

THE
S A T I R I S T,
OR
MONTHLY METEOR.

Omne in precipiti vitium stetit: utere velis,
Totos paude sinus. Juv.

Follies and vices uncontrol'd prevail:
To sea, bold Satirist; spread wide your sail!

VOL. IV.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR SAMUEL TIPPER,

LEADENHALL-STREET,

1809.

W. Flint, Printer, Old Bailey, London.

COMPARATIVE CRITICISM.*

Non nostrum TANTAS componere lites!—VIRGIL.

Who shall decide when DOCTORS disagree?—POPE.

1. English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.

“ We understand this poem has already attained a large circulation ; a circumstance by no means surprising, when we consider its high seasoning of invective and sarcasm, its *humour* and *spirited versification*,” &c.— Eclectic Review.

“ We shall indulge our inclination with an extract from this *excellent* poem. We must express our satisfaction at this effusion

* The last number of the Edinburgh Review exhibits a prodigy ; it *actually* notices a volume of sermons !—and, what is still more, *praises* them. We congratulate the Edinburgh Reviewers on their *conversion* ; which, as extremes generally meet, will probably be, from the disgusting cant of infidelity to the more disgusting and pernicious cant of methodism. But what is the secret of this conversion, and how is it that *such* a work has found its way to *their* notice and recommendation ? Why truly the author is a *Scotchman* : at least the book is published at *Edinburgh*. This it is, which has procured admission into their journal, for an article which, considered as a piece of *criticism*, would disgrace the rag-end of the Eclectic Review. The first extract that it gives is announced in this *new* and *ingenious* manner, “ it is *but fair*, however, that Mr. M. should be allowed to explain the objects he had in view *in his own language* :” and afterwards, “ after reciting, &c. the author goes on”—“ after some further reflections, the author winds up, &c. by the following”—“ after mentioning, &c. the preacher proceeds”—“ after alluding, &c. the author proceeds”—“ we quote a few passages, as a specimen of the interest, &c.”—“ the following recommendation exemplifies, &c.”—“ after drawing a fine picture, &c. the author proceeds”—“ the same strain of thought is discernible in the following”—“ the following passage is also extremely characteristic”—serve to introduce patch after patch, and page after page, of *profitable* quotation, to the end of the chapter.

of its author's *genius*; we hope it may be the precursor to many other *manly sentiments* equally well maintained, in future productions of his pen. We are glad to see that his spirit, so far from lagging, continues to rise with more *animated vigour*, and with increasing *energy* both of *thought* and *expression*."—Literary Panorama.

"Since the time of the Baviad, we have not met with a production combining so much severity, with so much *genuine wit*, *humour*, and *real talent*."—British Critic.

"—These specimens will suffice to demonstrate the *spirit* with which the author wields the sword of satire. An impartial reader will not hesitate to admit that he is deserving of public thanks for the *masterly correction* which he has inflicted on incorrigible dullness and an obstinate malignity."—Antijacobin Review.

"The author's *verse* is *flowing* and *energetic*, his *imagination* active, and his *powers of expression* fully equal to the *true spirit* of his theme. We shall perhaps be accused of illiberality for noticing with praise, or even with complacency, the ensuing attack upon one who is generally considered as president of the northern board of criticism," [Jeffery, the editor of the Edinburgh Review]; but in justice to our author we cannot pass over what is perhaps the *most spirited portion* of his satire, and that which affords the *strongest evidence* of those *talents* for which we have given him ample credit."—Critical Review.

"The various attacks on the Edinburgh Review, which have appeared during the last six months, partly in prose,* partly in *some other sort of writing not exactly resembling prose*, would, if collected, make a volume of no ordinary weight; and, as far as we have had patience to peruse these things, *considerably exceeding in stupidity* any equal mass of controversial matter formerly produced."—Edinburgh Review. †

* Alluding to Mr. Wharton's pamphlet, reviewed in our seventeenth number (Vol. IV. p. 184.)—SATIRIST.

† This extract, which occurs merely as a note on a political article in the

2. An Antidote to the Miseries of Human Life.

“ Not less than four editions of this little volume, we understand, have been sold in two years. We should rejoice in this, had not the author occasionally mixed some *false morality* and rather *piquant allusions* in her dialogue. We cannot much admire wit so *alloyed*.”—Antijacobin Review.

“ The *sentiments* are *unexceptionable*.”—British Critic.*

3. Tales from Shakespeare, by Charles Lamb; embellished with Copper-plates.

“ The *prints* are **NEATLY** executed.”—Antijacobin Review.

“ We cannot agree with the assertion of the title, that the tales are embellished by the *plates*; for though the designs are not amiss, the *execution* is so **VERY COARSE** and **SLOVENLY**.’ &c.—British Critic.

