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ARTICLE I.—REV. JAMES DIXON, D. D.*

THE visit of the Rev. Dr. Dixon to the United States, as the accredited messenger of the Wesleyan Church of Great Britain to the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, has left a very agreeable impression, not only upon the members of the General Conference, but upon all who met him in personal intercourse. In expressing this opinion, we apprehend that we echo the universal sentiment of the church he was deputed to visit. Certainly we have heard nothing to the contrary. Although thoroughly Anglican in his feelings, a right loyal subject of the British crown, and a sincere and ardent admirer of the British constitution, as he was always prompt to avow; there was yet so much of urbanity and kindness, of candour and liberality, of Christian courtesy and meekness, in his brief intercourse with his American brethren, and such cordial, unaffected sympathy with their religious sentiments and feelings, that national peculiarities were mutually forgotten, and he sojourned among them only as a friend and "brother beloved," a member of the same household of faith, a partaker of the common salvation, and a co-inheritor of thé same blessed promises.

Individually, we scarcely anticipated so perfect and cordial a unity between Dr. Dixon and his cis-Atlantic brethren. Our knowledge of him, as has been elsewhere said, was slight, and came rather in the form of observation than of personal acquaintance; but we were not alone in the almost apprehensions we entertained upon the subject. Unanimous as was the British Conference in the selection of him as

* The writer of this article published some time since, among other sketches, one of the Rev. Dr. Dixon. It was very brief and imperfect, and was in consequence omitted from his volume of "Sketches of Wesleyan Preachers." Much additional information, and a more correct estimate of his subject, have, the writer conceives, been wrought into the present "sketch."

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Art. VIII.—THOMAS CARLYLE.

1. *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays.* By Thomas Carlyle, author of the History of the French Revolution. A new edition, complete in one volume. Pp. 568. Philadelphia: Carey & Hart. 1848.
2. *Past and Present, Chartism, and Sartor Resartus.* By Thomas Carlyle. Complete in one volume. New-York: Harper & Brothers. 1848.
3. *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations.* By Thomas Carlyle. In two volumes. Pp. 560, 437. New-York: Harper & Brothers. 1848.

It cannot have escaped the notice of the most casual observer of the literature of Europe and America, that its whole tone and current have been changed within thirty years. There is not a department of thought in which this is not manifest. In religious literature, where the change is least obvious, there is still a marked difference between the essays, sermons, and books, that exert an influence now, and the Porteus, Blair, and Tillotson school, that were then in the ascendant. The spirit of activity and earnestness, which, half a century ago, was regarded, in a Whitefield and a Wesley, as a species of amiable insanity, has now become, if not the common, at least the approved feeling of the Church in all her departments. In history, the cold polish of a Gibbon, and the sneering shallowness of a Hume and a Voltaire, have given place to a school of thinkers, who see some significance in the life of the human race, and who apply themselves with something of a reverent spirit to the study of its problems. In poetry, the jingling aphorisms of Pope, the metallic lustre of Gray, and the Satanic fire of Byron, have given place to far higher conceptions of the proper mission of Song. So too in philosophy, belles-lettres, and political literature, there is a manifest change of both tone and sentiment in many important respects.

The causes of this change we do not propose at present to discuss; they lie too deep, and stretch too far, for a mere passing notice. Some of the instruments, however, by which these hidden causes acted, are obvious to the most superficial observer. A few men appeared in Great Britain and America whose souls were pervaded with a new spirit, which they sought to embody in their writings. Pre-eminent among these are the men who encountered such a storm of derision on their first appearance, and were called, in contempt, the Lakers; but who now stand, by universal suffrage, in the very foremost rank of English literature. We doubt whether the history of letters presents a more wonderful triumph achieved in a single life of calm and patient toil, than that which has been won,

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from the first bitter sneers of Byron, and the contemptuous "This will never do," of Jeffrey, to the crown of reverence and might that now encircles the brow of the noble old patriarch of Rydal-mere.

But while we fully recognize the agency of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Macaulay, and others in this change, we believe that few men have had a more decided influence in bringing it about than Thomas Carlyle. It has been his fate, like that of every other man of genius who differs greatly from his fellows, to be extravagantly commended and as extravagantly condemned. By some he is regarded as a drivelling dreamer, who seeks, by an uncouth and fantastic phraseology, to obtain a reputation for depth which he does not possess; and by others, as an inspired oracle, whose mystic utterances are fraught with the profoundest wisdom. On the one hand, he is regarded as a skeptical Pantheist, secretly undermining Christianity, and endeavouring to efface the ancient landmarks of religion and morality; on the other, he is looked upon as the very high priest of all true and reverent piety. It is worth while to seek the truth concerning one of whom there are such various and conflicting opinions. This we propose to attempt, in setting forth, plainly, what he has actually written, and thus furnishing the elements at least from which his real sentiments, character, and influence are to be ascertained.

Thomas Carlyle was born at Ecclefechan, near the River Annan, Dumfriesshire, Scotland. His father was a substantial farmer, an elder in the United Secession Church, and a man of strong native powers of mind. His mother, who, we believe, still lives, is said to be a fine specimen of the strong-hearted, earnest matrons of Scotland; and has, doubtless, impressed much of her character on her gifted son. His early years were spent in obscurity, poverty, and struggling efforts to obtain an education. The *res angusta domi* made it necessary for him to support himself in part, during his early studies, by tuition, translations, and similar employments. These facts in his youthful career will go far to explain some of those peculiarities of thought and feeling that we find in his subsequent writings. His intense sympathy with, and deep comprehension of, such men as Burns, Heyne, and Richter, who resembled him in these particulars; and his earnest battlings for the struggling masses, may be readily traced to this early training under the stern tutelage of poverty and sorrow.

The grand fact in his life, however, was his early study of German literature. It was this that gave tone and character to his mind, and shaped his literary career. He would under any circumstances have been a peculiar man; but the form and hue of almost all his

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peculiarities are distinctly traceable to his early acquaintance and deep sympathy with the strange and wonderful literature of Germany.

He was originally destined for the ministry; but, for reasons that may perhaps be gathered from some of his writings, abandoned it for the more congenial pursuits of a literary career. At one period in his life he taught an academy, during which time he enjoyed the acquaintance of one, similarly employed, who resembled him in many important respects, and to whom he has erected a most touching and beautiful memorial—we mean the eccentric and gifted, but unfortunate, Edward Irving. Had their paths in life been exchanged, and the one become the orator of Hatton Garden, and the other the profound German student, how differently might we have read the history of these men! and how differently the history of English letters!

After his marriage he resided partly in Edinburgh, partly in a wild and mountainous part of Dumfriesshire, and latterly in Chelsea, London. The peculiarities of his intellectual character gather around him in his present abode men of every shade of opinion; and his tea-table sometimes offers a not distant resemblance to Volney's Convention.

His mental history presents three distinct epochs: the first, the purely Scottish, the result of his early training amid scenes such as those immortalized in the Cotter's Saturday Night; the second, the German, when his mind was completely enthralled by the fascinating spell of that witchery that hangs around much of the German literature; and the third, the Germano-Scottish, in which his mind began to move with more independence, and to strike out for itself an original course, which is the resultant of the forces previously acting upon him, and which, we trust, will be the noblest phase of his character. These epochs are marked by incidents sufficiently characteristic. In his first phase, he was the bosom friend of Edward Irving, as genuine an impersonation of the *genus perfervidum Scotorum* as his land has ever produced; and one who would have scowled and thundered the most savage contempt on much that Carlyle afterwards loved, and much that he afterwards became. In the second phase, when public attention had been directed to this modern Diogenes, he was visited by Dr. Chalmers. The two great Scotsmen parted in mutual disgust. They never met again until a short time before the death of Dr. Chalmers, during his last visit to London. The mind of Carlyle had, meanwhile, reached its third phase; and when they met, they enjoyed several hours of congenial intercourse, and parted with mutual respect and admiration.

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The first appearance of Carlyle in the literary world was as a translator from the German. He published a translation of Wilhelm Meister, and specimens of the German novelists, accompanied by critical notices. These efforts were not very successful, although they evince much of the same critical acumen and skill that appear in some of his subsequent labours. His mind had not at that time reached the full developement of its peculiarities in thought and language, and hence these works produced comparatively little impression.

His first effort as an original author was his Life of Schiller. Of this we shall only say, that it exhibits fewer of his characteristic faults and excellencies than any of his subsequent writings. We dismiss it with the quotation of his own judgment, prefixed to a republication of it recently issued from the press:—

> "There are books, as there are horses, which a judicious owner, on fair survey of them, might prefer to adjust by at once shooting through the head; but in the case of books, owing to the pirate species, that is not possible. Remains, therefore, that at least dirty paper, and errors of the press, be guarded against,—that a poor Book, which has still to walk this world, do walk in clean linen, so to speak, and pass its few and evil days with no blotches but its own adhering to it." . . . "The present little book is very imperfect; but it pretends, also, to be very harmless; it can innocently instruct those who are more ignorant than itself."

His next appearance, and that in which public attention began to be specially directed to him, was as a Review writer. He was one of the illustrious band that restored the sinking character of the Edinburgh, about twenty years ago, and gave to Reviews a new place in the literature of the world. His principal contributions have been made to the Edinburgh, Foreign, Westminster, and Frazer's Magazine. Some of these articles we regard as among the finest productions of his pen; and there is no one work to which we would refer the reader as containing so full an exhibition of the man, as the collection of these papers published under the name of Miscellanies. In sterling thought; intimate acquaintance with German literature; dramatic power; wild, blazing, and beautiful diction; pyrotechnic light of every varied hue cast on old truths, giving them the aspect of new; and in mingled truths and half truths, it stands unique in modern literature.

His first paper was on Richter, and was the earliest introduction of that wonderful man to the English public, and the first flag of truce hung out by the Edinburgh Review to German literature. It is a finished literary portrait of that huge, many-sided, Titanic spirit, in whom the most opposite qualities of nature seem equally developed; now striding with unawed front into regions "where

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angels tremble as they gaze;" and tossing about the most awful themes with a recklessness of speculation that makes one shudder; then bending in the sweetest and most child-like reverence at the footstool of the Eternal; now fathoming the profoundest problems of metaphysical philosophy; then curvetting and posturing in the maddest nonsense, editing papers of the devil, and rioting beneath the cranium of a giantess, yet enveloping the deepest wisdom in this harlequin garb; now weeping with mingled joy and sorrow, and then, while the tears are yet glistening on his cheek, bursting forth into long, deep, incontrollable explosions of laughter; while at every turn he strews around him, in careless profusion, sparkling gems of the richest beauty and rarest sublimity.

But, charming as is this paper, his second sketch of Richter, in the Foreign Review, touches us far more deeply and tenderly. The first is a portrait, the second a life. In it we trace the early scenes of the boy "Fritz," among the birds, and poodles, and gentle inmates of the old parsonage of Jodiz; where the great Universe first began to unfold itself in wonder and beauty to this strange young spirit. We then, with deeper interest, follow the eager and fire-eyed youth in his strong strugglings with poverty, misfortune, and stupidity; living often on "bread and water" without the bread; manfully battling with the black spectres, and gathering strength from every encounter; until, from among the kettles, frying-pans, and spinning-wheel of his mother, where he sat, and dreamed, and wrote, he at last became recognized as one of the true spiritual monarchs of the age. We may not coincide with Carlyle in every opinion he expresses concerning Richter, but we must concede to him the merit of having given us a most graphic and exquisite delineation of one of the most wonderful men of modern times.

His paper on Burns, however, we regard as the most masterly sketch of the volume. It would be difficult to point to a finer analysis of a man's character and history than that furnished in this article. With an admiration of his genius that sometimes verges on the idolatrous, Carlyle evinces the keenest perception of his faults; and with the most delicate anatomy lays bare the defects of character that betray the true secret of his melancholy fate. A few extracts from the concluding paragraphs of this admirable essay will perhaps present the best description we could furnish at once of Burns and Carlyle. After discussing the literary character of Burns, he turns to his personal character and history, and tracing the prominent incidents of his life, until his Excise appointment in Dumfries, he remarks that this was the crisis of his life. But three issues were

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possible for him,—clear poetical activity, madness, or death. The last was the one which ensued. The question then arises, Could he not have been saved? Could not generous aid, and sympathy from the rich and great, have rescued him? Carlyle thinks not. Pecuniary aid would have galled and fretted, rather than relieved him. The higher classes did not treat him more unfeelingly than every man of genius has been treated; and hence deserve no peculiar condemnation in his case. And the blame of his failure lies not with the world, for it treated him with even more regard than such men have usually received. Having discussed these points at some length, he asks,—

"Where, then, does it lie? We are forced to answer, With himself; it is his inward, not his outward, misfortunes that bring him to the dust. Seldom, indeed, is it otherwise; seldom is a life morally wrecked but the grand cause lies in some internal wrong, some want, less of good fortune than of good guidance. Nature fashions no creature without implanting in it the strength needful for its action and duration; least of all, does she so neglect her master-piece and darling, the poetic soul. Neither can we believe that it is in the power of *any* external circumstances utterly to ruin the mind of a man; nay, if proper wisdom be given him, even so much as to affect its essential health and beauty.

