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L E T T E R

TO

FRANCIS JEFFRAY, Esq.

ON CERTAIN

CALUMNIES AND MISREPRESENTATIONS

IN THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW;

THE

CONDUCT OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS;

ON THE NIGHT OF

MR. THELWALL'S

Probationary Lecture, at Bernard's Rooms, Edinburgh;

AND

*The Ignorance of THE NEW CRITICAL JUNTO of the simplest
elements of English Composition and English Grammar:*

With an Appendix, containing

*Outlines of a Course of Lectures on the Science and
Practice of Elocution.*

EDINBURGH:

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ADVERTISEMENT.

LITERARY Journals have not always been very candid, or very impartial;---for they are the productions of Men, who have their *prejudices*; and of Proprietors, who have their *interests*; yet they have, hitherto, been conducted with some regard to decency and decorum. They have been conducted, also, with a degree of *secrecy*---which, though it shelters the uncandid from responsibility, is infinitely preferable to the ostentatious profligacy that flames forth in the Edinburgh Review.

In this new undertaking, all former precedent has been magnanimously despised. It is certainly an *experiment* as daring, and an *innovation* as intemperate as ever disturbed the republic of Letters. A set of opinionated, inexperienced and headstrong young men form themselves into a self-constituted tribunal of Taste and Literature;---they vaunt of their association, in the most public way; their names are announced, among the literary varieties, in the Monthly Magazine;---and, although, among those names, not

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 one

one appeared that had yet been distinguished in the ranks of Science or Literature,---they proclaim their intention of sitting in judgment upon those works, exclusively, that had either attained, or deserved, a more than ordinary portion of celebrity.

“It will easily be perceived” (they say in their advertisement) “that it forms no part of their object, to take notice of every production that issues from the press: and that they wish their journal to be distinguished rather for the *selection* than for the number of its articles.”

The real object of this selection, however, was soon conspicuous; for Detraction and Calumny were inscribed almost in every leaf. What they wanted in genius, in taste,---and in knowledge of the principles of composition, and the elements of the English Language, these bold adventurers determined to supply---by the presumption of dogmatism, and the virulence of abuse. Works of genius were subjected to their criticism for the evident purposes of sarcastic insult and biographical calumny; and where articles did not present themselves that could furnish sufficient food for their malevolence, excursive flights were indulged, and dissultory digressions. Criticism *ran a' muck*, as it were, among the talents and productions of the age: and scarcely a name that is dear to modern Literature escaped without a stab.

To put their motive, still further, beyond dispute, instead of adhering to their profession of “carrying the principle of selection a great deal farther than other Reviewers,” they even dragged into their “Critical Journal” a work which no other Reviewer would have thought himself at liberty to notice: a work that has never been regularly announced in the London papers; and which, in its present form, it was not the intention of the author ever to have so announced. It had been printed, in compliance with the solicitations of some friends, who were desirous of an opportunity of serving me; and the obscure neighbourhood in which I then resided had not furnished me with those advantages of paper and typography, which the taste of the times requires. The general publication was, therefore, deferred till occasion should call for, and leisure should permit, a new and more elegant impression: and all the publicity that was given to the book, was an occasional notice at the bottom of the advertisements of my lectures, in the provincial towns that I visited.

This connection, however, seems to have suggested to the reviewers---the malicious use that might be made of it. How it *was used*,---with what decency of language,---with what accuracy of statement,---

with what fidelity of quotation; and, with what perseverance, the hostility, once declared, has been followed up, it is the business of the ensuing pamphlet to explain.

In entering into this explanation, I have thought it necessary (in justice to my injured contemporaries, as well as myself) to examine the literary pretensions of these self-constituted arbiters; to sit in judgment upon my judges, and review these pragmatical reviewers.

My plan, therefore, being two-fold, I have thought it necessary to give to the execution a two-fold form. My own particular wrongs, and the insults and injuries I have sustained, seemed to justify, as they excited, the strong feelings of indignation; and to these, therefore, I have given vent:---not indecorously, I hope; nor in a strain unworthy the Professor of an Elegant Science. I should, indeed, have reason to blush (whatever my provocations) if it could ever be doubted--- whether the *Reviewer* or the *Lecturer* had best preserved the language and the manners of a gentleman. But the defamation that strikes at the hopes of a rising family will awaken emotions, in the paternal heart, that can only be expressed in the strains of indignant pathos.

Parts

Parts, however, there are, in the review in question --- (and in many other portions of this presumptuous work) so mean, and so contemptible, in every point of view, as to require another mode of castigation. Affectation and empiricism are objects of ridicule. Demosthenes would not have *declaimed* on the fooleries of a Jack-Pudding. Yet it may be necessary to strip the mask from the features of Affectation, and dismount Presumption from his stilts.

To these purposes are the generality of the annotations devoted: annotations so far from being necessary to the explanation of the text,---that the reader will do well to consider them as entirely distinct,---and either finish the letter before he begins the notes, or the notes before he begins the letter.

With respect to the name I have emblazoned on my title page---My authority for this mode of address, I derive from the publisher. I sent to Mr. Constable for the direction of the Editor of the Edinburgh Review, and he returned me the name inserted. I wrote, also, a letter to Mr. Jeffray; of which the following is a copy.

“ Sir,

“ Your mean and contemptible calumnies,
 “ misrepresentations and falsehoods, respecting me,
 “ on a former occasion, it was not my intention to
 “ have noticed, in any other way, than to have
 “ amused

No explanation having followed this Letter, I conceive---I have not trespassed on the bounds of decorum in the use I have made of Mr. Jeffray's name.

One thing more it is necessary to premise. Not all who have written for the Edinburgh review, are, therefore, included in the censures here bestowed. Some exceptions I have marked, in the occasional notes. More ought, perhaps, to have been added.

Of those whose names were inserted in the Monthly Magazine, Mr. *Horner* (I am told) is no longer in the connection; and Mr. *Thomas Brown*, with a prudent reverence for his character, took care to have it announced, in the Magazine already mentioned, soon after the appearance of the second number, that he had withdrawn himself from any concern in the undertaking.

TO FRANCIS JEFFRAY, ESQ.

SIR,

THE invitation I sent you, on the evening of Monday the twelfth, you did not think proper to accept. Indeed the *courage* you displayed in the *election of your place* on Thursday evening, could give me little reason to hope for the satisfaction of being *confronted* by you: and the tremblings of conscience might dispose you to avoid the hearing of an accusation, which your recollections would, perhaps, anticipate.

But, Sir, the affair cannot rest here. Some how, or other, the treatment I have received, must come before the public. Somewhere or other, it must be enquired Whether there are to be no limits to the impudent calumnies, the indecent scurrilities, and the audacious falsehoods and misrepresentations of Reviewers,---or to the

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indecorous

indecorous confederacies of young Advocates associated to *destroy* whomsoever such Reviewers may think proper to *proscribe*? Somewhere or other, it must be answered, Why the conductors of a literary Journal, stept out of their way, in the month of April last, to injure an individual, by the *unprecedented* review of a book that did not come within the regular cognizance of their tribunal?---Why they should have interlarded such pretended Review with the grossest misrepresentations, the most demonstrable falshoods, and even the mean insertion of pretended *quotations* of passages, not in that book to be found?---and Why, resolute in unprovoked hostility, they still pursue me, from *the Study* to the *Rostrum*?---from the sequestered haunts of Poesy, to the theatre of Science, and the public Congregation?

FOR shame, for shame, Mr. Jeffray!---Can you acknowledge yourself the Editor of the Review in question?---or can you shew why you have not denied it? If you acknowledge,---
must

must it not necessarily be enquired---By what strange and sinister motive you have been induced to render yourself the instrument of this calumny, this malignity and injustice? You must be well aware, Mr. Jeffray, that *your former history*, and that of *some of your most intimate colleagues*, can be no secret in Edinburgh;---that *you* could have no decent *public* pretence for volunteering yourselves as my opponents, or as my prejudicators;---and that---(as I never had any personal acquaintance or intercourse with any of you;---and could, therefore, have given you no *personal* provocation,) you can certainly have none of the *ordinary excuses*, which the prejudices and resentments of mankind may sometimes furnish, for making yourselves the ring leaders of every confederacy that aims at my reputation; or that seeks to deprive my family of the profits of my exertions.

BUT it is not by the voice of Moral Reprehension that the Calumniator is to be re-

formed.—Her whispers are too faint—Her tones too mild and moderate to pierce the ears and penetrate the hearts of men whose souls are *bartered* to the fiend of malignant misrepresentation ;—whose consciences are so suffocated in the bitumen of critical virulence, and whose hearts have become so hardened against all puncture of generous sympathy and human feeling, as to exult over the last of agonies that can rend the afflicted heart ; and, from the groans and exclamations of paternal anguish, extract the bitter venom of slanderous misrepresentation.

How, then, shall criminals like these receive the chastisement they merit?—Where shall the victim of their calumny seek for consolation and redress? The nature of the crime dictates the remedy ; and where the *injury* began, the reparation should commence. If, then, Mr. Jeffray, you have erected a Literary Tribunal, to the Tribunal of Literature you have rendered yourself amenable. If you

have

have attacked my character through the medium of the press, through the medium of the press I have a right to seek my remedy. If you have abused the public with falshoods and forgeries, and insulted it by confederacies to impede its deliberations and intercept its judgements,—to the bar of that public I have a right to call you ; that those falshoods may be detected, and those insults atoned.

I call then, in the first place, for the Editor of the Review in question ;—the *Third number of the Edinburgh Review*. You know, Mr. Jeffray, whether it is you I call. If so, I summon you to the tribunal of your own choice ; and I summon, with you, those culprit colleagues, by whom the defamations have been propagated, and the more recent malignity assisted.

I. Why, in the first place, did you step out of the ordinary path of your profession,—and, still more especially, out of the line which you and
your

your confederates, in a more particular manner, had publicly prescribed to yourselves, as the discriminative and essential boundary of your undertaking, to make a *pretended Review* of a Book, which (in the *Reviewer's* acceptance of the phrase) has *never*, yet, been *published*?

2. And, having so stepped out of your way, and violated the terms of your own engagement with the public, Why did you, in the second place, proceed to *affirm as facts*, upon the authority of that book, circumstances, for which, in that book, there is *not a shadow of foundation*? Why, in such *pretended Review*, have you attributed to me boasts and ostentatious vauntings not in that book to be found,---or in any book,---or any printing, writing, or speech that ever proceeded from me?---Why have you put together *parts* of disjointed propositions, in such way as to make them insinuate conclusions the direct *reverse* of what the *whole* would necessarily demonstrate? And, finally, Why have you printed within inverted

ommas, as quotations from that book, passages which, in that book, never had any existence?

To the first of these Questions, the public must hear your answer;---or you must remain before them branded, by tacit acknowledgment, as an eager volunteer in the service of unprovoked and unprincipled malignity.

To the second string of Interrogatories, *something more than a mere answer* must be given;---or you will be subjected to the still more grievous imputation of conscious misrepresentation, and wilful falshood:---to the imputation of having lost all claim to the Character of a Man of honour,---or a man of moral honesty, or common veracity:---to the imputation, in short,---and to the consequences, of having lost all claim to the expectation of being believed or listened to, by any gentleman, or any person of common sense, upon whatever subject you may, henceforward, find it necessary to open your lips.

What, then, is your plea? Will you,---thus publicly questioned, appeal to the subterfuge,---which, when privately interrogated, you thought fit to decline?

Will you,---by disavowing the responsible Editorship of the *obnoxious number*, get rid of a *part* of the infamy?---or, by announcing, at once, the real author, and proclaiming your abhorrence of the *obnoxious article*, ENDEAVOUR to get rid of the *whole*? *---or---

Will you, and your critical conclave still make common cause? Will you put yourselves boldly upon your defence?---and venture to call upon me, *to prove the existence of these disgraceful misrepresentations?*

No, Sir,---to the latter of these resources, it

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* Even this (though it would show some remains of grace and conscience, from which, after all, I should be glad to find that Mr. Jeffray was not exempt,) would not exonerate him from the charge of making himself an *accessory after* the fact; and his co-operation with the confederacy at the Lecture, (unless that also, can be denied,) would sufficiently connect him, with the general tenour of my complaint, and justify this appeal.

is obvious there can be no appeal. That conclave must be perfectly aware,---every individual who compares together the Memoir and the review, must immediately be convinced, that I can turn the accusatory parts of every one of my interrogatories into direct allegations; and can prove them all.

For the present, however, a single instance shall suffice*.

In

* To quote all the falshoods, prevarications, misrepresentations, foistings and forgeries this curious piece of Criticism exhibits, would be to transcribe the whole article: for it is a mere tissue of these *tropes* and *ornaments* of rhetoric, from beginning to end. In the text, therefore, I confine my observations to a single passage:---which, as a *literary curiosity*, is, perhaps, unequalled in the annals of impudence and slander. But a brief sketch of the number, character and tendency of the respective falshoods, which the ingenuity of the Reviewer has enabled him to compress into so small a compass, may, probably, be entertaining to the reader: especially as it will serve to exhibit the wonderful and exquisite ingenuity with which the Writer has diversified his *inventions*, and adapted them to the various occasions and circumstances under which it was expedient to exhibit them.

What

In the third Number of that periodical ebullition of personality, empiricism, and defamation,

What was formerly known by the vulgar name of Lying, in his management, is no longer a coarse and vulgar art. A very Barrington, in his once clumsy calling, he seems to have reduced it to a complete Science; and there can be little doubt—that, when the *Common-place-book* of this indefatigable student shall descend to posterity, it will develop as complete and classical an arrangement of experiments and productions in this kind, as Linnæus himself has presented of the three Kingdoms of Natural History:—probably, also, with the valuable addition of a correct table of the exact price (in pounds, shillings, pence and farthings) at which a perfect specimen, of each particular description, is usually valued, in the Reviewer's market.

But, as the rude productions of nature, when once they are made the objects either of experimental philosophy, or of refinement, generally change their names;—as *iron*, when refined by the admixture of *charcoal*, assumes the name of *steel*, and the *sheep* is converted into *mutton* by the science of the butcher and the cook; and, as the improvers of the different sciences have frequently been permitted to bequeath their names to the objects of their respective improvements; so, also, in the present instance, to do proper honour to the classification we are about to acknowledge,—and, at the same time, to avoid the frequent and awkward repetition of a word that the ears of no gentleman can endure, we shall beg leave to call the particular mode, or figure of speech, which

tion, which you misname a Review (p. 200), after very decently comparing my anxious
and

that word has been used to designate, by the new and appropriate name of a JEFF.

Of these *Jeffs*, then, as it appears to us, the various exhibitions of this learned classificator, present specimens of no less than *twelve distinct species*:—as, for example—

1. The *Jeff Major*—or direct and unequivocal falshood.
2. The *Jeff implicative*—or that in which a falshood is only implied.
3. The *Jeff interpolative*—in which the falshood is produced by foisting some additional word, or circumstance, into a quotation, or statement, in other respects not untrue.
4. The *Jeff quotative*—the falshood of which consists in making an author appear to say, what he never has said; by marking the forgeries of ones own invention with the distinction of inverted commas. It is useful only to Reviewers.
5. The *Jeff invertive*—which consists in inverting the order of circumstances, sentences, or parts of sentences; so as to make them suggest conclusions very different from what they would authorise in their natural order.
6. The *Jeff magnificative*.—This term very imperfectly describes the beautiful and extensive class of super-hyperboles it is intended to include. The excellence of this figure consists in seizing upon some word or circumstance, that occurs but *once* in a whole book, and describing

and determined preference of intellectual cultivation and literary pursuit over the callings and

scribing it as to be found in every sentence, or in every page:—Thus, for example, if, in a Dramatic Romance, a drunken Welchman should happen to be introduced, singing a song in praise of ale—you must call it “a Dramatic Romance *full of songs* about ale.” Another illustration will be given below: and, indeed, the instances and varieties that might be produced of this most prolific species are innumerable. The Critic who aspires to the *honour* of *ten guineas per sheet*, should be well provided with a good assortment of this kind of *Jeff*, in particular; as it is totally impossible that a single book, character, or occasion, should ever fall in his way, to which it may not, in some of its fashions, be adjusted.

7. The *Jeff equivocative*—of course, consists in the ingenious introduction of the words of truth, under such associations as to make them support the inferences of falsehood.
8. The *Jeff stradalative*—is another very admirable species of this illustrious Genus. Its most distinguishing excellence is the vast agility with which it accomplishes its object; *striding*, at pleasure, over any number of intervening circumstances in a narration, or argument,—so as to produce an apparent association between facts or premises essentially disjointed. Excellent use may be made of this favourite *Jeff*,—when either a chain of conclusive reasoning is to be traduced, as in coherent

and professions into which my friends had endeavoured to direct my exertions, to the indolence

coherent nonsense; a fine strain of morality, to be convicted of licentious extravagance; or the honest struggles of persevering consistency, are to be branded with the imputation of indolent and excentric venality.

9. The *Jeff conjunctive*—is most useful in quotations. In its most perfect form, it is produced by picking out single expressions, or single sentence (no matter from what distant parts of a book,) and stringing them all together; as if they had been so arranged by the author.
10. The *Jeff disjunctive*—consists either in relating a *part*, only, of a story, as if it were the *whole*; or dashing a full stop into the middle of a sentence; and then breaking suddenly off:—so as to make your author appear to say some very extravagant or ridiculous thing, which never had entered into his imagination. This is a very witty *Jeff*; and is of excellent use in turning a serious author into ridicule, or traducing the moral character of an individual. It should, therefore, never be neglected by the Editor, or writers, of any work, that depends, for its circulation, on gratifying the *malignant* passions of mankind.
11. The *Jeff insinuitive* (or *Jeff of inference*)—is one of the most delicate species in the whole arrangement. It is exemplified in those instances and masterpieces of apparent analysis, or recapitulation, where no falshood

dolence and vanity of certain females, who prefer the wages and trappings of prostitution
to

is absolutely told; but, in which, circumstances are so arranged, and the language so dextrously sophisticated, that a falshood must necessarily be inferred. This sort of *Jeff* is very useful in all those cases—where the falshood, to be insinuated, might expose the Reviewer to the danger of being kicked out of a coffee-house, or into a Court of Law.

