

which it was produced called for exposure and reprobation. We can pity honest folly, and smile indulgently at well-meant absurdity : but when we find, as here, malevolence striving, in despite of natural imbecility, to fling its venom over all that we have been accustomed to revere, and to calumniate the sense, the spirit, and the honour of our country, under the hypocritical pretence of mewling about freedom, we hold it a sacred part of our duty to reject the offender's plea of stupidity, however gross and palpable, and, as the only punishment in our power, to suspend him for an instant over the gulf of oblivion, a mark for the finger of scorn and ridicule, before we suffer him to drop, and be lost for ever.

ART. XIV. *Characters of the late Charles James Fox, selected, and in part written, by Philopatris Varvicensis.* 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 846. London, Mawman ; Birmingham, Belcher. 1809.

NO tears are more sacred than those with which friendship waters the tomb of worth or genius. The great abilities and benevolent dispositions of Charles Fox had won from his countrymen that esteem, which yet many, if not most of them, withheld from his political character ; when the event of his death, rendering admiration safe, and jealousy impossible, afforded them the opportunity of an unmixed, although melancholy indulgence of their kinder feelings. At a period so near to that event, that the public mind, if the expression may be allowed, is not yet *out of mourning* for his loss, appears this publication :—a sort of funeral offering to his memory, from one who is known to have long cherished for him an attachment, respectable for its disinterestedness, and amiable for its fidelity. Nor was this friend a mere humble retainer in the train of Mr. Fox ; but a man ever acknowledged by all to possess considerable talents, and almost incomparable learning. Under all these circumstances, we should have been apt to regard the work before us with sentiments of profound and unqualified sympathy, were it not that there is always in Dr. Parr's manner a certain mixture of pomposity and *naïveté*, affectation and *bonhomie*, self-importance and innocence, which we find it as completely impossible to contemplate with gravity as with disrespect.

We have referred to the real parentage of this work as to a matter of notoriety. In fact it is so, nor do we believe that the author wished it to be otherwise. The name must be intended to be guessed, where everything but the name is so frankly revealed ; and it is plain that Doctor Parr, who formerly puzzled the literary world by walking abroad in a veil, now wears one for the purpose, not of disguise, but of ornament. What sort of gratification, indeed, a learned man of a certain age can possibly derive from thus playing

playing at bo-peep with his readers, we find it hard to understand; but the mighty professors of classical mysteries, the *scavans en us*, have always, if we mistake not, been addicted to this little species of merriment. In the instance before us, however, the diversion is refined upon in a very original manner; for we here find Doctor Parr, otherwise called Philopatris, actually speaking of Doctor Parr, surnamed Bellendenus, as of some distinct or third person. ‘The character of Mr. Fox (he tells us) which, some years ago, appeared in the Preface to Bellendenus de Statû, is inserted with the permission of the author.’—The distinction between that author and himself, once made, might as well have continued; but he immediately adds, whimsically enough,—‘and the same person’ (that is, the author of the preface to Bellendenus) ‘is to be considered as the writer both of the letter and the notes which are placed at the conclusion of the work;’—that is, as no other than Philopatris himself who is speaking. So that we have here one author obtaining a certain permission from another author, which other author is all the time the same with the first. It would have been truly amusing to have witnessed the interview in which we may conceive the affair of this permission to be negociated; conducted, as it was, between two worthies so exactly paired in figure and speech, and so strangely compounded together, that their dialogue (which, doubtless, flowed in Greek and Latin) must have resembled the soliloquy of an *amphisbæna*, or a cabinet-conference held in Rome *consulibus Julio et Cæsare*.

The work which Julius and Cæsar have here produced, is, like its parent, of a very anomalous nature. The extract, already mentioned, from the preface to Bellendenus, is followed up by a variety of characters of Mr. Fox, all either in prose, or prosaic, transcribed from newspapers, magazines, reviews, pamphlets, and other fugitive publications of the day. Then Philopatris himself enters the lists, and in an English essay calling itself a letter, expatiates on the merits of the departed statesman. Thus far the olio, with all its peculiarities, sufficiently answers to its title, and here ends the first volume; when lo! a second, of far greater bulk, treating *de omni scibili*, in the form of notes on the letter, and notes on those notes, and ‘additional notes and additions to notes,’ and long additional notes on the additional notes,

‘And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threatening,’—

till the mind is perfectly bewildered, and the book drops from the hand. In the prolix dissertations here termed notes, it is not a little odd to encounter, at every turn, the epistolary phrase *Dear Sir*; the more odd, as few among them have any other relation to the letter on which they ostensibly hang, than such as one part of
space

space must necessarily bear to another. The longest of them (and, by actual computation, we have found it to be just twice as long as the letter itself) is altogether employed in treating of capital punishments. Now as Mr. Fox, in spite of all those imputations of treason against which this author so zealously defends him, died quietly in his bed, it is not easy to perceive any affinity between the subject of this note and the professed subject of the book at large. Philopatrius himself, however, assists us in tracing the connection sought; 'the note (he says) was suggested to him by the remembrance of a most serious, and, in truth, nearly the last, conversation which passed between himself and Mr. Fox.' Some other disquisitions, equally irrelevant, he vindicates on the plea that the matter contained in them *related to subjects which the author thought important*. On encountering these explanations, we experienced that chillness of the heart, which men feel when they discover that they have unconsciously passed through some dreadful danger. For, considering the number of topics which must have employed the mind and conversation of so enlightened a man as Mr. Fox, and the still greater number of subjects afloat in the world that may justly be 'thought important,' how easily might so fertile a penman as Doctor Parr have multiplied his work to fifty octavos, on the very same principle which has swelled it into two!

From the preceding details, the reader may guess that it is not necessary for us to bestow equal attention on every part of these volumes. The preface to Bellendenus is too well known, and, as we conceive, too justly appreciated, to require any minute criticism in this place. It is a cento of Latin phrases, wrought up, on the whole, with very uncommon skill and felicity; yet not uniformly free from a fault which is the besetting sin of that species of composition; namely, that the sense is somewhat trimmed and forced, in order to accommodate it to the expression, and the authorities, therefore, rather *mocked* than fairly imitated. As a piece of Latinity, it appears open to some exception in point of principle. The author has proceeded, we presume, on this notion, that a modern, composing in a classical language, must use no phrase which has not the direct sanction of some classical precedent. A phrase, however, is only a certain combination of words; and, if such a combination is not to be formed without a particular warrant, by what right can we, without a similar warrant, form those larger combinations of words, called clauses, periods, and paragraphs? Or where will this notion ultimately land us, but in the paradox, that every piece of modern Latin must be a literal transcript of some piece of ancient Latin?

Besides this, it is to be observed, that the expressions of which this preface is made up, are derived from very various sources; and, as they are preserved pretty scrupulously, the necessary result
of

of thus putting together bits of sentences in every possible style, is—no style at all. It is, in fact, plain, that servile imitation will never attain to unity of effect, except by confining itself to a single model. He who borrows in a liberal manner, who modifies freely what he takes, who creates as well as copies, may, like the Grecian painter of old, transfuse into a single portrait the several graces of a variety of different objects. But the superstitious copyist must decline this extended plan of study, or his toil will issue in something like that monstrous figure, *undique collatis membris*, which Horace points out to the derision of his friends. A scrap from Tully transposed, a scrap from Virgil *transposed*—a muscle from this author, a joint from that—half the hand of an orator, terminating in the claw of a satyr—a whisker shorn from the grizzled lip of a rhetorician, close beside a plume plucked living from the shoulder of a poet:—such is the strange compound to which his pencil will give being; and such, in a degree at least, is, with all its admitted beauties, the preface to Bellendenus.

It is said that the native notes of the mock-bird, though less wonderful than its exquisite exhibitions of mimicry, are far more pleasing. Had Doctor Parr, in composing his preface, relied rather on his general acquaintance with the Latin language, than on that particular system of imitation which he has adopted, that celebrated production, though, perhaps, less of a miracle than it is, would probably have been far more perfect.

