

without a shiver in his blood not to be expressed. Who is not sensible of certain magical effects, altogether distinct from the thoughts, in some of Coleridge's and Shelley's verse; in the musical ripple of Irving's words; in the stealthy charm and subtle perfection of Thackeray's and Hawthorne's periods; in the mellow, autumnal hue which falls like the golden lights of harvest aslant the pages of Alexander Smith; in the grand harmonies of Sir Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor, and Ruskin; and in the orchestral swells and crashes of De Quincey? How perfectly the impetuosity of Napier's style corresponds to the military movements he describes! As we read his vivid narrative of the Peninsular battles, we seem, it has been said, to hear the tramp of the charging squadrons, the sharp rattle of the musquetry, and the booming thunder of the artillery. Words in a master's hands seem more than words; he seems to double or quadruple their power by skill in using, giving them a force and significance which in the dictionary they never possessed. Yet, mighty as is the scinery of these wizards of words, that of Shakspeare is still greater. The marvel of his diction is its immense suggestiveness—the mysterious synthesis of sound and sense, of meaning and association, which characterizes his verse; a necromancy to which Emerson alludes in a passage which is itself an illustration, almost, of the thing it describes. Speaking of the impossibility of acting or reciting Shakspeare's plays, he says: "The recitation begins, when lo! one golden word leaps out immortal from all this painted pedantry, and sweetly torments us with invitations to its own inaccessible homes."

Hardly less surprising than this suggestiveness of Shakspeare, is the variety of rhythm in his ten-syllable verse. We speak sometimes of Shakspeare's style; but we might as well

speak of the style of Rumour with her hundred tongues. Shakspeare has a multiplicity of styles, varying with the ever-varying character of his themes. The Proteus of the dramatic art, he identifies himself with each of his characters in turn, passing from one to another like the same soul animating different bodies. Like a ventriloquist, he throws his voice into other men's larynxes, and makes every word appear to come from the person whose character he for the moment assumes. The movement and measure of Othello and the Tempest, Macbeth and the Midsummer Night's Dream, Lear and Coriolanus, are almost as different from each other as the rhythm of them all from that of Beaumont and Fletcher; and yet in every case the music or melody is a subtle accompaniment to the sentiment that ensouls the play. Whoever would know the inexhaustible riches of our many-tongued language, its capability of expressing the daintiest delicacies and subtlest refinements of thought, as well as the grandest emotions that can thrill the human brain, should give his days and nights to the study of the myriad-souled poet. It may be doubted whether there is any inflection of harmony, any witchery of melody, from the warble of the flute and the low thrill of the flageolet to the trumpet-peal or the deep and dreadful sub-bass of the organ, which is not brought out in the familiar or the passionate tones of this imperial master.

Style is often called the dress of thought, an objectionable term, as it seems to imply that there is no vital connection between the two. Style is not a robe which may be put on or off at will; it is the incarnation of the thought. It is the coefficient without which the thought is incomplete. As words without ideas are soulless, so ideas without words are shadowless ghosts. Analyze any masterpiece of