nature. Often a complete personification is undesirable. Milton is especially happy in his description of natural forces: he gives touches of personality here and there, but leaves a vagueness about the picture that adds greatly to its power. Thus *P. L.* I. 174 ff.: —

> . . . "and the thunder,
> Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
> Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
> To bellow through the vast and boundless deep."

Still more powerful is this vagueness in the picture of Superstition in Lucretius (I. 62 ff.): —

> "humana . . . cum vita jaceret
> *in terris* oppressa gravi sub religione
> quæ caput *a cœli regionibus* ostendebat."

Superstition (religio), with her foot upon mortals, shows nevertheless her head from among the clouds of heaven. The suggestion of indefinite vastness and power is very strong. — But in most cases we demand from the poet a full and satisfying personification. We have imperfect, uncertain personification in the changing epithets applied to the sun by Shakspere in his 33d Sonnet. There is no clear-cut personality: it shifts — is now a monarch, now a lover, now an alchemist. More distinct is the 7th Sonnet, — "Lo in the orient when the gracious light." But the fullest satisfaction is given by those passages in which the old mythology flashes forth: —

> "Night's candles are burnt out, and *jocund day*
> *Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops.*"
> — *Rom. & Jul.* III. 5.

> "But look, *the morn in russet mantle clad,*
> *Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.*"
> — *Hamlet*, I. I.



> "When the gray-hooded Even,
> Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
> Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phoebus' wain."
> — Milton, *Comus.*

Further, *cf.* Sidney's sonnet: —

> "With how sad steps, O moon, thou climbst the skies!"

The blithe young morning peering over the hills, the sober-robed evening, the wandering moon, — all are mythological.

So in our oldest poetry. In the *Genesis* (called the first book of "Cædmon") we have such phrases as "In its (the evening's) footsteps *ran and pressed* the gloomy shadow," or "they saw the *light stride away.*" — Finally we must add to these natural personifications our inheritance from the classic literatures. Greek and Roman mythology has left us a countless host of such tropes. — Modern poets should use these with great caution; it is better to make fresh tropes. Thus Pope and his school are never tired of Sol and Phœbus and Luna. Keats, with all his love for classic beauty, catches the spirit and neglects the letter — as in his *Isabella:* —

> "Ere the hot sun *count*
> *His dewy rosary* on the eglantine,"

which also contains a fine metaphor.

Finally, we have complete personification of *abstract* ideas. In early times, imagination — the power to picture a definite object — was much stronger than the intellectual power of grouping classes and qualities, and forming abstract ideas. Instead of scientific classification of will and thought and feeling, early psychology knew only a changing inner world whose processes it

pictured in concrete terms (metaphor) and whose powers it personified. We revive this latter instinct when we say with Lear: "Down, *climbing Sorrow!*" Further, such an abstraction as our word Fate (=that which is spoken, irrevocable) was to our forefathers, under another name, the goddess of destiny, *Wyrd* (="accomplished," "finished"). "Wyrd wove me this," cries the hero; that is, "here is my fate." In the Old-Saxon (not Anglo-Saxon) poetical version of the gospel, the *Heliand*, Christ says to Judas: "Thy Wyrd stands near thee." — Even such an abstract idea as *hunger* was personified, and was not felt as at all abstract. This is well shown by a passage in the *Genesis*: —

> "When from thy heart *hunger or wolf*
> Soul and sorrow at the same time tears."

Observe the co-ordination of abstract "hunger" and concrete "wolf." In modern poetry we perform the process consciously, not in a mythological belief: —

> "Methinks it were an easy leap
> To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon,
> Or dive into the bottom of the deep . . .
> . . . And *pluck up drowned honour by the locks;*
> So he that doth redeem her thence, might wear,
> Without corrival, all her dignities." — 1 *Hen. IV.* I. 3.