4. A new Spanish and English Grammar, by Thomas Planquais.

“ With regard to these fundamental points, Mr. Planquais’ Grammar appears to be *unexceptionable*.”—Monthly Review.

“—The Spanish language therefore we deem of infinite importance: and congratulate the public that Mr. Planquais has published a Grammar of it upon a new plan, which indeed places his in the light of an original work, in which the mind is no longer en-

last Number of the Edinburgh Review, is all the notice that Mr. Jeffery has thought fit to take, of a publication in which he receives as smart a lashing as ever he inflicted on any unfortunate author in *his* review; applied too with some genius and wit, which are things *quite out of Mr. Jeffery’s line*.

* The British Critic, *according to custom*, has reviewed this book twice, (July 1807 and October 1808). The latter instance indeed might be attributed entirely to the publication of a new edition, were it not that the article does not refer to any former notice of the work, but on the contrary speaks of now “*not omitting*” to praise it, and of having “*expected different things*” from it. See the last two pages of our twentieth Number (Vol. IV. p. 519, 520) for former exploits of the British Critic, in the way of *criticism extraordinary*.

tangled by a mass of extraneous matter ; but by precepts and examples, equally CORRECT and *perspicuous*, led by gradations from the easiest to the most difficult part of this scientific attainment, and consequently the study of the Castilian tongue *in a high degree facilitated* to the younger branches of students."—European Magazine.

“ There is *nothing* in this ponderous volume which has any *particular claims to attention* ; and were we to enumerate its ERRORS, we should *fill as many pages* as are necessary to contain a good grammar. In short, we can only say of this New Grammar, that it is a mass of *dirty paper illegibly printed*.”—Antijacobin Review.

5. *Exodus*, an Epic poem, in thirteen books ; by Charles Hoyle.

§. “ What may be the fate of Mr. Hoyle’s epic, we know not ; but we apprehend that it is more *likely* to be the *favourite of posterity*, than of the present age. That it possesses *merit* to support it as it *floats down the stream of time*, we are ready to confess. The *versification frequently* reminds us of *Milton*. The *talents* of the author are *incontestable*.”—Oxford Review.

“ The *language* of this author is *dignified* and POETICAL, and his *blank verse harmonious*. That he can also *imagine well*, and *describe with force*, might be proved by *instances innumerable*. He writes *almost every where* with *vigour* and POETICAL *dignity* ; his *conceptions* are *frequently sublime in a high degree*, and his *expression* of them such as to give their *full force* to the images he presents. The contest of his demon Baal-famen with the archangel Gabriel is *truly original* and *grand*. They who can enjoy the gratification of *fine passages*, detached from their context, may here find an *abundant harvest*.—British Critic.

“ We proceed most seriously to reprehend Mr. Hoyle for the indecency of imploring the aid of the Almighty to consecrate to immortality in heaven, *verses* which are *worthy of no*

thing on earth except the *damnation* of a Seatonian prize-poem. If he allege the example of *Milton* in his defence, we answer in the first place, that he is *totally deficient* in all that *poetical inspiration* which animated the labours of his great prototype. The succeeding books, from the third to the seventh, present us with a *continuity of heaviness*, which is *never relieved* by any *richness of imagery*, or *felicity of expression*. After such an instance of *truly deplorable imbecility*," &c. "The general character of the poem is *inanimate, monotonous, flat*, and *PROSAIC*."—Critical Review.

§. "These specimens will *fully shew* that Mr. Hoyle has executed his task, with the *fire of true genius*, and that the commendation which we have bestowed is *due* to him as a *scripture epic poet*."—Monthly Review.

"It is really lamentable to see so much labour and learning as Mr. Hoyle appears to possess, wasted upon an undertaking so unpromising as an *epic poem*, and to which his *genius* is so *utterly inadequate*."—Annual Review.

6. Poems, by Mr. Polwhele ; in three volumes.

"Mr. Polwhele's *fame* as a *poet* has been too *long established* to be either increased by our praise, or diminished by our censures, were we disposed to inflict them. *Few poets* indeed of the present day have written so much and *written so well* ; and though most of the poems which are inserted in these volumes have *before appeared*," &c.—Antijacobin Review.

"The present volumes are *by no means a republication* of former poems, except in a *FEW instances*. The first volume contains a poem entitled the *English Orator* : the lines in which the oratory of the late lord Chatham and his still more eloquent son are characterized, will give a proper taste of the *spirit* and *elegance* of the poem :—the *clear and energetic style* in which these characters are delineated, gives proof of a *poetical eloquence* well suited to the subject of the poem.—The second volume is occupied by a long poem in heroic couplets, entitled

Sir Allan, or the knight of expiring chivalry. The whole" [of this tale], "being the work of fancy, displays a *rich and vigorous imagination*: and if the length of the tale be not thought objectionable, we *know not of any other fault* that can impede its popularity. The *descriptions* are often *vivid*, the situations well imagined, and the versification free yet harmonious."—British Critic.

