

# EDWARD BERDOE

THE BROWNING  
CYCLOPÆDIA: A GUIDE  
TO THE STUDY OF THE  
WORKS OF ROBERT  
BROWNING

**Edward Berdoe**  
**The Browning Cyclopædia:**  
**A Guide to the Study of the**  
**Works of Robert Browning**

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*The Browning Cyclopædia: A Guide to the Study of the Works of Robert  
Browning:*

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**The Browning Cyclopædia:  
A Guide to the Study of the  
Works of Robert Browning**

**I gratefully Dedicate these pages**

**TO**

**DR. F. J. FURNIVALL**

**AND**

**MISS E. H. HICKEY,**

**THE FOUNDERS OF**

**THE BROWNING SOCIETY**

# PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The demand for a second edition of this work within three months of its publication is a sufficient proof that such a book meets a want, notwithstanding the many previous attempts of a more or less partial character which have been made to explain Browning to “the general.” With the exception of certain superfine reviewers, to whom nothing is obscure – except such things as they are asked to explain without previous notice – every one admits that Browning requires more or less elucidation. It is said by some that I have explained too much, but this might be said of most commentaries, and certainly of every dictionary. It is difficult to know precisely where to draw the line. If I am not to explain (say for lady readers) what is meant by the phrase “*De te fabula narratur*,” I know not why any of the classical quotations should be translated. If Browning is hard to understand, it must be on account of the obscurity of his language, of his thought, or the purport of his verses; very often the objection is made that the difficulty applies to all these. I have not written for the “learned,” but for the people at large. *The Manchester Guardian*, in a kindly notice of my book, says “the error and marvel of his book is the supposition that any cripple who can only be crutched by it into an understanding of

Browning will ever understand Browning at all.” There are many readers, however, who understand Browning a little, and I hope that this book will enable them to understand him a great deal more: though all cripples cannot be turned into athletes, some undeveloped persons may be helped to achieve feats of strength.

A word concerning my critics. No one can do me a greater service than by pointing out mistakes and omissions in this work. I cannot hope to please everybody, but I will do my best to make future editions as perfect as possible.

*E. B.*

*March 1892.*

# PREFACE

I make no apology for the publication of this work, because some such book has long been a necessity to any one who seriously proposes to study Browning. Up to its appearance there was no single book to which the reader could turn, which gave an exposition of the leading ideas of every poem, its key-note, the sources – historical, legendary, or fanciful – to which the poem was due, and a glossary of every difficult word or allusion which might obscure the sense to such readers as had short memories or scanty reading. It would be affectation to pretend to believe that every educated person ought to know, without the aid of such a work as this, what Browning means by phrases and allusions which may be found by hundreds in his works. The wisest reader cannot be expected to remember, even if he has ever learned, a host of remote incidents in Italian history, for example, to say nothing of classical terms which “every schoolboy” ought to know, but rarely does. Browning is obscure, undoubtedly, if a poem is read for the first time without any hint as to its main purport: the meaning in almost every case lies more or less below the surface; the superficial idea which a careless perusal of the poem would afford is pretty sure to be the wrong one. Browning’s poetry is intended to make people think, and without thought the fullest commentary will not help the reader much. “I can have little doubt,” said the poet, in his

preface to the First Series of *Selections* from his works, “that my writing has been in the main too hard for many I should have been pleased to communicate with; but I never designedly tried to puzzle people, as some of my critics have supposed. On the other hand, I never pretended to offer such literature as should be a substitute for a cigar or a game at dominoes to an idle man. So, perhaps, on the whole, I get my deserts, and something over – not a crowd, but a few I value more.” As for my own qualifications for the task I have undertaken, I can only say that I have attended nearly every meeting of the Browning Society from its inauguration; I have read every book, paper, and article upon Browning on which I could lay my hands, have gone over every line of the poet’s works again and again, have asked the assistance of literary friends in every difficulty, and have pegged away at the obscurities till they *seemed* (at any rate) to vanish. It is possible that a scientific education in some considerable degree assists a man who addresses himself to a task of this sort: a medical man does not like to be beaten by any difficulty which common perseverance can conquer; when one has spent days in tracing a nerve thread through the body to its origin, and through all its ramifications, a few visits to the library of the British Museum, or a few hours’ puzzling over the meaning of a difficult passage in a poem, do not deter him from solving a mystery, – and this is all I can claim. I have not shirked any obscurities; unlike some commentators of the old-fashioned sort, who in dealing with the Bible carefully told us that a score meant twenty,

but said nothing as to the meaning of the verse in Ezekiel's dream about the women who wept for Tammuz – but have honestly tried to help my readers in every case where they have a right to ask such aid. Probably I have overlooked many things which I ought to have explained. It is not less certain that some will say I have explained much that they already knew. I can only ask for a merciful judgment in either case. I am quite anxious to be set right in every particular in which I may be wrong, and shall be grateful for hints and suggestions concerning anything which is not clear. I have to thank Professor Sonnenschein for permission to publish his valuable Notes to *Sordello*, with several articles on the history of the Guelf and Ghibelline leaders: these are all indicated by the initial [S.] at the end of each note or article. I am grateful also to Mr. A. J. Campbell for permission to use his notes on Rabbi Ben Ezra. I have also to thank Dr. Furnivall, Miss Frances Power Cobbe, and the Very Rev. Canon Akers, M.A., for their kindness in helping me on certain difficult points which came within their lines of study. It would be impossible to read the works of commentators on Browning for the years which I have devoted to the task without imbibing the opinions and often insensibly adopting the phraseology of the authors: if in any case I have used the ideas and language of other writers without acknowledging them, I hope it will be credited to the infirmity of human nature, and not attributed to any wilful appropriation of other men's and women's literary valuables. As for the poet himself, I have largely used his actual words and

phrases in putting his ideas into plain prose; it has not always been possible, for reasons which every one will understand, to put quotation marks to every few words or portions of lines where this has occurred. When, therefore, a beautiful thought is expressed in appropriate language, it is most certainly not mine, but Browning's. My only aim has been to bring the Author of the vast body of literature to which this book is an introduction a little nearer to the English and American reading public; my own opinions and criticisms I have endeavoured as much as possible to suppress. In the words of Dr. Furnivall, "This is a business book," and simply as such I offer it to the public.

*Edward Berdoe.*

London, *November 28th, 1891.*

# BOOKS, ESSAYS, ETC., WHICH ARE ESPECIALLY USEFUL TO THE BROWNING STUDENT

## BIOGRAPHICAL WORKS

**Life of Robert Browning.** By Mrs. Sutherland Orr. London: 1891.

**Life of Robert Browning.** By William Sharp. London: 1890.  
On the whole, Mr. Sharp's Biography will be found the more useful for the student. It contains an excellent Bibliography by Mr. John P. Anderson of the British Museum, and a Chronological List of the Poet's Works.

**Robert Browning: Chief Poet of the Age.** By W. G. Kingsland. London: 1890. Excellent for beginners.

**Robert Browning: Personalia.** By Edmund Gosse. Boston: 1890.

## WORKS OF CRITICISM AND EXPOSITION

**Robert Browning: Essays and Thoughts.** By John T. Nettleship. London: 1868. Artistic and suggestive.

**Stories from Robert Browning.** By F. M. Holland; with Introduction by Mrs. Sutherland Orr. London: 1882.

**A Handbook to the Works of Robert Browning.** By Mrs. Sutherland Orr. London: 1885.

**An Introduction to the Study of Browning.** By Arthur Symons. London: 1886. Intensely sympathetic and appreciative.

**A Bibliography of Robert Browning, from 1833 to 1881.** By Dr. F. J. Furnivall. 1881.

**An Introduction to the Study of Robert Browning's Poetry.** By Hiram Corson. Boston: 1888.

**Studies in the Poetry of Robert Browning.** By James Fotheringham. London: 1887.

**Browning Guide Book.** By George Willis Cooke. Boston: 1891.

**Strafford: a Tragedy.** With Notes and Preface, by E. H. Hickey, and Introduction by S. R. Gardiner. London: 1884.

**Browning and the Christian Faith.** The Evidences of Christianity from Browning's Point of View. By Edward Berdoe. London: 1896.

**Browning as a Philosophical Religious Teacher.** By Prof. Henry Jones. Glasgow: 1891.

**Browning's Message to His Time: His Religion, Philosophy and Science.** By Edward Berdoe. London: 1890.

# THE BROWNING SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part I.** Vol. I., 1881-4, pp. 1-116 (*presented by Dr. Furnivall*). [1881-2.

1. A Reprint of Browning's Introductory Essay to the 25 spurious *Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, 1852: On the Objective and Subjective Poet, on the Relation of the Poet's Life to his Work; on Shelley, his Nature, Art, and Character.

2. A Bibliography of Robert Browning, 1833-81: Alphabetical and Chronological Lists of his Works, with Reprints of discontinued Prefaces, of *Ben Karshook's Wisdom*, partial collations of *Sordello* 1840, 1863, and *Paracelsus* 1835, 1863, etc., and with Trial-Lists of the Criticisms on Browning, Personal Notices of him, etc., by F. J. Furnivall.

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part II.** Vol. I., 1881-4, pp. 117-258. [1881-2.

3. Additions to the Bibliography of R. Browning, by F. J. Furnivall. 1. Browning's Acted Plays. 2. Fresh Entries of Criticisms on Browning's Works. 3. Fresh Personal Notices of Browning. 4. Notes on Browning's Poems and my Bibliography. 5. Short Index.

4. Mr. Kirkman's Address at the Inaugural Meeting of the Society, October 28th, 1881.

5. Mr. Sharpe's Paper on "*Pietro of Abano*" and "*Dramatic Idyls*, Series II."

6. Mr. Nettleship's *Analysis and Sketch of "Fifine at the Fair."*

7. Mr. Nettleship's Classification of Browning's Poems.

8. Mrs. Orr's Classification of Browning's Poems.

9. Mr. James Thomson's Notes on *The Genius of Robert Browning*.

10. Mr. Ernest Radford on *The Moorish Front to the Duomo of Florence*, in "*Luria*," I., pp. 122-132.

11. Mr. Ernest Radford on *The Original of "Ned Bratt's" Dramatic Lyrics*, I., pp. 107-43.

12. Mr. Sharpe's Analysis and Summary of *Fifine at the Fair*.

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part III.** Vol. I., 1881-4, pp. 259-380, with *Abstract*, pp. 1<sup>1</sup>-48<sup>2</sup>. [1882-3.

13. Mr. Bury on *Browning's Philosophy*.

14. Prof. Johnson on *Bishop Blougram*.

15. Prof. Corson on *Personality, and Art as its Vice-agent, as treated by Browning*.

16. Miss Beale on *The Religious Teaching of Browning*.

17. *A Short Account of the Abbé Vogler ("Abt Vogler")*. By Miss E. Marx.

18. Prof. Johnson on *Science and Art in Browning*.

The *Monthly Abstract* of such papers as have not been printed in full, and of the Discussions on all that have been discussed. Nos. I. – X.

**Illustrations to Browning's Poems. Part I.:** Photographs of

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<sup>1</sup> Out of print at present.

<sup>2</sup> Out of print at present.

(a) Andrea del Sarto's *Picture of Himself and his Wife*, in the Pitti Palace, Florence, which suggested Browning's poem *Andrea del Sarto*; (b) Fra Lippo Lippi's 'Coronation of the Virgin,' in the Accademia delle belle Arti, Florence (the painting described at the end of Browning's *Fra Lippo*); and (c) Guercino's 'Angel and Child,' at Fano (for *The Guardian Angel*); with an Introduction by Ernest Radford. [1882-3.]

**Illustrations to Browning's Poems. Part II.**<sup>3</sup> (d) A photo-engraving of Mr. C. Fairfax Murray's drawing of Andrea del Sarto's *Picture* named above. (e) A Woodburytype copy of Fredelle's Cabinet Photograph of Robert Browning in three sizes, to bind with the Society's *Illustrations*, and *Papers*, and Browning's *Poems*: presented by Mrs. Sutherland Orr. (f) Reductions in fcap. 8vo, to bind with Browning's *Poems*, of *d*, *b*, *c*, above, and of (g) the engraving of Guercino's *First Sketch* for his "Angel and Child." [1882-3.]

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part IV.** Vol. I., 1881-4, pp. 381-476, with *Abstract*, pp. 49<sup>4</sup>-84<sup>5</sup> and *Reports*, i-xvi. [1883-4.]

19. Mr. Nettleship on *Browning's Intuition, specially in regard to Music and the Plastic Arts*.

20. Prof. B. F. Westcott on *Some Points in Browning's View of Life*.

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<sup>3</sup> Out of print at present.

<sup>4</sup> Out of print at present.

<sup>5</sup> Out of print at present.

21. Miss E. D. West on *One Aspect of Browning's Villains*.

22. Mr. Revell on *Browning's Poems on God and Immortality as bearing on Life here*.

23. The Rev. H. J. Bulkeley on "*James Lee's Wife*."

24. Mrs. Turnbull on "*Abt Vogler*."

The *Monthly Abstract* of the Proceedings of Meetings Eleven to Eighteen.

*First and Second Reports* of the Committee (1881-2 and 1882-3).

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part V.** Vol. I., 1881-4, pp. 477-502, with *Abstract and Notes and Queries*, pp. 85<sup>6</sup>-153<sup>7</sup>, and *Report*, pp. xvii-xxiii. [1884-5.

25. Mr. W. A. Raleigh on *Some Prominent Points in Browning's Teaching*.

26. Mr. J. Cotter Morison on "*Caliban on Setebos*," with some *Notes on Browning's Subtlety and Humour*.

27. Mrs. Turnbull on "*In a Balcony*."

The *Monthly Abstract* of the Proceedings of Meetings Nineteen to Twenty-six, including "Scraps" contributed by Members.

*Third Report of the Committee*, 1883-4.

**Illustration, Part III.** Presented by Sir F. Leighton, P.R.A., etc., Vice-President of the Browning Society. A Woodburytype Engraving of Sir Frederick Leighton's picture (in the possession

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<sup>6</sup> Out of print at present.

<sup>7</sup> Out of print at present.

of Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Bart., M.P.) of “Hercules contending with Death for the Body of Alkestis” (*Balaustion’s Adventure*).

[**Part VI.** of the Browning Society’s Papers, a Second Supplement to Parts I. and II., with illustrations, is in the press.]

**The Browning Society’s Papers, Part VII.** Vol. II., 1885-90, (being Part I. of Vol. II.), pp. 1-54, with *Abstract* and *Notes and Queries*, 1<sup>8</sup>-88<sup>9</sup>, i. – viii., and Appendix, 1-16. [1885-6.

28. Mr. Arthur Symons’ Paper, *Is Browning Dramatic?*

29. Prof. E. Johnson on “*Mr. Sludge the Medium.*”

30. Dr. Berdoe on *Browning as a Scientific Poet.*

The *Monthly Abstract* of Proceedings of Meetings Twenty-seven to Thirty-three; *Notes and Queries, etc.*; *Fourth Annual Report*; Programme of the Annual Entertainment at Prince’s Hall, etc.

**The Browning Society’s Papers, Part VIII.** Vol. II., 1885-90, pp. 55-146, with *Abstract* and *Notes and Queries*, 89<sup>10</sup>-164<sup>11</sup>, and Report i-vii. [1886-7.

31. Mr. J. T. Nettleship on *The Development of Browning’s Genius in his Capacity as Poet or Maker.*

32. Mr. J. B. Bury on “*Aristophanes’ Apology.*”

33. Mr. Outram on *The Avowal of Valence (Colombe’s*

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<sup>8</sup> Out of print at present.

<sup>9</sup> Out of print at present.

<sup>10</sup> Out of print at present.

<sup>11</sup> Out of print at present.

*Birthday*).

34. Mr. Albert Fleming on "*Andrea del Sarto*."

35. Mr. Howard S. Pearson on *Browning as a Landscape Painter*.

36. Rev. H. J. Bulkeley on *The Reasonable Rhythm of some of Mr. Browning's Poems*.

37. Prof. C. H. Herford on "*Hohenstiel-Schwangau*."

Abstracts of all Meetings held, *Notes and Queries, Fifth Annual Report, etc.*

**Reprint of the First Edition of Browning's *Pauline*.**  
[1886-7.]

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part IX.** (being Part III. of Vol. II.). [1887-8.]

38. Dr. Todhunter on *The Performance of "Strafford."*

39. Mrs. Glazebrook on "*A Death in the Desert*."

40. Dr. Furnivall on *A Grammatical Analysis of "O Lyric Love."*

41. Mr. Arthur Symons on "*Parleyings with Certain People*."

42. Miss Helen Ormerod on *The Musical Poems of Browning*.

Abstracts of all Meetings held, *Notes and Queries, Sixth Annual Report, etc.*

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part X.** (being Part IV. of Vol. II.). [1888-9.]

43. Mr. Revell on *Browning's Views of Life*.

44. Dr. Berdoe on *Browning's Estimate of Life*.

45. Prof. Barnett on *Browning's Jews and Shakespeare's Jew*.

46. Miss Helen Ormerod on *Abt Vogler, the Man*.

47. Miss C. M. Whitehead on *Browning as a Teacher of the Nineteenth Century*.

48. Miss Stoddart on "*Saul*."

Abstracts of all Meetings held, *Notes and Queries, Seventh Annual Report, etc.*

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part XI.** (being Part V. of Vol. II.). [1889-90.]

49. Dr. Berdoe on *Paracelsus: the Reformer of Medicine*.

50. Miss Helen Ormerod on *Andrea del Sarto and Abt Vogler*.

51. Rev. W. Robertson on "*La Saisiaz*."

52. Mr. J. B. Oldham on *The Difficulties and Obscurities encountered in a Study of Browning's Poems*.

53. Mr. J. King, Jun., on "*Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*."

54. Mrs. Alexander Ireland on "*A Toccata of Galuppi's*."

55. Mrs. Glazebrook on "*Numphreptos and Browning's Women*."

56. Rev. J. J. G. Graham on *The Wife-love and Friend-love of Robert Browning*.

Abstracts of all Meetings held, *Notes and Queries, Eighth Annual Report, etc.*

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part XII.** (being Part I. of Vol. III.). [1890-91.]

57. Prof. Alexander's *Analysis of "Sordello"*.

58. Dr. Furnivall on *Robert Browning's Ancestors*.

59. Mrs. Ireland on *Browning's Treatment of Parenthood*.

60. Mr. Sagar on *The Line-numbering, etc.*, in "*The Ring and the Book.*"

61. Mr. Revell on *The Value of Browning's Work* (Part I.).

62. Mr. W. M. Rossetti on "*Taurello Salinguerra.*"

List of Some of the Periodicals in which Notices of Robert Browning have appeared since his Death.

Abstracts of all Meetings held, *Notes and Queries, Ninth Annual Report, etc.*

**The Browning Society's Papers, Part XIII.** (being Part II. of Vol. III., 1890-93). [1891-92.

63. Mrs. A. Ireland on "*Christina and Monaldeschi.*"

64. Jón Stefánsson, M.A., on *How Browning Strikes a Scandinavian.*

65. W. F. Revell, Esq., on *Browning's Work in Relation to Life* (Part II.).

66. J. B. Oldham, B.A., on *Browning's Dramatic Method in Narrative.*

67. R. G. Moulton, M.A., on Browning's "*Balaustion*" a beautiful Perversion of Euripides' "*Alcestis.*"

Abstracts of all Meetings held, *Notes and Queries, Tenth Annual Report, etc.*

# CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF WORKS, Etc

1812. Robert Browning born at Camberwell on May 7th. He “went to the Rev. Thos. Ready’s school at Peckham till he was near fourteen, then had a private tutor at home, and attended some lectures at the London University, now University College, London” (Dr. Furnivall).

1833. *Pauline* published.

1834. Browning travelled in Russia.

1835. *Paracelsus* published.

1836. *Porphyria*, *Johannes Agricola*, *The King*, and the lines “Still ailing wind” in *James Lee* published by Mr. W. J. Fox in his magazine *The Monthly Repository*.

1837. *Strafford* published.

1840. *Sordello* published.

1841-6. *Bells and Pomegranates* appeared.

1841. *Pippa Passes* published.

1842. *King Victor and King Charles* published. *Dramatic Lyrics* published.

1843. *The Return of the Druses* published. *A Blot in the Scutcheon* published.

1844. *Colombe’s Birthday* published.

1845. *The Tomb at St. Praxed’s* published in *Hood’s Magazine*,

March. *The Flight of the Duchess* published. *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics* published.

1846. *Lucia* published. *A Soul's Tragedy* published. Robert Browning married (34), Sept. 12th, at St. Mary-le-bone parish church our greatest poetess, Elizabeth Barrett, aged 37 (Dr. Furnivall).

1847. The Brownings resident in Florence.

1849. March 9th, Robert Wiedemann Barrett Browning born. *Browning's Poems* published in two vols.

1850. *Christmas-Eve and Easter-Day* published.

1852. Browning writes the Introductory Essay to the Shelley (spurious) Letters.

1855. *Men and Women* published. The Brownings travel to Normandy.

1861. June 28th, Mrs. Browning died at Casa Guidi.

1863. *The Poetical Works* of Robert Browning published in three vols.

1864. *Dramatis Personæ* published.

1868. *The Poetical Works* published in six vols.

1868-9. *The Ring and the Book* published.

1871. *Hervé Riel* published in the *Cornhill Magazine*. *Balaustion's Adventure* published. *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau* published.

1872. *Fifine at the Fair* published.

1873. *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country* published.

1875. *Aristophanes' Apology* published. *The Inn Album*

published.

1876. *Pacchiarotto* published.

1877. *The Agamemnon of Æschylus* published.

1878. *La Saisiaz* published. *The Two Poets of Croisic* published.

1879. *Dramatic Idyls* published.

1880. *Dramatic Idyls (Second Series)* published.

1881. The Browning Society inaugurated, Oct. 28th.

1883. *Jocoseria* published.

1884. *Ferishtah's Fancies* published.

1887. *Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day* published.

1889. *Asolando: Fancies and Facts*, published. Robert Browning died in Venice, December 12th; buried in Westminster Abbey, December 31st.

# BROWNING CYCLOPÆDIA

**Abano**, a town of Northern Italy, 6 miles S.W. of Padua, the birthplace of Pietro d'Abano (*q. v.*).

**Abate, Paolo** (or Paul), brother of Count Guido Franceschini. He was a priest residing in Rome. (*Ring and the Book.*)

**Abbas I.**, surnamed The Great. See [Shah Abbas](#).

**Abd-el-Kader**, a celebrated Algerian warrior, born in 1807, who in 1831 led the combined tribes in their attempt to resist the progress of the French in Algeria. He surrendered to the French in 1847, and was set at liberty by Louis Napoleon in 1852. (*Through the Metidja to Abd-el-Kader.*)

**Abt Vogler.** [The Man.] (*Dramatis Personæ*, 1864.) George Joseph Vogler, usually known as Abbé Vogler, or, as Mr. Browning has called him, Abt Vogler, was an organist and composer, and was born at Würzburg, June 15th, 1749. He was educated for the Church from his very early years, as is the custom with Catholics; but every opportunity was taken to develop his musical talents, which were so marked that at ten years old he could play the organ and the violin well. In 1769 he studied at Bamberg, removing thence in 1771 to Mannheim. In 1773 he was ordained priest in Rome, and was admitted to the famous Academy of Arcadia, was made a Knight of the Golden Spur, and was appointed protonotary and chamberlain to the Pope. He returned to Mannheim in 1775, and opened a School

of Music. He published several works on music, composition, and the art of forming the voice. He was made chaplain and *Kapellmeister* at Mannheim, and about this time composed a *Miserere*. In 1779 Vogler went to Munich. In 1780 he composed an opera, *The Merchant of Smyrna*, a ballet, and a melodrama. In 1781 his opera *Albert III.* was produced at the Court Theatre of Munich. As it was not very favourably received, he resigned his posts of chaplain and choirmaster. He was severely criticised by German musical critics, and Mozart spoke of him with much bitterness. Having thus failed in his own country, he went to Paris, and in 1783 brought out his comic opera, *La Kermesse*. It was so great a failure that it was not possible to conclude the performance. He then travelled in Spain, Greece, and the East. In 1786 he returned to Europe, and went to Sweden, and was appointed *Kapellmeister* to the King. At Stockholm he founded his second School of Music, and became famous by his performances on an instrument which he had invented, called the "Orchestrion." This is described by Mr. G. Grove as a very compact organ, in which four keyboards of five octaves each, and a pedal board of thirty-six keys, with swell complete, were packed into a cube of nine feet. In 1789 Vogler performed without success at Amsterdam. He then went with his organ to London, and gave a series of concerts at the Pantheon in January 1790. These proved eminently successful: Vogler realised over £1200, and made a name as an organist. He seems to have excelled in pedal playing, but it is not true that pedals were

unknown in England until the Abbé introduced them. “His most popular pieces,” says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, “were a fugue on themes from the ‘Hallelujah Chorus,’ composed after a visit to the Handel festival at Westminster Abbey, and on ‘A Musical Picture for the Organ,’ by Knecht, containing the imitation of a storm. In 1790 Vogler returned to Germany, and met with the most brilliant receptions at Coblenz and Frankfort, and at Esslingen was presented with the ‘wine of honour’ reserved usually for royal personages. At Mannheim, in 1791, his opera *Castor and Pollux* was performed, and became very popular. We find him henceforward travelling all over Europe. At Berlin he performed in 1800, at Vienna in 1804, and at Munich in 1806. Next year we find him at Darmstadt, accepting by the invitation of the Grand Duke Louis I. the post of *Kapellmeister*. He opened his third school of music at Darmstadt, one of his pupils being Weber, another Meyerbeer, a third Gänsbacher. The affection of these three young students for their master was ‘unbounded.’ He was indefatigable in the pursuit of his art to the last, genial, kind and pleasant to all; he lived for music, and died in harness, of apoplexy, at Darmstadt, May 6th, 1814.”

[The Poem.] The musician has been extemporising on his organ, and as the performance in its beauty and completeness impresses his mind with wonderful and mysterious imagery, he wishes it could be permanent. He has created something, but it has vanished. He compares it to a palace built of sweet sounds, such a structure as angels or demons might have reared for

Solomon, a magic building wherein to lodge some loved princess, a palace more beautiful than anything which human architect could plan or power of man construct. His music structure has been real to him, it took shape in his brain, it was his creation: surely, somewhere, somehow, it might be permanent. It was too beautiful, too perfect to be lost. Only the evil perishes, only good is permanent; and this music was so true, so good, so beautiful, it could not be that it was lost, as false, bad, ugly things are lost! But Vogler was but an extemporiser, and such musicians cannot give permanence to their performances. He has reached a state almost of ecstasy, and the spiritual has asserted its power over the material, raising the soul to heaven and bringing down heaven to earth. In the words of Milton, he had become —

“All ear,  
And took in strains that might create a soul  
Under the ribs of death,”

and in this heavenly rapture he saw strange presences, the forms of the better to come, or “the wonderful Dead who have passed through the body and gone.” The other arts are inferior to music, they are more human, more material than music, — “here is the finger of God.” And this was all to go — “Never to be again!” This reflection starts the poet on a familiar train of thought — the permanence of good, the impermanence, the nullity of evil. The Cabbalists taught that evil was only the shadow of the Light; Maimonides, Spinoza,

Hegel and Emerson taught the doctrine which Mr. Browning here inculcates. Leibnitz speaks of “evil as a mere set-off to the good in the world, which it increases by contrast, and at other times reduces moral to metaphysical evil by giving it a merely negative existence.” “God,” argued Aquinas (*Sum. Theol.*, i., § 49), “created everything that exists, but Sin was *nothing*; so God was not the Author of it.” So, Augustine and Peter Lombard maintained likewise the negative nature of moral evil: —

“Evil is more frail than nonentity.”

(Proclus, *De Prov.*, in Cory’s *Fragm.*)

“Let no one therefore say that there are precedaneous productive principles of evil in the nature of intellectual paradigms of evil in the same manner as there are of good, or that there is a malefic soul or an evil-producing cause in the gods, nor let him introduce sedition or eternal war against the First God” (Proclus, *Six Books*, trans. Thomas Taylor, B. i., c. 27). In heaven, then, we are to find “the perfect round,” “the broken arcs” are all we can discover here. Rising in the tenth stanza to the highest stature of the philosophical truth, the poet proclaims his faith in the existence of a home of pure ideals. The harmony of a few bars of music on earth suggests the eternal harmonies of the Author of order; the rays of goodness which brighten our path here suggest a Sun of Righteousness from which they emanate. The lover and the bard send up to

God their feeble aspirations after the beautiful and the true, and these aspirations are stored in His treasury. Failure? It is but the pause in the music, the discords that set off the harmony. To the musician this is not something to be reasoned about mathematically; it is knowledge, it is a revelation which, however informing and consoling while it lasts, must not too long divert a man from the common things of life; patient to bear and suffer because strengthened by the beautiful vision of the Mount of Transfiguration, proud that he has been permitted to have part and lot with such high matters, he can solemnly acquiesce in the common round and daily task. He feels for the common chord, descends the mount, gliding by semitones, glancing back at the heights he is leaving, till at last, finding his true resting-place in the C Major of this life, soothed and sweetly lulled by the heavenly harmonies, he falls asleep. The Esoteric system of the Cabbalah was largely the outcome of Neo-Platonism and Gnosticism, and from these have sprung the theosophy of Meister Eckhart and Jacob Boehme. It is certain that Mr. Browning was a student of the latter "theosophist" *par excellence*. In his poem *Transcendentalism* he refers to the philosopher by name, and there are evidences that the poet's mind was deeply tintured with his ideas. The influence of Paracelsus on Boehme's mind is conspicuous in his works, and the sympathy with that great medical reformer which the poem of *Paracelsus* betrays on every page was no doubt largely due to Boehme's teaching. The curious blending of theosophy and science which

is found in the poem of *Paracelsus* is not a less faithful picture of Mr. Browning's philosophical system than of that of his hero. Professor Andrew Seth, in the article on theosophy in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, thus expounds Boehme's speculation on evil: it turns "upon the necessity of reconciling the existence and the might of evil with the existence of an all-embracing and all-powerful God... He faces the difficulty boldly – he insists on the necessity of the Nay to the Yea, of the negative to the positive." Eckhart seems to have largely influenced Boehme. We have in this poem what has been aptly called "the richest, deepest, fullest poem on music in the language." (Symons.) Mr. Browning was a thorough musician himself, and no poet ever wrote what the musician felt till he penned the wonderful music-poems *Abt Vogler*, *Master Hugues of Saxe Gotha* and *A Toccata of Galuppi's*. The comparison between music and architecture is as old as it is beautiful. Amphion built the walls of Thebes to the sound of his lyre – fitting the stones together by the power of his music, and "Ilion's towers," they say, "rose with life to Apollo's song." The "Keeley Motor" was an attempt in this direction. Coleridge, too, in *Kubla Khan*, with "music loud and long would build that dome in air." In the May 1891 number of the *Century Magazine* there is a very curious and a very interesting account by Mrs. Watts Hughes of certain "Voice-figures" which have lately excited so much interest in scientific and musical circles. "By a simple method figures of sounds are produced which remain permanent. On a thin indiarubber membrane, stretched across the bottom of

a tube of sufficient diameter for the purpose, is poured a small quantity of water or some denser liquid, such as glycerine; and into this liquid are sprinkled a few grains of some ordinary solid pigment. A note of music is then sung down the tube by Mrs. Watts Hughes, and immediately the atoms of suspended pigment arrange themselves in a definite form, many of the forms bearing a curious resemblance to some of the most beautiful objects in Nature – flowers, shells, or trees. After the note has ceased to sound the forms remain, and the pictorial representations given in the *Century* show how wonderfully accurate is the lovely mimicry of the image-making music.” (*Spectator*, May 16th, 1891.) The thought of some soul of permanence behind the transience of music, provided the motive of Adelaide Procter’s *Lost Chord*. In the *Idylls of the King* Lord Tennyson says —

“The city is built  
To music, therefore never built at all,  
And therefore built for ever.”

Cardinal Newman, too, as the writer in the *Spectator* points out, expresses the same thought in his Oxford sermon, “The Theory of Development in Christian Doctrine.” The preacher said: “Take another example of an outward and earthly form of economy, under which great wonders unknown seem to be typified – I mean musical sounds, as they are exhibited most perfectly in instrumental harmony. There are seven notes in the scale: make them fourteen; yet what a slender outfit for

so vast an enterprise! What science brings so much out of so little? Out of what poor elements does some great master create his new world! Shall we say that all this exuberant inventiveness is a mere ingenuity or trick of art, like some fashion of the day, without reality, without meaning?.. Is it possible that inexhaustible evolution and disposition of notes, so rich yet so simple, so intricate yet so regulated, so various yet so majestic, should be a mere sound which is gone and perishes? Can it be that those mysterious stirrings of heart, and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence, should be wrought in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends in itself? It is not so! It cannot be.”

Notes. – Stanza I. “*Solomon willed.*” Jewish legend gave Solomon sovereignty over the demons and a lordship over the powers of Nature. In the Moslem East these fables have found a resting-place in much of its literature, from the Koran onwards. Solomon was thought to have owed his power over the spiritual world to the possession of a seal on which the “most great name of God was engraved” (see Lane, *Arabian Nights*, Introd., note 21, and chap. i., note 15). In Eastern philosophy, the “Upādāna” or the intense desire produces WILL, and it is the *will* which develops *force*, and the latter generates *matter*, or an object having form (see *Isis Unveiled*, Blavatsky, vol. ii., p. 320). “*Pile him a palace.*” Goethe called architecture “petrified music.” “*The ineffable Name*”: the unspeakable name of God. Jehovah

is the European transcription of the sacred tetragrammaton יהוה. The later Jews substituted the word Adonai in reading the ineffable Name in their law and prayers. Mysterious names of the Deity are common in other religions than the Jewish. In the Egyptian *Funeral Ritual*, and in a hymn of the Soul, the Word and the Name are referred to in connection with hidden secrets. The Jewish enemies of Christ said that the miracles were wrought by the power of the ineffable Name, which had been stolen from the Sanctuary. (See *Isis Unveiled*, vol. ii, p. 387.) – Stanza III. *Rampired*: an old form of ramparted. “*The Illumination of Rome’s Dome*.” One of the great sights of Rome used to be the illumination of the dome of St. Peter’s on great festivals, such as that of Easter. Since the occupation of Rome by the Italian Government such spectacles, if not wholly discontinued, have been shorn of most of their splendour. – Stanza IV. “*No more near nor far*.” Hegel says that “Music frees us from the phenomena of time and space,” and shows that they are not essentials, but accidents of our condition here. – Stanza V. “*Protoplast*.” The thing first formed, as a copy to be imitated. – Stanza VII. “*That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star*.” “A star is perfect and beautiful, and rays of light come from it.” Stanza XII. “*Common chord*.” A chord consisting of the fundamental tone with its third and fifth. “*Blunt it into a ninth*.” A ninth is (a) An interval containing an octave and a second; (b) a chord consisting of the common chord, with the eighth advanced one note. “*C Major of this life*.” Miss Helen

Ormerod, in a paper read to the Browning Society of London, November 30th, 1888, has explained these musical terms and expressions. "C Major is what may be called the natural scale, having no sharps or flats in its signature. A Minor, with A (a third below C) for its keynote, has the same signature, but sharps are introduced for the formation of correct intervals. Pauer says that minor keys are chosen for expressing 'intense seriousness, soft melancholy, longing, sadness, and passionate grief'; whilst major keys with sharps and flats in their signatures are said to have distinctive qualities; – perhaps Browning chose C major for the key, as the one most allied to matters of everyday life, including rest and sleep. The common chord, as it is called, the keynote with its third and fifth, contains the rudiments of all music."

**Adam, Lilith, and Eve** (*Jocoseria*, 1883). The Talmudists, in their fanciful commentaries on the Old Testament, say that Adam had a wife before he married Eve, who was called Lilith; she was the mother of demons, and flew away from Adam, and the Lord then created Eve from one of his ribs. Lilith had been formed of clay, and was sensual and disobedient; the more spiritual Eve became his saviour from the snares of his first wife. Mr. Browning in this poem merely uses the names, and makes no reference to the Talmudic or Gnostic legends connected with them. Under the terror inspired by a thunderstorm, two women begin a confession of which they make light when the danger has passed away. The man says he saw through the joke, and the episode was over. It is a powerful and suggestive story of

falsehood, fear, and a forgiveness too readily accorded by a man who makes a joke of guilt when he has lost nothing by it.

