

we must not omit the drawbacks while we glance at the perfections. Mr. Elton was a master of technicalities not only archæological and legal, but also grammatical and etymological. He shows us, for example, that the word "rooky," even when used in relation to the "night bird," has nothing to do with "rooks," but owns the same derivation as "reek," and means "steamy" or "vaporous." He is anxious to prove that the word "russet" does not signify "red," and he maintains by illustrations that its true meaning is "homely." He does not perceive that this is a derivative sense, and that "russet" is "homely" because common cloaks were red. Much of this kind of half-perception is scattered throughout the volume. He constantly discovers resemblances to Shakespearean turns or proverbs in similar language elsewhere, which manifestly owns not a copied but a common origin. A crowning example of this defect is to be found in his elaborate comments on the Latin epitaph ascribed to the poet's son-in-law, Mr. (or Dr.) Hall:

Terra tegit, populus mæret, Olympus habet.

"Olympus habet" is surely a trope trite enough, yet fully two pages are devoted to tracing its assumed origin. "Was it then from London, or from Friesland, or, with far less likelihood from the Isle of Cyprus, that Mr. Hall derived his Olympian metaphor?" asks Mr. Elton, and he answers his own riddle by quoting from Francis Rous:

That soul which mounted on Olympus' hill
In sacred spirits and the Muses' traine.

So again in his most interesting chapter on "*Ward's Diary*," and the influences of Shakespeare's writings upon it, Mr. Elton goes out of his way to connect Ward's "No comet or prodigie tolls us the bell of our departure" with Shakespeare's

Never till to-night, never till now,
Did I go through a tempest dropping fire;

and his emphasis of "fires in the element" boding Cæsar's