"The present publication contains *VERY LITTLE* that is *original*. Mr. Polwhele is one who, with some share of fancy and a *small store of poetical ideas*, has contrived to *puzzle and perplex* the former, and to *garble, confound, and mortify* the latter, *more than any self-called poet*, whose works it has been our misfortune to peruse. His *English Orator*, which occupies the first volume of this collection, is of all his labours the most free both from the praise and censure of the foregoing sentence: it possesses indeed as *little imagination*, and as much *straight-forward unmeaning dullness*, as any four cantos of didactic blank verse that ever were composed.—*Sir Allan*, or the knight of expiring chivalry, (a strange title!) contains both near approaches to poetry, and *wider deviations from good sense*. There are some *descriptions* in the early part of the poem, which would be pleasing if they were less *obscure*, and some *thoughts* that would be pretty if they were less *affected*. As for the *story* of *Sir Allan*, its most striking peculiarities are *improbability* and *incomprehensibility*. So much for the descriptive and narrative: but when Mr. Polwhele assumes the satirist, *nothing can exceed his coarseness*, but his *want of wit*; and in point of *humour*, *Sir Allan* is more *low and vulgar* even than the author's own *Theocritus*."—Critical Review.

7. *Quæstiones Græcæ*, or Questions adapted to the Eton Greek Grammar; by the Reverend John Simpson.

"This publication may, with great propriety, be recommended to the notice of *all tutors*, and to the adoption of those who use the Eton Greek grammar."—Eclectic Review.

“ Mr. Simpson’s plan will be found very useful to *stupid school-masters, who do not know how to examine their pupils without the assistance of such an auxiliary.*”—Critical Review.

8. The Twin Sisters, or the advantages of Religion.

“ This is a *very interesting* and instructive tale, and does *great credit* both to the *head* and heart of the writer.”—British Critic.

“ This little tale is written with a degree of *ingenuity* and *taste* that increases our disposition to recommend it.”—Eclectic Review.

“ On the score of morality we have no objection to the *Twin Sisters* : but as a novel, it has *not the least claim* to our applause ; inasmuch as it is as *dull* and *prosing* a performance as ever issued from the pen of methodism.”—Critical Review.

9. Characteristic Anecdotes of Men of Learning and Genius, &c. by John Watkins, LL.D.

“ The anecdotes and sketches contained in this volume are numerous and *interesting.*”—Antijacobin Review.

“ A mere compilation, *utterly devoid of interest.*”—Critical Review.

10. Edwy and Elgiva, and Sir Everard, two tales ; by the Reverend Robert Bland.

“ It has occurred to us as *remarkable* that Mr. Bland should have clothed these tales in *heroic verse*, in preference to the *ballad-stanza* ; which seems *always* to have been devoted to such compositions, as *most appropriate* by its touching simplicity.”—Monthly Review.

“ Since the days of Dryden we have scarcely ever witnessed that *goodly sight*, a short and interesting tale in the *regular English couplet*. We have had epic poems, at least at the rate of one for every year ; and ballads, both old and new, in every possible variety of metre : but no tales told in the *true language* of our national poetry. We would therefore gladly hail this little vo-

lume as the fore-runner of *better times* to come ; as the vehicle in which the genius of old English verse has ventured to *return* from his long banishment, and reassume the *ancient honours* of his empire.—Critical Review.

11. Theodore, or the Peruvians ; from the French of Pigault Lebrun, by E.W.

“ *A singularly interesting and affecting tale, translated with spirit, elegance, and correctness. Whenever a tale unites lively entertainment with unexceptionable delicacy of sentiment, we shall strongly recommend it, as we do this work, to female readers in particular.*”—British Critic.

“ One of the *most pleasing and interesting* little tales we have lately seen, and greatly superior to any thing we would * have expected from P. Lebrun. It is in general *well translated* ; and there is a *happy delicacy of sentiment* which pervades it, as if coming from a female pen. From the vulgar idea of Peru, there are too many golden scenes ; but these are not such as materially affect the general *simplicity and interest* of the tale.”—Antijacobin Review.

“ This story was *not worth translating*. The title of a Peruvian Countess falling in love with an European has been often told, and never more *unnaturally* than by M. Lebrun.”—Annual Review.

“ This is one of the *ephemeral insects* of literature which we certainly shall not take the pains of dissecting minutely ; and a microscopic examination of which would be an absolute *waste of criticism*. To expose in detail all its *faults and absurdities*, would be indeed to break a butterfly on the wheel.”—Monthly Review.

“ The translation contains rather *too strong a taint* of the *French idiom*.”—Critical Review.

* This critic seems to have lately left Dublin.—SAT.