**Adelaide, The Tuscan** (*Sordello*), was the second wife of Eccelino da Romano, of the party of the Ghibellines.

**Admetus** (*Balaustion's Adventure*). King of Pheræ, in Thessaly. Apollo tended his flocks for one year, and obtained the favour that Admetus should never die if another person could be found to lay down his life for him: his wife, Alcestis, in consequence cheerfully devoted herself to death for him.

**Æschylus.** The Greek tragic poet who wrote the *Agamemnon* translated by Mr. Browning. Æschylus was born in the year 525 before Christ, at Eleusis, a town of Attica opposite the island of Salamis. When thirty-five years old Æschylus not only fought at Marathon, but distinguished himself for his valour. He was fifty-three years old when he gained the prize at Athens, B.C. 472, for his trilogy or set of three connected plays. He wrote some seventy pieces, but only seven have come down to our times: they are *Prometheus Chained*, *The Suppliants*, *The Seven Chiefs against Thebes*, *Agamemnon*, *The Choëphoræ*, *The Furies*, and *The Persians*. The *Agamemnon*, which Mr. Browning has translated, is one of the plays of the Oresteia, the *Choëphoræ* and the *Eumenides* or *Furies* completing the trilogy. The poet died at Gela, in Sicily, B.C. 456. Æschylus both in order of time and power was the first of the three great tragic poets of ancient Greece. Euripides and Sophocles were the other two.

**After.** See [Before and After](#).

**Agamemnon of Æschylus, The.** A translation published in London, 1877. The scene of the play is laid by Æschylus at Argos, before the palace of Agamemnon, Mycenæ, however, really being his seat. Agamemnon was a son of Atreus according to Homer, and was the brother of Menelaus. In a later account he is described as the son of Pleisthenes, who was the son of Atreus. He was king over Argolis, Corinth, Achaia, and many islands. He married Clytemnestra, daughter of Tyndarus, king of Sparta, by whom he had three daughters Chrysothemis, Iphigenia and Electra, and one son Orestes. When Helen was carried off by Paris, Agamemnon was chosen to be commander-in-chief of the expedition sent against Troy by the Greeks, as he was the mightiest prince in Greece. He contributed one hundred ships manned with warriors, besides lending sixty more to the Arcadians. The fleet being detained at Aulis by a storm, it was declared that Agamemnon had offended Diana by slaying a deer sacred to her, and by boasting that he was a better hunter than the goddess; and he was compelled to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia to appease her anger. Diana is said by some to have accepted a stag in her place. Homer describes Agamemnon as one of the bravest warriors before Troy, but having received Chryseis, the daughter of Chryses, priest of Apollo, as a prize of war, he arrogantly refused to allow her father to ransom her. This brought a plague on the Grecian host, and their ruin was almost completed by his carrying off Briseis, who was the prize of Achilles – who refused in consequence to fight, remaining

sulking in his tent. After the fall of Troy the beautiful princess Cassandra fell to Agamemnon as his share of the spoils. She was endowed with the gift of prophecy, and warned him not to return home. The warning, however, was disregarded, although he was assured that his wife would put him to death. During the absence of Agamemnon Clytemnestra had formed an adulterous connection with Ægisthus, the son of Thyestes and Pelopia; and when he returned, the watchman having announced his approach to his palace, Clytemnestra killed Cassandra, and her lover murdered Agamemnon and his comrades. The tragic poets, however, make Clytemnestra throw a net over her husband while he was in his bath, and kill him with the assistance of Ægisthus, in revenge for the sacrifice of her daughter Iphigenia. In the introduction to the translation of the *Agamemnon* in *Morley's Universal Library* we have an excellent description of the great play. "In this tragedy the reader will find the strongest traces of the genius of Æschylus, and the most distinguishing proofs of his skill. Great in his conceptions, bold and daring in his metaphors, strong in his passion, he here touches the heart with uncommon emotions. The odes are particularly sublime, and the oracular spirit that breathes through them adds a wonderful elevation and dignity to them. Short as the part of Agamemnon is, the poet has the address to throw such an amiable dignity around him that we soon become interested in his favour, and are predisposed to lament his fate. The character of Clytemnestra is finely marked – a high-spirited, artful, close, determined, dangerous woman.

But the poet has nowhere exerted such efforts of his genius as in the scene where Cassandra appears: as a prophetess, she gives every mark of the divine inspiration, from the dark and distant hint, through all the noble imagery of the prophetic enthusiasm; till, as the catastrophe advances, she more and more plainly declares it; as a suffering princess, her grief is plaintive, lively, and piercing; yet she goes to meet her death, which she clearly foretells, with a firmness worthy the daughter of Priam and the sister of Hector; nothing can be more animated or more interesting than this scene. The conduct of the poet through this play is exquisitely judicious: every scene gives us some obscure hint or ominous presage, enough to keep our attention always raised, and to prepare us for the event; even the studied caution of Clytemnestra is finely managed to produce that effect; whilst the secrecy with which she conducts her design keeps us in suspense, and prevents a discovery till we hear the dying groans of her murdered husband." As Mr. Browning announces in his preface to his translation of the tragedy, he has aimed at being literal at every cost, and has everywhere reproduced the peculiarities of the original. He has also made an attempt to reproduce the Greek spelling in English, which has made the poem more difficult than some other translations to the non-classical reader. We have ample recompense for this peculiarity by the way in which he has imbibed the spirit of his author, and so faithfully reproduced, not alone his phraseology, but his mind. It required a rugged poet to interpret for us correctly the ruggedness of an Æschylus. Line

for line and word for word we have the tragedy in English as the Greeks had it in their own tongue. If there are obscurities, we must not in the present instance blame Mr. Browning: a reference to the original, so authorities tell us, will prove that Greek poets were at times obscure. The *Agamemnon* is part of the Oresteian Trilogy or group of three plays; this trilogy of Æschylus is our only example extant, and it is necessary to say something of the other parts. Atreus, the son of Pelops, was king of Mycenæ. By his wife Ærope were born to him Pleisthenes, Menelaus, and Agamemnon. Thyestes, the brother of Atreus, had followed him to Argos, and there seduced his wife, by whom he had two, or according to some, three children. Thyestes was banished from court on account of this, but was soon afterwards recalled by his brother that he might be revenged upon him. He prepared a banquet where Thyestes was served with the flesh of the children who were the offspring of his incestuous connection with his sister-in-law the queen. When the feast was concluded, the heads of the murdered children were produced, that Thyestes might see of what he had been partaking. It was fabled that the sun in horror shrank back in his course at the horrible sight. Thyestes fled. The crime brought the most terrible evils upon the family of which Agamemnon was a member. When this hero was murdered by his wife and her paramour, young Orestes was saved from his mother's dagger by his sister Electra. When he reached the years of manhood, he visited his ancestral home, and assassinated both his mother and her lover Ægisthus. In consequence of this he was

tormented by the Furies, and he exiled himself to Athens, where Apollo purified him. The murder of Clytemnestra by her son is described in the second play of the Trilogy, called the *Choëphora* or the *Libation Pourers*. *The Furies* is the title of the third and concluding play of the Trilogy. (For an account of Æschylus see [p. 8.](#))

Notes. – [N.B. The references here are to the pages of the poem in the last edition of the complete works in sixteen vols.] – P. 269, *Atreidai*, a patronymic given by Homer to Agamemnon and Menelaus, as being the sons of Atreus; *Troia*, the capital of Troas == Troy. p. 270, *Ilion*, a citadel of Troy; *Menelaos*, a king of Sparta, brother of Agamemnon. p. 271, *Argives*, the inhabitants of Argos and surrounding country; *Alexandros*, the name of Paris in the Iliad: *Atreus*, son of Pelops, was king of Mycenæ; *Danaoi*, a name given to the people of Argos and to all the Greeks; *Troes* == Trojans. p. 272, *Tundareus*, king of Lacedæmon, who married Leda; *Klutaimnestra* == Clytemnestra, daughter of Tyndarus by Leda. p. 273, *Teukris land*, the land of the Trojans – from Teucer, their king; “*Achaians’ two-throned empery*”: the brother kings Agamemnon and Menelaos. p. 274, *Linos*, the personification of a dirge or lamentation; *Priamos*, the last king of Troy, made prisoner by Hercules when he took the city. p. 275, *Iciös Paian*, an epithet of Apollo; *Kalchas*, a soothsayer who accompanied the Greeks to Troy. p. 277, *Kalchis*, the chief city of Eubœa, founded by an Athenian colony; *Aulis*, a town of Bœotia, near Kalchis;

*Strumon*, a river which separates Thrace from Macedonia. p. 282, *Hephaistos*, the god of fire, according to Homer the son of Zeus and Hera. The Romans called the Greek Hephaistos Vulcan, though Vulcan was an Italian deity. The news of the fall of Troy was brought to Mycenæ by means of beacon fires, so fire was the messenger. *Ida* == Mount Ida; *of Lemnos*, an island in the Ægean Sea. p. 283, *Athoan*, of Mount Athos; *Makistos* == Macistos, a city of Tryphylia; *Euripos*, a narrow strait separating Eubœa from Bœotia; *Messapios*, a name of Bœotia; *Asopos*, a river of Thessaly; *Mount Kitharion*, sacred to the Muses and Jupiter. Hercules killed the great lion there; *Mount Aigiplanktos* was in Megaris; *Strait Saronic*: Saronicus Sinus was a bay of the Ægean Sea; *Mount Arachnaios*, in Argolis. p. 286, *Ate*, the goddess of revenge; *Ares*, the Greek name of the war-god Mars. p. 288, *Aphrodite*, a name of Venus. p. 290, *Erinues* == the Furies. p. 292, *Puthian* == Delphic; *Skamandros*, a river of Troas. p. 293, *Priamidai*, the patronymic of the descendants of Priam. p. 300, *Threkian breezes* == Thracian breezes; *Aigaian Sea*, the Ægean Sea; *Achaian*, pertaining to Achaia, in Greece. p. 301, *Meneleos*, son of Atreus, brother to Agamemnon and husband of Helen; *water-Haides*, the engulfing sea. p. 302, *Zephyros*, the west wind; *Simois*, a river in Troas which rises in Mount Ida and falls into the Xanthus. p. 304, *Erinus*, an avenging deity. p. 307, *the Argeian monster* == the company of Argives concealed in the wooden horse; *Pleiads*, a name given to seven of the daughters of Atlas by Pleione, one of the Oceanides.

They became a constellation in the heavens after death. p. 309, “*triple-bodied Geruon the Second*,” Geryon, king of the Balearic Isles, fabled to have three bodies and three heads: Hercules slew him; *Strophios the Phokian*, at whose house Orestes was brought up with Pylades son of Strophios. p. 316, *Kassandra*, daughter of Priam, slain by Clytemnestra. p. 317, “*Alkmene’s child*” – Hercules was the son of Alkmene. p. 319, *Ototoi*– alas!; *Loxias*, a surname of Apollo. p. 322, *papai, papai* == O strange! wonderful! p. 324, *Itus*, or *Itys*, son of Tereus, killed by his mother. p. 325, “*Orthian style*,” in a shrill tone. p. 332, *Lukeion Apollon*– Lyceus was a surname of Apollo. p. 335, *Surian* == Syrian. p. 343, *Chruseids*, the patronymic of the descendants of Astynome, the daughter of Chryses. p. 348, *Iphigeneia*, daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra; her father offered to sacrifice her to appease the wrath of Diana. p. 350, *The Daimon of the Pleisthenidai*, the genius of Agamemnon’s family. p. 351, *Thuestes*, son of Pelops, brother of Atreus; *Pelopidai*, descendants of Pelops, son of Tantalus.

**Agricola, Johannes**, (*Johannes Agricola in Meditation*,) was one of the foremost of the German Reformers. He was born at Eisleben, April 20th, 1492. He met Luther whilst a student at Wittenberg, and became attached to him, accompanying him to the Leipsic Assembly of Divines, where he acted as recording secretary. He established the reformed religion at Frankfort. In 1536 he was called to fill a professorial chair at Wittenberg. Here he first taught the views which Luther termed *Antinomian*. He

held that Christians were entirely free from the Divine law, being under the Gospel alone. He denied that Christians were under any obligations to keep the ten commandments. Mr. Browning has quite accurately, though unsparingly, exposed his impious teaching in his poem *Johannes Agricola in Meditation* (q. v.).

**Agrippa, Henry Cornelius**, the mediæval doctor and magician, was born at Cologne in 1486, and was educated at the university of that city. He was denounced in 1509 by the monks, who called him an “impious cabalist”; in 1531 he published his treatise *De Occulta Philosophia*, written by the advice and with the assistance of the Abbot Trithemius of Wurzburg, the preceptor of Paracelsus. In 1510 he came to London on a diplomatic mission, and was the guest of Dean Colet at Stepney. He afterwards fought at the battle of Ravenna. In 1511 he attended the schismatic council of Pisa as a theologian. In 1515 he lectured at the university of Pavia. We afterwards find him at Metz, Geneva, and Freiburg, where he practised as a physician. In 1529 he was appointed historiographer to Charles V. He died at Grenoble in 1535. A man of such vast and varied learning could hardly in those days have avoided being accused of diabolical practices and heretical opinions; the only wonder is that he was not burned alive for his scientific attainments, which were looked upon as dangerous in the highest degree. (*Pauline* in the Latin prefatory note.)

“**A King lived long ago.**” Song in *Pippa Passes*, which is sung by the girl as she passes the house of Luigi. Mr. Browning

first published the song in the *Monthly Repository*, in 1835 (vol ix., N.S., pp. 707-8), it was reprinted with added lines, and was revised throughout, in *Pippa Passes* 1841.

**Alberic** (*Sordello*). Son of Eccelino the monk, described in the poem as “many-muscled, big-boned Alberic.”

**Alcestis** (*Balaustion's Adventure*), the daughter of Pelias, was the wife of Admetus, son of Pheres, who was king of Pheræ in Thessaly. Apollo, when – for an offence against Jupiter – he was banished from heaven, had been kindly received by Pheres, and had obtained from the Fates a promise that his benefactor should never die if he could find another person willing to lay down his life for him. The story how this promise was obtained is set forth with great dramatic force in Mr. Browning's *Apollo and the Fates* (q. v.). Alcestis volunteered to die in the place of her husband when he lay sick unto death. Her sacrifice was accepted, and she died. But Hercules, who had been hospitably entertained by Pheres, hearing of the tragic circumstance, brought Alcestis from Hades out of gratitude to his host, and presented her to her grief-stricken husband. Euripides has used these circumstances as the basis of his tragedy of *Alcestis*.

**“All Service ranks the same with God.”** A song in *Pippa Passes*.

**Amphibian.** The Prologue to *Fifine at the Fair* is headed “Amphibian,” under which title it is included in the *Selections*.

**Anael.** A Druse girl who loves Djabal and believes him to be divine (*The Return of the Druses*).

**Andrea del Sarto** [The Man] *Men and Women*, 1855, called “the faultless painter,” also Andrea senza Errori (Andrew the Unerring) was a great painter of the Florentine School. His father was a tailor (*sarto*), so the Italians, with their passion for nicknames, dubbed him “The Tailor’s Andrew.” He was born in Gualfonda, Florence, in 1487. It is not certain what was his real name: Vannuchi has been constantly given, but without authority. He was at first put to work with a goldsmith, but he disliked the business, and preferred drawing his master’s models. He was next placed with a wood-carver and painter, one Gian Barill, with whom he remained till 1498. He then went to the draughtsman and colourist, Piero di Cosimo, under whom he studied the cartoons of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. We next find him opening a shop in partnership with his friend Francia Bigio, but the arrangement did not last long. The brotherhood of the Servi employed Andrea from 1509 to 1514 in adorning their church of the Annunziata at Florence. Mrs. Jameson, in her *Legends of the Monastic Orders*, thus describes the church and cloisters identified with the work of this painter at Florence: “Every one who has been at Florence must remember the Church of the ‘Annunziata’; every one who remembers that glorious church, who has lingered in the cloisters and the cortile where Andrea del Sarto put forth all his power – where the *Madonna del Sacco* and the *Birth of the Virgin* attest what he could *do* and *be* as a painter – will feel interested in the Order of the Servi. Among the extraordinary outbreaks of religious

enthusiasm in the thirteenth century, this was in its origin one of the most singular. Seven Florentines, rich, noble, and in the prime of life, whom a similarity of taste and feeling had drawn together, used to meet every day in a chapel dedicated to the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin (then outside the walls of Florence), there to sing the *Ave* or evening service in honour of the Madonna, for whom they had an especial love and veneration. They became known and remarked in their neighbourhood for those acts of piety, so that the women and children used to point at them as they passed through the streets and exclaim, *Guardate i Servi di Maria* (Behold the *Servants* of the Virgin!) Hence the title afterwards assumed by the Order." These seven gentlemen at length forsook the world, sold all their possessions and distributed their money to the poor, and retired to a solitary spot in the mountains about six miles out of Florence; here they built themselves huts of boughs and stones, and devoted themselves to the service of the Virgin. It was for the cloisters of the church of the Servi at Florence that Andrea del Sarto painted the *Riposo*. His *Nativity of the B. V. Mary* is a grand fresco, the characters are noble and dignified, and "draped in the magnificent taste which distinguished Andrea." The following account of the artist's life is summarised from the article on Del Sarto by Mr. W. M. Rossetti in the *Encyc. Brit.* He was an easy-going plebeian, to whom a modest position in life and scanty gains were no grievances. As an artist he must have known his own value; but he probably rested content in the sense of his

superlative powers as an executant, and did not aspire to the rank of a great inventor or leader, for which, indeed, he had no vocation. He led a social sort of life among his compeers of the art. He fell in love with Lucrezia del Fede, wife of a hatter named Carlo Recanati; the latter dying opportunely, the tailor's son married her on December 26th, 1512. She was a very handsome woman, and has come down to us treated with great suavity in many a picture of her lover-husband, who constantly painted her as a Madonna or otherwise; and even in painting other women he made them resemble Lucrezia in general type. Vasari, who was at one time a pupil of Andrea, describes her as faithless, jealous, overbearing, and vixenish with the apprentices. She lived to a great age, surviving her second husband forty years. Before the end of 1516, a *Pietà* of his composition, and afterwards a *Madonna*, were sent to the French Court. These were received with applause; and the art-loving monarch Francis I. suggested in 1518 that Andrea should come to Paris. He left his wife in Florence and went accordingly, and was very cordially received, and moreover for the first time in his life handsomely remunerated. His wife urged him to return to Italy. The king assented, on the understanding that his absence was to be short; and he entrusted Andrea with a sum of money to be expended in purchasing works of art for the king. Andrea could not resist temptation, and spent the king's money and some of his own in building a house for himself in Florence. He fell into disgrace with the king, but

no serious punishment followed. In 1520 he resumed work in Florence, and painted many pictures for the cloisters of Lo Scalzo. He dwelt in Florence throughout the memorable siege, which was followed by an infectious pestilence. He caught the malady, struggled against it with little or no tending from his wife, who held aloof, and died, no one knowing much about it at the moment, on January 22nd, 1531, at the early age of forty-three. He was buried unceremoniously in the church of the Servi. Mr. Rossetti gives the following criticisms on his work as an artist. "Andrea had true pictorial style, a very high standard of correctness, and an enviable balance of executive endowments. The point of technique in which he excelled least was perhaps that of discriminating the varying textures of different objects and surfaces. There is not much elevation or ideality in his works – much more of reality." He lacked invention notwithstanding his great technical skill. He had no inward impulse toward the high and noble; he was a man without fervour, and had no enthusiasm for the true and good. It is said that Michelangelo once remarked that if he had attempted greater things he might have rivalled Rafael, but Andrea was not a man for the mountain-top – the plains sufficed for him.

[The Poem.] On the bare historical facts, as recorded by Vasari in his life of Andrea del Sarto, Mr. Browning has framed this wonderful art-poem. He has taken Vasari's "notes" and framed "not another sound but a star," as he says in his *Abt Vogler*. Given the Vasari life, he has mixed it with his thought,

and has transfigured it so that the sad, infinitely pathetic soul, in its stunted growth and wasted form, lives before us in Mr. Browning's lines. As *Abt Vogler* is his greatest music-poem, so this is his greatest art-poem, and both are unique. No poet has ever given us such utterances on music and painting as we possess in these works: if all the poet's work were to perish save these, they would suffice to insure immortality for their author. It is said that the poem was suggested by a picture in the Pitti Palace at Florence. "Faultless but soulless" is the verdict of art critics on Andrea's works. Why is this? Mr. Browning's poem tells us in no hesitating phrase that the secret lay in the fact that Andrea was an immoral man, an infatuated man, passionately demanding love from a woman who had neither heart nor intellect, a wife for whom he sacrificed his soul and the highest interests of his art. He knew and loved Lucrezia while she was another man's wife; he was content that she should also love other men when she was his. He robbed King Francis, his generous patron, that he might give the money to his unworthy spouse. He neglected his parents in their poverty and old age. Is there not in these facts the secret of his failure? To Mr. Browning there is, and his poem tells us why. But, it will be objected, many great geniuses have been immoral men. This is so, but we cannot argue the point here; the poet's purpose is to show how in this particular case the evil seed bore fruit after its kind. The poem opens with the artist's attempts to bribe his wife by money to accord him a little semblance of love: he promises to paint that he may win gold for

her. The keynote of the poem is struck in these opening words. It is evening, and Andrea is weary with his work, but never weary of praising Lucrezia's beauty; sadly he owns that he is at best only a shareholder in his wife's affections, that even her pride in him is gone, that she neither understands nor cares to understand his art. He tells her that he can do easily and perfectly what at the bottom of his heart he wishes for, deep as that might be; he could do what others agonise to do all their lives and fail in doing, yet he knows for all that there burns a truer light of God in them than in him. Their works drop groundward, though their souls have glimpses of heaven that are denied to him. He could have beaten Rafael had he possessed Rafael's soul; for the Urbinate's technical skill, as he half hesitatingly shows, is inferior to his own; and had his Lucrezia urged him, inspired him, to claim a seat by the side of Michelangelo and Rafael, he might for her sake have done it. He sees he is but a half-man working in an atmosphere of silver-grey. He had his chance at Fontainebleau; there he sometimes seemed to leave the ground, but he had a chain which dragged him down. Lucrezia called him. Not only for her did he forsake the higher art ambitions, but the common ground of honesty; he descended to cement his walls with the gold of King Francis which he had stolen, and for her. From dishonesty to connivance at his wife's infidelity is an easy step; and so, while in the act of expressing his remorse at his ingratitude to the king, we find him asking Lucrezia quite naturally, as a matter of ordinary occurrence —

“Must you go?

That cousin here again? he waits outside?

Must see you – you, and not with me?”

Here we discover the secret of the soullessness: the fellow has the tailor in his blood, even though the artist is supreme at the fingers' ends. He is but the craftsman after all. Think of Fra Angelico painting his saints and angels on his knees, straining his eyes to catch the faintest glimpse of the heavenly radiance of Our Lady's purity and holiness, feeling that he failed, too dazzled by the brightness of Divine light, to catch more than its shadow, and we shall know why there is soul in the great Dominican painter, and why there is none in the Sarto. Lucrezia, despicable as she was, was not the cause of her husband's failure. His marriage, his treatment of Francis, his allowing his parents to starve, to die of want, while he paid gaming debts for his wife's lover, – all these things tell us what the man was. No woman ruined his soul; he had no soul to ruin!

Notes. —*Fiesole*, a small but famous episcopal city of Italy, on the crown of a hill above the Arno, about three miles to the west of Florence. *Morello*, a mountain of the Apennines. *The Urbinate*: Rafael was born at Urbino. *George Vasari*, painter and author of the “Lives of the Most Excellent Italian Painters, Sculptors and Architects.” *Rafael*, Raphael Sanzio of Urbino. *Agnolo*: Michel Agnolo is the more correct form of Michael Angelo. *Francis*, King Francis I. of France, the royal patron of

Andrea. *Fontainebleau*, a town of France 37 miles S.E. of Paris; its palace is one of the most sumptuous in France. “*The Roman’s is the better when you pray.*” Catholics, however, do not use the works of the great masters for devotional purposes nearly so much as might be supposed. No “miraculous” picture is by this class. *Cue-owls*: The Scops Owl: Scops Giú (Scopoli). Its cry is a ringing “ki-ou” – whence Italian “chiù” or “ciù.” “*Walls in the New Jerusalem.*” Revelation xxi. 15-17. *Leonard*, Leonardo da Vinci.

**Andromeda.** In *Pauline*, Mr. Browning has commemorated the fascination for his youthful mind which was exercised by an engraving of a picture by Caravaggio of Andromeda and Perseus. This picture was always before him as a boy, and he loved the story of the divine deliverer and the innocent victim which it presented. The lines begin

“Andromeda!

And she is with me, – years roll, I shall change,  
But change can touch her not.”

**Another Way of Love.** See [\*One Way of Love\*](#), this poem being its sequel.

**Any Wife to Any Husband.** A dying wife finds the bitterest thing in death to be the certainty that her husband’s love for her, which, would life but last, she could retain, will fade and wither when she is no longer present to tend it:

“Man’s love is of man’s life a thing apart,  
’Tis woman’s whole existence.”

The great pure love of a wife is a reign of love. Woman’s love is more durable and purer than man’s, and few men are entirely worthy of being the objects of that which they can so imperfectly understand. Mr. Nettleship, commenting on this poem, very truly says, “The real love of the man is never born until the love of the woman supplements it.” The wife of the poem feels that there would be no difficulty in her case about being faithful to the memory of her husband; but she foresees that his love will not long survive the loss of her personal presence. This will be to depreciate the value of his life to him; his love will come back to her again at last, back to the heart’s place kept for him, but with a stain upon it. The old love will be re-coined, re-issued from the mint, and given to others to spend, alas! with some alloy as well as with a new image and superscription. She foresees that he will dissipate his soul in the love of other woman, he will excuse himself by the assurance that the light loves will make no impression on the deep-set memory of the woman who is immortally his bride; he will have a Titian’s Venus to desecrate his wall rather than leave it bare and cold, – but the flesh-loves will not impair the soul-love.

**Apollo and the Fates.** (See Prologue to *Parleyings*.) Apollo (the Sun God), having offended Jupiter by slaying the Cyclopes, who forged his thunderbolts by which he had killed Æsculapius

for bringing dead men to life, had been banished from heaven. He became servant to Admetus, king of Thessaly, in whose employment he remained nine years as one of his shepherds. He was treated with great kindness by his master, and they became true lovers of each other. When Apollo, restored to the favour of heaven, had left the service of Admetus and resumed his god-like offices, he heard that his old master and friend was sick unto death, and he determined to save his life. Accordingly he descended on Mount Parnassus, and penetrated to the abode of the Fates, in the dark regions below the roots of the mountains, and there he found the three who preside over the destinies of mankind – Clotho with her distaff, Lachesis with her spindle, and Atropos with a pair of scissors about to cut the thread of Admetus' life – and begins to plead for the life of his friend Admetus, whom Atropos has just doomed to death. The Fates bid Apollo go back to earth and wake it from dreams. Apollo demands a truce to their doleful amusement, and requests them to extend the years of Admetus to threescore and ten. The Fates ask him if he thinks it would add to his friend's joy to have his life lengthened, seeing that life is only illusion? Infancy is but ignorance and mischief, youth becomes foolishness, and age churlishness. Apollo should ask for life for one whom he hates, not for the friend he loves. The Sun's beams produce such semblance of good as exists by simply gilding the evil. Apollo objects that if it were happier to die, men's greeting would not be "Long life!" but "Death to you!" Man

loves his life, and he ought to know best. The Fates say this is all the glamour shed by Apollo's rays. Apollo concedes that man desponds when debarred of illusion: "suppose he has in himself some compensative law?" and the God then produces a bowl of wine, man's invention, of which he invites them to taste. The Fates, after some objection, drink and get tipsy and merry, Atropos even declaring she could live at a pinch! Apollo delivers them a lecture; he tells them Bacchus invented the wine; as he was the youngest of the gods, he had to discover some new gift whereby to claim the homage of man. He tampered with nothing already arranged, yet would introduce change without shock. As the sunbeams and Apollo had transformed the Fates' cavern without displacing a splinter, so has the gift of Bacchus turned the adverse things of life to a kindlier aspect; man accepts the good with the bad, and acquiesces in his fate; this is the work of Zeus. He demands of the Fates if, after all, Life be so devoid of good? "Quashed be our quarrel!" they exclaim, and they dance till an explosion from the earth's centre brings them to their senses once more, and the pact is dissolved. They learn that the powers above them are not to be cajoled into interfering with the laws of life and the inevitable decrees of which the Fates are but the ministers. At last they agree to lengthen the life of Admetus if any mortal can be found to forgo the fulfilment of his own life on his account. Apollo protests that the king's subjects will strive with one another for the glory of dying that their king may survive. First in all Pheræ will his father offer himself as his

son's substitute. "Bah!" says Clotho. "Then his mother," suggests Apollo; "or, spurning the exchange, the king may choose to die." With the jeers of the three the scene closes. Mr. Browning's lovely poem *Balaustion's Adventure* should be read next after this, as the Prologue to the *Parleyings* has little or no relation to the rest of the volume.

Notes. —*Parnassus*, a mountain of Greece, sacred to the Muses and Apollo and Bacchus. *Dire ones*, the Fates, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos. *Admetus*, the husband of Alcestis, whose wife died to save his life. *The Fates*, the Destinies, the goddesses supposed to preside over human life: *Clotho*, who spins the thread of life; *Lachesis*, who determines the length of the thread; *Atropos*, who cuts it off. *Woe-purpled*, embroidered with woe. *Weal-prankt*, decked out with prosperity. *Moirai*, the Parcæ, the Fates. *Zeus*, Jupiter, the Supreme Being. *Eld*, old age. *Sweet Trine*, the Three, the Trinity of Fates. *Bacchus*, the Wine-God. *Semele's Son*: Semele was the daughter of Cadmus and Harmonia; when Zeus appeared to her in his Divine splendour she was consumed by the flames and gave birth to Bacchus, whom Zeus saved from the fire and hid in his thigh. Bacchus, when made a god, raised her to heaven under the name of Thyone. *Swound*, a swoon. *Cummers*, gossips, female acquaintances. *Collyrium*, eye-wash. *Pheræ*, a town in Thessaly, where King Pheres reigned, who was the father of Admetus.

**Apparent Failure.** (*Dramatis Personæ*, 1864.) Mr. Ruskin has laboured hard to save St. Mark's, Venice, from the destroying

hand of the restorer. Mr. Browning wrote this poem to save from complete destruction a much less important, though a celebrated building, the Paris Morgue, the deadhouse wherein are exposed the bodies of persons found dead, that they may be claimed by their friends. The Doric little Morgue is close to Notre Dame, on the banks of the Seine, and is one of the sights of Paris – repulsive as it is – which everybody makes a point of seeing. The poet entered the building and saw behind the great screen of glass three bodies exposed for identification on the copper couch fronting him. They were three men who had killed themselves, and the poet mentally questions them why they abhorred their lives so much. You “poor boy” wanted to be an emperor, forsooth; you “old one” were a red socialist, and this next one fell a prey to misdirected love. The three deadly sins of Pride, Covetousness, and Lust had each its victim. And before them stands the poet of optimism, not staggered in his doctrine even by this sad sight. Not for a moment does his faith fail that “what God blessed once can never prove accurst.” His optimism in this poem is at high-water mark; where some weak-kneed believers in humanity would have found a breaking link in the chain, Mr. Browning sees but “apparent failure,” and declines to believe the doom of these poor wrecks of souls to be final.

**Apparitions.** (Introduction to *The Two Poets of Croisic*, 1878.) This exquisite poem is a tribute to the charm exercised by a human face, from which looks out God’s own smile, gladdening a cold and scowling prospect as a burst of May soon dispels the

lingering chills of winter.

**Appearances.** (*Pacchiarotto, with other Poems, 1876.*) Metaphysicians would explain this poem by an essay on the association of ideas; strong as imagination is, it can never exceed experience which has come to us through sight. Feelings are associated with one another according as they have been operant in more or less frequent succession. Reasoning may associate ideas, but for force and permanence our actual sight, and contact are the wonder-workers in this department of soul-life. Nothing can beautify the place where we have in the past suffered some great mental distress or wrong; so no place can ever be unbeautiful where the true lover wins his life's prize. When the upholsterer's art does more for a room than the memory of a first love, that love is not of the eternal sort our poet sings.

**Aprile.** The Italian poet who sought to love, as Paracelsus sought to know. He represents the Renaissance spirit in its emotional aspect, as Paracelsus represents the spirit of the Reformation in its passion for knowledge. As Mr. Browning says, they were the "two halves of a dissevered world." (*Paracelsus.*)

**Arcades Ambo.** (*Asolando, 1889.*) If a man runs away in battle when the balls begin to fly, we call him a coward. He may excuse himself by the argument that man must at all risks shun death. This is the excuse made by the vivisector: he is often a kind and amiable man in every other relation of life than in that aspect of his profession which demands, as he holds, the torture of living animals for the advancement of the healing art.

Health of the body must be preserved at all costs; the moral health is of little or no consequence in comparison with that of the body; above all we must not die, death is the one thing to be avoided, hide therefore from the darts of the King of Terrors behind the whole creation of lower animals. Mr. Browning says this is cowardice exactly parallel with that of the soldier who runs away in battle; the principle being that at all costs life is the one thing to be preserved. The Anti-Vivisectionist principles of Mr. Browning were very pronounced. He was for many years associated with Miss F. P. Cobbe in her efforts to suppress the practice of torturing animals for scientific purposes, and was a Vice-President of the Victoria Street Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection at the time of his death. See my *Browning's Message to his Time* (chapter on "Browning and Vivisection").

