AN ADDRESS TO THE MORETONHAMPSTEAD LITERARY SOCIETY

by CECIL TORR

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Mr President, gentle women and gentle men—Milton says that one of the functions of Literary Societies is "the procurement of wise and artfull recitations, sweetned with eloquent and gracefull incitements"—he says this in the preface to the second book of his REASON OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT*—and tonight at what he would call "this learned and affable meeting," your Society procures from me a recitation written with all the artfulness and wisdom that I have, but without the sweet incitements of eloquence and grace.*

Amongst old letters at home I found one from my grandfather to my father, written at Wreyland on 3 *Dec.* 1844*, and it says "There is a Literary Society formed at Moreton. I fear the intellect of Moreton is too shallow to make much progress for some time. However, that is the way to make it better." Nobody would say that the intellect of Moreton is shallow now; and if my grandfather was right about its being so shallow then, the Society may have the credit of the change.*

I also found two letters to my father from Mr William White, written at Moreton on 23 *Nov. and* 13 *Dec.* 1844*, not exactly asking for a subscription, but intimating pretty plainly that a subscription was expected. My father was in London at the time, and did not rise to the occasion. My grandfather wrote to him on* 12 *Jan.* 1845*, "Your mother has been at Moreton and attended a lecture by Mr Street, a member of the Literary Society, when the Secretary read some letters and gave a list of donations, from the Messrs Jackson a pound each, the Messrs Bidder a guinea each, Miss Shaw a guinea, and many others; but at last came Mr J. S. Torr ten shillings. Your mother says some persons did take the liberty to notice it to her."*

Though he scolded my father for giving so little, he gave nothing at all himself. With like parsimony he writes about the Literary Society, 12 *Jan.* 1845*, "I am out of the way here. I should like to get hold of some of their books, but I am sure, were I to be a member, I should constantly be fined: therefore I shall leave it alone and be contented." I presume the fines would be for taking books out and not returning them at proper times.*

In telling my father of the benefits that would arise from the Society, Mr William White remarked that people "will be much better in the reading room for a couple of hours than in a public house." But for this Society, we might all be in a public house tonight instead of being in this dismal Hall devoted to the shade of Mr Smethurst; and in the public house we might be better off, with mugs of unadulterated cider. Remember the Mermaid Tavern with Ben Jonson, Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, and the Cock and Mitre Taverns with Boswell and Johnson, Goldsmith, and their friends.

As we are in his Hall, I may say a word or two of Mr Smethurst himself. No other man could throw a fly and catch a trout as he did. When people had bad sport, they used to enquire about his catch. If they caught three when he caught five, they were well contented, and did not mind an empty basket if they could say that Smethurst himself caught none. I have a caricature of him out fishing with my father, about 1830. *It represents him in black clothes and a black hat, holding a fishing-rod and balancing himself on two stones in a stream.*

Another holy man, Saint Zeno, was just as great at fishing; and the old painters and sculptors always represented him in his vestments and his mitre, carrying a fishing-rod with a big fish hanging from the end of the line. He was bishop of Verona—the Italians call him Zenone—and there is a statue of him in the chancel-aisle of his great church there. The statue had a very ordinary fishing-rod, when I was there ten years ago; but when I first saw it, more than fifty years ago, it had a rod that stretched out from the aisle into the chancel of the church, and you saw the big fish dangling from the line as soon as you came in at the great west door. I feel that this Hall would be more worthy of Mr Smethurst if it had a figure of him with his rod. I would not suggest a great stone statue like Saint Zeno's, but a figure in waxwork with real clothes, such as you may see at Madame Tussaud's.

I have found a very angry letter from Mr Smethurst to my father, written at Moreton on 28 *July* 1857. *My father*

had sent him a "short copy" of an article, and he did not know what a "short copy" was, namely, a reprint of so many pages of a publication as contain the article in question. He says, "Some confounded rascal has torn away 38 *pages from the beginning of the work, and how many more from the latter part I cannot say: it ends, evidently imperfectly, at the* 94*th page. If I could get hold of the ears of the scoundrel, I would make them tingle. Such a gratuitous piece of mischief is enough to make a saint mad; for I daresay the fellow could make no more of his plunder than a pig." After that outburst he begins discussing the article. It was on the Interaction of the Anglo-Saxon and the Celtic languages, and he concludes that "if any word is now found in both languages, it may be difficult to determine to which it belongs as its parent."*

From that conclusion you will gather that the interaction of those languages is a good subject for Literary Societies: it is an interesting question, and you may talk of it for ever without getting at any definite result. If definite results could be obtained, there would be nothing to talk about. The question would have been settled and put down in books.

