The critical theory of Lord Kames

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"THE CRITICAL THEORY OF LORD KAMES."

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I

THE PLACE OF LORD KAMES IN LITERARY CRITICISM

A critic to whom little space is devoted in books on the history of criticism and still less credit given in practical criticism is Henry Home, Lord Kames. It is possible that his influence in this field is underestimated while his theories have been more or less incorporated into the general rules of criticism.

His thesis is that whatever is universal must have a foundation in human nature. Certain principles are universally recognized as fundamental in criticism; therefore they must be founded in human nature.

He states (Vol. II, Ch. 23) that he has "taken arms to rescue modern poets from the despotism of modern critics."

His voice was a protest against what is called a "blind veneration that is paid to the ancient classic writers without distinguishing their blemishes from their beauties." (Vol. II, Ch. 20 Sec. 3). In all other lines, he asserts, men have broken away from authority and claim the right to think for themselves, but criticism, "by what fatality I know not, continues to be not less slavish in its principles, nor less submissive to authority, than it was originally." (Introduction). In speaking of Terence's "slavery" to Greek dramatic models he takes opportunity for a stroke at contemporary criticism as follows:

"Thus a zealous sectary follows implicitly ancient forms and ceremonies, without once considering whether their introductive
cause he still subsisting." (Vol.II Ch. 23)

He objects to authority as apt to impose on judgment, and it is to the judgment that he refers the test of good and bad in the fine arts, thus rendering criticism what he is pleased to call a "rational science." He seeks to supply the deficiency which he sees in the earlier controversy among critics over the authority of ancient writers as models. "A comparison between the ancients and the moderns, was some time ago a favorite subject; those who declared for the ancient manners, thought it sufficient that these manners were supported by custom: their antagonists, on the other hand, refusing submission to custom as a standard of taste, condemned ancient manners as in several instances irrational. In this controversy, an appeal made to different principles, without the slightest attempt to establish a common standard, the dispute could have no end." (Ch.xiv)

From his attempt to supply this common standard sprang in 1761, a new theory of criticism in the fine arts which is designated philosophical criticism.

It was his theory that all are born with a taste for natural objects but that taste for the artificial, such as products of the fine arts, must be cultivated by study and practice. Taste tells us what is right or wrong, proper or improper. It is not arbitrary or local, being rooted in human nature and governed by principles common to all men. There is a sense of
conviction in the human species of a good in art as of a right in morals or a perfect in nature and any deviation from the standard is disagreeable. Hence, it is the generally agreeable that is accepted as the standard.

The existence of this common standard is demonstrated by the agreement in taste of the more cultured and the recognition of their higher judgment by those of lower taste. Agreement in taste is more universal than generally believed, differences among those competent to judge arising generally over trifles or points of equal rank, or from perverted tastes. Competency to judge demands good natural taste improved by education, reflection and experience, with a persistent following of the dictates of improved taste. These qualities must not be incapacitated by excess or voluptuousness which corrupt taste and render one incapable of the sympathetic affections necessary for appreciating the finer and simpler qualities of art. The value of experience as an asset is attested by the artistic judgment of the humblest Italian shopkeeper who has access to generations of works of art; by the very populace of Athens who were connoisseurs in the science of rhetoric; by even the shepherd who is able to distinguish the features of his various charges. Those favored with the experience of culture, are quick to discern improprieties in dress, speech or conduct.
A standard in moral conduct has long been recognized. That there exists a standard in the fine arts as well, is a discovery. This standard, which is the common sense of mankind, advances with civilization, being based upon the more universal and enduring among polite nations, and is, as yet, imperfect.

He proceeds to develop his main proposition, that human nature is the natural basis of criticism, and to unfold those principles of the fine arts which constitute criticism a rational science, "by studying the sensitive part of human nature and by learning what objects are naturally agreeable and what are naturally disagreeable." (Introduction)

He then discovers certain mental operations upon which they are based. In this manner he hopes to "form a standard of taste by unfolding those principles that ought to govern the taste of every individual." (p.VI) A standard of taste being established, rules are deduced therefrom which should govern all criticism of the fine arts.

II

PRINCIPLES GROWING OUT OF THE ORDERLY COURSE OF PERCEPTIONS.

Ideas in the mind follow each other in an orderly train, each growing out of the last or suggested by objects of occupation or surroundings. Connection governs the orderly sequence of the ideas which grow out of each other and this connection may arise from various sources such as cause and
effect, resemblance and contrast, contiguity in time and place. This fact gives rise to the pleasure of order and connection and establishes it as one of the principles in the fine arts. As an example of its effect in literature compare the ease and interest with which the mind follows a book of story as contrasted with a book of unconnected maxims.

III

PRINCIPLES GROWING OUT OF THE EMOTIONS AND PASSIONS

The influence of the various feelings to which the mind is capable of being aroused gives rise to other principles. These may be aroused by idea or mental images as well as by the original, hence its propriety in the field of art. The emotions, passions and appetites are closely allied.

Emotions are feelings not necessarily accompanied by desire. The emotion of joy is aroused by the gratification of desire, sorrow by the lack of it. The sympathetic emotion of virtue springs from the idea of virtuous acts and is a desire to act, but without an object. Its exercise creates a habit of virtue even without opportunity to act and out of this fact comes the beneficent effect of the moral drama.

