BACON DELIA SALTER

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE PLAYS OF SHAKSPERE UNFOLDED

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Содержание

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PREFACE

This Volume contains the argument, drawn from the Plays usually attributed to Shakspere, in support of a theory which the author of it has demonstrated by historical evidences in another work. Having never read this historical demonstration (which remains still in manuscript, with the exception of a preliminary chapter, published long ago in an American periodical), I deem it necessary to cite the author's own account of it: —

'The Historical Part of this work (which was originally the principal part, and designed to furnish the historical key to the great Elizabethan writings), though now for a long time completed and ready for the press, and though repeated reference is made to it in this volume, is, for the most part, omitted here. It contains a true and before unwritten history, and it will yet, perhaps, be published as it stands; but the vivid and accumulating historic detail, with which more recent research tends to enrich the earlier statement, and disclosures which no invention could anticipate, are waiting now to be subjoined to it.

'The INTERNAL EVIDENCE of the assumptions made at the outset is that which is chiefly relied on in the work now first presented on this subject to the public. The demonstration will be found complete on that ground; and on that ground alone the author is willing, and deliberately prefers, for the present, to rest it.

'External evidence, of course, will not be wanting; there will be enough and to spare, if the demonstration here be correct. But the author of the discovery was not willing to rob the world of this great question; but wished rather to share with it the benefit which the true solution of the Problem offers – the solution prescribed by those who propounded it to the future. It seemed better to save to the world the power and beauty of this demonstration, its intellectual stimulus, its demand on the judgment. It seemed better, that the world should acquire it also in the form of criticism, instead of being stupified and overpowered with the mere force of an irresistible, external, historical proof. Persons incapable of appreciating any other kind of proof, – those who are capable of nothing that does not 'directly fall under and strike *the senses*' as Lord Bacon expresses it, – will have their time also; but it was proposed to present the subject first to minds of another order.'

In the present volume, accordingly, the author applies herself to the demonstration and development of a system of philosophy, which has presented itself to her as underlying the superficial and ostensible text of Shakspere's plays. Traces of the same

philosophy, too, she conceives herself to have found in the acknowledged works of Lord Bacon, and in those of other writers contemporary with him. All agree in one system; all these traces indicate a common understanding and unity of purpose in men among whom no brotherhood has hitherto been suspected, except as representatives of a grand and brilliant age, when the human intellect made a marked step in advance.

The author did not (as her own consciousness assures her) either construct or originally seek this new philosophy. In many respects, if I have rightly understood her, it was at variance with her pre-conceived opinions, whether ethical, religious, or political. She had been for years a student of Shakspere, looking for nothing in his plays beyond what the world has agreed to find in them, when she began to see, under the surface, the gleam of this hidden treasure. It was carefully hidden, indeed, yet not less carefully indicated, as with a pointed finger, by such marks and references as could not ultimately escape the notice of a subsequent age, which should be capable of profiting by the rich inheritance. So, too, in regard to Lord Bacon. The author of this volume had not sought to put any but the ordinary and obvious interpretation upon his works, nor to take any other view of his character than what accorded with the unanimous judgment upon it of all the generations since his epoch. But, as she penetrated more and more deeply into the plays, and became aware of those inner readings, she found herself compelled to turn back to the 'Advancement of Learning' for information as

to their plan and purport; and Lord Bacon's Treatise failed not to give her what she sought; thus adding to the immortal dramas, in her idea, a far higher value than their warmest admirers had heretofore claimed for them. They filled out the scientific scheme which Bacon had planned, and which needed only these profound and vivid illustrations of human life and character to make it perfect. Finally, the author's researches led her to a point where she found the plays claimed for Lord Bacon and his associates, – not in a way that was meant to be intelligible in their own perilous times, – but in characters that only became legible, and illuminated, as it were, in the light of a subsequent period.

The reader will soon perceive that the new philosophy, as here demonstrated, was of a kind that no professor could have ventured openly to teach in the days of Elizabeth and James. The concluding chapter of the present work makes a powerful statement of the position which a man, conscious of great and noble aims, would then have occupied; and shows, too, how familiar the age was with all methods of secret communication, and of hiding thought beneath a masque of conceit or folly. Applicably to this subject, I quote a paragraph from a manuscript of the author's, not intended for present publication: —

'It was a time when authors, who treated of a scientific politics and of a scientific ethics internally connected with it, naturally preferred this more philosophic, symbolic method of indicating their connection with their writings, which would limit the indication to those who could pierce within the veil of a

philosophic symbolism. It was the time when the cipher, in which one could write '*omnia per omnia*,' was in such request, and when 'wheel ciphers' and 'doubles' were thought not unworthy of philosophic notice. It was a time, too, when the phonographic art was cultivated, and put to other uses than at present, and when a '*nom de plume*' was required for other purposes than to serve as the refuge of an author's modesty, or vanity, or caprice. It was a time when puns, and charades, and enigmas, and anagrams, and monograms, and ciphers, and puzzles, were not good for sport and child's play merely; when they had need to be close; when they had need to be solvable, at least, only to those who *should* solve them. It was a time when all the latent capacities of the English language were put in requisition, and it was flashing and crackling, through all its lengths and breadths, with puns and quips, and conceits, and jokes, and satires, and inlined with philosophic secrets that opened down "into the bottom of a tomb" – that opened into the Tower – that opened on the scaffold and the block.'

I quote, likewise, another passage, because I think the reader will see in it the noble earnestness of the author's character, and may partly imagine the sacrifices which this research has cost her: —

'The great secret of the Elizabethan age did not lie where any superficial research could ever have discovered it. It was not left within the range of any accidental disclosure. It did not lie on the surface of any Elizabethan document. The most diligent

explorers of these documents, in two centuries and a quarter, had not found it. No faintest suspicion of it had ever crossed the mind of the most recent, and clear-sighted, and able investigator of the Baconian remains. It was buried in the lowest depths of the lowest deeps of the deep Elizabethan Art; that Art which no plummet, till now, has ever sounded. It was locked with its utmost reach of traditionary cunning. It was buried in the inmost recesses of the esoteric Elizabethan learning. It was tied with a knot that had passed the scrutiny and baffled the sword of an old, suspicious, dying, military government – a knot that none could cut – a knot that must be untied.

'The great secret of the Elizabethan Age was inextricably reserved by the founders of a new learning, the prophetic and more nobly gifted minds of a new and nobler race of men, for a research that should test the mind of the discoverer, and frame and subordinate it to that so sleepless and indomitable purpose of the prophetic aspiration. It was "the device" by which they undertook to live again in the ages in which their achievements and triumphs were forecast, and to come forth and rule again, not in one mind, not in the few, not in the many, but in all. "For there is no throne like that throne in the thoughts of men," which the ambition of these men climbed and compassed.

'The principal works of the Elizabethan Philosophy, those in which the new method of learning was practically applied to the noblest subjects, were presented to the world in the form of AN ENIGMA. It was a form well fitted to divert inquiry,

and baffle even the research of the scholar for a time; but one calculated to provoke the philosophic curiosity, and one which would inevitably command a research that could end only with the true solution. That solution was reserved for one who would recognise, at last, in the disguise of the great impersonal teacher, the disguise of a new learning. It waited for the reader who would observe, at last, those thick-strewn scientific clues, those thick-crowding enigmas, those perpetual beckonings from the "theatre" into the judicial palace of the mind. It was reserved for the student who would recognise, at last, the mind that was seeking so perseveringly to whisper its tale of outrage, and "the secrets it was forbid." It waited for one who would answer, at last, that philosophic challenge, and say, "Go on, I'll follow thee!" It was reserved for one who would count years as days, for the love of the truth it hid; who would never turn back on the long road of initiation, though all "THE IDOLS" must be left behind in its stages; who would never stop until it stopped in that new cave of Apollo, where the handwriting on the wall spells anew the old Delphic motto, and publishes the word that "*unties* the spell."

On this object, which she conceives so loftily, the author has bestowed the solitary and self-sustained toil of many years. The volume now before the reader, together with the historical demonstration which it pre-supposes, is the product of a most faithful and conscientious labour, and a truly heroic devotion of intellect and heart. No man or woman has ever thought or written more sincerely than the author of this book. She has

given nothing less than her life to the work. And, as if for the greater trial of her constancy, her theory was divulged, some time ago, in so partial and unsatisfactory a manner – with so exceedingly imperfect a statement of its claims – as to put her at great disadvantage before the world. A single article from her pen, purporting to be the first of a series, appeared in an American Magazine; but unexpected obstacles prevented the further publication in that form, after enough had been done to assail the prejudices of the public, but far too little to gain its sympathy. Another evil followed. An English writer (in a 'Letter to the Earl of Ellesmere,' published within a few months past) has thought it not inconsistent with the fair-play, on which his country prides itself, to take to himself this lady's theory, and favour the public with it as his own original conception, without allusion to the author's prior claim. In reference to this pamphlet, she generously says: —

'This has not been a selfish enterprise. It is not a personal concern. It is a discovery which belongs not to an individual, and not to a people. Its fields are wide enough and rich enough for us all; and he that has no work, and whoso will, let him come and labour in them. The field is the world's; and the world's work henceforth is in it. So that it be known in its real comprehension, in its true relations to the weal of the world, what matters it? So that the truth, which is dearer than all the rest – which abides with us when all others leave us, dearest then – so that the truth, which is neither yours nor mine, but yours *and* mine, be known,

loved, honoured, emancipated, mitred, crowned, adored —*who* loses anything, that does not find it.' 'And what matters it,' says the philosophic wisdom, speaking in the abstract, 'what name it is proclaimed in, and what letters of the alphabet we know it by? – what matter is it, so that they *spell* the name that is *good* for ALL, and *good* for *each*,' – for that is the REAL name here?

Speaking on the author's behalf, however, I am not entitled to imitate her magnanimity; and, therefore, hope that the writer of the pamphlet will disclaim any purpose of assuming to himself, on the ground of a slight and superficial performance, the result which she has attained at the cost of many toils and sacrifices.

And now, at length, after many delays and discouragements, the work comes forth. It had been the author's original purpose to publish it in America; for she wished her own country to have the glory of solving the enigma of those mighty dramas, and thus adding a new and higher value to the loftiest productions of the English mind. It seemed to her most fit and desirable, that America – having received so much from England, and returned so little – should do what remained to be done towards rendering this great legacy available, as its authors meant it to be, to all future time. This purpose was frustrated; and it will be seen in what spirit she acquiesces.

'The author was forced to bring it back, and contribute it to the literature of the country from which it was derived, and to which it essentially and inseparably belongs. It was written, every word of it, on English ground, in the midst of the old familiar scenes

and household names, that even in our nursery songs revive the dear ancestral memories; those "royal pursuivants" with which our mother-land still follows and retakes her own. It was written in the land of our old kings and queens, and in the land of *our own* PHILOSOPHERS and POETS also. It was written on the spot where the works it unlocks were written, and in the perpetual presence of the English mind; the mind that spoke before in the cultured few, and that speaks to-day in the cultured many. And it is now at last, after so long a time – after all, as it should be – the English press that prints it. It is the scientific English press, with those old gags (wherewith our kings and queens sought to stop it, ere they knew what it was) champed asunder, ground to powder, and with its last Elizabethan shackle shaken off, that restores, "in a better hour," the torn and garbled science committed to it, and gives back "the bread cast on its sure waters."'

There remains little more for me to say. I am not the editor of this work; nor can I consider myself fairly entitled to the honor (which, if I deserved it, I should feel to be a very high as well as a perilous one) of seeing my name associated with the author's on the title-page. My object has been merely to speak a few words, which might, perhaps, serve the purpose of placing my countrywoman upon a ground of amicable understanding with the public. She has a vast preliminary difficulty to encounter. The first feeling of every reader must be one of absolute repugnance towards a person who seeks to tear out of the Anglo-Saxon heart the name which for ages it has held dearest, and to substitute

another name, or names, to which the settled belief of the world has long assigned a very different position. What I claim for this work is, that the ability employed in its composition has been worthy of its great subject, and well employed for our intellectual interests, whatever judgment the public may pass upon the questions discussed. And, after listening to the author's interpretation of the Plays, and seeing how wide a scope she assigns to them, how high a purpose, and what richness of inner meaning, the thoughtful reader will hardly return again – not wholly, at all events – to the common view of them and of their author. It is for the public to say whether my countrywoman has proved her theory. In the worst event, if she has failed, her failure will be more honorable than most people's triumphs; since it must fling upon the old tombstone, at Stratford-on-Avon, the noblest tributary wreath that has ever lain there.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE PLAYS OF SHAKSPERE

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE PROPOSITION

'One time will owe another.' —*Coriolanus*.

This work is designed to propose to the consideration, not of the learned world only, but of all ingenuous and practical minds, a new development of that system of practical philosophy from which THE SCIENTIFIC ARTS of the Modern Ages proceed, and which has already become, just to the extent to which it has been hitherto opened, the wisdom, – the universally approved, and practically adopted, Wisdom of the *Moderns*.

It is a development of this philosophy, which was deliberately postponed by the great Scientific Discoverers and Reformers, in whose Scientific Discoveries and Reformations our organised advancements in speculation and practice have their origin; – Reformers, whose scientific acquaintance with historic laws forbade the idea of any immediate and sudden cures of the political and social evils which their science searches to the root, and which it was designed to eradicate.

The proposition to be demonstrated in the ensuing pages is this: That the new philosophy which strikes out from the Court – from *the Court* of that despotism that names and gives form

to the Modern Learning, – which comes to us from the Court of the last of the Tudors and the first of the Stuarts, – that new philosophy which we have received, and accepted, and adopted as a practical philosophy, not merely in that grave department of learning in which it comes to us professionally *as* philosophy, but in that not less important department of learning in which it comes to us in the disguise of amusement, – in the form of fable and allegory and parable, – the proposition is, that this Elizabethan philosophy is, in these two forms of it, – not two philosophies, – not two Elizabethan philosophies, not two new and wondrous philosophies of nature and practice, not two new Inductive philosophies, but one, – one and the same: that it is philosophy in both these forms, with its veil of allegory and parable, and without it; that it is philosophy applied to much more important subjects in the disguise of the parable, than it is in the open statement; that it is philosophy in both these cases, and not philosophy in one of them, and a brutish, low-lived, illiterate, unconscious spontaneity in the other.

The proposition is that it proceeds, in both cases, from a reflective deliberative, eminently deliberative, eminently conscious, *designing* mind; and that the coincidence which is manifest not in the design only, and in the structure, but in the detail to the minutest points of execution, is *not* accidental.

It is a proposition which is demonstrated in this volume by means of evidence derived principally from the books of this philosophy – books in which the safe delivery and tradition

of it to the future was artistically contrived and triumphantly achieved: – the books of a new 'school' in philosophy; books in which the connection with the school is not always openly asserted; books in which the true names of the authors are not always found on the title-page; – the books of a school, too, which was compelled to have recourse to translations in some cases, for the safe delivery and tradition of its new learning.

The facts which lie on the surface of this question, which are involved in the bare statement of it, are sufficient of themselves to justify and command this inquiry.

The fact that these two great branches of the philosophy of observation and practice, both already *virtually* recognised as that, – the one openly, subordinating the physical forces of nature to the wants of man, changing the face of the earth under our eyes, leaving behind it, with its new magic, the miracles of Oriental dreams and fables; – the other, under its veil of wildness and spontaneity, under its thick-woven veil of mirth and beauty, with its inducted precepts and dispersed directions, insinuating itself into all our practice, winding itself into every department of human affairs; speaking from the legislator's lips, at the bar, from the pulpit, – putting in its word every where, always at hand, always sufficient, constituting itself, in virtue of its own irresistible claims and in the face of what we are told of it, the oracle, the great practical, mysterious, but universally acknowledged, oracle of our modern life; the fact that these two great branches of the modern philosophy make their appearance

in history at the same moment, that they make their appearance in the same company of men – in that same little courtly company of Elizabethan Wits and Men of Letters that the revival of the ancient learning brought out here – this is the fact that strikes the eye at the first glance at this inquiry.

But that this is none other than that same little clique of disappointed and defeated politicians who undertook to head and organize a popular opposition against the government, and were compelled to retreat from that enterprise, the best of of them effecting their retreat with some difficulty, others failing entirely to accomplish it, is the next notable fact which the surface of the inquiry exhibits. That these two so illustrious branches of the modern learning were produced for the ostensible purpose of illustrating and adorning the tyrannies which the men, under whose countenance and protection they are produced, were vainly attempting, or had vainly attempted to set bounds to or overthrow, is a fact which might seem of itself to suggest inquiry. When insurrections are suppressed, when 'the monstrous enterprises of rebellious subjects are overthrown, then FAME, who is *the posthumous sister of the giants*, – the sister of *defeated* giants springs up'; so a man who had made some political experiments himself that were not very successful, tells us.

The fact that the men under whose patronage and in whose service 'Will the Jester' first showed himself, were men who were secretly endeavouring to make political capital of that new and immense motive power, that not yet available, and not very easily

organised political power which was already beginning to move the masses here then, and already threatening, to the observant eye, with its portentous movement, the foundations of tyranny, the fact, too, that these men were understood to have made use of the stage unsuccessfully as a means of immediate political effect, are facts which lie on the surface of the history of these works, and unimportant as it may seem to the superficial enquirer, it will be found to be anything but irrelevant as this inquiry proceeds. The man who is said to have contributed a thousand pounds towards the purchase of the theatre and wardrobe and machinery, in which these philosophical plays were first exhibited, was obliged to stay away from the first appearance of Hamlet, in the perfected excellence of the poetic philosophic design, in consequence of being immured in the Tower at that time for an attempt to overthrow the government. This was the ostensible patron and friend of the Poet; the partner of his treason was the ostensible friend and patron of the Philosopher. So nearly did these philosophic minds, that were 'not for an age but for all time,' approach each other in *this* point. But the *protégé* and friend and well-nigh adoring admirer of the *Poet*, was also the *protégé* and friend and well-nigh adoring admirer of the Philosopher. The fact that these two philosophies, in this so close juxta-position, always in contact, playing always into each other's hands, never once heard of each other, know nothing of each other, is a fact which would seem at the first blush to point to the secret of these 'Know-Nothings,' who are men of science in an age of

popular ignorance, and therefore have a 'secret'; who are men of science in an age in which the questions of science are 'forbidden questions,' and are therefore of necessity 'Know-Nothings.'

As to Ben Jonson, and the evidence of his avowed admiration for the author of these plays, from the point of view here taken, it is sufficient to say in passing, that this man, whose natural abilities sufficed to raise him from a position hardly less mean and obscure than that of his great rival, was so fortunate as to attract the attention of some of the most illustrious personages of that time; men whose observation of natures was quickened by their necessities; men who were compelled to employ 'living instruments' in the accomplishment of their designs; who were skilful in detecting the qualities they had need of, and skilful in adapting means to ends. This dramatist's connection with the stage of course belongs to this history. His connection with the author of these Plays, and with the player himself, are points not to be overlooked. But the literary history of this age is not yet fully developed. It is enough to say here, that he chanced to be honored with the patronage of *three* of the most illustrious personages of the age in which he lived. He had *three* patrons. One was Sir Walter Raleigh, in whose service he was; one was the Lord Bacon, whose well nigh idolatrous admirer he appears also to have been; the other was *Shakspere*, to whose favor he appears to have owed so much. With his passionate admiration of these last two, stopping only 'this side of idolatry' in his admiration for them both, and being under such deep personal obligations

to them both, why could he not have mentioned some day to the author of the Advancement of Learning, the author of Hamlet – Hamlet who also 'lacked advancement?' What more natural than to suppose that these two philosophers, these men of a learning so exactly equal, might have some sympathy with each other, might like to meet each other. Till he has answered that question, any evidence which he may have to produce in apparent opposition to the conclusions here stated will not be of the least value.

These are questions which any one might properly ask, who had only glanced at the most superficial or easily accessible facts in this case, and without any evidence from any other source to stimulate the inquiry. These are facts which lie on the surface of this history, which obtrude themselves on our notice, and demand inquiry.

That which lies immediately below this surface, accessible to any research worthy of the name is, that these two so new extraordinary developments of the modern philosophy which come to us without any *superficially* avowed connexion, which come to us as *branches* of learning merely, do in fact meet and unite in one stem, 'which has a quality of entireness and continuance throughout,' even to the most delicate fibre of them both, even to the 'roots' of their trunk, 'and the strings of those roots,' which trunk lies below the surface of that age, buried, carefully buried, for reasons assigned; and that it is the sap of this concealed trunk, this new trunk of sciences, which makes both these branches so vigorous, which makes the flowers and

the fruit both so fine, and so unlike anything that we have had from any other source in the way of literature or art.

The question of the authorship of the great philosophic poems which are the legacy of the Elizabethan Age to us, is an incidental question in this inquiry, and is incidentally treated here. The discovery of the authorship of these works was the necessary incident to that more thorough inquiry into their nature and design, of which the views contained in this volume are the result. At a certain stage of this inquiry, – in the later stages of it, – that discovery became inevitable. The primary question here is one of universal immediate practical concern and interest. The solution of this literary problem, happens to be involved in it. It was the necessary prescribed, pre-ordered incident of the reproduction and reintegration of the Inductive Philosophy in its application to its 'principal' and 'noblest subjects,' its 'more chosen subjects.'

The HISTORICAL KEY to the Elizabethan Art of Tradition, which formed the first book of this work as it was originally prepared for the press, is not included in the present publication. It was the part of the work first written, and the results of more recent research require to be incorporated in it, in order that it should represent adequately, in that particular aspect of it, the historical discovery which it is the object of this work to produce. Moreover, the demonstration which is contained in this volume appeared to constitute properly a volume of itself.

Those who examine the subject from this ground, will find the external collateral evidence, the ample historical confirmation

which is at hand, not necessary for the support of the propositions advanced here, though it will, of course, be inquired for, when once this ground is made.

The embarrassing circumstances under which this great system of scientific practice makes its appearance in history, have not yet been taken into the account in our interpretation of it. We have already the documents which contain the theory and rule of the modern civilisation, which is the civilisation of science in our hands. We have in our hands also, newly lit, newly trimmed, lustrous with the genius of our own time, that very lamp with which we are instructed to make this inquiry, that very light which we are told we must bring to bear upon the obscurities of these documents, that very light in which we are told, we must unroll them; for they come to us, as the interpreter takes pains to tell us, with an 'infolded' science in them. That light of '*times*,' that knowledge of the conditions under which these works were published, which is essential to the true interpretation of them, thanks to our contemporary historians, is already in our hands. What we need now is to explore the secrets of this philosophy with it, – necessarily secrets at the time it was issued – what we need now is to open these books of a new learning in it, and read them by it.

In that part of the work above referred to, from which some extracts are subjoined for the purpose of introducing intelligibly the demonstration contained in this volume, it was the position of the Elizabethan Men of Letters that was exhibited, and the

conditions which prescribed to the founders of a new school in philosophy, which was none other than the philosophy of practice, the form of their works and the concealment of their connection with them – conditions which made the secret of an Association of 'Naturalists' applying science in that age to the noblest subjects of speculative inquiry, and to the highest departments of practice, a life and death secret. The *physical* impossibility of publishing at that time, anything openly relating to the questions in which the weal of men is most concerned, and which are the primary questions of the science of man's relief, the opposition which stood at that time prepared to crush any enterprise proposing openly for its end, the common interests of man as man, is the point which it was the object of that part of the work to exhibit. It was presented, not in the form of general statement merely, but in those memorable particulars which the falsified, suppressed, garbled history of the great founder of this school betrays to us; not as it is exhibited in contemporary documents merely, but as it is carefully collected from these, and from the *traditions* of 'the next ages.'

That the suppressed Elizabethan Reformers and Innovators were men so far in advance of their time, that they were compelled to have recourse to literature for the purpose of instituting a gradual encroachment on popular opinions, a gradual encroachment on the prejudices, the ignorance, the stupidity of the oppressed and suffering masses of the human kind, and for the purpose of making over the practical

development of the higher parts of their science, to ages in which the advancements they instituted had brought the common mind within hearing of these higher truths; that these were men whose aims were so opposed to the power that was still predominant then, – though the 'wrestling' that would shake that predominance, was already on foot, – that it became necessary for them to conceal their lives as well as their works, – to veil the true worth and nobility of them, to suffer those ends which they sought as means, means which they subordinated to the noblest uses, to be regarded in their own age as their *ends*; that they were compelled to play this great game in secret, in their own time, referring themselves to posthumous effects for the explanation of their designs; postponing their honour to ages able to discover their worth; this is the proposition which is derived here from the works in which the tradition of this learning is conveyed to us.

But in the part of this work referred to, from which the ensuing extracts are made, it was the life, and not merely the writings of the founders of this school which was produced in evidence of this claim. It was the life in which these disguised ulterior aims show themselves from the first on the historic surface, in the form of great contemporaneous events, events which have determined and shaped the course of the world's history since then; it was the life in which these intents show themselves too boldly on the surface, in which they penetrate the artistic disguise, and betray themselves to the antagonisms which were waiting to crush them; it was the life which combined these

antagonisms for its suppression; it was the life and death of the projector and founder of the liberties of the New World, and the obnoxious historian and critic of the tyrannies of the Old, it was the life and death of Sir Walter Raleigh that was produced as the Historical Key to the Elizabethan Art of Tradition. It was the Man of the Globe Theatre, it was the Man in the Tower with his two Hemispheres, it was the modern 'Hercules and his load too,' that made in the original design of it, the Frontispiece of this volume.

'But stay I see thee in the hemisphere
Advanced and made a *constellation* there.
Shine forth, thou Star of Poets, and with *rage*
Or influence, chide or cheer the drooping stage,
Which since thy flight from hence hath mourned like night,
And despairs day, but for thy Volume's light.

['To draw no envy *Shake-spear* on thy name,
Am I *thus ample* to thy book and fame.' – BEN JONSON.]

The machinery that was necessarily put in operation for the purpose of conducting successfully, under those conditions, any honourable or decent enterprise, presupposes a forethought and skill, a faculty for dramatic arrangement and successful plotting in historic materials, happily so remote from anything which the exigencies of our time have ever suggested to us, that we are not in a position to read at a glance the history of such an age; the

history which lies on the surface of such an age when such men – men who are men – are at work in it. These are the *Elizabethan* men that we have to interpret here, because, though they rest from their labours, their works do follow them – the Elizabethan *Men* of *Letters*; and we must know what that title means before we can read them or their works, before we can '*untie* their *spell*.'

CHAPTER II

THE AGE OF ELIZABETH, AND THE ELIZABETHAN MEN OF LETTERS

'The times, in many cases, give great light to *true* interpretations.' *Advancement of Learning*.

'On fair ground
I could beat forty of them.'

'I could myself
Take up a brace of the best of them, yea *the two tribunes*.'

'But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic,
And *manhood* is called *foolery* when it stands
Against a falling fabric.' —*Coriolanus*.

The fact that the immemorial liberties of the English PEOPLE, and that idea of human government and society which they brought with them to this island, had been a second time violently overborne and suppressed by a military chieftainship, – one for which the unorganised popular resistance was no match, – that the English People had been a second time 'conquered' –

for that is the word which the Elizabethan historian suggests – less than a hundred years before the beginning of the Elizabethan Age, is a fact in history which the great Elizabethan philosopher has contrived to send down to us, along with his philosophical works, as the key to the reading of them. It is a fact with which we are all now more or less familiar, but it is one which the Elizabethan Poet and Philosopher became acquainted with under circumstances calculated to make a much more vivid impression on the sensibilities than the most accurate and vivacious narratives and expositions of it which our time can furnish us.

That this second conquest was unspeakably more degrading than the first had been, inasmuch as it was the conquest of a chartered, constitutional liberty, recovered and established in acts that had made the English history, recovered on battle-fields that were fresh, not in oral tradition only; inasmuch as it was effected in violation of that which made the name of Englishmen, that which made the universally recognised principle of the national life; inasmuch, too, as it was an *undivided* conquest, the conquest of *the single will*– the will of the 'one only man' – not unchecked of commons only, unchecked by barons, unchecked by the church, unchecked by *council* of any kind, the pure arbitrary absolute will, the pure idiosyncrasy, the crowned demon of the *lawless*, irrational will, unchained and armed with the sword of the common might, and clothed with the divinity of the common right; that *this* was a conquest unspeakably

more debasing than the conquest 'commonly so called,' – this, which left no nobility, – which clasped its collar in open day on the proudest Norman neck, and not on the Saxon only, which left only one nation of slaves and bondmen – that *this* was a *subjugation*– that this was a government which the English nation had not before been familiar with, the men whose great life-acts were performed under it did not lack the sensibility and the judgment to perceive.

A more *hopeless* conquest than the Norman conquest had been, it might also have seemed, regarded in some of the aspects which it presented to the eye of the statesman then; for it was in the division of the former that the element of freedom stole in, it was in the parliaments of that division that the limitation of the feudal monarchy had begun.

But still more fatal was the aspect of it which its effects on the national character were continually obtruding then on the observant eye, – that debasing, deteriorating, demoralising effect which such a government must needs exert on *such* a nation, a nation of Englishmen, a nation with such memories. The Poet who writes under this government, with an appreciation of the subject quite as lively as that of any more recent historian, speaks of 'the face of men' as a 'motive' – a *motive* power, a revolutionary force, which ought to be sufficient of itself to raise, if need be, an armed opposition to such a government, and sustain it, too, without the compulsion of an oath to reinforce it; at least, this is one of the three motives which he produces in his conspiracy

as motives that ought to suffice to supply the power wanting to effect a change in such a government.

> 'If not *the face* of *men*, The sufferance of our *souls, the time's abuse*, – *If these be motives weak, break of betimes.*'

There is no use in attempting a change where such motives are weak.

> 'Break off *betimes*,
> And every man hence to his idle bed.'

That this political degradation, and its deteriorating and corrupting influence on the national character, was that which presented itself to the politician's eye at that time as the most fatal aspect of the question, or as the thing most to be deprecated in the continuance of such a state of things, no one who studies carefully the best writings of that time can doubt.

And it must be confessed, that this is an influence which shows itself very palpably, not in the degrading hourly detail only of which the noble mind is, in such circumstances, the suffering witness, and the secretly protesting suffering participator, but in those large events which make the historic record. The England of the Plantagenets, that sturdy England which Henry the Seventh had to conquer, and not its pertinacious choice of colours only, not its fixed determination to have the choosing of the colour of its own 'Roses' merely, but its inveterate idea of the sanctity of '*law*' permeating all the masses – that was a very

different England from the England which Henry the Seventh willed to his children; it was a very different England, at least, from the England which Henry the Eighth willed to *his*.

That some sparks of the old fire were not wanting, however, – that the nation which had kept alive in the common mind through so many generations, without the aid of books, the memory of that 'ancestor' that 'made its laws,' was not after all, perhaps, without a future – began to be evident about the time that the history of 'that last king of England who was the ancestor' of the English Stuart, was dedicated by the author of the Novum Organum to the Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles I., not without a glance at these portents.

Circumstances tending to throw doubt upon the durability of this institution – circumstances which seemed to portend that this monstrous innovation was destined on the whole to be a much shorter-lived one than the usurpation it had displaced – had not been wanting, indeed, from the first, in spite of those discouraging aspects of the question which were more immediately urged upon the contemporary observer.

It was in the eleventh century; it was in the middle of the Dark Ages, that the Norman and his followers effected their successful landing and lodgement here; it was in the later years of the fifteenth century, – it was when the bell that tolled through Europe for a century and a half the closing hour of the Middle Ages, had already begun its peals, that the Tudor 'came in by battle.'

That magnificent chain of events which begins in the middle of the fifteenth century to rear the dividing line between the Middle Ages and the Modern, had been slow in reaching England with its convulsions: it had originated on the continent. The great work of the restoration of the learning of antiquity had been accomplished there: Italy, Germany, and France had taken the lead in it by turns; Spain had contributed to it. The scientific discoveries which the genius of Modern Europe had already effected under that stimulus, without waiting for the New Organum, had all originated on the continent. The criticism on the institutions which the decaying Roman Empire had given to its Northern conquerors, – that criticism which necessarily accompanied the revival of *learning* began there. Not yet recovered from the disastrous wars of the fifteenth century, suffering from the diabolical tyranny that had overtaken her at that fatal crisis, England could make but a feeble response as yet to these movements. They had been going on for a century before the influence of them began to be visible here. But they were at work here, notwithstanding: they were germinating and taking root here, in that frozen winter of a nation's discontent; and when they did begin to show themselves on the historic surface, – here in this ancient soil of freedom, – in this natural retreat of it, from the extending, absorbing, consolidating feudal tyrannies, – here in this 'little world by itself' – this nursery of the genius of the North – with its chief races, with its union of races, its 'happy breed of men,' as our Poet has it, who notes all these

points, and defines its position, regarding it, not with a narrow English partiality, but looking at it on his Map of the World, which he always carries with him, – looking at it from his 'Globe,' which has the Old World and the New on it, and the Past and the Future, – 'a precious stone set in the silver sea,' he calls it, 'in a great pool, a *swan's nest*': – when that seed of all ages did at last show itself above the ground here, here in this nursery of hope for man, it would be with quite another kind of fruit on its boughs, from any that the continent had been able to mature from it.

