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ART. I.—*The American Annual Register for the Years 1827-8-9, or the Fifty-second and Fifty-third Years of American Independence.* New York. E. & G. W. Blunt. 1830.

E. Everett.

We have, on former occasions, recommended the two first volumes of the American Annual Register, in terms decisive of our opinion of the plan and execution of the work. In its plan, we scarce know a work capable of being rendered more valuable, in the whole class of literature to which it belongs. The reader has only to consider how important a series of volumes an American Annual Register would be, commencing with the settlement of the country, or even with the revolution, in order to form an opinion of the claims of this publication to general patronage. For want of a contemporary record, like that which is furnished by these volumes, not a little of our history is irretrievably lost. The materials for it, if they exist at all, are dispersed throughout newspapers, magazines, and congressional documents, which it is in vain, after the lapse of a few years, to attempt to collect. A single volume, like one of those before us, relating to any period now considerably remote, would contain probably more information than the antiquary would be able to collect by years of study. It is not extravagant to anticipate, that, from the time when the publication of the English Annual Register commenced, the history of modern Europe will be written with much greater facility, as well as in much wider comprehension, than before. And what that work has accomplished for British history in particular, and the history of all other countries as far as they are in-

encouragement, which is absolutely necessary to enable them to proceed in their labors with spirit and success. A copy, by Sully, of a female head by Guido, and of a *Gipsy* from a French artist, attracted some attention. The *Bridal Eve* of Miss Sully, if not in the purest style of coloring, was curious as a specimen of the French manner, in itself essentially vicious. The most valuable effort of female genius exhibited on this occasion was a landscape by Miss Scollay.

It is time, however, to close these remarks. Before we quit the Gallery we cannot refrain from expressing the pleasure with which we have viewed the busts in marble of John Quincy Adams and Mr. Quincy by Greenough, who is also, we are informed, the inventor of the plan of the Bunker-Hill Monument. The great merit of this design furnishes itself a strong presumption in favor of the taste and talent of the author. He is now, we believe, pursuing his studies at Florence, and we cannot but form very high expectations from the future progress of a career that opens with so fine a promise.

G. B. Cheever.

ART. IV.—*Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews.*

By ROBERT LOWTH, D. D. Lord Bishop of London.

Translated from the original Latin, by G. GREGORY,

F. A. S. A new edition, with Notes, by CALVIN E.

STOWE, A. M. Andover. 1829.

The time has gone by, in which an editor would have thought it necessary to prefix an apology for presenting to the public an edition of this master-piece of Lowth's genius—his *Lectures on the Hebrew Poetry*. In regard to such a book men will not now ask, as seems actually to have been done, even in Germany, when Michaelis first presented this work to his countrymen,—*cui bono?* They begin to feel and enjoy, with something like a true relish, the indescribable beauty of the sacred poets. This exquisite fountain, so long hidden from the eye, and unvisited, even by the footsteps of wanderers, has at length been unsealed; the sere leaves and the accumulated mosses have been removed from its sparkling purity; the world has tasted of its freshness, and it can never again be restrained in its free flow. In an intellectual as well as a moral sense, it

makes the wilderness and the solitary place be glad, and the desert blossom as the rose. It has blessed the individual minds, who have drunk deep of its inspiration, with a vividness of fancy, a grandeur of imagination, an original simplicity and purity of thought, a power of sublime expression and imagery, and a reverence for all that is wise and good, which might in vain have been sought from the study of the literature of all other nations. The genius of Milton was early baptized in this fountain. It was from

—‘Siloa’s brook, that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God,’

that he invoked the ‘heavenly muse’ to aid him in his ‘adventurous song.’ The tones of the Hebrew language came to his ear with a near and familiar accent, like that of his maternal dialect. He had fully mastered its treasures; and *Paradise Lost* exhibits on every page the impress of a mind most thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the sacred poets.

Setting aside the circumstance of their divine origin and consequent moral excellence, the scriptures of the Old Testament present such a field of curious, useful, and noble investigation, on so many of the most interesting subjects, which can occupy the human mind, viewed under so many romantic, elevated, and interesting lights, and they are besides so rich in all the elements of true sublimity and beauty, whether in poetry or history, that they are pre-eminently worthy of the most minute and patient study, which the Christian philosopher or the man of taste and genius can bestow upon them. It will hereafter, perhaps, be regarded as an anomaly in the history of the human intellect, that the poems of Homer should for ages have attracted the attention of the profoundest minds, and been made for a time almost the exclusive object of criticism in all its forms, and of associated inquiry in all its ten thousand wanderings, and yet that the Hebrew writings of the inspired volume, though equally before the eye and in the memory of men, should have been long passed by with such total absence of every thing like an attentive study, as to have left the great body of the most learned critics completely ignorant of their true nature, and gravely mistaking their poetry for prose. Without going into a minute consideration of the causes of this neglect, the reflection is now a very familiar one, that it has not been owing to the want of attractiveness and grandeur in

these writings, for in these respects they far surpass any thing that can be found in the whole circle of Grecian and Roman literature. The spirit of their poetry goes deeper into the human soul, and breathes a finer harmony of feeling; it calls forth thoughts that will never come at any other bidding. The *date* of their oldest poem is lost in extreme antiquity; and this is a charm, which would draw many to the pages of the Grecian bard, who had not a soul to feel or to appreciate his poetical beauties. If we step out of the circle of poetry into that of prose, which in a critical point of view has been equally neglected, what is there in all the celebrated histories of Greece to compare, in point of beauty, nature, and affecting simplicity of narrative, with some portions of the Pentateuch? It is a miracle, says Eichhorn, which has preserved our little Hebrew library so perfect. It is almost equally a miracle, which has kept it, till within comparatively a very few years, so perfectly unexplored.

The evils, which have arisen from a wrong conception of the nature of so great a portion of the inspired writings, have been multiplied. They have been the occasion of almost all the objections of infidels and the cavils of irreligious men. There cannot be a doubt, that just in proportion as the Hebrew scriptures, especially the poetical parts of them, are keenly and critically scrutinized, such objections and such cavils will utterly fade from the mind. They have often been excited by the mistakes, into which translators and commentators have fallen, when the Bible, in its original language, or rightly interpreted, would have precluded, so far as the intellect and not the heart is concerned, all possibility of their existence. A volume would hardly be sufficient to exhibit the nature of these mistakes, and the various sources from which they have arisen.

In the investigation of the Old Testament scriptures no one source of error has been more fruitfully prolific than the neglect to distinguish between what is poetry and what is prose. Every man's common sense, though he knows nothing of any literature but that of his own language, will show him the confusion, which must follow in the train of such a blunder. 'To what strange conclusions should we be led,' says Mr. Stowe, 'were we to interpret Milton's *Paradise Lost* in the same spirit and by the same rules with which we should read President Edwards on the Freedom of the Will?' Yet

none but an orientalist, versed in the character of Eastern poetry, and well acquainted with its peculiarities in distinction from prose, can truly appreciate the consequences, which result from confounding the rules of interpretation peculiar to each. This common error has been accompanied by, and in part has involved, an entire disregard of the peculiar genius and character of each poet, and a habit of perusing and examining the Old Testament, as if it were all the work of one and the same individual genius, and produced at the same period, and under the influence of precisely the same circumstances of feeling and condition. It has involved of course a total neglect of the parallelistic mode of writing, which now affords a most invaluable means of arriving at the sense; and an effort to find a figurative meaning for common language, which has produced results scarcely outdone in absurdity even by the maxim of the Jewish Rabbins, that mountains of sense are hung upon every point in the Bible. Add to this the neglect and ignorance of oriental and sacred geography, climate, scenery, customs, peculiarities of feeling, religious rites, political institutions, and manners of domestic life, all extremely different from those of Occidental countries, and also varying much in different parts of the East,—and instead of being astonished at the errors of past ages, we shall find occasion to wonder that they are so few.

As an illustration, though an imperfect one, of the point on which we have been speaking, let us take an instance at random from the poetry of Collins. In one of his *Oriental Eclogues*, this child of fancy introduces into his fine description of Chastity the following exquisite line.

Cold is her breast, like flowers that drink the dew.

Collins thought that these Eclogues were extremely deficient in imagery adapted to the region where their scene is laid; and in general there may be some truth in the objection. But in the present instance no image could be more appropriately beautiful; for in the mind of an inhabitant of the Eastern world it would be associated with ideas of the coldness, that always accompanies the dew-fall at night in those hot climates. Suppose for a moment, however, that a native of Greenland should be criticising this poem. He would certainly think that the glittering bosom of an iceberg, on which the salt spray falls and freezes, would be a much happier and

more appropriate image. A flower that drinks the dew would indeed tell him sweetly of an unsullied purity and freshness, but far from answering to the epithet *cold*, it would speak to his imagination only of the sunny skies and the warm fields of Elysium. Should this poem be read under the idea of its being mere prose, it would appear perfectly unaccountable, if not absurd. And yet, the contrast between the circumstances of life and climate at the North Pole, and those in the midst of which an Englishman is situated, seems hardly greater than that which exists between our own climate and manners and those which prevail in the Oriental regions. But if even an English critic should examine in what the peculiar aptitude of such a resemblance lies, or endeavor, as has often been done with the figurative language of the Scriptures, to apply it to practical use, and draw from it a grave and solemn lesson, he would find it not unfrequently converted by such a process into the merest nonsense. Nor is it only so with particular resemblances. Verse after verse of the most enchanting poetry in existence, if subjected to such an examination, would be despoiled of all its beauty and all its truth.

