

brand: it denotes a sign, token, or wonderful event. Although *סֵם* signifies to place or set, it is often used in the sense of *אָמָן*; and such is its signification wherever connected with *אָמָן*.—This interpretation is at once rational and consistent. To have set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him, could never be the act of Infinite Wisdom; such a mark, instead of contributing to his safety, would only have rendered his crime the more notorious; and by exposing him to the indignation of his species, would have been likely to bring upon him the very evil he had reason to fear. It is, therefore, the opinion of some, that, in order to prevent despair, and alleviate the distress of a penitent, something miraculous was effected, whereby he obtained assurance that his life should be preserved. But there is more reason to suppose that some object in nature was fixed upon as a sign, to remind him of that protection which God had graciously ordained in his behalf.

With respect to the question, "What need had Cain to fear?" I observe, that about this period the inhabitants of the world were probably very numerous. According to the computation of Archbishop Usher, the death of Abel took place in the year of the world 128. "Now if we suppose that Adam and Eve had no other sons than Cain and Abel in the year of the world 128, their descendants would make a considerable figure on the earth. Supposing them to have been married in the nineteenth year of the world, they might easily have had each eight children, some males and some females, in the twenty-fifth year. In the fiftieth year there might proceed from them in a direct line 64 persons; in the seventy-fourth year there would be 572; in the ninety-eighth year 4096; in the one hundred and twenty-second they would amount to 32,768: if to these we add the other children descended from Cain and Abel, their children, and their children's children, we shall have in the aforesaid one hundred and twenty-eight years, four hundred and twenty-one thousand one hundred and sixty-four men, without reckoning the women either old or young." Such an amazing increase of mankind is finely illustrated by one of our sweetest poets, when alluding to this period in the Mosaic history of the world:—

Ages meanwhile, as ages now are told,
O'er the young world in long succession roll'd:

*See Commentary and Notes on the Bible by Dr. Adam Clarke.

For such the vigour of primeval man,
Through number'd centuries his period ran,
And the first parents saw their hardy race,
O'er the green wilds of habitable space,
By tribes and kindreds scatter'd wide and far,
Beneath the track of every varying star.

It is, therefore, improperly assumed that, when Cain became "the fugitive of face and guilt," there were "only his aged parents existing." And should the want of scripture evidence be urged as an objection to these calculations, it ought to be remembered, that a complete history of mankind was never intended by the author of the Pentateuch. His object was to give such an account of the Holy Seed as might preserve the line of CHRIST through successive ages, exhibit the predictions and promises respecting him, and unfold the plan of human redemption, as it was gradually made known from the earliest periods of time. Being divinely inspired to write such things as were suited to the beginning and progress of revelation, he would be naturally led to omit whatever was not necessary to his purpose; inserting such incidental circumstances only, as were either adapted to illustrate the perfections of God, or were some way connected with the main design. Hence we are not to look for those minute particulars in the writings of Moses, which are naturally expected in other histories.

Considering well the design of Scripture, as a divine revelation, it is easy to conceive why, at the expatriation of Cain, "we find no mention of any female besides Eve." But that there were others "then existing," appears from a plain statement of the fact, in the very same chapter. When Cain therefore resided in the Land of Nod, "he had a wife"; but if C. E. B. imagines that we have any intimation of his entering into the married state at that time, he has evidently made a mistake, of which he will be immediately convinced, by re-examining that part of the sacred history.—To the question, "how came he by his wife?" we can only answer, that by complying with the peculiar necessity of those early times, he was united to a daughter of Eve, whose birth it was not necessary for Moses to mention. Such a union in the family of Adam, involved no impropriety; but as one great design of marriage is the promotion of friendship, and a combination of interests, for the general advantage of society, the union of

* Montgomery's World before the Flood, canto 1.

near relations was afterwards forbidden; and perhaps the divine law was chiefly founded on those considerations which regard mankind in their social capacity. But enough has been said in answer to the query proposed in your Magazine; and I have only to add my best wishes that it may long continue the medium of useful information, and free discussion.
Haverfordwest. J. B.

MR. EDITOR,

I TAKE the liberty of addressing you on behalf of all such as shall hereafter apply to be articled to a solicitor, in order to their admission into the profession of the law. These, I conceive, labour under a heavy species of taxation, which seems to have only for its object the enriching the solicitor at the expense of those I have mentioned, without his being entitled to any such species of profit. I do not allude to the stamp duties imposed on clerks, both on their being articled and their subsequent admission (which are perhaps necessary to render the profession respectable), but to the usage of the solicitor requiring a very high premium (generally 300 guineas) on taking an articled clerk. It would seem that the time and services of the clerk were a sufficient compensation for the duty undertaken by the master of instructing him in the mysteries of the profession; and surely as the requiring a premium is entirely optional, and the profession itself is accordingly not rendered more respectable by the payment of it, nor is the clerk entitled to any additional advantages by so doing, it might be supposed that a conscientious solicitor would be unwilling to add to the already great expense of admission, and accordingly relinquish a measure which is entirely partial, and on that account more obnoxious to the sufferers by it. But it is well known that a solicitor will, on the contrary (where there is no connexion between the parties), make the above demand, and thereby, perhaps, compel one desirous to be brought up to the profession, and whose talents might render him peculiarly adapted to it (if unable or unwilling to comply with the demand), either to article himself to one of inferior practice, or abandon the profession altogether. I shall be glad if any of your readers will furnish an argument why a solicitor (who may have two clerks at a time) should receive for every five years of his practice, the enormous sum of 600 guineas, as a premium, in fact, for