12. The *Jeff of omission*—which may, also, be called—the *Jeff negative*, or *nutral Jeff*,—consists in the entire suppression of such parts and circumstances of a story as cannot possibly be tortured to the purposes of the recapitulator; or, as would confute the calumnious inferences, which he is determined to make.

Of the generality of these, illustrations may be found in the article now before us. Of the *Jeff quotative* a very perfect specimen is exhibited and emblazoned in the Text; and, as for the *Jeff negative*, it is so great a favourite with the Reviewer, that he has absolutely appealed to it, in every instance, where any thing occurred which it was the real object of the Memoir to record.

Of the other kinds, it is curious to observe with what skilful diversity he has arranged the different species,—so as to produce a perfect mosaic of these, his favourite embellishments. Thus, (for example)—in the very first paragraph of the pretended analysis of the Memoir,—which consists only of *five short sentences*, there are *four* distinct specimens of

to the remuneration of plain work and embroidery, you insert the following *pretended*
to

of four distinct kinds of *JEFFS*—to wit—1. The *Jeff magnificative*, by which the “tardiness and apparent ineptitude” resulting from temporary derangements of health, and from the gloom and depression that clouded my mind, after the loss of my father, is quoted as the general characteristic of my boyhood. 2. The *Jeff stradulative*, by which (striding at once over the circumstance of my settled attachment to the profession of an artist;—for which my father had trained and destined me) he represents, as my first and favourite project, that appeal to the stage, which, in reality, was a mere transient suggestion of disappointment, when the more eligible mode of escaping from an unhappy situation was denied me. [See the particulars in a future note.] 3. The *Jeff interpolative*—by which, without the least shadow of pretence, he makes “my own consciousness of the want of *viocé*” one of the motives that “compelled me to give up the idea.” 4. Then comes the *Jeff invertive*, in which the only mention is made (and that out of its place) of “an unsuccessful attempt to become a painter.”

In this way does he go on, inlaying, tessellating and diversifying, with all the address that characterises his *peculiar genius*; till, on a ground plot of only seventy lines of analytical abridgement, he has inlayed no less than fifteen different specimens of his favourite embellishment. In twenty-six lines more of declamation and criticism, that follow, he has been somewhat more sparing; as, in the whole of
that

ed quotation ;—marked with the distinction of inverted commas,—as quotations in Reviews usually

that extent, only three distinct and absolute *Jeffs* are inserted. What is wanted in number, however, is made up in magnitude : and one of these *Jeffs*, in particular, (to which all due honour is endeavoured to be paid in the text above)—is an absolute constellation of itself.

Nor let it be supposed—that, in this ornamental mosaic, it is only of the more modest specimens (such as have already been exemplified,) that the artist has made his dispositions : *Jeffs* of a bolder splendour, and of more glaring colours, strikingly diversify the picture. The *Jeff major* itself, indeed, appears to be his principal favourite.

Thus,—speaking of my three years residence in Wales, the Reviewer has the following words—“ He was persecuted, he affirms, by *all* his neighbours.”

Those who consult the Memoir will find, on the contrary, that I have done justice to the kindness and attentions of *some* of those neighbours; and to the sympathy and friendship of one, in particular; who, all things considered, may be regarded as a phenomenon in the history of social attachments.

Again—“ The author *somewhere* informs us, that upwards of two thousand copies have been disposed of.”

To what does this word *somewhere* allude? Certainly, in the book under review, there is *nowhere* one single word to be found upon this subject. So that we should have,
even

usually are; and as, therefore, nothing but quotations, certainly, ought to be.

“ They

even yet, another species of falsification to define, under the denomination of the *Jeff transplantive*—if all subordinate distinctions were not swallowed up, by the superior claims of the *Jeff major*; under which this noble sally of excursive genius must, unquestionably, be ranked: for certain it is,—most certain! that *the author has not, any where*, said a word about two thousand copies—in writing, speech, or print. In the controversy with Mr. Belsham in the *Monthly Magazine*, (that controversy by which *one calumniator* has, already, so completely been put down!) some occasional mention, indeed, was made—of the encouraging extent of the private circulation of this book: but I have, there, only stated a simple truth, which the Reviewer has, here, thought fit to transform into a vain-glorious falshood.

But the *JEFF of JEFFS*—the transcendental—the most triumphant and ingenious of all the instances of the use of this bold embellishment of excursive criticism, still remains to be noticed—

“ He had the honour,” says the Reviewer “ of being appointed one of the poll-clerks to Mr Horne Tooke, upon his first canvas for Westminster.”—!!!

Now, I never was appointed poll-clerk to Mr. Horne Tooke; nor ever had any connection of pecuniary emolument with Mr. Horne Tooke, or any other *political* character, in my
B life:

“ They have all ‘ ardent temperaments,’ like
 “ Mr. Thelwall, ‘ irritable feelings, enthusiastic
 “ virtues,

life: nor is there any such fact stated in the Memoir. The reader who gives himself the trouble to turn to that memoir will, at once, discover the grossness, and the *object* of this misstatement.

There are some, perhaps, who may think that, in this long and elaborate disquisition, (with the customary zeal of commentators.) I have carried my admiration of the invention, adjustment and application of these classical discriminations too far:—that I have attributed to genius and scientific discrimination what—(in some instances, at least) may have originated in accident and mistake.

When it is considered (it will be observed) with what haste *gentlemen will* be apt to write, who *hire themselves out by the sheet*, and that an *Edinburgh Reviewer*, in particular, is not supposed to be paid for the attention with which he has perused his author, but for the quantity of flashy dissertation he can pour forth, on the general subject of the book, it may naturally be expected—that his statements and quotations should not be very accurate; and that a part of what are here regarded as ingenious and elaborate *Jeffs*, are, in reality, only hasty misapprehensions and ignorant blunders.

Had the misstatements and misquotations alluded to, been as irregular in their nature, as they are various in their characteristics;—had they been sometimes upon one side, and sometimes upon the other;—now sinning in *detracti*on, and
 now

“ virtues, and a noble contempt for mechanical
 “ drudgery, dull regularity, and slow-paced eru-
 “ dition.”

Now,

now in *favour*; this objection might, perhaps, have been admitted. But unity of object, and an admirable adaptation of complicated parts, to one great and consistent end, have always been admitted to preclude the doctrine of blind-fold accident and chance. Where the evidence of these is made distinct and clear, the dance of chaotic atoms vanishes from the imagination,—and we admit, at once, the beautiful system of order and design.

Look, then, through the whole catalogue of these supposed mistakes;—examine their general character,—mark their invariable—their universal tendency (even in those instances where the deviations appear most trifling and insignificant)—how correctly—how dextrously—with what co-operative influence and harmonious consent, do they minister to the same essential object:—to the degradation of the moral and intellectual character of the individual whose work is pretended to be reviewed. Compare the *Memoir* with the pretended *analysis*!—mark with what slight touches of the pen—what *bold omissions*, and *delicate insertions*! those very facts and circumstances, which,—fairly represented, would have proved, at least, the disinterestedness, the perseverance, the indefatigable activity of that individual, are made to insinuate the direct reverse of every one of these; and to countenance the meditated charges of “ precarious principle”

Now, Sir, I ask you---In what page, or what edition, of my "Poems and Memoirs" you have

—"contempt for honest industry"—"presumptuous vanity," and "mere forwardness and audacity." Add to which—that, if report is to be credited, the supposed cause of inconsiderate haste did no then exist; the contract was not then made, nor the remuneration by *measure* agreed upon. The first three numbers, it is said, were *probationary*; and the writers were to show—what extent of future remuneration they could deserve: and they *did* show it:—though their *deserts*, as yet, they certainly have not got!

These things considered, the idle hypothesis of blunder and mistake, is entirely out of the question: the unity of the design and the felicity of the execution, rush immediately upon the mind. Even Scepticism itself acknowledges the expansive genius, and does homage to the elaborate science of the arch-improver and classificator of the noble invention of *Jeffing*; and my Eulogy is admitted in its full extent.

If, unwearied with the pleasant effort of admiration, the reader should happen to extend his researches a little further,—should he continue the comparison through the *Critique* and the *Poems*,—his admiration will probably increase.

Whatever may be thought of the *Poetry*, or the *Poet*; of the *Critic* and his *Criticisms*, the opinion can be but one. The Science still pervades. The same *creative* genius—the same *ingenious* design prevails in every part. *Jeff* rises
above

have found this pretended quotation?—for certain it is, that no such paragraph ever was
written

above *Jeff*, in new species, and in new varieties; and new definitions are demanded to complete the classification.

In short—Nothing is left to the improvement of future labourers, or future ages. The Science, is at once, developed and illustrated through all its minutest parts: and the article in question may be properly regarded as an entire and perfect specimen in its way.—In plan, and in execution, as a very Epic:—In short, (to sum up all in all) as

ONE COMPLETE AMALGAMATED JEFF!!!

N. B. If any controversy should, hereafter, arise upon the subject of the principal term in this nomenclator—If it should be learnedly disputed—(which, I understand, is not impossible) whether what is here denominated a *Jeff*, ought not, in strictness of gratitude, to have been called a *Brom*;—and if, in support of such controversy, the SECOND PERSON SINGULAR, in *this grammatical conjugation of Verbs Critical*, should boldly lay claim to the Criticism on "*Belsham's Philosophy of the Mind*," (Ed. Rev. No. II. Art. 21.) in which *the beauty, excellence, utility, and propriety of teaching and telling falsehoods*, are philosophically and systematically maintained, with a sublime obscurity of diction, and an inexplicable involution of construction, truly worthy of such a doctrine; and in which the practical "employment of falsehood" (as well as "the acknowledged employment of rapine and murder") are boldly attributed to *the DIVINE BEING himself!!!* [See 477.]—In such case, I acknowledge,—and, pressed by such presumptive arguments,

written by me ; and that, in the printed copy of the Book, now before me, I have sought for it in vain.

Nay---I will give you all possible latitude.--- In what pages, however scattered, can you find even the mere associations of substantive and epithet here introduced ?

Where

I should only have a palliative plea in excuse for my inadvertency. I should only have to observe, that such mistakes have been but too frequent in the History of Science and Discovery ;---that, from the general imperfection of historical evidence, it is frequently impossible, in such instances, accurately to discriminate between the *inventor* and the *adopter* of an important improvement ;---between the *first discoverer*, and the *second claimant* ;---and, that, as *Amerigo*, who *edited* the discovery of the Western Continent, has assumed the *Laurel of Ages*, which should have crowned the brows of *Columbus*,---by whom the discovery was originally *made* ; so must Mr. B. philosophically content himself to see Mr J. crowned with *his ravished* honours :---unless, indeed, the ardent and enterprising spirit of this “ *daring experimenter*” (to adopt his own language) should impel him---to tear them from the usurping brow.

But whatever may be the issue of such a contest---or, whatever the award of posterity---the consolation is, (to the scientific world, as to the commercial !)---that, though *names* may be disputed, or *titles* changed, the *Classification*, and the *Continent* will still remain.

Where have I talked of “ noble contempt,” or any other “ contempt for mechanical “ drudgery ?”---Where have I been guilty of branding “ regularity” with the epithet---or the imputation of “ dulness ?”---Where have I abjured, or insulted, “ slow-paced erudition ?”

No Sir---Not only in words, but in temper and spirit, has this most shameless review *falsified the record* pretended to be transcribed.---For much of this fraudulent *quotation* there is not even “ the shadow of the shade” of a pretence ; and the whole passage is a complete forgery :---a forgery, perhaps, not cognizable by the Criminal Law of the Country ; but, in actual profligacy and atrociousness, not inferior to those, for the perpetration of which, in exercising the functions of your *secondary*---or your *primary* profession---(for, really, I do not know whether your proper description be *Reviewer* and *Advocate*, or *Advocate* and *Reviewer*) you may sometimes, perhaps, have pleaded away the lives of your fellow beings : many of whom, it is probable,

might have had better pleas of mitigation and excuse, than the *Writer*, or the *Editor* of this can be very likely to bring forward*.

The

* An interesting parallel might be drawn,—and, perhaps, a very instructive one, between the forgery of quotations in a *Review*, and the forgery of a name to a *Promissory Note*; and, if it were any part of the author's disposition to wish for the extension of our sanguinary code, it might be no very difficult matter to demonstrate—that, in all moral reason, and just analogy, the penalty inflicted upon the one, ought equally to be extended to the other: for, in the essential considerations of *motive* in the agent, and *injury* to the object, the turpitude of the *Reviewer* will be found, at least, to equal that of the *Felon* of the other description. Both seek to obtain a sum of money, by the forgeries they commit;—both, if successful, perpetrate an actual robbery on the individuals against whom they forge. But,—what comparison in the injury!

“Who steals my purse, steals trash;

“’Twas mine—’tis his—and has been slave to thousands;

“But he who filches from me my good name,—

“Robs me of that which *not enriches him*,

“And makes me poor indeed!”

An essential part of this quotation will not now apply. Even the comprehensive genius of Shakespeare, that

“Exhausted worlds, and then imagin’d new!”—

Even

The *Memoir*, indeed, sufficiently evinces—that mechanical pursuits were not very congenial, to my habits or dispositions; and, from the same document, it is sufficiently evident, that an affectionate father (whose early dissolution has been the source to me of so many wrongs and so many calamities) had trained my infant expectations to far other prospects. I have, also, quoted from the *Commentaries* of Judge Blackstone (“the first law book that was put

Even his sharp prophetic ken, that pierc’d the womb of Nature, and seemed to have discovered, in their very embryos, all the possibilities of human character—of human passion, and of human motive, did not foresee the refinements of profligate cupidity, reserved for this enlightened generation.—Even he did not anticipate, that the art of *enriching themselves by filching from others their good names*, would (at the beginning of the 19th century) not only be invented, but be reduced to a regular system, by a confederacy of *Advocate Reviewers*, organised and incorporated into a regular institution, under the style and firm of “the *Edinburgh Review, or Critical Journal*,” for the ostensible purpose of sharing among themselves the price of ten Guineas per sheet, for all the forgeries and robberies, of this description, their industrious and licentious pens could perpetrate,

put into my hands") a passage—in which that learned Judge, so emphatically, condemns the practice of subjecting those who are intended for the Bar (as I was, at that time, intended)—to “the drudgery of servitude, and the manual labour of copying the trash of an attorney’s office *.”

Such

* Even this quotation, from a legal authority, the advocate Reviewer could not requote, without appealing to his favourite figure. See (Edin. Rev. No. 3. p. 198.) Not satisfied with introducing as my own, a sentiment professedly quoted from so distinguished a writer, he changes the words of that quotation; and then, by the dextrous application of the *Jeff stradulative*, immediately, and without the least acknowledgment or warning, bounds over two closely printed octavo pages,—and, by the *interpolative* assistance of the *conjunctive* AND, couples it together (still within the same inverted commas) with a part of another sentence: by which means—(among other like honourable advantages) he has the opportunity of foisting upon me, a barbarous construction of period, and dissonant recurrence of words and sounds, scarcely unworthy of some of the constituted authorities of his *Critical* Judicature.

The whole passage, indeed, now under consideration, constitutes a beautiful specimen of taste and ingenuity; and shews, most completely, the inadequacy of all the elaborate

Such are the sole foundations for the pretended quotation, and ceremonial accompaniment

orate efforts of a former note, to do justice to the wonderful science it discusses. In the present instance we have a perfect specimen of a species of *Jeff*—which, escaping our former diligence—was omitted in the classical nomenclator:—to wit—The *Jeff complicative*, or that species of sentence which consists, from beginning to end, of a complete texture of different species of *Jeffs*,—so intersected, intertwined and intercalated, as to form one inseparable web of complicated *Jeffification*! The whole passage consists of but eight lines; four of which are printed with inverted commas, as one quotation:—[I use the *numeral*, in preference to the *article*, for the accommodation of the Reviewer; who, from some passages of his criticisms, seems not to be aware that *the latter is a contraction of the former*.] In these eight lines are, thus, inwoven and interwoven, five different *Jeffs*—some of which (even separately considered) will be found to be of a compound nature. As for example, (1.) In the very first line, (“He next took to the profession of the law, *though* this was a profession,” &c.) the word *though* is very dextrously made use of to amalgamate the *Jeff stradulative* and *Jeff conjunctive* into one indivisible and indiscriminative *Jeff*. (2.) By the assistance of the *Jeff interpretative*, (another distinct species, not heretofore defined) the author is *complimented*, in line the fourth, with the charge of passing “a very idle period of three years and a half;” which certainly the text,—and still less the context,

can

ment of inverted commas—' noble contempt for mechanical drudgery.' But for what remains, even such pretences are not to be found.

I have no where indulged myself in any petulant invectives against "regularity;" or in any sort of insinuations against that essential guardian of every talent, and of every virtue. I may be bold to affirm—that neither my *writings*, nor my *life*, have shewn it in any disrespect.

