Dr James Rush
with the respects of
the Author

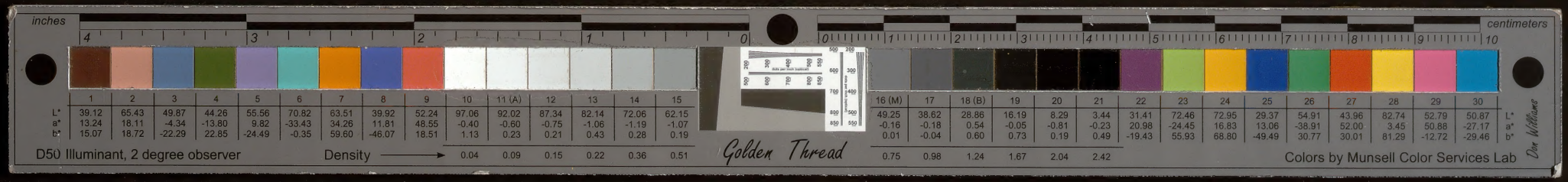
&c

MR. DU PONCEAU'S

DISCOURSE

ON

Foreign Literature and Science.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A

DISCOURSE

ON

THE NECESSITY AND THE MEANS

OF

MAKING OUR NATIONAL LITERATURE

INDEPENDENT OF THAT OF GREAT BRITAIN,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE MEMBERS

OF

The Pennsylvania Library

OF

FOREIGN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

On Saturday, Feb. 15, 1834.

BY PETER S. DU PONCEAU,
Senior Vice President of the Executive Board of the Association.

PHILADELPHIA:
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1834

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Extracts from the minutes of the transactions of the Executive Board of the PENNSYLVANIA LIBRARY OF FOREIGN LITERATURE AND SCIENCE, at a meeting held on the 24th February, 1834.

"*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Society are justly due, and are hereby presented to Mr. Du Ponceau for his very able and erudite discourse, pronounced before them on the 15th inst., and that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication.

"*Resolved*, That the committee of arrangement for the delivery of the address be a committee to carry into effect the foregoing resolution."

JAMES J. BARCLAY, *Secretary*.

PREFACE.

It is not every body who knows how difficult it is to find a proper subject for a public discourse. It seems very easy at first view, and there are many who wonder that any difficulty should be thought to exist in this Ciceronian age, when so many orations and addresses are pronounced in our forums and issue from our presses. But the difficulty does not the less exist, if not for others, at least for me. Elocution is common, eloquence rare, and I unfortunately possess neither. Had I but words at command, I might, perhaps, come off as well as some of my neighbours; but not being so favoured by nature, I must try to make up by the interest of my subject for my deficiency in the manner of treating it.

Thus I thought to myself, when requested by the Directors of the Pennsylvania Library of Foreign Literature and Science, to deliver a public discourse in aid of their object. To induce the mass of the citizens to subscribe to a scientific and literary institution, it is not enough to talk to them of science and literature. The learned do not want to be instructed; all want to be entertained. There is no entertainment in a catalogue of French, Italian, German and Spanish books, and hardly more in a dry dissertation upon their contents. If only a little scandal could be mixed with it, it would be sure to draw crowds; for scandal suits the taste of almost every palate; but how can we mix scandal with literature and science? That appears to me impossible. I then thought of politics; but what has politics now-a-days to do with either? What has General Jackson in common with the Muses, or the Bank with Apollo? Thus I turned every subject in my mind, without being able to find any likely to answer my purpose. I was at last in the greatest embarrassment; I did not know, (in modern English we must always introduce some

little French;) I did not know *à quel saint me vouer;* I felt like Faust in his laboratory, when reflecting on the vanity of human knowledge; at last, I determined to do as he did, and to have recourse to the magic art. I exclaimed in my despair

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

I took down my Albertus Magnus, and was fortunate enough to find at once the spell I wanted. I conjured up the spirit of the celebrated Doctor Dryasdust, with whom my readers, admirers of Sir Walter Scott, are, no doubt, well acquainted. I waited only a few moments, when lo! he appeared before me, not as Mephistopheles, in the shape of a poodle dog, but in his own proper person, with his little scratch wig and his razor face. He at once began to address me in the Scotch dialect, which I do not understand. I shook my head; he then spoke Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, Arabic, Zend, Pehlvi, Hindoostanee and Sanscrit, all in rapid succession. At last I became impatient, and I cried out—for Pluto's sake, Doctor, can't you speak English? English! replied he, why, to be sure, I can speak English; it is my mother tongue.*—Then, why did not you speak in your mother tongue at first?—Oh! Sir, between learned men ——

I put a stop to the compliment, by informing him at once of the subject that had made me require an interview. Doctor, said I, you must know that —— I know, sir, what you are going to tell me; we in the nether world are perfectly well informed of what is passing in this. You want to deliver a discourse before your Foreign Library Society, and I presume also a mixed audience, and you are at a loss upon what subject to make it turn. It seems to me the easiest thing in the world; you must talk to them of foreign science and foreign literature.—But how, dear Doctor, in what manner am I to treat those hackneyed subjects?—Why, very easily; as to Italian literature, for instance, take Muratori, Tiraboschi, Maffei —— O murder! cried I, am I to read all that? I assure you, Doctor, it will never do; I have not patience to go through all those volumes.—Well, sir, begging your pardon, I see you are rather indolent, I must then give you something easier. Take

* The good Doctor, it seems, had read Rabelais.

your *Encyclopœdia Americana*, and, in the articles on French, German, Italian and Spanish literature, you will find matter enough for twenty discourses, provided you know how to dilute it properly.—That, Doctor, I cannot do; I hate to repeat what has been said five hundred times, and what every body can find on the shelves of his library. What you propose to me is the *Pons asinorum.—Pons asinorum!* replied he, with a hellish sneer, and who do you think will be those that will compose your audience?

I own that my anger rose at these words, and I was going in my rage to crush the poor Doctor to atoms, when I recollected that he had come on my invitation, and that it would be violating the laws of hospitality. I, therefore, assumed as placid a countenance as I could, and mildly said, Why, Doctor, you have hardly been five minutes in our country, and you already begin to abuse it!—Beg pardon, sir, beg pardon, I really meant no such thing; indeed, the opinion that I have so foolishly expressed is not my own; I have received it from others. In the inferior regions, where I reside, we have, as you may well suppose, but little amusement, and, to make time pass away as well as we can, we read all the modern London publications, and particularly Books of Travels through your country. Now, sir, without meaning any offence, in most of those books you are described as a very stupid, ignorant race, devoid of all elevation of intellect, without books, without libraries, without judgment, without taste; in short, you are the *Respublica asinorum*,—so that I was wondering at your hesitating to walk on the bridge of donkies. I must own, however, that you possess some knowledge of necromancy, for your confounded spell made me jump up a great deal faster than I had an inclination to do. So, sir, I most humbly again beg your pardon.

I felt somewhat pacified. And who, said I, Doctor, are those writers of travels, who make so free with our country and our countrymen? Sir, said he, I could easily name them all to you; but I see on your table a book entitled "Men and Manners in America." I presume you have not read it; but if you will take the trouble to look into it, you will find that I have not overcharged the description that he makes of your country. That book was read lately at one of our meetings;

there was an American, one Arnold, who is said to have been a great general in your army; he seemed to enjoy it mightily, and swore *upon his honour* that all the author said was true. So that, sir, you plainly see that I was deceived. I thought I was right, because I had not only English, but American authority.

There, in fact, was the book, which my bookseller had just sent me, together with the Novel of Cyril Thornton, by the same author. The Doctor pointed out the principal passages, and I found that he had not exaggerated. A luminous idea then suddenly flashed across my mind; I made two or three jumps, crying out *Eureka! Eureka!* I have found it! I have found it!

