

# VARIOUS

NOTES AND QUERIES,  
NUMBER 70, MARCH 1,  
1851

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«Public Domain»

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# Various Notes and Queries, Number 70, March 1, 1851 / A Medium of Inter-communication for Literary Men, Artists, Antiquaries, Genealogists, etc

## Notes

### A WORD TO THE LITERARY MEN OF ENGLAND

*"Twenty scholars in seven years might retrieve the worst losses we experience from the bigotry of popes and califs. I do not intend to assert that every Herculean manuscript might, within that period, be unfolded; but the three first legible sentences might be; which is quite sufficient to inform the intelligent reader whether a farther attempt on the scroll would repay his trouble. There are fewer than thirty Greek authors worth inquiring for; they exist, beyond doubt, and beyond doubt they may, by attention, patience, and skill, be brought to light. \* \* With a smaller sum than is annually expended on the appointment of some silly and impertinent young envoy, we might restore all, or nearly all those writers of immortal name, whose disappearance has been the regret of genius for four entire centuries. In my opinion, a few thousand pounds, laid out on such an undertaking, would be laid out as creditably as on a Persian carpet or a Turkish tent."—Landor's *Imaginary Conversations—Southey and Porson—Works*, vol. i. p. 20.*

I call upon the literary men of England, upon the English government, and upon the public, to set the example in a glorious expedition, which, even in this age of wonders, is one of no little importance and magnitude. I conjure them to bear in mind the words I have placed at the head of this article,—the opinion of one of our best and most delightful authors. This opinion Mr. Landor, veiled under the eidolon of Porson, I feel assured, does not hold alone; I believe it to be engraven on the "red-leaved tablets" of the hearts of many more learned and more distinguished scholars than myself, who am but as the trumpet which is to rouse the friends of classical literature to action; as the bell which awakens the reaper to his abundant harvest: but I will sustain, that on none of them is it cut more deeply or more inextinguishably than on mine.

I propose that the friends of Classical, Scandinavian, and Oriental literature form themselves into an Association for the Rescue of the many ancient MSS. in the Greek, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, Norwegian, Zend, Sanscrit, Hebrew, Abyssinian, Ethiopian, Hindostanee, Persian, Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Coptic, Turkish, and Chinese languages:—that application be made to government for the pecuniary furtherance of this enterprise;—and that the active co-operation of all foreign literary men be secured.<sup>1</sup>

Thus a careful and untiring search may be entered upon in all the regions of the earth where any MSS. are likely to be found, and the recovery or loss of the many inestimable authors of antiquity be made certain. Let the libraries of Europe be examined strictly and inquisitorially (and this will not be a heavy expense), and the new accessions to classical literature printed, the MSS. which

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<sup>1</sup> I need not remind you how favourable an opportunity is presented by this year.

present themselves of already known authors carefully examined, and the variations to the received text marked. How much this is wanted we experience in the corruptions of Sophocles, Æschylus, Thucydides, Plato, and Aristoteles! In this way much that is valuable may be recovered; much that is matter of discussion set at rest. Let me instance the Babrian fables, and the discovery of Mr. Harris at Alexandria; who, it was remarked to me, might have discovered the whole, instead of a part, had proper hands unfolded the mummy.

On the advantages of this search, it were useless to expatiate: every one is sensible of it, and, sooner or later, it *must* occur. Let us not allow our grandchildren to surpass us in everything, but let us set about this ourselves. Monstrous as the idea seems, it is simple of execution.

I will not take up the space so kindly afforded me by the Editor of "Notes and Queries" with speculation. The Association should be composed of a Literary Section and a Business Section: the first to be under the administration of a President and an efficient Board of Examiners, to look into literary matters, and examine and appoint the proper officers of the Investigation Parties; which parties must be composed of clever, adventurous, hardy, and adroit men, obtaining the assistance of the natives wherever they may be carrying on their researches; the Second Section to be under the direction of a Chairman and Finance Committee, to which the officers of the subordinate departments render their accounts.

I know not whether more will be required of me on this subject; very likely not: but I reserve much that I could say, until that time. I have now only to thank the Editor for inserting this long, but I will not say, wholly uninteresting proposal.

*Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie.*

February 18. 1851.

## THE ESSAY ON SATIRE

Dryden, as sir Walter Scott observes, left a name in literature "second only to those of Milton and Shakspeare"; but, popular as his writings were, he gave no collective edition of his poetical or dramatic works. The current editions of his poems may therefore be open to censure, both on the score of deficiency and redundancy—and such I believe to be the fact.

