

# AMERICAN QUARTERLY REVIEW.

No. XV.

---

SEPTEMBER, 1830.

---

ART. I.—*Gulistani Cheïkh Moslih-eddin Sâdi Chirazi—Le Parterre de Fleurs du Cheïkh Moslih-eddin Sâdi de Chiraz. Edition Autographique, publiée par Mr. N. SEMELET. Exécuted par les presses de M. Y. Cluis, Lithographe, Place de Chatelet. Paris: 1828. 4to. pp. 194.*

WHEN we undertake to review such books as this, for the benefit of general readers, we feel ourselves not only authorized, but bound, to be somewhat desultory, superficial, and erratic, dealing more in entertaining generalities, than in dry though recondite particulars. The Orientalist need, therefore, look for no instruction in our lucubrations, as we fear we shall find it hard enough to keep the uninitiated in good humour with the subject. We say this, by way of protestation against any inferences to our disadvantage from the very slight tincture of erudition which we shall infuse into our strictures. The truth is, we cannot handle such a topic so as to give any thing like general satisfaction, without risking the displeasure of two formidable classes. The learned will indubitably brand us as mere sciolists; the unlearned, as mere pedants. We are clear, however, as a judge would say, that the case is within the rule laid down by Horace:

*Certis medium et tolerabile rebus*

*Recte concedi.*

We have determined to take notice of this curious publication for several distinct reasons. In the first place, it is interesting in itself, as presenting a corrected text of a celebrated work, and also as a specimen of art. In the next place, it furnishes us with an opportunity of saying something, in the small way just alluded to, on a branch of learning, which, though long familiar to a chosen few in Europe, has with us not yet begun to be in vogue: we mean the language and literature of the modern Persians. Our third reason is a little more remote, but has had more

ART. III.—Q. Horatii Flacci Poemata. Textum, ad prætantissimas editiones recognitum, et præcipua lectionis varietate nec non vv. dd. conjecturis instructum, prolegomenis et excursibus, varii argumenti, donavit, notisque perpetuis, patria lingua exaratis, et ad æstheticen, historiam, geographiam, mythologiam, archæologiam, remque botanicam spectantibus, illustravit CAROLUS ANTHON, in Collegio Columbiano, Neo-Eboracensi, Litt. Græc. et Lat. nec non Geog. Antiq. et Archæol. Professor Jaiius. Novi Eboraci. Impensis G. & C. & H. Carvill. MDCCCXXX. Svo. pp. xcv. & 954.

A CRITICAL edition of a classic author, elaborated in America, by an American, and for American consumption, is a new thing under the sun. The attention of our editors has hitherto been restricted to the preparation of mere school-books. We are glad, that an ascending step has at length been taken, and by a foot so sure and practised as Professor Anthon's. The amount of labour, which has been expended on the work before us, must have been immense; for we know how apt the superficial reader is to underrate the difficulty of performances, which he finds it so easy to skim over or neglect. The slow business of amassing fit materials; the still more tedious process of comparison, selection, and arrangement; the exercise of tact and patience necessary to adjust the whole, without disproportion of the parts; and last of all, the *limæ labor*, without which a work of philology or criticism is as unfit to see the light as an oration or a poem—all these are burdens, of which it is impossible to estimate the weight, without some snatches of experience. It is unfortunately true, however, that this long and intense application to such subjects, however necessary to the preparation of learned works, often injures them essentially, by occasioning a plethora of matter. Pope somewhere says (in prose) that one of the most indispensable qualifications of a good writer, is "the power of rejecting his own *thoughts*." No less important in an editor is the corresponding power of rejecting his *materials*. A man who, by the sweat of his brow, has hoarded up the stuff for a new book, is as reluctant to abandon any of his gains as Harpagon himself. It is sacrificing so much of his intellectual travail, as well as of his handy work. It will commonly be found, therefore, that the bias, in such cases, is to lose as little as possible. What will not stand in one place, is accommodated in another. What the text refuses, the appendix, notes, or prolegomena, are forced to entertain. And if, after all this stuffing, there be yet a remnant, it is well if it does not come forth by

piecemeal, in the pages of periodicals, or in the daily conversation of the editor, either as "gobbets raw" of undigested learning, or in the milder form of a pedantic unctio. The Germans are the cleverest book-makers in existence. They have now brought the art as near to perfection as we can hope to see it; yet even their march has been tediously progressive. Their earlier compilations are entirely spoiled by the defect which we have mentioned. Time and practice have taught them wisdom; and we defy the rest of the world to show finer models of this valuable craft than have been produced in the laboratories of Göttingen and Leipzig. Such master-workmen as the younger Rosenmüller, and a score of others whom we might enumerate, appear to have acquired the art of measuring with the eye, the vastest chaos of materials, and of determining, with unerring accuracy, how much shall be rejected altogether, how much boiled down into apothegm, how much sublimated into eloquence, how much hammered into text, how much melted into commentary. With all this beforehand in the mind's eye, they think nothing of the labour. With their habits of abstraction, and their sixteen hours of daily application, they can accomplish any thing. Elsewhere, this art, in its true form, is only nascent. In Germany, it has become a giant.

Those who are at all familiar with our *modus operandi*, will readily believe, that we have said all this, rather because it came into our head, than because it is particularly apropos. We should be far indeed from intending any special application of terms in any way contemptuous to one whose character and talents place him far above the rank of a mere book-maker. Still we are afraid, that the "*studium acerrimum*," to which Professor Anthon modestly pleads guilty in his preface, while it has eminently qualified him for his task, has also led him a few steps into the error we have ventured to condemn. The volume has too much the aspect of a book designed to say every thing that could be said; and in some passages, the solicitude to leave out nothing, has evidently given to the writer's disquisitions, a hurried, desultory, and embarrassed character, detracting largely from their merits. In other cases, he betrays a fondness for generalities, a little ludicrous, and which would have been not a little burdensome, had it been more indulged. In several of the articles, which compose the prolegomena, not content with what was necessary to elucidate his author, he goes back to first principles, and overwhelms us with elaborate discussions of the thing *in genere*, apart from its application to the subject. The places in which this solicitude to say all that can be said, is especially betrayed, are the article on Metres, which the writer thinks it necessary to commence, by explaining "a few of the

leading principles of *metre in general*;" page xliii\*—and that on the manuscripts of Horace, at the close of which, after giving all necessary information, he deems it *not amiss* to state some further facts "with regard to ancient MSS. generally;" page lxxi. Now we think this amiss. The facts, though interesting and important, are much more at home in their native nest, the Dictionnaire Bibliographique. Here, they are mere cuckoo's eggs. Books of this kind are most agreeable, as well as useful, when the process of amputation and exclusion has been most severe. That nothing is lost by such a method, is most clear; for the same mind that is capable of pruning ably, is also capable of masterly condensation, so that all which might seem to be lost by the curtailment, may be saved by additional compactness of the parts. Every piece of composition is a porous substance, and the facility of diminishing its bulk depends upon the character of the operator's mind.

