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THE RENAISSANCE
AND
WELSH LITERATURE.

*Disce docendus adhuc, quae censet amicus, ut si
Caecus iter monstrare velit; tamen aspice si quid
Et nos, quod cures proprium fecisse, loquamur.*

Horace.

The Renaissance

AND

Welsh Literature:

BEING A REVIEW OF SOME OF THE
WELSH CLASSICS IN THE LIGHT
OF THE HUMANISTIC MOVEMENT.

BY THE

Rev. W. Meredith Morris,

B.A., F.R.HIST.S.,

MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF ARTS.

Author of "British Violin Makers: Classical & Modern";
"Walter H. Mayson";
"Giuseppe Guarneri (del Gesù)"; etc.

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P R E F A C E .

These simple reflections upon some of the more notable of our Welsh classics are put in print for the benefit of the intelligent laity among whom I labour, and are intended as a stimulus to further and deeper reading of the books discussed. They pretend to be no more than they really are—simple reflections. The line of thought adopted starts from the assumption that in investigating the history of literature the best method of procedure is to extract general history from the life-story of individuals and their books. The more marked characteristics of any period of literature are revealed in certain authors who may be taken as types of that period. The seers of any age are few as compared with the visionless multitude, but it is to them we must go for an interpretation of “the writing upon the wall.” In the works of master-minds, the spirit of the age in which these minds lived is incarnate,—is clothed with literary flesh and blood. Great men may not be able to grasp the whole of any truth, or see the ultimate issue of the part of it which they discover; but what they do see and grasp they handle with the dexterity begotten of intellectual and spiritual superiority.

Thus, the meaning of the Renaissance movement may be better comprehended from a study of the works

of Michael Angelo, Baccaccio, Erasmus, Reuchlin, Luther, Calvin, More, Cranmer, etc., than from that of the innumerable biographies and productions of lesser lights. In the case of Wales, especially, the underlying ideas of the Renaissance take shape far more definitely in the labours of men like Salesbury, Dr. John Davies, Bishops Morgan and Davies, Ellis Wynne, Morgan Llwyd, etc., who attempted serious work, than they do in the fugitive efforts of the motley host of translators.

THE AUTHOR.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Preface.....	v.
Chapter I. Introductory.....	9
„ II. Mediævalism—Decay and Death.....	21
„ III. The Genesis and Growth of the Renaissance.....	35
„ IV. Ditto. (<i>continued</i>).....	50
„ V. Salesbury, Morgan, and Parry : the Bible Translators	60
„ VI. Vicar Prichard: the Hogarth of the Pen	123
„ VII. Morgan Llwyd: the Seer of Gwynedd	153
„ VIII. Huw Morus : the Carolist of Ceiriog...	183
„ IX. Charles Edwards : the Beloved Author...	203
„ X. Ellis Wynne: the Sleeping Bard.....	232
„ XI. Griffith Jones: the Pioneer of Education	256
„ XII. Theophilus Evans: the Patriot-Historian	269
„ XIII. Goronwy Owen: the Classical Poet.....	287

The Renaissance and Welsh Literature.



Chapter 1.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE term "Renaissance," in a restricted sense, has been applied to the style of architecture which succeeded the Gothic. This would appear to be the denotation of the term usually adopted by Ruskin and by writers of his school*. In its wider application it means "a new birth to liberty—the spirit of mankind recovering consciousness and the power of self-determination, recognizing the beauty of the outer world and of the body through art, liberating the reason in science and the conscience in religion, restoring culture to the intelligence, and establishing the principle of political freedom."† The term is now almost universally used in its wider signification.

* "Stones of Venice." Vol. I, chap. II.

† "The Renaissance in Italy &c." Symonds, p. 30.

Freeman, in a chapter dealing with the "Unity of History," says: "The Revival of learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries marks, as is agreed on all hands, one of the greatest epochs in the history of the mind of man That age was an age when the spirit of man cast away trammels by which it had long been fettered; it was an age when men opened their eyes to light, against which they had been closed for ages That revival of learning which brought the men of our modern world face to face with the camp before Ilios, and with the agorê of Athens, was indeed a revolution which amounted to hardly less than a re-birth of the human mind."*

Some writers, while recognizing the all-pervading influence of the mysterious Humanistic movement, show a tendency to view its manifestations from some particular and exclusive standpoint, such as e.g. Pater, who looks upon the Renaissance as a revival of the ancient art of "physical beauty—the worship of the body" and the consequent "breaking down of those limits which the religious system of the Middle Ages imposed upon the heart and the imagination."† Welsh writers, for the most part, have regarded the Protestant Reformation as the feature *par excellence* of the movement. In an article dealing with the works of Morgan Llwyd the Rev. L. Edwards, D.D.,—the Macaulay of Welsh Essayists—says: "Oes

* "Comparative Politics." p. 126.

† "Studies in the History of the Renaissance." Pref. p. xi.

ryfeddach na chyffredin oedd yr oes hono mewn llawer ystyr, pan oedd pob math o egwyddorion yn ymweithio yn erbyn eu gilydd mewn llawn nerth, ac yn gwneuthur yr holl deyrnas yn dryblith drwyddi . . . oes o ddinystr cyffredinol ar ffurfiau difywyd, ac o gyffro alaethus yn mhlith y pryfed copyn wrth weled eu gwëoedd yn cael eu hysgubo ymaith mor ddiarbed.”* The opposing principles we gather from the body of the essay were mainly of a religious and worldly character. The late Dean Howell in a private letter to a friend of the author said that “but for the Reformation the Revival of Learning of the sixteenth century would have been as meaningless and fruitless as the ancient fight over the shape of the tonsure.” On the other hand we have Gregorovius laying undue emphasis on the literary aspect of the Renaissance: “The Revival of Learning was the first [first in point of importance, as it would appear from the context] marvellous act of the gigantic moral transformation in which Europe became involved—the important periods of which were the Italian Renaissance, the German Reformation, and the French Revolution.”†

These views appear to be one-sided. But there is a danger, it must be admitted, in over-widening of the mental horizon; for in proportion as we widen the denotation of a term we narrow its connotation. We are apt to lose sight of the great brooding Spirit himself when we view successively his numerous progeny in

* “Traethodau Llenyddol,” p. 136.

† “Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter,” Vol. VII, p. 499.

the domain of art, science, religion, &c. It is hard to conceive of the Renaissance as a well-defined, unified principle, when our attention is directed to the manifestations of that principle in ever varied movements, under multi-coloured forms. If we thoroughly grasp the fact that the Energy is one, but its transformations many, we shall no doubt sufficiently guard ourselves against untoward bias for any particular movement or form. When marking on our mental map the course of the myriad Renaissance streams let us not forget to put in deep shading the one mount from which they spring. But the power to perceive the one in the many and the many in the one is a gift all too rare among men. It is given to only a few to discern that the spirit which breaks forth in pious lyricism in a Tennyson may break out in dogmatic agnosticism in a Spencer. The excursion from the realm of organism to that of non-living matter revealed nothing to Huxley beyond the mirage of Spontaneous Generation, whereas it discovered to Wallace the oasis of Biogenesis. Both were men of faith in quest of truth, for

“There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.”

We are astonished, nay we are bewildered, when we review the immense array of facts brought before us within the extreme limits of the Renaissance epoch. These limits, it is now considered, are 1453 and 1789,—the first being the date of the taking of Constantinople by Mohammed II, the second that of the beginning of the French Revolution.

The facts which we are called upon to examine are such that if any two are brought together for comparison we seem to be dealing with things that are as divergent and irreconcilable as a pair of logical contradictories. For instance, take an example from the domain of art. Look at the Statues of the Captives by Michael Angelo, which are now in the Louvre. These, we are told, were originally intended for the tomb of Pope Julius, but being of too great proportions were finally cast aside in an unfinished state. "It is a composition of infinite pathos"—so writes an eminent critic. Nothing in the whole realm of sculpture surpasses the ethereal beauty of the sleeping prisoner, who, after fruitless efforts to escape, rests on his bed of stone, with broad, white-browed head thrown back, revealing a throat of classical proportion and symmetry. In striking but studied contrast stands the figure of the other prisoner, who is furiously struggling to rend his bonds in sunder, with flaming eye and swollen muscle, and every limb contorted. Here we have a group in which the lines of silent sadness melt into those of strong suffering. When we have sat before the group for an hour, to drink of the inspiration, we feel that our emotion has been taken in hand, disciplined, and re-created. If we are momentarily depressed, we find that Pity becomes a very angel in sorrow. We go away with the impression that we have been dreaming a day-dream, the essence of which is profound peace, distilled into one short hour wherein we may hear the voice of earth, her sounds of spring, her stream songs, her storms, and her melodious rest.

From the Louvre let us pass to the church of SS. John and Paul, in Venice. Turn to the southern aisle. Here we have before us two statues of the Doge Bertuccio Falier, his son the Doge Silvester, and his son's wife, Elizabeth. Let Ruskin be our interpreter. "The statues of the Doges, though mean and Polonius-like, are partly redeemed by the Ducal robes; but that of the Dogaressa is a consummation of grossness, vanity, and ugliness,—the figure of a large and wrinkled woman, with elaborate curls in stiff projection round her face, covered from her shoulders to her feet with ruffs, furs, lace, jewels, and embroidery. Beneath and around are scattered Virtues, Victories, Fames, genii—the entire company . . . deserving attentive study as exhibiting every condition of false taste and feeble conception."* Here are two Renaissance facts from the domain of art. Or, take another pair of facts. "Luther's friends were afraid that his life would not be safe even in Wittenberg after the Edict of Worms; and the Elector of Saxony ordered a band of soldiers to seize him on his way home and carry him off to the Wartburg, a strong castle near Eisenach, where he could remain concealed and secured He lived in the Wartburg in retirement, was ordered to let his beard grow, wore a knight's dress, and went by the name of Junker George. Luther remained ten months in his hiding place. It was here that he began his greatest work, the translation of the Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew texts into

* "Stones of Venice." Vol. II, p. 117.

German.”* From the Wartburg pass on to one of the side wards of the hospital of Pampeluna—a short step of about twenty years. “Ignatius Loyola, a young Spanish noble, trained amidst the chivalry of Spain, where long wars with the Moors had made devotion to the Papacy a great part of patriotism, had his leg shattered at the siege of Pampeluna. Two painful operations at last convinced him that his career as a soldier had ended, and his thoughts turned towards a new service. He vowed that he would be a soldier of the Church. In the fits of fever which his wound had caused, he had fantastic visions of the Virgin, and on his recovery he vowed his life, with all the ceremonial of mediæval chivalry, to God, the Virgin, and the Church. . . . After some years of training, disappointments, and delays, he obtained permission from the Pope to found the Society of Jesus.”†

The first impression produced on the mind of the student of history by the consideration of these and similar facts is that of opposition of principle, and he endeavours to solve the riddle of finality on the Hegelian hypothesis of development by antagonism. This view of the subject has been seriously set forward by a learned writer, Dr. Pastor, as the view which alone satisfies all the demands of the case. He divides the Renaissance into two movements, the one Christian, the other Pagan, or, as he prefers to express it, “the one true and the other false.”* Further and deeper

* “The Reformation,” by Prof. Lindsay, p. 16.

† Ibid. p. 38.

consideration will convince the student, however, that there is at bottom no opposition, no antagonism. The same spirit which animated one sculptor to produce work of exalted Christian purity also moved another equally great to chisel forms of classical (if pagan) voluptuousness. That spirit, through Luther, gave to them that hunger and thirst after righteousness the Word of God, and through Loyola, the Society of Jesus. But whilst the truth we are indicating does not necessarily involve antagonism, it assuredly points to a mystery. Life is a riddle. There is no rose without its thorn, no day without its night, no good without its concomitant evil. Ahuramazda casts his dark shadow behind him, and that shadow is Ahrinam. Rembrandt paints his background dark, with a gleam of light bursting through. Profound philosophy! Here is the riddle, and here also is its solution. Both the gleam and the gloom are emanations from the brain of one and the same artist. Being is one: the trend of time is one. The upward march of the æons ends in the bosom of the Eternal. "And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

The Renaissance was the sowing season of the modern world. The great sower went forth to sow, and as he sowed, some seed fell by the way-side, some among thorns, some on stony places, and much into good

* "Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters,"
Intro. p. 45.



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Let him, therefore, who would grasp the Renaissance as an Idea, mount the highest observatory of Time, that he may trace its workings in all their ramifications, and he will succeed to understand the Idea according as he is well or ill-fitted for the task. This injunction is specially imperative on the student of Welsh literature. The history of Welsh literature viewed in its own light reveals nothing extraordinary or noteworthy from Dafydd ab Edmwnd (1450) down to Goronwy Owen (1750), either in prose or in poetry, if we except, of course, the vernacular version of the Scriptures and some half-a-dozen or so classics. The mind is led on insensibly from author to author, from decade to decade, without experiencing the slightest shock or awakening. We pass link after link of the long literary chain, till we find that we have reached the last, having experienced no other sensation than that of seeing links, some thicker some thinner than the rest mayhap. Not till our attention has been called to other literary chains, to their make and metal, do we go back to examine our own, then to discover that some of its links are of fact and some of fancy—some of gold and some of baser metal.

The student who views the Welsh literature of the period—more especially of the latter half of it—solely in its own light; falls into the same error as the botanist does who traces the affinities of plants by means of the Linnæan system. The artificial system may help the botanist to trace out a flower whose name he may wish to discover; but since it depends solely

on the arrangement of one set of organs, it often separates plants which are closely allied, and on the other hand unites those which possess no common properties beyond the structure of their flowers. Similarly in literature: the exclusionary compares *englyn* with *englyn* and *awdl* with *awdl*, never dreaming that there exists anything outside the laws of *y pedwar mesur ar ugain* which has or can have the slightest bearing on the material he has to consider. He forthwith proceeds to analyse and to synthesize according to his artificial methods.

It has been customary for Welsh writers, I think, to view literary interaction from an exclusively Cymric standpoint. Much has been written on the influence of our literature on that of other nations. It would appear from what some of these writers say, that we have given to others nearly all that is worth giving, and have received in return little that is worth receiving. The Rev. L. Edwards, D.D., in his admirable essay on "Shakspere a'r Cymry," says: "Ac mor bell ag y mae rhagoriaeth ei [i.e. Shakespeare's] ysgrifeniadau yn ymddibynu ar ei addysg foreuol, y mae yn ymddangos fod Prif-fardd y Saeson, a'r Saeson fel cenedl trwyddo ef, ac nid hwy yn unig, ond pob cenedl wareiddiedig, yn ddyledus i Gymru."* Dr. Edwards instances Spencer, Gray, Southey, and Tennyson as being also indebted to Welsh literature for some of their best material. Some writers go the length of suggesting that the author of the "Suenos" got his

* "Traethodau Llenyddol." p. 631.

material from a Welsh source, and that “Bardd Cwsg” is, after all, only indirectly indebted to the Spaniard. “Y mae yn bosibl mai perthyn i lenyddiaeth Gymreig yr oedd hyd yn nod ddefnyddiau Quevedo ei hun ar y cyntaf; ac iddynt trwy gyfrwng y mynachod, feallai, gael eu eu trosglwyddo i'r Yspañen.”† Other writers again have dealt with the influence of Welsh traditions and romances on the literature of Europe, notably so “Carnhuanawc,” T. D. Hardinge, &c., all of which lies entirely outside the range of the present subject.

Now, it is not sought here in the least to minimize the importance of the influence of Welsh literature on that of other nations—what we seek to do is to establish the importance of the other side of the great truth of literary interaction. Let us not approach the subject under a Pan-Cymric spell. If we do, we shall get nothing for our pains but the scorn of our neighbours, and the unenviable reputation of suffering from a form of literary leprosy which somebody has called the “Spite of the Proud.” Let us rather approach our subject in a catholic spirit—catholic, that is, in the primitive and best meaning of the word. We shall then be in a mood to learn in what manner and to what extent our principal writers were inspired by Muses other than those whose abode is the Welsh Parnassus, Erryri Wen.

† “Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymreig.” Ashton. p. 115.

Chapter 2.

MEDLÆVALISM—DECAY AND DEATH.

IT has been remarked that the roots of any period of history are buried in the soil of a preceding period. This is eminently true of the Renaissance period. "The new idea germinates under the ruins of the old order as it falls into decay and dissolution." It is life in death. Out of the brain of the Mediæval Jupiter came the Renaissance Minerva. Nor is the illustration inapt; for the culminating point of the Middle Ages must be placed at a period when Scholastic philosophy had run out the course of its virility. That is the time when Latin Christianity had completed those vast tomes of Theology which amaze and appal the mind with their enormous accumulations of intellectual industry, ingenuity, and toil, and of which the sole result to posterity is this barren amazement. Albert, the philosopher, Aquinas, the theologian, Bonaventura, the mystic, Scotus, the dialectician, and Ockham, the politician—these form the galaxy of Scholasticism. It may be said of the works of these, that whosoever takes a delight in intellectual gymnastics—exercises which have no bearing,

and which were never intended to have any bearing, on the life and conduct of mankind—may study their systems, when he may acquire something like reverence for the forgotten athletes in the intellectual games of antiquity. But he will soon discover that he is engaged in exercise for its own sake. The Schoolmen with all their plumbing into the unfathomable have fathomed nothing; with all their numberless logical apparatus, they have proved nothing to the satisfaction of the inquisitive mind. In the writings of the distinguished pentarchy just named we have the quintessence of Scholasticism. Here the ideas of the Middle Ages are at the full bloom, and this very efflorescence, which is their only possession, was the precursor of its own decay. From the dawn of the fourteenth century its loss of vigour and colour is clearly and increasingly evident in every department of human life, and it is not surprising that the bloom fell before the fruit began to form. In nothing is this decay more evident than in the fact that authors now began to bestow quite as much attention on form as they did on matter, and as the century waxed and waned, their *matter* cut quite a mean figure beside their *manner*. The material of the literary building was quite lost under the intricate mosaic with which it was covered. The characteristics of literature in the era of decline have been succinctly summed up by Ruskin. In speaking of the early Renaissance period (by which he means the transition period between Mediævalism and the real Revival) he

says: "They [the authors] discovered suddenly that the world for centuries had been living in an ungrammatical manner, and they made it forthwith the end of human existence to be grammatical. And it mattered thenceforth nothing what was said, or what was done, so only it was said with scholarship, and done with system. Falsehood in a Ciceronian dialect has no opposers; truth in patois no listeners. A Roman phrase was thought worth any number of Gothic facts. The sciences ceased at once to be anything more than different kinds of grammars,—grammar of language, grammar of logic, grammar of ethics, grammar of art; and the tongue, wit, and invention of the human race were supposed to have found their utmost and most divine mission in syntax and syllogism, perspective and five orders."* This is præeminently true of Welsh literature: the only difference being that as to time the remarks must be applied to the works of the succeeding century, the pace of both progression and retrogression being much slower in the principality than it was in the outside world. The general condition of our literature in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is very accurately described by Professor O. M. Edwards. He says: "The golden age of Welsh poetry came to an end with the Eisteddfod of Caerwys in 1524, and the death of Tudur Aled. It had degenerated steadily for a century. It had developed from the strong and realistic odes of the period of independence to the love-song of the fourteenth century,

* "Stones of Venice." Vol. II, p. 61.

to reach the perfection of its beauty in Dafydd ap Gwilym. It then began to decline; it became more artificial in diction, and less graceful in thought But a more potent cause of decline was the growing artificiality which froze thought into the rigid mould of the alliterative metres With artificial metres and stereotyped sentiment, the bard's handicraft became a mechanical one; and the elegy became a careful catalogue of family virtues and a most valuable and careful narration of family history."* In illustration of the justness of this criticism, let us take a number of promiscuous stanzas from the *awdlau*, *cywyddau*, &c., of the principal bards of the fifteenth century. It is not at all necessary for our purpose to give connected or extended extracts: all that is required here is that we should learn something of the nature of the art employed by the writers under discussion. A mere corner of a Titian canvass, or of a Raffaello's, is enough to enable the connoisseur to determine whether or not he has before him the work of a *maestro*.

(1) FROM "AWDL FOLIANT I'R GWR O'R TYWYN,"

BY DAFYDD NANMOR, c. 1460.

"Chwe' gwaith y peraist, chwe' gwaith parod,
 Chwe' chapau i'm rhan, Gymro hynod;
 Chwe' dwbled felfed am dy fod—mewn grym,
 Chwe' gwn ac aur ym', chwe' ugain grôd.

* * * * *

* "The Story of the Nations—Wales." pp. 306-7.



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* * * * *

Ac o phwyswn i gyffesu,
 Awr ormesu eryr maswedd ;
 Enw a ddwyswn a nawdd Iesu,
 I'w ras lesu ar Rys lwyswedd :
 A nawdd gleiniau
 Yr holl seiniau,
 Ar ei freiniau,
 Erfai rinwedd ;
 A'i oer lleiniau
 A'i lan heiniau,
 A'i fargeiniau,
 Ifor Gwynedd."

That will suffice. The reader who has managed to read a small volume through of stuff such as this will be ready to agree that art of this kind is hoarfrost to the tender bloom of poetry. *Artis est celare artem*, but art here is crimson with blowing of its own trumpet.

In further elucidation of this important point, let us take an illustration or two from the pages of English poetry. Pope and Spencer abound in alliteration, yet their art in employing it is so well concealed that it never raises in our minds a suspicion of artifice. Look at the following lines:

"In some fair body thus th' informing soul.

With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole."

"Which lives as long as fools are pleased to laugh"

“ With some unmeaning *thing* they call a *thought*.”

“ Such as a *lamp* whose *life* does *fade* away,
Or as the moon *cloathed* with *cloudy* night.”

Mark the artistic superiority of these to such tricks as Mr. Swinburne likes to play: e.g.—

“ Who are we that *embalm* and *embrace* thee
With *spices* and *savours* of *song*? ”

or

“ The *fair* limbs of the *Loves*, the *fair* faces
Of *gods* that were *goodly* and *glad*.”

Look again at the specimen given above of the art of Dafydd ap Edmwnd: “ Clawr Gwynedd, glas gledd, glos glan,” &c. Some enthusiasts, we know, would call this consonantal jingle musical notes. They may be notes; but they are notes without melody. The *effort* they betray is only too evident, alike to the eye and to the ear. True poetry, like the true poet, is born and not made.

And here, we beg leave to digress for a moment that we may state as near as possible what we conceive to be the natural structure of Welsh verse. The true *unit* of Welsh verse is not the foot, not the accent, not quantity, not *cynghanedd*, but simply a period of time—the rhythm. The natural music of our language—than which nothing can be more divinely sweet—is fully expressed only when its periods flow cadentially. Different metres are distinguished

by the prevailing character of what is, or should be, their music. Thus, the ordinary *cyhydedd hir* line of eight *bannau* has twelve syllables and four rhythmic beats. But the possible variations on this metre as on all the metres, when freed from the usual restrictions, are many, and admit of no arbiter but the poet's ear. Such a theory may be regarded as too lax, as amounting almost to the abnegation of all rule. Yet it is submitted that nothing short of this way of stating the case will meet the inherent demands of Welsh prosody. Take *mydr rhydd* in its most cultivated form, and let us test the "foot and accent" rule by an example or two from one of the most introspective and learned of modern bards, in whose deeply studied music we may be sure nothing careless or accidental is allowed, no cadence that did not commend itself to his ear, however unaccountable or erratic it may sound to our ears. Let us take "Nicander" as our model for the nonce, in the great *arwrgerdd* to which he gave his most mature and earnest workmanship. Can anyone really pretend to reduce to *corfannau* the studied irregularity of lines like these?—

"Rhwing twrf rhaiadrau brwmstan croch-orllifol."

"Chwerthin gorphwyllog gwae y du anobaith."

"Ond y rhan fwyaf mewn mudandod distaw."

"Wrth gallestr ddanedd dig glogwyni eirias."*

* "Moses"—*Arwrgerdd Fuddugol*.

The third line would serve well as a crux in a scansion exercise, as no one can say of what foot it is an example. These are but few instances culled from the unlikeliest of sources. Did we but choose to go further afield, similar instance might be cited by the thousand. Now, it is in poetry such as the "Moses" *arwrgerdd*, and in the numberless *pryddestau* of our best bards, that the natural music of the Welsh language gets full expression, and that expression is fullest when the verse is freed from the numberless arbitrary rules imposed by metre mongers. *The natural and supreme law of Welsh prosody is rhythm.* Rhythm, indeed, is the predominant law of natural verse in all languages, especially the vernacular languages of Europe. Take English, for example. During the last thirty years, as anyone may observe, dactylic metres have come immensely more into favour with English poets than formerly. And why? Simply because the predominant law of English verse is acknowledged to be rhythm, and dactylic metres best lend themselves to cadential treatment. It almost looks as if English poetry were entering now on a dactylic era. Inasmuch as English thought has always exerted some amount of influence on Welsh thought, we will cite a few instances illustrative of this cadential tendency in English verse, for the benefit of the devotee of the Dafydd ap IEdmwnd cult. Tennyson, after sowing the metrical wild oats of his

juvenile poems, begins steadily with iambic metres, progresses through the trochees of "Locksley Hall" to the vigorous dactyls of "Maud"—

"I hate the dreadful hollow behind the little wood"—

adopts this as the favourite ballad metre of his old age, and extends its sweep in the remarkable metres of "Kapiolani" and of "Vastness"—

"What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's anger of bees in their hive."

Morris begins similarly with the iambics of the "Earthly Paradise," and goes on to the metre of "Sigurd" and the rest, to lines like:

"Love is enough; have no thought for tomorrow."

Rosetti, though more rarely, strikes the same note with unflinching mastery—

"Say, is it day, is it dusk in thy bower?"

Browning, with a wider range of music, and less studious attention to the niceties of metre, yet shows signs of the same tendency, and progresses from "Evelyn Hope" and "Master Hugues of Saxe Gotha" to the exulting lines of "Abt Vogler" and a ballad-measure much resembling that adopted by Tennyson.

Returning to Welsh poetry, and casting a wistful glance at Mediaevalism once more, we cannot but animadvert that Dafydd ap Edmwnd put a Nessus robe on *Awen*, and that Eisteddfod Caerfyrddin, when it

smiled its sickly approval, consented to the putting to death of Nature herself.

Beyond this matters could not go: it was the culminating point of literary artificiality. We say "literary" advisedly, for there is nothing outside the range of poetry in that period—if we except the romances, which are really prose-poetry—that deserves to be described as "literature." The primary causes of the decay we have been describing, i.e. of Welsh verse, may be put in a nutshell in the words of a recent writer: "The loss of naturalness, the tyranny of Eisteddfodau, the rise of alliteration."

Very potent factors, it must not be forgotten, were the degeneration of the chief, and the consequent transference of literary patronage to the people; and (some would add) the Anglicizing tendencies of the Tudor period. Some think also that the rebellion of Glyndwr exerted a baneful influence on our literature, but that is not likely. War has been associated with some of the highest flights of the Muse, and the classics teem with illustrations in proof of the old saying that "war is the mother of song." The poet of all time sang of war, and the fiery flow of his verse resembles the movements of the army he lauds:

Οἶδ' ἄρ' ἴσαν, ὥσει τε πυρὶ χθῶν πάσα νέμοιτο.

During the second Messenian war, the martial songs of Tyrtaeus roused the fainting courage of the Spartans,

and so efficacious were his poems that to them is mainly ascribed the final success of the Spartan arms. And were not our own bards of old inspired to sing *Unbenaeth Prydain* to the clatter of hoofs and the clanging of swords?

Too much stress, in our opinion, has also been laid on the effects of the Anglicizing tendencies of the sixteenth century. Some have gone the length of asserting that the Welsh language was practically dead towards the end of the Tudor period. If that had been the case, we fail to understand why Bishop Morgan should have considered it at all necessary to translate the Scriptures into Welsh. No, in spite of the Act of Union, and the unfriendly attitude of the Council of Ludlow, the language lived. The spirit of our nation is well reflected in the "Triads of the English" which were sung before the Chair of Tir Iarll by Hopgin Twm Phillip, of Gelli Vid, in the year 1572, and of which the following triad is an example: "Three things are best when furthest away; mad dogs, the curse of God, and an Englishman." In the "Triads of the Welsh" by the same bard occurs the following patriotic triad: "Three things which a Welshman ought to love above all else; the Welsh nation, Welsh laws and customs, and the Welsh language."

But of great importance as effecting the character of our literature was the decline of the Welsh chief. "The Welsh nobles transferred their patronage from



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golden tresses. The wine of his muse was red as the blushes of Ceinwen. He regained the patronage of prince and the applause of peasant. And thus it continued till the Lollard came and hurled his invectives at monk and bard alike. He also received hero worship for one brief hour, but it was all too brief, alas! In the rebellion of Glyndwr, monk, bard, and Lollard were swept the way of the sword, and the chief took counsel of the world, the flesh, and the devil. With the accession of the Tudors the power of the Welsh princes disappeared, and with it their influence for good. The Welsh chief retired sullenly to his castle, let down the portcullis, and set his teeth for petty and self-aggrandizement. He was no longer the father of his people or the patron of bard and harpist; henceforth he became the parasite of the soil and merciless bone-grinder of the poor. And so it continued, from the doom of Mediaevalism till the full dawn of the Renaissance, a chill, sunless period of sterility and stagnation. The bard sang or tried to sing as in the olden days, but those who understood cared not for his song, and those who cared understood not. The peasant, his future patron, could neither read nor write, and his wit had been blunted by five centuries of Christian paganism.

Chapter 3.

THE GENESIS AND GROWTH OF THE RENAISSANCE.

TO understand the Renaissance in any of its more local aspects, we must take a comprehensive view of its origin and development. What one writer terms the “primary causal nexus” of the great awakening is to be found in the increased devotion to classical antiquity—devotion, be it admitted, which had never entirely ceased to exist throughout the Middle Ages. Latin, the sacred tongue of the Western Church, had always been the medium of cultured intercourse between the scholars and ecclesiastics of all ages; and when Petrarch professed a cult for antiquity which resembled fanaticism,—“taking refuge in its lore as in a temple”—he was merely putting a fresh coat of asphaltum on a well-trodden path. Petrarch was followed by Boccaccio—one of the greatest names in the annals of the Italian Renaissance, in whom the victory of the classical spirit is almost complete. One of the most interesting psychological studies of all history is furnished by the personality of this wonderful man. A highly gifted master of form, he also revelled in the languid

atmosphere of pagan sensuality. A polished courtier, the confidant of popes, a defender of the outward forms of the old Faith—he was withal a very Epicurus in morals. One can understand why very different estimates of the character of Boccaccio have been formed by different writers. The man's being was a busy junction of contrariant principles. Landor puts in his mouth sentiments like the following: "I never felt any high gratification in hearing of people being damned, and much less would I toss them into the fire myself." . . . "I dare not defend myself under the bad example of any, and the bad example of a great man is the worst defence of all." . . . "If God's first love was hell-making, we might almost wish his affections were as mutable as ours are: that is, if Holy Church would countenance us therein." . . . "I wish I could find in some epitaph, 'he loved so many': it is better than, 'he killed so many.'" * These expressions may smell of heterodoxy, but they are not the sentiments of a bad man. Pastor, on the other hand, is simply shocked at Boccaccio's "utter lack of Christian discipline and moral decency." In this strange compound of charlatanism, chivalry, and classicalism, we discover the first trace of the struggle between the old order and the new, but we have not long to wait to see the issue. If the battle is stubborn and promises to be a protracted one, we know at the outset that the new order is sure to win. Boccaccio makes it clear that to him the Mediaeval Church with

* "The Pentameron." Walter Savage Landor.

her "holy Latin tongue" had ceased to represent the highest ideals of culture; and he proclaimed the fact and proved its worth by the richness and beauty of his vernacular speech.

The flowers of winter wither and die. Out of their mould comes the crop of another spring, flower by flower at first—a laughing primrose or a timid violet—by-and-by a joyous chorus of purple heather. Froissart uses the French of the peasant for his "Chronicles," and Chaucer tells his "Canterbury Tales" in the English of the ploughboy.



The sun of that Spring rose on the sky of the New Age in 1453. The men of those days thought it was the setting of the sun, and the last Saturday of the world's history. No event in the annals of the world was ever accompanied by such paralyzing consternation as the triumph of Mohammed II, and the fall of Constantinople. Contemporary historians did not over-estimate its magnitude, but they erred in that they despairingly looked back to the Mediaeval Sodom rather than on and up to the Zoar of deliverance and development.

Constantinople was the Mediaeval Athens. Its destruction dispersed an army of Greek scholars who carried with them a whole museum of precious manuscripts of the classical authors, which had been fossilizing in dust heaps in the Byzantine monasteries. The

majority of these Greek scholars found their way into Europe—into Italy more especially—where their presence gave an immense impetus to the movement which was just beginning. The vast treasures of Greek thought had till now been unknown to the universities of Europe, except traditionally, for the slovenly Latin translations conveyed no idea of the exalted refinement of the originals. Besides, there were very few that could pretend to teach Greek. We learn from one of Petrarch's letters that, in his time, there were only eight men in Italy who had any acquaintance with Greek, three of whom were in Florence and not one in Rome. The learned Greeks were everywhere hailed with the greatest delight. Men revelled in the wealth of ideas to be found in Plato and Aristotle, and before the close of the fifteenth century, acquaintance with the Greek language and philosophy was considered an indispensable qualification of a scholar. From Italy the Greek fever spread to other countries. Grocyn and Linacre taught Greek at Oxford, and John Colet lectured there in 1496 on the Greek Testament. Erasmus came to England in 1498, and he "fanned into flame the burning pile," as we shall have occasion to show more fully at a later stage.

* * * * *

Hardly less astonishing, if less important, was the remarkable *coincidence* of the invention of the compass, gunpowder, and printing about the same time as the fall of Constantinople. It has been disputed whether these inventions are really of European origin, but the

question of their origin is unimportant here: they certainly became known as inventions in Europe about the middle of the fifteenth century. The history of printing and its influence on the destinies of the world could not be adequately dealt with under the limits of a ponderous quarto. We may say respecting the early history of printing with Disraeli that it "remained, as long as its first artificers could keep it, a secret and occult art; and it is the only one that ceaselessly operates all the miracles which the others had vainly promised."* "Miracle"! Yes; a greater than the raising of Lazarus. "Greater things than these shall ye do." The coincidence of the invention of printing with the discovery of ancient manuscripts is sufficiently astonishing, but printing regarded *per se*, and in the light of its infinite potentialities, stands out as one of the greatest miracles of all time. Printing became the reaping machine of the ripened harvest, and without its aid the vast crops must perforce have been lost. Books could be copied more rapidly than by hand, and far more cheaply, and this gave an unparalleled stimulus to the spread of learning. Previous to the invention of the *ars artium*, so slow was the process of multiplying copies, that one hundred Bibles could not be procured under the expense of seven thousand days, or of nearly twenty years' labour, and of a sum of money nearly equivalent to three thousand pounds in current coin. Assuredly, it would be impossible to form anything like an adequate con-

* "Amenities of Literature." Excelsior Series. p. 108.

ception of the magnitude and far-reaching consequences of this miracle of printing. The invention was first introduced into England by John Caxton, in 1472-3, the first English book—a translation of R'aoul le Fevre's "Recuyel of the Historyes of Troye"—having been printed at Cologne in 1471. Its introduction into Wales was of a much later date, and the delay accounts in part for the late hour of the Welsh awakening. According to Canon Silvan Evans, the first Welsh press was set up at Trefhedyn, in Cardiganshire, and the first book printed in Welsh was "Eglurhad o Gatechism Byrraf y Gymanfa," published in 1719. Shortly after this date, there were printing houses established at Carmarthen and Trefecca, and later, at Bodedern, Bala, Trefriw, and Denbigh. Up to the year 1685, Welsh books were printed for the most part in Loudon, some in Oxford (from 1661), and two or three on the Continent. In 1685 Thomas Jones, the Shrewsbury printer, brought out the fourth edition of "Ymarfer o Dduwioledeb," and thereafter the Shrewsbury press became the birth-place of nearly all the Welsh books of the succeeding half-century. For the long stretch of two hundred and fourteen years, i.e., from the date of the setting up of the first British press by Caxton, to that of the publication of "Ymarfer o Dduwioledeb" by Thomas Jones, at Shrewsbury, the Welsh litterateur laboured under two disadvantages, viz., that of living at a great distance from the printing house and, what was worse, that of having his books printed by English firms. English



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English books published in the same period about forty-two times as many.

The invention of gunpowder also had far-reaching consequences. Gradually, the old weapons of war were cast aside, the catapults, rams, and mangonels giving way to the more wieldy and deadly cannon. With the old engines went the coat of mail and the bow and arrow, and also the class distinction which had made warfare a comparatively safe and exciting amusement to the rich. Gunpowder was the means of more than levelling the ramparts of passing castledom: it razed the defences of Mediaeval knighthood. It has brought untold misery in its train, we know, but it has helped to quarry some of the material for the Temple of Liberty.

* * * * *

The geographical discoveries of the period must also be attributed to Renaissance activity. After the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, merchants were compelled to seek a new trade route to India, and this led to the discovery in 1492 of the New World. The closing of the Levant trade routes, however, was only one of the contributing-causes of the nautical activity. Great seamen had caught no smaller a measure of the Humanistic spirit than had the scholars, the statesmen, and the ecclesiastics. Columbus, Vasco da Gama, John and Sebastian Cabot, and (if the tale be anything more than a pretty romance) our own

Madoc, were all borne on the crest of the wave "which swept o'er sea and land." The diagonal of the parallelogram, to borrow a statical phrase, had up to 1453 been drawn through the Mediterranean: the forces at work now changed the direction of the point of their application, and there was a new resultant. Henceforth London, Bristol, Bordeaux, Cadiz, and Lisbon became the chief harbours for the traffic of the world. "These discoveries," says Ransome, "not only changed men's ideas in geography, but made a great alteration in the relative political importance of the nations of the world." *

And here we must not overlook the influence of the Copernican system. The widening of the mental horizon is nowhere more plainly visible than it is in the labours of Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, John Kepler, and we would couple with the names of these intellectual giants that of Robert Recorde, of Tenby, who was the first British astronomer to adopt the Copernican theory, and the first original writer on mathematics in the British Isles. Astronomy and higher mathematics are the parent sciences of navigation and geographical discovery. We are, of course, aware that the great pioneers of physical research were all indefatigable students of the classics, and that they were inspired in their researches by the new learning. Paulsen, in his observations on the influence of Humanism on physical research, says: "Im Humanismus stellt sich das Drängen des modernen Geistes

* History of England." p. 390.

nach einer ihm gemässen Erscheinungsform dar. Der Lebenstrieb der abendländischen Völker . . . fand in der naturalistischen Bildung des vorchristlichen Altertums seine Lebensempfindung und Weltanschauung angedrückt.* Peurbach, Cusanus, Copernicus, Brahe, Galileo, and Newton were all humble students of the old Greek systems, and they built their vast superstructures on foundations laid by Ptolemy, Archimedes, Euclid, Aristotle, and the Peripatetic philosophers. As to Galileo, we know that he taught the Ptolemaic system whilst he occupied the chair of mathematics at Padua, from 1592 to 1598, although, as it would appear from his own words, he taught it in compliance with the popular feeling, and for some time after he had become a convert to the Copernican doctrines; that is, if the treatise on the sphere which bears his name be authentic, which is doubted by some.† In his dialogues on the Copernican system we have evidence of his perfect familiarity with the whole range of ancient philosophy.‡ Brahe's work is particularly interesting. Moral conduct apart, a comparison might be instituted between him and Boccaccio. In both, the conflict between old and new principles resulted in an attempted compromise—an arrangement which proved futile and evanescent. Brahe was born at Knudstorp, on December 14th, 1546, and was sent

* "Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts" &c. Vol. i. p. 168.