**Aristophanes**, the celebrated comic poet of Athens, was born probably about the year 448 B.C. His first comedy was brought out in 427 B.C. Plato in his *Symposium* gives Aristophanes a position at the side of Socrates. The festivals of Dionysus greatly promoted the production of tragedies, comedies and satiric dramas. The greater Dionysia were held in the city of Athens in the month of March, and were connected with the natural feeling of joy at the approach of summer. These Bacchanalian festivals were scenes of gross licentiousness, and the coarseness which pervades much of the work of the great Greek comedian was due to the fact that the popular taste demanded grossness of allusion

on occasions like these. The Athenian dramatist of the old school was entirely unrestrained. He could satirise even the Eleusinian mysteries, could deal abundantly in personalities, burlesque the most sacred subjects, and ridicule the most prominent persons in the republic. Professor Jebb, in his article on Aristophanes in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, says: "It is neither in the denunciation nor in the mockery that he is most individual. His truest and highest faculty is revealed by those wonderful bits of lyric writing in which he soars above everything that can move to laughter or tears, and makes the clear air thrill with the notes of a song as free, as musical and as wild as that of the nightingale invoked by his own chorus in the *Birds*. The speech of Dikaios Logos in the *Clouds*, the praises of country life in the *Peace*, the serenade in the *Eccleziastusæ*, the songs of the Spartan and Athenian maidens in the *Lysistrata*; above all, perhaps, the chorus in the *Frogs*, the beautiful chant of the Initiated, – these passages, and such as these, are the true glories of Aristophanes. They are the strains, not of an artist, but of one who warbles for pure gladness of heart in some place made bright by the presence of a god. Nothing else in Greek poetry has quite this wild sweetness of the woods. Of modern poets Shakespeare alone, perhaps, has it in combination with a like richness and fertility of fancy." Fifty-four comedies were ascribed to Aristophanes. We possess only eleven: these deal with Athenian life during a period of thirty-six years. The political satires of the poet, therefore, cannot be understood without a knowledge of Athenian history, and an

acquaintance with its life during the period in which the poet wrote. "Aristophanes was a natural conservative," says Professor Jebb; "his ideal was the Athens of the Persian wars. He detested the vulgarity and the violence of mob-rule; he clove to the old worship of the gods; he regarded the new ideas of education as a tissue of imposture and impiety. As a mocker he is incomparable for the union of subtlety with wit of the comic imagination. As a poet he is immortal." The momentous period in the history of Greece during which Aristophanes began to write, forms the groundwork, more or less, of so many of his comedies, that it is impossible to understand them, far less to appreciate their point, without some acquaintance with its leading events. All men's thoughts were occupied by the great contest for supremacy between the rival states of Athens and Sparta, known as the Peloponnesian War. It is not necessary here to enter into details; but the position of the Athenians during the earlier years of the struggle must be briefly described. Their strength lay chiefly in their fleet; in the other arms of war they were confessedly no match for Sparta and her confederate allies. The heavy-armed Spartan infantry, like the black Spanish bands of the fifteenth century, was almost irresistible in the field. Year after year the invaders marched through the Isthmus into Attica, or were landed in strong detachments on different points of the coast, while the powerful Bœotian cavalry swept all the champaign, burning the towns and villages, cutting down the crops, destroying vines and olive-groves, – carrying this work of devastation almost up to the

very walls of Athens. For no serious attempt was made to resist these periodical invasions. The strategy of the Athenians was much the same as it had been when the Persian hosts swept down upon them fifty years before. Again they withdrew themselves and all their movable property within the city walls, and allowed the invaders to overrun the country with impunity. Their flocks and herds were removed into the islands on the coasts, where, so long as Athens was mistress of the sea, they would be in comparative safety. It was a heavy demand upon their patriotism; but, as before, they submitted to it, trusting that the trial would be but brief, and nerved to it by the stirring words of their great leader Pericles. The ruinous sacrifice, and even the personal suffering, involved in this forced migration of a rural population into a city wholly inadequate to accommodate them, may easily be imagined, even if it had not been forcibly described by the great historian of those times. Some carried with them the timber framework of their homes, and set it up in such vacant spaces as they could find. Others built for themselves little “chambers on the wall,” or occupied the outer courts of the temples, or were content with booths and tents set up under the Long Walls, which connected the city with the harbour of Piræus. Some – if our comic satirist is to be trusted – were even fain to sleep in tubs and hen-coops. Provisions grew dear and scarce. Pestilence broke out in the overcrowded city; and in the second and third years of the war the great plague carried off, out of their comparatively small population, about 10,000 of all ranks. But it needed a pressure

of calamity far greater than the present to keep a good citizen of Athens away from the theatre. If the times were gloomy, so much the more need of a little honest diversion. The comic drama was to the Athenians what a free press is to modern commonwealths. It is probable that Aristophanes was himself earnestly opposed to the continuance of the war, and spoke his own sentiments on this point by the mouth of his characters; but the prevalent disgust at the hardships of this long-continued siege – for such it practically was – would in any case be a tempting subject for the professed writer of burlesques; and the caricature of a leading politician, if cleverly drawn, is always a success for the author. The *Thesmophoriazusæ* is a comedy about the fair sex, whose whole point – like that also of the comedy of the *Frogs*– lies in a satire upon Euripides. Aristophanes never wearied of holding this poet up to ridicule. Why this was so is not to be discovered: it may have been that the conservative principles of Aristophanes were offended by some new-fashioned ideas of his brother poet. The *Thesmophoria* was a festival of women only, in honour of Ceres and Proserpine. Euripides was reputed to be a woman-hater: in one of his tragedies he says,

“O thou most vile! thou —*woman!*– for what word  
That lips could frame, could carry more reproach?”

He can hardly, however, have been a woman-hater who created the beautiful characters of Iphigenia and Alcestis. In this

comedy the Athenian ladies have resolved to punish Euripides, and the poet is in dismay in consequence, and takes measures to defend himself. He offers terms of peace to the offended fair sex, and promises never to abuse them in future.

**Aristophanes' Apology**; including a Transcript from Euripides, being the last adventure of Balaustion. London, 1875. — As Aristophanes' Apology is the last adventure of Balaustion, it is necessary to read *Balaustion's Adventure* (q. v.) before commencing this poem. Balaustion has married Euthukles, the young man whom she met at Syracuse. She has met the great poet Euripides, paid her homage to his genius, and has received from his own hands his tragedy of *Hercules*. The poet is dead, and Athens fallen. She returns to the city after its capture by the Spartans, but she can no longer remain therein. Athens will live in her heart, but never again can she behold the place where ghastly mirth mocked its overthrow and death and hell celebrated their triumph. She has left the doomed city, now that it is no longer the free Athens of happier times, and has set sail with her husband for Rhodes. The glory of the material Athens has departed. But Athens will live as a glorious spiritual entity —

“That shall be better and more beautiful,  
And too august for Sparté's foot to spurn!”

She and Euthukles are exiles from the dead Athens, not the living: “That's in the cloud there, with the new-born star!” As

they voyage, for her consolation she will record her recollections of her Euripides in Athens, and she bids her husband set down her words as she speaks. She must “speak to the infinite intelligence, sing to the everlasting sympathy.” There are dead things that are triumphant still; the walls of intellectual construction can never be overthrown; there are air-castles more real and permanent than the work of men’s hands. She will tell of Euripides and his undying work. She recalls the night when Athens was still herself, when they heard the news that Euripides was dead – “gone with his Attic ivy home to feast.” Dead and triumphant still! She reflected how the Athenian multitude had ever reproached him: “All thine aim thine art, the idle poet only.” It was not enough in those times that thought should be “the soul of art.” The Greek world demanded activity as well as contemplation. The poet must leave his study to command troops, forsake the world of ideas for that of action, otherwise he was a “hater of his kind.” The world is content with you if you do nothing for it; if you do aught you must do all. But when Euripides was at rest, censorious tongues ceased to wag, and the next thing to do was to build a monument for him! But for the hearts of Balaustion and her husband no statue is required: he stood within their hearts. The pure-souled woman says, “What better monument can be than the poem he gave me? Let him speak to me now in his own words; have out the Herakles and re-sing the song; hear him tell of the last labour of the god, worst of all the twelve.” And lovingly and reverently the precious gift of the poet was taken from its

shrine and opened for the reading. Suddenly torchlight, knocking at the door, a cry "Open, open! Bacchos bids!" and a sound of revelry and the drunken voices of girl dancers and players, led by Aristophanes, the comic poet of Greece. A splendid presence, "all his head one brow," drunk, but in him sensuality had become a rite. Mind was here, passions, but grasped by the strong hand of intellect. Balaustion rose and greeted him. "Hail house," he said, "friendly to Euripides!" and he spoke flatteringly, but in a slightly mocking tone, as men who are sensual defer to spiritual women whom they rather affect to pity while they admire. Balaustion loves genius; to her mind it is the noblest gift of heaven: she can bow to Aristophanes though he is drunk. (Greek intoxication was doubtless a very different thing from Saxon!) The comic poet had just achieved a great triumph: his comedy had been crowned. The "Women's Festival" (the *Thesmophoriazusæ* as it was called in Greek) was a play in which the fair sex had the chief part. It was written against Euripides' dislike of women, for which the women who are celebrating the great feast of Ceres and Proserpine (the Thesmophoria) drag him to justice. And so, with all his chorus troop, he comes to the home of Balaustion, as representing the Euripides whom he disliked and satirised, to celebrate his success. The presence of Balaustion has stripped the proper Aristophanes of his "accidents," and under her searching gaze he stands undisguised to be questioned. She puts him on his defence, and hence the "Apology." He recognises the divine in her, and she in him. The discussion, therefore, will be on

the principles underlying the works of Euripides, the man of advance, the pioneer of the newer and better age to come, and those of the conservative apologist of prescription, Aristophanes the aristocrat. He defends his first *Thesmophoriazusæ*, which failed; his *Grasshopper*, which followed and failed also. There was reason why he wrote both: he painted the world as it was, mankind as they lived and walked, not human nature as seen through the medium of the student's closet. "Old wine's the wine; new poetry drinks raw." The friend of Socrates might weave his fancies, but flesh and blood like that of Aristophanes needs stronger meat. "Curds and whey" might suit Euripides, the Apologist must have marrowy wine. The author of the *Alkestis*, which Balaustion raved about, was but a prig: he wrote of wicked kings. Aristophanes came nearer home, and attacked infamous abuses of the time, and scourged too with tougher thong than leek-and-onion plait. He wrote *The Birds*, *The Clouds*, and *The Wasps*. The poison-drama of Euripides has mortified the flesh of the men of Athens, so nothing but warfare can purge it. The play that failed last year he has rearranged; he added men to match the women there already, and had a hit at a new-fangled plan by which women should rule affairs. It succeeded, and so they all flocked merrily to feast, and merrily they supped till something happened, – he will confess its influence upon him. Towards the end of the feast there was a sudden knock: in came an old pale-swathed majesty, who addressed the priest, "Since Euripides is dead to-day, my choros, at the Greater Feast next month, shall,

clothed in black, appear ungarlanded!” Sophocles (for it was he) mutely passed outwards and left them stupefied. Soon they found their tongues and began to make satiric comment, but Aristophanes swore that at the moment death to him seemed life and life seemed death. The play of which he had made a laughingstock had meaning he had never seen till now. The question who was the greater poet, once so large, now became so small. He remembers his last discussion with the dead poet, two years since, when he said, “Aristophanes, you know what kind’s the nobler – what makes grave or what makes grin!” He pointed out why his Ploutos failed: he had tried, alas! but with force which had been spent on base things, to paint the life of Man. The strength demanded for the race had been wasted ere the race began. Such thoughts as these, long to relate, but floating through the mind as solemn convictions are wont to do, occupied him till the Archon, the Feast-Master, divining what was passing in his mind, thought best to close the feast. He gave “To the good genius, then!” as a parting cup. Young Strattis cried, “Ay, the Comic Muse”; but Aristophanes, stopping the applause, said, “Stay! the Tragic Muse” (in honour of the dead Tragic Poet), and then he told of all the work of the man who had gone from them. But he had mocked at him so often that his audience would not believe him to be serious now, and burst into laughter, exclaiming, “The unrivalled one! He turns the Tragic on its Comic side!” He felt that he was growing ridiculous, and had to repair matters; so he thanked them for laughing with him,

and also those who wept rather with the Lord of Tears, and bade the priest – president alike over the Tragic and Comic function of the god, —

“Help with libation to the blended twain!”

praising complex poetry operant for body as for soul, able to move to laughter and to tears, supreme in heaven and earth. The soul should not be unbodied; he would defend man’s double nature. But, even as he spoke, he turned to the memory of “Cold Euripides,” and declared that he would not abate attack if he were to encounter him again, because of his principle – “Raise soul, sink sense, Evirate Hermes!” And so, as they left the feast, he asked his friends to accompany him to Balaustion’s home, to the lady and her husband who, passionate admirers of Euripides, had not been present on his triumph-day. When they heard the night’s news, neither, he knew, would sleep, but watch; by right of his crown of triumph he would pay them a visit. Balaustion said, “Commemorate, as we, Euripides!” “What?” cried the comic poet, “profane the temple of your deity! – for deity he was, though as for himself he only figured on men’s drinking mugs. And then, as his glance fell on the table, he saw the Herakles which the Tragic Poet had given to Balaustion. “Give me the sheet,” he asks. She interrupted, “You enter fresh from your worst infamy, last instance of a long outrage – throw off hate’s celestialty, show me a mere man’s

hand ignobly clenched against the supreme calmness of the dead poet.” Scarcely noticing her, he said, “Dead and therefore safe; only after death begins immunity of faultiness from punishment. Hear Art’s defence. Comedy is coeval with the birth of freedom, its growth matches the greatness of the Republic. He found the Comic Art a club, a means of inflicting punishment without downright slaying: was he to thrash only the crass fool and the clownish knave, or strike at malpractice that affects the State? His was not the game to change the customs of Athens, lead age or youth astray, play the demagogue at the Assembly or the sophist at the Debating Club, or (worst and widest mischief) preach innovation from the theatre, bring contempt on oaths, and adorn licentiousness. And so he new-tipped with steel his cudgel, he had demagogues in coat-of-mail and cased about with impudence to chastise; he was spiteless, for his attack went through the mere man to reach the principle worth purging from Athens. He did not attack Lamachos, but war’s representative; not Cleon, but flattery of the populace; not Socrates, but the pernicious seed of sophistry, whereby youth was perverted to chop logic and worship whirligig. His first feud with Euripides was when he maintained that we should enjoy life as we find it instead of magnifying our miseries. Euripides would talk about the empty name, while the thing’s self lay neglected beneath his nose. Aristophanes represented the whole Republic, – gods, heroes, priests, legislators, poets – all these would have been in the dust, pummelled into insignificance, had Euripides had his

way. To him heroes were no more, hardly so much, as men. Men were ragged, sick, lame, halt, and blind, their speech but street terms; and so, having drawn sky earthwards, he must next lift earth to sky. Women, once mere puppets, must match the male in thinking, saying, doing. The very slave he recognised as man's mate. There are no gods. Man has no master, owns neither right nor wrong, does what he likes, himself his sole law. As there are no gods, there is only "Necessity" above us. No longer to Euripides is there one plain positive enunciation, incontestable, of what is good, right, decent here on earth. And so Euripides triumphed, though he rarely gained a prize. And Aristophanes, wielding the comic weapon, closed with the enemy in good honest hate, called Euripides one name and fifty epithets. He hates "sneaks whose art is mere desertion of a trust." And so he doses each culprit with comedy, doctors the word-monger with words. Socrates he nicknames chief quack, necromancer; Euripides – well, he acknowledges every word is false if you look at it too close, but at a distance all is indubitable truth behind the lies. Aristophanes declares the essence of his teaching to be, Accept the old, contest the strange, misdoubt every man whose work is yet to do, acknowledge the work already done. Religion, laws, are old – that is, so much achieved and victorious truth, wrung from adverse circumstance by heroic men who beat the world and left their work in evidence. It was Euripides who caused the fight, and Aristophanes has beaten him; if, however, Balaustion can adduce anything to contravene this, let her say

on.” Balaustion replies that she is but a mere mouse confronting the forest monarch, a woman with no quality, but the love of all things lovable. How should she dare deny the results he says his songs are pregnant with? She is a foreigner too. Many perhaps view things too severely, as dwellers in some distant isles, – the Cassiterides, for example, – ignorant and lonely, who seeing some statue of Phidias or picture of Teuxis, might feebly judge that hair and hands and fashion of garb, not being like their own, must needs be wrong. So her criticism of art may be equally in fault as theirs, nevertheless she will proceed if she may. “Comedy, you say, is prescription and a rite; it rose with Attic liberty, and will fall with freedom; but your games, Olympian, Pythian and the others, the gods gave you these; and Comedy, did it come so late that your grandsires can remember its beginning? And you were first to change buffoonery for wit, and filth for cleanly sense. You advocate peace, support religion, lash irreverence, yet rebuke superstition with a laugh. Innovation and all change you attack: with you the oldest always is the best; litigation, mob rule and mob favourites you attack; you are hard on sophists and poets who assist them: snobs, scamps, and gluttons you do not spare, – all these noble aims originated with you! Yet Euripides in Cresphontes sang Peace before you! Play after play of his troops tumultuously to confute your boast. No virtue but he praised, no vice but he condemned ere you were boy! As for your love of peace, you did not show your audience that war was wrong, but Lamachos absurd, not that democracy

was blind, but Cleon a sham, not superstition vile but Nicias crazy. You gave the concrete for the abstract, you pretended to be earnest while you were only indifferent. You tickled the mob with the idea that peace meant plenty of good things to eat, while in camp the fare is hard and stinted. Peace gives your audience flute girls and gaiety. War freezes the campaigners in the snow. And so, with all the rest you advocate; do not go to law: beware of the Wasps! but as for curing love of lawsuits, you exhibit cheating, brawling, fighting, cursing as capital fun! And when the writer of the new school attacks the vile abuses of the day, straightway to conserve the good old way, you say the rascal cannot read or write, is extravagant, gets somebody to help his sluggish mind, and lets him court his wife; his uncle deals in crockery, and himself – a stranger! And so the poet-rival is chased out of court. And this is Comedy, our sacred song, censor of vice and virtue's safeguard! You are indignant with sophistry, and say there is but a single side to man and thing; but the sophists at least wish their pupils to believe what they teach, and to practise what they believe; can you wish that? Assume I am mistaken: have you made them end the war? Has your antagonist Euripides succeeded better? He spoke to a dim future, and I trust truth's inherent kingliness. 'Arise and go: both have done honour to Euripides!'" But Aristophanes demands direct defence, and not oblique by admonishment of himself. Balaustion tells him that last year Sophocles was declared by his son to be of unsound mind, and for defence his father just recited

a chorus chant of his last play. The one adventure of her life that made Euripides her friend was the story of Hercules and Alcestis. When she met the author last, he said, "I sang another Hercules; it gained no prize, but take it – your love the prize! And so the papyrus, with the pendent style, and the psalterion besides, he gave her: by this should she remember the friend who loved Balaustion once. May I read it as defence? I read." [The Herakles, or Raging Hercules of Euripides, is translated literally by Mr. Browning on the principles which he laid down in the preface to the Agamemnon. In Potter's *Translation of the Tragedies of Euripides* we have the following from the introduction to the play: "The first scenes of this tragedy are very affecting; Euripides knew the way to the heart, and as often as his subject leads him to it, he never fails to excite the tenderest pity. We are relieved from this distress by the unexpected appearance of Hercules, who is here drawn in his private character as the most amiable of men: the pious son, the affectionate husband, and the tender father win our esteem as much as the unconquered hero raises our admiration. Here the feeling reader will perhaps wish that the drama had ended, for the next scenes are dreadful indeed, and it must be confessed that the poet has done his subject terrible justice, but without any of that absurd extravagance which, in Seneca becomes *un tintamarre horrible qui se passe dans le tête de ce Héros devenu fou*. From the violent agitation into which we are thrown by these deeds of honour, we are suffered by degrees to subside into the tenderest grief, in which we are prepared

before to sympathise with the unhappy Hercules by that esteem which his amiable disposition had raised in us; and this perhaps is the most affecting scene of sorrow that ever was produced in any theatre. Upon the whole, though this tragedy may not be deemed the most agreeable by the generality of readers, on account of the too dreadful effects of the madness of Hercules, yet the various turns of fortune are finely managed, the scenes of distress highly wrought, and the passions of pity, terror and grief strongly touched. The scene is at Thebes before the palace of Hercules. The persons of the Drama – Amphitryon, Megara, Lycus, Hercules, Iris, Lyssa (the goddess of madness), Theseus, Messenger; Chorus of aged Thebans.”] They were silent after the reading for a long time. “Our best friend – lost, our best friend!” mused Aristophanes, “and who is our best friend?” He then instances in reply a famous Greek game, known as *kottabos*, played in various ways, but the latest with a sphere pierced with holes. When the orb is set rolling, and wine is adroitly thrown a figure suspended in a certain position can be struck by the fluid; but its only chance of being so hit is when it fronts just that one outlet. So with Euripides: he gets his knowledge merely from one single aperture – that of the High and Right; till he fronts this he writes no play. When the hole and his head happen to correspond, in drops the knowledge that Aristophanes can make respond to every opening – Low, Wrong, Weak; all the apertures bring him knowledge; he gets his wine at every turn; why not? Evil and Little are just as natural as Good and Great, and he

demands to know them, and not one phase of life alone. So that he is the "best friend of man." No doubt, if in one man the High and Low could be reconciled, in tragi-comic verse he would be superior to both when born in the Tin Islands (as he eventually was in the person of Shakespeare). He will sing them a song of Thamyris, the Thracian bard, who boasted that he could rival the Muses, and was punished by them by being deprived of sight and voice and the power of playing the lute. Before he had finished the song, however, he laughed, "Tell the rest who may!" He had not tried to match the muse and sing for gods; he sang for men, and of the things of common life. He bids this couple farewell till the following year, and departs. In a year many things had happened. Aristophanes had produced his play, *The Frogs*. It had been rapturously applauded, and the author had been crowned; he is now the people's "best friend." He had satirised Euripides more vindictively than before; he had satirised even the gods and the Eleusinian Mysteries; and, in the midst of the "frog merriment," Lysander, the Spartan, had captured Athens, and his first word to the people was, "Pull down your long walls: the place needs none!" He gave them three days to wreck their proud bulwarks, and the people stood stupefied, stonier than their walls. The time expired, and when Lysander saw they had done nothing, he ordered all Athens to be levelled in the dust. Then stood forth Euthukles, Balaustion's husband, and "flung that choice flower," a snatch of a tragedy of Euripides, the *Electra*; then —

“Because Greeks are Greeks, though Sparté’s brood,  
And hearts are hearts, though in Lusandros’ breast,  
And poetry is power, and Euthukles  
Had faith therein to, full face, fling the same —  
Sudden, the ice thaw!”

And the assembled foe cried, “Reverence Elektra! Let stand Athenai!” and so, as Euripides had saved the Athenian exiles in Syracuse harbour, now he saved Athens herself. But her brave long walls were destroyed, destroyed to sound of flute and lyre, wrecked to the kordax step, and laid in the dust to the mocking laughter of a Comedy-chorus. And so no longer would Balaustion remain to see the shame of the beloved city. “Back to Rhodes!” she cried. “There are no gods, no gods! Glory to God – who saves Euripides!” [The long walls of Athens consisted of the wall to Phalerum on the east, about four miles long, and of the wall to the harbour of Piraeus on the west, about four and a half miles long; between these two, at a short distance from the latter and parallel to it, another wall was erected, thus making two walls leading to the Piraeus, with a narrow passage between them. The entire circuit of the walls was nearly twenty-two miles, of which about five and a half miles belonged to the city, nine and a half to the long walls, and seven miles to Piraeus, Munychia, and Phalerum.]

Plutarch, in his life of Lysander, tells how Euripides saved Athens from destruction and the Athenians from slavery: – “After Lysander had taken from the Athenians all their ships except

twelve, and their fortifications were delivered up to him, he entered their city on the sixteenth of the month Munychon (April), the very day they had overthrown the barbarians in the naval fight at Salamis. He presently set himself to change their form of government; and finding that the people resented his proposal, he told them ‘that they had violated the terms of their capitulation, for their walls were still standing after the time fixed for the demolishing of them was passed; and that, since they had broken the first articles, they must expect new ones from the council.’ Some say he really did propose, in the council of the allies, to reduce the Athenians to slavery; and that Eriantis, a Theban officer, gave it as his opinion that the city should be levelled with the ground, and the spot on which it stood turned to pasturage. Afterwards, however, when the general officers met at an entertainment, a musician of Phocis happened to begin a chorus in the *Electra* of Euripides, the first lines of which are these —

‘Unhappy daughter of the great Atrides,  
Thy straw-crowned palace I approach.’

The whole company were greatly moved at this incident, and could not help reflecting how barbarous a thing it would be to raze that noble city, which had produced so many great and illustrious men. Lysander, however, finding the Athenians entirely in his power, collected the musicians of the city, and

having joined to them the band belonging to the camp, pulled down the walls, and burned the ships, to the sound of their instruments.”

Notes. [The pages are those of the complete edition, in 16 vols.]—P. 3, *Euthukles*, the husband of Balaustion, whom she met first at Syracuse. p. 4, *Koré*, the daughter of Ceres, the same as Proserpine. p. 6, *Peiraios*, the principal harbour of Athens, with which it was connected by the long walls; “*walls, long double-range Themistoklean*”: after Themistocles, the Athenian general, who planned the fortifications of Athens; *Dikast* and *heliast*: the *Dikast* was the judge (*dike*, a suit, was the term for a civil process); the *heliasts* were jurors, and in the flourishing period of the democracy numbered six thousand. p. 7, *Kordax-step*, a lascivious comic dance: to perform it off the stage was regarded as a sign of intoxication or profligacy; *Propulaia*, a court or vestibule of the Acropolis at Athens; *Pnux*, a place at Athens set apart for holding assemblies: it was built on a rock; *Bema*, the elevated position occupied by those who addressed the assembly. p. 8, *Dionusia*, the great festivals of Bacchus, held three times a year, when alone dramatic representations at Athens took place; “*Hermippos to pelt Perikles*”: *Hermippos* was a poet who accused *Aspasia*, the mistress of *Pericles*, of impiety; “*Kratinos to swear Pheidias robbed a shrine*”: *Kratinos* was a comic poet of Athens, a contemporary of *Aristophanes*; *Eruxis*, the name of a small satirist. (Compare “*The Frogs*” ll. 933-934.) *Momos*, the god of pleasantries: he satirised the gods; *Makaria*, one of

the characters in the *Heraclidæ* of Euripides: she devoted herself to death to enable the Athenians to win a victory. p. 9, "*Furies in the Oresteian song*" – Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megæra: they haunted Orestes after he murdered his mother Clytemnestra: "As *the Three*," etc., the three tragic poets, Æschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. *Klutaimnestra*, wife of Agamemnon and mother of Orestes, Iphigenia, and Electra: she murdered her husband on his return from Troy; *Iocasté*, Iocasta, wife of Laius and mother of Ædipus; *Medeia*, daughter of Aetes: when Jason repudiated her she killed their children; *Choros*: the function of the chorus, represented by its leader, was to act as an ideal public: it might consist of old men and women or maidens; dances and gestures were introduced, to illustrate the drama. p. 10, *peplos* and *kothorned*, robed and buskined. *Phrunicos*, a tragic poet of Athens: he was heavily fined by the government for exhibiting the sufferings of a kindred people in a drama. (Herod., vi., 21.) "*Milesian smart-place*," the Persian conquest of Miletus. p. 11, *Lenaia*, a festival of Bacchus, with poetical contentions, etc.; *Baccheion*, a temple of Bacchus; *Andromedé*, rescued from a sea-monster by Perseus; *Kresphontes*, one of the tragedies of Euripides; *Phokis*, a country of northern Greece, whence came the husband of Balaustion, who saved Athens by a song from Euripides; *Bacchai*, a play by Euripides, not acted till after his death. p. 12, *Amphitheos*, a priest of Ceres at Athens, ridiculed by Aristophanes to annoy Euripides. p. 14, *stade*, a single course for foot-races at Olympia – about a furlong; *diaulos*, the double

track of the racecourse for the return. p. 15, *Hupsipule*, queen of Lemnos, who entertained Jason in his voyage to Colchis: “*Phoinissai*” (*The Phœnician Women*), title of one of the plays of Euripides; “*Zethos against Amphion*”: Zethos was a son of Jupiter by Antiope, and brother to Amphion; *Macedonian Archelaos*, a king of Macedonia who patronised Euripides. p. 16, *Phorminx*, a harp or guitar; “*Alkaion*,” a play of Euripides; *Pentheus*, king of Thebes, who refused to acknowledge Bacchus as a god; “*Iphigenia in Aulis*,” a play by Euripides; *Mounuchia*, a port of Attica between the Piræus and the promontory of Sunium; “*City of Gapers*,” Athens – so called on account of the curiosity of the people; *Kopaic eel*: the eels of Lake Copais, in Bœotia, were very celebrated, and to this day maintain their reputation. p. 17, *Arginousai*, three islands near the shores of Asia Minor; *Lais*, a celebrated courtesan, the mistress of Alcibiades; *Leogoras*, an Athenian debauchee; *Koppa-marked*, branded as high bred; *choinix*, a liquid measure; *Mendesian wine*: Wine from Mende, a city of Thrace, famous for its wines; *Thesmophoria*, a women’s festival in honour of Ceres, made sport of by Aristophanes. p. 18, *Krateros*, probably an imaginary character. *Arridaios* and *Krateues*, local poets in royal favour; *Protagoras*, a Greek atheistic philosopher, banished from Athens, died about 400 B.C.; “*Comic Platon*,” Greek poet, called “the prince of the middle comedy,” flourished 445 B.C.; *Archelaos*, king of Macedonia. p. 19, “*Lusistratê*” a play by Aristophanes, in which the women demand a peace; *Kleon*: Cleon was an Athenian

tanner and a great popular demagogue, 411 B.C., distinguished afterwards as a general; he was a great enemy of Aristophanes. p. 20, *Phuromachos*, a military leader; *Phaidra*, fell in love with Hippolytus, her son-in-law, who refused her love, which proved fatal to him. p. 21, *Salabaccho*, a performer in Aristophanes' play, *The Lysistrata*, acting the part of "Peace"; *Aristeides*, an Athenian general, surnamed the Just, banished 484 B.C.; *Miltiades*, the Athenian general who routed the armies of Darius, died 489 B.C.; "A golden tettix in his hair" (a grasshopper), an Athenian badge of honour worn as indicative that the bearer had "sprung from the soil"; *Kleophon*, a demagogue of Athens. p. 22, *Thesmophoriazousai*, a play by Aristophanes satirising women and Euripides, B.C. 411. p. 23, *Peiraios*, the seaport of Athens; *Alkamenes*, a statuary who lived 448 B.C., distinguished for his beautiful statues of Venus and Vulcan; *Thoukudides* (Thucydides), the Greek historian, died at Athens 391 B.C. p. 24, *Herakles* (Hercules), who had brought Alcestis back to life: the subject of a play by Euripides. p. 25, *Eurustheus*, king of Argos, who enjoined Hercules the most hazardous undertakings, hoping he would perish in one of them; *King Lukos*, the son of an elder Lukos said to have been the husband of Dirke; *Megara*, daughter of Creon, king of Thebes, and wife of Hercules; *Thebai*—*i. e.*, of Creon of Thebes; *Heracleian House*, the house of Hercules. p. 26, *Amphitruon*, a Theban prince, foster-father of Herakles, *i. e.*, the husband of Alkmene the mother of Herakles by Zeus; *Komoscry*, a "Komos" was a revel; *Dionusos*,

*Bacchos, Phales, Iacchos* (all names of Bacchus): the goat was sacrificed to Bacchus on account of the propensity that animal has to destroy the vine. p. 27, *Mnesilochos*, the father-in-law of Euripides, a character in the *Thesmophoriazousai*; *Toxotes*, an archer in the same play; *Elaphion*, leader of the chorus of females or flute-players. p. 30, *Helios*, the God of the Sun; *Pindaros*, the greatest lyric poet of Greece, born 552 B.C.; “*Idle cheek band*” refers to a support for the cheeks worn by trumpeters; *Cuckoo-apple*, the highly poisonous tongue-burning Cuckoo-pint (*Arum maculatum*); *Thasian*, Thasus, an island in the Ægean Sea famous for its wine; *threttanelo* and *neblaretai*, imitative noises; *Chrusomelolonthion-Phaps*, a dancing girl’s name. p. 31, *Artamouxia*, a character in the *Thesmophoriazousai* of Aristophanes; *Hermes* == Mercury; *Goats-breakfast*, improper allusions, connected with Bacchus; *Archon*, a chief magistrate of Athens; “*Three days’ salt fish slice*”: each soldier was required to take with him on the march three days’ rations. p. 32, *Archinos*, a rhetorician of Athens (Schol. in Aristoph. Ran.); *Agurrhios*, an Athenian general in B.C. 389: he was a demagogue; “*Bald-head Bard*”: this describes Aristophanes, and the two following words indicate his native place; *Kudathenaian*, native of the Deme Cydathenê; *Pandionid*, of the tribe of Pandionis; “*son of Philippos*”: Aristophanes here gives the names of his father and of his birthplace; *anapæsts*, feet in verse, whereof the first syllables are short and the last long; *Phrunichos* (see on [p. 10](#)); *Choirilos*, a tragic poet of Athens, who wrote a hundred and fifty tragedies. p.

33, *Kratinos*, a severe and drunken satirist of Athens, 431 B.C.; “*Willow-wicker-flask*,” *i. e.*, “*Flagon*,” the name of a comedy by *Kratinos* which took the first prize, 423 B.C.; *Mendesian*, from *Mende* in *Thrace*. p. 36, “*Lyric shell or tragic barbiton*,” instruments of music: the barbiton was a lyre; shells were used as the bodies of lyres; *Tuphon*, a famous giant chained under *Mount Etna*. p. 38, *Sousarion*, a Greek poet of *Megara*, said to have been the inventor of comedy; *Chionides*, an Athenian poet, by some alleged to have been the inventor of comedy. p. 39, “*Grasshoppers*,” a play of *Aristophanes*; “*Little-in-the-Fields*,” suburban or village feasts of *Bacchus*. p. 40, *Ameipsias*, a comic poet ridiculed by *Aristophanes* for his insipidity; *Salaminian*, of *Salamis*, an island on the coast of *Attica*. p. 41, *Archelaos*, king of *Macedonia*, patron of *Euripides*. p. 42, *Iostephanos* (violet-crowned), a title applied to *Athens*; *Dekeleia*, a village of *Attica* north of *Athens*; *Kleonumos*, an Athenian often ridiculed by *Aristophanes*; *Melanthios*, a tragic poet, a son of *Philocles*; *Parabasis*, an address in the old comedy, where the author speaks through the mouth of the chorus; “*The Wasps*,” one of the famous plays of *Aristophanes*. p. 43, *Telekleides*, an Athenian comic poet of the age of *Pericles*; *Murtilos*, a comic poet; *Hermippos*, a poet, an elder contemporary of *Aristophanes*; *Eupolis*: is coupled with *Aristophanes* as a chief representative of the old comedy (born 446 B.C.); *Kratinos*, a contemporary comic poet, who died a few years after *Aristophanes* began to write for the stage; *Mullos* and *Euetes*, comic poets of *Athens*; *Megara*, a

small country of Greece, p. 44, *Morucheides*, an archon of Athens, in whose time it was ordered that no one should be ridiculed on the stage by name; *Sourakosios*, an Athenian lawyer ridiculed by the poets for his garrulity; *Tragic Trilogy*, a series of three dramas, which, though complete each in itself, bear a certain relation to each other, and form one historical and poetical picture —e. g., the three plays of the *Oresteia*, the *Agamemnon*, the *Choëphoræ*, and the *Eumenides* by Æschylus. p. 45, “*The Birds*,” the title of one of Aristophanes’ plays. p. 46, *Triphales*, a three-plumed helmet-wearer; *Trilophos*, a three-crested helmet-wearer; *Tettix* (the grasshopper), a sign of honour worn as a golden ornament; “*Autochthon-brood*”: the Athenians so called themselves, boasting that they were as old as the country they inhabited; *Taiügetan*, a mountain near Sparta. p. 47, *Ruppapai*, a sailor’s cry; *Mitulené*, the capital of Lesbos, a famous seat of learning, and the birthplace of many great men; *Oidipous*, son of Laius, king of Thebes, and Jocasta: he murdered his own father; *Phaidra*, who fell in love with her son Hippolytus; *Augé*, the mother of Telephus by Hercules; *Kanaké*, a daughter of Æolus, who bore a child to her brother Macareus; *antistrophé*, a part of the Greek choral ode. p. 48, *Aigina*, an island opposite Athens. p. 49, *Prutaneion*, the large hall at Athens where the magistrates feasted with those who had rendered great services to the country; *Ariphrades*, a person ridiculed by Aristophanes for his filthiness; *Karkinos* and his sons were Athenian dancers: supposed here

to have been performing in a play of Ameipsias. p. 50, *Parachoregema*, the subordinate chorus; *Aristullos*, an infamous poet; “*Bald Bard’s hetairai*,” Aristophanes’ female companions. p. 51, *Murrhiné* and *Akalanthis*, chorus girls representing “good-humour” and “indulgence”; *Kailligenia*, a name of Ceres: here it means her festival celebrated by the woman chorus of the *Thesmophoriaxousai*; *Lusandros* == Lysander, a celebrated Spartan general; *Euboia*, a large island in the Ægean Sea; “*The Great King’s Eye*,” the nickname of the Persian ambassador in the play of *The Acharnians*; *Kompolakuthes*, a puffed-up braggadocio. p. 52, *Strattis*, a comic poet; *klepsudra*, a water clock; *Sphettian vinegar* == vinegar from the village of Sphettus; *silphion*, a herb by some called masterwort, by some benzoin, by others pellitory; *Kleonclapper*, *i. e.*, a scourge of Cleon; *Agathon*, an Athenian poet, very lady-like in appearance, a character in *The Women’s Festival* of Aristophanes; “*Babaiax!*” interjection of admiration. p. 54, “*Told him in a dream*” (see Cicero, *Divinatione*, xxv); *Euphorion*, a son of Æschylus, who published four of his father’s plays after his death, and defeated Euripides with one of them; *Trugaios*, a character in the comedy of *Peace*: he is a distressed Athenian who soars to the sky on a beetle’s back; *Philonides*, a Greek comic poet of Athens; *Simonides*, a celebrated poet of Cos, 529 B.C.: he was the first poet who wrote for money: he bore the character of an avaricious man; *Kallistratos*, a comic poet, rival of Aristophanes; *Asklepios* == Æsculapius; *Iophon*, a son of Sophocles, who tried

to make out that his father was an imbecile. p. 58, *Maketis*, capital of Macedonia; *Pentelikos*, a mountain of Attica, celebrated for its marble. p. 60, *Lamachos*: the “Great Captain” of the day was the brave son of Xenophanes, killed before Syracuse B.C. 414: satirised by Aristophanes in *The Acharnians*; *Pisthetairos*, a character in Aristophanes’ *Birds*; *Strepsiades*, a character in *The Clouds* of Aristophanes; *Ariphrades* (see under p. 49). p. 63, “*Nikias, ninny-like*,” the Athenian general who ruined Athens at Syracuse – was very superstitious. p. 64, *Hermai*, statues of Mercury in the streets of Athens: we have one in the British Museum. p. 67, *Sophoniskos*, was the father of Socrates. p. 75, *Kephisophon*, a friend of Euripides, said to have afforded him literary assistance. p. 79, *Palaistra*, the boy’s school for physical culture. p. 82, *San*, the letter S, used as a horse-brand. p. 81, *Aias* == Ajax. p. 82, *Pisthetairos*, an enterprising Athenian in the comedy of the *Birds*. p. 83, “*Rocky-ones*” == Athenians; *Peparethian*, famous wine of Peparethus, on the coast of Macedonia. p. 85, *Promachos*, a defender or champion, name of a statue: the bronze statue of *Athene Promachos* is here referred to, which was erected from the spoils taken at Marathon, and stood between the Propylæa and the Erechtheum: the proportions of this statue were so gigantic that the gleaming point of the lance and the crest of the helmet were visible to seamen on approaching the Piræus from Sunium (Seyffert, *Dict. Class. Ant.*); *Oresteia*, the trilogy or three tragedies of Æschylus – the *Agamemnon*, the *Choëphoræ*, and the *Eumenides*. p. 86,