Examples lie everywhere. Take all of Collins' *Ode to the Passions.* Further: —

> "Slander, whose whisper . . ." — *Hamlet.*

> "Strong War sets hand to the scythe, and the furrows take fire from his feet." — Swinburne, *Erechtheus.*

### § 6. ALLEGORY.

Allegory, as we know, is "where more is meant than meets the ear" — or eye. One thinks immediately of



*Gulliver's Travels*, of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, or of the *Faery Queene.* That is in subject-matter. But in point of *style*, allegory is *a sustained metaphor*, one extended into several phrases or clauses, *so that we do not think so much of the object as of the illustration.* Often, however, *abruptness* makes up for length. Hamlet, thinking of his counter-plot against the king (III. 4), says: —

> "For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
> Hoist with his own petar: and 't shall go hard,
> But I will delve one yard below their mines
> And blow them at the moon."

*Cf. Jul. Cæs.* II. 1: —

> "'tis a common proof
> That lowliness is young ambition's ladder," &c.

Imperfect allegory goes not quite so far away from the object. King Philip points to Arthur (*King John*, II. 1), and says: —

> "Look here upon thy brother Geffrey's face; —
> These eyes, these brows, were moulded out of his;
> This little abstract doth contain that large
> Which died in Geffrey; and the hand of time
> Shall draw this brief into as huge a volume."

Sometimes the allegory is, for the sake of clearness, introduced or ended by a *simile* (*cf.* below); thus in the well-known *Epitaph in Croyland Abbey*: —

> "Man's life is like unto a winter's day.
> Some break their fast, and so depart away.
> Others stay dinner, then depart full-fed.
> The longest age but sups and goes to bed."

There is a finely sustained allegory near the end of Cowper's *Lines on the Receipt of my Mother's Picture.*

The seasons furnish abundant occasion for allegory. Out of many examples, we instance Clough's *No More* — "My wind has turned to bitter north, etc." Further, instead of a prolonged metaphor, allegory may be a prolonged *personification*. Milton describes the peace prevailing on the earth at Christ's nativity, in an allegorical way: —

> "But he her fears to cease,
> Sent down the meek-ey'd Peace, etc."

A beautiful allegory is contained in the 80th Psalm. In fact, metaphor slips easily into allegory. Naïve is Chaucer's explanation at the beginning of Book II. of *Troylus and Cryseyde*: —

> "Out of these blake wawes for to saylle,
> O wynde, O wynde, the weder gynneth to clere;
> For in this see the boot hath swiche travaylle
> Of my connynge, that unneth I it stere:
> *This see clepe I the tempestuous matere*
> *Of desespeyre, that Troylus was inne.*" . . .

Like the simile, allegory was introduced into our poetry at a very early date. In the Anglo-Saxon *Physiologus* (*cf.* Ch. I. § IV.), in the poem "Christ" (Grein's *Bibliothek*), and in other old poems, it often occurs. But it is an importation from classic and sacred writings, and is not native to our oldest literature.

### § 7. THE SIMILE — IMPLIED.

The trope based on resemblance of two objects may *assume* that resemblance, as in metaphor, personification, allegory: in metaphor, the ship "ploughs the sea." We assume that the action of a ship resembles the action of a plough. But when we *name* the action of the ship, and then compare it to the action of the plough, we have simile. The *likeness* may be stated frankly, or it may be implied. Most writers on poetics place the implied simile under the head of metaphor. Thus Nichol (*Eng. Comp.*) says that "He fought like a lion" is simile; "He was a lion in fight" is metaphor. Surely the latter is implied simile. Every one understands by "was" just about what one understands by "was like." The idea of comparison and likeness is present in both cases. But the metaphor boldly expresses *one thing in terms of another*, does not place the two objects before the mind. A simile, then, is where two objects are presented to the mind for comparison.



An implied simile is not a metaphor, and yet is bolder than the stated simile. It may be implied in several ways. Thus, by *apposition*: —

> "The noble sister of Publicola,
> The moon of Rome." — *Coriol.* V. 3.

> "And those eyes, the break of day,
> Lights that do mislead the morn." — *M. for M.* IV. 1.

> "Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,
> Tall oaks." — Keats, *Hyperion*.

