

PAPER III.—THE LITERATURE OF QUEEN ANNE'S REIGN.

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(Read before the Society, March 30th, 1870.)

Though I have called this, which I am now about to read, a paper on the literature of Queen Anne's reign, I would not have it supposed that I pretend to give a complete history, or an exhaustive criticism, of that literature. I intend no more, in laying before you the fruits of my reading and reflection, than to touch some of its more salient characteristics. And I have had my fears, lest in falling back upon such a theme as this—without having anything very new to say, and without claiming the skill to say old things in a new way—I should be considered in a manner tedious, by an audience which expects, and usually finds, in the papers read before it, some degree of originality. Well, "*non omnia possumus omnes*"—I can only do what I can. And after all, I shall not perhaps be so tedious, whilst I refresh the old picture you know so well—retouch it, and place it once more before your mind's eye; nor altogether wasteful of your time, since the literature of which I propose to treat is so excellent in itself, and is, in so great a measure, the parent and propagator of our present speech; and since, after having been, it may be, unduly exalted, it is now, as I think, unduly depressed.

In the days of our fathers every educated man knew something more of Pope and Addison than their names. Pope tuned every would-be minstrel's lyre, and he who aspired to write English prose, as it should be written, gave—as Johnson advised—his days and his nights to Addison. But who reads them now? Most educated men have made, no doubt, some cursory inspection of their works, but they are no longer the leaders of style. They have been deposed from

their chairs, and men of the modern literary taste frequently speak of them with a contempt which certainly is not engendered of over much familiarity.

It may be thought indeed that Johnson, and not Addison, to whom he would send the student—that Johnson himself, and Burke, and Gibbon, and Hume, and Goldsmith—that these are the true parents and progenitors of our modern style. They are, no doubt; and Burke is, perhaps, the greatest of masters in English prose; but these men, it must be remembered, were all saturated with the literature of their predecessors. And to come closer home: in the light literature of our time the style of Thackeray is confessedly the purest and most perfect; and we have only to open the pages of *Esmond* to see how thorough a study he had made of the writings of the period to which I am calling attention. Through two long volumes he writes in the manner of that age as though it were his very own.

I would not indeed restore the wits of Queen Anne's days to the supremacy which they once held; but I think, that no Englishman, who is desirous to use, according to the measure of his gifts, his native tongue with its proper effect, can afford to neglect their study. And I think too that such study would be a wholesome corrective of much bad writing in the present day. They were neither spasmodic nor sensational. It was not their fashion to stir up a puddle, and call it deep because they could not see to the bottom.

This way of writing was, in truth, their favorite aversion. "Tis easy," says Lord Shaftesbury, in his *Advice to Authors*, first published in 1710, "to imagine that amidst the several styles or manners of discourse, or writing the easiest, attained and earliest practised, was the *miraculous*, the *pompous*, or what we generally call the *sublime*." * * * * "In poetry, and study'd prose, the astonishing part, or what commonly passes for sublime, is formed by the variety of figures and multiplicity of metaphors, and by quitting as much as possible the natural and easy way of expression for that which is

most unlike to humanity and ordinary use." But this "natural and easy way of expression" was just what the reigning masters of composition would not quit. They wrote with neatness, clearness, ease, grace, force. They were always intelligible, often admirable. Bright with wit, rich in humour, keen, polished, cutting, they set themselves—to quote again from Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*—to "explode the unnatural manner." And in this they succeeded. They exploded, it is true, some other things along with it. There are many things in heaven and earth that were not so much as dreamed of in their philosophy. Common sense was their court of appeal, and there was no higher. Before it all causes were pleaded; and its award was final.