"We have already stated the error of Burns; and mourned over it rather than blamed it. It was the want of unity in his purposes, of consistency in his aims; the hapless attempt to mingle in friendly union the common spirit of the world with the spirit of poetry, which is of a far different and altogether irreconcilable nature. Burns was nothing wholly; and Burns could be nothing, no man, formed as he was, can be anything, by halves. The heart, not of a mere hot-blooded, popular verse-monger, or poetical *Restaurateur*, but of a true Poet and Singer, worthy of the old religious heroic times, had been given him; and he fell in an age not of heroism and religion, but of skepticism, selfishness, and triviality.

"Burns was born poor; and born, also, to continue poor, for he would not endeavour to be otherwise; this it had been well could he have once for all admitted, and considered it as finally settled. He was poor truly; but hundreds, even of his own class and order of minds, have been poorer, yet have suffered nothing deadly from it; nay, his own father had a far sorer battle with ungrateful destiny than his was; and he did not yield to it, but died courageously warring, and, to all moral intents, prevailing against it.

"What, then, had these men which Burns wanted? Two things; both which, it seems to us, are indispensable for such men. They had a true, religious principle of morals; and a single, not a double, aim in their activity. They were not self-seekers and self-worshippers; but seekers and worshippers of something far better than self.

"With Burns, again, it was different. His morality, in most of its practical points, is that of a mere worldly man; enjoyment, in a finer or coarser shape, is the only thing he longs and strives for. He has no religion. His religion, at best, is an anxious wish,—like that of Rabelais, 'a great Perhaps.'

"With our readers in general, with men of right feeling anywhere, we are not required to plead for Burns. In pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts, in a far nobler mausoleum than that one of marble; neither will his Works, even as they are, pass away from the memory of men. While the Shakspeares and Miltons roll on like mighty rivers, through the

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country of thought, bearing fleets of traffickers and assiduous pearl-fishers on their waves, this little Valclusa fountain will also arrest our eye; for this also is of nature's own and most cunning workmanship, bursts from the depths of the earth, with a full gushing current, into the light of day; and often will the traveller turn aside to drink its clear waters, and muse among its rocks and pines."—Pp. 112–114.

These fragmentary extracts convey but a very imperfect conception of the finished beauty and power of the whole essay.

The paper next to this in strength is that on Voltaire. It enters into an exhaustive analysis of his life and character; and proves conclusively that he had no claim to greatness. He was adroit, clever, witty, and successful; but very far from being great. He lacked that deep reverence, that earnestness of spirit, that are necessary to greatness. He was vain, deceitful, fickle, and selfish, and therefore incapable of uttering a truly great thought, or doing a truly great act. "He is no great man, but only a great *Persifleur*," "and is found always at the top, less by power in swimming, than by lightness in floating." For him "the earth is a place for producing corn; the starry heavens are admirable as a nautical timekeeper." He was keen-eyed, but shallow; powerful, but frivolous.

It is the statements of the Essay concerning Voltaire as a polemic that have excited most disapprobation. In describing his work here, it charges him with manifesting the same frivolous adroitness of character that marked him in other respects; contending for victory rather than truth. His want of originality is not charged upon him as a demerit, but rather the contrary. His grand offence was meddling with religion, when he was not in any sense religious; tampering with awful themes in the mocking levity of a fool; warring against Christianity without comprehending what Christianity was; engaging in a work that demanded a devout spirit, and yet entering upon it with the spirit of a profane jester. The whole discussion, as he carried it on, turns on "the Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures." If this is not held in the sense in which Voltaire understood it to be held, his whole work falls to the ground. On this point the Essay thus remarks:—

"That the sacred books could be aught else than a Bank-of-Faith bill, for such and such quantities of enjoyment, payable at sight in the other world, value received; which bill becomes waste paper, the stamp being questioned; that the Christian religion could have any deeper foundation than books, could possibly be written in the purest nature of man, in mysterious, ineffaceable characters, to which all Books, and all Revelations, and authentic traditions, were but a subsidiary matter, were but as the *light* whereby that Divine *writing* was to be read; nothing of this seems to have, in the faintest manner, occurred to him. Yet herein, as we believe that the whole world has now begun to discover, lies the real essence of the question; by the negative or affirmative decision of which the Christian religion, or anything

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that is worth calling by that name, must fall, or endure forever. We believe, also, that the wiser minds of our age have already come to agreement on this question, or rather never were divided regarding it. Christianity, 'the Worship of Sorrow,' has been recognized as Divine on far other grounds than 'Essays on Miracles,' and by considerations infinitely deeper than would avail in any mere 'trial by jury.' He who argues against it or for it, in this manner, may be regarded as mistaking its nature: the Ithuriel, though to our eyes he wears a body, and the fashion of armour, cannot be wounded with material steel. Our fathers were wiser than we, when they said in deep earnestness, what we often hear in shallow mockery, that religion is 'not of sense, but of faith;' not of understanding, but of reason. He who finds himself without this latter, who, by all his studying, has failed to unfold it in himself, may have studied to great or small purpose, we say not which; but of the Christian religion, as of many other things, he has, and can have, no knowledge.

"We say, that cheerfully recognizing, gratefully appropriating, whatever Voltaire has proved, or any other man has proved, the Christian religion, once here, cannot again pass away; that in one or the other form it will endure through all time."—P. 163.

There are sentiments in this passage concerning the nature and evidences of Christianity, and the inspiration of the sacred writings, with which we cannot coincide; but we regard the epithet of Infidelity that has been applied to them as the cruellest slander. Let those who thus denounce Mr. Carlyle examine the sentiments of Coleridge, Arnold, Neander, and many of the purest and best spirits of our times, on this general subject; and if they cannot agree with him on these points, they will at least learn that the holding of such opinions is compatible with the noblest developements of the Christian life that our age has seen.

The most peculiar papers in the collection are the "Signs of the Times" and the "Characteristics." The first endeavours to explain the distinction between a mechanical and a dynamical age, and to prove that the former is the characteristic of the age in which we live. It alleges that "men are grown mechanical in head and heart as well as in hand; that they have lost faith in individual endeavour —and struggle after outward arrangements rather than internal perfection." There is a less manly and healthy tone of thought in this Essay than in most of the other papers. It is grounded, if not on a distinction without a difference, at least on a distinction that is very vague and elusive; and it evinces a morbidly querulous feeling concerning the present, in which we cannot fully sympathize. There is an important truth involved in this distinction; but we cannot regard it as either so important or so universally applicable as it is represented in the Essay. To object to our age as mechanical, and condemn it for lacking the properties of an age of more individual freshness and vigour, is to object to the sobered method of manhood, that it has not, at the same time, the wild and glorious energy of

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youth. An age of machinery as certainly appears in the history of a peaceful and prosperous people, as one stage of life succeeds another. It is the inevitable result of those necessities, natural and artificial, that grow up in an advanced civilization, and that require for their adequate supply those varied applications of skill and power which we denominate machinery. The literature of such an age must necessarily differ from that of an earlier period in natural life, by the same law that regulates the developement of intellect in the individual life. The primary formations of the national mind, from the date of their appearance, are those in which the fire element is predominant, in which the texture is more homogeneous. and in which the grand and terrible passions of our nature are fused and fixed in forms that are like the enduring granite. The transition and secondary formations are necessarily composed in part of the *detritus* of what has preceded them, and evince a more mingled and complicated state of civilization. But surely it cannot wisely be objected to the alabaster of an "Excursion," that it lacks the granitic density and mass of a fire-born Iliad. Nor are we sure that our author, or the most vehement assertor of the degeneracy of our age, would exchange it, with its printing-presses, its telegraphs, its engines and machinery, its science and greatness, for the scanty parchments, the pilgrim's staff, the fierce foray, the gloomy castle, and the squalid hovel of those more heroic ages. We therefore regret the tone of this Essay, as morbid and dyspeptic; and regard the truth on which it is based as too narrow and too weak to support such a superstructure.

The second paper, called "Characteristics," is one eminently characteristic of the author, though obnoxious to the same objections with the preceding. It was his last contribution to the Edinburgh, and led, we believe, to his withdrawal from its pages. Nor are we surprised at this result, for it is a portion of the strong meat of Carlylism. The general strain of the paper may be conveyed in an extract or two:—

"We might pursue this question into innumerable other ramifications; and everywhere, under new shapes, find the same truth which we here so imperfectly enunciate, disclosed: that throughout the whole world of man, in all manifestations and performances of his nature, the perfect, the great, is a mystery to itself, knows not itself; whatsoever does know itself, is already little, and more or less imperfect. Or otherwise, we may say, unconsciousness belongs to pure, unmixed life; consciousness to a diseased mixture and conflict of life and death: unconsciousness is the sign of creation; consciousness, at best, of manufacture.

"Truly may it be said, the Divinity has withdrawn from the earth, or veils himself in that wide-wasting whirlwind of a departing era, wherein the fewest can discern his goings. Not Godhead, but an iron, ignoble circle of necessity

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embraces all things; binds the youth of these times into a sluggish thrall, or else exasperates him into a rebel. Heroic action is paralyzed; there is nothing sacred under whose banner he can act; doubt storms in on him through every avenue; inquiries of the deepest, painfullest sort must be engaged with; and the invincible energy of young years waste itself in skeptical, suicidal cavillings; in passionate questionings of destiny, to which no answer will be returned.

"For the rest, let that vain struggle to read the mystery of the Infinite cease to harass us. It is a mystery which, through all ages, we shall only read here a line of, and there a line of. Do we not already know that the name of the Infinite is GOOD, is GOD? Here on earth we are as soldiers, fighting in a foreign land; that understand not the plan of the campaign, and have no need to understand it; seeing well what is at our hand to be done. Let us do it like soldiers, with submission, with courage, with an heroic joy."—Pp. 301, 305, 310.

We doubt whether this Essay would be written, in the same form, by our author, at the present stage in the history of his mind. We would fain hope that it is a part of that "Everlasting No" through which, we trust, he has passed once and forever. It is a night scene from the history of this strange and gifted intellect, in which we see the lurid glare, the fearful tossings, and the mighty commotions of the tempest; but, ere it vanishes, a bright gleam of the starry sky, the tranquil ocean, and the green earth stretching quietly beyond. Hence we esteem it at once true and false; subjectively true, but objectively false; true, as a part of the spiritual history of this man, and, as such, most touching and melancholy; terribly true in its delineations of his fights with the foul fiend, and the dark spectres of doubt and disbelief; but false, horribly false, as a delineation of God's world, where there are deathless souls, a blood-bought Church, a blessed Cross, and an Eternal Spirit, all conspiring to hallow and ennoble this earth, where there have been a Paradise and a Calvary; and where there shall yet be a new Jerusalem, descending, bride-like, from above; and a Great White Throne.

There are many other papers of no ordinary value in this collection. We have one on Werner, who appears successively through life as profligate, play-wright, and priest, with about equal success in each; one on Goethe, the many-souled, for whom the author has a passion verging on idolatry, and whose character and works are dwelt upon with loving reverence; one on the learned and laborious Heyne; one on the mystic and half-inspired Novalis; one on the lofty and high-hearted Schiller; one on Boswell's Johnson, in which the glorious old mammoth and his attendant monkey are depicted to the life; one on the clever, shameless, and truthless Diderot, in whom the baboon and the philosopher struggled for the mastery; one on the volcanic Mirabeau, with his mingled fire of

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heaven and hell, his spots of greenness and fruit, and his torrents of consuming lava; one of great beauty on Sir Walter Scott; and one on the Paraguayan Dictator, Francia, to whom Carlyle's sympathies were drawn out by the dash of heroism in his composition. Besides these, there are some strange fragments on history; lighter sketches of the great impostor Cagliostro, and the Diamond Necklace; and some critical dissertations on German literature.

Such is a brief summary of the contents of this volume of Miscellanies; a volume, which, if the Carlylese in which much of it is written is once mastered, will, in its deep earnestness of tone, its wonderful stores of modern literature, its quaint and scorching wit, and often its high and antique eloquence, amply repay the most careful perusal.

As we propose to follow not so much the chronological order of Carlyle's works, as the order we deem most advantageous to a proper comprehension of them, we turn to his "Past and Present," and "Chartism."

"Past and Present" is an effort to solve the difficult problem of England's future, by noting some differences and resemblances between her past and present. It consists of four books, severally denominated, the Proem, the Ancient Monk, the Modern Worker, and the Horoscope.