† *Vide* "Opere de Galileo." tom. vii., p. 427.

‡ *Vide* *Systema Cosmicum.*" Dial. ii., pp. 119, 120.

(Lugd. Bat 1699).

in 1559 to the University of Copenhagen, where the new learning had already secured a firm hold. Not less interesting, nor yet less important from our point of view, is the work of our own countryman, Robert Recorde. Recorde was the son of Thomas Recorde, of Tenby, by Rose, daughter of Thomas Jones, of Machynlleth. The following particulars respecting him are culled from "Enwogion Cymru" (p. 429). "He [Recorde] entered at Oxford about the year 1525, and was elected Fellow of All Souls, in 1531, being then Bachelor of Arts. Applying himself to the study of physic, he went to Cambridge, where he took the degree of Doctor in that faculty in 1545, honoured by all that knew him in several arts and sciences. . . . He was the first original writer on Arithmetic in English; the first on geometry; the first person who introduced the knowledge of Algebra into England; the first writer on Astronomy in English; the first person in this country who adopted the Copernican system; the inventor of the present method of extracting the square root, and the inventor of the method of extracting the square root of multinomial algebraic quantities." We are not in a position to vouch for the accuracy of these particulars, but we have never seen it questioned. Recorde published several scientific works, a list of which will be found with other information in the work referred to. The poor man fell into pecuniary difficulties towards the end of his life, and was imprisoned for debt in the King's Bench, where he died in 1558, shortly after

he had made his will, which is dated June 28. His name must be added to the long list of distinguished men whom England has starved and dishonoured. Not many Welshmen of the period we are reviewing distinguished themselves by application to the physical sciences: indeed, Welshmen never have so distinguished themselves, and it would hardly be dangerous to prophesy that they never will. The Welsh are by nature philosophers, and they breathe daily a metaphysical atmosphere. They are far too introspective to be able to write books on metaphysics and kindred sciences. With the exception of the Hindoos, and some other Indian tribes, the Celtic races are, perhaps, the most introspective people on earth, and the fact accounts for the predominant metaphysical element in Druidism and Buddhism.

To say that we are too introspective to write on philosophy sounds so paradoxical that we must elucidate the statement. We will illustrate our meaning by a parallel from the annals of music. The Bohemians and the Welsh are probably the most richly endowed of all peoples with the power to make music, but neither Bohemia nor Wales has produced any really great musical composers. The Welsh are as lyrical by nature as they are metaphysical,—their folk-music is a treasure-house of purest melody,—but the composers of passable fame whom Wales has produced may be counted on the fingers of one hand. Similarly it may be said of the Bohemians, among whom there have been no composers. In the case of these two countries,

the reasons to which this absence of production may be attributed are, we think, different, but the primary underlying cause shows that the result is not accidental. In the case of Wales, at all events, the life of the people is such that a musical currency is constantly maintained; the plant so thrives that it is unnecessary to have any garnered store. Where musical ideas of genuine value are daily being conceived and circulated it is not worth any man's while to write his music down; and if he did, it would be less his own than that of his nation, for art is held as a commonwealth in the principality. Our representative composers, when they exist at all, are not men that are peculiarly gifted in individual musical expression, but are simply mouthpieces to voice the natural folk-music. If one were to talk to a Welsh peasant girl about music, she would hardly understand, but let one withdraw from her a little and leave her at her milking pail, and presently will be heard on her lips such a melody, tearful, smiling, lonely, as one would give one's right hand to invent.

We have written no books on astronomy and the physical sciences, it is true, but every Welsh farmer and shepherd (of the old type, that is now obsolescent, alas!) will discourse volubly on "Arcturius, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south," and will put more common-sense information on the weather within the compass of a five-minutes' chat than can be gleaned from a twelve-months' study of meteorological records.

A little way back, we said that the geographical discoveries of the Renaissance period were the result of the increased nautical activity, and we attempted to show that that activity was itself a phase of the Humanistic movement. It only remains to point out that Wales was "in the march of the nations." William Barlow, who was a son of Bishop Barlow, and born at S. David's, became celebrated for his researches in magnetism. He published, among other works, "The Navigator's Supply," dealing with many matters relative to navigation, instruments, etc. William Vaughan, a son of Walter Vaughan, of Golden Grove, born in 1577, was the author of several works dealing with nautical matters, colonization, &c. He founded a colony in the southernmost part of Newfoundland, to which he gave the name of "Cambriol," and later "Cambriola," and devoted the whole of his fortune to his intrepid enterprise. Sir Richard Buckley, of Darenhill, in Anglesey, born 1533, was a distinguished authority on maritime affairs, building of ships, their maintenance at sea, &c. In 1634 and 1638, Sir Thomas Herbert published accounts of his travels in parts of Asia and Africa. He published also a lengthy account of the voyages of Madog ab Owain, and his fabled discovery of America,—taken, he said, from a MS. in the library of Raglan Castle. It is needless to swell the list. Welshmen, since the dawn of the Reformation, have been in the vanguard of coloniz-



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Chapter 4.

THE GENESIS AND GROWTH OF THE RENAISSANCE.

(Continued.)

BUT the most important phase in the development of the Renaissance, as concerns Wales, remains to be considered. This is the Protestant Reformation. The beginning of the Reformation is usually assigned to the act of nailing the ninety-five theses on the door of the Castle Church of Wittenberg. This act, however, was merely a visible sign of the long-suppressed dissatisfaction with ecclesiastical corruption that had been felt by the better sort. The Church, i.e., the Clergy—for so the word is understood by Roman Catholics—was corrupt to the core; nevertheless, here and there was to be found a righteous Lot who would fain flee from the surrounding iniquity, if only he knew how. The reigning pope was as sick of his ecclesiastical environment as was the monk of Erfurt. “Leo X,” says Heine, “the magnificent Medici, was just as zealous a Protestant as Luther; and as at Wittenberg there was a Protestantism in Latin prose, so in Rome there was a Protestantism in stone,

colour, and *ottava rima*.”* Leo was even inclined at first to treat the theses of Luther as a new and ingenious joke on the old “superstition,” and its author as a wit. When Sylvester Priero, the master of the sacred palace, asked His Holiness to treat Luther as a heretic, Leo replied: “Che frate Martino Luthero haveva un bellissimo igegno e che coteste erano invidie fratesche.”† Thus had the sulphur-laden clouds been gathering for a generation; but the nailing of the theses was the first bolt that told of the pending storm. The storm burst in all its fury on the 10th of December, 1520, at Wittenberg, when Luther marched out from the university at the head of a procession of professors and students to the market-place, where they kindled a bonfire and threw the Bull into the flames. It raged furiously over the Eternal city in 1541 when Michael Angelo put the finishing touches to his “Last Judgment” in the Sistine Chapel, for this fresco is nothing less than a symbolic representation of the Dies Irae which had already fallen upon the shameless wickedness of the children of men. The storm was neither foreseen nor intended by Luther, so Bishop Creighton tells us. “Luther would never have been the leader of a great rebellion if he had known whither he was tending,”‡ Perhaps not, but a greater than Luther rules in the counsels of the nations. The shout of the students

* “Die Romantische Schule: in Sämtliche Werke.”

Vol. VI., p. 34.

† Brandelli. Hist. trag., pars 3.

‡ “History of the Papacy, &c.” Vol. v., p. 89.

before the Elster Gate of Wittenberg found an echo in the heart of Europe. "The Pope," Carlyle caustically observes, "should not have provoked that shout. It was the shout of the awakening of the nations. The "little Monk" brought the new life and liberty into light. The gift of the Renaissance to the world, through him, may be described in one breath—the doctrine of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH, with its basis, IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS. Justification by Faith is the pivot on which turns every other factor of the religious upheaval: it is the soul of the Reformation. It would be impossible to overestimate the importance of this doctrine. Through it were gathered into a point the rays of Renaissance heat, which were concentrated on the dogma of Works of Supererogation and other inventions of Councils and Curias, burning them up as chaff. The truth embodied in the doctrine staggered Luther, at first, no less than it staggered the world. He had vainly endeavoured to work out his own salvation through his own good deeds. "If ever any monk could have been saved through monkery, I was that monk," said he. Behold him one day, among a motley crowd of pilgrims that had gathered around the Pilate Staircase, waiting his turn to creep up the steps on his knees, to obtain by bruised flesh and gory limbs a certain indulgence promised by the "Vicar of Christ." But while performing this meritorious act, he heard a voice from heaven thundering down the staircase, "The just shall live by faith." He rose in amazement from the steps on which he had been atoning for his sin with his own blood, and

came down with the fear of the Lord in his heart. Twice before, at Wittenberg, and at Bologne, had he heard the same voice uttering the same words—"The just shall live by faith"! He fled far from the scene of his folly, with shame and anguish like a millstone around his neck. D'Aubigné very rightly observes that this text had a mysterious influence on the life of Luther. "It was," says he, "a creative sentence both for the reformer and for the Reformation. It was in these words God then said 'Let there be light,' and there was light." It announced anew that good works as a ground of reconciliation to a just God are vain and valueless; that human righteousness is as a coat of rags on a mass of leprosy. Luther meditated long—How then, if not by good works, is a man to be saved? The answer, which came from his own reflective mind no less than from the new light shed on the Word of God, was—"by the imputation of the merits of Christ." This answer was the meeting of the ways: the point of departure from the Latin Church. The Schoolmen had taught that Christ had come *ex injustis justos facere*—that justification meant *inherent* righteousness, or, in the phraseology of the times, that justifying grace is a *gratia gratium faciens*. The answer to Luther's question involved a complete departure in the apprehension of faith. The Romanist had taught that faith can co-exist with mortal sin; Luther makes it clear that that is wholly untenable. "True faith," he says, "is that assured trust and firm assent of heart, by which Christ is laid hold of—so that Christ is the

object of faith. Yet he is not merely the object of faith, but in the very faith, so to speak, Christ is present. Faith lays hold of Christ, and grasps him as a present possession, just as the ring holds the jewel." * It were well if writers of a certain school paid closer regard to the phraseology of the reformer. Mozley in a learned Essay on the subject says that by faith Luther understood "the pure abstract faculty of confidence whereby the mind assures itself of something it wishes to be assured." † This is a gross and unwarrantable misrepresentation of Luther's views, and one wonders whether the writer had really troubled to go to the bottom of the reformer's theology.

The enunciation of the doctrine we are here considering marks the consummation of the revolt against decadent Romanism. That revolt was latent in the early beginnings of the Renaissance, and is traceable through all its workings. It found its apostle in Luther, of whose Titanic greatness and fitness for the task of reform there can be no question. He was the father of the Protestant Reformation. The Continental reformers, however divergent their opinions might have been from his, were, without exception, his subordinate torch-bearers. And this is equally true of the Anglican as it is of the German reformation. "Luther became benighted Britain's pillar of fire." The Reformation in our country, in its inceptive stage, differed from

* Commentary on Galatians, quoted in Thomasius, III., 2; p. 183.

† "Essays Historical and Theological." Vol. I., p. 344.

that of the Continent in that it was of a political character, and had little in common with the German movement. Henry VIII did not wage war against Catholic dogma, but against papal supremacy. His object was to build on English soil a kingly papacy, equally despotic and far more secular than the one he was pulling down. But after his death, the management of the new movement, and of ecclesiastical reform, passed into the hands of Cranmer, who was an adherent of the Lutheran doctrine. To Cranmer are due the changes made in the Communion and Ordination Offices of the Prayer Book. The doctrine of the Prayer Book, notably of the Thirty-Nine Articles, agglomerates around Luther's doctrine of Justification by Faith. Article XI says: We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our works or deservings: wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification." This is exactly as Luther himself would have put it, and the article signs the English Church with the sign of Protestantism.

Thus, we have reviewed rapidly the origin, growth, and salient features of the Reformation outside Wales: we must now show in as few words as possible how matters stood at home. The Welsh people were the last to abandon Roman Catholicism, as they had been the last to embrace it. Welshmen form their opinions slowly, but surely. Their convictions, like the oak-

trees of their native hill-sides, are of slow growth but firm rooting. At the accession of Elizabeth, when the rest of Britain was preparing to shape its course along the *via media* of Anglicanism, Wales was the most subserviently Roman of all the Catholic countries—it was, in fact, steeped in the darkest and grossest superstition. A couple of decades before the accession of Elizabeth, Bishop Barlow, of S. David's, complained to Cromwell that image and relic worship was rampant in his diocese. In the year 1538 he writes two letters to the same personage, in which he describes the relic worship at Haverfordwest and Cardigan, at the same time bringing very serious charges against some of his canons. He mentions one Gruffydd ab Owen who, he says, kept a concubine, by whom he had had several children, and which (concubine) the said canon afterwards gave in marriage to one of his servants. "The woman," the Bishop further informs us, after her marriage, "still frequented the canon's house and had other children by him." This Welsh Rodrigo Borgia was by no means an exception to his class. In the Bishop of Bangor's circular letter of the year 1560 are several significant questions. Among other things the clergy were asked to say whether they were suspected of concubinage, or whether they actually kept concubines, or, if not, were they under suspicion through receiving into their houses young women of doubtful character. A graphic description of relic worship and its effects on the morals of the people is given in a letter of Ellis Price, of Plas Iolyn, to



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daughters, named Rosa Vanozza, by whom he had five children. The besetting sin of modern Wales is said to be immorality,—at all events that charge has been brought against it by men capable of forming an unbiassed opinion. We are not prepared to endorse the opinion, but it would not surprise us in the least, if the charge were statistically or otherwise proved.

The sins of the fathers are visited upon their children to the third and fourth generation. The law of heredity is as inflexible as the granite of Foel Eryr. Our nation drank the cup of Romish iniquity to the dregs, and the virus which breaks out now and again in tumours of lax morality and sundry ailments, has not quite left the system. Have we not the wake still in our midst? In certain parts of the principality, sheltering under the aegis of the local Bethel, are there not Welsh homes where tall wax candles are even now burning in the chambers of the dead? And are not our dead, Nonconformist and Catholic alike, buried with face to the East? Is there not something akin to reversion to type in the visions of our revivalists? The various manifestations—the beatific visions, the dread apparitions, and the mysterious lights—supposed to have been vouchsafed to certain people in the Revival of 1905 were all of the traditional Roman Catholic type, albeit the district where they happened is “one of the most pronouncedly Protestant in the British Isles.” The fact is, Wales remained more or less Catholic at heart down to the days of Rowlands, of Llangeitho, and Jones, of Llanddowror, and the

rest of the godly men of the religious awakening of the eighteenth century. There were shining lights here and there during the century and a half of Protestantism preceding the great revival, but they shone in stormy places, before men who loved darkness more than light. The value of Anglican Protestantism as a factor in the development of the religious life of Wales is this: it held in trust (till such time as the people should claim it) the heritage handed down to posterity by Luther and the English reformers, to wit, the doctrine of Justification by Faith, with its appurtenances—toleration, liberty, equality, brotherhood, and the promise of “a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Having thus taken a bird's eye view of the Renaissance world, including both its literary and religious hemispheres, we will now proceed to study the subject in one of its local aspects. The ground we have to cut up is but a small field as compared with the whole area of the subject, but it will demand constant attention and hard labour—more of both, indeed, than we are capable of bestowing upon it. To till it with a view to only partial success we shall be obliged often to go to other fields and climes for lessons, and for material with which to carry on our work.

Chapter 5.

SALESBURY, MORGAN, AND PARRY :
THE BIBLE TRANSLATORS.

I.

“THE history of the Reformation is the history of one of the greatest outpourings of the life that cometh from God.” And the history of the Reformation is largely the history of the “Recovery of the Word of God.” The story of the last finding of the Law is told by D’Aubigné in a graphic passage describing the university life of Martin Luther, which may be summarized as follows: The young student passed in the university library all the time he could snatch from his academical pursuits. Books were as yet rare, and it was a great privilege for him to profit by the treasures brought together in this vast collection. One day—he had then been two years at Erfurth, and was twenty years old—he opens many books in the library one after another, to learn their writers’ names. One volume that he comes to attracts his attention. He has never until this hour seen its

like. He reads the title—it is a Bible! a rare book, unknown in these times. His interest is greatly excited: he is filled with astonishment at finding other matters than those fragments and epistles that the Church had selected to be read to the people during public worship every Sunday throughout the year. Until this day he had imagined that they composed the whole Word of God. And now he sees so many books, so many chapters, so many pages of which he had no idea! His heart beats as he holds the divinely inspired volume in his hands. With eagerness and with indescribable emotion he turns over these leaves from God. The first page on which he fixes his attention narrates the story of Hannah and the young Samuel. He reads—and his soul can hardly contain the joy it feels. This child, whom his parents lend to the Lord as long as he liveth; the song of Hannah, in which she declares that Jehovah “raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes”; this child, who grew up in the temple in the presence of the Lord; those sacrificers, the sons of Heli, who are wicked men, who live in debauchery, and “make the Lord’s people to transgress”;—all this history, all this revelation that he has just discovered, excites feelings till then unknown. He returns home with a full heart. “Oh! that God would give me such a book for myself,” thought he. Luther was as yet ignorant both of Hebrew and Greek. It is scarcely probable that he had studied these languages during the first

two or three years of his residence at the university. The Bible that had filled him with such transports was in Latin. He soon returned to the library to pore over his treasure. He read it again, and then, in his astonishment and joy, he returned to read it once more. The first glimmerings of a new truth were then beginning to dawn upon his mind. . . . Perhaps for the first time this precious volume has now been taken down from the place it occupied in the library of Erfurth. This book, deposited upon the unknown shelves of a gloomy hall, is about to become the book of life to a whole nation. In that Bible the Reformation lay hid.* In 1521, Luther was called upon by the "Voice of the Unseen," he tells us, to present the German people with the Holy Scriptures in their own tongue. He began to carry out the task by translating the New Testament from the original Greek, and completed it almost without help. To assist him with the Old Testament he obtained the help of what one of his biographers calls "a private sanhedrim of learned men." This "sanhedrim" met regularly once a week at the Wartburg and afterwards in Wittenberg, in Luther's house, to compare notes, and to assist each other with difficult passages. The Old Testament also was translated direct from the Hebrew, and not from the Vulgate, as had been previously attempted. The publication of the entire Scripture in the German tongue was the culminating point of the religious Renaissance. Wickliffe had, it

* "The Reformation." Vol. I. Book II. Chap. II.

is true, given the English people a translation of the Bible as far back as 1380, but it was not from the original Greek and Hebrew, of which languages he was ignorant. Tyndale published his translation of the New Testament in 1525, which was based on Greek MSS., and in 1535 Coverdale published his translation of the Bible, which was based on the Vulgate and German versions. The credit of first translating the entire Scriptures from the original texts into a vulgar tongue certainly belongs to Luther and his collaborators.

Whatever the value of the ancient versions may be, and of the evidence furnished by them, Luther was doubtless of opinion that nothing short of a translation from the Greek and Hebrew texts would serve the purpose of the Reformation. The New Testament in Greek was not published till the sixteenth century, but it had been circulated in MS. long before that time. Some detached portions had been printed a little earlier, but there was not a complete edition previous to that of Cardinal Ximenes, which had been prepared at Alcalâ, in Spain, and which formed the fifth volume of the Triglott edition of the complete Bible published by him, and called "The Complutensian," from the Latin name of the place. The fifth volume was printed in 1514, and the complete work in 1522, some five years after Cardinal Ximenes' death. The several MSS. from which the Complutensian text was prepared have not been identified with certainty, but they probably belonged to that type of MS. which

are now considered to be of late origin. At the time that this text was being prepared, a Basel printer, named Froben, learning of the Cardinal's design, and anxious to forestall him, prevailed on Erasmus to prepare an independent edition for the press. The great man undertook the task, but it was somewhat hurriedly performed, and the first edition of what is known as "Erasmus' Text" was published in 1516. The MSS. (minuscules) from which Erasmus worked have all been identified. One of them, which is considered by modern critics to be of considerable value, exhibits numerous variations from the others, but Erasmus, for this reason, hesitated to use it, so that his text is almost wholly based on the other three, which, unfortunately, are all of the late type. The only MSS. of a different type from the above, and which were known to Cardinal Ximenes and Erasmus, were D, D₂, L, and I, but they were regarded with so much suspicion that they were seldom consulted. It is not necessary to mention the other editions of Erasmus' text, and the above have been mentioned merely to show what material Luther had at hand to work with. The reformer disdained to use the Latin Vulgate: the spirit of enquiry being now strong upon him, he went straight to what he conceived to be the fountain-head of textual purity—the original MSS. of the New Testament. Comparative criticism, as we now know it, was yet unthought of, but Luther was unconsciously helping to bring about the conditions which demanded and made possible that science. There



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bishop of the diocese, and left in the hands of lay men and women whom he knew to be good and Catholic people." Be it observed: the existence of these translations is not disputed. But the whole question turns on the fact that none of them were translations from the original Greek and Hebrew. The credit of first turning the *originals* into a modern *vernacular* belongs to Martin Luther. Luther's thirst for "origins" was a thirst he felt in common with all the great spirits of his age. In this respect, he was under obligation to Italian Humanism. Greek MSS. of the classics, previous to the fall of Constantinople, had been fossilizing in dust-heaps in convent cells and university libraries, as we have mentioned elsewhere. When the dust was ruthlessly brushed off and MSS. huddled together by hands that were eager to rescue every relic of a by-gone world, Latin translations would no longer satisfy the inquisitive minds and roused spirits of a resuscitated world. How, then, could a Latin version of Holy Scriptures meet with the approval of one who was eager that men should draw the water of life out of an undefiled well? For such, to the mind of Luther, were the MSS. in the original which he turned into the vulgar tongue of his people.

II.

The Word of God in a vulgar tongue! The full significance of this crowning act of the New Age can be appreciated only when the Reformation doctrine of

Scripture is itself appreciated. "The Reformation doctrine of Scripture is often stated in a fashion which does not bring it into direct connection with the over-mastering impulse in the Reformation movement."* This matter calls for careful treatment. The reformers, it has been said, set the Bible, an infallible book, over against the word of an infallible Church. Mediaevalists appealed to the Church—to popes and councils—for the final decision upon matters of doctrine and morals. Reformers appealed at the last resort to the Bible, i.e., they placed the Word of God, so to speak, on the throne and pedestals occupied by the pontiff and Roman curia. The Protestant view has been expressed tersely by Chillingworth when he says that "the Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants." Now, all this is very true so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough, and it is therefore rather misleading. The fact that Roman Catholics and Protestants do not use the word "Bible" in exactly the same sense is lost sight of in this statement of the case. When Protestants use the word "Bible" they mean one thing, and when Roman Catholics use that word, they mean quite another thing; and in the difference in the use of this same word there lies a most important element of the Reformation doctrine of Scripture.

The Mediaeval Church did not, as we have already seen, forbid the laity to read the Bible, provided the version or translation was authorized; on the other

* "The Reformation." Prof. Lindsay. p. 187.

hand, it was held as a maxim in Mediaeval theology that the whole of the vast doctrinal superstructure which the Church had built up during the centuries was entirely founded on the Word of God. Thomas Aquinas, in his "Summa Theologia" says expressly that Christian doctrine in its entirety rests absolutely on the Scripture. We know that in the early stages of the Reformation controversy, Roman Catholic apologists appealed to the Bible no less frequently than did Luther and his supporters. For example, in the famous discussion at Leipsic, Dr. Eck, the greatest of the Roman apologists, founded his arguments on the authority of Scripture no less than on that of the Fathers. Some of the most fanatical of the papists, it is true, rejected the authority of the Bible, but they belonged to the less educated section of the community, such as, e.g., John ab Eck (not Dr. Eck) who asked Luther at the private audience which the reformer had with the Archbishop of Treves *why* he always appealed to Scripture, *seeing that it was the source of all heresies*. But Mediaeval theologians used the Bible for purposes totally different from those of the Reformers. To them, the Word of God was not a *means of grace*, but merely a storehouse of divine information in matters of doctrine and morals. The reformers also regarded the Scriptures as the source of infallible truth, but they believed it to be much more—they believed it to be a *means of grace*. To Protestants the Bible is the medium of fellowship and communion with the great Father of spirits, and the quickener of the divine life. The sacraments are

the sole media of grace, according to Romanists, but the inspired writings are not less so according to Protestants.

But there is one all-but-insuperable difficulty attending the Mediaeval idea of the Bible as the repository of doctrinal and ethical information, namely, that a great portion of the Bible does not fall under the category of dogma. There are, over and above, long lists of genealogies, descriptions of temple furniture, and numerous biographies, and other matter of a kindred character. The Mediaeval theologians, therefore, were under the necessity of eliminating such portions, or of accounting for them by some rule of hermeneutics other than that of grammatico-historical interpretation. They chose the latter alternative, and decided that every passage in the Bible was capable of more than one interpretation. Ultimately, the Mediaevalists elaborated a system of interpretation founded upon the doctrines of the Cabbalists, and they attributed to the Sacred Books a fourfold sense—the historical, the allegorical, the moral, and the anagogic—the last three differing in meaning from the historical, or the plain prose meaning which grammar and history warranted. Mediaeval expositors built up intricate doctrines on the genealogies of Abraham and David, and extracted ethics from the material, pattern, and colour of the high-priest's robes. It is difficult, nay impossible for the lay mind to know the precise meaning of any passage. The reader may be thinking of the plain historical sense, whereas the hidden

meaning of the passage is of a totally different significance. Any paragraph may be made to mean anything, in fact, according to the mystical sense which fits in with the occasion.

And while it was made hopeless by the doctrine of the Four-fold Sense to know the precise meaning of any passage, it was made absolutely necessary, by another doctrine, to have exact information, for faith was defined to be, not trust in a person, but assent to correct information. Saving Faith, according to Mediaevalists, was "assent to the propositions about God, the universe, and the soul of man, contained in the Bible." Thus, on the one hand, the doctrine of the Four-fold Sense made it impossible for the lay mind to know *what* to understand; whereas, on the other, the doctrine of Saving Faith made it all-important that the lay mind *should* understand. This was a most ingenious and at the same time effective piece of artillery. It wrought havoc on both sides. To save the position, the Church was forced to erect the bulwark of Infallibility: popes and councils, it said, were infallible guides in the matter of interpretation.

To the faithful Catholic, therefore, the machinery which produced infallible interpretation was of more practical value than the Scripture interpreted. The Bible in the hands of the laity might become anything but infallible truth—it might become an infallible lie, in fact—but in the hands of an infallible Church

it was the word of God. That the Scripture should be the medium of communion between God and man was consequently impossible unless the Church were placed as an intermediary.

The reformers went back to the early patristic doctrine of interpretation by the grammatico-historical rule, and they gave to the Bible the plain and simple meaning which they themselves had found in it. The infinite, the omniscient, the personal God who had made man spoke to them in man's language. Scripture, they said, is the unadorned language of God's spirit speaking to the soul of man. The doctrine of the Four-fold Sense was an invention of the evil one. There might be, as indeed there is, frequent anthropomorphism, but never mysticism. Simple men may not be able to understand certain passages, or be able to build up an elaborate and logically thought-out system of theology, but the plainest man can hear his Father's voice, and learn the *necessary* truths of the plan of salvation. The Reformation doctrine of Scripture is, to put the matter in a nutshell, that "yearning after communion with God is fulfilled in the reading and preaching of the Word of God." The reformers, therefore, made it their business, as it was their first duty, to translate the Bible into all the languages they had knowledge of, and to put a Bible in every man's hands; and they said that "a poor man with a Bible knows more about the way of salvation than councils and popes without it."

III.

Authorities are divided in their opinion as to whether the Welsh possessed translations of the Scripture, or of parts thereof, previous to the Reformation. The balance of opinion seems to be in favour of the view that they did. From what history there is of the British Church, it would appear that the early Welsh christians possessed at least fragments of the Bible in their native tongue. Some assert, on what authority has not been satisfactorily shown, that Taliesin translated portions of the Scripture into Welsh. Others, again, refer to the “*Librum seu textum Evangeliorum*”—supposed to be at the Cathedral library of S. Asaph as late as the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth—as being a Welsh MS. of the Gospels. Gwallter Mechain mentions a MS. of the Gospel according to S. John, which he says was in the possession of one T. Lloyd, Esq., of Hafod Unos, and which was written on parchment in a fine hand in the style of the twelfth and thirteenth century, but he gives no satisfactory proof of its existence, much less of its supposed antiquity. There is a fragment of the Gospel according to S. Matthew in one of the Peniarth MSS., viz., chaps. xxvi., 2—xxviii., 7. This has been



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pan oeddwn fachgen cof yw cenyf weled pump llyfr Moysen yn Gymraeg, o fewn tuy ewythr ym' oedd wr dyscedic: ond ni doedd neb yn ystyr y llyfr, nac yn prisio arno. Peth amheus ydiw (ir a wnn I) a ellit gwelet yn holl Cymru un hen Bibl yn Gymraeg i'r penn golledwyt ac i speliwyt y Cymru oi oll lyfray, mal i doydais o'r blaen."

There remains but one other name in the list of aspirants for "translation" honours, viz., that of Thomas Llewelyn, of Rhigos, and to this we must give more than passing notice. Not that we regard the claim made on the behalf of the bard of Rhigos to be worthy of any serious attention, but because certain writers who pose as authorities among a large section of the community believe, or affect to believe, that Llewelyn is really the first translator of the Bible into Welsh, and aver that Bishop Morgan indirectly, and Salesbury and his collaborators directly, are indebted to him for much of their material.

The claim was first advanced by Iolo Morganwg, and it has been renewed by others from time to time, with rather more zeal than acumen. It is necessary to state and examine the case fully, and we cannot do better than give the arguments advanced for the Rhigos theory, by a writer in "Seren Gomer" for January, 1883, in the first place, and then examine them, one by one.

argument :

(1) "In an old MS. which was in the collection of Iolo Morganwg, it is said that Thomas Llewelyn, of Rhigos, was the first Welsh Nonconformist preacher, and that he had three congregations under his charge, one at Rhigos, a second at Llangyfelach, and a third at Llanfabon. Llewelyn, it is said, used to translate portions of the Bible for his services. It is claimed for this account that it was taken down from the mouth of Morgan Llewelyn, of Neath, about the year 1770—the said Morgan Llewelyn being, it is further averred, a descendant of Thomas Llewelyn, and the possessor of the Rhigos MSS."

(2) The following passage is said to occur in one of Iolo's letters: "Thomas Llewelyn o'r Rigoes yn Morganwg a droes y Bibl yn Gymraeg o gyfieithiad Saesneg Tyndal, a hwn a ddarllenai ef mewn cynnull-eidfaedd bychain mewn amryw fannan ar hyd y wlad. A Siencyn o Ddefynog mewn marwnad iddo a ddywed ei fod weithiau yn pregethu. Y mae yn Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch, yn Mostyn (meddai Evan Evans) gopi o lythyr a ysgrifennodd efe at Dr. R. esgob Mynyw, i erchi iddo gyfieithi y Bibl i'r Gymraeg. Yn fyr, hen wr da rhagorol oedd ef, ac yn medru'r hen brydyddiaeth yn berffaith; ac mae llawer o gywyddau synwyrol dros ben o'i waith."

(3) "Local tradition testifies that Llewelyn had translated the Bible into the Welsh language."

(4) The writer assumes that Salesbury made extensive use of the "Rhigos version" on the ground that numerous South Wales (Gwenhwyseg) phrases, words, terminations, &c., occur in his translation.

He then concludes his remarkable article in the following triumphant manner: "Credwn, erbyn hyn, y bydd naw o bob deg o'r darllenwyr yn foddlon cydolygu a ni, fod Thomas Llewelyn wedi cyfieithu rhannau helaeth, os nid yr oll, o'r Testament Newydd i'r Gymraeg, ac fod William Salesbury a Dr. Davies wedi gweled ac wedi defnyddio llawer o'r cyfieithiad hwnnw pan yn paratoi yr eiddynt hwy i'r wasg."

It will help the reader to form an estimate of this writer's reasoning powers, and of the value of his historical methods, if we show how he arrives at another important "fact" respecting the bard of Rhigos. Thomas Llewelyn was a Baptist, he says; and this is how the discovery is made:—

"Ni ddywedir i ni pa beth oedd ci farn grefyddol; ond y mae rhyw bethau yn yr hanes yn peru i ni dybied ei fod yn barnu yn nghylch bedydd yn debyg fel y barna y Bedyddwyr yn yr oes hon, oblegyd y pethau canlynol:—Dywedir ei fod yn teithio o un parth o'r wlad i'r llall i bregethu. Yr oedd prif orsaf y symudiad gwerthfawr hwn yn y diwedd, fel yr ymddengys, yn Mlaen Cannaid, ger Merthyr. Torodd y casgliad hwnw o ddysgyblion duwiol Thos. Llewelyn allan ar ol hyny yn dair cangen; un yn Bresbyteraidd, a sefydlodd yn Nghefn-coedycymmer; un arall, yn debyg i Grynwyr, a sefydlodd yn *Quakers' Yard*; un arall yn Fedyddwyr, a sefydlodd yn Llan-

haran, wedi hyny yn Llantrisant, ac wedi hyny yn Hengoed. Yn awr, y mae yn naturiol i ni feddwl fod y nodweddau newydd (*new features*) sydd yn y cangenau hyny yn cael eu cefnogi gan y sylfaenydd. Nid oedd Presbyteriaeth yn beth newydd, canys yr oedd ymrysonfa rhwng y Puritaniaid a'r dosparth Pabyddol yn Eglwys Loegr am bethau fel hyn er ys blynyddau lawer. Ond yr oedd egwyddorion y Bedyddwyr yn lled ddyeithr y pryd hwnw yn Nghymru; ac felly hefyd yr oedd egwyddorion tebyg i eiddo y Crynwyr. Gan hyny, tueddir fi i feddwl mai pregethwr yn erbyn defodau a seremonïau oedd T.Ll., yn cymbhell *crefydd bersonol* ar y bobl; yr hyn sydd anhawdd ci wneyd yn gysson, heb wrthod gwneyd plant *nad allant* gredu yn grefyddwyr. Mae yn deilwng o sylw fod y nodwedd hwn yn yr holl ddiwygwyr yn y tymhor yma, yn gystal ag o'i flaen ac ar ci ol; sef dadleu dros *grefydd bersonol*, yn lle y dull Pabyddol o wneyd yr holl wlad yn grefyddol. Gwelir y nodwedd yna yn Wickliff, Walter Brute, Sion Kent, a'r Lolardiaid yn gyffredinol, yn gystal ag yn Udal, J. Penry, T. Cartwright, &c., yn ac ar ol amser Thomas Llewelyn; ac yr oedd hyny yn tueddu yn naturiol i ymwrthod â chrefydd plant. Dywedais fod yr egwyddorion hyn yn lled ddyeithr; efallai y dysgwylir gan rai i mi ddweyd eu bod yn hollol ddyeithr; ond yn hyn nid wyf yn cydfeddwl â hwy, o herwydd ui a gawn fod Bedyddwyr yn Sir Forganwg er y flwyddyn 1580 neu cyn hyny.

“Ond y rheswm cryfaf yn ein golwg ni i brofi mai Bedyddiwr oedd T.Ll., yw y ffaith fod Dr. Rees, Abertawy, a Dr. Thomas, Liverpool, yn eu “Hanes yr Eglwysi Annibynol yn Nghymru,” yn amheu a fu y fath bregethwr yn y wlad erioed. Gallwn ddyfalu fod y ddau Batriarch wedi methu gweled eu ffordd yn glir i hawlio T.Ll. fel Annibynwr, yn hytrach nâ chyfaddef yn onest mai Bedyddiwr oedd, wedi penderfynu amheu ei fodolaeth.”

We have not, we confess, met with a similar example of intellectual impotency within the compass

of our reading. The historian could afford to ignore puerilities of this kind were it not that they are paraded under the guise of history by "popular" lecturers for sectarian purposes. A writer ceases to be a literary critic when he forgets that truth knows no sect, and the Nemesis of history will not spare the memory of such an one.

We must now return to the chain of arguments. Let us begin with the first link. In the first place, we observe that there does not exist any trace of the MS. said to be in the possession of Iolo Morganwg, and which is supposed to have been "written from the mouth" of Morgan Llewelyn, of Neath, about the year 1770. It is natural to ask—what has become of this same MS.? Secondly, nothing is known of any "Morgan Llewelyn, of Neath." Patient research on the part of the author has failed to trace "Morgan Llewelyn, of Neath" c. 1770, or to identify any Llewelyn, of Neath, of that period, with the line of Thomas Llewelyn, of Rhigos.

With regard to the second link, we observe that Iolo bases his statement on hearsay evidence. *Ieuan Brydydd Hir* told him, presumably, that "Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch" contained a transcript of Llewelyn's letter to Bishop Davies. Even if we admit the reliability of the witness Iolo, who is to vouch for the veracity of *Ieuan Brydydd Hir*? The question is very *a propos* if we remember that the book in the Mostyn library which Evan Evans alludes to does *not* contain the said transcript. And here we would

remark that the testimony of Iolo is not invariably of an unimpeachable character. The "Bardd yn ol Braint a Defawd" was first and last a Morganwgite, and in matters where the honour of his beloved "Gwenhwyseg" was at stake, he frequently allowed his patriotism to warp his judgment.

The third link is that of tradition. As to "llen gwerin y gymydogæth" we can only say that it has nothing to tell concerning the "Rhigos version." No tradition of any kind touching Llewelyn has existed within the memory of the oldest living inhabitant of the neighbourhood of Rhigos.