Passions are always accompanied by desire and prompt to action. They are distinguished as selfish, social and dis-social as determined by the end of each. For illustration: affection which prompts me to act only for the gratification of my own pleasure is selfish; when it is to give pleasure to a friend only it is social. A resentment which acts for the
sake of gratifying the passion alone is selfish, but when it extends to a desire for destruction of its object it is dis-social.

Appetite is passion directed to a general object.

Some emotions and passions communicate themselves to other objects and even produce other passions through the principle of order and connection which prompts the mind to pass readily from one object to another related to it. Good will to a parent may communicate good will to his child without stronger cause than that of relationship. Pity may produce friendship and even love because the mind, softened by the emotion of pity, is prepared for the ingress of all tender emotions.

It has been stated above that the emotions and passions may be aroused by idea as well as by the original. The only difference is that those aroused by idea are more faint. The strength of the emotion depends on the degree of ideal presence inspired which may be a process of memory, or of imagination inspired by history or fiction. The secret of the power to raise the emotions lies in the delusion of reality, which ends as soon as opportunity for reflection is given, and sympathy is lost. Genius in writing, painting, or acting is the power to create this ideal presence. Note the device of the historical present in writing or speaking to create the effect. The unpleasant sensation arising from the mixture of tenses is explained by this principle, for the mind is confused in its
effort to keep up with the changes and in the process, the delusion of reality is lost. A genius has the power to create this delusion so perfectly that it takes possession of the imagination and belief of the reader or hearer until he accepts things even beyond probability and for this reason such a one may employ bolder fictions than one of mediocre ability. But events, while unexpected, must seem natural or the delusion of reality vanishes. For this reason machinery is out of place in an epic though used with propriety in burlesque where no effort is made to impose on the belief.

Since the philosophic theory of criticism is to judge of the excellence of things by discovering what things are agreeable and using them as a standard, it is necessary to determine the meaning of our terminology. Objects are agreeable or disagreeable, the emotions aroused by them are pleasant or unpleasant. The former, then, are qualities of the object, the latter of the mind. The general law is that agreeable objects produce pleasant emotions, disagreeable objects painful emotions. An emotion itself may be agreeable yet at the same time painful which is not synonymous with disagreeable, as, for example, the emotion of pity. The end governs the classification of an emotion or passion as agreeable or disagreeable. Pleasures of external sense are gross, therefore less agreeable than those of mind and heart which are more pure and refined. The social affections are more refined and therefore more agreeable than the selfish pleasures whose end is less noble.
Any work of art portraying human nature must take into consideration the fact that emotions and passions are not permanent but coexistent with their causes. Since the ideas are never stationary but succeed each other in order, the emotions aroused by them must fluctuate to correspond. Different emotions have different periods of growth according to their purpose in the scheme of nature. Those passions whose end is quickly achieved, as wonder and surprise, fear and anger, are generally perfect in production. Love and hatred are long in the growth, require repeated gratification, and are long in decay.

The effect of different emotions acting simultaneously is also a matter for careful observation to the artist. Some emotions by their nature easily combine; others never combine but the mind fluctuates between them. Similar emotions, those producing the same tone of mind as all the cheerful emotions, readily combine. Dissimilar emotions, as pride and humility, joy and sorrow, cannot combine but succeed each other in turns. Different causes may result in similar emotions whence a connection between the causes arises in the mind; and the same cause may produce dissimilar emotions. Out of this principle comes the fittest subject for tragedy,—a man bringing misfortune upon himself through his own fault. The emotions of blame and pity, though dissimilar, are aroused
by the same cause.

Passion may impel one to think what he knows is improbable and even impossible. One's desires magnify the probability of a fortunate event, his fears the probability of an unfortunate one. The emotions of dread and wonder may impose upon the mind to arouse belief in wonders and prodigies. One's natural propensity and inclinations also influence his belief, a fact the dramatist must consider in suiting sentiments and actions to his characters. Passion influences the measure of time and space. The natural measure of time is the succession of perceptions in the mind and the apparent time varies with the rapidity of this succession. The same time and space covered apparently rapidly under one state of mind where the flow of ideas is rapid, may pass interminably under another.

Sometimes the effect of an emotion is increased by its similarity to its cause. Sluggish motion gives rise to a languid feeling, swift motion to a spirited feeling. Sound in a low key brings down the tone of mind, and in a high key, clears and elevates. This is a governing principle in all composition where the emotions enter.

IV
QUALITIES WHICH GIVE EXCELLENCE TO ART.

The qualities which alone or in combination give excellence to works of art, are taken up separately and analyzed as to their properties, and reasons given for their effect.

Beauty is, literally, the agreeable appearance of an object of sight but is made to apply figuratively to objects
of all the senses. Beauty is of two kinds, intrinsic and relative, the one perceived by the sense the other by reflection. In relative beauty the beauty of effect is transferred by the mind to its related cause. The qualities of intrinsic beauty are color, motion and figure.

The beauty of color needs no discussion and motion is given a place to itself. The beauty of figure is more complex, comprising the properties of regularity, simplicity, uniformity, proportion and order. A straight line or a figure composed by a single rule with no part left arbitrary, as a circle or square, is possessed of perfect regularity. The parallelogram and the rhomb are less regular because subject to a few rules in sides and angles. Simplicity is the quality that gives a single complete impression at once. Where too many objects or details, even beauties of inferior quality, are introduced, the mind is confused and no impression is left. Uniformity differs from regularity in that the former applies to the constituent parts as related to each other by resemblance, the latter to the whole. Proportion always implies inequality or difference as uniformity implies resemblance, but difference only to a degree. It should govern things intimately connected and different parts of the same thing intended for different uses. For example, a proportion of the parts to the length is demanded in a literary composition. Order regards the placing of parts according to the instinctive
sense of order. It is more natural for the mind to pass in succession from principal to accessory, from whole to parts, from one object to another connected by position.