The first book, whose chapters are termed Midas, Sphinx, Manchester Insurrection, Morrison's Pill, Aristocracy of Talent, and Hero-Worship, is designed to set forth, in its quaint way, the question to be discussed. That question is the State of England, what is it, and how is it to be bettered? England is rich; but, like long-eared Midas, she begins to discover that something more is needed by her than gold. She begins to perceive that her destiny is a Sphinx-riddle which she must solve or perish. This riddle is propounded to her in the fearful tones of popular disquietude, coming to an occasional outburst of savage energy, like the Manchester Insurrection. In answer to the query, How is this frightful disease of society to be cured? the political quack brings forth some "remedial measure," some "Morrison's pill," with proofs, in staring capitals, that it is the panacea for all political maladies; but the disease lies too deep for mere palliative nostrums and remedial measures. Others allege that there must be an Aristocracy of Talent, a government of the wisest. This is true; but the question arises, Are these wisest in actual existence? Or, if they do exist, how shall they be recognized, in an age when men look so much more at the outward circumstances than at the inward worth? The true solution of this problem is, that men must begin to recognize

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some nobler element in their nature than that of selfishness; must begin to labour for higher ends than merely mercenary ones; in a word, must begin to reverence the Heroic in human character and conduct, and learn to practise a true and intelligent "hero-worship." This, however, implies a radical change in the very heart of society, and one that lies too deep to be accomplished by Acts of Parliament and leading articles by able editors. The nature of this change may be suggested by comparing the present state of England with her condition seven hundred years ago.

Such, in brief, is the train of thought which, amid endless digressions, involutions, metaphors, and epithets, of the strangest kind, runs in a broken thread through the first book of this work.

The second book is a rendering into Carlylese of the Chronicles of Jocelin, of Brakelond, a garrulous Boswellian monk of the twelfth century, who reported, in his crabbed monk Latin, the deeds of Samson, abbot of the monastery of St. Edmund; and had the good fortune to remain in decipherable manuscript until he was sent forth in a new dress by the Camden Society, and embalmed in the quaint conglomerate of "Past and Present."

We have, in the first three chapters, a characteristic account of the rise of St. Edmund's Monastery, in which the author, as a matter of course, detects his favourite principles of work-worship on the one hand, and hero-worship on the other; producing, at length, a nucleus of reverential regards to the "landlord Edmund," that gradually grew to the monastery of St. Edmundsbury. We have then detailed to us the internal condition of the monastery under the rule of Abbot Hugo, a weak, half-blind old man, who, under the influence of designing parasites, plunged the affairs of the establishment into the direst confusion. When the confusion has become well-nigh intolerable, Abbot Hugo dies, in consequence of injuries received during a journey to propitiate the favour of St. Thomas a Becket. The poor old man obtains deliverance from his abbatic troubles, but in an unexpected and somewhat undesirable way.

We are then introduced to the real hero of the book, Monk Samson; a grave, taciturn, strong-hearted child of poverty; who, from the lowly position of a mendicant, is elevated to that of Lord Abbot of St. Edmundsbury. He sets himself manfully to work, and, after encountering innumerable troubles, in deranged and exhausted finances, clamorous creditors, mutinous monks, turbulent nobles, and even Cœur-de-Lion himself, by his strong, earnest nature, comes forth victorious from them all, restores the affairs of the monastery to order, and does a great work in his generation. At this point in his career, the gossipping annals of Jocelin suddenly

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stop, and the brave Abbot vanishes from our sight, leaving us ignorant of his ultimate fate.

The object of this narration may be gathered from the following passages of one of the concluding chapters:—

"It was not a Dilettanteism this of Abbot Samson. It was a reality; and it is one. The garment only of it is dead: the essence of it lives through all time and all eternity!

"And truly, as we said above, is not this comparative silence of Abbot Samson as to his religion, precisely the healthiest sign of him and of it? 'The unconscious is the alone complete.' Abbot Samson, all along a busy working-man, as all men are bound to be, his religion, his worship, was like his daily bread to him; which he did not take the trouble to talk much about; which he merely ate at stated intervals, and lived and did his work upon. This is Abbot Samson's Catholicism of the twelfth century; something like the *ism* of all true men in all true centuries, I fancy. Alas, compared with any of the *isms* current in these poor days, what a thing!

"But of our Dilettanteisms and galvanized Dilettanteisms; of Puseyism—O Heavens, what shall we say of Puseyism in comparison to twelfth-century Catholicism? Little or nothing; for, indeed, it is a matter to strike one dumb.

> 'The Builder of this Universe was wise,
> He plann'd all souls, all systems, planets, particles:
> The plan He shaped his worlds and Æons by
> Was—Heavens! was thy small Nine-and-thirty Articles?'

That certain human souls, living on this practical earth, should think to save themselves and a ruined world by noisy theoretic demonstrations and laudations of *the* Church, instead of some unnoisy, unconscious, but *practical*, total, heart-and-soul demonstration of *a* Church; this, in the circle of revolving ages, this also was a thing we were to see. A kind of penultimate thing, precursor of very strange consummations; last thing but one. If there is no atmosphere, what will it serve a man to demonstrate the excellence of lungs? How much profitabler when you can, like Abbot Samson, breathe; and go along your way!"—Pp. 115, 116.

From this extract it will be perceived that the author finds in the ancient monk an exemplification of his favourite doctrines,—that hero-worship, the reverence with which a truly great man is regarded and obeyed, is the grand conservative principle in human affairs; and that the hero is the unconscious worker, the man who does his allotted task with quiet energy, and leaves the issue with higher powers. The implication is, (for the author does not deal much in explicit statements,) that England needs, in the present, men of like faith, like energy, and like heroism, with this brave old Abbot of the past. The Carlylism that is interwoven with this picture of the twelfth century, we forbear to notice until we come to discuss it as a whole.

The third book is termed the Modern Worker. The first chapter, headed "Phenomena," is a lamentation over the sham and trickery which invest everything in modern times, from the enormous sham

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hat, sent trundling through the streets of London as an advertisement, to the tin-cased champion of the Coronation, and the stuffed figure of the Pope, set up to relieve his gouty holiness from the labour of kneeling so long to bless the people on *Corpus-Christi* day. The author then denounces what he terms the "Gospel of Mammonism," or the insane greed of money making; and the "Gospel of Dilettanteism," or the pretensions of an idle aristocracy; and, under the heading of "Happy," condemns that incessant inquiry after mere happiness, that marks every class in society. He then dwells with great satisfaction on the character of "the English" people, as a silent, grave, working race, rather than an adroit, talking one; and a race whose past history shows that it is not well to drive them to determined action by an obstinate retention of abuses. The subversion of the earnest spirit of Puritanism, and the reign of insincerity, in both government and literature, for the last "Two Centuries," are then deprecated. The result of this misgovernment has been, "Over Production," and consequent distress. He then again warns an "Unworking Aristocracy" of the evils their pampered idleness is forcing on; and endeavours to convince a "Working Aristocracy," that, in seeking for a repeal of the Corn-Laws and for Free Trade, as the grand remedies of existing evils, they are mistaken. These measures are only palliatives, which, after they cease to act, will allow the evils to return with increased violence. In the six concluding chapters, denominated, severally, "Plugson of Undershot," "Labour," "Reward," "Democracy," "Sir Jabesh Windbag," and "Morrison again," the author repeats similar doctrines in the quaint, abrupt, and seemingly disconnected manner that is indicated by these odd titles.

The fourth book is termed Horoscope. The author first asserts, with new illustrations, his favourite idea of a real "Aristocracy," a born governing class, which shall not be marked by the horrible venalities developed by the investigations of the "Bribery Committee." He then refers to the "One Institution," that of war, that has descended unchanged in its essential features from the remotest past; and from the analogies it affords, suggests some improvements for the future. He hints at the possibilities of introducing the same thorough organization and rigid superintendence in the tasks, wages, dwellings, and sanitary condition of the labouring class, that now exist in regard to the military; and proposes an enlarged system of education and emigration, which shall be at once stringently binding, and yet to a great degree gratuitous. He then addresses the "Captains of Industry," "the Landed" and "the Gifted," urging them to gird themselves for the work that is assigned them; and

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proposes a greater "Permanence" in the relations between employer and employed, as a remedy for some of the existing evils.

These things are not formally or explicitly stated; but are hinted, suggested, and half concealed under wild dreamings, snatches of the most matchless beauty, endless repetitions of the Carlylean philosophy, bitter scorn, gentle pity, deep-shaking laughter; and every combination of notes from that weird gamut which this strange spirit knows so well how to use.

The small treatise on Chartism, which was published about a year before Past and Present, is a discussion of the same general subject, and contains the germs of the larger work. The titles of the chapters suggest the character of the work, and its general resemblance to the fuller treatise. They are, Condition-of-England Question; Statistics; New Poor-Law; Finest Peasantry in the World; Rights and Mights; Laissez-Faire; Not Laissez-Faire; New Eras; Parliamentary Radicalism; and Impossible.

The most striking portion of the work is a condensed sketch, in the author's peculiar style, of the history of England, from which we make an extract:—

> "To this English people in World-History, there have been, shall I prophesy, two grand tasks assigned! Huge looming through the dim tumult of the always incommensurable present time, outlines of two tasks disclose themselves; the grand industrial task of conquering some half or more of this terraqueous planet for the use of man; then, secondly, the grand constitutional task of sharing, in some pacific, endurable manner, the fruit of said conquest, and showing all people how it might be done.
>
> "Hail to thee, poor little ship Mayflower, of Delft-Haven; poor common-looking ship, hired by common charter-party for coined dollars; caulked with mere oakum and tar; provisioned with vulgarest biscuit and bacon;—yet what ship Argo, or miraculous epic ship built by the sea-gods, was other than a foolish bumbarge in comparison! Golden fleeces, or the like these sailed for, with or without effect; thou, little Mayflower, hadst in thee a veritable Promethean spark; the life-spark of the largest nation on our earth;—so we may already name the trans-Atlantic Saxon nation. They went seeking leave to hear a sermon in their own method, these Mayflower Puritans; a most honest, indispensable search; and yet, like Saul, the son of Kish, seeking a small thing, they found this unexpected great thing!"—Pp. 359, 362.

We pass by for the present the peculiarities in these works, that will fall more naturally under a general view of Carlylism, and content ourselves with a brief criticism.

As pictures of the evil they are designed to portray, they are unparalleled. There are passages of surpassing power and beauty, in both the works, which cannot be read unmoved. They flash upon the question under discussion the most fearful gleams of light, that seem to lay bare the whole region of doubt with blazing distinctness, projecting it against the distant sky in tracery of fire. There are

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pictures of mocking but terrible power, that might have been sketched by the pen of a Mephistophiles; and that one can scarce read without a shudder. But as practical treatises they are comparatively useless. They point out the evils with sufficient clearness, but fail to indicate either the causes or cure of them with any satisfaction. The very play of genius that lightens and flashes through the whole work, tends rather to dazzle than to aid our vision. Instead of a clear path before us, illumined by the light of day, we are perplexed by alternate sheets of fiery brightness and rayless gloom; strange and phantom faces gleam out upon us from the sudden glare, and vanish from our sight with the shrill and mocking laughter of fiends. We are bewildered by the alternate excess of light and darkness.

The remedies proposed, or rather circuitously suggested, are but palliatives, and partake too much of what the author himself terms the Morrison-pill character. Emigration and education, the only specific items proposed, may be important, but they do not reach the heart of the evil. By his own repeated testimony, England must have a religion; but a religion is not to be obtained by emigration or education. In her present condition she may work, and thus fulfil the gospel of Carlylism; but her work may be that of a blind giant, the dread work of ruin. She needs an entire regeneration of society at its heart, and experience proves that this regeneration can only take place from the gospel of Jesus Christ, and from that very form of it which the author slightingly represents as "looking into its own navel;" and not by the gospels of Jean Jacques, Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, or Thomas Carlyle.

One grand objection to these books is, that they contain either too much or too little religion. Had they been mere political disquisitions on economics, we should neither have looked for any reference to religion, nor condemned its absence. But when the author refers so frequently and earnestly to the most grand and peculiar doctrines of revealed religion, when he insists so strongly upon their vital relation to the question in discussion, we have a right to expect a fuller recognition of the forms in which God has embodied these truths, and from which the knowledge of them was first obtained by our author himself. If the heart of the English people must be informed by these truths, we have a right to demand of the author, why he has so casually and slightingly referred to those vast and powerful agencies instituted by God, and the only efficacious instruments for this end that have ever been used? If the Unseen and the Eternal must be brought in contact with the living heart of society, we ask how is this to be done? Instead of referring us to the living Word, the labouring Church, and the magnificent machinery of the gospel,

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we are told that the remedies lie in education, emigration, and work. We do not charge it upon our author that he is an unbeliever; but we do charge it upon his works, that, omitting all reference to the divinely appointed agencies for the regeneration of society, and suggesting none others in their stead, they are not only grossly defective in practical value, but likely in some minds to produce all the effect of the writings of one who despised and hated the whole system of revealed religion.

The principal value of these works lies in their suggestive character. They have acted, and will act, on minds that are more practical and more capable of going into detail than the mind that issued them, and thus must exert a wide and powerful influence. And the very defects to which we have referred, will bring them into welcome contact with many minds that would turn away from them with contempt, were their recognition of revealed religion more distinct and positive. While, then, we regret this omission, we hope that it may be overruled for good in the end, by introducing the great truths of religion to minds that would receive them in no other form. We believe, that notwithstanding these defects, the effect of their perusal on the active and devoted Christian will only be to make him more active and more devoted. While, if in any case they have a tendency to confirm the rationalist and the unbeliever in their attitude of hostility to the Church, it will be the result rather of their previous opinions, than of any doctrines clearly taught in the volumes themselves.