> "Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal
> The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne."
> — *Rich. II.* V. 1.

A splendid succession of comparisons, too long to quote, is the eulogy of England that Shakspere puts into the mouth of the dying Gaunt (*Rich. II.* II. 1); one is, — "this precious stone set in the silver sea."

The simile may be implied by a *dependent genitive case*: "The dew of sleep"; "The milk of human kindness"; "The nunnery of your chaste breast." Here

note particularly that the two nouns are *co-ordinates.* "Dew" and "sleep" are co-ordinate, of equal value, — comparison and compared. Different would be the case with such an expression as — "the quiet of sleep," where "quiet" is simply a part or quality of "sleep." Further *cf.* "In cradle of the rude imperious surge" (2 *Hen. IV.* III. 1).

More distant is the implying by means of *adjectives:* "Passionate, pale, cold face, *star-sweet on a gloom profound*" (Tennyson, *Maud*); "Golden sleep"; "This working-day world." — There are many other ways of implying likeness. For instance (*Merch. of Ven.* II. 5), "But stop my house's ears — I mean my casements." Then, approaching the stated simile, we have the connection of comparison and compared by the "copula" *is* or *are:* —

"He is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nations." — *Hamlet.*

"A jewel in a ten times barred-up chest
Is a bold spirit in a loyal breast." — *Rich. II.*

"Love is a sickness full of woes." — S. Daniel.

Other equivalents of *is* or *are* may be mentioned besides the one from *Merch. of Ven.* just given: —

"Then her voice's music, — *call it*
The well's bubbling, the bird's warble." — R. Browning.

"The sullen passage of thy weary steps
*Esteem* a foil, wherein thou art to set
The precious jewel of thy home-return."
— *Rich. II.* I. 6.

With a *gesture* Cleopatra implies the comparison, as she points to the asp on her bosom, and asks (*A. and C.* V. 2): —

"Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep?"



## § 8. THE SIMILE — STATED.

This marks the extreme stage of the trope based on likeness. In development, the metaphor precedes the simile. The former can rest on a picturesque confusion of names[1] — as in calling the bird's nest his "house": so Tennyson, speaking of the vanished inmate of a sea-shell, asks: "Did he stand at the diamond door of his *house?*" Our early poetry is full of this metaphor; it calls the sky "the people-*roof*," the sea "foamy *fields*," and so on. All that was required was a common quality, and the immediate substitution of one object for another. Hence a great confusion, "mixing" of metaphors, as when the "mouth" (*sc. door*) of the ark is "locked." Much more art, more balance, is needed to pause in the current of poetry and hold two objects apart, painting carefully the details of the comparison, then returning to the main subject and proceeding quietly with the interrupted narration. This demands a higher poetic faculty, a more analytic, self-contained faculty. Hence the superiority, in point of style, of the Homeric poems over our old English epos. The former are famous for their sustained similes; the latter has scarcely a simile worthy of the name, setting aside, of course, the later poems, where classical and sacred models now begin to exert their influence. We are, therefore, not surprised to learn that Lessing, the experienced man of letters and brilliant critic, disliked, as a poet, the metaphor, and used in preference the sim-

[1] Goldsmith ("Essay on the Use of Metaphors") calls metaphor "a kind of magical coat by which the same idea assumes a thousand different appearances."

ile. Hegel notes that the simile is essentially oriental, the metaphor occidental. The simile came into our literature through the influence of Latin models and the love of sacred literature for allegory. The Bible is very fond of similes: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!" But our primitive poetry ventured, at the best, only on such a timid flight as when it says that the ship glides over the water "most like a bird" (*fúgle gelîcost*). This fact, that the simile stands on a higher plane of poetical development than the metaphor, must be borne in mind when one is told that the metaphor is a "condensed" simile. *It is so logically; not, however, chronologically.*

The simile may be stated *positively*: —

> "Like the winds in summer sighing,
> Her voice is low and sweet."

> "Ponderous syllables, like sullen waves
> In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks." — Keats.