Grandeur and sublimity are based on the naturally aspiring nature of mind which makes great and elevated things, agreeable, with the added emotion of seriousness. Grandeur is a combination of beauty and size; sublimity, of beauty and elevation, though the properties of beauty are less essential because irregularities are less noticeable combined with size or elevation. For example in an epic, constituting an example of the grand in literature, irregularities are more readily pardoned than in a sonnet.

Transition from small to larger is agreeable giving the impression of mounting, which gives origin to the term "ascending series." The impression results from the orderly and agreeable expansion of mind and is the principle upon which much of the agreeable in period and sentence structure, and in versification is based. Much figurative terminology is derived from the literal by the similarity in emotions produced. Witness the term "ascending series" mentioned above. We speak of low and elevated emotions. The term "sublime" in poetry has like origin. The agreeableness of the climax in both sense and language is based on this principle.

The grand and sublime are best within limits. If there is too great magnitude or elevation in material objects the
result confuses instead of expands and elevates, and the same is true in figurative expression. If the sentiments are overdrawn, the figures strained, the result is obscurity. If the subject is too exalted it falls by contrast. To reach the sublime in literature, abstract and general terms must be avoided as giving no impression, the greatest circumstances employed as giving the strongest impression, and the impression reiterated by successive images. The errors of false sublime are, an effort to raise an object above its rank called bombast, and an elevation forced by introducing imaginary beings without propriety in their actions. The theme best fitted for the sublime is the history of heroes.

Motion was named above as one quality of beauty. A tree moved by a breeze, water in motion, ascending smoke all please by this quality. That degree of motion corresponding to the rapidity of perceptions in their natural course is the most agreeable. The effect of motion is to carry the mind with it and when either too slow or too swift, motion loses its beauty. Regular motion is preferable to irregular because of its transference to the mind. Motion uniformly accelerated is agreeable by giving the impression of mounting or elevation of mind. Undulating motion is agreeable from its impression of freedom, and fluids in motion arouse a pleasing emotion because of their order and regularity. Ascending smoke is agreeable because it elevates the mind, and being without force or effort calms and soothes. Downward motion depresses accordingly.

Force exerted creates the emotion of effort in the mind. Compare the different emotion aroused by a natural waterfall.
and a jet of water forced upward against the order of nature.

Novelty is the property of objects which are singular and new. It arouses the emotion of wonder and appeals to the quality of curiosity in human nature. Surprise differs from wonder in that it is the unexpected breaking in on the regular chain of perceptions by anything either new or familiar, while wonder excludes objects of familiarity. The mind is engrossed by the emotions of wonder and surprise so that it cannot be ascertained whether they are pleasant or painful.

Since amusement is necessary to unbend the mind from serious application, risible objects have utility in human nature. To be risible an object must be trifling in importance and in some respect out of rule. A risible object arouses the pleasant emotion of mirth. A ridiculous object is one that is both risible and improper and inspires the unpleasant emotions of contempt added to mirth.

The gratification of curiosity lies in finding unexpected points of resemblance and contrast. This is the foundation principle of comparisons in language. The resemblances may err in being either too strong or too faint producing an effect opposite to that intended. The most effective comparisons are made between objects differing in genus; contrasts between those of the same genus. The unexpectedness causes surprise which inflames the passions and these, influencing the opinions, make
the likeness or unlikeness appear more striking than it is in reality. This is the principle which causes a simile to become trite, its familiarity from frequent use eliminating the element of surprise. Added to the influence of passion over opinion is the propensity in human nature to carry things to completion. We are uneasy at any thing that cannot be completed as an infinite series. This propensity causes us to carry the suggested partial resemblance or difference to complete resemblance or difference.

The natural course of perceptions is qualified first by order and connection, second by uniformity and variety. Various impressions are made by the various objects about us thus helping to determine the course. The will, too, has an influence in determining the variety. The most pleasant course of perceptions is made up of a variety following a moderate rate of succession. In works of art the effect is most pleasant when the variety of ideas suggested corresponds to the natural course. Where too great variety is attempted, the work lacks simplicity and the impressions lack vividness.

Congruity is based on an instinct or sense which notifies us of what is fitting or proper in the relation of one thing to another. Propriety is congruity as applied to thoughts, words and acts of sensible beings only. The qualities of congruity and propriety being agreeable arouse pleasant emotions. Propriety, for example, may arouse esteem, joy, humility. Impro-
propriety may arouse contempt, indignation and laughter while risible impropriety arouses contempt and the laugh of scorn. Incongruity in the parts of a literary composition or impropriety in the manners in a story is a great defect.

Dignity is a species of propriety. An object possesses dignity only as it elevates and ennobles. Hence the pleasures of the understanding and the sympathetic passions possess this quality. Of the passions, the agreeable alone possess dignity. Grace is a property of objects of sight and an attribute of human emotion only. It is a combination of dignity of countenance and of motion.