The Doctor appeared stupified.—And what have you then found, sir, that makes you jump so like an inhabitant of my present place of residence?—The subject of my discourse. Here it is, said I, pointing to my head; here it is, complete; I want no more of your advice. And so, my good Doctor, I dismiss you; go, and only take care not to return unless I call you.—That I will be sure not to do, he immediately replied, and having made me a fine Scotch bow, he instantly disappeared.

Full of my bright idea, I took up the books on my table, and read them all through. I became more and more confirmed in the plan I had adopted. Ah! said I, Men and Manners! you are the very man that I want. After enjoying our hospitality, and receiving every kind of attention and kindness that a stranger could expect, and to use your own inelegant expression, *with your mouth full of turkey*,* you have abused our country in a shameful manner; it is just that you should be exposed in *propriâ personâ* before my audience, and thus serve the purpose of our rising institution. You have said that we want intellect; that is the very thing to make people subscribe to our library; for all will understand that

* Speaking of the harmony which prevails at our literary meetings, called "Wistar parties," he accounts for it by saying, "No man can say a harsh thing with *his mouth full of turkey*." This is truly disgusting. Throughout his book, the turkies, beef-steaks and jellies, the wine, the punch, the liquors, the *prog*, in short, are every where prominent. After that, this writer will talk of *elevation of mind!*

he cannot want intellect, who reads Dante and Tasso; Schiller and Goethe; Racine and Voltaire; Yriarte, Melendez, Moratin, and all the Spanish writers in verse and in prose. I will show that we possess not only intellect, but taste likewise; for how else should we think of establishing such a library? You say, moreover, that we are slaves to the literature of Great Britain. Then our library will help us to emancipate ourselves from that slavery. You say that we are corrupting the English language! Very well, Mr. Cyril Thornton, we will prove that it is you that are corrupting it, by larding it with French words and phrases, as thick as a *fricandeau*. Now, Mr. Men and Manners, prepare yourself; for I must exhibit you to my audience, as well as your son Cyril, who will also contribute to the entertainment of the company. Come along, if you please, there is no time to lose.

So, I mounted Men and Manners, leading Cyril Thornton by the bridle. In a little while we arrived, and found the company assembled. Ladies and gentlemen, said I, mistrusting my own abilities, I have taken to my aid these two strangers, who have been kind enough to consent to contribute to your amusement. You expected, perhaps, from me, a *lengthy* discourse on foreign literature and science, about the foreign poets and prose writers, and that I should relate to you the history of all the literatures of Europe, as you will find it, much better told, in any of the Encyclopedias that you may come across; but I have prepared for you better entertainment. Here is Mr. Men and Manners, from Scotland, and young Mr. Thornton from England, who will tell you curious things. I pray you to lend an attentive ear to what they will say.

I then began to enter into a conversation with Men and Manners, about our country and its want of intellect; but do what I would, I could not get a single word out of him; his Scotch pride was up, and he only repeated in a gruff voice what he had said in his book, without attempting to answer my arguments, though they were framed according to the most approved rules of logic. He left all the talk to me, which embarrassed me not a little. I turned at last to his son, Cyril. Now, young man, said I, it is your turn to entertain the company. Tell us something about your adventures

in Scotland, where it is said you have had your education, under the care of your uncle Spreull and his lovely housekeeper, Mrs. Girzy, who talks Scotch as glib as Major Downing speaks Yankee. Come, no apologies, sir, but begin. The company are anxious to hear you. And, as you are an Englishman, be sure that you speak the language of your own country, and don't intermix it with Scotch or French dialects.

Master Cyril is an obedient lad, and so he began. He told us stories about Scotland, that made the company split their sides with laughing. O, what a description he made of it! the men all stupid gluttons and drunkards, and the women models of the most exquisite vulgarity. There was no resisting it. Well, said I, if this is Scotland, and if you, Mr. Men and Manners are, as they say, a native of that country, you should have been the last man to have exposed it as you have done. But, perhaps, when you wrote, you had just returned from a Scotch funeral.

Men and Manners was silent, and Cyril Thornton said no more; the truth is that he had no more to say; therefore it came to my turn again to entertain the company. I did not know well how to do it; therefore I followed the old Doctor's advice, and crept on for awhile as well as I could along the bridge of donkies. I spoke of French, Spanish, German and Italian poetry and prose, I chattered about it and about it until I was at a loss what more to say. But, at the critical moment, when I was going to stop quite short, I observed Men and Manners shrugging up his shoulders, with such a contemptuous look as I had never seen before. What is the matter? said I, what do you mean by that shrug and that look? He made no answer; but shrugged and looked again. I insisted on an explanation. Why, sir, then said he, it's nothing; only that you speak such bad English. Bad English! I cried; I may, perhaps, have committed some grammatical errors, but all that I have said, I believe, was clear and intelligible. You do not understand me, sir, he replied; you are not *au fait* of the manner in which we speak in England *à présent;* you think you are *kibing my heels*, and are trying to make yourself *hilarious* at my expense; but I tell you, sir, that your language is not that of the *haut ton;* you speak like a *parvenu*, like a

bourgeois; there is not a *laquais* or a *soubrette* in London or Edinburgh, that does not speak more *comme il faut* than you do. All this he intermixed with Scotch words, which I did not understand, and therefore cannot repeat. I made no reply; but asked my audience whether they had understood the gentleman? A loud NO resounded from every quarter.

Having no further occasion for Men and Manners or his son Cyril, I dismissed them both, and I must acknowledge that they performed their parts tolerably well, to amuse my hearers at their expense. My task was thus nearly accomplished. I, however, took that opportunity to prove to my audience, that there was much greater danger of the English language being corrupted in England than in this country, and that our library, instead of corrupting, would tend to preserving it in its pristine purity; after which, with a few general observations, I concluded my discourse.

I am bound, therefore, to express my great obligations to those two gentlemen, without whose kind assistance I could not have gone through what I had unadvisedly undertaken. I must beg their pardon for having *kibed their heels*, perhaps, a little too hard; but it is their own fault; they put themselves in my way, very opportunely for me, when I was in quest of arguments to show the importance of our "Library of Foreign Literature and Science," and to induce our citizens to join in support of it. I found their aid very convenient.

So, Men and Manners, thanks to you,
And Cyril, thanks to thee:
And when to Scotland next you go,
May I be there to see.*

* See Cowper's John Gilpin, *ad calcem.*

A DISCOURSE, &c.

Gentlemen of the Foreign Library Company,—

Among the various institutions that exist in this country for the cultivation and promotion of knowledge, there is none more likely to redound to the honour as well as to the advantage of our citizens, than that which you have lately established. It is a novelty of its kind. In no part of the world, I believe, is there a public library, devoted entirely to foreign literature and science, to the exclusion of books written in the vernacular tongue. But to no country, also, is such a library so well suited as it is to ours. It seems called for by our peculiar situation, to enable us at the same time to vindicate our intellectual character from the misrepresentations which have become so fashionable among a certain class of writers in a certain quarter of Europe, and to free us from the shackles of a kindred, yet foreign literature, which prevent us from fully displaying that individuality which is the characteristic of a truly independent nation.

The success which this association has hitherto experienced; the number of subscribers, the choice of books, the avidity with which they are sought after, and the constant call for more, are a sufficient answer to the aspersions which superficial and flippant travellers delight to throw upon our country. They prove that there are those among us, and not a few of those, who have minds to understand and hearts to feel the beauties of Corneille and of Racine; of Petrarch and of Dante; of Schiller and Goethe, and of Cervantes and Calderon. And mind, that it is not in the great commercial city of New York, where foreigners abound, that this society is established; but here, in Philadelphia, in the *Quaker city*, as it has been called, where it is well known that strangers are comparatively few, and they in general, not persons devoted to

literature and science. There would be no necessity for a library like this, if there were not readers of the works that it contains; and unless it was absolutely necessary to gratify the public taste, it would be absurd and ridiculous for any man of sense to dream for a moment of its establishment. I regret that I was not one of those who first conceived this happy idea; but I rejoice that it has been acted upon, and I congratulate you on the success that it has hitherto obtained, and which justifies our most sanguine hopes for the future.