The only remaining work of our author to which we can at present allude, is his last: "The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, with Elucidations." On this production our strictures must be briefer than we could desire.

The work consists of an Introduction, comprised in five chapters, and the Letters and Speeches of Cromwell, in ten books. The introductory chapters are termed: Anti-Dryasdust; Of the Biographies of Oliver; Of the Cromwell Kindred; Events in Oliver's Biography; and, Of Oliver's Letters and Speeches. They give a sketch of Cromwell's history up to the point when it begins to appear in his letters and speeches, and have all the quaintness, sarcastic wit, and graphic power that mark the other writings of the author. The spirit and scope of the whole may be gathered from a few sentences from the chapter Anti-Dryasdust:—

"But the thing we had to say and repeat was this: that Puritanism is not of the nineteenth century, but of the seventeenth; that the grand unintelligibility for us lies *there*. The Fast-day Sermons of St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, in spite of printers, are all grown dumb! In long rows of little dumpy quartos, gathered from the bookstalls, they indeed stand here bodily before us;

by human volition they can be read, but not by any human memory remembered. We forget them as soon as read; they have become a weariness to the soul of man. They are dead and gone, they and what they shadowed; the human soul, got into other latitudes, cannot now give harbour to them. Alas! and did not the honourable Houses of Parliament listen to them with rapt earnestness, as to an indisputable message from heaven itself? Learned and painful Dr. Owen; Dr. Burgess, Stephen Marshall, Mr. Spurstow, Adoniram Byfield, Hugh Peters, Philip Nye;—the printer has done for them what he could, and Mr. Speaker gave them the thanks of the house; and no most astonishing Review article of our day can have half such "brilliancy," such potency, half such virtue for producing belief, as these poor little dumpy quartos once had. And behold, they are become inarticulate men—spectral—and, instead of speaking, do screech and gibber."—P. 9.

"And then further, it becomes apparent, altogether contrary to the popular fancy, that this Oliver was not a man of falsehoods, but a man of truths; whose words do carry a meaning with them, and, above all others of that time, are worth considering. His words—and still more his *silences* and unconscious instincts, when you have spelt and lovingly deciphered these also out of his words,—will in several ways reward the study of an earnest man."—P. 13.

These sentences contain the ruling ideas of the book. The Letters and Speeches have been corrected in their spelling, punctuation, and sometimes language, by the editor, and we can fully believe him when he says, that this was "a job of buck-washing" he does not long to repeat. They are connected, and, as he terms it, elucidated, by annotations, narratives, soliloquies, and dramatic scenes with wooden-headed Dryasdusts, and other hapless unfortunates, who appear ever and anon, Caliban-like, to receive a shower of blows from this Prospero, and be driven back to the lair of their leaden stupidity. There are pictures scattered through the work that seem like etchings done by a flash of lightning—they stand out with such vivid intensity from the page. Take the following portrait of Cromwell:—

"Does the reader see him? a rather likely figure, I think; stands some five feet ten or more; a man of strong, solid stature, and dignified, now partly military carriage; the expression of him, valour and devout intelligence.—Energy and delicacy on a basis of simplicity. Fifty-four years old, gone April last; brown hair and moustache are getting gray. A figure of sufficient impressiveness; not lovely to the man-milliner species, nor pretending to be so. Massive stature, big massive head, of somewhat leonine aspect; wart above the right eye-brow; nose of considerable blunt-aquiline proportions; strict yet copious lips, full of all tremulous sensibilities, and also, if need were, of all fiercenesses and rigours; deep loving eyes, call them grave, call them stern, looking from under those craggy brows, as if in life-long sorrow, and yet not thinking it sorrow, thinking it only labour and endeavour; on the whole, a right noble lion-face, and hero-face, and to me royal enough."—Vol. ii, p. 64.

The first thing that arrests our attention is the plan of the work. "It is from his own words," the author remarks, "from his own letters and speeches well read, that the world may first obtain some dim glimpse of the actual Cromwell, and see him darkly face to face."

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But is this true? Let any man refer to his own personal history, and ask himself whether a fair, full, and impartial statement of it can be gathered from his letters? Or compare the authentic biography of any distinguished man with his genuine letters and speeches, and how much do we find of the one, not comprised in the other? This is true even of those men who have most fully recorded their lives in their epistolary communications, and whose times have afforded them the amplest leisure to make this record: how much more is it true of such men as Cromwell, who wielded the sword and sceptre so much more easily than the pen; and whose time was engrossed with acts rather than with words.

The letters and speeches of a man in power are usually apologies for his acts, rather than impartial narrations of them; and from the necessity of the case they must be so, for the laws of human nature prevent a man from being an impartial biographer of himself. It would, therefore, seem impossible to give a full and truthful biography of any man, but especially of such a man as Cromwell, from his letters and speeches. The inevitable form of such a work must be eulogistic.

Such, accordingly, do we regard this sketch of the *man* of the seventeenth century. It is a most valuable work, full of important materials, important thoughts, and magnificent historic pictures; but still, at best, but a splendid apology for "the great rebel." We look in vain for that masterly analysis of character, that delicate discrimination of motive, that firm balancing of right and wrong, and that clear-sighted tracing of the original nature of the man, and the mode in which outward circumstances acted, and were acted upon, by that nature, which are manifested in the sketches of Diderot, Voltaire, and Burns.

We are not deficient in admiration of the brave old Puritan, perhaps even prone to a contrary extreme, but we cannot regard him as the faultless hero he seems to be from this representation. He was great, brave, strong-hearted, and, in the main, sincere; but he was a man of iron and clay, and hence much of his work did not endure. He was, beyond contradiction, the mightiest man that ever sat upon the English throne, and his lot was cast in evil days; but if Puritanism was what our author represents it, and we believe rightly represents it, to have been; and if Cromwell had been as free from selfishness, ambition, and despotism, as we are led from this work to suppose; we cannot think it possible that the purest and best men of that age would have been estranged from him as they were; and so much of the huge fabric of his power have perished with himself.

To us Cromwell stands midway between Bonaparte and Washington, blending as much of the good and evil of both as could unite in

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a single nature. Our great objection, therefore, to this work, is its want of discriminating fidelity in depicting the character of the hero,—a want whose error stretches in one direction almost as far as the polished slanders of Hume and Clarendon in the other.

It is with a painful sense of historic injustice that we read this indiscriminate defence of all Cromwell's conduct and opinions. We do not remember a breath of disapprobation expressed for a single act that he ever did, or word that he ever uttered. Even the bloody campaign in Ireland, where men were slaughtered by thousands, and even women and children, in one instance, and where every humane man must declare that there was needless rigour, and desire to close the page of Oliver's history that records it, even this dreadful campaign finds an apologist in Mr. Carlyle, who denounces the condemnation of the massacres of Drogheda and Wexford, as "rose-water surgery." The defence of such atrocities better beseems the plea of the advocate than the decision of the judge.

We fear, therefore, that the effect of the work may be, to some extent, to confound historic truth and moral distinctions, and to lead to a feeling which no one has more sternly denounced than our author,—that success is the criterion of right, and that the end will justify the means, provided these means are of a bold and energetic character.

But the fact most surprising to most readers, is the appearance of the man who has been suspected of Infidelity, and even Pantheism, as the apologist, admirer, and even avowed believer in the most strait-laced Puritanism. It is with some surprise that men hear him talking of Cromwell's "conversion," his "deliverance from the jaws of eternal death," as the "grand epoch for a man; properly, the one epoch; the turning-point which guides upward, or guides downward, him and his activity forevermore;"—of the "Life Everlasting, and Death Everlasting;" of his "choosing the better part," and longing "toward the mark of the prize of the high calling;" and declaring, in view of some of the deepest spiritual exercises of Cromwell's soul,—"Brother, hadst thou never, in any form, such moments in thy history? Thou knowest them not, even by credible rumour? Well, thy earthly path was peaceabler, I suppose. But the Highest was never in thee, the Highest will never come out of thee. Thou shalt at best abide by the stuff; as cherished house-dog, guard the stuff,—perhaps with enormous gold-collars and provender: but the battle, and the hero-death, and victory's fire-chariot, carrying men to the Immortals, shall never be thine. I pity thee; brag not, or I shall have to despise thee." These, and other statements equally strong,

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will sound strangely to those who have only known the author of Sartor Resartus, and Past and Present.

We would fain hope that much of the spirit that breathes through this work arises from the fact, that its author is drifting back nearer to his old ancestral faith, and beginning to hear, amid the jargon of Neology, the sweet voices of early years. But it will be remembered that a prime article in his creed is an intense faith in all heroisms. Regarding Puritanism as such, he believes in it, and sympathizes with it as a great truth, but not by any means the whole truth. But still his hearty approval of it is made in terms that stand in welcome contrast to his sneering reference to evangelical religion in our days, as "looking at its own navel."

The feature about the work which we regard with the most unfeigned gratitude and satisfaction, is the triumphant vindication it affords of the heroic character of all true religion; and the withering scorn it pours upon those who are disposed to sneer at it as enthusiasm and hypocrisy. There are passages of burning invective upon the mocking scoffers, who have been accustomed to make themselves merry with all serious religion, that are scarcely excelled in our language. For this vindication, and for the powerful defence he has made of the religion of the seventeenth century, and its prominent professors, the Christian world owes Carlyle a debt of the profoundest gratitude. The influence of this work will be to show to many, that there is far more to respect, admire, and even love, in earnest religion, than they have ever been accustomed to suppose.

With these brief strictures we are compelled to dismiss this work, and to postpone to a future number our remarks on the three most peculiar of our author's works; and on his system, style, and general influence in the great world of letters. We shall then direct the attention of our readers more especially to the beautiful edition of Carlyle's works, now in course of publication by Harper and Brothers, which have been received too late for more than a passing notice in this number.

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THE

METHODIST QUARTERLY REVIEW.

APRIL, 1849.

Art. I.—PLAN AND STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

[Modified from the German of Vaihinger, in the "*Theologische Studien and Kritiken*" for July, 1848.]

Though there have been many expositions of Ecclesiastes, no commentator has yet offered a clear and distinct *plan* of the book.* In attempting, therefore, to study its intimate structure, I have had almost to begin the work *de novo;* although I have made use of the contributions of others as far as possible, especially of Stier, Köster, Ewald, and Umbreit.

My investigations have resulted in the conviction, that this remarkable work possesses a regular rhythmus and structure of strophes, both poetical and rhetorical, the two mutually interpenetrating each other. Indeed, the more I have contemplated the book in these aspects, the more strikingly has its elaborately artistical structure revealed itself.

Looking upon the *praise of enjoyment in life* as a mark of division in the subject, we readily obtain four distinct poetical discourses in the book. But my confidence in this division was shaken by the fact, that what appears to be the main topic of each of the three last discourses, has already been touched upon in the preceding one,—so that the divisions appear to run into each other, and so are incomplete and unsatisfactory. On closer study, however, I discovered that the Preacher *intentionally* takes this course; that is, he throws out incidentally, as it were, in *each* discourse, a thought which he

* M. Desvœux, in his "Philosophical and Critical Essay on Ecclesiastes," (Lond., 1762, 4to.,) gives an analysis of the book, which may be found in Clarke's Commentary, (Introd. to Ecclesiastes.) A different plan was presented by Holden, in his "Attempt to Illustrate the Book of Ecclesiastes." See Horne's Introduction, ii, 248.

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Art. III.—THOMAS CARLYLE.

1. *Past and Present, Chartism and Sartor Resartus.* By Thomas Carlyle. New edition, complete in one volume,—2 vols. in 1, pp. 386, 233. New-York: Harper & Brothers. 1848.
2. *The French Revolution; a History.* By Thomas Carlyle. 2 vols., pp. 470, 477. New-York: Harper & Brothers. 1848.
3. *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches; including the Supplement to the First Edition, with Elucidations.* By Thomas Carlyle. 2 vols., pp. 560, 613. New-York: Harper & Brothers. 1848.
4. *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History. Six Lectures, reported with Emendations and Additions.* By Thomas Carlyle. Pp. 299. New-York: D. Appleton & Co. 1842.

Before resuming our observations on the remaining works of Mr. Carlyle, we desire to say a word concerning the new edition of his historical works, recently issued from the prolific press of the Harpers. The main advantages of this edition are—the latest personal revision of the author, and an Appendix to the Letters and Speeches of Cromwell, containing some additional letters alleged to have been discovered since the publication of the first compilation. We shall not enter into the controversy that has arisen concerning the genuineness of these letters, as it is aside from our present purpose, and, however it may be decided, will not affect the judgment we have rendered, either on the stern old Protector or his admiring editor. This new edition is enriched with fine portraits of Cromwell and Carlyle, each presenting a face that is worthy of some study. The edition merits, as it must receive, an extensive circulation.

