

THE
ANTI-JACOBIN
REVIEW AND MAGAZINE;

OR,

MONTHLY, POLITICAL, AND LITERARY
CENSOR :

FROM

APRIL TO SEPTEMBER, INCLUSIVE.

1809.

WITH AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

AN AMPLE REVIEW OF FOREIGN LITERATURE.

VOLUME XXXIII.

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1809.

cution is such as to render it worthy our approbation. It would be an advantage to youth, if some such compendium as the present, which contains much very curious as well as useful information, was regularly read in all our schools and academies at stated periods.

A Collection of modern and contemporary Voyages and Travels, Vol. III. Containing Pouqueville's Travels through the Morea, Albania, and several other Parts of the Ottoman Empire, to Constantinople, from 1798 to 1801; Mangourit's Travels in Hanover, in 1803-4; Fischer's Letters during a Journey to Montpellier; Tour through the principal Provinces of Spain and Portugal, in 1803; Journal of a Tour in Ireland, in 1804; with Analyses of Carr's Northern Summer, and Turnbull's Voyage round the World. 8vo. with 9 Plates. Phillips.

Could we believe Dr. Pouqueville, his adventures in Greece would be interesting; the Editor, however, has added notes occasionally to confirm or illustrate his remarks. Mangourit's Travels in Hanover we noticed at length in our Appendix to Vol. xxix. p. 441. Fischer's Letters on the South of France are much more interesting and authentic than either of the preceding;—he very successfully and justly exposes the erroneous and vulgar idea respecting the salubrity of that climate, and the Paradisical enjoyment of Montpellier. We have often had occasion to mention the dirt and vices of the people in Nismes and Montpellier, and M. Fischer has here more fully exposed them with his usual vivacity. This volume also contains the original of the Tour in Spain and Portugal, which was lately attempted to be obtruded on the public as a new work. It has here, however, a more respectable and honest character, than when manufactured into two volumes. Respecting the Tour in Ireland, we are strangely enough informed, at the end of the volume, as an apology for the reflections "on the Irish character, (by which, however, Irishmen should profit) that it is the production of a Scotchman!" Upon the whole, we have no hesitation in saying, that this third volume of Contemporary Voyages and Travels is well worthy the perusal of all persons desirous of an acquaintance with the manners, customs, antiquities, and natural history of nations.

REVIEWERS REVIEWED.

An Apology for the Edinburgh Review.

—Pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.—OVID, MET. I.

To the Editor of the Antijacobin Review.

SIR,—When a man takes the liberty of volunteering his services before they are called for, he is in a somewhat awkward predicament,

and hardly knows which way to excuse himself for doing what nobody desired him to do. Such is, I confess, in some measure, my unlucky situation at present. I have taken upon me to pen an "*Apology for the Edinburgh Review*," and, for the life of me, I cannot exactly say what was my inducement; for, certainly, I dare not address the conductors of that celebrated Work, as Samuel, heretofore, addressed Eli, *Here am I, for thou calledst me*; and, indeed, were I to affect such a piece of presumption, I should probably only be mortified by old Eli's rebuke, *I called not, my son; lie down again*.

However, to wrangle no further about a point which I shall probably, after all, never very satisfactorily clear up, I am determined to cut the Gordian knot at once, by declaring, that having witnessed, for some time past, the malicious attacks made upon this popular Journal, through the slanderous medium of its cotemporary luminary, the *Antijacobin Review*, I have felt a sudden motion arousing the powers within me to stand up in its defence. What the Edinburgh Reviewers will say to me for this officious interference I know not; but as my whole heart and soul are with them, I hope they will excuse any oddity in my manner, and, after the good old fashion of sober times, kindly take the will for the deed.

I would not, however, have it supposed that, in the apology here offered to the public, I am, Quixotte-like, arming, cap-à-pée, to demolish a non-entity. Alas! very far from it! The Edinburgh Reviewers, unconscious probably of their perilous situation, have been long dancing on the edge of a precipice. They have been hugging themselves in their fair fame, and carrying their heads high, crowned with laurel, without perceiving the eavious mildew gathering around them. Malice is ever striving to stifle merit. From the moment they began to shine, they became enveloped in the shade of slander. Surmises were formed. Sarcasms banded about. Jacobinism suggested. Here a flaw was detected in their principles; there an inaccuracy in their language. Here they were deficient in sublimity; there in sense. Now they were too serious; now too lax. This moment they came flying upon the wings of the wind; the next they crept upon all-fours. Something, in short, was always either too learned, or too dull;—too tame, or too declamatory; too partial, or too presuming; too pedantic in its structure, or too democratical in its tendency; and it was charitably "hoped, for the honour of the nation, that the second volume of this occasionally able, and uniformly abusive, Journal was forgotten,* even before the Antijacobin could find leisure to treat us with a brief sketch of its contents.

It was with no small concern, that I beheld the brightest ornament of British literature thus cruelly wounded in its reputation by such whiffling opposers. And as, with a too intimate knowledge of our crabbed nature, the Poet had long since observed,

Diram qui contudit Hydram,
Notaque fatali portenta labore subegit,
Comperit invidiam supremo fine domari,†

* Antijacobin Review, 1804. † Hor. Epist. ad. August.

it, by parity of reasoning, pretty well seemed to follow, that the same ungracious fate might, one day, await even their illustrious labours, by which, in all likelihood, many monsters were destined to be crushed in the egg, and many Hydras of the dreaded race of the *Cacoethis scribendi* to be subdued. For, as the apothecary's mortar, it has been remarked, often rings the patient's passing-bell, so do their seasonable flagellations consign to oblivion the mis-shapen productions of the day, which had otherwise stolen both fame and pudding from the suffrages of the ignorant; and laid the whole world of letters under a disgraceful contribution.

The period, however; is, at length, arrived (and I will not blink the question) fairly to meet the matter at issue, and either, by a conviction of inability, to confirm the accusations of the malicious; or, by a full exposure of the inanity of these viperous attacks, to set the question at rest for ever. The Edinburgh Reviewers have hitherto, indeed, been doomed "to work against wind and tide, and to own Religion in her rags;"* but it shall go hard with us if we don't make a better business of it than did the late Commander in Chief; and as sure as ever we gain a verdict of acquittal, they shall henceforward "walk with her in her silver slippers, where the sun shines, and the people applaud her."†

Let it not be supposed, however, that I mean, like the Knight of *La Mancha*, to dip my hands up to the elbows in adventure, and, enthusiastic in my admiration; to go all lengths in their defence. No, I have none of the hypocritical suppleness; Heaven be praised! of the Poet's parasite about me, *Quidquid dicunt, laudo: id rursum si negant, laudo id quoque.*—*Negat quis, nego: ait, aio.*‡ And, indeed, were I unblushing enough to copy the premises, I don't know that I should be so lucky as to fall in with the conclusion. Possibly, for the sweet bit of the sweet penny,§ I might only come in for a bitter pill. Like an honest lawyer, therefore, I am determined to scrutinize my brief, before I plead, slap-dash, for my worthy clients, through thick and thin.

To clear the way, however, as we go, it may be necessary to promise why I have crammed my porridge with consecrated bread, so frequently drawn my allusions, and, in some sort indeed, my very language, from classical authority; and, in a more especial manner, from the *Edinburgh Review* itself; and, further, why I have herein made use of only the four last numbers of that admired publication.

Be it known then, that; having to defend a sublime work, I was mightily desirous of doing it in a sublime manner; for, as Sancho justly remarks, in the pleasant discourse between his master and the bachelor, Sampson Carrasco, it becomes every man to take care how he talks, or how he writes, of other men, and not set down at random, higgledy-piggledy, whatever comes into his noddle. It was necessary, therefore, to call in exotic assistance, to the support of indigenous genius. I have, with this view, laid all I could catch hold of under contribution, and compelled them, with one consent, to

* *Pilgrim's Progress.* † *Ibid.* ‡ *Terence Eunuch.* § *Ibid.*

worship the golden image, which King Jeffrey of the North has been pleased to set up. But even these powerful auxiliaries would very imperfectly have availed me, could I not luckily have gone to the fountain-head for my materials.—*Dulcius ex ipso fonte bibuntur aquæ.* It will be found, therefore, that I have largely drawn upon the pages, of the Edinburgh Review itself, for the laud and commendation with which I have invested it, and have fairly buried it in a bed of its own roses. It might, perhaps, have been as well to emblazon their exploits in any other language; but “when we have done enough, there is no occasion, you know, to stuff the cushion with straw,”* and such an abundance of good things do their pages contain, that we may well afford to make them honey from their own stores. “None but *themselves* can be their parallel.” After indulging in the magnificent coruscations of the Edinburgh Review, there is, positively, no enduring the plain pike-staff phraseology of any other work. Besides, genius, they say, is of an infectious nature; and as Longinus was reported to have imbibed the Homeric spirit, while engaged in discussing the beauties of the Iliad; so, in treating of the energies of their critical Journal, have I, somehow or other, felt those energies infused into my own apology, and, treading in such splendid steps, have become, as I humbly conceive, by a sort of sublime contamination, occasionally splendid myself.

As to the circumstance of having, in many, and various, quotations, drawn only from the four last numbers of this blazing star of the first magnitude, I must honestly confess that they are the only numbers I have, hitherto, been favoured with the sight of. I take shame, indeed, to myself for having become so late a reader of so universally circulated a work, and shall patiently abide the reproach of offended dignity; “not to know me argues yourself unknown.” How I, at length, found out that the Edinburgh Review was worth reading, it is immaterial to mention. Suffice it to observe, that *No. 23, for April, 1808,* was the first these eyes were, alas! ever blessed with the sight of.

It is some consolation, however, that, though I have been, hitherto, destined to take up with ‘an universal blank’ for this ‘book of nature fair,’ having had access to none other than those pitiful publications, the Antijacobin Review, the British Critic, the Gentleman’s Magazine, and trash of a similar description; there is still, thank my stars! enough before me for the most riotous mental enjoyment. I ask not what has preceded Number 23, I am satisfied with the specimens already in my possession.—*Ex ungue leonem.* And if the Fabulist’s old woman was at no loss to judge of the quality of the liquor from the mere smell of the cask, I must be even somewhat below an old woman in sagacity, if, from the Corinthian fragments, I cannot conjecture the exquisite design of the whole wonderful structure. Isis, it has been somewhere observed, was accustomed to reveal medicine to the sick by dreams. But I will venture, *meo periculo,* to declare to those who are awake, that, from the *Brunn-*

* Don Quixotte.

ian system of the Edinburgh Review, are we alone to look for the vital re-integration of all British literature. And, as the eating of garlic was prescribed by Hippocrates, both to those who were, and to those who intended to get drunk; so may the perusal of their glowing pages be recommended as well to them who do, as to them who wish to cut a figure in the republic of letters. For, from my own experience, I can assert that, having, at length, been tempted to taste of this "tree of interdicted knowledge," a most wonderful acuteness has, some how or other, been operated upon my intellectual optics; for I feel that it is, indeed, "able to make gods of men," and, like mother Eve, I could almost find in my heart, in company so delicate, to fly "forthwith up to the clouds." Now as, in all cases, sauce for the goose is held to be sauce for the gander, I make no doubt but that every reader of the Edinburgh Review will, if gifted with a philosophical precocity, find himself cockered and spirited up after the same legerdemain manner, and "feeling vigour divine within him," will be ready to exclaim, with the undaunted leader of the revolutionary host,—

"Our puissance is our own; our own right hand
"Shall teach us highest deeds."—MILTON.

Having premised thus much, by way of introduction, I proceed to an investigation of the charges that have, at various times, and, by a variety of skulking and insidious means, been brought against the Edinburgh Review. And though I am not, believe me, vain enough to fancy I can give slander such a quietus as may settle her till doomsday, (for the tom-tit will twitter upon the Eagle's back, in spite of us) yet if she still finds courage to continue to blow her trumpet, I hope, at any rate, before I have done with her, to purify, in some measure, the bad breath she has hitherto sent forth; a task, let me tell you, of no small importance, in an age of talkative and brazen presumption like the present.

The first objection, then, which I observe made to this celebrated work, is, that it is not, properly speaking, a Review, but merely a collection of detached essays, having little connection with the subject under discussion, and being very confined in its selection. That further, a misnomer is fixed on the very face of the performance, for that what is called the *Edinburgh Review* "is now generally believed to be principally manufactured in London,"* and that the hireling writers thereof "are resident on this side the Tweed, eating their way to the English Bar, and laughing at the credulity of John Bull."†

Now, as far as this objection respects a confined selection, it must surely be deemed nugatory, insomuch as the Edinburgh Reviewers themselves have, it seems, disclaimed the idea of any thing like a history of general literature: for I understand them to declare, that they "decline any attempt at exhibiting a complete view of modern literature, and confine their notice, in a great degree, to works that either have attained, or deserve, a certain portion of celebrity."‡

* *Antijacobin Review*, June, 1807. † *Ibid.* ‡ *Ibid.* Feb. 1804.

And, very proper, I think, is such a determination; for as a prudent physician prefers a few well-chosen remedies to the confused farrago of the *Materia Medica*, so do they wisely select the "choice morsels of criticism, and leave the tag-rag tribe of their brethren to do as they will with the remainder. And, indeed, it is out of all character to suppose that they should condescend to identify their acuteness of remark with every vulgar thing vomited from the press in this prolific "Age of Publication."