An *Essay on satire*, itself a coarse satire, has been ascribed to him for more than a century on dubious authority, and the correctness of this ascription has been properly suggested as a question for examination.

We have to decide on the credibility of two opposite statements, as made in the publications about to be enumerated:—

1. "The works of John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave, marquis of Normanby, and duke of Buckingham. London: printed for John Barber, 1723. 4°. 2 vols."
2. "The works of John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave, marquis of Normanby, and duke of Buckingham. Printed for John Barber, alderman of London, 1726. Small 8°. 2 vols."
3. "Original poems and translations, by John Dryden, Esq. London: printed for J. and R. Tonson, 1743. 12°. 2 vols."

In the two former publications, the poem appears as the entire composition of the noble author, and is said to have been "written in the year 1675." In the latter publication it appears without date, and is said to be "by Mr. Dryden and the earl of Mulgrave."

The publications were posthumous, and as the editors afford no explanation of the point in dispute, we must consult the reputed authors.

In the year 1691, as an advertisement to *King Arthur*, a dramatic opera, Dryden printed a catalogue of his "plays and poems in quarto," in order to prevent future mis-ascriptions. The catalogue comprises ten poems, but no *Essay on satire*. The publisher of *King Arthur* was Mr. Jacob Tonson.

In 1682, the earl of Mulgrave published, anonymously, through the agency of Mr. Joseph Hindmarsh, an *Essay upon poetry*. It contains these lines:—

"The laureat here may justly claim our praise,  
Crown'd by *Mac-Fleckno* with immortal bays;  
Though prais'd and punish'd for another's rimes,  
His own deserve that glorious fate sometimes,  
Were he not forc'd to carry now dead weight,  
Rid by some lumpish minister of state."

In 1717, Mr. Tonson published *Poems by the earl of Roscommon*; and added thereto the *Essay on poetry*, "with the leave and with the corrections of the author." The lines shall now be given in their amended state, as they appear in that volume, with the accompanying notes:—

"The *Laureat*<sup>2</sup> here may justly claim our praise,  
Crown'd by *Mack-Fleckno*<sup>3</sup> with immortal bays;  
Tho' *prais'd* and *punish'd* once for other's<sup>4</sup> rhimes,

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<sup>2</sup> Mr. Dryden.

<sup>3</sup> A famous satyrical poem of his.

<sup>4</sup> A copy of verses called, *An essay on satyr*, for which Mr Dryden was both applauded and beaten, tho' not only innocent but ignorant, of the whole matter.

His own deserve as great applause sometimes;  
Yet *Pegasus*<sup>5</sup>, of late, has born *dead weight*,  
Rid by some *lumpish* ministers of state."

Next to Dryden and the earl of Mulgrave, as authorities on this question, comes the elder Jacob Tonson. Both writers were contributors to his *Poetical miscellanies*. In 1701 he published *Poems on various occasions, etc. By Mr. John Dryden*. The volume has not the *Essay on satire*. The same Tonson, as we have just seen, gave currency to the assertion that Dryden was "ignorant of the whole matter."

To this display of contemporary evidence must be added the information derivable from the posthumous publications enumerated in the former part of this article. The publication of 1723 was made by direction of the duchess of Buckingham. The couplet, "Tho' prais'd," &c., and the appended note, were omitted. In 1726 Mr. alderman Barber republished the volumes "with several additions, and without any castrations," restoring the couplet and note as they were printed in 1717. In the *Original poems* of Dryden, as collectively published in 1743, the joint authorship is stated without a word of evidence in support of it.

If we turn to the earlier writers on Dryden, we meet with no facts in favour of his claim to the poem in question. Anthony à Wood says, "the earl of Mulgrave was generally thought to be the author." This was written about 1694. The reverend Thomas Birch, a man of vast information, repeated this statement in 1736. Neither Congreve nor Giles Jacob allude to the poem.

The witnesses on the other side are, 1. The publisher of the *State poems*. 2. Dean Lockier. And 3. The reverend Thomas Broughton.

The *State poems*, in which the essay is ascribed to Dryden, may be called a surreptitious publication: it carries no authority. The testimony of Lockier, which is to the same effect, was never published by himself. It was a scrap of conversation held thirty years after the death of Dryden, and reported by another from memory. The reverend Thomas Broughton, who asserts the joint authorship of the poems, cites as his authority the *Original poems*, &c. Now Kippis assures us that he edited those volumes. On the question at issue, he could discover no authority but himself!