The two objects that I have mentioned, and the attainment of which this institution will greatly promote, are not the only good effects that it will produce. I could enumerate many more, but the limits of this discourse will not permit me to expatiate upon them. I shall, therefore, confine myself to those to which I have already adverted. I hope I shall be able to prove to you that the advancement of our literature absolutely requires that we should cease to look up so exclusively as we have hitherto done to the literature of Great Britain, as the model of our own, and that a more intimate acquaintance with that of other countries will not only enlarge our ideas, but as I shall undertake to show you, will even preserve the purity of our language. It hardly requires an argument to prove that this institution will raise our intellectual reputation, at least among those who might receive their impressions from the misrepresentations of foreign travellers. As to men of real knowledge and sound judgment, they are not to be worked upon by the ephemeral productions of those writers; availing themselves of the benefits which this library offers to them, they will see nothing in it but what might naturally have been expected from the progress of mental improvement in our country.

When I speak of misrepresentations of foreign travellers, I do not mean to advert to those who, conscientiously attached to the constitution and government of their country, view our republican institutions with a prejudiced eye, and represent them in a false light to their countrymen; these have their excuse in the *amor patriæ*, an honourable feeling, in which we do not less indulge than other nations; much less shall I take notice of those, who, laying hold of some national peculiarities differing from those to which they have been

accustomed, seem to take pleasure in presenting to the world a caricature of our manners; the former are often respectable, the latter are always contemptible.

But when an author, not unknown in the literary world, after receiving in our country all the attentions to which a respectable stranger is entitled, affects to sink our nation to a low rank in the scale of intellect, and tauntingly reproaches us with the respect that we have long cherished for the literature of his country, which he represents as a humiliating servitude, we are bound, at least, to take warning from him, and free ourselves from those shackles which he boasts that his nation has imposed upon us.

The writer that I speak of is the author of a Book of Travels in the United States which he has entitled "Men and Manners in America." I leave to reviewers the unfair descriptions of our manners, with which his work abounds; I confine myself to what has a direct relation to the subject of this discourse. "In the present generation of Americans," says he, "I see no symptoms of improving taste or increasing *elevation of intellect.* The recorded specimens of this period (the period subsequent to our revolution) indicate a sad deficiency of taste, originality and imaginative power." He adds that we have degenerated, even from our immediate ancestors. Such is the cruel stigma which this author has attempted to fix upon our country. It is our duty to repel it.

That our literature cannot stand a comparison with that of Great Britain, is what I am willing freely to admit; and what no one of us is disposed to deny; but that may be easily accounted for, without recurring to a want of elevation of mind or a deficiency of mental powers. Our existence in the colonial and independent state dates from a little more than two hundred years; during the first century and a half, our country consisted of infant settlements, devoted entirely to agriculture, with a scanty population, scattered through immense forests, and debarred of intercourse with all mankind, except Great Britain and her dependencies. Those were not times in which science or literature could flourish. Literature has never flourished *any where* under a colonial system of government. Yet at the latter end of that period, Franklin arose and shone like a brilliant meteor amidst the darkness

that surrounded him. As Britain justly boasts of her Newton, America is equally proud of her Franklin.

The next period of between thirty and forty years, from the commencement of our revolution to the last peace with Great Britain, was also unfavourable to literature. It languished even in Europe. In this country, the first part of it was consumed in the struggle with the mother country for our independence, and in organizing a bold and novel system of government, which other nations have since adopted as a model; during the latter part of it, we were distracted by the intrigues of France and Great Britain, and ruined by the piracies of Great Britain and France, which ended in a war with the former, in which we came off victorious. I must also acknowledge, that during the whole of that period, such was the force of ancient prepossessions, that we had not yet even thought of shaking off the mental yoke which had so long weighed upon us; we seemed to be satisfied with our political emancipation, and despaired ever to be able to wrestle with great Britain in the fields of literature and science. Towards the end of that period, however, Fulton appeared, who conquered time, space, the winds and the tides, and his genius has changed the face of the world. Two such men as Franklin and Fulton are sufficient to illustrate any nation. I do not speak of our warriors and statesmen, they do not come within the scope of this discourse. Even Washington's great name shall be passed over in silence.

We have had, in fact, no literature until the peace of December, 1814. The war which preceded it, inspired us with a spirit we had never felt before. We had resisted in arms, unaided by friends or allies, the whole force of Great Britain; we now thought for the first time of an independent literature. The task was not an easy one; what cost Great Britain centuries to achieve, we could not expect to perform in twenty years; but we have begun, and are gradually advancing. Before the time that I speak of, it might, perhaps, not improperly have been asked: Who reads an American book? In less than twenty years after our first beginning, we have produced books that are read all over the world, that are translated into various languages, and are honourably noticed in the scientific and literary journals of all Europe. As the

writers of those books are almost all living, I abstain from alluding particularly to any of them. Those have been (with a few honourable exceptions) our first efforts, and yet the colonial spirit which has borne so long upon us, is not quite extinguished. We have still to prove to foreigners that we are in every respect an independent people.

It is not only unjust; it is cruel, in the traveller of whom I have been speaking, to ascribe the little progress that our literature has made in twenty years, compared with that of Great Britain in three centuries, to the want of *mental powers*, and to stigmatize us as a degenerate race. He turns our libraries into ridicule, because they are not so large as those which have been for ages collecting in Europe. "If a man," says he, "were to read all the books that exist within the limits of the United States, there could not be enough to make him a truly learned man." This is bitter sarcasm; but I would hardly take any notice of it, if it were not connected with the object of our institution. Permit me, therefore, to say a few words upon this subject.

That our public libraries are not to be compared with those of Europe for the number of books that they contain, is what cannot be denied. At the same time it is right that I should say that any one who will take the trouble to cast his eye over our catalogues, will convince himself that their contents are well chosen. It is true that we do not possess all that useless multitude of books with which the great European libraries are encumbered. We do not possess that immense number of volumes of polemic divinity which during so many centuries deluged Europe with blood, nor the enormous mass of commentaries on the civil law that appeared after the discovery of the Pandects at Amalfi. Our libraries do not contain the controversial writings between the nominalists and realists, the Scottists and the Thomists, at one period, and the Jansenists and Molinists at another. We have enough of our own *ists*, about whom the Europeans care as little as we do about theirs. I admit that we have not sixty or a hundred editions of the same work; that we do not abound in Aldis and in Elzeviers; that our collections of the *Cinquecentisti* are not considerable, and that we have but few of those manuscript missals, rituals, Homilies and Theological works with-

out end, which are so much sought after on the European continent. It is not here that the learned Mai must seek for Palimpsests to discover under illegible trash, some fragments of Fronto or of Cicero de Republicâ, and the Institutes of Gaius will not be found here, half devoured by rats, after lying for centuries unnoticed and unknown. If, however, we do not possess these, it does not follow that our libraries do not afford ample means for acquiring real learning. We are not deficient in works of science or of elegant literature. We possess the Greek and Roman classics, and those of the modern nations of Europe; though we might rest contented with Gibbon's History of the Greek, and Von Hammer's of the Ottoman Empire, for the disgusting catalogue of crimes that disgrace the times of which they speak, yet the lover of antiquity will find on our shelves pretty complete collections of the Byzantine historians; and he who would wish to know what books formed a library at Constantinople in the ninth century, may satisfy himself by reading the Myriobiblion of Photius, which I mention only by way of example. The works of the fathers of the Christian Church may be found in our theological libraries, to which they properly belong, and they are not inaccessible to those who would examine them in a literary point of view. In short, our libraries, though not so large as those of Europe, yet are sufficient to satisfy the wants of a student who is contented without "all the reading never to be read."