As to the *Edinburgh Review* consisting of mere essays, having little connection with the work under discussion, where, I beseech you, is the sin, or shame, of Genius being so thoroughly absorbed in its own lofty doings, as to overlook the crude and disjointed speculations of others? What if they are now and then, as in the case of Bishop Warburton, "completely carried away from the book, by the title of which their observations were suggested," * would you stop them in the midst of their flaming energies with a whistle in their ears, *sub judice lis est*; and that the writer is mortified at their parading round and round with their own bright effusions, without its once entering their thoughts to notice the dulness of his? Very pretty indeed, if things are come to such a pass, that transcendent talents must be obtained under the yoke of some stupid custom, and the ass's panniers hid across the back of the generous war horse. No, no, the *Edinburgh Reviewers* will, I hope, have spirit enough to despise such absurd accommodations to the public taste, and, like the sun shining in his strength, will continue, after their own fashion, to dispense light, and life, to a benighted world, who are doomed to gaze on the majestic orb, without ability to trace the line of its mysterious revolution.

In our old-fashioned *Reviews*, indeed, of the South, the work criticised is the prominent part of the entertainment. But they manage these things better in the North; and prudently considering that "Dionysius and Philip together are too much for one article," † though the author is, of courtesy, it is true, introduced to the audience, he is taught better manners than to figure upon the stage in the presence of his masters. They very soon, therefore, shove him behind the scenes; and when, after a due course of flourishing through the magnificent circle of their own deaf ideas, he is coldly invited to make his appearance again, he may think himself pretty well off, if they condescend to say good by to you, without sending him away with a smart cut across the shoulders. Now, how much more dignified is this, than to suffer these culprits, at the bar of Apollo, to tell their own tedious tale, and to strut, and rant, and call names, if they but fancy you will hold from them the accustomed civilities of literature. I have no notion of indulging authors in these consequential airs. Let them pack off, and take their "miserable erudition" ‡ with them. It will serve well enough "to enrich the *Gentleman's Magazine*," § where, amid "solid masses of antiquated stupidity," || it may find a niche, probably, in *their Temple*

* *Edinburgh Review*, No. 26, p. 336. † *Ibid.*, No. 24, p. 479.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 449. § *Ibid.* || *Ibid.*

of Fame.—Or, at any rate, *Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis*—there's the *Antijacobin Miscellany* open, night and day, for the reception of all comers and goers, if they do but produce their passport of having abused, or been well abused by, the Edinburgh Reviewers, or any of their infidel satellites,

Don't tell me that this is harsh judging—a writer is never neglected but when he is not worth notice. That this happens nine times out of ten is no fault of theirs. Can the Edinburgh Reviewers make ability where nature has not bestowed it? and, where it is denied, are they not very considerate to supply the deficiency by their own? And it is wonderful, by the bye, what they are enabled to perform in this way. Set them down but to an eighteen-penny pamphlet, and they will presently work you up from it an elaborate treatise, full of arguments founded on, be sure, nothing less than everlasting principles—for, like the immortal Raphael, their excellency may be said to consist in the “powers of invention, and the skilful accommodation of other men's conceptions, to their own purpose.” Be the subject what it may, they never fail, by hook or by crook, to demonstrate their omniscience before they have done with it; until, from the ashes of some poor crazy composition, arises a Phoenix to astonish the admiring multitude. And as Midas was celebrated for turning all he touched to gold, so from the vilest scribblings can our Reviewers extract matter for the sagest remark; and, like the fly in the tangle, look plump and well-favoured, even though they fed upon a——
Zibeta Occidentalis.

But indeed, they who censure this substitution of detached Essays for a regular critical Journal, may be said, like peevish brats, to quarrel with their bread and butter. For as the alderman's beef, the king of meats, comprehended in it the quintessence of partridge and quail, and venison, and pheasants, and plum-pudding, and custard,* so the Ed. Review, the king of Reviewers, contains within itself not only the heart and soul, where it has any, of the work under consideration, but a rich abundance of original sentiment into the bargain. In turning over its pages, you are disgusted by “no tame writing, no intervention of ordinary passages, no enervation of the high powers of the mind,” no “stooping of the wing”† and balking a strong conception; but all “bears the zeal and impress of genius.”‡ And though, in consequence of these “rapid and lofty movements,§” we may occasionally be whirled into regions beyond the crystalline orbs, and bewildered by speculations remotely connected with the subject, we are yet to remember that their very vagaries smack of invention, and that “the light that leads astray is—light from Heaven”!|| for, like the great and unhappy Lord Verulam, the Ed. Reviewers are “spirits of that high order that go ingeniously wrong, and who cannot even err without instructing.”¶

Though, therefore, to alter their plan would be, in effect, to

* Swift's Tale of a Tub. † Edinburgh Review, No. 23, p. 27, &c.

‡ Ibid. No. 26, p. 256. § Ibid. || Burns.

¶ Wood's Enquiry into the Life of Homer.

endanger their reputation; yet, aware that they have given a new character to review writing, and that the world is but little disposed to pardon any aberration from established customs, it may not perhaps be amiss to observe, in extenuation of this supposed offence, that as "the sin which most easily besets a translator, is that of grafting his own sense on that of his original,"* so the danger to which a Reviewer is most exposed, and, by the bye, "the temptation, is the stronger the more he is a man of talent and imagination,"† is the giving us his own opinions in lieu of those of his author. Besides, is the conjecture altogether unreasonable, that "the Public is apt to exaggerate a little the value of what it receives, without any previous expectation;"‡ and I dare say we every one of us read the Ed. Review with greater pleasure, for not knowing before hand where its train of thought may conduct us; like travellers in a romance, we are every moment deluded by a change of scenery. Heroic knights, love-lorn damsels, falling waters, hanging gardens, enchanted castles, clouds, comets, and armies in the air, all fit in delightful succession before us. *Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes intulit agresti latio.* The genius of the Reviewer hurries us, at will, through his magic pages; and, like men that have "eaten of the insane root that takes the reason prisoner," we have no power to controul the charmed spell, but, will-he nill-he, are conveyed "to Rome, to Athens, or the lord-knows where," and are only recalled to the stupid dulness of plain common sense, by recollecting that all this is but "the baseless fabric of a vision," the work of minds wrought in the same mould with our own; and that, amid the delirium of our rapture, instead of escorting my Lady the Princess Micomicona, we have merely been hunting up Sancho's ass, and devouring the pages of——*the Edinburgh Review!*!

As to those who have no taste for this method of composing a critical journal, let them seek elsewhere for entertainment. I, for my part, love to behold the expansions of intellect, and the cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, to cover by degrees the face of the whole heavens. What! does an overflowing excellence lose its nature? If Chrysippus wrote a complete volume upon cabbage, need the Edinburgh Reviewers blush at producing a regular treatise from the flimsy ratiocinations of a Grub-street pamphleteer? But there are Goths and Vandals that spurn at every exhibition of native genius; and as those who have drunk of the Clitorian fount are said to contract an aversion to wine, so do these dull and insensate beings, bred up in the droning sentiments of the Antijacobin, or the British Critic, feel no rapturous union with "the voice of the charmer, charm he ever so wisely." Indeed, in vain will you attempt to electrify these clodpoles by the most daring and lofty speculations. They have souls of an uncouth growth, and had rather basely grovel in the dust, than "ride the whirlwind and direct the storm"—all we can do, therefore, is to leave them to their folly. *Qui vult decipi, decipiatur.*

* Ed. Review, No. 23, p. 56. † Ibid. p. 1. ‡ Ibid. p. 1.

Upon the whole, I hold it no objection whatever to this far-famed national work, that it is confined in its selection, and is, in fact, any thing in the world, rather than a Review. Call it by what title you please, you cannot impair its merit—it will still constitute, in the eye of reason, the admired standard of all that is great and excellent. Indeed, “we have not met with any thing nearly so good,”* since the revival of literature; and we cannot but regret that it should have fallen to the lot of the Edinburgh Reviewers to live in an iron age, when interest lords it over intellect, and when the glory of the Salamanca schools should have commenced Bachelors of Arts, and taken their degrees for nothing; for what is the composing a critical Journal, and serving the Booksellers, when they have “talents to serve the world?” I hope, however, for the honour of genius, that they will, somehow or other, be provided for in the end; and whether you make them governors of Asiatic provinces, Semi-Diplomatists, or “members for rotten Boroughs;” depend upon it we shall not find it thrown into an old sack; for, like squire Sancho, they have long ago felt their own pulse, and find themselves sound enough to rule kingdoms and govern islands.

O fortunate Empire of Britain! which hast the talisman of thy security; within thine own confines, ‘abilities so transcendent as those manifested by the Illuminati’ of the north, have indeed rarely been vouchsafed to “any mortal mixture of Earth’s mould.”

Præsentî tibi maturos largimur honores,
Jurandasque tuum per nunquam ponimus aras,
Nil oriturum alias, nil ortum tale fatentes! *

As for the remaining part of the slander, that the Edinburgh Review is generally believed to be manufactured in London, and that its hireling writers are eating their way to the English bar, and laughing at the credulity of John Bull, it is one of those *subterfugis ignorantie* that can only deserve to be treated with silent contempt. The mere *ipse dixit* of an anonymous scoffer can surely be entitled to little respect; and I have more serious business upon my hands than to waste my time in combating idle conjectures, which make nothing to the matter in hand, and which, were there even any grounds for them, could not subduct an atom from the intrinsic reputation of the work which they thus foolishly affect to depreciate. I dismiss it, therefore, to the tomb of the Capulets.

Voilà une fort belle entrée—so now to the second. There are certain cold and phlegmatic creatures, who, caring little about what is transacting on the grand theatre of the universe, affect to make it an objection to the Edinburgh Review that, taken all together, it is too much of a *political* cast, and that a Publication, professing to comprehend within its grasp the various departments of science and literature, should not allot so large a portion of its pages to one subject, and that too, to scholars, by no means the most interesting; and more particularly, as even in the opinion of its friends, “the advertisement of its first

* Edinburgh Review, No. 24, p. 401. † Hor. Ep. ad August.

number afforded no reason to expect that its pages should be dedicated to purposes of politics or party.* Nay more, that even articles where we should least look for any "favourable occasion to speculate on their darling topic, are yet so transmuted; during the process of discussion, as, somehow or another, to furnish out their contingent to the common stock; and that, by "anecdotes conveyed in a sort of loose convenient generals, which free them from the minute restrictions of truth," † these Reviewers are constantly in hot water, bawling out Politics, and prepared, like Knights errant in a romance to "run a muck, and tilt at all they meet." ‡

Now, that the Edinburgh Reviews, taken in the gross, may, perhaps, be said to be of a political complexion, I will not deny; nor will I even hold out against the accusation that a thread of politics may be discernibly traced through the whole body of its disquisitions. But I do, and ever most, contradict the hasty assertion, that "these subjects too much abound," and that these "favourable occasions," for the display of legislative powers, too frequently occur. What, has not the potter leave to mould his porcelain after his own form and fashion? and, in the projection of a Critical Journal, are not the conductors at liberty to consult "the signs of the times?" Now politics, we all know, is the pole star of English education, from the Statesman, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, to the village Hampden, who imbibes his constitutional principles at the barber's shop, or the blacksmith's stithy. The Edinburgh Reviewers have no authority over the fates and destinies; and were people as fond of reforming themselves as they are of mending the State, the Journals of the day would soon chime in with the fashion; and treatises of politics would become as rusty as treatises of piety. But, so long as this world is a vast deal better thinking of than she next, so long as men are smit with the rage of philosophizing, and fancy themselves better gifted to canvass the measures of government, than the state of their own souls; and even the grand legislative council of the nation itself is almost as much delighted with sifting the evidence of a *Lady under Royal protection*, as with accompanying the Speaker, on a fast day, to explore the Divine assistance,—the watchful guardians of literature must swim with the stream; and, instead of aspiring to be "the makers of manners," must bow the knee to Baal, and humbly condescend to, "catch the manners living as they rise."

With infinite address, therefore, do the Edinburgh Reviewers fix with the full weight of their talents on this popular subject. They touch this grand main spring; and, more fortunate than Archimedes, having gained a footing, they instantly move the world. With the matchless pre-science of Napoleon himself, "in that vulnerable heart they plant the dagger," † assured that "the remotest limb will quiver with the shock." ‡ Nor night, nor day, do they desist to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and "to tell a whole nation the whole of its faults." || That it may please Heaven to enable them, by the force

* Antijac. Rev. June 1807. † Ibid, July 1808. ‡ Ibid. June 1808.

§ Edinburgh Review, No. 25, p. 230. || Ibid. No. 24.

of their own potent reasoning, "to endue the Lords of the Council with grace, wisdom, and understanding," is a petition that enters duly into the liturgy of their pious orisons; and could they but once clinch King William's scheme of a comprehension with the Dissenters, and emancipate the poor oppressed Catholics of Ireland, they would have a sweet sleep of it, I dare say, afterwards. But fair and softly, my Northern Hotspurs! we are not ripe for such high doings at present. You must "scale the cliff, and dance on hollow winds with antic shapes," a little longer, before the Devil and Doctor Faustus will be ready to join in the rigadon; for neither was Rome, you know, built, nor Quack Solomon's *Anti-Impetigenes*, though a "safe, salutary, and absolute specific," swallowed down in a day.