Rabelais gives a really good subject of this sort in PANTAGRUEL, ii. 7, "*If the Chimæra were buzzing in a vacuum, could she swallow second intentions?*" *Consider the points. Could the Chimæra buzz, not having any wings? Could anything buzz in a vacuum, not having any air? What are second intentions, and was Macaulay right in saying that Abracadabra was a second intention? And if the Chimæra wanted to swallow the Abracadabra, with which of her three mouths would she attack it? for you know she had a lion's head on her shoulders, a goat's head somewhere in the middle of her back, and a snake's head at the tip of her tail. That raises Natural History problems, and so the discussion widens out. Rabelais describes it as a very subtle question, debated in the Council of Constance for ten weeks. That, of course, was only a council of theologians, not a Literary Society, and the subject is not altogether literary; but there are literary subjects quite as silly as that.*

Our fathers and grandfathers were always buzzing

round the question of Who wrote the letters of Junius?, though it does not matter a brass farthing to anybody, who the author was. Pascal's letters also came out anonymously and caused as great a stir; but after Pascal acknowledged them, there was no more to be said about the authorship, though much about the letters themselves. Suppose it could be proved that Sir Philip Francis wrote the letters of Junius, that would be an interesting fact in his biography, but would not affect the letters. And it would only be a matter for biographers if the same man wrote the History of Henry VII that is printed in Bacon's works and the Play of Henry V that is printed in Shakespeare's.—I am not a Baconian myself; but I must say that if I were, I'd go the whole hog. I wouldn't stop at saying, Francis Bacon wrote Shakespeare. I'd say, Roger Bacon wrote Chaucer; and it would not need much sophistry to make the worse argument appear the better of those two.

The ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE *would be just as great a piece of poetry, whether written by Shelley or by Keats: the only difference would be in the biographies of those two poets. But it would be another matter if an* ODE TO AN AEROPLANE *were included in their works. It might be just as fine a poem, though dwelling more upon the creature's flight and less upon its song. But it would not merely raise a question of biography: it would raise a question of history as well.*

That is the question with Orpheus. No one has suggested that the Orphic poems were written by Hercules or Jason or anybody else who was contemporary with him, as Bacon was with Shakespeare and Shelley was with Keats. The suggestion is that the poems were fathered on him in a much later age.—As you know, there was a tree in Greece that gave forth oracles. Prosaic people said the tree was hollow and someone got inside it and worked the oracle that way: poetic people said the timber really spoke. According to the ARGONAUTICA *of Orpheus* (1160–1174), *a bit of that timber was built into the Argo; and it spoke out when the ship was put on the wrong course, and told the Argonauts that unless they changed her course, they would run her on*

the coast of Ireland. There is no evidence that the Greeks had ever heard of Ireland before about 300 B.C., *eight centuries later than the traditional date for Orpheus. Ireland is to Orpheus what aeroplanes would be to Shelley or to Keats.*

As literature, the Orphic poems would be just as good (or just as bad) whether written by Orpheus or by an ancient Chatterton; but in the history of literature they would have to take another place. And a Literary Society may well discuss all literature, regarded as a whole, and so discuss each bit of literature in relation to the age when it was written. In fact, one cannot always be quite sure of what an ancient author meant unless one knows his date, for words and phrases, modes of thought and points of view, all suffer changes in the course of time.