Another fault, and not the slightest that we have to mention, is some want of taste, or neglect of its suggestions, in the *getting up* of this edition. And of this opportunity we shall avail ourselves, to give our brethren of Nieuw-Amsterdam a friendly hint. There seems to be a jealous rivalry between New-York and Boston, with respect to school-books. We infer this from the fact, that large editions of some elementary books have been published in both cities, almost simultaneously. In this strife, the Bostonians have, on one important point, an unambiguous advantage. They print better. It has long been admitted, both in England and this country, that even ordinary school-books, of a handsome form, are cheaper, in the end, than those printed upon wrapping paper, in the style of almanacs. Gould's Boston edition of Adams's Latin Grammar, (*parvula, nam exemplo est, formica,*) and Patterson's New-York edition of the same work, may be safely taken, we presume, as samples of the respective styles; and a single glance, we think, would be sufficient to decide the question of expediency. But mere school-books are not the subject of our story. Here is a work which has, no doubt, been many years in preparation, and which lays claim to a higher character than any former cis-Atlantic publication in the same department. A better opportunity could not have occurred for retrieving the reputation of the New-York press. We are sorry to find that it has been suffered to escape. The finer copies,

\* We should have viewed these little matters in another light, had we been satisfied that the work before us was intended for a school-book. But coming as it does in such a questionable shape, we are left to conjecture, which conducts us to a different conclusion. We need not say, that the same things which would be highly proper in a class-book, may be absurd in a critical edition, and *vice versa*.

it is true, are quite respectable, but something more was wanted. The type, in the first part or volume, is, we suspect, none of the newest, and we are sure none of the finest, having the same plump, embonpoint appearance, so familiar to the readers of old books of Dutch divinity adorned with fleshy cherubim.\* The latter half appears to have been wrought with other apparatus, and is better. But we are not satisfied, in this case, with mere decency of dress. A little decoration might have been forgiven. We are loath, that the first American attempt, of any note, in this branch of authorship, and one so successful and respectable withal, should come forth in any but the best apparel.

One more criticism, on the score of taste, we must presume to offer, though with fear and trembling at the imminent deadly risk which we incur. For we can hardly escape being branded as inveterate hyper-critics, when we venture to object to the Latin article, with which the volume opens. We do object to it, however, not only because it puts the English articles, which follow, out of countenance, but because it is little fitted to increase the reputation of the writer, or to recommend the book. This circumstance is not at all surprising, nor does it in the least detract from our preconceived opinion of Professor Anthon's scholarship. In classical literature, public sentiment has justly ranked him very high; and in some quarters of that extensive field, he is probably without a rival. But, we fear, that the day has not arrived when an American, however learned as we count learning, can with perfect safety come before the world, with Latin on his lips. We have heard men wonder, that so few, if any, of our ripest scholars, *educated here*, write Latin with facility and elegance. The reason is a plain one—because they never learned. Such as have tried the experiment, and only such, can fully understand how distinct the ability to read a foreign language is from the ability to write or speak it. The difference, indeed, is nothing more nor less than that between analysis and synthesis. The exercise given to the powers, in the two processes, is totally dissimilar, and the aid which they *directly* give each other, very inconsiderable. A teacher, after thoroughly indoctrinating his disciple in the rules for translating and grammatically analyzing the best authors, can no more expect him to compose correctly, without further discipline, than a watchmaker can require his apprentice to construct a watch, after learning merely to disjoin its parts adroitly. So long, therefore, as our system of instruction continues as it is, we can only

\* What Grecian can help wishing, that Mr. Dean had been supplied with some succedaneum for the Greek type employed in the Prolegomena? Its deformity is aggravated by its contrast with the neatness of the small type in the notes.

expect our youth to do what they have learned to do, that is, to render equivalents in English, for the Greek and Latin which is laid before them. Before they can express their own thoughts well in either, they must learn—we repeat it, they must learn. We have before\* protested against this defect in the grammar-schools of America—a defect which does not terminate in the mere want of an accomplishment, but hangs as a weight upon our scholarship in more important points. We have scarcely seen or heard a sample of American latinity, exempt from solecisms. In some, of humble pretensions, (such as medical dissertations, &c.) there has been a mere conversion of terms, leaving the English idiom untouched. In others, the *Latin* has been unexceptionable, and the idiom of the detached parts sound, but the whole taken together has an English air. This, we cannot help thinking, is a just description of the specimen before us. The composition is elaborately and scrupulously correct, but the *tout ensemble* is not classical. It looks as if each clause had been wrought by itself, and then soldered to its neighbours. There is a want of lubricity in the joints, and of that unity in the sentences, however complicated and involved, which is the surest indication of a native, or a duly practised hand. In Cicero's longest periods, there is an intertwining of the first and last and intermediate members, a system of wheels within wheels, harmonious and regular, though complex, that renders it impossible to sever them mechanically, without destroying their significancy. In *English Latin*, on the contrary, the style is *coupé* or *staccato*, the clauses are too independent of each other, and admit too readily of separation—and this too, in cases where the grammatical and even the idiomatical correctness are above reproach. We would that this were otherwise, and are well persuaded, that a course of instruction, accommodated to the views we have expressed, and designed to exercise the pupil in synthetical, as well as analytic, study, would richly repay the additional labour which might be bestowed upon it. On this point, we cheerfully adopt the language of Professor Anthon: *Faxit Deus, ut ad saniora et felicitiora consilia quamprimum veniamus!*

The work now before us contains above a thousand pages, and consists of three principal parts—Prolegomena—Text—Commentary.

The Prolegomena consist of eleven distinct articles, mostly very brief. The first, on the life of Horace, contains nothing, we believe, which was not before accessible, at least to scholars. The second, on the Tiburtine villa and the Sabine farm, relates to a question in topography, not very interesting, we apprehend,

\* See A. Q. R., No. XII. Art. III.

except to those half Horace-mad, like Dr. Douglas,\* and is chiefly made up of extracts from Eustace and other travellers. The third section is composed of passages from the poet's writings, in which he alludes to the events of his own life. The fourth, of passages from other ancient writers in which mention is made of Horace. The fifth contains Bentley's chronological arrangement of the works of Horace, corrected according to the views of Vanderbourg.