In the whole range of literature, nothing can afford a finer subject of inquiry than the Sacred Poetry of the Bible, considered apart from the circumstance of its inspiration, with regard to the influence which the history, climate, scenery, and whole condition of the Hebrews exerted in modifying its spirit and moulding its forms. Even a general and indistinct glance at their character and history presents them prominently to the mind as in all respects the most extraordinary people in the whole world. Amidst all antiquity they were not less a splendid astonishment in their national existence, than they are now, over every quarter of the globe, a proverb and a by-word in their life as individuals. While the grossest darkness of paganism enveloped all other nations, to them only, till the coming of our Saviour, was the knowledge of the true God communicated, and among them only did his spiritual worship exist. Shadowy and dim as were their conceptions of that religion, which beams in the fulness of light and purity from the New Testament, they were, nevertheless, a moral Oasis amidst the desolation of surrounding idolatry. The seductive example of their neighbors, and the singular depravity of their own disposition, were indeed forever inclining them to depart from the living God, and degrade themselves with idolatrous sensuality ; nothing but

a constant course of miracle and chastisement could keep them in any degree to their duty. Still, the knowledge of the glorious Jehovah, however unwillingly they obeyed his precepts, gave to their moral character a vast elevation above that of the whole world around them. The Sovereign of the Universe was the Supreme Administrator of their State. Before the glory of such a distinction, even at the commencement of their national existence, the artificial grandeur of the most magnificent empire passes into the shade. The consciousness that they were the chosen people of Jehovah, for whose sake all hostile nations were to be exterminated, and around whose borders there should be a perpetual defence, nourished in them a proud independence, and an unequalled intensity of patriotic feeling. The expectation of that glorious Being, whose coming was announced in the first revelation from Jehovah, and declared to be the one great object of their separate existence as the people of the Lord, powerfully strengthened their native attachments, and added to the loftiness of their character. The prosperity and splendor of Messiah's reign was dwelt upon with increasing fulness from age to age, in the predictions of every succeeding prophet, till it became the theme of universal exultation—the hope to which the imagination of every Jewish individual delighted to advert. They turned to those vivid prophecies for consolation amidst all misfortunes, and for triumph and gladness in their festivals. Almost every passage in their history, every ruler of their country, and every ceremony in their worship, were connected with the mysterious promise, and pointed forward to the glorious event.

The commencement of their national existence was not lost in obscurity, nor dated from circumstances in themselves mean or trifling. It was founded on an event no less august and solemn, than a covenant of mercy between the Most High God and his servant Abraham ;—a covenant renewed with Isaac and Jacob, and from age to age with the most eminent and holy among the successors of the patriarchs. Always looking, with an expression which could not be mistaken, to the future advent of the Saviour, it designated them and their posterity as the chosen people, through whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. They could trace back their existence, through all its diversified changes, to one great patriarchal ancestor ;—a being, honored to the end of life by supernatural revelations from Heaven, and regarded through the whole Eastern world

as the most pious, venerable, and majestic character in all antiquity. India and Asia, the ancient disciple of Zoroaster, and the modern worshipper of the Arabian prophet, unite in doing homage to the memory of the Father of the Faithful.

Their early history was not left to be disfigured by the prolific invention of fictitious chroniclers, nor involved like that of other nations, in the perplexity of doubtful and contradictory relations. It was inscribed with the pen of inspiration, and at the same time glowed with the genius of their divinely commissioned lawgiver. Where can another history be found like that contained in the Pentateuch of Moses—so sweetly unaffected, yet so full of dignity; so concise, and yet so comprehensive; so rich in poetry, yet so chaste and simple in its style; so affecting in its pathetic recitals, and so vivid and powerful in its solemn and terrific scenes; and presenting throughout, a picture so graphic of the life and manners of the ancient Oriental world? The Pentateuch closes with the book of Deuteronomy, the last testimony of the Jewish legislator to his countrymen, containing a brief but vivid recapitulation of their past history, and a second concise declaration of the law. The nation had now gained a lasting experience of God's dealings with his people, and the generation had passed away on whose souls and bodies the blight of effeminacy and slavery had descended during their residence in Egypt. Aaron had been gathered to his fathers, Moses was about to die, and the tribes were just upon the eve of a happy entrance into the long promised land of Canaan. Under these circumstances, the words of Moses must have carried a thrilling impression into the hearts of the Israelites. How powerfully does he appeal to their experience of the judgments and mercies of Jehovah—with what mingled encouragements and threatenings, what fearful curses on the disobedient, what tender admonitions, what eloquent entreaties! Nor is the voice of prophecy silent; it speaks plainly of the coming Messiah; it predicts their own defection and consequent wretchedness; it almost relates the destruction of Jerusalem. The eight closing chapters of the book of Deuteronomy are perhaps the most sublime portion of the Scriptures. They contain the tremendous curses denounced against transgressors, and the unequalled blessings pronounced upon the obedient; the glowing historical song, which Moses, at the command of God, wrote for the people of Israel, to be forever in their memories, a witness against them

when they should turn from the Lord their God ; the animated and prophetic blessing upon the twelve tribes, and the short but striking history of the death of Moses, when he had viewed from the top of Pisgah, with an eye which old age had not dimmed, the land '*flowing with milk and honey,*' stretched out before him in all its compass and luxuriance.

Through all this short, but perfect and comprehensive history—the storehouse of poetic imagery to the prophets and psalmists—where is the page that is not full of materials to arrest the eye, and excite the imagination of the poet? What books could be more crowded with energetic recollections, sublime and picturesque events, instructive and terrible warnings? From the first interposition of Jehovah, to the moment when His presence is revealed to Moses upon Nebo, His glorious agency is every where visible. It is He who accompanies the patriarchs in all their journeyings, and makes trial of their faith ; it is He who gives wisdom to Joseph, and makes the children of Israel to increase in Egypt ; it is He who brings them out with His mighty hand and His outstretched arm ; who reveals His glories at the Red Sea, on Mount Sinai, and through the wilderness ; who dwells between the cherubim, and leads His people like a flock. Throughout, it is the purpose of the inspired historian to stamp upon the minds of his countrymen the most impressive sense of their peculiar dependence upon God ; he closes with the declaration, so literally fulfilled, that they shall be invincible and glorious, if obedient to their divine Sovereign, but cursed, rejected, and miserable whenever they forsake Him.

The character of Moses himself, as it is depicted in the course of the history, was an invaluable treasure to the people. 'And there arose not a prophet since in Israel, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the light and wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all that mighty land, and in all the great terror, which Moses showed in the sight of all Israel.' His name could never be remembered without exciting in the bosom of the Israelite, the highest exultation of patriotic pride.

If the history contained in the Pentateuch was full of materials calculated to excite the popular imagination, to strengthen the national patriotism, and to convince the Hebrews of God's retributive providence, the history of successive periods in their

existence was scarcely less so. We must pass by the period from Joshua to Samuel, and can only glance at the reigns of David and Solomon.

David's life was full of poetry ; his character and reign were a proud inheritance to the Jewish people—the most delightful era in their history. He was eminently the anointed of the God of Jacob ; under him they always recognized their Theocratical Constitution, and were again taught, as by the experience of their whole national existence, to seek prosperity solely in obedience to Jehovah, and to attribute to Him the praise of their victorious successes. David was favored with a magnificent renewal of the Covenant of God, with the additional promise, whose extensive and spiritual import as referring to the Messiah he evidently understood, that the royal succession should be in his house, and that his kingdom should be established forever. He fixed the royal residence at Jerusalem, and the capital of the nation was named the City of David, whither also he transferred, with public and splendid rejoicings, the Ark of the Covenant. Jerusalem became the capital of the Invisible King ; his temple was built upon Mount Moriah ; and thenceforward the City of David was called, by its most glorious title, the CITY OF GOD.

In no respect did David confer a greater benefit upon his countrymen, or leave the stamp of his own genius more indelibly upon the nation, than in the measures, which he adopted to improve the public worship, and give it a suitable character of magnificence and joyfulness. He formed for it a regular system of music and poetry ; he appointed Levites to praise the Lord with songs and various instruments of music ; he composed the most instructive and animating Psalms, to be chanted not only at all the sacrifices, but by the whole people, when they made their glad pilgrimages to Jerusalem at the seasons of the feasts. Himself the sweet Psalmist of Israel, he communicated to the national imagination, in no slight degree, the impulse of his own poetic genius.

The reign of Solomon was the most splendid in all the Hebrew annals ; he is celebrated through the world as the greatest of Eastern monarchs. David left him in possession of a peaceful kingdom, and on him, in answer to his pious request, the spirit of wisdom was poured out apparently without measure. The regularity with which all the national affairs were administered, the magnificence of his court, the abundance of

his riches, so that he 'made silver in Jerusalem as stones,' and the gorgeousness of the Temple, which Jehovah permitted him to build, surpass all description. He inherited likewise the poetical genius of his father, and the sacred Book tells us that his songs were one thousand and five. Happy would it have been for Israel, had his piety to Jehovah equalled his wisdom and genius. For his idolatry the crown of glory was taken from the nation. Scarcely had he died, when the ten tribes revolted, and in about four hundred years Jerusalem was destroyed. These centuries were the period during which most of the prophets, from Elijah downwards, appeared and uttered their predictions. Jeremiah prophesied the captivity of Judah, and after the mournful event, uttered his affecting Lamentations. *How doth the city sit solitary, she that was full of people!* His warning voice had long before declared, *The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron—with the point of a diamond.* He was reserved to be a historical witness of the events, which Inspiration had predicted from his own lips.

The Hebrew muse has been called the denizen of nature; with equal propriety may she be termed the denizen of history. She draws much of her sublimest inspiration from the instructive record of God's dealings with his people. Even the Psalms are full of the finest imagery gathered from historical events; but the prophetic poetry is by far the most copious in its sublime and beautiful allusions. The history of the Hebrews in its spirit is all poetry; their poetry is almost a history, both of the past and the future. For the Prophets, what could be more appropriate, in the exercise of their functions as the messengers of God, than to paint their warnings with an unceasing and energetic appeal to the well known experience of the nation? Such an appeal was not addressed to a people ignorant of their own history. It was the pride of a Hebrew, as well as his duty, to have the law and the testimony inscribed upon his heart. A Jew, well instructed, could almost repeat the contents of the sacred Books from memory. On their study the utmost expenditure of wealth and labor was lavished. They were copied with the richest penmanship; they were incased in jewels; they were clasped with diamonds; they were deposited in golden arks. The whole of the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm is composed in praise of their wisdom, and to inculcate their perusal. How

striking was the last charge of Moses to the people: 'And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up—thou shalt say unto thy son, we were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand!'