But your small politicians, who, as Swift observes, are mighty forward in forming profound conjectures, have somehow or other, 't seems, taken into their heads, that the Edinburgh Review is little better than a fortress of Jacobinism;* that the tendency of its discussions is to free the mind from the wholesome restraints of government; that honest English patriotism would disdain to suggest, and experience, to sanctify some of its leading theories; that its writers, who "were, most of them, provided for by the late Ministry, who sought to render the King a cypher in the State,"† are, upon all occasions, forward to predict the ruin of their country, eager to traduce her councils, and, by consequence, not undelighted to palsy her exertions. And this Philippic they, very consistently, follow up by expressing their hopes, that "as one of the first glories of the Antijacobin Review was to silence the Analytical, it will be equally successful in silencing the Edinburgh, which croaks the same tune, though in a different key."‡

Alas! so incessantly will malice be twitching at reputation, that, as Falstaff observed of honour, "If it comes, it comes unlooked for, and there's an end."—But with respect to the calumny in question,—*Nos hæc novimus esse nihil*. For possessed, as the Edinburgh Reviewers occasionally may be, with certain "sublime doubts," § with a sort of *regicide* greatness of conception, as I suppose their enemies would term it, they are still Apostles of true British *Burdettite*, liberty, and have nothing so much at heart as the well-being of the Empire. They have no desire to remove the seat of government to the North; they merely prescribe, like experienced physicians, the doses of those "doctrines, in a recurrence to which the salvation of England is to be found;" ¶ and provided they could only see virtuous men in office, and knaves out, would, for their own part, "care mighty little whether they were called upon to pay tribute to Cæsar, or to Pompey." ¶ Not, indeed, that they have any violent objection to a Whitbread, or a Wardle, at the helm, and a Spanish war, and the Income Tax, departing, like a vision of the

* Antijacobin Review, August 1804. † Ibid. June 1807.

‡ Ibid. August 1804. § Edinburgh Review, No. 24, 356.

¶ Ibid. No. 24, 434. 438. ¶ Ibid. No. 24, 481.

night. "The prejudiced declamation of the Demagogue" they hold in abhorrence; and as for our Church establishment, far enough, dear, innocent lamb-like souls! are they from dreaming of its demolition.

(To be continued.)

MISCELLANIES.

On the authenticity of the Poems of Ossian; and observations on the opinions of Malcolm Laing, Esq. the Rev. Dr. Graham; and Professor Richardson.

As children sometimes sing before they can speak, so, it seems, rude nations have a turn for Poetry before they shew any talent for analyzing the principles of human language. It is, at any rate, a curious fact, that the genius of true poetry—that poetry which is most closely allied to the free energies of human feeling—has gradually withdrawn, as the languages, which he employed, grew more polished and technical. It would be going out of the way to tell the cause of this, and to mention, at length, how imagination is cramped and repressed by nice formalities; it is enough, in order to be convinced of the truth of the observation, to compare the works of fancy, which appeared in the easy days of composition, with those that have felt the squeeze of criticism, in these more correct, but more fastidious times. In the former, the whole production, the good and the bad, was natural; the good bearing the genuine mark of poetical inspiration, while the bad, it must be acknowledged, was very dress: in the latter, the great mass, with very few exceptions, is artificial, and confined to a tame mediocrity. From this it is not to be inferred that there were none, in ancient and early times, who thought themselves poets, without having received a commission from the Muses. Such have appeared in every age: but the obstacles to writing and transmission were then so great, that none but those lofty spirits, which were guided and impelled by the workings of rare genius, could effectually surmount them. Lord Bacon, indeed, in one of those unlucky moments, when authors will risk the imputation of speaking nonsense for the sake of saying a good thing, ventured to assert that, in the stream of time, as in other streams, all that was weighty and valuable had gone to the bottom, and that nothing of antiquity, but the sticks, and straw, had come down to us. We are rather of opinion, notwithstanding the high authority of Verulam, that we have, at least, pretty fair specimens of what the men of old times could do, both in oratory and philosophy, as well as in poetry; and we are, moreover, inclined to regard a considerable proportion of the poetry ascribed to Ossian, with all its beauties, and with all its faults, as a memorial of the genius and sentiment of the ancient Caledonians. We are not, however, prepared to assert, nor does Dr. Graham think it essential

ears." The sanctified traveller, is often a debauched man, and strangers have no great regard to character. An immoral man in a strange country, may wear the masque of virtue, as long as it suits his purpose. The observation was made ages ago, by Sallust, and human nature remains unchanged. The *rounder* is conversant with opportunities: he has studied the times and the seasons. He knows when to erect his tabernacle, and where, and he has sagacity enough to perceive the moment for retreat; to escape to a distance, and to take shelter, where the report of his intrigues may never reach him. The *rotundity* of two female saints at ——— was lately discovered: the *rounder* had disappeared.

In short, it is high time that the legislature should pay attention to the encroachments of methodism; which are most alarming. And there can be little doubt, that the hints which we have just thrown out, have a better claim to consideration, than those crude suggestions of the Edinburgh Reviewers.

[Our next article will include a review of Volumes XII. XIII. and XIV.]

An Apology for the Edinburgh Review.

(Continued from page 311.)

They simply contend that test and corporation acts are not its proper pillars of support, and that were knocking Jack of the North alive, the burden of his song would probably be 'down with them, down with them, even unto the ground.' Though aware that their political locubrations do actually sway the four quarters of the globe, they yet modestly remember, *O si sic omnia!* that they are but men, and can, therefore, walk the streets without turning up their noses at all they meet. To be sure, for the English Ministry, who are notoriously mere old women, they entertain a sovereign contempt; and, indeed, had not the invincible Napoleon wiser heads than theirs to contend with, we should soon probably be honoured with an army of the Thames, or an army of the Tweed. But so long as the conductors of the Edinburgh Review, the *Dii penates* of the nation, will condescend to wield the sceptre of English politics, and to oppose their diplomatic talents to his wily machinations, we may safely, I believe, set the *Great Nation* at defiance, and rest quietly in our tight little island.

Indeed I blush for the sagacity of my countrymen, that they should thus venture to attack an adversary in his strong hold.—They might as well pretend to break a spear against a battery of cannon, for so peculiarly gifted are the Edinburgh Reviewers for political discussion, that they may be said to be cut out for prime Ministers almost from their very cradles. In fact, they seem possessed of an intuitive knowledge, both of all that has been done, or that is about to be done. For, though placed, as they ingenuously confess, on the

"mere threshold of Continental politics,"* they are yet able to see far and wide, and to command the whole civil and military prospect. After volunteering their services to demonstrate how sadly affairs are managed at home, they kindly point out to us the mode of rectifying our disasters, and of retrieving our injured honour abroad. Thus they tell us (and to be sure its all as clear as the sun at noon day,) how we should have fought our battles in Spain, how we should have aided our allies in Portugal, in what manner we should have co-operated with the gallant King of Sweden, and by what means we should have curbed the folly of the imperial Driveller of the North. They then treat us with a ludicrous exhibition of what Napoleon would have done with the assistance of an English Ministry, and what he has managed to effect without it.† In short, be the subject what it may, they do trim it over most completely, that's certain. While holding forth on diplomacy, you'd fancy they kept the keys of every Cabinet in Europe. When employed on money and exchange, they are the political economists of the Realm. When discussing the principles of gravitation, even the Plumian professor himself must acknowledge, that he is fairly foiled at his own weapons; and as for the society for the Suppression of Vice, to the utter shame and confusion of its members, they prove to you that a combination of perjured attorneys, and fraudulent bankrupts, understand more of the real nature of virtue.‡ So that you see very little regard is to be paid to the unfounded insinuation of the Poet, that 'one science only will one genius fit;' for, like Goldsmith's Village Schoolmaster, they are qualified for a touch at every science,—aye, and can pepper them over pretty smartly too.

Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
 And ev'n the story ran that he could gauge.
 In arguing, too, the parson own'd his skill,
 For ev'n, tho' vanquish'd, he cou'd argue still;
 While words of learn'd length, and thund'ring sound,
 Amaz'd, the gazing rustics rang'd around,
 And still they gaz'd; and still the wonder grew,
 That one small head cou'd carry all he knew.

Deserted Village.

When, therefore, we perceive the little attention men are disposed to pay even to the sublimest speculations, and how they still prefer 'the road to ruin' in spite of every prophetic warning; neither altering their course, nor, as it should seem, much solicitous about the consequences, plainly as that course is pointed out to be erroneous, and those consequences to be fatal; it almost makes one a convert to the Poet's fearful surmise, that an unseen power spurned underfoot the awful fates of Rome, and that there are spirits above envious of the grandeurs here below.

* Edinburgh Review, No. 24. 443. † Ibid. No. 25, Art. 14.

‡ Ibid. No. 26. 335.

Usque adeo res humanas vis abdita quædam
Obterit, et pulchros Fasces, sævasque secures
Proculcare ac ludibrio sibi habere videtur.

Lucret. l. 5.

For there is, otherwise, no tolerable account to be rendered how men, who display such stores of legislative erudition, combining within the pages of a Quarterly Review, the policy of ancient, and the machiavelism of modern, times, should yet no more be listened to, than a Borough Member of the House of Commons. Surely the "Age of Reason" must be waning apace, when even these cockerel Talleyrands of the North, in all their pomp and pride of argumentation, cannot bring the Swinish multitude back to common sense, nor so much as persuade a drowsy Ministry that they are "wandering in a world of enigma,"* and that their discussions in the Cabinet are mere conversations in their sleep.

As firm patriots, however, they will, I hope, still hold on in their course; and, like Cassandra, continue to prophesy for the good of an incredulous and ungrateful country. Above all, they must not suffer their noble spirit to be cast down by this astonishing general apathy; but rather, with redoubled vigor, let "the walls of St. Stephen resound with—wha wants me,"† conscious that "a favourable occasion" will soon present itself of indulging in their darling declamation. And let them not be deterred by the idle cry of no political cant,—no elucidations of the state of Ireland,—no Lettre aux Espagnols-Américains,—no Code de la Conscription,—no expeditions against Copenhagen; for though, to be sure, the Edinburgh Review may be a little like Pompey's feast at Epirus, a collection of many dishes of seeming variety, but, in fact, all made out of one hog, and, of course, nothing but *pork* differently disguised; yet, as has been pleasantly enough remarked, "there's an excellent variety of sauce."‡

Indeed I know of no subject that so well tallies with the daring genius of our Northern Reviewers as that of politics. And to this study, too, existing circumstances are, luckily for the display of their talents, peculiarly favourable; for it is a remark made by one of their popular writers, that "the times of regular government, and polished manners, are to be wished for by the feeble and weak in mind; but an *unsettled* state, and those convulsions that attend it, is (are) the proper field for an *exalted* character, and the exertion of *great parts*. Merit there rises always superior."§ Not unmindful, therefore, of their own importance in the revolutionary order of the day, they fix upon a mode of composition that is best fitted to the development of their Herculean powers. Men, measures, Ministers,—every thing, in short, 'rotten in the state of Denmark,' they attack, and that, too, with as little "management and reserve in their language"||

* Edinburgh Review, No. 24. 356. † Antijacobin, June, 1807.

‡ Tale of a Tub. § Blair's Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian.

|| Edin. Review, No. 24. 432.

as a Crown and Anchor orator could wish for. To be sure, I will not say, that as "men, whose trade is rat-catching, love to catch rats,"* the politician, who fancies all wrong, may not secretly be delighted with actually finding all wrong, and may even occasionally wish for disaster that he may indulge in invective, as Cardan, we are told, having fixed the time of his death, abstained from food that his prediction might be fulfilled. But this is a mere extraneous circumstance, and can make nothing against the general benefits of free and easy discussion. We live in a land of liberty, my boys! but we should not live in a land of liberty long, if the freedom of the Press was not all alive at fair Edinburgh Town, and democracy a shorter cut, in a Barrister's road, to the Temple of Fame, than Coke upon Littleton.

Proceed then, O ye glory of your times! and persevere in your path to immortality, though earth gape to devour you. Revolutionize the dull minds of your countrymen, shew them 'the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,' and tell them how to come in for them, if they will only away with all "vassal feelings"† of subjection to "the powers that be," and fall down and worship me dear philosophical divinity of reason! Never stand toying with conscience, and manifesting any "painful anxiety to ascertain the exact truth of doubtful passages, and the probable motives of ambiguous actions;"‡ but, embracing some future opportunity "to verify the particulars narrated,"§ touch them off with "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," and leave them to find out the authenticity of the statement as they can. The divinity of reason will dispense with punctilios in politics, and a sic me Deus adjuvat et omnes Sancti, is sufficient authority for any assertion. Be the subject, therefore, what it may, whether an Asiatic research, a History of the Slave Trade, an Edition of Dryden, or a Tale of Flodden Field; in some part or other of the critique, let the cloven foot appear; and so put your heart and soul into the act, and fulminate upon the darling topic, that seized, at length, like the Macedonian Conqueror, with a noble madness; you may actually fancy yourselves under the process of deification:

Assume the God,

Affect to nod,

And seem to shake the spheres!

But it is time to dismiss this futile objection, of which our adversaries are now, I suppose, pretty well ashamed. At any rate let them not imagine that their sarcastic insinuations of want of principle, and of the Edinburgh Reviewers, "finding assertion infinitely more convenient than proof,"|| will give them a moment's uneasiness. For, alas! so alive are they to the anxiety created by their own statements, and so lost to every thing but "the dreadful crisis which is preparing for us,"¶ that, whether you call them Popery,

* Edinburgh Review, No. 26. 338. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. No. 24. 285.
§ Ibid. || Antijacobin, July, 1808. ¶ Edin. Review, No. 26. 461.

or no Poperymen, Jacobins, or Antijacobins; whether you tax them with jumping for King George, or Buonaparte; whether you deem them, like the melancholy minstrel, 'wond'rous wise,' or actually believe them 'mad,' is a matter of no consequence. They are "too much occupied with honest anxiety, even to be conscious of the contempt with which, at another time, they might treat such insinuations."* There's blood for you.—Do you think calumny will ever stick to patriotic spirits like these? Cease, then, your impotent attacks, for 'vital in every part,'

' All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,

' All intellect, all sense!'—*Paradise Lost.*

Let us forbear, then, to dictate to the philosophic mind in what manner it should employ itself. Every man can best appreciate the peculiar adaptation of his own talents.—*Navita de ventis, de tauris narrat arator*.—*Ememorat miles vulnera, pastor oves*.—*Propert.*

The Edinburgh Reviewers feel where their strength lies.—Like Milton, they seem sufficiently acquainted with their own energies, and know what nature has bestowed upon them more bountifully than upon others,—“the power of displaying the vast, illuminating the splendid, enforcing the awful, *darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful!*” † Who then can blame them for making, in this instance, at least, “their strength their law.” Did Delilah do well to cut off Sampson's hair, and to turn him out as sport for the Philistines?—How then can we wish to rob the Edinburgh Reviewers of this cream of their criticisms? Give up their politics, indeed! No, no; stick to your sheet anchor, my boys, say I; and be assured that, by an active hostility against the drooping, half measures of the British government, you will command, with Colonel Wardle, addresses from all quarters; and, like the French invincibles, cover yourselves with glory!