*Kimón*, son of Miltiades: he was a famous Athenian general, and was banished by the *Boulé*, or council of state; *Prodikos*, a Sophist put to death by the Athenians about 396 B.C., satirised by Aristophanes. p. 87, *Kottabos*, a kind of game in which liquid is thrown up so as to make a loud noise in falling: it was variously played (*see Seyffert's Dict. Class. Ant.*, p. 165); *Choes*, an Athenian festival; *Theoros*, a comic poet of infamous character. p. 88, *Brilesian*, Brilessus, a mountain of Attica. p. 89, "*Plataian help*," prompt assistance: the Plataeans furnished a thousand soldiers to help the Athenians at Marathon; *Saperdion*, a term of endearment; *Empousa*, a hobgoblin or horrible sceptre: "Apollonius of Tyana saw in a desert near the Indus an empousa or ghûl taking many forms" (*Philostratus*, ii., 4); *Kimberic*, name of a species of vestment. p. 93, "*Kuthereia's self*," a surname of Venus. p. 94, *plethron square*, 100 square feet; *chiton*, the chief and indispensable article of female dress, or an undergarment worn by both sexes. p. 95, *Ion*, a tragic poet of Chios; *Iophon*, son of Sophocles, a poor poet; *Aristullos*, an infamous poet. p. 98, *Cloudcuckooburg*, in Aristophanes' play *The Birds* these animals are persuaded to build a city in the air, so as to cut off the gods from men; *Tereus*, a king of Thrace, who offered violence to his sister-in-law Philomela; *Hoopoe triple-crest*: Tereus was said to have been changed into a hoopoe (*The Birds*); *Palaistra tool*, *i. e.*, one highly developed; *Amphiktuon*, a council of the wisest and best men of Greece; *Phrixos*, son of Athamas, king of Thebes, persecuted by his stepmother was fabled to have taken flight to

Colchis on a ram. p. 99, *Priapos*, the god of orchards, gardens, and licentiousness; *Phales Iacchos*, indecent figure of Bacchus. p. 102, *Kallikratidas*, a Spartan who routed the Athenian fleet about 400 B.C.; *Theramenes*, an Athenian philosopher and general of the time of Alcibiades. p. 103, *chaunoproct*, a catamite. p. 113, *Aristonumos*, a comic poet, contemporary with Aristophanes; *Ameipsias*, a comic poet satirised by Aristophanes; *Sannurion*, a comic poet of Athens: *Neblaretai! Rattei!* exclamations of joy. p. 117, *Sousarion*, a Greek poet of Megara, who introduced comedy at Athens on a movable stage, 562 B.C.: he was unfriendly to the ladies. p. 118, *Lemnians*, *The Hours*, *Female Playhouse*, etc., these are all lost plays of Aristophanes. p. 119, *Kassiterides*, “the tin islands”: the Scilly Islands, Land’s End, and Lizard Point. p. 121, “*Your games*”: *Olympian*, in honour of Zeus at Olympia; *Pythian*, held near Delphi; *Isthmian*, held in the Isthmus of Corinth; *Nemeian*, celebrated in the valley of Nemea. p. 126, *Phoibos*, name of Apollo or the sun; *Kunthia* == Cynthia, a surname of Diana, from Mount Cynthus, where she was born. p. 128, *skiadeion*, the umbel or umbrella-like head of plants like fennel or anise – hence a parasol or umbrella; *Huperbolos*, an Athenian demagogue. p. 129, *Theoria*, festival at Athens in honour of Apollo – character in *The Peace*; *Opôra*, a character in *The Peace*. p. 133, “*Philokleon turns Bdelukleon*,” an admirer of Cleon, turned detester of Cleon: character in Aristophanes’ comedy *The Wasps*. p. 135, *Logeion*, the stage where the actors perform – properly “the speaking place.” p. 137, *Lamia-shape*,

as of the monsters with face of a woman and body of a serpent; *Kukloboros*, roaring – a noise as of the torrent of the river in Attica of that name; *Platon* == Plato. p. 140, *Konnos*, the play of Ameipsias which beat the *Clouds* of Aristophanes in the award of the judges; *Moruchides*, a magistrate of Athens, in whose time it was decided that no one should be ridiculed on the stage by name; *Euthumenes*, *Argurrhios*, *Surakosios*, *Kinesias*, Athenian rulers who endeavoured to restrain the gross attacks of the comic poets. p. 141, *Acharnes*, Aristophanes' play *The Acharnians*: it is the most ancient specimen of comedy which has reached us. p. 143, *Poseidon*, the Sea == Neptune. p. 144, *Triballos*, a vulgar deity. p. 145, *Kolonos*, an eminence near Athens; *stulos*, a style or pen to write with on wax tablets; *psalterion*, a musical instrument like a harp, a psaltery. p. 146, *Pentheus*, king of Thebes, who resisted the worship of Bacchus, and was driven mad by the god and torn to pieces by his own mother and her two sisters in their Bacchic frenzy. p. 147, *Herakles* == Hercules; *Argive Amphitruon*, son of Alkaios and husband of Alcmene; *Alkaios*, father of Amphitruon and grandfather of Hercules; *Perseus*, son of Jupiter and Danae; *Thebai*, capital of Bœotia, founded by Cadmus; *Sown-ones*, the armed men who rose from the dragons' teeth sown by Cadmus; *Ares*, Greek name of Mars; *Kadmos*, founder of Bœotian Thebes; *Kreon*, king of Thebes, father of Megara slain by Lukos; *Menoikeus*, father of the Kreon above referred to. p. 148, *Kuklopiian city*: Argos, according to Euripides, was built by the seven Cyclopes:

“These were architects who attended Proetus when he returned out of Asia; among other works with which they adorned Greece were the walls of Mycenæ and Tiryns, which were built of unhewn stones, so large that two mules yoked could not move the smallest of them” (Potter); *Argos*, an ancient city, capital of Argolis in Peloponnesus; *Elektruon*, a son of Perseus; *Heré* == Juno; *Tainaros*, a promontory of Laconia, where was the cavern whence Hercules dragged Cerberus; *Dirké*, wife of the Theban prince Lukos; *Amphion*: “His skill in music was so great that the very stones were said to have been wrought upon by his lyre, and of themselves to have built the walls of Thebes” —*Carey* (see [Abt Vogler](#)); *Zethos*, brother of Amphion; *Euboia*, the largest island in the Ægean Sea, now Negroponte. p. 149, *Minuai*, the Argonauts, companions of Jason. p. 150, *Taphian town*, Taphiæ, islands in the Ionian Sea. p. 153, *peplos*, a robe. p. 154, *Hellas* == Greece; *Nemeian monster*, the lion slain by Hercules. p. 156, *Kentaur race*, a people of Thessaly represented as half men and half horses; *Pholoé*, a mountain in Arcadia; *Dirphus*, a mountain of Eubœa which Hercules laid waste; *Abantid*: Abantis was an ancient name of Eubœa. p. 158, *Parnasos*, a mountain of Phocis. p. 165, *Peneios*, a river of Thessaly; *Mount Pelion*, a celebrated mountain of Thessaly; *Homole*, a mountain of Thessaly; *Oinoé* == Cene, a small town of Argolis; *Diomede*, a king of Thrace who fed his horses on human flesh, and was himself destroyed by Hercules. p. 166, *Hebros*, the principal river of Thrace; *Mukenaian tyrant*,

Eurystheus, king of Mycenæ; *Amauros*, Amaurus, a river of Thessaly near the foot of Pelion; *Kuknos*, a son of Mars by Pelopea, killed by Hercules; *Amphanaia*, a Dorian city; *Hesperian*, west, towards Spain; *Maiotis*, Lake Mæotis, *i. e.*, the Sea of Azof. p. 167, *Lernaian snake*, the hydra slain by Hercules, who then drained the marsh of Lerna; *Erutheia*, an island near Cadiz, where Hercules drove the oxen of Geryon. p. 169, *Pelasgia* == Greece; *Daidalos*, mythical personage, father of Icarus; *Oichalia*, a town of Laconia, destroyed by Hercules. p. 177, *Ismenos*, a river of Bœotia flowing through Thebes. p. 180, *Orgies*, festivals of Bacchus; *Chthonia*, a surname of Ceres; *Hermion*, a town of Argolis where Ceres had a famous temple; *Theseus*, king of Athens, conqueror of the Minotaur. p. 182, *Aitna* == Etna. p. 183, *Mnemosuné*, the mother of the Muses; *Bromios*, a surname of Bacchus; *Delian girls*, of Delos, one of the Cyclades islands; *Latona*, mother of Apollo and Diana. p. 188, *Acherontian harbour*: Acheron was one of the rivers of hell. p. 189, *Asopiad sisters*, daughters of the god of the river Asopus; *Puthios*, surname of the Delphian Apollo; *Helikonian muses*: Mount Helicon, in Bœotia, was sacred to Apollo and the Muses. p. 190, *Plouton* == Pluto, god of hell; *Paian*, name of Apollo, the healer; *Iris*, the swift-footed messenger of the gods. p. 193, *Keres*, the daughters of Night and personified necessity of Death. p. 194, *Otototoi*, woe! alas! p. 195, *Tariaros* == Hades; *Pallas*, *i. e.*, Minerva. p. 198, *Niso's city*, port town of Megara; *Isthmos*, the isthmus of Corinth. p. 201, *Argolis*, a country of Peloponnesus,

now Romania; *Danaos*, son of Belus, king of Egypt: he had fifty daughters, who murdered the fifty sons of Egyptus; *Prokné*, daughter of Pandion, king of Athens, wife of Tereus, king of Thrace. p. 202, *Itus*, son of Prokné. p. 206, *Taphioi*, the Taphians, who made war against Electryon, and killed all his sons; *Erinues* == the Furies. p. 213, *Erechtheidai's town* == Athens. p. 215, *Hundredheaded Hydra*, a dreadful monster slain by Hercules. p. 216, *Phlegruia*, a place of Macedonia, where Hercules defeated the giants. p. 234, *Iostephanos*, violet-crowned, a name of Athens. p. 235, *Thamuris*, an ancient Thracian bard; *Poikilé*, a celebrated portico of Athens, adorned with pictures of gods and benefactors; *Rhesus* was king of Thrace and ally of the Trojans; *Blind Bard* == Thamuris. p. 236, *Eurutos*, a king of Æchalia, who offered his daughter to a better shot than himself: Hercules won, but was denied the prize; *Dorion*, a town of Messenia, where Thamyris challenged the Muses to a trial of skill; *Balura*, a river of Peloponnesus. p. 241, *Dekeleia*, a village of Attica north of Athens, celebrated in the Peloponnesian war; *spinks*, chaffinches. p. 242, *Amphion*, son of Jupiter and inventor of Music: he built the walls of Thebes to the sound of his lyre. p. 245, *Castalian dew*, the fountain of Castalia, near Phocis, at the foot of Parnassus. p. 247, *Pheidippides*, the celebrated runner, a character also in *The Clouds*. p. 248, *Aigispoiarnoi*, Ægospotamos was the river where the Athenians were defeated by Lysander, B.C. 405; *Elaphebolion month*, stag-hunting time, when the poetical contests took place; *Lusandros*, the celebrated Spartan

general Lysander; *triremes*, galleys with three banks of oars one above another. p. 249, *Bakis-prophecy*, Bacis was a famous soothsayer of Bœotia. p. 253, *Elektra*, daughter of Agamemnon, king of Argos; *Orestes*, brother of Elektra, who saved his life. p. 254, *Klutaimnestra*, murdered her husband Agamemnon. p. 255, *Kommos*, a great wailing; *eleleleleu*, a loud crying; *Lakonians*, the Lacedæmonians == the Spartans. p. 258, *Young Philemon*, a Greek comic poet; there was an old Philemon, contemporary with Menander. – Mr. Fotheringham, in his “Studies in the Poetry of Robert Browning,” says: “Browning’s preference for *Euripides* among Greek dramatists, and his defence of that poet in the person of Balaustion against Aristophanes, shows how distinctly he has considered the principles raised by the later drama of Greece, and how deliberately he prefers Euripidean art and aims to Aristophanic naturalism. He likes the human and ethical standpoint, the serious and truth-loving spirit of the tragic rather than the pure Hellenism of the comic poet; while the *Apology* suggests a broader spirit and a larger view, an art that unites the realism of the one with the higher interests of the other – delight in and free study of the world with ideal aims and spiritual truth” (p. 356).

**Arezzo.** A city of Tuscany, the residence of Count Guido Franceschini, the husband of Pompilia and her murderer. It is now a clean, well-built, well-paved, and flourishing town of ten thousand inhabitants. It is celebrated in connection with many remarkable men, as Mæcenas, Guido the musician, Guittone the

poet, Cesalpini the botanist, Vasari, the author of the "Lives of the Painters," and many others. (*The Ring and the Book.*)

**Art Poems.** The great poems dealing with painting are "Fra Lippo Lippi," "Andrea del Sarto," "Old Pictures in Florence," "Pictor Ignotus," and "The Guardian Angel."

**Artemis Prologizes.** (*Dramatic Lyrics, in Bells and Pomegranates, No. III. 1842.*) Theseus became enamoured of Hippolyta when he attended Hercules in his expedition against the Amazons. Before she accepted him as her lover, he had to vanquish her in single combat, which difficult and dangerous task he accomplished. She accompanied him to Athens, and bore him a son, Hippolytus. The young prince excelled in every manly virtue, but he was averse to the female sex, and grievously offended Venus by neglecting her and devoting himself entirely to the worship of Diana, called by the Greeks Artemis. Venus was enraged, and determined to ruin him. Hippolyta in process of time died, and Theseus married Phædra, the daughter of Minos, the king of Crete. Unhappily, as soon as Phædra saw the young and accomplished Hippolytus, she conceived for him a guilty passion – which, however, she did her utmost to conceal. It was Venus who inspired her with this insane love, out of revenge to Hippolytus, whom she intended to ruin by this means. Phædra's nurse discovered the secret, and told it to the youth, notwithstanding the commands of her mistress to conceal it. The chaste young man was horrified at the declaration, and indignantly resented it. The disgraced and betrayed Phædra

determined to take her own life; but dying with a letter in her hand which accused Hippolytus of attempts upon her virtue, the angry father, without asking his son for explanations, banished him from the kingdom, having first claimed the performance from Neptune of his promise to grant three of his requests. As Hippolytus fled from Athens, his horses were terrified by a sea monster sent on shore by Neptune. The frightened horses upset the chariot, and the young man was dragged over rocks and precipices and mangled by the wheels of his chariot. In the tragedy, as left by Euripides, Diana appears by the young man's dying bed and comforts him, telling him also that to perish thus was his fate: —

“But now  
Farewell: to see the dying or the dead  
Is not permitted me: it would pollute  
Mine eyes; and thou art near this fatal ill.”

The tragedy ends with the dying words of Hippolytus: —

“No longer I retain my strength: I die;  
But veil my face, now veil it with my vests.”

So far Euripides. Mr. Browning, however, carries the idea further, and makes Diana try to save the life of her worshipper, by handing him over to the care of Æsculapius, to restore to life and health by the wisest pharmacies of the god of healing.

Mr. Browning's poem closes with the chaste goddess watching and waiting for the result of the attempt to save his life. The poet has adopted the Greek spelling in place of that to which we are more accustomed. The Greek names require their Latin equivalents for non-classical scholars. *Artemis* is the Greek name for *Diana*; *Asclepios* is *Æsculapius*; *Aphrodite*, the Greek name of *Venus*; *Poseidon* is *Neptune*; and *Phoibus* or *Phæbus* is *Apollo*, the Sun. *Heré* == Hera or Juno, Queen of Heaven. *Athenai* == Minerva. *Phaidra*, daughter of Minos and Pasiphae, who married Theseus. *Theseus*, king of Athens. *Hippolutos*, son of Theseus and Hippolyte. *Henetian horses*, or *Enetian*, of a district near Paphlagonia.

**Artemisia Genteschi** (Beatrice Signorini, *Asolando*), "the consummate Artemisia" of the poem, was a celebrated artist (1590-1642). See [Beatrice Signorini](#).

"**Ask not the least word of praise,**" the first line of the lyric at the end of "A Pillar at Sebzevah," No. 11 of *Ferishtah's Fancies*.

**Asolando: Fancies and Facts.** Published in London, December 12th, 1889, on the day on which Mr. Browning died in Venice. *Contents*: Prologue; Rosny; Dubiety; Now; Humility; Poetics; Summum Bonum; A Pearl, A Girl; Speculative; White Witchcraft; Bad Dreams, I., II., III., IV.; Inapprehensiveness; Which? The Cardinal and the Dog; The Pope and the Net; The Bean-Feast; Muckle-mouth Meg; Arcades Ambo; The Lady and the Painter; Ponte dell' Angelo, Venice; Beatrice Signorini;

Flute Music, with an Accompaniment; “Imperante Augusto, Natus est – ”; Development; Rephan; Reverie; Epilogue. The volume is dedicated to the poet’s friend, Mrs. Arthur Bronson. In the dedication the poet explains the title *Asolando*: it was a “*title-name popularly ascribed to the inventiveness of the ancient secretary of Queen Cornaro, whose palace-tower still overlooks us.*” *Asolare* – “to disport in the open air, amuse oneself at random.” “The objection that such a word nowhere occurs in the works of the Cardinal is hardly important. Bembo was too thorough a purist to conserve in print a term which in talk he might possibly toy with; but the word is more likely derived from a Spanish source. I use it for love of the place, and in requital of your pleasant assurance that an early poem of mine first attracted you thither; where and elsewhere, at La Mura as Cà Alvisi, may all happiness attend you! – Gratefully and affectionately yours, R. B.” – *Asolo, Oct. 5th, 1889.*

**Asolo** (*Pippa Passes* – *Sordello* – *Asolando*), the ancient *Acelum*: a very picturesque mediæval fortified town, in the province of Treviso, in Venetia, Italy, 5500 inhabitants, at the foot of a hill surmounted by the ruins of a castle, from which one of the most extensive panoramas of the great plain of the Brenta and the Piave, with the encircling Alps, and the distant insulated group of the Euganean hills, opens before the traveller. On a fine summer evening the two silver lines of the Piave and the Brenta may be followed from their Alpine valleys to the sea, in the midst of the green alluvial plain in which Treviso, Vicenza and Padua

are easily recognised. Venice, with its cupolas and steeples, is seen near the extreme east horizon, which is terminated by the blue line of the Adriatic; whilst behind, to the north, the snow-capped peaks of the Alps rise in majestic grandeur. The village of Asolo is surrounded by a wall with mediæval turrets, and several of its houses present curiously sculptured façades. — The castle, a quadrangular building with a high tower, is an interesting monument of the thirteenth century. It was the residence of the beautiful Caterina Cornaro, the last queen of Cyprus, after the forced resignation of her kingdom to the Venetians in 1489. Here this lady of elegant tastes and refined education closed her days in comparative obscurity, in the enjoyment of an empty title and a splendid income, and surrounded by a small court and several literary characters. Of these, one of the most celebrated was Pietro Bembo, the historian of Venice, afterwards Cardinal, whose celebrated philosophical dialogues on the nature of love, the *Asolani*, have derived their name from this locality. Mr. Browning visited Asolo first when a young man; it was here that he gathered ideas for *Pippa Passes* and *Sordello*, and in the last year of his life his loving footsteps found their way to the little hill-town of that Italy whose name was graven on his heart. Here, as Mr. Sharp reminds us in his *Life of Browning*, the poet heard again the echo of Pippa's song —

“God's in His heaven, All's right with the world!”

He heard it as a young man, he hears it as he nears the dark river, the conviction had never left his soul for a moment in all the length of intervening years. Asolo will be a pilgrim spot for Browning lovers. The Catherine Cornaro referred to was the wife of King James II., of Cyprus; his marriage with this Venetian lady of rank was designed to secure the support of the Republic of Venice. After his death, and that of his son James III., Queen Catherine felt she was unable to withstand the attacks of the Turks, and was induced to abdicate in favour of the Republic of Venice, which in 1487 took possession of the island. Catherine was assigned a palace and court at Asolo, as already mentioned. Her palace was the resort of the learned and accomplished men and women of Venice, famous amongst whom was her secretary, Cardinal Pietro Bembo, the celebrated author of the *History of Venice*, from 1487 to 1513, and a number of essays, dialogues, and poems. His dialogue on Platonic love is entitled *Gli Asolani*. He died in 1547. When Queen Catherine settled in her beautiful castle of Asolo, she could have found little cause to regret the circumstances which led her from her troubled kingdom of Cyprus to the idyllic sweetness of her later life. Surrounded by her twelve maids of honour and her eighty serving-men, her favourite negress, her parrots, apes, peacocks, and hounds, her peaceful life passed in ideal pleasantness. But the wealth and luxury of her surroundings did not make her selfish, or unconcerned for the welfare of her little kingdom. In all that concerned the happiness and well-being of her people she was as

deeply interested as the monarchs of more important states. She opened a pawnbroking bank for the poor, imported corn from Cyprus and distributed it, and appointed competent officials to settle the complaints and difficulties of her subjects. She lived for her people's welfare, and won their affections by her goodness and grace. For twenty years she lived at Asolo, leaving it on only three occasions: to visit her brother in Brescia; to walk to Venice across the frozen lagoon; and once when troops occupied her little town. She died then, at Venice, on July 10th, 1510, and was buried by the republic of the city in the sea, with its utmost magnificence. The fate could scarcely have been called cruel which gave a royal residence amid scenery such as Asolo can boast, under such conditions as blessed the later years of good Queen Catherine.

**At the Mermaid.** The Mermaid Tavern, in Cheapside, was the favourite resort of the great Elizabethan dramatists and poets. Raleigh's Club at the Mermaid was the meeting-place of Shakespeare's contemporaries, where he feasted with Raleigh, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Ford, Massinger, Donne, Drayton, Camden, Selden, and the rest. "At this meeting-place of the gods," says Heywood, in his *Hierarchy of Angels*: —

"Mellifluous Shakespeare, whose enchanting quill  
Commanded mirth or passion, was but *Will*,  
And famous Jonson, tho' his learned pen  
Be dipt in Castaly, is still but *Ben*."

Mr. Browning introduces us to Shakespeare protesting that he makes no claim and has no desire to be the leader of a new school of poetry. In the person of Shakespeare Mr. Browning tells the world that if they want to know anything about him they must take his ideas as they are expressed in his works, not seek to pry into his life and opinions behind them. His works are the world's, his rest is his own. He protests, too, that when he utters opinions and expresses ideas dramatically they are not to be snatched at by leaders of sects and parties, and bottled as specimens for their museums, or used to give authority to their own pet principles. He does not set open the door of his bard's breast: on the contrary, he bars his portal, and leaves his work and his inquisitive visitors alike "outside." Notwithstanding this emphatic declaration, it is probable that few great poets have opened their hearts to the world more completely than Mr. Browning: it is as easy to construct his personality from his works as it is to reconstruct an old Greek temple from the sculptured stones which are scattered on its site. All Mr. Browning's characters talk the Browning tongue, and are as little given to barring their portals as he to closing the door of his breast. This fact must not, of course, be unduly pressed. The utterances of Caliban are not to be put on the same level as the thoughts, expressed a hundred times, which justify the ways of God to man. Having declared himself as determined to let the public have no glimpse inside his breast, in Stanza 10 he proceeds to admit us to his innermost soul, in its joy of life

and golden optimism. It is as perfect a picture of the poet's healthy mind as he could possibly have given us, and is an earnest deprecation of the idea that a poet must necessarily be more or less insane. Notes. —*Oreichalch* (7), a mixed metal resembling brass – bronze. “*Threw Venus*” (15): in dice the best cast (three sixes) was called “Venus.” Ben Jonson tells us that his own wife was “a shrew, yet honest.”

**Austin Tresham.** Gwendolen Tresham's betrothed, in *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon*. He is next heir to the earldom.

**Azoth** (*Paracelsus*). The universal remedy of Paracelsus, in alchemy. The term was applied to mercury, which was supposed to exist in every metallic body, and constitute its basis. The Azoth of Paracelsus, according to Mr. Browning, was simply the laudanum which he had discovered. The alchemists by Azoth sometimes meant to express the creative principle of nature. As “he was commonly believed to possess the double tincture, the power of curing diseases and transmuting metals,” as Mr. Browning explains in a note to the poem, the expression is often difficult to define precisely, as indeed are many of the terms used by alchemists.

**Azzo.** Lords of Este (*Sordello*): Guelf leaders. The poem is concerned with Azzo VI. (1170-1212), who became the head of the Guelf party. During the whole lifetime of Azzo VI. a civil war raged almost without interruption in the streets of Ferrara, each party, it is said, being ten times driven from the city. Azzo VII. (1205-64) was constantly at war with Eccelino III. da Romano,

who leagued himself with Salinguerra. Azzo married Adelaide, niece of Eccelino, and died 1264. (*Encyc. Brit.*)

**Bad Dreams.** (*Asolando.*) I. In the first dream the lover sees that the face of the loved one has changed: love has died out of the eyes, and the charm of the look has gone. Love is estranged, for faith has gone. With a breaking heart the lover can say love is still the same for him. II. A weird dream of a strange ball, a dance of death and hell, where, notwithstanding harmony of feet and hands, “man’s sneer met woman’s curse.” The dreamer creeps to the wall side, avoiding the dance of haters, and steps into a chapel where is performed a strange worship by a priest unknown. The dreamer sees a worshipper – his wife – enter, to palliate or expurgate her soul of some ugly stain. How contracted? “A mere dream” is an insufficient excuse. The soul in sleep, free from the disguises of the day, wanders at will. Perhaps it may indeed be that our suppressed evil thoughts – thoughts that, kept down by custom, conventionality, and respect for public opinion, never become incarnate in act – walk at night and revel in unfettered freedom, as foul gases rise from vaults and basements when the house is closed at night, and the purifying influences of the light and air are excluded. III. Is a dream of a primeval forest: giant trees, impenetrable tangle of enormous undergrowths, where lurks some brute-type. A lucid city of bright marbles, domes and spires, pure streets too fine for smirch of human foot, its solitary traverser the soul of the dreamer; and all at once appears a hideous sight: the beautiful city is devoured by the forest, the

trees by the pavements turned to teeth. Nature is represented by the forest, Art by the city and its palaces. Each in its place is seen to be good and worthy, but when each devours the other both are accurst. The man seems to think that his wife conceals some part of her life from him; her nature is good and true, but he fears her art (or perhaps arts, we should say) destroys it. IV. A dream of infinite pathos. The wife's tomb, its slab weather-stained, its inscription overgrown with herbage, its name all but obliterated. Her husband comes to visit the grave. Was he her lover? – rather the cold critic of her life. She had felt her poverty in all that he demanded, and she had resigned him and life too; and as she moulders under the herbage, she sees in spirit her husband's strength and sternness gone, and he broken and praying that she were his again, with all her foibles, her faults: aye, crowned as queen of folly, he would be happy if her foot made a stepping-stone of his forehead. What had worked the miracle? Was the date on the stone the record of the day when his chance stab of scorn had killed her? There are cruel deeds and still more cruel words that no veiling herbage of balm and mint shall keep from haunting us in the time when repentance has come too late.

**Badman, Mr.** *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, as told by John Bunyan, contains the story of "Old Tod," which suggested to Mr. Browning the poem of *Ned Bratts* (*q. v.*).

**Balaustion.** The name of the Greek girl of Rhodes, who, when the Athenians were defeated at Syracuse and her countrymen had determined to side with the enemies of Athens,

refused to forsake Athens, the light and life of the world. She saved her companions in the ship by which she fled from Rhodes by reciting to the people of Syracuse the *Alcestis* of Euripides. Her story is told in *Balaustion's Adventure*, and *Aristophanes' Apology*, which is its sequel. Her name means "wild pomegranate flower."

**Balaustion's Adventure**, including a transcript from Euripides. London, 1871. – The adventure of Balaustion in the harbour of Syracuse came about as follows. Nicias (or Nikias as he is called in the poem), the Athenian general, was appointed, much against his inclination, to conduct the expedition against Sicily. After a long series of ill-successes he was completely surrounded by the enemy and was compelled to surrender with all his army. He was put to death, and all his troops were sent to the great stone quarries, there to perish of disease, hard labour and privation. At Syracuse Athens was shamed, and lost her ships and men, gaining a "death without a grave." After the disgraceful news had reached Greece the people of Rhodes rose in tumult, and, casting off their allegiance to Athens, they determined to side with Sparta. Balaustion, though only a girl, was so patriotic that she cried to all who would hear, begging them not to throw Athens off for Sparta's sake, nor be disloyal to all that was worth calling the world at all. She begged that all who agreed with her would take ship for Athens at once; a few heard and accompanied her. They were by adverse winds driven out of their course, and, being pursued by pirates, made for the island of Crete.

Balaustion, to encourage the rowers, sprang upon the altar by the mast, crying to the sons of Greeks to free their wives, their children, and the temples of the gods; so the oars “churned the black waters white,” and soon they saw to their dismay Sicily and the city of Syracuse, – they had run upon the lion from the wolf. A galley came out, demanding “if they were friends or foes?” “Kaunians,” replied the captain. “We heard all Athens in one ode just now. Back you must go, though ten pirates blocked the bay.” It was explained to the exiles that they wanted no Athenians there to spirit up the captives in the quarries. The captain prayed them by the gods they should not thrust suppliants back, but save the innocent who were not bent on traffic. In vain! And as they were about to turn and face the foe, one cried, “Wait! that was a song of Æschylus: how about Euripides? Might you know any of his verses too?” The captain shouted, “Praise the god. Here she stands – Balaustion. Strangers, greet the lyric girl!” And Balaustion said, “Save us, and I will recite that strangest, saddest, sweetest song of his – Alkestis. Take me to Herakles’ temple you have here. I come a suppliant to him; put me upon his temple steps, to tell you his achievement as I may!” And so they rowed them in to Syracuse, crying, “We bring more of Euripides!” The whole city came out to hear, came rushing to the superb temple, on the topmost step of which they placed the girl; and plainly she told the play, just as she had seen it acted in Rhodes. A wealthy Syracusan brought a whole talent, and bade her take it for herself; she offered it to the god —

“For had not Herakles a second time  
Wrestled with death and saved devoted ones?”

The poor captives in the quarries, when they heard the tale, sent her a crown of wild pomegranate flower – the name (Balaustion in Greek) she always henceforth bore. But there was a young man who every day, as she recited on the temple steps, stood at the foot; and, when liberated, they set sail again for Athens. There in the ship was he: he had a hunger to see Athens, and soon they were to marry. She visited Euripides, kissed his sacred hand, and paid her homage. The Athenians loved him not, neither did they love his friend Socrates; but they were fellows, and Socrates often went to hear him read. – Such was her adventure; and the beautiful Alcestis’ story which she told is transcribed from the well-known play of Euripides in the succeeding pages of Mr. Browning’s book. Whether the story has undergone transformation in the process we must leave to the decision of authorities on the subject. A comparison between the Greek original and Mr. Browning’s translation or “transcript” certainly shows some important divergences from the classic story. We have only to compare the excellent translation of Potter in Morley’s “Universal Library,” vol. 54 (Routledge, 1s.), to discern this fact at once. As the question is one of considerable literary importance, it is necessary to call attention to it in this work. For those of my readers who may have

forgotten the *Alkestis* tragedy, it may be well to recall its principal points. Potter, in his translation of the *Alkestis* of Euripides, gives the following prefatory note of the plot: – “Admetus and Alcestis were nearly related before their marriage. Æolus, the third in descent from Prometheus, was the father of Cretheus and Salmoneus; Æson, the father of Jason, and Pheres, the father of Admetus, were sons of Cretheus; Tyro, the daughter of Salmoneus, was by Neptune mother to Pelias, whose eldest daughter Alcestis was. The historian, who relates the arts by which Medea induced the daughters of Pelias to cut their father in pieces in expectation of seeing him restored to youth, tells us that Alcestis alone, through the tenderness of her filial piety, concurred not with her sisters in that fatal deed (Diodor. Sic.). Pheres, now grown old, had resigned his kingdom to his son, and retired to his paternal estate, as was usual in those states where the sceptre was a spear. Admetus, on his first accession to the regal power, had kindly received Apollo, who was banished from heaven, and compelled for the space of a year to be a slave to a mortal; and the god, after he was restored to his celestial honours, did not forget that friendly house, but, when Admetus lay ill of a disease from which there was no recovery, prevailed upon the Fates to spare his life, on condition that some near relation should consent to die for him. But neither his father nor his mother, nor any of his friends, was willing to pay the ransom. Alcestis, hearing this, generously devoted her own life to save her husband’s. – The design of this tragedy is to recommend

the virtue of hospitality, so sacred among the Grecians, and encouraged on political grounds, as well as to keep alive a generous and social benevolence. The scene is in the vestibule of the house of Admetus. Palæphatus has given this explanation of the fable: After the death of Pelias, Acastus pursued the unhappy daughters to punish them for destroying their father. Alcestis fled to Pheræ; Acastus demanded her of Admetus, who refused to give her up; he therefore advanced towards Pheræ with a great army, laying the country waste with fire and sword. Admetus marched out of the city to check these devastations, fell into an ambush, and was taken prisoner. Acastus threatened to put him to death. When Alcestis understood that the life of Admetus was in this danger on her account, she went voluntarily and surrendered herself to Acastus, who discharged Admetus and detained her in custody. At this critical time Hercules, on his expedition to Thrace, arrives at Pheræ, is hospitably entertained by Admetus, and being informed of the distress and danger of Alcestis, immediately attacks Acastus, defeats his army, rescues the lady, and restores her to Admetus.” – At the eighty-fourth meeting of the London Browning Society (June 26th, 1891), Mr. R. G. Moulton, M.A. Camb., read a paper on *Balaustion's Adventure*, which he described as “a beautiful misrepresentation of the original.” In this he said: “To those who are willing to decide literary questions upon detailed evidence, I submit that analysis shows the widest divergence between the Admetus of Euripides and the Admetus sung by

Balaustion. And, in answer to those who are influenced only by authority, I claim that I have on my side of the question an authority who on this matter must rank higher than even Browning himself; and the name of my authority is Euripides.” The following extracts from Mr. Moulton’s able and scholarly criticism will explain his chief points. (The whole paper is published in the Transactions of the Browning Society, 1890-1.) Mr. Moulton says: “My position is that Browning, in common with the greater part of modern readers, has entirely misread and misrepresented Euripides’ play of *Alcestis*. If any one wishes to pronounce “Balaustion’s Adventure” a more beautiful poem than the Greek original, I have no wish to gainsay his estimate; but I maintain, nevertheless, that the one gives a distorted view of the other. The English poem is no mere translation of the Greek, but an interpretation with comments freely interpolated. And the poet having caught a wrong impression as to one of the main elements of the Greek story, has unconsciously let this impression colour his interpretations of words and sentences, and has used his right of commenting to present his mistaken conception with all the poetic force of a great master, until I fear that the Euripidean setting of the story is for English readers almost hopelessly lost. The point at issue is the character of Admetus. Taken in the rough, the general situation has been understood by modern readers thus: A husband having obtained from Fate the right to die by substitute, when no other substitute was forthcoming his wife Alcestis came forward, and by dying

saved Admetus. And the first thought of every honest heart has been, "Oh, the selfishness of that husband to accept the sacrifice!" But my contention is, that if Euripides' play be examined with open and unbiassed mind, it will be found that not only Admetus is not selfish, but, on the contrary, he is as eminent for unselfishness in his sphere of life as Alcestis proves in her own. If this be so, the modern readers, with Browning at their head, have been introducing into the play a disturbing element that has no place there. And they have further, I submit, missed another conception – to my thinking a much more worthy conception – which really does underlie and unify the whole play. If Admetus is in fact selfish, how comes it that no personage in the whole play catches this idea? – no one, that is, except Pheres, whose words go for nothing, since he never discovers this selfishness of Admetus until he is impelled to fasten on another the accusation which has been hurled at himself. Except Pheres, all regard Admetus as the sublime type of generosity. Apollo, as representing the gods, uses the unexpected word "holy" to describe the demeanour with which his human protector cherished him during the trouble that drove him to earth in human shape. The Chorus, who, it is well known, represent in a Greek play public opinion, and are a channel by which the author insinuates the lesson of the story, cannot restrain their admiration at one point of the action, and devote an ode to the lofty character of their king. And Hercules, so grandly represented by Browning himself as the unselfish

toiler for others, feels at one moment that he has been outdone in generosity by Admetus. There can be no question, then, what Euripides thought about the character of Admetus. And will the objector seriously contend that Euripides has, without intending it, presented a character which must in fact be pronounced selfish? The suggestion that the poet who created Alcestis did not know selfishness when he saw it, seems to me an improbability far greater than the improbability that Browning and the English readers should go wrong. Browning's suggestion of Pheres as Admetus "push'd to completion" seems to me grossly unfair: it ignores all Admetus' connection with Apollo and Hercules, and all his world-wide fame for hospitality. There is nothing in the legend or in the play to suggest that Pheres is anything more than an ordinary Greek: certainly the gods never came down from heaven to wonder at Pheres, nor did Hercules ever recognise him as generous beyond himself. In no view can the scene be other than a painful one. But it is intelligible only when we see in it, not the son rebuking his father, but the head of the State pouring out indignation on the officer whose self-preserving instinct has shirked at once a duty and an honourable opportunity to sacrifice, and thereby lost a life more valuable than his own. In this light the situation before us wears a different aspect. It is no case of a wife dying for a husband, but it is a subject dying to save the head of the State. And nothing can be clearer than that such a sacrifice is *taken for granted* by the personages who appear before us in Euripides' play. For I must warn the reader of *Balaustion* that

there is not the shadow of a shade of foundation in the original for the scornful words of the English poet telling how the idea of a substitute for their king nowhere appears unnatural to the personages of the play; the sole surprise they express is that the substitute should be the youthful Alcestis and not the aged parents. The situation may fairly be paralleled in this respect with the crisis that arises in Sir Walter Scott's *Fair Maid of Perth*, when the seven sons of Torquil go successively to certain death to shield their chief; and, while they cover themselves with glory, no one accuses Hector of selfishness for allowing the sacrifice: the sentiment of clan institutions makes it a matter of course. The hospitality of Admetus is the foundation of the story; for it is this which has led Apollo (as he tells us in the prologue) to wring out of Fate the sparing to earth of the generous king on condition of a substitute being found."

The stone quarries of ancient Syracuse are now called *Latomia*, the largest and most picturesque of which is named *Latomia de' Cappuccini*. It is a vast pit, from eighty to a hundred feet in depth, and is several acres in extent. Murray, describing these vast quarries, says: "It is certain that they existed before the celebrated siege by the Athenians, 415 B.C.; and that some one of them was then deep enough to serve for a prison, and extensive enough to hold the unhappy seven thousand, the relics of the great Athenian host who were captured at the *Asinarus*. There is every probability that that of the *Capuchins* is the one described by *Thucydides*, who gives a touching picture of the misery the

Athenians were made to endure from close confinement, hunger, thirst, filth, exposure and disease. Certain holes in the angles of the rocks are still pointed out by tradition as the spots where some of the Athenians were chained. The greater part of them perished here, but Plutarch tells us that some among them who could recite the verses of Euripides were liberated from captivity.” Lord Byron’s lines in *Childe Harold* may be quoted in this connection —

“When Athens’ armies fell at Syracuse,  
And fettered thousands bore the yoke of war,  
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse —  
Her voice the only ransom from afar.  
See! as they chaunt the tragic hymn, the car  
Of the o’ermastered victor stops; the reins  
Fall from his hands; his idle scimitar  
Starts from his belt: he rends his captive’s chains,  
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.”

“Some there were who owed their preservation to Euripides. Of all the Grecians, his was the muse whom the Sicilians were most in love with. From every stranger that landed in their island, they gleaned every small specimen or portion of his works, and communicated it with pleasure to each other. It is said that on this occasion a number of Athenians, upon their return home, went to Euripides, and thanked him in the most respectful manner for their obligations to his pen; some having been enfranchised

for teaching their masters what they remembered of his poems, and others having got refreshments, when they were wandering about after the battle, for singing a few of his verses. Nor is this to be wondered at, since they tell us that when a ship from Caunus, which happened to be pursued by pirates, was going to take shelter in one of their ports, the Sicilians at first refused to admit her; but upon asking the crew whether they knew any of the verses of Euripides, and being answered in the affirmative, they received both them and their vessel.” (Plutarch’s life of Nicias.)

Notes. [The numbers refer to the pages in the complete edition of the Works.] – P. 5, *Kameiros*, a Dorian town on the west coast of Rhodes, and the principal town before the foundation of Rhodes itself; *The League*, the Spartan league against the domination of Athens. p. 6, *Knidos*, city famous for the statue of Venus by Praxiteles, in one of her temples there; *Ilissian*, Trojan; *gate of Diomedes*, the Diomæan gate, leading to a grove and gymnasium; *Hippadai*, the gate of Hippadas, leading to the suburb of Cerameicus; *Lakonia* or *Laconica* or *Lacedæmon*: Sparta was the only town of importance – in this connection it means Sparta; *Choës* (the Pitchers) an Athenian festival of Dionysus or Bacchus; *Chutroi*, a Bacchic festival at Athens – the feast of pots; *Agora*, the Athenian market and chief public place; *Dikasteria*, tribunals; *Pnux* == the Pnyx, the place of public assembly for the people of Athens; *Keramikos*, two suburban places at Athens were thus called: the one a market and public walk, the other a cemetery; *Salamis*, an island on

the west coast of Attica, memorable for the battle in which the Greeks defeated the fleet of Xerxes, 480 B.C.; *Psuttalia*, a small island near Salamis; *Marathon*: the plain of Marathon was twenty-two miles from Athens, and the famous battle there was fought 490 B.C.; *Dionusiæ Theatre*, the great theatre of Athens on the Acropolis. p. 7, *Kaunos*, one of the chief cities of Caria, which was founded by the Cretans. p. 8, *Ortugia*, the island close to Syracuse, and practically part of the city. p. 9, *Aischulos* == the song was from Æschylus, the great tragic poet of Greece; *pint of corn*: the wretched captives in the quarries were kept alive by half the allowance of food given to slaves. Thucydides says (vii. 87): "They were tormented with hunger and thirst; for during eight months they gave each of them daily only a *cotyle* (the *cotyle* was a little more than half an English pint) of water, and two of corn." p. 10, *salpinx*, a trumpet. p. 11, *rhexis*, a proverb; *monostich*, a poem of a single verse; *region of the steed*: horses were supposed by the Greeks to have originated in their land. p. 12, *Euoi*, *Oöp*, *Babai*, exclamations of wonder. p. 13, *Rosy Isle*, Rhodes, the Greek word meaning rose. p. 16, *Anthesterion month* == February-March; *Peiræieus*, the chief harbour of Athens, about five miles distant; *Agathon*, a tragic poet of Athens, born 448 B.C. – a friend of Euripides and Plato; *Iophon*, son of Sophocles: he was a distinguished tragic poet; *Kephisophon*, a contemporary poet; *Baccheion*, the Dionysiæ temple. p. 17, *The mask of the actor*: it should be remembered that the Greek actors were all masked. p. 20, *Phoibos*, the *bright*

or *pure*— a name of Apollo; *Asklepios* == Æsculapius, the god of medicine; *Moirai*, the Fates – Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, the divinities of human life. p. 25, *Eurustheus*, king of Mycenæ, who imposed the “twelve labours” on Hercules. p. 26, *Pelias’ child*: Alcestis was the daughter of Pelias, son of Poseidon and of Tyro; *Paian*, a surname of Apollo, derived from *pæan*, a hymn which was sung in his honour. p. 27, *Lukia* == Lycia, a country of Asia Minor; *Ammon*, a god of Libya and Upper Egypt: Jupiter Ammon with the horns of a ram. p. 32, *pharos*, a veil or cloak covering the eyes. p. 35, *Iolkos*, a town in Thessaly. p. 41, *Koré*, the Maiden, a name by which Proserpine is often called. p. 47, *Acherontian lake*: Acheron was one of the rivers of hell; *Karneian month* == August-September, when the Carnean festival was celebrated in honour of Apollo Carneus, protector of flocks. p. 48, *Kokutos’ stream*, a river in the lower world: the river Cocytus is in Epirus. p. 51, *Thrakian Diomedes*, a king of Thrace who fed his horses on human flesh: it was one of the labours of Hercules to destroy him; *Bistones* == Thracians. p. 53, *Ares*, Greek name of Mars; *Lukaon*, a mythical king of Arcadia; *Kuknos*, son of Mars and Pelopia == Cycnus. p. 60, *Lyric Puthian*: musical contentions in honour of Apollo at Delphi were called the Pythian modes: so Apollo, worshipped with music, was called the lyric Pythian, in commemoration of his victory over the Python, the great serpent; *Othrus’ dell*, in the mountains of Othrys, in Thessaly, the residence of the Centaurs. p. 61, *Boibian lake*, in Thessaly, near Mount Ossa; *Molossoi*, a

people of Epirus, in Greece. p. 68, *Ludian* == Lydian; *Phrugian* == Phrygian. p. 73, *Akastos*, the son of Peleus, king of Iolchis; he made war against Admetus. p. 74, *Hermes the infernal*: he was the son of Zeus and Maia, and was herald of the gods and guide of the dead in Hades – hence the epithet “infernal.” p. 78, *Turranos*, Tyrant or King. p. 79, *Ai, ai! Pheu! pheu! e, papai* == woe! alas, alas! oh, strange! p. 81, *The Helper* == Hercules. p. 83, *Kupris*, Venus, the goddess of Cyprus. p. 87, “*Daughter of Elektruon, Tiruns’ child*”: Electryon was the father of Alcmene, Tiryns was an ancient town in Argolis. p. 88, *Larissa*, a city in Thessaly. p. 94, *Thrakian tablets*, the name of Orpheus is associated with Thrace: the Orphic literature contained treatises on medicine, plants, etc., originally written on tablets, and preserved in the temple; *Orphic voice*, of Orpheus, which charmed all Nature; *Phoibos*, Apollo was the god of medicine, and taught the art to Æsculapius; *Asklepiadai*, who received from Phoibos or Apollo the medical remedies. p. 95, *Chaluboi*, a people of Asia Minor, near Pontus. p. 96, *Alkmené* was the daughter of Electryon: she was the mother of Hercules, conceived by Jupiter. p. 99, *Pheraioi*, the belongings of Admetus as a native of Pheræ. p. 110, “*The Human with his droppings of warm tears*,” a quotation from a poem by Mrs. Browning, entitled *Wine of Cyprus*. p. 111, *Mainad*, a name of the priestesses of Bacchus. p. 119, “*Straying among the flowers in Sicily*”: Proserpine, daughter of Ceres, one day gathering flowers in the meadows of Enna, was carried away by Pluto into the infernal regions, of which she became queen. p.

121, “*a great Kaunian painter*”: Protogenes, a native of Caunus in Caria, a city subject to the Rhodians, flourished 332-300 B.C., and was one of the most celebrated of Greek painters. “The story of his friendly rivalry with Apelles, who was the first to recognise his genius, is familiar to all.” —*Browning Notes and Queries* (Pt. vii. 25): the description of the picture refers to Sir Frederick Leighton’s noble work on this subject. p. 122, *Poikilé*, the celebrated portico at Athens, which received its name from the variety of the paintings which it contained. It was adorned with pictures of the gods and of public benefactors.

**Balkis** (“Solomon and Balkis,” *Jocoseria* 1883). The Queen of Sheba who came to visit Solomon. See [Solomon and Balkis](#).

**Bean Feast, The** (*Asolando*). Pope Sixtus the Fifth (Felice Peretti) was pope from 1585 to 1590. He was born in 1521, and certainly in humble circumstances, but there seems no proof that he was the son of a swineherd, as described in the poem (see *Encyc. Brit.*, vol. xxii, p. 104). He was a great preacher, and one of the most vigorous and able of the popes that ever filled the papal chair. Within two years of his election he issued seventy-two bulls for the reform of the religious orders alone. When anything required to be done, he did it himself, and was evidently of the same opinion as Mr. Spurgeon, who holds that a committee should never consist of more than one person. He reformed the condition of the papal finances, and expended large sums in public works; he completed the dome of St. Peter’s, and erected four Egyptian obelisks in Rome. Ever anxious to reform

abuses, he made it his business to examine into the condition of the people and see with his own eyes their mode of life. Mr. Browning's poem relates how, going about the city in disguise, he one day turned into a tumbledown house where a man and wife sat at supper with their children. He inquired if they knew of any wrongs which wanted righting; bade them not stop eating, but speak freely of their grievances, if any. He bade them have no fear when he threw his hood back and let them see it was the Pope. The poor people were filled with a joyful wonder, the more so as the Pope begged a plate of their tempting beans. He sat down on the doorstep, and having eaten, thanked God that he had appetite and digestion.

**Bean-Stripe, A: also Apple Eating.** (*Ferishtah's Fancies*, No. 12.) One of Ferishtah's scholars demanded to know if on the whole Life were a good or an evil thing. He is asked if beans are taken from a bushful, what colour predominates? Make the beans typical of our days. What is Life's true colour, – black or white? The scholar agrees with Sakya Muni, the Indian sage who declared that Life, past, present and future, was black only – existence simply a curse. Memory is a plague, evil's shadow is cast over present pleasure. Ferishtah strews beans, blackish and whitish, figuring man's sum of moments good and bad; in companionship the black grow less black and the white less white: both are modified – grey prevails. So joys are embittered by sorrows gone before and sobered by a sense of sorrow that may come; thus deepest in black means white most imminent.

Pain's shade enhances the shine of pleasure, the blacks and whites of a lifetime whirl into a white. But to the objector the world is so black, no speck of white will unblacken it. Ferishtah bids his pupil contemplate the insect on a palm frond: what knows he of the uses of a palm tree? It has other uses than such as strike the aphis. It may be so with us: our place in the world may, in the eye of God, be no greater than is to us the inch of green which is cradle, pasture and grave of the palm insect. The aphis feeds quite unconcerned, even if lightning sear the moss beneath his home. The philosopher sees a world of woe all round him; his own life is white, his fellows' black. God's care be God's: for his own part the sorrows of his kind serve to sober with shade his own shining life. There is no sort of black which white has not power to disintensify. His philosophy, he admits, may be wrecked to-morrow, but he speaks from past experience. He cannot live the life of his fellow, yet he knows of those who are not so blessed as to live in Persia, yet it would not be wise to say: "No sun, no grapes, – then no subsistence!" There are lands where snow falls; he will not trouble about cold till it comes to Persia. But the Indian sage, the Buddha, concluded that the best thing of Life was that it led to Death! The dervish replied that though Sakya Muni said so he did not believe it, as he lived out his seventy years and liked his dinner to the last – he lied, in fact. The pupil demands truth at any cost, and is told to take this: God is all-good, all-wise, all-powerful. What is man? Not God, yet he is a creature, with a creature's qualities. You cannot make these two

conceptions agree: God, that only can, does not; man, that would, cannot. A carpet web may illustrate the meaning: the sage has asked the weaver how it is that apart the fiery-coloured silk, and the other of watery dimness, when combined, produce a medium profitable to the sight. The artificer replies that the medium was what he aimed at. So the quality of man blended with the quality of God assists the human sight to understand Life's mystery. Man can only know *of* and think *about*, he cannot understand, earth's least atom. He cannot know fire thoroughly, still less the mystery of gravitation. But, it is objected, force has not mind; man does not thank gravitation when an apple drops, nor summer for the apple: why thank God for teeth to bite it? Forces are the slaves of supreme power. The sense that we owe a debt to somebody behind these forces assures us there is somebody to take it. We eat an apple without thanking it. We thank Him but for whose work orchards might grow gall-nuts.

Ferishtah in the Lyric asks no praise for his work on behalf of mankind. He who works for the world's approval, or even for its love, must not be surprised if both are withheld. He has sought, found and done his duty. For the rest he looks beyond.

**Beatrice Signorini** (*Asolando*, 1889) was a noble Roman lady who married Francesco Romanelli, a painter, a native of Viterbo, in the time of Pope Urban VIII. He was a favourite of the Barberini family. Soon after his marriage he became attached to Artemisia Gentileschi, a celebrated lady painter. One day he proposed to her that she should paint him a picture filled

with fruit, except a space in the centre for her own portrait, which he would himself insert. He kept this work amongst his treasures; and one day, wishing to make his wife jealous, he unveiled it in her presence, dilating on the graces and beauty of the original. His wife was a very beautiful woman also, and was not inclined to tolerate this rivalry for her husband's affections; she therefore destroyed the face of the fair artist in the picture, so that it could not be recognised. Her husband was not angry at this, but admired and loved his wife all the more for this outburst of natural wrath, and soon ceased to think further of his quondam love. Artemisia Gentileschi, daughter of Orazio Gentileschi, lived 1590-1642. She was a pupil of Guido, and acquired great fame as a portrait painter. She was a beautiful woman; her portrait painted by herself is in Hampton Court. Her greatest work is the picture of Judith and Holofernes, in the Pitti Palace, Florence. She came to England with her father in the reign of Charles I., and painted for him David with the head of Goliath. She soon returned to Italy, and passed the remainder of her life at Naples. Baldinucci tells the story of Romanelli.

**Beer.** See [Nationality in Drinks](#) (*Dramatic Lyrics*).

**“Before and After.”** (*Men and Women*, 1855; *Lyrics*, 1863; *Dramatic Lyrics*, 1868.) Two men have quarrelled, and a duel is proposed. It is urged that the injured man should forgive his enemy, but a philosophical adviser considers that Christianity is hardly equal to this particular matter: “Things have gone too far.” Forgiveness is all very well in good books, but these men

are sunk in a slough where they must not be left to “stick and stink.” As the offender never pardons, and the offended in this case will not, there is nothing for it but to fight. Besides, “while God’s champion lives” (the just man), “wrong shall be resisted” and the wrong-doer punished. These two men have quarrelled, and it is impossible to say which of them is the injured and which the injurer. Wrong has been done – this much is certain; beyond that human judgment is at fault, and the Divine must be invoked. Let them fight it out, then! Of course the poet is speaking dramatically, and not laying down the principle that where we see evil done, especially in our own concerns, we are bound to avenge the wrong. This sentiment is that of the philosophical observer of the feud, though there are phrases here and there quite in accord with Mr. Browning’s axioms: “Better sin the whole sin”; “Go, live his life out”; “Life will try his nerves.” [This teaching is much in the way of that in the concluding verses of *The Statue and the Bust* (*q. v.*)] For the culprit there, the speaker says, it is better he should add daring courage to face the consequences of his crime, than by running away from them be coward as well as criminal. He may come off victor, but his future life, his garden of pleasure, will have a warder, a leopard-dog thing (his sin), ever at his side. This leering presence, this “sly, mute thing,” crouching under every “rose wall” and “grape-tree,” will exact the penalty of past sin, and mayhap sting the sinner to repentance. “So much for the culprit.” The injured, “the martyred man,” has borne so much, he can at least bear another stroke – “give his

blood and get his heaven." If death end it, well for him – "he forgives"; if he be victor he has punished sin as God's minister of justice. In "After," what is not said is more powerful than any words which could have filled the intervening space between these two poems. The imagination here is all-sufficient. The chill presence of death has altered the aspect of everything. The rush of thought, the casuistry, the intensity of the preceding poem, is all hushed and silent here. Death makes things so real in its presence, masks drop off from souls' faces, and truth can make her voice heard above the contentions of sophistry. The victor speaks – he has no desire to masquerade here as God's avenging angel; he recognises that even his foe has the rights of a man, and as the spirit of the dead man wanders, absorbed in his new life, he heeds not his wrongs nor the vengeance of his slayer; the great realities of the other world make those of this world trivial, and the victor estimates at its true value the worthlessness of his conquest. If they could be as they were of old! So forgiveness would have been better and Christ's command is vindicated – "I say unto you that ye resist not evil." There are some victories which are always the worst of defeats.

**"Bells and Pomegranates."** Under this title Mr. Browning published a cheap edition, in serial form, of his poems in 1841. The following works appeared in this manner: —*Pippa Passes; King Victor and King Charles; Dramatic Lyrics; The Return of the Druses; A Blot in the 'Scutcheon; Colombe's Birthday; Dramatic Romances and Lyrics; Luria;* and *A Soul's Tragedy.* ("A golden

bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about.” – Exod. xxviii. 34, 35.) “The reason supposed in the Targum for the directions given to the priest is that the priest’s approach should be *cautious* to the innermost ‘Holy of Holies,’ or Sanctuary of the Tabernacle. The sound of the small bells upon his robe was intended to announce his approach before his actual appearance.” Philo says the bells were to denote the harmony of the universe. St. Jerome says they also indicated that every movement of the priest should be for edification. Mr. Browning, however, intimated that he had no such symbolical intention in the choice of his title. In the preface to the last number of the series, he said: “Here ends my first series of ‘Bells and Pomegranates,’ and I take the opportunity of explaining, in reply to inquiries, that I only meant by that title to indicate an endeavour towards something like an alternation or mixture of music with discoursing, sound with sense, poetry with thought; which looks too ambitious, thus expressed, so the symbol was preferred. It is little to the purpose that such is actually one of the most familiar of the many Rabbinical (and Patristic) acceptations of the phrase; because I confess that, letting authority alone, I supposed the bare words, in such juxtaposition, would sufficiently convey the desired meaning. ‘Faith and good works’ is another fancy, for instance, and, perhaps, no easier to arrive at; yet Giotto placed a pomegranate fruit in the hand of Dante, and Raffaello crowned his theology (in the *Camera della Segnatura*) with blossoms of

the same; as if the Bellari and Vasari would be sure to come after, and explain that it was merely ‘*simbolo delle buone opere – il qual Pomogranato, fu però usato nelle vesti del Pontefice appresso gli Ebrei.*’ – R. B.”

“**Ben Karshook’s Wisdom.**” Mr. Sharp says, in his *Life of Browning*, “In the late spring (April 27th, 1854), also, he wrote the short dactylic lyric, “Ben Karshook’s Wisdom.” This little poem was given to a friend for appearance in one of the then popular *keepsakes*—literally given, for Browning never contributed to magazines. As “Ben Karshook’s Wisdom,” though it has been reprinted in several quarters, will not be found in any volume of Browning’s works, and was omitted from *Men and Women* by accident, and from further collections by forgetfulness, it may be fitly quoted here. *Karshook*, it may be added, is the Hebraic word for a thistle.

“‘Would a man ’scape the rod?’ —  
Rabbi Ben Karshook saith,  
‘See that he turns to God,  
The day before his death.’

‘Ay, could a man inquire,  
When it shall come!’ I say,  
The Rabbi’s eye shoots fire —  
‘Then let him turn to-day!’

Quoth a young Sadducee, —

‘Reader of many rolls,  
Is it so certain we  
Have, as they tell us, souls?’ —

‘Son, there is no reply!’  
The Rabbi bit his beard;  
‘Certain, a soul have *I*, —  
We may have none,’ he sneered.

Thus Karshook, the Hiram’s-Hammer,  
The Right-hand Temple column,  
Taught babes in grace their grammar,  
And struck the simple, solemn.”

(*Rome, April 27th, 1854.*)

The reference in the last verse is to 1 Kings vii. 13-22. Hiram was a Phœnician king, and a skilful builder of temples. The Temple columns referred to were called Jachin and Boaz, and were made of brass and set up at the entrance; Boaz (*strength*) on the left hand, and Jachin (*stability*) on the right. The Freemasons have adopted the names of these pillars in their ceremonial and symbolism.

**Bernard de Mandeville** [The Man] (1670-1733) was a native of Rotterdam, and the son of a physician who practised in that city. He studied medicine at Leyden, and came to England “to learn the language.” He did this with such effect that it was doubted if he were a foreigner. He practised medicine in London, and is known to fame by his celebrated book *The Fable of*

*the Bees*, a miscellaneous work which includes “*The Grumbling Hive, or Knaves Turned Honest; An Inquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue; An Essay on Charity Schools; and A Search into the Origin of Society.*” When, in 1705, the country was agitated by the question as to the continuance of Marlborough’s war with France, Mandeville published his *Grumbling Hive*. All sorts of charges were being made against public officials; every form of corruption and dishonesty was freely charged on these persons, and it was in the midst of this agitation that Mandeville humorously maintained that “private vices are public benefits,” – that self-seeking, luxury, ambition, and greed are all necessary to the greatness and prosperity of a nation. “Fools only strive to make a great and honest hive.” “The bees of his fable,” says Professor Minto, “grumbled, as many Englishmen were disposed to do, – cursed politicians, armies, fleets, whenever there came a reverse, and cried, ‘Had we but honesty!’” Jove, at last, in a passion, swore that he would “rid the canting hive of fraud,” and filled the hearts of the bees with honesty and all the virtues, strict justice, frugal living, contentment with little, acquiescence in the insults of enemies. Straightway the flourishing hive declined, till in time only a small remnant was left; this took refuge in a hollow tree, “blest with content and honesty,” but “destitute of arts and manufactures.” “He gives the name of virtue to every performance by which man, contrary to the impulse of nature, should endeavour the benefit of others, or the conquest of his own passions, out of a rational ambition of being good”;

while everything which, without regard to the public, man should commit to gratify any of his appetites, is vice." He finds self-love (a vice by the definition) masquerading in many virtuous disguises, lying at the root of asceticism, heroism, public spirit, decorous conduct, – at the root, in short, of all the actions that pass current as virtuous." He taught that "the moral virtues are the political offspring which flattery begot upon pride." Politicians and moralists have worked upon man to make him believe he is a sublime creature, and that self-indulgence makes him more akin to the brutes. In 1723 Mandeville applied his analysis of virtue in respect to the then fashionable institution of charity schools, and a great outcry was raised against his doctrines. His book was presented to the justices, the grand jury of Middlesex, and a copy was ordered to be burned by the common hangman. It is probable that Mandeville was not serious in all he wrote; much of his writings must be considered merely as a political *jeu d'esprit*. His was an age of speculation upon ethical questions, and a humorous foreigner could not but be moved to satirise English methods, which are frequently peculiarly open to this kind of attack.

[The Poem.] (*Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day*: London, 1887.) The sketch of Mandeville's opinion given above will afford a key to the drift of Mr. Browning's poem. His aim is to point out the great truths which, on a careful examination, will be found to underlie much of the old philosopher's paradoxical teaching; not as understood by

fools, he says, but by those who let down their sounding line below the turbid surface to the still depths where evil harmoniously combines with good, Mandeville's teaching is worthy of examination. We must take life as we find it, ever remembering that law deals the same with soul and body, life's rule is short, infancy's probation is necessary to bodily development; and we might as well expect a new-born infant to start up strong, as the soul to stand in its full-statured magnificence without the necessary faculty of growth. Law deals with body as with soul. Both, stung to strength through weakness, strive for good through evil. And all the while the process lasts men complain that "no sign, no stirring of God's finger," indicates His preference for either. Never promptly and beyond mistake has God interposed between oppression and its victim. But suppose the Gardener of mankind has a definite purpose in view when he plants evil side by side with good? How do we know that every growth of good is not consequent on evil's neighbourhood? As it is certain that the garden was planted by intelligence, would not the sudden and complete eradication of evil repeal a primal law of the all-understanding Gardener? "But," retorts the objector, "suppose these ill weeds were interspersed by an enemy?" Man's faculty avails not to see the whole sight. When we examine the plan of an estate, we do not ask where is the roof of the house – where the door, the window. We do not seek a thing's solid self in its symbol: looking at Orion on a starry night, who asks to see the man's flesh in the

star-points? If it be objected that we have no need of symbols, and that we should be better taught by facts, it is answered that a myth may teach. The rising sun thrills earth to the very heart of things; creation acknowledges its life-giving impulse and murmurs not, but, unquestioning, uses the invigorating beams. Is man alone to wait till he comprehends the sun's self to realise the energy that floods the universe? Prometheus drew the sun's rays into a focus, and made fire do man service. Thus to utilise the sun's influence was better than striving to follow beam and beam upon their way, till we faint in our endeavour to guess their infinitude of action. The teaching of the poem is, that to make the best use of the world as we find it, is wiser than torturing our brains to comprehend mysteries which by their nature and our own weakness are insoluble.

**Bifurcation.** (*Pacchiarotto and other Poems*: London, 1876.) A woman loves a man, but “prefers duty to love” – enters a convent, perhaps, or adopts some life for reasons which she considers imperative, and so cannot marry. Rejecting love, she thinks she rejects the tempter's bribe when the paths before her diverge. It is a sacrifice, she feels, and a great one; but her heart tells her, probably because it has been suggested by those whose influence over her was very great, that heaven will repair the wrongs of earth. She chooses the darkling half of life, and waits her reward in the world “where light and darkness fuse.” The man loved the woman. Love was a hard path for him, but duty was a pleasant road. When the ways parted, and his love forsook

him to abide by duty, she told him their roads would converge again at the end, and bade him be constant to his path, as she would be to hers, that they might meet once more. But, when the guiding star is gone, man's footsteps are apt to stray, and every stumbling-block brought him to confusion. And after his falls and flint-piercings he would rise and cry "All's well!" and struggle on, since he must be content with one of the halves that make the whole. He would have the story of each inscribed on their tomb, and he demands to know which tomb holds sinner and which holds saint! If love be all – if earth and its best be our highest aim – then the woman was the sinner for not marrying her lover, and settling down in a suburban villa, and surrounding herself with children and domestic pleasures. But if the ideal life – if a love infinitely higher and purer than any earthly affection – be taken into account; if in her soul she had heard the call, "Leave all and follow Me," and she obeyed with breaking heart, in a perfect spirit of self-sacrifice, then was she no sinner, but saint indeed. Surely there are higher paths in life than even the holy one of wedded love. Mr. Browning's own married life was so ideally perfect that he has been led into some exaggeration of its advantages to the mass of mankind.

**Bishop Blougram's Apology.** (*Men and Women*, vol. i., 1855.) Bishop Blougram is a *bon vivant*, a man of letters, of fastidious taste and of courtly manners – a typical Renaissance prince of the Church, in fact. He has been successful in life, as he understands it, and there seems no reason why he should make

any apology for an existence so in every way congenial to his nature. Mr. Gigadibs is a young literary man, smart at “articles” for the magazines, but possessing no knowledge outside the world of books, and incapable of deep thought on the great problems of life and mind. He can settle everything off-hand in his flippant, free-thinking style, and he has arrived at the conclusion that a man of Blougram’s ability cannot really believe in the doctrines which he pretends to defend, and that he is only acting a part; as such a life cannot be “ideal,” he considers his host more or less of an impostor. By some means he finds himself dining with the Bishop, and after dinner he is treated to his lordship’s “Apology.” The ecclesiastic has taken the measure of his man, and good-humouredly puts the case thus: “You say the thing is my trade, that I am above the humbug in my heart, and sceptical withal at times, and so you despise me – to be plain. For your own part you must be free and speak your mind. You would not choose my position if you could you would be great, but not in my way. The problem of life is not to fancy what were fair if only it could be, but, taking life as it is, to make it fair so far as we can. For a simile, we mortals make our life-voyage each in his cabin. Suppose you attempt to furnish it after a landsman’s idea. You bring an Indian screen, a piano, fifty volumes of Balzac’s novels and a library of the classics, a marble bath, and an “old master” or two; but the ship folk tell you you have only six feet square to deal with, and because they refuse to take on board your piano, your marble bath, and your old masters, you set sail in a

bare cabin. You peep into a neighbouring berth, snug and well-appointed, and you envy the man who is enjoying his suitable sea furniture; you have proved your artist nature, but you have no furniture. Imagine we are two college friends preparing for a voyage; my outfit is a bishop's, why won't you be a bishop too? In the first place, you don't and can't believe in a Divine revelation; you object to dogmas, so overhaul theology; you think I am by no means a fool, so that I must find believing every whit as hard as you do, and if I do not say so, possibly I am an impostor. Grant that I do not believe in the fixed and absolute sense – to meet you on your own premise – overboard go my dogmas, and we both are unbelievers. Does that fix us unbelievers for ever? Not so: all we have gained is, that as unbelief disturbed us by fits in our believing days, so belief will ever and again disturb our unbelief, for how can we guard our unbelief and make it bear fruit to us? Just when we think we are safest a flower, a friend's death, or a beautiful snatch of song, and lo! there stands before us the grand Perhaps! The old misgivings and crooked questions all are there – all demanding solution, as before. All we have gained by our unbelief is a life of doubt diversified by faith, in place of one of faith diversified by doubt.” “But,” says Gigadibs, “if I drop faith and you drop doubt, I am as right as you!” Blougram will not allow this: “the points are not indifferent; belief or unbelief bears upon life, and determines its whole course; positive belief brings out the best of me, and bears fruit in pleasantness and peace. Unbelief would do nothing of the sort for me: you say it

does for you? We'll try! I say faith is my waking life; we sleep and dream, but, after all, waking is our real existence – all day I study and make friends; at night I sleep. What's midnight doubt before the faith of day? You are a philosopher; you disbelieve, you give to dreams at night the weight I give to the work of active day; to be consistent, you should keep your bed, for you live to sleep as I to wake – to unbelieve, as I to still believe. Common-sense terms you bedridden: common-sense brings its good things to me; so it's best believing if we can, is it not? Again, if we are to believe at all, we cannot be too decisive in our faith; we must be consistent in all our choice – succeed, or go hang in worldly matters. In love we wed the woman we love most or need most, and as a man cannot wed twice, so neither can he twice lose his soul. I happened to be born in one great form of Christianity, the most pronounced and absolute form of faith in the world, and so one of the most potent forms of influencing the world. External forces have been allowed to act upon me by my own consent, and they have made me very comfortable. I take what men offer with a grace; folks kneel and kiss my hand, and thus is life best for me; my choice, you will admit, is a success. Had I nobler instincts, like you, I should hardly count this success; grant I am a beast, beasts must lead beasts' lives; it is my business to make the absolute best of what God has made. At the same time, I do not acknowledge I am so much your inferior, though you do say I pine among my million fools instead of living for the dozen men of sense who observe me, and even they do not know

whether I am fool or knave. Be a Napoleon, and if you disbelieve, where's the good of it? Then concede there is just a chance: doubt may be wrong – just a chance of judgment and a life to come. Fit up your cabin another way. Shall we be Shakespeare? What did Shakespeare do? Why, left his towers and gorgeous palaces to build himself a trim house in Stratford. He owned the worth of things; he enjoyed the show and respected the puppets too. Shakespeare and myself want the same things, and what I want I have. He aimed at a house in Stratford – he got it; I aim at higher things, and receive heaven's incense in my nose. Believe and get enthusiasm, that's the thing. I can achieve nothing on the denying side – ice makes no conflagration.” Gigadibs says, “But as you really lack faith, you run the same risk by your indifference as does the bold unbeliever; an imperfect faith like that is not worth having; give me whole faith or none!” Blougram fixes him here. “Own the use of faith, I find you faith!” he replies. “Christianity may be false, but do you wish it true? If you desire faith, then you've faith enough. We could not tolerate pure faith, naked belief in Omnipotence; it would be like viewing the sun with a lidless eye. The use of evil is to hide God. I would rather die than deny a Church miracle.” Gigadibs says, “Have faith if you will, but you might purify it.” Blougram objects that “if you first cut the Church miracle, the next thing is to cut God Himself and be an atheist, so much does humanity find the cutting process to its taste.” If Gigadibs says, “All this is a narrow and gross view of life,” Blougram answers, “I live for this world now; my

best pledge for observing the new laws of a new life to come is my obedience to the present world's requirements. This life may be intended to make the next more intense. Man ever tries to be beforehand in his evolution, as when a traveller throws off his furs in Russia because he will not want them in France; in France spurns flannel because in Spain it will not be required; in Spain drops cloth too cumbrous for Algiers; linen goes next, and last the skin itself, a superfluity in Timbuctoo. The poor fool was never at ease a minute in his whole journey. I am at ease now, friend, worldly in this world, as I have a right to be. You meet me," continues Blougram, "at this issue: you think it better, if we doubt, to say so; act up to truth perceived, however feebly. Put natural religion to the test with which you have just demolished the revealed, abolish the moral law, let people lie, kill, and thief, but there are certain instincts, unreasoned out and blind, which you dare not set aside; you can't tell why, but there they are, and there you let them rule, so you are just as much a slave, liar, hypocrite, as I – a conscious coward to boot, and without promise of reward. I but follow my instincts, as you yours. I want a God – must have a God – ere I can be aught, must be in direct relation with Him, and so live my life; yours, you dare not live. Something we may see, all we cannot see. I say, I see all: I am obliged to be emphatic, or men would doubt there is anything to see at all" Then the Bishop turns upon his opponent and presses him: "Confess, don't you want my bishopric, my influence and state? Why, you will brag of dining with me to

the last day of your life! There are men who beat me, – the zealot with his mad ideal, the poet with all his life in his ode, the statesman with his scheme, the artist whose religion is his art – such men carry their fire within them; but you, you Gigadibs, poor scribbler, – but not so poor but we almost thought an article of yours might have been written by Dickens, – here’s my card, its mere production, in proof of acquaintance with me, will double your remuneration in the reviews at sight. Go, write, – detest, defame me, but at least you cannot despise me!” The average superficial reasoner is in the constant habit of setting down as insincere such learned persons as make a profession of faith in the dogmas of Christianity. The ordinary man of the world considers the mass of Christian people as bound to their faith by the fetters of ignorance. Such men, however, as it is impossible to term ignorant, who profess to hold the dogmas of Christianity in their integrity, are actuated, they say, by unworthy motives, self-interest, the desire to make the best of both worlds, unwillingness to cast in their lot with those who put themselves to the pain and discredit of thinking for themselves, and casting off the fetters of superstition. So, say these cynics, the dignified clergy of the Established Church repeat creeds which they no longer believe, that they may live in splendour and enjoy the best things of life, while the poorer clergy retain their positions as a decent means of gaining a livelihood. When such flippant thinkers and impulsive talkers contemplate the lives of such men as Cardinal Wiseman or Cardinal Newman, who were acknowledged to be

learned and highly cultivated men, they say it is impossible such men can be sincere when they profess to believe the teachings of the Catholic Church, which they hold to be contemptible superstition; they must be actuated by unworthy motives, love of power over men's minds, craving for worldly dignities and the adulation of men and the like. That a man like Newman should give up his intellectual life at Oxford "to perform mummeries at a Catholic altar" in Birmingham, was plainly termed insanity, intellectual suicide, or sheer knavery. The late Cardinal Wiseman was an exceedingly learned man, of great scientific ability, and such admirable *bonhomie* that this class of critic had no difficulty whatever in relegating his Eminence to what was considered his precise moral position. Mr. Browning in this monologue accurately postulates the popular conception of the Cardinal's character in the utterances of one Gigadibs, a young man of thirty who has rashly expressed his opinions of the great churchman's religious character. The poet, though completely failing to do justice to the Bishop's side of the question, has presented us with a character perfectly natural, but which in every aspect seems more the picture of an eighteenth-century fox-hunting ecclesiastic than that of a bishop of the Roman Church, who would have had a good deal more to say on the subject of faith as understood by his Church than the poet has put into the mouth of his Bishop Blougram. As it is impossible to see in the description given of the Bishop anybody but the late Cardinal Wiseman, it is necessary to say that the description is to the last degree untrue,

as must have been obvious to any one personally acquainted with him. A review of the poem appeared in the magazine known as the *Rambler*, for January 1856, which is credibly supposed to have been written by the Cardinal himself. "The picture drawn in the poem," says the article in question, "is that of an arch hypocrite, and the frankest of fools." The writer says that Mr. Browning "is utterly mistaken in the very groundwork of religion, though starting from the most unworthy notions of the work of a Catholic bishop, and defending a self-indulgence which every honest man must feel to be disgraceful, is yet in its way triumphant."

Notes. – "*Brother Pugin*," a celebrated Catholic architect, who built many Gothic churches for Catholic congregations in England. "*Corpus Christi Day*," the Feast of the Sacrament of the Altar, literally the Body of Christ; it occurs on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. *Che, che*, what, what! *Count D'Orsay* (1798-1852), a French savant, and an intellectual dandy. "*Parma's pride – the Jerome*" the St. Jerome by Correggio, one of the most important paintings in the Ducal Academy at Parma. There is a curious story of the picture in Murray's Guide to North Italy. *Marvellous Modenese*— the celebrated painter Correggio was born in the territory of Modena, Italy. "*Peter's Creed, or rather, Hildebrand's*," Pope Hildebrand (Gregory VII., 1073-85). The temporal power of the popes, and the authority of the Papacy over sovereigns, were claimed by this pope. *Verdi and Rossini*, Verdi wrote a poor opera, which pleased the audience

on the first night, and they loudly applauded. Verdi nervously glanced at Rossini, sitting quietly in his box, and read the verdict in his face. *Schelling*, Frederick William Joseph von, a distinguished German philosopher (1775-1854). *Strauss*, David Friedrich (1808-74), who wrote the Rationalistic *Life of Jesus*, one of the Tübingen philosophers. *King Bomba*, a soubriquet given to Ferdinand II. (1810-59), late king of the Two Sicilies; it means King Puffcheek, King Liar, King Knave. *lazzaroni*, Naples beggars – so called from Lazarus. *Antonelli*, Cardinal, secretary of Pope Pius IX., a most astute politician, if not a very devout churchman. “*Naples’ liquefaction.*” The supposed miracle of the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius the Martyr. A small quantity of the saint’s blood in a solid state is preserved in a crystal reliquary; when brought into the presence of the head of the saint it melts, bubbles up, and, when moved, flows on one side. It is preserved in the great church at Naples. On certain occasions, as on the feast of St. Januarius, September 19th, the miracle is publicly performed. See Butler’s *Lives of the Saints* for September 19th. The matter has been much discussed, but no reasonable theory has been set up to account for it. Mr. Browning is quite wrong in suggesting that belief in this, or any other of this class of miracles, is obligatory on the Catholic conscience. A man may be a good Catholic and believe none of them. He could not, of course, be a Catholic and deny the miracles of the Bible, because he is bound to believe them on the authority of the Church as well as that of the Holy Scriptures. Modern miracles

stand on no such basis. *Fichte*, Johann Gottlieb (1762-1814). An eminent German metaphysician. He defined God as the *moral order* of the universe. “*Pastor est tui Dominus,*” the Lord is thy Shepherd. *In partibus, Episcopus*, A bishop *in partibus infidelium*. In countries where the Roman Catholic faith is not regularly established, as it was not in England before the time of Cardinal Wiseman, there were no bishops of sees in the kingdom itself, but they took their titles from heathen lands; so that an English bishop would perhaps be called Bishop of Mesopotamia when he was actually appointed to London. This is now altered, so far as this country is concerned.

**“Bishop orders his Tomb at St. Praxed’s Church, The”** (Rome, 15 – . *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics – Bells and Pomegranates* No. VII., 1845). – First published in *Hood’s Magazine*, 1845, and the same year in *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics*; in 1863 it appeared under *Men and Women: St. Praxed or Praxedes*. An old *title* or parish church in Rome bears the name of this saint. It was mentioned in the life of Pope Symmachus (A.D. 498-514). It was repaired by Adrian I. and Paschal I., and lastly by St. Charles Borromeo, who took from it his title of cardinal. He died 1584; there is a small monument to his memory now in the church. St. Praxedes, Virgin, was the daughter of Pudens, a Roman senator, and sister of St. Pudentiana. She lived in the reign of the Emperor Antoninus Pius. She employed all her riches in relieving the poor and the necessities of the Church. The poem is a monologue of a bishop of the art-loving, luxurious, and

licentious Renaissance, who lies dying, and, instead of preparing his soul for death, is engaged in giving directions about a grand tomb he wishes his relatives to erect in his church. He has secured his niche, the position is good, and he desires the monument shall be worthy of it. Mr. Ruskin, in *Modern Painters*, vol. iv., pp. 377-79, says of this poem: "Robert Browning is unerring in every sentence he writes of the Middle Ages – always vital, right, and profound; so that in the matter of art, with which we are specially concerned, there is hardly a principle connected with the mediæval temper that he has not struck upon in these seemingly careless and too rugged lines of his" (here the writer quotes from the poem, "As here I lie, In this state chamber dying by degrees," to "Ulpian serves his need!"). "I know no other piece of modern English prose or poetry in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance spirit – its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin. It is nearly all that I have said of the central Renaissance, in thirty pages of the *Stones of Venice*, put into as many lines, Browning's also being the antecedent work." It was inevitable that the great period of the Renaissance should produce men of the type of the Bishop of St. Praxed's; it would be grossly unfair to set him down as the type of the churchmen of his time. As a matter of fact, the Catholic church was undergoing its Renaissance also. The Council of Trent is better known by some historians for its condemnation of heresies than for the great work it did in reforming the morals of Catholic

nations. The regulations which it established for this end were fruitful in raising up in different countries some of the noblest and most beautiful characters in the history of Christianity. St. Charles Borromeo, archbishop of Milan, whose connection with St. Praxed's Church is noticed above, was the founder of Sunday-schools, the great restorer of ecclesiastical discipline and the model of charity. St. Theresa rendered the splendour of the monastic life conspicuous, leading a life wholly angelical, and reviving the fervour of a great number of religious communities. The congregation of the Ursulines and many religious orders established for the relief of corporeal miseries – such as the Brothers Hospitallers, devoted to nursing the sick; the splendid missionary works of St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Francis Xavier – all these, and many other evidences of the awakening life of the Catholic Church, were the products of an age which is as often misrepresented as it is imperfectly understood. There were bishops of St. Praxed's such as the poet has so inimitably sketched for us; but had there been no others of a more Christian type, religion in southern Europe would have died out instead of starting up as a giant refreshed to win, as it did, the world for Christ. The worldly bishop of the poem is an “art for art's sake” ecclesiastic, who is not at all anxious to leave a life which he has found very satisfactory for a future state about which he has neither anxiety nor concern. What he is concerned for is his tomb. His old rival Gandolf has deprived him of the position in the church which he longed for as a resting-place, but he hopes

to make up for the loss by a more tasteful and costly monument, with a more classical inscription than his. The old fellow is as much Pagan as Christian, and his ornaments have as much to do with the gods and goddesses of old Rome as with the Church of which he is a minister. In all this Mr. Browning finely satirises the Renaissance spirit, which, though it did good service to humanity in a thousand ways, was much more concerned with flesh than spirit.

Notes. — *Basalt*, trap rock of a black, bluish, or leaden-grey colour; *peach-blossom marble*, an Italian marble used in decorations; *olive-frail* == a rush basket of olives; *lapis lazuli*, a mineral, usually of a rich blue colour, used in decorations; *Frascati* is a beautiful spot on the Alban hills, near Rome; *antique-black* == Nero antico, a beautiful black stone; *thyrsus*, a Bacchanalian staff wrapped with ivy, or a spear stuck into a pine-cone; *travertine*, a cellular calc-tufa, abundant near Tivoli; *Tully's Latin* == Cicero's, the purest classic style; *Ulpian*, a Roman writer on law, chiefly engaged in literary work (A.D. 211-22). "*Blessed mutter of the mass*"; To devout Catholics the low monotone of the priest saying a low mass, in which there is no music and only simple ceremonies, is more devotional than the high mass, where there is much music and ritual to divert the attention from the most solemn act of Christian worship; *mortcloth*, a funeral pall; *elucescebat*, he was distinguished; *vizor*, that part of a helmet which defends the face; *term*, a bust terminating in a square block of stone, similar to those of the god

Terminus; *onion-stone* == cippolino, cipoline, an Italian marble, white, with pale-green shadings.

**Blot in the 'Scutcheon, A.** (Part V. of *Bells and Pomegranates*, 1843.) *A Tragedy*. Time, 17 – . The story is exceedingly dramatic, though simple. Thorold, Earl Tresham, is a monomaniac to family pride and conventional morality: his ancestry and his own reputation absorb his whole attention, and the wreck of all things were a less evil to him than a stain on the family honour. He is the only protector of his motherless sister, Mildred Tresham, who has in her innocence allowed herself to be seduced by Henry, Earl Mertoun, whose estates are contiguous to those of the Treshams. He, too, has a noble name, and he could have lawfully possessed the girl he loved if he had not been deterred by a mysterious feeling of awe for Lord Tresham, and had asked her in marriage. But he is anxious to repair the wrong he has done, and the play opens with his visit to Thorold to formally present himself as the girl's lover. Naturally the Earl, seeing no objection to the match, makes none. The difficulty seems at an end; but, unfortunately, Gerard, an old and faithful retainer, has seen a man, night after night, climb to the lady's chamber, and has watched him leave. He has no idea who the visitor might be, and, after some struggles with contending emotions, decides to acquaint his master with the things which he has seen. Thorold is in the utmost mental distress and perturbation, and questions his sister in a manner that is as painful to him as to her. She does not deny the circumstances

alleged against her. Her brother is overwhelmed with distress at the sudden disgrace brought upon his noble line, and confounded at the idea of the attempt which has been made to involve in his own disgrace the nobleman who has sought an alliance with his family. Mildred refuses to say who her lover is, and weakly – as it appears to her brother – determines to let things take the proposed course. Naturally Thorold looks upon his sister as a degraded being who is dead to shame and honour, and he rushes from her presence to wander in the grounds in the neighbourhood of the house, till at midnight he sees the lover Mertoun preparing to mount to his sister's room. They fight, and the Earl falls mortally wounded. In the chamber above the signal-light in the window has been placed as usual by Mildred, who awaits Thorold in her room. He does not appear, and her heart tells her that her happiness is at an end. Now she sees all her guilt, and the consequences of her degradation to her family. In the midst of these agonising reflections her brother bursts into her room. She sees at once that he has killed Mertoun, sees also that he himself is dying of poison which he has swallowed. Her heart is broken, and she dies. Mildred's cousin Gwendolen, betrothed to the next heir to the earldom, Austin Tresham, is a quick, intelligent woman, who saw how matters stood, and would have rectified them had it not been rendered impossible by the adventure in the grounds, when the unhappy young lover allowed Thorold to kill him. Mr. Forster, in his *Life of Charles Dickens* (Book iv. I), says: "This was the date [1842], too, of Mr. Browning's tragedy

of the *Blot in the Scutcheon*, which I took upon myself, after reading it in the manuscript, privately to impart to Dickens; and I was not mistaken in the belief that it would profoundly touch him. ‘Browning’s play,’ he wrote (November 25th), ‘has thrown me into a perfect passion of sorrow. To say that there is anything in its subject save what is lovely, true, deeply affecting, full of the best emotion, the most earnest feeling, and the most true and tender source of interest, is to say that there is no light in the sun and no heat in blood. It is full of genius, natural and great thoughts, profound and yet simple and beautiful in its vigour. I know nothing that is so affecting – nothing in any book I have ever read – as Mildred’s recurrence to that “I was so young – I had no mother!” I know no love like it, no passion like it, no moulding of a splendid thing after its conception like it. And I swear it is a tragedy that MUST be played; and must be played, moreover, by Macready. There are some things I would have changed if I could (they are very slight, mostly broken lines); and I assuredly would have the old servant *begin his tale upon the scene*, and be taken by the throat, or drawn upon, by his master in its commencement. But the tragedy I never shall forget, or less vividly remember, than I do now. And if you tell Browning that I have seen it, tell him that I believe from my soul there is no man living (and not many dead) who could produce such a work.’” Mr. Browning wrote the play in five days, at the suggestion of Macready, who read it with delight. The poet had been led to expect that Macready would play in it himself, but was annoyed to hear that

he had given the part he had intended to take to Mr. Phelps, then an actor quite unknown. Evidently Macready expected that Mr. Browning would withdraw the play. On the contrary, he accepted Phelps, who, however, was taken seriously ill before the rehearsal began. The consequence was (though there was clearly some shuffling on Macready's part) that the great tragedian himself consented to take the part at the last moment. It is evident that Macready had changed his mind. He had, however, done more: he had changed the title to *The Sisters*, and had changed a good deal of the play, even to the extent of inserting some lines of his own. Meanwhile, Phelps having recovered, and being anxious to take his part, Mr. Browning insisted that he should do so; and, to Macready's annoyance, the old arrangement had to stand. The play was vociferously applauded, and Mr. Phelps was again and again called before the curtain. Mr. Browning was much displeased at the treatment he had received, but his play continued to be performed to crowded houses. It was a great success also when Phelps revived it at Sadlers Wells. Miss Helen Faucit (who afterwards became Lady Martin) played the part of Mildred Tresham on the first appearance of *The Blot* in 1843. The Browning Society brought it out at St. George's Hall on May 2nd, 1885; and again at the Olympic Theatre on March 15th, 1888, when Miss Alma Murray played Mildred Tresham in an ideally perfect manner. It was, as the *Era* said, "a thing to be remembered. From every point of view it was admirable. Its passion was highly pitched, its elocution pure and finished,

and its expression, by feature and gesture, of a quality akin to genius. The agonising emotions which in turn thrill the girl's sensitive frame were depicted with intense truth and keen and delicate art, and an excellent discretion defeated any temptation to extravagance." It cannot be seriously held by any unprejudiced person that *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* has within it the elements of success as an acting play. The subject is unpleasant, the conduct of Thorold monomaniacal and improbable, the wholesale dying in the last scene "transpontine." The characters philosophise too much, and dissect themselves even as they die. They come to life again under the stimulation of the process, only to perish still more, and to make us speculate on the nature of the poison which permitted such self-analysis, and on the nature of the heart disease which was so subservient to the patient's necessities. An analytic poet, we feel, is for the study, not for the boards.

**Bluphocks.** (*Pippa Passes.*) The vagabond Englishman of the poem. "The name means *Blue-Fox*, and is a skit on the *Edinburgh Review*, which is bound in a cover of blue and fox." (Dr. Furnivall.)

**Bombast.** The proper name of *Paracelsus*; "probably acquired," says Mr. Browning in a note to *Paracelsus*, "from the characteristic phraseology of his lectures, that unlucky signification which it has ever since retained." This is not correct. Bombast, in German *bombast*, cognate with Latin *bombyx* in the sense of cotton. "Bombast, the cotton-plant growing in Asia" (Phillips, *The New World of Words*). It was applied also to

the cotton wadding with which garments were lined and stuffed in Elizabeth's time; hence inflated speech, fustian. (See Stubbes, *The Anatomy of Abuses*, p. 23; Trench, *Encyc. Dict.*, etc.)

**Boot and Saddle.** No. III. of the "Cavalier Songs," published in *Bells and Pomegranates* in 1842, under the title "Cavalier Tunes."

**Bottinius.** (*The Ring and the Book.*) Juris Doctor Johannes-Baptista Bottinius was the Fisc or Public Prosecutor and Advocate of the Apostolic Chamber at Rome. The ninth book of the poem contains his speech as prosecutor of Count Guido.

**Boy and the Angel, The.** (*Hood's Magazine*, vol. ii., 1844, pp. 140-42.) Reprinted, revised, and with five fresh couplets, in "Dramatic Romances and Lyrics" (1845), No. VII. *Bells and Pomegranates*. Theocrite was a poor Italian boy who, morning, evening, noon and night, ever sang "Praise God!" As he prayed well and loved God, so he worked well and served his master faithfully and cheerfully. Blaise, the monk, heard him sing his *Laudate*, and said: "I doubt not thou art heard, my son, as well as if thou wert the Pope, praising God from Peter's dome this Easter day"; but Theocrite said: "Would God I might praise Him that great way and die!" That night there was no more Theocrite, and God missed the boy's innocent praise. Gabriel the archangel came to the earth, took Theocrite's humble place, and praised God as did the boy, only with angelic song, – playing well, moreover, the craftsman's part, content at his poor work, doing God's will on earth as he had done it in heaven. But God said:

“There is neither doubt nor fear in this praise; it is perfect as the song of my new-born worlds; I miss my little human praise.” Then the flesh disguise fell from the angel, and his wings sprang forth again. He flew to Rome: it was Easter Day, and the new pope Theocrite, once the poor work-lad, stood in the tiring room by the great gallery from which the popes are wont to bless the people on Easter morning, and he saw the angel before him, who told him he had made a mistake in bringing him from his trade to set him in that high place; he had done wrong, too, in leaving his angel-sphere: the stopping of that infant praise marred creation’s chorus; he must go back, and once more that early way praise God – “back to the cell and poor employ”; and so Theocrite grew to old age at his former home, and Rome had a new pope, and the angel’s error was rectified. Legends and stories of saints, angels, and our Lord Himself, are common in all Catholic countries, where these heavenly beings are far more real to the minds of the people than they are to the colder intelligence of Protestant and more logical lands. In southern Europe, hosts of such stories as these cluster round our Lady and the Saints. The Holy Virgin does not disdain to take her needle and sew buttons on the clothing of her worshippers, and the angels and saints think nothing of a little domestic or trade employment if it will assist their devout clients.

In *Notes and Queries*, 3rd Series, xii. 6, July 6, 1867, there appeared two queries on this poem by “John Addis, Jun.”: “1. What is the precise inner meaning? 2. On what legend is it

founded? With regard to my first question, I see dimly in the poem a comparison of three kinds of praise – viz., human, ceremonial, and angelic. Further, I see dimly a contrasting of Gabriel’s humility with Theocrite’s ambition... The poem ... has been recalled to me by reading ‘Kyng Roberd of Cysillé’ (Hazlitt’s *Early Popular Poetry*, vol. i., p. 264). There is a general analogy (by contrast perhaps rather than likeness) between the two poems, which points, I think, to the existence of a legend kindred to ‘Kyng Roberd’ as the prototype of Browning’s poem, rather than to ‘Kyng Roberd’ itself as that prototype... To ‘Sir Gowghter’ and the Jovinianus story of *Gesta Romanorum*, I have not present access; but both I fancy (while akin to ‘Kyng Roberd of Cysillé’) have nothing in common with ‘The Boy and the Angel.’” At page 55 another correspondent says that according to Warton (ii. 22), “‘Sir Gowghter’ is only another version of ‘Robert the Devil,’ and therefore of ‘King Roberd of Cysillé.’ He goes on to say that Longfellow has closely followed the old poem in ‘King Robert of Sicily’ printed in *Tales of a Wayside Inn*; but no answer is given to Mr. Addis’ queries about ‘The Boy and the Angel.’” (*Browning Notes and Queries*, No. 13, Pt. I., vol. ii.) Leigh Hunt, in his *Jar of Honey*, chap. vi., gives the story of King Robert of Sicily. We can only include the following abbreviation here of the beautiful legend told so delightfully by the great essayist.

One day, when King Robert of Sicily was hearing vespers on St. John’s Eve, he was struck by the words of the *Magnificat*–

“Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles” (“He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble”). He asked a chaplain near him what the words meant; and when they were explained to him, scoffingly replied that men like himself were not so easily put down, much less supplanted by those contemptible poor folk. The chaplain was horrified, and made no reply, and the king relieved his annoyance by going to sleep. After some time the king awoke and found himself in the church with no creature present except an old deaf woman who was dusting it. When the old lady saw the man who was trying to make her hear, she cried “Thieves!” and scuttled off to the door, closing it behind her. King Robert looked at the door, then at the empty church, then at himself. His ermine robe was gone, his coronet, his jewels, all the insignia of his royalty had disappeared. Raging at the door, he demanded that it should be opened; but they only mocked him through the keyhole and threatened him with the constable; but as the sexton mocked the captive king the great door was burst open in his face, for the king was a powerful man and had dashed it down with his foot. He strode towards his palace, but they would not admit him, and to all his raving replied “Madman!” Then the king caught sight of his face in a glass, which he tore from the hands of one of his captains who was admiring himself, and saw that he was changed: it was not his own face. Fear came upon him: he knew it was witchcraft, and his violence was increased when the bystanders laughed to hear him declare he was his majesty changed. Next the attendants

came from the palace to say the king wanted to see the madman they had caught; and so he was taken to the presence chamber, where he found himself face to face with another King Robert, whom the changed king called "hideous impostor," which made the court laugh consumedly, because the king on the throne was very handsome, and the man who fell asleep in the church was very coarse and vulgar. And now the latter could see that it was an angel who had taken his place, and hated him accordingly. He was still more disgusted when the king told him he would make him his court fool, because he was so amusing in his violence; and he had to submit while they cut his hair and crowned the king of fools with the cap and bells. King Robert then gave way, for he felt he was in the power of the devil and it was no use to resist; and so went out to sup with the dogs, as he was ordered. Matters went on in this way for two years. The new king was good and kind to everybody except the degraded monarch, whom he never tired of humiliating in every possible way. At the end of two years the king went to visit his brother the Pope and his brother the Emperor, and he dressed all his court magnificently, except the fool, whom he arrayed in fox-tails and placed beside an ape. The crowds of people who came out to see the grand procession laughed heartily at the sorry figure cut by the poor fool. He, however, was glad he was going to see the Pope, as he trusted the meeting would dispel the magic by which he was enchained; but he was disappointed, for neither Pope nor Emperor took the slightest notice of him. Now, it happened that day it was again St.

John's Eve, and again they were all at vespers singing: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted the humble." And now with what different feelings he heard those words! The crowded church was astonished to see the poor fool in his ridiculous disguise bathed in tears, meekly kneeling in prayer, his head bowed in penitence and sorrow. Somehow every one felt a little holier that day: Pope and Emperor wished to be kinder and more sympathetic to their people, and the sermon went to every one's heart, for it was all about charity and humility. After service they told the angel-king of the singular behaviour of the fool. Of course he knew all about it, though he did not say so; but he sent for the fool, and, when he had him in private (except that the ape was there, to whom the fool had become much attached), he asked him, "Art thou still a king?" "I am a fool, and no king." "What wouldst thou, Robert?" asked the angel gently. "What thou wouldst," replied poor King Robert. Then the angel touched him, and he felt an inexpressible calm diffuse itself through his whole being. He knelt, and began to thank the angel. "Not to me," the heavenly being said – "not to me! Let us pray." They knelt in prayer; and when the King rose from his knees the angel was gone, the ermine was once more on the King's shoulder and the crown upon his brow; his humiliation was over, but his pride never returned. He lived long and reigned nobly, and died in the odour of sanctity. Mr. Browning may have drawn upon some Italian legend for his story of Theocrite: it may even have been suggested by the legend of King Robert; but he must have been

so familiar with the Catholic idea of the interest in human affairs taken by angels and saints, that he might readily have invented the story. Nothing can be easier to understand than its lesson. With God there is no great or small, no lofty or mean, nothing common or unclean. To do the will of God in the work lying nearest us, to praise God in our daily task and the common things of life as they arise, this is better for us and more acceptable service to Him than doing some great thing, as we, with our false estimates of things, may be led to apprise it.

**By the Fireside.** (First published in vol. i. of *Men and Women*, 1855.) A man of middle life and very learned is addressing his wife. He looks forward to his old age, and prophesies how it will be passed. He will pursue his studies; but, deep as he will be in Greek, his soul will have no difficulty in finding its way back to youth and Italy, and he will delight to reconstruct the scene in his imagination where he first made all his own the heart of the woman who blessed him with her love and became his wife. Once more he will be found on that mountain path, again he will conjure from the past the Alpine scene by the ruined chapel in the gorge, the poor little building where on feast days the priest comes to minister to the few folk who live on the mountain-side. The bit of fresco over the porch, the date of its erection, the bird which sings there, and the stray sheep which drinks at the pond, the very midges dancing over the water, and the lichens clinging to the walls, – all will be present, for it was there heart was fused with heart, and two souls were blent in one. “With whom else,”

he asks his wife, “dare he look backward or dare pursue the path grey heads abhor?” Old age is dreaded by the young and middle-aged, none care to think of it; but the speaker dreads it not, he has a soul-companion from whom not even death can separate him, and with the memory of this moment of irrevocable union he can face the bounds of life undaunted. “The moment one and infinite,” to which both their lives had tended, had wrought this happiness for him that it could never cease to bear fruit, never cease to hallow and bless his spirit; the mountain stream had sought the lake below, and had lost itself in its bosom; two lives were joined in one without a scar. “How the world is made for each of us!” everything tending to a moment’s product, with its infinite consequences – the completion, in this case, of his own small life, whereby Nature won her best from him in fitting him to love his wife. The

“great brow

And the spirit small hand propping it,”

refer to Mrs. Browning, and the whole poem, though the incidents are imaginary, is without doubt a confession of his love for her, and its influence on his own spiritual development.

**Caliban upon Setebos; or, Natural Theology in the Island.** (*Dramatis Personæ*, 1864.) The original of Caliban is the savage and deformed slave of Shakespeare’s *Tempest*. The island may be identified with the Utopia οὐτοπος, the nowhere) of Hythloday.

Setebos was the Patagonian god (Settaboth in Pigafetta), which was by 1611 familiar to the hearers of *The Tempest*. Patagonia was discovered by Magellan in 1520. The new worlds which Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci, Gomara, Lane, Harriott and Raleigh described, should, according to the popular fancy of the time, be peopled by just such beings of bestial type as the Caliban of *The Tempest*. The ancients thought the inhabitants of strange and distant lands were half human, half brutal, and monstrous creatures, ogres, and “anthropophagi, men who each other eat.” The famous traveller Sir John Mandeville, in the fourteenth century, describes “the land of Bacharie, where be full evil folk and full cruel. In that country been many Ipotaynes, that dwell sometimes in the water and sometimes on the land; half-man and half-horse, and they eat men when they may take them.” Marco Polo (1254-1324) represents the Andaman Islanders as a most brutish savage race, having heads, eyes and teeth resembling the canine species, who ate human flesh raw and devoured every one on whom they could lay their hands. The islander as monster was therefore familiar enough to English readers in Shakespeare’s time, and the date of the old book of travels “Purchas his Pilgrimage,” very nearly corresponding with the probable date of the production of *The Tempest*, affords reasonable proof that the poet has embodied the story given in that work of the pongo, the huge brute-man seen by Andrew Battle in the kingdom of Congo, where he lived some nine months. This pongo slept in the trees, building a roof to shelter himself from the rain, and

living wholly on nuts and fruits. Mr. Browning has taken the Caliban of Shakespeare, “the strange fish legged like a man, and his fins like arms,” yet “no fish, but an islander that hath lately suffered by a thunderbolt,” and has evolved him into “a savage with the introspective powers of a Hamlet and the theology of an evangelical churchman.” Shakespeare’s monster did not speculate at all; he liked his dinner, liked to be stroked and made much of, and was willing to be taught how to name the bigger light and how the less. He could curse, and he could worship the man in the moon; he could work for those who were kind to him, and had a doglike attachment to Prospero. Mr. Browning’s Caliban has become a metaphysician; he talks Browningese, and reasons high

“Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,  
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute.”

He has studied Calvin’s *Institutes of Theology*, and knows enough of St. Augustine to caricature his teaching. Considered from the anthropologist’s point of view, the poem is not a scientific success; Caliban is a degradation from a higher type, not a brute becoming slowly developed into a man. Mr. Browning’s early training amongst the Nonconformists of the Calvinistic type had familiarised him with a theology which, up to fifty years ago, was that of a very large proportion of the Independents, the Baptists, and a considerable part of the

Evangelical school in the Church of England. Without some acquaintance with this theological system it is impossible to understand the poem. At the head is a quotation from Psalm 1. 21, where God says to the wicked, “thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself,” and the object of the poem is to rebuke the anthropomorphic idea of God as it exists in minds of a narrow and unloving type. It is not a satire upon Christianity, as has been sometimes declared, but is an attempt to trace the evolution of the concrete idea of God in a coarse and brutal type of mind. Man from his advent on the earth has everywhere occupied himself in creating God in his own image and likeness:

“Make us a god, said man:  
Power first the voice obeyed;  
And soon a monstrous form  
Its worshippers dismayed.”

The motto of the poem shows us how much nobler was the Hebrew conception of God than that of the nations who knew Him not. The poem opens with Caliban talking to himself in the third person, while he sprawls in the mire and is cheating Prospero and Miranda, who think he is at work for them. He begins to speculate on the Supreme Being – Setebos: he thinks His dwelling-place is the moon, thinks He made the sun and moon, but not the stars – the clouds and the island on which he dwells; he has no idea of any land beyond that which is bounded by the sea. He thinks creation was the result of God being ill at

ease. The cold which He hated and which He was powerless to change impelled Him. So He made the trees, the birds and beasts and creeping things, and made everything in spite. He could not make a second self to be His mate, but made in envy, listlessness or sport all the things which filled the island as playthings. If Caliban could make a live bird out of clay, he would laugh if the creature broke his brittle clay leg; he would play with him, being his and merely clay. So he (Setebos). It would neither be right nor wrong in him, neither kind nor cruel – merely an act of the Divine Sovereignty. If Caliban saw a procession of crabs marching to the sea, in mere indifferent playfulness he might feel inclined to let twenty pass and then stone the twenty-first, pull off a claw from one with purple spots, give a worm to a third fellow, and two to another whose nippers end in red, all the while “Loving not, hating not, just choosing so!” [Apart from revelation, mankind has not reached the conception of the Fatherhood of God, whose tender mercies are over all His works. The gods of the heathen are gods of caprice, of malice and purposeless interference with creatures who are not the sheep of their pastures, but the playthings of unloving Lords.] But he will suppose God is good in the main; He has even made things which are better than Himself, and is envious that they are so, but consoles Himself that they can do nothing without Him. If the pipe which, blown through, makes a scream like a bird, were to boast that it caught the birds, and made the cry the maker could not make, he would smash it with his foot. That is just

what God Setebos does; so Caliban must be humble, or pretend to be. But why is Setebos cold and ill at ease? Well, Caliban thinks there may be a something over Setebos, that made Him, something quiet, impassible – call it The Quiet. Beyond the stars he imagines The Quiet to reside, but is not much concerned about It. He plays at being simple in his way – makes believe: so does Setebos. His mother, Sycorax, thought The Quiet made all things, and Setebos only troubled what The Quiet made. Caliban does not agree with that. If things were made weak and subject to pain they were made by a devil, not by a good or indifferent being. No! weakness and pain meant sport to Him who created creatures subject to them. Setebos makes things to amuse himself, just as Caliban does; makes a pile of turfs and knocks it over again. So Setebos. But He is a terrible as well as a malicious being; His hurricanes, His high waves, His lightnings are destructive, and Caliban cannot contend with His force, neither can he tell that what pleases Him to-day will do so to-morrow. We must all live in fear of Him therefore, till haply The Quiet may conquer Him. All at once a storm comes, and Caliban feels that he was a fool to gibe at Setebos. He will lie flat and love Him, will do penance, will eat no whelks for a month to appease Him.

There are few, if any, systems of theology which escape one or other of the arrows of this satire. Anthropomorphism in greater or less degree is inseparable from our conceptions of the Supreme. The abstract idea of God is impossible to us, the

concrete conception is certain to err in making God to be like ourselves. That the Almighty must in Himself include all that is highest and noblest in the soul of man is a right conception, when we attribute to Him our weaknesses and failings we are but as Caliban. The doctrine of election, and the hideous doctrine of reprobation, are most certainly aimed at in the line —

“Loving not, hating not, just choosing so.”

The doctrine of reprobation is thus stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith, iii. 7. “The rest of mankind [*i. e.* all but the elect] God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of His glorious grace.” Calvin, in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, taught that “God has predestinated some to eternal life, while the rest of mankind are predestinated to condemnation and eternal death” (*Encyc. Brit.* iv., art. “Calvin,” p. 720).