In cases where my own particular interests, and my own personal affairs, were, alone, concerned,—I may, heretofore, perhaps, at some times, and in the ardour of other pursuits, have have paid too little practical attention to its
dictates ;

can by no means authorise. (3.) Then again, the fifth and sixth lines present us with the *complex*, or *amalgamation*, of the *quotative* and *stradulative*, already animadverted upon, at the commencement of this note; which, again, in the sixth and seventh lines, is immediately followed by (4.) the still more dextrous amalgamation of the *quotative*, *stradulative*, and *conjunctive*; which, imperceptibly gliding into (5.) the *Jeff disjunctive*, with a beautiful abruptness, completes the whole masterly *complication*.

dictates; but I have never felt, affected, or, *expressed* for this useful quality, any "noble," or any *ignoble*, "contempt."—In my moral conduct (notwithstanding the "precarious principle," with which the Review has the audacity to charge me) I defy the whole congregated faction of defamation, to bring forward the individual instance (recorded or unrecorded,) in which I have offended against its rules; and although, in my studies and intellectual pursuits, I had, unfortunately, none of that assistance to which the generality of students have such essential obligations,—yet, even in my character of an author, I flatter myself—that the very worst of my earliest productions (and some of them, I again acknowledge, are, in some respects, sufficiently defective) will, at least, evince my *desire* of paying homage to this indispensable requisite of useful composition.

If I have not stigmatised "regularity" with the imputation of *dulness*, still less have I contemptuously sneered at "slow-paced erudition." Nothing that corresponds with
this

this will be found in any part of my book. The thought and the phraseology are of kindred birth:—my feelings could never have dictated the one, nor my ear have endured the other.

No.—I venerate Erudition!—even those descriptions of it which minister to the solitary gratification of the cloistered and the abstract; or those which are to be regarded rather as the badges and embellishments, than the solid advantages of a liberal education: nor is there any *part*, or species of erudition, (so long as the professor will remember, that it is but a *part*) which I do not honour and respect. Deprived myself, by circumstances which I could not control, of the early opportunity of cultivating some branches of knowledge, to which custom has directed her chief regards; I have sought with diligence, and seized with avidity, the sprays that were within my reach*;

* It may not be improper to remark—that, during that very three years and a half, which the reviewer is pleased to stigmatise, as a very idle period, it was my almost invariable

a laborious and persevering diligence, have devoted myself to the improvement of some particular studies—that, hitherto, perhaps, have been too much neglected. Even in the Memoir itself, there is sufficient evidence of my *thirst of knowledge*, and my *avarice of time*; and the Lectures, against which an ungentleman-like confederacy has here been formed, would, at least, have evinced a patience of minute investigation, a persevering ardour, and a habit of elaborate application and experimental induction: nor is it uncharitable to conclude, that, the convictions of certain persons, in this respect, rendered those Lectures so much the more an object of prejudication and contemptuous hatred.

But

variable habit (summer and winter) to read every night till the clock struck *twelve*, and recommence my studies in the morning, as the clock struck *six*; and to fill up the *whole* of the intervals between office hours, with the same studious application:—a further illustration of my “noble contempt for dull regularity.” But after all,—it is not what the student has *acquired*, that is the matter of importance to the public; but what he can *produce*:—not the *slowness*, or the *velocity* of his *pace*; but the goal he has attained.

But I am treading in the steps of evil example, and travelling out of the record. At least, I am anticipating what belongs to another part of my charge. My objects, at present, are the misrepresentations of the Memoir: and, with respect to this part of the calumny, it is sufficient to observe,—that there is not a mode or form of erudition, or any thing that has ever been dignified with that name, that, in any part of my book, is mentioned with the least derision; or any single expression—that, in the smallest degree, can justify the scoffing imputation of “ noble contempt.”

Instead, therefore, of charging me with despising erudition, it would have been more becoming in those who assume the office, and affects the character of critics, to have pointed out some passages in my book, in which I have betrayed the want of it; or in which, what they are pleased to call my “ presumptuous vanity,” has affected any ostentatious display, or any arrogant presumption of that

which

which I do not possess. Something of this kind, I shall certainly attempt, with respect to the empirics of this illustrious association*;

* An instance of such ignorance might be extracted (or, if it is not ignorance, what is it?) from the very paragraph that immediately follows this mass of contemptuous forgery. Endeavouring to discredit, with a single dash of his pen, a Dramatic Poem, expressly written in illustration of Northern Mythology, the reviewer contemptuously observes—(in conjunction with another affirmation, already noticed in the dissertation on the Science of *Jeffing*;) that it is “ full of freezing spirits:”—(that is, there is *one* freezing spirit, a material agent in the Drama, and *one* scene in the *regions of mist and frost*: the Hell of our northern ancestors.) With what other spirits would our learned reviewer have dealt, upon such an occasion?—Would he have peopled the frozen regions of Hela, with *bone-fire devils*, “ in flame coloured taffata?”—or, Would his “ slow-paced erudition” have placed there, Ixion upon his wheel, and Prometheus with his vulture; and Tantalus and Sisyphus, and all the appropriate pageantries of classical superstition?

Used, and abused, as these unfortunate creations of *classical belief* have so frequently been, by those pretenders to poetry, who mistake the transcripts of memory for the flights of fancy, and the pedantry of the copyist for the fervour of inspiration,—must they not have stared and wondered to find themselves, at last, in a situation so perfectly grotesque?

and upon some, or other of them,—I believe, upon more than one, I shall prove, before I lay down my pen, the most gross deficiencies in that sort of Erudition, which, as self-appointed guardians of English Literature, it behoved them most especially to have cultivated:—*to wit*—the principles of the English Language, of English Composition, and of English Grammar.

But, first, I must have done with the quotation; and, with a pained heart, I am obliged to recollect—that the sum of wickedness, so industriously accumulated into this contracted vehicle of forgery and defamation, is not yet enumerated.

“Bad begins, but worse remains behind.”

Where do you find the expression “ardent temperaments?”—Where do you find the expression “irritable feelings?”—Where have I boasted of my “enthusiastic virtues?”

Disjuncted, or associated, I can no where recognise any portion of this pretended quotation:

tation: unless the mere letters of the alphabet, arranged in whatever different order, may be regarded as such portions. Some of the individual words, indeed, will be found in the Memoir; but *no two* of them will be found together.

One passage, I admit, there is—(a passage, however, of *several sentences*; but sentences connected in subject and in succession; and the only *individual* passage, of whatever length,) in which my “enthusiasm,” my “temperament” and my “feelings” are all, successively mentioned: and this is, therefore, the only paragraph that can possibly be admitted to have furnished—even a pretence for this association.

But—Oh Nature!—oh Humanity!—oh link of Moral Sympathy, that bindest man to man! what a passage is this, to have been made the subject of villanous misrepresentation and exulting calumny? What sort of a heart must that being possess!—to what social

or moral feeling can he be susceptible!—of what materials must the original constitution of his mind consist! and by what process of digestion and assimilation must it proceed! who peruses the narrative of domestic afflictions, only to insult the sufferer with contemptuous mockery!—and, from the last of miseries that can rend the paternal heart, collects only the materials that may diminish the consolations of intellectual and moral respectability!

The passage in contemplation will be found in p. xlii of the Memoir, in which, after speaking of the irreparable and sudden loss of the eldest and most beloved of all my children; and of her having “left her unfortunate parents, amid the horrors of solitude, in a state of mind which souls of the keenest sensibility can alone conceive; which Stoicism may condemn, and *Apathy* might, perhaps, deride;” some allusion is made to the very different strain of composition exhibited in the sonnets and poems, that were written upon a former trying occasion, and those which were produced

produced during the long struggle of mental anguish, by which this calamity was succeeded: and it is observed, that—Those who had “studied the tone of the author’s mind,” in those earlier specimens, “would not have expected to see him thus sinking beneath domestic misfortune. But his firmness” (on the former occasion) “was not insensibility, but *enthusiasm*; and, perhaps, his character cannot better be comprehended than by a comparison of those Poems with the Effusions produced by this calamity. He will there be seen in his strength, and in his weakness: and, probably, both will be found to originate in the same *temperament*; —in the same keenness of perception, and habits of *feeling*.”

Here, then, (or no where) is the pretence (and the occasion) upon which this callous-hearted Reviewer thinks it decent and proper to accuse me of an ostentatious parade of metreticious sentiment! Such is the passage that has furnished calumnious Malice with the materials

terials of exulting irony, over my "ardent temperaments," my "irritable feelings," and my "enthusiastic virtues!"

Here are the *substantives*, indeed;---but how different are the *epithets* they suggest! Here is the *acknowledgement of enthusiasm*, I admit;---but where is the *boast of virtue*? The whole passage, indeed,---(especially when taken with the context) instead of a *boast*, is an *apology*. The heart-broken father apologises for that weakness, over which, nevertheless,---when the *object* it deplored is recollected,---even yet, he cannot blush.

Child of my heart!---first offspring of my love!---dear victim of the afflictions to which I have been exposed!---must not the turf lie peaceful upon thy breast?---would inveterate malignity even disturb thy ashes; and from the tears that watered thy early grave, extract the bitter poison of triumphant defamation!

Surely *this spot* might, at least, have been sacred! This little spot the profane foot of calumnious Ridicule might have trembled to approach.

Into

Into the anguish this part of the subject has excited, I did not expect to have been betrayed. I was not aware, that, in applying a remedy to recent injuries, it would be necessary to tear open the yet smarting wounds of domestic affliction; or, in vindicating my character from the mingled levity and ferociousness of this attack, to review the bitterest sorrows of my life. No, Sir,---bloating with calumny as every line of this pretended review so conspicuously was---the necessity of searching the volume for the pretended quotations, could, alone, have revealed the extent of that inhuman baseness, by which, alone, it could be dictated.

But let me turn away from this painful part of the discussion. Let me turn to the only source of consolation, of which the contemplation of human profligacy is susceptible:---to the recollection,---and to the *proof*, that *the profligate calumniator is generally as contemptible as he is base*.

C 4

Yes

Yes---yes, Mr. Jeffray, I said it in direct terms: I said it of the Calumniator in general: ---He is usually as contemptible as he is base. But of the *calumniator by profession!*---of him who makes a regular trade and system of defamation,---who calumniates for *hire*, and lets himself out to *journey-work*, in this way, for a stated salary,---or to *piece-work*, at a stated price; ---of him it must especially be true: for no mind of any grasp or size, could condescend to the drudgery and infamy of so base a calling.

Vanity---(of the sufficiency of which, in certain of the conductors, *report* is rife, and *physiognomy* is conclusive!) may buoy them up, against this observation; and it is not unknown,---that, mistaking the disgraceful avidity of mankind for slander and abuse (even from the very mouths of *Jackdaws* and *Starlings*,) for homage to their transcendent abilities, they are not a little intoxicated by the scandalous success of their experiment. Yet, most assuredly, Mr. Jeffray, in those portions of "the Edinburgh Review and Critical Journal,"

"nal," that have fallen under my observation, there is little that can be pleaded in exception to this consolatory rule*.

In

* Nothing, in reality:---for although there are articles of some ability, in these Reviews, that deserved a better place, and better company,---in those articles the baseness does not appear. Even in this identical *third number*, a very able specimen of candid criticism and correct analysis is presented, in the Review of "Hay's practical observations on Surgery." It is, in reality, just what a review should be: an impartial statement and candid criticism of the contents of the book reviewed; and exhibits, at once, the unprejudiced discrimination of practical Science, and that simple, yet elegant perspicuity of style, which never flowed but from a well cultivated understanding, and a polished mind. In these, and in every other respect, it furnishes, indeed, an admirable contrast to the generality of the articles of which the work is composed: articles in which impertinent digression is substituted for analysis; empty pretensions of wit and ornament, endeavour to gloss over the grossest blemishes of construction and grammar; and prolix effusions of affected subtilty, aspire to the honours of philosophical disquisition.

The article, I believe, is the production of a professional gentleman, whose head and whose heart, are, alike, uncontaminated by the iniquity against which I complain; and who (although, in the zeal of professional science, he has occasionally lent his pen to the honourable purpose of giving increased publicity to works of practical usefulness) would
disdain

In point of composition, I suppose it will be acknowledged, that the present article is very far from being the worst that, even this very

disdain to be regarded as a member of this confederacy; or to have *his* name handed down to posterity, in the muster roll of literary defamation.

The name of *Heberden* has drawn my attention to another article—(probably from the same pen.) It exhibits the same candour and discrimination,—the same professional science, and the same correct style of criticism and composition, displayed in a more ample field. [See *Heberden on the History and Cure of Diseases*, No. 2. p. 467.]

This note might be enlarged; and the exceptions ought to be multiplied: for there are some few persons of real taste and learning, who have *occasionally* written articles for this work, who are not of the *confederacy* (in any acceptance of the phrase)—and whose understandings and style of composition, are equally uninfected with the vices of this empirical school. The temperate and masterly review of Pinkerton's Geography, in the fifth number, has all the internal evidence of coming from a pen of this description. It exhibits a manly spirit of criticism and discrimination, and real knowledge of the subject under review; but it breathes none of that insanity of calumnious malice so conspicuous in many of the articles; and in style and composition, it is marked with none of the affectations, and none of the ignorance of grammar and construction that accompany, most conspicuously, the grand specimens of profligate virulence.

very number of the review contains. Yet, such as it is, the illustration is in point. The *language* is worthy of the *linguist*;—the *style* is in perfect harmony with the *sentiment*; his *metaphors* are as meretricious as his *views* are prostitute.

Take, for an example, the *elegant* flourish with which this forged quotation is introduced—

“ In every page of this extraordinary Memoir, we discover traces of that impatience of *honest industry*, that *presumptuous vanity*, and *precarious principle*, that have thrown so many adventurers upon the world, and drawn so many females from their plain work and their embroidery, to delight the public by their beauty in the streets, and their novels in the circulating library.”

Who can peruse this meretricious farrago, and not immediately reflect—that *Literature* has its stews, as well as *Concupiscence*;—that there are *Brothel Reviews*, as well as *Brothel-houses* of another description;—that the *mind* can be let out to prostitution as well as the *body*;

body; and that the same sort of flimzy, flashy bedizement may be made use of, as a *signal of trade*, in the one instance as in the other?

But, of all the signs, and all the attributes of prostitution, impudence, I believe, has always been regarded as the most unequivocal: and surely, in this respect, all who are in the least acquainted with the *two reputed principal partners* in this *convenient* establishment, will be ready to admit—that this curious metaphor is not at all deficient.

Precarious principle!!!—*precarious* principle!—

Is it Mr. Jeffray that makes this speech? or is it the immaculate Mr. *Brougham*? or do they speak it in Co.? or does it only proceed from some of the *common* instruments of scandalous gratification?

Pray, good, steady, *consistent* and upright Gentlemen! do recollect yourselves a while. Turn over, again, the pages of this Memoir; and, then, turn over the pages of your own remembrances;—and tell me, if you can, what
proofs

proofs you can bring forward of the *precariousness* of my principle? and what proof you are giving, in this very instance, of the *steadiness of your own*?

During the last seven years of my life, it is true, I have abjured all politics:—from my soul I have abjured them. I am wedded—enthusiastically wedded, to a very different pursuit. But have I *shifted sides*, like a common prize fighter? Have I withdrawn myself from one party, only to display my violence for another? or to excite, or keep alive, a spirit of division and persecution, when the exigencies of the times are crying aloud for an emulous and affectionate unanimity.

As a politician, I am absolutely *defunct*: but I have not started forth, in regenerated wickedness, a slanderer, or a persecutor; nor do I quit my Church Yard, in the ghastly shroud of Criticism, to cross the way of any human being;—to haunt him with the remembrances of things that are past,—or retrace the foot-
steps

steps of former opinions,—a perturbed and accusing spirit*.

In what other point of view, will Mr. Jeffray, or Mr. Brougham, or whoever was the Critical amanuensis upon this occasion, think fit to apply this ambiguous accusation—*precariousness of principle?*

Is
 * A whispered suspicion, I understand, was buzzed about, some few months ago, which, though not immediately connected with the subject of this pamphlet, it may not be improper to take this opportunity of repelling. It was suspected—that the introductory paragraph to an article relative to my Lectures and Address at Halifax, that appeared in “the Courier,” came from my pen. If this had been the case, it would have been an exception to the present statement. But, most assuredly, no single word of that article was written by me, except what was quoted from the *printed address*: nor have I any knowledge whatever of the Editors, proprietors, or writers of that paper. For their unsolicited insertion of that ample quotation, I am, undoubtedly, much indebted to them. It was an act of gratuitous kindness; and, certainly, with respect to me and my science, as a kindness, it was evidently intended. I confess, also, that I was the more gratified with this act of civility towards me, because the tone and spirit of that paper so decisively marks it as connected with the ministerial interest;

Is it to any thing connected with *moral* conduct?

The evidence of this was before them:—broad, full, and open, it is spread through the the Memoir; with such particularity of time and

and
 interest; and I considered, therefore, the friendly mention that was there made of my deportment and present pursuits, as an *additional* evidence that I was no longer, in any shape whatever, an object of jealousy, or of animosity to the governing powers; that satisfied with my *positive and complete abstinence of seven years*, from every subject, or transaction of a political nature or tendency; and seeing me ardently and diligently engaged in a pursuit, which may be useful to many, and can rationally be obnoxious to none, it was rather their wish, that I should be countenanced and encouraged, than disturbed and hunted down. Considering the article as a testimonial of that spirit (which some persons of high respectability in that connection, have, in some neighbourhoods, very openly professed and acted upon,) I again repeat that I felt myself both gratified and obliged. But, if the mode of introduction could have been dictated by me, I should, certainly, have declined all comparisons. I do not wish to pull down others, to build up myself. I will not become the accuser, even of what I do not approve. I will assail no man, or set of men, unless driven so to do by the imperious necessity of self-defence. My only wish—is to stand by the candid appreciation of my own merits or by such appreciation to fall.

and place, as no one could have ventured upon, who was conscious of any thing he had reason to conceal.