V

RIDICULE

Burlesque may be of a nature merely to excite laughter or it may provoke derision or ridicule. The former may be effected by bringing down a grave subject so as to appear trivial, the latter by handling a trivial matter seriously. The burlesque effect arises from the contrast between the subject and the way it is handled. A humorous author is one who provokes mirth while pretending to be serious. Irony laughs at a man in disguise. Parody enlivens a gay subject by imitating a serious event of importance. Improprieties afford a fruitful field for themes for burlesque. Appreciation of the ridiculous is not a process of reason but a sense or instinct as is congruity.
VI

WIT

Wit is a combination of singularity with the ludicrous inducing surprise, and may exist either in thought or in expression. Examples of the former are: fanciful causes ascribed for certain effects, fanciful reasoning, opposites joined in appearance, premises promising much but performing nothing. Wit from expression consists of a play of words by the use of words with different signification. The pleasure arising from novelty soon vanishes and is a pleasure of languages in lower states of civilization, falling into disfavor as civilization advances and language is perfected. There is also a wit arising from sound alone, such as amusing rhymes. Wit is a mark of a mind at ease and not suitable as a dress for serious thought where the discordance between thought and expression creates an unpleasant effect.

VII

CUSTOM AND HABIT

The growth of habit is a process involving novelty, familiarity and custom in turn. The first renders an object enchanting, the second indifferent and the last desirable. The formation of habit requires frequency, length of time, regularity and uniformity. Habit is a pain of want rather than a desire of gratification and the pain increases inversely as the pleasure subsides. Moderate pleasures are more apt to become habits
than intense pleasures because it is a natural law that pleasures which attain full growth quickly are short lived for, being fatiguing to the mind and spirits through their intensity, they create disgust and satiety instead of pleasure. A faint impression such as a moderate agreeableness, may become stronger but an extreme impression can only become more faint.

As to how far the authority of custom applies in the fine arts has been discussed earlier. Custom is a criterion only where the question is a matter of fancy alone. Custom may prevail so as to change the nature of things as evidenced in outlandish fashions, and bias taste, and like the passions it may even influence feelings and belief. In questions of right and propriety custom has little authority. Where submission to authority is irrational there it should be abandoned. To indulge certain practices of the ancients upon the stage, which were justified by their belief, would be preposterous on the modern stage.

VIII

EXTERNAL SIGNS OF EMOTIONS AND PASSIONS

So intimately are soul and body connected that an agitation of the one is externally expressed in the other and the talent of a good dramatist lies in his command of the most natural expression. Attitude and gestures bear a resemblance to the emotions they express. Joy is expressed by elevation of body; dignity by erect posture; pride, magnanimity, courage and all elevating passions by gestures corresponding. Respect and grief depress the mind and are best expressed by depression of body. The figure "to be cast down" expressing dispiritedness
has its legitimate origin in this fact.

Soliloquies, while much abused, are justified by the gratification which arises from venting a passion at certain heights in words as well as gestures, and causes us to speak even without an audience. Under such circumstances only are soliloquies natural. The same tendency also prompts the mind to bestow sensibility on inanimate objects as confidants.

Quiescent and deliberative emotions are evidenced rather by actions than by outward signs.

The external signs all have their effect upon the spectator from which fact the writer of the pathetic profits well.

IX

SENTIMENTS

The rules for the drama or epic are briefly: Adjust passion to the character, sentiments to the passion and language to the sentiments. To draw a comparison from music, every passion has a certain tone to which every sentiment should be attuned. The greatest genius is displayed in drawing out the thought of each character in expression suited to the character and his sentiments. In order to accomplish this, an author must assume the character. Otherwise we have but the language of a spectator, and our sympathies are not aroused because the delusion of reality, the life of dramatic writing, is wanting.

Since passions are never stationery, having origin, growth and decay corresponding to the succession of perceptions which prompt them, the sentiments should show this fluctuation.
Not all the sentiments can be expressed but the capital ones showing the strongest pulses of the passions should be given place and those uppermost in mind expressed first. A climax is a useful device for expressing swelling passion. The sentiments showing the stages of passion should succeed in an order that is natural, else the mind, accustomed to an orderly train of ideas, will protest. A sense of shame causes immoderate passions if expressed to tend to dissemble rather than reveal themselves, because they are not under the control of reason or conscience as they should be.

X

LANGUAGE OF PASSION.

As stated above, soliloquies are justified by the social tendency which prompts us, when acting under the proper degree of passion, to communicate our opinions and emotions. Excessive grief is silent through desire of self-affliction. Surprise and terror are silent through an agitation of mind so violent as to suspend speech; immoderate love and revenge are silent through shame. Hence these passions are none of them suited for soliloquy.

According to the rule given above, language should be adapted to sentiment as well as sentiment to passion. Where sentiments show a fluctuation of passion the language should be unequal and interrupted. The language of elevated passions should be elevated. Soft flowing language is adapted to the tender sentiments while humble language should be employed.
to express depressed sentiments. The reason for this required
conformity of expression to thought is that by it the emotions
aroused are similar, whereas without it they are discordant.

Figurative expression within bounds is allowable, espe­
cially for expressing certain emotions. But when it is used
too freely there is produced a discord the greater by contrast.
Figurative language is suitable for pleasant and elevating
emotions but unsuitable for the humbling and dispiriting pass­
ions such as anguish or distress, because the mind in the form­
er case is disposed to flights of the imagination which is
not so in the latter case.