And now as to the occurrence in Salesbury's translation of South Wales words, terminations, &c. This is not disputed, but is satisfactorily accounted for by the fact that Salesbury and his collaborators were simply working from patterns. "Yn nhafodiaeth y Deheudir yr ysgrifenwyd 'Cyfreithiau Hywel Dda,' 'Y Brutian,' 'Achau a Bucheddau y Saint,' y 'Mabinogion,' y 'Trioedd,' 'Barddas,' yng nghyd a'r amryfal gyfansoddiadau a geir yn 'Ysgriflyfrau Iolo,' a llawer gyda hwynt; ac nid oes ond y peth nesaf i ddim o *ryddiaeth* wedi ei ysgrifeny yn nhafodiaith Gwynedd hyd yn bur agos i amser y Diwygiad yn yr 16eg canrif."* Salesbury and his helpers cast their style in the already-existing mould, or very largely so. We have a parallel case in the history of English literature.

* "Y Cyfieithiad Cymreig."

After the Scandinavian invasions had stamped out the Northern culture, and the South became the home of letters, under Alfred and his successors, the West Saxon became the literary dialect, and was adopted by all English writers, in the absence of a better model.

Furthermore, according to Iolo (as quoted by Malkin), the translation of Llewelyn was made from the English version of Tyndale, but Salesbury, as will be more fully shown in the proper place, translated direct from the Greek. It is very doubtful whether a translation of a translation deserves to be considered a version of anything—it would rather be more correct to describe it as a paraphrase. This remark applies equally to English and other translations not made from original sources. Another important consideration is that the Rhigos theory fails to account for the variety in style in the Testament of 1567.

Finally, we agree with Gwallter Mechain who says that men of the position, honesty, and learning of Salesbury, Bishop Davies, and Huet would not stoop to do that which could be characterized only as despicable plagiarism.

This brief account summarises, we believe, all that has or can be said touching the existence or otherwise of Welsh translations of the Bible, or of portions thereof, previous to the appearance of the New Testament of William Salesbury.



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(b) *Its diversity of style.*

There are at least three distinct dialects represented in the works, viz., those of Gwynedd, Morganwg, and Dyfed. These are accounted for by the fact, as already stated, that Salesbury was following certain models; but it must not be forgotten that he sought also to make his version acceptable alike to the people of South and North Wales. The South Wales idioms are to be found more especially in the portions translated by Bishop Davies and by Huet. Salesbury usually puts S. Wales words in the margin, whereas in the work of the other two they are more frequently than not in the body of the translation. It is to be observed of the relative merits of the three translators that Salesbury is the most literal, Davies the most modern, and Huet the most natural. The naturalness of Huet is due to his provincialism. He sometimes unconsciously drifts into the simple Doric of Dyfed, and then his style is flowing and graceful.

(c) *Its ruggedness.*

The style of the work, as a whole and apart from that of individual passages, is stiff and unmusical. The remarks of Gwallter Mechain on this head are not a whit too severe. He says: "Pe rhoddid enw un o'r pedwar mesur ar hugain cerdd dafawd ar waith William Salsbri [sic] yn llythyrenu geiriau Cymraeg—'Clogyrnach' a fyddai yr enw cymhwysaf, Y mae yn rhaid addef, mai dull gymhwys ydyw i gynnal ar gof a chadw dadogaeth geiriau un-

sill, a tharddiad rbai cyfansawdd: ond ar yr un pryd, dull dra anaddas oedd i gyhoeddi newyddion da yr Efengyl yn mhlith y werin anbyddysg yng nghystrawen y grammadegau.”* It would be difficult to find anything more abrupt or broken than some of the paragraphs of Salesbury’s Testament in the whole range of Mediaeval literature.

(d) *Its un-Cymric elements.*

There are numerous Greek, Latin, and English words—transliterations they might almost be called—e.g, eccles, episcop, hypocriteit, batyddio, parabola, membranae, pechet, temp, parat, deficio, orribil, temptation, president, entrio, nasiwn, etc. One can but conclude that Salesbury was a great deal more concerned about his etymology than about his syntax.

(e) *Its obsolete words and usages.*

There are numerous obsolete words, such as oruc, amobydd, dref-tad, gible, Coelfain (=Efengyl), dabre, gawri, nyoha, syna, mwnwgl, etc.; and there are several words that are used in an obsolete sense, such as câr, prudd, maddeu, praidd, cyfoeth, plwyf, etc.†

* “Gwaith Gwallter Mechain.” Vol. II., p. 207.

† Vide “Transactions of the Liverpool Welsh National Society,” p. 78.

The chief characteristics of Bishop Morgan's Bible are :—

(a) *Its purity of diction.*

Morgan brushed away the Mediaevalisms of Salisbury, and he very rarely uses words that are not of Welsh origin.

(b) *Uniformity of dialect.*

He employs throughout the rich Attic of Gwynedd.

(c) *The euphonious flow of its sentences.*

For rhythm and cadence it equals and sometimes surpasses the English Authorised Version. Take the following typical example and compare its "melody" with that of any other version, ancient or modern.

S. MATT. v. 3—10.

(3) Gwyn eu bŷd y tlodion yn yr yspryd, canys eiddynt yw teyrnas nefoedd.

(4) Gwyn eu bŷd y rbai galarus, canys hwynt a ddiddenir.

(5) Gwyn eu bŷd y rhai addfwyn; canys hwy a feddiannant y ddaiar.

(6) Gwyn eu bŷd y rhai sy arnynt newyn a syched am gyfiawnder: canys hwy a ddiwellir.

(7) Gwyn eu byd y trugarogion: canys hwy a gânt drugaredd.

(8) Gwyn eu bŷd y rhai glân o galon: canys hwy a welant Dduw.

(9) Gwyn eu bŷd y tangneddyf-wyr: canys hwy a elwir yn blant Duw.

(10) Gwyn eu bŷd y rbai a erlidir er mwyn cyfiawnder: canys eiddynt yw teyrnas nefoedd.

(d) *Its avoidance of the hiatus and other dissonances.*

The instances in which Morgan has rubbed down the harshness of Salesbury are some thousands in number. He never tolerates such forms as i ei, o ci i yw, i ein, &c. It were well if writers of the school of Gwallter Mechain followed him in this respect. Nothing can be more intolerable to a musical ear than the "gaping of the vowels."

(e) *Its language is the language of the people.*

Morgan has been called the father of modern Welsh prose, and the distinction is perfectly deserving. He is its father because, to use a paradox, the child is the father of the man. The fondest offspring of a Welshman is the dialect of his own neighbourhood. Morgan employed the living dialect of his district and gave it permanence and ubiquity by the cunning of his pen. When he resolved to cast aside the old models, the spirit of prophecy was mightily on him. With the old poets matter was subservient to form; with the old prose writers matter and form were at

war: the style of all time was one, he could not but observe, in which both matter and form would be joined in happy and indissoluble concord. The material of a new style stood ready-hewn in the dialect of Gwynedd, waiting only to be built into a stately mansion of standard prose by the first master-mind who should arise. That master-mind was Morgan, and he accomplished the task. 'The style of the Welsh Bible is still our best model. Whereas in verse we are today fluctuating between the doctrines of the Romantic and the Artificial schools, in prose we abide by the syntactical and other reforms introduced by the immortal Bishop. The trailing and involved sentences of the older writers, the intricate constructions and inherited confusions allowable in grandiose romance, the ambiguous anacolouthons resulting from attempts to compass more than an analytic language permits, have totally disappeared. The "regularity, uniformity, precision, balance," which Matthew Arnold regards as "the needful qualities of a fit prose" are not lacking in the monument of knowledge and industry which was built by the great Welshman.

We said that the spirit of prophecy was mightily on Morgan. That it was is manifest from his irrepressible desire to give his beloved Wales the Book of Life, and still more from the striving after clearness in that Book. Consider the perspicuity of the language alone. The great failing of Salesbury's style is—(to sum up all its weak points)—its

“opaqueness.” Morgan perceived that to improve upon his predecessor he must shatter the shackles of antiquity and break with the past, and he had little scruple in doing so. The sound of iconoclasm was in the air. The recesses occupied by idols became apertures to let in light. “The one supreme commandment, ‘Be thou clear,’ was what the children of Phœbus heard in those days,” and the spirits who could shape their course with the trend of time obeyed the commandment, in literature no less than in art and religion. Morgan was one of the few who thoroughly comprehended the spirit of his age. The number of literary men who succeeded in tearing off the veil of Mediaevalism was comparatively small, considering the strides that had been made in some parts of the Continent. And English writers were no better than Welsh writers in this respect. For example, we find Chapman, the Elizabethan translator of Homer, expressing himself in his preface thus: “Though truth in her very nakedness sits in so deep a pit, that from Gades to Aurora and Ganges few eyes can sound her, I hope yet those few here will so discover and confirm, that, the date being out of her darkness in this morning of our poet, he shall now gird his temples with the sun,” and we find Milton writing: “And long it was not after, when I was confirmed in this opinion, that he, who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem.” We heave a sigh of relief when we have waded to the other side of a sentence like either

of the above, and exclaim with Matthew Arnold "Such a prose is intolerable!" But when we read a sentence like the following by Dryden—"What Virgil wrote in the vigour of his age, in plenty and at ease, I have undertaken to translate in my declining years; struggling with wants, oppressed with sickness, curbed in my genius, liable to be misconstrued in all I write"—then we exclaim that here at last we have the true English prose, a prose such as we would all gladly use if we only knew how. Yet Dryden was Milton's contemporary. And when we come to look at our own writers we find many disparities quite as conspicuous as that between Milton and Dryden; for example, look at the prose of Dr. Gruffydd Roberts. Here are two examples from his "Grammadeg" published in 1567: "E fyd uethiau'n dostur fynghalon urth veled lauer a anuyd ag a faguyd, i'm doedyd, yn diystr gentynt amdanaf, tan geissio y murthod a mi, ac ymgystlung ag estroniaeth cyn adnabod dim o honi." "Canys chui a gench rai yn gytrym ag y guelant afon Hafren, ne glochdai, ymuithig, a chloured sais yn doedyd uniaith good morow, a dechreuant olung i cymraeg tros gof, ai doedyd yn faur i lediaeth, i cymraeg a fyd, seisnigaid, ai saisneg (dyu a wyr) yn rhy gymreigiaid."

The difference between the style of the translator and that of the grammarian can be best described by a simile: Morgan's periods are like lithe lambs gambolling on the hill-side, whereas the sentences of Roberts are like a flock of fettered sheep moving lamely along.



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be found to follow the English Authorised Version or, in the New Testament, the version of Salesbury. But there is internal evidence to show that the revisers consulted the original texts and that they departed from Salesbury, Morgan, and the Authorised Version when they deemed necessary. The revision of 1620 is usually known as "Parry's Bible," but a large share—perhaps the larger—of the work must be attributed to Dr. John Davies. By the combined labours of these men, the few remaining archaisms and a considerable number of expletives were removed from Morgan's Bible. It may be said of the revision that while it sometimes improves the syntax of Morgan, it never improves his music. The service, therefore, which the revisers rendered their country was of a moral rather than of a literary character.

V.

It will help us to understand these men of light and leading—these translators of the Scriptures into the ancient British tongue—if we reflect for a moment on the character of the environment which played so important a part in the development of their literary and religious bias; we mean the Universities. William Salesbury was educated, according to Anthony Wood, either at St. Alban's, or at Broadgate Hall, Oxford, somewhere about 1540. Bishop Richard Davies received his training at New Inn, Oxford, and Bishop Morgan at St. John's, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in 1567-8, M.A. in 1570-1, and B.D. in 1578, his College

conferring the degree of D.D. upon him in 1583. Bishop Parry received his early education at Westminster School, and he went to Christ Church, Oxford, in 1579. In the year 1598 the degree of B.D. was conferred upon him. Dr. John Davies was educated at Ruthin Grammar School, and afterwards at Jesus College, Oxford, where he matriculated in 1593. The degree of D.D. was conferred upon him in 1616.

The story of English Humanism supplies abundant evidence that our universities in the sixteenth century were the centres of zealous work, and could report progress which, before the dawn of the seventeenth century, had secured the future of classical studies in England. The story is a long one, but its more important features will not take long to tell. England felt the influence of the Renaissance somewhat later than France and Germany, and also, at first, with much less sympathy and enthusiasm.

Some half-a-dozen Englishmen had been pupils of the great Italian masters, one of the first being William Selling, an Oxonian, who died in 1495. Erasmus says that he found in Oxford, when he came there in 1498, a congenial group of Hellenists, notable among whom were Grocyn and Linacre. Both these scholars had heard Politan at Florence, and Linacre had been a member of Aldo's Neacademia at Venice. William Lilly, another famous Englishman of that period, had studied Greek in Rhodes, and later in Rome. The university of Cambridge received a fresh

impulse in the study of Greek from the teaching of Erasmus. Richard Croke, who had taught Greek at Cologne, Louvain, Leipzig, and Dresden, taught the classics at Cambridge, to which University he returned in 1518 after a brilliant career abroad. In 1519 he was appointed university reader of Greek, on which occasion he delivered a masterly inaugural address on Greek studies. Sir Thomas Smith, of Queen's College, lectured on Greek from 1535 to 1540, and his lectures attracted universal attention. In 1540 Henry VIII founded the Five Regius Professorships of Divinity, Hebrew, Greek, Civil Law, and Physic, when the Chair of Civil Law was filled by Sir Thomas Smith, and that of Greek by John Cheke. Roger Ascham was another of the great men of the times. In a letter which he (Ascham) wrote from Cambridge to a friend of his he describes the state of classical studies in those days. He says that Aristotle and Plato were read by the undergraduates, and that Sophocles and Euripides were more familiar authors than was Plautus a few years back. "Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon are more conned and discussed than Livy was then [i.e. when his friend was in the university]. Demosthenes is as familiar an author as Cicero used to be; and there are more copies of Isocrates in use than there formerly were of Terence. Nor do we disregard the Latin authors, but study with the greatest zeal the choicest writers of the best period. It is Cheke's labour and example that have lighted up and

continue to sustain this learned ardour.”* The date of this letter is 1542. It will be remembered that two of the men just named, viz., Sir Thomas Smith and Sir John Cheke, took an important part in the famous controversy on the pronunciation of Greek, which was occasioned by the publication of Erasmus’s “Dialogue de recta Latini Graecique sermonis Pronuntiatione” in 1528. Linacre, as is well-known, was a Scholar of European reputation. In 1514 he published his “De Emendata Structura Latini sermonis,” which attained to the distinction of being reprinted abroad and of being recommended to German students by Melanchthon and Camerarius, who recognized the excellence of the Englishman’s work. In the sixteenth century were published and circulated English versions of the classics, such as Chapman’s Homer, Phaer’s Virgil, and North’s Plutarch. Italian Renaissance authors were extensively read in the universities, both in the original and in translations. This was a most important source of Humanistic influence, inasmuch as through men like Dante, Tasso, Ariosto, Castiglione, Boccaccio, etc., the new Italian ideal of intellectual and social development was brought before British students.

A glance at the religious condition of the universities in the sixteenth century will show that Reformation principles had struck root in the very heart of our centres of learning. The event of events at the dawn

* *Vide* “The Cambridge Modern History.” Vol. I., p. 581.

of the Reformation was the publication of Erasmus's Greek Testament. "We must restore the pure text of the Word of God," Erasmus had been heard to say, and when the loud anathemas of the priests were poured on the accomplished task, he exclaimed, "*Deum testor simpliciter existimabam me rem facere Deo gratam ac rei christianae necessariam.*"* A volume of this Greek Testament, fresh from the press of Basle, found its way across the channel, first to London, whence it was transmitted to Oxford and Cambridge. Copies soon began to multiply, and the two universities became the scene of unprecedented enthusiasm. In private studies and in the lecture halls, groups of students and even learned doctors and masters of arts were to be seen reading the Greek and Latin Testament, and animatedly discussing its contents. Among the students of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, was Thomas Bilney, whose reading of the precious volume had given him liberation from the bondage of confessors and the labyrinths of the Schoolmen. "Leaving to the disciples of the pope the entangled chain of their imaginary succession, whose links it is impossible to disengage, he attached himself closely to Christ." Bilney went forth from the University to declare the inestimable riches of Christ. Among the students at Magdalene, Oxford, and sitting at the feet of these modern Gamaliels Grocyn, Latimer, and Linacre, was another young man, who was destined by his translation of the New Testament into the English of the hearth

* Erasmus : *Epistolae*. p. 911. (Original Edit.)

to shake the very foundations of popery in England. This was Tyndale. He it was who fixed the standard of English, what time was also erected the temple of English religious liberty. His New Testament was printed in 1525, and was followed by his Bible, in the translation of which he was assisted by William Roy, a runaway friar, and by Rogers, the first martyr of Queen Mary's reign. It was this Bible, revised by Miles Coverdale, and re-edited as Cromwell's Bible in 1539, and again as Cranmer's Bible, in 1540, which was set up in every parish church in England, establishing the principles for which Tyndale had laboured and fought, first at Oxford and then at Cambridge.

John Fryth was another young man who distinguished himself by the uprightness of his life and zeal for the new learning and reformed religion. He was a student at King's College, Cambridge, and as deeply versed in mathematics as Tyndale was in the classics or Bilney in canon law and scholasticism. These men, by their learning, integrity, and zeal, leavened the lump, and the fermentation was continued till the attempted alliance with Continental Protestantism under the policy of Somerset and Warwick. Nor did it cease then, for Cranmer brought over several foreign theologians to help him in the task he had set himself to accomplish, which was no less than the conversion of England to the reformed faith—conversion, that is, spiritually, for it had already thrown down the papal yoke ecclesiastically. Martin Bucer and Paul

Fagius came over from Strasburg and settled at Cambridge, where they lectured on Hebrew and theology. Peter Martyr, from Florence, and Bernard Ochino, from Sienna, lectured at Oxford. These men, who were all accomplished scholars, trained up a generation of students learned in the Scriptures and well versed in the articles of the reformed faith. In the manner of Continental universities, they also conducted disputations in controversial subjects, such as transubstantiation, purgatory, papal infallibility, the celibacy of the clergy, &c. The principals of Broadgate Hall from 1540 to 1550 were John Williams and John Ap Harry (said to be Welshmen), who were staunch Protestants, and it is probable that William Salesbury became the zealous reformer that he was through their instrumentality. It is true that the condition of the universities, generally speaking, was not as satisfactory during the reign of Mary as it had been in the early part of the century. John Jewel, in a letter written under date of May 22, 1559, to Henry Bullinger, complains bitterly of the unsatisfactory state of the university of Oxford, and in a letter written a year later to Peter Martyr he wails that learning and religion were dead at the universities, especially at Oxford. In the light of other contemporary evidence, however, we think the statement of Jewel should not be taken too literally. The fire of the Reformation was certainly alive at the universities, but it had been found expedient to cover it down during the turbulent reign of Mary. That matters were in a satisfactory state at Cambridge in the year



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there can be no two opinions is that they were stalwart Protestants when they left. We know that Salesbury was brought up as a Roman Catholic, and it may be that Dr. T. C. Edwards is right in the conjecture that he was converted at Oxford. The story of the lad Morgan and the run-away friar, although possible, is hardly serious enough for a matter-of-fact history.

These men, Salesbury, Morgan, Parry, and their assistants, were the greatest benefactors of their country that Wales has ever produced. They came in touch with the Renaissance at both its literary and religious apices, and they resolutely set themselves to learn its lessons. When they had themselves fully grasped the truth they hastened to impart it to their benighted countrymen.

The gift of the Bible in their own language proved a two-fold blessing to the Cymry, as it had already proved to the Germans and to the English: it revealed to them "the inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ," and it furnished them with a fixed standard of Welsh prose. Writers who do not understand Wales and its people often express their wonder at the fact that our literature for the last three hundred years is of an almost exclusively theological character. But the *raison d'être* of this *amor theologiae* is not far to seek: our standard prose is the Bible. When writers are for

ever dealing with the same phenomena, they must perforce learn something of the noumena, or underlying realities. Thomas Bilney and his friends first admired the elegant Latinity of Erasmus's Testament, and were attracted by the beauty of the style rather than by the importance of the subject-matter—"Latinitate potius quam verbo Dei, allectus"—as he tells us, but when they drew aside the tasselled curtain of Latinity they discovered treasures that were far more and passing rich. That the Welsh reformers were influenced by the Renaissance on the literary no less than on the religious side admits of not a moment's doubt. Salesbury published in 1547 "A Dictionary in Englyshe and Welshe moche necessary to all such Welshmen as wil spedly learn the englyshe tongue," &c., and in 1550 a little work entitled "A playne and a familiar Introductio, teaching how to pronounce the letters in the British tongue, &c." The object of this latter work, we are told in its preface, was to teach Englishmen to read Welsh. A second edition of this book appeared in 1567. In 1550 also he published a work entitled "The baterie of the Popes Botereulx, commonlye called the high Altare. Compiled by W.S. in the yere of oure Lorde 1550." The "Baterie" is an attack on Popery, and on the superstitions of the age, which (superstitions) the compiler caustically observes, were the gift of the Roman Church to the credulous Britishers. In 1551, Salesbury published "Kynniver llith a ban"—the forerunner of his New Testament. In the year 1567 Bishop Davies and

Salesbury collaborated on the Welsh version of the Book of Common Prayer. Salesbury also had a hand in the preparation of a work entitled "Egluryn Phraethineb," published by John Dantes, in London, 1595. Bishop Morgan did not publish any work other than his *magnum-opum*—the Bible. "Bardd Glas Morganwg" relates a tradition current in his day that Morgan collaborated with others in the compilation of a dictionary, which was said to have been left in MS., but there is no foundation for the story. The great reformer had his hands full with diocesan matters, and an irascible grasper gave him no peace to pursue his studies during his episcopate. The only work published by Bishop Richard Davies besides his revision of Morgan's Bible was one entitled "Concio ad Clerum," which appeared in 1628. Dr. John Davies, of Mallwyd, must be considered a prolific writer, if we regard the age in which he lived. In 1620 he published his "Antiquae Linguae Britannicae Rudimenta"—a grammar of the Welsh language in Latin. This was followed in the same year by the "Catechism." In 1632 he published a Welsh-Latin and Latin-Welsh Dictionary—the second part of the work being an epitome of a similar work by Sir Thomas ab William, of Trefriw. In the same year he issued a translation of Parson's "Christian Resolutions." In 1633 he published "Yr Hen Lyfr Plygain a'r Gwir Gatechism." He left a considerable number of his



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gain some worldly advantage. The priest or monk, she says, that rises to early mass for this end, viz., that he may have his "daily dividend," if it be not principally for this object, sins not. Popes Urban and Coelestine determined that it was lawful for the clergy to serve God in their churches for the purpose of securing promotion or worldly advantage.

"Glossa illa celeberrima ait peccare quidem eum, qui surgit ad matutinas preces principaliter propter distributiones quotidianas, non autem illum, qui surgit principaliter ut Deo inserviat, et minus principaliter, et secundo, ut eas lucretur—Urbanus papa et Coelestinus determinarunt licere clericis servire Deo in ecclesiis ob spem ascendendi ad dignitates illarum. Imo, Gelasius dixit eos ad hunc ascensum spe majoris commodi compellendos.—Glossa recepta dicit expresse per illum textum, licere clerico servire in ecclesia ad quaerendam aliquam dignitatem, modo principaliter ob id non serviat, &c."*

So a perfectionist, who rises to morning prayer for this object, or some other worldly ulterior motive, and who would not stir out of bed to attend the worship of God for God's sake, is not so much as venially tainted, nor yet is a priest so tainted. They are both concerned with purely selfish acts, which is part of their reasonable duty. The two great casuists just named say that if selfish motives in acts of worship were vicious, then all acts in a manner would be of none effect, since there are extremely few rites amongst men that are done purely for God.

* Navarre. Op. Cap. xxiii. n. ci.

“Alioqui enim omnes fere actus nostri essent vitiosi; quia paucissimi fiunt pure propter solum Deum, et solam virtutem,” &c.*

And yet priests are a worthy and true Church none the less, since nothing is done by them either for God alone, or for themselves alone, but for both God and themselves. Sylvester is less discreet than ingenuous when he speaks without the cover of any pitiful shift, that it is no sin to serve God principally for personal profit.† That individualism is the fundamental principle of Romish ethics may be further shown from the fact that the Catholic doctors hold it but a venial fault to worship the supreme Being principally for Himself and secondarily for vain-glory.

“Nullum autem peccatum immo meritum est facere illa (viz., concionare, missam celebrare, precari et id genus alia) principaliter propter Deum, et secundario propter vanam gloriam, vel laudem humanam, in finem aptum relatum per ibi dicta post.”‡

Navarre affirms that to preach or say mass, and such things as are instituted for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, for vain or self glory principally, is but a venial fault; and that such as gainsay this (which are but two, he observes) have been confuted by others, and by himself after them.

* Navarre, Ibid. p. 590.

† *Vide* Sum. v. charitas. n. 5. *Vide* also Suarez, tom. iv. disp. xx. sec. iii. n. 4. p. 273.

‡ S. Thomam. C. xxiii. n. 13.

“Peccat, qui res principaliter, institutas ob honorem Dei et cultum ejus, et salutem animarum, principalius, vel aequè principaliter ob vanam gloriam facit; quale est concionari, missam celebrare, precari et id genus alia secundum Abulensem et Angelum, quod post alios efficacitor confutavimus, dicentes esse solum veniale,” &c.*

The Roman Church (by which we are to understand, of course, the Roman hierarchy), has never scrupled to put into practice the teaching of its learned doctors in respect to “venial self-aggrandizement.”

Now, Roman Catholic individualism can be understood only in the light of the hedonism on which it is founded. We do not imply that all Roman individualists have been also hedonists. Within the ethical sphere, as in all domains, there are exceptions to every rule, but generally it may be held that popish individualism and hedonism are very closely allied. So are individualism and hedonism in general—both have developed on parallel lines, and it is a remarkable coincidence that periods of religious apathy and political stagnation synchronize with the predominance of the one equally with that of the other. And it is to be observed that as in religion the logical outcome of hedonism is agnosticism, so in economics it invariably leads to individualism. Indeed, individualism is, in its ultimate issues, resolvable into hedonism, even as it is logically related to it in development. The hedonist says that whatever ministers

* Op. c. xxxiv. n. xiii. p. 554.



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fittest? Yes, if the measure of fitness be the honesty of his need. No, if the test of fitness be wealth or power. The economic structure in the latter case would be identical with the interests of the few; of the classes as against that of the masses. That would be foreign to the spirit of the Rabbi of Galilee. The propounding of the theory that the interests of the many are justly pushed aside by those of the few who, in virtue of their superior power, have a right to rule and tyrannize,* has been reserved to modern visionaries who were born with a gold spoon in their mouth.

The reformers were inspired by the conviction—a conviction, perhaps, which they were not able to analyse or explain—that neither birth, nor power, nor wealth, nor even mental abilities had a moral right to monopolize all the good things of life. Moral qualities alone were to them the test of authority. They recognized that the ethical process is superior to the cosmic. Hence they concluded that an altruistic principle is the true economic basis of society. Not the so-called altruistic principle which inculcates the modern Comtist doctrine of the sacrifice of self for the interest of others, but the principle which seeks to work out the salvation of the one in that of the many. The Christian becomes all things to all men, and, be the harvest which others reap small or great, thirty-fold or a hundred-fold, the sower is not left with-

* *Vide* Haeckel "Freie Wissenschaft und freie Lehre."

out grist for his own grinding. Reflex benefits never fail to follow good deeds: they are the bright angels which ride behind the chariot of duty.

It is not sought here to convey the impression that the Reformers were men who broached a definite system of ethics, or that they attempted to teach ethics at all *per se*. Such a notion of their mission were as absurd as it were unjust, for, although truth is one, it is often split up into paradoxes in the spectroscope of a great prophet's consciousness. "An excessive dogmatism of definition is always regrettable, for no man is able to see all sides of a truth. Indeed, we doubt whether in any human language we have words subtle enough to express adequately the loftiest truths in the universe. There is an affection called *hemiopia*, in which the patient can only discover a part of an object. He may see a man walking without head or shoulders, or with the upper part of his frame moving in the air, with no lower limbs to sustain it. Now, there exists a theological *hemiopia* which renders it impossible for men to see the whole of any spiritual truth. We live in a world of half visions. Truth is so vast, and man so small, that he cannot take it all in at once. Our best definitions are but approximations, and we must value them accordingly."*

It may be that the Reformers did not comprehend ethical truth in such manner as to be able to express

* "Old yet ever New." Rev. J. Ossian Davies, p. 11.

it as we express mathematical axioms or logical predicables, but they apprehended it so as to be able to speak it "in sundry times and in divers manners." And so, when the first Christian Humanists (who but the Christian is the true Humanist?) rediscovered the Word of God, they lost no time in distributing the "inestimable riches" among the sin-saddened starvelings who hungered and thirsted for righteousness. This willingness—this readiness to distribute its moral wealth proportionately among the members of the race, constitutes the unique grandeur of the Protestant Reformation. It is the resurrection of Christianity. It is the spirit of the Master of men coming out of the mausoleum of Individualism into the miradore of Altruism. The splendid spirit of self-abegnation, which had been lost to the world since the last great persecution, was restored by the Christian Renaissance. No country has partaken more fully of this spirit than Wales. Here is the home of true liberty, because here is the abode of genuine Altruism. The famous saying of Lactantius is verified in the history of our resurrected Wales: "There can neither be true wisdom without religion, nor true religion without wisdom: but where wisdom is religious, and religion wise, there is truth."

"The test of wisdom is moral inceptivity." The "wisdom" that makes for moral devitalization is not worthy the name. For this reason it is conceded by all who claim some acquaintance with the philosophy of history that the literary Renaissance would have



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dissolves the emotion in a state of love melancholy, full of the languor of passion, without its real spirit. And similarly in the wider domain of thought, the Mediaevalism which was already all-too individualistic degenerated now into pseudo-intellection and rank Hedonism. And thus it is that Italy, which should be in the vanguard, is left in the rear in the march of the nations. And thus it is also that Wales, which might have been in the rear, is to-day in the front, where the fight is thickest. She has not produced intellectual giants, perhaps, but that is because all hers sons are of goodly stature and her daughters of comely heritage.

The charge is brought against us that we have produced no prose outside the pale of theology for the last three hundred years worth the reading. Whilst repudiating so sweeping a charge, we admit the fact that on the whole we have so concerned ourselves with the moral well-being of our country that we have had little time to think of other matters. And yet there is less physical poverty in Wales than in any other part of the civilized world.* Our rich are few, our poor not many in number, The Welshman has implicit faith in the promise of the Christ that to seek first the kingdom of heaven and his righteousness is sure to lead to the addition of all necessaries. If we have produced no scientific, mathematical, or philosophical works, neither have we written any very secular, immoral, or sceptical books. There exists not

* That is, among the Welsh-speaking people of Wales.

a page of profane literature to sully the gloss of our “menyg gwynion.” A beautiful altruism pervades everything that we have said in press or MS., from pulpit or platform. The *summum bonum* of the individual is the salvation—moral, intellectual, political—of the TOTUM. This is the Cymro’s creed. He has derived it, not from Œcumenical Councils, but from the Synod of Christ and the Apostles. In our moral compass there are two cardinal points, the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man.

VII.

The historian who proposed to show in broad outline how the Renaissance influenced Welsh literature would be simply concerned with tracing the influence of the Scriptures on that literature, for the Bible, with all that it means, represents seventenths of our Renaissance inheritance. That the printing of the Bible in our language gradually but completely changed the character and texture of our literature, especially our prose, admits of no doubt. Speaking generally, the history of Welsh literature divides itself into three periods, corresponding with the Catholic, Anglican, and Nonconformist periods of our religious history. The literature of the first period is of a romantic type, that of the second of a theological type, and that of the third of a scientific type—scientific, that is, in the sense of investigating into the first principles of religion and morality. The distinction corresponds with another method of classification, viz., that of

arranging the subject-matter of ethics under the heads of the beautiful, the good, and the true, a method adopted by recent German writers. In the first period we have literature of the Holy Grail, the Mabinogion, the Brutiau type, and the nature songs of Dafydd ab Gwilym, Madog Benfras, and Dafydd Nanmor; in the second, the numerous translations of, and the few original works on, theology, some half-a-dozen works now recognized as classics, and a large number of moral songs; in the third period, we have dialectical, apologetical, and controversial essays, and "correct" (*vide* Pope) poetry. This classification, it is true, is more general than specific. A great deal of poetry of the romantic type must be put down to the credit of the third period, and a considerable quantity of controversial literature was produced during the second period, and so on, but the classification is sufficiently correct to serve as a guide.

That so complete a change as was effected in the character of our literature towards the close of the sixteenth century can be explained on only one hypothesis is patent to all who know anything about history. The change was due to nothing if not to the Bible, that is, to the Religious Renaissance. Our literati found that they had to deal with altered conditions—with new environments. Environment, we know, exerts no less influence on organism than does organism on environment, both physically and intellectually. We have observed how, in the fifteenth century, the Scholasticism (Welsh), the pedantism, the



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(2) “Psamlae y Brenhinol Brophvvyd Dafydd, gwedi i cynganedhu mewn mesurau cymreig. Gann Gaptan William Middleton. Yn nesaf y gallodh at fedhwl yr Yspryd glân (1603).” A very clumsy but praiseworthy performance.

(3) “Pregethau a osodwyd allan trwy awdurdod i’w darllein ymob Eglwys blwyf a phob capel er adeiladaeth i’r annyscedig. Gwedi eu troi i’r iaith Gymeraeg drwy waith Edward James” (1606). This is the Book of Homilies. It is quite possible, if not probable, that Edward James was induced by Bishop Morgan to undertake the work of translating the Homilies. That the mantle of the Bible translator had fallen on the shoulders of the Homily translator is evident from the style and spirit of the preface to the “Pregethau.” We give “Y Rhagymadrodd” here in *in extenso*, that the reader may observe the complete departure in style from the prose models of the early sixteenth century:—

“Mae’r Apostol S. Pawl yn testiolaethu yn oleu na all neb alw neu weddio ar Dduw heb gredu ynddo, na all neb gredu heb wrando, na neb wrando heb fod rbai ac a bregetho gair Duw iddynt: am hynny pan ystyriodd y brenhin ieuangc duwiol Edward y chweched pa mor ambell oedd gwir bregethwyr gair Duw o fewn ei deyrnas ef, y rbai a fedre addyscu’r bobl i gredu yn-Nuw, i alw arno ac i gadw ei orchymynion sanctaidd ef, er iechyd eu heneidiau a gogoniant i enw Duw, fe a barodd wrth gyngor ei Gynghoriaid i wyr duwiol dyscedig cyfarwydd yngair Duw gynull ac scrifennu allan o’r scrythyrau sanctaidd (unig ffynon pob doethineb, unig ymborth yr eneidiau,

uuig dywysog ac arweinudd i wir wybodaeth, rhinwedd a duw-
ioldeb, unig ddiwreiddudd pob chwyn gwenwynig, unig wrth-
laddudd pob anwybodaeth, ac uuig gyferbyn yn erbyn pob gau-
athrawiaeth dwyllodrus, yr hon sydd yn tywys i ofergoel
trawsopinionau a delw-addoliad) yr homiliau duwiol ymma: yn
y rbai y cynhwysir y prif byngciau o'n ffydd ni ac on dlyed
tu ag at Dduw a'n cymydogion: fel y galle yr offeiriaid a'r
curadiaid annyscedig, y rbai ni fedrant yn amgen etto wrth
adrodd datcan a darllen yr homiliau hyn, bregethu i'w pobl
wir athrawiaeth, ac fel y galle pawb o'r bobl wrth wrando,
ddyscu'n inion ac yn iawn anrhydeddu ac addoli'r holl-alluog
Dduw a'i wasanaethu'n ddiwyd. Yr homiliau hyn befyd am eu
bod mor fuddiol y orchymynnodd yr ardderchog frenhines
Elizabeth eu printio ailwaith, ac hi a rhoddodd yr un
gorchymyn am eu darllen hwy ac a rhoesai ei brawd duwiol hi
yn y blaen. Ac megis na ellir dywedyd fod ar y ddayar
er ioed dywysog ac a ddangosodd ymhob peth arall fwy o zeal
at Dduw nac o ofal dros ei ddeiliaid n'ar brenhin godidawg,
ardderchawg duwiol Iames ein grasusaf frenhin a'n llywydd:
felly yn y peth hyn ni ddangosodd ef ddim lai o'r fath zeal
a gofal nac y ddangosase y brenhin Edward a'r frenhines
Elizabeth o'i flaen cf. O herwydd yntef trwy gyfraith Eglwysig
(fel y gallir gweled yn 46 Canon a wnaeth y Gymanfa
Esgobion ac Eglwyswyr a gynhaliwyd yn yr ail flwyddyn o'i
deyrnasiad ef ar Brydain fawr Ffrainc ac Iwerddon, yr hon y
gadarnhaodd ei fawrhydi ef a'i awdurdod goruchel brenhinol) a
rhoes orchymyn caled ar fod i bob Person, Vicar a Churat
ddarllen yr Homiliau hyn bob Sul a gwyl (o ddiffyg pregeth)
ymhob Eglwys blwyf a chapel o fewn y deyrnas: fel y galle
y rbai ni chlywant lafar pregethwyr ond yn ambell, wrth arfer
o glywed darllen y pregethau duwiol dyscedig hyn yn fynych,
ddyscu mewn amser gredu yn-Nuw yn inion ac yn ffyddlon,
galw arno yn ddifrif ac yn deilwng, gwneuthur y cwbl o'u
dlyed at Dduw a'u cymydogion ac ymddwyn felly yn y byd
hwn yn ol gwybodaeth fel y beddai iddynt fwynhau bywyd
tragywyddol yn y byd a ddaw trwy ein Iachawdwr Iesu Grist.

Etto er nad oedd rheitiach i un wlad wrth y fath gynhorthwy nac i wlad Cymru am fod pregethwyr mor ambell ynddi, ni ewyllysiodd Duw ini gael neb o'r Homiliau hyn na'r fath eraill yn y iaith Gymeraeg hyd yr amser hyn. Ond wele y Cymro hwy yn awr yn dy iaith di dy hun, fel y medrich dithau wrth eu gwrando eu deall hwy. Duw a wnelo iddynt wneuthur iti fawrles ac a'th wnelo dithau yn ddiolchus i Dduw am ci fawr ddaioni. Amen."

(4) "Crynodeb o addysg Cristionogawl, a Dosparth Catholic ar ddeuddeg pwnc y Phydd a elwir y Gredo &c" (1609). Translated by Dr. Rosier Smith.

(5) "Catechism Petrus Canisius" (1611). Translated by Dr. Rosier Smith.

