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On Reputation

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On Reputation.

Writers may be classified as meteors, planets and fixed stars. A meteor makes a striking effect for a moment. You look up and cry There! and it is gone for ever. Planets and wandering stars last a much longer time. They often outshine the fixed stars and are confounded with them by the inexperienced; but this only because they are near. It is not long before they must yield their place; nay, the light they give is reflected only, and the sphere of their influence is confined to their own orbit — their contemporaries. Their path is one of change and movement, and with the circuit of a few years their tale is told. Fixed stars are the only ones that are constant; their position in the firmament is secure; they shine with a light of their own; their effect to-day is the same as it was yesterday, because, having no parallax, their appearance does not alter with a difference in our standpoint. They belong not to one system, one nation only, but to the universe. And just because they are so very far away, it is usually many years before their light is visible to the inhabitants of this earth.

We have seen in the previous chapter that where a man's merits are of a high order, it is difficult for him to win reputation, because the public is uncritical and lacks discernment. But another and no less serious hindrance to fame comes from the envy it has to encounter. For even in the lowest kinds of work, envy balks even the beginnings of a reputation, and never ceases to cleave to it up to the last. How great a part is played by envy in the wicked ways of the world! Ariosto is right in saying that the dark side of our mortal life predominates, so full it is of this evil:

questa assai più oscura che serena

Vita mortal, tutta d'invidia piena.

For envy is the moving spirit of that secret and informal, though flourishing, alliance everywhere made by mediocrity against individual eminence, no matter of what kind. In his own sphere of work no one will allow another to be distinguished: he is an intruder who cannot be tolerated. Si quelq'un excelle parmi nous, qu'il aille exceller ailleurs! this is the universal password of the second-rate. In addition, then, to the rarity of true merit and the difficulty it has in being understood and recognized, there is the envy of thousands to be reckoned with, all of them bent on suppressing, nay, on smothering it altogether. No one is taken for what he is, but for what others make of him; and this is the handle used by mediocrity to keep down distinction, by not letting it come up as long as that can possibly be prevented.

There are two ways of behaving in regard to merit: either to have some of one's own, or to refuse any to others. The latter method is more convenient, and so it is generally adopted. As envy is a mere sign of deficiency, so to envy merit argues the lack of it. My excellent Balthazar Gracian has given a very fine account of this relation between envy and merit in a lengthy fable, which may be found in his *Discreto* under the heading *Hombre de ostentacion*. He describes all the birds as meeting together and conspiring against the peacock, because of his magnificent feathers. If, said the magpie, we could only manage to put a stop to the cursed parading of his tail, there would soon be an end of his beauty;

for what is not seen is as good as what does not exist.

This explains how modesty came to be a virtue. It was invented only as a protection against envy. That there have always been rascals to urge this virtue, and to rejoice heartily over the bashfulness of a man of merit, has been shown at length in my chief work.(19) In Lichtenberg's Miscellaneous Writings I find this sentence quoted: Modesty should be the virtue of those who possess no other. Goethe has a well-known saying, which offends many people: It is only knaves who are modest! — Nur die Lumpen sind bescheiden! but it has its prototype in Cervantes, who includes in his Journey up Parnassus certain rules of conduct for poets, and amongst them the following: Everyone whose verse shows him to be a poet should have a high opinion of himself, relying on the proverb that he is a knave who thinks himself one. And Shakespeare, in many of his Sonnets, which gave him the only opportunity he had of speaking of himself, declares, with a confidence equal to his ingenuousness, that what he writes is immortal.(20)

(19) *Welt als Wille, Vol. II. c. 37.]*

(20) *Collier, one of his critical editors, in his Introduction to the Sonettes, remarks upon this point: "In many of them are to be found most remarkable indications of self-confidence and of assurance in the immortality of his verses, and in this respect the author's opinion was constant and uniform. He never scruples to express it, ... and perhaps there is no writer of ancient or modern times who, for the quantity of such writings left behind him, has so frequently or so strongly declared that what he had produced in this department of poetry 'the world would not willingly let die.'"]*

A method of underrating good work often used by envy — in reality, however, only the obverse side of it — consists in the dishonorable and unscrupulous laudation of the bad; for no sooner does bad work gain currency than it draws attention from the good. But however effective this method may be for a while, especially if it is applied on a large scale, the day of reckoning comes at last, and the fleeting credit given to bad work is paid off by the lasting discredit which overtakes those who abjectly praised it. Hence these critics prefer to remain anonymous.