It was in the later years of the sixteenth century, in the latter half of the reign of Elizabeth, that the Printing press, and the revived Learning of Antiquity, and the Reformation, and the discovery of America, the new revival of the genius of the North in art and literature, and the Scientific Discoveries which accompanied this movement on the continent, began to combine their effects here; and it was about that time that the political horizon began to exhibit to the statesman's eye, those portents which both the poet and the philosopher of that time, have described with so much iteration and amplitude. These new social elements did not appear to promise in their combination here, stability to the institutions which Henry the Seventh, and Henry the Eighth had established in this island.

The genius of Elizabeth conspired with the anomaly of her position to make her the steadfast patron and promoter of these movements, – worthy grand-daughter of Henry the seventh as she was, and opposed on principle, as she was, to the ultimatum

to which they were visibly and stedfastly tending; but, at the same time, her sagacity and prudence enabled her to ward off the immediate result. She secured her throne, – she was able to maintain, in the rocking of those movements, her own political and spiritual supremacy, – she made gain and capital for absolutism out of them, – the inevitable reformation she herself assumed, and set bounds to: whatever new freedom there was, was still the freedom of her will; she could even secure the throne of her successor: it was mischief for Charles I. that she was nursing. The consequence of *all* this was —*the Age of Elisabeth*.

That was what this Queen meant it should be literally, and that was what it was apparently. But it so happened, that her will and humours on some great questions jumped with the time, and her dire necessities compelled her to lead the nation on its own track; or else it would have been too late, perhaps, for that exhibition of the monarchical institution, – that revival of the heroic, and *ante*-heroic ages, which her reign exhibits, to come off here as it did at that time.

It is this that makes the point in this literary history. This is the key that unlocks the secret of the Elizabethan Art of Delivery and Tradition. Without any material resources to sustain it – strong in the national sentiments, – strong in the moral forces with which the past controls the present, – strong in that natural abhorrence of change with which nature protects her larger growths, – that principle which tyranny can test so long with impunity – which it can test with impunity, till it forgets that this also has in nature its

limits, – strong in the absence of any combination of opposition, to the young awakening England of that age, that now hollow image of the past, that phantom of the military force that had been, which seemed to be waiting only the first breath of the popular will to dissolve it, was as yet an armed and terrific reality; its iron was on every neck, its fetter was on every step, and all the new forces, and world-grasping aims and aspirations which that age was generating were held down and cramped, and tortured in its chains, dashing their eagle wings in vain against its iron limits.

As yet all England cowered and crouched, in blind servility, at the foot of that terrible, but unrecognised embodiment of its own power, armed out of its own armoury, with the weapons that were turned against it. So long as any yet extant national sentiment, or prejudice, was not yet directly assailed – so long as that arbitrary power was yet wise, or fortunate enough to withhold the blow which should make the individual sense of outrage, or the feeling of a class the common one – so long as those peaceful, social elements, yet waited the spark that was wanting to unite them – so long 'the laws of England' might be, indeed, at a Falstaff's or a Nym's or a Bardolph's 'commandment,' for the Poet has but put into 'honest Jack's' mouth, a boast that worse men than he, made good in his time – so long, the faith, the lives, the liberties, the dearest earthly hopes, of England's proudest subjects, her noblest, her bravest, her best, her most learned, her most accomplished, her most inspired, might be at the mercy of a woman's caprices, or the sport of a fool's sheer will and

obstinacy, or conditioned on some low-lived 'favorites' whims. *So long*: And how long was that? – who does not know how long it was? – that was long enough for the whole Elizabethan Age to happen in. In the reign of Elizabeth, and in the reign of her successor, and longer still, that was the condition of it – till its last act was finished – till its last word was spoken and penned – till its last mute sign was made – till all its celestial inspiration had returned to the God who gave it – till all its Promethean clay was cold again.

This was the combination of conditions of which the Elizabethan Literature was the result. The Elizabethan Men of Letters, the organisers and chiefs of the modern civilization were the result of it.

These were men in whom the genius of the North in its happiest union of developments, under its choicest and most favourable conditions of culture, in its yet fresh, untamed, unbroken, northern vigour, was at last subjected to the stimulus and provocation which the ancient learning brings with it to the northern mind – to the now unimaginable stimulus which, the revival of the ancient art and learning brought with it to the mind of Europe in that age, – already secure, in its own indigenous development, already advancing to its own great maturity under the scholastic culture – the meagre Scholastic, and the rich Romantic culture – of the Mediaeval Era. The Elizabethan Men of Letters are men who found in those new and dazzling stores of art and literature which the movements of their age brought in

all their freshly restored perfection to them, only the summons to their own slumbering intellectual activities, – fed with fires that old Eastern and Southern civilizations never knew, nurtured in the depths of a nature whose depths the northern antiquity had made; they were men who found in the learning of the South and the East – in the art and speculation that had satisfied the classic antiquity – only the definition of their own nobler want.

The first result of the revival of the ancient learning in this island was, a report of its 'defects.' The first result of that revival here was a map – a universal map of the learning and the arts which the conditions of man's life require – a new map or globe of learning on which lands and worlds, undreamed of by the ancients, are traced. 'A map or globe' on which 'the principal and supreme sciences,' the sciences that are *essential* to the human kind, are put down among 'the parts that lie fresh and waste, and not converted by the industry of man.' The first result of the revival of learning here was 'a plot' for the supply of these deficiencies.

The Elizabethan Men of Letters were men, in whom the revival of 'the Wisdom of the Ancients,' which in its last results, in its most select and boasted conservations had combined in vain to save antiquity, found the genius of a happier race, able to point out at a glance the defect in it; men who saw with a glance at those old books what was the matter with them; men prepared already to overlook from the new height of criticism which this sturdy insular development of the practical genius of the North created,

the remains of that lost civilization – the splendours rescued from the wreck of empires, – the wisdom which had failed so fatally in practice that it must needs cross from a lost world of learning to the barbarian's new one, to find pupils – that it must needs cross the gulf of a thousand years in learning – such work had it made of it – ere it could revive, – the wisdom rescued from the wreck it had piloted to ruin, *not* to enslave, and ensnare, and doom new ages, and better races, with its futilities, but to be hung up with its immortal beacon-light, to shew the track of a new learning, to shew to the contrivers of the chart of new ages, the breakers of that old ignorance, that old arrogant wordy barren speculation. For these men were men who would not fish up the chart of a drowned world for the purpose of seeing how nearly they could conduct another under different conditions of time and races to the same conclusion. And they were men of a different turn of mind entirely from those who lay themselves out on enterprises having that tendency. The result of this English survey of learning was the sanctioned and organised determination of the modern speculation to those new fields which it has already occupied, and its organised, but secret determination, to that end of a true learning which the need of man, in its whole comprehension in *this* theory of it, constitutes.

But the men with whom this proceeding originates, the Elizabethan Men of Letters, were, in their own time, 'the Few.' They were the chosen men, not of an age only, but of a race, 'the noblest that ever lived in the tide of times;' men

enriched with the choicest culture of their age, when that culture involved not the acquisition of the learning of the ancients only, but the most intimate acquaintance with all those recent and contemporaneous developments with which its restoration on the Continent had been attended. Was it strange that these men should find themselves without sympathy in an age like that? – an age in which the masses were still unlettered, callous with wrongs, manacled with blind traditions, or swaying hither and thither, with the breath of a common prejudice or passion, or swayed hither and thither by the changeful humours and passions, or the conflicting dogmas and conceits of their rulers. That is the reason why the development of that age comes to us as a *Literature*. That is why it is on the surface of it *Elizabethan*. That is the reason why the leadership of the modern ages, when it was already here in the persons of its chief interpreters and prophets, could get as yet no recognition of its right to teach and rule – could get as yet nothing but *paper* to print itself on, nothing but a *pen* to hew its way with, nor that, without death and danger dogging it at the heels, and threatening it, at every turn, so that it could only wave, in mute gesticulation, its signals to the future. It had to affect, in that time, bookishness and wiry scholasticism. It had to put on sedulously the harmless old monkish gown, or the jester's cap and bells, or any kind of a tatterdemalion robe that would hide, from head to heel, the waving of its purple. '*Motley's* the only wear,' whispers the philosopher, peering through his privileged garb for a moment. King Charles II. had not more to

do in reserving *himself* in an evil time, and getting safely over to the year of his dominion.

Letters were the only ships that could pass those seas. But it makes a new style in literature, when such men as these, excluded from their natural sphere of activity, get driven into books, cornered into paragraphs, and compelled to unpack their hearts in letters. There is a new tone to the words spoken under such compression. It is a tone that the school and the cloister never rang with, – it is one that the fancy dealers in letters are not able to deal in. They are such words as Caesar speaks, when he puts his legions in battle array, – they are such words as were heard at Salamis one morning, when the breeze began to stiffen in the bay; and though they be many, never so many, and though they be musical, as is Apollo's lute, that Lacedemonian ring is in each one of them. There is great business to be done in them, and their haste looks through their eyes. In the sighing of the lover, in the jest of the fool, in the raving of the madman, and not in Horatio's philosophy only, you hear it.

The founders of the new science of nature and practice were men unspeakably too far above and beyond their time, to take its bone and muscle with them. There was no language in which their doctrines could have been openly conveyed to an English public at that time without fatal misconception. The truth, which was to them arrayed with the force of a universal obligation, – the truth, which was to them religion, would have been, of course, in an age in which a single, narrow-minded, prejudiced

Englishwoman's opinions were accepted as the ultimate rule of faith and practice, 'flat atheism.' What was with them loyalty to the supremacy of reason and conscience, would have been in their time madness and rebellion, and the majority would have started at it in amazement; and all men would have joined hands, in the name of truth and justice, to suppress it. The only thing that could be done in such circumstances was, to *translate* their doctrine into the language of their time. They must take the current terms – the vague popular terms – as they found them, and restrict and enlarge them, and inform them with their new meanings, with a hint to 'men of understanding' as to the sense in which they use them. That is the key to the language in which their books for the future were written.

But who supposes that these men were so wholly super-human, so devoid of mortal affections and passions, so made up of 'dry light,' that they could retreat, with all those regal faculties, from the natural sphere of *their* activity to the scholar's cell, to make themselves over in books to a future in which their mortal natures could have no share, – a future which could not begin till all the breathers of their world were dead? Who supposes that the 'staff' of Prospero was the first choice of these chiefs? – these 'heads of the State,' appointed of nature to the Cure of the Common-Weal.

The leading minds of that age are not minds which owed their intellectual superiority to a disproportionate development of certain intellectual tendencies, or to a dwarfed or

inferior endowment of those natural affections and personal qualifications which tend to limit men to the sphere of their particular sensuous existence. The mind of this school is the representative mind, and all men recognise it as that, because, in its products, that nature which is in all men, which philosophy had, till then, scorned to recognise, which the abstractionists had missed in their abstractions, – that nature of will, and sense, and passion, and inanity, is brought out in its true historical proportions, not as it exists in books, not as it exists in speech, but as it exists in the actual human life. It is the mind in which this historical principle, this motivity which is not reason, is brought in contact with the opposing and controlling element as it had not been before. In all its earth-born Titanic strength and fulness, it *is* dragged up from its secret lurking-places, and confronted with its celestial antagonist. In all its self-contradiction and cowering unreason, it is set face to face with its celestial umpire, and subjected to her unrelenting criticism. There are depths in this microcosm which *this* torch only has entered, silences which this speaker only has broken, cries which he only knows how to articulate.

'The soundest disclosing and expounding of men is by their *natures* and *ends*,' so the one who is best qualified to give us information on this question tells us, – by their natures *and* ends; 'the weaker sort by their natures, and the *wisest* by their ends'; and '*the distance*' of this wisest sort 'from the *ends* to which they aspire,' is that 'from which one may take measure and scale of

the rest of their actions and desires.'

The first end which these Elizabethan Men of Letters grasped at, the thing which they pursued with all the intensity and concentration of a master passion, was —*power*, political power. They wanted to rule their own time, and not the future only. 'You are hurt, because you do not reign,' is the inuendo which they permit us to apply to them as the key to their proceedings. 'Such men as this are never at heart's ease,' Caesar remarks in confidence to a friend, 'whiles they behold a greater than themselves.' 'Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf,' he adds, 'and tell me truly what thou think'st of him.' These are the kind of men that seek instinctively 'predominance,' not in a clique or neighbourhood only, – they are not content with a domestic reflection of their image, they seek to stamp it on the state and on the world. These Elizabethan Men of Letters were men who sought from the first, with inveterate determination, to rule their own time, and they never gave up that point entirely. In one way or another, directly or indirectly, they were determined to make their influence felt in that age, in spite of the want of encouragement which the conditions of that time offered to such an enterprise. But they sought that end not instinctively only, but with the stedfastness of a rational, scientifically enlightened purpose. It was an enterprise in which the intense motivity of that new and so 'conspicuous' development of the particular and private nature, which lies at the root of such a genius, was sustained by the determination of that not less superior

development of the nobler nature in man, by the motivity of the intellect, by the sentiment which waits on *that*, by the motive of 'the larger whole,' which is, in this science of it, 'the worthier.'

We do not need to apply the key of times to those indirectly historical remains in which the real history, the life and soul of a time, is always best found, and in which the history of such a time, if written at all, must necessarily be inclosed; we do not need to unlock these works to perceive the indications of suppressed movements in that age, in which the most illustrious men of the age were primarily concerned, the history of which has not yet fully transpired. We do not need to find the key to the cipher in which the history of that time is written, to perceive that there was to have been a change in the government here at one time, very different from the one which afterwards occurred, if the original plans of these men had succeeded. It is not the Plays only that are full of that frustrated enterprise.

These were the kind of men who are not easily baffled. They changed their tactics, but not their ends; and the enterprises which were conducted with so much secresy under the surveillance of the Tudor, began already to crown themselves as certainties, and compare their 'olives of endless age' with the spent tombs of brass' and 'tyrant's crests,' at that sure prospect which, a change of dynasties at that moment seemed to open, – at least, to men who were in a position then to estimate its consequences.

That *this*, at all events, was a state of things that was not going

to endure, became palpable about that time to the philosophic mind. The transition from the rule of a sovereign who was mistress of 'the situation,' who understood that it was a popular power which she was wielding – the transition from the rule of a Queen instructed in the policy of a tyranny, inducted by nature into its arts, to the policy of that monarch who had succeeded to her throne, and whose 'CREST' began to be reared here then in the face of the insulted reviving English nationality, – this transition appeared upon the whole, upon calmer reflection, at least to the more patient minds of that age, all that could reasonably at that time be asked for. No better instrument for stimulating and strengthening the growing popular sentiment, and rousing the latent spirit of the nation, could have been desired by the Elizabethan politicians at that crisis, 'for the great labour was with the people' – that uninstructed power, which makes the sure basis of tyrannies – that power which Mark Antony takes with him so easily – the ignorant, tyrannical, humour-led masses – the masses that still roar their Elizabethan stupidities from the immortal groups of Coriolanus and Julius Caesar. We ourselves have not yet overtaken the chief minds of this age; and the gulf that separated them from those overpowering numbers in their own time, to whose edicts they were compelled to pay an external submission, was broad indeed. The difficulty of establishing an understanding with this power was the difficulty. They wanted that 'pulpit' from which Brutus and Mark Antony swayed it by turns so easily – that pulpit from which Mark Antony showed

it Caesar's mantle. They wanted some organ of communication with these so potent and resistless rulers – some 'chair' from which they could repeat to them in their own tongue the story of their lost institutions, and revive in them the memory of '*the kings* their ancestors' – some school in which they could collect them and instruct them in the scientific doctrine of the *commons*, the doctrine of the common-*weal* and its divine supremacy. They wanted a school in which they could tell them stories – stories of various kinds – such stories as they loved best to hear – Midsummer stories, or Winter's tales, and stories of their own battle-fields – they wanted a school in which they could teach the common people *History* (and not English history only), with illustrations, large as life, and a magic lantern to aid them, – 'visible history.'

But to wait till these slow methods had taken effect, would be, perhaps, to wait, not merely till their estate in the earth was done, but till the mischief they wished to avert was accomplished. And thus it was, that the proposal 'to go the beaten track of getting arms into their hands under colour of Caesar's designs, and *because the people understood them not*,' came to be considered. To permit the new dynasty to come in without making any terms with it, without insisting upon a definition of that indefinite power which the Tudors had wielded with impunity, and without challenge, would be to make needless work for the future, and to ignore criminally the responsibilities of their own position, so at least some English statesmen of that time, fatally for their

favour with the new monarch, were known to have thought. 'To proceed by process,' to check by gradual constitutional measures that overgrown and monstrous power in the state, was the project which these statesmen had most at heart. But that was a movement which required a firm and enlightened popular support. Charters and statutes were dead letters till that could be had. It was fatal to attempt it till that was secured. Failing in that popular support, if the statesman who had attempted that movement, if the illustrious chief, and chief man of his time, who headed it, did secretly meditate other means for accomplishing the same end – which was to limit the prerogative – such means as the time offered, and if the evidence which was wanting on his trial *had been* produced in proof of it, who that knows what that crisis was would undertake to convict him on it now? He was arrested on suspicion. He was a man who had undertaken to set bounds to the absolute will of the monarch, and therefore he was a dangerous man. [He (Sir Walter Raleigh), together with the Lord Chobham, Sir J. Fortescue, and *others*, would have obliged the king to *articles* before he was admitted to the throne, and thought the number of his countrymen should be limited. —*Osborne's Memorials of King James*.] The charges that were made against him on that shameless trial were indignantly repelled. 'Do you mix, me up with these spiders?' (alluding, perhaps, more particularly to the Jesuit associated with him in this charge). 'Do you think I am a Jack Cade or a Robin Hood?' he said. But though the evidence on this trial is not only in itself

illegal, and by confession perjured, but the *report* of it comes to us with a falsehood on the face of it, and is therefore not to be taken without criticism; that there was a movement of some kind meditated about that time, by persons occupying chief places of trust and responsibility in the nation – a movement not favourable to the continuance of 'the standing departments' in the precise form in which they then stood – that the project of an administrative reform had not, at least, been wholly laid aside – that there was something which did not fully come out on that trial, any one who looks at this report of it will be apt to infer.

It was a project which had not yet proceeded to any overt act; there was no legal evidence of its existence produced on the trial; but suppose there were here, then, already, men 'who loved the *fundamental part of state*,' more than in such a crisis 'they *doubted* the change of it' – men 'who preferred a noble life before a long' – men, too, '*who were more discreet*' than they were '*fearful*,' who thought it good practice to 'jump a body with a dangerous medicine *that was sure of death* without it;' suppose there *was* a movement of that kind arrested here then, and the evidence of it were produced, what Englishman, or who that boasts the English lineage to-day, can have a word to say about it? Who had a better right than those men themselves, those statesmen, those heroes, who had waked and watched for their country's weal so long, who had fought her battles on land and sea, and planned them too, not in the tented field and on the rocking deck only, but in the more 'deadly breach' of civil office,

whose *scaling*-ladders had entered even the tyrant's council chamber, – who had a better right than those men themselves to say whether they would be governed by a government of laws, or by the will of the most despicable 'one-only-man power,' armed with sword and lash, that ever a nation of Oriental slaves in their political imbecility cowered under? Who were better qualified than those men themselves, instructed in detail in all the peril of that crisis, – men who had comprehended and weighed with a judgment which has left no successor to its seat, all the conflicting considerations and claims which that crisis brought with it, – who better qualified than these to decide on the measures by which the hideous nuisances of that time should be abated; by which that axe, that sword, that rack, that stake, and all those burglar's tools, and highwayman's weapons, should be taken out of the hands of the mad licentious crew with which an evil time had armed them against the commonweal – those weapons of lawless power, which the people had vainly, for want of leaders, refused before-hand to put into their hands. Who better qualified than these natural chiefs and elected leaders of the nation, to decide on the dangerous measures for suppressing the innovation, which the Tudor and his descendants had accomplished in that ancient sovereignty of laws, which was the sovereignty of this people, which even the Norman and the Plantagenet had been taught to acknowledge? Who better qualified than they to call to an account – 'the thief,' the 'cut-purse of the empire and the rule,' who 'found the precious diadem

on a shelf, and stole and put it in his pocket'?

['Shall the blessed *Sun* of *Heaven* prove a micher, and *eat blackberries*'? A question *not* to be asked! Shall the blessed 'Son of England' prove a thief, and take purses? A question *to be asked*. 'The *poor* abuses of the time want *countenance*.'

Lear. Take that from me, my friend, who have the power to *seal the accuser's* lips.]

Who better qualified could be found to head the dangerous enterprise for the deliverance of England from that shame, than the chief in whom her Alfred arose again to break from her neck a baser than the Danish yoke, to restore her kingdom and found her new empire, to give her domains, that the sun never sets on, – her Poet, her Philosopher, her Soldier, her Legislator, the builder of her Empire of the Sea, her founder of new 'States.'

But then, of course, it is only by the rarest conjunction of circumstances, that the movements and plans which such a state of things gives rise to, can get any other than the most opprobrious name and place in history. Success is their only certificate of legitimacy. To attempt to overthrow a government still so strongly planted in the endurance and passivity of the people, might seem, perhaps, to some minds in these circumstances, a hopeless, and, *therefore*, a criminal undertaking.

'That *opportunity* which then they had to take from us, to resume, we have again,' might well have seemed a sufficient plea, so it could have been made good. But it is not strange that some few, even then, should find it difficult to believe that the national

ruin was yet so entire, that the ashes of the ancient nobility and commons of England were yet so cold, as that a system of despotism like that which was exercised here then, could be permanently and securely fastened over them. It is not strange that it should seem to these impossible that there should not be enough of that old English spirit which, only a hundred years before, had ranged the people in armed thousands, in defence of LAW, against absolutism, enough of it, at least, to welcome and sustain the overthrow of tyranny, when once it should present itself as a fact accomplished, instead of appealing beforehand to a courage, which so many instances of vain and disastrous resistance had at last subdued, and to a spirit which seemed reduced at last, to the mere quality of the master's will.

That was a narrow dominion apparently to which King James consigned his great rival in the arts of government, but that rival of his contrived to rear a 'crest' there which will outlast 'the tyrants,' and 'look fresh still' when tombs that artists were at work on then 'are spent.' 'And when a soldier was his theme, my name – my *name* [namme de plume] was nor far off.' King James forgot how many weapons this man carried. He took one sword from him, he did not know that that pen, that harmless goose-quill, carried in its sheath another. He did not know what strategical operations the scholar, who was 'an old soldier' and a politician also, was capable of conducting under such conditions. Those were narrow quarters for 'the Shepherd of the Ocean,' for the hero of the two hemispheres, to occupy so long; but it proved

no bad retreat for the chief of this movement, as he managed it. It was in that school of Elizabethan statesmanship which had its centre in the Tower, that many a scholarly English gentleman came forth prepared to play his part in the political movements that succeeded. It was out of that school of statesmanship that John Hampden came, accomplished for his part in them.

The papers that the chief of the Protestant cause prepared in that literary retreat to which the Monarch had consigned him, by means of those secret channels of communication among the better minds which he had established in the reign of Elizabeth, became the secret manual of the revolutionary chiefs; they made the first blast of the trumpet that summoned at last the nation to its feet. 'The famous Mr. Hamden' (says an author, who writes in those 'next ages' in which so many traditions of this time are still rife) '*a little before* the civil wars was at the charge of transcribing three thousand four hundred and fifty-two sheets of Sir Walter Raleigh's MSS., as the amanuensis himself *told me*, who had his *close chamber*, his fire and *candle*, with an *attendant to deliver him the originals* and *take his copies as fast as he could write them*.' That of itself is a pretty little glimpse of the kind of machinery which the Elizabethan literature required for its 'delivery and tradition' at the time, or near the times, in which it was produced. That is a view of 'an Interior' 'before the civil wars.' It was John Milton who concluded, on looking over, a long time afterwards, one of the unpublished papers of this statesman, that it was his duty to give it to the public. 'Having had,' he says,

'the MS. of this treatise ["The Cabinet Council"] written by Sir Walter Raleigh, many years in my hands, and finding it lately by chance among other books and papers, upon reading thereof, I thought it *a kind of injury to withhold longer* the work of so eminent an author from the public; it being both answerable in style to other works of his already extant, as far as *the subject* would permit, and given me for a true copy by a learned man at his death, who had collected several such pieces.'

'*A kind of injury*.' – That is the thought which would naturally take possession of any mind, charged with the responsibility of keeping back for years this man's writings, especially his choicest ones – papers that could not be published then on account of the subject, or that came out with the leaves uncut, labouring with the restrictions which the press opposed then to the issues of such a mind.

That great result which the chief minds of the Modern Ages, under the influence of the new culture, in that secret association of them were able to achieve, that new and all comprehending science of life and practice which they made it their business to perfect and transmit, could not, indeed, as yet be communicated directly to the many. The scientific doctrines of the new time were necessarily limited in that age to the few. But another movement corresponding to that, simultaneous in its origin, related to it in its source, was also in progress here then, proceeding hand in hand with this, playing its game for it, opening the way to its future triumph. This was that movement

of the new time, – this was that consequence, not of the revival of learning only, but of the growth of the northern mind which touched everywhere and directly the springs of government, and made 'bold power look pale,' for this was the movement in 'the many.'

This was the movement which had already convulsed the continent; this was the movement of which Raleigh was from the first the soldier; this was 'the cause' of which he became the chief. It was as a youth of seventeen, bursting from those old fastnesses of the Middle Ages that could not hold him any longer, shaking off the films of Aristotle and his commentators, that he girded on his sword for the great world-battle that was raging already in Europe then. It was into the thickest of it, that his first step plunged him. For he was one of that company of a hundred English gentlemen who were waiting but for the first word of permission from Elizabeth to go as volunteers to the aid of the Huguenots. This was the movement which had at last reached England. And like these other continental events which were so slow in taking effect in England when it did begin to unfold here at last; there was a taste of 'the island' in it, in this also.

It was not on the continent only, that Raleigh and other English statesmen were disposed to sustain this movement. It was not possible as yet to bring the common mind openly to the heights of those great doctrines of life and practice which the Wisdom of the Moderns also embodies, but the new teachers of that age knew how to appreciate, as the man of science only can fully

appreciate, the worth of those motives that were then beginning to agitate so portentously so large a portion of the English people. The Elizabethan politicians nourished and patronised in secret that growing faction. The scientific politician hailed with secret delight, hailed as the partner of his own enterprise, that new element of political power which the changing time began to reveal here then, that power which was already beginning to unclasp on the necks of the masses, the collar of the absolute will – that was already proclaiming, in the stifled undertones of 'that greater part which carries it,' another supremacy. They gave in secret the right hand of a joyful fellowship to it. At home and abroad the great soldier and statesman, who was the first founder of the Modern Science, headed that faction. He fought its battles by land and sea; he opened the New World to it, and sent it there to work out its problem.

It was the first stage of an advancement that would not rest till it found its true consummation. That infinity which was speaking in its confused tones, as with the voice of many waters, was resolved into music and triumphal marches in the ear of the Interpreter. It gave token that the nobler nature had not died out under the rod of tyranny; it gave token of the earnestness that would not be appeased until the ends that were declared in it were found.

But at the same time, this was a power which the wise men of that age were far from being willing to let loose upon society then in that stage of its development; very far were they from being

willing to put the reins into its hands. To balance the dangers that were threatening the world at that crisis was always the problem. It was a very narrow line that the policy which was to save the state had to keep to then. There were evils on both sides. But to the scientific mind there appeared to be a choice in them. The measure on one side had been taken, and it was in all men's hearts, but the abysses on the other no man had sounded. 'The danger of stirring things,' – the dangers, too, of that unscanned swiftness that too late *ties leaden pounds to his heels* were the dangers that were always threatening the Elizabethan movement, and defining and curbing it. The wisest men of that time leaned towards the monarchy, the monarchy that was, rather than the anarchy that was threatening them. The *will* of the one rather than the *wills* of the many, the head of the one rather than 'the many-headed.' To effect the change which the time required without 'wrenching all' – without undoing the work of ages – without setting at large from the restraints of reverence and custom the chained tiger of an unenlightened popular will, this was the problem. The wisest statesmen, the most judicious that the world has ever known were here, with their new science, weighing in exactest scales those issues. We must not quarrel with their concessions to tyranny on the one hand, nor with their determination to effect changes on the other, until we are able to command entirely the position they occupied, and the opposing dangers they had always to consider. We must not judge them till they have had their hearing. What freedom and what hope there

is of it upon the earth to-day, is the legacy of their perseverance and endurance.

They experienced many defeats. The hopes of youth, the hopes of manhood in turn grew cold. That the 'glorious day' which 'flattered the mountain tops' of their immortal morning with its sovereign eye would never shine on them; that their own, with all its unimagined splendours obscured so long, would go down hid in those same 'base clouds,' that for them the consummation was to 'peep about to find themselves dishonourable graves' was the conviction under which their later tasks were achieved. It did not abate their ardour. They did not strain one nerve the less for that.

Driven from one field, they showed themselves in another. Driven from the open field, they fought in secret. 'I will bandy with thee in faction, I will o'errun thee with policy, I will kill thee a hundred and fifty ways,' the Jester who brought their challenge said. The Elizabethan England rejected the Elizabethan Man. She would have none of his meddling with her affairs. She sent him to the Tower, and to the block, if ever she caught him meddling with them. She buried him alive in the heart of his time. She took the seals of office, she took the sword, from his hands and put a pen in it. She would have of him a Man of Letters. And a Man of Letters he became. A Man of Runes. He invented new letters in his need, letters that would go farther than the sword, that carried more execution in them than the great seal. Banished from the state in that isle to which he was

banished, he found not the base-born Caliban only, to *instruct*, and train, and subdue to his ends, but an Ariel, an imprisoned Ariel, waiting to be released, able to conduct his masques, able to put his girdles round the earth, and to 'perform and point' to his Tempest.

'Go bring the RABBLE, o'er whom I give thee *power*, here to this place,' was the New Magician's word.

[Here is another version of it.

'When Sir Nicholas Bacon, the Lord Keeper, lived, every room in Gorhambury was served with a pipe of water from the pond distant about a mile off. In the lifetime of Mr. Anthony Bacon the water ceased, and his lordship coming to the inheritance could not recover the water without infinite charge. When he was Lord Chancellor, he built Verulam House *close by the pond yard, for a place of privacy* when he was called upon to dispatch any urgent business. And being asked why he built there, his lordship answered that, seeing *he could not carry the water to* his House, he *would carry his House* to the water.]

This is not the place for the particulars of this history or for the barest outline of them. They make a volume of themselves. But this glimpse of the circumstances under which the works were composed which it is the object of this volume to open, appeared at the last moment to be required, in the absence of the Historical Key which the proper development of them makes, to that Art of Delivery and Tradition by means of which the secrets of the Elizabethan Age have been conveyed to us.

CHAPTER III

EXTRACTS FROM THE LIFE OF RALEIGH. – RALEIGH'S SCHOOL

'Our court shall be a little Academe,
Still and contemplative in *living* Art.'
'What is the *end* of study? let me know.'

Love's Labour's Lost.

But it was not on the New World wholly, that this man of many toils could afford to lavish the revenues which the Queen's favour brought him. It was not to that enterprise alone that he was willing to dedicate the *eclat* and influence of his rising name. There was work at home which concerned him more nearly, not less deeply, to which that new influence was made at once subservient; and in that there were enemies to be encountered more formidable than the Spaniard on his own deck, or on his own coast, with all his war-weapons and defences. It was an enemy which required a strategy more subtle than any which the exigencies of camp and field had called for.

The fact that this hero throughout all his great public career – so full of all kinds of excitement and action – enough, one

would say, to absorb the energies of a mind of any ordinary human capacity – that this soldier whose name had become, on the Spanish coasts, what the name of '*Coeur de Lion*' was in the Saracen nursery, that this foreign adventurer who had a fleet of twenty-three ships sailing at one time on his errands – this legislator, for he sat in Parliament as representative of his native shire – this magnificent courtier, who had raised himself, without any vantage-ground at all, from a position wholly obscure, by his personal achievements and merits, to a place in the social ranks so exalted; to a place in the state so *near* that – which was chief and absolute – the fact that this many-sided man of deeds, was all the time a literary man, not a scholar merely, but himself an Originator, a Teacher, the Founder of a School – this is the explanatory point in this history – this is the point in it which throws light on all the rest of it, and imparts to it its true dignity.

For he was not a mere blind historical agent, driven by fierce instincts, intending only their own narrow ends, without any faculty of comprehensive survey and choice of intentions; impelled by thirst of adventure, or thirst of power, or thirst of gold, to the execution of his part in the great human struggle for conservation and advancement; working like other useful agencies in the Providential Scheme – like 'the stormy wind fulfilling his pleasure.'