If I have falsified---why have I not been confuted? If there is any thing in the book, that, even by inference, can impeach my integrity---why is it not brought forward? And, finally, Why, in the pretended analysis of my Memoir, is every individual circumstance that relates to moral associations,---to my personal connections, my wrongs, my hardships, my relative attachments, and my *studies*,*-----why is every thing of this description solicitously suppressed?---suppressed, in the pretended review of a Memoir of forty-eight pages, upwards of thirty of which are, actually, devoted to circumstances of these descriptions? Why, in such pretended analysis, has the reviewer omitted all allusion to the difficulties

* One passage, indeed, that relates to the studious habits of my *boyhood*, as it happened, in its *disjuncted* form, to convey a ludicrous idea, has found its way into notice; and presents, therefore, a solitary exception to this general remark.

difficulties amidst which I struggled to support an aged and decrepid mother, and a brother bowed down by the visitations of disease?---that mother (fond and affectionate as she was!) whose mistaken calculations had denied me the eligible profession to which my father had destined me!---that brother (the scourge of my disastrous youth!) who had wasted the property that father had bequeathed?

Why, I repeat it, was every thing of this description omitted? Did these facts constitute no part of the genuine portraiture of that mind he pretended to delineate?---or, Had the Memorialist, himself, related them too ostentatiously?-----No. If he had, the public would have had some notice of such ostentation, through the medium of the Edinburgh Review. The real fact is, that the pen of the Reviewer was too busily employed in the forgery of pretended connections to find time to record the circumstances of those that did, in reality, exist.

So much for "precarious principle!"

D

Nor

Nor is the accusation of "impatience of "*honest* industry," more decorous, or more fortunate.

Does the critic, really, consider no industry as *honest*, but that which submits (in the elegant phraseology of his Criticism) "to cut out "casimere and stitch in buckram?" Are the labours of the mind and of the pen *all* fraudulent and base?—Does Mr. Jeffray—Does Mr. Brougham think so?—Or is no *literary* industry to be regarded as *honest*, but that which is employed in writing Edinburgh Reviews and Critical Journals?—in selling defamation by the piece! or measuring it out by the ell!

And as for presumptuous vanity!—Let any person, acquainted with the genuine spirit of Criticism, and the strength and clearness of genuine English composition, observe the bottled small beer that froths, and fumes,—sometimes mantling a little, and sometimes stirring up the very bottom of its foul and disgusting lees, as it pours through this vapouring Review;

view;—and, then, let him compare it (I am certainly *presumptuous* enough to dare *this* test) with the style and matter of the poor, despised, unfortunate Memoir; and say where the evidences and characteristics of "presumptuous "vanity" most conspicuously appear.

But the *general spirit* of this *Review* is the best commentary on this part of the charge. The nature and character of my presumptuous vanity are every where *insinuated*;—and, indeed, repeatedly *stated*, in tolerably direct terms.—The son of a Silk-mercator, and forced, during *eighteen months of my boyhood*, by calamity and ill usage, into a mechanical trade,—I have dared to aspire at literary and elocutionary cultivation, and to publish "*effusions of relative and social feeling**."

I have attempted to quit my cast!!!

Presumptuous

* Such sentiments are worthy of a confederacy who regard "poverty" as a circumstance that "makes men ridiculous;" [See *Rev. of Southey's Thaliba*, No. 1. p. 67.] and who cannot even mention poverty, without coupling it with vice and profligacy. See (among innumerable instances of

Presumptuous vanity indeed ! But, then,— somehow or other, it has happened—that several of those characters, whose names will be ever dear to Literature and Science, have been equally presumptuous, and equally vain. The poet Gay was, also a Silk-mercantile; and Prior was a “ Coffeehouse waiter.” Franklin, the States-

this contemptuous association) in the *Review of the Crisis of the Sugar Colonies*. (No. 1. p. 227.) the impassioned deprecation of “ that inconsistent spirit of canting philanthropy, which, “ in Europe, is only excited by the wrongs or miseries of “ the poor and the profligate.” All sorts of canting are undoubtedly detestable;—nor is that least detestable which cants on all sides of all questions, as the changes of circumstances, and the views of ambition, or of *interest* dictate. If report is to be credited, the Reviewer of this article, is also the author of a heavy book on Colonial Establishments; and was, once, one of the most violent champions for *the establishment of a Black Empire in the West Indies*; and the sovereign domination of those very Negroes, whom he now considers as “ the “ Jacobins of the West India Islands”—as “ the anarchists, “ the terrorists, the *domestic enemy*—Against” whom “ it “ becomes rival nations, to combine, and hostile govern- “ ments to coalesce;”—and with whom to coalesce?— “ with the republican arms.”—!!!

By what licence of metaphor, exclusively admissible in
Critics

Statesman, the Philanthropist, and the Philosopher—Franklin was once a *printer's devil*:— aye, and a tolerably poor devil too; and, in the days of youth and hunger, as he has himself described, walked through the streets of

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Critics and Reviewers, the Negroes of the West Indies can be considered as the *domestic enemies* of European Nations, I shall not stay to enquire;—and even a few short months have already decided how wise it would have been in Great Britain (for the averting of any distant danger from her distant colonies) to have followed the profound advice of these profound politicians,—and employed her navy and her resources, to encrease the power of that Military Republic, whose neighbourhood, and whose ambition present so much more serious a danger, at our very threshold!

And these are the upright, and *politic* Gentlemen—who think it wise and decent to accuse me of precariousness of principle!

Poor Negroes of the West Indies! do I strike at you because you are hopeless? No—I leave you, indeed, to your destiny. Miseries enough have already bowed me down in consequence of that enthusiasm which your sufferings first inspired. I have no more sacrifices to make. My own little ones, and the faithful partner of my own afflictions claim all my heart, and challenge *all* my efforts:—and they shall have them. But I leave you, at least, as I found you. I do not swell the tide of your distress. My name is not enrolled in the list of your enemies; nor ever shall.

a town, with one half-penny roll under his arm, while he devoured another:—A circumstance and a situation, perhaps, almost as degrading, as my devouring the productions of literary genius as I walked through the streets of London!

O Gay! O Prior! O Franklin! how fortunate were the days of your temerity! Had the *Edinburgh Review* at that time existed,—had Messrs. Jeffray and Brougham then received their missionary delegation from the *Grand Lama*, would you have had the presumptuous vanity thus to have quitted your *Casts*?—would the “*Trivia*,” and the “*Alma*” have been ever written?—would the laws of electric phenomena ever have been developed*?

But

* *Yes!* exclaims the Reviewer of “*Shepherd’s life of Poggio*”—*Yes, they would have developed themselves, by inevitable “steps in the natural history of Man!”* See *EDINBURGH REVIEW*—No. III. Art. III. p. 44, 45.

But the whole of that exquisite specimen of *philosophical appreciation and fine writing*, in which this wonderful dis-

covery

But what sort of doctrine is this, to come from the pen of a Scotchman, and to Scotchmen

covery of the self-advancing step of the *natural history of man*, is developed to the world, deserves particular quotation, and particular comment.

“Our author,” says the Reviewer, “seems to have cherished a veneration for the subject of his Memoirs, which neither his talents, nor the services which he rendered to the world can authorize. *The plundering of monastic libraries*,”—[Who would not have imagined, from this bold and beautiful figure, that Poggio, was some victorious general, or some mid-night house-breaker, rather than a peaceful collector of the fragments of classical erudition? But, to proceed—“*The plundering of monastic libraries, the searching collections of manuscripts mouldering under “heaps of ruins,*” (How richly picturesque!—and what spirit and beauty does the passage derive from *the reiterated inserting of the article!*)—“and *the discovering those lights which have since illuminated a great portion of the globe, sound as mighty exploits in the ears of the vulgar and superficial.* Even *the cultivated admirer of Old Rome*”—[Who is *he?*—the *Historian of the Decline and Fall?*—or is this only one of those beautiful *grammatical figures*, to which the splendid wits of this confederacy are so conspicuously attached?—(*the for every?*)—But how are *admirers cultivated?*—and admirers of *Old Rome*, in particular? Are they planted, in cuttings, under frames, or sown in seeds upon hot-beds? We can find nothing upon the subject, in the

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Gardener’s

men to be addressed?—to Scotchmen, justly
proud

Gardener's Callendar:—nothing in the Encyclopedia Britannica:—and as for our own experience and observation,—we have found, indeed, that *admiration* can be cultivated; but to the Edinburgh Reviewers we are indebted for the discovery, that *admirers* may be cultivated also. The fact is, indeed, important: we are only afraid that they should extend their discovery to the cultivation of *slanderers*: and indeed, we are but too well informed, that a hot-bed, upon a new construction, and of a new composition, is already provided for that purpose. But what does this *cultivated* admirer do? “Even the cultivated admirer of *Old Rome*, “views with fond partiality, *those achievements, gilded as they are, by the distance of four centuries.*” Here are originality and boldness of metaphor for you!—Where shall we find the like? First of all, the *verbs* plundering, searching, and discovering, by the simple application of the article *the*, are converted into *nouns*, and made antecedents to the comprehensive term *achievements*;—then these *achievements*, these *plunderings, searchings, and discoverings*, are to be *gilded*;—and who is the artist employed in this delicate operation?—Why they are gilded by *distance*! Novelty again!—We have heard that Imagination gilds, that Hope gilds, and that Memory gilds; and several other of these allegorical ladies: and, certainly, some of them perform the operation pretty well;—but Distance is, we believe, quite a new hand in the literary gilding shop; and it is therefore, no great wonder, if he does his business rather awkwardly.

So much for fine writing. And, now, for philosophical reasoning.

“But

proud of the name of Robert Burns!—who,
though

“But in truth,” continues the Reviewer, “the talents required and exercised in these occupations are of no very high order: *nor*, at the same time, are we to consider Poggio and his associates as possessed of *some* rare and transcendent endowments, which peculiarly enabled them to effect the restoration of letters. That event must be considered as a *step* in the natural history of ‘man,’ to which the preceding circumstances of progressive improvement and growing curiosity had led the way, and which *must have developed itself* about this period, had Poggio and his circle of classical compeers directed their labours to other objects.” We will say nothing, in this place, of the beautiful and perspicuous idea of *steps* DEVELOPING *themselves*. Sufficient homage has, already, been paid to the splendour of original metaphor. The novelty of the reasoning—the brilliancy of the discovery—the wonderful annunciation, that the steps of the human mind, and the progress of human improvement will continue their gradations—without the assistance of human agency!—this, of itself, is enough to fill the imagination with astonishment and delight, without the subordinate admiration of tropes and metaphors.

That “the preceding circumstances of progressive improvement, and growing curiosity, had led the way” to those researches after the precious reliques and fragments of antiquity, which distinguished the fifteenth century, we were certainly prepared to admit; and that it was by the operation of these preceding circumstances, that the labours

though an Ayrshire ploughman, had, nevertheless,

labours of Poggio, and the other "restorers" of those times were directed to that particular object.

All this is perfectly in the way of nature.

Nor was the present age in any danger of supposing that "the restorers" acted under the influence of any supernatural gift or inspiration; or, as Shakespeare expresses it, "by a divine thrusting on." We know very well that "in the history of human nature," and human discovery, such "steps" and gradations always must exist: and generally they can be traced.

Thus, for example,—the generous liberality of spirit that pervaded the age of Queen Anne—(the Augustan age of Britain!) had prepared the way for the admission of Gay from behind the counter, and Prior from the bar of a Tavern, to those circles of rank and fashion, of which their intellects were the ornaments and the pride; and the policy of Philip, and the magnanimity of William the 3d, had prepared also the way for the conquests of Alexander the Great, and the victories of our illustrious Marlborough. All this, and more, there needs no Ghost to tell us. But that the "Trivia" and the "Alma" would have been written, if Gay had continued a measurer of silk, and Prior a drawer of wine;—that the precious manuscripts of antiquity, that were "mouldering away under heaps of ruins" would have discovered themselves "about this period to the world," if those benefactors of literature, who rescued them from this obscurity and decay, had directed their "labours

"to

theless, the presumptuous vanity to be a poet; and, perhaps, was even *so presumptuous*, as to write the very best Poetry that Scotland had ever boasted †.

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"to other objects;"—that the battle of Blenheim would have gained itself, if Marlborough and his army had been asleep in their beds; and Greece and Persia have been subdued to Macedon, if Alexander "and his compeers had directed their labours" only to wrestling on the sands, and playing at quoits and whirlbat;—all this we *did not know*; nor is it probable, that we ever should have known it, had the writers of the Edinburgh Review confined themselves within *THEIR proper cast*, in the Society of intellect; and "directed their labours" to Grub-Street Reports of dying speeches, and to translating, into their own *modern* and appropriate language, the ancient History of Jack-the-Giant-Killer, and the story of Thomas Hickathrift.

† Not even a Scotchman's reverence for Scottish genius, can restrain the fiery indignation with which this Dragon of Criticism guards the Hesperian fruit of genius and intellect from the profane and unhallowed vulgar. The ashes of poor Burns are, also, to be disturbed, because he has dared to taste; and the monument erected by the liberality of Curry, (because it consecrates those ashes) is to be defaced with malignant spume. Even from the review of "Dugald Stewart's account of Dr. Robertson," the Reviewer

I do not mean to draw comparisons. Nothing can be further from my thoughts. But the excellence that these had a right to *attain*, I had a right to *attempt*; and, even if it were *true*,—that, by attaching myself to literature, I was endeavouring to quit *my Cast*, I trust that we are not yet, so completely proselytised to the religion and policy of the Gentoos, that my *right* to the experiment would be denied.

But you are perfectly aware, Mr Jeffray,—
or
viewer springs aside, upon his devoted quarry; and the professor is reproached with having employed “his pencil” on “the coarse lineaments of the Scottish rustic.”

What immediately follows, is equally curious for the spirit and *justness* of the criticism, and for the *correct simplicity* of the language. “The ‘*Letter*’ (of Professor Stewart) says the Reviewer, “which is the only buoyant part of “Dr. Currie’s ponderous tomes, and amply displays its *powers*, “by *floating* so large a *mass*,” &c.—

The *powers* of a *letter floating a mass*!!!—Friends! can you hold your laughter?—

When metaphor runs mad, and every strained inversion of grammatical figure, shall pass for taste and criticism,—then—(and not till then) will Dr. Currie believe the permanency of his reputation in danger from the attacks of such reviewers.

or whoever was the writer of the article was aware—that even the despicable doctrine of *Casts* will not answer the purpose of the present proscription:—that to give colour even to this miserable pretence, it was necessary to garbel the record, and suppress the evidence:—which, indeed, has been regularly done, throughout the whole of this pretended review, wherever that evidence could not be distorted to the purposes of wickedness and malignity.

It is true, indeed, that the *imprudence* of one generation, and the successive *minorities* of two more, have stripped to the very bark, that branch of the family (and you would take bark and all) of which myself and my children alone remain. It is also true, that I have had to struggle with all the difficulties and disadvantages which these successive circumstances have produced. But this does not alter my *Cast*: and, if individuals are to be estimated by what is called *the antiquity of their families*,—and the right of aspiring to literary distinction, were by such estimation to be decided,
my

my pretensions to offer myself as a candidate, it would, even yet, be somewhat difficult to reject. Carry your researches into the Vale of Clwd,—where the original stock yet remains, that has flourished through countless generations ; or extend your professional enquiries into the legal antiquities of the southern part of Britain ; and some evidence, might be even there obtained. Nor at the recapitulation of my ancestors shall I have occasion to blush. Of the name of Thelwall there stands, I believe, upon record—no *ruffian*, no *calumniator*, no *Jack-of-all-sides*, and *coward*.

But I will leave my pedigree to the *Welch* part of the family : to those who consider themselves as the principal stem : or I will leave it to you, to make out a new one to your liking ; and to emblazon it with the heraldry of your own imagination. You may take, if you please, the Boar's head from my crest, and
clap

clap there a pair of sheers ;—you may snatch from the mouth its branch of laurel, and put a shred of buckram in its place :—so long as you cannot degrade my character to a level with this scribbler's,—or charge me with such forgeries and misrepresentations as I have proved against this review, I will not quarrel about families, or scutcheons.

It is not upon *such* grounds that I have taken up the cudgel of controversy ; nor for any thing, in reality, that *this scandalous Reviewer* has written. Had malignant hostility terminated there, I should have disdained remonstrance : I should, in all probability, have been too profitably employed to have spared time for his castigation ; and he might have hung himself out, like a Parrot in a cage, to abuse my poetry in set phrases,—or call out *Mercer*, or *Attorney's Clerk*, or *run-away Apprentice*, or *W-----*, or *Taylor*, or any other foul name that his mechanical memory could furnish :—he might have compared me to as many prostitutes as he thought fit ;
—and

---and to prostitutes of *any* description :---or, to sum up all that could be scandalous and offensive,---he might even have likened me to some miss-begotten monster, of equivocal race, half *Advocate* and half *Reviewer*,---who, inflated with vanity, and bursting with venomous gall, *hires himself out*, alternately, to the bookseller and to the bar ; yet maintains the unity of his essence, amid the duplicity of his character, by the consistent facility with which he discharges his *virus*, either from the tongue, or from the pen, on that side of the question which is likely to reward him best.

All this I could have endured, to avoid contention ; ---and, satisfied with my usual maxim of *living down* the calumnies I could not but despise, would have " kept the even tenour of " my way."