Words of short syllables pronounced quickly are proper
for expressing active and hurrying passion, while long slow
syllables are proper for the slower passions. Words of many
long syllables are most appropriate for the expression of the
perceptions of melancholy; rough broken language for surprise
and fear; soft gliding words for calm and sweet emotions.
The hurry of passion is naturally expressed by the redoubling
of words. These rules are all based upon the principle of
agreeable emotions produced by a concordance of expression
with the thought.

XI

BEAUTY OF LANGUAGE

The beauty of words is three-fold; first in their imitative
power, second in agreeableness to the ear; third in their
ability to express thought.

The beauty of imitation arises from the resemblance of words to the ideas they express. Rarely the beauty lies in the resemblance of the articulate sound of the word to the inarticulate sound of the thing expressed, as "twang" for the sound of a bow string. But more frequently it is a work of the imagination, the beauty of the sense being communicated to the sound, for sound can resemble the objects of no other sense or feeling. There may be a concordance of emotions aroused by the object described and the sound of the word, on the principle of the same effect from different causes. By this principle the impression of slow or swift motion is given by long or short syllables, laborious motion by monosyllables, rough and tumultuous motion by rough syllables, gentle motion by the Alexandrine line. Gravity and solemnity are expressed by long syllables pronounced slowly, settled melancholy by polysyllables slowly pronounced, hard labor by long syllables so arranged as to require short pronunciation and short syllables requiring long pronunciation, labor of thought by harsh rough words requiring an effort in pronunciation. The ease or difficulty of pronunciation is transferred to the mind of the hearer soothing or agitating as the case may be. The pleasure of concordant sound and sense is the greater on the principle of the pleasure from resemblance discussed above, where pleasure is aroused by
surprise in the discovery of unexpected resemblances between objects where least expected, which is the case in the apparent resemblance between words and ideas due only to similarity of the emotions produced by them.

Where there can be a conjunction in climax of sound and sense the effect is most perfect as increasing the effect of an ascending series.

Words in themselves by a combination of vowels, consonants and syllables, may express sound productive of certain agreeable emotions. For example smooth sounds calm and soothe; rough sounds animate by transference of effort in pronouncing to the hearer's mind. Words united in a period so as to proceed from less to greater, producing a climax in sound, are agreeable from the emotion of mounting created by an ascending series. In periods united in a discourse, care should be given to the beauty of variety in length, cadence and arrangement.

The beauties of words arising from signification are most important and consist of beauty of choice and beauty of arrangement. The first consideration is clearness. Agreement of words with thought, proper conjunctions to show relations, careful construction, all serve toward perspicuity. When there is a desire to express hurry or quick action, and to animate, copulatives should be omitted. The use of many copulatives may express deliberation or coolness in a speaker or may empha-
size the idea of great numbers.

Beauty of arrangement involves natural style and inverted or transposed style. The natural order has the virtue of corresponding to the orderly train of perceptions in the mind, and possesses the beauties of simplicity and perpicuity, but the inverted order may possess beauties counterbalancing these such as force, harmony, elevation, cadence. The curiosity is aroused often by suspending the main thought until the end which, except when delayed too long, adds an agreeableness to the sentence which a periodic sentence does not possess because curiosity is ended before the sentence finally closes. Long periods and sentences should not be introduced until the reader's interest is aroused so that attention may follow. Words expressing things connected in thought should be placed near together so that the natural orderly mental operation may not be interrupted. For example a relative should come as near its substantive as possible. Sometimes it is desired to elevate or depress an object. This may be accomplished by joining it in expression with words expressing the desired quality, the emotion aroused by the latter being communicated to the former. When possible the circumstances should be placed first giving the impression of mounting upward as the more important parts of the sentence succeed. When possible the most important word, often the verb, should come last, but when this is not best, as when it delays the thought too long, then it is well to place it toward the
first. Here it attracts attention and makes a more forceful impression. If it can be accomplished without ambiguity the longest and most sonorous words should come last to give the impression of mounting. The same principle governs the arrangement of a number of circumstances differing in size, rank or importance, proceeding always from less to greater unless the natural order of the objects takes a different course in the mind, as where desire to express respect, due to difference in rank, causes the order to descend from higher to lower.

XII

VERSIFICATION.

Verse differs from prose in its different impression upon the ear due to pauses and the length, stress or accent, and arrangement of syllables.

The propriety of pauses is governed by the thought. Where a pause in sound and sense can be made to correspond, the pleasure is enhanced. Consequently a pause should never fall within a word where the tendency of the mind is to proceed. A word divided by a semi-pause is less objectionable but even that should be avoided when possible. In the ideal Latin hexameter the full pause in sense should come only at the end of the line, which unfits it for narrative poems where the thought continues from line to line. A pause may properly come between a substantive and its adjective but never between an adjective and its substantive, because the mind can conceive a substantive alone but not a quality which demands its completing idea. The verb and adverb may be divided but not adverb and verb, agent and action but not action and agent, passive substantive and passive verb but not active verb and passive substantive, all
based on the principle just mentioned. When the pauses in sense and melody correspond, the beauty of the one is transferred to the other. If in any case a breach in the rules of either is necessary, the melody should be sacrificed and the beauty of force or other qualities so derived by the sense may be transferred to the sound.

English verse is largely reduced to dissyllables and monosyllables because few polysyllables have a proper alternation in long and short syllables to fit them for metrical use. Where a line is so constituted as to bring a false quantity upon a syllable it is a blemish, for the mind is distracted from the sense in trying to meet the demands of the metre.