There is, indeed, no lack of the instinctive element in this heroic 'composition;' there is no stronger and more various and complete development of it. That '*lumen siccum*' which his great

contemporary is so fond of referring to in his philosophy, that *dry light* which is so apt, he tells us, in most men's minds, to get 'drenched' a little sometimes, in 'the humours and affections,' and distorted and refracted in their mediums, did not always, perhaps, in its practical determinations, escape from that accident even in the philosopher's own; but in this stormy, world-hero, there was a latent volcano of will and passion; there was, in his constitution, 'a complexion' which might even seem to the bystanders to threaten at times, by its 'o'ergrowth,' the 'very pales and forts of reason'; but the intellect was, notwithstanding, in its due proportion in him; and it was the majestic intellect that triumphed in the end. It was the large and manly comprehension, 'the large discourse looking before and after,' it was the overseeing and active principle of 'the larger whole,' that predominated and had the steering of his course. It is the common human form which shines out in him and makes that manly demonstration, which commands our common respect, in spite of those particular defects and o'ergrowths which are apt to mar its outline in the best historical types and patterns of it, we have been able to get as yet. It was the intellect, and the sense which belongs to *that* in its integrity – it was the truth and the feeling of its obligation, which was sovereign with him. For this is a man who appears to have been occupied with the care of the common-weal more than with anything else; and that, too, under great disadvantages and impediments, and when there was no honour in caring for it truly, but that kind of honour which he had so much of; for this was

the time precisely which the poet speaks of in that play in which he tells us that the end of playing is 'to give to the very age and body of the time *its form and pressure*.' This was the time when 'virtue of vice *must pardon beg*, and curb and beck for leave to do it good.' It was the relief of man's estate, or the Creator's glory, that he busied himself about; that was the end of his ends; or if not, then was he, indeed, no hero at all. For it was the doctrine of his own school, and 'the first human principle' taught in it, that men who act without reference to that distinctly *human* aim, without that *manly* consideration and *kind*-liness of purpose, can lay no claim either to divine or human honours; that they are not, in fact, men, but failures; specimens of an unsuccessful attempt in nature, at an advancement; or, as his great contemporary states it more clearly, 'only a nobler kind of vermin.'

During all the vicissitudes of his long and eventful public life, Raleigh was still persistently a scholar. He carried his books – his 'trunk of books' with him in all his adventurous voyages; and they were his 'companions' in the toil and excitement of his campaigns on land. He studied them in the ocean-storm; he studied them in his tent, as Brutus studied in his. He studied them year after year, in the dim light which pierced the deep embrasure of those walls with which tyranny had thought to shut in at last his world-grasping energies.

He had had some chance to study 'men and manners' in that strange and various life of his, and he did not lack the skill to make the most of it; but he was not content with that narrow,

one-sided aspect of life and human nature, to which his own individual personal experience, however varied, must necessarily limit him. He would see it under greater varieties, under all varieties of conditions. He would know the history of it; he would 'delve it to the root.' He would know how that particular form of it, which he found on the surface in his time, had come to be the thing he found it. He would know what it had been in other times, in the beginning, or in that stage of its development in which the historic light first finds it. He was a man who wished even to know what it had been in *the Assyrian*, in *the Phenician*, in *the Hebrew*, in *the Egyptian*; he would see what it had been in *the Greek*, and in *the Roman*. He was, indeed, one of that clique of Elizabethan Naturalists, who thought that there was no more curious thing in nature; and instead of taking a Jack Cade view of the subject, and inferring that an adequate knowledge of it comes by nature, as reading and writing do in that worthy's theory of education, it was the private opinion of this school, that there was no department of learning which a scholar could turn his attention to, that required a more severe and thorough study and experiment, and none that a man of a truly *scientific* turn of mind would find better worth his leisure. And the study of antiquity had not yet come to be then what it is now; at least, with men of this stamp. Such men did not study it to discipline their minds, or to get a classic finish to their style. The books that such a man as this could take the trouble to carry about with him on such errands as those that he travelled on, were books that had

in them, for the eager eyes that then o'er-ran them, the world's 'news' – the world's story. They were full of the fresh living data of his conclusions. They were notes that the master minds of all the ages had made for him; invaluable aid and sympathy they had contrived to send to him. The man who had been arrested in his career, more ignominiously than the magnificent Tully had been in *his*, – in a career, too, a thousand times more noble, – by a Caesar, indeed, but *such* a Caesar; – the man who had sat for years with the executioner's block in his yard, waiting only for a scratch of the royal pen, to bring down upon him that same edge which the poor Cicero, with all his truckling, must feel at last, – such a one would look over the old philosopher's papers with an apprehension of their meaning, somewhat more lively than that of the boy who reads them for a prize, or to get, perhaps, some classic elegancies transfused into his mind.

During the ten years which intervene between the date of Raleigh's first departure for the Continent and that of his beginning favour at home, already he had found means for ekeing out and perfecting that liberal education which Oxford had only begun for him, so that it was as a man of rarest literary accomplishments that he made his brilliant *debût* at the English Court, where the new Elizabethan Age of Letters was just then beginning.

He became at once the centre of that little circle of highborn wits and poets, the elder wits and poets of the Elizabethan age, that were then in their meridian there. Sir Philip Sidney, Thomas

Lord Buckhurst, Henry Lord Paget, Edward Earl of Oxford, and some others, are included in the contemporary list of this courtly company, whose doings are somewhat mysteriously adverted to by a critic, who refers to the condition of 'the Art of Poesy' at that time. '*The gentleman who wrote the late Shepherds' Calendar*' was beginning then to attract considerable attention in this literary aristocracy.

The brave, bold genius of Raleigh flashed new life into that little nucleus of the Elizabethan development. The new '*Round Table*,' which that newly-beginning age of chivalry, with its new weapons and devices, and its new and more heroic adventure had created, was not yet 'full' till he came in. The Round Table grew rounder with this knight's presence. Over those dainty stores of the classic ages, over those quaint memorials of the elder chivalry, that were spread out on it, over the dead letter of the past, the brave Atlantic breeze came in, the breath of the great future blew, when the turn came for this knight's adventure; whether opened in the prose of its statistics, or set to its native music in the mystic melodies of the bard who was there to sing it. The Round Table grew spheral, as he sat talking by it; the Round Table dissolved, as he brought forth his lore, and unrolled his maps upon it; and instead of it, – with all its fresh yet living interests, tracked out by land and sea, with the great battle-ground of the future outlined on it, – revolved the round world. '*Universality*' was still the motto of these Paladins; but 'THE GLOBE' – the Globe, with its TWO hemispheres, became

henceforth their device.

The promotion of Raleigh at Court was all that was needed to make him the centre and organiser of that new intellectual movement which was then just beginning there. He addressed himself to the task as if he had been a man of literary tastes and occupations merely, or as if that particular crisis had been a time of literary leisure with him, and there were nothing else to be thought of just then. The relation of those illustrious literary partners of his, whom he found already in the field when he first came to it, to that grand development of the English genius in art and philosophy which follows, ought not indeed to be overlooked or slightly treated in any thorough history of it. For it has its first beginning here in this brilliant assemblage of courtiers, and soldiers, and scholars, – this company of Poets, and Patrons and Encouragers of Art and Learning. Least of all should the relation which the illustrious founder of this order sustains to the later development be omitted in any such history, – 'the prince and mirror of all chivalry,' the patron of the young English Muse, whose untimely fate keeps its date for ever green, and fills the air of this new 'Helicon' with immortal lamentations. The shining foundations of that so splendid monument of the later Elizabethan genius, which has paralyzed and confounded all our criticism, were laid here. The extraordinary facilities which certain departments of literature appeared to offer, for evading the restrictions which this new poetic and philosophic development had to encounter from the first, already began to

attract the attention of men acquainted with the uses to which it had been put in antiquity, and who knew what gravity of aim, what height of execution, that then rude and childish English Play had been made to exhibit under other conditions; – men fresh from the study of those living and perpetual monuments of learning, which the genius of antiquity has left in this department. But the first essays of the new English scholarship in this untried field, – the first attempts at original composition here, derive, it must be confessed, their chief interest and value from that memorable association in which we find them. It was the first essay, which had to be made before those finished monuments of art, which command our admiration on their own account wholly, could begin to appear. It was 'the tuning of the instruments, that those who came afterwards might play the better.' We see, of course, the stiff, cramped hand of the beginner here, instead of the grand touch of the master, who never comes till his art has been prepared to his hands, – till the details of its execution have been mastered for him by others. In some arts there must be generations of essays before he can get his tools in a condition for use. Ages of prophetic genius, generations of artists, who dimly saw afar off, and struggled after his perfections, must patiently chip and daub their lives away, before ever the star of his nativity can begin to shine.

Considering what a barbaric age it was that the English mind was emerging from then; and the difficulties attending the first attempt to create in the English literature, anything which should

bear any proportion to those finished models of skill which were then dazzling the imagination of the English scholar in the unworn gloss of their fresh revival here, and discouraging, rather than stimulating, the rude poetic experiment; – considering what weary lengths of essay there are always to be encountered, where the standard of excellence is so far beyond the power of execution; we have no occasion to despise the first bold attempts to overcome these difficulties which the good taste of this company has preserved to us. They are just such works as we might expect under those circumstances; – yet full of the pedantries of the new acquisition, overflowing on the surface with the learning of the school, sparkling with classic allusions, seizing boldly on the classic original sometimes, and working their new fancies into it; but, full already of the riant vigour and originality of the Elizabethan inspiration; and never servilely copying a foreign original. The English genius is already triumphant in them. Their very crudeness is not without its historic charm, when once their true place in the structure we find them in, is recognised. In the later works, this crust of scholarship has disappeared, and gone below the surface. It is all dissolved, and gone into the clear intelligence; – it has all gone to feed the majestic current of that new, all-subduing, all-grasping originality. It is in these earlier performances that the stumbling-blocks of our present criticism are strewn so thickly. Nobody can write any kind of criticism of the 'Comedy of Errors,' for instance, without recognizing the Poet's acquaintance with the

classic model, [See a recent criticism in 'The Times.'] – without recognizing the classic treatment. 'Love's Labour's Lost,' 'The Taming of the Shrew,' the condemned parts of 'Henry the VI.,' and generally the Poems which are put down in our criticism as doubtful, or as the earlier Poems, are just those Poems in which the Poet's studies are so flatly betrayed on the surface. Among these are plays which were anonymously produced by the company performing at the Rose Theatre, and other companies which English noblemen found occasion to employ in their service then. These were not so much as produced at the theatre which has had the honor of giving its name to other productions, bound up with them. We shall find nothing to object to in that somewhat heterogeneous collection of styles, which even a single Play sometimes exhibits, when once the history of this phenomenon accompanies it. The Cathedrals that were built, or re-built throughout, just at the moment in which the Cathedral Architecture had attained its ultimate perfection, are more beautiful to the eye, perhaps, than those in which the story of its growth is told from the rude, massive Anglo-Saxon of the crypt or the chancel, to the last refinement of the mullion, and groin, and tracery. But the antiquary, at least, does not regret the preservation. And these crude beginnings here have only to be put in their place, to command from the critic, at least, a similar respect. For here, too, the history reports itself to the eye, and not less palpably.

It may seem surprising, and even incredible, to the modern

critic, that men in this position should find any occasion to conceal their relation to those quite respectable contributions to the literature of the time, which they found themselves impelled to make. The fact that they did so, is one that we must accept, however, on uncontradicted cotemporary testimony, and account for it as we can. The critic who published his criticisms when 'the gentleman who wrote the late Shepherd's Calendar' was just coming into notice, however inferior to our modern critics in other respects, had certainly a better opportunity of informing himself on this point, than they can have at present. 'They have writ excellently well,' *he* says of this company of Poets, – this 'courtly company,' as he calls them, – ' they have writ excellently well, *if their doings could be found out and made public with the rest.*' *Sir Philip Sidney, Raleigh,* and the gentleman who wrote the late Shepherd's Calendar, are included in the list of Poets to whom this remark is applied. It is Raleigh's verse which is distinguished, however, in this commendation as the most 'lofty, insolent, and passionate;' a description which applies to the anonymous poems alluded to, but is not particularly applicable to those artificial and tame performances which he was willing to acknowledge. And this so commanding Poet, who was at the same time an aspiring courtier and meddler in affairs of state, and who chose, for some mysterious reason or other, to forego the honours which those who were in the secret of his literary abilities and successes, – the very best judges of poetry in that time, too, were disposed to accord him, – and we are not without

references to cases in antiquity corresponding very nearly to this; and which seemed to furnish, at least, a sufficient precedent for this proceeding; – this so successful poet, and courtier, and great man of his time, was already in a position to succeed at once to that chair of literary patronage which the death of Sir Philip Sidney had left vacant. Instinctively generous, he was ready to serve the literary friends whom he attracted to him, not less lavishly than he had served the proud Queen herself, when he threw his gay cloak in her obstructed path, – at least, he was not afraid of risking those sudden splendours which her favour was then showering upon him, by wearying her with petitions on their behalf. He would have risked his new favour, at least with his 'Cynthia,' – that twin sister of Phoebus Apollo, – to make her the patron, if not the inspirer of the Elizabethan genius. 'When will you cease to be a beggar, Raleigh?' she said to him one day, on one of these not infrequent occasions. 'When your Majesty ceases to be a most gracious mistress,' was this courtier's reply. It is recorded of her, that 'she loved to hear his reasons to her demands.'

But though, with all his wit and eloquence, he could not contrive to make of the grand-daughter of Henry the Seventh, a Pericles, or an Alexander, or a Ptolemy, or an Augustus, or an encourager of anything that did not appear to be directly connected with her own particular ends, he did succeed in making her indirectly a patron of the literary and scientific development which was then beginning to add to her reign its

new lustre, – which was then suing for leave to lay at her feet its new crowns and garlands. Indirectly, he did convert her into a patron, – a second-hand patron of those deeper and more subtle movements of the new spirit of the time, whose bolder demonstrations she herself had been forced openly to head. Seated on the throne of Henry the Seventh, she was already the armed advocate of European freedom; – Raleigh had contrived to make her the legal sponsor for the New World's liberties; it only needed that her patronage should be systematically extended to that new enterprise for the emancipation of the human life from the bondage of ignorance, from the tyranny of unlearning, – that enterprise which the gay, insidious Elizabethan literature was already beginning to flower over and cover with its devices, – it only needed *that*, to complete the anomaly of her position. And that through Raleigh's means was accomplished.

He became himself the head of a little *Alexandrian* establishment. His house was a home for men of learning. He employed men in literary and scientific researches on his account, whose business it was to report to him their results. He had salaried scholars at his table, to impart to him their acquisitions, Antiquities, History, Poetry, Chemistry, Mathematics, scientific research of all kinds, came under his active and persevering patronage. Returning from one of his visits to Ireland, whither he had gone on this occasion to inspect a *seignorie* which his 'sovereign goddess' had then lately conferred upon him, he makes his re-appearance at court with that so

obscure personage, the poet of the 'Faery Queene,' under his wing; – that same gentleman, as the court is informed, whose bucolics had already attracted so much attention in that brilliant circle. By a happy coincidence, Raleigh, it seems, had discovered this Author in the obscurity of his clerkship in Ireland, and had determined to make use of his own influence at court to push his brother poet's fortunes there; but his efforts to benefit this poor bard *personally*, do not appear to have been attended at any time with much success. The mysterious literary partnership between these two, however, which dates apparently from an earlier period, continues to bring forth fruit of the most successful kind; and the 'Faery Queene' is not the only product of it.

All kinds of books began now to be dedicated to this new and so munificent patron of arts and letters. His biographers collect his public history, not from political records only, but from the eulogies of these manifold dedications. *Ladonnier*, the artist, publishes his Sketches of the New World through his aid. Hooker dedicates his History of Ireland to him; Hakluyt, his Voyages to Florida. A work 'On *Friendship*' is dedicated to him; another 'On Music,' in which art he had found leisure, it seems, to make himself a proficient; and as to the poetic tributes to him, – some of them at least are familiar to us already. In that gay court, where Raleigh and his haughty rivals were then playing their deep games, – where there was no room for Spenser's muse, and the worth of his 'Old Song' was grudgingly reckoned, – the 'rustling in silks' is long since over, but the courtier's place in the pageant

of the 'Faery Queene' remains, and grows clearer with the lapse of ages. That time, against which he built so perseveringly, and fortified himself on so many sides, will not be able to diminish there 'one dowle that's in his plume.' [He was also a patron of Plays and Players in this stage of his career, and entertained private parties at his house with very *recherché* performances of that kind sometimes.]

In the Lord Timon of the Shakspere piece, which was rewritten from an *Academic* original after Raleigh's consignment to the Tower, – in that fierce satire into which so much Elizabethan bitterness is condensed, under the difference of the reckless prodigality which is stereotyped in the fable, we get, in the earlier scenes, some glimpses of this 'Athenian' also, in this stage of his career.

But it was not as a *Patron* only, or chiefly, that he aided the new literary development. A scholar, a scholar so earnest, so indefatigable, it followed of course that he must be, in one form or another, an Instructor also; for that is still, under all conditions, the scholar's destiny – it is still, in one form or another, his business on the earth. But with that temperament which was included among the particular conditions of his genius, and with those special and particular endowments of his for another kind of intellectual mastery, he could not be content with the pen – with the Poet's, or the Historian's, or the Philosopher's pen – as the instrument of his mental dictation. A Teacher thus furnished and ordained, seeks, indeed, naturally and instinctively, a more

direct and living and effective medium of communication with the audience which his time is able to furnish him, whether 'few' or many, whether 'fit' or unfit, than the book can give him. He must have another means of 'delivery and tradition,' when the delivery or tradition is addressed to those whom he would associate with him in his age, to work with him as one man, or those to whom he would transmit it in other ages, to carry it on to its perfection – those to whom he would communicate his own highest view, those whom he would inform with his patiently-gathered lore, those whom he would *instruct* and move with his new inspirations. For the truth has become a personality with him – it is his nobler self. He will live on with it. He will live or die with it.

For such a one there is, perhaps, no institution ready in his time to accept his ministry. No chair at Oxford or Cambridge is waiting for him. For they are, of course, and must needs be, the strong-holds of the past – those ancient and venerable seats of learning, 'the fountains and nurseries of all the humanities,' as a Cambridge Professor calls them, in a letter addressed to Raleigh. The principle of these larger wholes is, of course, instinctively conservative. Their business is to know nothing of the new. The new intellectual movement must fight its battles through without, and come off conqueror there, or ever those old Gothic doors will creak on their reluctant hinges to give it ever so pinched an entrance. When it has once fought its way, and forced itself within – when it has got at last some marks of

age and custom on its brow – then, indeed, it will stand as the last outwork of that fortuitous conglomeration, to be defended in its turn against all comers. Already the revived classics had been able to push from their chairs, and drive into corners, and shut up finally and put to silence, the old Aristotelian Doctors – the Seraphic and Cherubic Doctors of their day – in their own ancient halls. It would be sometime yet, perhaps, however, before that study of the dead languages, which was of course one prominent incident of the first revival of a dead learning, would come to take precisely the same place in those institutions, with their one instinct of conservation and 'abhorrence of change,' which the old monastic philosophy had taken in its day; but that change once accomplished, the old monastic philosophy itself, religious as it was, was never held more sacred than this profane innovation would come to be. It would be some time before those new observations and experiments, which Raleigh and his school were then beginning to institute, experiments and inquiries which the universities would have laughed to scorn in their day, would come to be promoted to the Professor's chair; but when they did, it would perhaps be difficult to convince a young gentleman liberally educated, at least, under the wings of one of those 'ancient and venerable' seats of learning, now gray in Raleigh's youthful West – ambitious, perhaps, to lead off in this popular innovation, where Saurians, and Icthyosaurians, and Entomologists, and Chonchologists are already hustling the poor Greek and Latin Teachers into corners, and putting them to

silence with their growing terminologies – it would perhaps be difficult to convince one who had gone through the prescribed course of treatment in one of these 'nurseries of humanity,' that the knowledge of the domestic habits and social and political organisations of insects and shell-fish, or even the experiments of the laboratory, though never so useful and proper in their place, are not, after all, the beginning and end of a human learning. It was no such place as that that this department of the science of nature took in the systems or notions of its Elizabethan Founders. They were 'Naturalists,' indeed; but that did not imply, with *their* use of the term, the absence of the natural common human sense in the selection of the objects of their pursuits. 'It is a part of science to make *judicious* inquiries and wishes,' says the speaker in chief for this new doctrine of nature; speaking of the particular and special applications of it which he is forbidden to make openly, but which he instructs, and prepares, and charges his followers to make for themselves.

One of those innovations, one of those movements in which the new ground of ages of future culture is first chalked out – a movement whose end is not yet, whose beginning we have scarce yet seen – was made in England, not very far from the time in which Sir Walter Raleigh, began first to convert the eclat of his rising fortunes at home, and the splendour of his heroic achievements abroad, and all those new means of influence which his great position gave him, to the advancement of those deeper, dearer ambitions, which the predominance of the nobler

elements in his constitution made inevitable with him. Even then he was ready to endanger those golden opinions, waiting to be worn in their newest gloss, not cast aside so soon, and new-won rank, and liberty and life itself, for the sake of putting himself into his true intellectual relations with his time, as a philosopher and a beginner of a new age in the human advancement. For 'spirits are not finely touched but to fine issues.'

If there was no Professor's Chair, if there was no Pulpit or Bishop's Stall waiting for him, and begging his acceptance of its perquisites, he must needs institute a chair of his own, and pay for leave to occupy it. If there was no university with its appliances within his reach, he must make a university of his own. The germ of a new 'universality' would not be wanting in it. His library, or his drawing-room, or his 'banquet,' will be Oxford enough for him. He will begin it as the old monks began theirs, with their readings. Where the teacher is, there must the school be gathered together. And a school in the end there will be: a school in the end the true teacher will have, though he begin it, as the barefoot Athenian began his, in the stall of the artisan, or in the chat of the Gymnasium, amid the compliments of the morning levee, or in the woodland stroll, or in the midnight revel of the banquet.

When the hour and the man are indeed met, when the time is ripe, and one *truly sent*, ordained of that Power which *chooses*, not one only – what uncloaked atheism is that, to promulgate in an age like this! —*not* the Teachers and Rabbis of *one race* only, but *all the successful* agents of human advancement, the initiators

of new eras of man's progress, the inaugurators of new ages of the relief of the human estate and the Creator's glory – when such an one indeed appears, there will be no lack of instrumentalities. With some verdant hill-side, it may be, some blossoming knoll or 'mount' for his 'chair,' with a daisy or a lily in his hand, or in a fisherman's boat, it may be, pushed a little way from the strand, he will begin new ages.

The influence of Raleigh upon his time cannot yet be fully estimated; because, in the first place, it was primarily of that kind which escapes, from its subtlety, the ordinary historical record; and, in the second place, it was an influence at the time *necessarily covert*, studiously disguised. His relation to the new intellectual development of his age might, perhaps, be characterised as *Socratic*; though certainly not because he lacked the use, and the most masterly use, of that same weapon with which his younger contemporary brought out at last, in the face of his time, the plan of the Great Instauration. In the heart of the new establishment which the magnificent courtier, who was a 'Queen's delight,' must now maintain, there soon came to be a little 'Academe.' The choicest youth of the time, 'the Spirits of the Morning Sort,' gathered about him. It was the new philosophic and poetic genius of the age that he attracted to him; it was on that philosophic and poetic genius that he left his mark for ever.

He taught them, as the masters taught of old, in dialogues – in words that could not then be written, in words that needed the

master's modulation to give them their significance. For the new doctrine had need to be clothed in a language of its own, whose inner meaning only those who had found their way to its inmost shrine were able to interpret.

We find some contemporary and traditional references to this school, which are not without their interest and historical value, as tending to show the amount of influence which it was supposed to have exerted on the time, as well as the acknowledged necessity for concealment in the studies pursued in it. The fact that such an Association *existed*, that it *began with Raleigh*, that young men of distinction were attracted to it, and that in such numbers, and under such conditions, that it came to be considered ultimately as a '*School*,' of which he was the head-master – the fact that the new experimental science was supposed to have had its origin in this association, – that opinions, differing from the received ones, were also secretly discussed in it, – that *anagrams* and other devices were made use of for the purpose of infolding the *esoteric* doctrines of the school in popular language, so that it was possible to write in this language acceptably to the vulgar, and without violating preconceived opinions, and at the same time instructively to the initiated, – all this remains, even on the surface of statements already accessible to any scholar, – all this remains, either in the form of contemporary documents, or in the recollections of persons who have apparently had it from the most authentic sources, from persons who profess to know, and who were at least in a position to know, that such was the

impression at the time.

But when the instinctive dread of innovation was already so keenly on the alert, when Elizabeth was surrounded with courtiers still in their first wrath at the promotion of the new 'favourite,' indignant at finding themselves so suddenly overshadowed with the growing honours of one who had risen from a rank beneath their own, and eagerly watching for an occasion against him, it was not likely that such an affair as this was going to escape notice altogether. And though the secrecy with which it was conducted, might have sufficed to elude a scrutiny such as theirs, there was *another*, and more eager and subtle enemy, – an enemy which the founder of this school had always to contend with, that had already, day and night, at home and abroad, its Argus watch upon him. That vast and secret foe, which he had arrayed against him on foreign battle fields, knew already what kind of embodiment of power this was that was rising into such sudden favour here at home, and would have crushed him in the germ – that foe which would never rest till it had pursued him to the block, which was ready to join hands with his personal enemies in its machinations, in the court of Elizabeth, as well as in the court of her successor, that vast, malignant, indefatigable foe, in which the spirit of the old ages lurked, was already at his threshold, and penetrating to the most secret chamber of his councils. It was on the showing of *a Jesuit* that these friendly gatherings of young men at Raleigh's table came to be branded as 'a school of Atheism.' And it was

through such agencies, that his enemies at court were able to sow suspicions in Elizabeth's mind in regard to the entire orthodoxy of his mode of explaining certain radical points in human belief, and in regard to the absolute 'conformity' of his views on these points with those which she had herself divinely authorised, suspicions which he himself confesses he was never afterwards able to eradicate. The matter was represented to her, we are told, 'as if he had set up for a doctor in the faculty and invited young gentlemen into his school, where the Bible was jeered at,' and the use of profane anagrams was inculcated. The fact that he associated with him in his chemical and mathematical studies, and entertained in his house, a scholar labouring at that time under the heavy charge of getting up 'a philosophical theology,' was also made use of greatly to his discredit.

And from another uncontradicted statement, which dates from a later period, but which comes to us worded in terms as cautious as if it had issued directly from the school itself, we obtain another glimpse of these new social agencies, with which the bold, creative, social genius that was then seeking to penetrate on all sides the custom-bound time, would have roused and organised a new social life in it. It is still the second-hand hearsay testimony which is quoted here. '*He is said* to have set up an Office of Address, and it is *supposed* that the office *might* respect a *more liberal intercourse—a nobler mutuality of advertisement*, than would perhaps admit of *all sorts of persons*.' 'Raleigh set up a kind of Office of Address,' says another, 'in

the capacity of an agency for all sorts of persons.' John Evelyn, refers also to that long dried fountain of communication which *Montaigne* first proposed, Sir Walter Raleigh put in practice, and Mr. Hartlib endeavoured to renew.

'This is the scheme described by Sir W. Pellis, which is referred traditionally to Raleigh and Montaigne (see Book I. chap. xxxiv.) An Office of *Address* whereby the wants of *all* may be made known to ALL (that painful and great instrument of this design), *where men may know what is already done in the business of learning, what is at present in doing, and what is intended to be done*, to the end that, by such a *general communication of design and mutual assistance, the wits and endeavours of the world* may no longer be *as so many scattered coals*, which, for want of *union*, are soon quenched, whereas being laid together they would have yielded *a comfortable* light and heat. [This is evidently *traditional* language] … such as advanced rather to the *improvement* of *men* themselves than their means.' – OLDYS.

This then is the association of which Raleigh was the chief; *this* was the state, within the state which he was founding. ('See the reach of this man,' says Lord Coke on his Trial.) It is true that the honour is also ascribed to Montaigne; but we shall find, as we proceed with this inquiry, that *all* the works and inventions of this new English school, of which Raleigh was chief, all its new and vast designs for man's relief, are also claimed by that same aspiring gentleman, as they were, too, by another of these Egotists, who came out in his own name with this identical

project.

It was only within the walls of a school that the great principle of the new philosophy of fact and practice, which had to pretend to be profoundly absorbed in chemical experiments, or in physical observations, and inductions of some kind – though not without an occasional hint of a broader intention, – it was only in *esoteric* language that the great principles of this philosophy could begin to be set forth *in their true comprehension*. The very trunk of it, the primal science itself, must needs be mystified and hidden in a shower of metaphysical dust, and piled and heaped about with the old dead branches of scholasticism, lest men should see for themselves *how* broad and comprehensive *must* be the ultimate sweep of its determinations; lest men should see for themselves, how a science which begins in fact, and returns to it again, which begins in observation and experiment, and returns in scientific practice, in scientific arts, in scientific re-formation, might have to do, ere all was done, with facts not then inviting scientific investigation – with arts not then inviting scientific reform.

In consequence of a sudden and common advancement of intelligence among the leading men of that age, which left the standard of intelligence represented in more than one of its existing institutions, very considerably in the rear of its advancement, there followed, as the inevitable result, a tendency to the formation of some medium of expression, – whether that tendency was artistically developed or not, in which the new and

nobler thoughts of men, in which their dearest beliefs, could find some vent and limited interchange and circulation, without startling the *ear*. Eventually there came to be a number of men in England at this time, – and who shall say that there were none on the continent of this school, – occupying prominent positions in the state, heading, it might be, or ranged in opposite factions at Court, who could speak and write in such a manner, upon topics of common interest, as to make themselves entirely intelligible to each other, without exposing themselves to any of the risks, which confidential communications under such circumstances involved.

For there existed a certain mode of expression, originating in some of its more special forms with this particular school, yet not altogether conventional, which enabled those who made use of it to steer clear of the Star Chamber and its sister institution; inasmuch as the terms employed in this mode of communication were not in the more obvious interpretation of them actionable, and to a vulgar, unlearned, or stupid conceit, could hardly be made to appear so. There must be a High Court of Wit, and a Bench of Peers in that estate of the realm, or ever these treasons could be brought to trial. For it was a mode of communication which involved in its more obvious construction the necessary submission to power. It was the instructed ear, – the ear of a school, – which was required to lend to it its more recondite meanings; – it was the ear of that new school in philosophy which had made History the basis of its learning, – which, dealing

with *principles* instead of *words*, had glanced, not without some nice observation in passing, at their more '*conspicuous*' historical 'INSTANCES'; – it was the ear of a school which had everywhere the great historical representations and diagrams at its control, and could substitute, without much hindrance, particulars for generals, or generals for particulars, as the case might be; it was the ear of a school intrusted with discretionary power, but trained and practised in the art of using it.

Originally an art of necessity, with practice, in the skilful hands of those who employed it, it came at length to have a charm of its own. In such hands, it became an instrument of literary power, which had not before been conceived of; a medium too of densest ornament, of thick crowding conceits, and nestling beauties, which no style before had ever had depth enough to harbour. It established a new, and more intimate and living relation between the author and his reader, – between the speaker and his audience. There was ever the charm of that secret understanding lending itself to all the effects. It made the reader, or the hearer, participator in the artist's skill, and joint proprietor in the result. The author's own glow must be on his cheek, the author's own flash in his eye, ere that result was possible. The nice point of the skilful pen, the depth of the lurking tone was lost, unless an eye as skilful, or an ear as fine, tracked or waited on it. It gave to the work of the artist, nature's own style; – it gave to works which had the earnest of life and death in them the sport of the 'enigma.'

It is not too much to say, that the works of Raleigh and Bacon, and others whose connection with it is not necessary to specify just here, are written throughout in the language of this school. 'Our glorious Willy' – (it is the gentleman who wrote the 'Faery Queene' who claims him, and his glories, as 'ours'), – 'our glorious Willy' was born in it, and knew no other speech. It was that 'Round Table' at which Sir Philip Sydney presided then, that his lurking meanings, his unspeakable audacities first 'set in a roar.' It was there, in the keen encounters of those flashing 'wit combats,' that the weapons of great genius grew so fine. It was there, where the young wits and scholars, fresh from their continental tours, full of the gallant young England of their day, – the Mercutios, the Benedicts, the Birons, the Longuevilles, came together fresh from the Court of Navarre, and smelling of the lore of their foreign 'Academe,' or hot from the battles of continental freedom, – it was *there*, in those *réunions*, that our Poet caught those gracious airs of his – those delicate, thick-flowering refinements – those fine impalpable points of courtly breeding – those aristocratic notions that haunt him everywhere. It was there that he picked up his various knowledge of men and manners, his acquaintance with foreign life, his bits of travelled wit, that flash through all. It was there that he heard the clash of arms, and the ocean-storm. And it was there that he learned 'his old ward.' It was there, in the social collisions of that gay young time, with its bold over-flowing humours, that would not be shut in, that he first armed himself with those quips and puns, and

lurking conceits, that crowd his earlier style so thickly, – those double, and triple, and quadruple meanings, that stud so closely the lines of his dialogue in the plays which are clearly dated from that era, – the natural artifices of a time like that, when all those new volumes of utterance which the lips were ready to issue, were forbidden on pain of death to be 'extended,' must needs 'be crushed together, infolded within themselves.'