And it was because, in this way, both in the pitch of his tone, and the manner of his expression, he hit the taste of his age, that Archbishop Tillotson was so popular a writer. When we read his sermons now, and then listen to the manner in which his contemporaries and immediate successors talk of him, we are amazed. To us he seems the incarnation of common-place. That indeed was the very ground of his popularity, and, as things were, the point of his excellence. Kindly, genial, fluent,—with ostentation of argument, and a conversational style—always ready to lay down his propositions, and to prove, with much good sense and politeness, the reasonableness of religion, he was exactly suited to the temper of the times. And he was the most popular preacher of his day. He died, certainly, before Queen Anne's time, but I have not brought him in to illustrate my statement without an intention; since, though he was not of those of whom I am to write, they all speak of him as their literary father. His style was founded upon the style of good conversation. And this was just what the age was instinctively feeling after.

Great masters had written our language before Tillotson, with a wealth of thought and eloquence to which he makes

not the faintest approach. The stately roll of Hooker's full, sonorous periods—the exquisite beauty of Jeremy Taylor's variegated eloquence—the might and the majesty of Milton's prose—all these were before the world; but all these had in them an artificial strain. And of moral pretensions that looked artificial and unreal, men were sick. And, in the jaundiced vision of those reactionary days, almost all spiritual pretension did look artificial and unreal. To men in this mood came Tillotson, talking of religion and morality in the tones of quiet conversation; very calm, very reasonable, very genial and gentle, but very earnest and very serious, bringing religion into the common ways, and talking of it in the common language, of common life. And at once he caught the nation's ear. He spoke home to his generation, and became the great master of speech. Though I have said that he was the incarnation of common-place, we must not suppose that he could have attained to this lead among men without eminent abilities. What has been said of another, was singularly true of him. "He was an extraordinary ordinary man." The wits made him their model. Dryden proclaimed, that if there were any excellence in his prose writing, it was derived from the assiduous study of Tillotson. And where Dryden led, the successors of Dryden followed.

To see how far, and how speedily, the pupils outran their master, we have only to compare the writings of Tillotson with some of the best papers in the Spectator. Both are built upon the same foundation; the language of conversation is their common base; but in the hands of Addison and his coadjutors, it assumes a point, an elegance, a grace, for which we search through the pages of Tillotson in vain. The Spectator was founded in 1711, by Steel, and to it he and Addison, were the chief contributors. Out of the six hundred and thirty-five papers of which the Spectator consists, Addison wrote 274 and Steel 240; leaving only 121 for all other contributors put together. Steel is brisk and vivacious—full of humour and dramatic force,—but, compared with Addison, his style is inelegant, and his thought is poor. It is

to Addison we must look to see the true excellence of these papers. His idiomatic ease never sinks into colloquial vulgarity. His humour has nothing of the buffoon. There is always wisdom at the bottom of his wit. They come, indeed—both his wit and his humour,—of the genuine stock. They are—as he himself says, all true-born members of the family must be—“remotely allied to truth, and lineally descended from good sense.” Coarseness of expression was common in the age, and disfigures much of the writings of his coadjutors; but from this Addison was preserved by the native delicacy of his taste. Coarseness of thought was common too, and it pollutes the pages of some of the greatest of his contemporaries; but from this Addison was delivered by the Christian purity of his mind. His wit was bright with the brightness of intellect, and its transparent clearness was unclouded with moral stain. And if the quality of his wit was rare, his use of it was rarer still. It was always directed to noble ends; and of this he was justly proud.

“If I have any other merit in me,” he writes, “it is that I have new pointed all the batteries of ridicule. They have generally been planted against persons who have appeared serious rather than absurd; or, at best, have aimed rather at what is unfashionable than what is vicious. For my own part, I have endeavored to make nothing ridiculous that is not in some measure criminal. I have set up the immoral man as the object of derision. In short, if I have not formed a new weapon against vice and irreligion, I have at least shown how that weapon may be put to a right use, which has so often fought the battles of impiety and profaneness.”

I once followed Macaulay's advice, and, in order to get an idea of the extent and versatility of Addison's powers, read, at one sitting, papers 26, 329, 69, 317, 159, 343, 517; being the two visits to the Abbey, the visit to the Exchange, the journal of the retired citizen, the Vision of Mirza, the Transmigrations of Pug the Monkey, and the death of Sir Roger de Coverley. And I can recommend the exercise.