A like fate threatens, though more remotely, those who depreciate and censure good work; and consequently many are too prudent to attempt it. But there is another way; and when a man of eminent merit appears, the first effect he produces is often only to pique all his rivals, just as the peacock's tail offended the birds. This reduces them to a deep silence; and their silence is so unanimous that it savors of preconcertion. Their tongues are all paralyzed. It is the *silentium livoris* described by Seneca. This malicious silence, which is technically known as ignoring, may for a long time interfere with the growth of reputation; if, as happens in the higher walks of learning, where a man's immediate audience is wholly composed of rival workers and professed students, who then form the channel of his fame, the greater public is obliged to use its suffrage without being able to examine the matter for itself. And if, in the end, that malicious silence is broken in upon by the voice of praise, it will be but seldom that this happens entirely apart from some ulterior aim, pursued by those who thus manipulate justice. For, as Goethe says in the *West-östlicher Divan*, a man can get no recognition, either from many persons or from only one, unless it

is to publish abroad the critic's own discernment:

Denn es ist kein Anerkennen,

Weder Vieler, noch des Einen,

Wenn es nicht am Tage fördert,

Wo man selbst was möchte scheinen.

The credit you allow to another man engaged in work similar to your own or akin to it, must at bottom be withdrawn from yourself; and you can praise him only at the expense of your own claims.

Accordingly, mankind is in itself not at all inclined to award praise and reputation; it is more disposed to blame and find fault, whereby it indirectly praises itself. If, notwithstanding this, praise is won from mankind, some extraneous motive must prevail. I am not here referring to the disgraceful way in which mutual friends will puff one another into a reputation; outside of that, an effectual motive is supplied by the feeling that next to the merit of doing something oneself, comes that of correctly appreciating and recognizing what others have done. This accords with the threefold division of heads drawn up by Hesiod(21) and afterwards by Machiavelli(22) There are, says the latter, in the capacities of mankind, three varieties: one man will understand a thing by himself; another so far as it is explained to him; a third, neither of himself nor when it is put clearly before him. He, then, who abandons hope of making good his claims to the first class, will be glad to seize the opportunity of taking a place in the second. It is almost wholly owing to this state of things that merit may always rest assured of ultimately meeting with recognition.

(21) *Works and Days*, 293.]

(22) *The Prince*, ch. 22.]

To this also is due the fact that when the value of a work has once been recognized and may no longer be concealed or denied, all men vie in praising and honoring it; simply because they are conscious of thereby doing themselves an honor. They act in the spirit of Xenophon's remark: he must be a wise man who knows what is wise. So when they see that the prize of original merit is for ever out of their reach, they hasten to possess themselves of that which comes second best — the correct appreciation of it. Here it happens as with an army which has been forced to yield; when, just as previously every man wanted to be foremost in the fight, so now every man tries to be foremost in running away. They all hurry forward to offer their applause to one who is now recognized to be worthy of praise, in virtue of a recognition, as a rule unconscious, of that law of homogeneity which I mentioned in the last chapter; so that it may seem as though their way of thinking and looking at things were homogeneous with that of the celebrated man, and that they may at least save the honor of their literary taste, since nothing else is left them.

From this it is plain that, whereas it is very difficult to win fame, it is not hard to keep it when once attained; and also that a reputation which comes quickly does not last very long; for here too, quod cito fit, cito perit. It is obvious that if the ordinary average man

can easily recognize, and the rival workers willingly acknowledge, the value of any performance, it will not stand very much above the capacity of either of them to achieve it for themselves. *Tantum quisque laudat, quantum se posse sperat imitari* — a man will praise a thing only so far as he hopes to be able to imitate it himself. Further, it is a suspicious sign if a reputation comes quickly; for an application of the laws of homogeneity will show that such a reputation is nothing but the direct applause of the multitude. What this means may be seen by a remark once made by Phocion, when he was interrupted in a speech by the loud cheers of the mob. Turning to his friends who were standing close by, he asked: Have I made a mistake and said something stupid?(23)