We now turn to the *Pons Asinorum* of our author's works, "Sartor Resartus; or, the Life and Opinions of Herr Teufelsdröckh." To the great majority of readers this book will present itself, at first, as a farrago of the wildest nonsense; without connexion, coherence, or purpose,—a very chaos of incomprehensible ravings. Others will be reminded of The Doctor, Tristram Shandy, Gulliver, Pantagruel, and similar eccentricities in literature, that in a strange and fantastic garb envelope some meaning, the discovery of which is worth the labour of unfolding. But to the reader of the delicate and sugared monthly, the devourer of "the last" new novel; to the hard, shrewd man of business, whose faith is in his ledger, and whose philosophy is in his commercial list; and to the religionist, who has passively received the traditionary teachings of the past without challenge or query, and never dreamed of misgiving or doubt regarding them,—to all such, the book can have little meaning or

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value. It describes a process through which they have never passed, and with whose throes of anguish they can have no sympathy. A man must have trodden the same dark path with the author,—must have encountered the same shapes of mockery and terror, and hung above the same yawning abysses of despair,—before he can understand this book. But if he has ever felt the foundations of his early belief begin to crumble beneath his feet; if he has ever been environed by a legion of grinning and mocking fiends, each plucking from him a portion of the faith he has prized as his life, and yet jeering him with its loss; if he has ever seen the blank abyss of skepticism yawn horribly before him, without a ray to illumine its depths; if the whole energy of his nature has been concentrated into one passionate cry for light! and he has been ready to sit down and weep in utter desolation, because the heavens above were as brass, and the earth beneath him as iron, with no breath of Heaven to cool his fevered spirit; then, indeed, will he find a terrible significance in this book, such as is found in few works in our language, except some parts of Bunyan, and perhaps portions of that strange but powerful poem, Festus. Sartor Resartus is a spiritual auto-biography. Its quaint designation, "the Tailor Retailored," is drawn from the general scope of the volume, which is, to show the difference between form and substance,—the clothing of truth and truth itself; to illustrate the effect that outward forms have upon the mass of mankind, and the struggle of the spirit that attempts to pierce their surface; and, in the great topics of thought, to discriminate the absolute and changeless from the relative and contingent, and recognize the eternal truth and infinite agency that underlie all phenomena. All knowledge being confined to phenomena, the philosophy and religion of each age are simply the garments in which the absolute and eternal truth presents itself to the mind of that age; while those who construct and promulgate opinions on these subjects, are the *Sartores*,—the manufacturers of these phenomenal conceptions. The forms of thought and action in each generation are the clothes of that generation; while each individual of it is weaving for himself a garment of mingled hue in this life, and a robe of eternal glory or a shroud of eternal gloom in the life to come.

The book is evidently designed to give a sketch of the author's history, with some of his peculiar views on the great problems of philosophy and religion. The form and style of the auto-biography were perhaps suggested by some of the wild and wonderful creations of Richter—of whom there seems to be, all through the work, a conscious or unconscious imitation. The writer appears first as the editor of extracts from a volume on the Origin and Influence of Clothes, by *Herr*

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Diogenes Von Teufelsdröckh, Professor of Allerlei-Wissenschaft (all sorts of things) *in the University of Weissnichtwo*, (nobody knows where;) published by *Stillschweigen and Co.*, (Silence and Co.,) and sent to him by his German friends, to be rendered into English. After sundry personal reminiscences of this pseudo Professor, the editor receives six paper bags of biographical and other documents illustrative of the life and opinions of the mysterious Teufelsdröckh; each bag marked with one of the six southern signs of the Zodiac, and despatched to the editor by the Boswellian friend of the illustrious Professor, the *Hofrath Heuschrecke*, (the Counsellor Grasshopper.) From these materials he undertakes to present his life and opinions, in three books. This mystic Professor personates our author; and in the school and university life, the wanderings, the communings with "the great dumb mountains;" in the doubts, misgivings, and final repose of his mind on certain great truths; and in the quaint, angular glances that he gives at human life, we have a sketch of the spiritual history of Thomas Carlyle. When it is recollected that this is not a mere fantastic fiction,—the work of a sneering Swift, or a filthy Rabelais,—but the actual history of a soul grappling earnestly with the great problems of its being, and seeking to wring from them a solution, in the agony of despairing doubt, the book becomes a record of most touching and melancholy interest,—a Pilgrim's Progress, in a century of doubt, denial, and indifference.

The essence of the first book may be gathered from a paragraph in the chapter, "Prospective:"—

"All visible things are emblems: what thou seest is not there on its own account,—strictly taken, is not there at all. Matter exists only spiritually, and to represent some idea and *body* it forth. Hence Clothes, as despicable as we think them, are so unspeakably significant. Clothes, from the King's mantle downward, are emblematic, not of want only, but of a manifold cunning Victory over Want. On the other hand, all emblematic things are properly Clothes, thought-woven and hand-woven. Men are properly said to be clothed with Authority, clothed with Beauty, with Curses, and the like. Nay, if you consider it, what is Man himself, and his whole terrestrial Life, but an emblem; a Clothing or visible Garment for that divine ME of his, cast hither like a light particle down from Heaven? Thus he is said also to be clothed with a Body. Why multiply instances? It is written, The Heavens and the Earth shall fade away like a Vesture; which indeed they are,—the Time-vesture of the Eternal. Whatsoever sensibly exists, whatsoever represents Spirit to Spirit, is properly a Clothing, a suit of Raiment, put on for a season, and to be laid off. Thus,—the essence of all Science lies in the PHILOSOPHY OF CLOTHES."

These quotations will be perfectly intelligible to all who are acquainted with the questions discussed by the various schools of philosophy in the present day.

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In the first two chapters of the second book, ("Genesis" and "Idyllic,") we have a sketch of the author's childhood and youth, in which we see, as in the dissolving views of a magic lantern, some of the thoughts and fancies that mark that interesting period of human life. In the chapter, "Pedagogy," we have a most savage assault on the mode of education in use thirty years ago in the high schools and universities of Scotland;—which, however, may rather prove its want of adaptation to such a peculiar mind, than any radical defect in the system itself. In the chapter, "Getting under Way," we have allusions to the struggles which he had with poverty after the death of his father; the abandonment, for very obvious reasons, of the profession to which he had been destined; his efforts to obtain bread and books by translations, &c.; and some obscure allusions to equivocal friends and aristocratic patrons, which are tinctured with a spice of bitterness. It would seem from the Latin epitaph, which we dare not translate, that his blunt honesty was in the way of his rapid advancement. The chapter, "Romance," describes that Petrarchan season of life, more interesting usually to a man's self than to others, but which is not unfrequently decisive in its influence on his future destiny. The chapter termed "The Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh," indicate a change in his spiritual history. Poverty, disappointment in friendship and love, toil and injustice, produced their natural effect on such a nature, in awaking a morbid and gloomy spirit of speculation on the moral government of the world. This, combined perhaps with a growing familiarity with the daring and intoxicating skepticism of France and Germany, developed symptoms of a spiritual *delirium tremens*. The crisis of this diseased state of the soul is described in the chapter called "The Everlasting No." This state of mind may be gathered from a single paragraph:—

"To me the Universe was all void of Life, of Purpose, of Volition, even of Hostility: it was one huge, dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb. O the vast, gloomy, solitary Golgotha, and Mill of Death! Why was the Living banished thither companionless, conscious? Why, if there is no Devil;—nay, unless the Devil is your God?"

The first transition from this state is thus described:—

"All at once there rose a Thought within me, and I asked myself, 'What *art* thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet, too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will, or can do against thee? Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatso it be? and, as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it.' And, as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul;

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and I shook base Fear away from me forever. The Everlasting No had said, 'Behold thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine, (the Devil's;') to which my whole Me now made answer: '*I* am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee.' It is from this hour that I date my Spiritual New-birth, or Baphometic,* Fire-baptism: perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a man."

Having thus left the negative pole of dark, despairing unbelief, he passes through the intervening stage between that and the positive pole of clear and quiet belief in something certain and true. This is described in the chapter called "Centre of Indifference,"—which betokens a state of mind compounded of sullen defiance and submissive resignation; the angry and weeping spirit sobbing itself into repose. It proved to be the transition state to a higher and clearer position described in "The Everlasting Yea."

"Man's unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his greatness; it is because there is an infinite in him, which, with all his cunning, he cannot quite bury under the finite. Always there is a black spot in our sunshine: it is even *the shadow of ourselves*. But the whim of happiness we have is somewhat thus. By certain valuations of our own striking, we come upon some sort of average terrestrial lot; this, we fancy, belongs to us by nature—any *overplus* we account happiness, any *deficit*, misery. Now consider that we have the valuation of our deserts ourselves; do you wonder that the balance should so often dip the wrong way? I tell thee, blockhead, it all comes of thy vanity; of what thou *fanciest* those same deserts of thine to be. Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged, (as is most likely,) thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot. So true is it what I then said, that *the fraction of life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your numerator, as by lessening your denominator*. Nay, unless my algebra deceive me, *unity* itself, divided by *zero*, will give *infinity*. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then; thou hast the world under thy feet."

"I see a glimpse of it! there is in man a HIGHER than love of happiness; he can do without happiness, and instead thereof find blessedness. Love not pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved. Small is it that thou canst trample the earth under thy feet, as old Greek Zeno trained thee: thou canst love the earth while it injures thee, and even because it injures thee: for this a greater than Zeno was needed, and he too was sent. Knowest thou that '*Worship of Sorrow?*'"

The attentive reader will gather the nature of this process from these condensed extracts, which the author terms his "Conversion:"—

"The old world knew nothing of conversion: instead of an *Ecce Homo*, they had only some *Choice of Hercules*. What to Plato was but a hallucination, and to Socrates a chimera, is now clear and certain to your Zinzendorfs, your Wesleys, and the poorest of the Pietists and Methodists."

That there was a conversion here is very certain; but whether it was the precise change which the Zinzendorfs and Wesleys have

* Alluding to the initiatory mysteries of the Knight Templars, termed Baphomet, baptism of metis, or baptism of fire.

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called by that name, is somewhat doubtful. It is very certain that, had they described the unfolding of the Everlasting Yea to their souls, we should have seen the scroll of its record all blazing with a name which was to them the Alpha and the Omega, the all and in all; and the absence of which, in this delineation, we sorrowfully note. But our object is not so much to discuss as to describe the work.

The third book contains, under the guise of Professor Teufelsdröckh's opinions, some of the same views of politics, philosophy, and religion, which we find more largely developed in the author's subsequent works. We can but rapidly glance at the successive chapters.

"The incident in modern history," which is regarded as so important, is that of George Fox making for himself a full suit of leather, the meaning of which is somewhat doubtful, unless it refers to the sturdy independence with which Fox broke through all received opinions and practices, and followed the dictates of his own eccentric nature. The chapters on "Church Clothes" and "Symbols" express his conviction, that the vitality of both speculative and practical religion has died out of existing forms, organizations, and creeds, leaving them but "hollow shapes, or masks, under which no living figure or spirit any longer dwells." The chapter on "Helotage" touches the same questions on Economics, and expresses the same general views which we find in "Past and Present" and "Chartism." "The Phœnix," "Old Clothes," and "Organic Filaments," convey the sentiment that English society, both political and religious, is slowly undergoing a Phœnix fate—burning its old body to obtain a new; dropping its "old clothes" piece by piece; but, as the outward envelop is cast off, showing the growth of "organic filaments" underneath, which are preparing the new vesture in which it is to appear when the old shall have sloughed off entirely. The chapter on "Natural Supernaturalism" contains his opinion on the subject of miracles. What these are may be gathered from a sentence or two:—

"But is not a real miracle simply a violation of the laws of nature? I answer, what are the laws of nature? To me, perhaps, the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper law, now first penetrated into, and by spiritual force, even as all the rest have been, brought to bear on us with its material force." "Admit space and time to their due rank as forms of thought, and consider how they hide from us the brightest God-effulgences! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand and clutch the sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand, and therewith clutch many a thing. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the miracle lies in miles of distance, or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true, inexplicable, God-revealing

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miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all? On what ground shall one who can make iron swim, come and declare that therefore he can teach religion?"

The doctrine of this chapter is not materially different from that of the celebrated Charles Bonnet, in his Palingenesis, except so far as it is modified by the idealistic philosophy. Bonnet's theory was, that miracles were not violations of the laws of nature, but a peculiar exercise of those laws, in consequence of a physical predetermination, a sort of pre-established harmony, introduced into those laws, when they were originally imposed by God on the material world. Carlyle differs from the Genevan philosopher, however, in carrying the theory to its legitimate result; that miracles cannot attest a revelation. We presume the modification will meet with as little favour among scholars as the original theory itself.

The chapter on the "Dandiacal Body," or that portion of society that lives to dress and eat, contains much bitter and sarcastic truth, and shows that there are more dandies in the world than our philosophy has dreamed of; whilst the chapter on "Tailors" shows a similar extension of this ancient and much-belied guild.