(6) "Theater du Mond, sef iw Gorsedd y Byd &" (1615). Translated by Dr. Rosier Smith.

These three works were translated into Welsh by Dr. Smith by the permission and under the patronage of the Romish Church ("Permissu Superiorum"), and were nothing but flickering attempts at stemming the Protestant tide.

(6) "Llyfr y Psalmau, vvedi eu cyfiethu, ai cyfansoddi ar fesur Cerdd yn Gymraeg" (1628). By Archdeacon Prys.

(7) "Yr Ymarfer o Dduwioledeb, &c" (1630). Translated by Rowland Vaughan, of Caergai, out of the works of Lewis, Bishop of Bangor.



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(18) "Profiad yr Ysprydiau, &c." (1675). By Rendl Davies.

(19) "Gair i Bechaduriaid, a Gair i Sainct" (1676). By T. Gouge, and translated by W. Jones.

Some other works by Thomas Gouge were also translated into Welsh by W. Jones.

(20) "Canwyll Crist" (1677). By Vavasor Powel possibly.

(21) "Gweddi'r Arglwydd wedi ei hegluro mewn amryw ymadroddion, neu Bregethau Byrion" (1685). By Dr. Griffith, Bishop of Bangor. A distinctly Protestant and Evangelical work.

(22) "Teg Resymau Offeiriaid Pabaidd, wedi eu hatteb gan Brotestant o Eglwys Loegr" (1686).

(23) Esponiad ar Catechism yr Eglwys, Neu Ymarfer o Gariad Ddwyfol" (1688). Translated by William Foulkes. Moderately Evangelical in teaching.

(24) "Hyfforddwr Cyfarwydd i'r Nefoedd, &c." (1693).

(25) "Goleuni wedi tori allan yng Nghymru, &c." (1696). By Benjamin Keach. A work on Christian Baptism, written in the defence of Baptist principles, in reply to James Owen.

(26) "Rheol Buchedd Sanctaidd, &c." (1701). Translated by Ellis Wynne.

(27) “Bucheddau’r Apostolion a’r Efengylwyr A gasglwyd allan o’r Ysgrythyr-Lan, &c.” By Edward Samuel.

(28) “Cadwyn Euraidd, &c.” (1707).

(29) “Egwyddorion y Grefydd Gristionogawl, &c.” (1707). Translated by William Evans. Evangelical.

(30) “Yr Athrawiaeth yn ol Duwioldeb, Gwedi ei seilio ar Sanctaidd Scrythyrau’r Gwirionedd, &c.’” (1711). Translated by Matthias Maurice. Protestant and Evangelical.

(31) “Gemmau Doethineb, &c.” (1714). By Rhys Prydderch.

(32) “Gwirionedd y Grefydd Grist’nogol” (1716). Translated by Edward Samuel from the works of Hugo Grotius. The works of Grotius have exerted a strong influence on Welsh theology; e.g., his views on the doctrine of the atonement have been held by the great majority of Welsh divines for the last two hundred years. Grotius held that the atonement is a satisfaction, not to any internal principle of the divine nature, but to the necessities of government. (*Vide* his *Defensio Fidei Catholicae de Satisfactione*.)

(33). “Mynegair Bibl Cyssegr-lân, &c.” (1717). Translated by Samuel Williams.

(34) “Meddyliau neillduol ar Grefydd” (1717). Translated by Iago ab Dewi from the works of Bishop Beveridge.

(35). "Difyrwch Crefyddol. Neu Lyfr o Ganiadau Newyddion ar Destynau 'Scrythyrol, &c." (1721). By John Prichard Prys. A work of no great literary merit, but full of comfort and Evangelical truth.

(36) "Meddygiaeth a Chyssur" (1722). By Edward Lloyd.

(37) "Cyd-gordiad Egwyddorawl o'r Scrythyrau, neu Gyfarwyddiad i gael pob lle o'r Scrythur Lan" (1730). By Abel Morgan.

(38) "Athrawiaeth yr Eglwys" (1731). Translated by Edward Samuel, Vicar of Llangar. Pronouncedly Protestant and anti-Romish.

(39) "Pwyll y Pader, &c." (1733). Translated by Theophilus Evans.

(40) "History yr Heretic Pelagius" (1735). By Samuel Thomas, the author of "Hanes y Byd a'r Amseroedd."

(41) "Hymnau Duwiol" (1742). By Howel Harris, and others.

(42) "Prif Gristianogaeth, &c." (1748). Translated by J. Owen.

(43) "Blodeugerdd Cymru" (1759). Collected by D. Jones.

(44) "Gogoneddus Ddirgelwch Trugaredd Duw, &c." (1766). The translation of this work from the English



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were in addition some hundreds of works, including numerous translations, dealing with matters of doctrine, apologetics, ecclesiology, &c., and a host of pamphlets, sermons, religious songs, &c. We will now pass on to consider some of the works which call for special treatment.

Chapter 6.

VICAR PRICHARD:

THE HOGARTH OF THE PEN.

ANDREW Fletcher, of Saltoun, in a letter to the Marquis of Montrose, wrote: "I know a very wise man that believed that if a man were permitted to make all the ballads he need not care who should make the laws of the nation." The "caneuon" of Vicar Prichard were among the most potent of the factors that made for good in the Wales of the early eighteenth century, and they cut up and prepared the ground for the seed of the great "Diwygiad." It is impossible to over-estimate their worth, and if we were concerned with the influence of literature on the moral life of the people, we should be obliged to speak of "Canwyll y Cymry" in almost the same breath as the Sacred Writings themselves. "Y Ficer" is the root and stem of the tree of which "Pantycelyn" is the flower and fruit. The former made hymnology proper possible by his rejection of the alliterative

metres no less than by his sanctified zeal and unaffected simplicity. "Pantycelyn" 's experience and unction are due to the revival, but his numbers and naturalness are the "two parts of the spirit" of the old vicar which fell on him. Three books which were invariably found in the small library of a Welshman of the eighteenth century were "Y Beibl Cyssegr Lan," "Canwyll y Cymry," and "Gorphwysfa'r Saint." Three books which are invariably found, among others, in the library of a Welshman of the present day are "Y Bibl," "Hymnau Williams, Pantycelyn," and "Taith y Pererin." Even as it would be impossible to over-estimate the moral worth of the "Canwyll," so also would it be impossible to over-estimate its modifying influence on the poetry of the century from about 1650 to 1750. In that period we have very little that deserves to be described as "poetry" really. There are numerous odes, poems, songs, carols, ballads, and *englynion*, but their inspiration is cold and insipid. The contributory causes of the decline of poetry are many, not the least, in our estimation, being the arresting force of Vicar Prichard's metre. Its naturalness, simplicity, and piquancy were means by which it easily and immediately insinuated itself into favour with the public. We would put these qualities down among the primary causes of the decline of "correct" poetry, though not perhaps the most important of them. In the struggle for existence, the fittest sur-



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shone in the poetical gloom, men hailed its light, and they realized that in the "Allelujah" and "Hosanna i Fab Dafydd" the "Vicar" being dead spoke yet again.

Where did the Vicar derive his "mesur esmwyth" from? The equilibrium of his metre, to borrow a statical figure, was the resultant of the forces which were then at work, and which passed through one common point in the consciousness of the author. The same forces were at work everywhere, and the few, comparatively, who were able to put themselves *en rapport* with these forces were men in whom the lines of action were all "parallel." The ideas of the times—all common property—were unified in the consciousness of the sympathetic thinker, and were given out again elaborated and coloured by his idiosyncrasy. And thus it happens that Ellis Wynne and Rhys Prichard, who were both impressed by the same truths, gave to the world what is of a diametrically opposite character—pompous grandeur on the one hand, and sober simplicity on the other. If we are bound to express an opinion as to which is the better interpretation of the great spring-dream of the modern world, then we will say, his is the better interpretation, whose words are bread and whose ideas are water to satisfy the needs of the multitude.

The spirit which actuated Petrarch and Boccaccio to write in simple, graceful Italian, Froissart in

homely, racy French, and Chaucer in the English of the ploughboy, also animated the Vicar to write in the hearth-language of the Carmarthenshire peasant.

Nothing can be further apart in spirit and style than are the following examples of fifteenth century (Welsh) Scholasticism and seventeenth century (Welsh) Renaissance.

(a) " Rhown ein gofal bob calon
Ar Grist fry, a'i groeswaed fron ;
Man nad oes na garw loes gur,
Na dialedd na dolur,
Nac erlid llid nac oerloes,
Na dig, na galar nid oes,
Na newyn, chwerwddyn, na chwyn,
Na syched, na nos achwyn." *

(b) " Er cael aur, ac er cael arian,
Er cael tai a thiroedd llydan,
Beth wyf nes er cael pob cyfraid,
Nes cael Crist i gadw f'enaid ?

Tynn fy llygaid, tynn fy nghalon,
Tynn fy ngolud, a'm cyfeillion,
Tynn y cwbl oll sydd genyf,
Cyn y tynnech Grist oddi wrthyf." †

The difference between Tudur Aled and Vicar Prichard is this, that whereas both have a message, with the one your attention is fixed on the messenger,

* Tudur Aled a'i cânt.

† "Canwyll y Cymry."

and with the other on the thing said. It is the difference that everywhere exists between matter and form. Not that the Vicar was careless as to form; on the other hand, he was careful to make his form, as he says, "esmwyth." But his ruling passion is the desire to be understood and remembered. To gain this end he sacrificed all that was held sacred by the Dafydd ap Edmwndites. His great soul was a-fire with the love of truth, and with the hate of sin and sham; how then could he put on gloves to save brands from the burning? The disciples of Dafydd ap Edmwnd have been justly charged with sacrificing sense to sound. Look at the following lines from "Marwnad Tudur Llwyd o Iâl" by Tudur Aled.

"Marw pwys Duw, marw post Ial,
Methai rhyfyg Mathrafal!

Marw mab mam, mawr ym mhob modd,
Mair a Garmon! marw gormodd!
Tynn alarch tan clew,
Tudur Llwyd, hyder y llew.
Beth a gawn byth i gynal,
Byw ar dri brodyr o Ial?
Ei arglwydd frawd, eurgledd fry,
A geidw Ial ac a'i dyly."

A learned commentator's observation on this ode is, "Excellent cynghanedd, but sorry stuff." Not only did the Welsh Scholastics sacrifice matter to form, they also often hid their meaning behind their words.



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the authors to be understood by the mass of the people. Angelo Politian rightly interprets the spirit of the age when he says that he composed his "Orfeo" in the "Stilo Volgare"—"perchè degli spettatori fusse meglio intesa, &c.,"—that his dramatical effort might be the better understood by his audience.

It is not extraordinary in the least that the Renaissance on its classical side found expression in the cultivation of Greek and Latin, nor that on the religious side it culminated in vernacular literature. The former is of the head, intellectual; the latter of the heart, emotional. The unusual feature about it is, perhaps, that the intellectual precedes the emotional, which is the reverse of what *a priori* and anthropological reasoning would lead us to expect. Classicism is the direction in which the pendulum of the New Age swung after the full stop of Scholasticism. When it rebound it reached the opposite side in the extreme limits of vernacularism. The reaction against the Dafydd ap Edmwnd cult reaches its culminating point in Vicar Prichard. He pushes vernacularism to its [if not logical] rhetorical issue. He was aware that the sons of toil are never convinced and won except in the language of the soil. Dafydd ap Edmwnd may cull his words with a bardic superstition, and exhaust a week of brain-racking on a page richly inlaid with a mosaic of alliteration, but no one will trouble to turn over his musty pages who is concerned with the deeper problems of life. We venture to quote, for the benefit of the numerous disciples of ap

Edmwnd, of the present day, the following two weighty passages from "The Spectator," which were penned by that master of English style, Addison :

"Human nature is the same in all reasonable Creatures ; and whatever falls in with it, will meet with Admirers amongst Readers of all Qualities and Conditions. *Moliere*, as we are told by Monsieur *Boileau*, used to read all his Comedies to [an] old Woman [who] was his Housekeeper, as she sat with him at her Work by the Chimney-Corner ; and could foretel the Success of his Play in the Theatre, from the Reception it met at his Fire-side : For he tells us the Audience always followed the old Woman, and never failed to laugh in the same Place.

I know nothing which more shows the essential and inherent Perfection of Simplicity of Thought, above that which I call the Gothick Manner in Writing, than this, that the first pleases all Kinds of Palates, and the latter only such as have formed to themselves a wrong artificial Taste upon little fanciful Authors and Writers of Epigram. *Homer*, *Virgil*, or *Milton*, so far as the Language of their Poems is understood, will please a Reader of plain common Sense, who would neither relish nor comprehend an Epigram of *Martial*, or a Poem of *Cowley* : So, on the contrary, an ordinary Song or Ballad that is the Delight of the common People, cannot fail to please all such Readers as are not unqualified for the Entertainment by their affectation or Ignorance ; and the Reason is plain, because the same Paintings of Nature which recommend it to the most ordinary Reader, will appear Beautiful to the most refined."*

"This Song is a plain simple Copy of Nature, destitute of the Helps and Ornaments of Art. The Tale of it is a pretty Tragical Story, and pleases for no other Reason but

* No. 70.

because it is a Copy of Nature. There is even a despicable Simplicity in the Verse; and yet because the Sentiments appear genuine and unaffected, they are able to move the Mind of the most polite Reader with Inward Meltings of Humanity and Compassion. The Incidents grow out of the Subject, and are such as [are the most proper to excite Pity; for] which Reason the whole Narration has something in it very moving, notwithstanding the author of it (whoever he was) has deliver'd it in such an abject Phrase and Poorness of Expression, that the quoting any part of it would look like a Design of turning it into Ridicule. But though the Language is mean, the Thoughts [, as I have before said,] from one end to the other are [natural,] and therefore cannot fail to please those who are not Judges of Language, or those who, notwithstanding they are Judges of Language, have a [true] and unprejudiced Taste of Nature."*

II.

As a moralist Vicar Prichard stands unrivalled in the pages of Welsh literature. He is the Hogarth of the pen. Nor is the comparison inapt. Hogarth in his moments of clearer inspiration was no mere satirist, but a teacher of morality, when his sternness was softened by the hallowed dew of pity. Cunningham, in his comments on "The Harlot's Progress," observes that "this work is no burlesque production nor jesting matter—it exhibits, in the midst of humour and satire, a moral pathos which saddens the heart." The boldness and originality of conception of Hogarth's satire, and the literal force with which

* No. 85.



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A matter very difficult to understand, except in the light of certain doctrinal tendencies of that age, is the connection between the ethics and the politics of "Canwyll y Cymry." The stout Royalist old vicar has to some extent forfeited twentieth century sympathy by his Stuart proclivities. These proclivities are best explained on the Machiavellian theory that "the art of government, like the art of Navigation, is out of relation to morals." The "Canwyll" is not extensively read to-day, and certainly not with the same sympathy that it was read a century ago. We have a Cromwell-like intolerance of everything that savours of the seventeenth century theory of kingship by divine right. We fail to comprehend how men of the stamp of Vicar Prichard could reconcile their ethics with their politics. The point is worthy of more than passing notice, as it helps to illustrate the influence of Italian Humanism on Welsh thought.

No writer of the sixteenth century wielded a greater influence on the minds of statesmen than Machiavelli; whether for good or for evil, is not for us to determine here. To Machiavelli, the necessity of law was grounded in the inherent evil of human nature. Law found its supreme accentuation in the person of the prince or the head of the state. He reasoned therefrom that "men ought to give honour to the past, and obedience to the present," that

“they ought to wish for good princes but put up with them, whatever their character,” and further, that “the safety of a republic or a kingdom consists, not in having a ruler who governs wisely while he lives, but in being subject to one who so organises it that, when he dies, it may continue to maintain itself.” “Such in broad outlines,” say the authors of the “Cambridge Modern History,” were the chief views of Machiavelli concerning the nature of man and the general movement of history, separated from the limitations of any particular time and place.* At first sight these views might appear visionary, remote, unreal; vitiated in some degree by ambiguities in the meaning of the terms employed, and by hasty generalization; academic in character, and out of relation to the storm and stress of a re-awakening world. This impression would be only partially true. Machiavelli, living at a period of transition, endeavoured, in the presence of an unusual problem, to push beyond its barriers, and to fix the relations of what was local and temporal to the larger and more universal laws of political societies in general. It was only by enlarging the ideas of analysis, and embracing the wider question of history and ethics, that it was possible to frame a scientific basis on which to erect the structure of practical politics. Machiavelli’s views on the origin of morality, and the

* “Renaissance.” p. 207.

nature of good and evil are at the root of his political science. He believed morality to be non-natural, in the sense that it is repugnant to the lustful appetites and undisciplined impulses of men; and he reasoned from this that it was not to be evolved out of anything which man is in his natural state. From this point he passes on to the consideration of whether men were able to do that which is right, i.e., whether they were free-agents. The question of moral or free-agency is of constant recurrence in the writings of Machiavelli. He gave some of his most serious thoughts to this ancient problem, which he called "Il sopraccaro della filosofia." He was a fatalist in theory, but found it convenient in practice to modify the doctrine of necessity. He sums up the matter in these words: "I am not un-aware that many have held and still hold the opinion that human affairs are so ordered by Fortune and by God, that men cannot by their prudence modify them; rather, they may have no remedy at all in the matter; and hence they may come to think they need not trouble much about things, but allow themselves to be governed by chance. This opinion has gained more acceptance in our own times, owing to the great changes which have been seen and are seen every day, beyond all human conjecture. I have sometimes thought about this, and have partly inclined to their opinion. Yet, in order that free-will may not be entirely destroyed, I believe the



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he had not called into being, and for which he could not be held responsible. "He was not obliged to act on any one principle, he was not to flinch if cruelty, dishonesty, irreligion were necessary; he was exempt from the common law; right and wrong had really nothing to do with the art of government."

It is not certain to what extent, if any, Machiavelli perceived the far-reaching consequences of this doctrine. It is impossible to say from his published works. These were: "The Prince," and "The Discourses," which were begun in 1513; "The Art of War," published in 1521, and the eight books of "The Florentine Histories," in 1525. It is sufficient to know that his ideas coloured the whole current of political thought, both in Italy and the rest of Europe, for a full century and a half, from about 1535 to 1690, and nowhere was the colour of a deeper hue than in Royalist Wales. The Vicar is merely reflecting the opinions of his Celtic compatriots in the song entitled "Ynghylch y Gwrthryfel yn y flwyddyn 1641," from which we select a few stanzas.

"Byth ui thaerai un Barbariad,
 Mai Duw o'r nef roes iddo gennad,
 Lladd a llogi dynion ufudd,
 I wir frenhin a gwir grefydd.

Ond mae rhai yn mentro dywedyd,
 Mai cynhyrriad y Glan Ysbryd,
 Ydyw'r achos o'u hymrafael,
 A gwisgo am danynt arfau rhyfel.

Duw a gadwo'n brenhin graslou,
 Rhag eu brad a'u distryw creulon
 Nertha, O Arglwydd Dduw, ei ddwylo,
 Bydd di yn nerth a tharian iddo."

Thus, we have attempted to reconcile the Royalist politics of "Canwyll y Cymry" with its Christian ethics on the Machiavellian hypothesis "that the art of government is out of relation to morals," for on no other ground can we conceive it to be possible to attempt any reconciliation. We are not, of course, of opinion that the upholders of the old Tudor doctrine of the divine right of kings believed in so many words that morality was out of relation to politics; it is more than possible that their loyalty blinded their reason, and that they could not appreciate ethical causes, or trace logical connections.

As to the ethics of the "Canwyll," regarded by itself, it is quite obvious that it has nothing in common with Machiavelli's conception of right as "that which conduces to the interests of the majority, and with which the majority are contented." The Vicar is too intensely individualistic to hold any such views. His individualism in ethics is as intense as is that of Williams, of Pantycelyn, in religion. He was first and last a prophet (a *forth-*, not *fore-*teller)—a teacher of righteousness.

He did not for a moment stop to ask whether his ethics were in antagonism with his politics. He loved his country with a love that could not stoop to philosophize.

III.

The Vicar's dogmatism is pronouncedly Protestant. He rings the changes on the full peal of Reformation doctrines, and his principles are in perfect accord with one another and with the ideas of the New Age. The all-sufficiency of the Word of God, and of the Atonement, justification by faith, and imputed righteousness, the errors of the Romish Church, such as those concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping of relics and images, invocation of saints, etc.—all are, in turn, dealt with by the saintly Vicar. There is never a false note or uncertain sound. This is all the more marvellous, when we consider that darkness had covered the land, yea, and “gross darkness the people.” Wales, we would again repeat, was fully a century behind the rest of Britain in the matter of reform. Even her priests, that should have been the leaders of the people, were unto their nation a stumbling-block and a snare. The words of the prophet had never had a more fitting application: “Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from



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Bwyd i'r enaid, bara'r bywyd,
 Gras i'r corph, a maeth i'r yspryd,
 Lamp i'r droed, a ffrwyn i'r genau,
 Yw Gair Duw, a'r holl 'Scrythyrau.

Ni chyst Bibl imi weithian
 Ddim tu hwnt i goron arian:
 Gwerth hen ddafad a fydd farw
 Yn y clawdd ar noswaith arw.

Duw, rho ras a grym i Gymru
 'Nabod Duw, a'i wir was'naethu;
 Crist a nertho bob rhai' ddarllain
 Llyfr Duw'u eu hiaith eu hunain."

How different is the sentiment of the third verse from that of the Romish view that the Church is above the Bible, and the one and only channel of grace!

(B) "CYNGHOR I BECHADUR I DDYFOD AT
 IESU GRIST.

Dere hen bechadur truan,
 Dere at Grist trwy ffydd dan riddfan,
 Mae Mab Duw yn d'alw atto,
 Os yw pechod yn dy fino.

Crist ei hun sy'n galw arnad,
 Crist sy'n erchi i ti ddwad,
 Crist sy'n cynnyg dy refresio,
 Os trwy ffydd y deui atto.

Ni ddaeth dyn i geisio gras
 At Fab Duw erioed na's cas,
 Nag i fegian cymmorth ganddo,
 Nas rhodd Crist e'n ebrwydd iddo."

(c) "AM Y PURDAN.

Tan all buro'r aur o'i sorod,
 Tan all losgi'r us a'r carllod;
 Ni all tan, na dim er hynny,
 Buro'r enaid ond gwaed Iesu.
 Y dyn nad elo i Baradwys,
 Lle mae Iesu Grist a'n prynwys,
 Nid oes lun nad el dan drottian,
 I bwl uffern lle mae Satan.

O ca'i waed fy Nghrist i'm golchi,
 O'm holl bechod a'm holl fryntni,
 Cloed y Pab fi 'nghanol purdan,
 Ni bydd arua'i byth mo'i ofan.

Dannedd gwaedlyd y Pabyddion,
 Sydd yn gollwng gwaed Crist'nogion,
 Sydd yn dangos nad gwir ddefaid
 Crist yw rhai'n ond rheibus fleiddiaid."

(D) "YNGHYLCH GWEDDIO DROS Y MARW.

Yn ol i un-dyn farw,
 A chael y farn yn groyw,
 Ofer yw i'r wlad a'r plwy'
 Weddio mwy dros hwnnw.

Pe ceisiai Job neu Daniel,
 Neu Abram, Moesen, Samuel,
 Laesu'r poenau yn y fflam,
 Ni chaent ddim am eu trafael.

Pe delai 'ffeiriaid holl-fyd,
 I grio drosto'n daerllyd,
 A'u haberthau o bob rhyw,
 Ni altrai Duw 'mo'i ferdyd.

Pe delai'r byd yn gyfan,
 A gwaeddi am laesu'r boenfan;
 Ni chaen', gwedi marw'r gwr,
 O'r droppyn dwr i'w safan.

Nid oedd ond gweithred ofer,
 A wnaeth i'r 'ffeiriaid arfer,
 Gweddi dros y marw mud,
 I dwyllo'r byd di-bryder."

(E) **YNGHYLCH LLINYNAU GLEINIAWG.**

"Ofer rhedeg dros baderau
 O'r tu faes, a geiriau'r genau,
 Oni bydd y galon hefyd
 Yn gweddio yn yr ysbryd."

(F) **YNGHYLCH GWEDDIO AR Y SAINT.**

"Nid ar Baal, na'r llo, na'r ddelw,
 Sant, na santes, y mae galw,
 Ond ar Dduw, trwy Griat yn unig,
 Am bob peth sydd arnat ddiffyg.



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than by any other. We are not here concerned with the nature of this occult art or science, if such it be. The reader who wishes for full treatment of that subject is referred to the works of Dr. Heinrich Hensoldt, the well-known German scientist, who believes charming as practised in this country previous to the eighteenth century, as also in India at the present day, to be nothing but the application of hypnotic phenomena in the treatment of disease. In exemplification of the subject, we will give here what are regarded as typical examples of the methods of the charmers of the period we are considering.

“Three little angels came from the East to try their virtue on fire and frost. In frost out fire! In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” So ran the charm formula for burns and scalds. The words were repeated thrice, the charmer describing three circles the while with the index finger of the right hand, counterclockwise, over the affected part, and for each repetition. Afterwards he breathed three times on the patient. The formula of the charm for toothache was: “And Jesus was passing by and saw Peter sitting under a sycamore tree grievously tormented with a toothache, and He saith unto him, what aileth the Peter? And Peter answered and said, Lord, I am grievously tormented with a toothache. And Jesus said, Arise, thou shalt be tormented with a toothache no more. And he arose, and immediately the toothache left him.” These words were written on a half sheet of note paper,

which was folded up and sealed, with the name of the sufferer witten across the back. The paper was tied to an under garment and worn on the person as an amulet. The words of the charm for hemorrhage, which was considered to be the most potent of all the charms, were Ezekiel xvi. 6, "And when I passed by thee, and saw the polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." The charmer dipped the tip of his finger in the blood of the patient, signing him with the sign of the cross on the forehead whilst he repeated the above words *sub silentio*. The charm of jaundice was peculiar and repulsive. Three doses of pedes (*pediculus capitis*) were administered, the first consisting of nine, the second of three, and the third of one of these human parasites. The patient was made to swallow them in 'golden syrup or honey, the charmer signing him with the sign of the cross on the back, on the breast, and on the forehead, whilst he muttered some words of incantation. For disorders of the liver there was a very elaborate charm. The patient attended the charmer three times (one of which visits was to be on a Sunday), bringing with him some oatmeal tied up in an handkerchief. The charmer put the meal into a cup, which he tied over in such a way that none of the meal could escape. He then took the cup in both hands and applied it to the patient nine times, first to the left side, then to the chest, the right side, the lumbar region, and the region of the dorsal vertebra

&c. During these applications he muttered the words written in St. Matt. xv. 22-28—the account of the healing of the daughter of the woman of Canaan. When he had completed these applications, he uncovered the cup and examined the meal, which had become crustaceous and marked over with reticulated fissures, which were supposed to represent certain hieroglyphics understood by the charmer alone. The charm was repeated, with slight variations, at the second and third visits. For a certain disease, the name of which is not known, the charm consisted of “bleeding the five wounds of Christ,” i.e. the patient was bled at both wrists, at the ankles, and at the left side, at the recital of these words (*sub silentio*) “Avaria! [Ave Maria?] Avaria! The blood of the Cross! I command thee to depart.”

These are a few samples out of about a hundred charms that we know. Most of the charms are a curious mixture of Pagan and Christian ideas, and some are extravagant nonsense, but they have all one thing in common, that is, they all have the glamour of mediaeval monkery. If the charmer wielded the wand of the magician, he certainly wore the mantle of the monk.

Such was the land of our fathers in our author's time—a land o'erflown with the foul waters of grossest ignorance. Surely the “Candle” shone on one of the darkest spots of Christian Europe!



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᾽Ω Ζεῦ φίλιε καὶ ξένιε καὶ ἔταιρεῖε καὶ ἐφέστιε καὶ ἀστεροπιητὰ καὶ ὄρκιε καὶ νεφεληγερέτα καὶ ἐρίγδουπε καὶ εἴ τί σε ἄλλο οἱ ἐμβρόντητοι ποιηταὶ καλοῦσι, καὶ μάλιστα ὅταν ἀπορῶσι πρὸς τὰ μέτρα, . . . ποῦ σοι νῦν ἢ ἔρις-μάραγος ἀστραπή καὶ ἢ βαρύβρομος βροντή . . . ; ἅπαντα γὰρ ταῦτα λῆρος ἤδη ἀναπέφηνε καὶ καπνὸς ἀτεχνῶς ποιητικὸς ἔξω τοῦ πατάγου τῶν ὀνομάτων.

The iconoclasm of the early literary Renaissance acted on Christianity as potassium cyanide does on a solution of chloride in the extraction of gold: the Faith was extracted and superstition eliminated. The literary Renaissance and the Religious Renaissance, indeed, acted and reacted upon each other for a century or more, till the former attained a Deistic colour in the eighteenth century, and the latter was toned down into pure Protestantism. The step between ultra-Montanism and Protestantism was no greater than that between quasi-Paganism and Deism. The moral use of religion is that it exalts human nature, and liberates it from all manner of slavery. But an unworthy conception of God, so far as it influences character and action, can only be degrading in its effects. In his essay on Superstition Bacon justly remarks that "It were better to have no opinion of God at all, than such opinion as is unworthy of him. For the one is unbelief, the other is contumely: and certainly superstition is the reproach of Deity."

Vicar Pritchard toiled, as we all do, in his day and for his own generation—first and foremost, but ultim-

ately for generations of Welshmen then unborn. Ours is the golden harvest of his unwearied sowing, his seven-times tried veracity, his simple piety, his Christian fortitude—a harvest of whose greatness and richness he had not the remotest conception. He never dreamed that the “Canwyll,” to which he gave the best moments of his life, would help to throw light on the treasures that lie concealed in the Cymric character. Peradventure, he would have been puzzled and pained if a vision had been vouchsafed him of the ulterior results of the scientific method he was trying to establish, whether in theology or in ethics.

“*Pudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosa nocte permit Deus.*”

The religious and intellectual freedom of our race would never have been wrought if the intellectual giants who have been its pioneers had foreseen “the long result of time.”

Reuchlin could not foresee Baur and the Tübingen School; Martin Luther could not gauge the logical issue of the doctrine of justification by faith; nor could Vicar Pritchard prophesy the Calvinistic-Nonconformity which is the upshot of his exegesis. No! consequences, ‘in the wise Providence of God, are mercifully hidden from us. Enough if we are allowed from some Pisgah summit to view the promised land, without learning aught of its physiography. To toil

in the cause of the truth which make men free is truly blessed. Honestly to search for the truth, fearlessly to speak it, and patiently to suffer, if need be, for truth's sake, is the supreme law of scientific enquiry. That was the law of the Vicar's life: it was the axle on which turned the driving wheel of his energy. It was in unquestioning obedience to it that he manfully strove against "the rulers of the darkness of this world." "The victory which he won—in apparent defeat—was a victory for us and for all time; a conquest, never to be undone, of light for liberty."



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ideal biographer is he who, Boswell-like, is blessed with little or no imagination. Mr. Palmer surmises, among other things, that Morgan Llwyd was Vicar of Wrexham for several years, i.e. from the year 1646 till within a few years of his death in 1659; and that towards the end of his life he became a member if not a minister of the Independent congregation at Wrexham. He gives three reasons for his belief: (1) There was a tradition to this effect among the Independents of Wrexham of the early part or middle of the eighteenth century. (2) Philip Henry was invited to be the minister of the Established Church at Wrexham, in March 1569—three months previous to the death of Morgan Llwyd. (3) Morgan Llwyd was buried in the cemetery of the Independents. We would point out that there exists not the smallest scrap of documentary evidence for any one of Mr. Palmer's suppositions. Very much may be advanced against the view that Morgan Llwyd was either a vicar or a minister of Wrexham, based on internal evidence deducted from his works, and also from his private correspondence. Were we at all concerned with biography it would be interesting to enter upon an examination of this and other statements made by the biographer of Morgan.

Very concise and to the point are the notes on the "Life, Work, and Writings of Morgan Llwyd" in an introductory chapter to "Llyfr y Tri Aderyn" by the Rev. Ogwen Jones, B.A., of Llansantffraid-yn-Mechain, but they are open to the same objections.

Agglomerating around a few scattered facts are a number of far-fetched “probables” and “possibles.” Take e.g. the following, which is quoted by the author from “Hanes Eglwysi Annibynol Cymru”: “Gallem feddwl wrth ci lawysgrifen [i.e. Morgan Llwyd’s] ei fod wedi cael ci ddwyn i fynu yn gyfreithiwr.” On a par with this surmise is the Baptist historian’s (Joshua Thomas) wonderful tit-bit that “Morgan Llwyd was a Baptist,” and that he, i.e. Joshua Thomas, had heard that Morgan went to some distant place to be privately baptised, which fact he with-held for some reason or other from the people of Wrexham. This reminds one of the tale of the celebrated Joseph Guarnerius (del Gesu) and the prison fiddles. In the dictionaries of violin makers we are told that *maestro* Joseph spent the latter part of his life in prison, where he made fiddles. The origin of the tale is wrapped in mystery, but it appears that somebody told Vuillaume the Parisian luthier, that somebody had told Carlo Bergonzi’s grandson that the great artist was a libertine and that he was cast into prison, where he made love to the goaler’s daughter, who procured for him material to make violins. The tale passed for history till some little time ago when a romance-less critic came along to rescue the name of poor Guarnerius from undeserving infamy. Imagine the intrepid Morgan Llwyd hieing to some remote corner where he could be surreptitiously immersed, and then returning to Wrexham, to be haunted, like a thief, with the fear of discovery!

We leave these minor questions, such as whether Morgan Llwyd were a Churchman, an Independent, a Baptist, or a Quaker, to the curious, and to those who are fond of picking cinders on the great ash-tip of history. We must try to get at Morgan Llwyd the man. To reach *him*, it is necessary to pass over and beyond the possible nothings with which nine-tenths of biography readers are concerned. Morgan himself did not tarry with externals, nor must we linger long with the mere shell of truth.

The following words which the Seer puts into the "mouth" of the *golomen*, are our criterion of the man. "Ac nid yw achau teuluoedd ond rhwyd a weuodd naturiaeth, yn yr hon y mae prif-copyn balchder yn llechu. Nid wyti nês er dyfod o houot o dywysogion Cymru, cnid wyt yn un o hâd Tywysog brenhinoedd y ddaiar, wedi dy eni nid o ewyllys gŵr, ond o'r Hâd anllygredig. Rhaid i ti, er glaned wyt oddiallan, gael newid dy naturiaeth oddifewn, neu fe a'th losgir di yn dy blu, a'th foneddigeiddrwydd, a'th synwyr dy hunan. Ac am grêd y bedydd dyfrllyd, nid yw hyny fwy na gwelltyn yn y domen, oni chei di gyda hyn yr ail-enedigaeth."

Here are the deeper principles of Morgan Llwyd the man.



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subject. Accordingly, all truth objectivates the Will under mediation only, i.e., by means of the Ideas: and our world is nothing but the appearance of the Ideas in multitude, whilst they enter the *principium individuationis*—the form of cognition possible to an individual as such. Nothing can be more evident than that Morgan had drunk deeply at the well of Plato. In speaking of “ewyllys, cariad, a nerth” he writes: “Ac oni bai fod y tri hyn fel yn cyd-weithio, ni buasai na dyn, nag angel, nag anifail, na dim arall wedi i wneuthur. Mae rhain wedi ymescor erioed yn y cariad drwy yscogiad yr ewyllys, yr hwn sydd yn i gwasgaru fel gwreichion allan o hono ci hun, &c.”

To Morgan, the “inward light” does not in the least depend upon the perceptible world, any more than the Idea did to Plato. The “light” ignores it unconditionally, and it could still exist, in a certain measure, even if the world were not here at all. For the “voice within” is to him as immediate an objectivation and image of the universal Will of “Noah” as the world itself is, or as the Ideas are to Plato. Thus, the “voice” is by no means an expression of the truth merely, ordinarily called “conscience,” but also an image of the Will, which is itself the objectivity of universal truth.

Morgan, in some respects the Welsh Reuchlin, was preëminently the child of the Renaissance. No one—not even excepting Petrarch, Boccaccio, Erasmus, Luther, More, or any other,—understood its message better

than he. It is certain that few of the eminent Welshmen of his day caught the Humanistic infection as he did. He felt the very ground under his feet throb with the delight of new-born Liberty. "Mae rhyw nerth yn mysg dynion nad oedd o'r blaen. Mae rhyw ysbryd rhyfedd yn gweithio, er nad yw'r bobl yn gweled." *

II.

"Llyfr y Tri Aderyn" is the only considerable original work that Morgan Llwyd wrote, and it is quite enough, because it is the cream of a large library. Many men have written a dozen volumes quarto, and have conveyed less thought than he. There is a Spanish proverb which says that "the wise man is he who reads much and thinks more." We know not who ought to be wiser than Morgan if that be true. The evidence of wide reading is manifest, and there is no unassimilated or irrelevant idea to be found anywhere. It was by force of circumstances that he became an Evangelist; by nature he was a recluse and a bookworm. He was Reuchlin *redivivus*—the Welsh savant. He communed with nature; he worshipped at her inmost shrine, and she repaid him by disclosing to him the secrets which she confides only to those who are called to be seers. In our opinion, he is the only Welsh writer who has penetrated to the eternal through the transient and gazed upon the face of the Ineffable. Where, in our

* "Llyfr y Tri Aderyn," Guild of Graduates edition, p. 24.

literature, is there to be found a passage that will, for penetration, bear comparison with the following? “Y Deml olaf yw Duw mewn dynion yn ymddangos, a dynion yn ymddangos yn ei enw yntau; pan fo dynion yn addoli Duw ynddo ei hunan, ac nid mewn cyfarwyddid dynion, a Duw ei hunan yn oll yn oll ynddynt, ac iddynt. Canys hyd yn hyn y greadwraeth a gyscododd y Creawdwr; ond pan ymddangoso y Duw mawr, fe ddiflana y creaduriaid. Mae fo drwy bob peth erioed, ond nid oes mo ysbrydoedd dynion ar y ddaiar yn i ganfod ef etto oll yn oll, ond yn chwennyach y wisg, yn hytrach na'r hyn sydd yn aros ynddi. Cyn gwneuthur y byd nid oedd ond Duw yn ymddangos iddo ei hunan; ac wedi difa'r byd ymma, ni ryfeddir neb ond Duw, &c.” To the author, all things visible are merely a sheet to shroud the Infinite. But the shroud does not confine or hide the Spirit: it becomes evanescent in a lovely fleeting cloud, and he gazed upon it with thoughtful, joyous optimism. With Goethe he regards the world of passing things as an allegory, and no one could with more feeling say:

“ Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichniss,
Das Unzulängliche
Hier wird es Ereigniss
Das Unaussprechliche
Hier wird es gethan
Das Ewig-Weibliche
Zieht uns hinan! ” *

* “Chorus Mysticus.” Faust, Part II.



