

L I T E R A R Y N O T I C E S .

THE POETS AND POETRY OF AMERICA. By RUFUS WILMOT GRISWOLD. In one volume. Sixteenth Edition. Philadelphia: PARRY AND McMILLAN.

WE can ask no better attestation of the value of a book so pretentious and expensive as this, than the simple words, '*sixteenth edition*,' upon the title-page. The successive editions of 'The Poets and Poetry of America' have all been, more or less, improvements upon their predecessors; but the present one is so much, and in all cases changed for the better, as to have the appearance of a new work. The author very justly estimates the importance of such a production in his preface, in which he remarks: 'The value of books of this description has been recognized from an early period. Besides the few leading authors in every literature, whose works are indispensable in libraries, to be regarded as in any degree complete, there are a far greater number of too little merit to render the possession of all their productions desirable. The compilations of English poetry by Mr. SOUTHEY, Mr. HAZLITT, Mr. CAMPELL, and Mr. S. C. HALL, embrace as many as most readers wish to read of the effusions of more than half the writers quoted in them; and of the qualities of all such indications are given in criticisms or specimens, as will intelligibly guide the lover of poetry to more comprehensive studies. In our own country, where there are comparatively few poets of a high rank, the majority would have little chance of a just appreciation but for such reviews.' And Baron FREDERICK VON RAUMER, the eminent German historian and philosopher, remarks: 'It is performing a valuable service when a man of taste and information makes a suitable, well-assorted selection, and guides the friend of poetry in his rambles through those groves from which he might otherwise be deterred by their immensity. Such service has been rendered by Mr. GRISWOLD, in his 'Poets and Poetry of America.' Mr. BRYANT, who has himself been carefully over the same field, remarks that he 'has executed his task with industry, skill, and taste. No man in this country is probably so familiar with this branch of American literature, not only in regard to its most ancient but most obscure authors.' The late Mr. HORACE BINNEY WALLACE says: 'We differ from Mr. GRISWOLD

sometimes, but never without a respect for his judgment, and never without feeling that we owe it to the public in all cases to give a reason why we do not assent to the conclusions of so candid and discriminating a judge. His freedom from prejudice is acknowledged by European critics, as well as by our own. The *Westminster Review* bears this testimony to his independence: 'Mr. GRISWOLD, we may premise, is *not* one of those Americans who displease their readers, and forfeit their credit at the outset, by indiscriminate and unbounded laudation of every product of their country. His tone is calm and temperate, and he has not shrunk from the disagreeable duty of pointing out the blemishes and failings of that which, as a whole, is the subject of his eulogy. He lays his finger, though tenderly, upon the sores which a less honest advocate would have hidden out of sight.' And the *London Examiner* says: 'We must not forget to thank Mr. GRISWOLD for his good taste and good feeling. It would be difficult to over-praise either.' Beside all this, Dr. GRISWOLD has a great advantage, in the affectionate and trustful respect with which he is regarded by almost the entire circle of American authors. He is a man altogether too decided and out-spoken not to have enemies among the baser sort; but it may be safely said that all who *know* him, as we have known him, for almost twenty years—for nearly the entire period of our connection with the KNICKERBOCKER—see in him a man of that nobility of temper, that generosity, sincerity, and unselfishness, which caused the lamented HORACE BINNEY WALLACE to descant so warmly on the excellence of his social virtues. The advantage possessed by such a character in acquiring information touching personal histories need not be stated. Every body is quite willing to communicate papers and reminiscences to so true a gentleman, of such known honorableness and discretion.

