

genius which burns beneath every period, give them not only a high rank in classical literature, but render them the most acceptable text-book that can be placed in the hands of the young scholar. The noble and patriotic sentiments of the old Roman are thus interwoven into the texture of the ideas, and become a component part of the intellectual nature, when it is most susceptible of deep impressions, and exert a strong influence in casting the mould of thought, even after the original impressions may have been partially effaced. The lifeless corpse of the republic has thus been embalmed in the uncorrupting fragrance of genius, and though

'The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now,'

the features of Rome's great men are engraven on the tablets of everlasting duration.

But the triumphs of eloquence are not confined to Greece or Rome. The scroll of English prose literature can unroll but few pages of equal beauty with those which record the intellectual struggles of Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Sheridan, Wyndham, and others, in the British Senate; and decidedly the most attractive and eloquent passages, the finest specimens of profound thought and exquisite elegance of diction, in the whole range of American literature, are found in the political speeches and treatises of our Henry, Hamilton, Jay, Marshall, Fisher Ames, Clay, Randolph, and Webster. Many of the orations of these mighty geniuses, especially those of Chatham, Burke, Fisher Ames, and Webster, offspring as they are of questions that arise out of the depths of political science, contain choice touches of sentiment, thrilling appeals to the most generous passions of human nature, fine imagery, and graphic descriptions; thus cementing together the different parts of their discourses by golden links, that add strength to the work, while they give the finishing touch to the most costly embellishments.

The alliance that subsists between poetry, eloquence, and politics, it is true, is rather incidental than direct; but there is another department of literature, whose range is very extensive, and is daily becoming more so, which exerts a political influence that is incalculable. I refer to periodical criticism. Magazines, originally established as an ordeal through which works offered to the favour of the public must pass, be subjected to a rigid analysis, and be tested by the application of the rules of just criticism, are now the charts on which the pilots of the ship of state sketch not merely the outlines of their course, but develop at length the principles of party policy.

In addition to works of periodical criticism, many volumes of English and American literature, which take rank among the classics, owe their birth to the rage and rancour of political struggles. The name of Burke is here covered with splendour. The volumes in which he has bequeathed his fame to posterity, all treat, with a single exception, of subjects purely political; although Goldsmith has said, that,

'Born for the universe, he narrowed his mind,  
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind,'

yet we think it quite problematical whether Burke's memory would have been cherished with more profound veneration than it is now, if he had chosen for his walks the groves of the academy, instead of making the senate echo the tones of his matchless eloquence. His reflections on the French Revolution, his most elaborate work, to say nothing of the depth of knowledge and political sagacity that are evinced on every page, are an exhibition of the most majestic style which the English language is capable of affording. The diction accommodates itself to the solemn grandeur of the subject, like the 'ample folds of the drapery on the master-pieces of antique sculpture.' It is impossible to court the acquaintance of this great man, through his works, without feeling pure and elevating influences. One breathes in his presence a purer and more invigorating atmosphere. By communion with him, the soul, unaccustomed to bold flights, gradually acquires the ardour and enterprise of the eagle.

The productions of Junius take high rank among the English classics, and now, after the events and circumstances that gave keenness and pungency to his satire have been swallowed up in oblivion, they are read, and will continue to be read, for the bold and noble cast of the thoughts, and the vigour with which they are expressed. Without attempting to complete a catalogue that might be extended to an almost indefinite length, of those who have adorned political discussions with the spoils of literature, it is sufficient to remark, that scarcely an electoral canvass now takes place, without bringing forth intellectual creations that need only the name of Junius, to raise them into an equality with those letters which are now marching on to immortality, under the banner of 'Stat nominis umbra.'

The blending of politics and literature may be productive of immense advantages, or of overwhelming evils, as examples abundantly show. The influence of the Iliad on the states of Greece, has been already adverted to; and the popular author of 'Ferdinand and Isabella,' which may be regarded as one of the most beautiful productions of American genius, has advanced the opinion that the turbulent spirits of Spain (while the institutions of chivalry alternately covered the state with glory, and were themselves invested with commanding dignity by their union with the state,) were bound together by the patriotic ardour which they breathed in the poem of the Cid, and other works of a kindred character, with which the literature of southern Europe abounds. But the best example of this kind of influence is offered by England, whose

legends and tales of chivalry gleam through the 'elfin dream' of Spenser, and give a keener zest even to Milton's heavenly theme. The memory of her kings and queens has been immortalized by Shakspeare, and their vices drawn forth, and unmasked to be detested, with such pathos and generous sympathy, that our tears flow at the downfall of greatness supported by guilt, and we see without envy the vault which successful ambition makes, as he has withdrawn the curtain, and permitted us to see the accompanying thorns, how they pierce the deepest when the splendour is most dazzling. All the events of her history have been woven by a thousand others, whose names whiten along the milky-way of her intellectual sky, into solemn narrative, festive poetry, and sportive lays: Thus