Having thus put to silence, as I humbly hope, a couple of meddling objections, my business brings me to a third, which, on account of its comparative insignificance, I shall presently dispatch: “I have long perceived,” says a writer in the Antijacobin, “that the object of the Edinburgh Review is to run down all literature that can come into competition with *Scotch* literature.” ‡ And another of these snarlers, who, by the bye, has the effrontery to sign himself *Amicus*, very consistently, with the spirit of a friend, presumes to ask, “Will they (the Edinburgh Reviewers) be angry if we suggest, that, generally speaking, when the name of the author, or the printer, is *National*, we have but little doubt that panegyric will ensue?” § Surely impotent malevolence could alone have suggested such a ground of crimination. However, as reproof should, in no case precede inquiry, let us briefly examine the foundation of this censure.

* *Edinburgh Review*, No. 26, 462. † *Johnson's Life of Milton.*

‡ *Antijacobin*, Nov. 1804. § *Ibid.* June, 1807.

That there is, indeed, a sort of national egotism (allow me the expression) which runs through the whole tenor of this celebrated performance, must, I think, be allowed. But, this is no impeachment of their integrity or taste. Are the Edinburgh Reviewers creators of mind? Is it any fault of theirs that the South is less prolific in genius than the North? We may expect shortly, I suppose, to have it objected, that the Scotch are too stout and rawboned a nation; and that it would be more becoming, to reduce themselves, by way of assimilation, to the effeminacy of a Bond-street lounge. To come, however, to the point at once. I will even grant you, without further dispute, that nothing does seem to go down with the Edinburgh Reviewers but Scotch literature; and for this very sufficient reason, that nothing but Scotch literature deserves to go down with them. What learning have we, what politics, what poetry, worth speaking of on either side the Thames? Have not the gentlemen north of the Tweed monopolized the whole circle of arts and sciences? The Simpsons, Blairs, Robertsons, the David Humes, the Adam Smiths, the Walter Scots;—Whom have we to oppose to this batch of Caledonian worthies? Hyperion to a Satyr would not be a greater burlesque upon comparison. With, perhaps, the solitary exception of ———. But I will mention no names.—I will not insult over departed greatness.—I will spare England her blush.

In one respect, indeed, the supremacy of the Scottish nation is, I believe, universally conceded. All their physicians flock to us—none of their physicians return. Like the subtle Patriarch, they set up their staff on this side Jordan, and presently become ‘two bands.’ And as for Diplomas, bless you, Galen’s incantation for a bone in the throat, or a ding dong, *repetatur tertia quaque hora*, is as good as the best; for as the Laureola is famed among old women for working either upwards or downwards, according to the manner of stripping off its leaves; so do these Hippocrates from the Tweed manage to worm themselves into practice whether they kill or cure; and so high an opinion do the good natured people of the South entertain of whatever is imported from a far country, that a Scotchman may do more for them with a clyster and a pair of bagpipes, than an English physician with the *materia medica* and Sydenham at his fingers’ ends. Grave experience will now and then effect much; but, trust me, the “*sublime unintelligible CANT*” of the profession will, at all times, accomplish a vast deal more.

It is idle, however, in the extreme to refuse them the meed of praise upon every subject connected with the best interests of literature. In the grand departments of knowledge, Caledonia stands nobly insulated; and, even in the minor affairs of human ingenuity, it is still *O rare Scotland for ever!* Who lays claim to the invention of the steam engine? * Who reformed the costume of the stage long before Mr. Kemble flourished? † Who was the first practical

* Edinburgh Review, No. 26. 311. † Ibid. No. 24. 466.

dabbler in the gas lights? * Who wrote "a little book, published a few years ago at *Edinburgh*, (mark that) containing more of valuable thinking on constitutional legislation than most other books?" †, Spring they not all from the same happy and highly-favoured soil? Far, indeed, are they from imitating the suspicious temper of the stiff-necked race, and asking, 'Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?' on the contrary, they are firmly persuaded that there is no good thing to be found but in Nazareth.

There is another circumstance, which it may be proper here to notice, as apologizing, in some measure, for this extreme susceptibility of local attachments, which, it seems, their enemies are so ready to mistake for "a determination to disparage all that is excellent in English literature." ‡ It is a duty, where we are out ourselves filled with a flaming ardour, to counteract, as far as possible, the neglect, and ungrateful torpidity of others. Now as Mr. Scott is accused of introducing "scarcely one trait of true Scottish nationality" into his whole exquisite poem of *Marmion*, and is so stupidly philanthropic as to forget to bestow a single "expression of admiration for the beautiful country to which he belongs," § his Reviewers feel themselves, on that very account, more imperiously called upon to supply the omission. Mr. Scott, it is to be hoped, will be thus better taught the duty of a *solicitor*, and when he next essays his art to take captive the whole British Empire, will follow the example of the learned *Æolists*, and perform his adorations, in due solemnity, to the *Almighty-North*,—that ancient deity had in veneration by all the inhabitants of *Megalopolis*.—*Omnium Deorum Boream maxime celebrant*; || for there, and there only, is to be found a concentration of all the virtue and abilities of the realm. Have not we Scotch ministers, Scotch judges, Scotch lawyers, Scotch doctors, Scotch every thing?—Why then, I say, the *Edinburgh Reviewers* do not take too much upon them from this proud pre-eminence.—They have a right to look down on us, they have a right to be partial in their strictures, they have a right to be *Scotch all over*. Who shall presume to dictate rules for modest deportment to *Christophorus*, *Theophrastes*, *Paracelsus*, *Bumbastus*? Has not philosophy bestowed upon them her star and garter, and adopted them as knights of her train. No wonder then, that, viewing themselves in her fascinating looking-glass, they learn the swagger of magisterial importance, and believe themselves to be as great in the eyes of the world as they appear in their own.

Give yourselves no trouble, therefore, my beloved countrymen, about precedence in literature. In the ball-rooms at Bath you may soon find a beau Nash for master of the ceremonies; but if you wish at an introduction to the court of Apollo, behold your Sir Clement Cottrel in the *Edinburgh Reviewers* alone! No one can determine

* *Edinburgh Review*, No. 26. 493. † *Ibid.* No. 26. 309.

‡ *Antijacobin*, June, 1807. § *Edin. Review*, No. 23. 18.

|| *Swift's Tale of a Tub*.

a point of literary etiquette with equal felicity; and it would be as great madness to expect celebrity without their countenance, as to hope to preach before royalty without a *Congé d'élire* from Mrs. Clarke. They can inform us who first, who last, are invited to grace the banquet of the gods.

*Summus Ego, et prope the viscus Turinus, et infra,
Si memini, varius.*—Hoz.

In short, the criticisms of the Edinburgh Review are not to be called in question by our jealous suspicious; and to allege that they are partial to their own countrymen is merely to acknowledge, that, without the intervention of any second sight, they can intuitively discover the preponderance of Scotch merit, though, like the violet, it hides its lowly head, and disclose its existence only by its fragrance.

But I come now to a more serious objection, or rather to a *lerna materum*, a cloud of objections with which the enemies of sound literature have thought proper to pester the public. In the Antijacobin Review, ever the vehicle of attack upon transcendent speculation, it is asserted, "that the Edinburgh Review, instead of bestowing praise where due, makes war on the whole host of authors, and mangles them without mercy for the amusement of the public."* And its writers are further accused of "labouring to find fault,"† and of being "eager to find fault, indifferent whether they are right or wrong."‡ Moreover, "indiscriminate scurrility"§ is said to be their characteristic, and which they pour, in particular, "on every work of merit."|| In short, by "garbled statements, rash assertions, pointed invectives," wilful misrepresentations,¶ and a skilful habit of "proportioning the decision of their tone to their ignorance of the subject."** This "heretical, but, alas! popular work," has, too, unfortunately, succeeded in "the art of giving interest to indiscriminate abuse."††

Merit, in a world like this, will never be without its mortification.—*Que se fait brebis le loup se mange.* Here is, indeed, such a harvest of spite, that I hardly know where to put my sickle in first. Besides, the calumny is of so broad and overwhelming a nature, that it becomes difficult to rebut it by any of the usual modes of modest defence. Unreasonable men, to be sure, will expect unreasonable things; but though Xerxes, we are told, whipped the sea, and writ a challenge to Mount Athos, it yet by no means follows, that I am bound to imitate so illustrious an example, and, like the Thracians, shoot my arrows against Heaven because it thunders and lightens. Though, however, I am not very fond of opposing myself to a host of nobody knows who, and am no Hercules either to overcome the Nemean Lion, or to cleanse the Augean stable, I will yet, barring these fool-hardy labours, do what I can against this rabble of-revilers.

* Antijacobin, June, 1807. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid.
|| Ibid. Nov. 1807. ¶ Ibid. June, 1807. ** Ibid. July, 1808.
†† Ibid. Feb. 1807. §§ Ibid.

Now as two of a trade can never agree, I don't wonder that the Antijacobin should give circulation to such a peck of slanderous reports; but, I confess, I do much wonder that any person of plain common sense should lend an ear to them. Before "the flippancy and injustice of the beardless critics of the Edinburgh Review" * are too strongly insisted upon, before they are advised to write for the future "with more caution and less pertness;" † let us recollect their own excellent remark, that "timidity is a much more universal and powerful source of human misery than rashness." ‡ Let us also bear in mind that "the VINDICATORS OF NEWTON" § scruple not to acknowledge that there are in the world "many powerful understandings;" || and that they even go so far as to confess, that, among these, there may be men actually "wiser than themselves." ¶ And don't they pay these aforesaid powerful understandings the compliment to declare, that they shall resume their speculations upon a certain important subject, only upon condition "of its seeming to them that any good is likely to be derived from it?" ** Now where prey is the pertness and presumption of all this?

(To be Continued.)

MISCELLANIES.

English Chapels in Scotland.

To the Editor of the Antijacobin Review.

SIR,

Having for several years past been a reader of your Critical Journal, I invariably found much pleasure in perusing your vigorous and manly sentiments in favour of Church and State. My wish to support the Episcopal Church, as established in England and Ireland, and as now tolerated in Scotland, is sincere. I therefore beg leave, through the medium of your Journal, to inform the public concerning the anomalous state of some of the Clergy in Scotland, pretending to be English Episcopalians, though acting in direct opposition to the leading principle of Episcopacy.—Not being a clergyman myself, I cannot speak positively as to the terms of the ordination of a Clergyman when ordained by his Bishop; but I presume, as Episcopacy implies, the Clergyman is bound to recognise the jurisdiction of the Bishop within whose diocess he officiates. The excellent form of prayer, precribed by our common prayer book, seems also to imply, that the Clergyman who uses it is a component part of the Episcopal Church, and as such prays for his Bishop.—A few Clergyman, however, who were ordained in England, and

* Antijacobin, July, 1808. † Ibid. June, 1807.

‡ Edinburgh Review, No. 26. 308. § Ibid. No. 25. 109.

|| Ibid. No. 26. 311. ¶ Ibid. ** Ibid. No. 26. 308.

REVIEWERS REVIEWED.

An Apology for the Edinburgh Review,

(Concluded from page 437.)

But I will not bottom my apology upon such narrow and contemptible grounds. I will boldly speak out at once, and proclaim that if, occasionally, there be somewhat of daring and "rash assertion" in the Edinburgh Review, there is yet no more of it than is duly authorized by its just assumption of all the critical acumen of the realm. And I will further venture to add, that "the age is a good age, or a bad age,"* according as it applauds or neglects, not that "most learned, most arrogant, and most absurd, work,"† the "*Divine legation of Moses*," which "hundreds might have put together,"‡ and which nobody now cares about; but the EDINBURGH REVIEW, which "no man living, probably, could have written,"§ and which every body must be enraptured with who admires "great force of conception, great spirit and animation of expression, great humour, great powers of description, great pathos, great discernment of character,"|| together with "spirit and originality in almost every thing that is said, and, in every thing that is said well, a charming facility which gives a grace even to occasional rudeness."¶ Every other periodical production you may peruse with as much *ennui* as you will. You may read and dose, and dose, and read again. But it is not so, let me tell you, with the Edinburgh Review; you see there one vast field of intense thought throughout, where attention is rivetted, and mental exertion in vain endeavours to find relief. It is not, take me up or lay me down as you please, but take me up and lay me down *if you can*. The stream of intellect flows on clear, full, and deep. The ample page 'rich with the spoils of time' is unfolded, and we are made philosophers and politicians of the first water, as it were, in spite of ourselves. We feel the fire of their blood in our veins; their enthusiasm thrills through our very frame; their patriotic ardour pervades our bosoms; their deep paintings of public wrongs inflame us to madness; undauntedly 'snatching the balance and the rod.' We form their plans, fight their battles, wield their thunders, dart their lightnings; and the whole Universe bows to the potency of our energies, until, at length, so overpowering is the sublime frenzy, we rise from the perusal of the Edinburgh Review as something more than mortal, and almost fancy we could sit down and write a number of that divine work ourselves. Nay, it is well, if even sleep puts an end to the extravagance of our admiration; for as the Persian Monarch was heard to cry out, three times, in the dead of night, "I have got Themistocles;" so it is odds, but we may be caught, by and by, in the midst of an alarming dream, vociferating, with transport, 'I have digested the Edinburgh Review!'