> "Her feet beneath her petticoat,
> Like little mice, stole in and out,
> As if they feared the light." — Suckling.

The simile, being a formal comparison, should not state the familiar and obvious. The poet must give us an unexpected, yet fit and beautiful comparison. In general effect, the two things compared should be as unlike as possible, so that the one common trait shall gain in intensity from the general contrast. This is finely brought out in a passage of Browning's *Paracelsus*: —

> "Over the waters in the vaporous west
> The sun goes down as in a sphere of gold,
> Behind the outstretched city, which between,
> With all that length of domes and minarets,
> Athwart the splendor, black and crooked runs
> *Like a Turk verse along a scimetar*."



See, too, the deposed Richard's famous simile of the well and buckets, *Rich. II.* IV. I.

The simile may be stated as a *negative*, or in *degrees of comparison*. This adds emphasis: —

> "The sea enraged is not half so deaf,
> . . . . as we to keep this city."
> — *King John*, II. 2.

> "O Spartan dog,
> More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!"
> — *Othello*, V. 2.

> "That she may feel
> How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child." — *Lear*, II. 4.

The simile best fits the stately motion of epic poetry. A short simile is used with great effect in lyric poetry, or the drama; but when it is sustained and carried into detail, it is out of place in these, and belongs to the epic. So we find the famous Homeric similes of a most elaborate finish; *cf.* that at the end of the eighth book of the *Iliad*. In English, Milton has best followed this path. The fallen angels stand (*P. L.* I. 612 ff.) —

> "Their glory withered. As when Heaven's fire
> Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
> With singed top their stately growth though bare
> Stands on the blasted heath."

More like the Homeric simile and longer — too long to quote — are such as that (*P. L.* III.) where Satan, as he looks down on the world, is compared to a military

scout. The Sonnet often makes an elaborate simile in its octave, then in the sestette draws the moral or shows the application. So, too, the *Epigram*, as in the stanza by Waller, given below.

It is to be remembered that *a mere instance is not a simile*: —

"Thais led the way
To light him to his prey,
And *like another Helen, fir'd another Troy*."

Nevertheless, the simile is often combined with *Allusion*. Thus the poet takes for granted our knowledge of classical mythology when he says that Portia's

"Sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in search of her."

The simile may be stated in *words equivalent to "like"* or *"as"*: —

"It *were all one*
That I should love a bright particular star,
And think to wed it, he is so above me."
— *All's Well.*

Or take Waller's conceit: —

"The eagle's fate and mine *are one*,
Which on the shaft that saw him die,
Espied a feather of his own
Wherewith he wont to soar so high."

---

The great similes of classic poetry find frequent imitation. Thus we may trace one simile (of dead leaves falling in frosty weather) from Chaucer (*Troilus*, 4. 29) back to Dante (*Inferno*, 3. 112), and from him to Vergil (*Æn.* 6. 309).



## § 9. TROPES OF CONNEXION.

One expression is here used for another on the basis not of *resemblance*, but of *connexion*, or association. In the former (resemblance), two things may be sundered in space and in thought; yet a common quality, a likeness in one point, may allow one to be used for the other: *e.g.*, "her roses" for "her cheeks," because both are red, or "rosy." But when we say: "the bottle will be his death," we see no *likeness* between what we say and what we mean (the liquor); but we do see a *connexion*. The two are associated in space as containing and contained: therefore we use one for the other. Connexion in space is sometimes called *mathematical;* connexion in thought, *logical.*

When one thing is put for another on account of connexion in space, we have the trope called *Synecdoche;* the word means to understand one thing by another. It is mainly based on the relation of *whole to parts*. Thus a part is taken for the whole.

"That cursed *head*
Whose wicked deed." — *Hamlet.*

Here "man" is meant.

"*Cheeks* of sorry grain will serve to ply
The sampler." — *Comus.*

In the next example, a singular proper noun expresses the collective idea of "nation"; note the plural pronoun: —

"*The Spaniard*, tied by blood and favour to her,
Must now confess, if *they* have any goodness," etc.
— *Hen. VIII.* II. 2.