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as a recent writer remarks, "it is far less fascinating than that sweetest and saddest expression of poetical mysticism." The exegetical methods of the Cabbalists is weirdly fantastic, but not without its poetry. But it must be borne in mind that the Cabbalists carried the system of interpretation adopted by them much further than it is in the Zohar, and it is only the ultra-Cabbalists that attribute a four-fold sense to the words of the Hebrew sacred books.

That Morgan Llwyd was a Cabbalist of the Zoharist type admits of no doubt. The whole of the discussion between the Eryr and the Golomen from where the former asks the question "Ond wrth ba henw y mae Moesen yn galw yr Arch?" down to the end of the answer to the question, "O! Golomen dirion, dangos mewn ychydig eiriau beth yw dirgelwch yr Arch?" is in a truly Cabbalistic spirit. It would be beside the purpose to give extended extracts here, since the reader can easily consult the work for himself, a facsimile reproduction of the original edition being now placed within his reach through the laudable enterprise of the Guild of Graduates of the Welsh University. Morgan is indebted to the Cabbalah for some of his ideas as well as his methods. The "Eryr" charges the "Cigfran" with "bwyta cig y meirwon," and with "ymborthi ar y budreddi annaturiol." According to the Cabbalah, flesh-eating is due to sin, and the intestinal canal and all connected therewith, are the direct consequence of the Fall. Here is another remarkable similarity of

idea. The Cabbalah says touching the death of the righteous that "the Fire of the all Holy unites with itself the heat of the soul that has been purified by the discipline of separate existence," but that "it burns as a sacrifice the emanations of the wicked, with their bodies." Compare with that the following idea expressed by the "Colomen": "Pan fo dyn duwiol yn ymadael a'r byd, nid yw fo ond gadael ei wisg, fel Joseph yn nwylaw gwraig Potiphar, honno yw'r ddaiar. Ac mae Haul y Cyfiawnder yn sugno gwres yr enaid hwn allan o'r corph, ac yn gadael y cnawd (fel gloyn du) i'w orchymyn i'r bedd. Ac fe a godir cyrph (neu natur gorphorol) y rhai duwiol fel y cyfyd yr haul yn ci ogoniant a'i nerth. Ond am y lleill fe fydd ei cyrph noethus hwynt fel tommen i'r cythreuliaid i ymdrabaeddu ynddi yn dragywydd." To the Cabbalah also Morgan is indebted for the quasi-pantheistic exposition of the doctrine of the attributes of God. From several passages we gather that he was dangerously near holding the view that the idea of infinity, e.g., is synonymous with the idea of totality, but he is very guarded in his language. Jacob Boehme explicitly states that "God is infinite, for God is all." Morgan, also, would seem to hold that the infinity of God is to be conceived of as extensively infinite, and not, as the orthodox theologian holds, *intensively* infinite. His language would often seem to imply that he regards the relation of the absolute to the finite, not as a dynamical and rational relation, but rather as a mathematical relation of a total to its parts; in

other words, infinity to him implies that God exists in a necessary relation to finite things or beings, and that the limitation of the divine nature resulting from their existence is a non-volitive limitation. It is not to be wondered at that in dealing with such a subject as that of the attributes of God our author fails to be altogether consistent with himself. Morgan was wonderfully in advance of his times, but he was not infallible. For whereas he explains infinity in terms of extensity he should have explained self-existence as being *non causa sui*. It is a necessary and logical deduction of the doctrine of extensity that the Deity has the ground of his existence out of Himself, but our author is inconsistently orthodox on the question of self-existence; he says: "Cyn gwneuthur y byd nid oedd ond Dduw yn ymddangos iddo ei hunan &c." Here, Morgan did not adopt the views of Boehme, nor yet those of the Cabbalah.

III.

Nothing so surprises one in "Llyfr y Tri Aderyn" as the modernity of its ideas. Not only was the author in advance of his own age, but he would seem in many of his wonderful passages to be in advance of the present age. Take e.g. these two sentences: "Canys ma'r dyn duwiol yn rheoli pob peth yn yr yrbryd gyda Duw ei hun." "O! Eryr, deall mai sylwedd yw pob ysbryd, ac nad yw'r byd a welir ond cyscod o'r byd nis gwelir, yr hwn sydd drwy'r byd ymma: ac nad yw'r corph ond cyscod, ac megys march



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mineral, vegetable, and animal, and that all three grades have their culmination—first in man, and finally in the Deity, “when God shall be all in all.” He certainly believed that the life-principle pervades all created things; flowing into the mineral kingdom from the sun, and then up through the two higher kingdoms in order to man. In the mineral kingdom, he implies, life is unorganized, therefore unproductive; but in the two higher kingdoms it is organized and directed into forms of use, and thus it becomes productive. There is nothing new in the view that mind governs matter, and that the spirit can by its own volitive force modify and direct all the manifestations of matter. That view is at least as old as “Llyfr y Tri Aderyn.”

Take another remarkable passage. “Ac wrth hyn y cai di adnabob y pechod hwnnw; fe reolodd yn dy hynafiaid,” &c. Here he is speaking of besetting sin, and it is perfectly clear that he ascribes it to atavism and transmission. Atavism Gegenbaur defines to be the reappearance of a more primitive organization, or a reversion to a primary state. This is all very clear to us of the twentieth century, but marvellous in a writer of the seventeenth, and can be explained only as a revelation granted by Nature to a devout and enquiring mind. That the law of heredity as applied to the general and broad outlines of structure and function was understood even as far back as the days of the Apostles may be admitted. Men of all ages knew that it is true that we do not gather grapes of

thorns, nor figs of thistles. That wheat produces wheat, that existing oxen have descended from ancestral oxen, that every unfolding organism eventually takes the form of the class, order, genus, and species from which it sprang, is a fact which by force of repetition, has always forced on the mind almost the aspect of necessity. But that the same law is true of the smaller attributes, down to the most trivial details of structure and function, has not been always admitted, and has even been widely disbelieved. Above all, that the law is of moral and mental application, is a truth the force of which has not been recognized till almost our own days. Morgan Llwyd, then, was greatly in advance of his own age when he attributed besetting sin to heredity, or moral reversion to type.

Take yet one more instance of his modernity, viz. his Christian Socialism. He is no dreamer of impossible Utopias, but a practical, hard-headed, mater-of-fact disciple of the Socialist of Galilee, the Son of Man himself. The creed of the sane Socialist contains but one article—Equality of opportunity. Look at the following noble sentiments! “Colomen * * *
 Ac mi ddylwn gael cennad i ddywedyd y gwir yn llonydd am danaf fy hunan, ac am bob aderyn arall.”
 “Eryr * * * Fe ddylai rheolwyr roi cennad i bawb i ddywedyd i meddwl &c.” “Cigfran [speaking of the ‘Colomenod’] Mae nhwy yn dâl nad oes ond un brenhin, ac yn dywedyd i fod ef ymhob lle ac heb i gynnwys yn unlle &c * * * Mae’r Colomenod ymma yn hedeg yn mhob teyrnas, ac arwydd drwg

yw hynny na saif y brenhinoedd * * * Mae'r hen rhai yn gweled fod tro mawr ar fyd yn agos &c." "Colomen * * * Ac nid yw achau teuluaidd ond rhwyd a weuodd naturiaeth, yn yr hon y mae prifcopyn balchder yn llechu." Here is the true Socialist. The Christian Socialist believes that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and that these are by divine right the heritage of man. All men are equal in the sight of God: "there is no difference." "To him there is no circumcision, Jew nor Greek, barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free," but all are one. Each individual has a divine right to the inheritance of as much of the land on which he lives as is necessary for his sustenance. He who appropriates more than is necessary for his own support, and for that of his offspring, at the expense of his neighbour's opportunity, is a thief and a robber, and is the indirect cause of the poverty and misery of others. To the sane Socialist, the ideal *patria* or fatherland is an industrial commonwealth founded upon an equitable use of land and capital.

On two subjects only did Morgan retain his pre-Renaissance ideas. He believed in astrology, and he shared in the prejudice of his age against the Copernican system. His views on the latter are expressed in the words of the Colomen: "Na wrando ar y mesurwyr cnawdol, sy'n son gormod am yr un mil ar hugain o filldiroedd sydd yn gwregysu yr holl fyd, ac yn bwrw fol tair mil o ganol gwaelod y ddaiar, i'r wynebion, a phedwar myrddiwn oddi yma i'r haul, a phedwar



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so bulky. There cannot then be any absurdity in saying, that all things were created for the sake of this inferior World and the inhabitants thereof, and they that have such mean thoughts of it, seem not to have consider'd, who it was that died to redeem it. Let them measure our World by that Standard, and they cannot undervalue it any longer, without some reproach to infinite Wisdom." *

IV.

We linger yet a moment with Morgan the divine. There is a remarkable passage in the speech of the Golomen, in which the work of Creation is grounded in the conception of the Trinity. It is a passage often quoted as an example of the author's mysticism. We give just a short extract, but the passage must be read and studied in its context to be appreciated and understood. "Mae yn nghragwyddoldeb dri yn un, sef, ewyllys, cariad, a nerth, a'r naill yn ymgyrhaeddyd erioed a'r llall, ac yn ymborthi, ac yn ymgenhedlu yn eu gilydd byth * * * Ac oni bai fod y tri hyn yn cydweithio, ni buasai na dyn, nac angel, nag anifail, na dim arall wedi i wneuthur &c. &c." It will be seen that the author grounds Creation in the doctrine of the Trinity, and the Trinity he conceives to be the organization of faculty in God. This organization it is that provides for the fullest self-consciousness and the fullest spiritual life. As the life of the nervous system, the life

*"Reflections upon Learning," p. 97, 1699 Edition.

of the circulating system, and the life of the digestive system, all go to make up the 'one life of the human body, so the consciousness of the Father, the consciousness of the Son, and the consciousness of the Holy Spirit, all go to make the *self*-consciousness of God. There is also in God a free self-determination. It follows that the universe is not a merely necessary evolution of divine ideas, but a volitive evolution also. "Mae rhain [i.e. created beings] wedi ymescor erioed yn y cariad drwy yscogiad yr ewyllys &c." "Ewyllys," "cariad," and "nerth" become a revealed unity in the person of Christ. Christ is the power and the love of God, and as love, he has his eternal self-determinations: these constitute the plan of the universe. But the plan is not the building: decrees are not the universe. Executive volition is also necessary. And Christ is the will as well as the love of God; creation is his free and sovereign act, turning ideas into realities, making objective what was only subjective before. While the plan of creation is the product of love or reason, the actual world is the product of will. The three distinctions in the divine Being, expressed by Morgan in the relation of "Ewyllys" "Cariad" and "Nerth", are so represented by him that we are not to conceive of them as other than persons. He has been charged with holding the heresy of Sabellius, who taught that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are merely developments or revelations, in time, of the otherwise concealed Godhead. What Morgan says in effect is that the second of the

divine persons is called the love ("reason" elsewhere) of God, and it is intimated that he constitutes the principle of objectification, consciousness, intelligence, within the divine nature, and the principle of expression, manifestation, revelation, by which God is made known to beings other than himself. The Father by Himself is the divine nature latent, unexpressed, unrevealed. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Christ is the will, love, and power of God in exercise. The temporal manifestations rest upon an eternal relation in God's being, In eternity, Christ, the love, is God as made objective to himself. In time, Christ the love, is God as expressed, manifested, and communicated to finite creatures.

A corollary of this doctrine of Creation, taught by the author, is the pan-spiritualism in which the material creation is said to be the shadow of which the spiritual world is the substantial counterpart. "Nid yw'r byd a welir ond cysgod o'r byd nis gwelir, yr hwn sydd drwy'r byd ymma: ac nid yw'r corph ond cyscod ac megis march lliain yr ysbryd, neu wain i'r enaid a bery byth." The universe is not only spiritual, as previously pointed out, but it is "God's ceaseless conversation with his creatures." The material universe attains the end of its existence only when it reveals to us the mind of God. He who penetrates to the inner constitution of man must perceive the One in Three and the Three in One.



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see him who is *above* nature, and in whom, at the same time, all things consist. This is the meaning of a famous passage in Browning, with whom Morgan Llwyd has much in common. Mrs. Orr, Browning's biographer, says that the poet spoke to her in relation to his own life, and concluded by reading to her the epilogue to "Dramatis Personæ." "It will be remembered," she continues, "that the beautiful and pathetic second part of the poem is a cry of spiritual bereavement; the cry of those victims of nineteenth century scepticism for whom incarnate Love has disappeared from the universe, carrying with it the belief in God. The third part attests the continued existence of God in Christ, as mystically present to the individual soul.

"That one Face, far from vanish, rather grows,
Or decomposes but to recompose,
Become my Universe that feels and knows!"

"That Face," said Mr. Browning, as he closed the book,— "that Face is the Face of Christ. That is how I feel him."

With one qualification and proviso, Morgan Llwyd would adopt the view of Robert Browning. Nature to the former was the expression of the will, love, and power of God, as a man's face is an expression of his mind and will.

Rhetorically, he sometimes identifies nature with God, just as man identifies his face with himself.

But then, he is careful to point out that behind and within the face there is a personality, of which the face is but the partial and temporary manifestation. In like manner, nature is but the partial and temporary manifestation of God, who is not only *in* all things, but *before* all things, and *above* all things.

V.

As to style, Morgan Llwyd is usually ranked third in the order of merit in the list of Welsh classical writers, Ellis Wynne and Theophilus Evans being placed before him. We would place him, not third, second, or first, but in a class by himself: he is *sui generis*. He is a past-master at sentence building, but perhaps not quite so felicitous at paragraph-building, because he is too sententious a thinker. As compared and contrasted with the writers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, we observe in him a marked change from what is haphazard, unseemly, promiscuous, and exuberant, to what is carefully elaborated, well-proportioned, symmetrical, select; a change from straggling, limping sentences to compact expressions containing *finesse*, elegance, skilful arrangement, antithesis, or epigram; and a change from loose, irregular periods to the harmonious smoothness of the rounded sentence. It is not to be inferred from all this that Morgan's style is always perfect, and that it should be taken as an invariable model. "Writing", as Mr. Pattison aptly observes, "is a sustained endeavour to express meaning, and the artist is per-

petually dropping below his own ideal." * A long composition is to be regarded in its effect as a whole, and there should be mezzo-tints, as in painting. "Incessant brilliance," says the same author, "is unnatural, and fatigues the attention." Morgan is not always brilliant; he is sometimes commonplace, and sometimes even ungrammatical. Yet in the rare art of using his colours skilfully, and of putting in vivid flashes what is intended to rouse and catch the attention, he is not often surpassed. In the ability to pack truth into small compass, he stands shoulder to shoulder with Pope. Here are a few examples taken almost at random—

- (1). "Y sawl sydd a dau wyneb ganddo, mae un o'r ddau yn gythreulig."
- (2). "Y neb a wenhieitho i ddynion sydd bwdr yn ei galon."
- (3). "Ysbryd y gwaed yw cwmwl y meddwl."
- (4). "Y rheswm uchaf yw'r afreswm isaf."
- (5). "Oni fedri roi taw ar ereill, distawa dy hun."
- (6). "Cyfrif y da o'th flaen yn berl, a'th waith o'th ol yn dom."
- (7). "Oni elli achub ereill, dianc oddi wrthyt dy hun."
- (8). "Gochel galedu dy gydwybod wrth i mynych dwymno a'i hoeri."

The wealth of metaphor and simile to be found in "Llyfr y Tri Aderyn" is really wonderful, more especially as regards quality, rather than as regards quantity. What can surpass the following metaphor

* "Introduction to Pope's Satires and Epistles." p. 19.



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beilchion, yr offeiriaid mudion, y llefarwyr myglyd, y gwrandawyr cysglyd, y proffeswyr gweigion, yr uchelwyr trawsion, y tenantiaid ffeilsion, y rhai ifainc nwyfus, y rhai hen ofergoelus, yr usdusiaid anghyfion, yr ymofynwyr partiol, y cyfreithwyr cyfrwys-ddrwg, y boneddigion briwsiongar, y tlodion rhagrithiol, y gwerin anwybodus, yr ysgolheigion chwyddedig, y milwyr anrhesymol, y trethwyr digydwybod, y tafarnwyr anifeilaidd, y cynllyfanwyr segurlyd, y gwyr chwerwon, y gwragedd anufydd, y plant cyndyn, y masweddwyr sidanog, y lladron anweledig, y llofruddion maleisus, y cynhennus dirheol, yr ymladdwyr gwaedwyllt, y godinebwyr anifeilaidd, a holl addolwyr y lythyren, a'r cyffelyb i'r rhai hyn, am y rhai y dywedwyd o'r blaen, ac yr wyf etto yn tystiolaethu, nad yw y rhain yn etifeddion teyrnas Dduw; &c"

In "Llyfr y Tri Aderyn" (the work which we are considering) Morgan adopts the allegorical style throughout, and it is admitted by all who have read the work, and who are capable of forming a just estimate, that he is master of that style of writing. As Dr. Lewis Edwards remarks, "the Eagle speaks like an eagle, the Dove like a dove, and the Raven like a raven." The Eagle no doubt represented Cromwell, the Dove Nonconformists, and the Raven the Established Church, but the truths or opinions they symbolize and speak are of present-day and universal application.

VI.

The evidences of Renaissance influence on Morgan Llwyd are undeniable. Apart from the general texture of his writings, there is the witness of the wide range of his reading, and the class of books which he read, contained in numerous allusions, direct and indirect, to ancient, mediæval, and Renaissance authors. Among others, he must have read the following works. The writings of Jacob Boehme. The "Ymadroddiad" is a literal translation of a little work by Boehme entitled "Of True Resignation." His Socialism the author had probably derived from More, although it is of a very different type, as already shown, from that of the "Utopia." He had read Calvin's "Institutes," and was in some measure influenced by the great Genevan in his views on the doctrine of decrees. The "Cigfran" says, "Ond mae llawer yn dywedyd i fod ef wedi gwrthod llawer, a dewis rhai cyn i geni", to which the "Colomen" replies "Gad iddi, O Eryr, y rhai a achubir a elwir &c."

He denounces impure literature in strong terms, "Col. * * Ond yr ydych eto yn dilyn y cnawd, yn canu carolau i gyffroi eich chwantau, yn darllain llyfrau budron, anllad, ac yn gwenwyno y gwreiddyn pur &c." He had no doubt seen the then recently published unexpunged editions of Ovid and Aristotle. He was perfectly familiar with the Cabbalah, and there are indications that he possessed

at least a rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew. Dr. Edwards observes that in reading certain portions of "Llyfr y Tri Aderyn" one may well imagine Plato to be speaking, under the influence and the light of Revelation. The curious, bent on hunting up analogies and comparisons, will go even further, and fancy that he discovers some resemblance between the "demon" of Socrates and "tyst oddi fewn" Morgan Llwyd.

Morgan had also in all probability read Kepler's "Harmonies of the World," and the "Epitome of the Copernican System," but he had no sympathy with the new astronomy, and he certainly viewed with distrust the discoveries and researches of Copernicus. A moot point is the number of Buddhistic ideas which are scattered up and down the pages of "Llyfr y Tri Aderyn." One wonders whether the author were familiar with the doctrine of the Mahâbhinishkramana. Do we not hear the echo of "Nirvana" in the following passage? " * * * pan ymddangoso y Duw mawr, fe ddiflana y creaduriaid. . . y sawl a fynno fodloni Duw, arhosed yn ei Fab; y sawl a fynno ddilyn y Mab, rhodied yn ci Ysbryd. Blin gan ddyn gael ci ddiddymu i'w ddiddanu; ond y sawl sydd ganddo glust i wrando, gwrandawed." Buddha would deliver man, not by philosophy, or asceticism, but by self-renunciation. Self-abnegation would appear also to be, according to Morgan, the pivot on which turns the wheel of the higher life.



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phob pren bychan, ar nad yw'n dwyn ffrwyth da; mae'r tân wedi ennyn yn Nghymru; mae drws dy fforest di (O wlad y Brutaniaid presennol) yn agored i'r eirias dân; ac hefyd mae'r fwyall ar dy wreiddyn di—oni ddygi yr awron ffrwyth da, fe a'th dorrir rhag bod yn bobl. He, like all great souls of all transition periods in the world's history, arose a master of the occasion.

All that was mortal of the great Seer was laid to rest, it is believed, in the Nonconformist burying ground, near Wrexham, about the year 1660. Robert Jones, of Rhoslan, says that he saw a small fragment of his tombstone with the letters M. Ll. inscribed thereon. He also relates a tradition that a certain rich man (a persecutor of the reformers) in passing by thrust his sword to the hilt into the grave of the Seer. *Sic transit!* Do we not read of a certain Doctor of Divinity who kept a picture of Erasmus on purpose to have the pleasure of spitting upon it from time to time?

Prophets are never understood, and a wicked and perverse generation gives them a stone for bread, a serpent for fish, and a vinegared sponge for a cup of water.

Chapter 8.

HUW MORUS:

THE CAROLIST OF CEIRIOG.

THE description "carolist" which we have appended to this eminent poet's name must not be understood in an exclusive sense, to imply that he wrote nothing but carols. We have used the epithet because it calls attention to that part of his work which falls more especially within the scope of our subject. From a bardic point of view no doubt the *cywyddion*, *hanesion*, *priodolion*, *moesolion*, &c are of greater importance than the *carolau*, but, with the exception of the amatory songs and *moesolion*, they betray little or no outside influence. We defer the consideration of the *carolau* for the moment, till we have first learned something of the nature of the poetical atmosphere in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Let us glance first at larger Britain. The New Learning and the Reformation stand as a sort of Alps between mediæval and modern literature. The earliest English poets to come under Italian influence

are Wyatt and Surrey, whose works were written towards the end of Henry VIII's reign, but published only a year before the accession of Elizabeth. These borrowed their form and to some extent their matter from the land of Dante and Boccaccio. It is to them we owe the introduction of the sonnet, the blank verse, and the *ottava rima*, to which Spenser added a ninth line. They revived the delicacy of versification and the strictness of metre which had characterized the verse of Chaucer, and they added the several exotic graces which distinguished the works of the "new company of Courtly makers," as Puttenham styles them. The earlier Elizabethan poets, with the exception of Sackville (who struck root backwards) carried on and perfected the work begun by these two men. Gascoigne is one of the outstanding figures of the period, and it is around his work that must be grouped the work of the minor host that sprang up and thrived in the morning sun of the Renaissance. Passing by the drama, which has exerted but microscopic influence on Welsh poetry, we arrive at Spenser. The beginning of a "New Age" in poetry is marked by the advent of the "Shepherd's Kalendar," in 1579. Shortly afterwards, and with surprising suddenness, there swarmed a locust-army of minor lyrists, among the chief of them is Marlowe, Sidney, Watson, Daniel, Drayton, and Constable. The great work of this period is Spenser's "Faerie Queene"—"the magnificent masterpiece of the Renaissance in England," and next to it are to be classed



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Spenser admired the songs of Marot so much that he imitated their style and translated several of them. Thus, the "bucolic" spread from Italy to every country in Europe. The metres of the "Kalendar" are various, and some of them show that the poet was "trying the prentice hand" at divers forms of verse, feeling his way on to the proud eminence that he was destined to reach. In the metre of the "Faerie Queene" the ninth line is an addition to the *ottava rima*, as we have already observed, and so the stanza is to all intents and purposes a verse of the poet's own invention. The ninth line is made to rhyme with the eighth, but is a foot longer, thus securing for the stanza a beautiful rhythm and rich cadence. Of the merit of the "Faerie Queene" as a poem, we may say with Chambers that "merely the few first stanzas, descriptive of Una, must have been enough to place Spenser above the whole hundred poets that then offered incense to Elizabeth," and with Hallam that Spenser's name "is the third in the poetical literature of our country, and is not surpassed except by that of Dante in any other." As an interpreter and painter of the ideals of the Renaissance he stands alone and unrivalled. Among the most beautiful of his minor pieces are the passionate "Hymns" on love and beauty. Running as a thread through their stanzaic beads is the Platonic belief that the soul has the power to mould and fashion the plastic mass of the body into her own image. It is remarkable, perhaps, that Huw

Morus shared in the same, or what is a very similar belief. With Morus love is the potter that shapes the graceless clay into a charming Venus.

Doubtless he had come under the spell of Spenser, who was regarded as the god of song in Britain down to the days of Pope and the classical school. The mighty influence of Spenser cast a shadow on a greater man than himself—Milton; whose unsurpassed epic genius was to bloom and flourish in the next century. Milton's influence on Welsh poetry, it need hardly be remarked, is almost a negligible quantity: it was not at all felt till about the beginning of the nine-teenth century. Strange to say, the number of Spenser's imitators was nearly in the inverse ratio to the number of his admirers; whereas Pope (whose poetry was still-born) has had no end of imitators. The reason is not far to seek: the former was an artist, the latter a mere copyist or artist's drudge. Men of mediocre attainments and slight gifts could, when they had once learnt the trick, spin out "correct" poetry by the league.

The chief of the Spenserian imitators were Phineas and Giles Fletcher, and Drake has made out a lengthy list of some two hundred or more names, but many of them hardly deserve to be described as poets. The Caroline and Commonwealth lyrists, from Donne to Cowley, were also Spenserians in a sense. They bore the same amount of resemblance to the great Spenser that a garden o'er-run with weed does to a garden

that is well-kept. The untrimmed, etiolated excess of Donne, to which has been given the appellation "Marinism," is more or less characteristic of all the anti-Puritan poetry of the Cavalier lyrists. This excess passed by easy gradation into the metaphysical pedantry and ratiocination of Davies, Lord Brooke (a contemporary of Donne), Habbington, Cowley, &c. With Cowley, the Spenserian imagery, which appealed to the heart, becomes a philosophic subtlety which tries to appeal to the intellect. Cowley is the farthest from Spenser in feeling, as he is the last to show any traces of the Italian cult. Some of the Cavalier lyrists produced very passable music, and a few showed that Spenser had left at least his mantle behind him, if not two parts of his spirits. The majority were singers of mere court and society verse, such as Suckling, Lovelace, &c., and their sorry stuff is a travesty of common sense. In Robert Herrick, however, we have a poet who could write charming verse, in which are combined the skill of an artist with the insight of a student of nature. Herrick revels in physical beauty, and one unwittingly connects his name with the image of the Julia, Anthea, and Perilla whom he painted in such warm, luscious colours. He is the elite of light verse. His "Cherry Ripe" is perfectly familiar today, and so are "Some asked me where the rubies grow," "Julia's Clothes," "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may," "Fair daffodils, we weep to see you fade so soon." Herrick published two volumes of poems, the first—"Hesperides"—in 1633, and the



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Rhianod" which deserve to be mentioned in the same breath as the finest stanzas of "Epithalamion." Compare the following:—

"Tell me, ye merchants daughters, did ye see
 So fayre a creature in your towne before;
 So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
 Adorn'd with beautyes grace and vertues store?
 Her goodly eyes lyke saphyres shining bright,
 Here forehead yvory white,
 Her cheekes lyke apples which the sun hath rudded,
 Her lips lyke cherries charming men to byte,
 Her brest like to a bowl of creame uncrudded,
 Her paps lyke bylltes budded,
 Her snowie neck lyke to a marble towre;
 And all her body like a pallace fayre,
 Ascending up, with many a stately stayre,
 To honours seat and chastities sweet bowre.
 Why stand ye still ye virgins in amaze,
 Upon her so to gaze,
 Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
 To which the woods did answer, and your echo ring?"

"Meillionen burwen beraidd, o fonedd, rinwedd ryw,
 A luniodd Duw yn lana'—hawddgara'—fwyna'n fyw;
 Gwech raddol, rasol rosyn, lliw blisgyn irwyn wy,
 Un dyner, cofia am dana'—bryd Efa, noddfa nwy';
 Yn hardd fel gardd deg urddol, o lesol nefol nôd,
 Ail Fenws, oleu fwynwar, lou glauar lawn o glôd.

* * *

Dy fan-wallt tros dy fynwes, sy'n taenu'n llaes fel llîn,
 Pob modfedd rinwedd raenus, yn drefnus wrth ei drin;

Gwèn eneth fel gwenynen, a'i min yw mwynen mêl,
 Dy gorph, dy gwnawd, dy fwynder, mun dyner i mi y dêl.

Trwy fy hun mi a'ch gwelwn, bun addfain gefu y nos,
 Yn hoyw fenyw feinwasg, fel gwridog *ddamasg* rôs."

If the bard of Ceiriog had been able to disentangle himself from the cobweb of Eisteddfod Gaerfyrddin he would have been free to soar into the higher regions of poetry, and would have pluckt his laurel from the same tree as Spenser.

It was the special province of Renaissance poetry to celebrate the beauty and purity of Affection, and of binding in an indissoluble bond the two great principles of human and divine love. Affection is the chain that links the human family together, levelling down the accidents of age, sex, condition, nationality, and linking the child to the parent, and the parent to the child, man to the father-land and the father-land to the man, nation to nation, and the whole world in the bond of brotherhood. Whether the inspiration be drawn from the old romances, or from the unadorned faith of the Reformation, whether "from the forests and wilds of the savage, or from the cities of the civilized man," Love is the inner spirit of true Renaissance poetry. The freshness, the purity, and the holiness of this sentiment have been more exquisitely portrayed in Welsh poetry than they have in those of any other nation, we believe. At all events, there

is less to make one blush in our own songs. English poetry of the Romance class is often the vehicle of sickly French sentimentalism. Barring the bawdiness of Morris o Fôn and one or two others, there is nothing to make us hesitate to put our literature in the hands of our children. There is certainly nothing in the compositions of Huw Morus which might offend the pure minded. He is a worshipper of physical beauty, but that is because, with the Christian apostle and philosopher, he regards the physical as the temple of the spiritual. "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?

* * * glorify God in your body." A careful analysis of the songs of Morus discloses the fact that there is among their lower strata a well-defined vein of melancholy. This vein is a characteristic of the school of Spenser. Love and sorrow are twin-sisters, and with the Spenserians "the lyre of Affection yields not only its sweetest but also its most constantly recurring tones to the hand of Affliction." Compare the following stanzas, the first of which is from the "Anthea" of Herrick, and the second from the *mabinogi* "I Fab a Merch," of Morus.

- (A) "Now is the time when all the lights wax dim,
 And thou, Anthea, must withdraw from him
 Who was thy servant. Dearest, bury me
 Under that holy-oak or gospel tree,
 Where, though thou seest not, thou mayst think upon
 Me, when thou yearly go'st in procession.
 Or, for mine honour, lay me in that tomb
 In which thy sacred relics shall have room ;



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been questioned, owing to what is described as “the frankly voluptuous character” of the “Hesperides.” It must be admitted that certain passages in the “Hesperides” are reminiscent (remotely) of Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria*, but assuredly, it is wanton prejudice to question the sincerity of the “Noble Numbers,” and in the case of our own bard, the charge is baseless, and succeeds in proving the malice of its author rather than the levity of the poet of Ceiriog. The remarks of the learned Editor of “Eos Ceiriog” are worthy of note, and we cannot do better than quote them here. He says: “Notwithstanding the playfulness displayed by his muse in his juvenile pieces he was nevertheless a man of exemplary moral conduct. His writings everywhere discover a heart impressed with virtuous sentiments, an humble mind, submissive and resigned to the will of his Creator. He took no small pains to disseminate the principles of sober religion among his countrymen. From the esteem and veneration in which his opinions were held among the middling and lower classes of society, it is not to be doubted but that his writings had a powerful and beneficial influence over the morals and habits of the common people. To check the career of vice and injustice, to aid the cause of virtue, and inculcate the precepts of humanity and benevolence, the bard was ever ready to exert his talents.”

The poetical atmosphere of Wales from the era of Eisteddfod Gaerfyrddin down to the days of Huw Morus was leaden and lowery. A violent reaction

had set in before the end of the sixteenth century against scholastic restraint, and the gathering clouds were charged with the electricity of the Renaissance.

Dafydd ab Edmwnd, Tudur Aled, and Gruffydd Hiraethog, were the major prophets of the Free-metre Captivity, but with Gwilym Ganoldref the *gynghanedd* itself died, only to be resurrected with the bards of Anglesey. The thunder-clap of Morus's verse was the forewarning of the storm which was to burst in the "fury of freedom" with Williams of Pantycelyn. Goronwy Owen tuned his lyre to the music of the storm, but he falteringly struck some ancient chords, so that the man is great only in spite of himself. Huw Morus's predecessors, with one or two exceptions, were men of mediocre attainments, whose muse inanely aped the consonantal "lilt" of Ap Edmwnd. His immediate successors caught something of his own felicity, but they were none of them great men. Of the coterie of ballad writers of the early eighteenth century period Professor John Morris Jones writes: "Tua dechreu'r ganrif ddiweddaf nid oedd nemor i fardd yng Nghymru heblaw rhigymwyr a baledwyr â rhyw adsain wan o odlau Huw Morus. Ac yn wir fe barhawyd y dull hwnw o brydyddu (cleciadau trwsgwl, a geiriau llanw, ac iaith anghoeth) ar hyd y ddeunawfed ganrif. Tua'i chanol yr oedd Huw Jones, Llangwm, a Dafydd Jones, Trefriw, yn gwerthu eu cerddi hyd y wlad, ac at ei diwedd yr oedd Twm o'r Nant yn ei fri. Parhawyd y dull mewn carolan ymbell i'r ganrif hon."*

* "Y Genhinen", Ionawr 1893.

It is to be observed that Huw Morus's verse is not free from alliterative restraint. He introduced alliteration (*cynganedd*) into every line of his "dyrifau," but he seldom sacrifices sense to sound, and his verse is usually smooth and easy.

On Eos Ceiriog's art Lewis Morris o Fôn observes:—
 "Huw Morus a ragorodd ar bawb ereill mewn Dyrifau (lyrics), etc * * * Cerdd tôn a goslef nid yw mor gaeth ei rheolau a phryddest gadwyniadol; am hyny nid rhyfedd nad oedd genym Ynghymru nemawr o'r fath rydd gynghaneddion a dalent eu darllain, nes y darfu i'r oes ddiweddaf ddwyn i'r byd un Huw Morus o blwyf Silin, yn swydd Ddinbych, megis seren ryfeddawl o'r disglaer yn y ffurfafen farddonol, a ymddanghosodd eilchwyl, gwedi bod ar encudd er ys tri chant o flynyddau. Yr oedd Dafydd ab Gwilym o gylch y flwyddyn 1400, mewn cywyddau y fath ag oedd Huw Morus yn 1700, mewn dyryfau; y ddau yn hynod o awenyddawl."

II.

The carol is the Protestant substitute for the Roman interlude, and the prototype of the modern hymn. Even as the primitive Church found it imperative to establish saints' days, and other feasts and fasts, in place of the pagan festivals, so did the Reformers find it imperative to establish more Scriptural practices instead of christianized Saturnalia, Laurentialia, Cerealia, Fordicidia, Palilia, Hilaria, and



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element, there is a sense of humiliation of heart, there is a poignant realization of sin and its guiltiness, there is a yearning for a brighter life in a hymn which you do not find in your closet; and, in singing, you come into sympathy with the truth as you perhaps never do under the preaching of a discourse. There is a provision made in singing for the development of almost every phase of Christian experience. Singing also has a wonderful effect upon those feelings which we wish to restrain. All are not alike susceptible; but all are susceptible to some extent. I speak with emphasis on this point, because I am peculiarly sensitive to singing, and because I owe so much to it. How many times have I come into the church on Sunday morning, jaded and somewhat desponding, saddened, at any rate,—and before the organ voluntary was completed, undergone a change as great as though I had been taken out of January and been plumped down in the middle of May, with spring blossoms on every hand! How many, many times have I been lifted out of a depressed state of mind into a cheerful mood by the singing before I began to preach! How often in looking forward to the Friday-night meeting, has my prevailing thought been, not of what I was going to say, but of the hymns that would be sung! My prayer-meeting consists largely of the singing of hymns which are full of prayings, and my predominant thought in connection with our Friday-night gatherings is, ‘Oh, that sweet, joyful singing!’ ”

If we were under the necessity of forming an estimate of the character and attainments of any people whose history we could not trace by other means, the two first things we should try to learn would be something about their musical instruments and something about their songs. That the story of a nation is in some measure, at least, the story of its musical instruments, is a fact which is patent to everybody,

and which was recognized by no less an authority than Gibbon.

Songs tell of the struggles, the aspirations, the moral character of a people, as unmistakably as do the pages of a systematic, matter-of-fact text-book of history. No one can read through Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry" without feeling that he is in communion with the spirits of Scottish and Northern English warriors, and without hearing, with Sidney, the trumpet accents of some "Chevy Chase" or other sounding in his ear. The history wrapped up in the fold of any particular ballad or song is largely due to the plastic power of that ballad or song itself. One song creates the history which another relates. "Unbeniaeth Prydain" won more battles than the Excalibur of Arthur. In like manner the carols of Huw Morus, Edward Morris, Edward Samuel, Ellis Cadwaladr, Owen Gruffydd, Richard Abram, William Mathew, Richard Parry, Dewi Fardd, Jonathan Hughes, and others, became the invincible weapons of Reformation doctrines, driving away before them the "Feast of the Ass," the "Boy Bishop," and the "Feast of Fools," with their more modern derivative, "Mari Lwyd." It was a case of the survival of the fittest.

The carols written by the above bards are doctrinal songs, for the most part, touching on the Atonement, the Incarnation, justification by faith, &c., written under the headings of "Carol Natalic Crist," "Carol y Pasc," "Carol Ystwyll," etc. Almost all the Welsh carols are post-Elizabethan, and the majority are distinctly Anglican in tone. "Carolau Natalic Crist" were

sung at “Plygain,” at that part of the service where the “anthem” is directed to be rendered, both before and after the ante-Communion, and also at the close of the post-Communion portions of the Order of Administration of the Lord’s Supper. “Canu pylgen” was the only Church singing ever attempted in the seventeenth and former half of the eighteenth century. The clergyman,—often (too often, alas!) a monoglot Saxon, a pluralist, and an absentee,—hired the local bard to write a Christmas carol, or he procured a few leaflets of the better-known songs, and a company of singers was engaged to sing at “Plygain.” Gwallter Mechain describes the custom thus: “About four o’clock in the morning (Dec. 25th) churches were illuminated, and public prayers were read, followed by the singing of these pieces called carols. Sometimes from ten to twenty were sung by different persons, in succession. Bourne supposes, with plausibility, that this custom originated in imitation of the “*Gloria in Excelsis, pax et in terris*” sung by the choir of angels over the fields of Bethlehem, etc.”

