



work, belonging entirely to this or that class, and confined entirely to one sort of interest.

If literature were sunk to the lowest possible state in which it could exist, it would reject, (from its means of interesting the mind,) first, all abstract truth; and then all imagination or conception except of things and scenes which are commonly before the eyes of mankind, and daily forced upon their attention; and then it would renounce all sense of the difference between beauty or deformity, and would content itself with representing only what is pleasant or painful to the individual. Having made all these revolutions, it would still have remaining the common passions of human nature, and the hopes and fears which necessarily accompany personal existence. These, in a literary work, the reader may be made intensely to feel, by a sympathy with fictitious situations; but without almost any internal discrimination of feeling as to better or worse. I could even suppose the lowest kind of feeling or interest to be produced by a painting, not as a work of art, but as a means of exciting sympathy; for example, a representation of a shipwreck, where men were using various expedients to save their lives. The characteristic of this Stage of Taste, is, that its interest is only in the personal sensation of the moment, and in that which brings pleasure or pain to the individual; but has no relation to any thing general, or to permanent and abstract truth. This is the case with all the common and unglorified passions. There can scarcely be any literary work which will not, in some parts, rise above these; but it is of importance to discriminate what is peculiarly appropriate to this lowest stage of feeling. The novel of Caleb Williams, for instance, has a great power of interesting the reader, for the most part, but scarcely rises beyond the personal sensations of the moment, and that darkness as to taste which is in the passions of individuals. The class of feelings which belongs to the lowest stage, may be called "natural," but they do not expand or resolve themselves into the affecting recognition of common humanity. The attention of the reader is fastened down to the concerns of individuals. Nature has sometimes been deified, and called

to his own qualities, tried according to any intelligible standard.

To the same level may be referred some of the latest tastes, which have appeared in modern times, as to what is the most desirable state and composition of society. These tastes have included great proportion of mankind to wish to contemplate societies of such a composition, as the uniform grey or Arab colours of the coats of Quakers, who, though they are good sort of people, I think, have more likeness to hired servants, than to prodigal sons. This is by way of consulting a Jewelling taste with order. Externally this inclination assumes the hypocritical form of respect, for all that is most immediately useful in human nature. In reality, it is a wish to raise the price of the homely and vulgar stuff of human nature, and place it in a condition of undisturbed self-conceit, incapable of improvement in taste. But supposing that, in one generation, by the predominance of vulgar envy, the dirt-colour were established in society, it would not be easy to persuade the next generation to remain contented with it, as the most beneficial of all things. Such are the tastes and inclinations which belong to the lowest stage of feeling. But here it is proper to observe, that in all fictitious narratives, (to whatever stage of taste they may belong,) a sympathy with the personal feelings and fortunes of some particular character must be created, for the purpose of engaging the reader's attention, and carrying him on, and this must be the stock, whatever other things may be grafted upon it. Therefore, although a strong personal interest, awakened by a fictitious narrative, is not a feeling of any high grade, yet it does, on that account, make the work referable to this or that stage of taste. Having said thus much, Mr North, on the first stage of feeling, I shall now inquire what is the next. To the Second Stage, I think, may be referred all recognition of a common humanity, extending through different individuals, and shown in the natural affections of mankind. Although not lofty, this is at least deeply moving, and resolves the self-interested passions of individuals into something universal and unlimited, in a sort of widely-diffused enthusiasm, or in the internal recognition of kindred being. This is what some of the German writers have called "holy nature;" and dramatists, among them, exploring the same vein, have shown that they were capable of producing a great deal of sensation, in all the tribes of Europe. Kotzebue was one of the lowest. He makes his tenderness of as damp and watery a sort, as possible, and confines himself to the most common and unmingled elements, which may be found in any mind, whatever. In the drama of the inferior German writers, there is often a transference of the scene into remote countries; and the persons on the stage, whether Asians, Europeans, or Hottentots, brought together, are made to join in sobbing or tenderness, undisturbed by any unseasonable discriminations of taste, that would lessen the breadth of the sensation. Schiller, in his Robbers, is not in a much higher vein, but deals in the passions of individuals, and seldom resolves into the yet universal nature of German sentiment, which, I think, must be good, in so far as it conduces to the recognition of general humanity. But the fellow-feeling of a common nature, or of impulses widely shared, cannot, justly be held up as the ultimate aim of poetical sentiment; since, if it were so, we should, as such, it would swallow up all distinctions of better or worse, or beauty and deformity. The aim of tragedy or poetry-writing, is not like the figure of the kneeling Actæon, on the medal struck in reference to the abolition of slavery, saying, "Am I not a man and a brother?" If one of the characters in Kotzebue's plays were making the same appeal, the reply might be, "You are a man and a brother by common origin, but you are not a person with whom we would think it any honour to sympathize from taste, however much we may desire your welfare." Among the English poets, Cowper, from humanity and humility, and from wishing to exercise the office of a Methodist preacher in verse, sought for this sense of universal kindred, and rejoiced in the participation of common affections. He has the following passage on the subject:—