An author's character may likewise be discussed if it affects his credibility. It is useful to know that Mr de Rougemont was living in a back street in a city at the time when he professed to be exploring savage lands: also that Karl Marx, the author of DAS KAPITAL, *never went outside the British Museum Library except to meetings of Mutual-admiration Societies. (That is rather an exaggeration, but near enough to the truth to explain his having no real knowledge of the subjects on which he wrote.) But such discussions should be strictly limited, as people are inclined to wander off from literature into mere gossip about literary men. There are thousands of people who will go patiently through an article on Dante's works, but there are tens of thousands who would rather read a snappy article on such a question as "Did Dante Shave?" You know the difficulty. Dante is clean shaved in all extant portraits of him: and yet, according to Boccaccio, he had a curly, black, beard.*

When Dante went down into Hell, he found the ancient poets living very comfortably there, INFERNO, IV. 88–102. *They had formed a sort of Literary Society, with Homer as president; and Dante says that they invited him to become a non-resident member. The other members (besides Homer) were Virgil, Ovid, Horace and Lucan; and Dante was to be the sixth. I think he might have claimed to be the third,*

for he comes very close to Virgil and to Homer in his vision of the underworld. Horace and the others are so unlike him that all comparison seems absurd. Yet such comparisons are made, and often on irrelevant grounds.

Dante speaks of Aristotle (INFERNO, iv. 131) *as supreme amongst all men of understanding—he found him also in a very comfortable part of Hell—but Plato takes precedence of Aristotle in Petrarch's Triumph of Fame* (TRIONFI, viii. 4–7), *and Petrarch says that he gave Plato precedence because he wrote more like a Christian: a matter that seems irrelevant in a comparison of two philosophers. Petrarch himself received the poet's crown; but he received it for his* AFRICA, *a Latin poem that nobody now reads. His coronation is no proof of the merits of his Italian poems, which are the things that people talk about. Dante and Petrarch and Boccaccio are all classed together by Machiavelli in his disquisition on the growth of the Italian language. All three of them belonged to Florence, in Tuscany, and by their writings they diffused the dialect of their city and their province throughout the whole of Italy; and Machiavelli doubted whether the language ought not to be called Tuscan or Florentine rather than Italian. His whole argument depends upon their being (what we should call) the three "best sellers," not necessarily the greatest writers. But now their names are coupled together, just as Schiller's name is coupled with Goethe's merely because they worked together at Weimar; and Schiller thus gets reflected lustre from the greater man.*

Of course there is no harm in trying to classify great writers: the danger is in getting their collected works. This leads to reading second-rate work by celebrated men, and neglecting first-rate work by men of lesser note. The greatest writers were not always at their best—Homer himself was not always wide-awake—but all their little failures are stuffed into their collected works, and people read them; and this engenders vitiated taste. When people read the works of Shakespeare because of the high place he holds, they do not judge them on their merits, but make a standard of them for judging other men's work; and the standard may be

wrong. As we all know, there are eggs, and eggs; and an egg may be a bad 'un, even if the Swan of Avon laid it.

Collected works contain the trivial things that writers jotted down on scraps of paper which they omitted to burn. Instead of putting these things in, an editor might serve an author better by blotting out his less successful work. "Single-Speech" Hamilton might have lost his reputation, if he had made a second speech; and, conversely, William Morris might have a greater reputation, if he had never written any poetry except his SIGURD*—the only poem of his with a theme that really suited him.*

It is an excellent pastime for a Literary Society to classify great writers and their works, as difference of opinion gives rise to controversy. When there is controversy, people always try to prove that their opponents are all wrong; and for proving this they will always study the subject much more carefully than they would ever study it without ulterior motives. Without some such incitement, literary study flags.

There was a Literary Society in Italy in the Fifteenth Century, formed by a set of brilliant youths for studying the ancient Greek and Latin writers; and this excelled all other such societies, as its ulterior motive was to pick out all the improper passages and thoroughly discuss them. There has been no such zeal for Greek and Latin since; and there is no scope for such societies now. Young Men's Pagan Associations would find the work already done. Modern editions omit improper passages; but conscientious editors have felt that nothing should be omitted in an author's collected works, and have printed the omitted passages in an appendix at the end. The brilliant youth can find them there, all cut and dried, and has no incentive now to read all manner of Greek and Roman writers to get at these tit-bits.

Many years ago I looked through the works of about 200 *Greek and Latin authors, in search of information about ancient ships. Of course, I had read the best of them before; but I should never have read the others except for information. I felt I could not speak with much authority on ships or anything else unless I knew the evidence from end to end; and this wide reading was merely a by-product of a search—*

for evidence, not improprieties. Few people can spare the time for reading on as large a scale as that; and a great deal of the time is wasted, although it may be true that no book is so bad that one cannot learn something from it.