The next division of this work comprises various characters of Mr. Fox; chiefly such as appeared in the journals or other light publications of the day, immediately on his decease. On this wide field of miscellanies we cannot undertake to enter; but must leave the York Herald, the Morning Herald, the Kent County Herald, and all the other Heralds, Mercuries, Chronicles, Suns, and Stars, to hold their places unmolested in this ‘limbo large and broad,’ whither they have fled since they were ‘dissolved on earth.’ Doctor Parr, indeed, kindly hints to these anonymous beings, that in his pages they will have a chance of living for ever:—‘Perhaps (says the Doctor) *even to distant generations* they will not be wholly uninteresting.’ That they will *reach* distant generations in such good company we presume not to doubt; but what, in the name of common sense, is to make them interesting to those generations, when they have done so? When a great man dies, all are moved, all talk of him: and at that moment, even the hasty effusion of a daily print on the occasion, attracts the attention of the breakfast-tables for the use of which it is intended. But does the Doctor imagine that the interest thus transiently raised will be perpetuated by the mere preservation of the document that excited it? As well might he believe that pickling an ephemeron-worm is the way to make it immortal. The pickle, indeed, may have a certain value; and there

there is a view in which, quite independently of their intrinsic merits, even newspaper tirades about public men may be prized by a future age. We mean, when they are considered as illustrative of the state of popular sentiment at a given period. To answer this purpose, however, with any precision, it is self-evident that they should be handed down *indiscriminately*, whereas the collection before us is declaredly *choice*. The characters 'here presented to the reader have been selected from many others,' and, even of those preferred, 'the Editor has exercised his own judgment in republishing the whole, or what appeared to him the more important parts.'

To this comprehensive censure, we do not deny that there are here to be found some very respectable, and one or two even splendid exceptions. There is, for example, a comparative view of the public merits of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, ably, though very partially drawn by Mr. Godwin. There are also the very pleasing account given by Gibbon of Mr. Fox's visit to him in Switzerland, the masterly character of Mr. Fox generally ascribed to the pen of Sir James Mackintosh, and the magnificent panegyric on the same person which concludes Mr. Burke's speech on the notorious India Bill.

We shall now willingly address our attention to the most conspicuous portion of this work; to that which is penned by Philopatris himself in his native language. And yet this is, in truth, a deceptive sort of designation; for, even in his letter, but far more in his notes, our patriot of Warwick has incorporated with much English of his own, so much that it is not his own though English, and so much that is neither English nor his own, as to make it dubious in what class of existences the aggregate is to be ranged. His acquaintance with the writers of his own country is very extensive, his empire over the stores of classical learning almost absolute; and of both these advantages he has fully availed himself to quote without stint. Now this may be all very right; but we must really be allowed to feel a little for those who may be in the habit of resorting to an author for his own sentiments, not for those of other people, and who may think that, though Greek and Latin are very good things, one's native tongue is still better. To be honest, we are ourselves of this number, and do venture to hint that there is such a fault as quoting to excess. At all events, why is it not enough that we receive (which we grant that we here do) our fill of such quotations as are new and good? Why are we to be further crammed with trash that is either natively insipid or stale; that either has never had any flavour, or has been thumbed and re-thumbed till it has lost all that it possessed? Why, instead of saying that, in conversation, Mr. Fox was not content to be a *mere hearer*, must Philopatris needs 'look back to many hours when Mr. Fox was not content to be *auditor tantum*?' Mr. Burke describes Mr. Fox as having 'risen, by slow degrees, to be the most brilliant and accomplished debater

debater that the world ever saw ;' and why must Philopatris alter this sentence, and inform us that ' in the opinion of Mr. Burke, the fame of Mr. Fox, as a brilliant and accomplished debater, *Crevit occulto velut arbor ævo?*' In what consists the merit of such hackneyed scraps as these, that good honest English must be displaced to make room for them ?

That a man of deep erudition, and a most ready memory, should descend to common-place citations, can only be attributed to the rapidity with which he composes. Our author has, however, another fault, which, to qualifications like his, we can still less forgive. Not content with quoting when he recollects a passage that is in point, he is somewhat apt to quote only because he recollects one of an exactly opposite description. *Mr. Fox was not obliged to say, as Demosthenes once did,—He would not have been disposed to say what was said by Megillus,—It could not have been said of him as it has been said of somebody else:—*thus, instead of hearing what people said, we are put off with what they did not say, and even could not have said. Philopatris's more favourite method, however, when his time is come for quoting, and when he only finds a morsel that will not suit, is to alter and mangle it till, in his opinion at least, it does suit ; and this, sometimes, (but, we imagine, by accidental omission,) without apprising the reader of the alteration made. Now commit to paper what we will, and all the passages in all the books extant stand in one of two relations to that which we have written ; either they apply to it, or they do not. If, then, both degrees of relationship entitled them to introduce themselves on the occasion, what bounds can we possibly set to quotation ? Or are great scholars, like Doctor Parr, really at liberty to wreak upon us, on such grounds, the whole of their immense reading ?

It is true that what is cited by way of contrast, may be as strictly relevant as what is introduced for the sake of assimilation. Contrariety associates ideas ; in the scheme of the human mind, as on the plane of a compass, the opposite points are united by immediate lines of junction. This very illustration, however, may remind us that there must be actual contrast, not a mere approximation to it, still less a simple diversity. What shall we say, then, to such instances of quotation as the following ?

'The sting of death (says the Apostle Paul,) is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.' These words, where they stand in the original, are clear, apt, forcible. 'The sting of death' (says Philopatris, while expatiating on the severity of our penal code) 'is sin, and the strength of sin in the law of England is far too great. Let "grace," in conformity to the real import of the scriptural word, abound in the exercise of human power, and as members of society, we shall have less to deplore, in sin against the law, and in death under it.' (vol. ii. p. 777.) Thus does a critic of acknowledged

ledged taste garble a fine passage into nonsense, for the sake of two or three poor puns !

Cicero fares little better than St. Paul. In the remarks of the Roman orator on the eloquence of Hortensius, the following sentence occurs : ‘ Longius autem procedens, et in cæteris eloquentiæ partibus, tum maximè in celeritate et continuatione verborum, adhærescens, sui dissimilior videbatur fieri quotidie.’ But Mr. Fox was not like Hortensius ; and, therefore, Philopatris applies to him the above sentence in a negative form ;—‘ sui dissimilior *non* videbatur fieri quotidie.’ Now, when Cicero informs us that the person whom he is describing ‘ seemed to grow more and more unlike himself every day,’ he says what is curious and worth recording ; but how strangely it sounds to be told of a man that he did *not* seem to grow more and more unlike himself every day ! If, however, the altered clause, thus singly taken, is the extreme of baldness and insipidity, take it (as Philopatris gives it) with the context, and the entire sentence does appear to us, we say it with all deference, downright contradiction and gibberish. Let the learned reader only try his skill on it, and if, without applying torture to the words, he can draw from them anything like a meaning, we wish him joy.

The affecting and much-admired reflections of Cicero on the death of Crassus, beginning, *O fallacem hominum spem fragilemque fortunam*,—are *accommodated* by our author to his own hero. The passage is altered with much art, and retains, even in a state of mutilation, no small portion of its beauty. The misfortune, however, is, that with all the dexterous cobbling which it has undergone, it is still lamentably far from fitting its new situation. ‘ Nam qui annus ab honorum perfunctione *primus*, aditum Crasso ad summam auctoritatem dabat, is ejus omnem spem atque omnia vitæ consilia morte pervertit.’ With what accuracy can this be said of the English Crassus ? *Summa auctoritas* stands, we suppose, for the foreign secretaryship of state ; and, admitting the propriety of this intended construction, (a point, however, on which Lord Grenville, who is a good scholar, might have his doubts,) then surely we need not remind any friend of Mr. Fox’s, that the year of his *first* accession to the chief authority was *not* the year of his death.