We will now give a few extracts from the carols of Huw Morus illustrative of the Reformation character of their doctrine.

“Trigolion y ddaear, cyd-genwch yn llafar,

Fe a’n cyrchwyd ui o’n carchar a’n galar i gyd,

Pob dyn a gadd fedydd trwy râd ci waredydd,

Heb gerydd a genfydd y gwynfyd.



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Cael olew ffydd wreiddiol, gan f'Arglwydd sancteiddiol,
 A gwin edifeiriol yn fuddiol a fydd;
 Yw'r ddeubeth happusol, a'm gwneiff i'n iachusol,
 O'm cyflwr annuwiol o'i newydd.

*

Os dwl yw dy synwyr, i ddeall y llwybyr,
 Chwilia'r 'Scrythyr, gre eglur ei grym,
 Cei yna'r ffordd hylwydd, a'th wneiff yn gyfarwydd,
 I ddiange rhag aflwydd yn gyflym.

* * *

Brenhin gor'chafiaeth, dod i ui ysprydoliaeth,
 I ganlyn rheolaeth dy gyfraith di yn gall;
 Rhy ynfyd ac ofer i ymachub rhag blinder,
 Ro'i hyder ar bower neb arall."

Chapter 9.

CHARLES EDWARDS:

THE BELOVED AUTHOR.

THE work we are now about to consider—the “Ffydd Ddiffuant”—is the least read or known of the Welsh classics. Why it is so little known we are at a loss to understand. It can hardly be because the work is no longer regarded as a history, for the same objection applies to another classic, “Drych y Prif Oesoedd”—a classic which is more in favour than formerly as a text-book of standard Welsh in our colleges. It may be that the syntax of Charles Edwards is not as unexceptionable as that of Theophilus Evans, but it has a charm all its own, and the “Ffydd Ddiffuant” should be read for its unction, if for nothing else. Someone has named Charles Edwards the Welsh Fènelon—“whom everybody loves but no one believes.” It were well if Welsh students remembered the words of the late Dr. Lewis Edwards, who says: “Nid oes dim a ddymunem ei gymhell ar ddynion ieuainc i’w ddarllen yn fwy na hanes y byd, ac yn enwedig hanes crefydd yn y byd: ac wrth ddechreu,

byddai yn anhawdd iddynt gael llyfr mwy buddiol na 'Hanes y Ffydd.'” * These are the words of a good man, and it is good men can best appreciate the work of an author like Charles Edwards, whose pages are as the snow in Salmon, and his words as the dew of Hermon. “Os cymmwys oedd galw Daniel yn “wr anwyl,’ Ioan yn ‘ddiscibl anwyl,’ a Luc yn ‘ffysigwr anwyl,’ llawn mor gymmwys a fydde galw Charles Edwards yn ‘awdwr anwyl’” † Simplicity is the secret of his charm. Add to this religious fervour, quiet imagery, and old-world naturalness, and you have a combination of qualities that ensures for the author a warm place in the heart of every lover of the pastoral in literary art. A writer with whom Charles Edwards has much in common is Sir Richard Baker, the author of the “Chronicle” (1568—1645), whose subject-matter and style have been described by Sir Henry Wotton as being “full of sweet raptures and researching conceits.” We are not sure that Edwards is not indebted to “the charming Baker” for a great deal of his picturesqueness. There is the same grace—the same unction about the two. Compare the following passage with some of the more characteristic paragraphs in chapter XX. on “Sicr Wirionedd y Ffydd Gristionogol.”

“I have said nothing in this whole Discourse (nor can I repeat it too often) with design to discredit humane Learning. I am neither of their mind who were for burning all Books, except their Bibles; nor of that Learned Man’s opinion, who

* “Traethodau Llenyddol,” p. 104.

† “Genhinen,” Ionawr, 1894.



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with simple and sure means whereby they may form correct views of Christianity. If we keep his object in sight, we shall follow him approvingly and even admiringly. He did not write a text-book of Church history: that is not the task he set before himself. It is not the story of the Church he tells, but of the Faith *unfeigned*. We are not to stop at the glamour of romance which dazzles our approach to the sanctum of his noble purpose: the myths are merely the varnish on the wood, or the gilt on the page. The object the author himself describes in these words:

“Cawn weled yma siamplau pobl Dduw, a'r modd y carasant ei ewyllys Ef, ac y cadwasant ei orchymynion Ef; fel y bo i ni ganlyn y brisg a dorrasant hwy drwy lychfeydd profedig-aethau'r byd dryc-binog hwn: a cherdded y *llwybr cul sydd yn arwain* i orphwysdra tragwyddol. Amlhaodd defaid Jacob wrth gyfebru o flaen gwiall brithion, a dwyn wyn o'r un lliw a'r hyn a osodid iddynt i edrych arno *yn y cwterydd o fewn y cafnau dyfroedd, lle y deuent i yfed*. Gen. xxx. 37, 38, 39. Bydded i ninnau wrth geisio ymddiwallu a gwybodaeth, iawn graffu ar Grist, a'i ferthyron sanctaidd, y rhai y dirisglwyd pob pechod, a mwyniant bydol oddi am danynt; fel y tebygom i'r *gwyn oedd ynddynt* ac 'chwanego gwir Gristionogion tebyg iddynt yn ein plith. Ni a ddewn i borfeydd gleision, os awn *rhagom ar hyd ol praidd y gwir fugail*. Can. Sol. i. *Na fyddwn fusgrell, eithr dilynwyr i'r rhai trwy ffydd ac amynedd sy'n etifeddu yr addewidion*. Heb. vi. 12. Yn enwedig byddwn *ddilynwyr* i'n henafiaid, *megis y buont hwythau i Grist*. 1 Cor. xi. 1. Dodwn hawl i araint a bonedd ein hen deidiau, sef purdeb ffydd efangylaidd, a grym duwioldeb. Er mwyn hynny, fy ngwladwyr anwyl, *y rhoddais hyn o ddiwydrwydd ar ysgrifenu attoch am yr iachawdwriaeth gyffredinol, gan eich annog i*

ymdrech ym mhlaid y ffydd, yr hon a roddwyd unwaith i'r Saint, ie ym mhlith y Britaniaid. Jud. 3. Yr oedd Paul yn hoffi Timothëus yn hytrach wrth alw i'w gof y ffydd ddiffuant ydoedd ynddo ef, yr hon a drigodd yn gyntaf yn ei nain Lois, ac yn ei fam Eunice. 2 Tim. i. 5. Eled y Cymro yn hoff gan Dduw yn yr unrhyw fodd. Ac fel y dylem ddilyn rhinweddau yr ychydig o rai da ym mysg ein henafiaid, felly hefyd gochelyd pechodau y llaweroedd o honynt ydoedd ddrwg, a ddug arnynt ddialedd dwys, ac a wnaethant na bu Duw fodlon i'r rhan fwyaf o honynt: canys cwmpwyd hwynt yn nhir eu genedigaeth." *

Christianity is the sum of revelation. Whether it take the form of history, biography, prophecy, poetry, doctrine, precept, or promise, it uniformly points to Christ. All its rays stream from him, and converge upon him. He is its centre, its sum, and its substance. It comes from him, and it leads to him. Apart from it, *He* is unknown; apart from him *it* is worthless. With him in the centre, all its beams are light and life; otherwise darkness and death reign. Christianity is the affluence of all the light, the confluence of all the streams of revelation. But if from erroneous preconception, or indulged ignorance, or wilful perversity, men refuse its aid, it is obvious that this light may "shine in darkness" unperceived. These and similar causes of insensibility to the claims of Christianity, however, only serve to place in a stronger light, the importance of correct views of the Christian system. The urgency of such views may be argued from the felt necessities of man, from the generous overtures and sublime pretensions of Christ-

* "Y Ffydd Ddiffuant."—Rhagymadrodd.

ianity, from the character of its Founder, and from the thirst for knowledge regarding the invisible which characterizes the wisest men. Correct views of Christianity are to be derived in the first instance from a study of the Faith itself, as disclosed in the system of Christ and his apostles, but none the less essential to the "perfecting of the Faith" is the study of the unfolding of that system in the history of the Church. In the evolution of the Faith, as in that of society, evil is gradually eliminated and good strengthened. The study of the process whereby vice diminishes and virtue increases is *the* important chapter in Christian ethics, since it demonstrates that the moral laws (or forces) act uniformly throughout] all time. It is not likely that men will set themselves wilfully to war against that which history proves to be a uniform and all-prevailing law. "Hanes y Ffydd" shows the futility of false views and the utility of true views. Men have felt happy or unhappy just as they have been feigned or unfeigned believers. "Go to the Bible", Charles Edwards says, "for your definition and to history for a demonstration of the 'Faith unfeigned.'" "

It was the desire to place in the hands of his countrymen a hand-book of the plan of salvation in *operation* that actuated our author when he wrote "Hanes y Ffydd".

One of the most striking differences between Mediævalism and the Renaissance is to be found in the treatment



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The gravity of this charge has not been mollified by the discoveries of more recent historians.

It was the Renaissance that unmasked the face of Time, placing on his brow a broad phylactery instead, containing the inscription: "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, nothing hid that shall not be made known."

The effort which Charles Edwards made to reflect the spirit of the age in a work which should prove as fascinating as it was useful is, to say the least, very commendable. If the result is found to be disappointing in the light of present-day knowledge, that is due to the thousand-fold improved conditions under which we have been schooled. Not the least of the virtues of the author is that by his bewitchery he brings the mind completely, if furtively, under the historic spell. When we have read him, we long to read somebody else who has more to say on the subject. He is like a guide who hurriedly takes the tourist through a land rich with scenery, hinting at more distant sights as he goes. The tourist is so charmed that he returns one day by another path to scan the country for himself.

II.

Charles Edwards is the first Welsh writer to attempt a survey of the wide domain of comparative religion. It was a bold venture in his day, both on account of the scantiness of information on the subject, and

also of the prejudice which obtained against a broad-minded treatment thereof. We are not to be offended if we discover that he shared in the narrow beliefs of his age, nor if we find that his views are often extravagant or even erroneous. Comprehensiveness has only been reached through the results of recent labours in the fields of comparative theology. The ideas of our forefathers on the subject are expressed in the words of the hymn which we sing at our missionary meetings:

“ From Greenland’s icy mountains,

* * * *

The heathen in his blindness

Bows down to wood and stone,” &c.

The words are a sufficiently correct representation of present day information on the subject of non-Christian religions, as regards the mass of the people. It does not occur to the average man that there may be heathen and heathen, even as there are Christians and Christians. No doubt there are millions of blind heathen who bow down to wood and stone, even as there are millions of blind Christians who bow down to cross and crucifix; and it will remain a moot question, perhaps, which is the blinder of the two. The mind versed in the science of comparative religion does not pay much attention to the accidents of brass and stone, but centres observation on the underlying unifying principles. All religions meet at certain points, and teach a number of dogmas that are identical in essence. If Welsh

theologians had picked up the subject at the point where Charles Edwards left it, we should have elaborated the study of comparative religion into a science long ago. But they have preferred to exhaust their energy in acrimonious sectarian pamphlets and treatises. There can be no sure basis found for missionary zeal till we have dug to the lower strata of comparative theology. The command to go into all the world makes it imperative on him who obeys to be well-equipped for the journey, and to be ready with answer to him that asketh the reason of the hope that is in him. The missioner ought verily to be able to "compare spirituals with spirituals."

Chapter XI. in "Y Ffydd Ddiffuant" is devoted to the subject of Mohammedanism. It gives a short epitome of the contents of Alcoran, preceded by a hurried sketch of the prophet. The last paragraph of of the previous chapter animadverts on the "Wild dream of the Orient."

"Ar hyn, Mahomet yr hudol (drwy help Sergius, monach, esgymmunedig) a ddyfeisiodd yr Alcoran, sef, Llyfr gau grefydd y Tyrciaid. Ac, am ci fod ef yn fynych yn syrthio mewn ffaentiadau, taerai mai ymddiddanion yr angel Gabriel a barent ei lewyg ef. Ac, fel y derbynai'r byd ei athrawiaeth ef yn rhwyddach, tymherodd hi i foddloni peth ar hawb. Cydnebydd Grist yn brophwyd ffyddlon, er boddhau y gwir Gristion; gorchymyn enwaediad, er mwyn yr Iuddewon; gwada Dduwdod Crist, er enill yr Ariaid oeddynt aml yn y parthau hyny; ac er denu y sawl a garant bechod, yr hyn sydd naturiol i'r holl fyd, caniatto amllder o wragedd i'r un gwr, a rhydd-did y



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of Sieur du Ryer, and is, on the whole, correct enough; but only such portions of the chapters are given as were considered suitable by the author for his purpose. This purpose is expressed in a prefatory remark.

“*Ei athrawiaeth ef sydd gynnwysedig yn y llyfr a elwir Alcoran, a arwyddocca Casgliad o Orchymynion. Ac o herwydd ei fod ef yn crybwyll weithiau am y Ffydd Gristionogol, detholais a chyfieithais y pethau goreu ynddo, am fod cyfaddefiad Gelyn yn dystiolaeth gref yn ei erbyn ci hun, ac yn dda ar du'r gwir a orthrymmo ef. A'r pethau cyfeiliornus ar sydd ynddo ef a ddylent ein hannog ni i garu'n Ffydd Iachusol yn wresocach; canys gwelir y glan yn hawddgarach wrth ei gyffelybu a'r gwrthun. A bydd y plant afradlon, pan ddelont attynt eu hunain, yn well ganddynt eu hymborth cartrefol ar ol profi'r cibau sydd yn y wlad bell.*”

This was an excellent beginning, and it is sad to reflect that no Welsh writer, after Charles Edwards, has thought it expedient to launch out into the deeper seas of the science of comparative religion. Christianity has nothing to lose from fair comparison: it has much to gain. Its cosmopolitan character, its assimilative capacity, and its ideal ethics will demonstrate (when it is interpreted in the spirit of its Founder) the vast superiority of its splendour over the “broken lights” of man's device. We need another Renaissance—not so much a revival of letters as of the inward spirit of learning. The spirit of enquiry, patient, fearless, and withal reverent, has been devoured, paradoxical as it might sound, by the hydra-headed monster, modern Education. Wales, whom some consider to be politically

progressive, is, theologically, conservative and stationary. The nervously active spirit, which impelled minds of the Renaissance period to invade every department of life, and, like the bee, to gather honey from the million flowers of a thousand fields, is hibernating and living on the past. It would betray lack of faith to deprecate the application of scientific methods in the treatment of the supernatural. We should not forget that *magna est veritas, et prævalebit*, however fiery may be the ordeal through which it has to pass.

In the early and Renaissance periods the tendencies in relation to non-Christian thought were of a diametrically opposite character. The attitude of the purely literary Renaissance towards paganism was one of approval, and of the purely religious Renaissance of enquiry. Some of the leading Italian Humanists, as we learn from remarks of Petrarch, considered it a mark of "stupidity and ignorance" to give the Christian religion preference over non-Christian philosophy. The early apostles of the revived letters accounted Mediaeval Christianity as an expression of superlative barbarism, and went back to pre-Christian antiquity for their ideals. Nor were they altogether to be blamed. 'The only version of Christianity which they knew scarcely demanded and certainly did not deserve any preference over ancient philosophy. Plato was a saint as compared with Borgia: the Delphic oracle was less fallible than a corrupt Vatican. When classicalism had ceased to run riot, and the ferment of its juvenility had subsided, it began to reconsider the

position it had recently abandoned. Men that had been compelled to cast aside the pseudo-Christianity of Popes could find no fault with the unfeigned Faith of the Primitive Church. There followed a period of introspection, which was in turn followed by one of speculation. The speculative writers of the latter part of the seventeenth and the early part of the eighteenth century felt themselves secure in the inherent strength of Christian philosophy, and went boldly in quest of superadvenient evidence in the fields of comparative religion. They are not over-scrupulous in their methods, it must be said, and it mattered little to them how or where they got their facts, so only that they fittingly embellished the polemic building. They quoted portions of the Vedas or of the Koran, or they appealed to the testimony of Laou-tsze or Sakÿa Gautama in support of their contentions, quite regardless of context or of circumstance. Herein lies the weakness of the first Christian "evidences" deduced from non-Christian sources, and Charles Edwards failed only where others had failed before him.

III.

The reference to Christian evidences reminds us of the present value of "Hanes y Ffydd." Chapters XX. and XXI. treat on "Sicr Wirionedd y Ffydd Gristionogol," and we think that a better defence of the fundamental principles of our religion has not been made from Justin Martyr down. The two chapters extend to only thirty-three pages, but they contain the



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Os ammheui eto, dywedaf wrthyf, fel y dywedodd Philip wrth Nathaniel, 'Tyred a gwel.' Fel yr argyhoedda'r creadigaeth a rhagluniaeth dy reswm di, gwaith yr 'adenedigaeth ac adnewyddiad yr Ysbryd Glan,' a lwyr argyhoedda dy galon, ac a ysgrifena'r gyfraith ynddi, oni's gwrthodi hi. Oni choeli fod athrawiaeth y ffydd yn win melus a iachus, wrth weled eraill yn ei ddymuno, ac yn siricl ar ei ol ef, prawf ef dy hun, a dywedi yr un peth. Golch lygaid gweiniaid dy feddwl a dagrau edifeiriol, a gloewach fyddant, a chanfyddi ewyllys Duw yn graffach a gweli'r Haul cyfiawnder wrth ei oleuni ci hun. Oddiwrth darth cnawdoliaeth y cyfyd niwl yn y meddwl. Bydd pob dyn a deall wedi ci dywyllu, tra fyddo wedi ymddieithrio oddiwrth fuchedd Duw. Ond y meddwl newydd a gaiff 'brofi beth yw daionus, a chymeradwy, a pherffaith ewyllys Duw.' A'r hwn sydd yn credu yn Mab Duw, sydd ganddo y dystiolaeth hon ynddo ei hun. Derbyn Ysbryd Duw i sancteiddio dy enaid, yr hwn a dystiolaetha mai ci ysgrifen ef yw'r ysgrythyrau. Yna y gelli ddywedyd wrth yr eglwys fel y Samariaid wrth y wraig, 'Nid ydwyf fi weithian yn credu oblegid dy ymadrodd di: canys mi a'i clywais ef fy hun a gwn yn ddiâu mai efe yw y Crist, iachawdwr y byd.' 'Yr hwn a ewyllysia wneuthur ewyllys Duw a gaiff wybod am y ddysgeidiaeth, ai o Dnuw y mae hi.' Defaid ufudd Crist a adnabyddant ei lais ef rhagor llais dieithriaid.

Oni bydd dyn yn yr un elfen a'r peth yr edrycho efe arno, nis gwel yn iawn. Pan edrycho un oddiar y lan ar bren yn y dwfr, efe a'i gwel yn gam, er ci fod yn union. Felly ui ddichon yr hwn sydd mewn cyflwr cnawdol iawn ddirnad y gwirionedd grasol; 'oblegid yn ysbrydol y bernir ef.' Meibion Duw sydd gynefin a'i bresennoldeb ef, ac arferol o drin ei negesau, a adwaenant ysgrifen-law en Tad nefol. Cais burdeh calon. a chei weled Duw, a'i ewyllys hefyd.

Yn awr, ddarllenydd, cnid yw y dyfyniad hwn yn profi mai nid dyn cyffredin oedd Charles Edwards? Nid ydym yn tybied

fod un sylw mwy dwfn-dreiddiol, na chyffelybiaeth brydferthach yn holl waith Bacon.” *

One of the finest passages in the book, and the most cogent of the numerous “proofs” is the following:—

“Hefyd, er bod y rhwystrau yn fawrion, nid oedd cynnorthwy-
au gweledig, ac offerau yr Efengyl onid bychain; gwael oedd
cyflyrau a theneu oedd mintai pregethwyr y Brif Eglwys;
ychydig oedd yn erbyn llawer; a rbai syml yn erbyn cyfreithwyr;
pysgodwyr a gwehyddion yn erbyn boneddigion a swyddogion;
etto cawsant oruchafiaeth yn Nghrist (2 Cor. ii. 14), yr hwn a
eghurhaodd arogledd ei wybodaeth trwyddynt hwy ym mhob lle.
Gan fod bwled, sydd dipyn o blwm crwu heb na blaen, na min,
yn myned yn rhwyddach drwy faen a phren, nag y gall llaw dyn
hyrddu'r arf flaen-llymaf, mae'n dangos egni'r tan yn tori allan o
gyfyngdra. Pylni offerau Efengylaidd a ddylai ein argyhoeddi,
mai nerth 'zel ARGWLWYDD y lluoedd' (Esa. ix. 7) ydoedd yn eu
gyrru drwy gymmaint o anhawsdra. Pan orchfygodd Moses
ffyddlon yr Aipht a'i brenhin a gwialen ac a llwch cyffesodd ei
elynion fod bys Duw gydag ef. Ecs. viii. 17, 18. Ni syrthiasai
'styfnigrwydd y byd wrth bregethiad yr Apostolion, na muriau
Jerico wrth yr Israeliaid yn bloeddio, oni bai fod Duw gyd a
hwynt. Ni buasai ffol bethau y byd yn gwaradwyddo y doethion,
a gwan bethau'r byd yn gwaradwyddo y pethau cedyrn, oni bai
i Dduw eu hethol. 1 Cor. i. 27. Pan oedd yr adar yn difa, a'r
haul yn llogi, a'r drain yn tagu tair rhan o had y Gair, hawdd
fuasai i'r moch a'r mulod orphen y rhan arall, fel nad aethai
fyth mor gnydfawr, am nad oedd un cae o waith dyn yn ci
gylch. Matt. xiii. 4, 31. Cyffelyb oedd Teyrnas Nefoedd i ronyn
o had mwstard, y lleiaf o'r hadau, a lliaws mawr o gywion
drwg yn ceisio ei gipio, heb ddyn i'w tarfu; ac etto tyfodd yn
bren canghennog. Rhyfedd na's gallasai cymmaint o gwn lyngcu'r

* “Traethodau Llenyddol,” pp. 195-6.

tippyn surdoes, cyn iddo beri i'r byd newid ci flas! Ac wrth adferu'r Ffydd, bu pin ysgrifenu Luther yn drech na chleddyf Cesar."

The seventeenth argument—the alternatives of faith and unbelief—is quite modern in spirit. The purport of the reasoning is to show that by substituting unfaith for faith the sceptic is simply getting rid of a number of imaginary difficulties and falling into others that are real. By adopting unbelief, the mind only exchanges one faith, in fact, for another; the negative is tantamount to a new affirmative; or, as Archbishop Whately, at greater length, puts it: "Disbelief is belief, only that they have reference to opposite conclusions; e.g., to disbelieve the real existence of the city of Troy is to believe that it was feigned; and which conclusion implies the greater credulity is the question to be decided. To some it may appear more, to others less probable that a Greek poet should have celebrated, with whatever exaggerations, some of the feats of arms in which his countrymen had actually been engaged, than that he should have passed by all these and resorted to such as were wholly imaginary. So, also, though the terms 'infidel,' and 'unbeliever' are commonly applied to one who rejects Christianity, it is plain that to *disbelieve* its Divine origin is to believe its human origin; and *which* belief requires the more credulous mind is the very question at issue". *

* "Elements of Rhetoric," Part I., Chap. II., Sect. 5.



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populi into *vox Dei* is typically Renaissance in character. “*Vox populi*”—may we not add *vox Naturae*? For were not the people moved by the “*Religio Medici*” more than by the “*Novum Organum*”? The quaint, common-sense simplicity of Sir Thomas Browne secured for him European fame, and who is he that is not touched today by sentiments like the following?—“Whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm, a little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of divinity in us; something that was before the elements, and owes no homage under the sun. Nature tells me I am the image of God, as well as Scripture. He that understands not thus much hath not his introduction or first lesson, and is yet to begin his alphabet of man.”

These arguments are for the heart and not the head but, quoth Baxter, “what the heart believeth the head assenteth.” The religious Humanists, that is to say, the Reformers and their immediate successors, were simple believers, and whenever they came to deal with Christian evidences, they relied on common-sense philosophy, withering invective, and smart repartee. It is noteworthy that from 1550 to 1700, the period when the best literature of our country was produced, no work of note appeared (barring the works of Hobbes) in which were assailed the fundamental truths of religion. So that what works we have treating on evidences within the said period were works written more for exercise than at the call of

duty. And it not infrequently happens that arguments and invectives which conjure up in the mind of the modern student an army of revilers, were only missiles hurled at an imaginary foe.

With the exception of the last, all the arguments of Charles Edwards were therefore retrospective rather than prospective in application. They belonged to the early religious Renaissance rather than to the Deistic and pre-Revolution epochs.

We have remarked elsewhere that Wales was the last corner of reformed Europe to feel the influence of the dual revival. The fact has a corollary: Wales was the last country to call for apologetic literature. At all events, our apologists have felt themselves secure behind the ramparts built by Charles Edwards. We are unmoved by German rationalism or French sentimentalism, save perhaps at leisure moments, when we suffer from religious ennui, or during 'Varsity days when we are treated to an occasional dose of Baur and Renan. Thanks to the Renaissance, we are for the most part securely lodged on the impregnable rock of the "Ffydd Ddiffuant."

IV.

The style of Charles Edwards is a curious blend of felicity and faultiness. It is difficult to account for the syntactical laxity of one who was so acute a thinker and an accomplished scholar. To say that he

was indifferent to the claims of literary art is beside the purpose, for his style is perfectly idiomatic and his periods rhythmical and delicately balanced. We are more immediately concerned with style than with syntax—with rhetoric than with grammar—in this treatise, but we must point out one or two of the more important faults. Charles Edwards has more trouble with the pronoun than with the other parts of speech: he constantly uses it where it is not required, and almost as often omits it where it is wanted. Look at the following short passages:—

- (A) “Tystiolaethodd Duw ci fod *Ef* yn perchennogi yr Ysgrythyrau drwy y gwyrthiau y nerthodd *Ef* y prophwydi, Crist a’i ddisgyblion i’w gwneuthur.”
- (B) “Ond wedi iddi ddigio Duw, acth ci golud *hi* yn wohr i’r sawl a’i lladdent *hi*.”
- (C) “Pawb ar a adwaenent ei enw *Ef* a ymddiriedent ynddo *Ef*, canys ni adawodd *Ef* y rbai a’i ceisient *Ef*.”
- (D) “Och iddynt ei archolli *Ef* a’r breichiau a genhedlodd, a fagodd, ac a ddilladodd *Ef*; a’i ddiānrhydeddu *Ef* a’r eneidiau ac a’r cyrph y greodd *Ef*; a’i ddigio *Ef* a’u pechodau, yr Hwn a’u boddhaodd ac a’u llanwodd hwynt a’i drugareddau.”
- (E) “Ac heb law’r pethau a ddioddefodd *Ef* dros ci ethol-edig, gorfyddai iddo ddioddef llawer o gam oddi ar eu dwylo yn ychwaneg pe’s gallent ci gyrhaeddyd *Ef*; canys tra y mae *Ef* yn aros am danynt i edifarhau, gwnant llawer yn ci erbyn *Ef*, gan rwygo ei enw *Ef*, a thori ei orchymynion *Ef*, a briwio ci aelodau *Ef*, wrth erlid ci bobl *Ef*.”



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that the mimetic many always follow the gifted few. Someone has well remarked that "the corrupter of a language stabs straight at the heart of his country, for he commits a crime against every individual of the nation when he throws poison into a stream from which all must drink." The writer of bad grammar wrongs himself first, and afterward every man and woman whose native speech he mars. It behoves every educated man to guard zealously the purity of his mother tongue. It is to be hoped that the standard set by the adjudicators in the ode at the National Eisteddfod of 1905 will be rigorously maintained at our future national gatherings. No inheritance which can descend to an individual or to a nation is comparable in value with a language which possesses words into which may be coined all great thoughts, pure motives, noble enterprises, grand endeavours, the wealth of theology, poetry, and history, and even the beauty of the canvas and the glory of the marble. He who does aught to preserve such a language deserves the gratitude of his people, as he who mars an organism so beautiful and precious, merits their severest displeasure. He who hunts down and pillories defective syntax or a corrupt vocabulary is a public benefactor. In the fulfilment of the sacred trust as an educated man, he adds a stone to the bulwark of his nation's safety and greatness.

We will not say that Charles Edwards consciously made slaughter of certain rules of syntax: we believe

he did not, for he was a just and an estimable man, but he ought to have set a stricter watch on his pen.

Let us turn to the better characteristics of his style. His strong points are naturalness and picturesqueness. His copious invention and variegated imagination, with here and there a little rambling exuberance, are strongly reminiscent of the older romances. He abounds in that enchanting sympathy,—that mystical something which, for lack of name, we call “human nature.” He has the vivid impression and the graceful charm of the *Mabinogion*, without their wearying over-flow and circumstantial dilation. If his romances (for he has many of them in the body of the work) are not epics judged by the conventional standard of the Stagyrite, at least they are epical, and many a subject for the painter’s brush lay sleeping in his paragraphs. What Boccaccio was to the vernacular literature of Italy, that was Charles Edwards (minus the raillery) to the youthful Renaissance prose of Wales.

We forgive him his syntactical inexactness: it is only the husk covering the grain. We love him. We *admire* Ellis Wynne, Morgan Llwyd, and Theophilus Evans, and herein lies the difference. The “Gweled-igaethau,” the “Tri Aderyn,” and the “Drych” we carry in our pockets, but the “Ffydd Ddiffuant” in our bosom. The very faults of Charles Edwards are probably among the creative factors of the love we bear him. The boy that has a touch of the *Fra*

Diavolo in him is more the object of parental devotion than are the rest of the family. The prose of Charles Edwards makes better music, notwithstanding its partial dissonances, than the poetry of Gwynedd. "The shell he struck gave a more melodious sound than the rough scrannel pipe [the alliterative metres] cut from the northern forests." Is there anywhere in our literature anything more musky than the following rhetorical posies?—

"Yr oedd y Testament Newydd wedi ci orchuddio yn yr Hen, ac yn awr y mae'r Hen wedi ei ddatguddio yn y Newydd; ac, fel yr haul yn Affrica, yn rhoddi goleuni heb gysgod."

"Yn y delwau nid wyf yn dirnad dim amgen nâ'r defnydd, a'u bod yn chwiorydd i lestri a chelfi cyffredin."

"Ac ar ol hyn cafodd yr Eglwys ychydig yspaid o dangnefedd, y barodd falchder ac anghydfod yn mhlith y Cristionogion, fel llygedyn rhwng dwy gafod yn codi chwyn yn yr yd."

"A chan eu bod fel yd rhwng dau faen melin, aethant yn wyn wrth eu dryllio, a rhoddasant eu pryd ar wasanaethu Duw yn fanylach, ac amlhasant yn y mynachlogydd."

"Y mae gwllithyn hyfryd ar bob glaswelltyn, a mel yn mhob meillionen, a melusdra yn mhob mefusen, ac arogl peraidd ym mhob llysieuyn yn yr ardd ysprydol hon."

"Oni bydd dyn yn yr un elfen a'r peth yr edrycho arno, nis gwel ef yn iawn. Pan edrycho un oddi ar y lan ar bren yn y dwfr, efe a'i gwel yn gam, er ci fod yn union."

"Yr ydoedd i'r bobl gyffredin fel bwyd dan glo, a llys-fam yn cadw'r agoriad."



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hyny a fyno'r maes oddiar elynion ci enaid, a ddylai yn gyntaf fedri iawn drin arfau ei filwriaeth ysbrydol."

"Gyda gwlyth y nefoedd, rhaid wrth ddefnyddiau o chwys y corff i beri i'r maes ffrwythloni. Ac ni wasanaetha i ni dybied am natur dyn fyddo wedi llygru a phechodau ffaidd, y daw hi yn ddiboen i ddwyn ffrwyth da."

"Cynhyrriad a gwaith sydd fuddiol i'r bywyd hwn a'r llall hefyd, y dwfr rhedegog sydd loywaf, a'r awyr gwyntog sydd iachaf, a'r cristion bywiog sydd ysbrydolaf."

"Medr y cythraul chwythu'r tan uffernol o'r cynnud crinion i'r cod ir, gan geisio llygru y rbai da drwy y rbai drwg. Yr hwn a gymero ofal am iechyd ei enaid, ymgadwed ym mhellach ag a allo oddiwrth y cyfryw ag sydd gleifion o haint anwiredd."

"Rhwystra ddechreuad pechod. Pan glywech ddeisyfiad afreolus yn cyfodi ynot, brawycha a gweddia; a dyro dy fryd ar ei ladd ef cyn iddo ymgadarnhau mewn gweithrediadau atgas. Hawdd i wendid dyuu eginyn derwen o'r gwraidd cyn gynted ag y toro trwy'r ddaear. Llawer tân wrth ci ganfod mewn pryd a ddiffoddwyd yn ddiboen, yr hwn, ped esgeulusasid a gynnyddasai i ddifrodi dinas."

"Rhoddi cyfarwyddyd i'r enbydus a'r cyfeiliornus, ac elusen i'r truenus, sydd yn cysuro y sawl a'u gwnelo cymaint a'r rbai a'u derbynio. 'Dedwydd yw rhoddi yn hytrach na derbyn.' A phan ddel dyn at y cnewyllyn blasus sydd o'r tu fewn i weithredoedd crefyddol, ni fyn fod hebddynt mwy; ac y mae dyn yn myned yu aplach i bob gwaith da wrth ei arfer. A bendith y Goruchaf a rydd ychwaneg i'r hwn a fyddo ffyddlon ar ychydig."

It would be easy to quote at greater length, but we have quoted enough to show wherein lies the

charm of the "Beloved Author". The "Ffydd Ddi-ffuant" is, indeed, a veritable fairyland, but not of the Arabian kind, that is over-burdened with dazzling sights and fabulous wealth. It is natural, lovely, simple; such as would delight the heart of a Goldsmith or a Ruskin.

Chapter 10.

ELLIS WYNNE:

THE SLEEPING BARD.

THE “Bardd Cwsg,” since its first appearance in 1703, has gone through about thirty editions, the best of which is that edited by Canon Silvan Evans, issued by the enterprising firm of Messrs. Spurrell.* The text of this edition follows that of the first edition published by the author himself, and is elucidated by means of footnotes and an exceedingly helpful introductory chapter.

The question of the originality of “Bardd Cwsg” is a vexed one, and has engaged the attention of Ellis Wynne’s commentators from time to time. Canon Silvan Evans is of opinion that the bard was indebted to Quevedo for the conception of the “Gweledigaethau,” but that he is original as to material and style. He says, “Try’r fantol o blaid y naill fel

* The author had not consulted the excellent Guild of Graduates edition when he wrote this chapter.



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Don Quixote. The humour appears to us of the present day to be often lamentably deficient in taste, and out of keeping with the good object which the author had in view, but not so to Bardd Cwsg, who frequently outstrips his model in vulgarity.

Ellis Wynne was inspired by Quevedo, and Quevedo was inspired by Savonarola. The significance of these facts can be appreciated only when we remember that Savonarola was the S. John Baptist of the religious Renaissance. These three men had one object in view, the reform—not of the doctrine of the Church to which each belonged, but of the degenerate Papacy, in the case of two of them, and of the morals of the people in the case of the third.

The watchword of the Italian was “Flee from Rome!”, of the Spaniard—“Let the Church be cleansed!”, and of the Welshman,—“Flee from sin: seek the true Church!”

The affinity of the “Gweledigaethau” to the *Suenos* is apparent from a comparison of separate passages as well as from that of the general scope and treatment of the subject, e.g:—

(1) “Going further on, I was gotten into a Crowd of Taylors, that stood up sneaking in a Corner, for fear of the Devils. At the first Door, there were Seven Devils taking the Names of those that came in, and they ask’d me mine, and my Quality, and so they let me pass. But examining the Taylors,

These Fellows, (cry'd one of the Devils) came in such shoals, as if Hell were made only for Taylors. How many are they? (said another) Answer was made, About a Hundred. About a Hundred? They must be more than a Hundred, says t'other, if they be Taylors; for they never came under a Thousand or Twelve Hundred strong: And we have so many here already, I do not know where we shall 'stow them. Say the word, my Masters, Shall's let them in or no? These poor *Pricklice* were damn'dly startled at that, for fear they should not get in: But in the End, they had the Favour to be admitted. Certainly, said I, these Folks are but in an ill condition, when 'tis a Menace for the Devils themselves to refuse to receive them: Thereupon a Huge Over-grown, Club-footed, Crump-shoulder'd Devil, threw them all into a deep Hole. Seeing such a Monster of a Devil, I ask'd him, how he came to be so deform'd: And he told me, he had spoil'd his Back with carrying of *Taylors*: For, said he, I have been formerly made use of as a Sumpter to fetch them; but now of late they save me that labour, and come so fast of themselves, that 'tis one Devil's work to dispose of them. While the Word was yet speaking, there came another Glut of them, and I was fain to make way, that the Devil might have Room to work in, who pil'd them up, and told me, they made the best Fewel in Hell."

(2) "Yn nesaf at hwn daeth mab a merch. Efe a fuasai yn gydymaith da, a hithau yn ferch fwyn, neu yn rhwydd o'i chorff; eithr galwyd hwy yno wrth eu henwau noethion, meddwyn a phutain. 'Gobeithio,' ebr y meddwyn, 'Y caf fi genych beth ffafr; mi yrais i chwi lawer ysglyfaeth dew mewn llifeiriant o gwrw da; a phan fethais yn lladd ereill, daethym fy hun yn wyllysgar i'ch porthi.' 'Trwy genad y cwrt, nid hanner a yrais i iddo,' ebr y butain, 'wedi eu hoffrwm yn ebyrth llosg, yn gig rhost parod i'w fwrdd.' 'Hai, hai,' ebr Angeu, 'er eich trachwantau melltigatedig eich hunain, ac nid

i'm porthi i, y gwnaed hyn oll: rhwymwch y ddau wyneb yn wyneb, gan eu bod yn hen gyfeillion, a bwriwch hwy i wlad y tywyllwch, a chwyded ef i'w cheg hi, pised hithau dân i'w berfedd yntau, hyd ddydd-farn.' Yna cipiwyd hwythau allan a'u penau yn isaf."

A comparison of these passages reveals a difference as well as a resemblance. The Spaniard is humorous: the Welshman is serious. When the former tries to be serious he is insipid: when the latter tries to be humorous he is coarse.

II.