Of course it would be absurd, or it would involve the most profound ignorance of the history of literature in general, to claim that the principle of this invention had its origin here. It had already been in use, in recent and systematic use, in the intercourse of the scholars of the Middle Ages; and its origin is coeval with the origin of letters. The free-masonry of learning is old indeed. It runs its mountain chain of signals through all the ages, and men whom times and kindreds have separated ascend from their week-day toil, and hold their Sabbaths and synods on those heights. They whisper, and listen, and smile, and shake the head at one another; they laugh, and weep, and complain together; they sing their songs of victory in one key. That machinery is so fine, that the scholar can catch across the ages, the smile, or the whisper, which the contemporary tyranny had no instrument firm enough to suppress, or fine enough to detect.

'But for her father sitting still on hie,
Did warily still watch the way she went,

And eke from far observed with jealous eye,
Which way his course the wanton Bregog bent.

Him to deceive, for all his watchful ward,
The wily lover did devise this slight.
First, into many parts, his stream he shared,
That whilst the one was watch'd, the other might

Pass unespide, to meet her by the way.
And then besides, those little streams, so broken,
He under ground so closely did convey,
That of their passage doth appear no token.'

It was the author of the 'Faery Queene,' indeed, his fine, elaborate, fertile genius burthened with its rich treasure, and stimulated to new activity by his poetical alliance with Raleigh, whose splendid invention first made apparent the latent facilities which certain departments of popular literature then offered, for a new and hitherto unparalleled application of this principle. In that prose description of his great Poem which he addresses to Raleigh, the distinct avowal of a double intention in it, the distinction between a particular and general one, the emphasis with which the elements of the ideal name, are discriminated and blended, furnish to the careful reader already some superficial hints, as to the capabilities of such a plan to one at all predisposed to avail himself of them. And, indeed, this Poet's manifest philosophical and historical tendencies, and his avowed view of

the comprehension of the Poet's business would have seemed beforehand to require some elbow-room, – some chance for poetic curves and sweeps, – some space for the line of beauty to take its course in, which the sharp angularities, the crooked lines, the blunt bringing up everywhere, of the new philosophic tendency to history would scarcely admit of. There was no breathing space for him, unless he could contrive to fix his poetic platform so high, as to be able to override these restrictions without hindrance.

'For the Poet thrusteth into the midst, even where it most concerneth him, and then recoursing to the things fore-past, and *divining of things to come*, he maketh a pleasing *analysis* of ALL.'

And it so happened that his Prince Arthur had dreamed the poet's dream, the hero's dream, the philosopher's dream, the dream that was dreamed of old under the Olive shades, the dream that all our Poets and inspired anticipators of man's perfection and felicity have always been dreaming; but this one '*awakening*,' determined that it should be a dream no longer. It was the hour in which the genius of antiquity was reviving; it was the hour in which the poetic inspiration of all the ages was reviving, and *arming* itself with the knowledge of 'things not dreamt of' by old reformers – that knowledge of nature which is *power*, which is the true *magic*. For this new Poet had seen in a vision that same 'excellent beauty' which 'the divine' ones saw of old, and 'the New Atlantis,' the celestial vision of *her* kingdom; and being also 'ravished with that excellence, and *awakening*, he determined

to *seek her out*. And so being by *Merlin armed*, and by *Timon thoroughly instructed*, he went forth to seek her in *Fairy Land*.' There was a little band of heroes in that age, a little band of philosophers and poets, secretly bent on that same adventure, sworn to the service of that same Gloriana, though they were fain to wear then the scarf and the device of another Queen on *their* armour. It is to the prince of this little band – 'the prince and mirror of all chivalry' – that this Poet dedicates his poem. But it is Raleigh's device which he adopts in the names he uses, and it is Raleigh who thus shares with Sydney the honour of his dedication.

'In that Faery Queene, I mean,' he says, in his prose description of the Poem addressed to Raleigh, 'in that Faery Queene, I mean Glory in my general intention; but, in my particular, I conceive the most glorious person of our sovereign the Queen, and *her* kingdom – in *Fairy Land*.

'And yet, in some places, I do otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth *two persons, one* of a most Royal *Queen* or *Empress*, the other of a most VIRTUOUS and BEAUTIFUL lady – the *latter part* I do express in BEL-PHEBE, fashioning her name according to your own *most excellent conceit* of "*Cynthia*," Phebe and Cynthia being both names of *Diana*.' And thus he sings his poetic dedication: —

> 'To thee, that art the Summer's Nightingale,
> Thy sovereign goddess's most dear delight,

Why do I send this rustic madrigal,
That may thy tuneful ear unseason quite?
Thou, only fit this argument to write,
In whose high thoughts *pleasure hath built her bower*,
And dainty love learn'd sweetly to indite.
My rhymes, I know, unsavoury are and soure
To taste the streams, which *like a golden showre*,
Flow from thy fruitful head of thy love's praise.
Fitter, perhaps, *to thunder martial stowre*,[Footnote]
When thee so list thy *tuneful* thoughts to raise,
Yet *till that thou thy poem wilt make known*,
Let thy fair Cynthia's praises be thus rudely shown.'

[Footnote: 'Shine forth, thou Star of Poets, and with *rage Or influence chide*, or *cheer* the drooping stage.' *BEN JONSON.]*

'Of me,' says Raleigh, in a response to this obscure partner of his works and arts, – a response not less mysterious, till we have found the solution of it, for it is an enigma.

'Of me *no lines* are loved, *no letters* are of price,
Of all that speak the English tongue, but those of *thy device*.'

[It was a '*device*' that symbolised *all*. It was a *circle* containing the alphabet, or the *A B C*, and the esoteric meaning of it was '*all* in *each*,' or *all* in *all*, the new doctrine of the *unity* of science (the '*Ideas*' of the New '*Academe*'). That was the token-name under which a great Book of this

Academy was issued.]

It is to Sidney, Raleigh, and the Poet of the 'Faery-Queene,' and the rest of that courtly company of Poets, that the contemporary author in the Art of Poetry alludes, with a special commendation of Raleigh's vein, as the 'most lofty, insolent, and passionate,' when he says,' they have *writ* excellently well, if their *doings* could be found out and made public with the rest.'

CHAPTER IV

RALEIGH'S SCHOOL, CONTINUED. – THE NEW ACADEMY

EXTRACT FROM A LATER CHAPTER OF RALEIGH'S LIFE

Oliver. Where will the old Duke live?

Charles. They say *he is already* in the forest of *Arden*, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England: they say many young gentlemen flock to him every day, and fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world.

As You Like It.

Stephano [sings]. Flout 'em and skout'em; and skout'em and flout 'em, *Thought* is free.

Cal. That's not the tune.

[Ariel *plays the tune on a tabor and pipe*.]

Ste. What is this *same?*

Trin. This is the tune of our catch, played by – the picture of

—*Nobody*.

But all was not over with him in the old England yet – the present had still its chief tasks for him.

The man who had 'achieved' his greatness, the chief who had made his way through such angry hosts of rivals, and through such formidable social barriers, from his little seat in the Devonshire corner to a place in the state, so commanding, that even the jester, who was the 'Mr. Punch' of that day, conceived it to be within the limits of his prerogative to call attention to it, and that too in 'the presence' itself [See 'the knave' *commands* 'the queen.' —*Tarleton*] – a place of command so acknowledged, that even the poet could call him in the ear of England 'her *most* dear delight' – such a one was not going to give up so easily the game he had been playing here so long. He was not to be foiled with this great flaw in his fortunes even here; and though all his work appeared for the time to be undone, and though the eye that he had fastened on him was 'the eye' that had in it 'twenty thousand deaths.'

It is this patient piecing and renewing of his broken webs, it is this second building up of his position rather than the first, that shows us what he is. One must see what he contrived to make of those 'apartments' in the Tower while he occupied them; what before unimagined conveniencies, and elegancies, and facilities of communication, and means of operation, they began to develop under the searching of his genius: what means of reaching and moving the public mind; what wires that reached to

the most secret councils of state appeared to be inlaid in those old walls while he was within them; what springs that commanded even there movements not less striking and anomalous than those which had arrested the critical and admiring attention of Tarleton under the Tudor administration, – movements on that same royal board which Ferdinand and Miranda were seen to be playing on in Prospero's cell when all was done, – one must see what this logician, who was the magician also, contrived to make of the lodging which was at first only 'the cell' of a condemned criminal; what power there was there to foil his antagonists, and crush them too, – if nothing but throwing themselves under the wheels of his advancement would serve their purpose; one must look at all this to see 'what manner of man' this was, what stuff this genius was made of, in whose hearts ideas that had been parted from all antiquities were getting welded here then – welded so firmly that all futurities would not disjoin them, so firmly that thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world might combine in vain to disjoin them – the ideas whose union was the new 'birth of time.' It is this life in 'the cell' – this game, these masques, this tempest, that the magician will command there – which show us, when all is done, what new stuff of Nature's own this was, in which the new idea of combining 'the part operative' and the part speculative of human life – this new thought of making 'the art and practic part of life *the mistress* to its theoric' was understood in this scholar's own time (as we learn from the secret traditions of the school) to

have had its first germination: this idea which is the idea of the modern learning – the idea of connecting knowledge generally and in a systematic manner with the human conduct – knowledge as distinguished from pre-supposition – the idea which came out afterwards so systematically and comprehensively developed in the works of his great contemporary and partner in arts and learning.

We must look at this, as well as at some other demonstrations of which this time was the witness, to see what new mastership this is that was coming out here so signally in this age in various forms, and in more minds than one; what soul of a new era it was that had laughed, even in the boyhood of its heroes, at old Aristotle on his throne; that had made its youthful games with dramatic impersonations, and caricatures, and travesties of that old book-learning; that in the glory of those youthful spirits – 'the spirits of youths, that meant to be of note and began betimes' – it thought itself already competent to laugh down and dethrone with its 'jests'; that had laughed all its days in secret; that had never once lost a chance for a jibe at the philosophy it found in possession of the philosophic chairs – a philosophy which had left so many things in heaven and earth uncompassed in its old futile dreamy abstractions.

Unless philosophy can make a Juliet, Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom, Hang up philosophy, was the word of the poet of this new school in one of his 'lofty and passionate' moods, at a much earlier stage of this philosophic development. 'See

what learning is!' exclaims the Nurse, speaking at that same date from the same dictation, for there is a Friar 'abroad' there already in the action of that play, who is undertaking to bring his learning to bear upon practice, and opening his cell for scientific consultation and ghostly advice on the questions of the play as they happen to arise; and it is his apparent capacity for smoothing, and reconciling, and versifying, not words only, but facts, which commands the Nurse's admiration.

This doctrine of a practical learning, this part operative of the new learning for which the founders of it beg leave to reintegrate the abused term of Natural Magic, referring to the Persians in particular, to indicate the extent of the field which their magical operations are intended ultimately to occupy; this idea, which the master of this school was illustrating now in the Tower so happily, did not originate in the Tower, as we shall see.

The first heirs of this new invention, were full of it. The babbling infancy of this great union of art and learning, whose speech flows in its later works so clear, babbled of nothing else: its Elizabethan savageness, with its first taste of learning on its lips, with its new classic lore yet stumbling in its speech, already, knew nothing else. The very rudest play in all this collection of the school, – left to show us the march of that 'time-bettering age,' the play which offends us most – belongs properly to this collection; contains *this* secret, which is the Elizabethan secret, and the secret of that art of delivery and tradition which this from the first inevitably created, – yet rude and undeveloped, but *there*.

We need not go so far, however, as that, in this not pleasant retrospect; for these early plays are not the ones to which the interpreter of this school would choose to refer the reader, for the proof of its claims at present; – these which the faults of youth and the faults of the time conspire to mar: in which the overdoing of the first attempt to hide under a cover suited to the tastes of the Court, or to the yet more faulty tastes of the rabble of an Elizabethan play-house, – the boldest scientific treatment of 'the forbidden questions,' still leaves so much upon the surface of the play that repels the ordinary criticism; – these that were first sent out to bring in the rabble of that age to the scholar's cell, these in which the new science was first brought in, in its slave's costume, with all its native glories shorn, and its eyes put out 'to make sport' for the Tudor – perilous sport! – these first rude essays of a learning not yet master of its unwonted tools, not yet taught how to wear its fetters gracefully, and wreathe them over and make immortal glories of them – still clanking its irons. There is nothing here to detain any criticism not yet instructed in the secret of this Art Union. But the faults are faults of execution merely; *the design* of the Novura Organum is not more noble, not more clear.

For these works are the works of that same 'school' which the Jesuit thought so dangerous, and calculated to affect unfavourably the morality of the English nation – the school which the Jesuit contrived to bring under suspicion as a school in which doctrines that differed from opinions received on essential

points were secretly taught, – contriving to infect with his views on that point the lady who was understood, at that time, to be the only person qualified to reflect on questions of this nature; the school in which Raleigh was asserted to be perverting the minds of young men by teaching them the use of profane anagrams; and it cannot be denied, that anagrams, as well as other 'devices in letters,' *were* made use of, in involving 'the bolder meanings' contained in writings issued from this school, especially when the scorn with which science regarded the things it found set up for its worship had to be conveyed sometimes in a point or a word. It is a school, whose language might often seem obnoxious to the charge of profanity and other charges of that nature to those who do not understand its aims, to those who do not know that it is from the first a school of Natural Science, whose chief department was that history which makes the basis of the '*living* art,' the art of *man's* living, the *essential* art of it, – a school in which the use of words was, in fact, more rigorous and scrupulous than it had ever been in any other, in which the use of words is for the first time scientific, and yet, in some respects, more bold and free than in those in which mere words, as words, are supposed to have some inherent virtue and efficacy, some mystic worth and sanctity in them.

This was the learning in which the art of a new age and race first spoke, and many an old foolish, childish, borrowed notion went off like vapour in it at its first word, without any one's ever so much as stopping to observe it, any one whose place was

within. It is the school of a criticism much more severe than the criticism which calls its freedom in question. It is a school in which the taking of names in vain in general is strictly forbidden. That is the first commandment of it, and it is a commandment with promise.

The man who sits there in the Tower, now, driving that same 'goose-pen' which he speaks of as such a safe instrument for unfolding practical doctrines, with such patient energy, is not now occupied with the statistics of Noah's Ark, grave as he looks; though that, too, is a subject which his nautical experience and the indomitable bias of his genius as a western man towards calculation in general, together with his notion that the affairs of the world generally, past as well as future, belong properly to his *sphere* as a *man*, will require him to take up and examine and report upon, before he will think that his work is done. It is not a chapter in the History of the World which he is composing at present, though that work is there at this moment on the table, and forms the ostensible state-prison work of this convict.

This is the man who made one so long ago in those brilliant 'Round Table' reunions, in which the idea of converting the new *belles lettres* of that new time, to such grave and politic uses was first suggested; he is the genius of that company, that even in such frolic mad-cap games as Love's Labour's Lost, and the Taming of the Shrew, and Midsummer Night's Dream, could contrive to insert, not the broad farce and burlesque on the old pretentious wordy philosophy and pompous rhetoric it was meant

to dethrone only, and not the most perilous secret of the new philosophy, only, but the secret of its organ of delivery and tradition, the secret of its use of letters, the secret of its '*cipher in letters*,' and not its 'cipher in words' only, the cipher in which the secret of the authorship of these works was infolded, and in which it was *found*, but not found in these earlier plays, – plays in which these so perilous secrets are still conveyed in so many involutions, in passages so intricate with quips and puns and worthless trivialities, so uninviting or so marred with their superficial meanings, that no one would think of looking in them for anything of any value. For it is always when some necessary, but not superficial, question of the play is to be considered, that the Clown and the Fool are most in request, for 'there be of them that will themselves laugh to set on some *barren spectators* to laugh too'; and under cover of that mirth it is, that the grave or witty undertone reaches the ear of the judicious.

It is in the later and more finished works of this school that the key to the secret doctrines of it, which it is the object of this work to furnish, is best found. But the fact, that in the very rudest and most faulty plays in this collection of plays, which form so important a department of the works of this school, which make indeed the noblest tradition, the only adequate tradition, the 'illustrated tradition' of its noblest doctrine – the fact that in the very earliest germ of this new union of 'practic and theoric,' of art and learning, from which we pluck at last Advancements of Learning, and Hamlets, and Lears, and Tempests, and the

Novum Organum, already the perilous secret of this union is infolded, already the entire organism that these great fruits and flowers will unfold in such perfection is contained, and clearly traceable, – this is a fact which appeared to require insertion in this history, and not, perhaps, without some illustration.

'It is not amiss to observe,' says the Author of the Advancement of Learning, when at last his great exordium to the science of nature in man, and the art of culture and cure that is based on that science is finished – pausing to observe it, pausing ere he will produce his index to that science, to observe it: 'It is *not* amiss to observe', he says – (speaking of the operation of culture in general on young minds, so forcible, though unseen, as hardly any length of time, or contention of labour, can countervail it afterwards) – 'how small and mean faculties gotten by education, yet when they fall into *great men, or great matters*, do work *great and important effects*; whereof we see a notable example in *Tacitus*, of *two stage-players*, Percennius and Vibulenus, who, *by their faculty of playing*, put the *Pannonian* armies *into an extreme tumult and combustion*; for, *there arising a mutiny* among them, upon the death of *Augustus* Caesar, *Blaesus* the lieutenant had committed some of the mutineers, *which were suddenly rescued*; whereupon Vibulenus *got to be heard speak* [being a stage-player], which he did *in this manner*.

'"These poor *innocent* wretches *appointed to cruel death*, you have restored to behold the light: but who shall restore *my brother* to me, or life to my brother, *that was sent hither in message from*

the legions of Germany to treat of – THE COMMON CAUSE? And he hath murdered him this last night by *some of his fencers and ruffians, that he hath about him for his executioners* upon soldiers. The mortalest enemies do not deny burial; *when I have performed my last duties to the corpse with kisses, with tears, command me to be slain besides him*, so that these, my fellows, *for our good meaning* and our *true hearts* to THE LEGION, *may have leave to bury us*."

'With which speech he put the army into an infinite fury and uproar; whereas, truth was, he had no brother, neither was there any *such* matter [in that case], but he played it merely *as if* he had been upon the stage.'

This is the philosopher and stage critic who expresses a decided opinion elsewhere, that 'the play's the thing,' though he finds this kind of writing, too, useful in its way, and for certain purposes; but he is the one who, in speaking of the original differences in the natures and gifts of men, suggests that 'there *are* a kind of men who can, as it were, divide themselves;' and he does not hesitate to propound it as his deliberate opinion, that a man of wit should have at command a number of styles adapted to different auditors and exigencies; that is, if he expects to accomplish anything with his rhetoric. That is what he makes himself responsible for from his professional chair of learning; but it is the Prince of Denmark, with his remarkable natural faculty of speaking to the point, who says, '*Seneca* can not be *too heavy*, nor *Plautus* too light, for – [what?] – the *law*

of writ– and – the *liberty*.' '*These* are the only *men*,' he adds, referring apparently to that tinselled gauded group of servants that stand there awaiting his orders.

'My lord – you played once *in the university*, you say,' he observes afterwards, addressing himself to that so politic statesmen whose overreaching court plots and performances end for himself so disastrously. 'That did I, my lord,' replies Polonius, '*and was accounted a good actor*.' 'And what did you enact?' 'I did enact *Julius Caesar*. I – was killed i' the Capitol [I]. Brutus killed me.' 'It was a *brute* part of him [collateral sounds – Elizabethan phonography] to kill so *capitol a calf* there. – Be the players ready?'(?). [That is the question.]

'While watching the progress of the action at Sadlers' Wells,' says the dramatic critic of the 'Times,' in the criticism of the Comedy of Errors before referred to, directing attention to the juvenile air of the piece, to 'the classic severity in the form of the play,' and 'that *baldness* of treatment which is a peculiarity of antique comedy' – 'while watching the progress of the action at Sadlers' Wells, *we may almost fancy we are at St. Peter's College*, witnessing the annual performance of *the Queen's scholars*.' That is not surprising to one acquainted with the history of these plays, though the criticism which involves this kind of observation is not exactly the criticism to which we have been accustomed here. But any one who wishes to see, as a matter of antiquarian curiosity, or for any other purpose, how far from being hampered in the first efforts of his genius with *this* class of educational associations,

that particular individual would naturally have been, in whose unconscious brains this department of the modern learning is supposed to have had its accidental origin, – any one who wishes to see in what direction the antecedents of a person in that station in life would naturally have biased, *at that time*, his first literary efforts, if, indeed, he had ever so far escaped from the control of circumstances as to master the art of the collocation of letters – any person who has any curiosity whatever on this point is recommended to read in this connection a letter from a professional contemporary of this individual – one who comes to us with unquestionable claims to our respect, inasmuch as he appears to have had some care for *the future*, and some object in living beyond that of promoting his own immediate private interests and sensuous gratification.

It is a letter of Mr. Edward Alleyn (the founder of Dulwich College), published by the Shakspere Society, to which we are compelled to have recourse for information on this interesting question; inasmuch as that distinguished contemporary and professional rival of his referred to, who occupies at present so large a space in the public eye, as it is believed for the best of reasons, has failed to leave us any specimens of his method of reducing his own personal history to writing, or indeed any demonstration of his appreciation of the art of chirography, in general. He is a person who appears to have given a decided preference to the method of oral communication as a means of effecting his objects. But in reading this truly interesting

document from the pen of an Elizabethan player, who *has* left us a specimen of his use of that instrument usually so much in esteem with men of letters, we must take into account the fact, that *this* is an exceptional case of culture. It is the case of a player who aspired to distinction, and who had raised himself by the force of his genius above his original social level; it is the case of a player who has been referred to recently as a proof of the position which it was possible for 'a stage player' to attain to under those particular social conditions.

But as this letter is of a specially private and confidential nature, and as this poor player who *did* care for the future, and who founded with his talents, such as they were, a noble charity, instead of living and dying to himself, is not to blame for his defects of education, – since his *acts* command our respect, however faulty his attempts at literary expression, – this letter will not be produced here. But whoever has read it, or whoever may chance to read it, in the course of an antiquarian research, will be apt to infer, that whatever educational bias the first efforts of genius subjected to influences of the same kind would naturally betray, the faults charged upon the Comedy of Errors, the leaning to the classics, the taint of St. Peter's College, the tone of the Queen's scholars, are hardly the faults that the instructed critic would look for.

But to ascertain the fact, that the controlling idea of that new learning which the Man in the Tower is illustrating now in so grand and mature a manner, not with his pen only, but

with his 'living art,' and with such an entire independence of classic models, is already organically contained in those earlier works on which the classic shell is still visible, it is not necessary to go back to the Westminster play of these new classics, or to the performances of the Queen's Scholars. Plays having a considerable air of maturity, in which the internal freedom of judgment and taste is already absolute, still exhibit on the surface of them this remarkable submission to the ancient forms which are afterwards rejected on principle, and by a rule in the new rhetoric – a rule which the author of the Advancement of Learning is at pains to state very clearly. The *wildness* of which we hear so much, works itself out upon the surface, and determines the form at length, as these players proceed and grow bolder with their work. A play, second to none in historical interest, invaluable when regarded simply in its relation to the history of this school, one which may be considered, in fact, the Introductory Play of the New School of Learning, is one which exhibits very vividly these striking characteristics of the earlier period. It is one in which the vulgarities of the Play-house are still the cloak of the philosophic subtleties, and incorporated, too, into the philosophic design; and it is one in which the unity of design, that one design which makes the works of this school, from first to last, as the work of one man, is still cramped with those other unities which the doctrines of Dionysus and the mysteries of Eleusis prescribed of old to *their* interpreters. 'What is the *end* of *study*? What is the *end* of it?'

was the word of the New School of Learning. *That* was its first speech. It was a speech produced with dramatic illustrations, for the purpose of bringing out its significance more fully, for the purpose of pointing the inquiry unmistakeably to those ends of learning which the study of the learned then had not yet comprehended. It is a speech on behalf of a new learning, in which the extant learning is produced on the stage, in its actual historical relation to those '*ends*' which the new school conceived to be the true ends of it, which are brought on to the stage in palpable, visible representation, not in allegorical forms, but in instances, 'conspicuous instances,' living specimens, after the manner of this school.

'What is the end of study?' cried the setter forth of this new doctrine, as long before as when lore and love were debating it together in that 'little Academe' that was yet, indeed, to be 'the wonder of the world, still and contemplative in *living* art.' 'What is the end of study?' cries already the voice of one pacing under these new olives. *That* was the word of the new school; that was the word of new ages, and these new minds taught of nature – her priests and prophets knew it then, already, 'Let fame that all hunt after *in their lives*,' *they* cry —

> *Live* registered upon our brazen *tombs*, And then *grace us in the disgrace of death*; When spite of cormorant devouring time, The endeavour of *this present breath* may buy *That honour* which shall bate his scythe's keen edge, And make us HEIRS of *all eternity*– [of ALL]. * * * * * *Navarre*

shall be the wonder of the world, Our Court shall be *a little Academe*, *Still and contemplative in*– LIVING *art*.

This is the Poet of the Woods who is beginning his 'recreations' for us here – the poet who loves so well to take his court gallants in their silks and velvets, and perfumes, and fine court ladies with all their courtly airs and graces, and all the stale conventionalitites that he is sick of, out from under the low roofs of princes into that great palace in which the Queen, whose service he is sworn to, keeps the State. This is the school-master who takes his school all out on holiday excursions into green fields, and woods, and treats them to country merry-makings, and not in sport merely. This is the one that breaks open the cloister, and the close walls that learning had dwelt in till then, and shuts up the musty books, and bids that old droning cease. This is the one that stretches the long drawn aisle and lifts the fretted vault into a grander temple. The Court with all its pomp and retinue, the school with all its pedantries and brazen ignorance, 'High Art' with its new graces, divinity, Mar-texts and all, must 'come hither, come hither,' and 'under the green-wood tree lie with me,' the ding-dong of this philosopher's new learning says, calling his new school together. This is the linguist that will find '*tongues* in trees,' and crowd out from the halls of learning the lore of ancient parchments with their verdant classics, their 'truth in beauty dyed.' This is the teacher with whose new alphabet you can find 'sermons in stones, *books* in the running brooks,' and good, – good – his '*good*' the good of the

New School, that broader '*good*' in every *thing*. 'The roof of *this* court is too high to be *yours*,' says the princess of this out-door scene to the sovereignty that claimed it then.

This is 'great Nature's' Poet and Interpreter, and he takes us always into 'the continent of nature'; but man is his chief end, and that island which his life makes in the universal being is the point to which that Naturalist brings home all his new collections. This is the Poet of the Woods, but man, – man at the summit of his arts, in the perfection of his refinements, is always the creature that he is 'collecting' in them. In his wildest glades, this is still the species that he is busied with. He has brought him there to experiment on him, and that we may see the better what he is. He has brought him there to improve his arts, to reduce his conventional savageness, to re-refine his coarse refinements, not to make a wild-man of him. This is the Poet of the Woods; but he is a woodman, he carries an axe on his shoulder. He will wake a continental forest with it and subdue it, and fill it with his music.

For this is the Poet who cries 'Westward Ho!' But he has not got into the woods yet in this play. He is only on the edge of them as yet. It is under the blue roof of that same dome which is 'too high,' the princess here says, to belong to the pygmy that this Philosopher likes so well to bring out and to measure under that canopy – it is 'out of doors' that this new speech on behalf of a new learning is spoken. But there is a close rim of conventionalities about us still. It is *a Park* that this audacious proposal is uttered in. But nothing can be more orderly, for it

is 'a Park with a Palace in it.' There it is, in the background. If it were the Attic proscenium itself hollowed into the south-east corner of the Acropolis, what more could one ask. But it is the palace of the King of —*Navarre*, who is the prince of good fellows and the prince of good learning at one and the same time, which makes, in this case, the novelty. 'A Park with a Palace in it' makes the first scene. 'Another part of the same' with the pavilion of a princess and the tents of *her* Court seen in the distance, makes the second; and the change from one part of this park to another, though we get into the heart of it sometimes, is the utmost license that the rigours of the Greek Drama permit the Poet to think of at present. This criticism on the old learning, this audacious proposal for the new, with all the bold dramatic illustration with which it is enforced, must be managed here under these restrictions. Whatever 'persons' the plot of this drama may require for its evolutions, whatever witnesses and reporters the trial and conviction of the old learning, and the definition of the ground of the new, may require, will have to be induced to cross this park at this particular time, because the form of the new art is not yet emancipated, and the Muse of the Inductive Science cannot stir from the spot to search them out.

However, that does not impair the representation as it is managed. There is a very bold artist here already, with all his deference for the antique. We shall be sure to have *all* when he is the plotter. The action of this drama is not complicated. The persons of it are few; the characterization is feeble, compared

with that of some of the later plays; but that does not hinder or limit the design, and it is all the more apparent for this artistic poverty, anatomically clear; while as yet that perfection of art in which all trace of the structure came so soon to be lost in the beauty of the illustration, is yet wanting; while as yet that art which made of its living instance an intenser life, or which made with its *living* art a life more living than life itself, was only germinating.

The illustration here, indeed, approaches the allegorical form, in the obtrusive, untempered predominance of the qualities represented, so overdone as to wear the air of a caricature, though the historical combination is still here. These diagrams are alive evidently; they are men, and not allegorical spectres, or toys, though they are 'painted in character.'

The entire representation of the extant learning is dramatically produced on this stage; the germ of the 'new' is here also; and the unoccupied ground of it is marked out here as, in the Advancement of Learning, by the criticism on the deficiences of that which has the field. Here, too, the line of the extant culture, – the narrow indented boundary of the *culture* that professed to take all is always defining the new, – cutting out the wild not yet visited by the art of man; – only here the criticism is much more lively, because here 'we come *to particulars*,' a thing which the new philosophy – much insists on; and though this want in learning, and the wildness it leaves, is that which makes tragedies in this method of exhibition; it has its comical aspect also; and

this is the laughing and weeping philosopher in one who manages these representations; and in this case it is the comical aspect of the subject that is seized on.

Our diagrams are still coarse here, but they have already the good scientific quality of exhausting the subject. It is the New School that occupies the centre of the piece. Their quarters are in that palace, but the *king* of it is the *Royalty* (Raleigh) that founded and endowed this School – that was one of his secret titles, – and under that name he may sometimes be recognized in descriptions and dedications that persons who were not in the secret of the School naturally applied in another quarter, or appropriated to themselves. '*Rex* was a surname among the Romans,' says the Interpreter of this School, in a very explanatory passage, 'as well as *King* is *with us*.' It is the New School that is under these boughs here, but hardly that as yet.

It is rather the representation of the new classical learning, – the old learning newly revived, – in which the new is germinating. It is that learning in its *first* effect on the young, enthusiastic, but earnest practical English mind. It is that revival of the old learning, arrested, *daguerréotyped* at the moment in which the new begins to stir in it, in minds which are going to be the master-minds of ages.

'Common sense' is the word here already. 'Common sense' is the word that this new Academe is convulsed with when the curtain rises. And though it is laughter that you hear there now, sending its merry English peals through those musty, antique

walls, as the first ray of that new beam enters them; the muse of the new mysteries has also another mask, and if you will wait a little, you shall hear that tone too. Cries that the old mysteries never caught, lamentations for Adonis not heard before, griefs that Dionysus never knew, shall yet ring out from those walls.

Under that classic dome which still calls itself Platonic, the questions and experiments of the new learning are beginning. These youths are here to represent the new philosophy, which is science, in the act of taking its first step. The subject is presented here in large masses. But this central group, at least, is composed of living men, and not dramatic shadows merely. There are good historical features peering through those masks a little. These youths are full of youthful enthusiasm, and aspiring to the ideal heights of learning in their enthusiasm. But already the practical bias of their genius betrays itself. They are making a practical experiment with the classics, and to their surprise do not find them 'good for life.'