But, gentlemen, if the size of libraries were a safe criterion from which to judge of the knowledge or of the intellect of a nation, it would follow that Great Britain is inferior in these respects to several of the other nations of Europe. The largest library in England (the Bodleian at Oxford) is said to contain five hundred thousand volumes, though some say only two hundred and eighty thousand, including manuscripts, while the Royal Library at Paris contains two millions of printed and manuscript volumes.* Is the author of Men and

* Galignani's Paris Messenger, says:—"The Royal Library at Paris, on the 1st of January, 1833, contained 1,985,000 volumes, including manuscripts, books of engravings, and numismatical works. On the 1st of January, 1834, it will contain at least 2,000,000 volumes, as every year, on an average, 20,000 new works are deposited there."

Manners prepared to admit that Great Britain, in point of intellect or knowledge, is inferior to France, at least in the proportion of four to one? People should be careful not to throw stones, without knowing where they may light.

I have said enough, and, perhaps, too much on the subject of this ill humoured traveller. But, as he has taken the liberty to amuse himself at our expense, I beg you will permit me to entertain you for a few moments at his, and to show you by that means to how little respect his opinions are entitled.

Know, then, gentlemen, that this same traveller, as I have been credibly informed, is a native of Scotland. No disgrace to him, I am sure; there is not a more true hearted people on the face of the earth, than that which inhabits old Caledonia. They hold a high rank in science and literature, and, though a little tinged with pride, they are exceeded by none in excellence of heart, or urbanity of manners; above all they are distinguished by their patriotism and by their attachment to the soil that gave them birth. You will, therefore, not be a little astonished when you hear that that gentleman, in describing the men and manners of his native country, has treated it, it would be too little to say with more severity than our own, but with unexampled, and, I am convinced, with unmerited cruelty. Have a little patience, while I try to make good my assertion.

The writer that I speak of, has made himself known to the public, as the author of a novel, entitled "Cyril Thornton,"* and we have no right to know him by any other description. After reading his travels through our country, I had the curiosity to read that romance. My astonishment was as great as yours will presently be, when I read what I am going to relate.

The hero of the tale is a young Englishman, who is sent to

* Sir Walter Scott, while he wished his name to remain concealed, published his novels as written "by the author of Waverly." Since that time every romance writer has adopted that mode of describing his own person, forgetting that this kind of imitation will not bring them a step nearer to the name or fame of *the great unknown*.

General Washington was very fond of those hickory nuts which we call *shell barks*. In consequence of that, the young officers of the revolutionary army affected a great fondness for that fruit. But there has been but *one* Washington.

Glasgow, the greatest commercial and manufacturing town in Scotland, to complete his education. There he is placed under the care of an old uncle, a rich merchant, excessively vulgar in his manners, but whose character otherwise is unessential to our purpose. The period at which the scene is laid is about thirty years ago; indeed, it cannot be much more than twenty years before the time when the book is presumed to have been written. We must, therefore, consider the description which the author gives of that country as a delineation of contemporary manners. Nations do not change their habits in so short a time.

The author, then, introduces his hero, under the guidance of his uncle, into what must be considered the first society of the place. The young man is invited to a dinner at the house of the Lord Provost, the first magistrate of the city, where it is to be expected that the most respectable and the best educated company are to meet. The scene opens with a visit from the son of the great man to the hero of the tale; he comes in person to invite him to dine with his papa. That young man's conduct is marked with the most excessive ignorance of decency of manners, and, amongst other things, he spits on the floor, as if he were on the deck of a Mississippi steamboat; but this is nothing to the dinner, which takes place at the appointed time. The guests are announced by an awkward servant in the most awkward manner; the company at last are assembled; there is my lord mayor and the lady mayoress, with their hopeful son and their two daughters, Miss *Jacky* and Miss *Lexy*. There is a minister to say grace. The rest of the company consists of a number of Scotch gentlemen and ladies, the flower, as we must presume, of the city of Glasgow. But now a scene of ravenous gluttony and coarse vulgarity begins, mixed with the most ludicrous attempts at gentility. I cannot attempt to delineate it to you; my feeble talents are not equal to the task. Suffice it to say, that at that table (I was going to say *stable*) there is not a single exception to the disgusting manners which characterize them all; no, not even the reverend priest; there is not one redeeming individual; not one solitary guest to show that it is not the general character of the country that is described; the author, on the contrary, avows in a subsequent

chapter, that he has thus depicted the *great majority* of what he calls the "mercantile and manufacturing aristocracy."

I shall pass over the after dinner scene, in which the lady mayoress and her charming daughters, are represented in their dishabille, over a dish of cold tea, where they are surprised by the hero, as they had not expected that any of the gentlemen would leave their bottle to seek the company of the ladies. It is ludicrous in the extreme. I cannot refrain from laughing, when I consider what a figure would be made by Miss Jacky and Miss Lexy, if with their elegant mother they were to make their appearance at one of our social circles in Philadelphia or New York. They would probably be invited to display their graces in the more congenial atmosphere of the kitchen.

But, gentlemen, this is not all. We are next presented with a funeral scene, at some distance in the country. The deceased was a *laird*, or, what we would call here, a *country gentleman*, an uncle of the hero, and a brother of his protector. We are now to have a description of country manners. The hero and his surviving uncle, of course, go to the funeral, which is attended by a great number of the neighbouring gentry. They have hardly entered the house of mourning, that the scene opens with eating and drinking, and healths are pledged around in great style. The funeral at last proceeds; it is scarcely ended, when the company meet again at a sumptuous supper, where such gormandizing and bacchanalian orgies take place as baffle all description. Singing songs, roaring glees and catches, drinking toasts, and all the concomitants of unbridled debauchery, succeed each other during the night, until at last the brutes in human shape attain the last period of drunkenness, and are seen lying on the floor, amidst the wreck of dishes, glasses and bottles spread in confusion around them. Here, again, there is not one decent character to relieve the mind from the disgust which this picture inspires; not one righteous man to save that Sodom from destruction.

This is Scotland; town, country and all, as depicted by the author of Men and Manners in America. It will be said that it is in a novel, a work of fiction, and, therefore, that the writer did not mean to throw disgrace upon his country. But,

gentlemen, we all know that in works of that description, the fable and its incidents are indeed fictitious, but the manners, habits and customs of the time and place where the scene is laid must be correctly represented. A novelist is expected to "paint the manners living as they rise;" this was well understood by Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, Miss Burney, and particularly by the late Sir Walter Scott, whose excellent novels, admirable as they are, would lose all their interest, were it not for the faithful pictures which they exhibit of the manners and customs of different times and different places. A little colouring, I admit, is allowed to the novelist, to give effect to his pictures, but that should never go so far as to destroy altogether the likeness of the objects which he intends to represent.

I would ask, now, gentlemen, whether this author has given such a picture of bonny Scotland as a conscientious romance writer would consider legitimate? If he has, we must bless heaven that we live in America, and not in such a country as he has described. If, on the contrary, he has calumniated that country, then why should we complain that he has not shown more favour to ours?

But why, you will ask, should a man thus try to degrade the country that gave him birth, and indiscriminately hold up to derision and contempt the respectable classes of the society to which he belongs? It is not for me, gentlemen, to investigate this author's motives; to us they are of no importance; the best apology that can be made for him is, that the same ill humour which prompted him to write against this country, guided his pen when he wrote about his own.

