

of the operator are said to be; a will in sympathy with its advantages; a firm belief in its power; and an entire confidence in its use. In short, for the moment, forget all knowledge of physics and metaphysics; remove from your mind all objections that present themselves; think only of doing good to the sick person. Faith, of which so much is said, is not in itself essential; it is only necessary to the magnetiser as a motive that determines him to use the faculty with which he is naturally endowed, and whose existence is independent of his opinion. Imagine, in short, that it is in your power to take the disease with your hand and throw it on one side. Do not magnetise in presence of the curious, but only before those who take an interest in the patient before whom there is no constraint.

But we ask of every impartial mind if this magnetic influence depended on an existing material fluid, would it not act independently of faith, of this necessary belief and this entire confidence? It would act upon intelligent men in the city as well as upon uneducated people in the village, whom it is easy to persuade that people desire to heal them. The presence of curious persons would not hinder the action of mineral magnetism, nor of electricity. But, it is said, animal magnetism depends upon a moral fluid through which its influence is exercised, and which may be designated, *imagination*. Far, therefore, from denying its power, we concede to the magnetisers even more than they themselves believe they are able to obtain from it.

Now, here is the whole marvel of this grand mystery. Horace has said, if you wish me to weep you must weep first; if you are full of confidence, you will make me confident. Imitation is the principle of action. How often do we not submit, in society, to this involuntary yoke? You yawn, and immediately I yawn. When instruments are tuned in unison the vibration of a single chord makes ours resound in the same tone. In like manner spasmodic movements of men we know and esteem impress similar images on our brain, which distribute vital motions in our body in conformable order. A smiling countenance induces us to smile. Those who yield most promptly to the influence are women and children, whose delicate fibres, weak and irritable tissues, render them submissive to imitation. Hence, the all powerful empire of a superior over an inferior mind. Such are the causes which propagate modes, opinions and heresies. Imitation makes a crowd of followers before the conviction of reason can carry away one proselyte.

*Regis ad exemplar totus componitur orbis.*

Why does a man of a firm, moderate, or calm disposition not receive the magnetic power or other influence of a fluid, if such really exists? Because, they say, he will not place himself in unison; he resists the efficacious grace, he is a hardened sinner, a crusty old soul, like rusty iron, that is no longer attracted by the loadstone. Nevertheless, many individuals subject themselves with the best grace in the world to hypnotism, who desire to feel its magic influence. Vain desire! they cannot even go to sleep; heaven refuses its affection to that degree; behold them rejected from the number of the predestined and elect! Mesmer opened the portals of the soul by music's charms and ravishing harmonious sounds. An ancient sage has, in fact, affirmed that sensibility to melody is a sure sign of a reprobate.

If it is permitted to doubt the influence

of the stars over the earth, no one will dispute that of the sun which ripens our fruits and harvests, browns the busy farmer in his fields, and the creole under his revolving rays. Who does not recognize the epoch of the day? To the dawn of morning, the warbling of birds, the opening of flowers, evening succeeds—a less animated scene; birds retiring and concealing themselves in the groves; plants, half withered, exhaling the sweetest perfumes, and others closing their leaves. Thus the great central star projects life and strength around the globe; his absence plunges nature into dejection and repose. This powerful motor brings all species of created things into play, at the time and hour fixed for their proper organizations, stimulates their songs of joy and hymns of love; opens and shuts, by turns, the hearts of flowers; balances the elements; arranges their diverse oscillations and new harmonies. In short, from the revolution of time which destroys and consumes us unceasingly, arises the continual necessity of repairing our strength, and the renewal of the universe by an eternal succession of beings which engender, increase and die.

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### STYLE.

A lively young great-grand-uncle met a man on the road in the very old coaching days, and tried him often all the way down from Liverpool, without moving a wrinkle of his wooden face; but, at last, as they were nearing Highgate, this dull man in the corner asked the wit (whose name was Miller), after all these long hours of his coruscation, whether he "couldn't say something clever about bend-leather."

