

grandeur of the thought. Thus, in "Satan's soliloquy," the expression of highly wrought passion and depth of feeling is rendered more intense by the irregular but judicious fall of the pause:

"So farewell hope, | and with hope || farewell fear!
Farewell remorse: || all good to me is lost.
Evil, || be thou my good: | by thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold—
By thee! and more than half, perhaps, will reign;
As man ere long, || and this new world, | shall know."

—Milton.

738. Here, by force of the cæsura, we are made more sensible of the fiend's emotion as each succeeding passion gains the ascendancy. Anguish and despair tremble through the first lines, checking his speech; then a paroxysm of rage hurries him impetuously along, till at the close haughty resolve and defiance are breathed heavily between his lips. The pauses give dignity to the language, manifest the grandeur of the thought, and inspire awe into the soul.

739. Note the startling effect of it in the "description of Moloch":

"His trust was || with the Eternal to be deemed
Equal in strength, || and rather than be less
Cared not | to be at all; || with that care lost
Went all his fear |; of God, | of hell, || or worse,
He reck'd not."

740. The study of effect in the fall of the cæsura is important, as upon it depends often the sweetness, the vivacity, or the majesty of the expression. In poetry where no high or strong emotions are to be stirred, but where the pleasurable feelings are addressed, where simple beauty is to be displayed or a shade of pathos to be cast, the place of the cæsura is generally uniform.

BOOK VI.

NATURE AND VARIETIES OF POETRY.

741. The study of poetry affords considerable **advantages**:

1. It contributes sensibly to that **liberal culture** which has ever been so highly appreciated in civilized communities. This culture consists in a detachment of the heart from the gross pleasures of sense, an appreciation of mental and spiritual excellence.

742. 2. It affords powerful **aids towards success in other literary compositions**:

- (a) It stores the memory with beautiful images;
- (b) It excites the imagination to suggest illustrations and even proofs to the orator;
- (c) It makes the heart sensitive to beauty, and intensifies all the passions which an orator may employ to advantage;
- (d) It perfects the judgment or taste, which must preside over all works of art;
- (e) It furnishes the most pleasing and energetic expression of thought. Therefore poetry has always been studied in connection with eloquence.

743. 3. It yields exquisite and elevating **pleasure**, which ennobles him who can enjoy it, and especially him who, by

the composition of poetry, can impart it to others. Hence the ancients revered the poet as a special favorite of the gods, and attributed his art to celestial inspiration.

744. The study of poetry **may be abused** in two ways :

1. By **excessive fondness** of the art, allowing the pleasure found in its pursuit to interfere with the performance of important duties. Many persons, by too great a love of fiction, have become unprofitable members of society.

2. By **perversion of poetic talent**: the poet is, as it were, the priest of nature, the interpreter to the common mind of its more hidden teachings, the guide of mankind to a higher sphere of happiness. But many poets, like Ovid of old in his *Amores*, and Swinburne to-day, have made themselves the priests of Venus instead, or, like Byron and Shelley, they have taught the creature to rise in rebellion against the Creator.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE OF POETRY.

745. **Poetry is the antithesis of prose.** Some consider this opposition to consist in the outward form only, calling poetry whatever is in verse, and prose whatever is not in verse. Others consider the thought only, and call a piece, whether in verse or not, poetry when the thoughts have a peculiar charm or elevation different from the thoughts of common life. The peculiarity of this charm lies in a plastic or creative power which the mind exhibits in the conception of such thoughts. Hence the name poetry, from *ποιέω*, to make or create. Most critics, however, understand by poetry such literary productions as express poetic thoughts in verse.

746. Hence **poetry may be thus defined**: A composition in metrical language, produced by a creative imagination, and affording intellectual pleasure by exciting elevated, agreeable, and pathetic emotions. Poetry, then, contains three elements.

747. 1. **Metrical language.** Many a passage of glowing pathos in oratory, of graphic description or tender narrative in real or fictitious histories, etc., have all the conditions of poetry except versification. We do not call these poetry. The valuable work of Macpherson called *Ossian's Poems* does not pretend to be a collection but a translation of poems which were metrical in their original Gaelic; the translation has all the qualities of poetry except verse.

748. 2. **A creative imagination.** To *create* means to