Here is the School, then, – with the classics on trial in the persons of these new school-men. That is the central group. What more do we want? Here is the new and the old already. But this is the old *revived*– newly revived; – this is the revival of learning in whose stimulus the *new* is beginning. There is something in the field besides that. There is a 'school-master abroad' yet, that has not been examined. These young men who have resolved themselves in their secret sittings into a committee of the whole, are going to have him up. He will be obliged to

come into this park here, and speak his speech in the ear of that English 'common sense,' which is meddling here, for the first time, in a comprehensive manner with things in general; he will have to 'speak out loud and plain,' that these English parents who are sitting here in the theatre, some of 'the wiser sort' of them, at least, may get some hint of what it is that this pedagogue is beating into their children's brains, taking so much of their glorious youth from them – that priceless wealth of nature which none can restore to them, – as the purchase. But this is not all. There is a man who teaches the grown-up children of the parish in which this Park is situated, who happens to live hard by, – a man who professes the care and cure of minds. He, too, has had a summons sent him; there will be no excuse taken; and his examination will proceed at the same time. These two will come into the Park together; and perhaps we shall not be able to detect any very marked difference in their modes of expressing themselves. They are two ordinary, quiet-looking personages enough. There is nothing remarkable in their appearance; their coming here is not forced. There are deer in this Park; and 'book-men' as they are, they have a taste for sport also it seems. Unless you should get a glimpse of the type, – of the unit in their faces – and that shadowy train that *the cipher* points to, – unless you should observe that their speech is somewhat strongly pronounced for an individual representation – merely glancing at them in passing – you would not, perhaps, suspect who they are. And yet the hints are not wanting; they are very

thickly strewn, – the hints which tell you that in these two men all the extant learning, which is in places of trust and authority, is represented; all that is not included in that elegant learning which those students are making sport of in those 'golden books' of theirs, under the trees here now.

But there is another department of art and literature which is put down as a department of '*learning*,' and a most grave and momentous department of it too, in that new scheme of learning which this play is illustrating, – one which will also have to be impersonated in this representation, – one which plays a most important part in the history of this School. It is that which gives it the *power* it lacks and wants, and in one way or another will have. It is that which makes *an arm* for it, and a *long* one. It is that which supplies its hidden *arms* and *armour*. But neither is this department of learning as it is extant, – as this School finds it prepared to its hands, going to be permitted to escape the searching of this comprehensive satire. There is a 'refined traveller of Spain' haunting the purlieus of this Court, who is just the bombastic kind of person that is wanted to act this part. For this impersonation, too, is historical. There are just such creatures in nature as this. We see them now and then; or, at least, he is not much overdone, – 'this child of Fancy, – Don Armado hight.' It is the Old Romance, with his ballads and allegories, – with his old 'lies' and his new arts, – that this company are going to use for their new minstrelsy; but first they will laugh him out of his bombast and nonsense, and instruct him in the knowledge

of 'common things,' and teach him how to make poetry out of them. They have him here now, to make sport of him with the rest. It is the fashionable literature, – the literature that entertains *a court*, – the literature of *a tyranny*, with his gross servility, with his courtly affectations, with his arts of amusement, his 'vain delights,' with his euphuisms, his 'fire-new words,' it is the polite learning, the Elizabethan *Belles Lettres*, that is brought in here, along with that old Dryasdust Scholasticism, which the other two represent, to make up this company. These critics, who turn the laugh upon themselves, who caricature their own follies for the benefit of learning, who make themselves and their own failures the centre of the comedy of *Love's* Labour's Lost, are not going to let this thing escape; with the heights of its ideal, and the grossness of its real, it is the very fuel for the mirth that is blazing and crackling here. For these are the woodmen that are at work here, making sport as they work; hewing down the old decaying trunks, gathering all the nonsense into heaps, and burning it up and and clearing the ground for the new.

'What is the end of study,' is the word of this Play. To get the old books shut, but *not* till they have been examined, *not* till all the good in them has been taken out, not till we have made a *stand* on them; to get the old books in their places, under our feet, and '*then* to make progression' after we see where we are, is the proposal here —*here* also. It is the shutting up of the old books, and the opening of the new ones, which is the business here. But *that*– that is not the proposal of an ignorant man (as

this Poet himself takes pains to observe); it is not the proposition of a man who does not know what there is in books – who does not know but there is every thing in them that they claim to have in them, every thing that is good for life, *magic* and all. An ignorant man is in awe of books, on account of his ignorance. He thinks there are all sorts of things in them. He is very diffident when it comes to any question in regard to them. He tells you that he is not '*high learned*,' and defers to his betters. Neither is this the proposition of a man who has read *a little*, who has only a smattering in books, as the Poet himself observes. It is the proposition of *a scholar*, who has read them *all*, or had them read for him and examined, who knows what is in them *all*, and what they are good for, and what they are not good for. This is the man who laughs at learning, and borrows her own speech to laugh her down with. *This*, and *not the ignorant man*, it is who opens at last 'great nature's' gate to us, and tells us to come out and learn of her, *because* that which old books did *not* 'clasp in,' that which old philosophies have 'not *dreamt* of,' – the lore of laws not written yet in books of man's devising, the lore of *that* of which man's ordinary life consisteth is *here*, uncollected, waiting to be spelt out.

King. *How well he's read* to reason *against reading*.

is the inference *here*.

Dumain. *Proceeded* well to *stop* all good *proceeding*.

It is *progress* that is proposed here also. After the survey of learning 'has been well taken, *then* to make *progession*' is the

word. It is not the doctrine of unlearning that is taught here in this satire. It is a learning that includes all the extant wisdom, and finds it insufficient. It is one that requires a new and nobler study for its god-like *ends*. But, at the same time, the hindrances that a practical learning has to encounter are pointed at from the first. The fact, that the true ends of learning take us at once into the ground of the forbidden questions, is as plainly stated in the opening speech of the New Academy as the nature of the statement will permit. The fact, that the intellect is trained to *vain delights* under such conditions, because there is no earnest legitimate occupation of it permitted, is a fact that is glanced at here, as it is in other places, though not in such a manner, of course, as to lead to a 'question' from the government in regard to the meaning of the passages in which these grievances are referred to. Under these embarrassments it is, we are given to understand, however, that the criticism on the old learning and the plot for the new is about to proceed.

Here it takes the form of comedy and broad farce. There is a touch of 'tart Aristophanes' in the representation here. This is the introductory performance of the school in which the student hopes for *high words howsoever low the matter*, emphasizing that hope with an allusion to the heights of learning, as he finds it, and the highest word of it, which seems irreverent, until we find from the whole purport of the play how far *he* at least is from taking it *in vain*, whatever implication of that sort his criticism may be intended to leave on others, who use good words with so

much iteration and to so little purpose. 'That is a *high hope* for a low having' is the rejoinder of that associate of his, whose views on this point agree with his own so entirely. It is the height of the *hope* and the lowness of the *having*– it is the height of the *words* and the lowness of the *matter*, that makes the incongruity here. That is the soul of all the mirth that is stirring here. It is the height of '*the style*' that '*gives us cause to climb in the merriment*' that makes the subject of this essay. It is literature in general that is laughed at here, and the branches of it in particular. It is the old books that are walking about under these trees, with their follies all ravelled out, making sport for us.

But this is not all. It is the *defect* in learning which is represented here – that same 'defect' which a graver work of this Academy reports, in connection with a proposition for the Advancement of Learning – for its advancement into the fields not yet taken up, and which turn out, upon inquiry, to be the fields of human life and practice; – it is that main defect which is represented here. 'I find a kind of science of "*words*" but none of "*things*,"' says the reporter. 'What do you read, my lord?' 'Words, words, words,' echoes the Prince of Denmark. 'I find in these antique books, in these Philosophies and Poems, a certain resplendent or lustrous mass of matter chosen to give glory either to the subtilty of disputations, or to the eloquence of discourses,' says the other and graver reporter; 'but as to the ordinary and common matter of which life consisteth, I do *not* find it erected into an art or science, or reduced to written inquiry.' 'How *low*

soever the matter, I hope in God for *high words*,' says a speaker, who comes out of that same palace of learning on to this stage with the secret badge of the new lore on him, which is the lore of practice – a speaker not less grave, though he comes in now in the garb of this pantomime, to make sport for us with his news of learning. For 'Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light for the law of writ and the liberty.'

It is the high *words* and the low *having* that make the incongruity. But we cannot see the vanity of those heights of words, till the lowness of the matter which they profess to abstract has been brought into contrast with them, till the particulars which they do *not* grasp, which they can *not* compel, have been brought into studious contrast with them. The delicate graces of those flowery summits of speech which the ideal nature, when it energises in speech, creates, must overhang in this design the rude actuality which the untrained nature in man, forgotten of art, is always producing. And it is the might of nature in this opposition, it is the force of 'matter,' it is the unconquerable cause contrasted with the vanity of the words that have not comprehended the *cause*, it is the futility of these heights of words that are not '*forms*' that do not correspond to things which must be exhibited here also. It is the force of the *law* in nature, that must be brought into opposition here with the height of the *word*, the *ideal* word, the *higher*, but not yet scientifically abstracted word, that seeks in vain because it has no 'grappling-hook' on the actuality, to bind it. There already are the *heights*

of learning as it is, as this school finds it, dramatically exhibited on the one hand; but this, too, —*life* as it is, – as this school finds it, man's life as it is, unreduced to order by his philosophy, unreduced to melody by his verse, must also be dramatically exhibited on the other hand, must also be impersonated. It is life that we have here, the 'theoric' on the one side, the 'practic' on the other. The height of the books on the one side, the lowness, the unvisited, 'unlettered' lowness of the life on the other. That which exhibits the *defect* in learning that the new learning is to remedy, the new uncultured, unbroken ground of science must be exhibited here also. But *that* is man's life. That is the world. And what if it be? There are diagrams in this theatre large enough for that. It is the theatre of the New Academy which deals also in IDEAS, but prefers the solidarities. The wardrobe and other properties of this theatre are specially adapted to exigencies of this kind. The art that put the extant learning with those few strokes into the grotesque forms you see there, will not be stopped on this side either, for any law of writ or want of space and artistic comprehension. This is the learning that can be bounded in the nut-shell of an aphorism and include all in its bounds.

There are not many persons here, and they are ordinary looking persons enough. *But* if you *lift* those dominos a little, which that 'refined traveller of Spain' has brought in fashion, you will find that this rustic garb and these homely country features hide more than they promised; and the princess, with

her train, who is keeping state in the tents yonder, though there is an historical portrait there too, is greater than she seems. This Antony *Dull* is a poor rude fellow; but he is a great man in this play. This is the play in which one asks 'Which is the princess?' and the answer is, 'The tallest and the thickest.' Antony is the thickest, he is the acknowledged sovereign here in this school; for he is of that greater part that carries it, and though he hath never fed of the dainties bred in a book, these spectacles which the new 'book men' are getting up here are intended chiefly for him. And that unlettered small knowing soul 'Me' – 'still *me*' – insignificant as you think him when you see him in the form of a country swain, is a person of most extensive domains and occupations, and of the very highest dignity, as this philosophy will demonstrate in various ways, under various symbols. You will have that same *me* in the form of a *Mountain*, before you have read all the books of this school, and mastered all its '*tokens*' and '*symbols*.'

The dramatic representation here is meagre; but we shall find upon inquiry it is already the Globe Theatre, with all its new solidarities, new in philosophy, new in poetry, that the leaves of this park hide – this park that the doors and windows of the New Academe open into – these new grounds that it lets out its students to play and study in, and collect their specimens from – 'still and contemplative in living art.' It was all the world that was going through that park that day haply, we shall find. It is all the world that we get in this narrow representation here,

as we get it in a more limited representation still, in another place. 'All the world knows *me* in my book and my book in *me*,' cries the Egotist of the Mountain. It is the first Canto of that great Epic, whose argument runs through so many books, that is chanted here. It is the war, the unsuccessful war of lore and nature, whose lost fields have made man's life, that is getting reviewed at last and reduced to speech and writing. It is the school itself that makes the centre of the plot in this case; these gay young philosophers with 'the ribands' yet floating in their 'cap of youth,' who oppose lore to love, who 'war against *their own affections* and THE HUGE ARMY OF THE WORLD'S DESIRES,' ere they know what they are; who think to conquer nature's potencies, her universal powers and causes, with wordy ignorance, with resolutions that ignore them simply, and make a virtue of ignoring them, these are the chief actors here, who come out of that classic tiring house where they have been shut up with the ancients so long, to celebrate on this green plot, which is life, their own defeat, and propose a better wisdom, the wisdom of the moderns. And Holofernes, the schoolmaster, who cultivates minds, and Sir Nathaniel, the curate, who cures them, and Don Armado or Don A_drama_dio, from the flowery heights of the new Belles Lettres, with the last refinement of Euphuism on his lips, and Antony Dull, and the country damsel and her swain, and the princess and her attendants, are all there to eke out and complete the philosophic design, – to exhibit the extant learning in its airy flights and gross descents, in its

ludicrous attempt to escape from those particulars or to grapple, without loss of grandeur, those particulars of which man's life consisteth. It is the vain pretension and assumption of those faulty wordy abstractions, whose falseness and failure in practice this school is going to expose elsewhere; it is the defect of those abstractions and idealisms that the Novum Organum was invented to remedy, which is exhibited so grossly and palpably here. It is the height of those great swelling words of rhetoric and logic, in rude contrast with those actualities which the history of man is always exhibiting, which the universal nature in man is always imposing on the learned and unlearned, the profane and the reverend, the courtier and the clown, the 'king and the beggar,' the actualities which the natural history of man continues perseveringly to exhibit, in the face of those logical abstractions and those ideal schemes of man as he should be, which had been till this time the fruit of learning; – those actualities, those particulars, whose lowness the new philosophy would begin with, which the new philosophy would erect into an art or science.

The foundation of this ascent is natural history. There must be nothing omitted here, or the stairs would be unsafe. The rule in this School, as stated by the Interpreter in Chief, is, 'that there be *nothing in the globe of matter*, which should not be likewise in the globe of *crystal* or *form*;' that is, he explains, 'that there should not be anything in *being* and *action*, which should not be *drawn* and *collected* into *contemplation* and *doctrine*.' The

lowness of matter, all the capabilities and actualities of speech and action, not of the refined only, but of the vulgar and profane, are included in the science which contemplates an historical result, and which proposes the *reform* of these actualities, the cure of these maladies, – which comprehends man as man in its intention, – which makes the *Common Weal* its end.

Science is the word that unlocks the books of this School, its gravest and its lightest, its books of loquacious prose and stately allegory, and its Book of Sports and Riddles. Science is the clue that still threads them, that never breaks, in all their departures from the decorums of literature, in their lowest descents from the refinements of society. The vulgarity is not *the* vulgarity of the vulgar – the inelegancy is not the spontaneous rudeness of the ill-bred – any more than its doctrine of nature is the doctrine of the unlearned. The loftiest refinements of letters, the courtliest breeding, the most exquisite conventionalities, the most regal dignities of nature, are always present in *these* works, to measure these abysses, flowering to their brink. Man as he is, booked, surveyed, – surveyed from the continent of nature, put down as he is in her book of kinds, not as he is from his own interior isolated conceptions only, – the universal powers and causes as they are developed in him, in his untaught affections, in his utmost sensuous darkness, – the universal principle instanced whereit is most buried, the cause in nature found; – man as he is, in his heights and in his depths, 'from his lowest note to the top of his key,' – man in his possibilities, in his actualities, in his

thought, in his speech, in his book language, and in his every-day words, in his loftiest lyric tongue, in his lowest pit of play-house degradation, searched out, explained, interpreted. That is the key to the books of this Academe, who carry always on their armour, visible to those who have learned their secret, but hid under the symbol of their double worship, the device of the Hunters, – the symbol of the twin-gods, – the silver bow, or the bow that finds all. 'Seeing that she beareth two persons … I do also otherwise *shadow* her.'

It is man's life, and the culture of it, erected into an art or science, that these books contain. In the lowness of the lowest, and in the aspiration of the noblest, the powers whose entire history must make the basis of a successful morality and policy are found. It is all abstracted or drawn into contemplation, 'that the precepts of cure and culture may be more rightly concluded.' 'For that which in speculative philosophy corresponds to the cause, in practical philosophy becomes the rule.'

It is not necessary to illustrate this criticism in this case, because in this case the design looks through the execution everywhere. The criticism of the Novum Organum, the criticism of the Advancement of Learning, and the criticism of Raleigh's History of the World, than which there is none finer, when once you penetrate its crust of profound erudition, is here on the surface. And the scholasticism is not more obtrusive here, the learned sock is not more ostentatiously paraded, than in some critical places in those performances; while the humour that

underlies the erudition issues from a depth of learning not less profound.

As, for instance, in this burlesque of the descent of *Euphuism* to the prosaic detail of the human conditions, not then accommodated with a style in literature, a defect in learning which this Academy proposed to remedy. A new department in literature which began with a series of papers issued from this establishment, has since undertaken to cover the ground here indicated, the *every-day* human life, and reduce it to written inquiry, notwithstanding 'the lowness of the matter.'

LETTER FROM DON ARMADO TO THE KING

King [*reads*], 'Great deputy, the welkin's vicegerent, and sole dominator of Navarre, my soul's earth's god, and body's fostering patron… So it is, – besieged with sable-coloured melancholy, I did commend the black, oppressing humour to the most wholesome physick of thy health-giving air, and, as I am a gentleman, betook myself to walk. The time when? About the sixth hour: when beasts most graze, birds best peck, and men sit down to that nourishment which is called supper.'

> [No one who is much acquainted with the style of the author of this letter ought to have any difficulty in identifying him here. There was a method of dramatic composition in use then, and not in *this* dramatic company only, which produced an amalgamation of styles. 'On

a forgotten matter,' these associated authors themselves, perhaps, could not always 'make distinction of their hands.' But there are places where Raleigh's share in this 'cry of players' shows through very palpably.]

'So much for the time *when*. Now for the ground *which*; which I mean I walked upon: it is ycleped thy park. Then for the place where; where I mean I did encounter that obscene and most preposterous event, that draweth from my snow-white pen the ebon-coloured ink, which here thou beholdest, surveyest, or seest, etc…

'Thine in all compliments of devoted and heart-burning heat of duty.

'DON ADRIANO DE ARMADO.'

And in another letter from the same source, the dramatic criticism on that style of literature which it was the intention of this School 'to reform altogether' is thus continued.

… 'The magnanimous and most illustrate King *Cophetua*, set eye upon the pernicious and indubitate beggar *Zenelophon*. And it was he that might rightly say, *Veni, vidi, vici*; which to *anatomise* in the vulgar, (*O base and obscure vulgar*!) *Videlicet*, he came, saw, and overcame… Who came? the king. Why did he come? to see. Why did he see? to overcome. To whom came he? to the beggar. What saw he? the beggar. Who overcame he? the beggar. The conclusion is victory. On whose side? etc.

'Thine in the dearest design of industry.'

[Dramatic comment.]

_Boyet. I am much deceived but I remember the style.

Princess. Else your memory is bad going o'er it erewhile._

Jaquenetta. Good Master Parson, be so good as to read me this letter – it was sent me from Don *Armatho*: I beseech you to read it.

Holofernes. [Speaking here, however, not in character but for 'the *Academe*.'] *Fauste precor gelida quando pecus omne sub umbra Ruminat*, and so forth. Ah, good old Mantuan! I may speak of thee as the traveller doth of Venice

– Vinegia, Vinegia,

Chi non te vede, ei non te pregia.

Old Mantuan! Old Mantuan! Who understandeth thee not, *loves thee not. – Ut re sol la mi fa. – Under pardon*, Sir, what are THE CONTENTS? or, rather, as Horace says in his – What, my soul, *verses*?

Nath. Ay, Sir, and *very learned* [one would say so *upon examination*].

Hol. Let me have a *staff*, a stanza, a verse; *Lege Domine*.

Nath. [Reads the 'verses.'] – 'If love make me forsworn,' etc.

Hol. You *find not the apostrophe*, and *so – miss* the *accent*– [criticising the reading. It is necessary to find the *apostrophe* in the verses of this Academy, before you can give the accent correctly; there are other points which require to be noted also, in this refined courtier's writings, as this criticism will inform

us]. Let me *supervise* the canzonet. Here *are only numbers* ratified, but for the elegancy, facility, and golden cadency of poesy, *caret*. *Ovidius Naso* was the man. And *why*, indeed, Naso; but for *smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy*, the *jerks of invention*. *Imitari* is nothing; so doth the hound his master, the ape his keeper, the tired horse his rider. [It was no such reading and writing as *that* which this Academy was going to countenance, or teach.] But, Damosella, was this directed to you?

Jaq. Ay, Sir, from one Monsieur Biron, one of the strange queen's lords.

Hol. I will *over-glance* the *super-script*. 'To the snow white hand of the most beauteous lady *Rosaline*.' I will look again *on the intellect* of the letter for the *nomination* of the party writing, *to the person written unto* (*Rosaline*). – [*Look again*. – That is the rule for the reading of letters issued from this Academy, whether they come in Don Armado's name or another's, when the point is *not* to 'miss the *accent*.'] 'Your ladyship's, in all desired employment, BIRON.' Sir Nathaniel, this Biron is one of the votaries with the king, and here he hath framed a *letter* to a *sequent* of the stranger queen's, which, *accidentally or by way of progression*, hath miscarried. Trip and go, my sweet; deliver this paper into the *royal hand of the king. It may concern much*. Stay not thy compliment, I forgive thy duty. *Adieu*.

Nath. Sir, you have done this in the fear of God, very religiously; and as a certain father saith —

Hol. Sir, tell me not of *the father*, I do fear colorable colors.

But to return to *the verses*. Did they please you, Sir Nathaniel?

Nath. Marvellous well *for the pen*.

Hol. I *dine* to-day at the _father's _of a certain pupil of *mine*, where, if before repast, it shall please you to gratify the table with a grace, I will, on my privilege I have with the parent of the foresaid child, or pupil, undertake your *ben venuto, where I will prove* those *verses to be very unlearned*, neither savouring of poetry, wit, nor invention. I beseech *your society*.

Nath. And thank you, too; for *society* (saith the text) is *the happiness of* LIFE.

Hol. And, *certes*, the text *most infallibly concludes it*. – Sir, [to Dull] I do *invite you too*, [to hear the verses ex-criticised] you *shall not* say me *nay: pauca verba. Away*; the *gentles are at their games*, and we will *to our recreation*.

Another part of the *same*. After dinner.

Re-enter Holofernes, Sir Nathaniel, and Dull.

Hol. Satis quod sufficit.

Nath. I praise God for you, Sir: your *reasons* at dinner have been *sharp and sententious*; pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection, audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy. I did converse this *quondam* day with a companion of the king's, who is intituled, nominated, or called Don Adriano de Armado.

Hol. *Novi hominem tanquam te*. His manner is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, and his general behaviour, vain, ridiculous and thrasonical. He is too

picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, and, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it.

Nath. A most singular and choice epithet! [Takes out his table-book.]

Hol. He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the *staple of his argument*, ['More matter with less art,' says the queen in Hamlet], I abhor such *fantastical phantasms*, such insociable and *point device* companions, such rackers of orthography, as to speak doubt *fine* when *he should say doubt*, etc. This is abhominable which he would call abominable; it insinuateth me of insanie; *Ne intelligis, domine*? to make frantic, lunatic.

Nath. Lans deo bone intelligo.

Hol. Bone – bone for bene: *Priscian, a little scratched 'twill serve*. [This was never meant to be printed of course; all this is understood to have been prepared only for a performance in 'a booth.']

Enter Armado, etc.

Nath. Videsne quis venit?

Ho. Video et gaudeo.

Arm. Chirra!

Hol. Quare Chirra not Sirrah!

But the first appearance of these two *book-men*, as *Dull* takes leave them to call them in this scene, is not less to the purpose. They come in with Antony Dull, who serves as a foil to their learning; from the moment that they open their lips they speak 'in character,' and they do not proceed far before they give us

some hints of the author's purpose.

Nath. Very *reverent sport* truly, and done *in the testimony of a good conscience*.

Hol. The deer was, as you know, in *sanguis*, ripe as a pomewater, who *now hangeth like a jewel in the ear of Coelo*, the sky, the welkin, the heaven, and *anon falleth like a crab on the face of terra*– the soil, the land, the earth. [A-side glance at the heights and depths of the incongruities which are the subject here.]

Nath. Truly, Master Holofernes, the epithets are sweetly varied, like a scholar at the least, but, etc…

Hol. Most *barbarous* intimation! [referring to Antony Dull, who has been trying to understand this learned language, and apply it to the subject of conversation, but who fails in the attempt, very much to the amusement and self-congratulation of these scholars]. Yet a *kind* of *insinuation*, as it were, *in via, in way of explication* [a style much in use in this school], *facere*, as it were, replication, or rather *ostentare*, to show, as it were, *his inclination*, after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or rather unlettered, or ratherest unconfirmed fashion, – to insert again my *haud credo* for a deer… Twice sod simplicity, *bis coctus!* Oh *thou monster ignorance*, how deformed dost thou look!

Nath. [explaining] Sir, *he hath never fed of the dainties bred in a book*; he hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink; *his intellect* is not replenished; he is only an animal – only

sensible in the duller parts;

And such *barren* plants are set before us that we thankful should be, (Which we of taste and feeling are) for those parts that do fructify in us more than he.

For *as it would ill become me* to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool, So were there *a patch set on learning* to see HIM in a *school*. [That would be a new 'school,' a new 'learning,' patching the 'defect' (as it would be called elsewhere) in the old.]

Dull. You two are book-men. Can you tell me by your wit, etc.

Nath. A rare talent.

Dull. If a talent be a claw, look how he claws him with a talent.

Hol. This is a gift that I have; simple, simple; a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions: But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute, and I am thankful for it.

Nath. Sir, I praise the Lord for you, and so may my parishioners; for their sons are well tutored by you, and their daughters profit very greatly under you; you are a good member of the COMMON-WEALTH.

He is in earnest of course. Is the Poet so too?

'What is the end of study?' – let me know.

'O they have lived long in the alms-basket of WORDS,' is the criticism on this learning with which this showman, whoever he may he, explains his exhibition of it. And surely he must be, indeed, of the school of Antony Dull, and never fed with the dainties bred in a book, who does not see what it is that is

criticised here; – that it is the learning of an unlearned time, of a barbarous time, of a vain, frivolous debased, wretched time, that has been fed long – always from "the alms-basket of words." And one who is acquainted already with the style of this school, who knows already its secret signs and stamp, would not need to be told to look again on the intellect of the letter for the nomination of the party writing, to the person written to, in order to see what source this pastime comes from, – what player it is that is behind the scene here. 'Whoe'er he be, he bears a mounting mind,' and beginning in the lowness of the actual, and collecting the principles that are in all actualities, the true forms that are forms in nature, and not in man's speech only, the new IDEAS of the New Academy, the ideas that are powers, with these 'simples' that are causes, he will reconstruct fortuitous conjunctions, he will make his poems in facts; he will find his Fairy Land in her kingdom whose iron chain he wears.

'The gentles were at their games,' and the soul of new ages was beginning its re-creations.

For this is but the beginning of that 'Armada' that this Don Armado – who fights with sword and pen, in ambush and in the open field – will sweep his old enemy from the seas with yet.

> O like a book of sports thou'lt read me o'er,
> But there's more in me than thou'lt understand.
>
> Look how the father's face
> Lives in his issue; even so the race

Of Shake-spear's mind and *manners* brightly *shines*
In his *well turn'd* and *true filed lines*,
In each of which he seems to *shake* a *lance*,
As *brandished* in the eyes of – [what? –]*Ignorance!*

BEN JONSON.

Ignorance!– yes, that was the word.

It is the Prince of that little Academe that sits in the Tower here now. It is in the Tower that that little Academe holds its 'conferences' now. There is a little knot of men of science who contrive to meet there. The associate of Raleigh's studies, the partner of his plans and toils for so many years, *Hariot*, too scientific for his age, is one of these. It is in the Tower that Raleigh's school is kept now. The English youth, the hope of England, follow this teacher still. 'Many young gentlemen still resort to him.' Gilbert Harvey is one of this school. 'None but *my father* would keep such a bird in such a cage,' cries *one* of them – that Prince of Wales through whom the bloodless revolution was to have been accomplished; and a Queen seeks his aid and counsel there still.

It is in the Tower now that we must look for the sequel of that holiday performance of the school. It is the genius that had made its game of that old *love's* labour's lost that is at work here still, still bent on making a lore of life and love, still ready to spend its rhetoric on things, and composing its metres with them.

Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his shade,

When in eternal lines to *time* thou growest.

He is building and manning new ships in his triumphant fleet. But they are more warlike than they were. The papers that this Academe issues now have the stamp of the Tower on them. 'The golden shower,' that 'flowed from his fruitful head of his love's praise' flows no more. Fierce bitter things are flung forth from that retreat of learning, while the kingly nature has not yet fully mastered its great wrongs. The 'martial hand' is much used in the compositions of this school indeed for a long time afterwards.

Fitter perhaps to thunder martial stower

When thee so list thy tuneful thoughts to raise, said the partner of his verse long before.

With *rage*

Or *influence chide* or *cheer* the drooping stage,

says *his* protegé.

It was while this arrested soldier of the human emancipation sat amid his books and papers, in old Julius Caesar's Tower, or in the Tower of that Conqueror, 'commonly so called,' that the 'readers of the wiser sort' found, 'thrown in at their *study windows*,' writings, *as if* they came 'from *several citizens*, wherein *Caesar's ambition was obscurely glanced at*' and thus the whisper of the Roman Brutus 'pieced them out.'

Brutus *thou sleep'st*; awake, and *see thyself*.

Shall *Rome* [soft – '*thus must I piece it out*.']
Shall *Rome* stand under *one man's awe*? *What* Rome?

* * * * *

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves that we are underlings.

* * * * *

Age, *thou* art shamed.

It was while he sat there, that the audiences of that player who was bringing forth, on 'the banks of Thames,' such wondrous things out of his treasury then, first heard the Roman foot upon their stage, and the long-stifled, and pent-up speech of English freedom, bursting from the old Roman patriot's lips.

Cassius. And let us swear our resolution.

Brutus. *No*, not an oath: If not the face of men, The sufferance of our soul's, the time's abuse, If these be motives weak, break off betimes, And every man hence to his idle bed; *So* let high-sighted tyranny range on, Till *each man drop by lottery*.

It was while he sat there, that the player who did not *write* his speeches, said —

Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass, Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron, Can be retentive to the strength of spirit; If I know this, know *all the world beside*, That part of tyranny that *I* do bear, *I* can shake off at pleasure.

And why should Caesar be a tyrant then? *Poor Man*! I know he would not be a wolf, But that he sees the *Romans* are but sheep: *He* were no lion, were not *Romans* hinds.

But I, perhaps, speak *this*
Before a willing bondman.

Hamlet. My lord, – you played once in the university, you say?

Polonius. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Hamlet. And what did you enact?

Polonius. I did enact *Julius Caesar*. I was killed i'the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Hamlet. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. – Be the players ready?

Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ, and the liberty. *These* are the only *men*.

Hamlet. Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guild. O my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Hamlet. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this

pipe?

Guild. My lord, I cannot.

Hamlet. I pray you.

Guild. Believe me, I cannot.

Hamlet. I do beseech you.

Guild. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Hamlet. 'Tis as *easy as lying*. *Govern* these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, *and it will discourse most eloquent music*. Look you, *these are the stops*.

Guild. But *these* cannot *I* command to any *utterance of harmony: I have not the* SKILL.

Hamlet. Why, look you now, how *unworthy a thing* you make of ME? You would *play upon* ME; *you would seem* to know *my stops*; you would pluck out the heart of MY MYSTERY; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my key; and there is much *music*, excellent voice in *this little organ, yet* cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood! do you think I AM EASIER TO BE PLAYED ON THAN A PIPE? Call me what *instrument* you will, though you can *fret* me, you cannot PLAY upon me.

Hamlet. Why did you laugh when I said, *Man* delights not me?

Guild. To think, my lord, if you delight not in *man*, what lenten entertainment THE PLAYERS shall receive from you. We coted them on the way, and thither are they coming to offer you – SERVICE.

BOOK I.
THE ELIZABETHAN ART OF DELIVERY AND TRADITION

PART I.
MICHAEL DE MONTAIGNE'S 'PRIVATE AND RETIRED ARTS.'

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlaces and with assays of bias,
By indirections, find directions out;
So by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you, my son. —Hamlet.

CHAPTER I

ASCENT FROM PARTICULARS TO THE 'HIGHEST PARTS OF SCIENCES,' BY THE ENIGMATIC METHOD ILLUSTRATED

> Single, *I'll* resolve you. —*Tempest.*
> Observe his inclination in yourself. —*Hamlet.*

For ciphers, they are commonly in letters, but may be in words. *Advancement of Learning*.

The fact that a Science of Practice, not limited to Physics and the Arts based on the knowledge of physical laws, but covering the whole ground of the human activity, and limited only by the want and faculty of man, required, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, some special and profoundly artistic methods of 'delivery and tradition,' would not appear to need much demonstration to one acquainted with the peculiar features of that particular crisis in the history of the English nation.