The effect of accent in versification is double. It gives a spirited air to the melody and it also contributes to the sense in that it marks the more important words. When the accent is made to fall on a low word the effect is one of burlesque in sense and the imperfection is mentally transferred to the melody.

Each style of verse has distinguishing qualities in the arrangement of its syllables. Variety may be allowed in some parts of a line but no licence may be taken with the characteristic features. The nature of the lines due to arrangement of syllables and position of pause fits them for various uses.

The four varieties of Heroic lines, distinguished by position of the pauses, with the author's explanation of their
beauties affords an excellent illustration of his critical theory.

The first order is when the pause occurs after the fourth syllable.

Example: Profuse of bliss// and pregnant of delight.

The pause directly succeeding an accent gives the time necessary for a deeper impression and causing a sudden stop without preparation, rouses the mind. The elevation of the accented tone produces a corresponding elevation of mind. The division of the line into unequal parts, the longer coming last, combined with the double effort required in pronouncing the latter, gives the impression of mounting upward. Due to the happy combination of pause and accent this line is the most lively and spirited of all from its three effects upon the mind: first, that of elevation due to the elevated tone; second, animation due to the unexpected pause; third, elevation due to arrangement of the lines in an ascending series which carries the mind with it, the mind at the close being at its highest elevation by the strong emphasis on the last syllable. Owing to this last quality a line of the first order is unfitted for closing a period where cadence instead of elevation is needed. It is however, the line best fitted for bold lively and impetuous sentiments.

The second order contains the pause after the fifth syllable.

Example: So when an angel/ by divine command.

The pause succeeding an unaccented syllable renders the
impression and elevation slight and the unaccented syllable prepares for the pause which follows naturally. The soft and gentle pause accompanied by the falling voice produces the emotion of sliding into rest. The line is divided into two equal parts by the position of the pause giving it the beauty of uniformity. This line then, with its accent succeeded by a short syllable, followed in turn by the pause produces a soft flowing modulation. The elevation of the first order is lacking, the falling voice inclines the mind to a gentle stop, and the uniformity of the parts of the line produces an emotion which is calm and sweet. The close of the line, while less elevated and dignified than that of the first order is superior to that of the third and fourth in this respect.

The qualities of this line render it proper for tender, melancholy and all sympathetic emotions.

In the third order the pause falls after the sixth syllable. Example: Then from his closing eyes// thy form shall part.

Here, as in the first order, the pause succeeding an accent gives a sprited impression. There is also a similar elevation due to elevation of the accented tone preceding the pause. The pause likewise divides the line into two unequal parts but unlike the first order the longer part comes first. This fact together with the less effort required in pronouncing the last part gives the effect of a descending series and inclines the mind to rest. This line possesses both
spirit and modulation by the combination of accent and pause, and its effect of elevation is balanced by the diminished effort in pronouncing the last part disposing the mind to rest. The late accent and the humble close produced by the descent and ease in pronunciation adds an air of gravity and solemnity to the line fitting it for subjects which are grave and solemn, or lofty.

The pause succeeds the seventh syllable in lines of the fourth order.

Example: And taught the doubtful battle// where to rage.

Here we have a similarity to lines of the second order in arrangement of pause and accent. The pause succeeding a short unaccented syllable produces slight impression and elevation, and the soft gentle pause following the falling voice inclines the mind to rest. The pause divides the line into unequal parts, the longer part first as in the third order, which produces the effect of a descending series and aids in disposing the mind to rest. These qualities render this line the most suitable for the complete closing of a period. The effect of descent due to the effort required for pronunciation of the longer part first, results in the most humble close of all the orders, and fits the line for all the sympathetic emotions combined with any degree of solemnity. A succession of lines of this order would be disagreeable from their too great tendency to rest.
Blank verse being unfettered by rhyme is more free for flights of imagination than rhymed verse. Since the melody of rhyme is confined to the couplet, to be most agreeable the sense likewise must be so confined which excludes its propriety for thoughts of any extent. Blank verse is unrestrained except in the demand that the full close come at the end of a line. More latitude in arrangement is given also. The longer periods possible from the continuance of thought from line to line give opportunity for more richness and variety. The force and elevation resulting from inversion is available in blank verse while almost entirely barred from the short period of the couplet. Variety in length of thoughts is more possible than where the periods must conform to rhyme, and a majesty and dignity results from the succession of thought from line to line.

Rhyme has undeniable faults but it also has virtues which give it rank. While it has no relation to sentiment, lacks dignity and often is ludicrous in effect, being a mere jingle to the ear, yet the repetition of sound has the effect of arousing and animating. The emotion produced by rhyme is gay without dignity or elevation. By producing variety, as often in the closing lines of the acts of the drama, it calms and raises the mind from dispiriting emotions. Rhyme is not suited to grand and sublime sentiments because the emotions it arouses are not concordant with those aroused by such sentiments.
This fact makes it an improper vehicle for tragedy. From its nature rhyme is adapted to gay light subjects, humor, ridicule and the like but not to the serious passions.

XIII

COMPARISONS.

Comparisons have two purposes, to instruct and to please. The former purpose is accomplished by setting an object in the strongest light; the latter by associating one subject with another that is agreeable. Both result from suggesting unusual resemblances or contrasts introducing the element of surprise. In earlier civilizations this device has a tendency to be overdone through the novelty suggested by the unexpected.