The observations which we have offered on this learned man’s quotations, apply equally to his introduction of historical or other anecdotes. Indeed, these two sorts of reference are very closely connected ; and, in the pages before us, sometimes appear intermixed. The reader will be amused with learning what a crowd of classical resemblances and dissimilitudes is summoned up to attend Mr. Fox in his character of a courtier. That gentleman has been charged with having been guilty of personal rudeness to his sovereign. His friend, in repelling the charge, assures us that Mr. Fox had,

had, from his education, ‘acquired the habits of politeness without servility, and freedom without impertinence.’ But this concise encomium is not enough ; both its members must be illustrated by appropriate examples. Accordingly, we are told, (too diffusely, however, to admit of our repeating it at length,) first, that Mr. Fox was not like Demosthenes, who had, before his embassy, boasted that ‘he would sew up Philip’s mouth with a bulrush,’ and yet lost all his courage on entering Philip’s presence : secondly, that, ‘in the presence of *young Ammon’s son*,’ Mr. Fox, ‘in all probability, would not have carried one shoulder too high, nor have imitated the soothsayer, who, for the purpose of adulation, violated the idiom of the Greek language :’ thirdly, that, ‘in the palace of Augustus, he would not have meanly cast down his head to gratify an emperor who prided himself on the piercing brightness of his eye :’ fourthly, that, ‘in transacting business of state with Charles the Sixth, he would not have gone away satisfied’ with the unmeaning gibberish employed by that sovereign to disguise his thoughts : fifthly, that he might so far have resembled the philosopher Chrysippus, ‘as not to dedicate any of his writings to sceptred patrons :’ and, after some interval, sixthly (which is indeed a simple quotation, altered in the usual manner,) that he was not like Pope’s ‘smooth courtier, the humble servant to “all human kind, who, when his tongue could scarce stir, brought out this, If, where I’m going, I could serve you, Sir !”’ All this, it will be observed, is an expansion of the expression *without servility*, and the *without impertinence* must also have its example. Indeed it has but one ; but, to say the truth, this one may fairly be matched against all the rest. In allusion to a common story about Diogenes, we are informed that Mr. Fox ‘was the most unlikely person in the world to gratify his pride or his spleen, by presuming to tell a king *not to stand between himself and the sun !*’

We have been more diffuse on this subject than was proper ; but it was so forced upon us by what was under our eyes, that we really had no option how to act. At this very moment, so deeply are we imbued, or rather infected with it, that, in whatever direction we look, we seem to see nothing but ‘English cut on Greek and Latin,’ and with difficulty restrain ourselves from pouring forth all the few *ends of verse* that we can recollect in all the few languages that we know. We will, however, calm our feelings, and pass on to other matter of observation.

The style of Philopatris (for *quocunque nomine*, this author writes the self-same style) is probably familiar to our readers. Some of its characteristics were long ago well portrayed by his own favourite, Quintilian : ‘*Nam et quod rectè dici potest, circumimus amore verborum ; et quod satis dictum est, repetimus ; et quod uno verbo patet, pluribus oneramus ; et pleraque significare melius putamus*

mus quàm dicere.* But to say of this style that it is verbose, or elaborate, however justly these epithets may be applied to it, is not to reach the radical peculiarities of its character. What those peculiarities are we are inclined to believe that we feel, but are not sure that we can, by description, do justice to our impressions.

Men always think, it is said, in some language. Doctor Parr seems to us to think, if we may so say, in *the language of rhetoric*. It is not merely that the structure of his periods, or, what is much more, that of his groups of periods, both in their matter and their more comprehensive divisions, is stiff and artificial; but there is a certain ease in all this stiffness, a sort of *naturalness* amidst all this artifice, which shews that, by original or by acquired nature, he does not so properly *compose*, as *think*, according to the formularies of Cornificius and Quintilian. Take him musing at random in the solitude of his study, (sub tegmine fagi, as he himself might perhaps be disposed to express it,) and embody in writing his musings as they occurred; and they would unquestionably appear in the form of a regular rhetorical exercitation. Instinctively do his cogitations range themselves in all the orderly array of the schools,

‘In rhombs and wedges and half-moons and wings,’

in the *figuræ verborum* and the *figuræ sententiarum*, in *interrogatio* and *exclamatio* and *dubitatio* and *geminatio*, and, above all, *amplificatio*, of which Quintilian, if we recollect right, enumerates four sorts, but of which we are well persuaded that there are somewhere nearer forty. Amidst all these figures, there is one, familiar to the rhetoricians, which we greatly desiderate. It is called *aposiopesis* or *reticentia*, and may be defined ‘the leaving unsaid a thing which you were just going to say.’ Critics attribute much force and effect to this figure; and we cannot help thinking that the use of it on a large scale would have very considerably improved the production before us.

In sober earnest, we do extremely regret that the vigour, both of conception and of expression, which this eminent scholar undoubtedly possesses, and possesses in no mean degree, should be at once impaired and obscured by the unhappy manner to which he is addicted. We say, at once impaired and obscured; for this technical and cumbrous method of writing may be compared to the redundant and unwieldy dress of a Mameluke, which partly takes from the wearer his real strength by restricting the freedom of his movements, and, still more, takes from him the overawing appearance of strength, by transforming him into the likeness of a bale of silks. So it is that our author both is weaker than he might be, and seems weaker than he is.

* Instit. lib. viii. cap. 1.

After an exordium, in which he comprehensively sketches all the good and great qualities of Mr. Fox, Philopatri proceeds to state his purpose of assuaging both his own grief, and that of the friend to whom his letter is addressed, 'by entering upon a large,' and he hopes, 'an impartial view of Mr. Fox's attainments as a scholar, his powers as a public speaker, and his merits as a statesman.' If he intended to arrange his matter according to this division, he saw reason, in the sequel, to abandon his purpose.

The account which he has given of the classical acquirements of Mr. Fox constitutes, perhaps, one of the best written, and most interesting portions of the whole letter. An extract from it may not be unacceptable to the reader.

'His memory seems never to have been oppressed by the number, or distracted by the variety of the materials which he had gradually accumulated. Never, indeed, will his companions forget the readiness, correctness, and glowing enthusiasm with which he repeated the noblest passages in the best English, French, and Italian poets, and in the best epic and dramatic writers of antiquity. But that he should look for relaxation to his understanding, or amusement to his fancy in the charms of poetry, is less remarkable than that he should find leisure and inclination to exercise his talents on the most recondite, and, I add, the most minute topics of criticism. He read the most celebrated authors of Greece and Rome, not only with exquisite taste, but with philological precision, and the mind which had been employed in balancing the fate of kingdoms seemed occasionally, like that of Cæsar, when he wrote upon grammatical Analogy, to put forth its whole might upon the structure of sentences, the etymology of words, the import of particles, the quantity of syllables, and all the nicer distinctions of those metrical canons, which some of our ingenious countrymen have laid down for the different kinds of verse in the learned languages. Even in these subordinate accomplishments, he was wholly exempt from pedantry. He could amuse without ostentation, while he instructed without arrogance.'—Vol. i. pp. 182, 183.

Such praise, from such a quarter, is of no mean value. We have always understood, indeed, that, in classical literature, Mr. Fox was as deeply versed as most of those who may be called scholars by profession; but we were not aware that his taste in that department of reading had been equally eminent; and, indeed, had been led to imbibe the contrary notion, from hearing that, in Latin poetry, he preferred the Ovidian to the Virgilian style. But in this particular we must have been misinformed; for Doctor Parr would have praised the taste of no man who was capable of making that preference.

We do not set to the account of bad taste another preference which Mr. Fox entertained, and which is noticed and commented on by his friend in the following manner:

'Critics must often have observed a peculiar resemblance between
Mr.

Mr. Fox and Demosthenes, in their disregard of profuse and petty ornaments, in their application of the sound, the salutary, and sometimes homely maxims, which common life supplies for the elucidation of politics, in the devotion of all their mind, and all their soul, and all their strength to a great subject, and in their eagerness to fix upon some pertinent and striking topic, to recur to it frequently, suddenly, forcibly, and upon each recurrence to hold it up in a new light, and point it in a new direction. But biographers will do well to record that, in conversing with a learned friend, he professed to receive more delight from Cicero, than from Demosthenes. Experience in this, as in other instances, puts to flight the conclusions which theorists might be prone to draw from apparent likeness in the characteristic traits of style. Similitude is not always the effect of voluntary and conscious imitation, nor does imitation always imply direct and general preference for the purposes of composition. We have been told that Euripides was the favourite writer of Milton in his closet; but, in Milton's poetry, we often meet with the bolder features, and the more vivid colouring which enrapture and astonish us in the tragedies of Æschylus.'—Vol. i. p. 184.