The first section of the book is a careful review of the Colonial poets, from the landing of the Pilgrims till the beginning of the Revolution. The author observes in the beginning of this extended historical summary:

'THE literary annals of this country before the Revolution present few names entitled to a permanent celebrity. Many of the earlier colonists of New-England were men of erudition, profoundly versed in the dogmas and discussions of the schools, and familiar with the best fruits of ancient genius and culture, and they perpetuated their intellectual habits and accomplishments among their immediate descendants; but they possessed neither the high and gentle feeling, the refined appreciation, the creating imagination, nor the illustrating fancy of the poet, and what they produced of real excellence was nearly all in those domains of experimental and metaphysical religion, in which acuteness and strength were more important than delicacy or elegance. The 'renowned' Mr. THOMAS SHEPHERD, the 'pious' Mr. JOHN NORTON, and our own 'judicious' Mr. HOOKER, are still justly esteemed in the churches for soundness in the faith and learned wisdom, as well as for all the practical Christian virtues, and in their more earnest 'endeavors,' they and several of their contemporaries frequently wrote excellent prose, an example of which may be found in the 'attestation' to CORTON MATHER'S 'Magnalia,' by JOHN HIGGINSON, of Salem, which has not been surpassed in stately eloquence by any modern writing on the exodus of the Puritans. In a succeeding age, that miracle of dialectical subtlety, EDWARDS, with MATHEW, CHAUNCEY, BELLAMY, HOPKINS, and others demonstrated the truth that there was no want of energy and activity in American mind in the direction to which it was most especially determined; but our elaborate metrical compositions, formal, pedantic, and quaint, of the seventeenth century and the earlier part of the eighteenth, are forgotten except by curious antiquaries, who see in them the least valuable relics of the first ages of American civilization.

'The remark has frequently been quoted from Mr. JEFFERSON, that when we can boast as long a history as that of England, we shall not have cause to shrink from a comparison of our literatures; but there is very little reason in such a suggestion, since, how-

ever unfavorable to the cultivation of any kind of refinement, are the necessarily prosaic duties of the planters of an empire in wilderness countries, in our case, when the planting was accomplished, and our ancestors chose to turn their attention to mental luxuries, they had but to enter at once upon the most advanced condition of taste, and the use of all those resources in literary art acquired or invented by the more happily situated scholars to whom had been confided in a greater degree the charge of the English language. When, however, the works of CHAUCER, SPENSER, SHAKESPEARE, and MILTON were as accessible as now, and the living harmonies of DRYDEN and POPE were borne on every breeze that fanned the cheek of an Englishman, the best praise which could be awarded to American verses was, that they were ingeniously grotesque. There were displayed in them none of the graces which result from an æsthetical sensibility, but only such ponderous oddities, laborious conceits, and sardonic humors, as the slaves of metaphysical and theological scholasticism might be expected to indulge when yielding to transient and imperfect impulses of human nature.

It is rich in the 'grotesque and arabesque,' in all the quaint, and curious, and grim, that marked our literature from one to two hundred years ago. With MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH'S '*Day of Doom*,' an elaborate poem, in which the most ultra-Calvinistic notions are set forth with great vividness, but in which the relenting poet finds it difficult to deposit in brimstone the multitude of infant sinners, and so decides that, although

— 'IN bliss
They may not hope to dwell;
Still unto them He will allow
The easiest room in hell!'

our readers are pretty well acquainted; and the amusing oddities of MATHER BYLES and JOSEPH GREEN have been sufficiently quoted. The following is by a clergyman in Philadelphia, the Rev. NATHANIEL EVANS, missionary in that region, just one hundred years since, from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel:

'ORPHEUS of old, as poets tell,
Took a fantastic trip to hell,
To seek his wife, as, wisely guessing,
She must be there, since she was missing.
Downward he journeyed, wondrous gay,
And, like a lark, sang all the way;
The reas-on was, or they belied him,
His yoke fellow was not beside him.
Whole grottos, as he passed along,
Danced to the music of his song.
So I have seen, upon the plains,
A fiddler captivate the swains.
And make them caper to his strains.
To PLUTO's court at last he came,
Where the god sat, enthroned in flame,
And asked if his lost love was there —
EVERYONE, his darling fair?
The fiends who listening round him stood,
At the odd question laughed aloud:
'This must some mortal madman be,
We fiends are happier far than he.'