Since comparison is the basis of figures of speech their propriety depends on the propriety of the comparisons. It is only when elevated and warmed by passion that the mind is disposed to comparisons. They are unsuited to a calm state of mind and to the dispiriting passions. The imagination of a man when cool, or when absorbed in occupation or oppressed with care is indisposed to action.

Figurative expression is unsuited to ordinary conversation or the description of ordinary events where the element of surprise is wanting. Even when not out of place, figures may be faulty. A comparison that is too faint fatigues the mind though its obscurity, one that is too strong eliminates the unexpectedness which makes the figure agreeable. A low image introduced for comparison in an elevated composition brings the
mind down from its elevation, whereas a lofty image elevates if there is ground for it. Objects may be elevated or depressed by connecting them in thought with others that are above or beneath them. If however, in an attempt to elevate or depress, an image too lofty or too abject is used the effect, due to contrast is just the opposite to that intended. Nauseous and ugly images are never in place, no matter how apt, nor is a comparison involving words alone without a comparison in sense, except where burlesque is intended.

Mutual proportion should exist between the objects compared so that the description may not descend into burlesque through contrast. Figures should be moderate, brief and used in moderation, for like extreme pleasures, excess in their use leads to satiation.

Personification is based on the principle which induces the mind under stress of passion to bestow life and sensibility on objects about it due to the influence of passion over our opinions and belief. There are two kinds of personification,—the passionate which involves temporary belief, and the descriptive which appeals to the imagination only. Abstract and general terms are often personified for the sake of an image upon which the mind may fix itself more definitely. Apostrophe, which bestows a temporary presence, is based upon the same principle.

Hyperbole has its justification in the principle of surprise which magnifies or diminishes an object more than reality war-
rants. The figure is more successful in magnifying than diminishing because small objects naturally contract the mind while large images expand. Hyperbole is out of place in describing the ordinary where no element of surprise is present.

Many figures are based upon mental transference of properties or qualities from one related object to another due to connection of the objects in mind, such as where the means or instrument is conceived as agent or where an attribute of the whole is ascribed to its parts.

Metaphor and allegory are closely related, the former being an operation of imagination, the latter of reflection. The description should proceed in terms of the imagined nature. Mixed metaphors, different in the same period and a combination of the literal with the figurative should be avoided. Otherwise the mind becomes distracted in following the changes.

The term "figure of speech" is applied by the author to a specific figure based upon the relation of resemblance of emotions produced by different objects. Thus height or size produces the same emotion as worldly greatness; depth as disagreeableness by excess or uneasiness; and height as time long past. Thus we speak of the "depths of despair", the "height of fame."

XIV

NARRATION AND DESCRIPTION

In history the thoughts should be chaste and solid, figures being used sparingly and only after the imagination has
had time to warm. The same principle bars figurative language from the beginning of an epic until the reader is prepared, thus rendering the first periods short, natural and simple. Where a subject is for entertainment merely and not instruction, an object should be described as it appears which is not always as it is in reality, so that the mind may experience ideal presence.

In order to paint objects so accurately as to form the most lively and distinct image all necessary circumstances should be introduced, all unnecessary ones omitted. Often a single detail will make a more sudden and forceful impression than an extensive description.

Where possible, the expression should be such as to arouse concordant emotions of sound and sense. Elevated subjects should be clothed in language and style that is elevated, familiar subjects in familiar unadorned style, serious subjects in plain nervous language. A description appealing to the imagination may employ the most figurative language. Objects, to appear most vivid, should be described dramatically, that is, as if appearing before the eye, by which means the strongest delusion of reality is made. Abstract and general terms producing no image should be avoided. The capital object should be placed in the strongest light and may be enforced by repetition. The style which is most comprehensive, introducing the most striking circumstances in a nervous style is best.
The epic and the drama have the same ends, to instruct and to amuse. Both employ the same means, the imitation of human action. Drama presents its sentiments directly at first hand, the epic indirectly at second hand. Since dramatic representation is most real the actors in an epic should be introduced after.

There are two classes of poems, the pathetic and the moral. The purpose of the former is to move the passions by exhibiting pictures of vice and virtue; the moral poem inculcates moral truth by showing the end of vicious and virtuous acts. A natural outcome increases the effect of reality such as the natural course of cause and effect. Sentiments may be presented in dialogue but facts are more the province of narration. Thus for drama the tender passions are the fittest theme, while grand and heroic deeds afford material for the epic.

The best subject for drama is a man suffering under misfortunes caused by his own act, a theme involving the tender passions and arousing the sympathetic emotions. The individual must be neither too innocent nor too guilty. The ruling passion of pathetic tragedy is pity alone; pity reenforced by fear, which impresses the lesson, that of the moral tragedy.
Aristotle's classification of subjects for tragedy cannot be entirely accepted since it bars the pathetic tragedy from the field of drama. His propositions are: (1) An innocent person falling into adversity is not a fit subject because there is little pity and no terror for moral instruction. (2) A wicked person emerging from misery to good fortune is an unfit subject because there is neither pity nor terror, nor is the subject agreeable. (3) The misfortune of a wicked person affords an unfit subject because, while agreeable from the standpoint of justice there is no pity or terror. (4) By this process of elimination, but one subject is left, which is a medium, a person suffering under misfortunes resulting from involuntary fault but not deliberate vice. It is his first proposition which excludes the pathetic, a legitimate form of tragedy because an innocent person suffering under misfortunes where sympathy is aroused is not rejected as a theme because it has no moral.