permitting them to transact his business, thereby saving him the expense of paying salaries to others, which he might be forced to do if unprovided with articled clerks. SPECTATOR.

London, March 29, 1816.

ON LITERARY CRITICISM.

IN considering this subject, I shall not designedly introduce any remarks on the fine arts, nor yet on what is termed "philosophical criticism," but confine myself solely to that which respects literature, and shall first mention the necessary mental qualifications of a literary critic, then very briefly show how the works of an author ought to be reviewed, and, lastly, point out some of the principal uses of literary criticism.

To be a proper critic on new publications in modern times, requires, 1. *An extensive knowledge of books.* Besides being well acquainted with the standard old books, a critical censor ought to be well read in those which have been published within the last thirty years, and especially such of them as are on the subject which he is reviewing. For this purpose his memory must be good, and either his own library should be large, or he should have access to some library which is so.—2. *Skill in languages.* Such as are appointed to review books written either wholly or in part, in the living or dead languages, must have a grammatical knowledge of them. Much skill in mathematics is also necessary in those who take that department in a literary journal, as well as an acquaintance with medicine, in such as have that part assigned them; and in every department a critical knowledge of the English language is indispensable.—3. *A habit of close and correct thinking.* Without this, even recondite learning and extensive reading will not be sufficient; but when the subject, passing under review, is surveyed in all points of view, and the thinking upon it close, correct, and discriminative, it is not always necessary that the reviewer should be a profound scholar. As to new theological publications, a critical censor of that department should not only be well acquainted with the Bible and ecclesiastical history, but know all the peculiarities of doctrinal and experimental divinity; and be of a candid disposition, without any sectarian bias.—4. *A cool, and discriminate judgment.* Some men of deep learning and fine taste have strong passions, which often are so much indulged, that they do not see, or

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will not acknowledge, the real merits of an author. But a just and candid critic will deliberately examine the whole contents of the publication he reviews, and readily point out excellencies as well as its defects.

With respect to the proper manner of reviewing books in order to do justice to authors and the public, their contents should be considered, 1st, *In an impartial and explicit manner.* Only truth and justice should guide a periodical critic, and not the least partiality ought to be shown to a writer on account of his rank, his riches, or former productions, nor yet for his honorary title. No work ought to be condemned by wholesale; and literary censors when they disapprove of any part of a publication, should explicitly assign their reasons for so doing. Many have thought that every important article ought to have the reviewer's name affixed. I have considered this subject for many years, and notwithstanding all the outcry of disappointed authors against anonymous critics, I think it is best to be so; because, if the name appeared, then authors, whose works were censured or not praised, might have a grudge against the reviewer, and perhaps would injure or put him to trouble. On the other hand, a needy or covetous critic might be tempted to praise the works of a rich author in hopes of some reward. In short, I am apprehensive that if the review of no important publications appeared without the critic's name, we might after a time have no review at all.

—2. *In a concise and satisfactory way.* Whatever may be pleaded for the present long and circumlocutory manner of reviewing books, I humbly conceive it is a bad one, as it respects the readers. They ought to be speedily brought acquainted with what the new publication contains in as few words as may be proper, according to the size of the work. But instead of this, very frequently the introduction to a very important publication is as long as the whole review of it ought to be, and often has many irrelevant remarks in it. The table of contents ought always to be copied, but is often omitted, and the book sometimes reviewed in such a desultory way, that even a very judicious reader is quite at a loss to form any correct idea of it. Besides this, such a tedious way of reviewing takes up so much room, that very few standard publications can pass under review in a month; and some are near two years after publication be-

fore they are reviewed.—Lastly, *In a lively and entertaining manner.* On grave subjects, no doubt the review of them should be grave, but others ought not to be dull. When interspersed with short appropriate anecdotes or striking quotations, they are rendered more pleasing; and strokes of humour are sometimes very agreeable when they are not personal and malicious.