But music's sounds o'er hell prevail;
Most mournfully he tells his tale,
Soothes with soft arts the monarch's pain,
And gets his bargain back again.
'Thy prayers are heard,' grim PLUTO cries,
'On this condition take thy prize:
Turn not thine eyes upon the fair,
If once thou turn'st, she flies in air.'
In amorous chat they climb the ascent:
ORPHEUS, as ordered, foremost went;
(Though when two lovers downwards steer,
The man, as fit, falls in the rear.)
Soon the fond fool turns back his head —
As soon, in air, his spouse was fled!
If 't was designed, 't was wondrous well;
But, if by chance, more lucky still.
Happy the man, all must agree,
Who once from wedlock's noose gets free;
But he who from it twice is freed,
Has most prodigious luck indeed!

Of course the Rev. NATHANIEL was not married: more's the pity. The first poet of these 'free and independent United States' was PHILIP FRENEAU, of whom the author gives a most interesting biography of eight or ten columns, in which his careful and accurate research is conspicuously displayed. There are in the volume from sixty to seventy new biographies, one of which is of St. GEORGE TUCKER, a partisan poet of great celebrity in his time, who wrote the following touching song of old age:

'Days of my youth, ye have glided away ;
 Hairs of my youth, ye are frosted and gray ;
 Eyes of my youth, your keen sight is no more ;
 Cheeks of my youth, ye are furrowed all o'er ;
 Strength of my youth, all your vigor is gone ;
 Thoughts of my youth, your gay visions are flown.

'Days of my youth, I wish not your recall ;
 Hairs of my youth, I'm content ye should fall ;
 Eyes of my youth, you much evil have seen ;
 Cheeks of my youth, bathed in tears you have been ;
 Thoughts of my youth, you have led me astray ;
 Strength of my youth, why lament your decay ?

'Days of my age, ye will shortly be past ;
 Pains of my age, yet awhile you can last ;
 Joys of my age, in true wisdom delight ;
 Eyes of my age, be religion your light ;
 Thoughts of my age, dread ye not the cold sod ;
 Hopes of my age, be ye fixed on your God ?

Hereof Dr. GRISWOLD relates the following anecdote :

'WHEN DR. WOLCOTT's satires on GEORGE the Third, written under the name of 'PETER PINDAR,' obtained, both in this country and in England, a popularity far beyond their merits, Judge TUCKER, who admired them, was induced to publish in FENEAU'S 'National Gazette' a series of similar odes, under the signature of 'JONATHAN PINDAR,' by which he at once gratified his political zeal and his poetical propensity. His object was to assail JOHN ADAMS and other leading federalists, for their supposed monarchical predilections. His pieces might well be compared with WOLCOTT's for poetical qualities, but were less playful, and had far more acerbity. Collected into a volume, they continued to be read by politicians, and had the honor of a volunteer reprint from one of the earliest presses in Kentucky. His 'Days of My Youth' so affected Mr. ADAMS in his old age, that he declared he would rather have written it than any lyric by MILTON or SHAKESPEARE. He little dreamed it was by an author who in earlier years had made him the theme of his satirical wit.'

Though the following song may be familiar, it is so exquisitely turned that we cannot refrain from copying it. It was written in the beginning of this century, by Dr. JOHN SHAW, of Maryland :

'Who has robbed the ocean cave
 To tinge thy lips with coral hue?
 Who, from India's distant wave
 For thee those pearly treasures drew ?
 Who from yonder orient sky
 Stole the morning of thine eye ?

'Thousand charms thy form to deck,
 From sea, and earth, and air are torn ;
 Roses bloom upon thy cheek,
 On thy breath their fragrance borne :
 Guard thy bosom from the day,
 Lest thy snows should melt away.

'But one charm remains behind,
 Which mute earth could ne'er impart ;
 Nor in ocean wilt thou find,
 Nor in the circling air, a heart :
 Fairest, wouldst thou perfect be,
 Take, oh ! take that heart from me !

