

HESPERIAN STUDENT.

VOL. 1.

University of Nebraska.

NO 7.

SEPTEMBER,

Qui non Profluit, Delleit.

1875.

Scraps from my Note Book.

XIX.

THE ROSE AND THE ANEMONE.

Few know the origin of the Rose and the Anemone; but the old Greek poet Bion appears to have known, and thus relates, commencing at the 63d line of his Epitaphios Adonidos:

tal, al, tan Kuthereian, apoletu kalos Adonis.
dakrion a Paphia, tesson cheel, osson Adonid
alma cheel: ta de panta poti chthoni gignetai
authe:

alms rodon tiktel, ta de dakrua tan anemonan."

Alas, alas, Venus: beautiful Adonis is dead.
Venus pours forth as many tears as Adonis
Drops of blood: but all become flowers upon the
ground.

The blood engenders the Rose, but the tears the
Anemone.

This is as sentimental and beautiful as
anybody can wish it.

While I was translating the above lines,
a question arose in my mind as to verse
translation in general. It was this: Con-
fessedly, neither English heroics, English
hexameters, nor English ballad metres,
faithfully represent the spirit of the old
classical poetry; (see Arnold on Trans-
lating Homer!) but may not a loose, *literal*,
flowing, and irregular verse, such as I
have adopted in the above specimen, more
adequately reflect an author's actual pow-
er and purpose than dull prose, or a most
unnatural verse that, owing to metrical
exigencies, is often necessarily cramped,
or painfully diffusive?

XX.

MEN CANNOT LONG BE HELD TO ATHEISM.

In his book, "Democracy and Monarchy
in France," Prof. Adams, of Michigan
University, says of Voltaire, "The most
sacred things in religion and morals were
the favorite objects of his scoffing rail-
lery; and so keen was his wit, so blasting
his mockery, that those who professed to
cling still to the old doctrines of religion
and virtue, were either driven into obscu-
rity or covered with general contempt."
Page 61.

And yet, Rationalism was a tragedy soon
played, and the worst Ultramontanism is
absolute master of France to-day. The
doctrines of a few men like Voltaire, J. S.
Mill, Herbert Spencer, etc., cause such
alarm and disgust, that, in the end, the
Papacy always wins by them. I am in-
clined to think that they who shall see the
subsidence of the Liberal wave of these
times, say about 1925 (or fifty years hence,) will find the Roman Church the leading
force in American thought. People, self-
conscious of individual helplessness, are
bound to believe something; and a dry
philosophy is worth next to nothing to
anybody for any length of time. Very
few are willing to die by it,—even Voltaire
was not.

According to the height of a tidal wave
is its reflux. And as these times are very
liberal, when the reaction comes, who is
likely to profit by it, but the venerable In-
fallibility who takes his meals in Rome?

XXI.

HEIGHT AND STRENGTH.

According to Mr. Bryant, the following
lines of Tennyson are more expressive of

height than any others in our language.
They are all we have of a fragmentary
poem called The Eagle.

"He clasps the crag with hooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ringed by the azure world, he stands.

"The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He dashes from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

To see the world from so sublime a
point of view that its vast orb seems but
a mere ring of azure, and the sea with its
swift, mountainous waves no more than a
watery plain wrinkled by monotonous and
slow-crawling ripples, is, indeed, to "be
high up."

But whatever may be said for Height,
adequate expression has never yet been
given to Strength. Abstractions have in-
deed been powerfully asserted, such as
Love, Darkness, Death, etc. Byron con-
sidered the dark eye of a woman as the
Ultima Thule of strength, and could find
no better comparison for Night, Storm
and Darkness.

"Oh night,

And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman!"

But I am inclined to think that the
strongest thing within the world of human
observation is a woman's back, and not
the light of her dark eye. Talk about the
woman being the "weaker vessel!" I
have seen many a wife carry a great fat
babe in her arms day in and day out, and
apparently never get tired; but if she
passed over the child to its father to hold
for a few minutes, he almost immediately
found his progeny such an intolerable
burden that, from sheer fatigue, he plead-
ed "business," and hurried off as quickly
as possible. It is very wonderful that this
fact has escaped the poets, and that the
proper apostrophes and parallels have not
been made.

XXII.

ABOUT THE LIGHT.

There is a Trinity in the light. The
three *primary* colors are Blue, Yellow and
Red. The Blue represents the actinic
rays which are never seen, as God the
Father is not seen; the Yellow represents
the visible light which is as God the Son,
who is the Light of the world, or the
source of all illumination; and the Red,
or the heat rays are, presumably, the rep-
resentative of God the Holy Ghost, who is
rarely seen, but felt in His influences upon
our hearts.

"God covereth Himself with light as
with a garment;" and the fact that He is a
Trinity of Persons, yet one God, is made
clearer to our comprehension by the fact
that His covering of light is a Trinity of
colors, which, in combination, make the
perfect, transparent, and wholly blended
Light.