The mind rejects the element of chance and is dissatisfied with a subject where the innocent suffer to the end under misfortunes that are accidental. If the causes are necessary and natural, even tho the individual is innocent; the mind is reconciled, because a regular orderly sequence of cause and effect seems more the hand of Providence than arbitrary chance.

History is often introduced in order to work on the passions by increasing the delusion of reality. Because we know that part is true we readily transfer our belief to the whole. No
event, contradictory to the history used, must be introduced. History may be supplied but it must be consistent with the real. The event borrowed should be distant in time and place to avoid familiarity which would result in loss of dignity and elevation, although familiarity is used with propriety in comedy.

In the division of drama into parts a pause in the action should always coincide with a pause in the thought.

A double plot in a dramatic poem is a dangerous device. The mind cannot attend to two plots of equal rank and even when the sub-plot partakes of the nature of an episode it is dangerous because the main plot absorbs the attention, and there is lack of simplicity in the composition. More variety is permissible in comedy which may amuse without engrossing. When an underplot is introduced, it should involve the same characters as the main plot, be in the same tone and arouse no discordant emotion which makes tragi-comedy a perilous province. The underplot should occupy the pauses of the principal action and both should conclude at once.

Violent action should be excluded from the stage, not only because it is disagreeable, but because it prevents the delusion of reality. Details of such action should be presented through narration.

In dialogue each speech should be a direct outgrowth of those preceding making a regular connected chain corresponding to natural mental perceptions.
Rhyme is out of place in dramatic composition because it lacks dignity. Prose is proper for low characters, and the dignity of blank verse is suitable only for characters possessing that quality.

In an epic poem, machinery, which consists of deities, angels and devils introduced as personages, is out of place because unnatural. Machinery has not the excuse of a legitimate principle as personification has. Because known to be impossible it gives an air of fiction to the whole and consequently the passions are not interested. Anything which raises an epic above the human is out of place because it spoils the end of the poem which is to imitate human action. Aesop's animals do not fall under this objection because they are really men in disguise. Homer's introduction of deities may be excused because heathen deities were actuated by human passions, but even they disgust when they exceed the bounds of nature and the imagination does not long keep pace. The introduction of angels and devils of modern religion is less pardonable because they are too far exalted above the human and man loses dignity by the contrast.

An episode, while it breaks the unity of an epic, is justified when properly introduced to rest the mind. It should be well connected with the principal action, should have the qualities of spirit and interest, should be brief and find place only where the main action becomes less intense.
The demand for unity of action is based upon the pleasure the mind takes in a chain of connected events. While the events should be the outgrowth of a common cause it is more easy to connect them by looking forward to the catastrophe and their common relation to it, because more natural to the mind than retrospect. This connection constitutes the unity of action which is necessary to both epic and dramatic poems, but less so to a narrative poem.

The strongest relation, that springing from cause and effect arises from the history of a single event, but in the material world this process continues without beginning, middle or end, each event being both an effect and a cause. The element necessary to make complete unity in the intellectual world is a design or purpose giving to the process a beginning, a middle and an end. The beginning is the circumstance moving the individual to form his plan, the prosecution of this plan and its obstructions leads to the middle where the action is most involved, then to the end where the plan is accomplished. The satisfaction arising from this unity is based on the propensity of the human mind to carry every thing to completion.

The natural order of events is best when other beauties are not sacrificed to it. But if the mind is more impressed by hurrying into the heat of the action first, the preliminaries may be introduced through some device later.

The scenes of a play are the connecting links in a regular chain of events, hence a barren scene is worse than useless even to delineate character which can be done better through sent-
iment and action.

The authority of the ancients in the matter of the unities should have no weight with modern critics for the former were under the constraint of conforming to the chorus which made uninterrupted action necessary, and no opportunity was afforded for varying time or place. With the elimination of the chorus in modern drama the action may be interrupted and intervals of time and variety of place introduced. While certain latitudes in these matters are permissible the mind rejects as unreal and unnatural too great a license, and too great liberty in unities of time and place breaks unity of action.

While the most perfect construction is complete unities of action, time and place, yet, since the passions are the proper field of drama, the proper fluctuation of the passions cannot be presented within too confined limits, so that the former beauty is best sacrificed to the latter.

In criticism of the divisions of modern drama it is charged that the interruptions annihilate the delusion of reality, but the sense of reality ceases as well when the spirits are exhausted by uninterrupted attention to a continuous action. The spirits and passions endure agitation for about the interval required for an act, after which the attention becomes strained and absence of mind results. Herein the Greek chorus was useful in keeping up the impression of the last action and preparing for that to succeed. This advantage is
possible to modern drama by the interposition of suitable music between the acts which serves the same end by corresponding to the emotions of the acts.

The necessity of observing the unities in the Greek drama gave rise to many improprieties which are eliminated from the modern stage, such as the necessity for all characters to appear and all events to occur in the same place; events which would have taken a much longer time represented in narration as having taken place during the action; and the continued representation requiring the restraint of continual occupation of the stage.

The demands for the modern stage as respects the unities then, are: (1) But one action in progress at one time, and a connection always between the characters on the stage and those entering. (2) No change of place except after an interval. (3) No latitude in time except what falls in with an interval. (4) Observation of each of the unities during the whole of each act.