Powerful indeed must have been the influence of such familiarity with those sublime compositions! The unceasing frequency with which their remarkable passages are referred to by the sacred poets, shows with what prevailing power they dwelt in the popular imagination. How could it be otherwise? Almost every rite in the ceremonial of the Hebrews was founded upon or in some way connected with the remembrance of supernatural interposition. Almost every spot in the land of the Israelites was associated with the history of those glorious events. Three times a year the whole Jewish multitude went up to the tabernacle or to Jerusalem at the feasts. Did they pass through the valley of Hebron? There lay the bones of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Did they stand on the plains of Mamre? There Abraham erected an altar to Jehovah, and entertained the angels. Did they visit the borders of the Dead Sea? Its sluggish waves rolled over the cities of the plain, and they traced the ruins of the fire-storm from heaven. If they looked towards Nebo, it was the sacred and mysterious burial-place of Moses. If they passed near Gilgal, there the sun and moon stood still at the command of Joshua. If they rode on the mountains of Gilboa, there the glory of Israel was slain upon their high places. Such thrilling recollections must have met them at every step, besides being often mingled in the memory with some vivid burst of poetry. An event, like that of the passage of the Red Sea, commemorated in a song such as that of Moses, was a treasure in the annals of the nation, whose worth in the formation of the national spirit we cannot adequately appreciate. Nor can we conceive the depth of emotion, which must have dilated the frame of a devout Jewish patriot, every time he remembered that sublime composition.

The general character of their sacred and civil constitution, as well as innumerable particular observances, domestic, political and religious, were full of influences, which could not be otherwise than powerful in strengthening the popular imagina-

tion, and filling it with elevated and beautiful conceptions. The Oriental manners in domestic life, joined to the Mosaic institutions in regard to private society, shed a spirit of refinement over the social intercourse of the Hebrews, and exhibit it to us connected with very many picturesque and romantic associations. Their hospitality was generous and open-hearted; their modes of salutation appear even extravagant in the profession of kindness and good-will. Strangers were to be treated with peculiar attention; 'the stranger that dwelleth among you shall be unto you as one born amongst you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; *for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.*' The aged they were commanded to regard almost with a religious veneration; the crown of gray hairs was sacred: '*thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man.*' 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' was one of the commandments of the Decalogue. The observance of the duties of filial attachment and respect were connected with peculiar blessings, and their violation with imprecations and punishments of an awful severity.

The celebration of nuptials was a season of joyous festivity, attended by many interesting and imposing ceremonies. The dress of the bride and bridegroom was rich and splendid; and so, indeed, among the Hebrews, were all garments worn on festival occasions. The birth of children was with them an event thrice blessed—to be hailed with exulting ceremonies. The birth-day of a son was honored as a festival, and observed each year with lively demonstrations of gladness.

A spirit of kindness and benevolence was inculcated even towards animals; and towards the poor and friendless in the land how beautiful was the humanity enjoined upon the Israelites, especially at the season of harvest! 'When ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest; and thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; *thou shalt leave them for the poor and the stranger.*'

The Jewish people were unequalled for the festive delightfulness and picturesque observances of their sacred seasons. The Sabbath was an institution worthy of the wisdom and benevolence of their Invisible Sovereign. He *blessed* it emphatically, as a day of holy cheerfulness and rest for the Hebrews, their servants and their cattle. In it they were to contemplate

with glad and grateful emotions the Creator and Governor of the universe ; they celebrated it with religious songs and instrumental music ; they gathered around their prophets to receive instruction ; they taught their children the wonderful providences of God ; and if they were not too far distant, visited the tabernacle or the temple.

The year of Jubilee was a national custom, combining, in an eminent degree, all that is picturesque, endearing, free, noble and patriotic. It was a long and hallowed Sabbath of rest and universal liberty ; they returned every man to his possession, and every man to his family ; all debts were cancelled ; the bondman, free as the air, came back to his inheritance ; the aged exile visited the long-lost home of his fathers.

The three great sacred festivals, at the return of each of which all the tribes appeared at the tabernacle, or, after the building of the temple, went up to Jerusalem, bringing presents, offering sacrifices and exulting together with songs, and music and dances, in God, 'whose mercy endureth forever,' were eminently calculated to communicate an ardent and joyous impulse to the popular imagination. Nor could any thing have been devised more admirably adapted to give life and intensity to the national patriotism, than these proud meetings of all the millions of Israel around the gorgeous temple in the City of their God. How joyful was the pilgrimage of the people, in bands of families and kindred, beneath the delicious sky and amidst the lovely scenery of Palestine, as they wound among the hill-sides, or stopped to refresh themselves in the valleys, lifting up their voices from time to time, accompanied with instrumental music, in those beautiful songs of degrees, which David composed for the purpose ;

' I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us enter thy house, O Lord !
Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem !'

First in the year came the feast of the Passover, solemn and striking in its ceremonies ; then the feast of the Harvest, full of rural plenty and festivity ; last and most splendid the feast of the Tabernacles, instituted in memory of the journey through the wilderness. During its continuance of eight days, the Hebrews dwelt in shady tents erected with green boughs along the streets of the Holy City, and on the roofs of the houses, in commemoration and imitation of their dwellings

when they wandered from Egypt. As it was likewise a festival of gratitude after the vintage and the gathering in of the fruits, they carried about the productions of the choicest trees, with branches of palm, willow, pomegranate and other verdurous and thick-foliaged boughs. The whole season passed away with songs and music in unmingled delightfulness. Jerusalem, during its continuance, wore the appearance of one vast, thickly-clustered, luxuriant bower, in the evening widely and splendidly illuminated.

In the character of the Jewish priesthood there was every thing combined, which could render it venerable and majestic ; their office was connected in the popular mind with all possible associations of grandeur. They and their posterity were solemnly divided from the rest of Israel for the service of the living God. Four thousand Levites, clad in robes of white linen, ministered as musicians and singers, but the classes of the priests were limited to the posterity of the sons of Aaron. The ceremonies of their consecration, continued during eight days, were solemn and impressive in the highest degree. Their vesture was splendid—especially that of the high-priest : over his forehead he wore a plate of gold, fastened to the mitre by a blue fillet, and inscribed with the august device, *Holy to the Lord*.

The Jewish worship combined, perhaps, in the greatest possible degree, magnificence with minuteness and simplicity in its rites. During the wanderings in the wilderness, and indeed for more than four hundred years, till the time of David and Solomon, the religious ceremonial was not invested with all that external grandeur, which it afterwards possessed ; yet the tabernacle of the congregation was a gorgeous pavilion, and its furniture of a character well adapted to strike the imagination with interest. With what evident and patriotic pride does even the Apostle, under a more glorious and perfect dispensation, look back to the days of the former priesthood, and enumerate the objects in the tabernacle, ‘ which is called the Holiest of all ; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant ; and over it the cherubim of glory, shadowing the mercy-seat.’ Wherever the tabernacle with the Ark of the Covenant abode, the whole town or village was consecrated by its presence.

After the building of Solomon's temple, the rites of worship were performed with a magnificent and solemn grandeur, of the effect of which, in the midst of an edifice so glorious, our imaginations, though aided by the utmost minuteness of description, can very inadequately conceive. The temple was 'garnished with precious stones for beauty,' and almost every part of it was overlaid with gold. The king dedicated it with offerings and ceremonies worthy of its own grandeur, and the majestic solemnity of the occasion. Nothing could exceed the sublimity of his consecrating prayer, or of the thanksgiving songs of David, accompanied with instrumental music, and uplifted on the voices of four thousand Levites. Jehovah himself manifested his awful presence, 'so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of Jehovah had filled the house of God.'

The following is an animated description of the temple in Jerusalem, drawn, indeed, as it appeared in the time of Herod the Great, but yet, perhaps, presenting no inadequate picture of its glory as it first rose under the eye of its royal founder. It is from the pen of Croly. 'I see the court of the Gentiles circling the whole; a fortress of the whitest marble, with its wall rising six hundred feet from the valley; its kingly entrance, worthy of the fame of Solomon; its innumerable and stately dwellings for the priests and officers of the temple, and above them, glittering like a succession of diadems, those alabaster porticoes and colonnades, in which the chiefs and sages of Jerusalem sat teaching the people, or walked, breathing the pure air and gazing on the grandeur of a landscape, which swept the whole amphitheatre of the mountains. I see, rising above this stupendous boundary, the court of the Jewish women, separated by its porphyry pillars and richly sculptured wall; above this, the separated court of the men; still higher, the court of the priests; and highest, the crowning splendor of all, the central temple, the place of the sanctuary and of the Holy of Holies, covered with plates of gold, its roof planted with lofty spear-heads of gold, the most precious marbles and metals every where flashing back the day, till Mount Moriah stood forth to the eye of the stranger approaching Jerusalem, what it had been so often described by its bards and people, a 'mountain of snow, studded with jewels.'

The loneliness of the Holy of Holies, in the absence of a visible image, surrounded as the Hebrews were on all sides,

by nations of idolaters, whose temples were crowded with the most grotesque forms of wood and stone, that a degraded heathen ingenuity could invent, must have powerfully affected their imaginations. With what awe and wonder it filled the mind even of Pompey, when after passing all the external splendors in the approach to the recesses of the Jewish temple, he lifted the separating veil, in the full expectation of finding a statue which would answer in its majesty to the gorgeous decorations that had already excited his curiosity to the utmost, but found himself a daring intruder, in the holy solitariness and silence!

Our limits will not suffer us to speak more minutely of their national and religious customs, or of the circumstances of their history. They were all full of poetical effect. The smallest of their rites were important, and often they were grand and magnificent in the extreme. Their existence itself was for ages a continued miracle; and their history abounded in such proud and endearing recollections, and teemed with events of such supernatural glory, and with characters of such holy faith and intellectual grandeur, that it would have constituted the strangest of all anomalies, had not the national imagination been peculiarly grand and elevated.

Their climate and scenery exerted a greater influence in moulding their character and giving a spirit to their poetry, than the same circumstances have done with almost any other people. The power of these causes is always greater perhaps, than we are disposed to believe. Their influence is silent, but it is constant and gradual, even from infancy to the maturity and decline of life. Their operation in aiding to unfold the faculties, and in giving a tinge to the poetical susceptibilities of the soul is indeed subtle, delicate, and refined. If it could be watched in its progress and measured in its power, as the more material influences can be, its extent, all-pervading though invisible, would astonish us. Could the idea of Foster be realised, and a mind which has arrived at maturity go back, step by step, through its past existence, and analyse and classify the innumerable influences which have contributed their share in the formation of the man, we apprehend that not the least powerful would be found to have proceeded from the appearances of external nature. And why should it not be so? Can any thing except the moral providence and the word of God be better fitted to refine and meliorate the character of an intelli-

gent being, than the ceaseless operation of such sublimity and beauty as he sees exhibited in the forms and hues of the natural universe? The contemplation of nature is a universal school of silent moral discipline. When devotional sentiments are united with a sensibility to natural beauty, and the mind beholds the Deity in His works, it is elevated by impressions whose power can scarcely be calculated, because they are unnoticed, and constantly recurring.