(23) *Plutarch, Apophthegms.]*

Contrarily, a reputation that is to last a long time must be slow in maturing, and the centuries of its duration have generally to be bought at the cost of contemporary praise. For that which is to keep its position so long, must be of a perfection difficult to attain; and even to recognize this perfection requires men who are not always to be found, and never in numbers sufficiently great to make themselves heard; whereas envy is always on the watch and doing its best to smother their voice. But with moderate talent, which soon meets with recognition, there is the danger that those who possess it will outlive both it and themselves; so that a youth of fame may be followed by an old age of obscurity. In the case of great merit, on the other hand, a man may remain unknown for many years, but make up for it later on by attaining a brilliant reputation. And if it should be that this comes only after he is no more, well! he is to be reckoned amongst those of whom Jean Paul says that extreme unction is their baptism. He may console himself by thinking of the Saints, who also are canonized only after they are dead.

Thus what Mahlmann(24) has said so well in *Herodes* holds good; in this world truly great work never pleases at once, and the god set up by the multitude keeps his place on the altar but a short time:

*Ich denke, das wahre Grosse in der Welt
Ist immer nur Das was nicht gleich gefällt
Und wen der Pöbel zum Gotte weiht,
Der steht auf dem Altar nur kurze Zeit.*

(24) *Translator's Note.* — August Mahlmann (1771-1826), journalist, poet and story-writer. His *Herodes vor Bethlehem* is a parody of Kotzebue's *Hussiten vor Naumburg.*]

It is worth mention that this rule is most directly confirmed in the case of pictures, where, as connoisseurs well know, the greatest masterpieces are not the first to attract attention. If they make a deep impression, it is not after one, but only after repeated, inspection; but then they excite more and more admiration every time they are seen.

Moreover, the chances that any given work will be quickly and rightly appreciated, depend upon two conditions: firstly, the character of the work, whether high or low, in other words, easy or difficult to understand; and, secondly, the kind of public it attracts,

whether large or small. This latter condition is, no doubt, in most instances a, corollary of the former; but it also partly depends upon whether the work in question admits, like books and musical compositions, of being produced in great numbers. By the compound action of these two conditions, achievements which serve no materially useful end — and these alone are under consideration here — will vary in regard to the chances they have of meeting with timely recognition and due appreciation; and the order of precedence, beginning with those who have the greatest chance, will be somewhat as follows: acrobats, circus riders, ballet-dancers, jugglers, actors, singers, musicians, composers, poets (both the last on account of the multiplication of their works), architects, painters, sculptors, philosophers.

The last place of all is unquestionably taken by philosophers because their works are meant not for entertainment, but for instruction, and because they presume some knowledge on the part of the reader, and require him to make an effort of his own to understand them. This makes their public extremely small, and causes their fame to be more remarkable for its length than for its breadth. And, in general, it may be said that the possibility of a man's fame lasting a long time, stands in almost inverse ratio with the chance that it will be early in making its appearance; so that, as regards length of fame, the above order of precedence may be reversed. But, then, the poet and the composer will come in the end to stand on the same level as the philosopher; since, when once a work is committed to writing, it is possible to preserve it to all time. However, the first place still belongs by right to the philosopher, because of the much greater scarcity of good work in this sphere, and the high importance of it; and also because of the possibility it offers of an almost perfect translation into any language. Sometimes, indeed, it happens that a philosopher's fame outlives even his works themselves; as has happened with Thales, Empedocles, Heraclitus, Democritus, Parmenides, Epicurus and many others.

My remarks are, as I have said, confined to achievements that are not of any material use. Work that serves some practical end, or ministers directly to some pleasure of the senses, will never have any difficulty in being duly appreciated. No first-rate pastry-cook could long remain obscure in any town, to say nothing of having to appeal to posterity.

Under fame of rapid growth is also to be reckoned fame of a false and artificial kind; where, for instance, a book is worked into a reputation by means of unjust praise, the help of friends, corrupt criticism, prompting from above and collusion from below. All this tells upon the multitude, which is rightly presumed to have no power of judging for itself. This sort of fame is like a swimming bladder, by its aid a heavy body may keep afloat. It bears up for a certain time, long or short according as the bladder is well sewed up and blown; but still the air comes out gradually, and the body sinks. This is the inevitable fate of all works which are famous by reason of something outside of themselves. False praise dies away; collusion comes to an end; critics declare the reputation ungrounded; it vanishes, and is replaced by so much the greater contempt. Contrarily, a genuine work, which, having the source of its fame in itself, can kindle admiration afresh in every age, resembles a body of low specific gravity, which always keeps up of its own accord, and so goes floating down the stream of time.