"Ellis Wynne gave the affrighted Welshmen so realistic a description of Hell that it has haunted the imagination ever since."* And whence this realism? For our answer we must go back to the Middle Ages. From the dawn of the eleventh century, when Patristic ideas began to be cast aside, down to the days of Dante, the life after death continued to reveal more and more fully its awful secrets. Hell, Purgatory, Paradise, and Heaven became more distinctly visible as men looked down the shortening vista of future time, and their topography, their torments, their trials, and pleasure more conceivable, almost more palpable to sense. With Dante, the revelations were crystalized into song of the most weird and fascinating realism. That Hell had a tangible existence, and that immaterial spirits suffered material torments had been matters of

* "Wales." O. M. Edwards. p. 383.



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thousand times more impressed on the mind of the reader by the fact that they were only yesterday among his associates or acquaintances in the flesh.

This is the secret of Dante's power. If he had produced an *Inferno* peopled by ancient sinners, by Nimrods and Iscariots of a forgotten age, his arrows would have fallen harmless or ever they reached their mark. But a Hell wherein were Popes and kings hardly yet cold in their tomb—horror of horrors!—this it was that made men mop the cold sweat from their visage. Till Dante came, the keys of the invisible world had been held by the Priesthood, but the audacious poet now wrenched it from their hands, and actually turned it on many of themselves, thundering out the sentence of damnation against even Popes and Councils. The full, deep, concentrated realism of Dante, which he embodied in his immortal verse, was nothing more than the conviction of the hearts and minds of men of the Middle Ages.

Out of the carcase of this modern Realism—this horrible *Inferno*—came the honey of the doctrine of Purgatory. Purgatory, which is possible with St. Augustine, probable with Gregory the Great, is an actuality with Dante, and perhaps before his time. Dean Milman is of opinion that it is a growth (singularly indistinct and untraceable) “out of the mercy and modesty of the Priesthood.” When the eternal doom of a human soul hanged on the lips of a priest, on the mere refusal of absolution, that

priest might well be staggered with awe at the idea of consigning the soul to an unchangeable destiny. He would infinitely prefer to pronounce a revocable sentence. The keys of Paradise and of the nether regions were an awful trust; the key of Purgatory might be used with far less compunction, with less fearful trepidation. At this point we become aware of a real Purgatory as well as a real Hell. That the realism of the Mediaeval *Purgatorio* is largely the product of Dante's imagination does not admit of much doubt. Previously, there had been nothing of a dogmatic nature written on the subject: the legends of the French monk St. Farcy, of Drithelm, of the monk of Evesham, and the visions of Alberic of Monte Casino, etc., were mere day-dreams. It is Dante that gave to these dreams their interpretation in a tangible Purgatory, in which there dwelt live, knowable Manfredis, Belacqua, Buoncontes, etc., summing up in his verse all previous theories and the whole popular belief as to the intermediate state.

The realism of Dante has invaded the theology of the entire Christian world—Roman, Protestant, and Nonconformist alike. From the thirteenth century down to the middle of the nineteenth, eternal punishment was always interpreted in terms of tangible, material torment. Scotus, Aquinas, Bellarmine, Sylvester, Luther, Melancthon, More, English reformers and Welsh bards see in the "fire and brimstone" of Holy Writ nothing beyond the natural elements with which they were acquainted. Calvin with better

penetration said: "The wicked have the seeds of hell in their own hearts," and Milton puts into the mouth of Satan the following words: "Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell," but they were prophets alone in the wilderness.

Lord Bacon, who said that "being, without well-being, is a curse, and the greater the being, the greater the curse," yet believed that "even as physical diseases produce moral pain, so will [in hell] moral pain produce physical diseases." Saintly Isaac Watts in his discourse on "The Nature of the Punishment of Hell" writes:

"It is true indeed, spirits or beings which have no body cannot feel burning by material fire, unless they are united to some sort of material vehicles; but, that God will use material fire to punish obstinate and rebellious sinners hereafter, at the resurrection, it is not improbable, though it is very hard to say with full assurance: since the bodies of the wicked are to be raised again, it is not at all unlikely that their habitation shall be a place of fire, and their bodies may be made immortal to endure the smart and torture without consuming."

It is unfathomably marvellous—the bewitchery of this Dantesque realism! Enchanted Swinden proved, to his own satisfaction at least, that hell was seated in the sun, and the learned Whiston declared that "the comets are so many hells, appointed in their orbits alternately to carry the damned to the confines of the sun, there to be scorched by its violent heat; and then to return with them beyond the orb of



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of God. With juster hermeneutics and a finer sense of the beautiful we are beginning to realize that the torture-throes of the nether world are not to be expressed so much by the words "material" and "eternal" as by the words "personal" and "spiritual." Later thought may be well and justly expressed in the words of Omar Khayyám :

"I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After Life to spell :
And by-and-by my soul return'd to me,
And answered, 'I myself am Heav'n and Hell.'"

The heritage which Dante handed down to Savonarola, and to the centuries, descended to Ellis Wynne. The realism of the "Gweledigaethau" is the realism of the *Inferno* with the mountain peaks of Merionethshire substituted for the undulating plateaux of Tuscany.

"The scenery is Welsh—the scenery of that wild Merioneth mountains which rise in terraced grandeur above the home of Ellis Wynne, and of the regicide John Jones. Among its inhabitants are statesmen closely associated by Welsh peasants for a century with the Evil one. Its gaping jaws had already received Oliver Cromwell; they were hungering for Louis XIV. The grasping landlord and the indolent tenant, the unworthy minister and the seditious sectary, all that were condemned by the conscience of the time, find a place in the loathsome dungeons or on the hot, lurid precipices of the poet's hell."*

* "Story of the Nations : Wales," p. 383.

The following descriptive passage carries the imagination to the precipitous slopes of Eryri :—

“Ac erbyn hyn, neseais gydag e'n ddiarswyd, at fin y dibyn, yn y llen, a'r fflamau yn ymranu o'n deutu, ac yn ein gochel, heb feiddio cyffwrdd a thrigolion Gwlad Uchelder. Yno, o ben y geulan anaele, ymollyngasom, fel y gwelit ti ddwy seren yn syrthio o entrych y nef, i lawr a ni fil filiwn o filltiroedd, tros lawer o greigiau brwmstan, a llawer anfad raiadr gwrthun, a chlogwyn eirias, a phob peth a gwg crogedig ar i waered fyth; eto yr oeddynt oll yn ein gochel ni; oddi eithr unwaith yr estynais fy nhrwyn allan o'r llen gel, tarawodd y fath archfa fi o fygfeydd a thagfeydd ag a'm gorphenasai, oni buasai iddo yn ddisymmwth fy achub a'r dwr bywiol. Erbyn imi ddadebru, gwelwn ein bod wedi dyfod i ryw sefyllod; canys yn yr oll geg anferthol hono, nid oedd bosibl ddim cynt gael attreg, gan serthed a llithriced ydoedd. Yno gadawodd fy Nhywysog i mi orphwys peth drachefn; ac yn hyny o seibiant dygwyddodd i'r taranau a'r corwyntoedd croch ddystewi gronyn; ac heb waethaf i swn y rhaiadrydd geirwon, mi a glywn o hirswn arall mwy na'r cwbl, o grochleisiau echrys, bonllefain, gwaeddi, ac ochain cryf, a thyngu, a chablu, oni roiswn i newid ar fy nghlustiau rhag gwranddo.”

Bardd Cwsg, in spite of those principles which “helped to give Wales the politics of the moderate Tories of the reign of Queen Anne,” is ultra-Humanistic and revolutionary in *spirit*. Even his devils are heterodox: they are, in fact, most evangelical fellows who busy themselves in carrying out the behests of

the divine will. Listen to the demons of "Carchar Camhyder."

"Nesaf i'r rbai hyn oedd carchar y Camhyder, llawn o rai, pan berid iddynt gynt ymadael a'u hanlladrwydd, neu feddwdod, neu gybydd-dod, a ddywedent, 'Mae Duw yn drugarog, ac yn well na'i air, ac ni ddamnia ci greadur am fater cyn lleied.' Ond yma cyfarth cabledd yr oeddynt, a gofyn, 'Pa le mae'r drugaredd hono a fostid ei bod yn anfeidrol?' 'Tewch, gorgwn,' ebr ceimwch o gythraul mawr oedd yn eu clywed, 'tewch; ai trugaredd a fynech chwi, heb wneyd dim at ei chael? A fynech i'r Gwirionedd wneyd ei air yn gelwydd, dim ond er cael cwmni sothach mor ffaidd a chwi? Ai gormod o drugaredd a wnaed a chwi? Rhoi i chwi Achubwr, Dyddanwr, a'r angylion, a llyfrau, a phregethau, a siamplau da; ac oni thewch chwi a'n crugo ni bellach wrth ymleferydd am drugaredd lle ni bu hi erioed?' "

"Wrth fyned allan o'r ceubwll tra thanbaid hwn, clywn un yn erthwch ac yn bloeddio yn greulon: 'Nis gwyddwn i ddim gwell; ni chostiwyd dim wrthyf fi erioed, i ddysgu darllen fy nyledswydd; ac nad oeddwn i yn cael mo'r ennyd chwaith gan enill bara i mi ac i'm tylwyth tlawd, i ddarllen nac i weddio.' 'Aie,' eb rhyw ddieflyn gwargam oedd ger llaw, 'gaed dim ennyd i ddywedyd chwedlau ysmala? dim segur ymrostio hirnos gauaf, pan oeddwn i yng nghorn y simnai, na allesid rhoi peth o'r amser hwnw at ddysgu darllen neu weddio? Beth am y Suliau? Pwy fu yn dyfod gyda mi i'r dafarn, yn lle myned gyda'r person i'r Eglwys? Pa sawl prydawn Sulgwaith a roed i ofer ddadwrdd am bethau'r byd, neu gysgu, yn lle dysgu myfyrio a gweddio? Ac a wnaethoch chwi yn ol a wyddech? Tewch, Syre, a'ch dwndwr celwyddog.' 'O waedgi cynddeiriog,' ebr y collddyn, 'nid oes fawr er pan oeddit yn sisial peth arall yn fy mhen! Pe dywedasid hyn y dydd arall, odid a ddaethwn i yma.' 'O,' ebr diawl,' nid oes genym fater er



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prison.” The devils of Dante and of Ellis Wynne are essentially the same, if we are to estimate character by its more evident traits. Compare the “black devil” of the following passage in Canto XXI of the *Inferno* with “Ceimwch o gythraul mawr” and the other demons of “Gweledigaeth Uffern.”

“The while below there fixedly I gazed,
 My Leader, crying out: ‘Beware, beware!’
 Drew me unto himself from where I stood.
 Then I turned round, as one who is impatient
 To see what it behoves him to escape,
 And whom a sudden terror doth unman,
 Who, while he looks, delays not his departure;
 And I beheld behind us a black devil,
 Running along upon the crag, approach.
 Ah, how ferocious was he in his aspect!
 And how he seemed to me in action ruthless,
 With open wings and light upon his feet!
 His shoulders, which sharp-pointed were and high,
 A sinner did encumber with both haunches,
 And he held clutched the sinews of the feet.
 From off our bridge he said: ‘O Malebranche,
 Behold one of the elders of Saint Zita;
 Plunge him beneath, for I return for others
 Unto that town, which is well furnished with them.
 All there are barrators, except Bonturo;
 No into Yes for money there is changed.’
 He hurled him down, and over the hard crag
 Turned round, and never was a mastiff loosened
 In so much hurry to pursue a thief.
 The other sank, and rose again face downward;
 But the demons, under cover of the bridge,
 Cried: ‘Here the Sant Volto has no place!’

He swims one otherwise than in the Serchio ;
 Therefore, if for our gaffs thou wishest not,
 Do not uplift thyself above the pitch.'

They seized him then with more than a hundred rakes ;
 They said : ' It here behoves thee to dance covered,
 That, if thou canst, thou secretly mayest pilfer.'
 Not otherwise the cooks their scullions make
 Immerse into the middle of the caldron
 The meat with hooks, so that it may not float." *

Bardd Cwsg eliminated Purgatory—that “fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.” His Protestantism is of the Elizabethan type, and he would consign the heathen, Mohammedans, Jews, Quakers, Papists, and perhaps Dissenters to the unending torments of his material Hell. In “Gweled-igaeth Cwrs y Byd” he is somewhat reserved in his opinion of Dissenters, and tries to say something kind about them, thus :—

“Oddi yno ni aethom i ysgubor, lle yr oedd un yn dyn-warded pregethu ar ei dafodleferydd ; weithiau yr un peth deir-gwaith olynol. ‘Wel,’ eb yr Angel, ‘mae gan y rhai hyn iawn spectol i weled y pethau a berthyn i’w heddwch, ond bod yn fyr yn eu henaint un o’r defnyddiau angenrheitiad, a elwir cariad perffaith. Mae amryw achosion yn gyru rhai yma : rhai o ran parch i’w hynafiaid ; rhai o anwybodaeth ; a llawer er manteision bydol. Gwnaent iti dybio eu bod yn tagu a’r wyneb, ond hwy a fedrant lyncu llyffant rhag angen : ac felly mae’r Dywysoges Rhagrith yn dysgu rhai mewn ysguboriau.”

* Longfellow’s translation.

But he had evidently made up his mind about them when he came to write "Gweledigaeth Uffern," for there Lucifer is made to sentence a fractious demon to seven years' servitude in the mouth of one of the preachers of the Barn:

" 'Wel,' cbr Luciffer, 'gan eich bod crystal yn eich pulpud, yr wyf yn dy orchymmyn tros saith mlynedd i safn un o bregethwyr yr Ysgubor, a ddywed y peth a ddel gyntaf i'w fochau; yno cei dithau le i roddi gair i mewn weithiau at dy bwrpas dy hun.' "

If the bard were living now he would, in all probability, belong to that section of the Church of England which styles itself the "Evangelical-Catholic."

III.

Wales has produced but one satirist,—the Sleeping Bard. He is our Jonathan Swift, or better still, our Lucian. Although not amenable to the charge of misanthropy, yet he lacks the sympathy begotten of broad-minded charity quite as much as does the cynic of S. Patrick. Swift's candid opinion of his fellow-men is expressed in the words of the King of the Brobdingnags: "I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." The bard is much of the same opinion: he says, " 'Atolygaf henw'r Ddinas fawr wallgofus hon,' ebr fi; 'os oes arni well henw



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gwr ydoedd, a'r cyffelyb; ac felly yr awran, nid yw'r wylo yma ond rbai o ran defod ac arfer, ereill o gwmni, ereill am eu cyflog.' ” *

“ It [i.e. the war] began upon the following fashion. It is allowed on all hands that the primitive way of breaking eggs before we eat them was upon the larger end; but his present majesty's grandfather, while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to the ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers, whereupon the emperor, his father, published an edict, commanding all his subjects, upon great penalties, to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law that our histories tell us there have been six rebellions raised on that account; wherein one emperor lost his life and another his crown. These civil commotions were constantly fomented by the monarchs of Blefuscu; and when they were quelled, the exiles always fled for refuge to that empire. It is computed that eleven thousand persons have at several times suffered death rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end. Many hundred large volumes have been published upon this controversy; but the books of the Bigendians have been long forbidden, and the whole party rendered incapable by law of holding employments. During the course of these troubles the emperors of Blefuscu did frequently expostulate by their ambassadors, accusing us of making a schism in religion by offending against a fundamental doctrine of our great prophet Lustrog, in the fifty-fourth chapter of the Blundecral (which is their Alcoran). This, however, is thought to be a mere strain upon the text; for the words are these: That all believers shall break their eggs at the convenient end seems, in my humble opinion, to be left to every man's conscience, or at least in the power of the chief magistrate to determine.” †

*“ Gweledigaeth Cwrs y Byd.” Ed. Silvan Evans, pp. 33-4.

† [The extract from Swift, it should be explained, is taken from the ironical description of the causes for the “obstinate war” between “the great empires” Blefuscu (France) and Lilliput (England), which is typical of the Deans's style].

The same characteristics also mark the humour of these two men--there is the same inimitable strength, and the same utter lack of grace.

Ellis Wynne and Jonathan Swift were contemporaries. Wynne was born in 1761 and died 1734; Swift was born four years earlier, and outlived the bard eleven years. But there is no reason to conclude that the Welshman was acquainted with the writings of the Englishman. The similarity of style is due to the fact that they had both adopted the same literary models. The satire of the one and the cynicism of the other are directly traceable to classical sources—to Juvenal and Horace, and especially to Lucian. Putting the cynic aside, we observe that the similarity between the satire of “Bardd Cwsg” and that of “Charon” and “Timon” is extended and complete. At the outset, we see that the object of the three works is the same: The aim is to show the worthlessness of the objects after which most men strive. The corrupt state of society furnished the authors with abundant materials for satire. The uneducated man who sought to gain cheap reputation for learning by buying a large library, the parasite who lived at the expense of his patron and entertained him with jokes, the hired companion who occupied a degrading position in the household of the wealthy, the superstitious believer in magic, in oracles, and in mythology, the glutton, the winebibber, the miser, the pleasure-seeker, &c., &c., all are lashed as with a scorpion. What Lucian owes to Aristophanes, that also does

Ellis Wynne owe to Lucian. Certain passages in "Gweledigaeth Cwrs y Byd" are, perhaps, remotely reminiscent of the satiric pieces of Menippus of Gadara, and there is something also which recalls the *Saturæ Menippeæ* of Varro. In some of the dialogues of "Bardd Cwsg" there is no action, and in others only just enough to bring out the characteristics of the speakers. As with Lucian, so with Ellis Wynne, the personality of the speaker is often forgotten, so that the bard is really speaking his own thoughts, not those appropriate to the character. The dialogue is more faulty, on that account, but the satire more pungent.

We note also in the Welsh bard and the Greek satirist the same failure to give vivid pictures of contemporary manners; the characters are in both cases (with a few exceptions) taken from history, or they are purely fictitious, and the pomps and vanities they satirise are, as a rule, those which are common to all men of all time.

The bard's mental standpoint may be briefly summed up in the words of Lucian's defence before the tribunal of Philosophy in the "Fisherman," "I hate," says Lucian, "quacks and charlatans, lies and conceits; . . . I love truth and beauty and singleness of heart." The same love of truth inspires all the "Gweledigaethau." Wynne's view of life was that of a judicious Anglican, who strove to live sensibly, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. His quasi-Stoicism enabled him to



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art there is suggestion, and there is contrast. Whilst fully recognizing the noble dignity of the style, we cannot agree with those who urge that "the style of Bardd Cwsg is worthy our esteem, and should be copied." Except as mere exercise, no practice could be more injurious to the young student. Beyond the usual magniloquence, there is a certain artificiality. A writer in the *Genhinen* of January, 1894, draws attention (as an instance of *mydr a chynghanedd*) to the treatment of the sound "g" in the following sentence:—"O'r diwedd, wedi porthi fy llygaid ar bob rhyw hyfrydwch o'm hamgylch, onid oedd yr haul ar gyrhaedd ei gaerau yn y Gorllewin, gorweddais ar y gwelltglas, tan syn fyfyrion deuced a hawddgared (wrth fy ngwlad fy hun) oedd y gwledydd pell y gwelswn gip o olwg ar eu gwastadedd tiriou; a gwyched oedd gael arnynt lawn olwg; a dedwydded y rhai a welsent gwrs y byd, wrthyf fi a'm bath." He might have added a large number of passages with certain predominating sounds; e.g. in the last paragraph of p. 19 the ruling sounds are "f" and "ph"; and in the third paragraph of p. 76 "m" and "n" are the conspicuous sounds*, and so on. It is as though the author had reasoned thus with himself, "Go to now, let us construct a sentence wherein 'g,' or 'f,' or 'm' is the ruling sound." This is certainly art, but very mechanical art. It is the art wherewith Pope and Dryden, and the Dafydd ap Edmwndites spun out their weary verse.

* Canon Silvan Evans's Edition.

Ellis Wynne has a wider range of vocabulary than any Welsh author, ancient or modern, and he is certainly at the head of the small class of writers who show a complete mastery of Welsh idiom. On the whole, we agree with the Rev. W. Jones's critique of our principal classic :—

“Fe allai mai y *Bardd Cwsg* yw y cyfansoddiad mwyaf hynod am gymhlethiant Barn fanwl a Darfelydd grymus a hedegog, o'r holl weithiau sydd ym meddiant ein gwlad. Barddoniaeth lawn o dan awenyddol ydyw, mewn gwisg rydd ddigynghanedd. Beth? Barddoniaeth heb gynghanedd? Iē, ddarllenydd, a barddoniaeth ardderchog hefyd! Y mae yn y *Bardd Cwsg* gryn lawer o anian, ond ei bod yn ymwisgo mewn dull ffugrol, yr hyn, ar yr un pryd, sydd yn peri fod y gwaith yn fwy barddonol. Er fod cryn lawer o ddiffyg yn chwaeth y cyfansoddiad, eto y mae yr iaith yn anghymharol o gref, fel nad oes dim yn y Gymraeg yn dyfod yn agos iddo yn y peth hwn. Nid yw bob amser yn hollol gywir yn ci ramadeg, y mae yn wir; ond gwna iawn am hyn yn ci nerth, a'i ieithwedd, yr hon sy mor drwyadl Gymroaidd. Y mae yn tynu llun personau, ac yn corffoli pechodau a llygredigaethau gan eu harddangos yn eu gwrthuni, mewn dull hynod o argraffawl. Mae y *Bardd Cwsg* yn un o'r llyfrau ag y byddai yn ddymunol ci fod ym mhob teulu, ac, yn fynych, yn llaw pob dyn ieuanc, ac yn arbenig pob prydydd ieuanc yn y Dywysogaeth.”*

* *Vide* “Traethawd ar swyddogaeth Barn a Darfelydd.”

Chapter 11.

GRIFFITH JONES:

THE PIONEER OF EDUCATION.

ALTHOUGH the great work, and the life work, of the Rev. Griffith Jones was not of a strictly literary character, yet it would not be possible to deal with the subject adequately without taking some account of the good accomplished by the Circulating and Catechetical Charity Schools. The founding of these schools, their circulation, and the instruction imparted, was itself a Renaissance. The poor were taught to read their own language, the immediate effect of which was an increase in the demand for and the supply of books. The Welsh peasants at the beginning of the eighteenth century were grossly ignorant, but they were anxious to learn. They found in Griffith Jones another Chrysoloras or Giovanni di Conversino. In the early Italian Revival, two great agencies in the dissemination of knowledge are usually recognized, corresponding with two successive stages of the Renaissance movement. The first agency is that of oral instruction by some scholar of eminence, such as the two great educationists just



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“Welch Piety,” yearly reports of the schools were published by the founder from 1737 to 1760, the year before he died.

Now, in connection with these schools, there are four outstanding facts which must not be lost sight of.

(1) The religious instruction imparted was distinctly Protestant and Evangelical in character. In the report (“Welch Piety”) for the year 1744 we are told by the founder that he had realized that the catechetical method of teaching adopted by him was the surest means of confirming his countrymen in the principles of the Reformation. He says,

“This was the way reformation was advanced in Europe, and Christianity in the primitive days; and this will be found the principal way to keep them alive, to maintain their vigour and flourish. The first reformers from the Popish defection laboured abundantly in this, and saw and rejoiced in the great success thereof. . . . I have read it as an usual complaint of some Jesuits, that they found there was but little hope of bringing back to the Romish Church, or of unsettling or discomposing, such reformed churches as were constant and serious in the use of catechising.”

(2) The instruction was given in Welsh. This fact should be graven with an iron pen and lead on every rock of our wild country. We cannot resist the temptation to quote another passage from the report of 1774: it is rather lengthy, but its length is more than compensated for by its noble patriotism.

"Perhaps it may be suggested, that it were better to set up Charity Schools for the Welch people in the English language; which, to be sure, will be altogether as edifying as preaching English sermons to Welch congregations, that understand no tongue but their own. Shall we be more concerned for the propagation of the English language, than the salvation of our people? Alas! . . . must they not be taught in the things which concern their salvation, till they be instructed in a language they do not as yet understand? This would be harder treatment than the common people meet with in Popish countries, who, though they have not the prayers, yet are favoured with the instructions of the Church in their own language. Most of the Welch poor, particularly the elder people among us, will find it impossible to learn English; and very many that have been three or four years in an English school could hardly be taught to read perfectly, and could learn no more of the language than to speak a little broken English about their common affairs, but were altogether unable to understand English books or sermons, and other religious instructions; whereas they may be taught the principles of religion, and not only to read, but likewise to understand what they read, in their own British language, in three or four months, or sooner. Such as are able to acquire the knowledge of the English tongue may apply themselves, as some have done, to learn it. The Welch Charity Schools are not in the least a hindrance, but rather a help to it: for if they learn their own language first, as all nations in the world do, they will find the difficulty less to learn another afterwards: to proceed from the easier task to a harder, is the most natural method. This objection has been already very fully answered in the yearly accounts of these schools, to which I must refer you; and, therefore, I need say no more than this, that Welch Charity Schools are only for the Welch poor people, that neither do nor can understand any other language. To give them English schools, must be the same as setting up French

Charity Schools for the poor in England. It is absurd, in the very reason and nature of the thing, to set about instructing the people in religion in any other language but such as they understand."

Thanks to the labours of our philologists, our educational authorities of the present day are beginning to recognize the utility of the Welsh language, and to discern the wisdom of men like Griffith Jones, who laboured to preserve the integrity of their mother tongue. Would that the vein of wisdom had been struck in 1833, when means were first devised to assist national education! From that year till nearly the end of the century, the various schemes of elementary education were broached on lines directly antagonistic to the interests of the Welsh language. Even Welsh Nonconformists acquiesced in and assisted to carry out a system which had for one of its objects the extinction of our ancient British tongue. It would be invidious here to give extracts from the reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the state of Education in Wales. Let us take a peep instead at one of the village schools of a monoglot Welsh district in the year of grace 1868—two years previous to the passing of Mr. Forster's Elementary Education Act—where the said scheme was in operation. In the Gwaun Valley, in Pembrokeshire, at a place called Felin Bictwn, about six miles from Fishguard, was a British school, celebrated for the number of eminent Baptist divines who received there their early education. The master at the period we have named was one Thomas Llewellyn, a cripple, who supported



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punishment. Offenders at playtime receive a severe cut with the hazel rod on the palm of each hand, and those at work-time, i.e., who had sinned inside the temple of learning itself, a severer cut on the back of each hand. The author, who bears in his body the marks of ancient infliction, can vouch for the truthfulness of this picture. Shades of Griffith Jones and Madam Bevan, could ye rest in paradise when your beloved Welsh was being drawn and quartered by the tyrannical exponents of a wrong-headed system! By the means just described, and by other means equally wicked, our beloved mother tongue has been banished from many a hamlet where it had lived and had been loved from times immemorial. All honour to the memory of the man who conceived the idea of providing *Welsh* Education for *Welsh* people.

(3) With the diffusion of knowledge grew the demand for books. The number of Welsh books published between 1588 and 1700 was one hundred and seventy-three, but between 1700 and 1800 there were twelve hundred and twenty-four published, about three-fourths of them being issued between 1750 and 1800.

(4) The Catechetical Schools were the fore-runners of the Sunday Schools established by Thomas Charles. In a letter written by Charles, dated 1811, to one of

the secretaries of the Gaelic Society, then in process of formation, he says:

“The Circulating Day-Schools have been the principal means of erecting Sunday Schools, for without the former, the state of the country was such, that we could not obtain teachers to carry on the latter; besides, Sunday Schools were set up in every place where Day-Schools had been.”

To the credit of the Circulating Schools must be put down the fact also that the Welsh Bible has been so generally found and read in the cottage. The annual reports of these schools, by their earnest appeals, were the means of inducing the S.P.C.K. to issue two editions, of 15,000 copies each, of the Welsh Bible, one in 1746, and the other in 1752.

Education, it is true, in the lifetime of Griffith Jones, did not advance beyond the barest of a bare rudimentary stage, but the floodgates had now been thrown open, and the tide was surely, if slowly, flowing in, not to be commanded back by any Canute of the passing darkness.

II.

The literary remains of Griffith Jones are both numerous and important. The following is a complete list (exclusive of translations) of his Welsh works:—

(1) “Llythyr oddiwrth Weinidog o Eglwys Loegr, At un o'i blwyfolion yn neilltuo oddiwrth yr Eglwys o grâd y Presbyteriaid.” (2) “Cynghor Rhad yr Anllythyrenog.” (3)

“Dwy Ffurf o Weddi.” (4) “Galwad at Orseddfainge y Gras” (part I). (6). “Hyfforddiad at Orseddfainge y Gras” (part II). (6) “Drych Difynyddiaeth.” (7) “Hyfforddiad Gynnwys i Wybodaeth Iachusol o Egwyddorion a Dyledswyddau Crefydd.” (8) “Caniad Solomon.” (9) “Crynodeb o Salmau Can.” (10) “Hymnau Detholedig.” (11) “Cerdd Sion.” (12) “Pigion Prydyddiaeth Pen-Fardd y Cymry.”

No. 10 is exceedingly rare, only three copies of the original edition being known to exist. In addition to the above he published some English works, and he left at his death several valuable manuscripts unpublished, which are now in the possession of the Rev. Dr. C—. J—.

By far the most important of his Welsh works is “Drych Difynyddiaeth,” being a compendious body of divinity, or minute exposition of the Church Catechism, with Scripture proofs. This work was published in five parts as follows: Part I, The Christian Covenant; part II, The Christian Creed; part III, The Christian Duty; part IV, The Christian Prayer; part V, The Sacraments. The doctrine of the “Drych Difynyddiaeth” is pronouncedly Protestant and Evangelical—Evangelical, that is, in the pre-Puseyite sense. A copy of the second edition (1748) of the work, being the edition finally revised and corrected by Griffith Jones himself, is now before the author, and the following extracts therefrom on crucial points of doctrine amply testify to the Protestant character of the work.



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iddunt Dduw o damnaid o fara; gan haeru, fod y Bara a'r Gwin yn troi, wrth ci gyssegru, yn wir Ddyndod a Duwdod Crist: maent yn cadw'r Ysgrythyrau oddi wrth y bobl, ac yn llosgi pawb ni chyttuno a'u celwyddau hwy: maent yn dyrchafu eu hunain goruwch i Grist, trwy newid Trefn ei Efengyl, a llyfelu rheolau cabledus gwrthwyneb iddo, ac yn cyfeiliorni'n resynus mewn llawer o bethau; ac felly y maent trwy naccau'r Cwppan i'r bobl yn Swpper yr Arglwydd, etc." (Part V., p. 60).

(7) "Cw. Pa fodd y profwch, nad yw'r Bara a'r Gwin yn troi, wrth eu cyssegru, yn wir Gorph a Gwaed Crist, fel y mae'r Pabyddiaid yn haeru; o blegid (meddant hwy) i Grist ddywedud am y Bara, ar ôl iddo ei gyssegru ef, *Hwn yw fy Nghorph*; ac am y Cwppan, *Hwn yw fy Ngwaed*?"

Att. 1. Fe gyffelybodd Crist ei hun i lawer o bethau, heb iddunt newid eu natur, a throi i fod yn wir Gorph a Gwaed Crist. Yr un peth yw i'r Pabyddiaid haeru, fod *Drws*, neu *Ffordd*, neu *Olewydden*, yn Grist, ag yw iddunt ddwedud, fod y Bara a'r Gwin yn Grist. . . . Ac am hynny amryfusedd haerllug yw dywedud, fod y Cyffelybiaethau neu'r Arwyddion o Grist yn troi i fod yn Gorph ac yn Waed Crist.

2. Mae'r cyfeiliorni hyn yn distrywio natur y Sacrament, lle mae'r Arwyddion gweledig o bethau ysbrydol anweledig: canys, pe fyddai'r Bara a'r Gwin yn troi yn wir Gorph a Gwaed Crist; yna ni fyddai un Arwydd, ac ni fyddai'r Ordin- haad hon yn Sacrament.

3. Mae'n holl synhwyrâu yn tystio, nad yw'r Bara a'r Gwin yn newid eu natur yn y Sacrament: canys, yr ydym yn gweled ac yn profi, yn aroglï ac yn teimlo, eu bod, ar ol eu cyssegru, o'r un lliw a llun, a blas a sylwedd, ag oeddynt o'r blaen.

4. Mae'r Ysbryd Glân yn eu galw yn *Fara*, a *Chwppan yr Arglwydd*, yn y Sacrament, pan fydder yn bwyta ac yn yfed o honynt; ac am hyny, ni ddarfu iddunt newid eu natur ar ol eu cyssegru. . .

5. Mae amryw ganlyniadau gwrthun yn tarddu oddi wrth gyfeiliorni'r Pabyddiaid, . . . canys, pe troir y Bara a'r Gwin yn Gorph a Gwaed, ac yn wir Berson cyfan Crist, fel yr haerant hwy; yna yr oedd dau Gorph neu ddau Berson i Grist wrth ordeinio'r Sacrament; un yng Nghrist ei hun, a'r llall yn y Bara a'r Gwin, etc., etc." (Part V., pp 62-3.)

The whole of the paragraph against transubstantiation is reminiscent of the disputation at the celebrated Conference of Marburg, and contains the substance of the arguments advanced by Oecolampadius and Zuingli.

There exists nothing in the Welsh language, nor indeed in any language, that so clearly and correctly expounds what the sound Churchman conceives to be "Church Doctrine, Bible Truth," as the "Drych Difynyddiaeth," and it is inexplicable, on that account, why the old classic has been cast aside. The prominent place it once occupied in the library of the devout Churchman, and of the Catechist, is now occupied by the less solid "Holwyddoregau" and the various kinds of "Little Manuals for Little Catholics." Griffith Jones did further service to his countrymen by publishing a selection of Vicar Prichard's songs. He had found that the "Candle," being already such a favourite with the working community, was particularly serviceable in inculcating the morality of

the Gospel, and he therefore published a new edition of the work in a cheap form for the benefit of farm labourers and servants. Copies of this edition are still to be found in the scattered farm houses and cottages of Carmarthenshire and North Pembroke-shire, bearing full outward evidence of having been in manual request from generation to generation.

When the great man had passed away, the people who had known him immediately realized that a star of the first magnitude had for ever set beyond the Cambrian sky. A contemporary writer, commenting on his death, said of him:

“Thus the Rev. Griffith Jones came to his grave like a ripe shock of corn, full of piety, and full of days: it may be truly said . . . that few lives were more heavenly and useful, few deaths more triumphant. He went to the grave in peace, and is now at rest; his name is recorded in the annals of eternity, and the honours conferred on him will be ever blooming and incorruptible: he died in the Lord, and his works do follow him and praise him in the gates.”



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sympathy, and remember that “Câs gwr na charo’r wlad a’i macco,” is what we reasonably expect. Theophilus has his shortcomings, but the marvel is that, with the meagre material he had to work with, he managed to produce a work of such excellency. Historical research, in the modern sense, was not recognized as a definite branch of learning till towards the end of the eighteenth century. Hume was the first to give Englishmen an opportunity of enjoying a connected survey of facts hitherto lying scattered in the innumerable archives of the country. The masses of records which had been previously accumulated by antiquarians were rather annals than history, and it remained for Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon to arrange them in literary form and to trace their causal nexus. In Wales there had been no sort of previous attempt at digesting the Chronicles, or of collecting the manuscripts—all was chaos. The Chronicles and the MSS. themselves were scattered about, and their reliableness was an unknown quantity. The task of the modern historian is absurdly simple as compared with that of the historian of the eighteenth century. What with our cheap books and vast libraries, we of to-day have little more to do than act the part of careful cinder-sifters. Encyclopædias and reference works were *raræ res* in the days of our author. There were not even decent libraries, except, of course, at Oxford and Cambridge, and here and there in the mansion of a rich nobleman or the palace of an opulent prelate, who were beginning to form collections. The country squire and ordinary parson were accounted

passing wise if perchance they had Baker's *Chronicle* and Gwillim's *Heraldry* among their articles of furniture. One often wonders how the old divines managed to get hold of the books from which they quote so freely in their learned discourses. All this should be borne in mind by him who would condemn Theophilus Evans.

The *raison d'être* of "Drych y Prif Oesoedd" is to be traced to the growing interest in history which was one of the distinguishing features of the Renaissance period. Speculation in France had taken a historical shape from the beginning of the Renaissance, and there also it received its first systematic treatment in the hands of Montesquieu, who definitely established the importance of the historical method in the study of political science. He was followed by Voltaire, some of whose brilliant surveys are purely attempts at treating social ethics as a branch of history. On its philosophical side, the French Revolution was nothing more, nothing less, than the application of history in the solution of social and political problems. Men went back to the origins of society, and instituted comparisons between the past and their own age—invariably (it need hardly be said) to the disadvantage of their own age,—with the result that their deliberations ended in the shattering of the existing order.

Speaking of the growing interest in history in the eighteenth century, Sir Leslie Stephen observes that it "led to some of the chief writings of the time, as we can see that it was the natural outgrowth of the

intellectual position.”* That is as succinct a statement of the case as it is possible to give. History is psychology in bloom. When a truth has been established by observation or by demonstration, it only remains to trace the chain of antecedents—to know the why and the wherefore. Sir Leslie Stephen further observes that “great thinkers had long recognized the necessity of applying scientific method in the sphere of social and political investigation. Two men especially illustrate the tendency and the particular turn which it took in England. Adam Smith’s great book in 1776 applied scientific method to political method. Smith is distinguished from his French predecessors by the historical element of his work; by his careful study, that is, of economic history, and his consequent presentation of his theory not as a body of absolute and quasi-mathematical truth, but as resting upon the experience and applicable to the concrete facts of his time.”† History was now applied to all the sciences, or better, the sciences were studied in the light of their own history. The foundation of the modern physical sciences was laid in this period, and was cut by such men as Black, Priestley, Cavendish, and Hunter, their success being directly attributable to the adoption by them of the historical method. The evolution of so sensitive an organism as society can be maintained only so long as new conditions are strictly correlated to the old. Society is not a crystal.

* “English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century,”
p. 184.

† Ibid. p. 185.



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the prose writers of the Augustan period of Roman history the most distinguished was the historian Titus Livius. In discussing the object which this celebrated writer had in view in compiling his history, Sir William Smith remarks that “ . . . no one who reads his work with attention can suppose that he ever conceived the project of drawing up a critical history of Rome. His aim was to offer to his countrymen a clear and pleasing narrative which, while it gratified their vanity, should contain no startling improbabilities or gross complications”;* that is to say, Livy was a patriot-historian. Herodotus, the Father of History, who wrote at the time when Greece had arrived at the highest pitch of civilization, interwove into his history the vast epic of the Persian war, with the result that the work is a pæan on Grecian valour rather than an impartial history. The intellectual activity of the period of Bæda and Ælfred culminated in the systematising of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which was an undisguised record of the glories of the Saxon traditions. And so on, till the catalogue of historical writings is exhausted. We arrive at Gibbon before we are conscious of traversing fields outside the domain of “tendency.” He is the first who unites “the power of presenting great panoramas of history with thorough scholarship and laborious research,” but he was writing of “other climes and other times,” not of his own country. “Pride of Race” is writ large on every page of “*Drych y Prif Oesoedd*,” and in it the dictum is verified that intellectual activity begets patriotism.