This song has been very much praised, and one of our Southern contemporaries, in a comparative view of Northern and Southern literature, has challenged reference to any song by one of our Northern poets to match it. We shall not direct attention to the self-singing melodies of General MORRIS, under these circumstances, but merely suggest that, admirable as the song in question is, it is *appropriated* almost entirely from some lines by WILLIAM

LIVINGSTON, of New-Jersey — a Revolutionary patriot and bard, whose life has been ably written by THEODORE SEDGWICK, Esq. Upon this point doubters may satisfy themselves by consulting Mr. SEDGWICK's work, pages 117 and 118, upon which the original of Dr. SHAW's brilliant lyric may be found. Dr. GRISWOLD seems not to have detected this curious literary felony. Of JOHN M. HARNEY, who died in 1825, and who wrote the celebrated poem of '*Crystalina*,' and some minor pieces of great merit, a full biographical and critical account is presented. The following *morceaux* prove that HARNEY was a poet. The first describes a sight his hero saw in the kingdom of OBERON :

'THE shores with acclamations rung,
As in the flood the playful damsels sprung:
Upon their beauteous bodies, with delight,
The billows leapt. Oh! 't was a pleasant sight]
To see the waters dimple round for joy,
Climb their white necks, and on their bosoms toy.
Like snowy swans they vexed the sparkling tide,
Till little rainbows danced on every side.
Some swam, some floated, some on pearly feet
Stood sidelong, smiling, exquisitely sweet.'

The next is still finer :

'IN robes of green, fresh youths the concert led,
Measuring the while, with nice, emphatic tread
Of tinkling sandals, the melodious sound
Of smitten timbrels ; some, with myrtles crowned,
Pour the smooth current of sweet melody
Through ivory tubes, some blow the bugle free,
And some, at happy intervals, around,
With trumps sonorous, swell the tide of sound ;
Some, bending raptured o'er their golden lyres,
With cunning fingers fret the tuneful wires,
With rosy lips, some press the syren shell,
And, through its crimson labyrinths impel
Mellifluous breath with artful sink and swell :
Some blow the mellow, melancholy horn,
Which, save the knight, no man of woman born
E'er heard, and fell not senseless to the ground,
With viewless fetters of enchantment bound.'

We were aware that 'Major JACK DOWNING,' SEBA SMITH, had written 'Powhattan, a Metrical Romance,' but did not know that from his prolific pen there had ever flowed any thing so graphic and powerful as '*The Burning Ship at Sea* :

'THE night was clear and mild,
And the breeze went softly by,
And the stars of heaven smiled
As they wandered up the sky ;
And there rode a gallant ship on the wave —
But many a hapless wight
Slept the sleep of death that night,
And before the morning light
Found a grave !

'All were sunk in soft repose
Save the watch upon the deck ;
Not a boding dream arose
Of the horrors of the wreck,
To the mother, or the child, or the sire ;
Till a shriek of woe profound,
Like a death-knell echo'd round,
With a wild and dismal sound —
A shriek of 'fire !'

'Now the flames are spreading fast —
With resistless rage they fly,
Up the shrouds and up the mast,
And are flickering to the sky ;

Now the deck is all a-blaze ; now the rails —
There's no place to rest their feet ;
Fore and aft the torches meet,
And a winged lightning sheet
Are the sails.

'No one heard the cry of woe
But the sea-bird that flew by ;
There was hurrying to and fro,
But no hand to save was nigh :
Still before the burning foe they were driven —
Last farewells were uttered there,
With a wild and frenzied stare,
And a short and broken prayer
Sent to HEAVEN.

'Some leap over in the flood
To the death that waits them there ;
Others quench the flames with blood,
And expire in open air ;
Some, a moment to escape from the grave,
On the bowsprit take a stand ;
But their death is near at hand —
Soon they hug the burning brand
On the wave.

'From his briny ocean-bed,
When the morning sun awoke,
Lo! that gallant ship had fled!
And a sable cloud of smoke

Was the monumental pyre that remained;
But the sea-gulls round it fly,
With a quick and fearful cry,
And the brands that floated by
Blood had stained.'