Men of great genius, whether their work be in poetry, philosophy or art, stand in all ages like isolated heroes, keeping up single-handed a desperate struggling against the onslaught

of an army of opponents.(25) Is not this characteristic of the miserable nature of mankind? The dullness, grossness, perversity, silliness and brutality of by far the greater part of the race, are always an obstacle to the efforts of the genius, whatever be the method of his art; they so form that hostile army to which at last he has to succumb. Let the isolated champion achieve what he may: it is slow to be acknowledged; it is late in being appreciated, and then only on the score of authority; it may easily fall into neglect again, at any rate for a while. Ever afresh it finds itself opposed by false, shallow, and insipid ideas, which are better suited to that large majority, that so generally hold the field. Though the critic may step forth and say, like Hamlet when he held up the two portraits to his wretched mother, Have you eyes? Have you eyes? alas! they have none. When I watch the behavior of a crowd of people in the presence of some great master's work, and mark the manner of their applause, they often remind me of trained monkeys in a show. The monkey's gestures are, no doubt, much like those of men; but now and again they betray that the real inward spirit of these gestures is not in them. Their irrational nature peeps out.

(25) Translator's Note. — At this point Schopenhauer interrupts the thread of his discourse to speak at length upon an example of false fame. Those who are at all acquainted with the philosopher's views will not be surprised to find that the writer thus held up to scorn is Hegel; and readers of the other volumes in this series will, with the translator, have had by now quite enough of the subject. The passage is therefore omitted.]

It is often said of a man that he is in advance of his age; and it follows from the above remarks that this must be taken to mean that he is in advance of humanity in general. Just because of this fact, a genius makes no direct appeal except to those who are too rare to allow of their ever forming a numerous body at any one period. If he is in this respect not particularly favored by fortune, he will be misunderstood by his own age; in other words, he will remain unaccepted until time gradually brings together the voices of those few persons who are capable of judging a work of such high character. Then posterity will say: This man was in advance of his age, instead of in advance of humanity; because humanity will be glad to lay the burden of its own faults upon a single epoch.

Hence, if a man has been superior to his own age, he would also have been superior to any other; provided that, in that age, by some rare and happy chance, a few just men, capable of judging in the sphere of his achievements, had been born at the same time with him; just as when, according to a beautiful Indian myth, Vischnu becomes incarnate as a hero, so, too, Brahma at the same time appears as the singer of his deeds; and hence Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa are incarnations of Brahma.

In this sense, then, it may be said that every immortal work puts its age to the proof, whether or no it will be able to recognize the merit of it. As a rule, the men of any age stand such a test no better than the neighbors of Philemon and Baucis, who expelled the deities they failed to recognize. Accordingly, the right standard for judging the intellectual worth of any generation is supplied, not by the great minds that make their appearance in it — for their capacities are the work of Nature, and the possibility of cultivating them a matter of chance circumstance — but by the way in which contemporaries receive their works; whether, I mean, they give their applause soon and with a will, or late and in niggardly fashion, or leave it to be bestowed altogether by posterity.

This last fate will be especially reserved for works of a high character. For the happy chance mentioned above will be all the more certain not to come, in proportion as there are few to appreciate the kind of work done by great minds. Herein lies the immeasurable advantage possessed by poets in respect of reputation; because their work is accessible to almost everyone. If it had been possible for Sir Walter Scott to be read and criticised by only some hundred persons, perhaps in his life-time any common scribbler would have been preferred to him; and afterwards, when he had taken his proper place, it would also have been said in his honor that he was in advance of his age. But if envy, dishonesty and the pursuit of personal aims are added to the incapacity of those hundred persons who, in the name of their generation, are called upon to pass judgment on a work, then indeed it meets with the same sad fate as attends a suitor who pleads before a tribunal of judges one and all corrupt.

In corroboration of this, we find that the history of literature generally shows all those who made knowledge and insight their goal to have remained unrecognized and neglected, whilst those who paraded with the vain show of it received the admiration of their contemporaries, together with the emoluments.