This is certainly well put. The analysis of the resemblance between Mr. Fox and Demosthenes is, in part, borrowed from the preface to Bellendenus; an innocent piece of plagiarism, we presume, since it probably was sanctioned by *the permission of the author*. With regard to the question of the comparative merits of the two ancient orators, it is one that has divided the critical taste of all ages; but that Mr. Fox should have been one of the partizans of Cicero, is not more surprising than it is that Doctor Parr should give his own vote (which he does in his notes) in favour of Demosthenes.

Had the manly manner of writing that appears in the two extracts which we have just exhibited been maintained throughout the rest of the letter, it might have been pronounced a very superior piece of composition. But our author too soon reverts to the favourite antithetical form. In descanting on the colloquial powers of Mr. Fox, he states, that there were many occasions when that personage 'trifled without loss of dignity, or disputed without loss of temper—when he opposed only because he really dissented, and yielded as soon as he was convinced—when without preparation he overcame the strong, and without display excelled the brilliant'—that 'sometimes indeed he was indolent, but never dull, and sometimes reserved, but never morose'—that 'he was swift to hear, for the purpose of knowing and examining what scholars and men of sense were disposed to communicate, and slow to speak, from unwillingness to grapple with the ostentatious, and to annoy the diffident'—and, soon after, that 'when silent, he was not contemptuous, and, when communicative, he was not vain.'

On the merits of his friend as an orator, Philopatris is of course
diffuse.

diffuse. Some of his reflections on this theme are excellent, nor has it drawn from him a single sentence, which we should be particularly apt to denounce as affected or *ventose*, excepting that in which he relates that Mr. Fox was, in closing his speeches, ‘temperate without languor, earnest without turbulence, pithy without quaintness, or solemn without grimace.’ But having given this most unfavourable specimen, we are bound to accompany it with a better.

‘The most severe and fastidious critic would hardly withhold the praise of originality from the manner of Mr. Fox’s eloquence, and perhaps no public speaker has an equal claim to the encomium which Quintilian bestowed upon the philosophical writings of Brutus. “*Scias eum sentire quæ dicit**.” Systematically Mr. Fox imitated no man, and to no man, who is not endowed with the same robustness of intellect, and the same frankness of disposition, is he a model for imitation. The profuse imagery of Mr. Burke, and the lofty sententiousness of Mr. Pitt, have produced many followers among the “*tumidos, ac subjactantes, et ambitiosos institores eloquentiæ*†.” But the simple and native grandeur of Mr. Fox is likely to stand alone in the records of English oratory. Every man of taste would abandon the hope of resembling him in the rapidity of his elocution, in the quickness and multiplicity of his conceptions, in the inartificial and diversified structure of his diction, in the alertness of his escapes from objections which we should have pronounced insuperable, in the fresh interest he poured into topics which seemed to be exhausted, and in the unexpected turn he gave to parliamentary conflicts, which had already exercised the prowess of veteran combatants. Every man of sense, if he reflects upon these transcendental excellencies, will cease to wonder at the complaints which hearers in the gallery, and hearers on the floor of the senate, have so often made of their inability to follow Mr. Fox through all his impetuous sallies, his swift marches, and his sudden evolutions—to calculate at the moment all the value of arguments acute without refinement, and ponderous without exaggeration—to discern all the sources and all the bearings of one observation, when, without any respite to their attention, they were called away to listen to another, equally apposite, sound, and comprehensive.’—Vol. i. pp. 224, 225.

The latter part of this paragraph seems to wear, in common with the rest of it, an air of commendation; but, since most of the ends of speaking must be frustrated, unless we are comprehended by those whom we address, it is surely paying but an equivocal compliment to a speaker, to assert that he was so *transcendently excellent* as to be often incomprehensible.

With respect to the confusion and want of order which have been

* Vid. lib. x. cap. 1.

† Vid. Quintil. lib. xi. cap. 1.

often imputed to the orations of Mr. Fox, we have here the following remarks :

‘ The luminousness and regularity of his premeditated speeches are, I believe, universally acknowledged ; and yet in preparing even them, however convinced he might be with Cleanthes “ *artem esse potestatem, quæ viam et rationem efficiat,*” he seemed never to forget “ *desinere artem esse, si appareat **.” But they who impute a frequent and unbecoming neglect of method to his extemporaneous effusions should be reminded, that in arrangement, as well as expression, genius may sometimes “ snatch a grace beyond the reach of art.” Mr. Fox was not accustomed, like Hortensius, “ *argumenta diducere in digitos, et propositionum ac partitionum leporem captare,*” and for this, as well as other reasons, the speeches of Mr. Fox, when we read them, are not exposed to the remark which a critic of antiquity made upon Hortensius, “ *apparet placuisse aliquid eo dicente, quod legentes non invenimus †.*” Mr. Fox did not bestrew his exordiums with technical phrases coined in the mintage of rhetoric. He did not tacitly compliment the sagacity of his hearers, nor entrap them into admiration of his own precision, by loud and reiterated professions of solicitude to be precise. He did not begin with requiring their attention to a long and elaborate series of divisions, and then, insidiously throw in some extraneous matter to make them overlook the studied violation of the order before proposed, to catch the credulous by surprise, and to let the unwary imagine that a difficulty had been solved, because the intention of solving it had been confidently announced. His transitions were indeed abrupt, but not offensive. They exercised our judgment, but did not perplex or mislead it. Artless and eager, he pushed onwards where inferior speakers would have been anxiously employed in anticipating petty cavils, in deprecating perverse interpretations, in stimulating the dull, and flattering the attentive. If a vivid conception sprung up in his mind, he chased it till he had seized and laid open every property which belonged to his subject, and upon quitting it, he without effort returned to the leading points of the debate.’—Vol. i., p. 226—228.

With these sketches it may amuse the reader to contrast a miniature portrait, drawn by the same hand, of another celebrated person. It is far from a favourable likeness ; but the execution has merit :

‘ Great, I allow, under any circumstances, and in any large assembly, must be the fascination of such a speaker as Mr. Pitt, from the fulness of his tones, the distinctness of his articulation, the boldness of his spirit, the sharpness of his invectives, the plausibility of his statements, and the readiness, copiousness, and brilliancy of his style.’—Vol. i., p. 229.

In one of the citations which we have just offered, it will have

* Vid. Quintil. lib. ii., cap. 18, and lib. iv. cap. 2.

† Vid. Quintil. lib. xi. cap. 3.

been seen that Philopatriſ, with no very doubtful voice, exalts the eloquence of Mr. Fox beyond that of Hortenſius. The moderns are very ſafe in preferring themſelves to the ancients, who cannot be preſent to maintain their own claims; but if modern oratory has really reached the ſtandard of that of antiquity, it muſt have attained its elevation by miracle. Let it be aſſumed, that the genius of Cicero and of Demothe- nes has riſen again in England; yet certainly the intense labour which thoſe orators beſtowed on the ſtudy of their art has nothing like a parallel in modern times; and, if all their labour went abſolutely for nothing, then this is a phenomenon for which there is clearly no other appellation but that of a miracle.