You may have heard a story of two Assyriologists, Sayce, tall and lean, and Oppert, short and stout. One day Oppert mentioned something in a book that he had lately written, and Sayce said he had not read the book. Then Oppert rose and made his great reply:—"I read all books on Assyriology, even yours. Therefore am I wise. You do not read my books. Therefore are you a fool." He had overlooked the ruling of Mr Justice Stareleigh in the well-known case of Bardell v. Pickwick, "You must not tell us what the soldier, or any other man, said; it's not evidence." In Assyriology the evidence is cuneiform inscriptions; not what the professor said or wrote about them in his books. Sayce knew the inscriptions, and perhaps was wise in leaving Oppert's book unread. So many people go on reading books till they forget the evidence on which the books are based.

To take an instance not so far from home—William the Conqueror had a little difficulty with the City of Exeter in the year 1068. *The evidence consists of three or four statements by old chroniclers, and an entry in Domesday book from which an inference may be drawn. On that slight foundation Freeman built the imposing narratives which you probably have read, in his book on* EXETER, *and in his* HISTORY OF THE NORMAN CONQUEST. *This irritated Round, and he wrote an article (reprinted in his* FEUDAL ENGLAND) *showing that whatever the chroniclers may have meant, it could not possibly be what Freeman said they meant: also that Freeman did not understand the Domesday entry, and had got the figures wrong. Archer extenuated Freeman's faults, Round then went for Archer, and so on. If you just read the evidence—which will all go into a page of print—you may get much nearer to the facts than if you read the scores of pages that these amiable people wrote about them. You will miss a very fine bit of Freeman's writing; but such fine writing is a curse to history.*

There are people who, as Milton says, ibid., *"will not*

so much as look upon Truth herselfe unlesse they see her elegantly drest." Those people may, perhaps, be right; but the difficulty is that if the lady is undressed, you do not find the naked truth: you only find a slatternly jade who has supplanted her. Macaulay clothed fiction with the dress of history, and Thackeray put history into fiction's dress—compare his ESMOND *with Macaulay's* HISTORY; *but he called his book a novel, and no one was misled.*

Truth is stranger than fiction: in other words, fiction generally has failed. There is no object in departing from real facts, unless imagination can replace them with fictions that are stranger still. Why read historic novels and the so-called histories, when you can get at THE CALENDAR OF STATE PAPERS *or other books like that? There you have statements made at the time by men who really knew. These are the raw materials on which historians work; and you get into closer touch with history by sifting these materials yourself. That great publication, or at any rate some sections of it, ought to be in every public library. The volumes need not be read right through, but just dipped into here and there; and the dipping often brings a prize. Take the Venetian volumes, say, and see what the ambassadors from Venice thought of Wolsey and his King. Those ambassadors were shrewd men.*

Facts, however, may be stated accurately, and yet be stated in a way that is no better than mis-statement. Bismarck sent out an abbreviated version of the Ems telegram, 13 *July* 1870. *There was nothing in his version that was not in the original, and nothing that was not true; but he contrived to put it in a manner that inevitably led to war.—There is a German word, Plunder, with the same spelling as the English word but with another meaning: it means trash and rubbish, wretched, paltry stuff. Southwark was a wretched looking place in* 1814 *when Blücher came to London; and seeing it across the Thames, he said with some surprise, "What Plunder!" It is a fact that he said this; but the fact has been recorded as if he meant that London was a city well worth plundering.*

You have all read accounts of the Battle of Leipzig in

1813, *a decisive battle in Napoleon's wars, and a battle that was remembered in Moreton on purely personal grounds. Viscount Rochambeau was one of the French generals killed there, and he had been living at Moreton from* 1807 *to* 1811 *as a prisoner-of-war on parole, and was well known to many people here. Let me read you an account of that battle in a book that came out in* 1819.

"*And it came to pass after these things that Napoleon strengthened himself, and gathered together another host instead of that which he had lost, and went and warred against the Prussians, and the Russians, and the Austrians, and all the rulers of the north country, which were confederate against him. And the ruler of Sweden also, which was a Frenchman, warred against Napoleon. So they went forth and fought against the French in the plain of Leipsic. And the French were discomfited before their enemies, and fled, and came to the rivers which are behind Leipsic, and essayed to pass over, that they might escape out of the hand of their enemies; but they could not, for Napoleon had broken down the bridges: so the people of the north countries came upon them and smote them with a very grievous slaughter.*"

That is all quite true. But does it give a notion of a Nineteenth Century battle, with generals in cocked hats? And does this passage give any better notion of what happened next?