And certainly any one at all informed in regard to the condition of the world at the time in which this science, – which is the new practical science of the modern ages, – makes its first appearance in history, – any one who knows what kind of a public opinion, what amount of intelligence in the common mind the very fact of the first appearance of such a science on the stage of the human affairs presupposes, – any one who will stop to

consider what kind of a public it was to which such a science had need as yet to address itself, when that engine for the diffusion of knowledge, which has been battering the ignorance and stupidity of the masses of men ever since, was as yet a novel invention, when all the learning of the world was still the learning of the cell and the cloister, when the practice of the world was still in all departments, unscientific, – any one at least who will stop to consider the nature of the 'preconceptions' which a science that is none other than the universal science of practice, must needs encounter in its principal and nobler fields, will hardly need to be told that if produced at all under such conditions, it must needs be produced covertly. Who does not know, beforehand, that such a science would have to concede virtually, for a time, the whole ground of its nobler fields to the preoccupations it found on them, as the inevitable condition of its entrance upon the stage of the human affairs in any capacity, as the basis of any toleration of its claim to dictate to the men of practice in any department of their proceedings.

That that little 'courtly company' of Elizabethan scholars, in which this great enterprise for the relief of man's estate was supposed in their own time to have had its origin, was composed of wits and men of learning who were known, in their own time, to have concealed their connection with the works on which their literary fame chiefly depended – that that 'glorious Willy,' who finds these forbidden fields of science all open to his pastime, was secretly claimed by this company – that a style of 'delivery'

elaborately enigmatical, borrowed in part from the invention of the ancients, and the more recent use of the middle ages, but largely modified and expressly adapted to this exigency, was employed in the compositions of this school, both in prose and verse, a style capable of conveying not merely a double, but a triple significance; a style so capacious in its concealments, so large in its '*cryptic*,' as to admit without limitation the whole scope of this argument, and so involved as to conceal in its involutions, all that was then forbidden to appear, – this has been proved in that part of the work which contains the historical key to this delivery.

We have also incontestable historical evidence of the fact, that the man who was at the head of this new conjunction in speculation and practice in its more immediate historical developments, – the scholar who was most openly concerned in his own time in the introduction of those great changes in the condition of the world, which date their beginning from this time, was himself primarily concerned in the invention of this art. That this great political chief, this founder of new polities and inventor of new social arts, who was at the same time the founder of a new school in philosophy, was understood in his own time to have found occasion for the use of such an art, in his oral as well as in his written communications with his school; – that he was connected with a scientific association, which was known to have concealed under the profession of a curious antiquarian research, an inquiry into the higher parts of sciences which the

government of that time was not disposed to countenance; – that in the opinion of persons who had the best opportunity of becoming acquainted with the facts at the time, this inventor of the art was himself beheaded, chiefly on account of the discovery of his use of it in one of his gravest literary works; – all this has been produced already, as matter of historic record merely. All this remains in the form of detailed contemporary statement, which suffices to convey, if not the fact that the forbidden parts of sciences were freely handled in the discussions of this school, and not in their secret oral discussions only, but in their great published works, – if not that, at least the fact that such was the impression and belief of persons living at the time, whether any ground existed for it or not.

But the arts by which these new men of science contrived to evade the ignorance and the despotic limitations of their time, the inventions with which they worked to such good purpose upon their own time, in spite of its restrictions and oppositions, and which enable them to 'outstretch their span,' and prolong and perpetuate their plan for the advancement of their kind, and compel the future ages to work with them to the fulfilment of its ends; – the arts by which these great original naturalists undertook to transfer in all their unimpaired splendour and worth, the collections they had made in the nobler fields of their science to the ages that would be able to make use of them; – these are the arts that we shall have need to master, if we would unlock the legacy they have left to us.

The proof of the existence of this special art of delivery and tradition, and the definition of the objects for which it was employed, has been derived thus far chiefly from sources of evidence exterior to the works themselves; but the inventors of it and those who made use of it in their own speech and writings, are undoubtedly the persons best qualified to give us authentic and lively information on this subject; and we are now happily in a position to appreciate the statements which they have been at such pains to leave us, for the sake of clearing up those parts of their discourse which were necessarily obscured at the time. Now that we have in our hands that key of *Times* which they have recommended to our use, that knowledge of times which 'gives great light in many cases to true interpretations,' it is not possible any longer to overlook these passages, or to mistake their purport.

But before we enter upon the doctrine of Art which was published in the first great recognized work of this philosophy, it will be necessary to produce here some extracts from a book which was not originally published in England, or in the English language, but one which was brought out here as an exotic, though it is in fact one of the great original works of this school, and one of its boldest and most successful issues; a work in which the new grounds of the actual experience and life of men, are not merely inclosed and propounded for written inquiry, but openly occupied. This is not the place to explain this fact, though the continental relations of this school, and other circumstances already referred to in the life of its founder, will serve to throw

some light upon it; but on account of the bolder assertions which the particular form of writing and publication rendered possible in this case, and for the sake also of the more lively exhibition of the art itself which accompanies and illustrates these assertions in this instance, it appears on the whole excusable to commence our study of the special Art for the delivery and tradition of knowledge in those departments which science was then forbidden on pain of death to enter, with that exhibition of it which is contained in this particular work, trusting to the progress of the extracts themselves to apologize to the intelligent reader for any thing which may seem to require explanation in this selection.

It is only necessary to premise, that this work is one of the many works of this school, in which a grave, profoundly scientific design is concealed under the disguise of a gay, popular, attractive form of writing, though in this case the audience is from the first to a certain extent select. It has no platform that takes in – as the plays do, with their more glaring attractions and their lower and broader range of inculcation, – the populace. There is no pit in this theatre. It is throughout a book for men of liberal culture; but it is a book for the world, and for men of the world, and not for the cloister merely, and the scholar. But this, too, has its differing grades of readers, from its outer court of lively pastime and brilliant aimless chat to that *esoteric* chamber, where the abstrusest parts of sciences are waiting for those who will accept the clues, and patiently ascend to them.

The work is popular in its form, but it is inwoven throughout with a thread of lurking meanings so near the surface, and at times so boldly obtruded, that it is difficult to understand how it could ever have been read at all without occasioning the inquiry which it was intended to occasion under certain conditions, but which it was necessary for this society to ward off from their works, except under these limitations, at the time when they were issued. For these inner meanings are everywhere pointed and emphasized with the most bold and vivid illustration, which lies on the surface of the work, in the form of stories, often without any apparent relevance in that exterior connection – brought in, as it would seem, in mere caprice or by the loosest threads of association. They lie, with the 'allegations' which accompany them, strewn all over the surface of the work, like 'trap' on 'sandstone,' telling their story to the scientific eye, and beckoning the philosophic explorer to that primeval granite of sciences that their vein will surely lead to. But the careless observer, bent on recreation, observes only a pleasing feature in the landscape, one that breaks happily its threatened dulness; the reader, reading this book as *books* are wont to be read, finds nothing in this phenomenon to excite his curiosity. And the author knows him and his ways so well, that he is able to foresee that result, and is not afraid to trust to it in the case of those whose scrutiny he is careful to avoid. For he is one who counts largely on the carelessness, or the indifference, or the stupidity of those whom he addresses. There is no end to his confidence in that.

He is perpetually staking his life on it. Neither is he willing to trust to the clues which these unexplained stories might seem of themselves to offer to the studious eye, to engage the attention of the reader – the reader whose attention he is bent on securing. Availing himself of one of those nooks of discourse, which he is at no loss for the means of creating when the purpose of his *essaie* requires it, he beckons the confidential reader aside, and thus explains his method to him, outright, in terms which admit of but one construction. 'Neither these stories,' he says, 'nor my allegations do always serve simply for example, authority, or ornament; I do not only regard them for the use I make of them; they carry sometimes, *besides what I apply them to*, the seeds of a richer and bolder matter, and sometimes, *collaterally, a more delicate sound*, both to me myself, – who will say no more about it *in this place*' [we shall hear more of it in another place, however, and where the delicate collateral sounds will not be wanting] – 'both to me myself, and *to others who happen to be of my ear*.'

To the reader, who does indeed happen to be of his ear, to one who has read the 'allegations' and stories that he speaks of, and the whole work, and the works connected with it, by means of that knowledge of the inner intention, and of the method to which he alludes, this passage would of course convey no new intelligence. But will the reader, to whom the views here presented are yet too new to seem credible, endeavour to imagine or invent for himself any form of words, in which the claim already made in regard to the style in which the great original

writers of this age and the founders of the new science of the human life were compelled to infold their doctrine, could have been, in the case of this one at least, more distinctly asserted. Here is proof that one of them, one who counted on an *audience* too, did find himself compelled to infold his richer and bolder meanings in the manner described. All that need be claimed at present in regard to the authorship of this sentence is, that it is written by one whose writings, in their higher intention, have ceased to be understood, for lack of the '*ear*' to which his bolder and richer meanings are addressed, for lack of the *ear*, to which the collateral and more delicate sounds which his words sometimes carry with them are perceptible; and that it is written by a philosopher whose learning and aims and opinions, down to the slightest points of detail, are absolutely identical with those of the principal writers of this school.

But let us look at a few of the stories which he ventures to introduce so emphatically, selecting only such as can be told in a sentence or two. Let us take the next one that follows this explanation – the story in the very next paragraph to it. The question is *apparently* of Cicero, of his style, of his vanity, of his supposed care for his *fame* in future ages, of his *real disposition and objects*.

'Away with that eloquence that so enchants us with its *harmony*, that we should more study it than *things*' [what new soul of philosophy is this, then, already?] – 'unless you will affirm that of *Cicero* to be of so supreme perfection as to form *a body* of

itself. And of him, I shall further add one story we read of to this purpose, wherein *his nature* will *much more manifestly be laid open to us*' [than in that seeming care for his fame in future ages, or in that lower object of style, just dismissed so scornfully].

'He was to make an oration in public, and found himself a little straitened *in time*, to *fit his words to his mouth as he had a mind to do*, when *Eros*, one of his slaves, brought him word that the *audience was deferred* till the next day, at which he was so ravished with joy that *he enfranchised him*.'

The word 'time' – here admits of a double rendering whereby the *author's* aims are more manifestly laid open; and there is also another word in this sentence which carries a 'delicate sound' with it, to those who have met this author in other fields, and who happen to be of his counsel. But lest the stories of themselves should still seem flat and pointless, or trivial and insignificant to the uninstructed ear, it may be necessary to interweave them with some further 'allegations on this subject,' which the author assumes, or appears to assume, in his own person.

'I write my book for *few men*, and for *few years*. Had it been *matter of duration*, I should have put it into a *better language*. According to the continual variation that ours has been subject to hitherto [and we know who had a similar view on this point], who can expect that the present *form of language* should be in use fifty years hence. It slips every day through our fingers; and since I was born, is altered above one half. We say that it is now perfect: *every age says the same of the language it speaks*. I shall

hardly trust to that so long as it runs away and *changes* as it does.

"Tis for good and useful writings to nail and rivet it to them, and its reputation will go *according to the fortune of our state. For which reason, I am not afraid to insert herein several private articles, which will spend their use amongst the men now living*, AND THAT CONCERN THE PARTICULAR KNOWLEDGE OF SOME WHO WILL SEE FURTHER INTO THEM THAN THE COMMON READER.' But that the inner reading of these private articles – that reading which lay farther in – to which he invites the attention of those whom it concerns – was not expected to spend its use among the men then living, that which follows might seem to imply. It was that wrapping of them, it was that gross superscription which 'the fortune of our state was likely to make obsolete ere long,' this author thought, as we shall see if we look into his prophecies a little. 'I will not, after all, as I often hear dead men spoken of, that men should say of *me*: "He *judged*, and LIVED SO and SO. Could he have spoken when he was dying, he would have said *so* or *so*. I knew him better than any."

> 'So *our* virtues
> Lie in the interpretation of the times,'

'says the unfortunate Tullus Aufidius, in the act of conducting a Volscian army against the infant Roman state, bemoaning himself upon the conditions of his historic whereabouts,

and beseeching the sympathy and favourable constructions of posterity —

> So our virtues
> Lie in the interpretation of the times;
> And power unto itself most commendable
> Hath not a tomb so evident as a hair
> To extol what it hath done.

'The times,' says Lord Bacon, speaking in reference to books particularly, though *he* also recommends the same key for the reading of lives, 'the times in many cases give *great light* to true interpretations.'

'Now as much as decency permits,' continues the other, anticipating *here* that speech which he might be supposed to have been anxious to make in defence of his posthumous reputation, could he have spoken when he was dying, and forestalling that criticism which he foresaw – that odious criticism of posterity on the discrepancy between *his life* and *his judgment*– 'Now as much as decency permits, I *here* discover my inclinations and affections. *If any observe*, he will find that *I have either told or designed to tell* ALL. *What I cannot express I point out with my finger*.

'There was never greater circumspection and *military prudence* than sometimes is seen among US; can it be that men are afraid to lose themselves by the way, *that they reserve themselves to the end of the game*?'

'There needs no more but to see a man promoted to dignity, though we knew him but three days before a man of no mark, yet an image of grandeur and ability insensibly steals into our opinion, and we persuade ourselves that growing in reputation and attendants, he is also increased in merit': —

Hamlet. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord. Hercules and his load too.

Hamlet. It is not very strange; for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mouths at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something *in this, more* than *natural* [talking of the _super_natural], *if philosophy could find it out*.

'But,' our prose philosopher, whose mind is running much on the same subjects, continues 'if it happens so that he [this favourite of fortune] falls again, and is mixed with the common crowd, every one inquires with wonder into the *cause* of his having been hoisted so high. *Is it he*? say they: did he know no more than this *when he was in* PLACE?' ['change *places* … robes and furred gowns hide all.'] Do *princes* satisfy *themselves* with so little? *Truly we were in good hands*! That which I myself adore in kings, is [note it] *the crowd of the adorers*. All reverence and submission is due to them, *except that of the understanding*; my *reason* is not to bow and bend, 'tis my *knees*' 'I will not do't' says another, who is in this one's counsels,

I will not do't
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
And by my body's action, teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.

Coriolanus.

'Antisthenes one day entreated *the Athenians to give orders that their asses might be employed in tilling the ground*, – to which it was answered, "that *those animals were not destined to such a service*." "That's all one," replied he; "it only sticks at your command; for the most ignorant and incapable men you employ *in your commands of war*, immediately become worthy enough *because*– YOU EMPLOY THEM."'

There mightst thou behold the great image of authority. A dog's obeyed in office. – Lear.

For thou dost know, oh Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here,
A very – very —*Peacock*.
Horatio. You might have rhymed. Hamlet.

'to which,' continues this political philosopher, – that is, to which preceding anecdote – containing such unflattering intimations with regard to the obstinacy of nature, in the limits she has set to the practical abilities of those *animals*, not enlarging their natural gifts out of respect to the Athenian

selection (an anecdote which supplies a rhyme to Hamlet's verse, and to many others from the same source) – '*to which the custom of so many people*, who canonize the KINGS they have chosen *out of their own body*, and are not content only to honour, but adore them, *comes very near. Those of Mexico* [for instance, it would not of course do to take any nearer home], after the ceremonies of *their* king's coronation are finished, *dare no more look him in the face*; but, as if they *deified* him by his royalty, *among* the oaths they make him take to *maintain their religion and laws*, to be valiant, just and mild; he moreover swears, —*to make the sun run his course in his wonted light, – to drain the clouds at a fit season, – to confine rivers within their channels, – and to cause all things necessary for his people to be borne by the earth*.' '(They told me I was everything. But when the rain came to wet me once, when the wind would not peace at my bidding,' says Lear, 'there I found them, there I smelt them out.)' This, in connection with the preceding anecdote, to which, in the opinion of this author, it comes properly so very near, may be classed of itself among the suggestive stories above referred to; but the bearing of these quotations upon the particular question of style, which must determine the selection here, is set forth in that which follows.

It should be stated, however, that in a preceding paragraph, the author has just very pointedly expressed it as his opinion, that men who are supposed, by common consent, to be so far above the rest of mankind in their single virtue and judgment,

that they are permitted to govern them at their discretion, should by no means undertake to maintain that view, by exhibiting that supposed kingly and divine faculty in the way of *speech* or *argument*; thus putting themselves on a level with their subjects, and by meeting them on their own ground, with their own weapons, giving occasion for comparisons, perhaps not altogether favourable to that theory of a superlative and divine difference which the doctrine of a divine right to rule naturally presupposes. 'For,' he says, 'neither is it enough for those *who govern and command us, and have all the world in their hand*, to have a common understanding, and to be able to do what the rest can' [their faculty of judgment must match their position, for if it be only a common one, the difference will make it despised]: 'they are very much below us, if they be not *infinitely above us*. And, therefore, *silence* is to them not only a countenance of respect and gravity, but very often of good profit and policy too; for, Megabysus going to see *Apelles* in his *painting* room, stood a great while without speaking a word, and at last began to talk of his paintings, for which he received this rude reproof. '*Whilst thou wast silent*, thou seemedst to be something great, by reason of thy chains and pomp; *but now that we have heard thee speak*, there is not the meanest boy in my shop that does not despise thee.' But after the author's subsequent reference to 'those animals' that were to be made competent by a vote of the Athenian people for the work of their superiors, to which he adds the custom of people who canonize the kings they have chosen

out of their own body, which comes so near, he goes on thus: —*I differ from this common fashion*, and am more apt to suspect capacity when I see it accompanied with grandeur of fortune and *public applause*. We are to consider of what advantage it is, *to speak when one pleases, to choose the subject one will speak of*– [an advantage not common with authors then] – TO INTERRUPT OR CHANGE OTHER MEN'S ARGUMENTS, WITH A MAGISTERIAL AUTHORITY, to protect oneself from the opposition of others, by a nod, a smile, or silence, in the presence of an assembly that trembles with reverence and respect. *A man of a prodigious fortune*, coming to give his judgment upon some slight dispute that was foolishly set on foot at his *table*, began in these words: – 'It can only be a liar or a fool that will say otherwise than so and so.' '*Pursue this philosophical point with a dagger in your hand*.'

Here is an author who does contrive to pursue his philosophical points, however, dagger or no dagger, wherever they take him. By putting himself into the trick of singularity, and affecting to be a mere compound of eccentricities and oddities, neither knowing nor caring what it is that he is writing about, and dashing at haphazard into anything as the fit takes him, – 'Let us e'en fly at anything,' says Hamlet, – by assuming, in short, the disguise of the elder Brutus; and, on account of a similar necessity, there is no saying what he cannot be allowed to utter with impunity. Under such a cover it is, that he inserts the passages already quoted, which have lain to this hour

without attracting the attention of critics, unpractised happily, and unlearned also, in the subtleties which tyrannies – such tyrannies – at least generate; and under this cover it is, that he can venture now on those astounding political disquisitions, which he connects with the complaint of the restrictions and embarrassments which the presence of a man of prodigious fortune at the table occasions, when an argument, trivial or otherwise, happens to be going on there. Under this cover, he can venture to bring in here, in this very connection, and to the very table, even of this man of prodigious fortune, pages of the freest political discussion, containing already the finest analysis of the existing political 'situation,' so full of dark and lurid portent, to the eye of the scientific statesman, to whom, even then, already under the most intolerable restrictions of despotism, of the two extremes of social evil, that which appeared to be the most terrible, and the most to be guarded against, in the inevitable political changes then at hand, was – not the consolidation but the dissolution of the state.

For already the horizon of that political oversight included, not the eventualities of the English Revolutions only, but the darker contingencies of those later political and social convulsions, from whose soundless whirlpools, men spring with joy to the hardest sharpest ledge of tyranny; or hail with joy and national thanksgiving the straw that offers to land them on it. Already the scientific statesman of the Elizabethan age could say, casting an eye over Christendom as it stood then, 'That which most

threatens us is, not an *alteration* in the entire and solid mass, but its *dissipation* and *divulsion*.'

It is after pages of the freest philosophical discussion, that he arrives at this conclusion – discussion, in which the historical elements and powers are for the first time scientifically recognized and treated throughout with the hand of the new master. For this is a philosopher, who is able to receive into his philosophy the fact, that out of the most depraved and vicious social materials, by the inevitable operation of the universal natural laws, there will, perhaps, result a social adhesion and predominance of powers – a social 'whole,' more capable of maintaining itself than any that Plato or Aristotle, from the heights of their abstractions, could have invented for them. He ridicules, indeed, those ideal politics of antiquity as totally unfit for practical realisation, and admits that though the question as to that which is absolutely the best form of government might be of some value *in a new world*, the basis of all alterations in existing governments should be the fact, that we take a world already formed to certain customs, and do not beget it, as Pyrrha or Cadmus did theirs, and by what means soever we may have the privilege to rebuild and reform it anew, we can hardly *writhe it* from its wonted bent, but we shall *break all*. For the subtlest principles of the philosophy of things are introduced into this discussion, and the boldest applications of the Shakspere muse are repeated in it.

'That is the way to *lay all flat*,' cries the philosophic poet

in the Roman play, opposing on the part of the Conservatist, the violence of an oppressed people, struggling for new forms of government, and bringing out fully, along with their claims, the anti-revolutionary side of the question. 'That which tempts me out on these journeys,' continues this foreign philosopher, speaking in his usual ambiguous terms of his rambling excursive habits and eccentricities of proceedings, glancing also, perhaps, at his outlandish tastes – 'that which tempts me out on these journeys, is *unsuitableness to the present manners of* OUR STATE. *I* could easily console myself with this corruption in reference to the *public interest*, but not to *my own: I* am *in particular* too much oppressed: – for, *in my neighbourhood* we are of late by *the long libertinage of our civil wars grown old* in so *riotous a form of state*, that in earnest *'tis a wonder how it can subsist.* In fine, I see by our example, that the society of men is maintained and held together *at what price soever; in what condition soever they are placed they will close and stick together* [see the doctrine of things and their original powers in the "Novum Organum"] —*moving and heaping up themselves, as uneven bodies, that shuffled together without order, find of themselves means to unite and settle*. King Philip mustered up a rabble of the most wicked and incorrigible rascals he could pick out, and put them altogether in a city which he had built for that purpose, which bore their name; I believe that they, even from vices, erected a government among them, and a commodious and just society.'

'Nothing presses so hard upon a state as innovation'; and let the reader note here, how the principle which has predominated historically in the English Revolution, the principle which the fine Frankish, half Gallic genius, with all its fire and artistic faculty, could not strike instinctively or empirically, in its political experiments – it is well to note, how this distinctive element of the *English* Revolution – that revolution which is still in progress, with its remedial vitalities – already speaks beforehand, from the lips of this foreign Elizabethan Revolutionist. 'Nothing presses so hard upon a state as innovation; change only gives form to injustice and tyranny. WHEN ANY PIECE IS OUT OF ORDER IT MAY BE PROPPED, one may prevent and take care that the *decay and corruption* NATURAL TO ALL THINGS, do not carry us too far from *our beginnings and principles*; but to undertake to found so great a mass anew, and to change the foundations of so vast a building, is for them to do who to *make clean, efface*, who would reform particular defects by a universal confusion, and cure diseases by *death*.' Surely, one may read in good Elizabethan English passages which savor somewhat of this policy. One would say that the principle was in fact identical, as, for instance, in this case. 'Sir Francis Bacon (who was always for moderate counsels), when one was speaking of such a reformation of the Church of England, as would in effect make it *no church*, said thus to him: – 'Sir, the subject we talk of is the *eye* of England, and if there be a speck or two in the eye, we endeavour to take them off; but he were a strange oculist who

would pull out the eye.' [And here is another writer who seems to be taking, on this point and others, very much the same view of the constitution and vitality of states, about these times: —

> He's a disease that must be cut away.
> Oh, he's a limb that has but a disease;
> Mortal to cut it off; to cure it, easy.]

But our Gascon philosopher goes on thus, with his Gascon inspirations: and these sportive notions, struck off at a heat, these careless intuitions, these fine new practical axioms of scientific politics, appear to be every whit as good as if they had been sifted through the scientific tables of the Novum Organum. They are, in fact, the identical truth which the last vintage of the Novum Organum yields on this point. 'The world is unapt for curing itself; *it is so impatient of any thing that presses it*, that it thinks of nothing but *disengaging itself*, at what price soever. We see, by a thousand examples, that it generally cures itself to its cost. The *discharge of a present evil is no cure, if a general amendment of condition does not follow*; the surgeon's end is *not only to cut away the dead flesh*, – that is but the progress of his cure; – he has a care over and above, *to fill up the wound with better and more natural flesh*, and *to restore the member to its due state*. Whoever only proposes to himself to remove that which offends *him*, falls short; *for good* does not necessarily succeed evil; another evil may succeed, *and a worse, as it happened in Caesar's killers*, who brought the republic to *such a pass, that they had reason to repent*

their meddling with it.' 'I fear there will *a worse* one come in his place,' says a fellow in Shakespear's crowd, at the first Caesar's funeral; and that his speech made the moral of the piece, we shall see in the course of this study.

But though the frantic absolutisms and irregularities of that 'old riotous form of military government,' which the long civil wars had generated, seemed of themselves to threaten speedy dissolution, this old Gascon prophet, with his inexhaustible fund of English shrewdness, and sound English sense, underlying all his Gasconading, by no means considers the state as past the statesman's care: 'after all, *we are not, perhaps, at the last gasp*,' he says. 'The conservation of states *is a thing that in all likelihood surpasses our understanding*: a civil government is, as Plato says, "a mighty and powerful thing, and hard to be dissolved." "States, as great engines, move slowly," says Lord Bacon; "and are not so soon put out of frame"; – that is, so soon as "the resolution of particular persons," which is his reason for producing his moral philosophy, or rather his moral *science*, as *his* engine for attack upon the state, a science which concerns the government of every man over himself; "for, as in Egypt, the seven good years sustained the seven bad; so governments, for a time well-grounded, do bear out errors following."' But this is the way that this Gascon philosopher records *his* conclusions on the same subject. 'Every thing that totters does not fall. The contexture of so great a body holds by more nails than one. *It holds even by its antiquity*, like old buildings from which the foundations

are worn away by time, without rough cast or cement, which yet live or support themselves by their own weight. Moreover, it is not rightly to go to work to reconnoitre only the flank and the fosse, to judge of the security of a place; it must be examined *which way approaches* can be made to it, AND IN WHAT CONDITION THE ASSAILANT IS – that is the question. '*Few vessels sink with their own weight*, and without some exterior violence. Let us every way cast our eyes. Every thing about us totters. In all the great states, both of Christendom and elsewhere, that are known to us, if you will but look, you will there see evident threats of alteration and ruin. Astrologers need not go to heaven to foretell, as they do, GREAT REVOLUTIONS' [this is the speech of the Elizabethan age – 'great revolutions'] 'and *imminent mutations*.' [This is the new kind of learning and prophecy; there was but one source of it open then, that could yield axioms of this kind; for this is the kind that Lord Bacon tells us the head-spring of sciences must be visited for.] 'But *conformity is a quality antagonist to* DISSOLUTION. For my part, I despair not, and *fancy I perceive ways to save us*.'

And *surely* this is one of the inserted private articles, before mentioned, which may, or may not be, 'designed to spend their use among the men now living'; but 'which concern the particular knowledge of some who will see further into them than the common reader.' If there had been a 'London Times' going then, and this old outlandish Gascon Antic had been an English statesman preparing this article as a leader for it, the question of

the Times could hardly have been more roundly dealt with, or with a clearer northern accent.

But it is high time for him to bethink himself, and 'draw his old cloak about him'; for, after all, this so just and profound a view of so grave a subject, proceeds from one who has no aims, no plan, no learning, no memory; – a vain, fantastic egotist, who writes only because he will be talking, and talking of himself above all; who is not ashamed to attribute to himself all sorts of mad inconsistent humours, and to contradict himself on every page, if thereby he can only win your eye, or startle your curiosity, and induce you to follow him. After so long and grave a discussion, suddenly it occurs to him that it is time for a little miscellaneous confidential chat about himself, and those certain oddities of his which he does not wish you to lose sight of altogether; and it is time, too, for another of those *stories*, which serve to divert the attention when it threatens to become too fixed, and break up and enliven the dull passages, besides having that other purpose which he speaks of so frankly. And although this whole discussion is not without a direct bearing upon that particular topic, with which it is here connected, inasmuch as the political situation, which is so clearly exhibited, is precisely that of the Elizabethan scholar, it is chiefly this little piece of confidential chat with which it closes, and *its significance in that connection*, which gives the rest its insertion here.

For suddenly he recollects himself, and stops short to express the fear that he may have written *something similar to this*

elsewhere; and he gives you to understand – not all at once – but by a series of strokes, that too bold a repetition *here*, of what he has said *elsewhere* might be attended, to him, with serious consequences; and he begs you to note, as he does in twenty other passages and stories here and elsewhere, that his *style* is all hampered with considerations such as these – that instead of merely thinking of making a good book, and presenting his subjects in their clearest and most effective form for the reader; – a thing in itself sufficiently laborious, as other authors find to their cost, he is all the time compelled to weigh his words with reference to such points as this. He must be perpetually on his guard that the identity of that which he presents here, and that which he presents elsewhere, under other and very different forms (in much graver forms perhaps, and perhaps in others not so grave), shall no where become so glaring as to attract popular attention, while he is willing and anxious to keep that identity or connection constantly present to the apprehension of the few, for whom he tells us his book – that is, this book within the book – is written.

'I fear in these *reveries* of mine,' he continues, suspending at last suddenly this bold and continuous application to the immediate political emergency of those philosophical principles which he has exhibited in the abstract, in their *common* and *universal form*, elsewhere; 'I fear, in these reveries of the *treachery of my memory*, lest by inadvertence it should make me write the same thing twice. Now I here set down *nothing new*,

these are *common* thoughts, and having per-adventure conceived them a hundred times, *I am afraid* I *have set them down somewhere else already*. Repetition is everywhere troublesome, though it were in Homer, *but 'tis ruinous in things that have only a superficial and transitory* SHOW. I do not love inculcation, even in the most profitable things, as in Seneca, and the practice of his Stoical school displeases me of *repeating upon every subject and at length*, THE PRINCIPLES and PRESUPPOSITIONS THAT SERVE IN GENERAL, and *always* to re-allege anew;' that is, under the particular divisions of the subject, *common and universal reasons*. 'What I cannot express I point out with my finger,' he tells you elsewhere, but it is thus that he continues here.

'My memory grows worse and worse every day. I must *fain for the time to come* (collateral sounds), for *hitherto, thank God, nothing has happened much amiss*, to avoid all preparation, for fear of tying myself to some obligation upon which I must be forced to insist. To *be tied and bound to a thing* puts *me* quite out, and especially where I have to depend upon so weak an instrument as my memory. I never could read this story without being offended at it, with as it were *a personal* and natural resentment.' The reader will note that the question here is of *style*, or method, and of this author's style in particular, and of his special embarrassments.

'Lyncestes *accused of conspiracy against Alexander*, the day that he was brought out before the army, according to the custom,

to be heard in his defence, had prepared a *studied speech*, of which, *haggling and stammering*, he pronounced *some words*. As he was becoming more perplexed and struggling with his memory, and *trying to recollect himself*, the soldiers that stood *nearest* killed him with their spears, looking upon his confusion and silence as a confession of his guilt: very fine, indeed! The place, the spectators, the expectation, would astound a man *even though were there no object in his mind but to speak well*; but WHAT *when 'tis an harangue upon which his life depends*?' You that happen to be of my ear, it is my style that we are speaking of, and there is my story.

'*For my part the very being tied to what I am to say, is enough to loose me from it*' – that is the cause of his wandering – '*The more I trust to my memory*, the more do I put myself out of my own power, so *much as to find it in my own countenance*, and have *sometimes been very much put to it to conceal the slavery wherein I was bound*, whereas *my design is* to manifest in speaking a *perfect nonchalance*, both of face and accent, and *casual and unpremeditated motions*, as rising from present occasions, *choosing rather to say nothing to purpose, than to show that* I came *prepared to speak well*; a thing especially unbecoming *a man of my profession*. The preparation begets a great deal more expectation than it will satisfy; a man very often absurdly strips himself to his doublet to leap no further *than he would have done in his gown*.' [Perhaps the reflecting scholar will recollect to have seen an instance of this magnificent

preparation for saying something to the purpose, attended with similarly lame conclusions; but, if he does not, the story which follows may tend to refresh his memory on this point.] 'It is recorded of the orator Curio, that *when he proposed the division of his oration* into three or four parts, it often happened either that he forgot some one, or added one or two more.' A much more illustrious speaker, who spoke under circumstances not very unlike those in which the poor conspirator above noted made his haggling and fatal attempts at oratory, is known to have been guilty of a similar oversight; for, having invented a plan of universal science, designed for the relief of the human estate, he forgot the principal application of it. But this author says, *I* have always avoided falling into this inconvenience, having always hated these promises and announcements, not only out of distrust of my memory, but also because this method relishes too much of the *artificial*. You will find no scientific plan *here* ostentatiously exhibited; you will find such a plan elsewhere with all the works set down in it, but the works themselves will be missing; and you will find the works elsewhere, but it will be under the cover of a superficial and transitory show, where it would be ruinous to produce the plan, '*I* have always *avoided* falling into this inconvenience. *Simpliciora militares decent*.' But as he appears, after all, to have had no military weapon with which to sustain that straight-forwardness of speech which is becoming in a military power, and no dagger to pursue his points with, some artifice, though he professes not to like it, may be

necessary, and the rule which he here specifies is, on the whole, perhaps, not altogether amiss. "Tis enough that I have promised to myself never to take upon me to speak in a place where I owe respect; for as to that sort of speaking where a man *reads* his speech, besides that it is very absurd, it is a mighty disadvantage to those who *naturally could give it a grace by action*, and to rely upon the mercy of the readiness of my invention, I will much less do it; 'tis heavy and perplexed, and such as would never furnish me in sudden and important necessities.'