* Edinburgh Review, No. 26. 355. † Ibid. No. 26. 346.

‡ Ibid. No. 25. 117. § Ibid. ¶ Ibid. No. 26. 255. ¶ Ibid.

And must minds of such high bearing be called upon to give a reason for every trifling departure from the stale, common walks of literature? Surely, if "at the sound of a fiddle, away rush secretary, president, and committee, to clap the cotillion into the Compter," * our Reviewers may be permitted to anatomize the pestiferous productions of the day without all this fulsome cant about their severity, their pertness, and their indecorous presumption. Besides, it is not that they wish to carry things with a high hand, or so frequently to "produce themselves in person" † were there aught in their author worth producing. But, as a feast of reason is to be furnished out some how or other, they must even have recourse to their own larder of its poor marketing abroad. Any thing is better than yesterday's dinner dressed over again.

I suspect, however, that the revilers of the Edinburgh Reviewers are upon a wrong scent. It is no such thing as undue confidence, the *eris mihi magnus Apollo*, that possesses them,--it is a mere seizure of the moment for animated representation. Gradual, indeed, at first, rises their "stirrings of ambition," ‡ like the "blind groping of Homer's Cyclops round the walls of his cave;" § but it is soon allowed by a fearless daring of "great and original genius, a strong divinity of soul, a decided and irresistible vocation to glory;" ||—Gemit impositis incudibus Ætna, and presently the whole storm of sublime invective follows. Woe, then, to that unlucky wight who happens to fall within the dreaded vortex of their fury; for though you may, indeed, as antique love records, cut a man through the middle, and join him together again, yet no *balsam of fierabrass* will ever more, alas! set that work upon its legs that has been branded by the *veto* of their hang, draw, and quarter criticisms. You may down with all cravings and ravings after notoriety, I assure you; for if the Delphian oracle be unpropitious, the Temple of Fame becomes a mere castle in the air.

Believe me, the Edinburgh Reviewers are not such converts to the fashion of their country as to carry about with them, wherever they go, the mark of North of the Tweed, and *boo* themselves into favour where they can command a passage, sword in hand. These little arts they leave to little men; and if they, at times, do assume somewhat more consequence than may seem strictly to become them, a few dignified airs may, peradventure, be pardoned to the only rational critics since the days of Longinus. Men of mighty powers, who, without "revolting arrogance," ¶ without "offensive coarseness," ** without "controversial invective," †† are endeavouring to sink the price of Hellebore, and forbidding "Bishops to doze in their mitres," §§ must not be thwarted in their useful designs by the groundless alarms of Antijacobin hypocondriacs.

* Edinburgh Review, No. 26. 341. † Ibid. No. 23. 212.

‡ Ibid. No. 26. 256. § Ibid. || Ibid. No. 26. 259.

¶ Ibid. No. 26. 350. ** Ibid. †† Ibid.

§§ Ibid. No. 26. 346.

As to the severity of the Edinburgh Review, which our adversaries seem to make the *ne plus ultra* of their criminations, it is not, perhaps, irrelevant to observe *a priori*, that a charge of this kind comes with a very ill grace from such as are determined to carp at every thing they meet with, and who would even decipher the spots in the sun, if it did not blink them to look on it. How can they, with any consistency, censure the asperity of others, who shew, by these ill-natured propensities, how little inclination they have to renounce asperity themselves.

But it is idle to prate of severity.—Pray who, now-a-days, reads any of your wishy-washy, milk and water trumpery? We live in an age of passion and appetite; for a thing to go down, it must be well seasoned.—And as Horace justly observes, on another occasion,

Si—— sine Amore, jocisque

Nil est jucundum, vivas in Amore jocisque.

So if it be the taste of the times that “every period be concluded with a lash,”* why we must even submit to it. The Edinburgh cooks pretty well know what dishes will best suit their own ordinary. They must have a tough, roughish food for the sharp air of the North. Calm and dispassionate criticisms only agree with your squeamish stomachs. To ensure solid beef and pudding, they must cut and slash away, with might and main, to the very end of the chapter.

Ought it, further, to escape recollection, that, having frequently vain and pompous gentry to deal with, it becomes necessary to make use of proportionate means. Bedlam is not the only department in which human beings occasionally fancy themselves Kings and Queens, the *Naviget Anticyram* is of more universal application. A little reasonable castigation, therefore, serves to keep down the literary mania; and, indeed, I see not how severity can be avoided with certain moon-struck writers, unless, as an eminent wit observes, “you bate them the circumstances of method, and style, and grammar, and invention.”† Were it not for these well-timed corrections, we should have the Archdeacon of Wilts fancying himself an historian, and Warburton setting up for an orthodox divine. Nay, I should not be surprized if, some of these days, the Reverend Julius Hutcherson were to make pretensions to loyalty, and the very Chancellor of the Exchequer to put in his claim for common sense. These roisterers are to be held at arm’s length only by the dread of their critical whip. Too high fed in the South, we want a little wholesome humiliation; and if sack-cloth and ashes, and a good sweating into the bargain, will bring us to our senses, I know of no better doctors to sweeten such a corruption of humours than the Edinburgh Reviewers.—Would you have them, by a whining methodical clemency, to “render absurdity eternal, and ignorance indestructible?”‡ Like Kings and Princes of this lower world, they ‘are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.’—Bene merenti, bene profuerit—male merenti, par erit.

* Edinburgh Review. † Swift. ‡ Edin. Review, No. 26. 338.

As for those who are so nervous that, though they can find courage to write, they yet want courage to hear what is said of their writings, and who, therefore, do 'exceedingly fear and tremble' when the eagles of St. Kilda claw hold of their half-fledged progeny; truly, the best advice I can give these poor souls will, I doubt, be wisdom thrown away. They had better sing some sweet lullaby to their senses till the storm blows over them; or if they have a mind to risk the experiment, and to try whether Cerberus can be coaxed to open his mouth for a sop, there is no law, that I know of, against it. Genius certainly has its "dispensing power,"* and, indeed, it must be confessed, some countenance has been given, by sagacious philosophers, to secret presumptions of this nature; for if you recollect "Lord Peter's bulls, that were sometimes set a rowing to fright naughty boys, would belch, and spit, and snivel, out fire, and keep up a perpetual coil till you flung them a bit of gold; but then—*Pulveris exigui jactu*—they would grow calm and quiet as lambs."†

Now, though I would not be understood to compare our Caledonian sages with these outrageous animals, it is yet, perhaps, no unreasonable conjecture that, *Ceteris paribus*, an author's tears would, at least, go as far with them as his reproaches. For though men of stupendous intellect, they are yet, fortunately for humanity, "of like passions" with the rest of their race. It is very probable, therefore, that they might be susceptible of pity for his sufferings, when they would not care the cracking of a loose about his rage. After all, however, it must be allowed to be a very delicate point; and whether we had better appease them by garlands and sacrifices, or pluck up a spirit, and boldly bid them kiss our ——— at once, I leave to the determination of the learned.

As to the notion that the Edinburgh Reviewers are too fastidious, and that they wantonly condemn what all the world has conspired to applaud; this is rather, as I take it, a feather in their cap, than any slur upon their judgment; for who does not instantly discover that peculiar delicacy of perception is, in fact, their greatest commendation, and one of their strongest claims upon popular applause.—*Plus esse in uno sæpe, quam in turba boni.* What, go with the beau monde, and admire "*Cælebs in search of a Wife*," because every body reads it, and affects to be in raptures with it? We might as well dress up fashion in a puritanical program at once, and send her out as a companion for piety in patterns. It is recorded of Milton, that "of his praise he was very frugal; as he set its value high, and considered his mention of a name as a security against the waste of time, and a certain preservative from oblivion"‡ And who, pray, more entitled than our sage divan to imitate so illustrious an example; they who have already placed *Murmion* among the constellations, and (as I am informed) have dismissed poor *Cælebs*, with a cap and bells, to the *Tavernacle*? They must suffer their staid reason to be taken

* Edinburgh Review, No. 26. 253. † Swift's Tale of a Tub.

‡ Johnson's Life of Milton.

captive at a glance. To what pitch might not that "effeminate licence of tongue,"* which they justly consider as so "ominous an appearance," † in process of time, arrive at, were they to relax from their severity and admit all to be gold that glitters. No, no; the Edinburgh Reviewers know their business better,—*Nil admirari*, is, luckily for polite literature, the foundation of their standard of taste; I trust, where the "Muses nine and songs divine" are concerned, they will not abate one jot of it, except on the favourite ground of your staunch critic of antiquity.

Qui redit ad fastos, et virtutem æstimat annis,

Miraturque nihil, nisi quod Libitina sacravit. ‡

Proceed then, O illustrious progeny of the Minister of Palmira!—Proceed undauntedly in your career of glory! Be harsh, be bold, be fastidious, as may best comport with the dignity of your doings.—*Fortius utere loris*. "Indulge yourselves in severe reflection," § and never mind accidentally "running foul of some of your own sentences." || The elegant architecture of Greece may do very well for your soft Italian scenery; but in wild and barbarous regions, we must have strong Gothic buildings that shall set time and tempests at defiance. ¶ You are entrusted with the preservation of literature. See that the commonwealth take no harm. Be alive to its best interests; dive into the very soul of an author; analyze his meaning to the quick, and tell us all he says, and all he thinks. Play Peter Aretin among the nobles of the land, use 'great swelling words,' and be not 'afraid to speak evil of dignities;' a fig for names of reputation,—the higher your game, the nobler your sport. Strip off the false glare of meretricious ornament, and produce us the Iliad, compressed into a nutshell; cry havoc amid the trembling heroes of the Dunciad; doom to obscurity the petty popular productions of the Thames; and and let no sound be heard throughout the unbounded extent of your dominions, but "Tweed's ceaseless plash;" ** Thus, as the glory of Euripides had all Greece for a monument, shall all Scotland celebrate that production—that *monstrum sine vitio*, as one might almost term it, which, defying the *Index Expurgatorius* of a bigotted Antijacobin Junto, is destined to establish its fame on the plaudits of the universe.

Having thus, I trust, demolished this cordon of objections, it will be a task of less difficulty to invalidate a slight one that remains, and which may well create surprize to the general reader, viz. the *grammatical improprieties* of the Edinburgh Review; for this I take to be the main drift of the censure, that its articles are, some of them, written in "a rambling, scrambling manner." †† How, in the name of wonder, such an objection could enter their heads, I cannot conceive; for the temerity of such a charge must be abundantly evident.

* Edinburgh Review. † Ibid. ‡ Hor. Ep. ad. August.

§ Edinburgh Review. || Ibid. ¶ Kaim's Elements of Criticism.

** Edinburgh Review. †† Antijacobin Review.

But, I suppose, having once passed the Rubicon, they desperately attack, at random, every thing they fall in with. I'll "turn the rogues' jackets for them," however, before I have done with them.

That the Edinburgh Reviewers, though "as little open as most men to minute criticism,"* may yet occasionally offend against the *technica* of grammar is very possible; but they have themselves advanced no despicable apology for these accidental deviations, in a passage, to which I cannot immediately refer, but which made a strong impression on my mind, when I read it. And, speaking of the supposed necessity, or even desirableness of accuracy of language upon all occasions, it is, if I recollect, an opinion of a celebrated philosopher, that "a man cannot even give a more certain mark of the narrowness of his mind, and of the little progress he has made in true science, than to shew that this business (of grammar) is of much moment with him." † Genius, therefore, you see, is not expected to be minutely correct. An understanding, formed like the Stagirite's, "to look all nature through," and to lead the benighted soul, *Ex umbra in Solem*, must not have its chain of profound speculations broken in upon by these pedantic desiderata. Who would dream of fettering reasonings, that are intended to emancipate man from the superstitions of childhood; and to revolutionize the world of mind, by a ridiculous attention to such scholastic trifles? A pretty thing truly, to pretend to curb their "visions of philosophy," ‡ and to call them off from "the magical effusions of an inflamed fancy," § by reminding them of the connection between nouns, pronouns, verbs, and participles!

Not, however, to shelter our Reviewers under arguments of this general nature, and thus tacitly to allow the validity of a charge altogether as fabulous as the existence of the Rhipæan mountains; I will boldly dare the enemy in the open field at once, and render "confusion worse confounded," by proving, to the satisfaction of every reader of true taste, that, so far from being either awkward in its collocations, or uncouth in its phraseology, the language of the Edinburgh Review is really "of the purest metal, and marked with the finest die;" ¶ that it abounds, in every page, with all that "constitutes strength of writing, and stamps the character of vigour upon every syllable;" ** that you find in it no babyish interjections, no "puling expletives," no "stuff about dancing, daffodils, and sister Emelines," †† no "accumulation of hyperbolical expressions which shew the determination to be impressive without the power;" ‡‡ but that, partaking of the subject and sentiment, it becomes in their hands a dignified vehicle of thought, and even the more noble for its graceful "neglect of rhetorical accuracy." †††

* Edinburgh Review, No. 23. 191.

† Priestley's Grammar. § Edinburgh Review, No. 25. 137.

|| Ibid. ¶ Ibid. No. 26. 274. 255. 276. 255. ** Ibid.

†† Ibid. §§ Ibid. ††† Ibid. No. 24. 355.