The sixth section is an elaborate exposure of the poet's plagiarisms, in which the cruel scrutiny is pushed so far as to include, not only entire passages derived from older writers, but even combinations of two words, which he is charged with stealing from Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Tyrtæus, Callimachus, Simonides, Euripides, Sappho, Æschylus, and Epicharmus! Upon this exhibition of poetic frauds, we have three remarks to make. The first is, that the culprit is not fairly treated. Some of the parallelisms would never be called plagiarisms, except by one who was determined to discover all he could. For instance, what application of an epithet could be more natural to one familiar with the Greek mythology, than that which occurs in "Erycina ridens?" Yet here we find it traced to the φιλομειδής Ἀφροδίτη of the Iliad. Again, we shall as soon believe, that Shakspeare stole "'Tis night," from Virgil's favourite "nox erat," as that Horace thought of Pindar's γλυκὺς αἶλος, when he wrote "dulci fistula." These instances of microscopic criticism sufficiently evince the tendency of such inquiries to disturb the balance of the soundest judgments upon little matters. Our next remark is, that such statements as the one in question, give us some insight into the vast difference between the Greek and Roman principles of composition. The Greek drew from nature, and the Roman from the Greek. When the Greeks talk of style and taste, they refer to no ulterior models as standards of perfection, which evinces that they brought their resources from no foreign quarter. The Romans, in their direct as well as incidental reasonings on rhetoric, say more about the *exemplaria Græca* than about first principles, and seem evidently to have looked upon approximation to the merits of their attic masters, as the highest aim of their ambition. This sufficiently accounts for the raciness of the Greeks, and the comparative tameness of the Romans, except in subjects upon which the latter drew immediately from nature. How different are Terence's cold, though elegant, transfusions, from the vivid originality of Grecian farce, or the dull rant of Seneca, from the sublime extravagances of the Attic buskin! And yet the strength and keenness of the Roman satirists distinctly prove, that the writers of that country be-

\* See the account of this strange character at p. xciii.

came imitators, not from defect of genius, but because the Greeks had been beforehand with them. Our third remark is, that some of the best poets have been arrant plagiarists, and some of their best things, mere stolen goods. Milton, Dryden, and particularly Pope, have immortalized a thousand good, but ill-dressed, thoughts of other men. The same good turn was done by Horace to a score of elder bards, and never without some very palpable improvement in the turn of the expression. Many of the best Greek writers display, in some degree at least, that neglect of mere verbal polish which is always a concomitant of true originality; while their Roman copyists exhibit in perfection, that exquisite correctness and refinement of exterior, which none but imitators can attain.

The seventh article is an elaborate account of the metres used by Horace, in which the learned editor has wisely pre-supposed an acquaintance with the Greek, and derived his explanations from the principles of Greek versification. The eighth and ninth sections, on the manuscripts and editions of the works of Horace, contain a rapid but minute synopsis, highly interesting to the classical bibliographer. A curious explanation is here given of the way in which some various readings, that have puzzled the acutest critics, took their rise. It seems, that the ancient copyists emblazoned the first letter of each line, and for this reason passed it over when they wrote the others. As these blanks were sometimes negligently left in statu quo, subsequent copyists were thrown upon their own resources; and as scribes have never, we believe, been eminent for taste or critical sagacity, their conclusions were not, in every case, the most felicitous. Such is the account here given of the famous line in the first ode, in which *me* and *te* have so long struggled for dominion:

Me doctarum hederæ præmia frontium.

All the labour spent upon this unimportant verse by Rutgers, Hare, *et id genus omne*, was occasioned, it appears, by some old amanuensis perversely leaving out the first letter of a word.

The two earliest editions of the works of Horace are without date or printer's name; but are supposed to be about three hundred and sixty years of age. The one before us is probably not far from the sixth hundredth that has since appeared. The Glasgow edition of 1744 is said to be immaculate, the sheets having been hung up in the college, with the offer of a premium for every mistake detected. The great folio edition of Basle contains the notes of forty commentators, and forms a striking contrast, as to bulk, with Filon's pigmy Horace printed at Paris, two years since, in 32mo, on type cut for the purpose by Didot, and said to be the smallest extant.

The last preliminary article contains a list of the translations

of the works of Horace, which have yet appeared, chiefly extracted from Dunlop. Some of our readers may be gratified to learn, that among the versions here recorded, are one in Hebrew, four in Dutch, and three in Polish. The former was occasioned by a wager, that a Roman poet could not be translated into Hebrew. Of the Polish versions, a sufficient specimen is furnished in the title of the latest,\* in which we defy the uninitiated to discover any vestige of the Poet's name. "Odywybrane z ksiąg roznych rymowym i Nicrimowyn wierszem przez Kantorb. Symowskiego."

Professor Anthon's diligence, in the adjustment of his text, deserves the highest praise. In this part of his work, he manifests an intimate acquaintance with the best editions, and the critical opinions of the ablest editors. Nor are we much disposed to quarrel with him for withholding all conjectures of his own. With the exception of some moderate and sensible suggestions, as to punctuation, which seem to be original, he appears to have confined himself to an impartial estimate of former guesses. Bentley, of course, figures on every page; but we are pleased to see, that he is not permitted to indulge his mangling appetite so freely as at home. Some of his emendations, we are afraid, have been admitted, rather from personal respect, than on account of their own merits; but on the whole, he has been treated just as he deserved. If ever there was a mind that merited the epithet of anti-poetical (for unpoetical is quite too mild a word) it was that of this great leviathan in the ocean of verbal criticism.† Among all his conjectures, with which we have come in contact, we can scarcely recall one which, if it affects the sense at all, does not go to substitute bald prose for tolerable poetry. And then to aggravate the evil, he is so prolific, so entirely inexhaustible, and withal so savage to his more good-natured predecessors and contemporaries, that he is quite intolerable. We mean in his own publications, where he riots in critical invective, and grammatical blood-thirstiness, with none to make him afraid. When we meet with him in a *variorum* commentary, where his dicta are sparingly admitted, and tempered by a copious admixture of dissimilar materials, he can be borne, and may even be considered an agreeable companion. There is a raciness and spirit in his observations, the absurd as well as the profound, which makes them far more savoury than the dry wisdom of his compeers. Witness that sublime apostrophe in his comment on the passage,

\* Printed at Warsaw, in 1816.

† Witness his mighty efforts to translate the sublimest flights of Milton into the dialect of pedagogues, a memento of his bad taste more lasting than all brass and marble.

Forte per angustam tenuis vulpecula rimam  
 Repserat in cumeram frumenti, pastaque rursus  
 Ire foras pleno tendebat corpore frustra.\*

“I appeal to your honour, ye hunters, farmers, and naturalists, can a fox eat corn?—M. Dacier,” he continues, “who reads *cameram*, has with much good foresight provided his granary with poultry and pigeons. A pleasant and facetious conceit truly! A frugal farmer to be sure, who lets his poultry into his barn, which must certainly be well covered against rain, if it is open to pigeons. But, it seems, this was a lean fox, that crept through a little hole. I should hardly believe it, though he were skin and bone. Reader, whoever thou art, if thou hast ever saluted Horace, even at the threshold, canst thou believe such absurdities of him?”