In order, however, to relish the peculiar humour of Addison, I should prefer to turn up all the papers in succession, in which Sir Roger de Coverley appears—or to follow the silent man, as he passes from Coffee House to Coffee House—on that ramble, for instance, all the way from St. James' to Cheapside, upon the false report of the French King's death, which he describes so deliciously in No. 403.

Very curious are those glimpses of Coffee House life; very interesting, and very different from anything we subsequently meet. There were such things, indeed, as Coffee Houses in the next age, but their glory was departed. They were no longer the indispensable places of resort, and centres of intelligence—the news-markets,—where the latest information was retailed and discussed, with the

“Coffee which makes the politician wise,
“And see through all things with his half-shut eyes.”—

where the wits, or the fops, or the doctors, or the lawyers, or the traders, congregated daily, according to the character of the house, to learn the news and find congenial talk. The Coffee Houses of the Spectator's time did not last into the next age. The newspaper killed them. And this expresses a great social change. News and discussion are now brought home to us; but in Anne's days men had to go for them, and the Coffee House was to the Londoner then, what the Agora was to the Athenian, who was ever gadding there—spending his time in nothing else but to hear or to tell some new thing.

Every Coffee House, Addison tells us, had some particular statesman, who was the mouth-piece of the street where he lived. And among literary men, just as Dryden formerly at Will's, so Addison, himself, was the oracle at Button's; where, according to Pope's spiteful satire, he

“Like Cato gives his little senate laws,
“And sits attentive to his own applause.”

In the exercise of the genial humourist's creative gift, these busy idlers have become immortal; and the hum of

their voices comes down to us across the long silence of the past. In a moment, such is the power of genius, we can step back a century, and a half, into the society of our forefathers, and see them "in their habit as they lived."

"I was yesterday" (says the Spectator) in a Coffee House "not far from the Royal Exchange, where I observed three persons in close conference over a pipe of tobacco; upon which, having filled one for my own use, I lighted it at the little wax candle that stood before them; and, after having thrown in two or three whiffs amongst them, sat down and made one of the company. I took up the last Spectator, and casting my eye over it, 'The Spectator,' says I, 'is very witty to-day.' Upon which a lusty, lethargic, old gentleman, who sat at the upper end of the table, having gradually blown out of his mouth a great deal of smoke, which he had been collecting for some time before, 'Ay,' says he, 'more witty than wise, I am afraid.' His neighbour, who sat at his right hand, immediately coloured, and, being an angry politician, laid down his pipe with so much wrath that he broke it in the middle, and by that means furnished me with a tobacco stopper. I took it up very sedately, and looking him full in the face, made use of it from time to time, all the while he was speaking. 'This fellow,' says he, 'cannot keep out of politics.'"—But we will not stop to hear their conversation, though it is very amusing. We will pass to a very different place, where the reek of tobacco never comes—to St. James', the Coffee House of the men of quality, and men of mode.

As the Spectator was on his rounds to hear what the town would say upon the news of the French King's death—"That I might begin," he says, "as near the fountain head as possible, I first called at St. James', where I found the whole outward room in a buzz of politics. The speculations were but indifferent towards the door, but grew finer as you advanced to the upper end of the room; and were so very much improved by a knot of theorists who sat in the