Dryden *may* have revised the *Essay on satire*. Is that a sufficient reason for incorporating it with his works? Do we tack to the works of Pope the poems of Wycherly and Parnell? We have authority for stating that Pope revised the *Essay on poetry*. Is it to be added to the works of Pope? Be it as it may, the poem was published, in substance, six years before Pope was born!

As the evidence is very brief, there can be no necessity for recapitulation; and I shall only add, that if about to edit the poetical works of Dryden, I should reject the *Essay on satire*.

*Bolton Corney.*

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<sup>5</sup> A poem call'd, *The hind and panther*.

## MACKLIN'S ORDINARY AND SCHOOL OF CRITICISM

Mr. George Wingrove Cooke, in his valuable work, *The History of Party* (vol. iii, p. 66.), gives an admirable sketch of the life of Edmund Burke. Speaking of his early career, and of the various designs which he formed for his future course, we are told that "at *Macklin's Debating Society* he made the first essay of his powers of oratory."

Mr. Cunningham, in his *Handbook for London*, speaks of Macklin delivering Lectures on Elocution at Pewterer's Hall (p. 394.), and of his residence in Tavistock Row, Covent Garden (p. 484.); but he does not mention *Macklin's Debating Society*. I imagine that by this "Debating Society" is meant an *Ordinary and School of Criticism*, which that eminent actor established in the year 1754, in the Piazza, Covent Garden. Mr. W. Cooke, in his *Life of Macklin*, 1806, p. 199., says—

"What induced him [Macklin] to quit the stage in the full vigour of fame and constitution, was one of those schemes which he had long previously indulged himself in, of suddenly making his fortune by the establishment of a tavern and coffee-house in the Piazza, Covent Garden; to which he afterwards added a school of oratory, upon a plan hitherto unknown in England, founded upon the Greek, Roman, French, and Italian Societies, under the title of *The British Inquisition*."

The first part of this plan (the public ordinary) was opened on the 11th of March, 1754; and an amusing account of its operations may be found in Angelo's *Pic Nic*, p. 32. The second part of "Macklin's mad plan," as it was then termed, "The British Inquisition," commenced proceedings on the 21st of November in the same year; and here, according to the first advertisement, "such subjects in Arts, Sciences, Literature, Criticism, Philosophy, History, Politics, and Morality, as shall be found useful and entertaining to society, will be lectured upon and freely debated."

*Edward F. Rimbault.*

## "LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST (Act II. Scene 1.)

"It is odd that Shakspeare should make Dumain inquire after Rosaline, who was the mistress of Biron, and neglect Katharine, who was his own. Biron behaves in the same manner.—Perhaps *all* the ladies wore masks.—Steevens.

"They certainly did."—Malone.

"And what if they did?"—Query.

In what possible way can the circumstance of the ladies *wearing masks* lessen the inconsistency pointed out by Steevens?

Rosaline has been immediately singled out by her former admirer—

"Did I not dance with you in Brabant once?"

—a circumstance quite inconsistent with uncertain identity afterwards.

But if the gentlemen really did mistake the identity of their ladies, Boyet's answers must have misled them into a similar mistake in *their names*: so that the natural consequence would have been, that each lover would afterwards address his poetical effusion *nominally* to the wrong lady! which does not appear to have been the case.

Therefore, even if the masking be admitted, it can in no way lessen the inconsistency of the cross questions, which to me appears to have arisen from a most palpable instance of clerical or typographical transposition.

Steevens was on the right scent, although he rejected it in the same breath, when he said,—

"No advantage would be gained by *an exchange of names*, because the last speech is determined to Biron by Maria, who gives a character of him after he has made his exit."

This is a good reason against a transposition in the *male* names, but it is none whatever against the same occurrence in the ladies' names; and consequently it is there that the true solution of the difficulty must be sought.

If we admit that a substitution may have occurred, of "Rosaline" for "Katharine," in Boyet's answer to Dumain, and *vice versâ* in his answer to Biron, all difficulty disappears at once.

The completeness with which the idea of transposition not only accounts for the existence of the error, but at the same time suggests the manner in which it may be corrected, ought of itself to secure its reception, even if it were not corroborated in a very singular way by the following collateral circumstance.

It may be observed that Boyet points out two of the ladies, not only by name, but also by styling them "heirs;" one of Falconbridge, the other of Alençon. Now in their previous descriptions of their respective lovers, one of the ladies (Maria) says she had met Longaville at a marriage of a "Falconbridge;" another lady (Katharine) says she had met Dumain at "Duke Alençon's." When, therefore, we find that Boyet, in reply to Longaville's question, designates *Maria* as "heir of Falconbridge," it is in direct analogy that he should, in answer to Dumain's question, designate *Katharine* as "heir of Alençon;" but, in consequence of the transposition of names, Boyet appears, as the text now stands, to confer that designation, not upon Katharine, but upon Rosaline, whom Biron had met at Brabant!

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the names of Katharine and Rosaline have been transposed *contrary to the author's intention*, and the only wonder is—not that such a very commonplace error should have been committed—but that it should have been suffered to remain through so many editions up to the present time.

*A. G. B.*

Leeds, Feb. 10. 1851.

## NOTES ON NEWSPAPERS

I send you the following, as a help to "Materials for a satisfactory History of Newspapers," alluded to in the last volume of "Notes and Queries," p. 375.

I have in my possession some old newspapers, ranging from 1691 to 1694, entitled *A Collection for Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*, edited by John Houghton, F.R.S., St. Bartholomew Lane, behind the Royal Exchange, London. The size is a small folio, published weekly, generally every Friday. It was carried on for some time merely as a single leaf, with no advertisements. In this form, the editor says—

"These papers are *2d.* each here, and anybody may have them by the post. But where that is thought too much, it may be eased by ten or twelve obliging themselves constantly to take them from a bookseller, coffee-man, or some other, who may afford to pay a carrier, and sell them there for *2d.*, or at most *3d.*; or carriers themselves may gain well, if they'll serve the country gentlemen. And any such bookseller, coffee-man, or carrier, that will apply themselves to me, shall have good encouragement, with liberty to return those that won't sell."

Ultimately the editor determined on admitting advertisements. He then doubled the size of his paper, making it two leaves instead of one. In reference to this increased size he says,—

"My collection I shall carry on as usual. This part is to give away; and those who like it not, may omit the reading. I believe it will help on trade, particularly encourage the advertisers to increase the vent of my papers. I shall receive all sorts of advertisements, but shall answer for the reasonableness of none; unless I give thereof a particular character, on which (as I shall give it) may be dependence, but no argument that others deserve not as well."

"I am inform'd that great numbers of gazettes are each time printed, which makes them the most universal intelligencers; but I'll suppose mine their first handmaid, because it goes (tho' not so thick, yet) to most parts. It's also lasting, to be put into volumes with indexes; and particularly there shall be an index of all the advertisements, whereby, for ages to come, they may be useful. I have publish'd on the subject of Husbandry and Trade, two quarto volumes, three folio volumes, with the great sheet of taxes, acres, houses, &c.; and am weekly carrying on this paper, which may be brought to anybodies house within the Bills of Mortality, or penny post, for one penny the week; and anywhere else in England (where enough will encourage a bookseller or carrier). The volumes may be had from most booksellers of England, Scotland, or Ireland."

The Collection, which the editor will carry on as usual, refers to the single sheet. The Gazette must have been the London Gazette. In what sort of way the editor could suppose that advertisements could be useful for ages to come, we, in this age of enlightenment and knowledge, are at a loss to conceive. The great sheet of taxes, acres, houses, &c., I have, and may give you an account of its contents at some future time. The first page of the paper was always devoted to a letter from the editor's own pen on husbandry, trade, chemistry, domestic cookery, and a variety of other topics. The editor appears to have been a spirited man, who collected with great care and diligence a great variety of facts whereby to interest his readers. The advertisements are very curious, specimens of which I will give you in another communication. Each paper contains the weekly prices of wheat, rye, barley, malt, oats, horse beans, peas, coals, hops, hay, tallow, and wool, in all the counties of England and Wales; the prices of provisions in London; also a weekly statement of wind and weather; the number of deaths, and their causes; the number of christenings and burials, specifying how many of each sex.

The editor often concludes a column of information by stating, "this is all I see useful to posterity." He not only appears to have been a man of an active mind, but also a very kind man; for he says to those who advertise in his paper for situations, &c., that "if they apply themselves to me, I'll strive to help them." He appears also to have kept a shop, or at least to have traded in certain articles: for in one of his papers is this advertisement:—

"In my first volume of 1682, I publish'd my own selling of chocolate, and have sold in small quantities ever since: I have now two sorts, both made of the best nuts, without spice or perfume; the one 5s., and the other 6s. the pound; and I'll answer for their goodness. If I shall think fit to sell any other sorts, I'll give notice.

*John Houghton.*"

By this advertisement we get at the date when the paper was first published.

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