But, if there are no limits to *malignity*, there must be some to *forbearance*. If, having defamed me as a *writer*, Reviewers and Editors should think it necessary to confederate against me as a *Lecturer* ;---and, to justify their

their scurrilities as Critics, plant themselves in sculking corners of my Lecture-Room, as ring-leaders and signal-posts of most indecorous and unprecedented interruption,---sufferance is at an end ; and imperious duty dictates another line of conduct. It is no longer an *insult* they are offering ; they assail me in the vital part. It is no longer an idle calumny they are inventing,---a futile criticism, or a malignant misrepresentation, which may be left for posterity to answer, or for time to clear ;---the spoiling hand of unprovoked hostility, is upon the subsistence and the hopes of my family ; and for their sakes, at least, I am called upon to repel the injury, and to exclaim, with decisive firmness,---

Here, at least, no man assails me with impunity!

If such has been the conduct of this confederacy, Mr. Jeffray,---such must, assuredly, be mine. I am called upon by every feeling, and by every duty ;---by the voice of nature, and the cries of affection, to arm myself at all points :---the meek, mute glance of conjugal solicitude,

solicitude, seems to reproach my delay; and my throng of little ones come crowding to my knees, and demand the protection of a father.

Such are the motives that urge me to this appeal;—that compel me to keep, no longer, with my calumniators, any sort of terms, and to give them no sort of quarter; to repel their aggressions in every direction: and, by laying bare the infamy of their *former* conduct, to expose their *present* motives.

The former of these is sufficiently proved; or falsehood, forgery, and defamation can never again be regarded as proofs of infamy. If the Reviewers of the *Memoir* were the Scorers of the *Lecture*,—If those who have treated me as a vulgar and illiterate being, whose only talent was “forwardness and audacity,” and whose “want of voice” precluded me from becoming a player, are *connected* with the prejudicators of my Elocutionary Science, the *present* is as obvious as the *past*. And, if, to this,

this, be added—the circumstances under which the Criticism, in the first instance, appeared,—it will not be a conclusion beyond the bearings of the evidence—that the calumnies of the Review were emanations of a conspiracy against the Lectures; and the indecorous interruption of the Lectures, a conspiracy to buoy up the calumnies of the Review.

Of this identity there are, indeed, some tolerably strong presumptions: nor are the rumoured exultations of the Literary Chiefs,—their ignorant criticisms*, and gross misrepresentations

* Some of these criticisms, which are now stalking abroad, in the name, and under colour of the authority of these infallible Arbiters of Taste, are, indeed, most curious—“My system of Elocution, and all that belongs to it, must necessarily be wrong, because Mrs. *Esten* recites the Ode on the Passions in a very different manner from that which I adopted!—and because neither Mr. *Kemble* nor Mr. *Cooke* made use of such transitions of voice, or such varieties of modulation as I exhibited!”

These objections would, certainly, have been very proper had I stood up, as a professed mimic, to give imitations of those performers. But if, on the contrary, it was my professed object to exhibit the full range of impassioned modulation, and of those imitative flexures, tones and cadences,

sentations (so completely of a piece with the forgeries of the Review,) very imperfect indications of the same pervading spirit.

Rumour,

by which the human voice is enabled, not merely to describe, but to designate and embody the respective passions and emotions,—the very censure of these critics is extorted praise: for it shews me to have accomplished the object I had in view.

Mrs. *Ester's* recitation of this Ode may be very admirable; and, though I have never heard her recite it, I have no doubt that it is so; for of her dramatic powers, I entertain a very high opinion. But if her object be to *describe* the respective passions, and mine be to *represent* them, our modes of recitation must necessarily be very different; and yet both may be equally proper.

With respect to Mr. *Kemble* and Mr. *Cooke*—nobody, I suppose, imagines that the *voice* of the latter is his particular perfection;—nor would the former, I should imagine, regard it as a disadvantage, if the range and modulative variety of his tones were rather more extensive.

But the best of the joke is,—that the organs of these most exquisite critics are so delicately susceptible, and their ears so admirably hung—that they positively cannot perceive the difference between the cadences of blank verse and of prose. After reading a passage (Edwin of Northumbria) from Hume's History of England, and giving to it that high commendation to which, in a literary point of view, I have always considered the historian as transcendently entitled, I took occasion to suggest the very different style of *elocution*, which even the same subject would require, if treated in an
 oratorical,

Rumour, however, does not stop here. Rumour has named both the Editor and writer of the obnoxious article; and Rumour has named

oratorical, instead of an historical way; and, in illustration of this, proceeded to recite a speech (the Massacre of Bangor) out of the very poems which these critics, eight months ago, had so very candidly reviewed:—a speech in which a designing Orator sets forth, in a pompous and exaggerated style, the exploits and achievements of his favourite hero, for the purpose of enflaming the passions of his hearers, and bringing them over to his views. This speech being introduced with some extemporary remarks, I glided, imperceptibly, into the recitation; without formally announcing it, with a “Here begins a piece of blank verse of my own composing!” or other clerk like *grace*:—never suspecting that it could be necessary to inform the *critics*, at any rate, when I was speaking spontaneously, and when I was repeating; still less that it could be requisite to inform them whether I was speaking in verse or prose. This, however, was a most fatal mistake; for the *learned critics*, deep read in the structure and melodies of language, actually mistook my recited verse, for spontaneous prose; and have criticised it, accordingly, with great clamour; adding to their curious criticisms, a *Jeff Major*, equally curious,—in the assertion—that I had spouted forth this bombastic oration, (as they called it) to show in what a very superior style to that of Mr. Hume, I would have described the historical event, to which both passages relate, had the writing of such history devolved upon me. Had this criticism come from
 any

named—some of the persons who abetted the recent insult.

But let us appeal to better evidence.

Tell me, then, Mr. Jeffray, (for it is said you know)—Who was the individual that skulked behind the screen, at the farther corner of my platform?—the only possible place where his conduct could elude my personal observation :—and What could be his reason for the election of such a retreat?

Was it the *meek and modest* Mr. Jeffray himself,

any set of beings but the Reviewers, it might have been passed off, by laying the fault upon the awkward structure of the composition;—which might have been called “a parcel of bombastic stuff, neither verse nor prose, and, therefore, equally liable to be mistaken for either.” But, unfortunately, these very critics, even in the midst of their scurrilous review, have, themselves, done homage to the versification of the “Epic Fragments” (from which this speech is selected); and have acknowledged that they “were particularly struck with the easy dignity of the language”!!!—With the *easy dignity*, Reader, of *that very identical* VERSE which they are now bawling down, as execrable bombastic prose—the very essence of all folly and extravagance!

And there are the bell-weathers of the critical flock of Edinburgh!

self,—retiring (with his accustomed bashfulness) from the eye of a stranger?—or Was it a late *turbulent* member of the Speculative Society,—shrinking from himself, and crouching on the stool of penitence, to con over the recantation of former heresies, or rehearse his new opinions?

Was it a certain *scribbling Advocate*, well known for his vanity, his petulence and his gall!—who had chosen this retirement to meditate his morrow’s brief;—and whose nods and winks were only the spontaneous expressions of self-gratulation, on the suggestion of some new sophism, or the solution of some knotty point?—or—

Was it (finally) the Editor of the Edinburgh Review,—who had chosen that situation, as most convenient for conveying his critical suggestions to his confederates and admirers;—to teach them where to laugh and where to scoff, and encourage their violations of decorum?

You have an interest in these questions, Mr. Jeffray, as well as myself:—for Report has

said that it was that very Editor ; and, when I enquire of the publisher for the Editor's direction, he tells me---that *You are the Man!*

Report has, also, told me---that a group of Scoffers came in that Editor's train ;---that they sneered and conferred, and conferred and sneered, before they dispersed themselves about the room ;---that they found, there assembled, another, smaller group, betraying a congeniality of motive : headed, indeed, by a very different being ;---the degenerate offspring of a literary sire ;---the obscure inheritor of a celebrated name !---These two parties, it should seem, though holding each other in notorious detestation, coalesced, upon this occasion, with immediate sympathy. Like the positive and negative electricity of two opposing clouds, they rushed together ; and I was the victim of their collision.

For my own part---much of this extraordinary business could only become intelligible by subsequent rumours and enquiries. I knew nothing of impending confederacies. I

was

was not prepared to expect them. If I had,---or if, when the indignities first began to be offered, I could at all have suspected the quarter from which they proceeded, I believe I should not have found it very difficult---to have done *critical execution*, on these self-constituted arbiters, upon the spot :---that I could sufficiently have exposed the ignorance and the infamy of Edinburgh Reviewers, to have spoiled their *ready made laugh* ; and to have barred the influence of their opinion.

But how was it possible that I should be so prepared ? Pursuing a profession that is hostile to none, how should I suspect such persevering and malignant hostility ?

Experience, also, had lulled me into fatal security. During the whole pilgrimage of this course of Lectures---(which has now been continued between two and three years) they have never been encountered with any *disrespect*. My success has, of course, been different in different places. Where prejudices have run high, many have stood aloof ;---at least,

least, at the beginning of the Course. Where literature and intellectual refinement had made but little progress, my attendance, would, of course, be small: and, in two or three places, of no very high repute, for intellect, for breeding, or for morals, individuals have been found, sufficiently malicious, to be active in *private hostility*; or to expose themselves to derision and contempt, by efforts of public intimidation. But neighbourhoods there are, that have done honour to the liberality of the *English character*,—and disdained to mingle the feelings of party, with a question of mere science and accomplishment*; and, hitherto, without

* While a gentleman at Beverly thought it worth his while to discountenance my undertaking, by making a public entertainment on the night of my first Lecture—(although he had actually given a similar entertainment the night before,)—to Barton upon Humber I was *invited* to deliver a course, which was attended by all the families of any consideration, within six or eight miles of the place. Yet those who are acquainted with the characters of the two neighbourhoods, will know very well that this difference of deportment did not originate in any difference

without exception, in those places most eminently distinguished for literature and science, my reception has been most unequivocal, and my

difference of political sentiment. But I cannot enter upon a subject of this description, without acknowledging the candour and cordial good sense of some conspicuous characters in the town of Sheffield;—where these Lectures first commenced. My plan was no sooner shewn to one gentleman, in particular,—whose property, whose profession, whose abilities, and whose zeal, during the contest of parties, had marked him out as the very leader of those—who (if resentful remembrances were to be permitted, on such subjects, to intrude) might have been expected to be most hostile,—than, with a frankness that does honour to his nature, he immediately acknowledged the utility of the undertaking; and did every thing in his power to promote my success.

To the honour of that part of the country, it must be acknowledged—that no where have political divisions left behind them a smaller degree of rankling animosity. When I passed through Sheffield a second time, I had the opportunity of meeting, at a public dinner, several gentlemen, of the first respectability, of all the different parties which in that neighbourhood had existed; and the deportment of all was such—as if the name, or the feeling of party had never there been known.

Have we less occasion *now* for such affectionate unanimity?

my encouragement most extensive! But, in every neighbourhood, whatever the proportion of my success, *my Lecture Room has, been sacred from all indignity.* Some solitary loungeur might chance, perhaps, to enter, with the sneer of levity flickering upon his lip, or the gloom of hostility upon his brow;—but no organised confederacy ever yet had intruded, with a sculking ring-leader behind a screen; and I have, uniformly, had the satisfaction to triumph over such prepossessions; and to find—that “fools who came to *laugh*, remained to *learn*.”

Englishman as I am, I confess I did not expect—that a *public Lecturer* would have met with less decorous liberality from a *Scottish* than from an *English* audience: still less did I expect to have been confronted with a species of interruption and insult, which I am confident *no English audience* would have endured.

It is true, I have always been given to understand, that I must be prepared in Edinburgh, for what, in London, would be called a *cold reception*;

tion;—That, widely different, in this respect, from the audience of our English metropolis (who always give the stranger credit for ability, till he has proved that he does not possess it; and, by that means, perhaps, frequently draw it forth, where otherwise it might not have appeared!) the Critics of Edinburgh would pause over my pretensions, and examine them with a curious eye;—that my abilities would be *questioned* before they would be *admitted*; and that I must *prove* my title, before I was to expect their applause. But I had, also, been informed—that their attention, though jealous, would be respectful;—that I should be listened to, with guarded silence, to the conclusion of my effort; and that the decision, though deliberate, would at least be candid. Thus much I had gathered from uniform report; and practical experience had prepared me for such a reception: for, even in England, I had observed more and more of this character, as I travelled further North; and ultimately I had found it highly gratifying:—For, though

though the *discriminating* plaudit, is, undoubtedly, cheering;—and though there are passages of great exertion, where the pauses produced by such exhilarating interruptions, may, almost, be requisite to the individual—who is to sustain the double task of entertainment and instruction, during a period of two hours and a half; yet the Lecturer who prides himself more upon his science than his execution, will consider a deep attention as the best applause; and no acclamation can, to him, be so acceptable—as that which such attention has preceded.

Thus prepared, by information and experience, I own that my reception, when I entered the room, was even more than I expected. But I had not been ten minutes upon the platform, before I began to feel—that I was, indeed, in a land of strangers. The sneering cajolery of *groups* and *couples*, skilfully dispersed in different parts of the room, gave an air of hostility to the company; and in place of that fixed attention which, in every individual

vidual instance, my Lectures had hitherto commanded, the nod, and the sneer, and the meeting of whispering heads, were, every now and then, obtruding themselves on my notice; and though some bursts of general approbation, towards the conclusion of the first part of my Lecture, seemed to manifest a very different feeling from what this pantomime (to me and the confederates, perhaps, at first, alone, observable) seemed to indicate; yet it was not till towards the latter part of the Lecture, that my eyes were fully opened to the existence of a cabal; or that I discovered of how small a number, the party of scoffers was composed.

I had perceived, indeed, considerable uneasiness, in one part of the room, when (sketching the general plan of my intended course, and speaking of the criticisms that were to accompany the readings and recitals,) I proceeded to explain the acceptation in which this term was to be understood;—and to warn my hearers—‘that it was not my intention to make

make this part of my Lectures, a vehicle for captious malignity; or, under the pretence of "Strictures literary and critical," to entertain them with calumnious Essays on the lives and writings of my contemporaries;—that the nature of my undertaking led me rather to the selection of beauties, than to the concentration of defects, and the exhibition of deformities;—and that far more useful to the progress of literature, was one liberal and genuine criticism, that illustrated a passage of transcendent excellence, and pointed out the reasons and the sources of its perfections, than whole volumes of that snarling, cavilling and abuse to which the pretensions of Modern Criticism were too frequently confined.

That there were persons in Edinburgh to whom this *oil* would be VENOM, and this *honey* ---GALL, I might, indeed, have anticipated; and I might have suspected the *nature* of the hostile confederacy,—when, from that very time, the hostility became more prominent.

But it was not till the recital of Collin's Ode that the confederacy stood revealed.

You

You will remember, Mr. Jeffray, how the commencement of that Ode was received and felt*. You will remember the rising emotion produced by the delineation of the passion of Fear:—the swelling murmur and the opening plaudit, which were spontaneously bursting forth. You will remember the admirable address with which the principal character of *the under-plot*, already described, intercepted that plaudit:—his lifted hand—his apparently cordial *bush! bush!*—as if anxious that I should not be interrupted!—You will remember, also, how admirably prepared the whole confederacy were against the next emergency; when, a similar emotion beginning, again, to manifest itself, the applausive murmur was more effectually suppressed; and the lecturer and the audience were, alike, confounded, by a forced unnatural laugh,—commenced by this very *bush*, and instantaneously seconded by about half a dozen more, to whom he *passed* the signal.

F

This

* Liverpool, I believe, and several other places, will remember—how it has been felt and received, throughout.

This expedient answered the purpose so well, that it was regularly appealed to, upon every serious occasion, through the remainder of the evening: originating always in the same quarter, and from the same quarters re-echoed*.

All

* One of the occasions upon which this laugh was applied, I shall here present to the public; that it may be fairly judged—how far the *provocation* justified the outrage. It was in the concluding ORATION—*On the importance of Elocution in a moral and intellectual point of view; as illustrated in the facts of Natural History,—the stationary condition of the inferior animals, and the exclusive improvability of the Human Race.*

It is not my intention to quote the whole Oration: indeed, it would not be very practicable; as my Orations are never written. My custom is (in conformity with my own maxim, as a teacher) to make a complete skeleton, or outline, of my argument, with notes of the leading facts; and, with respect to language, to leave every thing *but the definitions*, to the feelings and suggestions of the instant. All that I shall attempt, therefore, is to give, in the first instance, a general idea of the main argument of the discourse, by transcribing the entire notes made use of upon the occasion; and then cloathing, as nearly as possible, in their customary language, the passages that were the particular objects of the affected ridicule.

Outline

All this while, the man behind the screen, of whom report has since been so loud, escaped my

Outline of the Oration.

“ Object of the Lectures—Popular attraction to the *most important of all Sciences*: FACULTY OF DISCOURSE, the sole discriminating attribute of Man—“ Destitute of this Power, “ Reason would be a Solitary, and, in some degree, an un-availing principle”—BLAIR’S LECT. Etymologically, Reason and Discourse are one: FACULTY OF DISCOURSE=*the power of communicating our thoughts by definite arrangements of sounds and characters*: REASON=*the act of so communicating*; Derivative and metaphorical application of Terms: SILENT INDUCTION=*the power of remembering, comparing, and drawing conclusions*—not peculiar to Man—animal existence not preservable without it:—hence INSTINCT=*knowledge from solitary or uncommunicable induction*; REASON=*induction from communication, or discourse*. Gradations of instinct—the Swine—the Elephant—POPE. In *mere silent induction*, some Elephants superior to some Men—Facts from Natural History: Inductive faculty of inferior animals—“ even the mute Shellfish gasping on the shore”—SMELLIE’S Philos. Nat. Hist.—THE OYSTER.