We may not indulge further in poetical quotations, but must give a few specimens of the author's critical handling. He says of FITZ-GREENE HALLECK, with equal justice and elegance:

'It was Lord BYRON's opinion that a poet is always to be ranked according to his execution, and not according to his branch of the art. 'The poet who executes best,' said he, 'is the highest, whatever his department, and will be so rated in the world's esteem.' We have no doubt of the justness of that remark: it is the only principle from which sound criticism can proceed, and upon this basis the reputations of the past have been made up. Considered in this light, Mr. HALLECK must be pronounced not merely one of the chief ornaments of a new literature, but one of the great masters in a language classical and immortal for the productions of genius which have illustrated and enlarged its capacities. There is in his compositions an essential pervading grace, a natural brilliancy of wit, a freedom yet refinement of sentiment, a sparkling flow of fancy, and a power of personification, combined with such high and careful finish, and such exquisite nicety of taste, that the larger part of them must be regarded as models almost faultless in the classes to which they belong.'

Of RALPH WALDO EMERSON:

'His genius, in whatever forms it may be exhibited, is essentially poetical; and though he defies classification as a philosopher, few will doubt that he is eminently a poet, even in his poetry. As a thinker, he disdains the trammels of systems and methods; his utterances are the free developments of himself: all his thoughts appearing and claiming record in the order of their suggestion and growth, so that they have, if a more limited, also a more just efficiency. In poetry, he is as impatient of the laws of verbal harmony, as in discussion, of the processes of logic; and if his essential ideas are made to appear, so as not to seem altogether obscure to himself, he cares little whether they move to any music which was not made for them. In his degree, he holds it to be his prerogative to say, 'I am: let the herd who have no individuality of their own, accommodate themselves to me, and those who are my peers have respect for me.' If you cannot sing his songs to the melodies of MILTON, or SPENSER, or POPE, or TENNYSON, study till you discover the key and scale of EMERSON; then all will be harmonious, and no doubt you will find your compensation.'

Of poor CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN:

'In what I have written of General MORRIS, I have endeavored to define the sphere and dignity of the song: but whatever may be thought of it as an order of writing, I am satisfied that Mr. HOFFMAN has come as near to the highest standard or idea of excellence which belongs to this species of composition, as any American poet has done in his own department, whatever that department may be. Many of his productions have received whatever testimony of merit is afforded by great and continued popular favor; and though there are undoubtedly some sorts of composition respecting which the applause or silence of the multitude is right or wrong only by accident, yet, as regards a song, popularity appears to me to be the only test, and lasting popularity to be an infallible test of excellence.'

And of another of the 'KNICK'S' friends:

'MR. LELAND's poems are for the most part in a peculiar view of satirical humor. He has an invincible dislike of the sickly extravagances of small sentimentalists, and the absurd assumptions of small philanthropists. He is not altogether incredulous of progress, but does not look for it from that boastful independence, characterizing the new generation, which rejects the authority and derides the wisdom of the past. He is of that healthy intellectual constitution which promises in every department the best fruits to his industry.'

By the way, we must quote of 'Meister KARL' one characteristic specimen, which he ought to have sent for a first appearance to us:

'THERE 's a time to be jolly, a time to repent,
A season for folly, a season for Lent;
The first as the worst we too often regard,
The rest as the best — but our judgment is hard.

'There are snows in December and roses in June,
There 's darkness at midnight and sun-shine at noon;
But were there no sorrow, no storm-cloud or rain,
Who 'd care for the morrow with beauty again?

'The world is a picture both gloomy and bright,
And grief is the shadow, and pleasure the light,
And neither should smother the general tone;
For where were the other if either were gone?

'The valley is lovely, the mountain is drear,
Its summit is hidden in mist all the year;
But gaze from the heaven, high over all weather,
And mountain and valley are lovely together.

'I have learned to love LUCY, though faded she be,
If my next love be lovely, the better for me;
By the end of next summer, I 'll give you my oath,
It was best, after all, to have flirted with both.

'In London, or Munich, Vienna, or Rome,
The sage is contented, and finds him a home;
He learns all that is bad, and does all that is good,
And will bite at the apple, by field or by flood.'

'Theleme' is decidedly better than this; but rather too long for our present limits.