"The French Revolution, a history," is certainly misnamed. It may be an epic, it may be a tragedy, but a history, in the ordinary sense of the word, it is not. The man who sits down to the perusal of this work, without any previous acquaintance with the French revolution, will rise from it feeling that the history acted, and the history written, are alike incomprehensible. This results from the plan of the work, which is not designed so much to furnish the annals of that wonderful event, as to give a series of historical word-paintings—a sort of panoramic exhibition of the wild phantasmagoria so fearfully exhibited on the soil of France. But to the man who has even an ordinary acquaintance with the facts and characters of the revolution, it will be a gallery of etchings in fire, that he will never forget. The form of the work is essentially dramatic, and we had almost said pyrotechnic; characteristics which enable it fitly to represent this great drama of hell upon earth, that we trust is never to be repeated on the stage of human history.

It is divided into ten books, each covering a certain portion of the history, and each receiving its own peculiar title. The titles of the chapters form one of the first peculiarities that strikes the reader. As in most of Carlyle's works, each chapter has some quaint and unusual name, drawn not so much from the subject discussed in it, as from some stray epithet that has struck the writer's mind, or some favourite personage of whom he makes mention. It would, perhaps, be

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difficult to find a more puzzling set of cross-readings, to one who had never read the book, than the headings of the chapters, just as they stand. What signification would he be likely to attach to Astrœa Redux; Astrœa Redux without Cash; Sound and Smoke; To Fly or not to Fly; No Sugar; Let us March; Do thy Duty; Mumbo Jumbo; Go down to; Grilled Herrings, &c. &c.?

The style is in keeping with the subject. It is a sort of French revolution in historical writing. To describe it accurately, we must resort to the Carlylese vocabulary, and coin new epithets and combinations corresponding with the new entity to be delineated. It is fire-flaming, fuliginous, leviathanic, as if a Titan were to write the war of the giants, with a pen plucked from the huge dragon-pinions of some winged megalosaurian. One of the great charms of the work, however, will be found in the style, when it has ceased to distract and repel. Its power, like Homer's, lies in its epithets. A single epithet will sometimes flash a whole volume of meaning on a life, or call up a character before the eye with all the vividness of an actual presence. In this our author stands unequalled in English literature, and the French revolution unequalled among his works. Any one, with the slightest knowledge of the history of this period, will recognize the cameo-finish of such epithets and sentences as the following: Louis, the well-beloved; Witch Dubarry; Loquacious Abbé Raynal; Abbé Maury, tough, dogmatic, long of wind; solid, Dutch-built Pétion; bristly, fox-haired Tallien; Lafayette, "heavy-laden hero of two worlds," &c. Mirabeau is "a fiery rough figure, with black boar's-head, Samson locks, shaggy beetle brows, rough-hewn, seamed, carbuncled face, like a tiger that has had the small-pox." Danton is "a huge brawny figure, through whose black brows, and rude flattened face, there looks a waste energy as of Hercules not yet furibund; a wild, amorphous Titan, with lion voice, and lungs of brass." Camille Desmoulins is "slight-built, with long curling locks, a face of dingy blackguardism, wondrously irradiated with genius, as if a Naphtha lamp burnt within it." Marat is "one squalidest, bleared mortal, redolent of soot and horse-drugs, whose bleared soul looks forth through a bleared, dull-acrid, wo-stricken face." Robespierre is "that anxious, slight, ineffectual-looking man, under thirty, in spectacles; his eye (were the glasses off) troubled, careful; with upturned face, snuffing dimly the uncertain future time; complexion of a multiplex atrabiliar colour, the final shade of which may be the pale sea-green." Charlotte Corday is "a stately Norman figure, of beautiful still countenance, emerging from her secluded stillness suddenly like a star; cruel-lovely, with half-angelic, half-demoniac splendour; to gleam for a moment, and in a moment

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to be extinguished." Thus does he bring up these living, breathing, and speaking figures from the buried past, and daguerreotype them on his page.

This enumeration of epithets and descriptive sentences will show that the author has cast to the winds all the laws, written and unwritten, that have hitherto ruled the republic of letters. But it is often these very *splendida vitia* that give the book its strange power of fascination; enabling it to rivet the attention, like some gorgeous and absorbing pageant, until the pomp of its march has ended. There are passages that kindle and glow with the purest fire of poetry. Take, for example, the following description of the attempted escape of the royal family, in a manner that will call to mind the more successful effort recently made by His Holiness the Pope:—

"O Louis! and this all around thee is the great slumbering earth, (and overhead the great watchful heaven,) the slumbering wood of Bondy, where long-haired Childeric Donothing was struck through with iron; not unreasonably. These peaked stone-towers are Raincy; towers of wicked d'Orléans. All slumbers save the multiplex rustle of our new berline. Loose-skirted scarecrow of an herb-merchant, with his ass and early greens, toilsomely plodding, seems the only creature we meet. But right ahead the great north-east sends up evermore his gray brindled dawn; from dewy branch, birds here and there, with short deep warble, salute the coming sun. Stars fade out, and galaxies; street-lamps of the city of God. The universe, O my brothers, is flinging wide its portals for the levée of the GREAT HIGH KING. Thou, poor king Louis, farest, nevertheless, as mortals do, towards orient lands of Hope; and the Tuileries, with its levées, and France, and the earth itself, is but a larger kind of dog-hutch,—occasionally going rabid."

The procession of the States-General to the cathedral of Notre-Dame, and the death-scene of Mirabeau, are also specimens of this vivid pictorial delineation, but they are too long for quotation entire, and we will not break off a twig to describe a tree.

The objections to this work on literary grounds have already been indicated. It is not a history of the French revolution, but a series of illustrations, elucidating that history. And even when the author assumes the office of the plain annalist, like Gibbon, he rather suggests and implies what he has to say, than openly asserts it; and seems to be almost ashamed to be detected employing the language of simple, direct, and straight-forward narrative.

But we have an objection to urge against the book, of a higher and graver kind. There is in our author a disposition, which we are not unwilling to honour, that leads him to deal gently with those who have been most severely condemned at the bar of historic justice; and sometimes, with a most chivalrous magnanimity, to undertake the defence of the most desperate cases. Whether this be a feeling

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of lofty benevolence, such as would stoop to the publican and sinner, to raise him up to a divine sonship; or a deep emotion of human brotherhood, that recognizes, in the most degraded outcast, the same lineage and paternity with ourselves; or only a certain pugnacious eccentricity and national wrong-headedness, that loves to defend what all have attacked; still, we cannot see this gifted spirit, in the exercise of it, exploring the lanes and alleys of human history; wiping the execration and contempt of accumulated years from some lowering visage, to show the lingering lines of something human and something divine, that lie beneath the bestial and the diabolic; and stooping down to imprint on the softening brow the kiss of fraternal forgiveness; without feeling, that if it be a weakness, it is often a noble and generous one; and if an extreme, yet one greatly to be preferred to its opposite. Thus, in noticing the death of "hapless, squalid Marat," and his brother's request that his musket might be given him, he exclaims: "for Marat too had a brother, and natural affections; and was wrapped once in swaddling-clothes, and slept safe in a cradle like the rest of us, ye children of men!" And of Robespierre he says: "O unhappiest advocate of Arras! wert thou worse than other advocates? Stricter man, according to his formula, to his credo and his cant, of probities, benevolences, pleasures-of-virtue, and such like, lived not in that age. A man fitted, in some luckier, settled age, to have become one of those incorruptible barren pattern-figures, and have had marble-tablets and funeral-sermons. His poor landlord, the cabinet-maker in the Rue Saint-Honore, loved him; his brother died for him. May God be merciful to him and to us!" With such feeling as this it is not difficult to sympathize.

But when we see this disposition lead Carlyle not only to pity the criminal, but apologize for the crime; when we see him not only admire what is noble and grand in the colossal spirits of that period, but fail to condemn what is wicked; we are forced to believe that the delicate perceptions of his moral nature have been deadened: that the quick and instinctive rejection of the unholy that marks a holy spirit has been weakened; and that he has fallen into the error, which no one has more bitterly condemned, of allowing the glare of great deeds to conceal the blackness of a depraved nature. When a man has reached that state of mind in which the work of ruin seems dearer than that of rescue; in which the crash of falling institutions, provided they are smitten down with the truncheon of a giant, or toppled over by the throes of an earthquake, is regarded with a grim and savage delight, rather than a stern sadness; and when there is such a sympathy with the mighty Iconoclasts of his-

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tory, as to make their works of ruin atone for their deeds of crime; we are forced to suspect the purity of his love for the race, if not to infer a hidden vein of dark and misanthropic feeling, that thus rises to embitter the flow of his philanthropic emotions. Now, it is precisely this charge that we have to make against our author in this history. We quote in illustration his remarks on Mirabeau:—

"Moralities not a few must shrink condemnatory over this Mirabeau; the morality by which he could be judged has not yet got uttered in the speech of men. We will say this of him, again; that he is a reality, and no simulacrum; a living son of Nature, our general mother: not a hollow artifice, and mechanism of conventionalities, son of Nothing, *brother* to Nothing. Honour to the strong man, in these ages, who has shaken himself loose of shams, and *is* something. For in the way of being *worthy*, the first condition, surely, is that one *be*. Let cant cease, at all risks, and at all costs; till cant cease, nothing else can begin. Of human criminals, in these centuries, writes the moralist, I find but one unforgivable—the quack."

Is this the verdict that a Christian historian should pronounce on such a man?—a man gigantic, it is true, in his powers, but thereby only gigantic in his crimes; a slave to the most lawless sensuality in himself; a pander to it in others; a writer capable of correcting the vile tastes of a depraved people, yet searching the most sacred records with the prurient gusto of a carrion bird, to fish out the delicious bits of rottenness and garbage; a violator of almost every tie that binds man to man in human society; if not an atheist, at least a mocking blasphemer of everything holy; a friend of the people, who lived on a pension from the king; an actor on the stage of the revolution, whose whole life was histrionic, and whose ruling passion was vanity, the twin-sister of Cant; and a man, who, although the fate of France hung on the continuance of his life, was so much less a patriot than a debauchee, that he chose the fate of Alexander, and died the inglorious death of a bacchanal? And yet this is the man, who, because he is "Titanic," must have some "unuttered morality" by which to be judged. Such a morality we hope to be not only unuttered, but unutterable; we are content with the morality that was uttered amid the solemn voices of Sinai, and confirmed by the more solemn tones of Calvary, and of which not a jot or a tittle shall ever pass away.

Another, and more flagrant instance of this fault, is found in his reflections on the September massacres:—

"To shriek, we say, when certain things are acted, is proper and unavoidable. Nevertheless, articulate speech, and not shrieking, is the faculty of man: when speech is not yet possible, let there be, with the shortest delay, at least silence. Silence, accordingly, in this forty-fourth year of the business, and eighteen hundred and thirty-sixth of an 'Era called Christian, as *lucus à non*,' is a thing we recommend and practise. Nay, instead of shrieking more,

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it were, perhaps, edifying to remark, on the other side, what a singular thing Customs (in Latin, *Mores*) are; and how fitly the Virtue, *Vir-tus*, Manhood, or Worth, that is in a man, is called his *Morality*, or *Customariness*. Fell Slaughter, one of the most authentic products of the Pit, you would say, once give it Customs, becomes War, with Laws of War; and is customary and moral enough; and red individuals carry the tools of it girt round their haunches, not without an air of pride,—which do thou in nowise blame. While, see! so long as it is but dressed in hodden, or russet; and Revolution, less frequent than War, has not yet got its Laws of Revolution, but the hodden or russet individuals are Uncustomary. O, shrieking, beloved brother blockheads of Mankind, let us close these wide mouths of ours; let us cease shrieking, and begin considering."

Is this the judgment of impartial history on these horrible scenes? When it is remembered that hundreds of men, women, and children, were deliberately, barbarously, needlessly murdered in cold blood, without a decent pretext for the cowardly assassination, our whole moral nature rises up instinctively in loathing and condemnation. A battle-field is a mournful and fearful sight; but yet the noblest feelings of human nature may there be displayed. The soldier that rushes into the dreadful *mêlée*, to strike home for his cause, risks his own life as the test of his sincerity, and may be nerved by a lofty love of the right and the true, as well as by that gentle and merciful feeling that scorns to inflict an injury on an unarmed and helpless foe; and, above all, on a woman or a child. But the cold assassin, who, not only without the semblance of law, but without either the stimulus or apology of danger, or even of hate, deliberately murders the unarmed, the inoffensive, and the helpless, who are clinging to his knees, and begging for mercy; who insults and mutilates the mangled remains of his victims; such a miscreant is a wretch, whose unutterable baseness no terms of execration can express. Yet precisely such were the actors in those scenes of September, which the author, with such unseemly levity, and even insinuated apology, attempts to gloze over. The man that can record such atrocious cruelty, and for a moment forget its cowardly malignity, must have his moral instincts, in this particular case, strangely in abeyance.

