To Our Readers: Review of President Dew's Address

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TO OUR READERS.

"REVIEW OF PRESIDENT DREW'S ADDRESS."

We received with gratitude, and published with pleasure and approbation, the article, the name of which is prefixed to this. We admired the classic style, the chaste taste, the gentlemanly spirit that characterized it. But we do not assert to all its dogmatism, nor concurs in its criticisms. Yet we gladly surrendere,"

for the time, our chair of office, to a writer so well qualified to fill it. He has acquired himself well; but in resuming our function we feel it our duty to mark an error or two in his performance. He will know how to incorporate from the example of careful courtesy which he has set us, and will take our censure in the same spirit in which his own were conceived. Our function we understand, but not to have a name. Sometimes that name is made the root of the adjective, and sometimes derived from it. Now we do not scruple to say that if there be an adjective and a noun expressive of quality which that adjective predicates of its adjacent noun, it is lawful to make such a one. If we had such a word in any look as "endurance,"* the use of the word would be perfectly proper. Again, it may happen, although there is a noun expressive of the generic quality predicated by an adjective derived from it, if any multiplication of that quality were found unprovided with its appropriate word, it would be quite right to form one. Therefore, if we had the word "joyful" belonging to the whole family of gladness, the formation of "joy-erth" and "joy-omen" would be as legitimate as the use of the generic word "joyful." In the exercise of this privilege we will suggest one rule which is sometimes overlooked, and produces results unpleasing to the classical taste. It is this—that neither the radial word nor the increment which is supplied should be chosen in conformity to the genius of the language from which the word is derived. If this rule be uniformly observed, the innovator may rest assured that the new word thus formed on the old stock of the language, and incorporated with it, and become a part of it. Thus, if we suppose that we had no word to express "badness,"* and there was no exception to the rule, we may form a new word, and it would be quite right. "Badness,"* a word which is never found, is just as proper as the use of the generic word "badness."* Again, if we say "joyous-ness,"* which he also condemns, we lay much more stress on the noun than on the principle we have stated. Why should not such words be used? Can their meaning be mistaken? Is it not their formation in perfect harmony with the rules and genius of the language? Have they not equivalent such a name in the same work.

We would beg the reviewer's leave to introduce his use of the word "not ice" as a verb, and to make the word "ice" as an adjective, and the word "ice," as a noun. But we feel ourselves bound to throw over ouregis over the first, as it has not been the practice of the language to incorporate from the example of careful courtesy which he has set us, and will take our censure in the same spirit in which his own were conceived. We entirely agree with the reviewer that the usage of good writers is the only standard by which the English language is to be ascertained. But we perhaps differ from him in the manner of applying this standard. Our language is the subject of continual secretion, and from age to age (indeed from year to year) is enriched by the addition of new words and new idioms. To the authors of these we are curiously deeply indebted, and we shall continue to incur fresh debts, as often as any one shall contribute to our facilities of giving clearness, breeziness, piety, and grace to the expression of our thoughts. But how can these valuable contributions go on, if they who offer them are considered as forfeiting, by the very act, their place among those good writers whose compositions are to be taken as standards of language? The effect of this must be to stop all further improvement. Is there any language of the world that has made the least progress in this respect? Is there any language so much adorned and rewarded; while such as, at this day, follow its example, are to be consigned? With due solicitude we will venture a solution of this question, which will at once vindicate all contributors, past, present, and future, whose suggestions of words or phrases may add to the lexicon we shall prepare.

We will say then that the English language consists actually of all the words found in our dictionaries, and in all our standard works, and that each writer, whether so zealous that other words or phrases, even if the reviewer may suggest the usage of, and in the formation of which certain conditions are observed. It might favor of pauperism to vary the meaning of words, though we are not sure that it is a reason to specify them all. But a few examples will illustrate our meaning.

The adjective indicates a quality, which it predicates of the noun substantive. Now this quality has, or ought to have, a name. Sometimes that name is made the root of the adjective, and sometimes derived from it. Now we do not scruple to say that if there be an adjective and a noun expressive of quality which that adjective predicates of an adjacent noun, it is lawful to make such a one. If we had such a word in any look as "endurance,*" the use of the word would be perfectly proper. Again, it may happen, although there is a noun expressive of the generic quality predicated by an adjective derived from it, if any multiplication of that quality were found unprovided with its appropriate word, it would be quite right to form one. Therefore, if we had the word "joyful" belonging to the whole family of gladness, the formation of "joy-erth" and "joy-omen" would be as legitimate as the use of the generic word "joyful." In the exercise of this privilege we will suggest one rule which is sometimes overlooked, and produces results unpleasing to the classical taste. It is this—that neither the radial word nor the increment which is supplied should be chosen in conformity to the genius of the language from which the word is derived. If this rule be uniformly observed, the innovator may rest assured that the new word thus formed on the old stock of the language, and incorporated with it, and become a part of it. Thus, if we suppose that we had no word to express "badness,*" and there was no exception to the rule, we may form a new word, and it would be quite right. "Badness,*" a word which is never found, is just as proper as the use of the generic word "badness.*" Again, if we say "joyous-ness,*" which he also condemns, we lay much more stress on the noun than on the principle we have stated. Why should not such words be used? Can their meaning be mistaken? Is it not their formation in perfect harmony with the rules and genius of the language? Have they not equivalent such a name in the same work.
sage. This very line was applied by Doctor Johnson to his son. The Dictionary. The passage is in Moore's Life of Hume.

