

have a didactic purpose. So far as that purpose predominates, they fail as poems, if not also as philosophical treatises. But, happily, Goldsmith's practice was better than his theory. Moved by a true poetic instinct, he often forgets his text; he intermits his preaching or his argumentation, and turns his powers to properer uses." The chief defect in *The Deserted Village* is one that has been frequently referred to. It is the location of such a village as Auburn, in its state of prosperity, in Ireland. Macaulay has noticed this incongruity, and said: that Goldsmith must have taken his description of Auburn in prosperity from some English village, that no Irish village of that day would present such a picture of felicity.

In dealing with this objection, Mr. Black has finely observed that "One of the radical facts of human nature—the magnifying delight of the mind in what is long remembered and remote," would account for the rustic beauty with which Goldsmith has invested *Auburn*. "The grown up Goldsmith had not to go to any Kentish village for a model; the familiar scenes of his youth, regarded with all the wistfulness and longing of an exile, became glorified enough." Granted that the explanation given by Mr. Black is the true one, that the poet regarded the village as endowed with charms, which were largely drawn from his imagination; yet it does not, we think, weaken Macaulay's objection. Mr. Black has explained why this description may have seemed true to the poet himself, but it is not on that account true to everybody else. It is manifest to all that the picture is greatly heightened; that such a village was not to be seen in Ireland in Goldsmith's time, and that notwithstanding Mr. Black's ingenious defence, the charge of incongruity still holds good. It is unnecessary to refer in detail to *The Hermit* and *Retaliation*, the former has been

regarded as a model in ballad writing, and the latter contains much acute discernment and description of the characters of the various members of the celebrated Literary Club. Goldsmith occupying, as he does, the transition period between the highly artificial age of Pope, and that of the romantic school, at the beginning of the present century, partakes of the qualities of both. He has preserved the same scrupulous regard for neatness of form, terseness of expression and melody of diction that marks the former period, and he exhibits the love of nature that characterizes the latter. His verse differs from that of Pope, by the greater spirit of earnestness it displays, by the less philosophical, but more serious consideration of the great problem of life. It is also to be noticed that he has not the same subtlety of thought and diction that mark some of the later writers; a subtlety that has been gained in a great measure from the study of metaphysics—a science that has been developed since Goldsmith's day. His verse is chiefly remarkable for its ease, grace and power to reach the heart—a power derived partly from the subjects treated of, and partly from the choiceness of his language. The subjects are such as affect all; the love of home, of country, reminiscences of boyhood or of travel, and a few simple passions are thus brought into play. His language also requires to be carefully noted. He excites our deepest emotions, our liveliest appreciation of the beautiful, not by ponderous words of sesquipedalian length and thunderous sound—the vice of a preceding age—but largely by words of Anglo-Saxon origin, many of them monosyllabic, and that appeal directly to the heart. No other writer, perhaps, exhibits the harmony that should exist between thought and its expression better than Goldsmith.

Goldsmith in his own day enjoyed