"*So all the counsellors of Napoleon came and stood before him, and said, Behold now these Kings are merciful Kings; do even as they say unto thee; knowest thou not yet that France is destroyed? But he spake roughly unto his counsellors, and drave them out from his presence, neither would he hearken unto their voice. And when all the Kings saw that, they warred against France, and smote it with the edge of the sword.*"

These passages were written by Archbishop Whately and published in his HISTORIC CERTAINTIES *and his* HISTORIC DOUBTS. *The antiquated style suggests far earlier times; and the events of those times might seem modern, if recorded in the style employed for recent wars and conferences. We do not get a true view of a landscape*

if we look at different parts of it through differently coloured glass, nor a true view of history if different parts of it are written in different styles. For viewing history as a whole, we really need it written in one style all through, whether the style be up-to-date or obsolete. As a matter of fact, the old records are usually too meagre to make up a modern narrative. This would not deter a modern writer; but his narrative would not be history in the strict sense of the term.

Very few events in history have any importance now—it really does not matter to us what people said or did long years ago. The obvious question is, "Then why bother about past history?" I do not know of any obvious answer to that question, or to the question that ensues, "Why bother about events that never happened, about things never said or done?" That question covers all fiction besides fictitious history; and, as fiction is so widely read, I imagine there is an answer—it may be that we like a well-told tale because it is well told, that is, we care less about its substance than its style. As literature, the well-told tale is best; but literature is not the only thing that counts. People remember a tale because it is well told, but they cannot remember it apart from what it tells, and thus they fill their heads up with misleading notions of real life. They misjudge the world, and are bewildered when they have to face the facts.

There is a French play written by Brieux some twenty years ago, describing how an American had formed his notions of French life from the French novels he had read, and how very different he found it in reality when he came to live in France, and what embarrassing mistakes he made while he was finding out. When the play was printed, Brieux wrote an introduction to it, asserting that although all foreigners regarded a certain class of novel as typically French, such novels are hardly ever read in France or even heard of there. They are written for exportation.

Outrageous fiction does no harm. Baron Münchausen ties his horse to a post in the snow, goes to sleep and does not wake until the morning: he finds the snow has gone, and his horse is hanging from the top of the church steeple—the only part of it that could be seen when the snow was on

the ground. The reader laughs at that because he knows about snow-falls and thaws, but he does not always know enough about the world to see that characters in history or fiction are sometimes treated like Münchausen's horse. The more probable the fiction, the more misleading it may be.

As a contrast to all this, take such a book as Ruskin's MODERN PAINTERS*—the last three volumes only: don't waste time on the first two. Read what he says there of mountains, clouds, and sky. He says many things that would be inadmissible in scientific books; but you learn more from him than from the scientific books, because your interest is aroused. After reading him, you feel that Nature has a beauty that you never recognized before. But a second reading may fall flat: you now possess the substance of what he had to say, and wonder why he said it in such an ornate style.*

Some books, I imagine, are read solely for their style, as there is no substance in them: their authors are like the man with a gun who aimed at nothing and missed it, and thereby made a hit. But there are many things, without much substance in them, that may be just worth saying if they can be neatly said, but not worth saying if they have to be expounded ponderously. And such things seldom bear translation. After going to a London dentist, the Chinese ambassador wrote a poem and sent it to the dentist with his fee. (The dentist showed it to me.) In the English version it begins, "Praised be the man who hath restored to me the power to chew"; but in Chinese, I am assured, this is a graceful and poetic phrase.

You know the saying, attributed to Sheridan, that if a speech reads well, it must have been a shocking bad speech. If that is true of speeches, it should be true of plays. Racine's plays read well; but listen to them at the Théâtre Français, and notice how the actors eke the words out with gestures and grimaces. The actors know what is required, and employ contortions to express the feelings which the words should have conveyed. And, conversely, books do not read well, if written for declamation. Such books are interspersed with passages intended to provoke "loud cheers"

and "thunders of applause," and these passages are almost unendurable when the book is quietly read. The fault may be discerned in Tacitus and other Roman writers of his time. Books had "first nights" then just as plays have "first nights" now. Instead of sending a book to be reviewed, the author asked the critics to come and hear him read it out, and probably thought more of its effect on them than of its ultimate success.