**Camel Driver, A.** (Punishment by Man and by God: *Ferishtah's Fancies*, 7.) A murderer had been executed, the criminal acknowledging the justice of his punishment, but lamenting that the man who prompted him to evil had escaped; the murderer reflected with satisfaction that God had reserved a hell for him. But punishment is only man's trick to teach; if

he could see true repentance in the sinner's soul, the fault would not be repeated. God's process in teaching or punishing nowise resembles man's. Man lumps his kind in the mass, God deals with each individual soul as though they two were alone in the universe, "Ask thy lone soul what laws are plain to thee," said Ferishtah, "then stand or fall by them!" Ignorance that sins is safe, – our greatest punishment is knowledge. No other hell will be needed for any man than the reflection that he deliberately spurned the steps which would have raised him to the regard of the Supreme. In the Lyric it is complained that mankind is over-severe with mere imperfections, which it magnifies into crimes; but the greater faults, which should have been crushed in the egg, are either not suspected at all or actually praised as virtues.

**Caponsacchi** (*The Ring and the Book*), the chivalrous priest, Canon of Arezzo, who aided Pompilia in her flight to Rome from the tyranny of Count Guido.

**Cardinal and the Dog, The.** (*Asolando*, 1889.) The Papal Legate, at the later sessions of the Council of Trent in 1551 and 1552, was Marcel Crescenzo, who came of a noble Roman family. At the fifteenth session of the Council (March 20th, 1552) he was writing to the Pope nearly the whole night, although he was ill at the time; and as he rose from his seat he saw a black dog of great size, with flaming eyes and ears hanging down to the ground, which sprang into the chamber, making straight for him, and then stretched himself under the table where Crescenzo wrote. He called his servants and ordered them to turn out the

beast, but they found none. Then the Cardinal fell melancholy, took to his bed and died. As he lay on his death-bed at Verona he cried aloud to every one to drive away the dog that leapt on his bed, and so passed away in horror. The poem was written at the request of William Macready, the eldest son of the great actor. He asked the poet to write something which he might illustrate. This was in 1840, but the work was only published in the *Asolando* volume in 1889. Howling dogs have from remote times been connected with death. In Ossian we have: "The mother of Culmin remains in the hall – his dogs are howling in their place – 'Art thou fallen, my fair-haired son, in Erin's dismal war?'" There is no doubt that the howling of the wind suggested the idea of a great dog of death. The wind itself was a magnified dog, heard but not seen. Burton, in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, says (Part I., sect ii., mem. 1, subs. 2): "Spirits often foretell men's death by several signs, as knockings, groanings, etc., though Rich. Argentine, c. 18, *De præstigiis dæmonum*, will ascribe these predictions to good angels, out of the authority of Ficinus and others; prodigies frequently occur at the deaths of illustrious men, as in the Lateran Church in Rome the popes' deaths are foretold by Sylvester's tomb. Many families in Europe are so put in mind of their last by such predictions; and many men are forewarned (if we may believe Paracelsus) by familiar spirits in divers shapes – as cocks, crows, owls – which often hover about sick men's chambers." The dog is such a faithful friend of man that we are unwilling to believe him, even in spirit-

form, the harbinger of evil to any one. Cardinal Crescenzo, had he been a vivisector, would have been very appropriately summoned to his doom in the manner described in the poem. If the men who, like Professor Rutherford of Edinburgh University, boast of their ruthless torturing of dogs by hundreds, should ever find themselves in Cardinal Crescenzo's plight, there would be a fitness in things we could readily appreciate. The devil in the form of a great black dog is a familiar subject with mediæval historians. Not all black dogs were evil, though – for example, the black dog which St. Dominic's mother saw before the birth of the saint. Some of the animals called dogs were probably wolves; but even these appeared not entirely past redemption, such as the one of which we read in the *Golden Legend*, who was converted by the preaching of St. Francis, and shed tears of repentance, and became as meek as a lamb, following the saint to every town where he preached! Such is the power of love. In May 1551 the eleventh session of the Council of Trent was held, under the presidency of Cardinal Crescenzo, sole legate in title, but with two nuncios – Pighini and Lippomani. It was merely formal, as was also the twelfth session, in September 1551. It was Crescenzo who refused all concession, even going so far as to abstract the Conciliar seal, lest the safe-conduct to the Protestant theologians should be granted. He was, however, forced to yield to pressure, and had to receive the Protestant envoys in a private session at his own house. The legate in April 1552 was compelled to suspend the Council for two years, in consequence of the perils

of war. There was a general stampede from Trent at once, and the legate Crescenzo, then very ill, had just strength to reach Verona, where he died three days after his arrival (*Encyc. Brit.*, art. "Trent," vol. xxiii.). Moreri (*Dict. Hist.*) tells the story in almost the same way as Mr. Browning has given it, and adds: "It could have been invented only by ill-meaning people, who lacked respect for the Council."

**Carlisle, Lady.** (*Strafford.*) Mr. Browning says: "The character of Lady Carlisle in the play is wholly imaginary," but history points clearly enough to the truth of Mr. Browning's conception.

**Cavalier Tunes.** (Published first in *Bells and Pomegranates* in 1842.) Their titles are: "Marching Along," "Give a Rouse," and "Boot and Saddle." Villiers Stanford set them to music.

**Cenciaja.** (*Pacchiarotto, with other Poems*, London, 1876.)

"Ogni cencio vuol entrare in bucato."

The explanation of the title of this poem, as also of the Italian motto which stands at its head, is given in the following letter written by the poet to Mr. Buxton Forman: —

"19, Warwick Crescent, W., July 27th, '76.

"Dear Mr. Buxton Forman, — There can be no objection to such a simple statement as you have inserted, if it seems worth inserting. 'Fact,' it is. Next: 'Aia' is generally an accumulative yet depreciative termination. 'Cenciaja,'

a bundle of rags – a trifle. The proverb means ‘every poor creature will be pressing into the company of his betters,’ and I used it to deprecate the notion that I intended anything of the kind. Is it any contribution to ‘all connected with Shelley,’ if I mention that my ‘Book’ (*The Ring and the Book*) [rather the ‘old square yellow book,’ from which the details were taken] has a reference to the reason given by Farinacci, the advocate of the Cenci, of his failure in the defence of Beatrice? ‘Fuisse punitam Beatricem’ (he declares) ‘pœnâ ultimi supplicii, non quia ex intervallo occidi mandavit insidiantem suo honori, sed quia ejus exceptionem non probavi tibi. Prout, et idem firmiter sperabatur de sorore Beatrice si propositam excusationem probasset, prout non probavit.’ That is, she expected to avow the main outrage, and did not; in conformity with her words, ‘That which I ought to confess, that will I confess; that to which I ought to assent, to that I assent; and that which I ought to deny, that will I deny.’ Here is another Cenciaja!

*“Yours very sincerely, Robert Browning.”*

The opening lines of the poem refer to Shelley’s terrible tragedy, *The Cenci*, in the preface to which the story on which the work is founded, is briefly told as follows: “A manuscript was communicated to me during my travels in Italy, which was copied from the archives of the Cenci Palace at Rome, and contains a detailed account of the horrors which ended in the extinction of one of the noblest and richest families of that city, during the pontificate of Clement VIII., in the year 1599. The story is, that an old man, having spent his life in debauchery and wickedness,

conceived at length an implacable hatred towards his children; which showed itself towards one daughter under the form of an incestuous passion, aggravated by every circumstance of cruelty and violence. This daughter, after long and vain attempts to escape from what she considered a perpetual contamination both of body and mind, at length plotted with her mother-in-law and brother to murder their common tyrant. The young maiden, who was urged to this tremendous deed by an impulse which overpowered its horror, was evidently a most gentle and amiable being; a creature formed to adorn and be admired, and thus violently thwarted from her nature by the necessity of circumstances and opinion. The deed was quickly discovered; and, in spite of the most earnest prayers made to the Pope by the highest persons in Rome, the criminals were put to death. The old man had, during his life, repeatedly bought his pardon from the Pope for capital crimes of the most enormous and unspeakable kind, at the price of a hundred thousand crowns; the death, therefore, of his victims can scarcely be accounted for by the love of justice. The Pope, among other motives for severity, probably felt that whosoever killed the Count Cenci deprived his treasury of a certain and copious source of revenue." This explanation is exactly what might be expected from a priest-hater and religion-despiser like Shelley. The *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in the article on Clement VIII., says: "Clement was an able ruler and a sagacious statesman. He died in March 1605, leaving a high character for prudence, munificence, and capacity for

business.” Mr. Browning’s contribution to the Cenci literature affords a more reasonable motive for refusing to spare the lives of the Cenci. Sir John Simeon lent the poet a copy of an old chronicle, of which he made liberal use in the poem we are considering. According to this account, the Pope would probably have pardoned Beatrice had not a case of matricide occurred in Rome at the time, which determined him to make an example of the Cenci. The Marchesa dell’ Oriolo, a widow, had just been murdered by her younger son, Paolo Santa Croce. He had quarrelled with his mother about the family rights of his elder brother, and killed her because she refused to aid him in an act of injustice. Having made his escape, he endeavoured to involve his brother in the crime, and the unfortunate young man was beheaded, although he was perfectly innocent. In *Cenci* Mr. Browning throws light on the tragic events of the Cenci story. When Clement was petitioned on behalf of the family, he said: “She must die. Paolo Santa Croce murdered his mother, and he is fled; she shall not flee at least!”

**Charles Avison.** [The Man.] (*Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day*. 1887. No. VII.) “Charles Avison, a musician, was born in Newcastle about 1710, and died in the same town in 1770. He studied in Italy, and on his return to England became a pupil of Geminiani. He was appointed organist of St. Nicholas’ Church, Newcastle, in 1736. In 1752 appeared his celebrated *Essay on Musical Expression*, which startled the world by the boldness with which it put the French

and Italian schools of music above the German, headed by Handel himself. This book led to a controversy with Dr. Hayes, in which, according to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, from which we take the facts, ‘Hayes had the best of the argument, though Avison was superior from a literary point of view.’ Avison, who is reported to have been a man of great culture and polish, published several sets of sonatas and concertos, but there are probably few persons at the present day who have ever heard any of his music.” (*Pall Mall Gazette*, Jan. 18th, 1887.)

[The Poem.] This is a criticism of the province and office of music in its influence on the mind of man.

“There is no truer truth obtainable  
By man, than comes of music,”

says Mr. Browning. Underneath Mind rolls the unsounded sea – the Soul. Feeling from out its deeps emerges in flower and foam.

“Who tells of, tracks to source the founts of Soul?”

Music essays to solve how we feel, to match feeling with knowledge. Manifest Soul’s work on Mind’s work, how and whence come the hates, loves, joys, hopes and fears that rise and sink ceaselessly within us? Of these things Music seeks to tell. Art may arrest some of the transient moods of Soul; Poetry discerns, Painting is aware of the seething within the gulf, but

Music outdoes both: dredging deeper yet, it drags into day the abysmal bottom growths of Soul's deep sea.

Notes. – ii., “*March*”: Avison's *Grand March* was possessed in MS. by Browning's father. The music of the march is added to the poem. iv., “*Great John Relfe*”: Browning's music master – a celebrated contrapuntist. *Buononcini, Giovanni Battista*, Italian musician. He was a gifted composer, declared by his clique to be infinitely superior to Handel, with whom he wrote at one time in conjunction. *Geminiani, Francesco*, Italian violinist (1680-1762). He came to London under the protection of the Earl of Essex in 1714. His musical opinions are said to have had no foundation in truth or principle. *Pepusch, John Christopher*, an eminent theoretical musician, born at Berlin about 1667. He performed at Drury Lane in about 1700. He took the degree of Mus. Doc. at Oxford at the same time with Croft, 1713. He was organist at the Charter-House, and died in 1752. v., *Hesperus*. The song to the Evening Star in *Tannhauser*, “O Du mein holder Abendstern,” is referred to here (Mr. A. Symons). viii., “*Radamista*,” the name of an opera by Handel, first performed at the Haymarket in 1720. “*Rinaldo*,” the name of the opera composed by Handel, and performed under his direction at the Haymarket for the first time on Feb. 24th, 1711. xv., “*Little Ease*,” an uncomfortable punishment similar to the stocks or the pillory.

**Charles I.** (*Strafford*.) The character of this king, who basely sacrifices his best friend Strafford, is founded in fact, but his

weakness and meanness are doubtless exaggerated by the poet – to show his meaning, as the artists say.

**Cherries.** (*Ferishtah's Fancies*, 9.) “On Praise and Thanksgiving.” All things are great and small in their degree. A disciple objects to Ferishtah that man is too weak to praise worthily the All-mighty One; he is too mean to offer fit praise to Heaven, – let the stars do that! The dervish tells a little story of a subject of the Shah who came from a distant part of the realm, and wandered about the palace wonderingly, till all at once he was surprised to find a nest-like little chamber with his own name on the entry, and everything arranged exactly to his own peculiar taste. Yet to him it was as nothing: he had not faith enough to enter into the good things provided for him. He tells another story. Two beggars owed a great sum to the Shah. This one brought a few berries from his currant-bush, some heads of garlic, and five pippins from a seedling tree. This was his whole wealth; he offered that in payment of his debt. It was graciously received; teaching us that if we offer God all the love and thanks we can, it will gratify the Giver of all good none the less because our offering is small, and lessened by admixture with lower human motives. For the grateful flavour of the cherry let us lift up our thankful hearts to Him who made that, the stars, and us. We know why He made the cherry, – why He made Jupiter we do not know. The Lyric compares verse-making with love-making. Verse-making is praising God by the stars, too great a task for man's short life; but love-making has no depths to

explore, no heights to ascend; love now will be love evermore: let us give thanks for love, if we cannot offer praise the poet's own great way.

**Chiappino.** (*A Soul's Tragedy.*) The bragging friend of Luitolfo, who was compelled to be noble against his inclination, and who became "the twenty-fourth leader of a revolt" ridiculed by the legate.

**"Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came."** (*Men and Women*, 1855; *Romances*, 1863; *Dramatic Romances*, 1868.) The story of a knight who has undertaken a pilgrimage to a certain dark tower, the way to which was full of difficulties and dangers, and the right road quite unknown to the seeker. Those who had preceded him on the path had all failed, and he himself is no sooner fairly engaged in the quest than he is filled with despair, but is impelled to go on. At the stage of his journey which is described in the poem he meets a hoary cripple, who gives him directions which he consents to follow, though with misgivings. The day was drawing to a close, the road by which he entered on the path to the tower was gone; when he looked back, nothing remained but to proceed. Nature all around was starved and ignoble: flowers there were none; some weeds that seemed to thrive in the wilderness only added to its desolation; dock leaves with holes and rents, grass as hair in leprosy; and wandering on the gloomy plain, one stiff, blind horse, all starved and stupefied, looking as if he were thrust out of the devil's stud. The pilgrim tried to think of earlier, happier sights: of his friend Cuthbert –

alas! one night's disgrace left him without that friend; of Giles, the soul of honour, who became a traitor, spit upon and curst. The present horror was better than these reflections on the past. And now he approached a petty, yet spiteful river, over which black scrubby alders hung, with willows that seemed suicidal. He forded the stream, fearing to set his foot on some dead man's cheek; the cry of the water-rat sounded as the shriek of a baby. And as he toiled on he saw that ugly heights (mountains seemed too good a name to give such hideous heaps) had given place to the plain, and two hills in particular, couched like two bulls in fight, seemed to indicate the place of the tower. Yes! in their midst was the round, squat turret, without a counterpart in the whole world. The sight was as that of the rock which the sailor sees too late to avoid the crash that wrecks his ship. The very hills seemed watching him; he seemed to hear them cry, "Stab and end the creature!" A noise was everywhere, tolling like a bell; he could hear the names of the lost adventurers who had preceded him. There they stood to see the last of him. He saw and knew them all, yet dauntless set the horn to his lips and blew, "*Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came.*"

Notes. – At the head of the poem is a note: "See Edgar's song in *Lear*." In Act III., scene iv., Edgar, disguised as a madman, says, while the storm rages: "Who gives anything to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, through ford and whirlpool, over bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by

his porridge; made him proud of heart to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. – Bless thy five wits! Tom’s a-cold. – O do de, do de, do, de. – Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes.” At the end of the scene Edgar sings: —

“Childe Rowland to the dark tower came,  
His word was still, – Fie, foh, and fum  
I smell the blood of a British man.”

“Childe Roland was the youngest brother of Helen. Under the guidance of Merlin he undertook to bring back his sister from elf-land, whither the fairies had carried her, and he succeeded in his perilous exploit.” – Dr. Brewer. (See the ancient Ballade of *Burd Helen*.) *Childe* was a term specially applied to the scions of knightly families before their admission to the degree of knighthood, as “Chyld Waweyn, Loty’s Sone” (*Robert of Gloucester*).

This wonderful poem, one of the grandest pieces of word-painting in our language, has exercised the ingenuity of Browning students more than any other of the poet’s works. *Sordello* is difficult to understand, but it was intended by the poet to convey a definite meaning and important lessons, but *Childe Roland*, we have been warned again and again, was written without any moral purpose whatever. “We may see in it,” says Mrs. Orr, “a poetic vision of life... The thing we may not do is to

imagine that we are meant to recognise it.” A paper was read at the Browning Society on this poem by Mr. Kirkman (*Browning Society Papers*, Part iii., p. 21) suggesting an interpretation of the allegory. In the discussion which followed, Dr. Furnivall said “he had asked Browning if it was an allegory, and in answer had, on three separate occasions, received an emphatic ‘no’; that it was simply a dramatic creation called forth by a line of Shakespeare’s. Browning had written it one day in Paris, as a vivid picture suggested by Edgar’s line; the horse was suggested by the figure of a red horse in a piece of tapestry in Browning’s house... Still, Dr. Furnivall thought, it was quite justifiable that any one should use the poem to signify whatever image it called up in his own mind. But he must not confuse the poet’s mind with his. The poem was *not* an allegory, and was never meant to be one.” The Hon. Roden Noel, who was in the chair on this occasion, said “he himself had never regarded *Childe Roland* as having any hidden meaning; nor had cared so to regard it. But words are mystic symbols: they mean more, very often, than the utterer of them, poet or puppet, intended.” When some one asked Mendelssohn what he meant by his *Lieder ohne Worte*, the musician replied that “they meant what they said.” A poem so consistent as a whole, with a narrative in which every detail follows in a perfectly regular and natural sequence, must inevitably convey to the thinking mind some great and powerful idea, suiting itself to his view of life considered as a journey or pilgrimage. The wanderings of the children of Israel from Egypt

to the Promised Land may be considered simply as a historical event, like the migrations of the Tartars or the Northmen; or they may be viewed as an allegory of the Christian life, like Bunyan's immortal dream. The historian of the Exodus could never have had in his mind all the interpretations put upon the incidents which he recorded; yet we have the warrant of St. Paul for allegorising the story. Any narrative of a journey through a desert to a definite end held in view throughout the way, is certain to be pounced upon as an allegory; and it is impossible but that Mr. Browning must have had some notion of a "central purpose" in his poem. Indeed, when the Rev. John W. Chadwick visited the poet, and asked him if constancy to an ideal – "He that endureth to the end shall be saved" – was not a sufficient understanding of the central purpose of the poem, he said, "Yes, just about that." Mr. Kirkman, in the paper already referred to, says, "There are overwhelming reasons for concluding that this poem describes, after the manner of an allegory, the sensations of a sick man very near to death — *Rabbi Ben Ezra* and *Prospice*— are the two angels that lead on to *Childe Roland*." Mr. Nettleship, in his well-known essay on the poem, says the central idea is this: "Take some great end which men have proposed to themselves in life, which seemed to have truth in it, and power to spread freedom and happiness on others; but as it comes in sight, it falls strangely short of preconceived ideas, and stands up in hideous prosaicness." Mrs. James L. Bagg, in the *Interpretation of Childe Roland*, read to the Syracuse (U.S.) Browning Club, gives the

following on the lesson of the poem: – “The secrets of the universe are not to be discovered by exercise of reason, nor are they to be reached by flights of fancy, nor are duties loyally done to be recompensed by revelation. A life of *becoming, being, and doing*, is not loss, nor failure, nor discomfiture, though the dark tower for ever tantalise and for ever withhold.” Some have seen in the poem an allegory of *Love*, others of *the Search after Truth*. Others, again, understand the Dark Tower to represent Unfaith, and the obscure land that of Doubt – Doubting Castle and the By-Path Meadow of John Bunyan, in short. For my own part, I see in the allegory – for I can consider it no other – a picture of the Age of Materialistic Science, a “science falsely so called,” which aims at the destruction of all our noblest ideals of religion and faith in the unseen. The pilgrim is a truth-seeker, misdirected by the lying spirit – the hoary cripple, unable to be or do anything good or noble himself; in him I see the cynical, destructive critic, who sits at our universities and colleges, our medical schools and our firesides, to point our youth to the desolate path of Atheistic Science, a science which strews the ghastly landscape with wreck and ruthless ruin, with the blanching bones of animals tortured to death by its “engines and wheels, with rusty teeth of steel” – a science which has invaded the healing art, and is sending students of medicine daily down the road where surgeons become cancer-grafters (as the Paris and Berlin medical scandals have revealed), and where physicians gloat over their animal victims —

“Toads in a poisoned tank,  
Or wild cats in a red-hot iron cage,”

in their passion to reach the dark tower of Knowledge, which to them has neither door nor window. The lost adventurers are the men who, having followed this false path, have failed, and who look eagerly for the next fool who comes to join the band of the lost ones. “In the Paris School of Medicine,” says Mr. Lilly in his *Right and Wrong*, “it has lately been prophesied that, ‘when the rest of the world has risen to the intellectual level of France, the present crude and vulgar notions regarding morality, religion, Divine providence, and so forth, will be swept entirely away, and the dicta of science will remain the sole guide of sane and educated men.’” Had Mr. Browning intended to write for us an allegory in aid of our crusade, a sort of medical Pilgrim’s Progress, he could scarcely have given the world a more faithful picture of the spiritual ruin and desolation which await the student of medicine who sets forth on the fatal course of an experimental torturer. I have good authority for saying that, had Mr. Browning seen this interpretation of his poem, he would have cordially accepted it as at least one legitimate explanation. Most of the commentators agree that when Childe Roland “dauntless set the slug horn to his lips and blew ‘*Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came*,’” he did so as a warning to others that he had failed in his quest, and that the way of the Dark Tower was the way of destruction and death.

**Christmas Eve.** (*Christmas Eve and Easter Day*: London, 1850.) Two poems on the same subject from different points of view. The scene is a country chapel, a barnlike structure, from which ornament has been rigorously excluded, not so much on account of want of funds as horror of anything which should detract from “Gospel simplicity.” The night is stormy, and Christmas Day must have fallen on a Monday that year, or surely no worshippers in that building would have troubled themselves about keeping the vigil of such a “Popish feast” as Christmas. It must have been Sunday night as well as Christmas Eve, that year of ’49. The congregation eyed the stranger “much as some wild beast,” for “not many wise” were called to worship in their particular way, and the stranger was evidently not of their faith or class. In came the flock: the fat woman with a wreck of an umbrella; the little old-faced, battered woman with the baby, wringing the ends of her poor shawl soaking with the rain; then a “female something” in dingy satins; next a tall, yellow man, like the Penitent Thief; and from him, as from all, the interloper got the same surprised glance. “What, you, Gallio, here!” it expressed. And so, after a shoemaker’s lad, with a wet apron round his body and a bad cough inside it, had passed in, the interloper followed and took his place, waiting for his portion of New Testament meat, like the rest of them. What with the hot smell of greasy coats and frowsy gowns, combined with the preacher’s stupidity, the visitor soon had enough of it, and he “flung out of the little chapel” in disgust. As he passed out he

found there was a lull in the rain and wind. The moon was up, and he walked on, glad to be in the open air, his mind full of the scene he had left. After all, why should he be hard on this case? In many modes the same thing was going on everywhere – the endeavour to make you believe – and with much about the same effect. He had his own church; Nature had early led him to its door; he had found God visibly present in the immensities, and with the power had recognised his love too as the nobler dower. Quite true was it that God stood apart from man – apart, that he might have room to act and use his gifts of brain and heart. Man was not perfect, not a machine, not unaware of his fitness to pray and praise. He looked up to God, recognised how infinitely He surpassed man in power and wisdom, and was convinced He would never in His love bestow less than man requires. In this great way *he* would seek to press towards God; let men seek Him in a narrow shrine if they would. And as he mused thus, suddenly the rain ceased and the moon shone out, the black clouds falling beneath her feet; a moon rainbow, vast and perfect, rose in its chorded colours. Then from out the world of men the worshipper of God in Nature was called, and at once and with terror he saw Him with His human air, the back of Him – no more. He had been present in the poor chapel – He, with His sweeping garment, vast and white, whose hem could just be recognised by the awed beholder, He who had promised to be where two or three should meet to pray – and He had been present as the friend of these poor folk! He was leaving him who had despised the friends of the Human-

Divine. Then he clung to the salvation of His vesture, and told Him how he had thought it best He should be worshipped in spirit and becoming beauty; the uncouth worship he had just left was scarcely fitted for Him. Then the Lord turned His whole face upon him, and he was caught up in the whirl of the vestment, and was up-borne through the darkness and the cold, and held awful converse with his God; and then he came to know who registers the cup of cold water given for His sake, and who disdains not to slake His Divine thirst for love at the poorest love ever offered – came to know it was for this he was permitted to cling to the vesture himself. And so they crossed the world till they stopped at the miraculous dome of God, St. Peter's Church at Rome, with its colonnade like outstretched arms, as if desiring to embrace all mankind. The whole interior of the vast basilica is alive with worshippers this Christmas Eve. It is the midnight mass of the Feast of the Nativity under Rome's great dome. The incense rises in clouds; the organ holds its breath and grovels latent, as if hushed by the touch of God's finger. The silence is broken only by the shrill tinkling of a silver bell. Very man and Very God upon the altar lies, and Christ has entered, and the man whom He brought clinging to His garment's fold is left outside the door, for He must be within, where so much of love remains, though the man without is to wait till He return:

“He will not bid me enter too,  
But rather sit as I now do.”

He muses as he remains in the night air, shut out from the glory and the worship within, and he desires to enter. He thinks he can see the error of the worshippers; but he is sure also that he can see the love, the power of the Crucified One, which swept away the poetry, rhetoric and art of old Rome and Greece, "till filthy saints rebuked the gust" which gave them the glimpse of a naked Aphrodite. Love shut the world's eyes, and love sufficed. Again he is caught up in the vesture's fold, and transferred this time to a lecture-hall in a university town in Germany, where a hawk-nosed, high-cheek-boned professor, with a hacking cough, is giving a Christmas Eve discourse on the Christ myth. He was just discussing the point whether there ever was a Christ or not, and the Saviour had entered here also; but He would not bid His companion enter "the exhausted air-bell of the critic." Where Papist with Dissenter struggles the air may become mephitic; but the German left no air to poison at all. He rejects Christ as known to Christians; yet he retains somewhat. Is it His intellect that we must reverence? But Christ taught nothing which other sages had not taught before, and who did not damage their claim by assuming to be one with the Creator. Are we to worship Christ, then, for His goodness? But goodness is due from man to man, still more to God, and does not confer on its possessor the right to rule the race. Besides, the goodness of Christ was either self-gained or inspired by God. On neither ground could it substantiate His claim to put Himself above us. We praise

Nature, not Harvey, for the circulation of the blood; so we look from the gift to the Giver – from man’s dust to God’s divinity. What is the point of stress in Christ’s teaching? “Believe in goodness and truth, now understood for the first time”? or “Believe in Me, who lived and died, yet am Lord of Life”? And all the time Christ remains inside this lecture-room. Could it be that there was anything which a Christian could be in accord with there? The professor has pounded the pearl of price to dust and ashes, yet he does not bid his hearers sweep the dust away. No; he actually gives it back to his hearers, and bids them carefully treasure the precious remains, venerate the myth, adore the man as before! And so the listener resolved to value religion for itself, be very careless as to its sects, and thus cultivate a mild indifferentism; when, lo! the storm began afresh, and the black night caught him and whirled him up and flung him prone on the college-step. Christ was gone, and the vesture fast receding. It is borne in upon him then that there must be one best way of worship. This he will strive to find and make other men share, for man is linked with man, and no gain of his must remain unshared by the race. He caught at the vanishing robe, and, once more lapped in its fold, was seated in the little chapel again, as if he had never left it, never seen St. Peter’s successor nor the professor’s laboratory. The poor folk were all there as before – a disagreeable company, and the sermon had just reached its “tenthly and lastly.” The English was ungrammatical; in a word, the water of life was being dispensed with a strong taint of the

soil in a poor earthen vessel. This, he thinks, is his place; here, to his mind, is “Gospel simplicity”; he will criticise no more.

Notes. – Sect. ii., “*a carer for none of it, a Gallio*”: “And Gallio cared for none of these things” (Acts xviii. 17). “*A Saint John’s candlestick*” (see Rev. i. 20). “*Christmas Eve of ‘Forty-nine’*”: Dissenters do not keep Christmas Eve, nor Christmas Day itself; they would not, therefore, have been found at chapel unless Christmas happened to fall on a Sunday. In 1849 Christmas Eve fell on a Monday. Sect. x., *the baldachin*: the canopy over the high altar of St. Peter’s at Rome is supported by magnificent twisted brazen columns, from designs by Bernini. It is 95 feet in height, and weighs about 93 tons. The high altar stands immediately over the tomb of St. Peter. Sect. xiv., “*Göttingen, most likely*”: a celebrated university of Germany, which has produced many eminent Biblical critics. Neander and Ewald were natives of Göttingen. Sect. xvi., —

“When A got leave an Ox to be,  
No Camel (quoth the Jews) like G.”

The letter Aleph, in Hebrew, was suggested by an ox’s head and horns. Gimel, the Hebrew letter G, means camel. Sect. xviii., “*anapæsts in comic-trimeter*”: in prosody an *anapæst* is a foot consisting of three syllables; the first two short, and the third long. A *trimeter* is a division of verse consisting of three measures of two feet each. “*The halt and maimed ‘Iketides’*”: *The*

*Suppliants*, an incomplete play of Æschylus, called “maimed” because we have only a portion of it extant. Sect. xxii., *breccia*, a kind of marble.

**Christopher Smart.** (*Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day*. 1887.) [The Man.] (1722-1771.) It has only recently been discovered that Smart was anything more than a writer of second-rate eighteenth-century poetry. He was born at Shipbourne, in Kent, in 1722. He was a clever youth, and the Duchess of Cleveland sent him to Cambridge, and allowed him £40 a year till her death in 1742. He did well at college, and became a fellow of Pembroke, gaining the Seaton prize five times. When he came to London he mixed in the literary society adorned by Dr. Johnson, Garrick, Dr. James, and Dr. Burney – all of whom helped him in his constant difficulties. He married a daughter of Mr. Newbery, the publisher. He became a Bohemian man of letters, but the only work by which he will be remembered is the *Song to David*, the history of which is sufficiently remarkable. It was written while he was in confinement as a person of unsound mind, and was – it is said, though we know not if the fact be precisely as usually stated – written with a nail on the wall of the cell in which he was detained. The poem bears no evidence of the melancholy circumstances under which it was composed: it is powerful and healthy in every line, and is evidently the work of a sincerely religious mind. He was unfortunately a man of dissipated habits, and his insanity was probably largely due to intemperance. He

died in 1771 from the effects of poverty and disease. His *Song to David* was published in 1763, and is quite unlike any other production of the century. The poem in full consists of eighty-six verses, of which Mr. Palgrave, in the *Golden Treasury*, gives the following: —

“He sang of God – the mighty Source  
Of all things, the stupendous force  
On which all strength depends;  
From Whose right arm, beneath Whose eyes,  
All period, power, and enterprise  
Commences, reigns, and ends.

“The world, – the clustering spheres, He made,  
The glorious light, the soothing shade,  
Dale, champaign, grove, and hill:  
The multitudinous abyss.  
Where Secrecy remains in bliss,  
And Wisdom hides her skill.

“Tell them, I AM, Jehovah said  
To Moses, while earth heard in dread,  
And, smitten to the heart,  
At once above, beneath, around,  
All Nature, without voice or sound,  
Replied, O Lord, Thou art.”

[The Poem.] “How did this happen?” asks Mr. Browning.

He imagined that he was exploring a large house, had gone through the decently-furnished rooms, which exhibited in their arrangement good taste without extravagance, till, on pushing open a door, he found himself in a chapel which was

“From floor to roof one evidence  
Of how far earth may rival heaven.”

Prisoned glory in every niche, it glowed with colour and gleamed with carving: it was “Art’s response to earth’s despair.” He leaves the chapel big with expectation of what might be in store for him in other rooms in the mansion, but there was nothing but the same dead level of indifferent work everywhere, just as in the rooms which he had passed through on his way to the exquisite chapel: nothing anywhere but calm Common-Place. Browning says this is a diagnosis of Smart’s case: he was sound and sure at starting, then caught up in a fireball. Heaven let earth understand how heaven at need can operate; then the flame fell, and the untransfigured man resumed his wonted sobriety. But what Browning wants to know is, How was it this happened but once? Here was a poet who always could but never did but once! Once he saw Nature naked; once only Truth found vent in words from him. Once the veil was pulled back, then the world darkened into the repository of show and hide.

**Clara de Millefleurs.** (*Red Cotton Night-Cap Country.*) The mistress of Miranda, the jeweller of Paris.

**Claret.** See [“Nationality in Drinks”](#) (*Dramatic Lyrics*).

**Classification.** Mr. Nettleship’s classification of Browning is the best I know. It is no easy matter to table the poet’s works: they do not readily accommodate themselves to classification. Such poems as the great Art and Music works, the Dramas, Love, and Religious poems are to be found in this book under the respective subjects.

**Cleon.** (*Men and Women*, 1855.) The speculation of this poem may be compared with a picture in a magic lantern slowly dissolving into another view, and losing itself in that which is succeeding it. We have the latest utterances of the beautiful Greek thought, saddened as they were by the despairing note of the sense of hopelessness which marred the highest effort of man, and which was never so acutely felt as at the period when the Sun of Christianity was rising and about to fill the world with the Spirit of Eternal Hope. The old heathenism is dissolving away, the first faint outlines of the gospel glory are detected by the philosopher who has heard of the fame of Paul, and is not sure he is not the same as the Christ preached by some slaves whose doctrine “could be held by no sane man.” The quotation with which the poem is headed is from Acts of the Apostles, chap. xvii. 28: “As certain also of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also his offspring.’” The quotation is from the *Phænomena* of Aratus, a poet of *Tarsus*, in Cilicia, St. Paul’s own city. There is also a very similar passage in a hymn of the Stoic Cleanthes: “Zeus, thou crown of creation, Hail! – We are thy

offspring.” The persons of the poem are not historical, though the thought expressed is highly characteristic of that of the Greek philosophers of the time. As the old national creeds disappeared under the advancing tide of Roman conquest, and as philosophers calmly discussed the truth or falsity of their dying religions, an easy tolerance arose, all religions were permitted because “indifference had eaten the heart out of them.” Four hundred years before our era Eastern philosophy, through the Greek conquests in Asia, had begun to influence European thinkers by its strange and subtle attempts to solve the mystery of existence. A spirit of inquiry, and a restless craving for some undefined faith which should take the place of that which was everywhere dying out, prepared the way for the progress of the simple, love-compelling religion of Christ, and made every one’s heart more or less suitable soil for the good seed. Cleon is a poet from the isles of Greece who has received a letter from his royal patron and many costly gifts, which crowd his court and portico. He writes to thank his king for his munificence, and in his reply says it is true that he has written that epic on the hundred plates of gold; true that he composed the chant which the mariners will learn to sing as they haul their nets; true that the image of the sun-god on the lighthouse is his also; that the Pœcile – the portico at Athens painted with battle pictures by Polygnotus the Thasian, has been adorned, too, with his own works. He knows the plastic anatomy of man and woman and their proportions, not observed before; he has moreover

“Written three books on the soul,  
Proving absurd all written hitherto,  
And putting us to ignorance again.”

He has combined the moods for music, and invented one: —

“In brief, all arts are mine.”

All this is known; it is not so marvellous either, because men’s minds in these latter days are greater than those of olden time because more composite. Life, he finds reason to believe, is intended to be viewed eventually as a great whole, not analysed to parts, but each having reference to all: the true judge of man’s life must see the whole, not merely one way of it at once; the artist who designed the chequered pavement did not superimpose the figures, putting the last design over the old and blotting it out, — he made a picture and used every stone, whatever its figure, in the composition of his work. So he conceives that perfect, separate forms which make the portions of mankind were created at first, afterwards these were combined, and so came progress. Mankind is a synthesis — a putting together of all the single men. Zeus had a plan in all, and our souls know this, and cry to him —

“To vindicate his purpose in our life.”

