

MR. SWINBURNE AND THE "QUARTERLY REVIEW."

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—Will you allow me to make one or two observations on the few statements of fact which it is here and there possible to discern through the storm of expletives and superlatives that bursts from Mr. Swinburne's pen in to-night's *Athenæum*?

The object of his letter is to discredit the Quarterly Reviewer whose article on English Literature has attracted so much attention. This is how he does it:—

(1) He asserts that in the said article "Sophocles figures as the author of 'The Agamemnon' and the 'Persæ.'" Mr. Swinburne invites his readers to consult the passage referred to. I have done so, and this is what I find. The Reviewer suggests that it would be profitable to compare the tragedies of Shakspeare with "the tragedies of the Attic stage." In illustration of this general statement, he says, first, that it would be well to compare them with Sophocles; and, secondly (some dozen lines lower down), that it would be well to compare "Macbeth" with the "Agamemnon," and "Henry V." with the "Persæ." This is what Mr. Swinburne calls "Sophocles figuring as the author of the 'Agamemnon' and the 'Persæ.'" Why is he not consistent? Lower down still the Reviewer, still in support of his main contention—the necessity, namely, of comparing English literature with Greek and Roman—cites the "Ethics." Why does not Mr. Swinburne go the whole hog while he is about it, and say, in that pleasant manner of his, that the Reviewer has made "an indecent exposure" by talking of Sophocles as the author of the "Ethics"? It is only fair, however, to Mr. Swinburne to add that further on he confesses that he does not believe in the charge; may one, then, ask why he made it?

(2) Secondly, Mr. Swinburne discovers in the Quarterly Reviewer's article three very small grammatical inaccuracies. The importance which Mr. Swinburne attaches to them requires a word of explanation. The Reviewer, it will be remembered, incidentally characterized Mr. Swinburne's prose style as "intolerably involved, florid, and diffuse," and to do that a man must claim, it seems to Mr. Swinburne, to be "no mean and no common authority." Therein Mr. Swinburne is surely mistaken; but I will take the matter at his own valuation. His weapon is at best somewhat of the boomerang order, as the following parallel passages will perhaps show:—

QUARTERLY REVIEWER.

It is as easy to invest a worthless book with those superficial attractions which catch the eye of the crowd as it is a meritorious one.—P. 293. [Elliptical: Understand "as it is to invest a meritorious one."]

It would be difficult to mention a single theory on the principles of composition, a single important critical canon . . . which are not to be traced originally to the ancient critics.—P. 320. [Plural verb with singular substantives—? error.]

It would be seen with what exactness each of these students of human nature . . . has arrived independently at the same truths, and corroborate each other.—P. 323. [A somewhat bold *constructio ad sensum*: understand "and how they corroborate each other."]

The above-mentioned lapses do not seem to me very important, but Mr. Swinburne insists that the man who makes them must be off to Dotheboys Hall. I do not envy Mr. Squeers his new pupil.

(3) The Quarterly Reviewer says that "a large portion of what is most valuable in our poetry is as historically unintelligible, apart from the Greek and Roman classics, as the epic and lyric poetry of Greece." This statement Mr. Swinburne dismisses as "a crowning absurdity," "a culminating offence," &c., &c., &c., to contradict which would be "a preposterous act of condescension." On such terms rational discussion is not, it must be confessed, very easy—unless, indeed, Mr. Swinburne will so far condescend as to explain how apart from the ancient Classics it is possible to make historically intelligible such works as the "Samson Agonistes" or his own "Atalanta" and "Erechtheus."

(4) Fourthly, Mr. Swinburne (like all Mr. Gosse's friends) confesses that he has not read through the book in question.

(5) But, lastly, what he does know is that the *Quarterly Review*, which now attacks the said book, formerly attacked Keats.

That, Sir, is the sum and substance—the "storm-wind" alone excluded—of all that Mr. Swinburne is able to scour together against the *Quarterly* article. That he was anxious to find as much as possible is proved by the strength of his language; that he has succeeded in finding so little is conclusive evidence of the weakness of his case. Nor does the veiled compliment to the Quarterly Reviewer stop there. Not only has Mr. Swinburne so very little to say against him; but much even of what he does say is not

original. I subjoin side by side some of Mr. Swinburne's remarks and some of an earlier contributor's to the discussion:—

MR. BOCHANAN, OCTOBER 20.

