

and rudely trampled under foot, after the head had been cut off and exhibited to the by-standers. Passing into the possession of a grocer, the head was sold to M. Armez père, and transferred successively to several persons, till at last attempts were made, but made in vain, in 1846 and 1855, by the Historical Committee of Arts and Monuments, to repair the profanation. "We accuse no one," says Feuillet de Conches, who relates these incidents in his "Variétés d'Histoire et d'Art"; "still the fact is undeniable that this terrible head, the personification of the absolute monarchy killing the aristocratic monarchy, is wandering upon the earth like a spectre that has straggled out of the domain of the dead." In the same year the fine marble statue of the great Cardinal at the Château de Melraye was decapitated and the head used by an ultra-republican of the district as a balance-weight for a roasting-jack!

WILLIAM MATHEWS.

## VI.

### A PLEA FOR THE DIALECT STORY.

IN A RECENT number of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, Mr. Norton V. Johnson strongly condemns the dialects and dialect stories of this country. His remarks are very much prejudiced; he can see nothing at all to commend in dialects; and altogether he gives his side of the case with great frankness.

Do we want dialect stories in this country? Yes; most emphatically, yes. A dialect itself may be a sign of ignorance, and may also show a lack of education, but there is no denying that there is a certain picturesqueness, a certain fascination, about it that makes it very taking. It is impossible to have the representatives of the different nations and classes in this country speak one universal language with the same accent and enunciation, and as long as the different dialects are spoken, just so long will dialect stories be written. Mr. Johnson states that dialect stories have *irritated* thousands of readers and hundreds of compositors. It is true that a class of readers find it a little difficult at first to get accustomed to the dialect, but a majority of the intelligent readers in this country have no difficulty at all in understanding it. Those who find dialect stories *irritating* have no right to attempt to read them. As for compositors, no doubt dialects are difficult to put into type; but a compositor's business is to follow the copy set before him and make no complaints. One of the best examples of the dialect story is Thomas Nelson Page's "Meh Lady." What can be more simple, more touching, than the way the old negro tells of the death of "Marse Phil"? What can be more delicate, more eloquent than the charming manner in which he describes the love scenes? Would Mr. Johnson like to see "Meh Lady" put into cold, matter-of-fact, grammatical English? What would be the effect if it were done? The story would be utterly ruined. "Meh Lady" is one of the master-pieces of its class, and is also one of the most beautiful short stories that has ever been published. Before condemning the dialects of this country, one should read not only the stories of Thomas Nelson Page, but also those of George W. Cable. The dialect of the Creoles is most musical, pleasing to the ear, poetical, and altogether charming.

In the literature of this country, we always want the Yankee to speak like the Yankee, the Creole to speak like the Creole, and the negro to speak like the negro.

WILLIAM EARLE BALDWIN.