'Speaking,' he says in another place, 'hurts and discomposes me, – my *voice* is loud and high, so that when I have gone to whisper some great person about an affair of *consequence, they have often had to moderate my voice. This story deserves a place here*.

'Some one in a certain Greek school was speaking loud as *I do*. The master of the ceremonies sent to him to speak *lower*. "Tell him then, he must send me," replied the other, "the tone he would have me speak in." To which the other replied, "that he should take the tone from the ear of him to whom he spake." It was well said, if it be understood. Speak *according to the affair* you are speaking about to the auditor, – (speak according to the business you have in hand, to the purpose you have to accomplish) – for if it mean, it is sufficient that he *hears* you, I do not find it reason.' It is a more artistic use of speech that he is proposing in his new science of it, for as Lord Bacon has it, who writes as we shall see on this same subject, 'the *proofs* and *persuasions* of

rhetoric ought to differ according to the auditors,' and the Arts of Rhetoric have for their legitimate end, 'not merely PROOF, but *much more*, IMPRESSION.' 'For many forms are *equal in signification* which are *differing in impression*, as the difference is great in the piercing of that which is *sharp*, and that which is *flat*, though the *strength* of the percussion be the same; for instance, there is no man but will be a little more raised, by hearing it said, "Your enemies will be glad of this," than by hearing it said only, "This is evil for you."' But it is thus that our Gascon proceeds, whose comment on his Greek story we have interrupted. 'There is a voice to *flatter*, there is a voice to *instruct*, and a voice to *reprehend*. *I* would not only have my voice to reach my hearer, but peradventure *that it strike* and *pierce* him. When I rate my footman in a sharp and bitter tone, it would be very fine for him to say, "Pray master, speak lower, for I hear you very well." *Speaking* is *half his that speaks*, and *half his that hears*; the last ought to prepare himself to receive it, according to its motion, as with tennis players; he that receives the ball, shifts, draws back, and prepares himself to receive it, according as he sees him move, who strikes the stroke, and according to the stroke itself.' It is not, therefore, because this author has failed to furnish the rules of interpretation necessary for penetrating to the ultimate intention of this new kind of speaking, if all this affectation of simplicity, and all these absurd contradictory statements of his, have been suffered hitherto to pass unchallenged. It is the public mind he has to deal with. 'That which he adores in kings is the

throng of *their adorers*.' If he should take the public at once into his confidence, and tell them beforehand precisely what his own opinions were of things in general, if he should set before them in the outset the conclusions to which he proposed to drive them, he might indeed stand some chance to have his arguments interrupted, or changed with a magisterial authority; he would indeed find it necessary to pursue his philosophical points with a dagger in his hand.

And besides, this dogmatical mode of teaching does not appear to him to secure the ends of teaching. He wishes to rouse the human mind to activity, to compel it to think for itself, and put it on the inevitable road to his conclusions. He wishes the reader to strike out those conclusions for himself, and fancy himself the discoverer if he will. So far from being simple and straightforward, his style is in the profoundest degree artistic, for the soul of all our modern art inspired it. He thinks it does no good for scholars to call out to the active world from the platform of their last conclusions. The truths which men receive from those didactic heights remain foreign to them. 'We want medicines to arouse the sense,' says Lord Bacon, who proposed exactly the method of teaching which this philosopher had, as it would seem, already adopted. 'I bring a trumpet to awake his *ear*, to set his *sense* on the attentive bent, and *then* to speak,' says that poet who best put this art in practice.

But here it is the prose philosopher who would meet this dull, stupid, custom-bound public on its own ground. He would

assume all its absurdities and contradictions in his own person, and permit men to despise, and marvel, and laugh at them in him without displeasure. For whoever will notice carefully, will perceive that the use of the personal pronoun here, is not the limited one of our ordinary speech. Such an one will find that this philosophical *I* is very broad; that it covers too much to be taken in its literal acceptation. Under this term, the term by which each man names *himself*, the common term of the individual humanity, he finds it convenient to say many things. 'They that will fight *custom* with *grammar*,' he says, 'are fools. When another tells me, or when I say to myself, *This* is a word of Gascon growth; *this* a dangerous phrase; *this* is an ignorant discourse; thou art too full of figures; *this* is a paradoxical saying; *this* is a foolish expression: *thou makest thyself merry sometimes, and men will think* thou sayest a thing in good earnest, which thou only speakest in jest. Yes, say I; but I correct the faults of *inadvertence, not those of custom*. I have done what I designed,' he says, in triumph, '*All the world knows* ME in my book, *and my book in* ME.'

And thus, by describing human nature under that term, or by repeating and stating the common opinions as his own, he is enabled to create an opposition which could not exist, so long as they remain unconsciously operative, or infolded in the separate individuality, as a part of its own particular form.

'My errors are sometimes natural and incorrigible,' he says; 'but the good which virtuous men do to the public in making

themselves imitated, *I, perhaps, may do in making my manners avoided*. While I publish and accuse my own imperfections, somebody will learn to be afraid of them. *The parts that I most esteem in myself*, are more honoured in decrying than in commending *my own manners*. Pausanias tells us of an ancient player upon the lyre, who used to make his scholars go to hear one that lived over against him, and played very ill, that they might learn to hate his discords and false measures. *The present time* is fitting to reform us *backward*, more by *dissenting* than *agreeing*; by differing than consenting.' That is his application of his previous confession. And it is this *present time* that he impersonates, holding the mirror up to nature, and provoking opposition and criticism for that which was before buried in the unconsciousness of a common absurdity, or a common wrong. 'Profiting little by good examples, I endeavour to render myself as agreeable as I see others offensive; as constant as I see others fickle; as good as I see others evil.'

'There is no fancy so frivolous and extravagant that does not seem to me a suitable product of the human mind. All such whimsies as are in use amongst us, deserve at least to be hearkened to; for my part, they only with me import *inanity*, but they import *that*. Moreover, *vulgar and casual opinions are something more than nothing in nature*.

'If I converse with a man of mind, and no flincher, who presses hard upon me, right and left, his imagination raises up mine. The contradictions of judgments do neither offend nor alter, they only

rouse and exercise me. I could suffer myself to be rudely handled by my friends. "Thou art a fool; thou knowest not what thou art talking about." When any one contradicts me, he raises my attention, not my anger. I advance towards him that contradicts, as to one that instructs me. *I embrace and caress truth, in what hand soever I find it, and cheerfully surrender myself, and extend to it my conquered arms*; and take a pleasure in being reproved, and *accommodate myself to my accusers* [aside] (very often more by reason of *civility* than amendment); loving to gratify the liberty of admonition, by my facility of submitting to it, at my own expense. Nevertheless, it is hard to bring the men of my time to it. They have not the courage *to correct*, because they have not the courage *to be corrected, and speak always with dissimulation in the presence of one another*. I take so great pleasure in being judged and known, that it is almost indifferent to me in which of THE TWO FORMS I am so. My imagination does so often contradict and condemn itself, that *it is all one to me if another do it*. The study of books is a languishing, feeble motion, that heats not, whereas conversation *teaches* and *exercises* at once.' But what if a book could be constructed on a new principle, so as to produce the effect of *conference*– of the noblest kind of conference – so as to rouse the stupid, lethargic mind to a truly *human* activity – so as to bring out the common, human form, in all its latent actuality, from the eccentricities of the individual varieties? Something of that kind appears to be attempted here.

He cannot too often charge the attentive reader, however, that

his arguments require examination. 'In *conferences*,' he says, 'it is a rule that every word that *seems* to be good, is not immediately to be accepted. One must try it on all points, to see *how it is lodged in the author*: [perhaps he is not in earnest] *for* one must not always *presently yield* what truth or beauty soever seem to be in the argument.' A little delay, and opposition, the necessity of hunting, or fighting, for it, will only make it the more esteemed in the end. In such a style, 'either the author must stoutly oppose it [that is, whatsoever beauty or truth is to be the end of the argument in order to challenge the reader] or draw back, under colour of not understanding it, [and so piquing the reader into a pursuit of it] or, sometimes, perhaps, he may aid the point, and carry it *beyond* its proper reach [and so forcing the reader to correct him. This whole work is constructed on this principle]. As when I contend with a vigorous man, I please myself with anticipating his conclusions; I ease him of the trouble of explaining himself; I strive to prevent his imagination, whilst it is yet springing and imperfect; the order and pertinency of his understanding warns and threatens me afar off. But as to *these*, – and the sequel explains this relative, for it has no antecedent in the text – as to these, I deal quite contrary with them. I *must understand and presuppose nothing but by them*… Now, if you come to explain anything to them and confirm them (these readers), they presently catch at it, and rob you of the advantage of your interpretation. "It was what I was about to say; it was just *my* thought, *and if I did not express it so*, it was only for

want of *language*." Very pretty! Malice itself must be employed to correct this *proud ignorance*– 'tis injustice and inhumanity to relieve and set him right who stands in no need of it, and is the worse for it. *I love* to let him step deeper into the mire,' – [luring him on with his own confessions, and with my assumptions of his case] '*and so deep that if it be* possible, they may at least discern their error. FOLLY AND ABSURDITY ARE NOT TO BE CURED BY BARE ADMONITION. What Cyrus answered him who importuned him to harangue his army upon the point of battle, "that men do not become valiant and warlike on a sudden, *by a fine oration*, no more than a man becomes a good musician by hearing a fine song," may properly be said of such an admonition as this;' or, as Lord Bacon has it, 'It were a strange speech, which spoken, or *spoken oft*, should reclaim a man from a vice to which he is *by nature* subject; it is *order, pursuit, sequence*, and *interchange of application*, which is mighty in nature.' But the other continues: – 'These are apprenticeships that are to be served beforehand by a long continued education. We owe this care and this assiduity of correction and instruction to *our own*, [that is the school,] but to go to preach to the first passer-by, and to lord it over the ignorance and folly of the first we meet, is a thing that I abhor. I rarely do it, even in *my own particular conferences*, and rather surrender my cause, than proceed to these *supercilious* and *magisterial* instructions.' The clue to the reading of his inner book. This is what Lord Bacon also condemns, as the *magisterial* method, – 'My *humour* is unfit, either to speak

or write for *beginners*;' he will not shock or bewilder them by forcing on them prematurely the last conclusions of science; '*but* as to things that are said in *common discourse* or *amongst other things*, I never oppose them either by word or sign, how false or absurd soever.'

'Let none *even doubt*,' says the author of the Novum Organum, who thought it wisest to steer clear *even* of *doubt* on such a point, 'whether we are anxious to destroy and demolish *the philosophical arts and sciences which are now in use*. On the contrary, we readily cherish their practice, cultivation, and honour; for we by no means interfere to prevent *the prevalent system* from encouraging discussion, adorning discourses, or being employed *serviceably* in the chair of the Professor, or the practice of common life, and being taken in short, by general consent, *as current coin*. Nay, we plainly declare that the system we offer will not be very *suitable* for such purposes, not being easily adapted to *vulgar apprehension, except* by EFFECTS AND WORKS. To show our *sincerity* [hear] in professing our regard and friendly disposition towards *the received sciences*, we can refer to the evidence of our published writings, *especially* our books on – the Advancement – [the *Advancement*] of Learning.' And the reader who can afford time for 'a second cogitation,' the second cogitation which a superficial *and* interior meaning, of course, requires, with the aid of the key of times, will find much light on that point, here and there, in the works referred to, and especially in those parts of them in which the scientific

use of popular terms is treated. 'We will not, therefore,' he continues, 'endeavour to evince it (our sincerity) any further by *words*, but content ourselves with steadily, etc., … professedly premising that no great *progress* can be made by the present methods in the *theory* and contemplation of science, *and* that they can *not* be made to produce *any very abundant effects*.' This is the proof of his sincerity in professing his regard and friendly disposition towards them, to be taken in connection with his works on the Advancement of Learning, and no doubt it was sincere, and just to that extent to which these statements, and the practice which was connected with them, would seem to indicate; but the careful reader will perceive that it was a regard, and friendliness of disposition, which was naturally qualified by that doubly significant fact last quoted.

But the question of style is still under discussion here, and no wonder that with *such* views of the value of the 'current coin,' and with a regard and reverence for the received sciences so deeply qualified; or, as the other has it, with a humour so unfit either to speak or write for *beginners*, a style which admitted of other efficacies than bare *proofs*, should appear to be demanded for popular purposes, or for beginners. And no wonder that with views so similar on this first and so radical point, these two men should have hit upon the same method in *Rhetoric* exactly, though it *was* then wholly new. But our Gascon, goes on to describe its freedoms and novelties, its imitations of the living conference, its new vitalities.

'May we not,' says the successful experimenter in this very style, 'mix with the subject of conversation and communication, the quick and sharp repartees which mirth and familiarity introduce amongst friends pleasantly and *wittingly* jesting with one another; an exercise for which my natural gaiety renders me fit enough, if it be not so extended and serious as *the other I just spoke of*, 'tis no less smart and ingenious, nor of less utility *as Lycurgus thought*.'

CHAPTER II

FURTHER ILLUSTRATION OF 'PARTICULAR METHODS OF TRADITION.' – EMBARRASSMENTS OF LITERARY STATESMEN

> Here's neither bush nor shrub to bear off any weather at all, and another storm brewing. I hear it sing in the wind. My, best way is to creep under his gaberdine; there is no other shelter hereabout: Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows. I will here shroud, till the dregs of the storm be past.
> – *Tempest.*

Here then, in the passages already quoted, we find the plan and theory – the premeditated form of a new kind of Socratic

performance; and this whole work, as well as some others composed in this age, make the realization of it; an invention which proposes to substitute for the languishing feeble motion which is involved in the study of *books*– the kind of books which this author found invented when he came – for the passive, sluggish receptivity of another's thought, the living glow of pursuit and discovery, the flash of self-conviction.

It is a Socratic dialogue, indeed; but it waits for the reader's eye to open it; he is himself the principal interlocutor in it; there can be nothing done till he comes in. Whatsoever beauty or truth maybe in the argument; whatsoever jokes and repartees; whatsoever infinite audacities of mirth may be hidden under that grave cover, are not going to shine out for any lazy book-worm's pleasure. He that will not work, neither shall he eat of this food. 'Up to the *mountains*,' for *this is hunter's language*, 'and he that strikes the venison first shall be lord of this feast.' It is an invention whereby the author will remedy for himself the complaint, that life is short, and art is long; whereby he will 'outstretch his span,' and make over, not his learning only but his *living* to the future; – it is an instrumentality by which he will still maintain living relations with the minds of men, by which he will put himself into the most intimate relations of sympathy, and confidence, and friendship, with the mind of the few; by which he will reproduce his purposes and his faculties in them, and train them to take up in their turn that thread of knowledges which is to be spun on.

But if this design be buried so deeply, is it not *lost* then? If all the absurd and contradictory developments – if all the mad inconsistencies – all the many-sided contradictory views, which are possible to human nature on all the questions of human life, which this single personal pronoun was made to represent, in the profoundly philosophic design of the author, are still culled out by learned critics, and made to serve as the material of a grave, though it is lamented, somewhat egotistical biography, is not all this ingenuity, which has successfully evaded thus far not the careless reader only, but the scrutiny of the scholar, and the sharp eye of the reviewer himself, is it not an ingenuity which serves after all to little purpose, which indeed defeats its own design? No, by no means. That disguise which was at first a necessity, has become the instrument of his power. It is that broad *I* of his, that *I myself*, with which he still takes all the world; it is that single, many-sided, vivacious, historical impersonation, that ideal impersonation of the individual human nature as it is – not as it should be – with all its 'weaved-up follies ravelled out,' with all its before unconfessed actualities, its infinite absurdities and contradictions, so boldly pronounced and assumed by one laying claim to an historical existence, it is this historical assumption and pronunciation of all the before unspoken, unspeakable facts of this unexplored department of natural history, it is this apparent confession with which this magician entangles his victims, as he tells us in a passage already quoted, and leads them on through that objective representation

of their follies in which they may learn to hate them, to that globe mirror – that mirror of the age which he boasts to have hung up here, when he says, 'I have done what I designed: all the world knows *me in my book*, and my book in *me*.'

Who shall say that it is yet time to strip him of the disguise which he wears so effectively? With all his faults, and all his egotisms, who would not be sorry to see him taken to pieces, after all? And who shall quite assure us, that it would not still be treachery, even now, for those who have unwound his clues, and traversed his labyrinths to the heart of his mystery, – for those who have penetrated to the chamber of his inner school, to come out and blab a secret with which he still works so potently; insensibly to those on whom he works, perhaps, yet so potently? But there is no harm done. It will still take the right reader to find his way through these new devices in letters; these new and vivacious proofs of learning; for him, and for none other, they lurk there still.

To evade political restrictions, and to meet the popular mind on its own ground, was the double purpose of the disguise; but it is a disguise which will only detect, and not baffle, the mind that is able to identify itself with his, and able to grasp his purposes; it is a disguise which will only detect the mind that knows him, and his purposes already. The enigmatical form of the inculcation is the device whereby that mind will be compelled to follow his track, to think for itself his thoughts again, to possess itself of the inmost secret of his intention; for it is a school in whose

enigmatical devices the mind of the future was to be caught, in whose subtle exercises the child of the future was to be trained to an identity that should restore the master to his work again, and bring forth anew, in a better hour, his clogged and buried genius.

But, if the fact that a new and more vivid kind of writing, issuing from the heart of the new philosophy of *things*, designed to work new and extraordinary effects by means of literary instrumentalities, – effects hitherto reserved for other modes of impression, – if the fact, that a new and infinitely artistic mode of writing, burying the secrets of philosophy in the most careless forms of the vulgar and popular discourse, did, in this instance at least, exist; if this be proved, it will suffice for our present purpose. What else remains to be established concerning points incidentally started here, will be found more pertinent to another stage of this enquiry.

From beginning to end, the whole work might be quoted, page by page, in proof of this; but after the passages already produced here, there would seem to be no necessity for accumulating any further evidence on this point. A passage or two more, at least, will suffice to put *that* beyond question. The extracts which follow, in connection with those already given, will serve, at least, to remove any rational doubt on that point, and on some others, too, perhaps.

'But whatever I deliver myself to be, provided it be such as I really am, I have my end; neither will I make any excuse for committing to paper such mean and frivolous things as these;

the meanness of the *subject* compels me to it.' – '*Human reason is a two-edged* and a *dangerous sword*. Observe, in the hand of *Socrates*, her most intimate and familiar friend, *how many points it has. Thus*, I am good for nothing but to follow, and suffer myself to be easily carried away with the crowd.' – 'I have this opinion of *these political controversies*: Be on what side you will, you have as fair a game to play as your adversary, provided you do not proceed so far as to jostle *principles that are too manifest to be disputed; and yet, 'tis* my *notion, in public affairs* [hear], *there is no government* so ill, *provided it be ancient*, and has been *constant*, that is not better than change and alteration. Our manners are infinitely corrupted, and wonderfully incline to grow worse: of our laws and customs, *there are many that are barbarous and monstrous: nevertheless*, by reason of the difficulty of reformation, and the danger of stirring things, *if I could put something under to stay the wheel*, and keep it where it is, *I would do so with all my heart*. It is very easy to beget in a people a contempt of its ancient observances; *never any man undertook, but he succeeded; but to establish a better regimen in the stead of that a man has overthrown, many who have attempted this have foundered in the attempt*. I very little consult *my prudence* [philosophic 'prudence'] in my conduct. I am willing to let it be guided by *public rule*.

'In fine, to return to myself, the only things by which *I* esteem *myself* to be something, is *that wherein never any man* thought himself to be defective. *My recommendation is vulgar*

and common; for whoever thought *he* wanted sense. It would be a *proposition that would imply a contradiction in itself*; [in such subtleties thickly studding this popular work, the clues which link it with other works of this kind are found – the clues to a new *practical human philosophy*.] 'Tis a disease that never is where it is discerned; 'tis tenacious and strong; *but the first ray of the patient's sight* does nevertheless pierce it through and disperse it, as the beams of the sun do a thick mist: to *accuse one's self*, would be to *excuse one's self* in this case; and to *condemn*, to *absolve*. There never was porter, or silly girl, that did not think they had sense enough for their need. The reasons that proceed from the natural arguing of others, we think that if we had turned our thoughts that way, we should ourselves have found it out as well as they. *Knowledge, style*, and such parts as we see in other works, we are readily aware if they excel our own; but for the simple products of the *understanding*, every one thinks he could have found out the like, and is hardly sensible of the weight and difficulty, unless – and then with much ado – in an extreme and incomparable distance; *and whoever should be able clearly to discern* the height of another's judgment, would be also able *to raise his own to the same pitch*; so that this is a sort of exercise, from which a man is to expect very little praise, a kind of composition of small repute. *And, besides, for whom do you write*?' – for he is merely meeting this common sense. His object is merely to make his reader confess, 'That was just what I was about to say, it was just my thought; and if I did not express it

so, it was only for want of language;' – 'for whom do you write? *The learned*, to whom the authority appertains of judging books, know no other value but that of learning, and allow of no other process of wit but that of erudition and art. If you have mistaken one of the Scipios for another, what is all the rest you have to say worth? Whoever is ignorant of Aristotle, according to their rule, is in some sort ignorant of himself. *Heavy and vulgar souls* cannot discern the grace of a high and unfettered style. Now these two sorts of men make the *world*. The *third sort*, into whose hands you fall, of souls that are regular, and strong of themselves, is so rare, that it *justly* has neither *name nor place amongst us*, and it is pretty well time lost to aspire to it, or to endeavour to please it.' He will not content himself with pleasing the few. He wishes to *move* the world, and its approbation is a secondary question with him.

'He that should record *my* idle talk, to the prejudice of the most paltry law, opinion, or custom of his parish, would do himself a great deal of wrong, and me too; for, in what I say, I warrant no other certainty, but 'tis what I *had then in my thought, a thought tumultuous and wavering*. ["I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet," says the offended king. "These words are not mine." *Hamlet*: "Nor mine *now*."] All I say is by way of discourse. *I should not speak so boldly, if it were my due to be believed, and so I told a great man, who complained to me of the tartness and contention of my advice*.' And, indeed, he would not, in this instance, that is very certain; – for he has

been speaking on the subject of RELIGIOUS TOLERATION, and among other remarks, somewhat too far in advance of his time, he has let fall, by chance, such passages as these, which, of course, he stands ready to recall again in case any one is offended. ('These words are not mine, Hamlet.' 'Nor mine now.') 'To *kill men*, a clear and shining light is required, and our life is too real and essential, to warrant these supernatural and fantastic accidents.' 'After all 'tis setting a *man's conjectures* at a very high price to *cause a man to be roasted alive upon them*.' He does not look up at all, after making this accidental remark; for he is too much occupied with a very curious story, which happens to come into his head at that moment, of certain men, who being more profoundly asleep than *men usually are*, became, according to certain grave authorities, what in their dreams they fancied they were; and having mentioned one case sufficiently ludicrous to remove any unpleasant sensation or inquiry which his preceding allusion might have occasioned, he resumes, 'If *dreams can sometimes so incorporate themselves with effects of life*, I cannot believe that therefore our will should be accountable to justice. *Which I say, as a man*, who am neither *judge nor privy counsellor*, nor think myself, by many degrees, worthy so to be, but a *man of the common sort*, born and vowed to the obedience of the public realm, both in *words* and *acts*.

'*Thought* is free; —*thought* is free.' *Ariel.*

'Perceiving *you to be ready and prepared on one part*, I propose to you on the other, with all the care I can, to *clear*

your judgment, not to enforce it. Truly, *I* have not only a great many humours, but *also a great many opinions* [which I bring forward here, and assume as mine] that I would *endeavour* to make *my son dislike*, if I had one. The *truest*, are not always the most commodious to man; he is of too *wild* a composition. "We speak of all things by precept and resolution," he continues, returning again to this covert question of toleration, and Lord Bacon complains also that that is the method in his meridian. They make me hate things that are *likely*, when they impose them on me for *infallible*. "Wonder is the foundation of all philosophy" – (or, as Lord Bacon expresses it, "wonder is the seed of knowledge") – enquiry the progress – ignorance the end. Ay, but there is a sort of ignorance, *strong and generous*, that yields nothing *in honour and courage to knowledge*, a knowledge, which to conceive, requires *no less knowledge* than knowledge itself.'

'I saw, in my younger days, a report of a process that Corras, a counsellor of Thoulouse, put in print.' – [The vain, egotistical, incoherent, rambling old Frenchman, the old Roman Catholic French gentleman, who is understood to be the author of this new experiment in letters, was not far from being a middle-aged man, when the pamphlet which he here alludes to was first published; but his chronology, generally, does not bear a very close examination. Some very extraordinary anachronisms, which the critics are totally at a loss to account for, have somehow slipped into his story. There *was* a young philosopher

in France in those days, of a most precocious, and subtle, and inventive genius – of a most singularly artistic genius, combining speculation and practice, as they had never been combined before, and already busying himself with all sorts of things, and among other things, with curious researches in regard to ciphers, and other questions not less interesting at that time; – there was a youth in France, whose family name was also English, living there with his eyes wide open, a youth who had found occasion to *invent* a cipher of his own even then, into whose hands that publication might well have fallen on its first appearance, and one on whose mind it might very naturally have made the impression here recorded. But let us return to the story.] – 'I saw in my younger days, a report of a process, that Corras, a counsellor of Thoulouse, put in print, of a strange accident of *two men, who presented themselves the one for the other*. I remember, and I hardly remember anything else, that he seemed to have rendered *the imposture of him whom he judged to be guilty, so wonderful, and so far exceeding both our knowledge and his who was the judge, that I thought it a very bold sentence that condemned him to be hanged*. [That is the point.] *Let us take up* SOME FORM of ARREST, that shall say, THE COURT *understands nothing of the matter*, more freely and ingenuously than the Areopagites did, *who ordered the parties to appear again in a hundred years*.' We must not forget that these stories 'are not regarded by the author merely for the use he makes of them, – that they carry, besides what he applies them to, the seeds of a richer and bolder

matter, and sometimes collaterally a *more delicate sound*, both to the author himself who declines saying anything more about it *in that place*, and to others who shall happen to be of his ear!' One already prepared by previous discovery of the method of communication here indicated, and by voluminous readings in it, to understand that appeal, begs leave to direct the attention of the critical reader to the delicate collateral sounds in the story last quoted.

It is not irrelevant to notice that this story is introduced to the attention of the reader, 'who will, perhaps, see farther into it than others,' in that chapter on toleration in which it is suggested that considering the fantastic, and unscientific, and unsettled character of the human beliefs and opinions, and that even 'the Fathers' have suggested in their speculations on the nature of human life, that what men believed themselves to be, in their dreams, they really became, it is after all setting a man's conjectures at a very high price to cause a man to be roasted alive on them; the chapter in which it is intimated that considering the natural human liability to error, a little more room for correction of blunders, a little larger chance of arriving at the common truth, a little more chance for growth and advancement in learning, would, perhaps, on the whole, be likely to conduce to the human welfare, instead of sealing up the human advancement for ever, with axe and cord and stake and rack, within the limits of doctrines which may have been, perhaps, the very wisest, the most learned, of which the world was capable, at the time when

their form was determined. It is the chapter which he calls fancifully, a chapter 'on *cripples*,' into which this odd story about the two men who presented themselves, the one for the other, in a manner so remarkable, is introduced, for *lameness* is always this author's grievance, wherever we find him, and he is driven to all sorts of devices to overcome it; for he is the person who came prepared to speak well, and who hates that sort of speaking, where a man reads his speech, because he is one who could naturally give it a grace by action, or as another has it, he is one who would suit the action to the word.

But it was not the question of 'hanging' only, or 'roasting alive,' that authors had to consider with themselves in these times. For those forms of literary production which an author's literary taste, or his desire to reach and move and mould the people, might incline him to select – the most approved forms of popular literature, were in effect forbidden to men, bent, as these men were, on taking an active part in the affairs of their time. Any extraordinary reputation for excellence in these departments, would hardly have tended to promote the ambitious views of the young aspirant for honors in that school of statesmanship, in which the 'Fairy Queen' had been scornfully dismissed, as 'an old song.' Even that disposition to the gravest and profoundest forms of philosophical speculation, which one foolish young candidate for advancement was indiscreet enough to exhibit prematurely there, was made use of so successfully to his disadvantage, that for years his practical abilities were held in suspicion on that

very account, as he complains. The reputation of a *Philosopher* in those days was quite as much as this legal practitioner was willing to undertake for his part. That of a *Poet* might have proved still more uncomfortable, and more difficult to sustain. His claim to a place in the management of affairs would not have been advanced by it, in the eyes of those old statesmen, whose favour he had to propitiate. However, he was happily relieved from any suspicion of that sort. If those paraphrases of the Psalms for which he chose to make himself responsible, – if those Hebrew melodies of his did not do the business for him, and clear him effectually of any such suspicion in the eyes of that generation, it is difficult to say what would. But whether his devotional feelings were really of a kind to require any such painful expression as that on their own account, may reasonably be doubted by any one acquainted at all with his general habits of thought and sentiment. These lyrics of the philosopher appear on the whole to prove too much; looked at from a literary point of view merely, they remind one forcibly of the attempts of Mr. *Silence* at a Bacchanalian song. 'I have a reasonable good ear in music,' says the unfortunate Pyramus, struggling a little with that cerebral development and uncompromising facial angle which he finds imposed on him. 'I have a reasonable good ear in music: let us have the tongs and the bones.'

'A man must frame *some probable cause*, why he should not do his best, and why he should dissemble his abilities,' says this author, speaking of *colour*, or the covering of defects; and that

the prejudice just referred to was not peculiar to the English court, the remarkable piece of dramatic criticism which we are about to produce from this old Gascon philosopher's pages, may or may not indicate, according as it is interpreted. It serves as an introduction to the passage in which the author's double meaning, and the occasionally double sound of his stories is noted. In the preceding chapter, it should be remarked, however, the author has been discoursing in high strains, upon the vanity of popular applause, or of any applause but that of reason and conscience; sustaining himself with quotations from the Stoics, whose doctrines on this point he assumes as the precepts of a true and natural philosophy; and among others the following passage was quoted: – [Taken from an epistle of Seneca, but including a quotation from a letter of Epicurus, on the same subject.] – 'Remember him who being asked why he took so much pains in an art that could come to the knowledge of but few persons, replied, "A few are enough for me. I have enough with one, I have enough with never a one." He said true; yourself and a companion *are* theatre enough to one another, or *you* to *yourself*. Let us be to you *the whole people*, and the whole people to you but *one*. You should do like the beasts of chase who *efface the track at the entrance into their den*.' But this author's comprehensive design embraces all the oppositions in human nature; he thinks it of very little use to preach to men from the height of these lofty philosophic flights, unless you first dive down to the platform of their actualities, and by beginning with the secret of what they

are, make sure that you take them with you. So then the latent human vanity, must needs be confessed, and instead of taking it all to himself this time, poor Cicero and Pliny are dragged up, the latter very unjustly, as the commentator complains, to stand the brunt of this philosophic shooting.

'But this exceeds all meanness of spirit in *persons of such quality as they were*, to think to derive any glory from babbling and prating, *even to the making use of their private letters to their friends, and so withal that* though some of them *were never sent, the opportunity being lost*, they nevertheless published them; with this worthy excuse, that they were unwilling to lose their labour, and have their lucubrations thrown away.' – Was it not well becoming two consuls of Rome, *sovereign magistrates of the republic, that* commanded the world, to spend their time in patching up elegant missives, in order to gain the reputation of being well versed *in their own mother tongue*? What could a pitiful schoolmaster have done worse, who got his living by it? If the *acts* of Xenophon and Caesar had not far transcended their eloquence, I don't believe they would ever have taken the pains to *write* them. They made it their business to recommend not their *saying*, but their *doing*. The companions of Demosthenes in the embassy to Philip, extolling that prince as handsome, eloquent, and a stout drinker, Demosthenes said that those were commendations more proper for a woman, an advocate, or a sponge. 'Tis not *his profession* to know either how to hunt, or to dance well.

Orabunt causas alii, coelique meatus
Describent radio, et fulgentia sidera dicent,
Hic regere imperio populos sciat.