We would not, however, be understood as bringing this charge against all the representations of crime with which this history, of all others, must abound. It is only when the author's peculiar philosophy is allowed to warp the dictates of his better nature, that these errors are committed. His record of human madness and crime is often made with a pen that seems moistened with tears. And even when he relates these horrible and fantastic fooleries, with a sardonic mirth, we see a shuddering of sorrow mingled with his peals of laughter. We feel that he sometimes laughs at the follies of the

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ruling nation, that he may not weep; and at other times we are reminded of a kind of remote sympathy, which is well-nigh presumption in an erring creature, with that most awful of all revelations of the Divine Justice, when it is declared, that "He that sitteth in the Heavens shall laugh; the Most High shall have them in derision." It is the scorn of vindicatory justice, not the mirth of heartless folly.

As a picture we deem this work unrivalled, in the fiery energy of its etchings, the deep tone of its colourings, and clear outline of its figures, as they seem to start out from the canvass in living distinctness. Even in the very hurly-burly of its style, rushing, dashing, and foaming along, it depicts the hot and maddening scene with wonderful fidelity.

The "Lectures on Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History," constitute the only remaining work of our author that claims attention. They were delivered in the month of May, 1840, before a very select audience, in London, and develop one of Carlyle's favourite doctrines,—the influence of great men in history. They present, we believe, a very fair specimen of his ordinary style in conversation, which, it is but fair to say, is very extraordinary. He first describes the great man, or hero, as Divinity. Defining worship (incorrectly, we think) as admiration without limit, he sees in Paganism but the early wonder of the young world, opening its eyes on the vast and beautiful around it; while "Canopus, shining down over the desert, with its blue, diamond brightness, pierced into the heart of the wild Ishmaelitish man, whom it was guiding through the solitary waste." He gazes back so lovingly on Odin, and the fantastic myths of the Scandinavian religion, that one would think he almost regretted that his lot had not been cast in these shadowy centuries, and on that "waste, chaotic battle-field of Frost and Fire," where these old Norse legends hang like the Aurora Borealis of the Past. He next marks the hero as Prophet, taking Mahomet as his instance; and as he does battle so earnestly for this "deep-hearted Son of the Wilderness, with his beaming black eyes, and open, silent, great soul; a rough, self-helping son of the wilderness; not pretending to be what he is not; in cloak and shoes of his own clouting; teaching, in his own way, Annihilation of Self;" we are ready to hear him conclude with the shout, "*Allah Akbar*—there is one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet." We certainly never expect to see a better apology for Islamism, from a head that wears a turban. He then contemplates the hero as Poet, in Dante, "deep, fierce as the central fire of the world;—embodying, musically, the Religion of the Middle Ages, the Religion of Modern Europe, its Inner life:" and Shakspeare, "wide, placid, far-seeing, as the sun,

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the upper light of the world;—embodying for us the Outer Life of our Europe, as developed then, its chivalries, courtesies, humours, ambitions, what practical way of thinking, acting, looking at the world, men then had." His hero as Priest, (by an extension of the term, for which neither of his heroes would be specially grateful,) are, Luther, "a true Great Man; great, not as a hewn obelisk, but as an Alpine Mountain;—unsubduable granite, piercing far and wide into the Heavens;—yet in the clefts of it fountains, green, beautiful valleys with flowers;" and John Knox, whose stern and lofty career he traces with a deep and loving sympathy. His heroes as men of letters are, the rugged, amorphous Johnson; the inspired madman, Rousseau; and the peasant, Burns. His hero as King, he finds in Cromwell, of whom he has given so characteristic a memorial; and in Napoleon, of whom we have a similar mausoleum, as the fitting sequel to the "French Revolution."

It was objected to Cudworth's Intellectual System, that it stated the arguments in favour of Atheism so much more strongly than the refutations of them, that the book caused more skepticism than it cured. The same objection might be made to much of the discussion in this volume. The author so completely identifies himself with his hero, as to lose his own identity, and earnestly defends that which, in his next hero, perhaps, he as earnestly condemns.

Another objection to the work is, that, like some of his other writings, it confounds moral distinctions. No matter what a man's character may be, in other respects; what may be his motives, or the object to which his efforts are directed; if he be a man of force, earnestness, and sincerity, he is a hero, and, as such, kindles our author's admiration. Saul, exceedingly mad against the Church, deeming that he does God service, is, by this standard, as much to be admired and reverenced as Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Objective truth is to Carlyle less worthy than subjective truth, or sincerity; and rectitude of purpose a less noble thing than energy of will. He seems to be totally oblivious of the fact, that a man may be mighty only in wickedness; and have earnestness and energy only in advancing an error; and that there is a revealed and unerring standard of character and conduct, which does not teach that cant and insincerity are the deepest crimes, and earnestness, energy, and sincerity, the highest virtues; but which declares that the first and great commandment of the Law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" and that the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" and that instead of hero-worship, its command is, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

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Having thus briefly glanced at Mr. Carlyle's works, we are prepared to form a judgment concerning his opinions, claims, and influence as an author.

His philosophical opinions constitute the staple of his works. Whether they exist in a connected system in his own mind, we know not; at least, they are not found developed in that form in his writings. They appear as isolated sentiments, drawn mainly from the idealistic school of Germany; but, continually showing themselves in various forms and applications in his books, they may all be reduced to two distinct elements, viz.: the idea of man's individual self, and the idea of the Eternal and Divine,—the true idea of God. Or, to adopt the technical language of the Schools, the elements of his philosophy are, *the Me* and *the Absolute*. These two conceptions, he thinks, have been lost sight of, in their true relations, by the operation of the sensationalism of Locke, the expediency of Paley, and the utilitarianism of Bentham; and his object is to restore them, in their true relations, to the consciousness of the age. Regarding the external world as simply a world of *phenomena*, not having any absolute, independent reality, but simply a revelation of the Infinite to man, which man conceives under the forms of Time and Space; he regards these *phenomena* as simply the vesture assumed by the Unseen and Spiritual, that it may become visible to the finite; and hence his philosophy of clothes. Human history, human institutions, and human opinions, are the outward forms that have been assumed by the development of the Infinite in man, and are of no significance or value, unless they are informed by both these elements, the human and the Divine. Believing that the subjective element, the sense of a man's individual responsibility, agency, and power, was dying out of society; and that, instead of these springs of action, there was a growing reliance on outward arrangements, associations, and symbols; that the man was becoming swallowed up in the mass; the individual conscience in the voice of public opinion; he strives to awaken this element, not on grounds of expediency, but because of each man's relation to the Unseen and Eternal. Hence his doctrines of the sacredness of work; the importance of sincerity and earnestness; the awful solemnity of each man's position between two Eternities; and the unspeakable significance of Life.

The second element,—the idea of God, as the Absolute, Infinite, and Eternal,—he thinks but imperfectly apprehended. He applies it to religion, in his philosophy concerning miracles, inspiration, &c., precisely as he does to the external world, and to all human institutions. He annihilates nature, in the ordinary sense of the

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term, as something separate from both God and man, and standing between them; and plants religion, morals, and politics, directly on the Unseen and Eternal. Hence his scornful denunciation of "the gospel according to Jeremy Bentham," and the whole theory of expediency; and hence, also, his invectives against the ordinary principles that govern politics and legislation.

Our limits will not permit us to trace the application of these two elements in detail, as we believe they exist in our author's mind, and are variously developed in his works. But they are the two elements that constitute the primary formations of his mind; and, like those of the earth, they have been born and consolidated in fire; and, like the enduring granite, are found lying below the deepest depths, and jutting out at the summit of the loftiest heights of his intellectual and moral nature.

For the same reason, we cannot discuss the scientific truth of these opinions, as they are held and taught by him, or express the grounds on which we dissent. But, whilst we differ from him, we believe that there was a great evil in the philosophy, politics, literature, and religion of the age, against which such a protest was needed. The objective, "the things that are seen," or, in the Scripture sense, "the world," had obtained an undue predominance, producing a shallow philosophy, a truckling morality, and a godless literature; and there was needed a strong and manly voice to assert the rights of man's eternal nature, and God's eternal law; and to show the full significance of those pregnant words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. vii, 31, last clause: "*Παράγει γὰρ τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου.* We do not believe that Mr. Carlyle has told us either the whole truth, or nothing but the truth, on this subject; but we do believe that he fully comprehends the error in view; and his powerful, and even extravagant, utterance of some neglected truths will have a most salutary effect.

There are, however, some theories in his works, from which we feel bound to enter our most emphatic dissent. The first of these is, his doctrine of hero-worship. In the various forms in which he repeats this doctrine, he seems to hold, that every earnest and heroic man is the highest possible revelation of God, and, as such, is to be regarded with the feelings of reverence which we are bound to entertain toward God; or, in the language of the Schools, "*the Absolute*" comes to its highest conscious development in "*the Me,*" and challenges our worship. We cannot draw any other meaning from such language as the following: "The one use of all religion is to keep our Inner Light Shining." "All religion is to remind us of the quite *infinite* difference between a Good man and a Bad; to bid us

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love infinitely the one, and avoid infinitely the other." "All religion issues in due Practical Hero-worship." "He that has a soul unasphyxied, will never want a religion." "Who knows how to reverence the Body of a man? It is the most reverend phenomenon under this sun. For the Highest God dwells visible in that mystic, unfathomable Visibility which calls itself 'I' on the earth. 'Bending before men,' says Novalis, 'is a reverence done to this Revelation in the Flesh. We touch Heaven when we lay our hand on a human Body.'" "I find Grand Lamaism itself to have a kind of truth in it. They have their belief, these poor Thibet people, that Providence sends down always an Incarnation of Himself into every generation. At bottom, belief that there is a Greatest Man; that he is discoverable; that, once discovered, we ought to treat him with an obedience that knows no bounds! This is the truth of Grand Lamaism, the error lies in 'the discoverability.'" "Worship of a Hero is transcendent admiration of a Great Man. I say great men are still admirable; I say there is, at bottom, nothing else admirable. No nobler feeling than this. Religion, I find to stand upon it. Hero-worship, is not that the germ of Christianity itself?" "We love, venerate, and bow down submissive before great men; nay, can we honestly bow down to anything else?" "No fact that ever dwelt honestly as true in the heart of man, but was an honest insight into God's truth on man's part." "Hero-worship, we represent as the basis of all possible good, religious or social, for mankind."

What does all this mean? Is it simply that we must admire and revere a great and good man when we see him? If so, it is a very circuitous and puzzling way of saying what no one will dispute. It were an insult to the author's understanding to suppose that this is his whole meaning. He evidently holds that the religious faculties of our nature find their legitimate and *only* employment in contemplating a great and heroic fellow-man; and that the feeling of a good Mussulman toward Mahomet, and of Boswell toward Johnson, is legitimate worship, the religious reverence of the soul for the Most High. The great man is, to smaller men, the symbol, the vicar of God, the incarnation of the Divine, to which they are bound to render homage and implicit obedience. And also, that this is the only and sufficient agency by which the world is to be regenerated.

Against this doctrine, in the name of our fallen nature, and in the name of the only living and true God, we enter our solemn protest, and denounce it as at once untrue and unholy; degrading to God, and dangerous to man. It is at variance with the cardinal fact of human history and human consciousness, that man is a fallen and

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depraved being. It is at variance with all the teachings of the Bible concerning worship, and the different regard we must pay, not only in degree, but in kind, to God and man. It is at variance with all the divinely appointed means for the regeneration of the human heart, and the human race, and a dishonour to the work of the Eternal Spirit. If we must worship something besides the Triune God, better, with Thomas Taylor, return to the sublime dreamings of Paganism, than find our Deity among the Mahomets, the Rousseaus, and the Napoleons of our condemned and sinful race. Whilst, then, we believe that, in the mind of our author, this doctrine is associated with a deep reverence for God and his Word, owing to his peculiar philosophy, yet we believe, in itself, it is utterly subversive of all real homage or reverence toward either.

We have the same objection to his language on the general subject of religion. Take, for example, the following: * "Work is worship. He that understands this well, understands the Prophecy of the whole Future; the last Evangel, which has included all others. Its Cathedral, the Dome of Immensity; its Altar, the Star-throne of the Eternal; its Litany and Psalmody, the noble acts of the valiant of the Sons of Men." "A sacred religion does live in the heart of that strange froth-ocean, not wholly froth, which we call Literature." "Rituals, Liturgies, Credos, Sinai Thunder; I know more or less the history of these,—the rise, progress, decline and fall of these. Can Thunder from all the thirty-two azimuths, repeated daily, for centuries of years, make God's laws more godlike to me? Brother, no. Perhaps I am grown to be a man now, and do not need the thunder and terror any longer. Perhaps I am above being frightened; perhaps it is not Fear, but Reverence alone, that shall now lead me."