* “Roman History,” p. 285.

But the *raison d'être* of "Drych y Prif Oesoedd" is also to be traced to the moral consciousness of the author. Theophilus Evans makes history the medium of teaching moral philosophy. He never consciously subverts facts, but he frequently colours them so as the more effectively to institute comparisons and develop contrasts. With him night is "blackness of darkness" and day "a burning and shining light." He tells us himself in his prefatory remarks that he writes with a definite object. The object is two-fold: first, to illustrate from civil history the nature and workings of the moral government of God; secondly, to show from ecclesiastical history the purity of primitive Christianity, and the impurity of subsequent tradition. He says:

"Ac yr wyf yn tybied nad yw y fath waith a hwn yn anfuiddiol; canys wrth ddarllen yn y rhan gyntaf, chwi a gewch weled modd y bu hi, gyda'n hynafiaid o amser bwygilydd, a'r rhyfeloedd a fu rhyngddynt a'g amryw genedloedd. Yma y cewch weled bortreiad amlwg o ffrwythau pechod, a'r gwahanrhedol effaith rhwng buchedd dda a dyhirwch buchedd, 'rhwng yr hwn a wasanaetho yr Arglwydd a'r hwn nis gwasanaetho ef.' Yma y cewch weled, tra fu ein hynafiaid yn gwneuthur yn ol ewyllys yr Arglwydd, na thyciai ymgyrch y gelyn yn eu herbyn: ond pan aethant i rodio yn ol cynghorion, a childynrwydd eu calon ddrygionus, 'Y dyeithr ag oedd yn eu mysg a ddringodd arnynt yn uchel uchel, a hwythau o ddisgynasant yn isel isel.' (Deut. xxviii. 43).

Yn yr ail ran chwi a gewch nid yn unig hanes am bregethiad yr efengyl ym Mrydain, a pha ddamwain bynag a ddygwyddodd mewn perthynas i grefydd, ond dysgyblaeth ac athrawiaeth y brif eglwys hefyd, fal y gwypid pa fodd yr oeddid yn trin pethau sanctaidd yn yr amser gwynfydedig hwnw, pan oedd crefydd yn

ei. phurdeb, yn ddigymmysg a dim traddodiadau ofergoelus. Ac y mae yn ddiogel genyf fod y fath orchwyl a hwn yn waith buddiol i bwy bynag a'i hystyrio yn bwyllog, yn ol cynghor yr Ysbryd Glân. 'Fel hyn y dywed yr Arglwydd, sefwch ar y ffyrdd, ac edrychwch, a gofynwch am yr hen lwybrau, lle mae ffordd dda, a rhodiwch ynddi; a chwi a gewch orphwysdra i'ch eneidiau.' (Ier. vi. 16.) Ond os dywed rbai (megys y sawl y mae yr Arglwydd yn achwyn arnynt yno), 'Ni rodiwn ui ynddi,' bydded y perygl arnynt eu hunain."

Under the first head is pointed out how the backslidings of our forefathers, the Ancient Britons, were visited with a just affliction, and how the Britons, in their periods (too few, alas!) of fellowship and united effort, triumphed over their foes. Part I. of the "Drych" is a commentary on Butler's proposition that "moral government consists, not barely in rewarding and punishing men for their actions, which the most tyrannical person may do: but in rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked; in rendering to men according to their actions, considered as good or evil. And the perfection of moral government consists in doing this, with regard to all intelligent creatures, in an exact proportion to their personal merits or demerits."

Here is a typical example of the author's manner of moralizing on the events which he relates:—

"Ond yno ym mhen talm (ar ol derbyn y wobr ddyledus idd eu pechodau yn y byd hwn) y gwelodd yr Arglwydd yn dda i gyffwrdd a'u calonau; a daethant, fel y mab afradlawn, i bwyll ac ystyriaeth, gan ddychwelyd yn edifeiriol at yr Arglwydd eu Duw. Ac er nad oeddent y pryd hwnw ond ychydig o drueiniaid methedig, wedi eu curo gan yr oerfel a newyn, eto cawsant eu



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gan bawb, a phrin y gellid ammharchu digon arno; ond po fwyaf ysgeler, diriaid, a diras a fyddai neb, mwyaf i gyd a fyddai parch ac anrhydedd hwnw. Ac nid y gwyr lleyg yn unig oeddent fel hyn yn ymhyfrydu mewn camwedd, ac yn casâu y wybodaeth o Dduw, eithr y gwyr llên hefyd, neu yr offeiriaid, ‘a ymadawsant â llwybrau uniondeb, i rodio mewn ffyrdd tywyllwch.’ (Diar. ii. 13.) Canys yn lle gofalu dros eu diadellau, eu teml hwy a fyddai cegin tafarndau, ac ymdordynu a chanu maswedd; am baham y canodd un o’u prydyddion, gan edliw iddynt :—

‘ Y ’ffeiriaid cent euraid cyn oeri—crefydd;

Cryf oeddent mewn gweddi:

Yn awr meddwdod sy’n codi,

’Nifeiliaid yw’n bugeiliaid ni.’ ”

Every patriot is a moralist, and the greatest patriot is he who looks reverently into eternity for his inspiration. True patriotism is not wealth-seeking or land grabbing, but nobility of soul, and a striving after pure ideals for the sake of one’s country. Herbert Spencer says that the first condition of ideal life is to be a good animal, and to be a nation of good animals is the grand law of national greatness. That is to say, the standard of patriotism is zoological rather than psychological or moral. In the face of such a standard one would almost exclaim with Dr. Johnson that “patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.”

Theophilus Evans knows but one standard of patriotic greatness, viz., MORAL GOODNESS.

We may regard the “Drych” as an answer to a question which has been agitating the minds of men

from classical times—"What constitutes a State?" It says, in effect, in the words of a well-known stanza:

"What constitutes a State?
 Not high-raised battlement or laboured mound,
 Thick wall, or moated gate;
 Not cities proud, with spires and turrets crowned;
 Not bays and broad-armed ports,
 Where, laughing at the storms, rich navies ride,
 Not starred and spangled courts,
 Where low-browed baseness wafts perfume to pride!
 No! *Men, high-minded men!*"

Part II. gives a short but concise account of the Faith, with the object, more especially, of contrasting primitive with mediæval Christianity. The author writes, of course, in the spirit of an anti-Puritan, and we are not to look for the broad charity of the twentieth century; albeit he is wondrously free, for a writer of that age, from the leaven of sectarianism.

He has a novel method, and withal a most effective one, of dealing a blow at the pseudo-miracles of the Roman Church: it is a species of *reductio ad absurdum*. A number of "miracles" of saints and "wonders" of heathen literature are rehearsed in juxta-position, the design being to suggest what is very palpably evident, that both have the same characteristics.

"Yn wir, y mae'r Papistiaid, i.e., a'r paganiaid hefyd, yn dwrddio nid ychydig yng nghylch eu dawn a'u gallu i wneyd gwyrthiau. Dywed y Papistiaid am S. Thomas (un o'u seintiau) i'r groes lefaru wrtho, 'Da 'yr ysgrifenaist am danaf fi, O Domos.' Dywed y paganiaid hefyd i deml y dduwies Dyngedfen lefaru

wrth y gwragedd yn gweini yno, 'Da, da, y gwnaethoch.' Dywed y Papistiaid fod S. Fransis yn pregethu i adar, a physgod, a gwylltflod; ac i'w bregeth weithio y fath gyfnewidiad mewn blaidd rheibus, megys ag y daeth at S. Fransis, ac a dyngodd yn hoew brysur wrtho, na wnai efe niwed i ddyn nac anifail byth ar ol hyny. Dywed y paganiaid hefyd amryw chwedlau at yr un ystyr. Dywed y Papistiaid i ryw ddyn dori ymaith ei fraich ddeheu, a'i chrogi wrth bost, yng ngwydd llusws o bobl; ond ar ol ymostwng yn ddefosiynol o flaen delw y Fair Ferwyn, y neidiodd y fraich a grogasid wrth y post yn ddiattreg at ci gorff, a hi a asiwyd mor gynnil ac mor gelfyddgar, megys nad allai neb ganfod ol y cydiad. Dywed y paganiaid hefyd fod rhyw wraig yn cael ci dygn fino o achos rhyw llyngyren fawr yn ci bol; a phan acth hi at y dewin i'w hiachâu ysywaeth yr oedd efe wedi myned oddi cartref. Eithr ci weision a ddodasant y wraig yn y lle yr oedd eu meistr yn arferu iachâu y cleifion, ac a dorasant ei phen, megys y gallent, yn fwy dirwystyr, dynu allan y llyngyren o'i bol; ond cyn iddynt hwy asio y pen wrth y corff, dyma'r meistr ci hun yn dychwelyd, yr hwn a geryddodd ei weision am eu bod yn anturio gormod; ond efe a drugarhaodd wrth y wraig, ac a'i gwnaeth hi yn holliach yn ddiattreg. Gwaith hawdd a fyddai anchwanegu llusws o'r gwyrthiau y mae'r naill a'r llall yn bostio o'u plegyd. Fe all pob dyn, ie, â hanner llygad, ganfod pa wirionedd sydd ynddynt wrth yr ychydig a grybwyllwyd; ond y gall gau athrawon wneuthur rhyw fath o wyrthiau sydd ddiddadl; canys ebe ein Hiachawdwr, 'Gau Gristiau a gau brophwydi a gyfodant, ac a ddangosant arwyddion a rhyfeddodau, i hudo ymaith, pe byddai bosibl, ie, yr etholedigion.' (Marc xiii. 22.)"

Theophilus, it will be observed, does not enter into a lengthy discussion of the merits of the Romish claim, nor does he elsewhere follow the Schoolmen through their doctrinal labyrinths: he adopts instead the short cut.



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mastery of words—what Ruskin would call “word-painting”—and in the purity of his idiom, he almost rivals Ellis Wynne. Although the “Gweledigaethau” was written earlier than the “Drych,” yet the latter is older in style: it is, in fact, strikingly similar to the work of Morus Kyffin. Ellis Wynne and Morgan Llwyd usually place the verb at the beginning of the simple sentence, but Theophilus Evans follows Morus Kyffin in placing the noun first. Theophilus very rarely brings any part of speech out of its natural order in the sentence, as the other two frequently do when they wish to mark the emphasis. His periods flow on smoothly without break or interruption. In extended paragraphs the flow is occasionally monotonous, and wearies the ear with the evenness of its rhythm.

Much of the charm of the “Drych” is due to its archaisms, and to the quaintness of its similes. The author’s mind had been steeped in ancient lore, drawn for the most part from the well of the romances and the Chronicles. That his thoughts are clothed in the *toga virilis* of modern prose rather than in the Nessus robe of the Mediaevalists is due to the influence of the Bible, and to the charming simplicity of the man himself. The descriptive powers of Theophilus are unrivalled in the literature of our own, and unsurpassed in that of any other nation. Is not the following description of the battlefield of Caerbaddon like a Thompson canvas?—

“Yno wedi byddino eu gwyr o bob ochr, dechreuodd yr ymladdfa greulonaſ a fu, ond odid, erioed rhwng y Brytaniaid a’r

Seison. Yno y gwelid y saethau yn chwifio o'r naill lu at y llall, megys cafod o gesair yn ymdyru pan fo gwynt gwrthwyneb yn cu gwthio draw ac yma. Och pa fath olwg dosturus a fyddai gweled rbai a'u hymysgaroedd allan, a'r meirch rhyfel yn ymddyrysu yn mherfedd a choluddion ereill; ambell ddart yn nhwll y llygad, a'r dyn yn fyw, ac yn cynddeiriogi gan ci boen! ambell ddart yn y safu, y naill hanner y ty hyn, a'r hanner arall y tu draw i'r gwddf allan! ambell ddart yn y talcen, dros yr adfach, a'r ymenydd yn glafoerio allan! ambell ddart yn disgyn ar y llurig neu yr astalch pres, ac yn scinic yn rhonc megis cloch! ac ambell ddart yn union at y galon, ac yn diboeni mewn mynyd. Ac am ben hyn, yn lle meddygon i drin ei clwyfau, y meirch rhyfel yn ystrancio draw ac yma dros y clwyfus druan, yn briwo esgyrn rbai, yn llethu ereill, yn cornodio allan ymenydd rbai, a chalonau ac ymysgaroedd ereill."

Here are all the essential qualities of perfect description,—vivid fancy, swift rehearsal, careful perspective, with distinctness and unity of impression. Sometimes, as may be expected, the details of his pen-pictures are not strictly accurate; sometimes the colours are too accentuated, and here and there the figures are a little distorted. But these minor defects serve only to heighten the effect of the work taken as a whole. They detract no more from the *tout ensemble* than do the occasional artificial balancing of the parts of the sentence detract from the gorgeous splendour of Macaulay's descriptions.

A feature of the "Drych" which deserves attention is its *Homeric use of the simile*. The similes of the Welsh classic, like those of the *Iliad*, are nearly all of the pastoral type, and are made in both to *play an identical part* in the structure of the narrative.

Compare carefully the following examples:—

“And as on corn when western gusts descend
Before the blast the lofty harvests bend;
Thus o'er the field the moving host appears,
With nodding plumes and groves of waving
spears.”

“The king of kings, majestically tall,
Towers o'er his armies, and outshines them
all:
Like some proud bull, that round the pastures
leads
His subject herds, the monarch of the meads.”

“As when the lordly lion seeks his food
Where grazing heifers range the lonely wood,
He leaps amidst them with a furious bound,
Bends their strong necks, and tears them to
the ground:
So from their seats the brother-chiefs are torn,
Their steeds and chariot to the navy borne.”

“As when, on Ceres' sacred floor, the swain
Spreads the wide fan to clear the golden grain,
And the light chaff, before the breezes borne,
Ascends in clouds from off the heapy corn;
The grey dust, rising with collected winds,
Drives o'er the barn, and whitens all the hinds;
So white with dust the Grecian host appears,
From trampling steeds, and thundering char-
ioteers;
The dusky clouds from labour'd earth arise,
And roll in smoking volumes to the skies.”

“Ond rhaid addef mae
dynion diffraith cynhenus
drwg oeddent; na fedrent
gydfod fel brodyr yng
nghyd: arglwydd un cwm-
mwd yn ymgecru a'u gym-
mydog, ac yn myned ben-
ben, fel y gwelwch chwi
ddau waedgi gwancus yn
ymgiprys frigfrig am as-
gwrn.”

“Yr oedd y cenadon a
ddanfonodd Plocyn i Rufain
i gynnull ychwaneg o sawd-
wyr, wedi adrodd y fath
chwedl garw am ddewrder y
Brytaniaid, fel na wyddai
Gloew Caisar beth i wneu-
thur, ac arno chwant i ym-
ddiala chwant i aros gartref;
megys anner dwym-galon,
yn brefu wrth weled y cig-
ydd yn mwrddro ei chyntaf-
anedig, ac eto heb galon i
gornio y mwrddwr.”

“Yr oedd hyn, yn ddilys,
yn fyd tost ac annyoddefol;
ac ar hynny y cydfwriadodd
arglwyddi a phendefigion y
deyrnas i ruthroarnynt, a'u
tori ymaith vn gwbl, hen
ac iefainc, oddi ar wyneb y
wlad; megys y gwelwch
chwi lafurwr yn son am
ddiwreiddio drain, ac ys-
gall, a mieri, rhag eu bod
yn anffrwythloni y tir.”

“Buan y parodd y fath
afreolaeth a hyn, a hynny yn
ddibaid dros amryw flyn-
yddoedd, i holl ymherod-
raeth Rhufain siglo ac ym-
ollwng, megys llong fawr
yn ymddattod pan fo'r ton-
au a gwynt gwrthwyneb yn
ei chipio; neu megis maes
llydan o wenith yn cael ei
sathru a'i rwygo gan gen-
faint o foch, oni bydd cae
diogel o'i gylch; felly Rhuf-
ain a'i holl gadernid a aeth
o fesur ychydig ac ychydig
yn chwilfriw man, o ran yr
aml ymbleidiau o'i mewn, a
dygasog ymgyrch y barbar-
iaid o amgylch.”



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among the lesser lights of the literary world, to talk learnedly of the *Iliad*. “*Drych y Prif Oesoedd*” appeared first in 1716, a year after the issue of Pope’s *Iliad*, but the second edition, much enlarged and improved, was not published till 1740. Much of the beautiful imagery and characteristic idiom of the second edition is conspicuously absent in the first, at the time of the publication of which the author could not have been much above twenty-one years of age.

Chapter 13.

GORONWY OWEN:

THE CLASSICAL POET.

THE master spirit of British verse in the first three quarters of the eighteenth century was Pope. Notwithstanding that men of second rank like Thomson, Young, and Akenside, discarded the heroic couplet for the blank verse of Milton, and that Collins, Gray, and a few others, adopted the lyrical form of a preceding period, yet the influence of Pope remained paramount until the revolutionary era. An extremely plastic nature like that of Goronwy Owen could not have lived amid environment shaped by the ruling genius unimpressed. His verse, as to its outward and visible sign, is indeed a true expression of the dominant classicalism. It were well, before we come to deal with the subject-matter of Goronwy's poetry, to enquire what is the precise meaning of the epithet "classicalism," which is applied to the metrical productions of that period in general. The enquiry begins and ends with Pope. Alexander Pope had been endowed with three gifts which distinguished him above his fellows: he had a keenly sensitive

temperament, a marvellous felicity of expression, and a faultless musical ear. He was not, we think, a poet in the best sense of the word, but he reflects the ideas of his day far more fully and beautifully than does any other contemporary English poet. The "Essay on Man" is especially interesting, inasmuch as it aspired to be a sort of "Theodicaea," like the great work of Leibnitz, and is a metrical version of the religious creed of the age. Pope crystalized into smart verse the Deism of Clarke, Tindal, Shaftesbury, and Bolingbroke. If the "Essay" is devoid of poetical soul, it is because the existence or non-existence of soul, whether in man or in poetry, was not regarded as a matter of prime importance in those days. Logic, unhampered by rhetoric, was the *sine quâ non* of good verse as it was of good sermons. "As in Clarke's sermons, we have diagrams instead of pictures; a system of axioms, deductions, and corollaries instead of a rich mythology; a barren metaphysico-mathematical theory of the universe, which might satisfy the intellect, but remained hopelessly frigid for the emotional nature," so in Pope's poetry we have the skeleton of fact unclothed upon by the flesh and blood of fancy. Poetry of this type, if it is to escape the burial due to a lifeless body, must be embalmed in didactics and ratiocination. That is precisely what happened with Pope's verse.

His ideas (to change the figure) consist at best of a series of arguments strung artistically together like gems on a necklace; at their worst, they consist of a number of incoherent statements strung like glass



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abstract rules, which (rules) were mathematically exact and universally binding. Whatever was not reducible to the rule of "two and two make four" was voted outside the domain of practical poetry, religion, and politics. This code of abstract rules begat the religion of nature and the quasi-panteism of Clarke, as it begat the Deism and the mathematical poetry of Pope. Everything was tried at the court of mathematics, and whatever failed to come up to the standard of axiomatic or demonstrative evidence was condemned as "vain superstition and foolish enthusiasm." It was to be mathematical politics, mathematical morality, mathematical poetry—mathematical everything, in short. Henceforth, the imagination must be exercised within the limits marked out by the reason. The passions were to be curbed, nor was the muse to venture on any further flights of fancy. Ideas which, upon analysis, did not resolve into elements derivable from the sphere of material truth, were tabooed, being "vain and airy imaginings, nothing worth." Poetical correctness, that is, implied symmetry, the co-ordination of cause and effect within the sphere of the imagination, soberness in expression, and an aristocratic polish of style. In other words, Pope carried out in his poetry the principle which Chesterfield tells us actuated him in conversation, which was never to speak without expressing himself in as polished a manner as possible.

The poetical code which expressed the ideas of the times was embodied in the canons of criticism elaborated by the learned M. Bossu. These canons were partly

the cause, partly the effect of the universal tendency,—of the nascent classicalism. Hume and Gibbon, inspired by the law of dramatic unities, pronounced Racine to be superior to Shakespeare, and Addison criticised Milton in some cheap jargon about the machinery, the episodes, and the fable of the inimitable epic.

The change in the poetic method thus introduced by Pope directed afresh the attention of scholars to literary forms. Poetry was subjected to such rigorous and destructive criticism as it had never been before in the history of our literature. Art, if it was to be cultivated at all, must henceforth be cultivated according to a hard-and-fast rule, and ornaments of style must be restrained by the demands of common sense. The supreme demand of reason was for clearness of expression and polish of diction. “The classicalism of the time,” says Sir Leslie Stephen, “was midway between the taste of the Renaissance and that of modern times.”* It would be more strictly correct to say that it was a hybrid between the Renaissance taste and that of modern times. Felicity of expression was a Renaissance trait; the gloss and the polish belong to the age of ruffles and perukes.

The force and elegance of Pope’s poetry begat a host of imitations. Classicalism running wild in *Hilliads*, *Smartiads*, &c.; epigram and smooth rhythm ending in tame monotony, soon became the rage.

* “English Thought in the Eighteenth Century”; Vol. II., p. 355.

That Goronwy Owen came under the influence of the prevalent classicalism is abundantly manifest. With him were born again in all the vigour and freshness of resurrected life the alliterative metres of a bygone bardism. The form of his verse is strictly correct;—correct, that is, judged by the canons which obtained in Wales from Eisteddfod Gaerfyrddin (1451) to the Eisteddfod in the same town in 1819. There is no reason why, apart from the universal tendency, the strict metres should re-appear with Beirdd Môn, rather than fifty years earlier or later. The pity is that Goronwy had not lived at a period anterior to the era of classical supremacy, or that he had not been allowed to live the life of a recluse in some remote corner of his native land, where, undisturbed by outside influences, he could commune with Nature, and with Nature's God. The star of Goronwy appeared on the poetic sky at an inopportune moment, and its light was dimmed by the chill mists of classicalism. There were moments when the bard felt that he could not soar by reason of the limitations of the "cynganedd" he had espoused. In one of his letters he refers to "hualau cynganedd, yr hwn ni bu prin ormes yn y byd i ieithoedd eraill, ond sydd ym mron a llethu ein hiaith ni." And yet he helped to make the stringency of the alliterative metres ten-fold more subtle than before! He was so far influenced by current thought as to utter what seems very like an echo of Addison's criticism of Milton. In a letter to Rhisiart Morris he says: "Perhaps it were to be wished that the Rules of Poetry in our language were less nice and accurate; we should then undoubtedly



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is much to justify it. The mind bent in hunting up literary parallels will discover in Spenser's "hope deferred" the counterpart of poor Goronwy's disappointed hope of obtaining a curacy or preferment in his beloved Wales. The "scornful and unpoetic Burleigh" has his double in Bishop Hutton, who dismissed the bard from a curacy in favour of "a young clergyman with a very great fortune." Spenser spent his better years in Ireland, banished to a land "where the muse grew silent and sad." Goronwy was driven to America to seek a livelihood for himself and family. Spenser in his hasty flight from the castle of Kilcolman lost all his possessions, his valuable manuscripts included, and left behind in the flames a dear child as a sacrifice to the fury of a heartless mob. Goronwy in his voyage to America had to consign to the deep all that was mortal of his first wife and youngest child. Sir Philip Sidney had been the first friend and patron of Spenser, and "the sad catastrophe of that poet-hero made him a mourner all his days." The unsympathetic, if not insincere, treatment of our bard by Lewis Morys after the famous meeting of the Cymmrodorion may not be a parallel, but the effects on the mind of Goronwy were equally disastrous. He writes: "Am y Llew yr wyf agos a chanu yn iach iddo, oblegyd fod lle i ofni ei fod wedi digio dros byth bythoedd, o ran na chefais ganddo ond sèn, yn y llythyr diweddaf byth a welais oddiwrtho, etc." * Again, Spenser and Goronwy had each a sorrow,—the one a "secret" sorrow, the other

* Gronovania p. 320.

an "open" sorrow—dragging him into the Slough of Despond. Hear the sighs of the following grief-stricken stanzas!

“And when he heard the music that I made,
 He found himself full greatly pleased at it;
 He gan to cast great liking to my lore,
 And great disliking to *my luckless lot,*
That banish'd had myself, like wight forelore,
Into that waste where I was quite forgot.”

“Dieithryn adyn ydwyf,
 Gwae fi o'r sud! alldud wyf;
 Pell wyf o wlad fy nhadau,
 Och son! ac o Fôn gu fan;
 Y lle bum yn gware gynt
 Mae dynion na'm hadwaenynt;
 Cyfaill neu ddau a'm cofiant,
 Prin ddau lle'r oedd gynnau gant.”

The cruel neglect of our bard by the Welsh (?) Bishops deserves the anathema of all time. The Rev. Robert Jones, Rotherhithe, referring to the private life of Goronwy, very wisely observes that “there was a period in Goronwy's life when, had he been taken by the hand, he might have been raised far above temptations. * * Neglected, if not contemned, by the Welsh Bishops, debarred consequently from intercourse with his fellows, he—involuntarily at first perhaps—sought the only enjoyments within his reach, and sought them as refuges from the sorrow and troubles of a hard lot. Habit gradually confirmed their power, and the mighty Samson of Welsh Song was shorn of his

locks. * * Had he been called to do nothing more than write a hymnal for the Church, he would have done the best service towards strengthening her cords.”*

The last days of the immortal poets were equally sad: both went down to an early grave, rich in fruit but poor in fortune. Phineas Fletcher described the destiny of Spenser—

“Poorly, poor man! he lived; poorly, poor man! he died,”
and the description fits the great Goronwy.

So many accidental resemblances between two men prepare us for the discovery of parallels in the fruit of their muse. We will point out some of the more salient literary resemblances. Of all poets, Spenser excels in the *discreet* use of alliteration. He is not the most alliterative—in that respect he is exceeded by Pope, and by many modern poets, e.g. Swinburne—but he is the most *sanely* alliterative. His alliteration is natural, never obtrusive. It is so concealed that it escapes our attention at the same time that it is acting on our feeling. “Unconsciously or by habit, his ear became the echo of his imagination; sound was the response of thought, and as much as his epithets, scattered the ‘orient hues’ of his fancy. Alliteration and epithets, which with mechanical versificators are a mere artifice, because only an artifice, and glare and glitter, charm by their consonance when they rise out of the emotions of the true poet.” †

* The Poetical Works of the Rev. Goronwy Owen, Vol. II, p. 84

† “Amenities of Literature.” I. D’Israeli, p. 225.



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Far from resort of people, that did pas
 In traveill to and froe: a little wyde
 There was an holy chappell edifyde,
 Wherein the hermite dewly wont to say
 His holy things each morne and eventyde:
 Thereby a christall streame did gently play,
 Which from a sacred fountaine welled forth alway.

Arrived there, the little house they fill,
 Ne looke for entertainment, where none was;
 Rest is their feast, and all thinges at their will:
 The noblest mind the best contentment has.
 With faire discourse the evening so they pas;
 For that old man of pleasing wordes had store,
 And well could file his tongue, as smooth as glas:
 He told of saintes and popes, and evermore
 He strowed an Ave-Mary after and before."

(2) "Henffych well, Fon, dirion dir,
 Hyfrydwch pob rhyw frodyr;
 Goludog, ac ail Eden
 Dy sut, neu Baradwys hen;
 Gwiwddestl y'th gynysgaeddwyd,
 Hoffder Duw Ner, a dyn wyd;
 Mirain wyt ym mysg moroedd,
 A'r dwr yn gan' twr it' cedd,
 Eistedd ar orsedd eursail
 Yr wyd, ac ni welir ail,
 Ac euraid wyt bob goror,
 Arglwyddes a meistres môr."

As a sample of sudden energy, take the following flashes, than which nothing could be more vivid:—

"Milgi hirsafn ysgafndroed."

"Chwilio gem a chael gwmmmon."

“Mal cawr aruthr yn rhuthraw,
Mal lladron dison y daw.”

“Cydfydd y fall a’i gallawr,
Câr lechu’n y fagddu fawr.”

“A’i brif bechod yw tlodi,
Pob tlawd sydd gydfrawd i gi,” etc., etc.

which, to be appreciated, must be read in their context. The only serious fault to be found with Goronwy as a descriptive artist is that he is lacking in personal interest and sustaining power. But sustainment, it must be admitted, is incompatible with suddenness of stroke and vividness of colour, which are Goronwy’s forte. There is, moreover, much to urge on general grounds in favour of brevity. “Were I bidden to say,” says Edgar Allan Poe, “how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, I should answer, without hesitation, in the composition of a rhymed poem, not to exceed in length what might be read in an hour.” A very sensible observation. We have all felt how difficult it is, in reading a long poem, to keep the mind under control, and how easy it is to lose the sense of totality. “Cywydd y Farn Fawr,” Goronwy’s chief work, is very short, extending to only one hundred and sixty lines, but such concentrated force as we have in its lines could not be distributed over a much wider area without destroying the sense of totality. It depicts, as a long poem could not well do, the suddenness of the last calamity. In the final doom, eternity will be balanced on a point: a day. the dissolution will be swift as the stroke of an asp. A succession of vivid flashes

lasting for a few minutes best brings home to the heart the terrible nature of the event described.

The rich colour of Goronwy's language is unsurpassed in the works of any of the Renaissance poets, English or Italian, and unequalled in the verse of any of our own bards, Dafydd ap Gwilym alone excepted. Goronwy is the Rubens of Welsh poetry. In this respect again, he is to be compared with Spenser, as the following stanzas, on different yet not dissimilar themes, will amply show:—

(1) “ Ser bore a ddwyrëynt
 Yn llu i gyd ganu gynt ;
 Canu'n llon hoywlon eu hawdl,
 Gawr floeddio gorfoleddawdl!
 Ac ar ben gorphen y gwaith,
 Yn wiwlan canu eilwaith ;
 Caed miloedd o nerthoedd nef
 Acw'n eilio cân wiwlef,
 Meibion nef yn cydlefain
 A'u gilydd mewn cywydd cain :—
 ‘Perffaith yw dy waith, Duw Ion,
 Dethol dy ffyrdd a doethion,
 A mad ac anchwiliadwy,
 Dduw mawr ! ac ni fu ddim mwy ! ’ ”

(2) “ The joyous birds shrouded in cheareful shade,
 Their notes unto the voice attempred sweet ;
 Th' angelical soft trembling voices made
 To th' instruments divine respondence meet ;
 The silver sounding instruments did meet



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of divine communion. His religion is that of Nature, animated by a belief in the all-pervading presence of the Creator and Father of all. His joy in natural objects, supported by an under-current of melancholy, so characteristic of the Gothic school, is further linked to a fine sense of universal brotherhood. This explains the impatience of Cant and Conventionalism which every now and again breaks out in his verse. He felt in his inmost soul that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together," desiring to be "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty" of a better life. Already we see the shadows of the French Revolution and of the Religious Awakening cast on the land in "Cywydd y Farn Fawr." The dominant idea of this master ode is the nearness of God and of the day of doom. It enables the mind, by its perceptive "definity," to form a true conception of that clear and eternal Spirit, to whom all our thoughts are perhaps hardly so much as the twilight is to the bright noonday, and we feel that all distance and time, and everything that seems to separate man from the eye of his Maker, fade away like the shadow of a cloud. We are made to realize that our Maker and Judge is both a God afar off and also a God nigh at hand. We are brought, by the vivid imagination and the swift periods of the ode, to the very noon-day of doom, and elbow to elbow with the Judge. We feel that as no part of the round world is farther than another from the blue sky which is over all, so before the eye of God all hearts are alike open, and that from Him no secrets are hid.

Such is the realism of the ode that we breathe fast as we read it and heave a sigh of relief as we reach the last line.

In Goronwy, the priest is thoroughly merged in the bard, but the bard rarely loses himself in the pure idealist. The calm contemplation of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful is disturbed by two great ethical motives—hope and fear. The exceeding happiness of heaven, and a keen desire of attaining it, the more terrible doom of the impenitent, and our instinctive shrinking from all that it involves; are propounded as the two great instruments for turning man from sin, and for restoring him to fellowship with the Spirit of God, and the spirit of Nature. This theology is, it need hardly be pointed out, pre-Deistic in character: it belongs to the school of Luther and of the early English reformers. The wrath of Sinai overshadows the love of Calvary in the pre-Deistic era. Love is felt to be stronger than death, but the resulting gratitude, both for God's general bounty in the realm of nature, and for His special loving-kindness in the kingdom of grace, does not get the prominence that it deserves and demands. There is an element of selfishness. The Muse often ventures on holy ground without having taken the shoes off her feet. With love and fear as ethical motives, love of self becomes a primary principle of human nature. In pre-Deistic theology, as in all Gothic poetry, the conviction is forced upon us that expediency is the test of right. We do not seek to deny that

human motives are generally mixed; on the other hand we know they are, and we even admire the wisdom and mercy which has so arranged the world, that our duty and our happiness shall in the long run coincide. "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven . . . and all these things shall be added unto you." So the Father of Spirits deals with us as with children. He makes what is good still farther pleasant and attractive as being pleasant and *expedient*. Yet he meant us not to linger in the twilight of imperfect motives, and secondary considerations, but to press forward, until by the force of habit we take delight in our duty for its own sake, and rejoice in the very light of that divine countenance, which is both the source and the concentration of all moral goodness, purity, and love. We find fault with the ethics of our bard, in that it fails to convince us that virtue is its own reward.

But shining through the bard's religion of nature and imperfect ethics, as light through an alabaster vase, is his message to his fellow-men. The message may be expressed in the words of Solomon: "That which hath been, is now: and that which is to be, hath already been; and *God requireth that which is past.*" (Eccl. III. 15). These words sum up the experience of Goronwy's life, as expressed in his verse: the message is the substance of his moral philosophy,—the substratum of his poetry. In whatever light we view it, the message has a depth and breadth of meaning which no logic can formulate, and is instinct with an impassioned moral



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of it, and will see to its infallible preservation. The doings of the Almighty are never to be undone. No word of His shall return unto Him void—no efflux of His power ever became fruitless. As the adorable I AM, with whom “is no variableness, neither shâdow of turning,” He is, by necessity of nature, infinitely above any time limitations whatever.

“Cyfyd fal yd o fol âr
 Gwnwd tew eginhad dacar;
 A'r mor a yrr o'r meirwon
 Fil myrdd uwch dyfnffyrdd y dòn:
 Try allan ddynion tri-llu,
 Y sydd, y fydd, ac a fu,
 Heb goll yn ddidwn hollol;
 Heb un o naddun yn ol.

* * * *

Ysgwyd y nef tra llefair
 Icsu fad, a saif Ei air.”

III.

Goronwy Owen, if not exactly a profound scholar, was a man of parts and deeply read. He knew Greek well, could write Latin verse in good Latinity, had “some smattering” (as he says) of Hebrew and Chaldee, and he was not altogether ignorant of Arabic and Syriac. His English prose is as fine as Dryden’s, and his Welsh letters’ evince a mastery of our language that is rarely to be met with in modern Welsh prose, with its concatenation of Anglo-Welsh idioms. As instances of his prose style in the two languages, take the following extracts from his letters:—

“I flatter myself that I am master of a fluency of words and purity of diction; and if so, be the poetical vein ever so slender, all the *cynhaneddau* must be equal, if equally understood. Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, is commended in history for having taught her sons, in their infancy, the purity of the Latin tongue; and I may say in justice to the memory of my mother, that I never knew a mother, nor even a master, more careful to correct an uncouth, inelegant phrase, or vicious pronunciation, than she. And that, I must own, has been of infinite service to me.”

“Dyma fi yn Walton o’r diwedd, ar ol hir ludded yn fy nhaith. Mi gyrhaeddais yma’r bore ddoe, ynghylch dwy awr cyn pryd gwasanaeth, a’r person a’m derbyniodd yn groesawus ddigon; ond er maint fy lludded, fe orfu arnaf ddarllen gwasanaeth a phregethu fy hun y bore, a darllen y gosper y pryd-nhawn, ac ynteu a bregethodd. Y mae’r gwr yn edrych yn wr o’r mwyaf, ond yr wyf yn deall fod yn rhaid ei gymmeryd yn ei ffordd; mae’r gwas a’r forwyn (yr hyn yw’r holl deulu a fedd) yn d’wedyd mae cidwm cyrrith, anynad, drwg anwydus aruthr yw. Ond pa beth yw hynny i mi? bid rhyngddynt hwy ac ynteu am ei gampiau teuluaid; nid oes i mi ond gwneud fy nyledswydd, ac yno draen yn ci gap. Hyn a allaf ei ddywedyd yn hy am dano, na chlywais i ermoed, haiach, well pregethwr, na digrifach, mwynach,

ymgomiwr. Climmach o ddyn amrosgo ydyw, Garan anfaintunaidd, afluniaidd yn ci ddillad, o hyd a lled aruthr anhygoel, ac wynebpryd llew neu rywfaint erchyllach, a'i drem arwguch yn tolcio ymhen pob chwedl, yn ddigon er noddi llygod yn y dyblygion, ac yn onoi dail yr India, hyd oni red dwy ffrwd felyngoch hyd ci ên. Ond ni waeth i chwi hynny na phregeth, y mae yn un o'r creaduriaid anferthaf a welwyd erioed y tu yma i'r Affric. Yr oedd yn swil gennyf ddoe wrth fyned i'r Eglwys yn ein gynau duon, fy ngweled fy hun yn ci ymyl ef, fel bâd ar ol llong."*

Goronwy had an extensive acquaintance with the classics, and some of his similes and metaphors are reminiscent of those of the *Iliad* and the *Æneid*; those occurring in "Cywydd y Farn Fawr" being pointed out in the comments of Lewis Morus.† His unquenchable thirst for knowledge was no doubt among the contributing causes of the periodical supineness of his Muse. In the heat of the pursuit of Arabic, Syriac, Hebrew, and Chaldee Studies, the dew of *Awen* dried up, leaving the flowers withered in the meads of song. We may feel grateful that his library was of modest dimensions, for had he been able to procure all the books and MSS. he coveted,

* Vide "Llythyrau Goronwy Owen." I. Foulkes.

† Vide "Diddanwch Teuluaidd" (Edit. 1817); p. 83.



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