"These well, say'st thou, sage, erudite, profound,  
 Presently speak, and aquiline his nose,  
 A valiant heart with most aspiring brows,  
 A face well, could you permit the world to live  
 As this world please. What's the world to you?  
 As sweet as charity from human breasts,  
 I blush, astonished, I blush and weep,  
 And exercise all functions of a man.  
 How then should I and any man that lives  
 Be strangers to each other? Plucke my vein,  
 Take of the crimson stream mending there,  
 And substitute it well; supply thy glass,  
 Reason is not prove how if it be not blood  
 Congeal'd with white ovens; and, if it be,  
 What edge of arbitery canst thou suppose  
 Keen enough, wise and skillful as thou art,  
 To cut the link of brotherhood, by which  
 One comion maker bound me to the kind?"

That it is here evident that Cowper on the stage. The later poets of England considered common affection as a man. Hand have sought for it more in general than through which he might plead for a hearing of his Representations. It is, at the same time, he knows, lodged, that the internal recognition of general nature is itself a feeling highly reserved of being called poetical. It is always found, and confessed to be such, in the enthusiasm of strong emotions widely shared. The German dramatist sought for nature in the situations of a few individuals brought up.

"And then and there was hurrying to and fro,  
 And gathering fast, and trappings of distress,  
 And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago  
 Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;  
 And there were sudden partings, such as press  
 The fib from out young hearts, and choking sighs  
 Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess  
 If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,  
 Since upon nights so sweet such awful horrors could tie!"

"And there was sounding in hot haste; the steel,  
 The retreating squadron, and the clattering car  
 Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,  
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;  
 And the deep thunders, peal on peal afar,  
 And near, the beat of the approaching drum,  
 Rush'd up the soldier on the morning star;  
 While throng'd the alizans, with German dummies,  
 Or whizzing, with white tips,—The foe! they come! they come!"

"And wild and high the 'Carleton's gathering' rose—  
 The retirement of Looked, which Albany hills  
 Have heard; and heard too have her Saxons seen,  
 How in the noon of night that purpled thills,  
 Savage and shrill; but with the breath which fills  
 Their mountains-tops, so fill the mountain-tops  
 With the fierce native daring, which bursts  
 The stirring memory of a thousand years,  
 And Evar's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!"

"And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,  
 Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass,  
 Greeting, if aught than mine'er greaves,  
 Over the retreating bayle. Alas!  
 Eye evening to be frodden like the grass,  
 While now beneath them; but above shall grow  
 In its next verdure, when the fiery mass  
 Of living vapour, rolling on the foe,  
 And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low."

These verses, so much admired and so popular, are a good example of enthusiasm which are the means of recognizing that community of elementary nature, which exists in multitudes. Passing beyond the interests of individuals, these emotions extend into the knowledge of something absolute and unlimited, which is called "Nature," but which is not high or low in relation to sentiment, but only general. And hierarchy works which make use of such means for shedding the mind, may be referred to the Second Stage of taste. The words of many of the German writers are referable to this class; and it is probable that in Europe they have been of much use, in preparing the way for other things, by excusing Hierarchy, which resolve themselves into the unhuman and impersonal—all though it were no more than common nature, melting into water and tearful sentiment, or in those works which are meant to produce terror, the gods of vague and floating darkness, forming themselves in shadowy obscurity. The greatest depths of natural feeling are often accompanied with a sense of transitoriness and delusion, in which particular being appears lost, and solved in an indistinct universal, like the *Meyn* of the Indians. Sir William Jones gives a translation of one of their poems, in which the Gymnosophist expresses the desire to be weaned from the uncertainties of a transitory existence, and to fix his thoughts on the permanent and real. The poem is entitled the "Meditation of the Brahmin," and this among others the following stanzas:—