“ Inferences—All animals capable of combining and comparing facts, and drawing conclusions from premises: therefore, of individual improvement—instances, Horses, Dogs, &c. *Individuals* improvable, but *Species* STATIONARY:—even RETROGRADE from improvements in state of the material universe—Successive disappearance of Bears—Wolves—Beavers, &c. from Britain; Rattle Snake, &c. in America.

PROGRESSIVE

my notice: and therefore it is, Mr. Jeffray, that I enquire of you whether you can inform me of

PROGRESSIVE IMPROVABILITY OF MAN—Savage in his Woods and Dens—Polished Inhabitant of European Cities: Britons in time of Cæsar—German Ancestors in time of Tacitus. SOURCE OF IMPROVABILITY—Faculty of discourse—Communion—Transmission—Perpetuation—Accumulation—Comparison—Revision—Progression—Goal of Science attained by one generation, the starting place of the next: Immortality of Intellect. Not only Science and Refinement from Discourse, but—VIRTUE, *the exclusive attribute of Man*. Vindication of Human Nature against Cynical and Misanthropical Philosophers. Pretended Virtues of Brute animals—Gratitude and Fidelity of Dogs—to the Assassin—to the Philanthropist=Cavern of the Banditti=Door of the honest Proprietor. Hostile—to the Mendicant—the Ruffian. Mere Sympathy of selfishness, not Virtue—Attachment for reward, not Fidelity. *Some* human beings act upon the same motives:—but *not all*. EXPANSIVE PRINCIPLE OF HUMAN VIRTUE—from Comparison and Generalization—i. e. from Discourse—Progression of Sympathy: Domestic circle of relative dependence—Friendship—Neighbourhood—the community in which we are fostered—Civilized Society—the Human Race—Posterity—the Sentient Universe—GENUINE VIRTUE—(the comparison and practical adjustment of the varied claims of these) only attainable by Discourse: hence moral importance of cultivation.

“ SCIENCE

of him. Once, indeed, I remember to have seen a long chin poking out, from behind the green

“ SCIENCE OF ELOCUTION indispensable to full accomplishment of the objects of this faculty. General Division of Discourse into *Vocal* and *Written*—Culture of Elocution connected with progress of both—Comparative advantages: *Written*—permanency—transmission—precision: *Vocal*—promptitude—accommodation to active purposes—impressive force—sympathetic excitement. ORAL INSTRUCTION indispensable—Demonstration with Theory:—Advantages of *public* tuition—emulation—social contagion. RECAPITULATION and CONCLUSION.”

Such are the *heads*, or *outlines* of the Discourse: and, perhaps, even from this sketch, the reader may be enabled to discover—*Whether there is any thing so exceedingly extravagant, in the general design, as to be unworthy of serious attention?*—or, *Whether it be a texture of such threadbare common-place, as to call for derision and contempt?* At any rate, the points of attack (if it had been of any consequence *where* the attack was made) were not always very judiciously chosen.

The unseconded attempt of the *Auxiliary Chief* against the apparent paradox—That *the power of SILENT INDUCTION (of comparing premises, and drawing conclusions) was evidently possessed—even by “the mute shellfish gasping on the shore,”*—was unfortunately defeated by the facts and illustrations, that immediately followed, from Dr Smellie’s *Philosophy of Natural History*: and although the *Critical Corps* did not suffer him, again, to remain exposed, without assistance, in the

green baize, in a very suspicious way; with an arched eye-brow and a pair of scowling, yet self-complacent

the field, the following passage (upon which the grand assault was made,) will show, perhaps, whether the confederates depended more upon their discriminating generalship, and the natural weakness of the fort, or on their confidence of a *mine beneath*.

“But Science and Refinement are not the only advantages that we derive from this *exclusive* faculty of discourse. By this it is that we are enabled to attain—VIRTUE! *the godlike attribute of MAN!—and of Man alone.*

“I am well aware that to this position there are some who have their objections ready: that there are Cynical and Misanthropical Philosophers in the world, who would shew their zeal for morality, by degrading their species, and exalting the inferior animals. By such we are sent, for examples of every virtue, not to the circles of social intellect; but—

“Among the beastial herds to range.”

“Among the most favourite themes of these satirical fabulists, are the *Gratitude and Fidelity of Dogs*. But let us examine these pompous epithets, by which the brute is exalted, for the degradation of the human being. In what does the gratitude and fidelity of these inferior beings consist?

“You feed your Dog,—you shelter, and you caress him:—and you do well; for he protects your house from the midnight robber, and he guards your steps in the walks of
obscurity

self-complacent eyes above it, and a nose that snuffed importance at every breeze. And such

obscurity and peril. But if his daily sop had been ministered by the Assassin, would he not have guarded the Assassin also?—Would not the midnight depredator, the perjurer, or the calumniator be an object as dear to his *grateful Fidelity*, as the Benefactor of the sentient universe? Would he not guard the cavern of the Banditti, (if that *Banditti* were his feeders) with as fierce a courage, against the officers of justice,—as he guards the mansion of the *honest proprietor*, against the assaults of depredation? Is he not, universally, the enemy of the *needy Mendicant*, as much as of the *sanguinary Ruffian*?—and exists there among the teachable tribes of these inferior beings, a single animal (if trained and pampered with individual gratifications) whom this pretended gratitude and fidelity, will not render the traitor and destroyer, even of his own particular species.

“Is this the principle which, in the *human being*, we should dignify with the name of virtue? Is the *gratitude* we should admire—is the fidelity we should commend, a mere attachment for reward—a mere barter, or return for selfish gratification? Is the sympathy of selfishness, the only genuine virtue?

“Some men there are, it cannot be denied, who act upon no better principle. I wish there were not some, who (*like all other animals*) too frequently act upon a worse. But these are not the beings we distinguish as the virtuous: nor can Virtue be so defined.

“VIRTUE

such a nose, and such a chin, and such a pair of eyes and eye-brows I have since beheld, at the

“VIRTUE is, in reality, an expansive principle—that acts not alone upon individual impression; but soars to generalization and takes the universe in its fold. With passion for its goad, and reason for its rein, it looks beyond itself, (not only *behind*, but *before*;) and, even in the reciprocations of kindness, or the pursuits of individual gratification, it forgets not the general welfare. Its gratitude is not confined to the personal benefactor; it is extended to the benefactors of mankind. And he who is truly virtuous, will deplore, and restrain, the errors even of a father; will counteract the injustice, even of a benefactor, or a friend; and acknowledge, with veneration, the benevolence that dispenses blessings upon his species,—although it should happen (as, by accident or mistake, it may)—that such general benefactor, to him is personally hostile.

“Such is Virtue---if I comprehend the term. It has its source, indeed, in individual *feeling*: for till we have *felt* we cannot *know*: but its indispensable constituents are comparison and generalization; which can only proceed from discourse. Hence from the central throb of individual impulse, the feeling expands to the immediate circle of relative connections;—from relatives to friends and intimate associates; from intimate association to the neighbourhood where we reside—to the country for which we would bleed!—from the patriot community to civilized society—to the human race—to posterity—to the sentient universe: and wherever

the Bar of the Court of Justiciary: and I certainly did observe in those features (and still more in the voice that came forth from among them) something very like unto a painful struggle between affected scorn and conscious

wherever the throb of sensation can exist, the Virtuous find a motive for the regulation of their actions.

“Such are the expanding undulations of virtuous sympathy.—Such are its objects: and in the comparison and practical adjustment of the *various claims* of these—(which but for discourse could never be comprehended or perceived) does Virtue, in reality, consist.”

This is the passage—which, as the climax of my argument, was the object of particular derision. This is the passage which in every part was *interrupted*,—and which, consequently, in many was *obscured*, by the reiterated laugh—shall I say of *contempt*, of *idiotism*, or of *malice*?

I leave it to the public to decide,

As for the objections against my style of delivery: they are precisely the same that I remember to have heard blubbered out against Mr. Erskine, by the coarse lips of Beacroft; and for which the first W. PITT (the great E. of Chatham) found it necessary to castigate the dull impertinence of Walpole. I am ready, however to acknowledge—that it was such as cannot be justified by any thing that I have witnessed of the Oratorical practice of the Scottish Bar.

scious agitation, when he who wore them, observed the searching glance, with which, through these exterior semblances, I endeavoured to penetrate into the *Man within*.

If these latter were, in reality, the same identical eyes and nose and chin, so transiently recognised on the former occasion---I know, Mr. Jeffray, who was the lurker behind the screen; and, perhaps, enough is already known to explain why he should so have lurked.

This part of the subject might then be closed with a string of the simplest interrogatories.

Were the leaders of the Review among the audience at the Lecture?

Were they among the foremost to prejudicate and deride?

Have they, since, been equally forward---to exult, to misrepresent, and to clamour?

But there is yet another portion of this History that must not be passed over in silence.

What

What were the circumstances under which the curious Criticism on my Memoir and Poems first appeared in the Review?

The tale is simple. The conclusion cannot, I believe, be evaded.

On the 10th of January last, an advertisement was inserted in the Courant, announcing, in general terms, my intention of delivering, in Edinburgh, during some part of the present year, a Course of Lectures on the Science and Practice of Elocution.

This was the signal of attack. Then it was that my unfortunate Poems, and my still more unfortunate Memoir, were to be dragged from their obscurity, and made the objects of calumnious misrepresentation and rancorous abuse. Accordingly, in the ensuing number of the Review (which was published in the month of *April*) forth came the obnoxious article; in which every species of hostile prejudice was endeavoured to be renewed, or excited against me. And by whom?---Would
Edinburgh

Edinburgh have expected it?—Would the *Speculative Society* have believed it, had it been prophesied?—By Men—But I will not dwell upon the degrading picture. It is not necessary to finish the portraiture. The coarsest stroke of the pencil is sufficient to bring forth a resemblance, where the originals are caricatures.

And these are the men who single me out, as the victims of their denunciations! These are the men who stir up the embers, and rekindle the flames of prejudice,—that the Lecturer and the Lectures, the Individual and his Science may be consumed in the conflagration!

And what is the vehicle for this profligate barbarity?—The review of a book, the object of whose author, professedly and obviously, it was—to avoid every topic by which any feeling of this description could be awakened; and in the second page of which, it is expressly stated—that, “for peace sake,—and for
“ the sake of his unoffending family, he is desir-
ous

“ous that *the politician should be forgotten*; and
“that-----he should, henceforth, be known
“and noticed (as here he is introduced) only
“as a candidate for political and moral reputation.”

But it was not the spirit, or the tendency of the book,—it was not the character of the contents (either of the *preface*, or the *poems*,) that occupied the attention of the pretended reviewer. His jaundiced eye glouted on far other objects. To wound the *lecturer* by detraction of the *author*;—or, rather, to pour upon the devoted head of the *individual* all the phials of wrathful malevolence that the most rancorous wickedness could collect;—this was the obvious motive of the reviewer: and, pretence, or no pretence,—provocation, or no provocation,—this he was determined to accomplish. Therefore it was, that the Prefatory Memoir (notwithstanding the *very different spirit* in which it is written) was to be reviewed as if it were a political chronicle: therefore it was, that an ill-judged experiment to
force

force me, while a boy, into a mechanical profession,---was made the poor pretence for an illiberal sneer at my *Effusions of Relative and Social Feeling*!--as if the very glance of an eye (even a transient, indignant glance!) upon a calling of that description, necessarily exterminated all such feelings; or, at least, precluded the right to indulge, to express them. Hence, also, the contemptuous misrepresentation of the poems throughout; and the scanty, garbled quotations--which, assuredly, if the general character of the composition had been such as it is represented, might easily have been multiplied to greater effect;---and hence,---to put out of all dispute the connection of the *Review* with the hostility against the *Lectures*; hence the forged confession foisted upon the Lecturer, of "his own consciousness of the want of "voice."

The want of Voice!---*the want of Voice!*--- This was the accusation in the month of April. What is the accusation now?

For shame!--for shame! Is there no inconsistency

consistency sufficiently gross, to call a blush into the cheek of an Edinburgh Reviewer?--- Can even shameless effrontery itself look with a steady countenance on these palpable contradictions?

When the public mind is to be prejudiced against the first announcement of the intended Lectures, and invention is on the rack for the forgery of injurious accusations,---then I am to be charged with *consciousness of the want of voice*. When that voice has been heard,---the scribblers of this same confederacy, would cry me down---for the very opposite reason. Then---my system of Elocution must be execrable,---my doctrine of physical pulsations and musical proportions must be false,---my physiological distinctions of vocal and enunciative organization must be trash,---my disquisitions on accents and emphases must be ridiculous nonsense,---and my theory of vocal punctuation, and definitions of the powers and application of the respective points, ---downright balderdash!--and these, and every

every other part of my system ought to be condemned unheard,-----because, *I have an EXCESS of voice*; and *because the inflexions and varieties of that voice, are so much more extensive than those of Mr. Cooke and Mr. Kemble, or Mrs. Esten!!!*

This from the persons who have accused me of the *want* of voice!--or rather, have represented me as my own accuser.

But, really, I wonder they did not make me accuse myself of the want of a tongue, or of a head;--or of having a cocatrice's tail, or a serpent's tooth;--or of carrying two faces, like an *Advocate Reviewer*;--with a pen in my hand ready to be used as an assassin's dagger,--and a bladder-full of corrupted gall in my bosom, to supply the absence of a heart. Certain it is that I should have been just as likely to have acknowledged my consciousness of any, or all of these, as the consciousness of many of the things they have attributed to me*.

Such

* Of this forgery some notice has been taken in a former note (p. 15): but it may not be amiss to present to the reader

Such being the character of the Review in question,--and such being the time of its appearance,

reader, with a complete specimen of the style of analytical abridgment adopted by these Reviewers; by quoting, without abridgement or alteration, some passage, they have pretended to analyse, in immediate contact with the analysis itself. After acknowledging (p. 6.) my obligations to the only rational tutor I ever had the good fortune to have placed over me; the Memoir thus proceeds--

“ This young man left the school sometime before Thelwall was taken from it. But he had sowed in the mind of his pupil the seeds of literary ambition. After the departure of Harvey, indeed, the shoots appeared to wither: but they revived again, in defiance of unfavourable circumstances, and the incapacity of those by whom the cultivation should have been assisted.

“ Before he was taken from school (which was some months before he had completed his fourteenth year) he began to enter with so much ardour on the business of self-tuition, that nothing but a continuance of the leisure for improvement, and a few properly selected books, seemed necessary to enable him to make considerable progress.

“ These opportunities were, however refused. He was called home to different scenes and different pursuits; and he did not quit the studies he was beginning so much to relish without some remonstrance, and many tears.

“ With respect to the pursuits of life, his first and very early attachment was to the The Arts; and his father, who

formed

pearance, it was impossible to doubt the nature of its object. Of that object, I was thoroughly

formed great expectations of him, from the activity of his mind, had fed his ambition with the hope of making him an historical painter. But his father was now no more; and he was left in the power of those who were not capable of the same enlarged and liberal views. Sorely against his own inclination, and in violent opposition to every indication of his mind, he was placed behind the shop-counter, where he continued till he was turned of sixteen.

“ During this time he occupied his leisure, and, in fact, much of that time which ought to have been devoted to business, in the perusal of such books as the neighbouring circulating library could furnish. In novels, indeed, (which generally constitute the bulk of such collections) he was so far from taking delight, that he had a sort of prejudiced contempt for them; and those of Fielding were almost the only ones to which he could bring himself to give a patient perusal. Plays, poetry, and history, were his favourites, and moral philosophy, metaphysics, and even divinity, were not entirely neglected. That he might lose no opportunity of perusing these various compositions, it was his constant practice to read as he went along the streets, upon whatever business he might be employed: a practice which, originating in a sort of necessity, settled into habit, and was not entirely laid aside till his political exertions brought him into notoriety, and produced several remonstrances from his friends on its singularity and apparent affectation.

“ But

thoroughly convinced, from the moment I first beheld it. But I did not suspect that it was the

“ But a distaste for business, was not the only cause of his discontent. He had the misfortune to live in a state of perpetual discord with an unhappy brother: whose vehement and tyrannical temper was aggravated by a disease (the epilepsy) notorious for its ravages on the intellectual system, and by the progress of which his faculties, at an after period became entirely deranged.

“ The ardent and independent spirit, who is the object of these memoirs, found the yoke of this tyranny, and the stripes and violence with which it was enforced, utterly insupportable. Circumstances also arose out of some other parts of the conduct of the elder brother, which made the oppressor no less desirous of a separation than the oppressed himself. John, accordingly, turned his attention again to his favourite art; and a painter of some eminence was applied to: but the mistaken economy of his mother made the premium and expences an insurmountable bar. He then made a fruitless effort to get upon the stage: but his written application to the late Mr. Colman was answered only by a moral expostulation against the design, and a declaration that he had no room in his company for any new adventurer.

“ It is probable, indeed, that Thelwall would not have been so easily repulsed, if he had not been suspicious that his want of figure might be a bar to his success in the more eligible walks of the profession: for, although the notions he

the prelude, only, to a more inveterate confederacy. I was not aware that the calumniators

had imbibed of the kind of morals that generally prevail in professed Spouting Clubs, prevented him from forming any connection with those ranting seminaries, his rage for theatricals was excessive."

Of the circumstances mentioned at the beginning of this quotation,—my early devotion to "slow-paced erudition,"—my unwillingness to be deprived of the opportunities of study,—my remonstrances and my tears;—of the profession to which my father had destined me, and my ardent desire to follow that destination, it will not, by this time, appear extraordinary that no notice whatever should be taken. Having already, dismissed the circumstances of my education, by observing that I "was severely whipped at school for a tardiness and apparent ineptitude," the Reviewer thus proceeds—(No. III. p. 197.)