To the climate and scenery of Palestine we have to look from almost every page of the sacred poets for the explanation of particular allusions, and in order to the full enjoyment of their most beautiful imagery. It afforded in its variety almost all the elements of peculiar sublimity and beauty in the material world. It afforded them likewise in opposition and contrast. The extent of the country was indeed narrow, yet being intersected with numerous ranges of hills that were capable of cultivation even to the summit, its surface was in reality extensive, and the variety of its climate multiplied. 'At the foot of the hill grew the products of the torrid zone; on its side those of the temperate; on its summit the robust vegetation of the north. The ascending circles of the orange grove, the vineyard, and the forest, covered it with perpetual beauty.' The mountain ridges were not less salubrious and opulent in their various productions. The most careless reader of the Bible must have seen how the names of Lebanon and Carmel were connected in the imagination of a Hebrew with all ideas of fertility and delightfulness. The very appellation of the latter indicates the fruitfulness of its mountain-ranges, and of the valleys which they form; for Carmel literally signifies the *garden of God*. The summits of these ranges were crowned with forests of oak and fir; the valleys were covered with laurels and olives; and there was no want of fountains and rivulets, most grateful to the inhabitants of the East.

From the most deliciously beautiful and secluded vale, an Israelite might pass in a few hours to the grandeur of the cedar forest on Lebanon, or to the rocks and snows on the summit of Antilibanus. From the sweet lake of Tiberias he might find himself at no very distant interval walking on the bituminous and gloomy shores of the Dead Sea; and from a garden like the bower of the first pair in Eden, he might soon be transported to the savage sterility of the desert of Engeddi. There was an astonishing contrast and variety at different in-

tervals of season and situation in the river Jordan, whose origin is found in the perpetual snows of Antilibanus. After measuring a subterranean journey of a few miles from the foot of the mountain, it bursts from the earth with noise, and then, after a few miles of verdure and fertility, passes into the lake Merom. Here the beholder might at one season in the year, cast his eye over a broad and beautiful expanse of water, and at another over an almost interminable marsh, covered with shrubs and rushes, the abode only of wild beasts. Again when the snows melted on the mountains, the reedy marsh became a sheet of pure crystal, bordered with luxuriant verdure and foliage. Pursuing the course of this celebrated river a few miles further, he found himself at the lake Gennesareth, or Sea of Galilee, or Tiberias; forever dear in the imagination of the Christian, from the memorable scenes acted on its shores, and from the appearance of our Saviour to his alarmed disciples on its bosom in the midnight storm. It was pure and sweet, secluded in its natural situation, and surrounded by elevated and fruitful declivities. Passing from this delightful lake, the river flowed onwards, increasing in beauty and size, through a tract of country, to which its waters and tributary streams imparted such a freshness and fertility, that it was termed by way of eminence, the region of Jordan. And then, after all this variety, and from all these scenes of purity, fragrance and life, it was swallowed up in that image of all stagnant and frightful desolation, the Dead Sea.

There were similar transitions, at some seasons, in an incredibly short space of time, over the whole face of nature. 'In spring and summer, if the east wind continues to blow for a few days, the fields are in general so parched, that scarcely a blade of any thing green remains; many rivers and streams are dried up, the others are rendered briny, and all nature seems at the point of dissolution. After a plentiful shower, however, the fields revive beyond all expectation, the rivers resume their course, and the springs pour forth more delicious water. Dr. Russell has described this regeneration of nature in most lively colors in his *Natural History of Aleppo*, a book which every man ought to read, who wishes, not only literally to understand the Oriental writers, but to feel them.'*

* Michælis upon Lowth. The learned annotator, was, however, mistaken in his reference to the work here mentioned.

Earthquakes, perhaps the most terrible of all natural phenomena, were common, and likewise the severest thunder and lightning. There were also other calamitous as well as wonderful appearances and productions of nature, with which Palestine was from time to time visited. Such was the hot and deadly wind called by the Arabs Simoon, and by the Turks Samyel, which might be seen approaching from the distance, like a cloud, tinged with red as a rainbow, and attended with a rushing noise. The devastation of the locusts was another natural calamity, described with such fearful, but exact colors, in the second chapter of Joel.

Such a climate and such scenery and phenomena could not and did not fail to give a rich poetical cast to the whole popular mind.

The manner of life among the Hebrews was such too as brought them most completely under the influence of all the various appearances of nature. They were, till the conquest of Canaan, entirely a nation of shepherds; and though they afterwards in some measure laid aside their Nomadic habits, yet they still continued husbandmen; and the mildness of their climate, as well as the nature of their employments, kept them constantly in the open air, and alive to all the influences of natural scenery and phenomena, to a degree, which with us exists only in imagination. By the laws of Moses, agriculture was in reality made the basis of the state. It was a highly honorable employment; so that while the greater part of the people were, in their ordinary occupation, husbandmen, the richest and the noblest among them did not disdain to engage in rural labors. To every citizen was divided by the inspired legislator, an equal portion of land, which he and his sons after him might cultivate; nor could it be alienated from the family, for a longer period than until the great returning jubilee. How powerfully must this institution have tended to keep alive in every bosom the feelings of patriotism and the ties of family endearment, as well as to preserve a primitive and happy simplicity in character and manners! It has been well called the strongest and most benevolent bond that ever bound man to his country.

Such were a few, for after all we have mentioned only a few, of the circumstances, which may have combined to give to the Hebrew imagination its mingled richness, grandeur and simplicity, and its peculiar spirit and coloring to their poetical

composition. Yet we have exhibited a rich enumeration. What nobler materials could have been desired, out of which to mould a lofty-minded and religious national character, or to build up a holy, grand, elevated, and ample national literature! A delicious climate;—the cultivation of a fertile soil and the contemplation of the most diversified scenery as their daily employments;—a history full of all thrilling, patriotic and devotional recollections;—a glorious theocracy as their form of government;—a sanctified and magnificent priesthood;—a ritual, imposing in its external glory, and in almost every particular, teeming with high associations, and pregnant with prophetic meaning!

It is delightful, in reading the Sacred Poets, to trace the direct influence of all these circumstances, in passages of extreme beauty, occurring to the eye on almost every page. Our limits will not suffer us to be thus particular. Yet we cannot but glance at the general character of that class of their poetry, which is descriptive of natural beauty, or founded on their admiration of the works of Jehovah. They drank in the delicious influences of climate and scenery, and poured forth their emotions as inartificially and unconsciously as the warblers of the grove. In the absence of all foreign and far-fetched imagery, they dwelt with a contented fondness on the scenes amidst which they had been born and nurtured, with a purity and exultation of feeling, which powerfully captivates the heart. They never sought to astonish by magnificence, either in words or images, but were unstudied in their simplicity, and satisfied with expressing the truth. Yet they expressed it with vivid intensity, in words and figures that are flashing with life and energy.

When they looked forth upon the glories of nature, the idea of God as the Sovereign of their own State, no less than as the Creator and benevolent Ruler of the universe, and the only object of religious veneration, was continually before their minds. There was hardly a spot, which was not consecrated by the grateful recollection of some supernatural interposition of his providence. Wherever they turned their eyes, it was not merely the luxuriant fertility, or the sublime features of the scene, which told them of the goodness, and wisdom and power of Jehovah; the country possessed a more endearing memorial, it was connected with a more thrilling association. It spoke to them of the strange miracles which God had wrought for the

protection of his chosen people, and the destruction of idolatrous nations.

O God, when Thou didst march forth before Thy people,
 When Thou didst march through the wilderness,—
 The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of
 God ;
 Sinai itself at the presence of God—the God of Israel !

Their thoughts were never shut in by the mere limits of their physical vision, but always soared upward to the contemplation of the Deity. When they attempted to describe His works, their lips involuntarily uttered His name. God was in every thing, and every thing had a voice of praise to Him. The fields, the forests, the rivers, and the mountains, exulted in Jehovah, like animate intelligences.

The hills are girded with exultation,
 The pastures are clothed with flocks,
 The valleys are covered with corn,
 They shout for joy, yea, they sing.

They looked upon creation, not with the feelings of natural philosophers, but with the fresh admiration of the soul. No system of philosophy chained down their attention to secondary causes ; they looked to God. The 'course of nature' was not ; they had no term for it ; they formed no idea of it ; it was God. The universe and its minutest existences hung suspended on His ever-present, ever-acting, everlasting agency. Each night His hand guided the stars in their courses ; each day He renewed the light, and garnished the earth with beauty. Not a flower, but was the object of His care ; not the meanest animal, that did not live by His goodness.

He prepareth rain for the earth,
 He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.
 He giveth to the beast his food,
 To the young ravens which cry.

He is represented as the Universal Father, providing daily for the wants, and taking care of the happiness of his innumerable family. It is this which gives to the one hundred and fourth psalm its inexpressible beauty.

These wait all upon Thee,
 To give them their food in its season.
 Thou givest it unto them,—they gather it ;
 Thou openest wide Thine hand—they are satisfied with good.

All creation repairs, like a child, to its Father, and retires, contented and rejoicing in His care. The Sacred Poets never contemplated the glories of Creation, but with the lively gratitude of sincere worshippers, delighted to witness and to feel the all-pervading mercy of Jehovah. The utterance of their ecstasy at the view of the scene before them, was the fervent expression of real emotions. They loved a minute enumeration of its beauties, because it was a moving, animated picture of the glory and benevolence of God; because their souls were moulded by its influence, their hearts were touched with human kindness, they sympathised with the happiness of all animated nature, and rejoiced to sing forth their grateful, involuntary praises to the Giver of good.

There is scarcely an object in nature, which they do not personify. The sun, the moon, the stars, the winds, the clouds, the rain, are the ministers and messengers of Jehovah. The fields and the trees break forth into singing, and even clap their hands for joy. The mountains melt at His presence, or flee from His wrath in terror; and the sun and the moon hide themselves from the terrible flashing of His armor. What unutterable sublimity do such bold personifications communicate to that chapter in Habakkuk, commencing, *God came from Teman,—The Holy One from Mount Paran.*

The mountains saw Thee, and were troubled;
The overflowing of waters passed away;
The deep uttered its voice,
It lifted up its hands on high.

The sun and the moon stood still in their habitation;
In the light of Thine arrows they vanished,*
In the brightness of the lightning of Thy spear!
In indignation Thou didst march through the land,
In wrath Thou didst thresh the heathen.

* Several distinguished critics render this passage, *they went*; making the personal pronoun refer to the Israelites, who, he thinks, are here described as marching forth to victory by the flaming lightning of Jehovah, represented as His armor. Herder, with a more poetical conception of the passage, and perhaps one which is equally critical, says, that the sun and moon are here described, in the Oriental manner, as advancing to the door of their tent, to gaze at the fearful commotion around them; but overpowered and terrified by the flashing of Jehovah's armor, they start back, and vanish or hide themselves from its brightness.

The poetry of the Hebrews should scarcely be mentioned in connexion with that of other nations, but to point out its vast and delightful superiority. In the influences and the circumstances under which it grew, it has scarcely any thing in common with the poetry of the Pagan world. Excepting the important fact that we, like the Sacred Poets, are acquainted with the true religion, it is still more diverse in these respects from the poetry of modern times. With them, it was the pure offspring of nature. They had no critics, they knew no laws of rhetoric, no technical variety of composition. The schools of the Prophets were the only institutions in which they made the power of conveying instruction, oral or written, any thing like a study. There they prepared themselves in human learning, and when the Spirit of Inspiration descended upon them, the prophecies and the poetry they uttered were not untinged with the hues of their own genius and feelings. On the contrary, every peculiarity of individual intellect was made vividly conspicuous.

Though the point admits of doubt, it is of little importance to know whether the earliest snatches and glimpses of poetry, which we meet with in the Old Testament, such as the blessing of Jacob, and the prophecies of Balaam, were at first uttered precisely in their present form, or reduced to it by the narrator. The wild, hurried, mournful, unwilling strains of Balaam's sublime predictions, are full of the appearance of having been the immediate, irresistible, we had almost said, verbal inspiration of the Spirit of God. The King of Moab, finding it impossible for Balaam to curse Israel—'How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed?'—placed him in three different situations. 'Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.' We behold the prophet in imagination, standing amidst the princes of Moab, on the high places of Baal, or the summit of Pisgah, his arm outstretched and pointing to the white tents of Jacob, which spread out far and peacefully over the plain beneath him, his countenance almost transfigured by the vision of his soul—bursting forth at once into the most majestic strain of prophecy and poetry.

Lo! the people shall dwell alone,
They shall not be numbered among the nations!
Who shall count the dust of Jacob,
Or the number of the fourth part of Israel?

Let me die the death of the righteous,
And let my last end be like his !

* * * * *

I shall see him, but not now !
I shall behold him, but not nigh !
There shall come a Star out of Jacob,
A Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.

* * * * *

How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob !
Thy tabernacles, O Israel !
As the valleys are they spread forth,
As gardens by the river's side,
As the trees of aloes, which the Lord hath planted,
As the cedars by the water-courses !

Balaam is the most sublime example of the nature of the prophetic impulse, in the whole Bible. From the account given of him (Numbers, xxii. xxiii. xxiv.) we should deem it very probable, that we have his words precisely as they came from the lips of the excited prophet. There is the same probability in regard to the blessing of Jacob. Yet the present highly sublime and poetical structure of these pieces might have been given them by Moses. None can doubt his ability. His Ode on the Passage of the Red Sea, his prophetic blessing on the tribes of Israel before his death, his song of warning to the congregation, and the ninetieth Psalm, prove that he possessed a genius equal to that of the finest poets of his nation.

It is probable that much of the poetry in the Old Testament, the prophetic poetry, was composed, as we say, extempore ;—uttered in a poetical form—the best adapted to the expression of sublime ideas and excited feeling—under the immediate influence of inspiration. From the example of Elisha, (2d Kings, iii. 15,) who, when about to deliver a message from Jehovah, called for a minstrel, and when the harp was touched, ‘the hand of the Lord came upon him,’ and from other instances, we are led to believe, that the Hebrew prophets and poets may have often composed with the aid of instrumental music, uttering their predictions, or chanting their extempore hymns to accompany the strain.

In regard to Isaiah, there is internal evidence that his predictions were not committed to writing till after they were spoken, and the highest probability that they were spoken in their present form. From the very instructive and interesting

account in Jeremiah xxxvi. we find, that in the fourth year of king Jehoiakim, the prophet, by the command of God, dictates to Baruch the scribe, for the first time, all his previous prophecies. After this roll is destroyed by the angry monarch, Baruch again writes 'from the mouth of Jeremiah, *all the words* of the book, which Jehoiakim, king of Judah, had burned in the fire; and there were added besides unto them many like words.' From such passages there is reason to believe, that the prophetic poetry of the Old Testament comes to us exactly in the words and the form in which it was at first spoken. It can scarcely be otherwise; for why should the prophet alter or remodel what he had originally uttered from inspiration, and what all who had heard it could not fail to recollect?

The parallelistic arrangement is the most marked and general characteristic of Hebrew poetry. Though it became more regular with music and dancing, and though it seems to have been customary with the Hebrews to chant their sacred hymns in alternate choirs, answering each other in the correspondent lines, yet it cannot be doubted, that we are to look to the constitution of the human mind for the origin of this system. Strong feeling is never satisfied with the simple assertion of a sentiment; it must be repeated and enforced by a variety and change of expression. The best specimens of Indian eloquence which we possess, exhibit some beautiful instances of a parallelism like that of the Hebrew Poets.

Whatever might have been its origin, it exhibits itself not only as the characteristic peculiarity of the sacred poetry, but as one of its most beautiful features. Its simplicity is such that it never tires or becomes monotonous, but always falls upon the ear with new gratification. An English poet and critic finely remarked in regard to it, 'In repeating the same idea in different words, the Hebrew muse seems as if displaying a fine opal, that discovers fresh beauty in every new light to which it is turned. Her amplifications of a given thought, are like the echoes of a solemn melody; her repetitions of it, like the landscape reflected in the stream. And whilst her questions and responses give a life-like effect to her compositions, they remind us of the alternate voices in public devotion, to which they were manifestly adapted.' This subject is illustrated with great beauty in the nineteenth of Lowth's Lectures. It would seem incredible, were it not palpably exemplified in the most sublime instances, that the

simple repetition of an idea, often with very little variety, even in the expression, can be productive of so powerful an effect. The twenty-ninth Psalm, which is so full of majesty, owes the strength of its impression on the soul of the reader in a great measure to the amplification of one or two sublime ideas in the nervous simplicity of the Hebrew parallelism. We may be permitted to illustrate this truth by a short quotation.

The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters ;
The God of glory thundereth ;
Jehovah is upon many waters.
The voice of Jehovah is powerful ;
The voice of Jehovah is full of majesty.
The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars ;
Jehovah breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

Whether the Hebrew poetry possessed any regular metre in connexion with this parallelism, or what was its exact nature, we have no means of determining. The frequent adaptation of its strains to music, renders it probable that it must have been regulated, if not by syllabic laws, yet by fixed principles of harmony and cadence. The corresponding alternation of its distichs may be denominated verse ; but this arrangement was unfettered with rhyme, and adapted itself with an agreeable irregularity to the various character and symmetry of the thought. For this reason, a professed translation of the Sacred Poets is displeasing, unless the parallelistic divisions be as nearly as possible preserved, without the addition either of rhyme or metre. The English language seems to be the best adapted of all modern tongues to the accomplishment of this purpose ; because it is the one which expresses most distinctly the spirit and beauty of the original with the least variation from the form and letter. In rendering all other foreign poetry into his own language, the translator may often, with the greatest happiness, vary both the coloring and expression of his author's thoughts ; and he is not unfrequently obliged to call in the aid of metre and rhyme, sometimes to cover the poverty or conceal the extravagance of the sentiment, and generally, to give additional pleasure to the reader. But in a translation from the Sacred Poets, the mind involuntarily rejects every foreign ornament ; it asks for no artificial beauty which the original does not possess ; it demands the soul of the poetry in a garb as plain and simple as

the idiom of a modern language will possibly admit. It is a striking proof of the amazing power of the Inspired Poets, that they cannot be divested of their native majesty and beauty, even in the most languid versions of the most miserable tongues ; and on the other hand, that with the most vivid, accurate, and admirable translation of which any language is capable, it is impossible to convey an adequate impression of what the mind feels, when admitted to enjoy the full excellence of their poetry in the very idiom in which it was originally uttered.

One great cause of the difficulty of conveying its spirit fully into other languages, is found in the character of life, breath, and motion, which belongs to its bold and figurative expressions, notwithstanding their remarkable simplicity. They invest the thought and display it before the mind, as the most transparent atmosphere surrounds the beautiful objects and appearances of the natural world, presenting them perfect to the vision. Imagination and language seem moulded into one, and inspired with the same ceaseless energy. Thus the activity of that subtle power is never compelled to wait for the service of words ; it seems as if at every new movement it created a new and picturesque idiom to answer its demand, and clothe the ideal image with life. Other languages employ abstract terms and dry delineations of thought ; but the Hebrew refuses them, and indulges its love of powerful metaphor by investing abstract ideas and inanimate objects with all the vivid attributes of existence. The morning stars are *sons of the dawn* ; arrows are *sons of the bow, or of the quiver* ; the hills are *girded with exultation* ; the deep *uttereth its voice, and lifteth up its hands on high* ; the ark *walks upon the face of the waters* ; the blood of Abel *cries from the ground* ; and *the shadow of death is on the eyelids of the mourner*. Again, when they describe a tumultuous commotion, they speak of *the roar of the waves and the tumult of the people* ; and when the voice of Jehovah is uttered, there is the stillness, and trembling, and 'melting away' of the earth and the nations. To their remarkable simplicity, and the united grandeur, familiarity, and frequent use of their metaphors, are owing, in a great measure, the strength, vividness and energy of their descriptions.