"As a drop of water moves tremulous on the lily-leaf, thus is human the inexorably slippery; the company of the virtuous is here but for a moment; that is our ship in passing the ocean of the world.  
 "Day and night, evening and morning, winter and spring, depart and return; time passes, life passes on, yet the wind of expectation continues unrestrained.  
 "To dwell under the mansion of the high Gods, at the foot of a tree; to have the ground for a couch, and a hole for a passage; to renounce all earthly enjoyments—whom doth not such devotion fill with delight?  
 "Place not thy affections too strongly on foe or friend—on a son or a kinsman, in war or in peace. Be thou ever-minded towards all, if thou desirest speedily to attain to the nature of Vishnu.  
 "Eight original mountains and seven seas, Grahne, Indra, the Sun, and hands—not thou, not I, not this or that people; 'wherefore, then, should anxiety be raised in our minds?'  
 "In thee, in me, in every other being, is Vishnu; foolishly art thou offended with me, not bearing my speech; see every soul in thy own soul; in all places lay aside a notion of diversity.  
 "Such is the pathetic address of the Gymnosophist, endeavoring to fix his attention on the eight original mountains and seven seas. 'This deep natural sense of transitoriness and uncertainty, is capable of being turned either to sadness or levity. In modern times, it has sometimes taken the form of an inclination for skepticism in reasoning and matters of opinion; for when skepticism is perfect and absolute, it is like a resolution of all particular thoughts into the indefinite. But also, the same deep feeling of uncertainty has sometimes been shown in the vague horrors of a German romance, where the principal events take place in a mysterious twilight, or while a stormy shower is driven, by the wind through the recesses of some unexplored forest. In such productions, change, doubt, and indefinite sadness, are always the chief elements, and they belong to the second stage of feeling.  
 I shall now proceed to speak of the

Third Stage of feeling. To it may be referred the mixture of human passions and affections with the sentiment of the beautiful, and with the knowledge of the permanent and abstract idea. From this mixture arises internal taste, and discrimination as to the higher and lower grades of feeling. But still the mixture implies the presence of human affections, which are more or less changed, for example, in the sentiment, justice, or generosity, or repentance, or the love of the beautiful. To this intermediate region belong the finest struggles of sentiment in tragedies or fictitious narrative; since from the mixture of the different elements, it is both interesting to the passions of the reader, and gratifying to his taste, or his internal discrimination as to the quality of feeling, which he must exercise in sympathizing with the transition of struggling affections from their natural sanctity, into abstract beauty. This, therefore, is the Third Stage, and remains somewhat of the elements of the two inferior. But it is unnecessary to say any thing farther, to render the difference between them perceptible.

I think the exercise of Imagination belongs most properly to the Third Stage of feeling. Imagination is not merely a power for conceiving new situations to interest the passions; for, in all the bold and more sudden flights of imagination, there is a temporary feeling of the reality of general ideas, as existing abstractedly from particular objects. These glimpses are only for a moment, but they are divine. It is this which connects imagination with elevation of sentiment. Relatively to this Voltaire was a remarkable instance. In him, imagination appeared as a power not always recognizing the beautiful, but exerting activity to find astonishing contrasts to visible realities. He was like a strong and far-travelled bird appearing on the earth, from some distant region; and the astonishment which he excited, was itself a satire on the narrow conceptions of mankind. His flights were rather those of strength and activity, than of rising qualities of taste. But almost any rapid exercise of imagination is connected with the feeling of the abstract. The rapid comparison of possible forms can seldom fail to produce some astonishing, and some trainings of taste, beyond the narrow sphere of selfish pas-

sion, and also beyond that of natural affections. Therefore, I have no hesitation in saying, that imagination (which is a means of invention in all the stages of taste) belongs most properly, in point of feeling, to the Third Stage, which is the mixture of human affections with the sentiment of the beautiful. In all cases, imagination is an active recognition of the varieties of possible form. In its finest exercises, a profound sentiment of the beautiful makes these appear tinged with qualified hues, having almost the language of passive affection. Activity, however, is most appropriate to imagination. These expressions may appear vague and mystical, but it can scarcely be otherwise in treating of such a subject.

That which characterizes the Third Stage of taste, therefore, is not the absence of human affections, but the internal discrimination of the qualities of feeling in relation to the abstract beautiful. Since satire discriminates as to quality, it must belong to this stage. It sometimes appears to make one half of human nature ironically sympathize with what is bad, while the other half is made to condemn, and to feel opposition of taste, and so to discriminate. But satire, without the exercise of taste, is mere buffoonery, or abuse.