"He was then placed behind the counter, and was beaten by his elder brother, a person, we are informed 'of a very vehement and tyrannical temper.' His *ambitious* spirit, however, disdained this double bondage;" [What *double* bondage?—Bondage of "behind the counter," I understand; but *bondage* of "*beaten*," is beyond my grammar!]—"and he *soon* tried," [Mark the inversion of circumstances!] "like other discontented heroes, in similar situations, to deliver himself from it, by *going* on the Stage." [Grammar again! "*tried by going*, for *tried by attempting to go*. The original expression is somewhat less than a line,—I believe, of clear English

tors were conspicuous members of that professional corps, which, time out of mind, has enjoyed

English grammar,—which the *abridgement*, by vamp and flourish, dilates into almost three, of ungrammatical ambiguity.]

"His application to Mr. Colman, however, he informs us, 'was answered only by a moral expostulation against the design;' and his own consciousness of want of *voice* and *figure* compelled him to give up this idea altogether. He *next* made an unsuccessful attempt to become a painter," &c.

Of the moral integrity of such pretended abridgements, nothing need be said. But what are we to think, as *grammarians*, of the application of the word *an*—to this only mention of those struggles of attachment to the profession of the Arts, of which the history of my "early life" is *full*. Is it a slip of the pen? No—for, the same mode of expression occurs in other places. Thus, for example,—we have, in p. 198. of the same Review, "He read *a* paper in *a* Society of medical students, *that*," &c.—instead of, "he read *some* papers in *the* Society of medical students (i. e. *The Physical Society*) at Guy's hospital, the second of *which*," &c.

Compare these passages with one already noticed—(p. 12.) "a Dramatic Poem *full of* Songs about ale,"—and what is the conclusion?—Are these arbiters of taste and criticism, really, so ignorant of the meaning of these simple words *the* and *a*?—and does *full of* mean *one*, *a* mean *second*, and *an*—*three* or *four*, in the Lexicon of their comprehension? Have they bounded their knowledge of these important parts of speech, by the simple dogmas—that *a*, and

joyed the prescriptive right of setting the fashion, or dictating the reprobation, of every thing

an, and *the*, are mere articles?—and, considering the articulating and conjunctive portions of speech as the mere pegs and pivots of discourse, have they concluded, accordingly, that *a* Society, or *the* Society—a paper, or *other* paper—*an* attempt, or *several* attempts—are modes of expression, in themselves, perfectly indifferent,—since the sentence will run on as glibly with any one of them as with any other?

Such mistakes, in *Edinburgh Reviewers*, are not, indeed, surprising,—when it is recollected that, not many months ago, a learned dissertation of several pages, on the insertion and omission of articles, was inserted in a journal of much greater respectability, which, concluded with the sagacious decision that *The* meant *A*:—in the words of the writer—“*the* means *a* specifically:” a statement (however construed) so far from being true, that while entire *unity* is the very essence of the signification of the article *a*, there is nothing in the *specific* meaning of *the* that necessarily precludes *plurality*. *A*, therefore, may be, in some degree, a *vague* article, and *the* a *discriminative*; but *the one* cannot be a *specific* of *the other*; nor either *specifically* mean *the other*,” or “*mean the other specifically*: as, indeed, the very structure of this period, if it be grammatical, sufficiently shows.

Mr. Jeffray, and his brethren of the “double barrell’d gun,” are, *practically*, I have no doubt, sufficiently aware of this. They know that it is fully as correct to talk of *the fees*, as of *the fee*;—of *the profitable professions* of Advocate

and

thing that is connected with intellectual amusement, in Edinburgh; and the contemptibleness

and Reviewer, as of *the* profitable profession of an Advocate, or a Reviewer. And, if *the* fee of two guineas should be marked upon a brief, or *the* fee of ten guineas agreed upon for a sheet of Critical defamation; and, when the *work* was done, only *a* guinea should be paid, they would readily, I suppose, discover—that the construction was not *grammatical*;—nor would either of them, I suspect, (when in the former instance, he demanded *another*, and, in the latter, *nine other* of these said “yellow geordies”) be perfectly satisfied with the reasoning of his client, or his bookseller, should he confidently reply—“Sir, I have already given you *a* fee, or *a* guinea; and I can prove to you, from your own writings,—that *a* and *the* are convertible terms; “and, that *a* and *two*, and *an* and *three*, or *six*, or *ten*, signify “the same thing; and that as *another*, and *the other*, (according to the same authority) are necessarily included in *a*, “you have nothing further to demand.”

These retorts, perhaps, might lead them to reflect, that though these little words (or, to speak more correctly, these little flying syllables—for they have lost one of the indispensable characteristics of English *words*) in their present degraded state, are only used as the links and articulates of discourse, yet, that, if they had not some force and meaning of their own, they could neither articulate nor link: and a very small portion of that “slow-paced erudition” of which they arrogate to themselves the exclusive possession, would, perhaps,

ness of the article, in a literary, as well as moral point of view, precluded the suspicion that

perhaps, lead them to the discovery that—*a* and *an*, are *the numeral ONE*; formerly written *ANE*; whence, by contraction, *an*; and, in process of time (as the practice of supplying the enunciative hiatus by the symphonic tuings of the voice, subsided) the *a* (for the sake of euphony) was omitted before consonants; and *an*, wherever the ease and grace of enunciation required, was melted into *a*.

Such *was* the origin; and such is still the power of this article; and those provincials who, to this day, use the numeral only, and say *one*, or *ane*, where we should say *an* or *a*, though fashion be against them, offend not against propriety. He, on the contrary, (historian, witness, or reviewer!) who useth the article *a* or *an* wherever truth and moral accuracy would not admit the numeral in its place, either falsifies through real ignorance, or makes the semblance of ignorance a cover for his falsification.

The, on the other hand, is probably no other than the personal pronoun; used at first as a personification, or apostrophe to the *object* spoken of, as if spoken *to*,—but divested, by familiar use, both of quantity and what is vulgarly called accent. Certain it is, that when correctly used, it always designates *specific identity*. This *specification* is, indeed, its marked characteristic; for it applies alike to individuality or to multitude: which, perhaps, may be regarded as an objection to the etymology, by those who do not consider—that this is not the only instance in which singular
and

that such writers could do me any essential *injury*.

Under these circumstances, and these impressions, I did not think it necessary to depart from the general rule of conduct that I had prescribed to myself—To enter into no controversies on the subject either of my writings or my life; but, to pursue my Science, with uninterrupted application, and let the bubbles of calumny float undisturbed, till they burst by their own inflation.

It is the recent confederacy, Mr. Jeffray, that urges me to interrogate you on the subject of the former infamy.—And how degrading, how dishonourable would that confederacy have been, even if it had stood alone.

Had

and plural have become confounded, in *words* of familiar and frequent use. To talk, therefore, of *a* Society, instead of *the* Society,—is, again, either palpable ignorance,—or, it is as gross a fraud as paying *a* FEE instead of *the* FEE, in the instances already suggested: and, whether the passages in question, were written by *a* Reviewer, or by *the* Reviewer, either *one* or the *other* is fraudulent, or ignorant, or both.

Had I been a common exhibitor—Had the Lectures I proffered been the mere vehicle of an innocent, but idle, amusement,—Surely I should have been entitled to a candid hearing. Even in that point of view, I should have had a right to expect—that no hostile cabal should have prejudged my undertaking;—that no bands of young advocates should have organized and dispersed themselves about my Lecture-room, with their preconcerted signals of insult and interruption,—and an idiot laugh, prepared for every serious occasion, to check the rising emotions of the audience, and disconcert the Lecturer (unused to such brutality) whenever the full possession of his powers was most conspicuously demanded*.

If,

* Those *gentlemen Reviewers* who defend themselves on this ground, reiterate their malignity rather than shew their discretion: for the plea that acknowledges the Reviewers to have been the Scoffers, admits that the judges were prejudiced: it admits also, in its fullest latitude, the connection between the former and the recent injury: and that connection admitted, demonstrates all the rest. But suppose me degraded to the level they pretend,—an Englishman would

If, even in such a case, such conduct would have been unpardonable;—if urbanity and decency would have disclaimed it towards a common player; how much more indecorous must the outrage be regarded, when offered to an individual who professed to treat of an important Science; whose powers of entertainment, whatever they may be, are to be regarded as matters of subordinate consideration; and the outline of whose plan at least propounds an extent and novelty of important investigation, not to be decided upon, like the style of a Sonnet, or the tune of a new song, by the critical

would not be able to comprehend their plea. To confederate even against a player, a common exhibitor, or a puppet show-man, might be consistent enough among *the rabble of Bartholomew fair*; but would not, in England, be considered as any feather in the caps of *Gentlemen*: and if any set of persons, in a London Theatre, had so behaved to an Edinburgh performer, of any description, on the first night of his appearance among them, as these Edinburgh Critics behaved towards the English Lecturer on the Science and Practice of Elocution, an English audience would have shewn the disturbers a little *Theatrical Law*.

cal glance of an eye, or a first impression on the ear †.

But

† It is not for me to decide on the accuracy of my own science, or my attainments in my own art. But I may, surely, be permitted to observe, that, in those parts of England which I have visited, I have almost uniformly seen among the attendants of these Lectures, the persons most celebrated for their Literature and their Science; and that by such my system has been encouraged and approved;—by some of them, conspicuous for their oratorical talents in the pulpit, that system has been practically adopted. Some occasional correspondence I have, also, had upon the subject, with persons of high rank and liberal estimation; and their sentiments on the occasion, have not been a little flattering. Even on this very spot, I have been favoured with a very encouraging approbation of the plan and arrangement of my Lectures, from a nobleman of the first character, and of the highest repute for his virtues and his talents; and whose superior eloquence, in particular, has been acknowledged in the *highest assembly*. This illustrious Orator—instead of prejudicating my undertaking, as these scorners have thought fit to do, very politely informs me, that *the Prospectus which I enclosed, has been read by him, with as much attention as considerable pressure of business would allow; and that, undoubtedly, my arrangement appears as well calculated as possible, to unfold the principles of the Science which I undertake to explain.* He is pleased, also, to add, that he *thinks my plan of great utility: that so much is mechanical in elocution, that it is very advantageous to have any principles clearly*

But the prejudication becomes still more flagitious, when it is considered, *who* the prejudicators

clearly laid down, by which an individual may, with the greater distinctness, express the result of his observations, study and reflection."

I might, also, add—that (in some of the most essential points) the application of my principles to the cure of the most inveterate impediments, has proved my system not to be altogether a vain and empty theory: that to some whom nature had deprived even of those essential organs of enunciation, the *uvula* and the well-constructed palate, I have been able (with the assistance of the mechanic artist) to impart the power of distinct and impressive utterance; that, persons who have stammered through their five-and-fortieth year, have received some advantage from my assistance; that in the instances of younger pupils, the most calamitous impediments have vanished, as by a charm, on the application of the simple fundamental principle, upon which so much of my system rests—the musical proportion of physical pulsations and remissions;—and that I have never met with a single instance of any person who had the least idea of musical inflection, either from science or perceptive taste, in which, how dreadful soever the nature of the impediment, the practical application of this principle has failed of its effect:—and I might, still farther, add (as a circumstance, if well founded, of very extraordinary coincidence) that some gentlemen of acknowledged classical erudition, to whom my doctrines have been, both publicly and privately, developed,

have

dicators were. Should my success or failure have depended upon the fiat of those, who had already so calumniated me, in intellect and morals, that my success would have been their condemnation

have been of opinion—that my system of mere English Elocution—for such, alone, I profess it to be—renders perspicuous and clear, many passages and criticisms of classical writers, on the subject of the melodies and pronunciation of ancient languages, hitherto perfectly unintelligible, or exceedingly misunderstood.

But I wave, upon the present occasion, all arguments that might be drawn from such considerations. I place the question upon the simple foundation of the evidence contained in the printed Outline, which will accompany this pamphlet. I ask of the reader, a candid and attentive perusal; and, when this has been granted, I leave him to decide—Whether the undertaking was of that description of which an opinion was to be formed during the first ten minutes of the first Lecture?—or, Whether its approbation or rejection ought to have depended on the likings, or dislikings of a few coarse monotonists of the Scottish Bar (who have most unaccountably usurped to themselves, the undivided right of dictating to the City of Edinburgh, in all matters of this description!)—or, on the opinions which they might conceive, or affect, relative to the too great flexibility of tone, and unusual range of modulative variety, exhibited in the voice of the Lecturer.

condemnation?—or, Are censoriousness and malice so unusual in the world, that it should be necessary for these reviewers to render themselves absolute *Servants-of-all-work* in the dirty-house of Calumny and Injustice, and to conspire against the *Lecturer*, because they had defamed the *Writer*?

But waving the palpable evidence of detraction and malice,—let us place these clamorous arbiters on their vantage ground, and examine their literary pretensions. By their fruits ye shall know them!—By what they have admitted into their Critical Journal we may appreciate their discernment and their taste.

Where then shall I begin? Shall I drag forth to view that mass of impudence, affectation and incongruity, the Criticism on “*Shepherd’s Poggio*,” and expose still further, the puerile pigmy, who aimed the blunted shaft of his malevolence (blunted alike by historical and ungrammatical ignorance) against “the too splendid

splendid reputation which the "Life of Lorenzo de Medicis" acquired for its author." Shall I expose the naked descriptitude of the review of *Belsbam's Philosophy of the mind?*"—with its *references* without *antecedents*;*—its "evils *shed* abroad by the "hand of a *master*," and its "charms of novelty for *unacquainted* students;"—with its vast increase of happiness resulting from "the general adoption of a system of deceit,"—its reprobation of the idea that there is any thing "in the nature of truth that makes it necessarily good †;"—and its assertion, as a principle

* "In the preface to this work, it is said to contain 'the substance of a course of Lectures, which the author delivered to his pupils, upon some of the most interesting subjects which can occupy the human mind.' It is, however, from the preface only, that we receive *this information*;" (*what information?*) "for the most interesting subjects which can occupy the human mind are afterwards treated with the same drowsy mediocrity and tameness of sentiment, as if they had related to a fly or a fungus, or to any thing, but the great interests of man." Rev. No. 2. Art. 21. p. 475.

† N. B. The main argument of this Cavilling Criticism, is—that there are truths which it is inconsistent with the interests

ciple for early inculcation, that "there is a *virtuous* wrath, we could almost say a *virtuous malice* † and *revenge*." And might I not shew that the reasoning is as despicable as the morals are profligate?—that the statements are as inaccurate as the language is mean?

What

interest of morality to avow. If this were the case, and if it were a truth—that there is no inherent excellence in truth, would not this be one of the truths most important to be suppressed?—especially if we consider what the Critic further observes (p. 479.) "Whatever, therefore, gives ideas of general elevation, tho' it may not directly suggest any moral motives, is favourable to virtue; whatever gives sentiments more abject, though its practical influence may not be immediate, is favourable to vice." And what more elevating than the sublime idea of the fitness and beauty of truth and unconditional sincerity? If the frailty of our nature and the conditions of society, render it not perfectly practicable,—how inspiring—how ennobling to have it in contemplation!—What, on the other hand, so abject and so debasing as the system of convenient falshood!—But the whole of this article is such darkness visible—such palpable nothingness—such a labyrinth of quibbles and contradictions as nothing but a mind reeling drunk with the unrectified spirit of disputation could possibly have suggested.

† If there be any virtue in *Malice*, I am sure I can bear testimony

H

What say you, Mr. Jeffray, to whole pages of quibbling against the moral tendency of the doctrine of necessity, concluded with this quibbling concession?

"We own, indeed, that the *actual existence* of necessity is of much importance, as being *the only source of the power of motives*, and, consequently, of all moral education. But *truth*, and *the belief of truth*, are different;" &c. p. 482.

What!—is the actual existence of necessity the only source of the power of motives! and are not the doctrine and the knowledge of that existence the best stimulants to the application of such motives? What better inducement to the application of remedies, than the knowledge that they have power over the disease?

But

testimony for the Edinburgh Reviewers, that they are virtuous enough. As for *Revenge*, as I never did them any injury, I should not have known how to ascribe *that virtue* to them, if it had not been for an observation I happened to meet with, many years ago, (I believe almost before I was out of petticoats) in a certain philosophical work, "the History of Goody two shoes;" the purport of which was—that,

It

But what is this *Truth*,—the *reality* and the *belief* of which are such very different things—that one may be advantageous to that very morality of which the other is supposed to be destructive?

Truth, justly defined, is certified belief: belief upon evidence and conviction. How then can Truth, and the belief of Truth, be different things? How can Truth itself be important to morality, and the *belief of truth* be pernicious?

I am aware indeed, that, with respect to Truth; as with respect to heat, and many other general terms; there is a licence of speech, by which the *effect* is substituted for the *cause*. Thus we talk of mathematical truths as we talk of the heat of fire: not that the fire is, in reality hot;—for heat is the name

It is easier for the injured to forgive his injuries, than for the injurer to forgive the injured.—Oh! days of blissful infancy when this was hard to be comprehended!—Oh! days that have succeeded, so fruitful of poignant illustration!

name of a sensation; not that a proposition of Euclid is, in reality, True;—for Truth is the name of an impression on the understanding: but heat, in the one instance, and truth, in the other, is the inevitable consequence of the application of the evidence to the proper senses; and, therefore, we say that fire is hot, and that mathematical propositions are true: confounding the impression with the cause. But how the causes, or data, of metaphysical and moral truth, and metaphysical and moral truth itself—(or, as the Reviewer states it, the truth, and the belief of the truth) can, in *practical inference*, be different things, it will remain for those to prove, whose subtilty can show us by what other means than through the medium of belief, metaphysical and moral propositions act.