A favorite use of this trope among our Germanic forefathers was to take some striking part of an action and use it instead of the general expression. Instead of saying "they went ashore," the poet of *Beowulf* puts it thus: "They bore their armor to the strand." The vividness of the picture is much increased. A fine modern use of this is in Marc Antony's famous speech about Brutus and the others "*whose daggers have stabbed Cæsar.*" How infinitely stronger this is than "murdered," any one can see. So our forefathers did not simply "sail"; they "*drove the keel over the sea-street.*"

Similar to this trope is *Distribution.* Instead of simply naming the whole action or thing, one part after the other is named in detail. Instead of "They shall nevermore come to their homes at evening," the poet says: —

> "For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
> Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
> No children run to lisp their sire's return,
> Or climb his knee, the envied kiss to share."

See also the ghost's picture of Hamlet's abhorrence at the tale that might be told, —

> "whose lightest word
> Would harrow up thy soul," etc. — *Hamlet*, I. 5.

Another similar trope, known as *Periphrase,* puts a certain prominent habit for the thing or person meant: —

> "Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
> The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep."
> — *Par. Lost*, 5. 200 f.



> "The filmy shapes
> That haunt the dusk, with ermine capes
> And woolly breasts and beaded eyes."
> — Tennyson, *In Mem.*

> "Where sailors gang to fish for cod" = Newfoundland.
> — Burns, *Twa Dogs.*

The above substituted part for whole. We may also have *whole for part.* As "the Spaniard" was used for Spain, or all Spaniards, so conversely, the whole country is used for its monarch. This is common in Shakspere. "Good Hamlet," says the queen, "let thine eye look like a friend on *Denmark*" — meaning Claudius, king of Denmark. So, too, in *King John*, Faulconbridge's pun, when Hubert lifts the dead body of Arthur, rightful heir to the crown: —

> "How easy dost thou take all England up!"

*Material* is used for *thing made.*

> "*Sonorous metal* blowing martial sounds." — *Par. Lost*, I.

Our old poets were fond of this trope: "curve-necked wood" for "ship"; "glee-beam," or "glee-wood," for "harp"; and many more. Wolsey says (*Hen. VIII.*) he will "sleep in dull, cold marble." — "Not to taste that only *tree*," *i.e.* fruit of the tree (*Par. Lost*, 4. 423).

Finally, one object is put for another connected with it in space. This is not like the case of part for whole, since the two objects are separable. Thus: —

> "Costly thy habit as thy *purse* can buy."

> "For the four winds blow in from every coast
> Renownèd suitors." — *Merch. Ven.* I. I.

LOGICAL ASSOCIATION. — This relation is that of cause and effect, substance and attribute, and all such

as are grasped, not by the senses, but by thought. The trope is called *Metonymy*, — change of names. In the Anglo-Saxon *Genesis* we are told that "God created for the false ones *groans of hell*," *i.e.* pains that would cause groans. "Savage clamor drowned both *harp and voice*," — *sound* of the harp (*Par. Lost*). "I know the *hand*," quibbles Lorenzo, when he sees Jessica's letter (*Merch. of Ven.*): "in faith, 'tis a fair hand." So *Hen. VIII.* II. 3: —

> "'tis better to be lowly born
> Than to be perk'd up in a *glistering grief*,
> And wear a *golden sorrow*."

Prince Henry calls the crown a "polish'd perturbation," — *cause* of perturbation; and the Dirge in *Cymbeline* tells us that

> "The sceptre, learning, physic must
> All follow this and come to dust,"

a case of attribute and symbol instead of substance.

*Quality* for *person* or *thing*: "To fawn on rage" = raging man (*Rich. II.* v. 1). "*Bondage* is hoarse" (*R. and J.*). "When thus the *angelic Virtue* answered mild," = virtuous angel (*Par. Lost*).

So, too, relations of *time*: —

> "Nor wanting is *the brown October* drawn
> Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat
> Of thirty years." — Thomson.