'Uniting as with a moral band  
Its native legends with their land,  
Giving each rock its storied tale,  
Pouring a lay for every dale,'

until the sentiment of patriotism, which is a complex idea, composed of the recollection which great men have left behind them, and of the master-pieces of genius, has settled down into a component principle of the British constitutional nature; combining with loyalty, it embraces the throne with a grasp so strong, that the attempt to upheave it would be as futile as the attempt to dislodge the foundations of the deep-anchored isle.

A Briton conceives the State to be the offspring of the will of God, and he looks upon the frame-work of his government, adorned as it is with spoils which have been culled from the richest products of genius, through the space of a thousand years, as a sublime temple, which the Deity honours with his presence. The church engraves her eternal sanctions on the cap-stones of the temple, and maintains her sacred ministers through all its departments. The civil officer, in vowing allegiance to his sovereign, also vows allegiance to the majesty of heaven, in the sacraments of the church. He thus acquires a sanctity of character which has a strong tendency at least to stifle the cold selfishness of the human heart, which too often looks upon office as the mere avenue of gain. To render it still more attractive, the idea of royalty and nobility is embodied in the persons of individuals. All the charms that inspire the deepest and most romantic devotion, relieved by long lines of splendid ancestry, are concentrated around the throne. Love, and enthusiastic ardour, all the strongest and most generous passions of the human breast, united with cool, reflecting reason, combine to give strength and durability to the noblest monarchy that ever was framed.

Now compare this gorgeous fabric with the simplicity of the American republic. They who framed it were baptized sons of liberty in a river of patriot blood. They were thus made sacred for their sublime duty. Their institutions are the emanations of pure reason. Passions of every description were commanded to hold their peace, when they addressed themselves to their appointed task. Not beauty but utility was the object sought and gained. They looked for support, not to enthusiastic passions, and the ardour of devotion, but to the unsophisticated reason of men of common sense. But passions are stronger than reason, and they often usurp her authority. Institutions strong as iron and solid as stone, may effect every purpose of utility, but they cannot cease to vibrate the cords of affection in the heart. Self interest may be enlisted to support them, but the deep, resistless current of patriotic ardour requires our strongest passions to arouse it to its full force. As the genius of the republic is entirely averse from incorporating its prominent features in the persons of individuals, sinking men in the absorbing depths of principles, our only resort, and it is a resort of impregnable strength, in order to enlist the affections of the whole people in the support of national institutions, is to unite the highest possible utility with supreme elegance of intellectual taste. In this way, we may hope to restrain the fury of hold, bad men, by offering attractions to the better part of their nature. We may weave unfading garlands around the statue of Liberty, and thus invest her with such noble charms, that she shall awe those whom she cannot win.

Kolokobercker for March, 1840.

From New York Reporter.

MAY—MAY DAY.

Mark! how we meet thee  
At dawn of dewy day!  
Hark! how we greet thee,  
With our roundelay!  
While all the goodly things that be  
In earth, and air, and ample sea,  
Are walking up to welcome thee,  
Thou merry month of May!

So sang Bishop Heber when in India, no doubt moved by those feelings which he brought with him from Europe, where he often witnessed the merry multitudes who make the first of May, or MAY DAY, a rural festival, according to the usage of the olden time, as set forth in the works of the poets and chroniclers of that period; and who, one and all, appear to have taken the "Merry Month of Maie" under their especial protection. It is, most assuredly, the season of Love and Poesy. The buds, the blossoms, and the merry birds, awake the soul to love and harmony, and man cannot but feel that delight in which nature herself rejoiceth so greatly.