When the leader of the attack is the poor, purblind, pedagogic Quarterly Reviewer, who has about as much critical insight as Mr. Wackford Squeers, and has from time immemorial conducted the *Dotheboys Hall* of Albemarle-street on principles of corporal punishment and intellectual starvation, my sympathy turns, as now, to amused indignation. . . . I have not even read the article in question. . . . Whatever may be the judgment of the *Quarterly Review*, it comes from a quarter which has always hated and reviled true literature, from persons who have slavered the hands and licked the feet of bogus authors recruited from the coroneted classes, from men who have never, to my knowledge, said a kind or a liberal word since the day when they tried to kill John Keats until the day when they threw mud at the fair fame of Alfred Tennyson.

Truly the thunders of the *Quarterly Review* would seem to be like adversity: they make strange bedfellows. Mr. Swinburne, as we all know, has at other times paid Mr. Buchanan the compliment of immoderate abuse; but never before, I imagine, has he rendered in that quarter the last flattery of all—the flattery of imitation.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

November 5.

OXONIENSIS.

PREACHERS AT THE LONDON CHURCHES TO-MORROW.

The clergy and others sending appointments of preachers are informed that the notices must reach the office not later than the *First Post* on Saturday, or they cannot be inserted.

Westminster Abbey—Rev. Dr. Welldon, 10; Archdeacon Farrar, 3.
St. Paul's Cathedral—Rev. J. Mould, 10.30; Canon Gregory, 3.15; Rev. A. St. John Mildmay, 7.
Chapel Royal, Whitehall—Rev. Dr. Berry, 11 and 3.
Temple Church—Rev. Dr. Vaughan, 11; Rev. Dr. Ainger, 3.
Lincoln's-inn Chapel—Rev. Dr. Wace, 11; Rev. C. J. Ball, 3.
Gray's-inn Chapel—The Rev. Dr. Stokoe, 11.30.
Foundling Chapel—Rev. Dr. Momerie, 11.
St. Margaret's, Westminster—The Bishop of Rupert's Land, 11; Rev. R. A. Bullen, 7.
Berkeley Chapel, Mayfair—Rev. T. T. Shore, 11.30.
Holy Trinity, Bessborough-gardens—Rev. R. H. Sinclair, 11; Rev. H. B. Coward, 7.
St. Botolph, Bishopsgate—Rev. E. C. Hawkins, 11; Rev. R. H. Hadden, 6.30.
St. James's, Westmoreland-street, W.—Rev. H. R. Haweis, 11 and 7.
St. Nicholas Cole Abbey—Rev. F. Hancock, 11.15; Rev. J. L. Davies, 4; Rev. H. C. Shuttleworth, 7.
St. Bartholomew-the-Great, West Smithfield—Rev. F. W. T. Daniels, 11; Rev. W. Panckridge, 7.
St. Helen's, Bishopsgate—Rev. Dr. Cox, 11.
St. John the Baptist, Great Marlborough-street—Rev. H. N. D'Almeida, 11.
St. Philip's, Regent-street, Waterloo-place—The Rev. Harry Jones, 11.15; Rev. F. L. Donaldson, 7.
St. Andrew's, Haverstock-hill—Rev. Prebendary Barker, 11; the Lord Bishop of London, 7.
St. George's, Botolph-lane, Eastcheap—Rev. G. W. Harrod, 11.15; Canon, McColl, 7.
St. Andrew's, Ashley-place—Rev. A. Gerald Bowman, 11 and 7.
Pro-Cathedral, Kensington—Rev. A. B. Gurdon, 11; Rev. F. Stanfield, 7.
French Protestant Episcopal Church of the Savoy, Bloomsbury-street—The Rev. A. A. Dupont, 11 and 3.
French Huguenot Church, St. Martin's-le-Grand—Rev. G. G. Dangers, 11; Pasteur E. Neel, 7 (services in French).
French Protestant Evangelical Church, Westbourne-grove, Bayswater—M. le Pasteur du Pontet de La Harpe, 11 and 7.