Style is one of those familiar abstractions about which many men have said many clever things. Malleable as bend-leather, 'tis as unseizable as the Platonic idea of genius. And to posit genius is to imply style, although one needn't go all the way with Buffon, who said "the style is the man's self." 'Twould be as close to say the style of dress is the man; and, indeed, Goethe, in his *Wilhelm Meister*, had a utopian reformatory for the juvenile upper classes, where each young hopeful chose his own "things," in order that he might disclose his temperament in his favourite colours, and his character by the cut of his jib.

The style is the brain would be nearer the mark; and Schopenhauer, dealing with Kant, remarked that "style is the physiognomy—the face—of the mind." But put it more naturally, and answer the question: Can you tell a man's mind by his speech? The great majority of human beings (especially of women) talk no end better than they write. Writing and spelling and grammar arise like spectres at sight of pen and paper, and send their wits to the right-about. And style and grammar are two different things. Great writers are almost all incorrect: they innovate; and no rigid grammarian ever knew how to write, any more than a man in orthopaedic irons can jump a six foot wall. Your academical stylite, your square-toed Dr. Syntax, constructs his phrases by some prosodical tractate, like a funeral oration, without one particle of hardihood, or a quip of phrase, or a snort of revolt against conformity: never a kick over the traces for him, old "quiet to ride or drive." Still, simplicity and a week-day style are the reader's true bread-and-butter. We never tire of cut-and-come-again. Voltaire's *Romans* are a classic example; and he hit off

the trick of it, in his *Blanc et Noir*, as writing simply, without forcing the wit at every turn, and without phrase-making. "So much the better," rejoins Rustem, "that's how I like Tales"; and that was how Voltaire told his; and Swift. And Swift, they will keep on saying, took very private lessons in style from John Eachard's works; and indeed that last Rev. D.D. reckoned "amongst the first things that seem to be useless, high-tossing and swaggering, either mounting eloquent or profoundly learned." When the words are too big for the meaning, the result is bombast; and many there be that lay it on thick and threefold in this *style a panache*, some of whom want, like Lamartine, always to sit on the ceiling, while some other merely vapours like a crow in the gutter, until one wishes his tongue in a cleft stick.

On the Scylla side of this Charybdis are the droning common-councilman's common-places, with a small number of facts swamped amid emphatic and insignificant phrases. Nor can the coach-painter's pumice-stone be tolerated; the monotonous level of the deal board is as fatiguing as the most meretriciously ornate bombast; and a certain occasional exaggeration in the expression, but not in the thought, is essential to gratefulness of style. But away with the essential oils and the curling-tongs—the calamistered style, as that able and familiar innovator, Diderot, called it.

If polished diction won't do it, then the vulgar speech must, and without hesitation, when it's more intelligible. Let the paper copy the mouth, even when irregular and intrepid, provided each clause makes its hit. And, fish alive! if what must be must, then Billingsgate any day before Wardour Street—though that need not go so far as to make the result "a white field and a black crop," as a Finnish *devinette* has it. Remember Polonius, and "be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar."

*Oportet et hæreses esse*, even among Corinthians; and such a heretic will think rather of his work in hand than of any amount of Zeitgeist; humour shall sway him more than official repute; with a free stage, mettle, and what of vivid fancy he may find in pocket, he shall defray his way, *malgre* all the rules and all the authorities on all their stilts. He will sink that obsolete old M.C.—the *arbitrator elegantiarum*—and pick out a "bad taste," even, that can charm, that shall live. And directness is ever the great thing. Instead of pedantry or unction, try rather an Iron Duke's soldierly sentences and the push of pike; boot-and-saddle's the call:

"The Perse owt off Northumberlande,  
And a vowe to God mayd he  
That he wold hunte in the mountaynes  
Of Chyvyat within dayes thre;  
In the maugre of doughte Dogles,  
And all that ever with him be."

The genius that made that start was none of the squint-minded fellows; he rode straight at his fence; no slovenly dikesmowler he.

In fine it might not be a bad definition of the one-legged kind—as all these must be—that Style is Harmony; a close and simple concord between the ideas and the words, added to an actual harmony in the choice, rhythm, and cadence of the words, phrases, sentences, and whole passages. And the warp and woof of this, hidden by the mellow design and finish of the surface, would be—let us put it in this way, as stiffly as the timbers of a loom:—(1) Matter; (2) order and clarity; (3) brevity, simplicity, directness; (4) life and attraction (ornament); (5) abstinence, which ap-