As to the standard of literary criticism, it is certain that no one author in any language, ancient or modern, can be said to be an infallible criterion. But Dr. Knox expresses himself very well on this part of the subject in the following words: "What then, it will be asked, is criticism to be left for ever vague and indeterminate, and is there no standard?" I answer, that the *feelings* of the majority of men of taste, coinciding for a number of years in giving approbation to the best of authors, constitute a standard sufficiently certain and uniform. And indeed it is totally impossible to fix upon any writer, however celebrated, as a general standard; not only because that writer has his faults, but because he cannot equally excel in every species of composition. But those literary works which have pleased the greater part of literary persons for a number of years, will most likely please others after them; and as to differences of opinion, they are only the irregularities which attend every thing sublunary, and do not invalidate the justness of the general decision.

Let us now point out some of the chief uses of literary criticism to the republic of letters, and to scholars in particular.

1. *It deters some bad writers from publishing.* Every learned person is not necessarily qualified to become an author, much less are those who have only a smattering of learning. He who prepares for the press, besides a competent knowledge of the subject on which he writes, should understand the rules of composition, have a taste for good language, and be accustomed to compose. Now as nothing is more likely to deter unqualified persons from writing than a fear of being exposed by the critic, therefore periodical criticism is highly useful; indeed this is become quite necessary since the liberty of the press has been so extensive in Great Britain, because these literary journals are now almost the only public means of curbing the abuse of it.—2. *It admonishes committed authors to continue to write well.* It is to be lamented that some authors of

note, who have formerly used good language, have afterwards become rather careless; if, therefore, such inattention were not to be reproved by reviewers, we should soon degenerate. Some indeed affect to despise verbal criticism; but as words represent ideas of the most important things, every judicious person must know that a proper choice and arrangement of them is of great consequence. All authors should also consider that a correct, flowing, and elegant style, is much more likely to be useful in communicating knowledge than that which is defective. It is true, indeed, that reviewers are sometimes splenetic and fastidious in their remarks on the diction of a writer, yet all but conceited authors may make a good use of their strictures. Liberal criticisms are therefore useful to humble writers, which occasioned a living author thus to write in his preface: "Every good-tempered critic is my friend; and as I wish to be improved, I rather invite than deprecate criticism."—3. *It saves readers time, trouble, and expense.* Very few readers can fully judge for themselves, and if capable, modern standard books are so dear, that readers wish to consult a literary journal before they make a purchase. Title-pages have become of late years so deceiving that nothing decisive is to be concluded from them; it is, therefore, truly desirable to be able to consult a review. But perhaps some will say that reviewers are connected with certain publishing booksellers, and therefore praise such books as they publish whether good or bad. However this may be, it is certain that their productions may be made use of in some measure to guide in the choice of books.—Lastly, *criticisms spread the fame of authors, and diffuse knowledge.* If it were not for periodical literary journals the works of authors could not be very extensively known, and literature would be confined to a few comparatively speaking. But now, besides their review of elaborate treatises in various arts and sciences every month, even their incidental remarks and hints are very beneficial to intelligent readers. We have now more English reviews than ever we had; the number of readers have greatly increased; and consequently mental knowledge is much more diffused. I shall conclude with the following quotation from an able writer, which contains some additional remarks on the subject:—"A censorious or fastidious critic in reviewing a publication is chiefly delighted in point-

ing out blemishes; whereas one who is liberal-minded not only dwells on obvious excellences, but takes a pleasure in discovering such as are concealed. The former often censures, not because there is any real fault, but through pride to shew his assumed superiority; but the latter, when the work upon the whole is excellent, thinks it unjust and illiberal to dwell upon small faults. However, it is very proper that imperfections and errors in publications should be mentioned, otherwise there would be but few correct authors, and little improvement in the arts and sciences. The learned ought to consider themselves much indebted to Mr. Harris, Bishop Hurd, and Lord Kames, for their improvements in the art of criticism; and in the lectures of Dr. Blair there are also many just strictures. Men of erudition and candour are a sort of masters of the ceremony in the court of letters, by whom the literati are introduced into the best company, and thereby greatly improved and entertained."

G. G. SCRAGGS.

Buckingham.

MR. EDITOR,

IT will be pleasing to your readers to hear of an instance of good effect arising from the freedom of public remarks.

In your Magazine for February last an account is given of Professor CARLISLE's lectures at the Royal Academy, wherein he reprobates the unwarrantable cruelties practised upon animals by some modern anatomists, and which are ostentatiously promulgated by a great literary society.

The majority of the Royal Society have been for a long time disgusted with unprofitable and revolting narratives of animal torture, but the managers of that body affected to defy public opinion, and remained callous to the expression of better feelings. At the meeting of the 21st February, and in the presence of the Austrian archdukes, the ballot for the election of one of those favorite torturers came on, when, to the utter dismay of the managers and his promoters, this otherwise-unexceptionable candidate was black-balled, and that by the most extraordinarily numerous majority which has of late years attended the meetings of the Royal Society.

F. R. S.

MR. EDITOR,

IN the sixth number of your Magazine Mr. MITCHELL has given a few particulars of the late Mr. J. H. Wynne. Per-