BAPTIST.

Bloomsbury-street—Rev. James Baillie, 11 and 7.
Borough-road, Southwark—Rev. G. W. McCree, 11 and 6.30.
Camden-road—Rev. G. Hawker, 11 and 7.
Denmark-place, Camberwell—Rev. S. B. Rees, 11 and 6.30.
East London Tabernacle, Burdett-road, E.—Rev. Archibald G. Brown, 11 and 6.30.
Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, S.E.—Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, 11 and 6.30.
New Park-road, Brixton-hill—Rev. W. H. M'Mechan, 11 and 6.30.
Regent's Park Chapel, Park-square East—Rev. David Davies, 11 and 6.30.
Upper Holloway—Rev. J. R. Wood, 11 and 7.

CONGREGATIONAL.

Abney Church, Stoke Newington—Rev. William Spensley, 11 and 6.30.
Ashburnham Chapel, Tadema-road, Chelsea—Rev. Walter H. Lockley, 11 and 6.30.
Arundel-square, Barnsbury—Rev. G. Cousins, 11; Rev. H. Elwyn Thomas, 6.30.
Balham—Rev. J. Brierly, 11 and 7.
Brixton—Rev. J. Bartlett, 11 and 6.30.
Camberwell New-road—Rev. W. Tubb, 11 and 6.30.
City-road—Rev. Thomas Cheeseman, 11 and 6.30.
City Temple—Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker, 11 and 7.
Clapham—Rev. J. Guinness Rogers, 11 and 7.
Claremont, Pentonville-road—Rev. W. Whittlely, 11 and 6.30.
Craven Chapel, Foubert's-place, Regent-street—Rev. A. F. Muir, 11 and 7.
Crouch-end Park Chapel—Rev. Alfred Rowland, 11 and 6.30.
Dalston, Middleton-road—Rev. W. Justin Evans, 11 and 6.30.
Eccleston-square, Belgrave-road, S.W.—Rev. Dr. J. Hiles Hitchens, 11.
Falcon-square, Aldersgate-street—Rev. A. Storrow, 11 and 6.30.
Finsbury Chapel, Finsbury-circus—Rev. T. Kench, 11 and 6.30.
Finsbury Park Chapel, Seven Sisters-road—Rev. T. Eynon Davies, 11 and 6.30.

MR. SWINBURNE, NOVEMBER 1.

No less must have been the astonishment of all men with any tinge of culture or any knowledge of letters to see any serious attention accorded by any literary student to an article on any question of literature which might issue from the office of the *Quarterly Review*. . . . Another instance of grammar which may serve to illustrate this critic's reference to the average of scholarship at *Dotheboys Hall*: . . . I never heard of it till now. . . . In particular criticisms, if not in general propositions, the fatuity of his precursors was often unsurpassable. . . . A generation later, while commending the poetical promise of Mr. Monckton Milnes, they foretold for him a day when he would look back from his seat on Parnassus, with equal amusement and regret, upon the foolish young days in which he had burnt incense before "such baby idols as Mr. John Keats and Mr. Alfred Tennyson."

Hare-court, St. Paul's-road, Canonbury—Rev. W. W. Statham, 11 and 7.
Harley-street, Bow—Rev. W. Evans Hurndall, 11 and 7; Bow and Bromley Institute, 8.30.
Hawley-road, Kentish-town—Rev. D. Basil Martyn, 11; Rev. Edward White, 7 (Artisans).
Highbury-quadrant, Highbury New Park—Rev. P. Carmichael, 11; Rev. J. M. Gibbon, 6.30.
Kensington, Allen-street—Rev. Colmer B. Symes, 11 and 7.
King's Weigh House Chapel, Pillar Hall, Cannon-street Hotel—Rev. A. Sandison, 11 and 6.30.
New-court Chapel, Tollington Park—Rev. J. Ossian Davies, 11 and 6.30.
Notting-hill, Horbury Chapel, Kensington Park-road—Rev. W. Roberts, 11 and 7.
Paddington, Marylebone-road—Rev. G. Douglas Macgregor, 11 and 7.
Park Chapel, Camden-town—Rev. Joshua C. Harrison, 11 and 6.30.
Rectory-road, Stoke Newington—Rev. C. Fleming Williams, 11 and 6.30 (to Young Men).
Union Chapel, Islington—A. R. Henderson, 11; Rev. Justin Evans, 3.30.
Westminster, James-street, Buckingham-gate—Rev. Henry Simon, 11 and 7.
Whitefield's Tabernacle, Tottenham-court-road—Rev. J. Jackson Wray, 11 and 7.

