

style), he is the least sequacious. His verbal troops, like the old Continentals, his townsmen, who fought Pitcairn, never fire in companies, or even by platoons, but each "on his own hook," man by man. Individually complete and self-poised, like his ideal man, his sentences are combined merely by the accident of juxtaposition, and touch without adhering, like marbles in a bag. His language is densely suggestive, and abounds in those focalizing words and turns of expression peculiar to our day, which condense many rays of thought into one burning phrase. It abounds, too, in those happy phrases which are

"New as if brought from other spheres,
Yet welcome as if known for years."

Hardly any writer surpasses Emerson in what has been called the "polarization of language," by which effete terms are reinforced, and ordinary words are put to novel uses, and charged with unusual powers. But his style lacks repose, and, like Seneca's, wearies by excessive epigram and point. Its main defect is, that, as De Quincey says of Hazlitt's manner, "it spreads no deep diffusions of colour, and distributes no mighty masses of shadow. A flash, a solitary flash, and all is gone." It is said that Coleridge, when told that Klopstock was the German Milton, said: "A *very* German Milton indeed!" A like exclamation is provoked when one hears the remark, so thoughtlessly made—than which nothing marks more clearly the prevalent insensibility to the differences of style—that Emerson is "the American Carlyle." As, well might one compare the gentle gales that fan Lake Walden to the hoarse blast that blows in winter from Ben Lomond; the stream that ripples along the Concord meadows "with propulsion, eddy, and sweet recoil," to the brawling and turbid Highland torrent; the notes of the robin to the scream

of the northern eagle; or the cold, pitiless radiance of a sunlit iceberg to the lurid glare of the volcano, blazing with tyrannic fury through the silence and shadows of midnight, and hurling its sulphureous blackness against the starry canopy.

Of the few partial exceptions to the law that we have mentioned, Goldsmith is one of the most striking. Never was there a greater chasm between the man and the writer. Why is it that, carousing at college with midnight revellers and ale-house tipplers—fond all his life of coarse pleasures and gambling—at once a dandy and a sloven in his dress and life—he is never either finical, or coarse and slovenly in his writing? Whence come the artless but unapproachable graces of that style, as chaste as it is musical and fascinating? Why does his pen never for a moment betray the disorder of his life? "Like the squalid silk weaver, sending forth piece after piece of the purest white tissue," "poor Noll," says an English writer, "sends forth from his garret only the most snowy-white products, and circumstances of his outer life which strangely contrast with his inner life of thought. Irish to the backbone in his temperament and all his ways of life, he is yet English in almost every characteristic of his writings."

It is in this idiosyncratic peculiarity, this indefinable something which distinguishes one writer from another, and which can neither be imitated nor forged, that lies the priceless value of style. It is not, as it has been too often regarded, a cloak to masquerade in, a kind of ornament or luxury that can be indulged in at will—a communicable trick of rhetoric or accent—but the pure outcome of the writer's nature, the utterance of his own individuality. This sensibility of language to the impulses and qualities of him who uses it—its flexibility in accommodating itself to all the thoughts,