Man, cooped up in cities, however, is an artificial wretched being; and although he may feel and acknowledge the beauties of the

"youthful May," he looks upon them merely as one of the varying seasons of the year, that brings vegetables to market, reduces his bill for fuel, and makes out-of-doors an agreeable, variable source of recreation! But the clearing out of house and home—paying up arrears of rent—seeking a new dwelling—destruction of furniture—and all the annoyances which silly custom has, as it were, entailed here, upon our good citizens, are more or less sufficient to destroy any associations so delightful a change may create so the individual so circumstanced. I say nothing of the distress and affliction which the poor and needy meet with on this day of general movement, destruction, and plunder; and the privations and miseries they endure at the hands of hard-hearted landlords or heartless creditors. How many hundreds, nay, thousands, have had, and will have, cause to execrate the first day of the merry month of May. There are those who laugh at this! O! lachrymose laughter! melancholy mirth! The first of May doth "stand for aye accursed in the calendar" with him whose goods are seized for rent, and he knoweth not where to put his head! This is the triumph of Art over Nature with a vengeance! May courts us to be jocund and gay; but MAN—selfish, heartless, lucre-loving man—dashes the pure cup of hope and homied joy from our lips, and gives us, instead, the bitter chalice which he has himself with art concocted, the nauseous draught of disappointment and despair.

The legislature should abolish this cruel innovation of the joys of the "merry month of May," as in direct opposition to the will of Heaven, to the kind appeals of Nature, who cries aloud, be merry and happy, as you see all around you. How this custom of a "general move" obtained in this country on the first of May, we know not; but this we know, the name of the individual who first adopted this cruel custom should be held up to public detestation and contempt, as a contemner of the beauties of nature; as a foe to humanity; and, in short, as a good-for-nothing heartless fellow. We hope to see the day when this month shall prove to all, what it really is, the "merry month of May"—the advent of all that is beautiful, all that is dear to us in creation—the season of love, of health, of mirth, and boundless enjoyment—a season that opens the heart, expands the minds, and lifts our thoughts with heartfelt gratitude to the God of all—He who, in his infinite wisdom, has made all seasons (this especially) for man's profit, enjoyment, and content. I have been led to these reflections on witnessing around me the bustle, confusion, robbery, and distress, so peculiar to this place on the first of May, and unparalleled in any other city in the universe! In England, France, Germany, &c. though much of the mirth and hilarity of the olden time is forgotten or disused, yet enough remains to give a zest to this happy season of the coming spring. The outpouring of the population of the cities of London, Paris, &c. to go a-maying, may be more easily imagined than described. I am of the number of those who hold in dear remembrance the innocent sports of our forefathers, which moved the heart to love of human nature and gratitude to heaven.

Often have I in my nonage—happy days of innocence and mirth!  
—gone a-maying.

"To rove the good greenwood, and bring  
Away the spoil of early spring,  
With nosegays deck'd, with garlands crown'd,  
And hang each smiling homestead round,  
Window, and door, and porch with bowers  
Of verdant boughs and blooming flowers."

The lives of most are misspent for want of a certain end of their actions: wherein they do, as unwise archers, shoot away their arrows they know not at what mark. They live only out of the present, not directing themselves and their proceedings to one universal scope; whence they alter upon every change of occasions, and never reach any perfection; neither can they do other but continue in uncertainty and end in discomfort. Others aim at one certain mark, but a wrong one.

SINGULAR SCIENTIFIC ERROR.—In the infancy of railroad speculation, the engineers resorted to a thousand laborious contrivances with a view of overcoming an obstacle which had no real existence. It was assumed that the adhesion of the smooth wheels of the carriage upon the equally smooth iron rail, must necessarily be so slight, that if it should be attempted to drag any considerable weight, the wheels would only be whirled round, while the carriage would not advance. A patent for an invention to remedy this fancied inconvenience was actually taken out by Mr. Blenkinsop, in 1811.

A Scotchman proposes an apparatus, the use of which entirely does away with the necessity of eating. By an ingenious transfer of vanity to a different part of the body, he causes the stomach instead of the brain to be inflated, and a man can now fancy his stomach is well filled, where he used to believe the same of his head.

Great talents and splendid achievements are necessarily confined to few: and as we may be virtuous and happy without them, this is not to be regretted; but it is the duty and interest of every individual to aim at excellence in his own sphere, however humble. Many of the very same qualities are requisite to make a good tradesman, or skilful mechanic, which are needed to form a great statesman or general.

Childhood is like a mirror, catching and reflecting images from all around it. Remember that an impious or profane thought, uttered by a parent's lip, may operate on the young heart like a careless spray of water thrown upon a polished steel, staining it with rust which no after scouring can efface.—Peter Parley.