To be sure they are not, like some authors we could mention, such haberdashers of points and particles, as to be constantly upon the rack about the propriety of their phraseology, "beating their foreheads, and boxing their noses for rage, that they cannot come to a resolution whether they shall write face or visage, jail or gaol, eery or rabbit." * On the contrary, they fall naturally into all the graces of speech, and have an innate sense of whatever is elegant and becoming; so that it may safely be concluded, that even where they seem most to set a classical chasteness at naught, they, in fact, most consult it.

"Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,
Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream."

Though, therefore, I am well aware that I shall be in danger of throwing pearls before swine, and of taking my labour for my pains; yet as it comports with the scope of my apology, and which would, indeed, be imperfect without it, I will bring you forward such a string of examples of grammatical purity as evince, not only that the Edinburgh Reviewers perfectly understand the nature of those adscitious graces of language, but that, even in their most playful effusions, they are not unmindful of its becoming genius to relax with dignity, and, if it does condescend to be kittenish, at least to sport itself in "an elegant prattlement." †

Now, there are certain leading words in almost every language, that seem to claim a sort of hereditary prescription. Remember this, for it is the clue that must guide us through the etymological labyrinth. The objectors to the language of the Edinburgh Review will need all their assurance to brazen out the consequences of their own stupidity and tastelessness. Like the cock on the dunghill, they know not the value of the jewel they despise. O you Hotentots in literature!—What you never, I suppose, heard of "reading and reasoning animals;" ‡ or of "the pitch of a lady's sentiments;" § or of "a diet too inflammatory for the constitution;" ¶ or of people "supping full of horrors;" ¶¶ or of a man of sense "trembling every inch of him;" ** or of the Irish nation being "worried into a better theology;" †† or of "the springiness of a manner," ‡‡ and the "voracity of an antiquary;" §§ or that "the eloquence of Pitt consisted mainly in his talent for sarcasm." ||| And you never, probably, expressed any strong predilection for four beautiful *littles* in four lines; ¶¶ nor have ever fallen in with "the tact for truth;" * nor with persons who may have doubted your word; but have been convinced by your "showing." † And you have seldom, I dare say, met with works, (like the Edinburgh Review!) "in the most constant state of perusal," ‡

* *Quavado's Visions.* † Edinburgh Review, No. 26. 366.

‡ Ibid. No. 24. 410. § Ibid. No. 25. 6. ¶ Ibid. No. 24. 278.

¶ Ibid. No. 23. 9. ** Ibid. No. 24. 441. †† Ibid. No. 26. 82.

‡‡ Ibid. No. 25. 132. §§ Ibid. No. 25. 134. ||| Ibid. No. 25. 136.

¶¶ Ibid. No. 20. 186. * Ibid. No. 23. 206. † Ibid. No. 23. 213.

‡ Ibid. No. 23. 223.

and, so far from being "balked,"* found them, "by a good many degrees," † the ablest critiques of the day, notwithstanding the writer may, now and then, "lay his abuse about him" ‡ with an unsparing hand. All these graces of diction, I imagine, are lost upon you.— Nay, I should not wonder if you were even "so dreamy and ridiculous" § as to withhold your admiration from a treat to the lovers of fine writing, like the following: "We do not offer these passages as specimens of very exquisite poetry, but they possess the merit, *we think*, of truth and simplicity. There is something modest, and amiable, and natural, *we think*, throughout the whole composition; and, being satisfied that there are many readers to whom it will afford more pleasure than it has done to us, *we think* it right to make this little effort to make them and the author acquainted. *We think* he may do something better than make poems upon field sports." ¶

As I just now observed, leading words will always be uppermost. Thus "political events are not the only events which are recorded even in ancient history; and now, when it is generally admitted that even political events, &c." ¶ Here the capacious imagination of the Reviewer is, you see, full of events; for, I think, not less than five or six more of them occur in the very next page, notwithstanding the abundant use of them in the preceding. So, again, in another critique, where the subject seems overpowering, we find "It is quite impossible, it is quite certain, it is quite clear, it is quite inconceivable, it is quite evident,* &c. &c. &c.; for, you know, what does it signify for a matter to be certain, or clear, or evident, or impossible, or inconceivable, if we are not, in all such cases, as sure as sure can be." † It appears to us, *we will* acknowledge, extremely absurd †† to do things by halves; and, however usual it may be, "we cannot say that we vehemently admire it." †† The proverb sagely remarks, strike while the iron is hot, and when you have caught a word by the tale, take care and hold it fast. I am sure the Edinburgh Reviewers set us a very good example, for having fallen in love with "the magnificent regions" §§ of South America, they very naturally follow it up, in the next page, with a magnificent source of industry," and "a magnificent undertaking;" and, indeed, the composition of the whole article throughout may be said to be magnificent. We hope no offence from the freedom of our remarks, for, upon my honour, "we throw out these things from no invidious motives, but merely from a desire to reduce things to their proper level," ||| and to prove that, in no instance, do the Edinburgh Reviewers abate one tittle of "their wonted attention to the minutiae of style," ¶¶ though they may, now and then, to those who see no further than their nose, seem to write in "a rambling, scrambling manner."

* Edinburgh Review, No. 23. 223. † Ibid. No. 23. 246.

‡ Ibid. No. 23. 247. § Ibid. No. 23. 240. ¶ Ibid. No. 25. 76.

¶ Ibid. No. 24. 298. ** Ibid. No. 24. Art. 4.

†† Ibid. No. 24. 305. †† Ibid. p. 304. §§ Ibid. No. 26. 280.

||| Ibid. No. 24. 395. ¶¶ Ibid. No. 24. 355.

But there would be no end of replying to every pretty caviller. Suffice it to observe, that the phraseology of the Edinburgh Review will be most admired where it is best understood. And, indeed, whoever is not "very greatly moved and delighted with the greater part" * of that elaborate composition, and ready to declare that he has "not met with any thing nearly so good" † in the annals of ancient or modern times, had better, at once, call out, with Philoxenus, to be carried back again to the quarries. For my part, I should be glad to be informed where finer specimens of attic composition are to be found than the following, so eminently illustrative of their own sweet remark, that "there are beauties of style, which, like night violets, send forth their odours, themselves unnoticed; the traveller receives the gentle refreshment as he hurries on, without knowing or asking whence it proceeds." ‡ "And the illustrious names which have already reached to the summit of excellence, act like the tall and spreading trees of the forest, which overshadow and strangle the saplings which have struck root in the soil below." § "They contain much more bad taste, and are written with far more apparent labour. His poetry was almost all written primarily from feeling, and only secondarily from ambition. His letters seem to have been nearly all composed as exercises and for display. There are few of them written with simplicity." || "Of the additional poems we have but little to say; we have little doubt of their authenticity." ¶ "As we have no means of knowing, with precision, to what extent his writings are known." ** "The brilliant prospects which seem to be opened up for our species in the new world." †† "And Miranda, with so many other virtuous men, were buried in the dungeons of the revolution." ‡‡ "Neither the author nor the editor have stated, &c." §§ "The means could not be long of presenting themselves." ¶¶ "If these things get to any great height, they throw an air of insignificance over those branches of the government to whom these cares properly devolve, and whose authority is, by these means, assisted till it is superseded." * "If it be asked who are the constituted authorities, who are legally appointed to watch over morals, and whose functions the society usurp." † "In which all the presumption and ambition of his nature was, &c." § "Sightless crew does not mean invisible, as the author wishes it to do, but blind." || "But it is a work of great elegance, and, at least, equal to the Fabliaux, translated by the late Mr. Way, which, indeed, are liable to the same objection which we have made to Mr. Rose's diction. No objection can, however, be made, and much praise must be given, &c." ¶¶

* Edinburgh-Review, No. 24. 271. † Ibid. No. 24. 401.

‡ Ibid. No. 24. 355. § Ibid. No. 26. 250. || Ibid. No. 26. 256.

¶ Ibid. No. 26. 274. ** Ibid. No. 26. 275. †† Ibid. No. 26. 279.

‡‡ Ibid. No. 26. 289. §§ Ibid. No. 26. 327. ¶¶ Ibid. No. 26. 329.

* Ibid. No. 26. 336. † Ibid. § Ibid. No. 26. 345. 422.

|| Ibid. ¶¶ Ibid. No. 26. 422.

In these instances, now, you perceive no "pedantry or affected loftiness,"* but a plain simplicity and easy negligence of diction, which bespeak a mind intent upon great things, and stooping unwillingly to "the metaphysical perfection of language;"† though nobody certainly more capable than the Edinburgh Reviewers "to render a dissertation on grammar interesting to the general reader."‡ For if you observe, in every one of these examples "without subjecting the words to any settled collocation, the sense, nevertheless, seems perspicuous."§ We must not, therefore, wonder that writers of such nice discrimination should be unable to tolerate, even in the god of their idolatry, sentences that "grievously sin against the canons of taste."¶ What could they, in the name of Apollo and the nine Muses, think of passages like the following:—"the king made no point of adhering to his concessions, the style of thinking of the country, the crying injustice of certain proceedings, the swearing away the lives of accomplices."¶¶ I dare say they thrilled all over at the sight of such unsanctified violations of the rules of composition; so careful as they are in their own critiques to avoid these wretched infirmities;—these "little odds and ends of information,"** as we may call them.—No, no; you never find their flights of sublimity clothed in "the heroics of the hulks."†† With them you may make sure of the genuine *Æs Corinthium* upon all occasions.

I must, therefore, beg leave to differ, *toto caelo*, from those who contend that the dialect of the Edinburgh Review is, in any degree, ungrammatical; but if people are so besotted as not to know cheese from charcoal, they must even be suffered to hug themselves in their own ignorance, and to fancy poor Priscian's head in danger still. There is, unfortunately, no calling to order in these cases; for, as has been judiciously remarked, "the standard of taste is so flexible, that a dián is not within the reach of censure, even where he prefers the Saracen's head upon a sign-post to the best tablature of Raphaël."§§ Let them be careful, however, how they venture upon criminations that may finally redound to their own shame. What, I suppose, they wanted nothing, in the true John Bull spirit, but mere jog-trot English. But, I trust, the Edinburgh Reviewers will never surrender their splendid specimens of "purest, and most characteristic, Scotch,"¶¶¶ to accommodate themselves to so gothic a perversion of intellect. If they are to paint for eternity, they must not vary their phraseology for every "uncolledie" that may affect to condemn it; for neither Jamie Foster nor John Tamson wad fash themselves to mend a brig that was to serve a' the folk in the Glen."¶¶¶¶

And now it should seem as if my apology might be pretty well drawn to an end; and that, having run the gauntlet through the

* Edinburgh Review, No. 24. 304. † Ibid. No. 26. 379. 381.

‡ Ibid. § Ibid. ¶ Ibid. No. 25. 169. ¶¶ Ibid. No. 24. 304.

** Ibid. No. 24. 449. †† Ibid. No. 26. 254.

§§ Kaim's Elements of Criticism. ¶¶¶ Edin. Review, No. 24. 405.

¶¶¶ Ibid. No. 24. 404.

whole circle of calumnies, there should be nothing more to do than to make my bow, and retire. But what infidel ever acknowledged his conversion?—What Thersites ever grew tired of railing? Incompetent to substantiate the shadow of a charge against its literary merit, our adversaries are, at length, reduced to the miserable subterfuge, that, with whatever ability it may be written, the Edinburgh Review is yet—(risum teneatis!)—*very irregular in its publication!* The mountain has, indeed, been in labour to some purpose. Absurd, however, as this expiring slander is, I am not, upon the whole, sorry that they have ventured to produce it; inasmuch as they hereby afford us an opportunity of reaping the fruits of our investigation, and, by a fair and full disclosure of the springs of Genius, of remunerating ourselves for these idle censures, and of turning the tables upon them with a vengeance.

Be it remembered then, in the first place, that, though the Edinburgh Reviewers certainly do stipulate to give to the public four numbers of their Attic Miscellany by the year, they yet do not stipulate when those numbers shall make their appearance. The press-boy has, indeed, an idle trick of tacking to the delivery of each journal an unmeaning intimation of the birth of the next. But this is a mere rhetorical figure by which *numerus Certus pro incerto ponitur*, and evidently used without the knowledge of his employers. It might, in future, however, be advisable, by way of appeasing anxiety of expectation, to substitute, for any peculiar settlement of time, the mere general expression of No. — will be published *as soon as the polishing season is over!* Thus will they put a stop to the violation of truth, and will double, instead of disappointing, the golden hopes of their readers;—two grand circumstances in the concerns of a man's spiritual and temporal welfare.

Surely nothing can be more ridiculous than to effect to calculate the efforts of mind, and to lay down stated periods for the progression of human thought. Montaigne has, I think, somewhere observed, that it is a hard thing to close up a discourse, when we are once in, and have a great deal more to say. In the heat and enthusiasm of composition, where there is "an extraordinary sensibility to all powerful emotions."* I don't wonder that the Edinburgh Reviewers should, now and then, forget how the time goes.—When beautiful ideas rush across them,--when they are "adorning what is grand, or kindling what is interesting,"†--when they are giving up the whole heart and soul to the luxuries of speculations, and "lofty principles, and glimpses of great theory,"‡ electrify their strained faculties, and hurry them almost beyond themselves; how is it possible they should remember times and seasons? In such a feverie of god-like dreaming every thing under the Sun is obliterated;—the very Universe is as a speck before them! Even David Hume, and Charles Fox, and Napoleon the Great, and Walter Scott, Esq.

* Edinburgh Review, No. 25, 8. † Ibid. No. 25, 136.