But, not to give Bentley too much of our notice, we assure the reader, that the various lections of a classic author, notwithstanding their apparent insipidity, may afford quite a fund of entertainment. With all due respect for the character of those who devote themselves to such researches, and with all due allowance for the actual value of the researches themselves, we must after all be allowed to smile, when we see grave scholars straining at gnats, with so much zeal and energy. And in sober sadness, we should deprecate exceedingly the influence of such pursuits, if pushed too far, upon the student's mind. The invaluable power, or perhaps we should say, habit, of perceiving objects in their just proportions, must be gradually lost by such a process, unless freely interchanged, with different and more enlarged pursuits. Happily for the world, this is frequently the case. In our own country, at least, it is not probable, that any noted scholar can be found, who has learned to disjoin words and things completely, and to exercise his faculties upon the lifeless form of language. In the old world, it is otherwise, as we are well assured by the vast heaps of *difficiles nugæ* which make up a large proportion of our books of reference. In works more select and popular, like that before us, though the extremest cases are not met with, we can see enough in the numerous citations, to convince us, that even powerful and cultivated minds may be brought by habit to a false perception of the magnitude of things, and expend upon trifles all the energies, which truth and nature would have consecrated to momentous interests.

Let us open the volume now before us at a venture. Who would have supposed, that the sentence,

—— eburna, dic age, cum lyra  
 Maturet, in contum Lacænz  
 More comam religata nodum,†

\* Ep. 7. Lib. i. v. 29—31.

† Od. 11. Lib. ii. v. 22.

could have occasioned any throes of abortive criticism? Yet Bentley condemns *comtum* as irreconcilable with *maturet*, because if she made haste, she could not stop to bind her hair with so much accuracy! He therefore, without ceremony, reads *incomtam*, and for *nodum*—*nodo*. This grave objection is approved by Döring, but disputed by Professor Anthon, who proves analogically from Macrobius, that *maturo*, meaning to *make ripe*, must, of course, when figuratively used, mean to do a thing with *convenient speed*, whence he infers, that Lyde might very well delay a moment to tie up her hair, before she obeyed the summons. The insatiable Bentley, having despatched *comtum*, fastened on *Lacænxæ*, and asserting that there was no reason to think this fashion of tying the hair in a knot, peculiar to the Spartan virgins, insisted on the substitution of *Dianæ*. This emendation is, of course, withstood most stoutly by succeeding commentators, and will, for aught we know, be alternately extolled and scouted till the end of time. It is curious to observe the formidable array of champions sometimes exhibited in these textual tournaments. We can assure the reader, that there is some dignity, however latent, in a contest where such knights as Bentley, Scaliger, Fea, Gesner, Sanadon, Bos, Döring, Heinsius, Lambinus, Wakefield, and the like, condescend to tilt.

We have often been amused to observe the exquisite sensibility of taste which learned editors acquire, by a long apprenticeship in verbal criticism. The English reader would be apt to stare at the frequency of rapturous eulogiums upon feats of emendation and conjecture, turning wholly upon single syllables and letters. "Happy," "felicitous," "original," and "elegant," with other kindred epithets, are lavished in profusion upon literary exploits, which, in ordinary eyes, appear rather abecedary. We mention these things in this place, not because we think Professor Anthon's work particularly chargeable with this excess of learning; but because the thing among us is comparatively new, and some knowing readers of our own have had little opportunity of judging for themselves. At the same time, we repeat, that some of the annotations on the text are really both interesting and amusing. As a specimen of this class, we subjoin a note upon the last ode of the second book, containing the pedigree and fate of an elegant and spirited conjectural amendment, which appears to be a native of Hindostan. The subject of annotation is a phrase in the second stanza:—

Non ego pauperum  
Sanguis parentum, non ego, quem vocas  
Dilecte, Mæcenas, obibo,  
Nec Stygia cohibebor unda.

\* The common text has *quem vocas, Dilecte Mæcenas*. Bentley conjectures *vocas*, while others remove the comma after *vocas*, and place it before *Mæce-*

nas. By this punctuation, *Dilecte* is taken *materially*, as the grammarians express it. Bothe conjectures *vetas*, and Nodell *foves*, of which last Schrader approves. In the edition of Francis's Horace, published in 1807, under the care of Mr. Du Bois, a note is inserted, relative to this much disputed reading, which the editor informs us was obtained from Sir Philip Francis, the son of the translator. The note favours the punctuation of the common editions, viz. a comma after *vocas* and none after *Dilecte*. 'The poet,' observes the writer of the note in question, 'supposes himself changed into a bird, and mounting into the skies, with Mæcenas anxiously looking up and calling after him: 'whom you call,' *que vous rappelez.*' Mr. Fowke of Calcutta, he informs us, was the author of this interpretation, and he then goes on to remark as follows: 'Joseph Fowke told Mr. Francis, that he had mentioned this criticism many years ago to Samuel Johnson, who, after rolling himself about, *suo more*, said, 'Sir, you are right!' Several years afterwards, Mr. Francis asked Mr. G. Wakefield his opinion of the passage, which then ran, with that of most other commentators, in favour of *quem vocas Dilecte*, but with which neither he, nor any man of sense, nor Latin scholar, could be well pleased. After weighing Mr. Fowke's ingenious interpretation, he said hastily, as if conviction had suddenly flashed upon his mind, 'that there could be no doubt of it.' Now we think, with all due deference to the great names just mentioned, that there is little doubt of Mr. Fowke's interpretation being entirely erroneous. We do not deny that examples may be found in the Latin writers, where *voco* has the meaning for which Mr. Fowke contends; but we must beg leave to say, that this meaning is, in the present instance, both flat and prosaic, and at variance with the very context itself. In a letter from John Symmons, Esq. dated Paris, January 8, 1828, and addressed to our very learned and valued friend, E. H. Barker, Esq. of Thetford, (England,) a passage occurs, which the latter cites in his recent work on the authorship of Junius, and which we will here take the liberty of inserting. 'I do not at all approve of Mr. Fowke's and Sir P. Francis's interpretation of *quem vocas*. I am decidedly for *quem vocas Dilecte, Mæcenas*. The other sense would be a premature and a very awkward anticipation of what afterwards follows in the fervour of composition. The poet is by no means mounted to the height at the beginning. He begins with matter of fact, his being obscurely born, and yet being a friend of Mæcenas. He then quietly and plainly augurs the immortality of his name, which turned out to be also matter of fact. My dear sir, he is not mounted on a cloud yet. Why should Mæcenas be calling him back? Johnson and Wakefield were surprised into a consent; certainly the former; the latter was capable of a serious consent.' *Mr. Symmons is perfectly correct*, both in his criticism and in the reading which he prefers. The meaning of the poet evidently is, that the friendship of Mæcenas will be one of his surest passports to the praises of posterity, since it will prove that he possessed true merit, without which that friendship could never have been obtained. 'I, whom you salute with the title of beloved, will never die.' The common punctuation, *quem vocas, Dilecte Mæcenas*, is approved of by Scaliger, who gives the following as the construction: *Non ego, non ego obibo, quem vocas, Sanguis pauperum parentum.* The learned critic is decidedly wrong in his preference, since nothing could be more foreign from the character of Mæcenas, than to reproach those whom he honoured with his friendship with meanness of origin." pp. 68, 69.

We have been so bold as to interpolate a few supernumerary italics in this paragraph, for the purpose of pointing out some amusing illustrations of the confidence, with which one race of commentators dooms its predecessors to contempt. Scaliger, it seems, explained this tortured passage in a certain way. Joseph Fowke adopted the same reading, but suggested a different construction. This last conjecture, when proposed to Samuel Johnson and G. Wakefield, was approved by both of them, emphatically, in which judgment Philip Francis and Du

Bois appear to have concurred. Three years ago, this would have been considered a great weight of authority. Within that space, however, Mr. Symmons signifies his disapprobation of the doctrine, and the scale is straightway turned. We do not mean, of course, to impeach the soundness of these latter criticisms. On the contrary, we are disposed to subscribe to them ourselves; but we cannot help smiling at the air with which the editor gives judgment, and produces E. H. Barker and J. Symmons as his vouchers. He speaks as one having authority.\*

The only other emendation that we can here notice, is one in the First Satire, which deserves attention, as it goes to remove a difficulty in the interpretation of an interesting passage. No one who reads this article can have forgotten, that the poet in that satire, is exposing the propensity of most men to find fault with their condition, and prefer that of their neighbours. By way of a dramatic illustration, he introduces four discontented personages, the soldier, merchant, husbandman and lawyer. These characters are brought upon the stage, in the third line of the Satire, and in the supposed decision of the deity (v. 15—19) are again enumerated, with little variation of the terms. But when they are a third time mentioned, (v. 28—30,) we find *caupo* or the *vintner* substituted for the lawyer. This variation in the *dramatis personæ* has occasioned no small trouble to the critics, and a great variety of explanations have been forged for the occasion. Döring supposes, that the satirist released the lawyer from his durance vile, as a token of respect for the profession, or else because the Roman lawyers took no fees at that time. But even if these explanations were admissible—and Professor Anthon very clearly shows that they are not—why should the *vintner* have been pitched upon to fill the vacant place? It is not very easy to perceive the peculiar hardships, which entitle this profession to a parity with those before enumerated. This objection has compelled the critics to resort to emendation. Fea reads, *præfidus hic campo*—De Bosch, *pervigil hic campo*, with a change of punctuation; but the brightest thought is Markland's, who reads *causidicus vaser hic*, because "*fidus hic cau*,

\* Mr. Barker of Thetford, to whom this edition of Horace is inscribed, and between whom and the editor there seems to subsist a strong personal and literary friendship, may be characterized, with all due respect for his high qualities and standing, as one of the most learned and most tasteless men alive. He has written more learned trash, that is, matter full of learning without any use except to make that learning visible, than any scholar with whose works we are acquainted. At the same time, he deserves no small applause for many real favours to the republic of letters; and we have only introduced him here for the purpose of suggesting, that all the pedantry, or semblances of pedantry, which we have met with in Professor Anthon's volumes, are *Barkerian* in their aspect, even down to his venial imitation of the famous *Vix Nos*, which occurs so often in the *New Thesaurus*.

being transposed, gives us *causidicus*; for *f* and *s* are frequently mistaken in the manuscripts for each other, and *h* is often thrown into the middle of a word, by the blundering of copyists!" Wakefield defends the common reading, on the ground, that *caupo* may be made to mean a lawyer; but Porson tells us, that though *caupo verborum* may have such a sense, *caupo* alone cannot, for which reason he adopts Schrader's conjectural amendment, *cautor*. In this conclusion Mr. Anthon has concurred, and gives as his version of the phrase, *this knavish lawyer*. As the sense thus fastened upon *cautor* might have seemed suspicious, he cites the remark of Valart: "*Cavere, unde cautor, omnes consulti partes significat et implet.*"

On the text and various readings we have nothing more to say, except that the ordinary scholar, who is not familiar with such niceties, will be surprised, as he turns over the leaves, to find many of his favourite passages disguised, and, as he may think, disfigured by the changes introduced. Such as have not been accustomed to read Horace, with Sanadon or Bentley at their elbow, will be somewhat startled when they stumble upon "*otium divos rogat impotenti,*" and find that the Blandusian fount has, by some mysterious process, lost a letter of its name.\*

Having despatched the first half of the work before us, in this perfunctory manner, we proceed with pleasure to the Commentary, or Explanatory Notes, which, by themselves, form, or may form, at the option of the purchaser, a large octavo of above six hundred pages. Here, as might be supposed, Professor Anthon's learning is displayed to most advantage, because here it is conversant with things as well as words. The erudition which expends itself upon the nice adjustment of a text, the arrangement of the words, and the position of the stops, never does, and never can, command respect. No general reader can lay down a volume of pure verbal criticism, without an involuntary feeling of contempt for the subject, which is too apt to extend itself to the editor or author, particularly when the latter seems to be *totus in illis*. The impression is far different, when he displays a combination of exact philological acquirement, with more elevated and enlarged accomplishments; when he appears to value words as the signs of things, and language as a key to more important knowledge. We are acquainted with no class of compositions, not original, more useful, respectable, and creditable, than judicious commentaries on the ancient writers. In such works we desire and expect—not vast accumulations of obtrusive learning—not wild, imaginative, theories—not lively sallies of pert wit—not threadbare tissues of didactic dulness; but such a combination of sound criticism, appropriate quotation,

\* See Ode 13. Lib. III., ad fontem Bandusium.

and illustrative remark, as may be sufficient to produce upon the student's mind, the clearest and most forcible impressions of the author's meaning. Few commentaries, it must be confessed, are highly satisfactory in all these points, though they are far from coming short in precisely the same way. The particular deficiency of each will, of course depend upon the structure of the annotator's mind, the bias of his taste, and the drift of his opinions. The bold, coarse, self-sufficient Bentley, delights in showing with what ease he can change his author for the better. The mighty but capricious mind of Warburton, upon the other hand, maintains, by a dread array of paradoxes, the perfection of his author, discovering order in the midst of chaos, and a deep design in every blunder. In like manner, the mere pedant crowds his notes with crude masses of quotation, reference, and learned doting; while the lettered fop anoints them with a subtle varnish of diluted erudition. From all these extremes, the useful commentary must of course be equi-distant, and can hardly be expected to proceed from one possessed with the ambition of fine writing, of original conception, or of very varied learning. We have no hesitation in asserting, that, for ordinary use, at the present period of cis-Atlantic learning, Professor Anthon's Notes on Horace come as near our beau ideal as any we have seen—certainly nearer than any we have seen in an English dress. In the first place, he affects no originality, no paradox, no novel principles of exegesis. In this, he has exhibited not only his exemption from a weakness, but his actual possession of a sort of strength, highly necessary in a commentator upon classic authors. The temptations to impertinent attempts at invention, wit, or eloquence, are so strong in such a case, and so powerfully aided by the evil example of some hundred predecessors, that a sober abstinence from such *ineptiæ*, without any verging towards the opposite extreme of frigid dulness, indicates a maturity of judgment, far more valuable in its place, than the keenest wit, or most prolific fancy. In the next place, he has laboured to be brief, and has not become obscure. We have seldom seen more valuable illustration couched in fewer or better chosen terms, than in some of these annotations. But what chiefly gratifies us, is the richness of the illustrations drawn from other classic authors. Professor Anthon manifests an intimate acquaintance with the writers of antiquity, which cannot fail to place him in the very highest order of our native literati. The judgment, too, with which these illustrations are selected—*exceptis excipiendis*—and the skill with which they are applied to the elucidation of obscurities, are worthy of high praise. We are glad to see the classics made to illustrate one another, instead of a continual recurrence to the truisms and conjectures of the later critics. How much more satisfaction is afforded to the stu-

dent by a parallel passage from Lucretius, Ovid, or Catullus, or an illustration from Athenæus, Lucian, Cicero, or Pliny, than by all the glosses and shrewd guesses of the moderns! A bare reference to any pertinent or corresponding passage, is often of more value than whole sheets of disquisition.

To estimate the merits which we are commending, a perusal of the whole work would be necessary. Neither analysis nor extracts would avail in such a case. A glance at the notes upon one of the shortest odes, may give the reader some idea of the plan.

#### "AD PUERUM.

"Persicos odi, puer, apparatus;  
Displicent nexæ philyra coronæ;  
Mitte sectari, rosa quo locorum  
Sera moretur.

Simplici myrto nihil allabores  
Sedulus curæ; neque te ministrum  
Dedecet myrtus, neque me sub arcta  
Vite bibentem."

#### VARIOUS READINGS.

"Wakefield (*Silv. Crit. sect. 55.*) proposes *curæ*; and finds his conjecture confirmed, as he thinks, by one of Bentley's MSS. It is certainly the best reading that has ever been offered for this much contested passage. Cuningham, Valart, and Döring adopt it. Bentley reads *Sedulus cura*; taking *cura* as an imperative, in the sense of *cave*. This reading even Baxter praises. Gesner is contented with *curo*, and Klotius says, "illud *curo* exercuit interpretum ingenium, et exercebit." One of the MSS. of Vossius has *coro*, and one of Bentley's *oro*.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES.

"Ode 38. Written, as is generally supposed, in condemnation of the luxury and extravagance which marked the banquets of the day. The bard directs his attendant to make no other preparations for entertaining him but such as are of the simplest kind.

"Mr. Granville Penn, in a memoir read before the Royal Society of Literature, at London, January 5th, 1825, advances a very ingenious theory in relation to this ode. He entitles the piece *Carmen Brundusinum*, and endeavours not only to justify this new appellation, but to show, by reasons drawn from the ode itself, that it was composed on occasion of the festivals celebrated at Brundisium, A. U. C. 714, when the treaty of peace was ratified between Augustus and Antony. He thinks that the *Persici apparatus* and the *simplex myrtus*, which the poet contrasts with each other, present a description of the feasts respectively given by the two rival commanders; that of Antony being marked by Oriental luxury and profusion, while that of Augustus was characterized by stern and martial simplicity.

"1. *Persicos apparatus*. 'The festal preparations of the Persians.' Compare Xenophon. (*Agæ. c. 9. § 3. ed. Schneid.*) as cited by Athenæus (4. 24.—vol. 2. p. 64. ed. Schweigh.) *Τῶ μὲν γὰρ Πέρσῃ πᾶσαν γῆν περιέρχοντες μαστεύοντες, εἰ αὐ ἡδέως πίσι, μύρτιοι δὲ τεχνῶνται, εἰ αὐ ἡδέως φάγοι.* Compare also the account which Athenæus (4. 26. vol. 2. p. 67. ed. Schweigh.) gives from Heracledes of Cumæ, respecting the supper of the Persian king.

"2. *Nexæ philyra coronæ*. 'Chaplets secured with the rind of the linden.' Compare Explanatory Notes, Ode 1. 17. 27. and the remark of Pliny, *H. N.* 16. 14. 'Inter corticem ac lignum tenues tunice multiplici membranula, e quibus vin-

*cula, tiliæ vocantur; tenuissimæ earum philyræ, coronarum lemniscis celebres, antiquorum honore.*

"3. *Mitte seclari.* 'Give over searching.'

"4. *Moretur.* 'Loiters beyond its season.' An expression beautifully poetic. Compare *Lucian*, (*Nigrin.*—vol. 1. p. 53. ed. *Bip.*) τούτους γὰρ εἶναι τοὺς τὸ παντελὲς ὄψον ωνούμενους, καὶ τὸν οἶνον ἐν τοῖς συμπόσις μετὰ πρόπων τε καὶ ἀροματῶν ἐχθίοντας, τοὺς μίσην χειμῶνος ἐμπιπλάμενους ῥόδων, καὶ τὸ σπάνιον αὐτῶν καὶ τὸ παραζαῖρον ἀγαπῶντας, π. τ. λ.

"5. *Nihil allabores sedulus curæ.* 'Strive not with earnest care to add any thing.' *Sedulus curæ* is a Grecism for *sedula cura*, in the ablative. Consult *Variou Readings*.

"7. *Arcta sub vite.* 'Beneath the thick shade of the vine.' Compare *Virgil*, (*Ecl.* 9. 42.)

—————' *Lentæ texunt umbracula vites.* "

In the same satisfactory way, the poet is defended from the censures of some captious critics. For example, *Scaliger*, *more suo*, had objected to the mention of snow in the description of a thunder-storm—*Jam satis terris, nivis atque diræ, grandinis, &c.* In vindication of the bard, Professor *Anthon* lays before us two quotations from Greek authors. The first is the statement of *Pausanias*, (x. 23.) that the Gauls were disturbed in their attack on Rome, by thunderings and lightnings, which continued a whole day, and were then succeeded by a fall of snow; the other from an epigram in the *Anthology*, which represents a flock returning to the fold covered with snow, the shepherd having been destroyed by lightning.

To the high commendation, which Professor *Anthon* certainly deserves, of having kept his commentary free from cumbersome and useless matter, there are one or two exceptions. In turning over the notes upon the first book of the *Odes*, we meet with an elaborate mystico-mythological discourse on the *Hermes* of Greece and Egypt. Setting out with the important fact, recorded by *Jablonsky*, that in the Egyptian language, *Thot*, *Theyt*, *Thayt*, or *Thoyt*, signified an assembly, and especially a sacerdotal college, our author informs us, that "the collective priesthood of Egypt, personified, and considered as unity, was represented by an imaginary being,"—which imaginary being, we are left to infer, was the *Thot*, *Theyt*, *Thayt*, or *Thoyt*, before mentioned, and moreover identical with *Hermes* or *Mercurius*. We are then favoured with a tedious, and to us unintelligible, tissue of details upon this personification of a priesthood, which is only interrupted by the author's recollecting, that time would not "permit any farther development of the various ideas, which, beside those already mentioned, were combined in the imaginary character of *Hermes*; his identity, namely with *Sirius*, the star which served as the precursor of the inundation of the Nile, and the terrestrial symbol of which was the gazelle, that flies to the desert on the rising of the stream; his rank in demonology, as the father of spirits, and guide of the dead; his

quality of incarnate godhead subject to death; and his cosmogonical alliance with the generative fire, the light, the source of all knowledge, and with water, 'the principle of all fecundity.'" (*Explanatory Notes*, page 44.) Now this we protest against, as out of taste, and out of place, and out of keeping with the text itself, and with the purpose of the commentary. We are well aware how prone learned annotators are to become enamoured of this *outré* trash, and to suppose a similar degree of fondness in their readers—especially when their researches have extended to the German archæologists. But surely, Pope's *rejecting power* should here be exercised, if any where. The misty magnificence of these Egyptian fables may produce a mirage at a distance, but at hand, they are as dismal and obscure as smoke. We have no hesitation in asserting that this disquisition does not, in the least, contribute to the reader's comprehension of the ode to which it is appended. (*Mercuri facunde*, Lib. I. Carm. 10.) And indeed, how could it? For no sooner does the writer get through his account of the Egyptian Hermes, than he informs us that the Grecian Hermes was a very different being, with few points of resemblance to the other, and in some respects, his very opposite. How, then, could this biography of Thot be considered relevant to Horace's address to Mercury? For our part, we doubt whether the Roman poet ever heard of Thot, or Thoyt, or the collective priesthood, considered as a unit. We believe that the mythology of classic literature was a popular mythology, romantic and poetical, not mystical and philosophical; and that the critic who resorts to Jablonsky's Pantheon and Creuzer's Symbolik for light to shed upon the lyric poets, might as well use Martin Delrius's Magic to illustrate Macbeth, or the Domesday Book to elucidate John Gilpin.

We are sorry to perceive this German system of antiquities acquiring reputation. The philosophers of this school—for it has its votaries in other lands than Germany—are wonderfully prone to mystify all matters that pertain to the antique. The same spirit which characterizes the romance of Germany, is present in the graver studies of these philomaths, producing a continual propensity to theorize without data, and determine without proof. It is from this eccentric disposition that they always choose to light up the darker periods of history, by groping further back in more palpable obscurity. The antiquities of Greece, about which we know something, are explained by those of Egypt, about which we know just nothing. From this *illumination with dark lanterns*, as Sir John Bull would have called it, we desire to be delivered. We, of course, have no allusion to Champollion's novel and most interesting enterprise. Opinions founded upon facts are always of some value; we object to nothing but the baseless fabrics which have heretofore been reared

upon the shifting sands of Egypt. We are sorry to perceive, from the diatribe in question, from another like it on the ode *Dianam teneræ dicite virgines*, and from some incidental hints of the same complexion elsewhere, that Professor Anthon's learning has produced in him a relish for this mode of illustration. We are not so absurd as to deny, that the mere facts concerned, so far as they are ascertained, may in themselves be interesting; but we cannot, for our lives, comprehend how things tolerably plain can be rendered more translucent by immersion in the Styx of cosmogonical antiquities. Can Professor Anthon think, that a boy, or a grown man, would apprehend the meaning or relish the beauties of the simple, light and airy ode *Mercuri facunde*, any better for being told that it was really addressed to a personification of the Egyptian priesthood, which was also the dog-star, the father of spirits, and a dozen other items not a whit more comprehensible? Setting aside the falsehood of the explanation—which we take to be indubitable—will not any school-boy see how uncongenial all this heavy mysticism is with the sportive graces of true classic fable—the *Spiritus Graiæ tenuis Camenæ*? The caricatures on a sarcophagus may as well be assorted with the chiseling of Phidias, or the daubs on a mummy's wrapper with the tints of an Apelles. We have spoken more especially of Egypt, because the absurdity is grossest in that quarter, where authentic records are most scanty. But those who know any thing of these profound researches, need not be told, that India has contributed its quota. To the tracing of analogies in the *mythology* of Greece and Asia, properly so called, there can be no objection. For the advanced scholar it may be amusing, and to the antiquarian deeply interesting. But to think of explaining Greek and Latin songs—mere songs—by an appeal to the mysteries engrafted on these fables, by dull priests and duller sages, is too much. We cannot away with it—"it is affectations!" We would as soon recommend Mr. Ephraim Jenkinson's discourse upon Sanconiathon, Manetho, and Berosus, as a text-book to pupils.

To prevent all misconception, we shall here make two remarks, by way of appendix to this digression. In the first place, we assure the reader, that the German writers upon archæology, when they have facts to work upon, are admirable craftsmen. Bos, Rosenmüller, Jahn, and others, have enriched this branch of learning with the fruits of their extensive knowledge and amazing industry, in a manner highly worthy of applause, and immortality. It cannot be too often reiterated in the student's ears, that for developing, arranging, and illustrating authentic facts, the writers of that nation may well stand against the world; but that when they get to speculating, all is lost. Compare Wolfe's and Heyne's explanations of the text of Ho-

mer, with their ravings on the subject of the bard's existence, for an apt illustration of the readiness, with which the same person can first build and then destroy, first ransack history for facts and illustrations, and then sap the foundations of all history itself. In the next place, we are apprehensive that the reader may infer, from our prolixity and animation on this topic, that Professor Anthon's notes, notwithstanding our eulogium, are completely saturated with this sort of learning. We hasten, therefore, to assure him of the contrary. The articles, which we have specified, may be regarded as exceptions to the general character of the work, and have rather the appearance of stray leaves from the author's commonplace book, than of wilful perpetrations. In one or two cases, it is true, the commentary verges toward this style of disquisition, but the writer starts and saves himself. For instance, in his comment on the phrase *Incola Pythius* (Ode 16. Lib. i.) after hinting that "the triumph of Apollo over the serpent Python will indicate the establishment of a new worship, that of the sun probably, on the ruins of some older system introduced by the followers of Buddha," he adds—"should this be disputed, the strong analogy between Apollo and the Hindoo Krishna presents another *fertile theme for discussion.*" Happily, the theme is not pursued.

On the well known question with respect to the interpretation of the ode *O navis referent* (i. 14), Professor Anthon sides with those who make it allegorical, and quotes from Dio Cassius, part of an oration by Mæcenas, from which he thinks Horace may have borrowed both his figures and his arguments. We are inclined to the literal interpretation recommended by Muretus, Dacier, and Bentley. Horace, we think, was very little inclined to allegory. In the ode in question, there is not a word which could suggest its allegorical design, or furnish a clue to its solution. And moreover, the same canons of interpretation, which make this ode allegorical, would make *Sic te diva* (i. 3) also allegorical, and in some points much more to our satisfaction. Why may not *navis*, in the latter ode, be emblematic of the epopee? The difficulties in the one case are quite as surmountable as in the other. *Finibus Atticis* would be much more significant in the epic allegory, than *Pontica pinus* in the political one.