The effectiveness of an author turns chiefly upon his getting the reputation that he should be read. But by practicing various arts, by the operation of chance, and by certain natural affinities, this reputation is quickly won by a hundred worthless people: while a worthy writer may come by it very slowly and tardily. The former possess friends to help them; for the rabble is always a numerous body which holds well together. The latter has nothing but enemies; because intellectual superiority is everywhere and under all circumstances the most hateful thing in the world, and especially to bunglers in the same line of work, who want to pass for something themselves.(26)

(26) If the professors of philosophy should chance to think that I am here hinting at them and the tactics they have for more than thirty years pursued toward my works, they have hit the nail upon the head.]

This being so, it is a prime condition for doing any great work — any work which is to outlive its own age, that a man pay no heed to his contemporaries, their views and opinions, and the praise or blame which they bestow. This condition is, however, fulfilled of itself when a man really does anything great, and it is fortunate that it is so. For if, in producing such a work, he were to look to the general opinion or the judgment of his colleagues, they would lead him astray at every step. Hence, if a man wants to go down to posterity, he must withdraw from the influence of his own age. This will, of course, generally mean that he must also renounce any influence upon it, and be ready to buy centuries of fame by foregoing the applause of his contemporaries.

For when any new and wide-reaching truth comes into the world — and if it is new, it must be paradoxical — an obstinate stand will be made against it as long as possible; nay, people will continue to deny it even after they slacken their opposition and are almost convinced of its truth. Meanwhile it goes on quietly working its way, and, like an acid, undermining everything around it. From time to time a crash is heard; the old error comes tottering to the ground, and suddenly the new fabric of thought stands revealed, as though

it were a monument just uncovered. Everyone recognizes and admires it. To be sure, this all comes to pass for the most part very slowly. As a rule, people discover a man to be worth listening to only after he is gone; their hear, hear, resounds when the orator has left the platform.

Works of the ordinary type meet with a better fate. Arising as they do in the course of, and in connection with, the general advance in contemporary culture, they are in close alliance with the spirit of their age — in other words, just those opinions which happen to be prevalent at the time. They aim at suiting the needs of the moment. If they have any merit, it is soon recognized; and they gain currency as books which reflect the latest ideas. Justice, nay, more than justice, is done to them. They afford little scope for envy; since, as was said above, a man will praise a thing only so far as he hopes to be able to imitate it himself.

But those rare works which are destined to become the property of all mankind and to live for centuries, are, at their origin, too far in advance of the point at which culture happens to stand, and on that very account foreign to it and the spirit of their own time. They neither belong to it nor are they in any connection with it, and hence they excite no interest in those who are dominated by it. They belong to another, a higher stage of culture, and a time that is still far off. Their course is related to that of ordinary works as the orbit of Uranus to the orbit of Mercury. For the moment they get no justice done to them. People are at a loss how to treat them; so they leave them alone, and go their own snail's pace for themselves. Does the worm see the eagle as it soars aloft?

Of the number of books written in any language about one in 100,000 forms a part of its real and permanent literature. What a fate this one book has to endure before it outstrips those 100,000 and gains its due place of honor! Such a book is the work of an extraordinary and eminent mind, and therefore it is specifically different from the others; a fact which sooner or later becomes manifest.

Let no one fancy that things will ever improve in this respect. No! the miserable constitution of humanity never changes, though it may, to be sure, take somewhat varying forms with every generation. A distinguished mind seldom has its full effect in the lifetime of its possessor; because, at bottom, it is completely and properly understood only by minds already akin to it.

As it is a rare thing for even one man out of many millions to tread the path that leads to immortality, he must of necessity be very lonely. The journey to posterity lies through a horribly dreary region, like the Lybian desert, of which, as is well known, no one has any idea who has not seen it for himself. Meanwhile let me before all things recommend the traveler to take light baggage with him; otherwise he will have to throw away too much on the road. Let him never forget the words of Balthazar Gracian: *lo bueno si breve, dos veces bueno* — good work is doubly good if it is short. This advice is specially applicable to my own countrymen.

Compared with the short span of time they live, men of great intellect are like huge buildings, standing on a small plot of ground. The size of the building cannot be seen by anyone, just in front of it; nor, for an analogous reason, can the greatness of a genius be estimated while he lives. But when a century has passed, the world recognizes it and

wishes him back again.