Among the reproaches which the same author makes to our country, there is one, I regret to say, which is not altogether unfounded, but which, according to his custom, he makes the pretext of contumelious language. I mean our too great dependence on the literature of Great Britain, which he is pleased to call *mental allegiance.* I pray you to hear what he says. After advancing, as I have mentioned before, that we are deficient in taste, originality and imaginative powers, he thus proceeds to assign a reason for it. "Starting," he says, "like another Adam, into sudden political existence; preserving the laws, and dependant on the literature of Eng-

land, America found it more difficult to cast off the trammels of mental allegiance, than to burst asunder the bonds of physical enthralment." This is the unkindest cut of all. But it may also serve as a lesson. According to this writer, we are deficient in taste, because we have endeavoured to form ours upon British models; and for the same reason we are deficient in originality, a quality, without which no national literature can exist. Why that should also make us deficient in imaginative powers, I cannot well comprehend, for the powers of the mind are independent of the manner in which they are exercised. But I must leave this to be answered by our Irvings, our Coopers and our Pauldings, and by my amiable friend, the fair author of Redwood and of Hope Leslie.

Nothing can be more certain than that if we confine ourselves in any art to the imitation of a particular school, (excellent as it may be,) we shall never be able to have a school of our own. Imitation destroys genius; it narrows the range of our imaginations and the field of our conceptions. That we follow too closely the British models, and that our compositions are not sufficiently stamped with originality, is what I am not prepared to deny, and we cannot too much blame the satirist for giving it the name of *mental dependance*, though the imputation comes with a very ill grace from that quarter.

The reasons which have produced this *mental dependance*, (if it can be so called) are too well known, that I should take up much of your time in explaining them. The similarity of language, the constant influx of British books and literary productions of every description, which are reprinted here as fast as they appear, the natural indolence of man which makes him pursue the object easiest to be gained, in preference often to the most valuable; a long cherished congeniality of manners, habits and literary opinions with the nation whose language we speak, and whose descendants we, or the great majority of us, are; a filial respect, which, in spite of parental injuries, is not yet extinguished; all these circumstances together have produced that *mental thraldom* with which we are reproached by those whom it most honours, and from which we are warned by them that it is at last time to free ourselves. The question now occurs, how

is this to be done; and it is not difficult of solution. When we were struggling with Great Britain for our political independence what did we do? We sought foreign alliances, and obtained them. I do not mean to say that without their aid we should not have succeeded; but with their aid we did succeed, and in a shorter time than we should otherwise have done: the same course is now to be pursued. Let us seek foreign alliances in the literature and science of other nations than Great Britain, and we may expect similar success.

This idea is not new. It has already been acted upon, and is gradually producing its fruits. Finding at the close of the last war, that our weak efforts were derided by British critics, from whom, on the contrary, we should have expected mild encouragement, it occurred to some patriotic gentlemen in Philadelphia and New York to seek literary friends on the continent of Europe. A conspiracy was formed that had ramifications in Boston and elsewhere, to carry that idea into effect. I had the honour to be a member of that conspiracy, which I call by that name, because it was carried on in secret, and was known only by its results. We began with Germany. Correspondences were opened with the literary characters of that land of genius and science. The works of our writers were sent to them, and theirs received in return. Two journals were established; one in English at New York, under the title of "*the German Correspondent*," and another in German, at Philadelphia, under that of *Views of America*, (*Amerikanische Ansichten.*) The object of the former was to make German literature known to our countrymen, that of the latter to make our own known in Germany. At the same time there appeared at Leipzick another periodical publication entirely devoted to this country, and tending to the same end with the two others, entitled "*America described by herself*," (*Amerika dargestellt durch sich selbst.*) These three periodicals lasted little more than one year; the last, however, was followed by another, entitled "*Atlantis*," also published at Leipzick, by a gentleman who is now a respectable member of the medical profession in this city,* and went through two octavo volumes. Those works produced

* Dr. E. F. Rivinus.

the desired effect. American productions were fairly reviewed and moderately criticised in the literary journals at Halle, Gœttingen, Leipzick and other places, and even at Vienna. Several of them received the honour of a translation into the German language. About the same time when this conspiracy was formed, Harvard university sent some of her most promising pupils to complete their education in Germany, whence they returned fraught with knowledge, which enabled them to take their stations in the first ranks of our society.

Thus we first sought and obtained aid among the enlightened Germans, whose language and literature are most congenial to our own. France needed not to be sought, she met us of her own accord in the fields of literature and science; she extended to us her friendly hand, and showed herself the faithful ally in arts, that she had formerly been in arms; of this her scientific and literary journals bear ample testimony.* There the works of American authors have always been respectfully noticed, criticised with candour and fairness, and with the delicacy peculiar to that intelligent and amiable people; but never with the stern brow of insolent superiority, or the bitterness of contemptuous satire. Other nations followed the example of Germany and France, and we found friends everywhere through the whole extent of the European continent.

As to Great Britain, those of that nation whose good opinion is worth having, the men of elevated minds, have done justice to our efforts; but the vulgar herd of writers, abandoning France, which they so long delighted to misrepresent, have selected us as the object of their unmanly attacks, of which I have shown you a striking instance, which I would not have noticed, if it had not been so immediately connected with my subject; showing the necessity of extending our views more and more beyond the limits of British literature, as the best answer we can give to those who affect to consider us as their humble imitators. Not that I mean to say that the literature of Great Britain is not worthy of imitation; no man is more

* Those who have been in the habit of reading the *Revue Encyclopédique* and the *Bulletin des Sciences*, edited by Baron Ferussac, know with what respect American works have been noticed in those publications.

sensible than I am of its merits. The works of her great poets and prose writers have delighted my youthful days, afforded a pleasing relaxation from the labours of my maturer years, and at this moment are the solace of my old age. I hope we shall never cease to read, study and admire their immortal works, and that our writers will strive to catch some sparks at least of their genius and of their spirit, without descending to a servile imitation of their language or of their manner.

There is, after all, nothing so difficult for nations who speak the same language, as to imitate the literary productions of each other; imitation here degenerates into plagiarism, for you can hardly adopt the ideas of a writer without adopting also the language in which he has clothed them; and if you endeavour to express them in other words, you weaken the force of the expression, and produce only a faint copy of a bright original. It is not so when you borrow the ideas of an author who has written in a language different from your own. This kind of imitation has been allowed among all nations and in all ages. Thus Virgil imitated Homer, and Terence imitated Menander. We love to see Catullus imitated with so much success by Ariosto and Tasso.* To imitation we owe some of the noblest flights of the British muse. Spenser imitated Petrarch; Milton drank deep at the fount of the Italian Muse. Pope imitated Horace and Boileau; Johnson imitated Juvenal.† The charming love elegies of Hammond are little more than a translation of Tibullus. All this is considered fair and legitimate; but let any one try to clothe those or any other English poems in another English dress, he will find a miserable result, and will be called a plagiarist for his pains.

* I allude here to the beautiful simile of the Latin poet.

Ut flos in septis secretus nascitur hortis, &c.

Catul. lxii. *Carmen Nupt.*

Imitated by Ariosto, in Orl. Fur. Canto i. st. 42.

La verginella e simile alla rosa, &c.

And by Tasso, in Gerus. Lib. Canto xvi. st. 14.

Deh! mira, (egli cantò,) spuntar la rosa, &c.

Which Gay has indelicately parodied in the Beggar's Opera, Act. i.

Virgins are like the fair flow'r in its lustre, &c.

† In his poem called *London*.

Take, for instance, this so often repeated line of Pope, in his Essay on Man,

An honest man 's the noblest work of God,

and try to render the idea that it expresses in other English words, in verse or in prose. You will infallibly fail in every attempt. But suppose Pope had written in French, and expressed himself thus:

Le chef d'œuvre du ciel est un homme de bien,

you might have rendered the idea in English in the words that he has used, and the poetry would have been your own.

Thus Milton adopted the beautiful idea of Dante, who inscribes over the gate that leads to the infernal regions:

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'intrate.

The English poet, in describing hell, says,

—— Hope never comes,
That comes to all ——

Thus Spenser has received well-deserved praise for his charming sonnet:

Sweet warrior, when shall I have peace with you?

although the idea is taken from the well known sonnet of Petrarch:

Mille fiate, O dolce mia guerrera
Per aver co' begli occhi vostri pace, &c.

The imitator here has surpassed his model.

Thus Hammond has rendered, though not so happily, the delightful lines of Tibullus:

Te spectem, suprema mihi cum venerit hora,
Te teneam moriens, deficiente manu.

On her I'll gaze when other loves are o'er,
And dying press her with my clay-cold hand.

It is lawful for you to follow the example of those British writers, by sucking, like the bee, the flowers of the literature of other nations, and bringing the sweet juices to the hive of your own language, where you will work them up into delicious honey. Thus, when you read in Schiller's Wallenstein the description of peace suddenly proclaimed at the head of

an army long harassed with the fatigues of a bloody war, when you hear Max Piccolomini describe the soldiers returning joyful to their homes, their hats adorned with green boughs, *the last plunder of the fields*, (dem letzen Raub der Felder,) you may safely transfer the sublime idea into our language, you will have enriched our literature and acquired honour to yourselves and to our country. Or if you read Bürger's charming translation of the *Pervigilium Veneris.**

Morgen liebe, wer die Liebe
Schon gekannt;
Morgen liebe, wer die Liebe
Nie empfand.

You will be tempted to say after him in your own language,

To-morrow let him love, who love
Felt so true;
To-morrow let him love, who love
Never knew.

And when you wish to describe a once beautiful virgin, now pale and disfigured, sinking under the pangs of ill requited love, you will not repeat Shakspeare's admirable, indeed, but trite simile of "patience on a monument, smiling at grief;" but you may lawfully exclaim with the Italian poet:†

Appena si può dir, questa fù rosa,
And you can hardly say this was a rose.

You may also comfort an afflicted friend, bewailing the loss of a beloved infant daughter, in the words of the French poet, Malherbe:

Et rose, elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses,
L'espace d'un matin.

A rose, she lived the time that roses live,
The morning of a day.

In Spanish literature you will also find much to imitate, but I have not time at present to cite examples.

The field is immense, and very far yet from being exhausted. Let other nations honourably steal the beauties of English poetry, and make them their own by transplanting them,

* Cras amet qui nunquam amavit; quique amavit cras amet.
† Guarini.

if I may say so, into their own soil; the time will come when they will seek your fields, and gather treasures there to carry home.

Permit me to show you what advantage a nation gains, what even unmerited glory it acquires by a familiar acquaintance with foreign literature. You all remember the beautiful lines of Voltaire in his tragedy of Alzire.

> Des Dieux que nous servons connais la différence,
> Les tiens t'ont commandé le meurtre et la vengeance,
> Et le mien, quand ton bras vient de m'assassiner,
> M'ordonne de te plaindre et de te pardonner.

You all know also how much these lines have been applauded by the French and other European critics, and how often they are cited in praise of the French poet; but what, perhaps, you do not know, is, that he is only entitled to the honour of the versification, and that the idea is borrowed from the English poet Rowe, in his tragedy of Tamerlane.

> Now learn the diff'rence 'twixt thy faith and mine,
> Thine bids thee lift the dagger to my breast,
> Mine bids thee live.

The sublime sentiment which these words convey is more briefly and more happily expressed by the English than by the French poet, yet I do not remember that credit has been given for it to the former. But Rowe was an obscure writer in comparison to Voltaire, and the author of Alzire has alone enjoyed the glory which in justice belonged to the author of Tamerlane.

These, gentlemen, are a few among the many reasons that I might adduce, if time permitted, in favour of cultivating more and more the literature of continental Europe. You will not expect that I should give you here a dissertation on the peculiar merits of that of each different nation, that I should treat you with an abridgment of the works of Bouterwek on general literature, of Laharpe and Chénier on that of France, of Muratori and Maffei on that of Italy, of Schlegel and De Stael on that of Germany, and of Bouterwek again, or of our own Ticknor, on that of Spain. I do not come here to instruct, but to encourage and excite you. Nor do you want the little instruction that I could give. I would rather expect to receive it from you. The existence

of this association, the zeal that you have displayed in the promotion of its object, the general approbation which our institution has received from society at large, and the liberal support which it has hitherto obtained, and there is no doubt will continue to obtain, afford sufficient proof that we are not such strangers to the literature of other nations, as some ignorant or prejudiced writers would fain make the world believe.

I have heard it objected, that if we turn our attention too much to foreign literature, we are in danger of impairing the purity of our language, by the introduction of foreign words and modes of speech. I do not think the danger lies there. Language can only be corrupted by a want of taste, but our taste will be improved by the study of the great writers of France, Italy, Germany and Spain. Horace did not think that the Latin idiom could be corrupted by the reading of the Greek models when he recommended their daily and nightly perusal to the scholars of his day.

——————— vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.

No, gentlemen, the corruption of languages is the fruit of vulgarity and ignorance; knowledge, on the contrary, improves whatever it touches. Our language may be enriched by the study which I recommend; it can never be corrupted.

We have been repeatedly accused by modern British writers, of impairing the purity of our common idiom. A few words and modes of speech peculiar to this country, have been and are every day cited with affectation by critics and travellers in proof of that assertion. I cannot omit this opportunity of showing the falsity of the accusation. Permit me to address you a few words upon the subject, and to conclude this address by proving to you that there is much greater danger of the English language being corrupted on the other side of the Atlantic than in the United States.

Mr. Bulwer, in his interesting work, entitled "England and the English," has justly observed that "the English of the present day are not the English of twenty years ago." The same observation may be with equal truth applied to the language. The English of this day is not the same that it was

twenty years ago, much less what it was at the time of our separation from Great Britain.

It is now about sixty years since that separation took place. The language which at that time was spoken and written, both in England and in this country, which was then and has since remained our own, was that of Addison and Steele, Shakspeare and Milton, Pope and Dryden, Thomson and Young, Churchhill and Cowper. Has it remained the same since that time? By no means, it has on the contrary undergone great changes, not in America, as I shall show, but in Great Britain. In this country it has remained nearly stationary, Franklin and Washington Irving have both been justly praised for writing the English language with the purity of the Addisonian age. I fear they are *ultimi Romanorum.*

But let us see what changes the English language has undergone since the period of our revolution, and how and where they have been introduced during that time. Johnson's Dictionary was then the standard repertory of the words of which it is composed. A new edition of that work has been since published by Mr. Todd, containing by his own statement several thousand additional words. Where do these thousands of words come from? It is but just to suppose that some of them may be legitimate terms, which Johnson had omitted to insert in his Dictionary. I will also admit that many of them if they were not English at the time of our revolution, still deserve to be so, and may have been without impropriety introduced into the language; but if Great Britain claims the privilege of introducing in the course of sixty years thousands of words into the Dictionary, why should not we claim the same right? It is too well known that English Dictionary makers, to show their industry, will take words, good or bad, from any obscure writer and add them to their list; and it is known also that Lexicographers cannot at the present time follow the progress of innovation, and that new words are constantly employed in modern publications, which cannot be found in their compilations. I appeal to the readers of the London and Edinburgh Reviews and Magazines and of most of the modern English publications in Europe in proof of the truth of this assertion.

I am willing to admit that every change in language does

not necessarily imply its corruption. But if we compare the words that may be called "Americanisms" with the modern Anglicisms of Great Britain, we shall find that they have no right to boast of a taste in innovation superior to our own.

The words that have been introduced into the language in America, before or since the revolution, mostly, as our learned countryman, Mr. Pickering, has sufficiently proved, old English words that we have not thought proper to discard, are so few that they may be easily numbered. We call a *shop* a *store*, an *inn* a *tavern*. We say that a tedious discourse is *lengthy;* we distinguish almost every thing that pleases by the epithet *clever;* we call a woman of talents a *fine* woman; we *test* by facts the truth of an assertion; we *advocate* a cause, and when we are *advancing* towards the attainment of an object, we say with Shakspeare that we *progress*. These, with a few more, which do not at present occur, are the whole of our innovations in language; for I do not mean to speak of vulgarisms and provincialisms, confined to the spoken idiom, which abound much more in England than in this country. I may say with truth, that this is "the whole head and front of our offending."

In England, on the contrary, the mass of newfangled words introduced within the last twenty years is truly frightful. I may say they are innumerable. There we find *withdrawal*, with its horrid hiatus, *educational*,* *talented*,† *announcement*, *compromise*, instead of *commit;* to *accord*, instead of to *grant; tuition* for *instruction*, *hilarious*, *ubiquitous*, *ubiquitously*, *obsoletism*, *expenditure*, *obsoletion*, *kibing the heels of a person*, *toggery*, *transmogrify*, and an immense number of similar words which I have neither time nor patience to enumerate; we have also the neutral verb to *grow* changed into an active verb; the fashionable phrase is to *grow* instead of to *raise*, and a *grower* instead of a *cultivator* of wheat. We have to *be* done, instead of to *have* done.‡ And, what is worse than all, we have the newly invented phrase that a house is *being* built instead of is *building*. This is a distortion, not an improvement of lan-

* Edinb. Rev. Oct. 1833. † Ibid.

‡ Ibid, p. 162. I abstain from quoting authorities for the other words, all taken from British publications. Some are from *Cyril Thornton* and *Men and Manners in America.*

guage. It adds nothing to its force or to its clearness, but unnecessarily detracts from its characteristic brevity.

I know we have adopted many of those English innovations, and I wish we had done it with more discernment.* But that is the consequence of too exclusive an attachment to British literature. It shows the importance, I may say the necessity, of our association.

But innovations, drawn *ex visceribus*, from the bowels of the language, might be borne with, while the introduction of foreign words and locutions, unless necessary and judiciously adapted to the stock on which they are grafted, is to be constantly deprecated. In this the English have of late years indulged themselves to an extent that is truly surprising. I shall not speak of the numerous Scotticisms with which the delightful poetry of Sir Walter Scott is disfigured, but only of the immense number of French words and phrases with which the English language is at this moment patched, without the least regard to the harmony or the analogy of the idiom. A second Norman invasion is taking place, and the French language seems to be migrating in a body into the English. Many a modern English book cannot be understood without a previous knowledge of the language of France. This Gallomania prevails everywhere; not only in the newspapers, magazines, reviews, novels, books of travels, which from their extensive circulation are most apt to corrupt the idiom, but also in works of higher pretensions.† The language of Great Britain is fast diverging from that of America, and the time is approaching when English books, like some of Sir Walter Scott's poems, will require a glossary to be read in this country.

Let me not be understood as if I meant here to depreciate the French language, which I would hardly do, when encou-

* The fact is, that most of the words that I have cited, whether as Americanisms or as Anglicisms, are more or less in use in both countries, which are constantly acting and re-acting on one another. Even the word *lengthy*, with which we are so often reproached, is to be found in the official despatch of Capt. Pring, of the British navy, giving an account to his superior officer, of M'Donough's victory on Lake Champlain, in 1814.

† Lord Dover's History of Frederick II. of Prussia, might easily be taken for a translation from the French, by a person ignorant of the English language.

raging you to study French literature. The French language is beautiful in its place, in the works of the French poets and prose writers. But it will with difficulty amalgamate with our own. Its sounds are foreign to our ears, and its orthography to our eyes. It requires great judgment and great delicacy of taste to make an English out of a French word.

But modern English writers do not seem to understand this. The author of Men and Manners in America is particularly remarkable for his Anglo-French jargon. In his novel of Cyril Thornton, I have counted from forty to fifty different French words and phrases, awkwardly interlarded with his English, before I got through half of the first duodecimo volume. There you find *fauteuil*, *nonchalance*, *sobriquet*, *ménage*, *parvenu*, and a number of other words used as if they were English, without any thing to indicate their foreign origin; you read of an *oreille d'ours* coloured silk gown, of the *bouleversement* of horses and riders, of a lady assuming a *riant* manner, and many more such, if not good French, at least, as the Germans would say, *un-English* expressions, scattered without judgment and without taste. When I first read of the *riant* manner, which I pronounced *ri-ant*, as a common English word, I was greatly at a loss to find out its meaning; at last I tried it by the French pronunciation, and came *à bout** to understand it.

I regret to say that a much superior writer, Mr. Bulwer, has fallen into the same error, in his "England and the English." At least, his French words appear printed in Italics. But when you read in his book of the London *grands seigneurs*, of the dandy *clique*, of a person *à la mode*, of a *maison de jeu* morality, of a Lord Mute, who is an English *elegante*, (the last word, as usual, in the feminine instead of the masculine gender,) you cannot help regretting that so respectable an author should have fallen into this (to say the least of it) unpardonable affectation; and you may judge of the extent to which the contagion has advanced in the country in which he lives. May we not, then, apply here to the British nation, the well known line of the satirist,

Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione quærentes?

* Modern English for *I succeeded.*

In this manner, I think, I have sufficiently proved, that the danger of the English language becoming corrupted, is not on our side of the Atlantic; but that when it degenerates, (which I fear it has begun to do,) the cause will be to be looked for in the island of Great Britain.

The English language, like all human things, must one day perish. Pride may revolt at the idea, but it is not less an undeniable truth. The poet Dante, in one of his Visions of Paradise, tells us of a conversation that he had with Adam, the father of mankind. He asked him what had become of the language which he spoke in the garden of Eden? "It has perished," answered the patriarch; "every thing that is human must perish; heaven alone shall last for ever."

La lingua ch'io parlai fu tutta spenta
Innanzi che all' ovra inconsumabile
Fosse la gente di Nembrotte attenta:
Che nullo affetto mai razionabile
Per lo piacere uman, che rinnovella
Seguendo' l cielo, sempre fu durabile.*

Thus the primitive language has perished; it is in vain (whatever Grotius may have imagined) to seek for traces of it any where. The languages of Memphis, Babylon and Carthage, realms so celebrated in history, have perished, and the written memorials of them that still remain, mock the science of Philologists. The English language, therefore, and all that it has produced, are doomed to experience the same fate. But it will first perish in the old world, and it will live on this continent many centuries after it shall have been extinguished in Europe.

I find no difficulty in proving this assertion. Wherever our steps may guide us, from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico; from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean, we find the English language spoken, not in dialects, as in Europe, but pure and with but few local peculiarities. There is here no Gaelic or Cimbro-Celtic, no highland or lowland Scotch, no Yorkshire, Lancashire or Somersetshire jargon, but every where a uniformity of idiom. On the contrary, the English cannot travel twenty miles from their sea-girt shores without

* *Paradiso*, Canto xxvi.

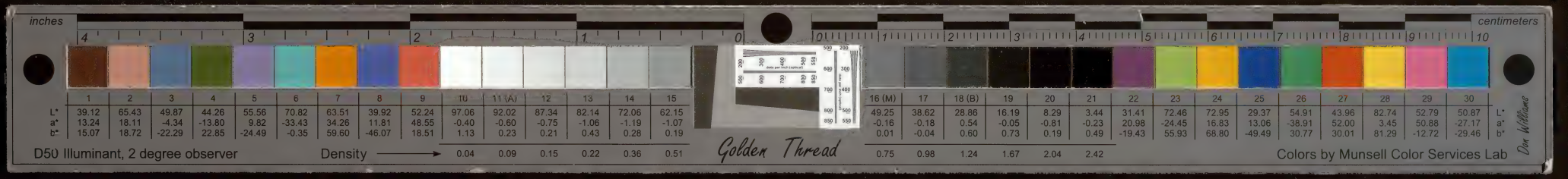
meeting a foreign tongue, and they are constantly visited by the Polyglot inhabitants of the continent. Their own people, on the other hand, migrate every year, by thousands, to the neighbouring shores of France, by which means, as I have shown you, their language has already begun to be corrupted, and will so continue, until the old English tongue shall have been merged into some other: here it will be preserved pure, or if, as cannot be avoided, it undergoes changes, those will be only variations of the original tongue, unmixed with foreign dialects, and it will, as long as it lasts, remain an English branch of an English stock.