But let us have done with this skirmishing and war of posts, and come to closer quarters. Let us take for our field the Review of “Belsham’s memoirs of George the third”. (No. III. Art. 18.) Nor is it necessary to take it in
garbled

garbled quotations; or to seek any advantages in the attack. Whole pages may be found, of closely printed matter, in which a single sentence does not occur—that is either sense or grammar. The Reviewer has outdone even the Historian himself: and surely that was not necessary.

“By the illiberality, party spirit, and intemperate ardour for the propagation of his political opinions, which Mr Belsham displays, he has forfeited the title of historian, for the more appropriate, though less respectable, *name of zealot, or pamphleteer* (1). The bitter and licentious *spirit* in which he had *indulged his pen* (2) throughout his former volumes, has now *risen* to a *height* (3) more intolerable to the reader, and disgraceful to the writer. It appears that Mr Belsham’s *habits of writing*, like all *other* evil habits, *increase in virulence*, (4) in proportion *as they proceed*; (5) and unless the wholesome discipline of criticism be administered, *the press* may, at some future day, *groan under* a still more *highly accumulated*
mass

mass (6) of personal abuse and intolerant zeal. —“ By stripping these volumes, however, of *their title to the rank of history*, (7) to which they have assuredly no more claim, than a book of political registers and party pamphlets *can pretend to*, (8) we have greatly *abridged to ourselves* the unpleasant task (9) of censure; and by thus bringing their merits and defects to the *decisions of an inferior standard*, (10) we have *allowed greater latitude* to the author's *eccentric excursions*, (11) and greater *indulgence* (12) to his violations of decency and propriety. It may be proper, however, to hint, that *the former* (13) are always observable when a low factious citizen comes under the cognizance of the law; and *the latter*, (14) whenever a prime minister, a tory, or an alarmist, is honoured by a mention in his annals.

“ The most cursory and rapid review of the *events* which these volumes detail, would occupy a pamphlet of some magnitude. It would therefore be totally inconsistent with the

the plan of our work, to offer more than a general view of *their design and execution* (15).” *

Shall

* (1) Are zealot and pamphleteer, convertible terms? or names of two distinct characters? If the latter; in the old style of writing, it would be “ name of zealot, or of pamphleteer. (2) Indulging a *pen in spirit!* (3) The spirit in which a pen is indulged, *rising to a height!!* (4.) *Habits* encreasing in *virulence!*—*All habits* so encreasing!! —*The virus* of a habit!!! (5) *Habits* proceeding! —*What a noble procession* it must be!! (6) The *press* groaning *under* a highly accumulated mass!! (7) Not “ title of history,” nor “ title to rank as history,” but *title to the rank!!* (8) “ can pretend to,”—Euphony itself! What have such writers to learn from Elocutionary harmonics, or the melody of speech? (9) Abridging the task of censure:—and abridging it to ourselves! (10) The decisions of a standard!!! (11) Allowing latitude to eccentric excursions! (12) Allowing indulgence to violation !! (13) What *former?* (14) What *latter?*—But what have Edinburgh Reviewers to do with such vulgar things as *antecedents!* (15) The *design and execution* of *events!!!*

The world of Ethicks is scarcely more indebted to the Edinburgh Review for the discovery that Falshood, Rapine and Murder are favourite instruments of the Divine Being, in his moral Government of the Universe, and for the consequent invention and classification of the noble Science of Jeffing,—than is the world of Taste and Literature for the like invention and classification of certain noble improvements

Shall I go on—through “divertissements”
of a “medley calling itself Memoirs,”—through
“ravages

ments in the style and grammatical structure of the English Language; which, in honour of the second great luminary of the said Review, might be arranged and specified under the appellation of BROUGHMIANA. To these *Broughmiana* (of which the specimen above presents a very splendid constellation) we should be right happy to pay the same distinguishing honour that we have already paid to the *Jeff*; and many learned names of distinction and contradistinction, are already floating in our imagination. But time presses, and our labours must be brought to a conclusion. We must, therefore, satisfy ourselves with selecting a few of these striking beauties; and must leave to the reader the pleasant labour of classifying them, according to his own taste and perspicacity.

It is but justice, however, to premise—that our selection must be very imperfect; since but a small portion of these Reviews have been by us perused. Till the necessity of writing the above letter occurred, the only Articles we had ever looked into were—the Reviews of the “Memoir and Poems,” of “Shepherd’s Poggio,” and “Belfham’s Geo. III.” Of each of these due notice is already taken, either in notes or text. Our subsequent acquaintance with this learned production has only been indulged, during the intervals of relaxation, while the letter was preparing for the press. From most of the articles we have read, however, some specimens of *Broughmiana* might be selected. We shall satisfy ourselves with a few.

No. I.

“ravages of the thirsty”—“monks of anarchy”—“boiling bigots,” and “in candescent wrong-

No. I. Art. 2. *Dr. Parr’s Sermon*. The wit and elegance of the introductory paragraph will be readily admitted. “Whoever has had the good fortune to see Dr. Parr’s wig, must have observed, that while it *trespasses* a little on the orthodox magnitude of perukes, in the interior parts, it swells out into boundless convexity of frizz, the *μύρα βαρπυρα* of barbers, and the terror of the literary world.”

But for the scrap of Greek, who would not have imagined that this elegant sally had been written by the Doctor’s Barber? and, from the words *trespasses on*, who would not have concluded, that the Critic of the Comb was making himself merry with a comparison between the smallness of the head and the largeness of the bush behind. But, lo! and behold! the application of the simile, in the ensuing sentence, informs us—that, in the language of the *Broughmiana*—to *trespass on*, means to *trespass beyond*.

Again (p. 22.) “It is better there should be an asylum for the mad, and a hospital for the wounded, if *they* were to squander away 50 per cent of *their* income, than that *we* should be disgusted with sore limbs, and shocked with straw-crowned monarchs in the streets.” To what antecedent do *they* and *their* refer? to the mad and the wounded?—Do *they* spend *their* income? or to the asylum and the hospital?—do *they* spend *theirs*? But it is a favourite figure in this new style of composition, and one of the distinguishing features of the *Broughmiana*, that the antecedent should
be

wrong-heads,"—through "homages of manner," and "therefores," that ought to be therebys;

be understood:—that is by the *writer*:—as for the reader, the matter will depend much upon the *profundity* of his understanding. Mark, also, the ethics. Why should there be hospitals and asylums?—that the Mad may be taken care of, and the Lame be cured?—No: but that Edinburgh Reviewers may not be *disgusted* with the sight of sore limbs, or *shocked* with straw-crowned monarchs in the streets!

P. 23.—we discover that according to the *Broughmiana*, infinitude, &c. have their *degrees*—and that there may be a smaller infinitude, and a larger infinitude, and a middle-sized infinitude, &c.—“A line of Greek, a line of Latin, or no line at all, subsequent to each name, will distinguish, with sufficient accuracy, the shades of merit, and the *degrees of immortality* conferred.”

Art. 3. Godwin's Reply—“Aware of *the very superior manner in which Mr. Godwin's complaint is now accustomed to be treated*, we had great hopes upon reading so far, that a radical cure had been effected; but we had no sooner entered upon his remarks on population, than this pleasing delusion was dispelled, and we were convinced it was *a case for life*.” p. 26.

From this article to p. 63. the leaves remain unopened. We have just peeped into the Review of “Southey's Thalaba,” Art. 8.) and there, at the very outset, we find—“Originality, however, we are persuaded is *rarer*” (a writer with an ordinary ear would perhaps have written *more rare*;) and

therebys; till we “*disabuse* Mr. Belsham of those *exaggerated pretensions*, to which every sentence

a man may change a good master for a bad one, *without* finding himself at all nearer to independence.” How fortunate that man must be who *did* find himself nearer to independence by such means!

We skip again over between 40 and 50 unopened pages, and come to Art. 17. “Poems by Mr Opie.” The Reviewer thus begins—“There are, probably, many of our *traders* who, at some fortunate, or unfortunate moment of their lives, have been tempted to *dip their pen in the fatal ink of publication*,” &c. p. 113. The ink of publication we suppose, is *printer's ink*: and we are marvelling with ourselves, what sort of a firestick that pen must be, that in such ink is to be dipped!

P. 114. “There is besides an innocent selfishness, which magnifies to our pride every past exertion, and persuades us, that success is more difficult of attainment, because we have ourselves succeeded. *Nor* is the penalty, now, the same simple failure, which, in a first attempt, is scarcely disgrace, because it is scarcely known.” Those who are not of *the school* would find it difficult to perceive why *the negative of or should be made the copulative of these two sentences*.

“In *the tender song of sentiment and pathos*,” (for *songs of tender sentiment and pathos*) “there is uncommon elegance;” &c. “She has attempted *the sportive song of humour*,” &c. p. 115. “The humbleness of phraseology and of sound,

sentence of his book proclaims his *want of right,*" and come, at last, to "no other victory, than

sound, which he before despised, is now a perfection, which he must *studiously elaborate,*" p. 117. Compare the *sentiment* of this passage with the criticisms on the new school of Poetry, in the Review of Southey's *Thalaba*; and the *phraseology*, with the criticism on the style of Dr. Parr.

P. 118. "There are few pieces in the volume before us, which it" (*personification*) "has not affected. *Guilt* of this kind is, indeed, often to be found, even in the coldest productions of age." &c. In the English Language, when we studied it, *Sin* was the acme of offence against *Religion*; *Crime* against *Law*; and *Guilt* against *Morality*; and we should, therefore, have supposed, as it is only against the *laws* of Taste and Criticism that *Personification* offends, *crime* would have been, here, the word; if, indeed, the simple term *offences* might not have appeared sufficiently. But if the Edinburgh Review continues long to flourish, it is evident, that we shall have a *new English Language* to transplant from this side of the Tweed:—as, also, a new System of Elocutionary harmony, before an English reader can do justice to such passages as the following—p. 121. "and if, as we trust, she will submit to abandon all idle decoration, and to give her whole fancy to simplicity and tenderness, &c."

In Art. 18. "Phillips's Public Characters," we suspect that the writer meant, in the following observation, to have a sly slap, at some of his own associates of the Edinburgh Review. "We suppose the booksellers have authors at two different

than that which any man may quickly obtain over delicacy and shame?"

It

different prices; those who write grammatically, and those who do not; and that they have not thought fit to put any of their best hands upon this work." What follows seems to be in the same arch-style—"we request *the biographer* will at least give us some means of ascertaining when he is comical, and when he is serious."—For *biographer*, read *reviewer*; and take as an illustration, the following example from No. II. Art. 6. p. 316. "Amelrosa, who imagines her father to have banished her from his presence for ever, in the first transports of joy for pardon, obtained by earnest intercession, thus exclaims:

' Lend thy doves, dear Venus,
' That I may send them where Casario strays:
' And while he smooths their silver wings, and gives them
' For drink the honey of his lips, I'll bid them
' Coo in his ear, his Amelrosa's happy!

"What judge of human feelings does not recognise, in these images of silver wings, doves, and honey, the genuine language of the passions?" If the writer be *serious*, we give him joy of his taste;—if *comical* we give him joy of his *punctuation*!

We turn back to the Review, No. 1. Art. 27. "The Crisis of the sugar Colonies." Of the morality and the "steadiness of principle," exhibited in his article we have already

It is not, Mr. Jeffray, from any partiality to the Author, that I thus expose the Critic. I despise

already spoken. Passages in abundance might be produced in proof that the style is worthy of the sentiment. Two however shall suffice—two of the metaphorical kind.—p. 217. Sometimes our author labours to express more than his own fertility, or the limited powers of language allow. He then *stalks forth upon stilts*; and either *hides himself in the thick darkness* of metaphysics, or strains at a quotation, or *flies* to the last resource of the wretched—*a case in point*." Can any thing be more grand! Stalking forth in stilts to hide oneself.—Flying in stilts! two cases in point—the last resources of the wretched!!! *Broughmiana* for ever! Again (p. 219.) "One who is always running after *flowers*, will sometimes make a false step."—A school-boy would have thought this more likely to happen, when he was running after *butter-flies*. But we suppose the writer means, by this passage, to intimate to the initiated, his adoption of the philosophical idea of Dr. Darwin—that the original *butter-flies* were, in reality, only animated flowerets, which, having been blown from their stems, in a storm of wind, in that effort for the preservation of existence which is inherent in all organised matter became, &c. See *Notes on the Botanic Garden*, &c.

The eye having accidentally fallen upon that beautiful Euphonic repetition of sense and sound (No. II. Art. 9. p. 370.) "The immense *acquisition* of power which the French government *acquired* by the revolution," &c.—it immediately brought

prostitute himself to factious calumny, and profanes

brought to our memory a cluster of similar beauties in No. V. Art. 10. "Amadis de Gaul by Southey and Rose,"—viz. "Arcalaus the enchanter *had had* influence enough," &c. p. 130. "The king, seduced by ambition, is *ill-advised* enough to force his daughter to this marriage *in spite of the advice* of his best counsellors," *ibid.* "The necessity of following out minutely the prose narrative *occasions* an *occasional* langour in the poem." p. 135. In the same article, harmony, and grace are, alike, consulted in "distressed damo-whom *he* *fortunes* to *relieve*." p. 128. But how exquisitely are harmony, energy, and propriety all concentrated in the following *improvement* upon *Burke*!—The Panegyrist of the spirit of Chivarly had *poorly* said, that "Vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness!! but the Reviewer thus *improves* it in quotation—"In the old romances we look in vain for the delicacy which, according to Burke, *robbed* vice of half its evil, by depraving it of all its grossness." *ib.* 121. It is observable that robbery seems to be in very high favour with these reviewers. Poggio *plunders* the libraries of the Monks: The Deity makes *rapine* one of his instruments of moral governance; and now Delicacy commits a robbery upon Vice! In short the Reviewer seems to have *plundered* the very highwaymen, housebreakers and footpads for metaphors, for arguments, and for ethics; and great has been their booty.

Turning back upon the article from which we have thus digressed

profanes the temple that should be sacred to Truth, or to Science, with the clamour of misrepresentation

digressed—to wit, the voluminous dissertation on the Ballance of Power, so ingeniously foisted, upon the public, under mask of a Criticism on “Segur’s *Politique de tous les Cabinets de l’Europe*,” we observe, with pain, some things that stagger us so much, that we are almost enclined to carry our panegyric no further; altho’ we have marked with our pencil, as we proceeded, several other very beautiful instances of *Broughmiana*.

The first of the staggering passages which we shall mention from this said Dissertation will be found Rev. No. II. p. 381. “The appearance of an Epaminondas can no longer raise a petty state to power and influence over its neighbour, suddenly to be lost, with the great man’s life, by some unforeseen victory at Leuctra.” Does this very classical writer mean to represent Epaminondas as having lost his life in the battle of Leuctra, whom all former classical writers have represented as having been slain in the battle of Mantinea?—or Is he really determined to carry his innovations on the grammatical structure of language so far as to render it utterly impossible for any body but himself to understand his meaning. But this is not the most serious cause of our uneasiness. When we find, in this same article, the justification of that “valuable and sacred principle,” (see p. 370.) “the right of national interference,” extended to a vindication and exultation over the invasion and partition of Poland, (see p. 351.) and hear “that the happiest event which

representation and abuse. With your censures of Mr. Belsham, therefore, I find no fault;

which has ever befallen the fine country of Poland, has been a dismemberment, wept over and disclaimed upon by those who had no experience of its necessity, or need of its benefits;” when we hear that “Those benefits have most undoubtedly been the pacification of that unhappy kingdom, by the only means which human fancy could have devised for accomplishing this end, without endangering the security of other powers, namely a fair division of the country among the neighbouring and rival powers, and a consequent communion of the inestimable blessings which their ancient subjects enjoyed under a system of peaceful government and regular police:”—when we hear this atchievment thus celebrated as one of those for which “A few useless millions, and a few still more useless lives” may properly be “sacrificed;” (p. 357.) the language sounds in our ears as so truly *Consular*, that (considering the *past* and *present* history of the reputed writer of this article) we should really be apprehensive lest, at some future day, a second edition might be presented to the great *foreign interferer* of the nineteenth century, as a panegyric upon his equally equitable partition, dismemberment and pacification of those realms;—if, indeed, we were not precluded from such apprehension, by the cheering confidence that there are, in Britain, multitudes enough of better heads and of better hearts than are to be found among the Edinburgh Reviewers, to preclude the opportunity of *such* prostration.

fault; perhaps the greater part of them are just. But the *style* of those censures—the language of that Review,—is it not below contempt? Is not criticism defiled, and language debased by condescending to the analysis of such trash? Is there another instance, do you think, in the English Language (if we except some other parts of the *Edinburgh Review*) in which fifteen errors of metaphor, grammar and construction (and even to this catalogue two more might have been added) are huddled thus together, without the intervention of one single sentence, or clause of a sentence, that has the least pretence to accuracy?

And are the publishers of this, the Arbiters of taste in Edinburgh?—Are these the men whose fiat is to determine what Sciences shall spread—what refinements shall be cultivated—what amusements shall prevail?

And is this the country of Mansfield and of Erskine! of Hume, of Home, and of Blair!—Is this “the Northern Capital of British Intellect”—“the renowned seat of Science and liberal

liberal enquiry”---which my imagination painted?

Be it so. It is not the first time that my enthusiasm has represented mankind much better than I found them; and, perhaps, it may not be the last: for to think well of their fellow beings (though too frequently such thoughts are the fore-runners of disappointment) is necessary to some natures. It is a habit, I confess, to which, in spite of frequent and mortifying experience, I have always a propensity to recur: and, even with respect to you, Mr. Jeffray, I shall still be glad to hear any explanation, or any circumstance that may give me reason to form a better opinion than that which, at present, I am compelled to entertain.

JOHN THELWALL.

Dec. 31st, 1803.