If the perishable son of time has produced an imperishable work, how short his own life seems compared with that of his child! He is like Semela or Maia — a mortal mother who gave birth to an immortal son; or, contrarily, he is like Achilles in regard to Thetis. What a contrast there is between what is fleeting and what is permanent! The short span of a man's life, his necessitous, afflicted, unstable existence, will seldom allow of his seeing even the beginning of his immortal child's brilliant career; nor will the father himself be taken for that which he really is. It may be said, indeed, that a man whose fame comes after him is the reverse of a nobleman, who is preceded by it.

However, the only difference that it ultimately makes to a man to receive his fame at the hands of contemporaries rather than from posterity is that, in the former case, his admirers are separated from him by space, and in the latter by time. For even in the case of contemporary fame, a man does not, as a rule, see his admirers actually before him. Reverence cannot endure close proximity; it almost always dwells at some distance from its object; and in the presence of the person revered it melts like butter in the sun. Accordingly, if a man is celebrated with his contemporaries, nine-tenths of those amongst whom he lives will let their esteem be guided by his rank and fortune; and the remaining tenth may perhaps have a dull consciousness of his high qualities, because they have heard about him from remote quarters. There is a fine Latin letter of Petrarch's on this incompatibility between reverence and the presence of the person, and between fame and life. It comes second in his *Epistolae familiares*?(27) and it is addressed to Thomas Messanensis. He there observes, amongst other things, that the learned men of his age all made it a rule to think little of a man's writings if they had even once seen him.

(27) In the Venetian edition of 1492.]

Since distance, then, is essential if a famous man is to be recognized and revered, it does not matter whether it is distance of space or of time. It is true that he may sometimes hear of his fame in the one case, but never in the other; but still, genuine and great merit may make up for this by confidently anticipating its posthumous fame. Nay, he who produces some really great thought is conscious of his connection with coming generations at the very moment he conceives it; so that he feels the extension of his existence through centuries and thus lives with posterity as well as for it. And when, after enjoying a great man's work, we are seized with admiration for him, and wish him back, so that we might see and speak with him, and have him in our possession, this desire of ours is not unrequited; for he, too, has had his longing for that posterity which will grant the recognition, honor, gratitude and love denied by envious contemporaries.

If intellectual works of the highest order are not allowed their due until they come before the tribunal of posterity, a contrary fate is prepared for certain brilliant errors which proceed from men of talent, and appear with an air of being well grounded. These errors are defended with so much acumen and learning that they actually become famous with their own age, and maintain their position at least during their author's lifetime. Of this sort are many false theories and wrong criticisms; also poems and works of art, which exhibit some false taste or mannerism favored by contemporary prejudice. They gain

reputation and currency simply because no one is yet forthcoming who knows how to refute them or otherwise prove their falsity; and when he appears, as he usually does, in the next generation, the glory of these works is brought to an end. Posthumous judges, be their decision favorable to the appellant or not, form the proper court for quashing the verdict of contemporaries. That is why it is so difficult and so rare to be victorious alike in both tribunals.

The unfailing tendency of time to correct knowledge and judgment should always be kept in view as a means of allaying anxiety, whenever any grievous error appears, whether in art, or science, or practical life, and gains ground; or when some false and thoroughly perverse policy of movement is undertaken and receives applause at the hands of men. No one should be angry, or, still less, despondent; but simply imagine that the world has already abandoned the error in question, and now only requires time and experience to recognize of its own accord that which a clear vision detected at the first glance.

When the facts themselves are eloquent of a truth, there is no need to rush to its aid with words: for time will give it a thousand tongues. How long it may be before they speak, will of course depend upon the difficulty of the subject and the plausibility of the error; but come they will, and often it would be of no avail to try to anticipate them. In the worst cases it will happen with theories as it happens with affairs in practical life; where sham and deception, emboldened by success, advance to greater and greater lengths, until discovery is made almost inevitable. It is just so with theories; through the blind confidence of the blockheads who broach them, their absurdity reaches such a pitch that at last it is obvious even to the dullest eye. We may thus say to such people: the wilder your statements, the better.

There is also some comfort to be found in reflecting upon all the whims and crotchets which had their day and have now utterly vanished. In style, in grammar, in spelling, there are false notions of this sort which last only three or four years. But when the errors are on a large scale, while we lament the brevity of human life, we shall in any case, do well to lag behind our own age when we see it on a downward path. For there are two ways of not keeping on a level with the times. A man may be below it; or he may be above it.