How noble are Milton's lines in the
third Book of Paradise Lost:

"Hail, holy Light! offspring of Heaven first-born:
Or of the Eternal coeternal beam
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,

Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void of formless infinite."

Perhaps there is no grander expression
of power in all language than this: "Let
there be light, and there was light;" yet it
is more finely rendered in the Vulgate
than in English. "*Lux sit et lux erat*" is
briefer and much worthier of a divine
original.

The doctrine of a Trinity in the light is
as old as Nicene Christianity.

XXIII.

WHAT IS MAN?

Astronomy teaches us that the order of
the stellar universe is this: 1. Satellite
systems, or moons; 2. Planetary systems,
or bodies like our earth that revolve
around suns; 3. Fixed stars, or suns; 4.
Groups of suns, that revolve around some
vast sun, as a common centre; 5. Clusters
of groups of suns, that also revolve
around an immeasurably vast and distant
sun as their common centre; 6. Nebulae
of combined clusters of suns that revolve
around a centre of suitable greatness.

Our earth is one of the smallest planets
in our own solar system; and our sun is
one of the smallest suns in the heavens.
Of the suns visible from the earth, it is
said that Sirius gives as much light as 63
of our suns; the Pole Star as 86; Vega as
344; Capella as 430; Arcturus as 516; Al-
cyone of the Pleiades as 12,000. Think of
a star blazing with 12,000 times the inten-
sity of our sun!

This Alcyone of the Pleiades is believed
to be the most wonderful star visible in
the heavens. It is asserted by some to be
the centre of all the stars within the com-
pass of human observation. What if it be
the centre of the Universe? And if not,
how vast must be the centre of which such
stars as Alcyone are but satellites? Some
have thought that the "sweet influence of
the Pleiades" mentioned in Job XXXVIII,
indicates that the central heaven itself is
located among them.

But if all these suns are attended by
planetary systems, and if all have living
inhabitants, who are witnesses of God's
glory, how populous the Universe must be!
And, amidst such an innumerable popula-
tion, what are men, even if taken altogeth-
er; and what is any single man, even if
Shakspeare's self? And what is fame,
bounded by this one world alone; and
what is all that we can do, which will
never be heard of beyond the confines of
the earth and only by a small part of the
people who live around us and come after
us? These contemplations ought to suit-
ably humble us and keep us in place: they
might well make us distrust a vaunting
individualism. O. C. D.

A Lesson from History.

In looking over the world's history, we
find here and there a name standing out
in bold relief, upon which the historian
dwells with delight, as the astronomer
contemplates with pleasure those stars
whose effulgence surpasses that of all
others. And we are led to ask what it is

that has placed these few men so far
above their fellows; what has caused
these few to rise to such dazzling heights
of fame, while others remained in obscu-
rity.

History shows that the price of renown
varies with the customs and notions of
the times and of the country. Among
the ancient Romans, physical prowess,
bold daring and public assassination won
the applause of brave heroes and fair
matrons. The fame of a Roman was
measured only by the extent of his dev-
astation, the heinousness of his plots and
the atrocity of his deeds.

In modern European nations, where
caste and primogeniture are still held
sacred, men are born heirs to fame and
are entitled by their birth to the pages of
history. Here men, equal by nature, are
separated, one held aloft while the other
is consigned to oblivion. Here an illit-
erate and arrogant Prince may sway his
arbitrary and despotic sceptre over a re-
fined and cultured subject. There is a
land where the long sought air of free-
dom inspires the American youth; where
men, born in poverty, and cradled in ob-
scurity, have converted adversity into
opportunity, and made obstacles their
benefactors. Where one leaves the mail
and wedge in the forest of the West, to
serve his country in the Presidential
chair; another forsakes his master on the
isles of a Southern sea, to strengthen the
financial credit of a free people as Secre-
tary of the Treasury; and a third quits
his humble cottage in the sunny South, to
become the greatest orator of the land.
Here the widow's son from the balmy
South, and the son of the millionaire from
the frigid North, stand side by side in a
national congress.

Thus men have risen alike from all
grades of society to the foremost station
of the land, and we are led to enquire the
cause of this elevation.

History shows that there are two great
principles by which renown is gained.
The first, and by far the most common, is
where men throw themselves into the cur-
rent of public opinion and are borne on-
ward by the research and labors of others;
where they gather up the fragmentary
thoughts of the people, clothing them in
magnificent language, giving them a pa-
triotic form, and uttering them with the
charm of eloquence.

The second principle is where men
branch out into new and unexplored re-
gions of thought, form their own opinion
and so fortify them with logic that over-
throw is impossible, that to hear them is
to believe them and to doubt is arrogance.

Of those who gained celebrity by the
first great principle, were Cicero of the
Romans, Demosthenes of the Greeks and
later Pitt of the English. And of our
own country we may mention Henry Clay.
Viewing him first as an advocate we find
him pleading before a Kentucky jury, ve-
hement, impetuous, irascible. Frequent-
ly disregarding the evidence, overlooking
the merits of the case, he overwhelms the