‡ Ibid.

himself, are no longer remembered. It is the immensity of their own conceptions that occupy attention,—the exercise of their own mighty powers that, “passing the flaming bounds of place and time—*flammantia moenia mundi,*” annihilate every object, but the “visions of glory,” and the “unborn ages,” that crowd on their entranced souls. O, impotent! to talk of periodical regularity to minds “invested, for the moment, with such dignified feelings,”* and hurried away by the rapidity of their ideas, to “climes beyond the Solar road.”

“Why, Sirs, *they* do bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus, and we petty men
Walk under their huge legs.”

Before, therefore, we can bring any vague objections of this kind home, it becomes us to consider the *Cui bono* of their tendency. For what, suffer me to ask, are the Edinburgh Reviewers about, when they thus keep the Empire in suspense by the delay of their publication? They are reducing luxuriance within the bounds of sense; they are identifying the statue of Phidias with the shield of Minerva; they are touching, retouching, and animating, the features with every fascination, and folding up the drapery with every grace, *Phidiacum vivebat Ebur*. In short, they are preparing to astonish; and astonish they infallibly will, so that whoever, after all this cost and trouble, should refuse to be enraptured, must be reduced to Momus’s alternative, and bid Venus take off her slippers.

Employed in “the cares of minute accuracy and high finishing,”† we are not then to be surprized, that hours, and days, and weeks, and even months, glide away unperceived. Buffon, we are told, wrote his “*Etudes, &c.*” eighteen times over and it may, therefore, easily be believed, that neither the “Code de la conscription,” the “*Letter aux Espagnols Americains,*” the “*Examination of the Expedition against Copenhagen;*” nor, indeed, any other article of the Edinburgh Review is manufactured *ad libitum*. *Non cuivis homini continget adire Corinthum*. It is “with no vulgar helps,”‡ I assure you, that they thus periodically enrapture the literary world, who stand gaping to catch at whatever comes, like the groupe of Poets, described by the artist, lapping up the stream running from Homer’s mouth. No wonder that No. 26, which was announced for publication in January, did not, in fact, make its appearance until March;—the wonder, indeed, is, that a body of such profound speculation, which so admirably develops the organization of French conquest, demonstrates the wretched situation we have reduced things to in the old world, and points out the brilliant prospects opened for us in the new, should have been brought forward for public idolization in any reasonable compass of time at all. Peter Bales’s Lord’s Prayer, Belief, and Ten Commandments, with the day of the Month,

* Edinburgh Review, No. 25. 121. † Ibid. No. 26. 251, 429.

‡ Ibid.

Year of the Lord, and Reign of the Queen, all written within the circle of a silver penny, is a mere nothing to it.

Who, then, but the vilest "scoffers at the divinity of talents,"* would wish the Edinburgh Review to make its appearance a single day before the measure of its sublimity is filled up! What dull, gothic soul is there among its numerous readers, that, for the sake of receiving it a little more in season, would dispense with those "bursts of unequal, and energetic composition,"† poured forth in a "tone of spirit and animation unchecked by timidity,"‡ which mark it with characters of fire, and bespeak its oracular inspiration throughout? The Edinburgh Review, if I may be allowed to call that by any earthly name, which seems more like the effort of mind released from the clog of mortality, than any mere human publication;—the Edinburgh Review is destined to descend to posterity, the completest depository of sound politics, and of genuine *true-blue* philosophy, that any age, or nation, has ever been blessed with.—"If all the books in the world were committed at once to the flames, there is no book which I should so speedily rescue as—"§ this celebrated Journal, whose fame is very deservedly "gone out into all lands,"—à Gadibus usque auroram et Gangem, "and its words unto the end of the world."

From the contemplation of such distinguished excellenc I turn with regret. After the delicious enjoyment of the Edinburgh Review, the perusal of any periodical performance is absolute *asafœtida*; sentiment out of the question, even their very language is *unique*, and sets all competition at defiance. Like Milton, they may be said to "labour after words suitable to the grandeur of their ideas,"|| and to find them "sink under them." Occasionally, indeed, they "invest themselves with grace, but their natural port is *gigantic loftiness*"¶ They can "please when pleasure is required, but it is their peculiar power to *ASTONISH*."**

This, now, I hold to be the perfection of Genius, when it is of so pliant and versatile a nature as to be able to dart its rays at pleasure, and to enlighten North, South, East, or West, as you please, like "that great man, Mr. Prig, the auctioneer, whose manner was so inimitably fine, that he had as much to say upon a ribbon as a Raphael." In one respect, indeed, the Reviewers of the North have a manifest advantage over our exalted poet of the South. For Dr. Johnson has observed, that "Paradise Lost is one of the books which the reader admires, and lays down, and forgets to take up again;"—whereas the pages of the Edinburgh Review never fatigue. There you may look, with security, for entertainment; for, be the argument what it may, in their manner of treating it, Genius is sure to be elicited; and as the Hebrus was fabled to roll its waters over golden sands, so do we behold them enriching every region through which their eloquence winds, and turning the waste and solitary wilderness

* Edinburgh Review. † Ibid. No. 23. 3. ‡ Ibid. § Menage.
|| Johnson's Life of Milton. ¶ Ibid. ** Ibid.

into a vale of Tempe.—Like Dryden, “ who felt a confidence that every subject would become poetical under his hand,”* they seem sufficiently conscious of the magic of their own compositions. To grandeur of thought, therefore, they add an attic elegance of language; and, amid high cares for the preservation of the British Empire, (now universally allowed to depend upon an adoption of their political speculations) they find time so to adjust exclamation, amplification, gradation, and all the moving figures of speech, as to impart to their Critical Journal even a sort of stage-effect. Such a tissue, in short, is it altogether of exquisite workmanship, that, while immersed in the magnificence of its design, and pursuing its various developments, we are little less rapt in astonishment, than was Aristeus when he beheld the habitations of his mother Cyrene.

Jamque domum mirans genericis, et humeda regna,

Speluncisque lactus clausos, lucosque sonantes,

Ibat, et ingenti motu stupefactus aquarum,

Omnia sub magna labentia flumina terra

Spectabat diversa locis.—*Georg. Lib. IV.*

But as some people are said “ to look on good counsel from an Ecclesiastic as a divinity portion, and set their stomachs against it;” † so are there certain gentry, who undervalue these divine lucubrations, because, forsooth, they find them in the form of a Periodical Review! As if it were any disparagement to the philosophy of Plato, or the politics of Machiavel, to be seen in the dress of an indifferent print and paper! The patriotism of Mr. Whitbread and Sir Francis Burdett will be equally genuine, whether couched in an address to the chair, or an address to the populace. A speech at the Crown and Anchor may display as much of original thinking as a speech in the Commons House of Parliament; and an article in the Edinburgh Review may as effectually secure the high destinies of the Empire, as the feeble and fluctuating policy of a British Cabinet. Was that prodigy of learning, Magliabechi, less resorted to as an oracle, because he used to sit whole days in an old cloak, with one straw chair for his table, and another for his bed? And shall we affect to sneer at these Caledonian Magliabechis for not being tricked out in the *costume* of Lords of the Council, or great Officers of State? But the world is full of folly and prejudice; and, while the soft touch of my young lady's guitar is Catalanied to the very skies, the professional note of the poor music-master, like the scrapings of a sixpenny fiddler, only create disgust. For my part, however, I shall continue to idolize this flower of English literature for its *intrinsic* merit, whether conceived in a cock-loft at Edinburgh, or manufactured by “ *All the Talents*” on the banks of the Thames.

As for those hints, occasionally thrown out, of having worked up particular articles in haste, and which seem, in some measure, to contradict their own pertinent observation, that “ he who writes for

* Edinburgh Review, No. 25. 132.

† Government of the Tongue, p. 212.

immortality should not be sparing of time;”* I confess I do but look upon them as a sort of tricks of the trade. I will not, indeed, say, that it would not, upon the whole, perhaps, be better to disclaim them, as well as every other artifice that may seem to savour of affectation. For, I verily believe, let the Edinburgh Reviewers make use of what finesse they please, they will never be able to convince a single reader, either that they have not taken sufficient pains with this *book of books*, or that it has not sufficiently enraptured the public. How, indeed, they can avoid the fate of that ancient artist, who is reported to have grown enamoured of the production of his own pencil, is to me truly astonishing. But, some how or other, they certainly do manage to keep clear of doting upon the darlings of their own creation. And it is in these instances of self-abasement that the Edinburgh Reviewers become ten-fold more the objects of our veneration than ever; for Genius is then most likely to be fallen in love with by others, when it seems least in danger of falling in love with itself.

But to the proof.—In their minute critique on the fable of *Marmion*, they are so little sensible of their own excellencies, as to suppose they may have detained the reader too long with their “dull remarks.”† In their deep discussion, too, of the subject of Portuguese emigration, wherein, with a most luminous felicity, the Prince Regent is exhibited as a coward, and the British Minister as a fool, they, with unparalleled modesty, conclude. “It is in order to lend our feeble aid towards furnishing a preventive in the present crisis, &c.”‡ as if they really were ignorant of their own prowess, and that the nation was actually, in all quarters, raising statues to them as the champions of England! And, further, after what every reader must have conceived, a very elaborate disquisition in No. 25, not, indeed, on the French usurpation of Spain, by Don Pedro Cevallos, (for this poor tool of the Prince of Peace is soon kicked down the back stairs,) but on the stupidity of the English Ministry by themselves; with the meekness inseparable from true merit they thus sum up their exertions; “Before concluding these *hasty and imperfect observations*, &c.—Having *sketched out some of the consequences hastily and imperfectly*, &c.”§ Nay, even in that paragon of their political discussions the appalling “Code de la Conscription,” “a work recently transmitted from France, with a full commentary of facts by a judicious observer;”¶ how ingenuously do they, in this very introductory sentence, subduct from the value of their own fame by thus sharing it with some obscure correspondent, some embryo Genius not yet burst from the egg. And, after a minuteness of relation, mixed with those occasional aberrations of indignant eloquence, that have rarely, I believe, been witnessed in the annals of Review-writing, and where, at every page, they make the very hair to stand

* Edinburgh Review, No. 23: 34. † Ibid. No. 23. 13.

‡ Ibid. No. 23. 261. § Ibid. No. 25. 226.

¶ Ibid. No. 26. Art. 9.

an end, and draw the life-blood from the heart. Now is, finally, all touch of self-complacency absorbed in pity for the situation of their dear, deluded, suffering, native land! For, instead of being all amazement at the gigantic shadow of their own genius; instead of making a fruitless whining, that a deputation is not immediately dispatched, soliciting them to become Cabinet Counsellors, and confidential advisers; they rest satisfied with simply observing, though born, like Mr. Hutcheson, "with talents to enchant and regenerate the world,"* that, if they could but see "the real strength and resources of the nation applied to the task of its deliverance," they "are not by *what hands* this great object may be effected."†

There: now,—there's the very quintessence of the *Amor Patriæ* for you at once! This is a disposition of lofty port and bearing indeed, when the very men who, of all others, are the most competent to the task of saving the nation, are the first to sacrifice their claims, and to renounce the honor of it.—*Prudens, sciens, vivus; vidensque-perce!* Who will say, after this, that the Roman greatness is gone by, and that the high tones of chivalry are no longer to be heard? Surely, with such a glowing example before us, Cincinnatus returning to his plough becomes a mere burlesque upon the grandeur of human sentiment! O! what must have been the feelings of the Edinburgh Reviewer, while thus pressing his commanding eloquence into the service of his country, and spurning all present remuneration for the thread-bare rewards of immortality! How must he have exulted in the dignified recollection, that the whole Empire were spectators of his glory, and prostrate at the foot of his prophetic tripod! Methinks I see him now, with the *Carmen Thessalidum*, the true Pythian inspiration fall upon him,—his eyes sparkling,—his hair erect,—and a cold damp shivering spreading itself over his whole body: Behold!—behold the laurel trembles! while, convulsed to the very inmost soul, and intoxicated by the *political* vapours, he thunders forth his oracular denunciation to an abused and insulted world.

"Breach pocket one hand fills, tortam tenet altera Chartam;

"Chartam morosis plenam sharpisque resolvit—"‡

But really if, after all, these admirable critiques be, *bona fide*; nothing more than the playful relaxations of stupendous intellect, the Edinburgh Reviewers have, I fear, not less cause than Mr. Scott himself, to "tremble when they look back on the miracles of their own facility."§ For though, to be sure, we find in their writings no "sounding amplification,"¶ no "obtrusive glare of shining sentences,"** no "exciting the Roman Catholics to discontent,"†† as their adversaries wickedly insinuate, and making the worse appear the better cause, so that they stand perfectly clear of the mortifying confession of the *Ethnic Vides meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.*—

* Edinburgh Review, No. 25. 5. † Ibid. No. 26. 461.

‡ Epistola Macaronica. § Edinburgh Review, No. 23. 34. 30.

¶ Ibid. ** Ibid. †† Antijacobin, Jan. 1808.

Yet so young, (for they are "beardless critics"* it seems) and so skilful; so green in years, and so ripe in experience; so seldom departing from the smoke of their own chimnies, and so versed in the policy of all cabinets and countries; they may certainly run some hazard, though in an age of philosophy, of being taken for as great conjurors as Friar Bacon himself; or may be suspected with Apono, the Physician of Padua, of having acquired the knowledge of the seven liberal arts by the assistance of the seven familiar spirits.

Besides, as I intimated before, all artifices of affectation should be laid aside, and the plain truth told at once. For would it be quite out of reason for a person of common sense to remark, after witnessing an acknowledgment, under their own hand and seal, of "hasty and imperfect observation"—Surely, Gentlemen, you took time enough to have rendered these observations less hasty and imperfect; for having assured us, that No. 25 would be published in October, and still not making its appearance till December; and No. 26, which was announced to see the light in January, not being ripe for the birth till the beginning of March, you had ample opportunity of dressing up the pretty bantlings with as much care as you thought proper. And though we have no objection to throwing you in a month, or even two, if necessary, towards the high finish of your fascinating Journal; (for the births of intellect can no more, we are aware, be calculated to a day than those of nature) yet it seems but a poor recompence of our patience; and good nature, to tell us, after all, that you are obliged to put us off with a little whip-syllabub of frothy and inadequate investigation. No wonder, if you thus, Saturni like, destroy your own lovely offspring, that "a morsel of pure Shakespeare"† is so hard to be met with.