These meetings were informal, but nearly the same set of critics came to every meeting—at least, I should infer this from Juvenal's complaint (i. 1) *about these meetings making such great inroads on his time. He had his revenge by giving a reading of his own; and really he need not have complained. For nine books out of ten a "first night" must have been a "last night" too, and then they disappeared—with only manuscript copies the circulation must have been far smaller than with print.*

There is too much reading now. People talk of the drug-habit and the cigarette-habit, but the reading-habit is far worse. At every leisure moment a book is taken up and read, not for any useful purpose, but merely to kill time. The book is neither marked nor learned nor inwardly digested; and the reader's indigestion clouds his mind—he gives up thinking for himself.

Yet indiscriminate reading may be of use to anybody with a memory. He may think of something that seems brilliant at first sight—a thing that never struck anyone before. But after a time, if his reading has been wide enough, he may not only remember that somebody had thought of that same thing before, but that somebody else had thought of a reply which showed that there was nothing in it.—To take a case in point. Cuvier, the naturalist, had not read the Bible with sufficient care, and one day the Devil appeared to him and threatened to eat him. He looked the Devil up and down, and said, "Horns? Hoofs? Therefore graminivorous, and cannot eat me." That was a good reply; but the Devil had read the Bible and remembered it, and he retorted with ISAIAH xl. 6, *"All flesh is grass."—To take another case. You have all heard of that old rhyme, "When Adam delved*

and Eve span, where was then the gentleman?" The mob asked that as if it were a poser, but the answer is quite clear in GENESIS vi. 2, *where the sons of God cast eyes on the daughters of Men.*

One day I heard some men discussing French literature, and there was another man who listened to them and smoked; but three or four times he struck in with a quotation, and each time it was a thing worth quoting and exactly to the point. I wondered at his having time for so much reading, for I knew he was a busy man. Some while afterwards I was looking through a book of literary tit-bits, CHOIX DES NARRATIONS, *and found that it contained the passages which he had quoted. And a man may learn things just as quickly in a library, where the owner knows the best bits in his books, and reads those bits repeatedly. In course of time he strains the bindings till the books fall open at these places, and save the casual reader the trouble of a search.*

Life is not long enough for reading everything, and the problem is to find out what is best. Should we be guided by Selections and Anthologies and trust to the compiler's judgement on what he chooses to put in, or should we make the choice ourselves? If we search, we may not find the best bits after all; and compromise may be the safest course—take something as a guide, say, THE OXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE, *and consider what we think might be struck out and what put in. This is a task that members of a Literary Society might undertake collectively.*

The compilers of such works are not infallible, but they usually are men of judgement and likely to be right. I understand that some French writers were much pleased with the compiler of THE OXFORD BOOK OF FRENCH VERSE. *They had a dinner in his honour, proposed his health, and suddenly brought out a wreath of laurel and popped it on his head. He said he never felt such a fool in his life; but coronation is a custom on the Continent, and we might adopt it here. When this Society has declared a poem to be worthy of a place amongst tit-bits, it might proceed to crown the poet. And it might reap a rich reward. During the War a*

feminine poet came down to dwell amongst us, and I read her poems. They often were real poetry, not mere verse, but I thought they made too free a use of certain words—Kiss, Kisses, Kissing, Kissers, Kisst, Kiss-Feast, Kiss-Fast, Unkissing and Unkisst. I found 8 of these words in a poem of only 18 lines, containing 112 words in all. Poets in real life are seldom like their works; but perhaps, if the Society had crowned her, she might have kissed the President and every Member she could catch.

If a Society wants to crown a poet, and the poet won't come to be crowned, I believe the Society crowns a plaster bust of him instead; and that is the only way of crowning a poet who is dead. I do not know of any departed Moreton poets who wrote anything but hymns. They are still awaiting literary crowns; but, one word of caution, do not put the crown on the wrong head. I say this because I think there was a little error here not long ago about two men of the same name. Crown Michaijah Towgood's bust if you can get it, but not for what his cousin did. They were both M. Towgood; but Matthew, not Michaijah, was the author of that admirable work which you must all have read, REMARKS ON THE PROFANE AND ABSURD USE OF THE MONOSYLLABLE DAMN.