They had no languid, luxurious, or sonorous epithets, such as those with which other poets often encumber and weaken their thoughts, and which are often considered, with great perversity of taste, a rare beauty in poetical composition ;

they had even none such as the Greeks and Romans used, nothing like the 'silver-footed,' or the 'golden-haired,' or the 'far-darting.' We all remember the ἀργυρόπεζα θεέτις, the κορυθαίολος Ἐκτωρ, the νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς, the πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης, and, still more richly poetical, the εἰνοσίφυλλον Πήλιον, of Homer. The Greek is full of such picturesque and imaginative expressions, and Homer, of all poets, uses them with the most admirable freedom and skill. Our own language too is not unadorned with this beauty. Milton, who almost thought in the rich languages of antiquity, exhibits many fine examples of it, such as 'sable-vested night,' 'drowsy-flighted steeds,' 'close-curtained sleep.' Collins, another master of the mingled richness and fineness of our language, uses compounds of great merit; we recollect the 'dim-discovered spires,' in his Ode to Evening. In the older poets, Spenser, Drayton, Shakspeare, they often occur. But the Hebrews, in their severe simplicity, seem almost to have disdained to resort to such artificial combinations, however beautiful. The genius of their language is superior to them. Their adjectives do not even admit an alteration from the positive form; the comparative degree being expressed by prefixing a preposition to the noun; the superlative has no appropriate form or construction, but is expressed by various circumlocutions. They have no compound epithets. They accordingly express their thoughts with the most unconscious simplicity, and seem to have known no such thing as an attempt to elaborate their language, or retouch its colors. The arts of criticism and correction did not then exist. They wrote, not for fame, not from imitation, but from unsought and irresistible impulses; from the free flow of devotional and patriotic feeling. All was pure nature, fresh, young, undiseased.

The peculiar construction of their language rendered it more poetical than any other in existence. Herder called it 'an abyss of verbs and verbal derivatives—a sea of energetic expressions, agitated and tossing with life and motion.' To those who are acquainted with the Hebrew tongue, the figure is not extravagant. Almost every noun looks to the verb as its ancestor, and communicates to all successive derivations the same character of activity which it received from its own origin. The nouns too are used as adjectives, and preserve, through all their shades and changes, the life and energy of the parent stock. The verb is the strong trunk of a noble tree, whose

boughs and foliage and fruits constitute the whole wide-spreading language. Its conciseness is likewise such as cannot be imitated in any other tongue. Particles—which invariably weaken, at the same time that they connect a language—have scarce a separate existence, being joined to some important word. Conjunction, pronoun, and verb, form but one word; object, subject, and predicate, may be uttered in one. The English circumlocution, ‘and he said to me,’ would be expressed by the Hebrews in a single term; and as a still more remarkable example of this peculiar brevity and force, they might utter in one word the whole English sentence, ‘as he has given to me.’ It is no wonder that with such a language they could be sublime; and how much of their sublimity must necessarily evaporate in a translation!

Again, they have but two tenses, and the first may be used indifferently for past, present, and future; yet without creating obscurity in the sense, or want of exactness in expressing the nicest shades of meaning. This change of tenses gives an astonishing vividness to their poetical composition, and converts their very history into poetry. If they prophecy a future event, it is present; if they relate a past one, it is also present. Everything breathes, moves, is a living reality, in the mind, and is clothed with life in the expression.

In order fully to appreciate the beauty and understand the meaning of the Hebrew poetry, it is absolutely necessary for the reader to be acquainted, not merely with the language in which it is written, but with the sources from which its imagery is drawn. His mind should be imbued with an atmosphere of Orientalism. By the study of the history, climate, scenery, manners, &c. of the Hebrews, he should become so familiar with every thing relating to their modes of life and feeling, as to be able, when reading their compositions, to read them with something of that general state of mind in which they were written. It is the duty of every student in Theology, at least, thus to prepare himself for their examination. Yet it is a rare circumstance to find an individual, who gives to this study its due weight and its proper place. An adequate knowledge of sacred geography and of Oriental customs is uncommon; and there are some students, who nobly appreciate the importance of a constant perusal of the scriptures for the acquisition of their spirit, spending hour after hour in the devotional contemplation and study of divine truth, yet strangely neglect that other part of

discipline and duty, and never think of consulting Bochart, Niebuhr, Calmet, or Reland.

To the prevailing disregard of such a method of studying the Hebrew scriptures was added, till the latter part of the last century, a very general ignorance of their real nature. If it was known that such a thing as Hebrew poetry existed, yet the prophetic writings were never believed to belong to its department, and no one had attempted to point out its peculiar characteristics, till Lowth applied himself so successfully to the investigation of this subject. Before the appearance of his volume, scarcely any thing had been accomplished in the whole wide range of sacred literature which it occupies. The English theologians had confined their labors principally to the preparation of paraphractical commentaries on the Sacred Books, which, however calculated to edify the devout reader, were admirably adapted to conceal the want of profound investigation, and to make both writer and reader satisfied with superficial views. These had been very generally translated and imitated in Germany; for it was not till after this period, that the German mind was roused to those efforts in biblical learning, which have since produced such astonishing results. Singular as it may seem, it was undoubtedly Lowth's work, which gave the first impulse to these studies in that country, and animated a whole host of profound scholars to follow in his train. This is nobly acknowledged by the Germans themselves. 'Let no man forget,' says Eichhorn, 'what he was for his own age; how beneficial was his influence upon his contemporaries; that we have become what we are, in part at least, by his aid; and that he has helped us forward many steps by his investigations and masterly example.'

The previous critical investigations of the most learned biblical scholars, both in England and on the continent, had been principally confined to the classification and comparison of manuscripts, and the settlement of the scriptural text. Such had been the profound and patient researches of Cappell and Carpzof, Walton, Wetstein and Mills. Father Simon, in France, had nobly distinguished himself in the critical history of the sacred text and interpretation. Glassius went far beyond his own age in his volume on the style and literature and interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. Bochart, a country-parish minister in France, had published works on sacred geography and natural history, which continue to be

the great sources of real learning on those subjects. English scholars had also, incidentally as it were, distinguished themselves by an acquaintance with the literature of the Bible, and the manners and domestic life exhibited in it. Such were Selden, Milton and 'the very learned Hyde.' But the whole field of Hebrew poetry lay untouched. Lowth was fortunate indeed in being the first adventurer to investigate a region so delightful. While the clergymen of the English church had been profusely lavishing their labors, and seeking every opportunity for the display of their learning, in the explanation of the Grecian poets, they had wholly passed by this mine of inestimable richness. It was left to be explored by a man, whose religion inspired him with better motives than those of merely human ambition, whose modesty kept him from presumption, whose accomplishments in the whole circle of English and classical learning were profound, and whose biblical erudition, especially his acquaintance with the Hebrew language, well qualified him, in this respect, for the task.

Neither an adequate knowledge of the Hebrew, nor any depth of critical investigation would alone have prepared him for a labor at once so erudite and delicate. It required a mind skilled in all the principles of eloquence, and acquainted with the history and philosophy of poetry; a taste refined in an uncommon degree, and a judgment deep, acute and penetrating. Lowth's original genius was of a very high order, and his education had been comprehensive and noble. His intellect was imbued with the richness of the literature of Greece and Rome, and his taste had been cultivated to an exquisite refinement of discrimination. The stores of erudition which he had amassed, never encumbered his mind, nor destroyed its more imaginative susceptibilities. Those rough treasures were all melted down in the fire of his genius, which converted them into brilliant transparencies, and tinged his most laborious acquisitions with the hues of a vigorous and active fancy. In that age, an English education was varied and rich and massive, to a degree, which did not exist in any other country, and which has not existed since in England. The University of Oxford especially, which was the Alma of Lowth, laid the ground-work deep and radical, in the knowledge of the ancient classics. Eichhorn refers to this, as the grand reason why the English scholarship of that age was so much more rich and beautiful, if not more profound, than that of the Germans. It is this also,

in a great measure, which gave its grandeur and massiveness to the earliest and best age of English literature. The habit of such an intimate study of that most perfect of all languages, the Greek, as would enable the youthful student to write it with ease and accuracy, communicated to the native style of the great English writers of that day a rich copiousness in language and a nobleness in the construction of sentences, which has almost passed from existence. To the discipline of Lowth's mind, in the composition of both poetry and prose in the ancient languages, must be attributed in a great degree the majestic elegance and dignity, which his own style certainly possessed.

Its energetic spirit, both in language and thought, are to be traced not merely to his classical education as its origin, but to another source. For while the classical attainments required in a course of liberal study at that day, were broader and deeper than in ours, the discipline in other branches of science, and in the noble, native literature of Great Britain, was proportionably vigorous, original and varied. Such minds as Lowth's and Burke's and Johnson's were formed upon the study of a native literature, strong and magnificent in its cast. They were formed by an intimate communion with men such as Milton, and Hooker, and Leighton, and Barrow, and Chillingworth, and Taylor, and Stillingfleet, and Usher, and Selden and Hyde; and, we might almost say, a host more like them—men of comprehension and energy, from whose writings wisdom and learning were dealt out to their readers in whole ingots, instead of being beaten into gold leaf, or frugally scattered here and there in parsimonious grains—men of gigantic intellectual grasp and sublime fancy—mighty in reasoning, and not less powerful and grand in imagination—men, too, in whose souls the agitating circumstances amidst which they were born and nurtured, had conspired to nourish a republican freedom and firmness of thought, and a range of sentiment elevated far above any thing insignificant and mean. Can we wonder that scholars like Lowth have disappeared, when the iron cradle, in which their genius was rocked, has been laid aside for the silken swaddling-bands of Addison and Blair? It is a favorable indication in the spirit of the present age that a taste for those old and noble writers, on whose model such as he were formed, is beginning to return among us

It is a remarkable circumstance, that Lowth entered on his task, not as a biblical critic, nor in his province of theologian; but as professor of poetry at Oxford. He chose the Hebrew poetry as the subject of his first course of lectures, after the example, as he tells us in a happy classical allusion, of Socrates; who began his musical studies by composing a hymn to Apollo, because he thought that the first fruits of his poetry ought to be consecrated to the immortal Gods, and that it was not lawful for him to descend to lighter subjects, before he had discharged his obligations to religion. He chose it because almost every common path had been trodden by his predecessors in office, while this afforded a field of investigation altogether original, and most grateful to his fine taste and religious disposition.

It was his object in the execution of his plan, to develope the beauties of the Sacred Poets in a view, which should arrest the attention of his hearers, and lead them to the farther prosecution of a study so full of profit and delight. To his pupils the subject was altogether novel. They had been conversant principally with the poetry of Greece and Rome; and it was at that day the prevailing habit, to criticise all poetry according to the models of the ancient bards and the laws of ancient critics. In France, there was no such thing known as a simple and natural perception of poetical beauty, or a truly philosophical and unconstrained manner of poetical criticism. And even in England, the examples of Milton and Shakspeare had hardly yet superseded the dogmas of Aristotle and Longinus, or brought critics to consider, that there might be other models beside those of Homer and Virgil, Euripides and Sophocles. It was therefore very natural for the Oxford professor, in pointing out the peculiarities and the beauties of the Hebrew poetry to the admiration of his audience, to measure its excellence and illustrate its merits by comparison with that standard, to which they had so long been accustomed to refer. He proceeds to divide it into the various technical departments,—the lyric, the elegiac, the didactic, the pathetic, &c.—where the Hebrew poets never thought of such a division, nor wrote with the most distant design of making it. It should have been treated, as far as possible, with a forgetfulness of all other models, and a disregard of all pre-established rules; as apart, distinct, peculiar—just as if there were no other poetry in the world. Still, we should be sorry to have lost his

discriminating criticisms on the poetry of Greece and Rome, and the exquisite selections, which he produced to adorn and illustrate his work.

In its progress, he found occasion to draw from all his resources of invention, learning and illustration. He displayed a vivid imagination, mingled with richness of thought and gentleness of feeling, a keen perception of poetical beauty, a power of philosophical criticism, and as great ease in the use of the Latin language, as if it had been his vernacular tongue. The purity and beauty of his Latin prose style has hardly been surpassed since the age of Augustus. Unfit as that language is for the purposes of acute and refined criticism, his felicity in adapting it to the expression of his ideas is remarkable. In reading the English translation by Gregory, the impression is left on the mind of the reader, that Lowth's style is deficient in definiteness and appropriate richness of language. Every one, who is acquainted with the power and beauty of Lowth's writings in his native tongue, must regret that he did not originally compose the Lectures in the English language. They would then have been a noble specimen of idiomatic beauty of composition, as well as a model of just and delicate criticism. As it is, the defect in the English dress is to be attributed to the translator, whose own style of writing was clumsy and unimaginative.

The example of Lowth in this great work pre-eminently shows, how much may be accomplished simply by the patient study of the scriptures. With the cognate dialects of the Hebrew he was perhaps totally unacquainted; nor was he very intimate with the peculiarities of the Oriental world. Yet by the persevering study of the Old Testament he attained a profound knowledge of the Hebrew language; and his discriminating judgment, exquisite taste, and acquaintance with the Hebrew history and antiquities, prevented his criticism from ever becoming loose, indefinite or extravagant, and made him successful in discovering the sources of poetic imagery. There is simplicity and truth in most of his reasonings. He makes no parade of learning, either of that which he really possesses, or of the semblance of that whereof he is destitute. There is nothing labored in his conclusions, nothing affected in his sentiments, nothing arrogant or hasty in his remarks; all is free, gentle and candid. He was making discoveries in a region entirely new, yet he does not announce them with the

bold eagerness of an adventurer, but with the mild philosophy of one who is seeking for truth, and with even a painful sense of the delicacy and responsibility of such an office.

A work so important in its connexions, so novel in its character, and conducted with so much learning, modesty and taste, could not fail to arrest the attention of learned men both in his own country and on the European continent. It opened their eyes on a new scene of the most interesting researches, and formed absolutely a new era in intellectual activity. It drew aside the veil, which had so long concealed the grandeur of inspired poetry, and made it to be relished and acknowledged. It threw new light on the explanation of the Old Testament, and introduced a more acute and correct method in the investigation of the sacred poetical books. His lecture on parallelism,—the peculiar characteristic of the Sacred Poets,—was altogether the work of original genius, and suggested a guide for the interpreter, the various uses of which, in discovering the meaning of particular words, in illustrating different forms of expression, in elucidating the sense of obscure places, and in the general critical examination of Hebrew poetry, cannot be imagined by any one who has not experienced its value. He resumed this part of his subject in the preliminary dissertation to Isaiah, where he went into a more full and minute investigation of the nature and principles of the Hebrew parallelism, than his limits as a lecturer would have permitted him to do. This great peculiarity in Hebrew poetry, from an ignorance of which very many of the errors of commentators and critics have originated, had before been scarcely hinted at. Azarias, in the seventeenth century, made some obscure suggestions in regard to it, but no one understood its nature, or had traced it in the Sacred Books, or attempted to deduce from it any practical utility. Schleusner followed Lowth on this subject with great learning and talent.

Though in itself the fruit of mature judgment and erudition, yet so little is this work encumbered with the heaviness or the display of research, that a reader who is altogether uninformed beyond the compass of his own language (if he have any poetical susceptibilities) will peruse it with the greatest delight. We deeply regret that it is not more known beyond the precincts of the clerical study and the theological institution. Were it as generally perused as its excellence deserves, it would elevate and purify the taste of the whole community. Who

could endure the prurience and blasphemy of Byron, or the voluptuousness of Moore, after having had but a glimpse of the glorious poetry of the Scriptures? Who would not relish Milton and Cowper with a deeper pleasure, after having himself tasted the richness of the fountain, at whose depths they drank so largely—after having been instructed in the highest principles of an art, which here claims the wisdom of the Deity as its origin?

We have spoken of Lowth's pure and elegant Latinity. He wrote Latin poetry which is hardly surpassed in beauty by that of Horace himself. Of this we have very many examples in the exquisite Latin translations from the Sacred Poets, scattered throughout this volume. There are no English scholars, who have equalled Lowth's attainments in this elegant art, in any degree, but Sir William Jones and the poet Gray. The epitaph on his daughter's tombstone is well known. Nothing can surpass its sweetness and its pathos. She was his first and favorite child.

Cara, vale! ingenio præstans, pietate, pudore,
 Et plusquam natæ nomine cara, vale!
 Cara Maria, vale! At veniet felicius ævum,
 Quando iterum tecum, sim modo dignus, ero.
 Cara, redi, læta tum dicam voce, paternos
 Eja! age in amplexus, cara Maria, redi.

While Lowth was lecturing at Oxford, the learned Michaelis, then a young student, visited England, and heard him deliver one of his lectures on the sacred poetry of the Hebrews. Not long after the lectures were published in England, Michaelis prepared an edition in Germany, with very copious notes, which was published at Göttingen in 1758 and 1761. These notes were a treasure of Oriental learning, and supplied whatever deficiency there might have existed in the lectures, arising from the want of an exhibition somewhat more complete, definite, and accurate, of the peculiar manners, climate, scenery, and dialects, of the Oriental world. They were the fruit of original investigations, pushed forward amidst every obstacle, with an energy in the cause of sacred literature, which animated no other man living. There is no scholar, who does not feel indebted to the venerable Michaelis for the accession which he thus brought to the means of illustrating the Hebrew poetry. The expedition which this great man prepared from

his quiet abode in Germany, to visit the East in search of information that might throw light upon the Bible, has something very sublime in its character. He planned and directed it himself, and drew up a list of questions for its guide, with a sagacity and a depth of knowledge that astonished the *literati* through all Europe. The expedition, though reduced in a few months by death's melancholy inroads from five individuals to one, resulted in the travels of Niebuhr. The discrimination with which Michaelis applied his inquiries to a more judicious and worthy exhibition of the meaning and beauty of the Sacred Poets, evinced a purity of poetical taste, which the admirers of his great learning have overlooked in the enumeration of his merits. When he attempted to write poetry himself, he was not indeed so successful; and was clearly mistaken when he said of himself, that had it not been for a few years' neglect of the practice, he might have written Latin poetry with the same elegance, which he admired, even to enthusiasm, in the translations of Lowth. Some of his notes on Lowth's work contain remarks on the interpretation of the sacred poetry, which are said to have given origin to several of the most splendid works since published in Germany. It may gratify our readers to be presented with the following graphic sketch of the manner of this celebrated Coryphæus of German literature in the lecture-room, drawn by one of his students, Dr. Schultz, of Giessen.

'Very often his glowing imagination, supplied with an inexhaustible fund of knowledge from every department of the sciences, lost itself with his voluble tongue in story-telling and dramatising an event or an argument, wide enough from the point from which he set out, and to which he must again return. The habit of eagerly seizing all sorts of figures and queer allusions and strange witticisms, though they would meet him only half-way in his progress, was constantly leading him off into the wildest by-paths; and then he heard himself talk with such exquisite delight, that at the end of the whole hour, nothing would be left but the gratification of a merry entertainment. In this respect he was particularly irksome to the more cold-blooded part of his students, who were looking for instruction. Whenever his keen eye, which was constantly darting around all parts of his lecture-room, happened to detect a stranger, he was sure to entertain him with a few quaint jests, good in their kind, only a little too evidently introduced for the occasion. As they were mostly derived from law, or from some other science that lay altogether

without the boundaries of theology and the Bible, they must necessarily have surprised the guest so much the more, and filled him with wonder at the learning of the lecturer. The obstreperous laugh poured forth on occasion of his jokes from the full throats of a hundred of the most thoughtless students, and the complacent smile displayed on the countenances of some ten or fifteen among the more cultivated and intelligent ones, were extremely gratifying and delightful to his feelings. Such, indeed, was the great man's weakness on this point, that he not unfrequently laid himself out with evident and laborious effort to raise the laugh precisely at the close of the lecture; then he would leave the room, as if in triumph, amidst the loud shouts of laughter, and while passing the door, you might see him cast back upon his audience a look, silyly, but intensely expressive of his gratification and pleasure.'

Next to Michaelis, though after a long interval of time, came the enthusiastic Herder, with all his vast learning and poetical genius, to the prosecution of this branch of sacred literature. We might lavish a eulogy on the character of this interesting being, as a poet, philosopher, philologist, and critic; and on the merits of his two great works in the department of sacred science, his Letters on the Study of Theology, and his Dialogues on the Spirit of Hebrew Poetry. In himself and in his writings, he has given a fine example of his own *ideal* of a perfect critic on the Hebrew poetry. He criticised the poetry of the Hebrews like one imbued with its spirit. The form of dialogues, which he chose for his work, was adapted to a flow of easy, natural remark, and unrestrained admiration, full of life and vividness, but in reality, the result of patient study and a most profound acquaintance with his subject. We obtain from this work the most exact information, while at the same time we are revelling in poetry. The stores of learning in the mind of Herder were imbued throughout with the subtle spirit of his genius. He wrote this work, it might be said, in tears. Mueller, his bosom friend and the editor of his writings, often found him, when engaged in its composition, weeping like a child, through the intensity of his feelings. The style is easy and rambling, but full of eloquence, and sparkling with poetic imagery. Herder carries us back by the power of his fancy and the truth of his descriptions, into the midst of the ancient Orientals, and surrounds us with the very atmosphere of their life and manners. Like Michaelis, without surpassing Lowth in elegance of taste, he possessed a more intimate ac-

quaintance with Oriental learning, because twenty-five years had provided new facilities for its attainment.

In 1815 Rosenmueller prepared in Germany a new edition of Lowth's work, to which he added many notes of his own, and corrected the errors into which Michaelis had fallen. Besides these writers, Sir William Jones, Eichhorn, Gesenius, De Wette, and some others, have since the time of Michaelis contributed not a little to the elucidation of this subject.

From all these authors, the American editor of this work has enriched it with valuable selections. He has also added a number of notes, which are entirely original. He has displayed in the execution of his task much sound judgment and research. All the notes he has selected are of sterling value; and those which are the result of his own investigations exhibit originality and learning. We may refer to the note he has given in regard to the Hebrew dialects and poetic diction as one of uncommon excellence, the result of original research. We cannot but express our gratitude for the extracts he has given us from the writings of Sir William Jones. Every thing that came from his accomplished mind is worthy of preservation; but his intimate acquaintance with Oriental languages and literature makes all his remarks on these subjects most precious. We are not sorry to see some of the selections from Rosenmueller and Michaelis, and from some other scholars, in Latin. It is indeed true, that every theological student, and every liberally educated man among us, ought to be able to read with delight a Latin style so easy as that in which most of the Latin notes in this volume are composed. Mr. Stowe has made this work a still richer accession to the library of every literary man, and a still more indispensable requisite for the study of sacred literature.*

* Mr. Stowe is already known to the public as the translator of Jahn's History of the Hebrew Commonwealth. Shortly after its appearance in this country, this valuable work was republished in England, under circumstances which reflect but little credit on the character of those who superintended its publication. The translator's name was excluded from the title page, and for aught that appeared there, the work might have been supposed to be English. At the close of the preface was the following note: 'In this edition the whole has been thoroughly revised, and such alterations made as seemed requisite to render the author's meaning clear and intelligible. *The American edition indeed was so totally unfit for English readers, as to make this abso-*

In 1778, Lowth published his translation of Isaiah, with a preliminary dissertation and notes. In this work he displayed the same elegance of taste as in his lectures, with perhaps even more learning. Yet it is remarkable that all his erudition and all his modesty did not save him from errors arising from the boldness of his criticisms. His only fault as a sacred critic was a degree of what Archbishop Secker denominated the '*rabies emendandi*,' or rage for textual and conjectural emendations. The prevalence of this spirit in his work on Isaiah was the only obstacle that prevented its attaining the same rank as a classic in sacred literature, which has been accorded to the Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews. 'If Lowth, as his American editor very justly remarks, with all his genius and scholarship, was betrayed into such errors, when he attempted to improve the text of the Bible by his own conjectures, what can be expected from others, who without his talents and learning, imitate him in his daring spirit of conjecture? It should be remembered, however, to the honor of Lowth, that he usually proposes his emendations with all the modesty and diffidence characteristic of true genius ;

lutely necessary.' Notwithstanding this barefaced assertion, it is perfectly evident that the English editors had not even compared Mr. Stowe's translation with the original work, when they republished that translation in England. Their edition is in substance an exact reprint of the American. In some cases Mr. Stowe had deemed it expedient to deviate from the original ; and in all such cases, the English edition followed the American, and not the German. The very typographical errors, such as 1446 for 1466, which had occurred in the American edition, were exactly copied in the English republication ;—and of the profound and important nature of the alterations by which the English editor, in *revising the translation*, endeavored to adapt it more peculiarly to English readers, we may judge from the following instances. In the American edition, where Arabic words occurred, they were given in Arabic letters ; but in the English edition, the Arabic words were represented by Roman letters ; and in one instance the English editors *omitted the Arabic entirely*. Again :—the American edition, speaking of the tithes of the Levites, said, 'the tithes did not amount to any thing like those enormous sums, at which Morgan has arrived by his erroneous calculations.' In the English edition the sentence runs thus : 'the tithes did not amount to any thing near the enormous sums, which Morgan has erroneously *calculated them at!*' Could the English editors have thought that such changes as we have mentioned, occurring on almost every page, would *make the author's meaning more clear and intelligible*, and render the work *more fit for English readers* ; or was it their only object to make the English edition different from the American ?

that he wrote before the text of the Bible was settled, and at a time when great results were expected from the collations of Kennicott ; that he had the ardent and adventurous spirit of a new discoverer ; and that critics at that period had not learned so well as they have since, that patient application is a much surer, though a more toilsome way of coming at truth, than bold conjecture, which costs neither time nor labor.'

We have before spoken of Lowth's general character as a scholar. It is impossible, with the meagre biographical outlines which alone remain to us, to do it adequate justice. Whatever he undertook was so performed, that it left very little to be accomplished in the same routine of study and labor. He gave to England the first regular grammar of his native tongue. We are somewhat surprised that Murray's grammar, which is but an enlarged copy of Lowth's, should so generally have occupied its place ; and that too with little acknowledgment to the individual, from whom were derived its plan and most of its materials. Although Lowth's treatise was written so early as the year 1758, yet we doubt whether there is at the present day a single work of equal excellence in the same compass.

The private character of Lowth was not less adorned with all the virtues of domestic life, than his public one with the urbanity, the elegance and the elevated dignity of learning and religion. Even his insolent antagonist, Warburton, could admire his amiable manners and the winning modesty of his whole deportment. In one of his letters to Lowth, he observes, 'It would answer no end to tell you what I thought of the author of *Hebrew Poetry* before I saw him. But this I may say, that I was never more surprised when I did see him, than to find him of so amiable and gentle manners, of so modest, sensible and disengaged a deportment. It would not have displeased me to find myself ill used by pedants and bigots ; but it grieved me to think I had any thing to explain with such a man.' His disposition was every where affectionate and kind ; his love to his offspring uncommonly tender. The ties in his family circle were often broken, yet under his severest afflictions he is said to have exhibited the firmness of a christian resignation. His piety was of that kind, which the English church, when her services are not profaned by hypocritical ambition, nor her offices made silken cushions for the repose of a lukewarm indifference, is adapted to foster—it was

rational and fervid. Whatever situations he was called to fill, and they were various, he was always scrupulously attentive to the performance of his duties. It was, however, in his elevated station as a bishop, that his admirable qualities shone most conspicuously. The rare union of deep learning, true piety, gentleness of manners, modesty and dignity of feeling, fitted him to adorn his office in a pre-eminent degree. England can scarcely show, in all the annals of her history, a dignitary of the church, whose character exhibited a combination in all respects so noble, so delightful. Mild as he was, he had a manly, energetic and independent mind, properly conscious of its own powers, and decided in its convictions. Open and free in his inquiries, he was fearless in the declaration of all his opinions. An advocate himself for the most unrestrained investigation in matters of religion, he was willing to extend to others the same privileges he demanded as his own birth-right. He had that liberality and courtesy of mind, which is founded in real benevolence of feeling. We love to turn from the intolerant arrogance of Warburton and Horsley, to the freedom, the charity, the condescension and the genuine kindness of a man, who demanded no deference to his own opinions merely because they were his, and who could recognise and venerate an amiable heart and a virtuous life, though they existed in combination with what he thought erroneous opinions. He had no bigotry; his firmness was conciliating as well as steadfast; mild, indeed, and devoid of bitterness, but much more likely to remain unshaken, than that of more turbulent, haughty, domineering prelates.

Wherever he appeared, he diffused around him a benign influence. In his countenance, manners and whole deportment, benevolence was united with dignity; a union which made his inferiors unembarrassed in his presence, his equals familiar and affectionate, his superiors respectful and courteous. His own politeness, though it had all the elegance of courts, was not born there; it was that of kindly feelings, chastened and not destroyed in the collision and intercourse of society—the politeness of the heart, to which the refinement of places could add nothing. He was altogether a being of a superior order. But his intellectual and moral nature had been finely disciplined and developed; and neither apparently at the expense of the other. His rich and varied attainments as a classical scholar gave a remarkable elegance to his mind, and his soul

seemed to have imbibed in no small degree the spirit of simplicity and grandeur belonging to the sacred literature, which he had so deeply studied. He was, indeed, as the venerable Eichhorn styled him in a heartfelt tribute to his memory, a noble Briton;—noble, for the extent, and depth, and modesty of his learning, for his dignified independence and liberality of mind, for his gentleness of mien and generosity of feeling, and above all, for the value which he set upon the noblest prerogatives of his being.

His name is one of those, to which England owes much of her literary glory, without acknowledging from whence it is derived. Volumes upon volumes have been lavished upon memoirs of ordinary men, and reviews upon reviews have been dedicated to the memory of far inferior characters, while that of Lowth, than whom scarce another Englishman could be mentioned, whose name is more venerated on the European continent, has been left to the meagre skeletons of Cyclopedian biographies, or to such a clumsy notice of his life and writings, as the reader may chance to stumble upon in the British *Nepos*. It is surprising how little the English public, even at this day, when antiquarian and literary curiosity are pushed beyond the limits of useful inquiry in almost every field that can be imagined, are acquainted with the character and labors of this admirable man. Do we err in supposing that the church of England would hardly yet have discovered the merit of his *Lectures on the Hebrew Poetry* had not *Michaelis* received their appearance with such enthusiastic congratulation, and excited his own countrymen to follow on in the path, which he had opened? As it is, the church has profited by his labors, without even paying to his character the tribute of a merited applause. He sleeps by the side of *Selden*, another pillar of English greatness, in the same comparative obscurity and neglect. He is not the only venerable patriarch of English literature, upon whose ashes they that are younger than he have arisen to unmerited distinction. Yet it is not even now too late, and we could wish that some true admirer of his character and genius might leave for a while the task of settling the text of *Aristophanes*, or writing commentaries on *Apollonius Rhodius*, or making a book for the *Cabinet Cyclopedia*, and set himself in earnest to collect the memorials that are fast passing away, and exhibit some tolerable record of his life, some worthy delineation of his merits and his labors.