But, come, come, enough of this old-fashioned way of putting the question. You are merely flourishing a dagger of lath; for, between ourselves, the writers of the Edinburgh Review have too much of the spirit of Calimachus about them, really to know what negligence is. Its merely a graceful mode they have of renouncing that glare of applause so painful to their retiring modesty; for Fernelius himself, who, we are told, cared neither for play, nor for walking, nor for entertainment, nor for conversation, was not a more intense votary of the mid-night lamp. However, if you are so stubborn, after all, as to believe that they really mean what they say, and, in pure carelessness, degrade their own doings, why it must even be so. But don't, now, hug yourselves, and think you gain any mighty advantage by this concession; for, recollect, if the Edinburgh Reviewers, who, by the bye, are but just beginning "to pullulate,"‡ can boast of such a "powerful mind *en dishabille*,"|| what must it be when dressed out for receiving company? If these gentlemen can produce you such critiques off at hand, as one may say; what *surpassing wonderful composi-*

* Antijacobin, July, 1808. † Edinburgh Review, No. 24. 450.

‡ Ibid. No. 25. 119. 128. § Ibid.

None might we not expect, could they be persuaded to take a little more time and pains. Surely, surely, they will one day vouchsafe to do justice to their own great parts, and, aware that they are woven into the Peplus of Minerva, no longer suffer negligence to sin against genius. It is an absolute murder of pure intelligence, thus to clog its exertions by remissness of application, If they go on at this rate, we shall have them forget that they are invested with the preservation of Europe, and destined to hew the Corsican's triumphal arches to the ground. O, for pity's sake then, great Sirs, do be prevailed upon to scan the compass of your own mighty minds, to consider the illustrious part you are called upon to act, and, in a season of difficulty and danger like the present, to exercise that unlimited authority so unanimously conferred upon beings, "whose feeling seems all intellect, and whose intellect is all feeling."* Talk no more of "old John Naps o'th' green, and Peter Turf, and Henry Pimpernell, and Marian Hachet, the fat ale wife of Wincot,"† but be persuaded to awake from this low-bred and delusive trance, and to know yourselves for what you are.

"I do not sleep; I see, I hear, I speak;
I smell sweet savors, and I feel soft things;
Upon my life, I am a lord indeed,
And not a tinker, nor Christopher Sly."‡

Bravo, my Scotch laddies! you are now in your proper key. No hireling Quarterly Reviewers, believe me, for Archibald Constable, and his book-jobbing firm of Edinburgh, but dictators in Literature to the British empire, and legislators of the universe!!

It is, however, an easy matter to require more than may turn out for our good; and it may, perhaps, be better for us, (whatever may be the original motive with them) that the Edinburgh Reviewers do not "put forth all their strength," but every now and then "check it in mid volley." Milton is indeed represented as beholding

The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze;

but it would blench the eye of an eagle to look upon these dread magicians when gathering up the beams of their genius to a focus, and setting the whole world of intellect in a flame. We might, in such a case, justly, I fear, apprehend the same miserable fate with the poet, who

—blasted with excess of light,
Clos'd his eyes in endless night.

At present we can manage to read an article in this divine work and retain our senses. We can follow the Reviewer in his luminous descriptions, delight ourselves with his glowing language, and admire his strong and powerful reasoning. But when the blue devils

* Edinburgh Review, No. 24. 361. † Taming of the Shrew,

‡ Ibid.

appear, and he bursts upon us in all the ravings of his sublimity, when "Heaven comes rolling down, hills are clothed in fire, and the foe vanishes before him like a wreath of smoke."* There is positively no enduring it. Our raptures "become unmanageable,"† and we are fain, with Semele, to lament our presumption in fancying we could encounter the thunderer in all his glories. Out of mere mercy, therefore, to their admiring readers do they pluck off the magic garment, and bedim the noon-tide sun;‡ and thus shrouding their majesty in surrounding darkness, they graciously suffer us to gaze upon their splendour, without the apprehension of being blasted by their lightnings.

And thus have I, to the best of my ability, finished my "*Apology for the Edinburgh Review*." I have not indeed vanity enough to believe, that, profuse as my commendations have been, they will entitle me to any considerable portion of gratitude; though I am sure I have not failed, like a lawyer, with a tongue steeped in oil, to rescue and to raise its reputation to the utmost. And, although in shewing the lions to the admiring multitude, I have made use of neither the puff direct, the puff oblique, the puff conclusive, nor the puff preparatory; I have yet, as I humbly conceive, not entirely failed in disclosing to the unprejudiced reader views of beauty, and veins of rich and rare fancy, where the ignorant and malicious dreamed they saw only defects. Not, however, that I have the presumption to suppose that, in this apology, I have furnished the public with a true scale of their merit.—They possess, indeed, a genius which can no more be appreciated by my insignificant labours, than the colours of the rainbow can be caught by a sign-post painter. Yet if there be any truth in that fine remark of Tully in his offices, that it is a proof of an elevated understanding "to discover effects, even while in the womb of their causes, and to provide against them," I may, perhaps, presume to hope that this, my apology, shall be deemed, in after ages, no less, in some respects, a work of sterling value than that which it professes to defend. For looking every way at once, I have endeavoured to provide against the worst; and, conscious that "it is of great importance to keep public opinion on the side of virtue,"|| have liberally laid out all my little powers in bespeaking it for the conductors of the *Edinburgh Review*.

As for those *en passant* attacks that may seem somewhat to militate against any violent presumption in their favour, I can only say that it is necessary, now and then, to throw a tub to the whale. Without conceding a few defects, I should have had no opportunity of shewing off their virtues. Though, therefore, I have given circulation to a random charge or two, I have, at the same time, "done justice to those fine conceptions,"¶ which mark every page of their

* Ossian's Poems. † *Edinburgh Review*, No. 23. 213.

‡ Shakespeare's *Tempest*. || *Edinburgh Review*, No. 26. 337.

¶ *Edinburgh Review*.

admired writings. And as "Arideus escaped without danger from the promontory of Leucate, saving only that his two fore teeth were struck out, and his nose a little flattened;* so, I trust, shall the Edinburgh Review survive these puny attacks upon its celebrity, and stand up as goodly a figure as ever, in spite of the belabourings of the Antijacobin, or any of its impotent crew.

That there are, and ever will be, men, who, like "the physician that takes no pleasure even in the health of his friend," refuse to rejoice in the honest fame of their neighbours, I know—I know, too, that they who have gained the plaudits of the universe must be content to forego the admiration of their countrymen. But though owls will hoot, and asses bray, there is no occasion to be alarmed at such adversaries, who, by every censure they dare to breathe, only evince their own "unspeakable stupidity," and "elaborate blundering." The oracle of Delphos is still destined to rest in the north and the Boreal star to shine over the Caledonian capital, let them grumble in the south as much as they please. Renowned Augusta already nods to her fall.—Mr. Urban is at his last gasp—The British Critics stand stupidly astounded. Even the veteran Cumberland begins to see fear, and suspects he has caught a Tartar; and as for the ANTIJACOBIN, the grand leader of the hostile phalanx, he beholds "the hand writing on the wall" and trembles! Such is their dread of that potency of intellect by which the Edinburgh Review awes them into a respect for its talents, though, alas! it cannot reclaim them from an abuse of its principles, or a detractation of its merit.

For, eager like Priam to throw a last javelin, though with a feeble hand, they scruple not to intimate, that "the Edinburgh Review is gradually sinking in reputation, and is only bouyed up by the partial representations of its friends."† From men who take upon them to pronounce that the reasoning of these Reviewers "is almost too absurd for confutation by serious argument,"§ we are not to wonder at the open promulgation of even such a slander as this, inconsistent as it may appear with their compelled acknowledgement, that "some articles are ably written, and that, in a few of them, are even displayed principles not totally unworthy of approbation."‡ Kind, generous souls! we know how to appreciate these extorted compliments; but, as half a loaf is at any time better than no bread, we make you our bow even for this "sparing and invidious panegyric."

However, to blast calumny at once, and, if possible, to put her to the blush for her dark doings; be it known, to the astonishment and mortification of the whole junto of Antijacobins, that the Edinburgh Review is, at this very moment, the sole, literary *pabulum* of the nation at large, who hunger and thirst after, and may even be said to eat and drink, its aspiring pages. As Carrasco

* Spectator. † Antijacobin, Nov. 1807. § Ibid. July, 1808.

‡ Ibid. Nov. 1807.

remarks of the history of Don Quixotte, "children handle it, youngsters read it, men understand it, and old people applaud it. In short, 'tis universally so thumb'd, so gleaned, so studied, and so known, that as if people did but see a lean horse, they presently cried there goes *Rosinante*"; so if they do, but clap eyes on any thing with a greasy blue cover, and the remnant of a yellow back, they instantly exclaim, fit to jump out of their skin for joy, there is the dear, delicious, *cutting*, Edinburgh Review! and be it morning, noon, or night, down they set to it, and never quit the chimney corner till they have made a glorious meal, and actually gobbled up the contents of the whole bill of fare. Yea, yes, Mr. Marryat may continue to cut his jokes if he pleases,* but trust me no gallimaufry of parliamentary eloquence must ever pretend to a rivalry with this *super-human* production, which, I will be bold to say, has increased, is increasing, and will, *ad infinitum*, continue to increase in reputation, maugre all these petty cavillings of the insolent and insignificant. As for those who are so dead to every canon of criticism as to put translations on a level with original compositions,† there is no saying what standards they scribble by, or what Rhodomontade adventures they may be doughty enough to undertake, "for if a man will stuff his head full of Gammer Gurton, and Gabriel Harvey, he will soon find that he has no room for Milton or Virgil."‡ Set up THE QUARTERLY REVIEW as a guardian of the public taste, and a competitor to the EDINBURGH!!—As well guillotine genius and oppose Tom Thumb to Goliath of Gath at once.

And, now in looking back upon the field of my labours, I am astonished, I confess, at the length of my apology; how it has happened I know not; but certainly, when I first began to con my task, it was never my intention to produce a volume. I can, in fact, only account for it upon honest John Bunyan's principle.

For having now my method by the end,

Still so I pull'd, it came—and so I penn'd

It down, until, at last, it came to be,

For length and breadth, the bigness which you see.

However, if I have but had the good luck to give satisfaction, I shall not regret the time and pains I have taken. What it, perhaps, more concerns me to fidget myself about is, the apprehension that a proper understanding may not have subsisted between us, and that I did not sufficiently possess the confidence of the Edinburgh Reviewers to set up for a canvasser of their politics; so that, neglecting to play into each others hands, I may all this time have been out at sea, without rudder or compass, reviling principles which they hold sacred, and drawing monsters with cloven feet and curled up tails, when I ought to have been composing their apotheosis and translating them amongst the northern constellations: a

* Antijacobin Review, May, 1809, p. 100. † Ibid. May, 1809, p. 107. ‡ Edinburgh Review, No. 24. 459.

situation certainly as dolefully deplorable as can well be conceived of any poor benighted traveller.

IBANT obscuri, sola sub nocte, per umbram,
Perque domos Ditis vacuas, et inania regna;
Quale per incertam lunam, sub luce maligna
Est iter in sylvis. Virg. ÆN. lib. vi.

But 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' I will not anticipate difficulties. Probably I shall be favoured with some *secret* instructions, for neither praise nor censure, do these stoical critics very properly take any *public* notice of. They would have enough to do to chastise the yelpings of every cur, 'acknowledgements to correspondents,' but ill suits with that glowing ardour for *original* composition which takes up all the heart, and all the mind, and all the soul, and all the strength. In the mean while, I am proud of the opportunity thus afforded me of paying my *devoirs* to the *literati* of the north, and of offering up, at the shrine of their genius, this "APOLOGY FOR THE EDINBURGH REVIEW," a work that may truly be denominated the *philosophy of criticism*, and

"OF WHICH ALL BRITAIN RINGS FROM SIDE TO SIDE."

The Reader will please to correct the following errors which occurred, in the preceding parts of this Apology, in the hurry of printing.

- Page 302—For "sweet bit of the sweet penny" read "and the sweet, &c."
303—For "when we have *done* enough" read "down enough."
For "from the Corinthian" read "these Corinthian."
304—For "company so delicate" read "so delectable."
305—For "if you but fancy they will hold" read "withhold."
306—For "fed upon a Z beta, &c." read "feed upon."
For "King of Reviewers" read "King of Reviews."
309—For "that the Edinburgh Reviews" read "Review."

MISCELLANIES.

Stipendiary Curates.

SIR,

In a former letter I affirmed that no curate ought to have a stipend of less value than one hundred pounds a year. A very important objection to this regulation may be made, on the ground that there are many livings in the kingdom, that do not amount to that sum in their annual value: though the truth of this be admitted, yet I do not conceive that my argument is at all invalidated by the objection: because I hold that it is the duty of government to provide for the respectable maintenance of the ministers of the Established Church; therefore as many livings are inadequate to the incumbent's support, their emoluments ought to be increased. Happily for the Church, the present administration are of my opinion; inasmuch as they are now devising a plan for increasing the provision for the poorer clergy. And I cannot forbear to avail myself of this opportunity of expressing my great regard for, and sincere admiration of, the conduct of Mr. Perceval, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose