

remoteness; which, grasping in its giant hand the telescope of Lord Rosse, is about to sound the heavens with a far more powerful plummet than was twenty years ago even imagined; to thaw down the most obstinate Nebule into heavens and 'heavens of heavens,' and to see objects in the moon no larger than an ordinary church; and which, uniting itself with daring chemical science, is venturing to conjecture that all those majestic masses owe their light and heat to mutual and incessant friction, star impinging upon star, as it pursues its eternal way. All this opens up a field so vast and magnificent, that it was impossible for a mind like that of Dr. Chalmers altogether to fail in its exposition. And, so far as the Newtonian astronomy goes, the poetry, as well as the religion of the sky, never found before such a worthy and enthusiastic expounder. Kindling his soul at those 'street-lamps in the city of God,' he descants upon creation in a style of glowing and unaffected ardour. He sets the 'Principia' to music. He leaves earth behind him, and now drifts across the red light of Mars; now rests his foot upon the bright bosom of Sirius; now bespeaks the wild comet; and now rushes in to spike the guns of that battery against the Bible, which the bold hands of skeptical speculators have planted upon the stars. But it was reserved for Professor Nichol, as the Aaron to Hirschell, the Moses of the science, to meet us at the place where Chalmers left us, and lift us up on subtler and softer pinions into far loftier regions, where imagination reels and breathes hard, as it is met by the chill, clear air of infinity, and sees the universe below it as 'one plain, the spaces between its orbs appearing no more than the interstices between grains of dust or sand.'

The portraits of Edward Irving, Dr. Andrew Thompson, and other preachers of the day, we have no space to introduce to our readers. Lord Brougham, however must not be passed by, and Mr. Gifford has sketched him with dexterity and success. His oratorical powers are most vividly depicted.

"As an orator, he speaks with a tone of authority. An eloquent dogmatism breathes in his every sentence. You feel that this man sees his subject through and through; has mastered all its bearings; has rolled it over in his strong mind as a pebble in the ocean." His general speech is on a conversational key. He talks; but it is in a style to which inferior men can only rise by convulsive effort, or in circumstances of extreme excitement. "Half his strength he puts not forth, but stays his thunder in mid valley." Like a giant, his mere movement is equal to the spasms, and races, and 'torrent ruptures' of other men. You wonder what he could do were he fully roused. It is this bridled power, this restrained fury, this lion energy, on the leash, which ever rivets your interest and your wonder in the oratory of Brougham. You deem him fit for the most august and thrilling crises of eloquent; for the impeachment of some Colossus of crime, who might be entitled the enemy of the human race; for the defence of a Brutus, were he at the bar for tyrannicide; for a cause in which all the nations of the earth were interested, and for the decision of which superior beings

were waiting with tremulous expectation. And as you watch him rending asunder complicated webs of sophistry with his little finger; playing with every string of the human heart at pleasure; withering mailed men with a touch; you say, were this son of Anak in right earnest, and pricked up to his full power, what labours might he not accomplish, what heroes subdue! Nor does the knowledge that this masterly ease is the result of early and patient toil, of invincible perseverance, more than of inspired genius, much detract from the effect—an effect increased by the inscrutability of his features, which, though sharp and angular, conceal more meaning than they enunciate; the unkindled lightnings of his eye; the iron massiveness of his forehead; the saturnine swarthiness of his complexion; the meaning twitch of his cheek; and the clearness, flexibility, and power of a voice, over which his command is supreme, and which runs parallel with every movement of his sentences, and echoes every passion of his soul. And those who have seen him in his 'loftier mood,' not now calmly bestriding, but fairly caught in the wind of his spirit—his face brightened into full and fierce meaning—his eye shining like a sunken pit of fire suddenly disclosed—his arms vibrating like sharp tongues of flame in the blast—his brow darkening like iron in the shade—his form dilating to his dilating soul—his voice now exalted to a harrowing shriek, and now sunk to a rasping and terrible whisper—those (and their number is now comparatively few) can alone tell how the promise of his calmer moments is amply fulfilled, and the word "orator" seems (like a transparency fluctuating in the breeze) to flame around his every look and gesture, word and movement. His power, too, is greater, inasmuch as it is based on a superstructure of intellect; as it is kept in severe reserve; and as, like the forces of Nature, it never comes into play but on great occasions, and is then entirely irresistible. Hazlitt has, in the 'Spirit of the Age,' treated Brougham as the representative of the Scottish school of oratory, and drawn a very ingenious parallel between it and the Irish, giving the preference to the latter. It appears to us that he is rather a composite of the English and the Scottish, and unites the passion and boldness of John Bull to Sawney's carefulness, plodding perseverance, intense practicality, and instinctive common sense. He has little of the Irishman about him, except his irritable and impetuous temper; little of his bustling, bungling humour; less of his wild pathos; and less still of his fervid fancy. His wit is apt to darken into sarcasm, or to kindle into invective; his pathos is the feeblest of his powers; and his imagination, though vivid and strong to the verge of insanity, is never rich, and seldom poetical. Inflamed intellect is the brief and comprehensive description of his oratory. His sarcastic vein is as deep and dark a channel as ever the gail of a proud and powerful spirit found for itself. His sarcasm is equally compounded of irony and invective.

Like two dark serpents tangled in the dust,  
That on the paths of men their mingling poison thrust.  
His irony is not cold and stern, but fierce and hot. His invective is slow, measured, winding, indirect, accumulating gradually round its hapless victim. The garment he wraps round his enemy is of amplest drapery, and most voluminous