“ inner room, within the steam of the coffee-pot, that I there
 “ heard the whole Spanish monarchy disposed of, and all the
 “ line of Bourbon provided for, in less than a quarter of an
 “ hour.” And so he passes on. There are characteristic
 ways of viewing the event at each house. “ At my
 going,” he says, “ into Will’s, (the resort of the wits,)”
 “ I found their discourse gone off from the death of
 “ the French King to that of Monsieur Boileau, Racine,
 “ Corneille, and several other poets, whom they regretted on
 “ this occasion as persons who would have obliged the world
 “ with very noble elegies on the death of so great a prince,
 “ and so eminent a patron of learning.” From there, he
 passes to a Coffee House near the Temple, and hears a couple
 of law students settling the succession to the Spanish monarchy,
 not having the least knowledge of what they are talking about.
 In Fish street, the chief politician of that quarter views the
 decease of the Grand Monarque in its relation to mackerel ;
 and subsequently he considers its effect upon pilchards.
 “ I afterwards,” the Spectator goes on to say, “ entered a
 “ by Coffee House, that stood at the upper end of a narrow
 “ lane, where I met a non-juror, engaged very warmly with
 “ a lace man, who was the great supporter of a neighbouring
 “ conventicle. The matter in debate was, whether the late
 “ French King was most like Augustus Cæsar, or Nero. The
 “ controversy was carried on with great heat on both sides ;
 “ and as each of them looked upon me very frequently during
 “ their debate, I was under some apprehension that they
 “ would appeal to me, and therefore laid down my penny at
 “ the bar, and made the best of my way to Cheapside.”

But if we follow him further, we shall have no time to
 observe him in his more serious moods, which would be a
 great omission. On these occasions, as in paper 565, where,
 like Isaac, he goes out into the fields, to meditate at eventide,
 or, as in No. 580, where he looks onward to the “ new
 heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,”
 his thoughts are suffused with a heavenly radiance, and the
 splendour he contemplates pours its light upon his page. I

will make no extracts from this class of Addison's writings, but I cannot forbear from saying that, not to make ourselves acquainted with these papers, would be to deal unjustly by the literature of the age.

The Spectator first began to appear in the year 1711. In the same year came Pope's Essay on Criticism; the first of his works that shewed the quality of the man. In that same year Swift wrote his Examiner, and his Conduct of the Allies. Swift was as great a humourist as Addison, but after a very different fashion. Many of his writings cannot be read too often; and many are not fit to be read at all. Not so elegant as Addison, he has more strength. In bare, simple phrase, he goes straight to the point, and shews, always, the marvellous force and edge of plain words rightly put. His Conduct of the Allies has been considered by good judges to be the ablest political pamphlet ever written. For popular effect, however, the Drapier's letters have, assuredly, never been equalled. They are plain, homely, clear, hard. He is never driven from his point; and every provocation, every chance of a reply, he seizes adroitly, to re-state his grievance. It is now long since I read these letters, but judging from my recollection, I should say that one of the chief secrets of making an impression must be reiteration; and not the least important rule of the controversialist's art would seem to be, "Say it again." The alarm he raised may have been a groundless one, but he succeeded in inflaming one nation—a somewhat inflammable one it is true—and intimidating another.

With Swift's great satire we are all familiar; and it would be well if all modern travellers would tell their tale with the neatness and simplicity of Lemuel Gulliver. Readers nowadays miss, of course, much of the force of personal satire in this work, but the book is built upon the broad base of human nature; and when the school-boy has ceased to delight in the adventures, so strange, and yet so natural, among the little men and the big men, the grim, sarcastic irony remains for those who have some experience of life.

In the Tale of a Tub, in the Battle of the Books, the same caustic humour is always to be found, accompanied, though, in the former, with an irreverence deplorable in any man, and scandalous in a clergyman. But in whatever he writes—in his journal—in his familiar letters—always the force of Swift's nature, and the power of his intellect, shews itself. Everywhere he is himself.

As I recollect, one of my earliest efforts to test the strength of my critical faculty, was to turn over a collection of letters, written by Pope, Gay, Bolingbroke, Swift, and others,—open the page at random, and try whether I could guess the writer from the turn of the style. With some of the others I was mistaken often—with Swift seldom. A couple of sentences would shew the man. The fragment of a bone revealed the giant.