> "And on her (*sc.* the table's) ample square from side to side
> *All Autumn* piled." — *Par. Lost*, 5. 391.

### § 10. TROPES OF CONTRAST.

In order to express something in a very forcible way, we can use a phrase entirely unexpected, making a



sharp contrast with the literal statement. It does not deceive the reader; it simply draws his attention, as by a violent gesture, to the real object.

1. *Hyperbole.* — This trope (the word means to "cast beyond") states a fact in words that we know to be impossible or extremely improbable. It shows that we must believe as far as we can in the direction indicated. "*Countless* houses" is a term by which we understand houses so numerous that it would be *very difficult* to count them, or would take a long time. The hyperbole is common in all speech. In poetry it is also abundant.

> "I was all ear,
> And took in strains that might create a soul
> Under the ribs of death." — *Comus*.

> "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No: this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous sea incarnadine,
> Making the green one red." — *Macbeth*.

> "When I lie tangled in her hair
> And fettered to her eye." — Lovelace, *To Althea*.

Hyperbole easily degenerates into *rant*. Shakspere intentionally ridicules this in Hamlet's wild speech at Ophelia's grave. Unintentionally, Lee, the tragedian, rants in his well-known passage: —

> "Pouring forth tears at such a lavish rate,
> That were the world on fire, they might drown
> The wrath of heaven, and quench the mighty ruin."

This, as Blair remarks, is "mere bombast." But a slight step makes the trope forcible in Macbeth's nervous words: —

> "Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye
> That tears shall drown the wind."

The hyperbole, as Lord Kaims pointed out, must not contain an absurd and contradictory statement. On this ground we condemn Pope's couplet: —

> " When first young Maro in his boundless mind
> A work t' *outlast immortal* Rome designed."

2. *Litotes.* — This is the opposite of the hyperbole. It *understates.* It stops far short of the actual truth. We feel the sharp contrast between the insufficient statement and the literal fact, and we hasten to do the subject right and justice. Thus Chaucer, describing a fat, jolly, rosy, ease-loving monk, says: —

> " He was not pale as a forpyned gost."

So in *Par. Lost:* —

> " Whereof in Hell
> Fame is not silent."

3. *Euphemism.* — There are certain forms of religion in low stages of culture where the good gods are neglected — they will do no harm — and the bad gods are overwhelmed with gifts and flattery. To these are given *good names:* the wish is father to the thought, — they are called good in hopes that they will *be* good. Even the Greek word *Eumenides* was given to the Furies, who, as Æschylus tells us, spoil the growing corn and fruit. There are similar names in our own mythology. Now this same spirit crops out in the disguise of modern *Euphemism.* This term ("speaking well of") is applied to that trope which, in contrast to the literal badness of the object, gives it a good name. In exalted style, we use Euphemism for harmful, destructive things; in familiar style, for disagreeable things. Especially is it used of *death.*



> " How *sleep* the brave who *sink to rest*
> By all their country's wishes blest!" — Collins.

> " After life's fitful fever, he sleeps well." — *Macbeth.*

> " Ah, Warwick, Montague hath breathed his last."

For the second case, in *Hamlet* (II. 1), instead of "intoxicated" we have the polite "*o'ertook.*" *Cf.* such colloquial and rather vulgar expressions as "appropriated" for plain "stolen."

4. *Irony.* — The contrast here consists in our believing the opposite of what is said. Irony may be light, almost harmless, as in Sterne; merciless and biting, as in Swift. Poetically it is often used: —

> " Go teach eternal wisdom how to rule."

> " Enjoy the thoughts that rise
> From disappointed avarice,
> From frustrated ambition."

"Now get you to my lady's chamber," says Hamlet to Yorick's skull, "and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; *make her laugh at that.*" A most admirable example of compliment shading into irony, and irony into bitter sarcasm, is Marc Antony's speech about the "honorable men." Finally, we get the plain statement with the word "traitors."

In epic poetry, irony alternates with direct abuse, — as in speeches of warriors about to fight. So Gabriel calls Satan "courageous chief."