Willis's Lines on 'The Burial of Arnold'

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have we seen the best characteristics of the illustrious Roman half so well displayed, as in the "Middle Ages." The same burning yet well tempered love of liberty; the same hatred of tyranny and injustice; the same vein of sage remark, developing in a single sentence, momentous political truth; the same power of narration, conveyed usually in the very words which carry forward the narrative; the same condensèd and forcible brevity of recital. Often than in Tacitus, or in Hume, there occur in Hallam passages of eminent rhetorical beauty; much resembling those occasional observations, at once elegant and profound, in which Burke abounds. But they are neither frequent nor long enough, to violate the becoming chastity of historical composition. Far from being exccentsent ornaments, which lead off the reader's mind from the facts detailed, or suggest a doubt concerning the truth of a story so embellished, they enliven and rivet his attention, by illustrating the subject; and interrupt not, for a moment, the course of the narration. The work takes a wide range. It gives the History of France—Italy—Spain—Germany—the Greek Empire and the Saracens—Ecclesiastical Power—the Feudal System—the English Constitution—and the State of Society in Europe—during the Middle Ages; that is, for about eight or nine centuries. The manner in which it groups and details the multitude of facts comprised in this great outline, is lucid and happy. With equal judgment are the instructive or important selected, and the trivial or useless passed in silence. But it is above all as the enlightened friend of liberty, that Mr. Hallam deserves the esteem of American readers. Some extracts we propose making, will evince this, and also the Tacitus-like pith and pungency we have ascribed to him. The index and small capitals are ours.

**EXTRACTS.**

'A generous disdain of one man's will, is to republicans governments what chastity is to women; a conservative principle, never to be reasonned upon, or subjected to calculations of utility.'

Rienzi's character was not unusual among literary politicians; a combination of knowledge, eloquence, and enthusiasm for ideal excellence, with vanity, inexperience of mankind, unreadiness, and physical timidity.'

'The most deadly hatred, is that which men excpetated by proscription and forfeiture bear to their country.'

On the triumphant return of Cosmo de' Medici, in 1434, from the exile into which the opposite faction of Albizzi had driven him, Hallam remarks,—'It is in vain to expect that a victorious faction will scrupulously retaliate upon its enemies a still greater measure of injustice than it experienced at their hands. The vanquished have no rights in the eye of their conquerors. The sword of returning exiles, flushed by victory and incensed by suffering, falls successively upon their enemies, and upon those who may hereafter become such.'

(Policy of employing Foreign Mercenaries.) 'Considered with reference to economy, almost any taxes must be a cheap communution for personal service. But economy may be regarded too exclusively; and can
never counterbalance that degradation of national character, which proceeds from intrusting the public defense to foreigners.

'This has been a contest for freedom; these conquered; and some is more partial to successful aggression than to patriotic resistance.'

"Nonum de Charlemagne's wars can be compared with the annals of history that of Charles Martel: but this was a contest for freedom; these were conquests; and some is more partial to successful aggression than to patriotic resistance."

In the unsparing "prohibitions, strictness of conscience," and benevolence, of Louis IX. (St. Louis), he found all the effects of far-sighted policy. "But it is the privilege only of virtuous minds, to receive what wisdom dwells in moderate counsels. No acquisitiveness ever taught a selfish and ambitious sovereign to forgo the sweetness of immediate power."

"What is this, that mortifies the liberal hand of public spirit when it appears to be called for by necessity, and success and imagined security, a pretext for indolence: beyond which taxes will not be borne without impatience?"

"The Arabian monarchs of Cordova found in their wealth, the gratification of their passions and the amusements of courts, the inordinate passions of the multitude, the ambition of demagogues, the cruelty of victorious factions, will never cease to have their parallels and their analogues, while the military achievements of distant times afford, in general, no instruction; and can hardly occupy too little of our time in historical studies."

Historical Students. Intestine tumults, etc., are among the eternal lessons of History: for the unjust encroachments of courts, the intertemporal passions of the multitude, the ambition of demagogues, the cruelty of victorious factions, will never cease to have their parallels and their analogues; while the military achievements of distant times afford, in general, no instruction; and can hardly occupy too little of our time in historical studies. Note."

Virtues of Free States. The spirit of compromise and accommodation, by which it is sometimes endeavored to obstruct their tendency to hate and injure each other;".

"There is in general room enough for skepticism as to the character of men, who are only known to us through their enemies. History is full of examples that can never be effaced. But I really see no ground for thinking charitably of Peter the Cruel."

Note."

"The Austrian monarchs of Cordova found in their wealth, the gratification of their passions and the amusements of courts, the inordinate passions of the multitude, the ambition of demagogues, the cruelty of victorious factions, will never cease to have their parallels and their analogues; while the military achievements of distant times afford, in general, no instruction; and can hardly occupy too little of our time in historical studies."

Alvaro de Luna, the favorite of John II. [king of Castile], retained for 35 years an absolute control over his feeble master. The adverse faction naturally ascribed to this powerful minister every criminal intention and all public mischief. He was certainly not more acquisitive than the generality of statesmen, and appears to have been ravenous in accumulating wealth. But there was energy and courage about Alvaro de Luna, which distinguished him from the cowardly syeophants who usually rise by the favor of weak princes: and Castile probably would not have been happier under the administration of his counsels.

"John II. did not long survive his minister; dying in 1454, after a reign which may be considered as inglorious, compared with any except that of his successor. If the father was not respected, the son fell completely into contempt."

Of John Huniades, the Hungarian patriot, who "frequently defeated, but unconquered in defeat, stood in the breach for twelve years against the Turkish power; and to whom the regency was conferred during the king's minority."—Hallam says, "He surrendered to young Ladislaus a trust that he had exercised with perfect fidelity: but his merit was too great to be forgotten; and the court never treated him with cordiality." [Does not this irony rival that of Tacitus, where he says, the father of Agricola was 'studio eloquentiae sapientissime notatus, lusus virtutum Italii Caii Censoris [Caligulae] meritus?']

We have marked many more specimens, of equal truth, pointedness, and force: but to extract them all, would extend unduly what was designed to be a very short article. From scarcely any other historian, nor
(except Burke) from any other writer of any other class, could a larger number of sentences be called, harmonious in structure, graceful and impressive in phrasology, and rich in sound political philosophy.