This is either saying too little, or a great deal too much. If this language, and similar expressions elsewhere, are to be taken metaphorically, they are criminally strong, and calculated to mislead. If they are not, but meant in their literal sense, they are at once false and foolish; destructive of all difference between truth and falsehood; sweeping away, at one blow, not only the Church, but Christianity itself, in all its distinctive peculiarities; obliterating the authority of Scripture; and throwing a mist of vague uncertainty over the whole subject of religion, from whose curling wreaths every man's fancy may create its own particular object of reverence. Did this language come from an avowed skeptic, it would be hooted as ridiculous, or condemned as dangerous. But coming from one who has so much genuine religious emotion as Carlyle, it is doubly perilous; for many will ape the contortions of the Sybil, who lack

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the inspiration; and, in rendering this worship of work, will perform the works of darkness, carnality, and ruin. Our salvation is not by work, but by the grace of God; "and if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." The gospel that Paul preached, and the gospel that Carlyle preaches, are certainly different; and it is Paul himself who has said, that if even an angel from heaven preach another gospel, he should be accursed. Mr. Carlyle might, we apprehend, adopt the language of Festus:—

> "I am an Omnist, and believe in all
> Religions,—fragments of our golden world
> Yet to be relit in its place in Heaven—
> For all are relatively true or false,
> As evidence and earnest of the heart,
> To those who practise, or have faith in them.
> The absolutely true religion is
> In Heaven only, yea, in Deity."

This presents the precise point at which we are at issue with Mr. Carlyle, and a large class of modern thinkers; that the truth of Christianity is relative, rather than absolute; subjective, rather than objective; and that it differs from other forms of religious belief only in the possession of purer and better agencies for the accomplishment of this work. This opens a question on which we cannot touch at present, but which we hope to be able to discuss at length on some future occasion. We must, therefore, content ourselves with recording our dissent from this entire mode of thinking, as dangerous, because of the fragments of truth it contains, and pernicious, because of the serious error it involves; and our belief that its combination of half-truths and whole falsehoods, in weak and wicked minds, will constitute the most formidable development of unbelief with which the Church must contend.

His doctrine concerning miracles we apprehend to be, that there is either nothing like miracles, or nothing but miracles, according to the definition you adopt. Believing all exhibitions of power in the world of phenomena to be the manifestation of the Infinite Force, he regards all its exhibitions as precisely of the same nature and significance. If, then, you regard a miracle as a new sequence in the world of appearances, he denies the possibility of its occurrence; if you regard it as a sequence of the same nature, as to its antecedent, with every other manifestation of power, it possesses no more value. In any case, he sees no necessary connexion between the occurrence of such an exhibition, and the truth of any doctrine announced.

We will not charge our author with Pantheism, although we doubt

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whether he holds the personality of Jehovah in the same terms with ourselves. But a very little reflection will show, that this view of miracles is only true on the Pantheistic hypothesis. We might concede his explanation of the nature of all power, and yet it would not follow, that an unusual manifestation of that power could not attest a divine commission to teach; unless all its manifestations were the developments of an impersonal unconscious Spirit, which reached its consciousness and personality only in that of man. It is undeniable that, to the popular mind the conviction is clear, that the man who attests his claim to teach, by exerting an authority plainly superhuman, is worthy of credence; for the Power that controls these exercises, if it be a conscious person, would not endorse the credentials of an impostor. It is also undeniable, that our Lord Jesus Christ did rest his Divine legation to teach precisely on this ground. We have not room to do more than refer to a few passages: Matt. ix, 5, 6; x, 7, 8; xi, 4, 5, 20; xii, 28; Acts ii, 22; &c. The weakening of this proof in any mind, we regard as very much to be deprecated.

We have the same objection to his doctrine concerning the Inspiration of the Scriptures. To us it amounts to a mere sliding-scale of authority, that varies with every man's views of truth and falsehood. When we ask, in what sense the writings of Paul possess an authority to control our faith or practice, which is not possessed by those of Goethe, we have no satisfactory reply. Indeed, he speaks in far higher terms of the latter than he ever does of the former. In this theory we find no clear, firm ground on which the mass of mankind may repose; no rule of belief and action, which can be grasped by those who need it most. We are at sea, with a thousand islands of cloud and mist floating around us, and we know not whither to steer. The human soul craves a Thus saith THE LORD, and not a Thus saith the gospel of Goethe. In such minds and hearts as those of Carlyle, Coleridge, and others of similar stamp, the error may be neutralized; but in the mass of mankind, the practical result of this theory will be infidelity, impiety, and confusion.

We have another objection to these writings. It is their vehement and savage invective against every existing institution, political and religious. This seems to be a sort of monomania with the gifted author. Men have become to him mere valets; formulas; grinning masks; sham heroes; stuffed clothes-suits; Dead Sea apes; Dilettantes; Flunkeys; Inanities; walking and talking after their brains are all out, and their souls have become mere *succedanea* for salt. All religion has died out, leaving mere empty mummeries; calabash prayings; gospel of Mammonism; windmill wor-

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ship and cant. All nobleness, in word and act, has become extinct; and in its place there is nothing but *laissez-faire;* greatest amount of happiness; catch as catch can; and *sauve qui peut.* This strain of arrogant, contemptuous denunciation, runs through all our author's works, in some cases breaking out into a perfect frenzy.

We do not regard our age as at all perfect, but we do deem this strain of wholesale invective as nothing more or less than committing false witness against our neighbour. It is preposterous, and, we had almost said, slanderous, for any poor, fallible mortal to sit in judgment on the sincerity and rectitude of several hundred millions of his fellow-men, whom he has never seen, and condemn them *en masse.* Whatever defects may exist in the Church and the world, we challenge any man to exhibit an age in the world's history, when there were fewer defects to blame, and more facts for which to be grateful to God, than the age in which we live. The *laudator temporis acti* is an ancient character; but one whose querulous question, Wherefore "the former days were better than these?" receives only the cutting reply, "Thou inquirest not wisely concerning this."

With all our profound respect for Mr. Carlyle, we cannot, in reading the cynical flings he makes at his contemporaries, avoid being irresistibly reminded of the lugubrious exclamation of honest Jack Falstaff: "There live not three good men unhanged in England, and one of them is fat and grows old. A bad world, I say."

To those who are ignorant of the course of thought in many portions of the Christian world, within the last twenty-five years, it may excite some surprise, that, after the developments we have made, we are prepared to render the judgment which we are about to record. But those who know the history of religious opinion and philosophical speculation during that time, will not wonder when we say, that, although we condemn some of Carlyle's opinions, as false and dangerous, yet we hope that he still holds the essential truths of Christianity in his head, and rests upon them in his heart; and that, although his faith is mingled with vague and dreamy speculations, drawn from Pantheism. Heathenism, Mohammedanism, and German Rationalism, yet at heart he reposes on a Divine Saviour, a Sanctifying Spirit, and a revealed Word. He is the connecting link between the old-fashioned faith and the new-fashioned skepticism; or, to alter the figure, whilst the foundation of his belief rests on the Rock of Ages, the summit of it is lost in the cloudy region of German metaphysics.

When we come to consider his claims in a literary point of view, our decision is somewhat forestalled by the verdict of public opinion. It is too late to attempt to assign him a position among the

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lights of the age; for he has already taken his position, and holds it by a right of tenure which will not be successfully disputed. He is universally recognized as one of the fixed stars in the galaxy of English literature. His position has been assumed under the combined action of a strong English mind, and the powerful impulse of German thinking. The resultant of these forces has been an orbit somewhat eccentric and cometary, but brilliant and vast. He never can become a popular writer; but, within a small circle, he must always be a powerful one. This power does not arise from any force of logic in his writings, for he rarely reasons, but from the sudden, self-luminous flashings of truth that he emits. He ejects the truth in some oracular utterance, which if you understand and receive, it is well; but if not, he is utterly indifferent; the loss lies with yourself, and not with him. Like the Sybil to Tarquin, there is but one offer of the oracles; their refusal is their total loss,—he flings them into the fire. Genius he has not so much as talent. He loves a great man more than he loves a great truth, and hence the biographical cast of his writings. He is not properly an original thinker, in the sense in which we apply that term to Foster, or Coleridge; although he is an original writer. There are few important thoughts in his works that may not be found elsewhere; whilst there are many expressions of thought that are entirely peculiar to himself. But we do not regard his merit as, on this account, the less conspicuous. The cunning workman, who fashions the massive ingots into forms of beauty and of use, is surely not less to be valued than the miner, who delves out the ore from the bowels of the earth. The work of Mr. Carlyle may be expressed in a single word; he is the interpreter of the idealistic philosophy of Germany to the English mind; moulded and petrified, as it has been, in the intellectual forms of Bacon, Locke, Paley, and Bentham.

When we come to the question of style, we feel not unlike the judges of Ho-Ti, in Elia's "Dissertation on Roast Pig," who had tasted "the crackling;" though we hope to avoid the malfeasance of these erudite men of the robe. We feel the fascination and power of this style, and hang over its fitful coruscations with delight, but still must pronounce upon it a sentence of the severest condemnation. We are not purists, nor disposed to condemn a man who has not the stately dulness of Addison, or the polished inanity of Blair; and we believe the attempt to fix a Procrustean bed of style, that some seem disposed to make, is as foolish as it will be vain. But it is for this very reason, in part, that we object to Mr. Carlyle's attempt to sew this German patch-work on his English style. That it is natural to him, in a certain sense, we believe, just as it is natural to

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some men to stutter; but that any man, were it even Charles Lamb, whose wit it so often heightened, has a right to establish stuttering as an authorized style of speech, we utterly deny. That this style is not unavoidable, is proved by the pure, idiomatic English in which some of his earlier essays are written, portions of which are among the finest specimens of strong, clear Saxon, that the language affords. The style is evidently cultivated for its own sake, and is more strongly marked in every successive work.

We object to it, because no man has a right thus to adulterate his country's language, any more than his country's coin. The same reasons that require the observance of uniform principles in the one case exist in the other. Were this license granted to every writer, the language, in a few years, would become a chaos of unintelligible barbarisms, and the writings of one generation be in a dead language to the next. Such are the laws of the republic of letters; and we know of no decree, "*ne quid respublica detrimenti capiat,*" that has been, or ought to be, enacted in this particular case.

We object to it again, because of the narrow sphere of influence to which it reduces his power. There are thousands of minds, whom his earnest spirit ought to reach and move, but cannot, owing to the quaint, obscure, and unintelligible form in which his burning thoughts are placed. The man who has the clear and glowing light that he possesses, has no right to put it into a lantern of stained and darkened glass; where one half of those who ought to enjoy its guiding rays, are misled by the fantastic figures of the medium of transmission; and the other half do not perceive them at all. There is no pure and truthful man of our age, whose writings have been more perverted to evil by skepticism and worldliness, than his; for the very reason that there are no writings more capable of misconception and misconstruction, owing to their abrupt and oracular style. We say, then, not only as a question of literature, but also of morals, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

We object, also, because the German mode of thought and expression is totally foreign to all our habits of mind, and neither can nor ought to be fastened upon them. There is a style of thinking, speaking, and acting, that is peculiar to each nation—the outgrowth of its history and institutions, and inalienably its own. The pigtail, shaven crown, solemn genuflexions, and tactual salutations of noses, foreheads, and hands, practised by the Celestials, may be very interesting and imposing to the sons of the Flowery Land; but they would have a very farcical effect, if transferred to the streets of New-York, or the *salons* of Paris. So there are many things, that are

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charming simplicity and exquisite wit to a German mind, that to an English taste are the sheerest drivelling and twattle. A single instance of this, among many others, must suffice to illustrate the objection. A witness in Lord Thurtell's trial, being asked what he meant by a man's being respectable, answered, that he kept a gig. This might do very well as an after-dinner joke; but Mr. Carlyle seizes it, and, in the form of gigmanity, gigness, gig-respectability, etc., drives this unfortunate gig through all his writings. There is not a work he has written, but in which, at some unexpected corner, you are met by this ubiquitous gig. This wearing of an epithet, or an illustration, to the very bones, is a puerility unworthy a mind so fertile as our author's, and yet it is one of the most marked characteristics of his style.

Our final judgment on his influence may be gathered from what we have already said. That he is one of the most earnest, reverent, and pure-hearted men of our times; one of the most finished scholars, especially in modern literature; one of the most powerful and effective writers in the circle where he acts, is beyond all question. That he has done philosophy a service, by translating its formulas into the acts of common life; and religion a service, by his manly avowal of religious emotion, and his scathing rebukes of irreligion and worldliness, is also gratefully acknowledged. But that he has serious error mingled with precious truth; and that he often states the truth, so that to many minds it has all the effect of error; is equally unquestionable. And that the fantastical and *outre* garb in which he often chooses to array his thoughts, has led many to mistake a hero for a harlequin, and the profoundest wisdom for the wildest nonsense, must also be mournfully admitted. But, balancing all these conflicting claims, and looking not only at his present, but his future influence, there are few prominent characters of our day, on whom as men, as writers, or as thinkers, we dwell with a fonder delight; and few, for whose life and writings, with all their cross-lights of half truth and error, we feel more grateful to God, than for those of Thomas Carlyle.

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