Philopatriſ, however, as we have ſeen in a former extract, appears to ſet the eloquence of his hero on a level, not merely with that of Hortenſius, but even with that of Demothe- nes; and, according to Sir James Mackintosh, Mr. Fox ‘certainly poſſeſſed above all moderns that union of reaſon, ſimplicity, and vehemence, which formed the prince of orators. He was the moſt Demothe- nean ſpeaker ſince Demothe- nes.’ Conſidering this judgment as only comparative, we feel no great inclination to conteſt its propriety; but if it is intended to countenance the opinion that Mr. Fox was altogether a Demothe- nean ſpeaker, we apprehend it to be far from accurate. In wit, ſurely, the Engliſh orator greatly ſur- paſſed him of Athens, who had little or none; and the ſuperiority which he poſſeſſed on this ground, was, we ſuſpect, more than loſt on ſome others. On the whole, Mr. Fox, as it ſeems to us, might have been deſcribed rather as the *raw material* of Demothe- nes than as Demothe- nes himſelf. The ſimplicity of his manner frequently bordered on coarſeneſs; that of his diction on ſlovenlineſs; that of his arrangement on deſultorineſs and diſorder. Theſe quali- ties it may, perhaps, be *John-Bulliſh* to admire; but an Athenian aſſembly would hardly have preferred them before the ſtrictly me- thodical compoſition of Demothe- nes (whom, as to the diſtribution of a ſubject, Quintilian places on the ſame footing with Cicero*); before his ſtyle, the laſt work of combined ſtudy and genius; before his delivery, refined and purified by a long courſe of the moſt pain- ful diſcipline. If Mr. Fox had practiſed declaiming, like Demos- thenes, with ſharp weapons ſuſpended about him, ſuch were his geſ- tures that the whole of his ample frame would have been one con- tinued wound; and, as to ſpeaking with pebbles in his mouth, he never ſeemed to ſpeak without them. Should any think that, in eloquence alone, refinement is incompatible with the moſt perfect

* ‘Quorum ego virtutes pleraſque arbitror ſimiles; conſilium; ordinem; dividendi, præparandi, probandi rationem; omnia denique quæ ſunt inventionis.’—*Inſtit.* lib. x., cap. 1.

air of simplicity, art with that of nature, we can only refer such critics to the common-places of all the great masters of rhetoric : or, as a shorter road to confutation,—let them read Demosthenes.

With his simplicity, Mr. Fox is said to have united ‘reason.’ His reasoning faculties were undoubtedly of the first rate; but their effect was considerably marred by that want of method which we have already ascribed to him. With an understanding as lucid as day-light, he yet seldom furnished those whom he addressed with a very complete or comprehensive view of his subject. Every thing was there, but hardly any thing exactly in its place. Indeed his powers of recollection only seemed the more stupendous, from their acting in so desultory a way. Rising towards the end of a long debate, and bursting into a speech as immethodical as it was impetuous, he yet recalled, without a single omission, every topic of importance that had been touched upon through the night. This was a memory that might be termed *intuitive*; it appeared to act always primarily, and without the help of the principle of association; it could retain, as it were, individually such a number of ideas as an ordinary mind can command only by stringing them together, and holding one end of the series. It was, in truth, a prodigy; but a prodigy of no good omen to Mr. Fox’s audience, who would have received the ideas more easily, had they been presented to them in good order on the string, than when they were poured forth thus promiscuously.

Sir James Mackintosh celebrates also the vehemence of Mr. Fox, and with good cause. Vehemence indeed is, in itself, a quality of doubtful virtue; but that of Mr. Fox had this enviable peculiarity that, intense and furious as it was, it scarcely ever occasioned his over-reaching himself or missing his blow. His darts were like those of a Parthian horseman: though always aimed on the full gallop, they invariably took effect. Yet surely we may be forgiven for observing that here likewise, as in every other point, the oratory of Mr. Fox betrayed its *want of education*; that his vehemence was too apt to be unmeasured and monotonous, and his intervals of relaxation from it, when he allowed himself such, to subside into absolute flatness and languor. In fact, this wonderful man could not be great in a sober style. He was unequal, in the sportsman’s phrase, to a *standing leap*. He was the *cursu concitus heros*, who, when he wished to make his prowess felt, put himself in violent motion. We incline to think too that his rage was less dignified than that of the mighty Grecian orator to whom he has been so studiously compared; while in the efforts of his great parliamentary rival, we mean in his happiest efforts, there was a certain severe and majestic earnestness, a calm and self-balanced energy, which we believe to have been more in the manner of Demosthenes, but

which certainly coincides more nearly with our conception of a superior intelligence, new-lighted upon earth, to warn mortals of some impending danger, or rouse them to the performance of some hard and heroic duty.

Both these renowned contemporaries were deficient in what may be called *pure eloquence*,—in the poetic part of oratory,—in splendour of imagination and richness of sentiment. This was the more extraordinary, as, in every thing else where invention could be displayed, in fertility of manner, in variety of argument, in felicity of illustration, both discovered great mental resources. Their inventive powers had the effect of giving them a more extensive range on the level of the earth, but did not transport them to the ‘third heaven’ of fancy. Their wings, if we may use so humble a simile, like those of the ostrich, assisted them, not in flying but in running. The example of these eminent men seems to have bred, in this country, an unfortunate prejudice against the bold and figurative style of speaking; a prejudice, which has perhaps been strengthened by the circumstance, that some other orators of the day who actually ventured on this style, either blended with it too much of metaphysical speculation to make it palatable to a mixed assembly, or too obviously adopted it for the mere sake of show and delectation. All this has had a pernicious effect on our senatorial eloquence. A prosaic tameness generally reigns in our debates. We seem disposed to refuse to imagination all privilege of parliament, and carefully avoid, in our speeches, all figures but those of the counting-house.

Let us not be accused of injustice towards the orators of our country, because we have shown an inclination to reduce the extravagance of the praise which has been heaped upon them. Those who contemplated Mr. Fox’s eloquence with superstitious homage, were not therefore the better fitted to appreciate the real beauty of its massy structure and Tuscan proportions. If our veneration was more discriminate than theirs, there were times when it was not less fervent; for there were times when he was all that their partiality could make him. We have heard him when the *mens divini*, the immortal soul of oratory, rose completely victorious over the defects of the manner in which it was embodied. We have heard him when we would not have yielded, in a single feeling, to his fondest idolaters; when every swell of sympathy, every start of admiration, every thrill of delight, we would have disputed with them to the uttermost. Nor is it a paradox to say, that we wished him greater only because we esteemed him so great. We regretted that his oratory was not wrought to the highest polish conceivable, only because we believed its substance to be adamant of the firmest grain.

But

But we are forgetting our author in his subject.—On *the merits of Mr. Fox as a statesman*, which, it may be recollected, were laid out as one branch of the triple discussion proposed in this essay, we have not left ourselves room to quote many of the observations here offered. They refer chiefly to conduct held and the opinions professed by Mr. Fox at the memorable æra of the French revolution. That conduct and those opinions Philopatris does not merely aspire to vindicate; allowing them to have been partially faulty, he holds them generally up as the manifest result of the profoundest wisdom, and of a political sagacity only not amounting to prescience.

The partizans of Mr. Fox were, in general, we believe, fond of complimenting their chief on his powers of divination, and with the same exemplification of their compliment as that used by Philopatris. Whatever becomes of the compliment, the exemplification does not strike us as happy, nor indeed can we well discover on what grounds it has been hazarded. The claims of Mr. Fox to the prophetic character, will not, we suppose, be rested on the two naked facts of his having predicted the ill-success of the plan of measures adopted by the government at the time in question, and of that prediction having been verified. Every leader of every opposition predicts the ill-success of the measures of the party in power, and might have been expected to do so in Mr. Fox's place. 'The *croak from the left* is always inauspicious. All ex-placemen are thus far Cassandras; with this only peculiarity, that, whereas Cassandra was not in credit because she prophesied all things, they prophesy evil things because they are not in credit. But if ever there was a season at which this dismal kind of augury might be expected particularly to prevail, it was immediately on the French revolution, when political animosity of every sort throughout Europe was inflamed into a madness which mistook itself for inspiration. The fact is that, at that period, all the *militant* parties in this country, whether the enemies of the administration, or the enemies of the constitution, every underling in the circles at Debrett's, every flutterer about the doors of Copenhagen-House, all were as alert with their denunciations of woe as the great luminary of opposition;

'Tempore quanquam illo, tellus quoque et æquora ponti,
Obscænique canes, importunæque volucres,
Signa dabant.'——

It becomes, therefore, necessary to inquire the specific foundations on which this eloquent man built his vaticinations with respect to the failure of the first coalition against France; and this, too, not at a point when the matter was already half decided, but
towards

towards the outset of the contest. Now the basis and the burden of his prophecy we conceive to have been the supposed unconquerableness of the French as a free people. While England, indeed, yet remained neutral in the war, Mr. Fox had very clearly intimated his opinion, that to the inspiring influence of domestic liberty, France, as she had owed her first, would likewise owe her final successes against her enemies. On the accession of England to the coalition, the probable result of the struggle naturally became a consideration not unattended with some delicacy, and calling for a degree of reserve. Yet, at this period, Mr. Fox, on the one hand, deprecated in general terms the war, as of a tendency ruinous to this country; and, on the other, while he deplored those successive despotisms which had now begun to chase and hurry after each other over the political firmament of France, he yet considered this voluminous rack of thunder-clouds, rather as obscuring for a season, than as finally closing the prospect of revolutionary liberty. It would seem, therefore, that his views, neither of the war, nor of the revolution, had then materially altered; and, as he still expected the French to be free, and still foretold that they would be unconquered, we are surely safe in presuming that his predictions of the one event were still grounded on his expectations of the other. It did not once, at that time, enter into his conception, that the organization of ruin which he was celebrating as 'a glorious fabric' of liberty, was essentially made up of instability and rottenness; that, having arisen like an exhalation, like an exhalation it would vanish; and that it was to be succeeded by a structure, more terrifically durable, indeed, but of which the foundations should be laid in the depths of popular debasement, and which should be 'glorious' only to a tyrant.