Another great writer of this age, who has left his mark upon our language, and who, like Swift, has made his mark all the deeper by leaving behind him a school-boy's classic, is Daniel De Foe. It is true that Robinson Crusoe was not published till 1719, but Defoe was an active writer many years before that. In selecting those details which cause the scene he is describing to rise before the reader's eye,—and in winning belief by the mere sincerity of his manner, Defoe is unsurpassed. He is garrulous without being tiresome. He says, and says without being tedious, so many things which would only be said because they were true, that his persuasiveness is irresistible. His style has been aptly characterised, by Sir Walter Scott, I think, as a "forging of the handwriting of nature." In his political tracts, in his History of the Plague, in his tales, everywhere this inimitable air of truthfulness diffuses itself over all he writes. But nowhere perhaps can it be more conveniently seen than in his account of the apparition of one Mrs. Veal, which is short, and is given entire in Chambers' Cyclopedia of English Literature. The story is a pure invention, written to help off from the hands of the publisher "Drelincourt on Death"—an

unsaleable book, with which it was bound up, and which the ghost recommended. The book sold after that.

It has been said that our modern English style is formed out of two distinct styles which were developed in the eighteenth century;—the idiomatic Saxon style of Swift and Addison, and the stately Latinized style of Johnson. But there was one writer at least, the contemporary and friend of Swift, in whom the fusion was already complete. When Bolingbroke is at his best, his style is the style of the very best writers of the present day.

He was a free liver, and a free thinker—a profligate in morals, and a sceptic in religion; but he was the most consummate orator of his day. A man of the world, and a man of letters—graceful, fascinating, with a free and flowing eloquence, and a great capacity for business, he took parliament by storm, as soon as he entered it. Just as he was in the act of seating himself at the summit of power, by the Queen's death he fell; and fell "like Lucifer, to rise no more." He became, indeed, at a subsequent period, a great inspirer of his party; but he was excluded from parliament, and so disabled from becoming a great power in the state.

Of his speeches we have no remains, but what they were, we can very well see from his political writings, which are, in fact, speeches delivered with the pen. And they have all the qualities of the best oratory—luminous in statement, cogent in argument, trenchant in invective, vehement with passion, they are such as to captivate and command an audience. For abstract thought he had no talent—(though this was not his opinion.) His speculative writings are poor, and in them his style is disfigured by affectation. It is only when he comes to the region of practical business that he is real, natural, powerful. This is very well seen in his letters on the study and Use of History.

In the earlier letters, where he affects the philosopher, he is weak, and full of little vanities; but as he comes nearer

home, and begins to apply history to the elucidation of policy, he warms to his work, and in the last three letters, he sketches in the history of Europe with a bold, rapid hand; never flagging—never loitering. And, however tangled the skein, the thread he follows always comes easily and conspicuously out. He may have misread history, but nobody can misread him. Luminously, his narrative leads up to the point in which it culminates—the defence of his own policy. And here, in his eighth chapter, having made the ground his own, he expatiates upon it—demonstrating his own wisdom, and demolishing his opponents. His diction was admirable. The freshness, the point, the very fall and cadence of his periods, re-appear perpetually in the best modern writers, from Junius to Macaulay. Here, for instance, is a piece in the manner of Macaulay:—

“ We had sufficiently experienced how little dependence
 “ could be had on the vigour of the Portuguese; and how
 “ firmly the Spanish nation in general, the Castilian in
 “ particular, were attached to Philip. Our armies had been
 “ twice at Madrid: this prince had been twice driven from
 “ the capital: his rival had been there: none stirred in
 “ favour of the victorious: all wished and acted for the
 “ vanquished.”

It is a more singular coincidence, perhaps, that Bolingbroke's estimate of the great character which forms the centre of Macaulay's historical picture, is exactly that of Macaulay; and expressed, if I am not mistaken, in words very like Macaulay's own:

“ The Prince of Orange alone acted with invincible
 “ firmness, like a patriot and a hero. Neither the seductions
 “ of France, nor those of England, neither the temptations
 “ of ambition, nor those of interest, could make him swerve
 “ from the true interest of his country, nor from the common
 “ interest of Europe. He had raised more sieges, and lost
 “ more battles, it was said, than any general of his age had

“ done. Be it so. But his defeats were manifestly due to
 “ circumstances independent of him, and that spirit, which
 “ even these defeats could not depress, was all his own.”