Plutarch says, moreover, that to appear so excellent in these less necessary qualities, is to produce witness against a man's self, that he has spent his time and study ill, which ought to have been employed in the acquisition of more necessary and more useful things. Thus Philip, King of Macedon, having heard *the great Alexander*, his son, *sing at a feast* to the *wonder and envy of the best musicians* there. 'Art thou not ashamed,' he said to him, 'to *sing so well*?' And to the same Philip, a musician with whom he was disputing about something concerning his art, said, '*Heaven forbid, sir, that so great a misfortune should ever befall you as to understand these things better than I*.' Perhaps this author might have made a similar reply, had *his* been subjected to a similar criticism. And Lord Bacon quotes this story too, as he does many others, which this author has *first selected*, and for the same purpose; for, not content with appropriating his philosophy, and pretending to invent his design and his method, he borrows all his most significant stories from him, and brings them in to illustrate the same points, and the points are borrowed also: he makes use, indeed, of his common-place book throughout in the most shameless and unconscionable manner. 'Rack his style, Madam, *rack his style*?' he said to Queen Elizabeth, as he tells us, when she consulted him – he being then of her counsel learned,

in the case of Dr. Hayward, charged with having written 'the book of the deposing of Richard the Second, and the *coming in* of Henry the Fourth,' and sent to the Tower for that offence. The queen was eager for a different kind of advice. Racking an author's book did not appear to her coarse sensibilities, perfectly unconscious of the delicacy of an author's susceptibilities, a process in itself sufficiently murderous to satisfy her revenge. There must be some flesh and blood in the business before ever she could understand it. She wanted to have 'the question' put to that gentleman as to his meaning in the obscure passages in that work under the most impressive circumstances; and Mr. Bacon, *himself* an author, being of her counsel learned, was requested to make out a case of treason for her; and wishes from such a source were understood to be commands in those days. Now it happened that one of the managers and actors at the Globe Theatre, who was at that time sustaining, as it would seem, the most extraordinary relations of intimacy and friendship with the friends and patrons of this same person, then figuring as the queen's adviser, had recently composed a tragedy on this very subject; though that gentleman, more cautious than Dr. Hayward, and having, perhaps, some learned counsel also, had taken the precaution to keep back the scene of the deposing of royalty during the life-time of this sharp-witted queen, reserving its publication for the reign of her erudite successor; and the learned counsel in this case being aware of the fact, may have felt some sympathy with this misguided author. 'No, madam,' he replied

to her inquiry, thinking to take off her bitterness with a merry conceit, as he says, 'for treason I can *not* deliver opinion that there is any, but very much felony.' The queen apprehending it gladly, asked, 'How?' and 'wherein?' Mr. Bacon answered, 'Because he had stolen many of his sentences and conceits out of Cornelius Tacitus.' It would do one good to see, perhaps, how many felonious appropriations of sentences, and quotations, and ideas, the application he recommends would bring to light in this case.

But the instances already quoted are not the only ones which this free spoken foreign writer, this Elizabethan genius abroad, ventures to adduce in support of this position of his, that statesmen – men who aspire to the administration of republics or other forms of government – if they cannot consent on that account to relinquish altogether the company of the Muses, must at least so far respect the prevailing opinion on that point, as to be able to sacrifice to it the proudest literary honours. Will the reader be pleased to notice, not merely the extraordinary character of the example in this instance, but *the grounds* of the assumption which the critic makes with so much coolness.

'And could the perfection of eloquence have added any lustre proportionable to the merit of a great person, certainly Scipio and Laelius had never resigned the honour of their comedies, with all the *luxuriancies and delicacies of the Latin tongue*, to an African slave, for that the work was THEIRS *its beauty and excellency* SUFFICIENTLY PROVE.' [This is from a book in which the

supposed autograph of Shakspere is found; a work from which he quotes incessantly, and from which he appears, indeed, to have taken the whole hint of his learning.] 'Besides Terence himself confesses as much, and I should take it ill in any one that would *dispossess me* of that *belief*.' For, as he says in another place, in a certain deeply disguised dedication which he makes of the work of a friend, a poet, whose early death he greatly lamented, and whom he is 'determined,' as he says, 'to revive and raise again to life if he can:' 'As we often judge of the greater by the less, and *as the very pastimes* of great men give an honourable idea to the clear-sighted *of the source* from which they spring, I hope you will, by this work of his, rise to the knowledge of himself, and by consequence love and embrace his memory. In so doing, you will accomplish what he exceedingly longed for whilst he lived.' But here he continues thus, 'I have, indeed, in my time known some, who, by a knack of writing, have got both title and fortune, yet disown their apprenticeship, *purposely corrupt their style,* and affect ignorance of so vulgar a quality (which *also our nation observes*, rarely to be seen *in very learned hands*), carefully seeking a reputation by better qualities.'

> I once did hold it, as our statists do, a baseness to write fair: but now it did me yeoman's service.
> – *Hamlet.*

And it is in the next paragraph to *this*, that he takes occasion to mention that his stories and allegations do not always serve simply for example, authority, or ornament; that they are not

limited in their application to the use he ostensibly makes of them, but that they carry, for those who are in his secret, other meanings, bolder and richer meanings, and sometimes collaterally a more delicate sound. And having interrupted the consideration upon Cicero and Pliny, and their vanity and pitiful desire for honour in future ages, with this criticism on the limited sphere of statesmen in general, and the devices to which *Lælius and Scipio* were compelled to resort, in order to get *their* plays published without diminishing the lustre of their personal renown, and having stopped to insert that most extraordinary avowal in regard to his two-fold meanings in his allegations and stories, he returns to the subject of this correspondence again, for there is more in this also than meets the ear; and it is not *Pliny*, and *Cicero* only, whose supposed vanity, and regard for posthumous fame, as men of letters, is under consideration. 'But returning to the *speaking virtue*;' he says, 'I find *no great choice* between not knowing to speak *anything but ill*, and not knowing anything but *speaking well*. The sages tell us, that as to what concerns *knowledge* there is nothing but *philosophy*, and as to what concerns *effects* nothing but *virtue*, that is generally proper to all degrees and orders. There is something like *this in these two other* philosophers, for *they also promise* ETERNITY to the letters they write to their friends, but 'tis *after another manner*, and by accommodating themselves *for a good end* to the vanity of *another*; for they write to them that if the concern of making themselves known to future ages, and the thirst of glory, do yet

detain them in the management of public affairs, and make them fear the solitude and retirement to which they would persuade them; let them never trouble themselves more about it, forasmuch as they shall have credit enough with posterity to assure them that, were there nothing else but the *letters* thus writ to them, those letters will render their names as known and famous as their *own public actions* themselves could do. [And that —*that* is the key to the correspondence between *two other* philosophers enigmatically alluded to here.] And besides this difference,' for it is 'these two other philosophers,' and not Pliny and Cicero, and not Seneca and Epicurus alone, that we talk of here, 'and besides *this difference, these* are not *idle* and *empty* letters, that contain nothing but a fine jingle of well chosen words, and fine couched phrases; but replete and *abounding with grave and learned discourses*, by which a man may render himself – not more eloquent but more *wise*, and that instruct us not to *speak* but *to do well*'; for that is the rhetorical theory that was adopted by the scholars and statesmen then alive, whose methods of making themselves known to future ages he is indicating, even in these references to the ancients. '*Away* with that *eloquence* which so enchants us with its *harmony* that we should more study it than *things*'; for this is the place where the quotation with which our investigation of this theory commenced is inserted in the text, and here it is, in the light of these preceding collections of hints that he puts in the story first quoted, wherein he says, the nature of the orator will be much more manifestly laid open to us,

than in that seeming care for his fame, or in that care of his style, for its own sake. It is the story of Eros, the slave, who brought the speaker word that the audience was *deferred*, when in composing a speech that he was to make in public, 'he found himself straitened in *time*, to fit his words to his mouth as he had a mind to do.'

CHAPTER III

THE POSSIBILITY OF GREAT ANONYMOUS WORKS, – OR WORKS PUBLISHED UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME, – CONVEYING, UNDER RHETORICAL DISGUISES, THE PRINCIPAL SCIENCES, – RE-SUGGESTED, AND ILLUSTRATED

> Is the storm overblown? I hid me under the dead moon-calf's gaberdine for fear of the storm.
> – *Tempest.*

BUT as to this love of glory which the stoics, whom this philosopher quotes so approvingly, have measured at its true worth; as to this love of literary fame, this hankering after an earthly immortality, which he treats so scornfully in the Roman statesman, let us hear him again in another chapter, and see

if we can find any thing whereby *his* nature and designs will more manifestly be laid open to us. 'Of all the foolish dreams in the world,' he says, that which is most universally received, is the solicitude of reputation and glory, which we are fond of to that degree as to abandon riches, peace, life, and health, which are effectual and substantial good, to pursue this vain phantom. And of all the irrational humours of men, it should seem that the philosophers themselves have the most ado, and do the least disengage themselves from this the most restive and obstinate of all the follies. There is not any one view of which *reason* does so clearly accuse the vanity, as that; but it is *so deeply rooted in us*, that I doubt whether any one ever clearly freed himself from it, or no. *After you have said all, and believed all* that has been said to its prejudice, it creates so intestine an inclination *in opposition to your best arguments*, that you have little power and firmness to resist it; *for* (*as Cicero says*) even those who controvert it, would yet that *the books they write* should appear before the world with *their names in the title page*, and seek to derive glory from seeming to despise it. All other things are communicable and fall into commerce; we lend our goods —

[It irks me not that men my garments wear.]

and stake our lives for the necessities and service of our friends; but to communicate one's honour, *and to robe another with one's own glory*, is very rarely seen. And yet we have some examples of that kind. Catulus Luctatius, in the Cymbrian war, having done all that in him lay to make his flying soldiers

face about upon the enemy, *ran himself at last away with the rest, and counterfeited the coward*, to the end that his men might rather seem to follow their captain, than to fly from the enemy; and after several anecdotes full of that inner significance of which he speaks elsewhere, in which he appears, but only appears, to lose sight of this question of literary honour, for they relate to *military* conflicts, he ventures to approach, somewhat cautiously and delicately, the latent point of his essay again, by adducing the example of persons, *not* connected with the military profession, who have found themselves called upon in various ways, and by means of various weapons, to take part in these wars; who have yet, in consequence of certain '*subtleties of conscience*,' *relinquished* the *honour* of their successes; and though there is no instance adduced of that particular kind of disinterestedness, in which an author relinquishes to another the honour of his title page, as the beginning might have led one to anticipate; on the whole, the not indiligent reader of this author's performances here and elsewhere, will feel that the subject which is announced as the subject of this chapter, 'Not to communicate a man's honour or glory,' has been, considering the circumstance, sufficiently illustrated.

'*As women succeeding to peerages* had, notwithstanding their sex, the right to assist and give their votes in the causes that appertain to the jurisdiction of peers; so the ecclesiastical peers, *notwithstanding their profession*, were obliged to *assist our kings* in their wars, not only with their friends and servants, but in their

own persons. And he instances the Bishop of Beauvais, who took a gallant share in the battle of Bouvines, but did not think it *fit for him to participate in the fruit and glory of that violent and bloody trade*. He, with his own hand, reduced several of the enemy that day to his mercy, whom he delivered to the first gentleman he met, either to kill or to receive them to quarter, *referring that part to another hand*. As also did William, Earl of Salisbury, to Messire John de Neale, with a like subtlety of conscience to the other, he would KILL, *but* NOT WOUND *him*, and *for that reason*, fought only with a *mace*. And a certain person in my time, being reproached by the king that he had *laid hands* on a *priest*, stiffly and positively denied it. The case was, he had cudgelled and kicked him.' And there the author abruptly, for that time, leaves the matter without any allusion to the case of still another kind of combatants, who, fighting with another kind of weapon, might also, from similar subtleties of conscience, perhaps think fit to devolve on others the glory of their successes.

But in a chapter on *names*, in which, if he has not told, he has *designed to tell all*; and what he could not express, he has at least pointed out with his finger, this subject is more fully developed. In this chapter, he regrets that such as write *chronicles in Latin* do not leave our names as they find them, for in making of *Vaudemont* VALLE-MONTANUS, and metamorphosing names to dress them out in Greek or Latin, we know not where we are, and with the *persons* of *the men, lose* the *benefit* of the *story*: but one who tracks the inner thread of this apparently miscellaneous

collection of items, need be at no such loss in this case. But at the conclusion of this apparently very trivial talk about *names*, he resumes his philosophic humour again, and the subsequent discourse on this subject, recalls once more, the considerations with which philosophy sets at nought the loss of fame, and forgets in the warmth that prompts to worthy deeds, the glory that should follow them.

'But this consideration – that is the consideration "that it is the custom in *France*, to call every man, even a stranger, by the name of any *manor* or *seigneury*, he may chance to come in possession of, tends to the total confusion of descents, so that *surnames* are no security," – "for," he says, "a younger brother of a good family, having a *manor* left him by his father, by the name of which he has been known and honoured, cannot handsomely leave it; ten years after his decease, it falls into the hand of a stranger, who does the same." Do but judge whereabouts we shall be concerning the knowledge of these men. This consideration leads me therefore into another subject. Let us look a little more narrowly into, and examine upon what foundation we erect this glory and reputation, for which the world is turned topsy-turvy. Wherein do we place this renown, that we hunt after with such infinite anxiety and trouble. It is in the end PIERRE or WILLIAM that bears it, takes it into his possession, and whom only it concerns. Oh what a valiant faculty is HOPE, that in a mortal subject, and in a moment, makes nothing of usurping infinity, immensity, eternity, and of

supplying her master's indigence, at her pleasure, with all things that he can imagine or desire. And this Pierre or William, what is it but a sound, when all is done, ("What's in a name?") or three or four dashes with a pen?'

And he has already written two paragraphs to show, that the name of William, at least, is not excepted from the general remarks he is making here on the vanity of names; while that of Pierre is five times repeated, apparently with the same general intention, and another combination of sounds is not wanting which serves with that free translation the author himself takes pains to suggest and defend, to complete what was lacking to that combination, in order to give these remarks their true point and significance, in order to redeem them from that appearance of flatness which is not a characteristic of this author's intentions, and in his style merely serves as an intimation to the reader that there is something worth looking for beneath it.

As to the name of William, and the amount of personal distinction which that confers upon its owners, he begins by telling us, that the name of Guienne is said to be derived from the Williams of our ancient Aquitaine, 'which would seem,' he says, rather far fetched, were there not as crude derivations in Plato himself, to whom he refers in other places for similar precedents; and when he wishes to excuse his enigmatical style – the titles of his chapters for instance. And by way of emphasizing this particular still further, he mentions, that on the occasion when Henry, the Duke of Normandy, the son of Henry the Second,

of England, made a feast in France, the concourse of nobility and gentry was so great, that for *sport's sake* he divided them into *troops, according to their names*, and in the *first troop, which consisted of Williams*, there were found a hundred and ten knights sitting at the table of that name, without reckoning the simple gentlemen and servants.

And here he apparently digresses from his subject for the sake of mentioning the Emperor *Geta*, 'who distributed the several courses of his meats by the *first letters of the meats* themselves, where those that began with *B* were served up together; *as* brawn, beef, beccaficos, and so of the others.' This appears to be a little out of the way; but it is not impossible that there may be an allusion in it to the author's own family name of *Eyquem*, though that would be rather farfetched, as he says; but then there is *Plato* at hand, still to keep us in countenance.

But to return to the point of digression. 'And this Pierre, or William, what is it but a sound when all is done? *Or* three or four dashes with a pen, *so easy to be varied*, that I would fain know to whom is to be attributed the glory of so many victories, to *Guesquin*, to Glesquin, or to *Gueaguin*. And yet there would be something more in the case than in Lucian that Sigma should serve Tau with a process, for "He seeks no mean rewards." *The quere is here in good earnest. The point is*, which of *these letters* is to be rewarded for so many sieges, battles, wounds, imprisonment, and services done to the crown of France by this famous constable. *Nicholas Denisot* never concerned

himself further than *the letters of his name*, of which he has altered the *whole contexture, to build up by anagram* the Count d'Alsinois *whom he has endowed with the glory of his poetry and painting*. [A good precedent – but here is a better one.] And the historian Suetonius looked only to the *meaning of his*; and so, cashiering his *fathers surname, Lenis* left Tranquillus *successor to the reputation of his writings*. Who would believe that the Captain Bayard should have no honour but what he derives from the great deeds of Peter (Pierre) Terrail, [the name of Bayard – "the meaning"] and that Antonio Escalin should suffer himself, to his face, to be robbed of the honour of so many navigations, and commands at sea and land, by Captain Poulin and the Baron de la Garde. [The name of Poulin was taken from the place where he was born, De la Garde from a person who took him in his boyhood into his service.] Who hinders my groom from calling himself Pompey the Great? But, after all, what virtue, what springs are there that convey to my deceased groom, or the other Pompey (who had his head cut off in Egypt), this glorious renown, and these so much honoured flourishes of the pen?' Instructive suggestions, especially when taken in connection with the preceding items contained in this chapter, apparently so casually introduced, yet all with a stedfast bearing on this question of names, and all pointing by means of a thread of delicate sounds, and not less delicate suggestions, to another instance, in which the possibility of circumstances tending to countervail the so natural desire to appropriate to the

name derived from one's ancestors, the lustre of one's deeds, is clearly demonstrated.

"Tis with good reason that men decry the hypocrisy that is in war; for what is more easy to an old soldier than to shift in time of danger, and to counterfeit bravely, when he has no more heart than a chicken. There are so many ways to avoid hazarding a man's own person' – 'and had we the use of the Platonic ring, which renders those invisible that wear it, if turned inwards towards the palm of the hand, it is to be feared that a great many would often hide themselves, when they *ought to appear*.' 'It seems that to be known, *is in some sort to a man's life and its duration in another's keeping*. I for my part, hold that I am wholly in myself, and that other life of mine which lies in the knowledge of my friends, considering it nakedly and simply in itself, I know very well that I am sensible of no fruit or enjoyment of it but by the vanity of a fantastic opinion; and, when I shall be dead, I shall be much less sensible of it, and shall withal absolutely lose the use of those real advantages that sometimes accidentally follow it. [That was Lord Bacon's view, too, exactly.] I shall have no more handle whereby to take hold of reputation, or whereby it may take hold of me: for to expect that my name should receive it, in the first place, I have no name that is enough my own. Of two that I have, one is common to all my race, and even to others also: there is one family at Paris, and another at Montpelier, whose surname is *Montaigne*; another in Brittany, and Xaintonge called *De la Montaigne*. The transposition of *one syllable only* is enough

to ravel our affairs, so that I shall peradventure share in their glory, and they shall partake of my shame; and, moreover, my ancestors were formerly surnamed *Eyquem*, a name wherein a *family well known in England* at this day is concerned. As to my other name, any one can *take it that will*, and *so*, perhaps, I may honour *a porter* in my own stead. And, besides, though I had a particular distinction myself, what can it distinguish when I *am no more*. Can it point out and favour inanity?

> But will thy manes such a gift bestow
> As to make violets from thy ashes grow?

'But of this I have spoken elsewhere.' He has – and to purpose.

But as to the authority for these readings, Lord Bacon himself will give us that; for this is the style which he discriminates so sharply as 'the *enigmatical*,' a style which he, too, finds to have been in use among the ancients, and which he tells us *has some affinity* with that new method of making over knowledge from the mind of the teacher to that of the pupil, which he terms the method of *progression*– (which is the method of *essaie*) – in opposition to the received method, the only method he finds in use, which he, too, calls the *magisterial*. And this method of progression, with which the enigmatical has some affinity, is to be used, he tells us, in cases where knowledge is delivered as a thread to be spun on, where science is to be removed from one mind to another *to grow from the root*, and not delivered as trees

for the use of the carpenter, where *the root* is of no consequence. In this case, he tells us it is necessary for the teacher to descend to *the foundations of knowledge and consent*, and so to transplant it into another as it grew in his own mind, 'whereas as knowledge is now delivered, there is a *kind of contract of error* between the deliverer and the receiver, for he that delivereth knowledge desireth to deliver it in such a form as may *best be believed*, and not as may best be *examined*: and he that receiveth knowledge desireth rather *present satisfaction* than *expectant inquiry*, and so rather *not to doubt than not to err, glory* making the author not to lay open his weakness, and *sloth* making the disciple *not to know his strength*.' Now, so very grave a defect as this, in the method of the delivery and tradition of Learning, would of course be one of the first things that would require to be remedied in any plan in which '*the Advancement*' of it was seriously contemplated. And this method of the delivery and tradition of knowledge which transfers *the root* with them, that they may grow in the mind of the learner, is the method which this philosopher professes to find wanting, and the one which he seems disposed to invent. He has made a very thorough survey of the stores of the ancients, and is not unacquainted with the more recent history of learning; he knows exactly what kinds of methods have been made use of by the learned in all ages, for the purpose of putting themselves into some tolerable and possible relations with the physical majority; he knows what devices they have always been compelled to resort to, for the purpose of establishing some more or less effective

communication between themselves and that world to which they instinctively seek to transfer their doctrine. But this method, which he suggests here as the essential condition of the growth and advancement of learning, he does *not* find invented. He refers to a method which he calls the enigmatical, which has an affinity with it, 'used in some cases by the discretion of the ancients,' but disgraced since, 'by the impostures of persons, who have made it as a *false light* for their counterfeit merchandises.' The purpose of this latter style is, as he defines it, 'to remove the *secrets* of knowledge from the penetration of the more vulgar capacities, and to reserve them to *selected auditors*, or to wits of such sharpness as can pierce the veil.' And that is a method, he tells us, which philosophy can by no means dispense with in his time, and 'whoever would let in new light upon the human understanding must still have recourse to it.' But the method of delivery and tradition in those ancient schools, appears to have been too much of the dictatorial kind to suit this proposer of advancement; its tendency was to arrest knowledge instead of promoting its growth. He is not pleased with the ambition of those old masters, and thinks they aimed too much at a personal impression, and that they sometimes undertook to impose their own particular and often very partial grasp of those universal doctrines and principles, which are and must be true for all men, in too dogmatical and magisterial a manner, without making sufficient allowance for the growth of the mind of the world, the difference of races, etc.

But if any doubt in regard to the use of the method described, in the composition of the work now first produced as AN EXAMPLE of the use of it, should still remain in any mind; or if this method of unravelling it should seem too studious, perhaps the author's own word for it in one more quotation may be thought worth taking.

'*I can give no account of my life by* MY ACTIONS, fortune has placed *them* too low; *I must do it* BY MY FANCIES. And when shall I have done representing the continual agitation and change of my thoughts as they come into my head, seeing that Diomedes filled six thousand books upon the subject of grammar.' [The commentators undertake to set him right here, but the philosopher only glances in his intention at the voluminousness of the science of *words*, in opposition to the science of *things*, which he came to establish.] 'What must prating *produce*, since prating itself, and the first beginning to speak, stuffed the world with such a horrible load of volumes. So many words about *words* only. They accused one Galba, of old, of living idly; he made answer that every one ought to give account of his *actions*, but *not* of his *leisure*. He was mistaken, for *justice*– [the civil authority] – has cognizance and *jurisdiction* over those that *do nothing*, or only PLAY *at* WORKING… Scribbling appears to be the sign of a disordered age. Every man applies himself negligently to the duty of his *vocation* at such a time and debauches in it.' From that central wrong of an evil government, an infectious depravity spreads and corrupts all

particulars. Everything turns from its true and natural course. Thus *scribbling* is the sign of a disordered age. Men write in such times instead of acting; and scribble, or seem to perhaps, instead of writing openly to purpose.

And yet, again, that central, and so divergent, wrong is the result of each man's particular contribution, as he goes on to assert. 'The corruption of this age is made up by the particular contributions of every individual man,' —

He were no lion, were not Romans hinds. —*Cassius*.

'Some contribute *treachery*, others *injustice*, irreligion, *tyranny*, *avarice* and *cruelty, according as they have power; the* WEAKER SORT CONTRIBUTE FOLLY, VANITY, *and* IDLENESS, and *of these* I am one.'

Caesar loves no plays as thou dost, Antony. Such men are dangerous.

Or, as the same poet expresses it in another Roman play: —

> This *double worship*,
> Where one part does *disdain with cause, the other*
> *Insult without all reason*; where gentry, title, wisdom
> Cannot conclude but by the *yea and no*
> Of *general ignorance*, – it must omit
> Real necessities – and give way the while
> To unstable slightness; purpose *so barred*,
> It follows, nothing is done to purpose.

And that is made the plea for an attempt to overthrow the

popular power, and to replace it with a government containing the true head of the state, its nobility, its learning, its gentleness, its wisdom.

But the essayist continues: – 'It seems as if it were the season for *vain things* when *the hurtful oppress us*; in a time when doing ill is common, to do nothing but what *signifies nothing* is a kind of commendation. 'Tis *my* comfort that *I* shall be one of the last that shall be called in question, – for it would be against reason *to punish the less troublesome* while we are *infested* with the *greater*. *As the physician* said to one who presented him his finger to dress, and who, as he perceived, had an ulcer *in his lungs*, "Friend, it is not now time to concern yourself about your finger's ends." *And yet* I saw some years ago, *a person, whose name and memory I have in very great esteem*, in the very height of our great disorders, when there was *neither law nor justice put in execution, nor magistrate that performed his office*, *—no more than there is now*, – publish I know not what *pitiful reformations* about *clothes, cookery* and *law chicanery*. *These are amusements* wherewith *to feed a people that are ill used, to show that they are not totally forgotten. These others* do the same, who insist upon *stoutly defending* the *forms* of *speaking*, dances and games to a people totally abandoned to all sorts of execrable vices – it is for the Spartans only to fall to combing and curling themselves, when they are just upon the point of running headlong into some extreme danger of their lives.

'For *my part*, I have *yet a worse* custom. I scorn to mend

myself by halves. If my *shoe* go awry, I let my shirt and my cloak do so too: when I am out of order I feed on mischief. I abandon myself through despair, and let myself go towards the precipice, and as the saying is, throw the helve after the hatchet.' We should not need, perhaps, the aid of the explanations already quoted, to show us that the author does not confess this custom of his for the sake of commending it to the sense or judgment of the reader, – who sees it here for the first time it may be put into words or put on paper, who looks at it here, perhaps, for the first time objectively, from the critical stand-point which the review of another's confession creates; and though it may have been latent in the dim consciousness of his own experience, or practically developed, finds it now for the first time, collected from the phenomena of the blind, instinctive, human motivity, and put down on the page of science, as a principle in nature, in human nature also.

But this is indeed a Spartan combing and curling, that the author is falling to, in the introductory flourishes ('diversions' as he calls them) of this great adventure, that his pen is out for now: he is indeed upon the point of running headlong into the fiercest dangers; – it is the state, the wretched, discased, vicious state, dying apparently, yet full of teeth and mischief, that he is about to handle in his argument with these fine, lightsome, frolicsome preparations of his, without any perceptible 'mittens'; it is the heart of that political evil that his time groans with, and begins to find insufferable, that he is going to probe to the quick with

that so delicate weapon. It is a tilt against the block and the rack, and all the instruments of torture, that he is going to manage, as handsomely, and with as many sacrifices to the graces, as the circumstances will admit of. But the political situation which he describes so boldly (and we have already seen what it is) affects us here in its relation to the question of style only, and as the author himself connects it with the point of our inquiry.

'A man may regret,' he says, 'the better times, but cannot fly from the present, we may wish for other magistrates, but we must, notwithstanding, obey those we have; and, peradventure, it is more laudable to obey the bad than the good, so long as the image of the ancient and received laws of this monarchy shall shine in any corner of the kingdom. If they happen, unfortunately, to thwart and contradict one another, so as to produce two factions of doubtful choice,' —

> And my soul aches
> To know, [says Coriolanus] when two authorities are up,
> Neither supreme, how soon confusion
> May enter 'twixt the gap of both, and take
> The one by the other.

– 'in this contingency will willingly choose,' continues the other, 'to withdraw from the tempest, and in the meantime, *nature or the hazards of war may lend me a helping hand*. Betwixt Cæsar and Pompey, I should soon and frankly have declared myself, but amongst the three robbers that came after, a man

must needs *have either hid himself*, or have gone along with the current of the time, *which I think a man may lawfully do, when reason no longer rules*.' '*Whither* dost thou wandering go?'

'This *medley* is a little from my subject, I go out of my way but 'tis rather *by licence than oversight*. My fancies *follow* one another, *but sometimes at a great distance*, and *look towards one another*, but 'tis with an *oblique glance*. I have read a DIALOGUE of PLATO of such a *motley and fantastic* composition. The *beginning was about love*, and all the rest ABOUT RHETORIC. *They* stick not (that is, the ancients) at these variations, and have a marvellous grace in letting themselves to be carried away at the pleasure of the winds; or at least to *seem* as if they were. The titles of my chapters do not always comprehend the whole matter, they often denote it *by some mark only*, as those other titles *Andria Eunuchus*, or these, *Sylla, Cicero, Torquatus*. I love *a poetic march*, by leaps and skips, 'tis an art, as Plato says, light, nimble; and *a little demoniacal*. There are places in *Plutarch* where *he* forgets his theme, where the proposition of *his* argument is only found *incidentally*, and stuffed throughout with foreign matter. Do but observe his meanders in the Demon of Socrates. How beautiful are his variations and digressions; and then *most of all, when they seem to be* fortuitous, [hear] and introduced *for want of heed. 'Tis the indiligent reader* that loses my subject —*not I. There will always be found some words* or *other in a corner that are to the purpose, though it lie very close* [that is the unfailing

rule]. I ramble about indiscreetly and tumultously: my style and my *wit* wander at the same rate, [he wanders *wittingly*]. A *little folly* is *desirable* in him *that will not be guilty of stupidity*, say the precepts, and much more the *examples* of our masters. A thousand poets flag and languish after a *prosaic manner*; but the best old prose, and I strew it here up and down *indifferently* for verse, shines throughout with the vigor and boldness of poetry, and represents some air of its fury. Certainly, prose must *yield* the pre-eminence in speaking. "The poet," says Plato, "when set upon the muse's tripod, pours out with fury, whatever comes into his mouth, like the pipe of a fountain, *without considering and pausing upon what he says*, and things come from him of *various colors*, of *contrary substance*, and with an irregular torrent": he himself (Plato) is all over poetical, and all the old theology (*as the learned inform us) is poetry*, and the *first philosophy*, is the origiual language of the gods.

'I would have the matter *distinguish itself*; it sufficiently shows *where it changes*, where it concludes, *where it begins, and where it resumes, without interlacing it with words of connection*, introduced for the relief of *weak or negligent ears*, and without commenting myself. Who is he that had not rather not be read at all, than after a drowsy or *cursory* manner? Seeing I cannot fix the reader's attention by the *weight* of what I write, *maneo male*, if I should chance *to do it by my intricacies*. [Hear]. I mortally hate obscurity and *would avoid it if I could. In such an employment*, to whom you will not give an hour you will give

nothing; *and you do nothing for him for whom you only do, whilst you are doing something else*. To which may be added, that I have, perhaps, some particular obligation to speak only *by halves*, to speak *confusedly and discordantly*.'

But this is, perhaps, enough to show, in the way of direct assertion, that we have here, at least, a philosophical work composed in that style which Lord Bacon calls 'the enigmatical,' in which he tells us the *secrets* of knowledge are reserved for *selected auditors*, or wits of such sharpness as can pierce the veil; a style which he, too, tells us was sometimes used by the discretion of the ancients, though he does not specify either Plutarch or Plato; in that place, and one which he introduces in connection with his new method of progression, in consequence of its having, as he tells us, *some affinity* with it, and that we have here also a specimen of that new method itself, by means of which knowledge is to be delivered as a thread to be spun on.

But let us leave, for the present, this wondrous Gascon, though it is not very easy to do so, so long as we have our present subject in hand, – this philosopher, whose fancies look towards one another at such long, such very long distances, sometimes, though not always, with an *oblique* glance, who dares to depend so much upon the eye of his reader, and especially upon the reader of that 'far-off' age he writes to. It would have been indeed irrelevant to introduce the subject of this foreign work and its style in this connection without further explanation, but for the identity of political situation already referred to, and but

for those subtle, interior, incessant connections with the higher writings of the great Elizabethan school, which form the *main characteristic* of this production. The fact, that this work was composed in the country in which the chief Elizabethan men attained their maturity, that it dates from the time in which Bacon was completing his education there, that it covers ostensibly not the period only, but the scenes and events of Raleigh's six years campaigning there, as well as the fact alluded to by this author himself, in a passage already quoted, – the fact that there was a family then in England, *very well known*, who bore the surname of his ancestors, a family of the name of *Eyquem*, he tells us with whom, perhaps, he still kept up some secret correspondence and relations, the fact, too, which he mentions in his chapter on Names, that a surname in France is very easily acquired, and is not necessarily derived from one's ancestors, – that same chapter in which he adduces so many instances of men who, notwithstanding that inveterate innate love of the honour of one's own proper name, which is in men of genius still more inveterate, – have for one reason or another been willing to put upon anagrams, or synonyms, or borrowed names, all their honours, so that in the end it is William or Pierre who takes them into his possession, and bears them, or it's the name of 'an African slave' perhaps, or the name of a 'groom' (promoted, it may be, to the rank of a jester, or even to that of a player,) that gets all the glory. All these facts, taken in connection with the conclusions already established, though insignificant in

themselves, will be found anything but that for the philosophical student who has leisure to pursue the inquiry.

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