But an example is at hand of a quotation used with the happiest effect in a reverse sense. It was in a speech of the late Mr. Randolph, which all who heard it delight and which none can forget. When the confidence of the opposition was claimed for Mr. Adams, and a pledge of confidence was asked, he gave his answer in the words of Apollo in the son of Clytemnestra—"Pigurum cata petis, de pigurum cata tenebrosa." The fear of Apollo was for his son. "That of Mr. Randolph was for Mr. Adams. Yet the effect of this quotation, so equalized, was electrical, and was considered by many as one of the most felicitous examples of Mr. R.'s fine classic taste.

So much for verbal criticism. Paulus majora censuras. Yet we cannot dismiss this philosophical discussion without availng, that the moral and political science; and, in doing this, displays somewhat of that zeal, which is always awakened by the voices of others against which we approve. President Dew is aware, that in most other seminars, and especially in some of those in Virginia, these subjects are held in little repute, and are deceived or pronounced in the exact sciences. We do not understand him as doing more than to contend for their equal claim to consideration. In doing this, it was not necessary that he should recapitulate all that could be said in favor of nonmathematics, natural philosophy, and chemistry; but it is already done by others with whom he was contending. His part was to say as much, as much as could be said with truth, in favor of what the reviewer calls his favorite studies; and perhaps his favorite studies; but it is not on that account that he speaks on their behalf. He advocated them because of their intrinsic importance, and he advocated them as the head of a institution where they have always particularly cherished. He knew that this had been imparted to him as a fact, and from this impudence he felt it his duty to defend her.

If any thing was wanting to make good his defence, his reviewer has supplied it. We beg the reader's attention to the following passage:

"Among the greatest evils that has ever afflicted this commonwealth, is the morbid desire of some of our political dis­tinguished men, for the advancement of some of the parts of the republic, destroying every thing else. Nevertheless, in the Virginia, and by omission from the board of our education, so injurious to the people of other states, or from the patronage of the federal government, the same thing is to be observed. In the mass of learning, then, deeming themselves politicians and statesmen, ready made according to the philosophy of the best schools, they rush with ardor into the political arena. Exempted from their ambitious aspirations, with their taste deprived, and having lost all capacity for useful employment, they become reckless and abandoned; or falling in with a dominant party, they sacrifice all independence of character, and steep the lowest rung of the ladder of ambition in that conclusion to which they had vainly attempted to ascend. Not in this pen­sion of the act but for the inclined portion of our people. Truly has President Dew said, 'a whole state is a great po­litcal nursery.' It swarms with politicians of every age, and education; but, unfortunately, for our statesmen we have a hundred demagogues. Next to a standing army in time of peace is the political demagogue, the surest means for the business of public life, in more dangerous in the liberties of a free state. Such men must necessarily be the States of party. Considering politics as their vocation, they must indeed seek for election. If they fail and lose the independence disavow as representatives of the people, they must seek it in the companies with the immoral mandates of party leaders, or in a course of degrading servility and subserviency to the interests of federal patronage. Let us do nothing to in­crease this numerous swarm of hungry politicians. What we must look out, is the success of education, not the success of instructing, not only in moral and political philosophy, but in
Augusta, Georgia, 19th March, 1837.

Sir,—From the last number of the Messenger, I learn that you have been rudely handled, by a writer in the Pittsburg Daily Times, for accrediting the ode "To My Wife," in the October number of your truly valuable periodical, to Lindley Murray. Surely, your mistake was quite too natural, to justify the sharp reproof of the writer in the Times. But what will he, and his indignant (the Editor of the Times) say, when they learn, that Mr. Houlston has no more claims to the authorship of that piece, than Lindley Murray! In fact, it was written by Scotchman, of the name of John Laprnik, a contemporary and companion of Burns. It is to be found at page sixty-seven of the first volume of the Glasgow edition of The Hymns of Burns, which was published nearly twenty years ago. The ode appears in the Messenger a little changed, both in measure and diction, from the original, but not so much as to render it even similar to the writer of the Times, so as to its Identity with Laprnik's. Let me lay them both before the reader.

From the Messenger.

TO MY WIFE.

When on thy bosom I recline,
Enam't'd still to call thee mine,
To call thee mine for life; I glory in the sacred ties,
That Love can never be divided.
One mutual flame inspires our bliss;
The tender look, the melting kiss,
Even years have not destroyed,
Some sweet sensation ever new.
Springs up, and proves the utmost true,
That Love can never be divided.

Have I a wish?—"tis all for thee;
First thou a wish—"tis all for me.
That angels look with ardent gaze,
Well pleased to see our happy days,
And bid us live—and love.

If cares arise—and cares will come—
Thy bosom is my pleasant home;
I'll bid me there to rest;
And is there aught disturbs my fair?
I'll bid her sigh out every care,
And lose it in my breast.

Have I a wish?—"tis all for thee,
All tears and mine are rolled in one.
Our hearts are so entwined,
That, like the ivy round the tree,
Bound up in closest amity,
'Tis Death to be disjoined.