In the mean time it is the duty and the interest of both nations, to retard as much as possible the dissolution of the English language in any part of the world. It is not for me to point out what Great Britain ought to do to attain that most desirable end; but I am at liberty to say what I think ought to be done in this country, with a view to the same object; we ought, in the first place, to adopt no new words or phrases from the other side of the Atlantic, but such as are English in their sound and in their structure; such as bear a close analogy to our language, and are in harmony with it; nor ought we to adopt even those, without evident necessity, or where they really add beauty or force to the expression of ideas. We should hold up a mirror to Great Britain, in which she might see her beautiful language reflected in its purity, and free from the barbarisms which of late years she has too easily suffered to be introduced into it. The greatest defect in the English idiom is its anomalies, and they ought not to be increased.

The study of the languages of continental Europe, instead of impeding, will aid you in this design. In the French, German, Italian and Spanish, as in the Latin and Greek, you will see homogeneous idioms, and you will learn to mould your own, as much as possible, on the same plan. You will always keep before your eyes the great models of a former age, and you will let modern British writers strike whatever devious course they may think proper. It is not words, but ideas, that you will look for in foreign writers; the latter will enrich and elevate your minds, the former could serve but as masquerade dresses to your own thoughts, and those, I hope,

will not require to be thus disguised. You will produce them in their own decent English garb, the only means by which you may convey them to your latest posterity.

I should have much more to tell you, gentlemen, on this inexhaustible subject. But time presses, and I have already trespassed too much on your kind attention. If I have convinced those who hear me, that from natural causes which I have endeavoured to explain, the noble language of our country, the language in which our independence was declared, and in which Washington, Adams, Jefferson and so many other illustrious citizens recorded their virtuous and patriotic sentiments, and proclaimed the principles of American freedom to an admiring world; that that language is committed to your guardianship, to be preserved pure as we found it at the time of our separation from Great Britain, and free from the inroads which foreign idioms are making upon it in Europe; if I have sufficiently proved that the surest means to attain that end, is to wean ourselves from too exclusive an attachment to English literature, and to extend the circle of our ideas beyond its limits, by forming a close acquaintance with the works of the great masters who have illumined the European continent, who have scattered floods of light upon Great Britain herself and inspired her poets and prose writers with some of the sublimest flights of their genius, I shall have done all that is in the power of my weak abilities to show the importance of our institution, and to induce all who are desirous of promoting the honour of our country, and its advancement in literature and science, to unite in supporting it.



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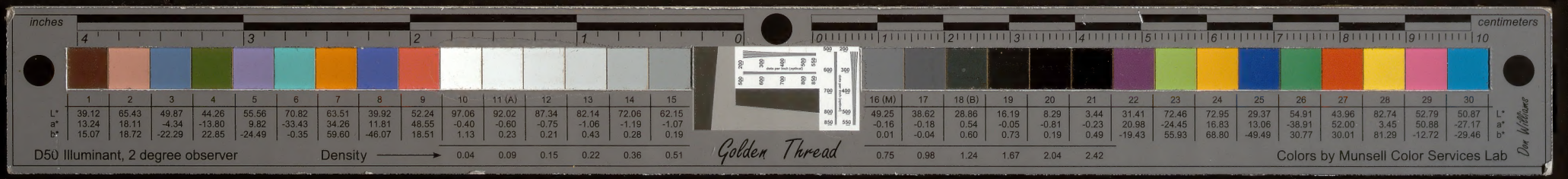
L*	39.12	65.43	49.87	44.26	55.56	70.82	63.51	39.92	52.24	97.06	92.02	87.34	82.14	72.06	62.15
a*	13.24	18.11	-4.34	-13.80	9.82	-33.43	34.26	11.81	48.55	-0.40	-0.60	-0.75	-1.06	-1.19	-1.07
b*	15.07	18.72	-22.29	22.85	-24.49	-0.35	59.60	-46.07	18.51	1.13	0.23	0.21	0.43	0.28	0.19

	16 (M)	17	18 (B)	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
L*	49.25	38.62	28.86	16.19	8.29	3.44	31.41	72.46	72.95	29.37	54.91	43.96	82.74	52.79	50.87	L*
a*	-0.16	-0.18	0.54	-0.05	-0.81	-0.23	20.98	-24.45	16.83	13.06	-38.91	52.00	3.45	50.88	-27.17	a*
b*	0.01	-0.04	0.60	0.73	0.19	0.49	-19.43	55.93	68.80	-49.49	30.77	30.01	81.29	-12.72	-29.46	b*



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a*	13.24	18.11	-4.34	-13.80	9.82	-33.43	34.26	11.81	48.55	-0.40	-0.60	-0.75	-1.06	-1.19	-1.07
b*	15.07	18.72	-22.29	22.85	-24.49	-0.35	59.60	-46.07	18.51	1.13	0.23	0.21	0.43	0.28	0.19
										0.04	0.09	0.15	0.22	0.36	0.51

	16 (M)	17	18 (B)	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
L*	49.25	38.62	28.86	16.19	8.29	3.44	31.41	72.46	72.95	29.37	54.91	43.96	82.74	52.79	50.87
a*	-0.16	-0.18	0.54	-0.05	-0.81	-0.23	20.98	-24.45	16.83	13.06	-38.91	52.00	3.45	50.88	-27.17
b*	0.01	-0.04	0.60	0.73	0.19	0.49	-19.43	55.93	68.80	-49.49	30.77	30.01	81.29	-12.72	-29.46
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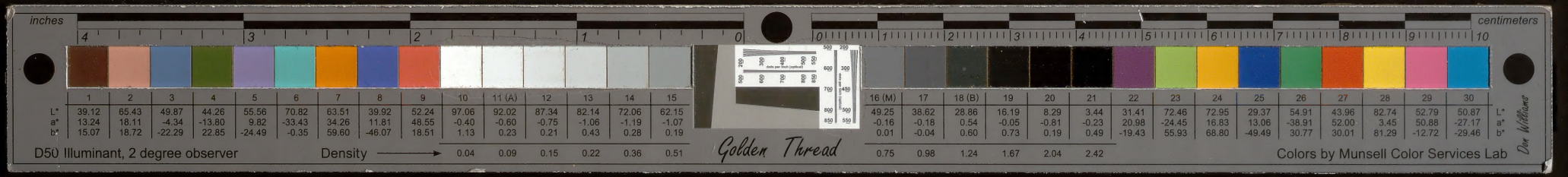

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11 (A)	12	13	14	15
L*	39.12	65.43	49.87	44.26	55.56	70.82	63.51	39.92	52.24	97.06	92.02	87.34	82.14	72.06	62.15
a*	13.24	18.11	-4.34	-13.80	9.82	-33.43	34.26	11.81	48.55	-0.40	-0.60	-0.75	-1.06	-1.19	-1.07
b*	15.07	18.72	-22.29	22.85	-24.49	-0.35	59.60	-46.07	18.51	1.13	0.23	0.21	0.43	0.28	0.19

	16 (M)	17	18 (B)	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
L*	49.25	38.62	28.86	16.19	8.29	3.44	31.41	72.46	72.95	29.37	54.91	43.96	82.74	52.79	50.87
a*	-0.16	-0.18	0.54	-0.05	-0.81	-0.23	20.98	-24.45	16.83	13.06	-38.91	52.00	3.45	50.88	-27.17
b*	0.01	-0.04	0.60	0.73	0.19	0.49	-19.43	55.93	68.80	-49.49	30.77	30.01	81.29	-12.72	-29.46

D50 Illuminant, 2 degree observer

Density → 0.04 0.09 0.15 0.22 0.36 0.51 0.75 0.98 1.24 1.67 2.04 2.42

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