The Fourth and last Stage of feeling is to be found in the fine arts, and in the contemplation of abstract relations, such as they are in themselves, without any reference to human affections. This kind of feeling applies to form, style, possible order, relative colour, harmony, extension, and the like. These things cannot be so well expressed by literature, which gives only words to suggest conceptions; to the reader, who may conceive imperfectly; but the fine arts exemplify abstract relations, and make them cognizable to the senses. The two first or inferior stages of taste have no relation to abstract form, but the third is not below the level of the fine arts, for it is the mixture of human affections with the sentiment of the beautiful. In music, it is well expressed by the mixture of the discords, and imperfect chords, of human affections, with harmony. In painting, it may be shown in the expressions of the countenance, and in the various mixtures of light with darkness. The Third and Fourth Stages of Taste are closely al-

that it may often require to consider the difference between them; and the absence of human passions and affections in the last.

Having thus gone through the different stages of taste, and established the grade of each, upon principles which must appear clear and undeniable to every person capable of reflecting upon the subject, I appeal to you, Mr North, whether I have not stated things well worthy of consideration, in an age when there are so many different excitements to bewilder the mind.

THE DAVIL AMONG THE ARTISTS; OR, DAVID DEADWOODSIGHT AGAINST KNOCK-BODIES.

When an earthquake occurs in Calabria, Sicily, Portugal, or any part of the habitable globe, exclaiming in convulsions and eruptions of nature, it leaves behind it such decided and unequivocal proofs of its reality, as to silence the cavils of the most sceptical. Towers, temples, palaces, and houses, streets, squares, and cities, go down like a child's card-play-thing, and perishing human creatures are burned or buried. But when an earthquake occurs in Scotland, say at Inverness or Comrie, it is so faint and woo-begone, that its existence seems extremely problematical. Hence there arise two parties—the earth-quakers and the anti-earth-quakers. The one pulls a long face, speak in hollow murmurs, take you solemnly by the fourth button of your waistcoat, cast their eyes up to the ceiling, and stir your soul with the dreadful narrative. Shock after shock, they maintain, to the number maybe of the devil's dozen, struck old mother earth till she trembled as with cholera; the heavens were as black, they asseverate, as the crown of their hat; the heat was like an oven, and the whole concert most frightful in deed and dismal alike to men, women, children, and cattle.

In corroboraton of such terrific denunciations of nature, and to shew that the solid earth must have quaked from its foundation, my comes the cook from the kitchen, solemnly sweating by her sole and forehead, that the very spit shook, and every pan clattered. The broiler is ready to take his Bible-cath, that he heard bottles breaking in the bunnies;

and ascertain their grade in relation to taste. I do not pretend to detract from the merits of any particular line or walk of literary composition, or unjustly to depreciate the mental gifts which which may be derived from it. I only seek to discriminate the kinds, and to make their respective qualities clearly perceptible. As a person in learning to dance, goes through all the positions, so the mind goes (improving in agility and refinement) through all the regions of taste. I am, yours, &c. H.

and the pretty house-maid appears with a broken china-cup in her rosy paw, as demonstrative evidence of some mighty convulsion of nature. Dogs had been heard to bark, cattle to low, and children to squall. The very hens had stuck-neck-and-walk-tinkered in the poultry-yard, in a manner which no hen would have adopted, except during an earthquake; and the elderly maid having accidentally gone with Roger, the ploughman, into the barn during the darkness, had felt the very straw shaking, and observed that the eggs rattled away, most alarmingly indeed, out of their nests, bearing witness that the barley-mow was agitated to its foundation-shake. The anti-earth-quakers, on the other hand, are willing to pledge faith, fortune, life itself, that there has been nothing whatever of the kind. If the bottles have shook upon the table, it was, according to them, after dinner; and the effect was produced by no earthquake, but by a rap of the knuckles, enforcing some gentleman fell off his chair, they became no earthquake, but lay his fall to the charge of the jorum; and if the Turkey carpet heaved, sunk, and whirled, there seems no mystery whatever in such excursions, for they know, drink as they are, that the earth is as fast as a mill, and that the table is standing a most steady ologyped on a most firm, worthy floor. "Damn the earthquake, did I or other of us either see, hear, or feel! However, we won't be positive; only we were too pleasantly occupied to attend to such trifles, and really we pity people who are so sensitive and

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