It would be wild, however, to attempt to take up the several poems *seriatim*. We must therefore rise from particulars to generals. To the notes on the first book of the odes are appended ten *excursus* on the liquors of the ancients, which we at first mistook for original discourses, but on further scrutiny discovered that they were only extracts from Henderson's History of ancient and modern Wines. May we venture to suggest, that the acknowledgment of the quotation is not obvious enough, be-

ing placed promiscuously in the margin with a number of mere references? The notes on the second book are followed by a similar *excursus* on the life and character of Mæcenas, extracted from Dunlop. Those on the third book, by a version of Vanderbourg's remarks upon the *Parra*, in which that mysterious bird is proved to be the screech-owl.

The *excursus*, which winds up the annotations on the fourth book, is a learned dissertation of fourteen closely printed pages, on *the Seres and the silk trade of antiquity*. Some idea may be formed of the laborious research expended on this article, from the fact that more than sixty works are referred to in the margin as authorities. The design of this *excursus* is, to identify the Seres with the Chinese, and to ascertain how far silk was known to the Greeks and Romans. Hager's suggestion, that the golden fleece was nothing but raw silk, is quoted and approved, and a series of passages exhibited, in which this article is mentioned by Aristotle, Virgil, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, Florus, Tacitus, Seneca, Pliny, Quintilian, Martial, Suetonius, and Hesychius. We recommend this curious and learned essay to the knights of the cocoon.

Professor Anthon introduces the notes upon the satires with a preface of his own, but borrows one for the epistles, from Dunlop. We pass over this portion of the commentary hastily, in order to gain time, just to pause a moment on that noble monument of genius, critical acumen, taste, and common sense, the *Ars Poetica*.

Upon this valuable part of Horace's writings, we are pleased to find that Professor Anthon has bestowed especial pains. There is scarcely any relic of antiquity that merits critical attention more, or that bears its ordeal better, than the epistle to the Pisos. Without perceiving in it that complete formality of method, which some critics have discovered, we have no hesitation in pronouncing it a system, and an admirable system, of true critical philosophy. The introduction to the notes upon this poem gives an excellent synopsis of the theories, which have been started, in relation to its design and plan. It is a curious fact, that so much violent and learned controversy should have arisen on a point, apparently so trivial, as the question "whether Horace, in writing the present work, intended to deliver instructions on the whole art of poetry, and criticisms on poets in general, or whether his observations are applicable only to certain departments of poetry, and poets of a particular period." (p. 568.) Yet this question has afforded matter for elaborate discussion, not to modern critics only, but to ancient scholiasts, Greek as well as Roman. To us, no stronger proof could be adduced, of the general esteem in which the poem has been held among the learned, from the days of Porphyry to the present

time. Its intrinsic merit must have been admitted, or the critics never would have gone to war about mere circumstances. The oldest commentators look upon this poem as a medley of unconnected extracts from Aristotle, Neoptolemus, and others, in which opinion they are followed by the earliest critics after the revival of letters.

The earliest attempt to shake this theory was made by Heinsius, who discovered in it a perfect regularity of plan, and laid the blame of all anomalies upon the license of the ancient copyists. Another hypothesis was that of Pope, who thought it a collection of mere fragments, forming part of a design which was never executed. Hurd was the first who claimed for the epistle, the praise of complete regularity, even as it stands; a notion which bears upon its front the impress of a Warburtonian paradox. This theory considers the whole poem a finished treatise on dramatic poetry, with special reference throughout, to the actual condition of the Roman theatre. Sanadon and Engel regard it as a satire, aimed at contemporary poetasters; while Ast sets it down as an imitation of the Phædrus of Plato.

Most of these over-strained hypotheses have ultimately settled down into the theory of Wieland, which is here adopted by Professor Anthon. This theory, if such it may be called, just takes the poem as it is, and infers the author's purpose from the current of his thoughts and the drift of his expressions, without insisting on its surpassing merits as a systematic treatise, or denouncing it with Scaliger, as *sine arte*.\* We are glad to see so moderate and rational a principle, adopted in the exposition of this great *chef-d'œuvre*. Still, we believe, with Döring, that the first idea of the poem was satirical, if not its general tone and spirit. We have little doubt, that critics owe this valuable manual of their important art, to the disgust occasioned in the poet's mind, by the absurd pretensions of the paltry wits, who, then as now, infested the saloons of the Eternal city.

The notes upon this epistle merit special commendation; and we take pleasure in inviting public notice to so fair an exhibition of extensive reading, accurate scholarship, sound judgment, and good taste. Besides the familiar explanations of more obvious difficulties, common to all annotators, the student will find happy illustrations drawn from other classics, and a judicious choice of the best modern criticisms. The scholiasts too, are put in requisition; the best French and English imitations and translations are occasionally cited; and the whole is wrought up into

\* "De arte quæris quid sentiam—Quid? Equidem quod de arte sine arte traditur." Scalig. *Poet. lib. vi. c. 7*. The same author, in the same book, speaking of the odes *Donce gratus eram tibi* (iv. 3.) and *Quem tu Melpomene* (iii. 9.) says, "Quarum similes a me compositas malim quam esse totius Tarraconensis rex."

a form at once perspicuous, convenient, and agreeable. Since the days when we learned the Art of Poetry by heart, it has never yielded us such satisfaction as we have derived from the perusal of it, in connexion with this valuable commentary, at the end of which we find ourselves now safely landed, with a deep sense of our obligations to Professor Anthon for his rich donation to the commonwealth of letters.

---

ART. IV.—*Falkland.* By the Author of “*Pelham*,” “*The Disowned*,” “*Devereux*,” and “*Paul Clifford*.” J. & J. Harper, New-York: 1830.

THE celebrity of the Pelham novels, as they are called, invests them with an importance, in our opinion, greatly beyond their true value. It is, however, such as, in some measure, obliges us to appropriate to them an article in preference to works that stand much higher in our estimation. They are literally forced upon us by the power of eclat. To remain silent on a subject about which all the world is talking, might expose us to the charge of supercilious sullenness, or unwarranted contempt for public sentiment. It is true, that our opinion of these works is such, that were we to refuse noticing them, we might plead in justification, our reluctance to add to an excitement which we consider already excessive. The world will have its whim; and wherever its attention chances to be directed—whether it be to tulip-roots or South-sea speculations, to living skeletons or opera singers, to a lion or an insect, a Scott or a Bulwer, a Napoleon or a Sam Patch—there is no checking its course, until it be attracted by some other object equally *piquant* for either absurdity or excellence.

In accounting for the fluctuations of the public mind in relation to matters of literature, it has been asserted, that taste is perpetually changing, and rendering the judgment as unstable as itself. This we hold to be erroneous doctrine. True taste never changes, nor is it changable. If it were so—if taste had no fixed principles of perception, and judgment no permanent laws by which to decide, in vain would any author expect reputation from merit only—vain would it be to labour after excellence. Chance or caprice would be the dispenser of fame; and fruitlessly would the sons of genius exhibit the superiority of their minds over the common herd of dull scribblers that keep the press groaning with their uninstrucive or insipid productions. If taste and judgment be not founded on principles as unchange-