

of the Nervous Style as well as others. Too great a study of length, to the neglect of the other qualities of Style, is found to betray writers into a harsh manner. Harshness arises from unusual words, from forced inversions in the construction of a sentence, and too much neglect of smoothness and ease. This is reckoned the fault of some of our earliest classics in the English language; such as Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Bacon, Hooker, Chillingworth, Milton in his prose works, Harrington, Cudworth, and other writers of considerable note in the days of Queen Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I. These writers had nerves and strength in a high degree, and are to this day eminent for that quality in Style. But the language in their hands was exceedingly different from what it is now, and was indeed entirely formed upon the idiom and construction of the Latin, in the arrangement of sentences. Hooker, for instance, begins the Preface to his celebrated work of Ecclesiastical Polity with the following sentences: "Though for no other cause, yet for this, that posterity may know we have not loosely, through silence, permitted things to pass away as in a dream, there shall be, for men's information, extant, this much, concerning the present state of the church of God established amongst us, and their careful endeavours which would have upheld the same." Such a sentence now sounds harsh in our ears. Yet some advantages certainly attended this sort of Style; and whether we have gained, or lost, upon the whole, by departing from it, may bear a question. By the freedom of arrangement, which it permitted, it rendered the language susceptible of more strength, of more variety of collocation, and more harmony of period. But however this be, such a Style is now obsolete; and no modern writer could adopt it without the censure of harshness and affectation. The present form which the Language has assumed, has, in some measure, sacrificed the study of strength to that of perspicuity and ease. Our arrangement of words has become less forcible, perhaps, but more plain and natural; and this is now understood to be the genius of our Language.—*Blair*.

ON THE NERVOUS AND THE FEEBLE STYLE.

The Nervous and the Feeble, are generally held to be characters of Style, of the same import with the Concise and the Diffuse. They do indeed very often coincide. Diffuse writers have, for the most part, some degree of feebleness; and nervous writers will generally be inclined to a concise expression. This, however, does not always hold; and there are instances of writers, who, in the midst of a full and ample Style, have maintained a great degree of strength. Livy is an example; and in the English language, Dr. Barrow. Barrow's Style has many faults. It is unequal, incorrect, and redundant; but vital, for force and expressiveness uncommonly distinguished. On every subject, he multiplies words with an overflowing copiousness; but it is always a torrent of strong ideas and significant expressions which he pours forth. Indeed, the foundations of a Nervous or a weak Style are laid in an author's manner of thinking. If he conceives an object strongly, he will express it with energy; but if he has only an indistinct view of his subject; if his genius be such, or at the time of his writing so carelessly exerted, that he has no firm hold of the conception which he would communicate to us; the marks of all this will clearly appear in his Style. Several unmeaning words and loose epithets will be found; his expressions will be vague and general; his arrangement indistinct and feeble; we shall conceive somewhat of his meaning, but our conception will be faint. Whereas a nervous writer, whether he employs an extended or a concise Style, gives us always a strong impression of his meaning, his mind is full of his subject, and his words are all expressive; every phrase and every figure which he uses, tends to render the picture, which he would set before us, more lively and complete.—*Id.*

ON THE DRY STYLE.

The dry manner excludes all ornament of every kind. Content with being understood, it has not the least aim to please either the fancy or the ear. This is tolerable only in pure didactic writing; and even there, to make us bear it, great weight and

solidity of matter is requisite; and entire perspicuity of language. Aristotle is the complete example of a Dry Style. Never, perhaps, was there any author who adhered so rigidly to the strictness of a didactic manner, throughout all his writings, and conveyed so much instruction, without the least approach to ornament. With the most profound genius, and extensive views, he writes like a pure intelligence, who addresses himself solely to the understanding, without making any use of the channel of the imagination. But this is a manner which deserves not to be imitated. For, although the goodness of the matter may compensate the dryness or harshness of the Style, yet is that dryness a considerable defect; as it fatigues attention, and conveys our sentiments, with disadvantage, to the reader or hearer.—*Id.*

ON THE PLAIN STYLE.

A Plain Style rises one degree above a Dry one. A writer of this character employs very little ornament of any kind, and rests almost entirely upon his sense. But, if he is at no pains to engage us by the employment of figures, musical arrangement, or any other art of writing, he studies, however, to avoid disgusting us, like a dry and a harsh writer. Besides Perspicuity, he pursues Propriety, Purity and Precision, in his language: which form one degree, and no inconsiderable one, of beauty. Liveliness too, and force, may be consistent with a very Plain Style, and, therefore, such an author, if his sentiments be good, may be abundantly agreeable. The difference between a dry and plain writer, is, that the former is incapable of ornament, and seems not to know what it is; the latter seeks not after it. He gives us his meaning, in good language, distinct and pure; any further ornament he gives himself no trouble about; either, because he thinks it unnecessary to his subject; or, because his genius does not lead him to delight in it; or, because it leads him to despise it.