Of Mr. FREDERICK COZZENS, whose 'Prismatics' have delighted our readers many a time and oft, we have the following brief account:

'The writer of the pleasant magazine papers under the signature of 'RICHARD HAYWARDE,' was born in New-York, in the year 1818. RICHARD HAYWARDE was the name of his father's maternal grandfather. He was born in Hampshire, in England, in 1693, and was one of the earlier Moravian missionaries to America. In 1740 he entertained some of the Brethren, who had come from the Old World, at his house in Newport. In a little pamphlet, published in 1808, giving an account of the Moravian settlements in this country, he is referred to familiarly as 'Old Father HAYWARDE.' LEONARD COZZENS, his great-grandfather in another line, came from Wiltshire, in England, and settled in Newport in 1743. His grandfather, immediately after the battle of Lexington, joined the Newport Volunteers, commanded by Captain SEARS, and fought at Bunker-Hill. He was himself educated in the city of New-York, and has always resided there. He has been a curious student of American literature, and in the winter of 1854 delivered a lecture upon this subject. His volume, entitled 'Prismatics,' published in 1851, consists mainly of articles previously published in the 'KNICKERBOCKER Magazine,' to which he has been a frequent contributor for several years. His more recent work, the '*Sparrowgrass Papers*,' appeared originally in the 'KNICKERBOCKER' and 'PUTNAM's Monthly.' He is an importer and dealer in wines, of which he has written some admirable essays, both in 'PUTNAM's Monthly,' and in a little periodical which he publishes himself, under the title of '*The Wine-Press*.' In a certain fresh and whimsical humor, and a refined and agreeable sentiment, expressed in prose or verse, Mr. COZZENS always pleases. He is indeed a delightful essayist, in a domain quite his own, and his poetry has an easy flow, and a natural vein of wit and pathos, which render his signature one of the most welcome that can meet the eye of the desultory reader.'

In these desultory gleanings of this interesting and invaluable work, we have attempted no proper criticism of it. The author informs us in his preface that the first project for a collection of specimens of American poetry, was that of the famous old tory, RIVINGTON, who edited the '*Royal Gazette*' here, before the Revolution. RIVINGTON published the following advertisement of his intentions:

'The public is hereby notified that the printer of this paper has it in contemplation to publish, with all convenient speed, a 'Collection of Poems by the Favorites of the Muses in America,' on the same plan with DODSLEY's celebrated 'English Compilation.' Such ladies and gentlemen, therefore, as will please to honor the attempt with their productions, (which will be treated with the utmost impartiality by a gentleman who hath undertaken to conduct the publication,) will confer a favor on the public in general, and particularly on their much obliged and very humble servant, JAMES RIVINGTON.'

The revolutionary war prevented the execution of the royal printer's project; and JOEL BARLOW, as appears from a letter of his to Governor LIVINGSTON, undertook such a work, but did not go through with it. His materials, we presume, were handed over to RICHARD ALSOP, who edited the collection of 'American Poems,' printed at Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1793. Since that time, we have had Mr. KETTEL's three duodecimos; the Rev. Dr. CHEEVER's 'Common-Place Book of American Poetry;' Mr. BRYANT's excellent little volume of 'Specimens of the American Poets,' and a few others; but all have been surpassed by Dr. GRISWOLD's incomparable 'Anthology,' in which, with a sagacity peculiarly his own, he has collected nearly every thing we wish to possess, either for historical or literary interest, of American poetry. His judgments, though apt to be influenced in a degree by the native kindness of his disposition, are, take them all in all, unequalled, considering the variety of subjects upon which they are delivered, for good sense, delicacy, poetical insight, and sympathetic appreciation. In the vexed question of the philosophy of poetry, he has his own principles and prejudices, but these do not affect the catholicity of his taste. The scope of his work admitted but little formal criticism; he could only give us summaries of opinions; yet few persons, with faculties to distinguish beauties from blemishes in this species of literature, will candidly and thoroughly examine any of the authors whom he has reviewed, without arriving at the same conclusion as to their merit and demerit.

Printed separately as a series of critical biographies, Dr. GRISWOLD's 'Lives of the American Poets' would constitute a work of remarkable elegance and of signal historical value. The three productions, of which this is the first, comprising a complete survey of our national literature, will remain permanent monuments of his industry and taste, which no other publication can take the place of, or render unnecessary in every public or private library, though by using the materials which he has by so much pains-taking and sagacity accumulated, it is not improbable that rival works of the same kind may be invested with a transient popularity, at his expense. Intelligent readers will understand all this.