In the following sentences there is a ring, and an effectiveness, which bring vividly before us the great debater whom the Tory squires cheered so lustily :—

“ Such objections as these may lie to the Queen’s conduct,
 “ in the course of this great affair, as well as objections of
 “ human infirmity to that of those persons employed by her
 “ in the transactions of it ;—from which neither those who
 “ preceded, nor those who succeeded, have, I presume, been
 “ free. But the principles on which they proceeded were
 “ honest, the means they used were lawful, and the event
 “ they proposed to bring about was just. Whereas the very
 “ foundation of all the opposition to the peace was laid in
 “ injustice and folly.”

And again :

“ The reign of prerogative was short ; and the evils and
 “ dangers to which we were exposed by it ended with it.
 “ But the reign of false and squandering policy has lasted
 “ long, it lasts still, and will finally complete our ruin.”

And the following, directed at Walpole, shewed the formidable character of his invective :—

“ Such men sin against posterity, as well as against their
 “ own age, and when the consequences of their crimes are
 “ over, the consequences of their example remain. I think,
 “ and every honest man in generations yet unborn will think,
 “ if the history of this administration descends to blacken our
 “ annals, that the greatest iniquity of the minister, on whom
 “ the whole of the iniquity ought to be charged, since he has
 “ been so long in possession of the whole power, is the
 “ constant endeavour he has employed to corrupt the morals
 “ of men.” * * * * * “ A wise administration may

“draw us back to our former credit and influence abroad,
“from that state of contempt into which we are sunk among
“all our neighbours. But will the minds of men, which this
“minister has narrowed to personal regards alone,—will
“their views, which he has confined to the present moment,
“as if nations were mortal, like the men who compose them,
“and Britain was to perish with her degenerate children,—
“will these, I say, be so easily or so soon enlarged?”

Here he was great. It was only when he began to philosophize that he was weak. “Lord Bolingbroke,” said Swift, “is above trifling; when he writes anything in this world, he is more than mortal; if ever he trifles, it must be when he turns Divine.” He loved so to trifle, when he was at leisure; but, in his trifling, he never caught the public ear. He found, however, when he spoke by the mouth of another, that popular acceptance which was denied to himself. He instilled his notions into Pope, from whose mint the base metal came out, mixed with finer ore, rounded, bright, portable—and passed, as current coin, into the general circulation of intelligence.

Pope stands for the poetry of the age; for, though every body who wrote at all, wrote verses in that age, the verse of Pope is so incomparably superior to that of all others, that the lesser fires are indistinguishable in the blaze of his light. When the sun is up we do not see the stars. After Pope had written, the measured cadence of his verse, his correctness in form and expression, became the property of the public—to be appropriated by all. These are the communicable properties of culture. His wit, his terseness, his incisiveness, his brilliancy, were all his own. These were the inalienable qualities of his intellect. His language is often coarse, which was the fault of his age. His meaning is often coarser still, which was the fault of his mind. When he deals earnestly, as once, at least, he certainly does, with the passion of love, though his language is refined, the sentiment is abominable. As a rule, however, he avoids the themes on which poets love to

dwell. As a rule, his theme is not nature, but the world, not man, (though he did give us a didactic *Essay on Man*, to prove that "Whatever is, is right"—and, I suppose, that "Whatever isn't is wrong,")—not man but society. On this ground he is without a rival. So shrewd are his observations upon life, and so pithily expressed, that they have passed, without number, into proverbs; and many a man, every day of his life, quotes Pope without knowing it. The proverb has been defined to be "one man's wit, and all men's wisdom." This is just the character of Pope's many maxims—the floating sense of common life, crystallized into gems; and a great adornment of conversation they are.