But if Mr. Fox foretold the ultimate discomfiture of the coalition, as well before as after our ministers had declared themselves in favour of that alliance, and, indeed, more plainly before than after, with what fairness, it may be asked, can his auguries be ascribed to a party-feeling against the ministers, or classed under the general head of *Opposition-croakings*? With none, perhaps, if they preceded, not only our entrance into the coalition, but all prospect or surmise of our entering it; a point of fact, on which we are not competent to speak. The surmise might, perhaps, do something; and, previously to the surmise, a vague inclination to what seemed formed for the popular side of the question, might, with a member of opposition, do something also. But, though we think both suppositions plausible, and though, to all merely general encomiums on the *Cassandrian* forebodings of Mr. Fox, it seemed to us fair to oppose a general intimation that a losing party is naturally disposed to ill omens, we are far from denying that, independently of all
such

such considerations, Mr. Fox might feel an inherent bias in favour of the French Revolution. The truth we believe to have been, that his views of that event were greatly swayed by his recollections respecting another memorable revolution which had occurred within the term of his parliamentary life. The profound attention with which he had, for many years, watched the course of the conflict between Great Britain and her colonies, appears to have bound fast, in his mind, the idea of revolution with those of holy warfare and blood-bought liberty. He remembered how truly, in that case, Lord Chatham had forewarned the British cabinet that ‘three millions of whigs would be found unconquerable;’ and imagined that, to apply the precedent to the instance before him, he had merely to substitute twenty-six millions for three. He spoke of the ‘glorious fabric’ of the French revolution, but he had in his thoughts only the glorious fabric of American independence.

If it should be said that, in hoping so well of the result of the grand experiment made in France, the sagacity of this great man was warped by his generous philanthropy and his ardour for freedom, this is to pay him a compliment, perhaps, but it is directly to give up his sagacity, which is every thing in dispute. If it should be contended, (as it will hardly now be contended,) that his hopes would have been justified, if war had not disturbed the process of the grand experiment in question, this again is, in effect, to give up his sagacity, because, in the case supposed, such disturbance ought to have constituted a part of his prophetic vision. But whatever praises we yield to the foresight which Mr. Fox discovered on this occasion, he must share them, as we have already hinted, with the *opposing* politicians, in general, of that day, whether they were anti-monarchical or simply anti-ministerial. All said, or sung, that France would be externally strong, because they believed that she would be, or rather was, internally free. All, therefore, gave this common token of their proficiency in the occult art, that, as they were altogether wrong in their premises, they must have been right, we presume, in their conclusion by preternatural intelligence. Of course, we mean not to impute to these parties any further similarity of views, than such as would just collect them together within the generic description which we have given.

It will not be supposed that we intend to deny to Mr. Fox the credit of political penetration, because we regard him as having been, in this instance, deceived. In this instance, indeed, every statesman was deceived, of every party. The proper inquiry, as in one place, Philopatrius, notwithstanding his partiality to Mr. Fox, with great truth and candour observes, is, Who among our countrymen was the least wrong? ‘*Quis est tam Lynceus (as his quotation aptly expresses it,) qui tantis tenebris nihil offendat, nusquam incurrat?*’

incurrat?' Strewed, as the area of Europe appears at this moment, with wrecks of the fairest hopes, and glittering fragments of the most brilliant prophecies, we have only to contemplate, in silent resignation, the effects of that tremendous storm which has at once confounded the strength of the strong, and made foolish the wisdom of the wise.

We should be disposed to close, in this place, our strictures on the letter of Philopatris, were it possible to leave altogether unnoticed some personal questions into which it very diffusely enters. While the author generally treats the memory of Mr. Pitt with respect, and almost with kindness, of Mr. Burke he uniformly expresses himself with profound admiration, indeed, for his genius, but with a strong personal dislike and disesteem. These sentiments towards Mr. Burke he caught, we fear, from Mr. Fox, whose love and veneration for the political instructor of his youth, latterly gave place to feelings of a far less complacent nature. This change in the sentiments of Mr. Fox is well known not to have been unprovoked; but the more immediate cause of it we first learned from the following passage, which, amidst the dearth of anecdote that distinguishes this book, is doubly interesting, although to a benevolent mind it will suggest some painful reflections.

'But mark, I beseech you, the behaviour of the two men—Mr. Burke not only ceased to act with Mr. Fox, but had begun, aye, and continued to vilify him—Mr. Fox, on the other hand, continued to speak with tenderness of Mr. Burke's former friendship in public and in private; he deplored, but rarely censured the political change of Mr. Burke; he praised Mr. Burke's intellectual endowments, mourned for his domestic loss, and left, as long as was possible, an opening for personal reconciliation. Closed it was not, till the charge of a "high treasonable misdemeanor in Russia," demonstrated the bitterness of Mr. Burke's resentment, and the restlessness of his hostility—That charity which had endured many other things, could not patiently endure this one most deliberate wrong.'—Vol. i. p. 288.

Tum demùm assurgunt iræ; insidiisque subactus—the altered dispositions of Mr. Fox towards his early friend are discovered, where we could hardly have expected to trace them, in his posthumous work. No reader of the smaller fragments which make a part of the work, can have failed to observe the allusion involved in the sneer on those statesmen who maintain 'the pride of submission and the dignity of obedience,' nor, we hope, to have heaved a sigh over the sad mortality of human attachments.

'The charge of a high treasonable misdemeanor in Russia' occurs in Mr. Burke's *Observations on the Conduct of the Minority in 1793*. The chagrin which that tract seems to have cost Mr. Fox, would naturally give it a 'bad eminence' in the eyes of his friends;

friends ; and Philopatriis, accordingly, has made it the ground-work of a *diatribe*, twenty pages long, against its author. On the political discussions which the work is calculated to provoke, we shall resist the temptation of venturing ourselves ; but we must observe that Philopatriis has very injuriously, though, we presume, not intentionally, misrepresented the circumstances of its first appearance. The truth is, that it was written by Mr. Burke exclusively for the use of some of his private friends, and by him was never published at all ; that a person employed to transcribe it having treacherously sent it to the press, in a mangled state, and under a false title, and three thousand copies having been circulated past recal, it became necessary for Mr. Burke to present it to the world in a correct form ; a task, which he projected, but, as we understand the Editor of Mr. Burke's works to say, did not live to accomplish. Such is the account given by the learned and able Editor, and, as it strikes us, satisfactorily made out, but which, if not admitted, ought surely to be disproved. It is, however, strongly confirmed by internal evidence arising from the Observations themselves. It can hardly be thought, for example, that the very free strictures, which occur in the course of them, on the conduct of Mr. Pitt, were intended for the public eye ; and, least of all, can this be thought by those who imagine that one main object of Mr. Burke's later political life was to conciliate the party in power.