'The Poets and Poetry' will be followed immediately by the 'Female Poets' and 'The Prose Writers of America,' revised and enlarged with the same unflinching care and indefectible judgment; and the three works will be sold separately, as heretofore, or together, as 'A Survey of the Literature of the United States,' in three volumes. We had nearly forgotten to mention the excellent portraits of DANA, PERCIVAL, BRYANT, GALLAGHER, LONGFELLOW, POE, LOWELL, BAYARD TAYLOR, and other poets, on steel — all from the most recent and approved pictures that could be procured for the engravers — by which the volume is illustrated and adorned.

PICTURES OF TRAVEL. Translated from the German of HENRY HEINE. By CHARLES G. LELAND. First Number: pp. 96. Philadelphia: JOHN WEIK, Number 195, Chestnut-street.

WE briefly announced the publication of this commencement of HEINE's writings, in our last number, and promised a farther reference to the work in these pages; and that promise we now propose to fulfil. The characteristics of HEINE's writings are plainly and simply set forth in the American translator's preface:

'HEINE most emphatically belongs to that class of writers who are a scandal to the weaker brethren, a terror to the strong, and a puzzle to the conservatively-wise of their own day and generation, but who are received by the intelligent contemporary with a smile, and by the after-comer with thanks. He belongs to that great band whose laughter has been in its inner-soul more moving than the most fervid flow of serious eloquence; to the band which numbered LUCIAN, and RABELAIS, and SWIFT, among its members; men who lashed into motion the sleepy world of the day, with all its 'baroque-ish' virtues and vices. Woe to those who are standing near when a humorist of this stamp is turned loose on the world! He knows nothing of your old laws: like an AZRAEL-NAPOLÉON, he advances conscienceless, feeling nothing but an overpowering impulse, as of some higher power which bids him strike and spare not. He has endeared himself to the German people by his universality of talent, his sincerity, and by his weaknesses. His very affectations render him more natural, for there is no effort whatever to conceal them, and that which is truly natural will always be attractive, if from no other cause than because it is so readily intelligible. He possesses in an eminent degree the graceful art of communicating to the most uneducated mind, (of a sympathetic cast,) refined secrets of art and criticism; and this he does, not like a pedantic professor, *ex-cathedra*, as if every word were an apocalypse of novelty, but rather like a friend, who with a delicate regard for the feelings of his auditor, speaks as though he supposed him already familiar with the subject in question. Pedantry and ignorant self-sufficiency appear equally and instinctively to provoke his attacks, and there is scarcely a modern form of these reactionary negative vices which he has not severely lashed.

'Perhaps the most characteristic position which HEINE holds is that of interpreter or medium between the learned and the people. *He has popularized philosophy, and preached to the multitude those secrets which were once the exclusive property of the learned.* His writings have been a 'flux' between the smothered fire of universities and the heavy ore of the public mind. Whether the process will evolve pure and precious metal, or noxious vapors — in simple terms, whether the knowledge thus popularized, and whether the ultimate tendency of this 'witty, wise, and wicked' writer has been for the *direct* benefit of the people, is not a question open to discussion. All that we know is, *that he is here*; that he cannot be thrust aside; and that he exerts an incredible and daily-increasing influence.'

In entering upon a brief consideration of HEINE's peculiar humor, Mr. LELAND truly and forcibly observes: 'It is a striking characteristic of true humor, that it is 'all-embracing,' including the good and the bad, the lofty and the low. There is no characteristic appreciable by the human mind which does not come within the range of *humor*, for wherever *creation* is manifested, *there* will be contradiction and opposites, striving into a law of harmony. Humor appreciates the contradiction — the lie disguised as truth, or the truth born of a lie — and proclaims it aloud, for it is a strange quality of humor, that it must out, be the subject what it may. Unfortunately, no subject presents so many and such absurdly vulnerable points as the proprieties and improprieties of daily life and society. Poor well-meaning civilization, with her allies, morality and tradition, maintain a ceaseless warfare with nature, vulgarity, and a host of 'outside barbarian' foes, while