WESLEYAN METHODIST.

Bayswater Chapel, Denbigh-road—Rev. Robert Foster, 11; Rev. Joseph Olphert, 6.30.
Brixton-hill—Rev. H. P. Hughes, 11; Rev. J. Kinnings, 6.30.
City-road—Rev. J. Richards, 10.45; Rev. J. McKenny, 6.30.
Dalston, Mayfield-road—Rev. Joshua Haigh, 11; Rev. Robert P. Downes, 6.30.
Great Queen-street Chapel—Rev. J. F. Pyle, 10.45 and 6.30.
Green Lanes—Rev. W. F. Slater, 11; Rev. G. A. Bennetts, 6.30.
Highbury, Drayton Park, Holloway-road—Rev. Dr. R. N. Young (President of Conference), 11 and 6.30.
Liverpool-road, Islington—Rev. R. P. Downes, 11; Rev. Joshua Haigh, 6.30.
Mildmay Park—Rev. G. A. Bennetts, 11; Rev. W. F. Slater, 6.30.
Shaftesbury Hall, Aldersgate-street—Rev. J. McKenny, 11; Rev. J. Richards, 6.30.
Streatham—Rev. John Kinnings, 11; Rev. W. S. Tomlinson, 6.30.

PRESBYTERIAN.

Belgrave, Haikins-street West—Rev. Dr. Adolph Saphir, 11; Rev. H. Shearer, 7.
St. Columba's Church, Pont-street, Belgravia—Rev. Donald Macleod, 11 and 7.
Crouch-hill, N.—Rev. A. C. Murphy, 11 and 6.30.
Islington, Colebrooke-row—Rev. Dr. Davidson, 11 and 6.30.
Kensington Church, Allen-street—Rev. C. Moinet, 11 and 7.
Marylebone, Upper George-street, Bryanston-square—Rev. Dr. Donald Fraser, 11 and 7.
Notting-hill, Kensington Park-road—Rev. Hugh Sinclair Paterson, 11 and 7.
Regent-square—Rev. Dr. J. O. Dykes, 11 and 7.
St. Paul's, Westbourne-grove—Rev. Dr. Morison, 11 and 7.
Trinity Church, Clapham-road—Rev. Dr. Mac Ewan, 11 and 6.30.

OTHER SERVICES AND ADDRESSES.

Agricultural Hall, Islington—Rev. Eynon Davies, 3.30; Mr. Spurgeon's Evangelists, 7.
Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury.—Rev. S. A. Brooke, 11 and 7.
Christ Church, Westminster—Rev. Newman Hall, 11 and 6.30.
Edinburgh Castle, Limehouse, E.—Dr. Barnardo, 11 and 7; Rev. H. Bright, 3.
St. James's Hall, Regent-street—Rev. E. T. Dunstan, 3.30; Mr. J. E. Simester, 7.
Exeter Hall, Strand—3.30 (men only); 7 (public).
South-place Chapel, Finsbury—Mr. J. A. Picton, 11.15; Mr. A. Milnes, 4.
Great Assembly Hall, Mile-end-road—Mrs. Urnston, 11 and 6.30.
West London Tabernacle, St. James's-square, Notting-hill—Rev. W. T. Moore, 11 and 6.30.
The Theistic Church, Swallow-street, Piccadilly—Rev. C. Voysey, 11 and 7.
New Christian Church, Argyle-square, King's Cross—Rev. John Presland, 11 and 7.

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