With what justice, then, can Doctor Parr represent Mr. Burke as having '*endeavoured to convict*' Mr. Fox '*of a high treasonable misdemeanour ?*' What becomes of his assertion, that '*the effects intended*' by this work were '*to blacken Mr. Fox with indelible disgrace in the mind of the king, the parliament, and the country ?*' What credit is to be attached to his renewed declaration, that the '*representations*' of Mr. Burke '*issued from the press, and to the press they were sent, after much deliberation, and in a very offensive form ?*' Or whence has he learned, that Mr. Burke '*meant to publish the work in question, that he suffered it to be published, that he himself republished it ?*' For all this information our author is indebted, we suppose, merely to that loose hearsay, which he professedly quotes as his authority, when he describes the tract of Mr. Burke as

' A pamphlet *said* to have been enlarged and shortened, corrected and re-corrected, during a long and agonizing struggle between rage without fortitude, and self-reproof without self-command ; where many changes *reported* to have been made in the matter, and the style, indicated no change in the vindictive purpose of the writer—against one, whose courteous and affectionate proposal for an interview he is *said* to have rejected, on the approach of those awful moments, when the interrupted or forfeited endearments of friendship are regretted most painfully,

painfully,' 'and when the good and the bad are alike anxious to forgive and be forgiven, before they go hence and be no more seen.'—*Said!*
—*Reported!*

But it seems that Mr. Burke, long after all connection between him and Mr. Fox had ceased, spoke of that gentleman to a friend (we collect that it was Sir James Mackintosh,) as a man 'born to be loved.' When he thus praised a person, whose friendship he had discarded, and whom he had accused of a high treasonable misdemeanor, if not of treason, he, according to the inference of Philopatrís, passed a virtual sentence of condemnation on his own conduct. In this inference, however, there manifestly is no conclusiveness, unless the laudatory expression used by Mr. Burke necessarily implies *moral* approbation; which, in popular acceptance, we humbly conceive that it does not. A man born to be loved, is a man whom nature has endowed with singularly amiable dispositions. The question then is, whether a man, whom nature has endowed with singularly amiable dispositions, may not commit high treason; a question which we should feel little difficulty in resolving.

We need not meddle further with this contest, so to term it, between the memories of Mr. Burke and Mr. Fox. Political questions, indeed, of whatever kind, it is far from our wish to meet in this place. In our remarks on the letter of Philopatrís, it has been our general object to confine ourselves, as much as possible, to the consideration of Mr. Fox's intellectual powers, and to leave untouched his moral and political character. Only the connexion between intellect and political qualifications is so intimate that, on this side, we found it impossible not to relax our rule. To this letter we now bid adieu, and, with it, to the first volume of the 'Characters.' But there is yet much behind. *Insequitur nimbus peditum.* A thick cloud of annotations follows; or, if after the example of the learned authority whom we are reviewing, we may be indulged in a quibble, (an *amphibolia*, as he himself and Quintilian would say,) we might not unaptly call it a thick *volume* of annotations. Virgil, however, was content with mentioning his *cloud of foot* in the mass; and, considering the length of what we have already written, we may surely suffer our voluminous notes to pass on in undistinguished nebulosity.

Yet one note, to which we casually alluded in the early part of this article, on the criminal laws of Great Britain, is too long, too good, and too odd, to be dismissed, without at least some slight mention. It is full of severe, though apparently fair comments on the rigour of our penal code; and the good sense and humanity which Dr. Parr discovers in his criticisms on that code, can only be rivalled by his simplicity in recommending that it should be forthwith abrogated by one sweeping enactment. He attempts to secure, indeed, this
plan

plan against the charge of rashness, by adding that the stoppage of the old laws may be instantaneously succeeded by a relay of fresh ones, previously prepared and accoutred. But this expedient, while it would undoubtedly save us from that last of evils, an utter want of laws, would evidently confirm to us the scarcely less evil of a sudden change of system. Between a new code and no code, there is a mere trifle to chuse. Our author, however, is impatient that something should be done. He seems alarmed lest his country should be left last in the race of humanity, and not a little discomposed that the despotic government of Russia should have 'stept before our own free government in the mitigation of capital punishment.' On this precedent, he would probably have laid less stress, had he recollected that the despotic government of Russia has substituted, for the horrid abomination of capital punishments, the mild and parental discipline of *knouting* delinquents to death.

Without entering on the multifarious contents of this note, we will select from it a morsel so characteristic of Philopatris, that the reader can hardly fail to be amused with it. It must be premised that the author is sketching the portraits of three English judges of his own time, though not now living.

'With learning, taste, and genius, which adorned the head, but improved not the heart, one of them was a sober, subtle, inexorable interpreter and enforcer of sanguinary statutes. With a ready memory, keen penetration, barren fancy, vulgar manners, and infuriate passions, another indulged himself in the gibberish of a canting fanatic, and the ravings of an angry scold, before trembling criminals. With sagacity enough to make the worse appear the better cause to superficial hearers, and with hardihood enough not to profess much concern for the bodies of men, or their souls, the third carried about him an air, sometimes of wanton despatch, and sometimes of savage exultation, when he immolated hecatombs at the altar of public justice. Armed "with giant strength," and accustomed "to use it like a giant," these protectors of our purses transferred to thievery that severity which the court of Areopagus employed only against cut-throats, and they did so, where judges were not bound by a *peculiar*, direct, and sacred oath adapted to the *peculiar character of the tribunal*, and where offenders had not the chance, as among the Athenians, of a more favourable issue from appeals to *Thesmothetæ*, nor that privilege of going before trial into voluntary exile, which, on the first institution of this court, had been granted to them by legislators, who εἶδ' Ἡρώες ἦσαν, εἴτε θεοὶ, οὐκ ἐπέθεντο τοῖς ἀτυχήμασιν, ἀλλ' ἀνδρωπίνως ἐπεκρύφισαν, εἰς ὅσον εἶχε καλῶς, τὰς συμφοράς.'

'If a Βῶμος Ελέου, like that at Athens, had been placed in the avenue to our English courts, these δικασπόλοι ἄνδρες would have differed from each other in their outward demeanor, and yet have remained equally guiltless of 'bearing the sword in vain.' *Elaphocardius*,
upon

upon approaching the hallowed spot, might have paused for a second, winced under a slight stroke of rebuke from the monitor within, and quietly sneaked by on the other side. *Cardamoglyphus* would have wrung his hands, lifted up his eyes to heaven, implored forgiveness to himself as a miserable sinner, and before sunset would have boasted of "not being as other men are," regraters, sabbath-breakers, libertines, and more especially, as that execrable criminal who stood before him at the bar. But the steps of *Cynopes* would not have been turned aside to the right hand or to the left; his eye would have darted upon the emblems of the altar with a glare of fierce disdain; he would negligently have swept the base of it with the skirts of his robe; he would have laughed inwardly at the qualms of one of his compeers, and scoffed without disguise at the mummeries of the other.'—Vol. ii. p. 344.

It will be remembered that we before took the liberty of describing Doctor Parr as a sort of *rhetorical thinker*; and we appeal to the reader whether that description does not exactly apply to the passage which he has just been perusing. On a subject, in itself most solemn, and which the author evidently regards with the most suitable feelings, it is infinitely curious to see him thus frisking about in mere classical wantonness, digging this unfortunate trio out of their graves, calling them by hard Greek names, then dragging them away to that dismal old court of Areopagus, and straightway sacrificing them on the altar of mercy. Perhaps, indeed, we ought to have represented him, rather as dragging the Areopagus to them; for there seems to be, in this instance, as wilful and determined an introduction of a classical reference as ever converted a passage into nonsense. The peculiarity of the oath to which, as we believe, Philopatri alludes, and which, in his opinion, so much tended to impress those who took it, exclusively respected the mode of its administration. It was taken on the intestines * of a boar, a ram, and a bull. Now we really have great doubts, whether our judges of assize would feel their consciences much impressed by being sworn before a butcher, according to this ancient fashion. It would be just as much, and perhaps rather more to the purpose, to swear them on their own furs and sheep-skins. To be serious,—in what manner or degree can the *obligation* of an oath be affected by its deep colouring, or tragical accompaniments; by the direness of its imprecations, or the solemnities amidst which it is administered? In none, surely, excepting to those casuists who are apt to measure their moral liberty, not by the length, but by the strength of the tether that binds them. Such a rule of measurement, however, is seldom avowed, even by those who use it, and nothing but the pure accident of being absorbed in Greek could have made an honest man slip into a justification of it.