This last was the case with Dean Swift, who may be placed at the head of those that have employed the plain Style. Few writers have discovered more capacity. He treats every subject which he handles, whether serious or ludicrous, in a masterly manner. He knew, almost beyond any man, the Purity, the Extent, the Precision of the English Language; and therefore to such as wish to attain a pure and correct Style, he is one of the most useful models. But we must not look for much ornament and grace in his language. His haughty and morose genius made him despise any embellishment of this kind, as beneath his dignity. He delivers his sentiments in a plain, downright, positive manner, like one who is sure he is in the right; and is very indifferent whether you be pleased or not. His sentences are commonly negligently arranged; distinctly enough as to the sense, but without any regard to smoothness of sound; often without much regard to compactness or elegance. If a metaphor, or any other figure, chanced to render his satire more poignant, he would, perhaps, vouchsafe to adopt it, when it came in his way, but if it tended only to embellish and illustrate, he would rather throw it aside. Hence, in his serious pieces, his style often borders upon the dry and unpleasant; in his humorous ones, the plainness of his manner sets off his wit to the highest advantage. There is no froth nor affectation in it; it seems native and unstudied; and while he hardly appears to smile himself, he makes his reader laugh heartily. To a writer of such a genius as Dean Swift, the Plain Style was most admirably fitted. Among our philosophical writers, Mr. Locke comes under this class; perspicuous and pure, but almost without any ornament whatever. In works which admit, or require, over so much ornament, there are parts where the plain manner ought to predominate. But we must remember, that when this is the character which a writer affects throughout his whole composition, great weight of matter, and great force of sentiment, are required, in order to keep up the reader's attention, and prevent him from becoming tired of the author.—*Blair*.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

PROTESTANT BIBLE SOCIETY OF FRANCE.

Within a few days past we have received the report of the General Protestant Bible Society of

Paris. It is indeed a most interesting document.—It begins with stating that the Society met on the 28th of April at noon.—The Marquis de Jaucourt, a peer of France, presided. A detail is given of the officers of the Society, and of the distinguished strangers who were present. The meeting was usual, was opened with prayer. The prayer was truly excellent; and we were rejoiced to observe that it was concluded with a distinct ascription of praise to the adorable Trinity, thus—"Hear, O God, our prayer, through Jesus Christ thy Son; to whom, as to thee, heavenly Father, and to the Holy Spirit, our only God eternally blessed, be honor, praise and glory, forever and ever—Amen." After this the President made an Address to the Society. The Report of the Committee was then read by the "Baron Pelet de la Lazere." We have not room to give even an epitome of this report. It states that during the past year, there has been issued from the various depositories of the Society, four thousand and fifty Bibles, and eight thousand three hundred and four New Testaments; and that the whole number issued by the Society, since its establishment, was eighteen thousand six hundred and six Bibles, and twenty-three thousand five hundred and twenty-three New Testaments. It says, there are two hundred thousand Protestant families in France; and justly observes that all their issues, as yet, will afford but a very scanty supply of the word of life to this extensive population.—It should be recollected, that the Bible had almost vanished from France during the revolution.—*Christian Advocate*.

APPEAL OF MR. RICHARD RATHBONE ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

Mr. Richard Rathbone, of this town, has published an able and fine-spirited appeal to his fellow members of the Society of Friends, to exert themselves in favour of the establishment of universal and unrestricted religious liberty in this country. He commences his appeal in the following manner:—"Dear Friends,—After much and serious affliction, in, I hope, humility of feeling, and under, I am sure, a strong conviction of duty, I have decided to address you upon a subject which appears to me to deserve the attention of the Society in a greater degree than it has yet been given. I allude to the unjust restrictions and disabilities which still attach to the Society of Friends, and to many other of our fellow-countrymen, including the Jews, the Roman Catholics, and the various denominations of Protestant Dissenters. I have long thought that we were unwisely and unkindly listless respecting these things, both as it regards ourselves and others; and at the present moment, are we not particularly called upon to rouse ourselves from our lethargy and to be up and doing in the cause of suffering humanity?"—Mr. Rathbone afterwards more fully explains his object, as follows:—"There is, perhaps, no part of our duty in which we may more simply comply with the dictates of our hearts and the demands of our consciences, and at the same time keep ourselves 'unsponsored from the world,' than in urging, by respectful petitions from every Meeting of the Society in Great Britain and Ireland, the claims of all classes of our fellow-citizens to an equal participation in the inherent rights of all."—He then reminds the Friends of their successful exertions for the abolition of the Slave Trade, and urges them to make similar exertions to obtain the removal of all civil disqualifications on the ground of religious opinions. He adds:—"In almost every passage of the New Testament, we shall find motives innumerable, arguments unanswerable, appeals the most touching, and commands the most sacred and solemn, to demand our best exertions in promoting the universal reign of civil and religious liberty, because it is the only solid basis of universal peace on earth and goodwill to men." Mr. Rathbone then cites several of the passages to which he alludes, and reasons upon them in favour of impartial justice, benevolence, and liberality. He concludes as follows:—"Believing that the forcible appeal of the numerous meetings of which our body is composed, in the quiet and peaceable spirit which communicates conviction, would have great weight in the scale of public opinion; believing that it is our duty to add that weight, when experience gives us reason to hope that it will be serviceable in the cause of truth and justice; believing that we may thereby assist in preventing the occurrence of events which would be attended with the most