

Mr. Naylor has proved himself an extremely elegant scholar, an admirable master of his own language, both in the prose and poetical portion, and a very excellent student in the German. To this scholarship he adds, what is extremely rare, a considerable poetic power, invention to make his adaptation suitable, and right gleesome relish of satire and humour.

The Examiner,⁷⁵ finally, is convinced that the author has adopted the only possible method for his 'reproduction':

We cannot, in short, pay a higher compliment to his version than by saying that the same sort of praise is due to it which is due to Sir Thomas Urquhart's *Rabelais*. The facility with which he has dashed through his ten 'fyttes', using all sorts of rhymes, good or bad, helter-skelter; the unflagging, devil-may-care spirit, kept up to the last page; and the keen sense with which every niche for a new pleasantry is seized and filled; makes his book a curiosity of literature. Never have we seen the strong sense of delight in a task more clearly impressed on its results.

One and all the reviewers are loud in their praises of the handsome form of the volume. They are delighted with the black and red letter-press, with the dainty initials and other decorations, whilst they pronounce the parchment binding, with Master Reynard embossed on either side, 'a model of taste'⁷⁶.

In the matter of *Reynard the Fox* we are in the unusual and fortunate position of possessing the author's 'Review of Reviews'. In a letter of January 10, 1845, to Crabb Robinson, he utters some rather ungrateful comments on his critics:

What you say of the article on *Reynard* in *The Times* is perfectly true. It is *not* a good *Review of the Book*: but it has served the interests of my publication more than a strict adherence to the subject in hand could have done. It was an admirable *ad captandum*

⁷⁵ 1844. December 14, p. 788.

⁷⁶ Naylor had intended to illustrate his book with the plates with which a German edition was ornamented, and had asked Otilie to procure him the requisite permission from the publisher. He received the permission too late; but he had one of the plates bound up with a copy of his translation 'for his wife's drawing-room table'. See also note 52 above.