There was in Pope's nature a vein of spite, that made satire peculiarly congenial to him; and his wit is always the brighter when it contains a dash of malignity. Here, for instance, is a general observation, put with great humour, and finished off with a spiteful illustration, all in the compass of four lines:—

" Old politicians chew on wisdom past,
 " And totter on in business to the last;
 " As weak, as earnest, and as gravely out,
 " As sober Lanesbrow dancing in the gout."

At another time he exposes to men's laughter a whole tribe in the clear scorn of a couplet—

" While pensive poets painful vigils keep,
 " Sleepless themselves to give their readers sleep."

There is moderation indeed here, where he reposes complacently on his own superiority. Where he is excelled, he hates, and where he hates, he hisses—

" There hapless Shakespeare, yet of Tibbald sore
 " Wish'd he had blotted for himself before,"—

is his blistering notice of a rival, and better, editor of Shakespeare. He kicked this Theobald ignominiously from his pedestal, where he stood hero of the *Dunciad*, as too insignificant a fellow for that eminence in infamy. And,

again and again, he drags him into his verse, that he may vent his rage in some paltry sneer. He flattered Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in lines like these :—

“ In beauty, or wit,
 “ No mortal as yet
 “ To question your empire has dared ;
 “ But men of discerning
 “ Have thought that in learning
 “ To yield to a lady was hard.”

He talks, as he looks at her picture of “ That happy air of majesty and truth ;” of “ The equal lustre of the heavenly mind,” and one day he actually made love to her, and when she laughed at his folly, he turned upon her with a yell, and bespattered her in verses too vile to be owned. But he writes bitterly enough, in all conscience, without provocation ; and it is impossible to read the *Dunciad*, without seeing that the infliction of pain was to him a pleasure for its own sake. It would be wrong, though, to say that his satire was always of this grovelling kind. There is breadth, for instance, and elevation in the scorn of the following piercing declamation :

“ But by your father’s worth if yours you rate,
 “ Count me those only who were good and great.
 “ Go! if your ancient, but ignoble blood
 “ Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood,
 “ Go! and pretend your family is young ;
 “ Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.
 “ What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards ?
 “ Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards.”

And in the elegant playfulness of the *Rape of the Lock*, life’s follies are touched with a lighter hand. But still, personality was his forte ; and the keenest, and most cutting of all his satires, as well as the most untruthful and unjust, is his lampoon upon Addison. Pope and Addison had been on good terms ; and, when Cato was brought upon the stage, Pope wrote the Prologue for his friend’s tragedy. But Addison had revised, and recommended some Homeric translations of his friend Tickell ; and Pope, treacherous and

tricky himself, jumped at once to the belief that Addison was the real author, working underhand with a dark design to supplant his own translation. Forthwith he dipped his pen in congenial gall; and dexterously distorting all the features of his friend—throwing his foibles into bright relief, and working up an outline of truth with shades of falsehood, he produced a picture, which will stand whilst our language lasts, a monument of his malignity and his power:—

“Peace to all such! but were there one whose fires
 “True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires;
 “Blest with each talent, and each art to please,
 “And born to write, converse, and live with ease:
 “Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
 “Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,
 “View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
 “And hate for arts that caused himself to rise;
 “Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
 “And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;
 “Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,
 “Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
 “Alike reserved to blame, or to commend,
 “A timorous foe, and a suspicious friend;
 “Dreading e'en fools, by flatterers besieged,
 “And so obliging, that he ne'er obliged;
 “Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
 “And sit attentive to his own applause;
 “While wits and Templars every sentence raise,
 “And wonder with a foolish face of praise—
 “Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
 “Who would not weep, if Atticus were he!”

Mr. President: I will trespass upon your patience no longer. I had intended to say something of Arbuthnot, of Atterbury, of Gay, of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and of Prior. They hold, however, but a secondary rank. And if

I have not already, in my attempt to recall the literary features of Queen Anne's days, hit the mark, prolixity will not, in all probability, bring me nearer to it; for,—

“When one's proofs are aptly chosen,

“Four are as valid as four dozen.”