* Τὰ τόμια —

Since this piece of learning is useless, and worse than useless, there is the less necessity for observing that it seems erroneous. It does appear to us, however, that Doctor Parr must have strangely misread a passage of Demosthenes, a part of which he subsequently quotes, and from which, as we imagine, all this account of the peculiar oath of an Areopagite is taken. In that passage there is, indeed, a peculiar oath mentioned; but it is the oath imposed, not on the judges, but on the parties * who entered the Areopagus, either to be tried or to prosecute. No oath peculiar to the court is mentioned by Demosthenes. And since we are on this subject, we may state here another point of difference between the learned annotator and his authority. The annotator speaks of the privilege which persons accused in the court of Areopagus enjoyed, 'of going *before trial* into voluntary exile;' whereas, from the authority we learn only that the accused party might go into exile, '*after he had made his first defence.*'† These privileges are not necessarily one and the same thing. If the liberty of escaping *after* the first defence might be supposed to include the liberty of escaping *before* it, at least it should have been distinctly explained, that the existence of the latter privilege was asserted merely as a matter of inference from that of the former.

Of the other notes of Philopatrīs, we cannot help particularizing one which treats of the degree in which the practice of infanticide prevailed among the ancient Greeks, and particularly among the Athenians. Although the evidence which the author has collected on the subject is not altogether complete,‡ we were much enter-

* ——— ἵτινὰ ἀισιώμενος ἐργάσθαι τι τοιοῦτον. 'Εστ' οὐδὲ κατὰ τυχόντά τιν' ὅρκον τοῦτο ποιήσει' ἀλλ' οὐκ... π. λ. ——— *Demosth. contr. Arist.*

τῷ δὲ φύγοντι, τὰ μὲν τῆς διωμοσίας τοιαῦτα. ——— *Ibid.*

† '——— τὸν πρότερον δὲ ἔξιστον ἰπὸντα λόγον, μεταστῆναι.' ——— *Ibid.*

‡ Since, in referring to the Hecyra of Terence, Doctor Parr has resorted to *indirect* evidence on the subject of ancient infanticide (for, in the Hecyra, no child is actually exposed), we are surprised that he did not complete this head of evidence, which, indeed, as to the general existence of the crime, is just as good evidence as could be obtained. We subjoin three or four passages of this class from the Latin comic poets; most of them relating to Athens, one to Thebes. It may be observed, by the way, that, for very obvious reasons, the comic poets are more competent witnesses as to the customs or manners of the Athenians, than as to those of most other nations.

'Nam inceptio est amentium, haud amantium;

Quicquid peperisset, decreverunt tollere.' — *Andr.* Act i. Sc. 3.

And, again, in a dialogue between Pamphilus and Davus,

Pa. 'Nam pollicitus sum suscepturum. *Dav.* O facinus audax! *Pa.* Hanc fidem Sibi, me obsecravit, qui se sciret non deserturum, ut darem.' — Act ii. Sc. 3.

From what admirable motives did these parents save the life of their new-born infant!

The following lines are from the Truculentus of Plautus. Phronesium speaks.

'Nunc huc remisit nuper ad me epistolam,
Sese experturum quanti sese penderem,
Si, quod peperissem, id educarem et tollerem,
Bona sua me habiturum omnia.' — Act ii. Sc. 4.

tamed

tained with his note, and regard it as a specimen of sound learning agreeably applied to the elucidation of an interesting point in the history of the species. In terms of almost equal commendation should we be apt to describe the critical observations, replete with various information, which Philopatris offers on the historical work of Mr. Fox. But our space is limited; and even were it otherwise, it might be advisable for us to avoid the risk of surfeiting the reader with a subject, which already forms the groundwork of an article * in our present number. Nor shall we fatigue him with any detailed account of our annotator's *thesis* on the Catholic emancipation, a thesis which, from its length (for we have not read it), we should conjecture to contain succinct histories of all the popes—nor of his lively, but not very polite comparison of Mr. Percival to an owl; nor of his endless guesses about the meaning of some passage in the *British Critic*, which he is forced, after all, to give up as hopeless; nor finally, of his curious attack on Joanna Southcote, Mr. Percival, Jacob Boehmen, the Methodists, and various other orders of Christians, all of whom he classes together, and overwhelms under a shower of heathen Greek.

We have been prolix. We will, however, somewhat aggravate our fault, and shall perhaps add to it another, by making bold to subjoin a few words of remonstrance to our author. Though we have been somewhat diverted by his singularities, we have the deepest respect for his learning, and ardently wish that, instead of only occasionally bestowing a few dazzling glimpses of it on the world, he would cause it to shine with a steady and beneficial lustre. It is lamentable that a scholar, surpassed perhaps by some of his contemporaries in the art of verbal criticism, but to whom probably Europe could furnish no equal in valuable and elegant classical knowledge, should be celebrated chiefly as a sort of walking *dictionary of quotations*. Doctor Parr, we doubt not, amuses his va-

From the prologue and other parts of the *Truculentus*, it appears that the scene of its action was in Athens; which is also notoriously the case with the *Andria*. Both, therefore, furnish us with evidence as to the prevalence of infanticide in that city; though both indirectly, as in both a reason is given why an infant should *not* be exposed.

In the *Amphitryon*, Jupiter is introduced thus addressing Alcmena.

‘————— menses jam tibi actos vides:

Mihi necesse est ire hinc; verum *quod erit natum, tollito*.’—Act i. Sc. 3.

But the scene of this play not being laid in Athens, and its action being supposed to take place in the fabulous ages, nothing can be safely concluded from it, excepting as to the general feelings of the ancients on the practice to which Jupiter is introduced as indirectly alluding. In fact, when Plautus wrote, infanticide was prohibited at Thebes by law.

To the other sort of infanticide mentioned by Doctor Parr, a strong allusion occurs in the *Truculentus*; Artaphium is speaking of Phronesium.

‘Celabat, metuebatque te illa, ne sibi persuaderes

Ut abortioni operam daret, puerumque ut enecaret.’—Act i. Sc. 2.

* Rose's Observations on Fox's History.

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cant hours with useful literary research; and surely it is not too much to ask, that the public may sometimes be admitted into his study. Such disquisitions as that which he has given us on ancient infanticide are important as well as interesting; and of such the author, to whom the labour of writing seems as nothing, might prepare for the press a whole *silva*, at no other expense than the trouble (to him, indeed, perhaps a grievous one) of selection. This undertaking we suggest, because it is the very utmost of which we are sanguine enough to expect the accomplishment; but, if a choice of requests were allowed us, we should assuredly be tempted to beg for something of a more regular cast and a higher nature. An exposition, for example, either partial or general, of the technology of the old Greek philosophers, is one among many tasks not distantly connected with the illustration of great truths to which the talents and acquirements of Doctor Parr appear peculiarly well adapted. If he would embark in some such labour, and would, in the course of it, steadily avoid digression, abstain from attitudinizing, and abjure antithesis, we should not doubt of his ‘leaving something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die.’ With respect to some of the works which he has already written—we say this to the reproach, not of his powers, but of his application of them—it is much to be feared that *aftertimes* will hardly have the opportunity of exercising their volition on the subject.

ART. XV. *Letters from a late Eminent Prelate to one of his Friends.* Kidderminster. 4to. pp. 380, and 8vo, pp. 510. London. Cadell and Davies.

‘A MAN of eminence owes it to himself, to put together all such letters and papers as he would wish to have preserved, and to destroy the rest. There is otherwise no security against the folly or indiscretion of those, into whose hands they may afterwards come.’ This sound advice was given to Warburton by the venerable Bishop to whom we owe the present publication; and his apparent neglect of it adds, in our opinion, a new argument in favour of its justice. There are grounds, undeniably, that may warrant the publication of private correspondence, even where it is impossible to learn the writer’s wishes. Letters, like those of Cicero for example, which throw important light on the history and politics of the age; or which bear intrinsic marks of excellence as compositions, like those of Pliny and Pope; or which unite a portion of both these merits, as, among many others, those of Lady Wortley Montague and Madame de Sevigné,—carry with them