As for himself he is not a poet like Homer, such a musician

as Terpander, nor a sculptor like Phidias; point by point he fails to reach their height, but in sympathy he is the equal of them all. So much for the first part of the king's letter: it is all true which has been reported of him. Next he addresses himself to the questions asked by the king: "has he not attained the very crown and proper end of life?" and having so abundantly succeeded, does he fear death as do lower men? Cleon replies that if his questioner could have been present on the earth before the advent of man, and seen all its tenantry, from worm to bird, he would have seen them perfect. Had Zeus asked him if he should do more for creatures than he had done, he would have replied, "Yes, make each grow conscious in himself"; he chooses then for man, his last premeditated work, that a quality may arise within his soul which may view itself and so be happy. "Let him learn how he lives." Cleon would, however, tell the king it would have been better had man made no step beyond the better beast. Man is the only creature in whom there is failure; it is called advance that man should climb to a height which overlooks lower forms of creation simply that he may perish there. Our vast capabilities for joy, our craving souls, our struggles, only serve to show us that man is inadequate to joy, as the soul sees joy. "Man can use but a man's joy while he sees God's." He agrees with the king in his profound discouragement: most progress is most failure. As to the next question which the letter asks: "Does he, the poet, artist, musician, fear death as common men? Will it not comfort him to know that his works will live, though he may perish?" Not at all,

he protests – he, sleeping in his urn while men sing his songs and tell his praise! “It is so horrible.” And so he sometimes imagines Zeus may intend for us some future state where the capability for joy is as unlimited as is our present desire for joy. But no: “Zeus has not yet revealed it. He would have done so were it possible!” Nothing can more faithfully portray the desolation of the soul “without God,” the sense of loss in man, whose soul, emanating from the Divine, refuses to be satisfied with anything short of God Himself. Art, wealth, learning, honours, serve not to dissipate for a moment the infinite sadness of this soul “without God and without hope in the world.” And, as he wrote, Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, had turned to the Pagan world with the Gospel which the Jews had rejected. To the very island in the Grecian sea whence arose this sad wail of despair the echo of the angel-song of Bethlehem had been borne, “Peace on earth, good-will towards men.” Round the coasts of the Ægean Sea, through Philippi, Troas, Mitylene, Chios, and Miletus, “the mere barbarian Jew Paulus” had sown the seeds of a faith which should grow up and shelter under its branches the weary truth-seekers who knew too well what was the utter hopelessness of “art for art’s sake” for satisfying the infinite yearning of the human heart. In the crypt of the church of San Marziano at Syracuse is the primitive church of Sicily, constructed on the spot where St. Paul is said to have preached during his three days’ sojourn on the island. Here is shown the rude stone altar where St. Paul broke the bread of life; and as we stand on this sacred spot and recall

the past in this strange city of a hundred memorials of antiquity – the temples of the gods, the amphitheatre, the vast altar, the Greek theatre, the walls of Epipolæ, the aqueducts, the forts, the harbour, the quarries, the Ear of Dionysius, the tombs, the streams and fountains famed in classic story and sung by poets – all fade into insignificance before the hallowed spot whence issued the fertilising influences of the Gospel preached by this same Paulus to a few poor slaves. The time would come, and not so far distant either, when the doctrines of Christ and Paul would be rejected “by no sane man.”

**Clive.** (*Dramatic Idyls*, Series II., 1880.) The poem deals with a well-known incident in the life of Lord Clive, who founded the empire of British India and created for it a pure and strong administration. Robert Clive was born in 1725 at Styche, near Market Drayton, Shropshire. The Clives formed one of the oldest families in the county. Young Clive was negligent of his books, and devoted to boyish adventures of the wildest sort. However, he managed to acquire a good education, though probably by means which schoolmasters considered irregular. He was a born leader, and held death as nothing in comparison with loss of honour. He often suffered, even in youth, from fits of depression, and twice attempted his own life. He went out to Madras as a “writer” in the East India Company’s civil service. Always in some trouble or other with his companions, he one day fought the duel which forms the subject of Mr. Browning’s poem. In 1746 he became disgusted with a civilian’s life, and obtained an ensign’s

commission. At this time a crisis in Indian affairs opened up to a man of high courage, daring and administrative ability, like Clive, a brilliant path to fortune. Clive seized his opportunity, and won India for us. His bold attack upon the city of Arcot terminated in a complete victory for our arms; and in 1753, when he sailed to England for the recovery of his health, his services were suitably rewarded by the East India Company. He won the battle of Plassey in 1757. Notwithstanding his great services to his country, his conduct in India was severely criticised, and he was impeached in consequence, but was acquitted in 1773. He committed suicide in 1774, his mind having been unhinged by the charges brought against him after the great things he had done for an ungrateful country. He was addicted to the use of opium; this is referred to in the poem in the line "noticed how the furtive fingers went where a drug-box skulked behind the honest liquor." Lord Macaulay in his Essay on Clive, says he had a "restless and intrepid spirit. His personal courage, of which he had, while still a writer, given signal proof by a desperate duel with a military bully who was the terror of Fort St. David, speedily made him conspicuous even among hundreds of brave men." The duel took place under the following circumstances. He lost money at cards to an officer who was proved to have cheated. Other losers were so in terror of this cheating bully that they paid. Clive refused to pay, and was challenged. They went out with pistols; no seconds were employed, and Clive missed his opponent, who, coming close up to him, held his pistol to his

head and told him he would spare his life if he were asked to do so. Clive complied. He was next required to retract his charge of cheating. This demand being refused, his antagonist threatened to fire. "Fire, and be damned!" replied Clive. "I said you cheated; I say so still, and will never pay you!" The officer was so amazed at his bravery that he threw away his pistol. Chatting, with a friend, a week before he committed suicide, he tells the story of this duel as the one occasion when he felt fear, and that not of death, but lest his adversary should contemptuously permit him to keep his life. Under such circumstances he could have done nothing but use his weapon on himself. This part of the story is, of course, imaginary.

**Colombe of Ravenstein.** (*Colombe's Birthday.*) Duchess of Juliers and Cleves. When in danger of losing her sovereignty by the operation of the Salic Law, she has an offer of marriage from Prince Berthold, who could have dispossessed her. Colombe loves Valence, an advocate, and he loves her. The prince does not even pretend that love has prompted his offer, and so Colombe sacrifices power at the shrine of love.

**Comparini, The.** (*The Ring and the Book.*) Violatne and Pietro Comparini were the foster-parents of Pompilia, who, with her, were murdered by Count Guido Franceschini.

**Confessional, The.** (*Dramatic Romances in Bells and Pomegranates*, 1845.) The scene is in Spain, in the time of the Inquisition. A girl has confessed to an aged priest some sinful conduct with her lover Bertram; as a penance, she has been

desired to extract from him some secrets relating to matters of which he has been suspected. As a proof of his love, he tells the girl things which, if known, would imperil his life. The confidant, as requested, carries the story to the priest. She sees her lover no more till she beholds him under the executioner's hands on the scaffold. Passionately denouncing Church and priests, she is herself at the mercy of the Inquisition, and the poem opens with her exclamations against the system which has killed her lover and ruined her life.

**Confessions.** (*Dramatis Personæ*, 1864.) A man lies dying. A clergyman asks him if he has not found the world "a vale of tears"? — a suggestion which is indignantly repudiated. As the man looks at the row of medicine bottles ranged before him, he sees in his fancy the lane where lived the girl he loved, and where, in the June weather, she stood watching for him at that farther bottle labelled "Ether" —

"How sad and bad and mad it was! —  
But then, how it was sweet!"

**Constance** (*In a Balcony*), a relative of the Queen in this dramatic fragment. She is loved by Norbert, and returns his love. The queen, however, loves the handsome young courtier herself, and her jealousy is the ruin of the young couple's happiness.

**Corregidor, The.** (*How it strikes a Contemporary.*) In Spain the corregidor is the chief magistrate of a town; the name

is derived from *corregir*, to correct – one who corrects. He is represented as going about the city, observing everything that takes place, and is consequently suspected as a spy in the employment of the Government. He is, in fact, but a harmless poet of very observant habits, and is exceedingly poor.

**Count Gismond.** Aix in Provence. Published in *Dramatic Lyrics* under the title “*France*,” in 1842. An orphan maiden is to be queen of the tourney to-day. She lives at her uncle’s home with her two girl cousins, each a queen by her beauty, not needing to be crowned. The maiden thought they loved her. They brought her to the canopy and complimented her as she took her place. The time came when she was to present the victor’s crown. All eyes were bent upon her, when at that proud moment Count Gauthier thundered “Stay! Bring no crown! bring torches and a penance sheet; let her shun the chaste!” He accuses her of licentious behaviour with himself; and as the girl hears the horrible lie, paralysed at the baseness of the accusation, she never dreams that answer is possible to make. Then out strode Count Gismond. Never had she met him before, but in his face she saw God preparing to do battle with Satan. He strode to Gauthier, gave him the lie, and struck his mouth with his mailed hand: the lie was damned, truth upstanding in its place. They fought. Gismond flew at him, clove out the truth from his breast with his sword, then dragging him dying to the maiden’s feet, said “Here die, but first say that thou hast lied.” And the liar said, “To God and her I have lied,” and gave up the ghost. Gismond knelt to the

maiden and whispered in her ear; then rose, flung his arm over her head, and led her from the crowd. Soon they were married, and the happy bride cried:

“Christ God who savest man, save most  
Of men Count Gismond who saved me!”

**Count Guido Franceschini.** (*The Ring and the Book.*) The wicked nobleman of Arezzo who marries Pompilia for her dowry, and treats her so cruelly that she flies from his home to Rome, in company with Caponsacchi, who chivalrously and innocently devotes himself to her assistance. While they rest on the way they are overtaken by the Count, who eventually kills Pompilia and her foster-parents.

**Courts Of Love** (*Sordello*) “were judicial courts for deciding affairs of the heart, established in Provence during the palmy days of the Troubadours. The following is a case submitted to their judgment: A lady listened to one admirer, squeezed the hand of another, and touched with her toe the foot of a third. Query, Which of these three was the favoured suitor?” (*Dr. Brewer’s Dictionary of Phrase and Fable.*) It was at a Court of Love at which Palma presided, that *Sordello* outdid *Eglamour* in song, and received the prize from the lady’s hand. At these courts, *Sismondi* tells us, *tensons* or *jeux partis* were sung, which were dialogues between the speakers in which each interlocutor recited successively a stanza with the same rhymes.

Sismondi introduces a translation of a *tenson* between Sordello and Bertrand, adding that this “may, perhaps, give an idea of those poetical contests which were the great ornament of all festivals. When the haughty baron invited to his court the neighbouring lords and the knights his vassals, three days were devoted to jousts and tourneys, the mimicry of war. The youthful gentlemen, who, under the name of pages, exercised themselves in the profession of arms, combated the first day; the second was set apart for the newly-dubbed knights; and the third, for the old warriors. The lady of the castle, surrounded by youthful beauties, distributed crowns to those who were declared by the judges of the combat to be the conquerors. She then, in her turn, opened her court, constituted in imitation of the seignorial tribunals, and as her baron collected his peers around him when he dispensed justice, so did she form her Court of Love, consisting of young, beautiful, and lively women. A new career was opened to those who dared the combat – not of arms, but of verse; and the name of *tenson*, which was given to these dramatic skirmishes, in fact signified a contest. It frequently happened that the knights who had gained the prize of valour became candidates for the poetical honours. One of the two, with his harp upon his arm, after a prelude, proposed the subject of the dispute. The other then advancing, and singing to the same air, answered him in a stanza of the same measure, and very frequently having the same rhymes. This extempore composition was usually comprised in five stanzas. The Court of Love then entered upon a grave

deliberation, and discussed not only the claims of the two poets, but the merits of the question; and a judgment or *arrêt d'amour* was given, frequently in verse, by which the dispute was supposed to be decided. At the present day we feel inclined to believe that these dialogues, though little resembling those of Tityrus and Melibæus, were yet, like those, the production of the poet sitting at ease in his closet. But, besides the historical evidence which we possess of the troubadours having been gifted with those improvisatorial talents which the Italians have preserved to the present time, many of the *tensons* extant bear evident traces of the rivalry and animosity of the two interlocutors. The mutual respect with which the refinements of civilisation have taught us to regard one another, was at this time little known. There existed not the same delicacy upon questions of honour, and injury returned for injury was supposed to cancel all insults. We have a *tenson* extant between the Marquis Albert Malespina and Rambaud de Vaqueiras, two of the most powerful lords and valiant captains at the commencement of the thirteenth century, in which they mutually accuse one another of having robbed on the highway and deceived their allies by false oaths. We must charitably suppose that the perplexities of versification and the heat of their poetical inspiration compelled them to overlook sarcasms which they could never have suffered to pass in plain prose. Many of the ladies who sat in the Courts of Love were able to reply to the verses which they inspired. A few of their compositions only remain, but they have always the advantage

over those of the Troubadours. Poetry, at that time, aspired neither to creative energy nor to sublimity of thought, nor to variety. Those powerful conceptions of genius which, at a later period, have given birth to the drama and the epic, were yet unknown; and, in the expression of sentiment, a tenderer and more delicate inspiration naturally endowed the productions of these poetesses with a more lyrical character.” (Sismondi, *Lit. Mod. Europe*, vol. i., pp. 106-7.)

**Cristina** (or **Christina**). *Dramatic Lyrics (Bells and Pomegranates* No. III.), 1842. – Maria Christina of Naples is the lady of the poem. She was born in 1806, and in 1829 became the fourth wife of Ferdinand VII., King of Spain. She became Regent of Spain on the death of her husband, in 1833. Her daughter was Queen Isabella II. She was the dissolute mother of a still more dissolute daughter. Lord Malmesbury’s *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister*, 1884, vol. i., p. 30, have the following reference to the Christina of the poem: “Mr. Hill presented me at Court before I left Naples [in 1829]... The Queen [Maria Isabella, second wife of Francis I., King of the Two Sicilies] and the young and handsome Princess Christina, afterwards Queen of Spain, were present. The latter was said at the time to be the cause of more than one inflammable victim languishing in prison for having too openly admired this royal coquette, whose manners with men foretold her future life after her marriage to old Ferdinand [VII., King of Spain]. When she came up to me in the circle, walking behind her mother, she stopped, and took hold

of one of the buttons of my uniform – to see, as she said, the inscription upon it, the Queen indignantly calling to her to come on.” The passion of love, throughout Mr. Browning’s works, is treated as the most sacred thing in the human soul. We are here for the chance of loving and of being loved; nothing on earth is dearer than this; to trifle with love is, in Browning’s eyes, the sin against that Divine Emanation which sanctifies the heart of man. The man or woman who dissipates the capacity for love is the destroyer of his or her own soul; the flirt and the coquette are the losers, – the forsaken one has saved his own soul and gained the other’s as well.

**Cristina and Monaldeschi.** (*Jocoseria*, 1883.) – I am indebted to the valuable paper which Mrs. Alexander Ireland contributed to the Browning Society on Feb. 27th, 1891, for the facts relating to the subject of this poem. Queen Cristina of Sweden was the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus. She was born in 1626, and came to the throne on the death of her father, in 1632. She was highly educated and brilliantly accomplished. She was perfectly acquainted with Greek, Latin, French, German, English, Italian, and Spanish. In due time she had batches of royal suitors, but she refused to bind herself by the marriage tie; rather than marry, she decided to abdicate, choosing as her successor her cousin Charles Gustavus. The formal and unusual ceremony of abdication took place in the cathedral of Upsala, in June 1654. Proceeding to Rome, she renounced the Protestant religion, and publicly embraced that of the Catholic

Church. The officers of her household were exclusively Italian. Among these was the Marquis Monaldeschi, nominated “Master of the Horse,” described by Cristina in her own memoirs as “a gentleman of most handsome person and fine manners, who from the first moment reigned exclusively over my heart.” Cristina abandoned herself to this man, who proved a traitor and a scoundrel. He took every advantage of his position as favourite, and having reaped honour and riches, Monaldeschi wearied of his royal mistress and sought new attractions. The closing scene of Queen Cristina’s *liaison* with the Grand Equerry inspired Mr. Browning’s poem. He has chosen the moment when all the treachery of Monaldeschi has revealed itself to the Queen. The scene is at Fontainebleau, whither Cristina has removed from Rome; here the letters came into her hands which broke her life. A Cardinal Azzolino had obtained possession of a wretched and dangerous correspondence. The packet included the Queen’s own letters to her lover – letters written in the fulness of perfect trust, telling much that the unhappy lady could have told to no other living being. Monaldeschi’s letters to his young Roman beauty made a jest, a mockery of the Queen’s exceeding fondness for him. They were letters of unsparing and wounding ridicule; and, while acting thus, Monaldeschi had steadily adhered to the show of unaltered attachment to the Queen and deep respect for his royal mistress. Cristina’s emotions on seeing the whole hateful, cowardly treachery laid bare were doubtless maddening. She arranged an interview with the Marquis in the picture

gallery in the Palace of Fontainebleau. She was accompanied by an official of her Court, and had at hand a priest from the neighbouring convent of the Maturins, armed with copies of the letters which were to serve as the death-warrant of the Marquis. They had been placed by Cardinal Azzolino in Cristina's hands through the medium of her "Major-Domo," with the knowledge that the Cardinal had already seen their infamous contents. The *originals* she had on her own person. Added to this, she had in the background her Captain of the Guard, Sentinelli, with two other officers. In the Galerie des Cerfs hung a picture of François I. and Diane de Poitiers. To this picture the Queen now led the Marquis, pointing out the motto on the frame – "Quis separabit?" The Queen reminds her lover how they were vowed to each other. The Marquis had vowed, at a tomb in the park of Fontainebleau, that, as the grave kept a silence over the corpse beneath, so would his love and trust hold fast the secret of Cristina's love to all eternity. Now the woman's spirit was wounded to death. She was scorned, her pride outraged; but she was a queen, and the man a subject, and she felt she must assert her dignity at least once more. The Marquis doubtless tottered as he stood. "Kneel," she says. This was the final scene of the tragedy. Cristina now calls forth the priest and the assassins, having granted herself the bitter pleasure of such personal revenge as was possible for her, poor woman!

"Friends, my four! You, Priest, confess him!

I have judged the culprit there:  
my sentence! Care  
For no mail such cowards wear!  
Done, Priest? Then, absolve and bless him!  
Now – you three, stab thick and fast,  
Deep and deeper! Dead at last?”

In October 1657 Cristina already felt suspicious of Monaldeschi. Keenly watching his actions, she had found him guilty of a double perfidy, and had led him on to a conversation touching a similar unfaithfulness. “What,” the Queen had said, “does the man deserve who should so have betrayed a woman?” “Instant death,” said Monaldeschi; “twould be an act of justice.” “It is well,” said she; “I will remember your words.” As to the right of the Queen to execute Monaldeschi, it must be remembered that, by a special clause in the Act of Abdication, she retained absolute and sovereign jurisdiction over her servants of all kinds. The only objection made by the French Court was, that she ought not to have permitted the murder to take place at Fontainebleau. After this crime Cristina was compelled to leave France, and finally retired to Rome, giving herself up to her artistic tastes, science, chemistry and idleness. She died on April 19th, 1689; her epitaph on her tomb in St. Peter’s at Rome was chosen by herself – “Cristina lived sixty-three years.”

Notes. – “*Quis separabit?*” who shall separate? *King Francis*– François I. The gallery of this king is the most striking one in the palace. *Diane*, the gallery of Diana, the goddess.

*Primatice* == Primaticcio, who designed some of the decorations of the *Galerie de François I.* *Salamander sign*: the emblem of Francis I., often repeated in the decorations. *Florentine Le Roux* == Rossi, the Florentine artist. *Fontainebleau*: its Château Royal is very famous. “*Juno strikes Ixion*,” who attempted to seduce her. *Avon*, a village near Fontainebleau.

**Croisic.** The scene of the *Two Poets of Croisic*. Le Croisic is a seaport on the southern coast of Brittany, with about 2500 inhabitants, and is a fashionable watering-place. It has a considerable industry in sardine fishing.

**Cunizza**, called Palma in *Sordello*, till, at the close of the poem the heroine's historical name is given. She was the sister of Ezzelino III. Dante places her in *Paradise* (ix. 32). Longfellow, in his translation of the *Divine Comedy*, has the following note concerning her: “Cunizza was the sister of Azzolino di Romano. Her story is told by Rolandino, *Liber Chronicorum*, in Muratori (*Rer. Ital. Script.*, viii. 173). He says that she was first married to Richard of St. Boniface; and soon after had an intrigue with Sordello – as already mentioned (*Purg.* vi., Note 74). Afterwards she wandered about the world with a soldier of Treviso, named Bonius, ‘taking much solace,’ says the old chronicler, ‘and spending much money’ (*multa habendo solatia, et maximas faciendo expensas*). After the death of Bonius, she was married to a nobleman of Braganza; and finally, and for a third time, to a gentleman of Verona. The *Ottimo* alone among the commentators takes up the defence of Cunizza, and says:

‘This lady lived lovingly in dress, song, and sport; but consented not to any impropriety or unlawful act; and she passed her life in enjoyment, as Solomon says in Ecclesiastes,’ alluding probably to the first verse of the second chapter – “I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure, and behold, this is also vanity.”

**“Dance, Yellows and Whites and Reds.”** A beautiful lyric at the end of “Gerard de Lairese,” in *Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day*, begins with this line. It originally appeared in a little book published for the Edinburgh University Union Fancy Fair, in 1886.

**Daniel Bartoli.** *Parleyings with Certain People of Importance in their Day*: 1887. [The Man.] “Born at Ferrara in 1608, died at Rome in 1685. He was a learned Jesuit, and his great work was a history of his Order, in six volumes, published at various times. It is enriched with facts drawn from the Vatican records, from English colleges, and from memoirs sent him by friends in England; and is crowded with stories of miracles which are difficult of digestion by ordinary readers. His style is highly esteemed by Italians for its purity and precision, and his life was perfectly correct and virtuous” (*Pall Mall Gazette*, Jan. 18th, 1887). “His eloquence was wonderful, and his renown as a sacred orator became universal. He wrote many essays on scientific subjects; and although some of his theories have been refuted by Galileo, they are still cited as models of the didactic style, in which he excelled. His works on moral science and philology are

numerous. Died 1684.” (*Imp. Dict. Biog.*)

[The Poem.] The poet tells the narrator of saintly legends that he has a saint worth worshipping whose history is not legendary at all, but very plain fact. It is her story which is told in the poem, and not that of Bartoli. The minister of a certain king had managed to induce a certain duke to yield two of his dukedoms to the king at his death. The promise was a verbal one, but the duke was to sign the deed of gift which deprived him of his rights when it was duly prepared by the lawyers. While this was in progress the duke met at his sister’s house a good and beautiful girl, the daughter of an apothecary. He proposed to marry her, and was accepted, notwithstanding the opposition of his family. The banns were duly published, and the marriage ceremony was soon to follow. Meanwhile this turn in the duke’s affairs came to the ear of the crafty minister of the king, who promptly informed his royal master that the assignment of the dukedoms might not proceed so smoothly under the altered circumstances. “I bar the abomination – nuptial me no such nuptials!” exclaimed the king. The minister hinted that caution must be used, lest by offending the duke the dukedoms might be lost. The next day the preliminary banquet, at which all the lady’s friends were present, took place; when lo – a thunderclap! – the king’s minister was announced, and the lady was requested to meet him at a private interview. She was informed that the duke must at once sign the paper which the minister held in his hand, ceding to the king the promised estates, or the king would withhold his consent to

the marriage and the lady would be placed in strict seclusion. Should he, however, sign the deed of gift without delay, the king would give his consent to the marriage, and accord the bride a high place at court; and the druggist's daughter would become not only the duke's wife but the king's favourite. They returned to the dining-room, and the lady, addressing the duke, who sat in mute bewilderment at the head of the table, made known the king's commands. She told him that she knew he loved her for herself alone, and was conscious that her own love was equal to his. She bade him read the shameful document which the king had sent, and begged him to bid her destroy it. She implored him not to part with his dukedoms, which had been given him by God, though by doing so he might make her his wife: if, however, he could so far forget his duty as to yield to these demands, he would, in doing so, forfeit her love. The duke was furious, but could not be brought to yield to the lady's request, and she left the place never to meet again. Next day she sent him back the jewellery he had given her. This story was told to a fervid, noble-hearted lord, who forthwith in a boyish way loved the lady. When he grew to be a man he married her, dropped from camp and court into obscurity, but was happy, till ere long his lady died. He would gladly have followed, but had to be content with turning saint, like those of whom Bartoli wrote. The poet next philosophises on the life which the duke might have led after this crisis in his history. He would sooner or later reflect sadly on the beautiful luminary which had once illumined his path: he could

fancy her mocking him as false to Love; he would reflect how, with all his lineage and his bravery, he had failed at the test, but would recognise that it was not the true man who failed, not the ducal self which quailed before the monarch's frown while the more royal Love stood near him to inspire him; – some day that true self would, by the strength of that good woman's love, be raised from the grave of shame which covered it, and he would be hers once more.

Notes. – vi., *Pari passu*: with equal pace, together. xv., “*Saint Scholastica ... in Paynimrie*”: she lived about the year 543. She was sister to St. Benedict, and consecrated herself to God from her earliest youth. The legend referred to is not given, either in Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, or Mrs. Jameson's *Legends of the Monastic Orders*. *Paynimrie* means the land of the infidel. xvi., *Trogalia*: sweetmeats and candies.

**Dante** is magnificently described in *Sordello* (Book I., lines 374-80): —

“Dante, pacer of the shore  
Where glutton hell disgorgeth filthiest gloom,  
Unbitten by its whirring sulphur-spume —  
Or whence the grieved and obscure waters slope  
Into a darkness quieted by hope;  
Plucker of amaranths grown beneath God's eye  
In gracious twilights where His chosen lie.”

**Date et Dabitur.** “Give, and it shall be given unto you.” (See

*The Twins.*)

**David.** (See *Saul*, and *Epilogue to Dramatis Personæ: First Speaker*).

**Deaf and Dumb.** A group by Woolner (1862). How a glory may arise from a defect is the keynote of this poem. A prism interposed in the course of a ray of sunlight breaks it into the glory of the seven colours of the spectrum; the prism is an obstruction to the white light, but the rainbow tints which are seen in consequence of the obstacle reveal to us the secret of the sunbeam. So the obstruction of deafness or dumbness often greatly enhances the beauty of the features, as in the group of statuary which forms the subject of the poem, and which was exhibited at the International Exhibition of 1862. The children were Constance and Arthur, the son and daughter of Sir Thomas Fairbairn.

**Death in the Desert, A.** (*Dramatis Personæ*, 1864.) John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, who lay on His breast at the last sad paschal supper, who stood by the cross, and received from the lips of his Lord His only earthly possession – His mother; John, the writer of the Gospel which bears his name, and of the letters which breathe the spirit of the incarnated love which was to transform a world lying in wickedness; the seer of the awful visions of Patmos – the tremendous Apocalypse which closes the Christian revelation – lay dying in the desert; recalled from exile after the death of Domitian from the isle of the Sporades, the volcanic formation of which, with its daily

scenes of smoke, brimstone, fire, and streams of molten lava, had aided the apostle to imagine the day of doom, when the angel should cry, "Time shall be no longer." The beloved disciple, who had borne the message of Divine love through the cities of Asia Minor, had founded churches, established bishoprics, and had laboured by spoken and written word, and even more effectually by his beautiful and gentle life, to extend the kingdom of God and of His Christ, now worn out with incessant labours, and bent with the weight of well-nigh a hundred years, the last of the men who had seen the Lord, the final link which bound the youthful Church to its apostolic days, lies dying in a cave, hiding from the bloody hands of those who breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the followers of Christ. Companioned by five converts who tenderly nursed the dying saint, he had been brought from the secret recess in the rock where they had hidden him from the pursuers into the midmost grotto, where the light of noon just reached a little, and enabled them to watch

"The last of what might happen on his face."

And at the entrance of the cave there kept faithful watch the Bactrian convert, pretending to graze a goat, so that if thief or soldier passed they might have booty without prying into the cave. The dying man lies unconscious, but his attendants think it possible to rouse him that he may speak to them before he departs: they wet his lips with wine, cool his forehead with water,

chafe his hands, diffuse the aromatic odour of the spikenard through the cave, and pray; but still he sleeps. Then the boy, inspired by a happy thought, brings the plate of graven lead on which are the words of John's gospel, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," and having found the place, he presses the aged man's finger on the line, and repeats it in his ear. Then he opened his eyes, sat up, and looked at them; and no one spoke, save the watcher without, signalling from time to time that they were safe. And first, the beloved one said, "If one told me there were James and Peter, I could believe! So is my soul withdrawn into its depths." – "Let be awhile!" – And then —

"It is long

Since James and Peter had release by death,

And I am only he, your brother John,

Who saw and heard, and could remember all."

He reminds them how in Patmos isle he had seen the Lord in His awful splendour; how in his early life he saw and handled with his hands the Word of Life. Soon it will be that none will say "I saw." And already – for the years were long – men had disputed, murmured and misbelieved, or had set up antichrists; and remembering what had happened to the faith in his own days, he could well foresee that unborn people in strange lands would one day ask —

"Was John at all, and did he say he saw?"

“What can I say to assure them?” he asks; the story of Christ’s life and death was not mere history to him: “*It is,*” he cries, – “*is, here and now.*” Not only are the events of the gospel history present before his eyes, so that he apprehends nought else; but not less plainly, not less firmly printed on his soul, are the more mysterious truths of God’s eternal presence in the world visibly contending with wrong and sin; and, as the wrong and sin are manifest to his soul-sight, so equally does he see the need, yet transiency of both. But matters, which to his spiritualised vision were clear, must be placed before his followers through some medium which shall, like an optic glass, segregate them, diminish them into clearness; and so he bids them stand before that fact, that Life and Death of Jesus Christ, till it spreads apart like a star, growing and opening out on all sides till it becomes their only world, as it is his. “For all of life,” he says, “is summed up in the prize of learning love, and having learnt it, to hold it and truth, despite the world in arms against the holder. We can need no second proof of God’s love for man. Man having once learned the use of fire, would not part with the gift for purple or for gold. Were the worth of Christ as plain, he could not give up Christ. To test man, the proofs of Christianity shift; he cannot grasp that fact as he grasps the fact of fire and its worth.” He asks his disciples why they say it was easier to believe in Christ once than now – easier when He walked the earth with those He loved? “But,” says John, who had seen all, – the transfiguration,

the walking on the sea, the raising of the dead to life, – “could it be possible the man who had seen these things should ever part from them?” Yes, it was! The torchlight, the noise, the sudden inrush of the Roman soldiers, on the night of the betrayal, caused even him, John, the beloved disciple, to forsake Him and fly. Yet he had gained the truth, and the truth grew in his soul, so that he was enabled to impress it so indelibly on others, that children and women who had never seen the least of the sights he had seen would clasp their cross with a light laugh, and wrap the burning robe of martyrdom round them, giving thanks to God the while. But in the mind of man the laws of development are ever at work, and questioners of the truth arose, and it was necessary that he should re-state the Lord’s life and work in various ways, to rectify mistakes. God has operated in the way of Power, later in the way of Love, and last of all in Influence on Soul: men do not ask now, “Where is the promise of His coming?” but —

“Was He revealed in any of His lives,  
As Power, as Love, as Influencing Soul?”

“Miracles, to prove doctrine,” John says, “go for nought, but love remains.” Then men ask, “Did not we ourselves imagine and make this love?” (That is to say, love having been discovered by mankind to be the noblest thing on earth, have not men created a God of Infinite Love, out of their own passionate imagining of what man’s love would be if perfectly developed?) “The mind of

man can only receive what it holds – no more.” Man projects his own love heavenward, it falls back upon him in another shape – with another name and story added; this, he straightway says, is a gift from heaven. Man of old peopled heaven with gods, all of whom possessed man’s attributes; horses drew the sun from east to west. Now, we say the sun rises and sets as if impelled by a hand and will, and it is only thought of as so impelled because we ourselves have hands and wills. But the sun must be driven by some force which we do not understand; will and love we do understand. As man grows wiser the passions and faculties with which he adorned his deities are taken away: Jove of old had a brow, Juno had eyes; gradually there remained only Jove’s wrath and Juno’s pride; in process of time these went also, till now we recognise will and power and love alone. All these are at bottom the same – mere projections from the mind of the man himself. Having then stated the objections brought against the faith of Christ, St. John proceeds to meet them. “Man,” he says, “was made to grow, not stop; the help he needed in the earlier stages, being no longer required, is withdrawn; his new needs require new helps. When we plant seed in the ground we place twigs to show the spots where the germs lie hidden, so that they may not be trodden upon by careless steps. When the plants spring up we take the twigs away; they no longer have any use. It was thus with the growth of the gospel seed: miracles were required at first, but, when the plant had sprung up and borne fruit, had produced martyrs and heroes of the faith, what

was the use of miracles any more? The fruit itself was surely sufficient testimony to the vitality of the seed. Minds at first must be spoon-fed with truth, as babes with milk; a boy we bid feed himself, or starve. So, at first, I wrought miracles that men might believe in Christ, because no faith were otherwise possible; miracles now would compel, not help. I say the way to solve all questions is to accept by the reason the Christ of God; the sole death is when a man's loss comes to him from his gain, when – from the light given to him – he extracts darkness; from the knowledge poured upon him he produces ignorance; and from the manifestation of love elaborates the lack of love. Too much oil is the lamp's death; it chokes with what would otherwise feed the flame. An overcharged stomach starves. The man who rejects Christ because he thinks the love of Christ is only a projection of his own is like a lamp that overswims with oil, a stomach overloaded with nurture; that man's soul dies." "But," the objector may say, "You told your Christ-story incorrectly: what is the good of giving knowledge at all if you give it in a manner which will not stop the after-doubt? Why breed in us perplexity? why not tell the whole truth in proper words?" To this St. John replies, "Man of necessity must pass from mistake to fact; he is not perfect as God is, nor as is the beast; lower than God, he is higher than the beast, and higher because he progresses, – he yearns to gain truth, catching at mistake. The statuary has the idea in his mind, aspires to produce it, and so calls his shape from out the clay:

“Cries ever, ‘Now I have the thing I see’:  
Yet all the while goes changing what was wrought,  
From falsehood like the truth, to truth itself.”

Suppose he had complained, ‘I see no face, no breast, no feet’? It is only God who makes the live shape at a jet. Striving to reach his ideals, man grows; ceasing to strive, he forfeits his highest privileges, and entails the certainty of destruction. Progress is the essential law of man’s being, and progress by mistake, by failure, by unceasing effort, will lead him,

“Where law, life, joy, impulse are one thing!”

Such is the difficulty of the latest time; so does the aged saint answer it. He would remain on earth another hundred years, he says, to lend his struggling brothers his help to save them from the abyss. But even as he utters the loving desire, he is dead,

“Breast to breast with God, as once he lay.”

They buried him that night, and the teller of the story returned, disguised, to Ephesus. St. John is said to have been banished into the Isle of Patmos, A.D. 97, by the order of Domitian. After this emperor had reigned fifteen years Nerva succeeded him (A.D. 99), and historians of the period wrote that “the Roman senate decreed that the honours paid to Domitian should

cease, and such as were injuriously exiled should return to their native land and receive their substance again. It is also among the ancient traditions, that then John the Apostle returned from banishment and dwelt again at Ephesus." Eusebius, quoting from Irenæus, says that John after his return from Patmos governed the churches in Asia, and remained with them in the time of Trajan. Irenæus also says that the Apostle carried on at Ephesus the work begun by Paul; Clement of Alexandria records the same thing. It is said that St. John died in peace at Ephesus in the third year of Trajan – that is, the hundredth of the Christian era, or the sixty-sixth from our Lord's crucifixion, the saint being then about ninety-four years old; he was buried on a mountain without the town. A stately church stood formerly over this tomb, which is at present a Turkish mosque. The sojourn of the Apostle in Asia, a country governed by Magi and imbued with Zoroastrian ideas, and in those days full of Buddhist missionaries, may account for many things found in the Book of Revelation. Mr. Browning refers to this in the bracketed portion of the poem, commencing:

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