

A CHAPTER ON AUTOGRAPHY.

UNDER this head, some years ago, there appeared, in the Southern Literary Messenger, an article which attracted very general attention, not less from the nature of its subject than from the peculiar manner in which it was handled. The editor introduces his readers to a certain Mr. Joseph Miller, who, it is hinted, is not merely a descendant of the illustrious Joe, of Jest-Book notoriety, but that identical individual in proper person. Upon this point, however, an air of uncertainty is thrown by means of an equivocal, maintained throughout the paper, in respect to Mr. Miller's middle name. This equivocal is put into the mouth of Mr. M. himself. He gives his name, in the first instance, as Joseph A. Miller; but, in the course of conversation, shifts it to Joseph B., then to Joseph C., and so on through the whole alphabet, until he concludes by desiring a copy of the Magazine to be sent to his address as Joseph Z. Miller, Esquire.

The object of his visit to the editor is to place in his hands the autographs of certain distinguished American *littérateurs*. To these persons he had written rigmarole letters on various topics, and in all cases had been successful in eliciting a reply. The replies only (which it is scarcely necessary to say are all fictitious) are given in the Magazine, with a genuine autograph fac-simile appended, and are either burlesques of the supposed writer's usual style, or rendered otherwise absurd by reference to the nonsensical questions imagined to have been propounded by Mr. Miller. The autographs thus given are twenty-six in all—corresponding to the twenty-six variations in the initial letter of the hoaxer's middle name.

With the public this article took amazingly well, and many of our principal papers were at the expense of re-printing it with the wood-cut autographs. Even those whose names had been introduced, and whose style had been burlesqued, took the joke, generally speaking, in good part. Some of them were at a loss what to make of the matter. Dr. W. E. Channing, of Boston, was at some trouble, it is said, in calling to mind whether he had or had not actually written to some Mr. Joseph Miller the letter attributed to

him in the article. This letter was nothing more than what follows:—

BOSTON, ———.

DEAR SIR,

No such person as Philip Philpot has ever been in my employ as a coachman, or otherwise. The name is an odd one, and not likely to be forgotten. The man must have reference to some other Doctor Channing. It would be as well to question him closely.

Respectfully yours,

W. E. CHANNING.

TO JOSEPH X. MILLER, Esq.

The precise and brief sententiousness of the divine is here, it will be seen, very truly adopted, or "hit off."

In one instance only was the *jeu-d'esprit* taken in serious dudgeon. Colonel Stone and the Messenger had not been upon the best of terms. Some one of the Colonel's little brochures had been severely treated by that journal, which declared that the work would have been far more properly published among the quack advertisements in a spare corner of the Commercial. The colonel had retaliated by wholesale vituperation of the Messenger. This being the state of affairs, it was not to be wondered at that the following epistle was not quietly received on the part of him to whom it was attributed:—

NEW YORK, ———.

DEAR SIR,

I am exceedingly and excessively sorry that it is out of my power to comply with your rational and reasonable request. The subject you mention is one with which I am utterly unacquainted. Moreover it is one about which I know very little.

Respectfully,

W. L. STONE.

JOSEPH V. MILLER, Esq.

These tautologies and anti-climaxes were too much for the colonel, and we are ashamed to say that he committed himself by publishing in the Commercial an indignant denial of ever having indited such an epistle.

The principal feature of this autograph article, although perhaps the least interesting, was that of the editorial comment upon the supposed MSS., regarding them as indicative of character. In these

comments the design was never more than serious. At times, too, the writer was evidently led into error or injustice through the desire of being pungent—not unfrequently sacrificing truth for the sake of a *bon-mot*. In this manner qualities were often attributed to individuals, which were not so much indicated by their hand-writing, as suggested by the spleen of the commentator. But that a strong analogy *does* generally and naturally exist between every man's chirography and character, will be denied by none but the unreflecting. It is not our purpose, however, to enter into the *philosophy* of this subject, either in this portion of the present paper, or in the abstract. What we may have to say will be introduced elsewhere, and in connection with particular MSS. The practical application of the theory will thus go hand in hand with the theory itself.

Our design is three-fold:—In the first place, seriously to illustrate our position that the mental features are indicated (with certain exceptions) by the hand-writing; secondly, to indulge in a little literary gossip; and, thirdly, to furnish our readers with a more accurate and at the same time a more general collection of the autographs of our *literati* than is to be found elsewhere. Of the first portion of this design we have already spoken. The second, speaks for itself. Of the third it is only necessary to say that we are confident of its interest for all lovers of literature. Next to the person of a distinguished man-of-letters, we desire to see his portrait—next to his portrait, his autograph. In the latter, especi-

ally, there is something which seems to bring him before us in his true idiosyncrasy—in his character of *scribe*. The feeling which prompts to the collection of autographs is a natural and rational one. But complete, or even extensive collections, are beyond the reach of those who themselves do not dabble in the waters of literature. The writer of this article has had opportunities, in this way, enjoyed by few. The MSS. now lying before him are a motley mass indeed. Here are letters, or other compositions, from every individual in America who has the slightest pretension to literary celebrity. From these we propose to select the most eminent names—as to give *all* would be a work of supererogation. Unquestionably, among those whose claims we are forced to postpone, are several whose high *merit* might justly demand a different treatment; but the rule applicable in a case like this seems to be that of celebrity, rather than that of true worth. It will be understood that, in the necessity of selection which circumstances impose upon us, we confine ourselves to the *most noted among the living literati of the country*. The article above alluded to, embraced, as we have already stated, only twenty-six names, and was not occupied *exclusively* either with living persons, or, properly speaking, with literary ones. In fact the whole paper seemed to acknowledge no law beyond that of whim. Our present essay will be found to include *one hundred autographs*. We have thought it unnecessary to preserve any particular order in their arrangement.

Professor CHARLES ANTHON, of Columbia College, New York, is well known as the most erudite of our classical scholars; and, although still a young man, there are few, if any, even in Europe, who surpass him in his peculiar path of knowledge. In England his supremacy has been tacitly acknowledged by the immediate re-publication of his editions of Cæsar, Sallust, and Cicero, with other works, and their adoption as text-books at Oxford and Cambridge. His amplification of Lemprière did him high honor, but, of late, has been entirely superseded by a Classical Dictionary of his own—a work most remarkable for the extent and comprehensiveness of its details, as well as for its historical, chronological, mythological, and philological *accuracy*. It has at once completely overshadowed every thing of its kind. It follows, as a matter of course, that Mr. Anthon has many little enemies, among the inditers of merely big books. He has not been unassailed, yet has assuredly remained uninjured in the estimation of all those whose opinion he would be likely to value. We do not mean to say that he is altogether without faults, but a certain antique Johnsonism of style is perhaps one of his worst. He was mainly instrumental (with Professor Henry and Dr. Hawks) in setting on foot the New York Review, a journal of

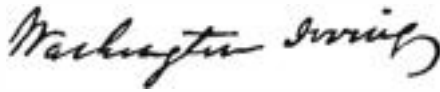
which he is the most efficient literary support, and whose most erudite papers have always been furnished by his pen.

The chirography of Professor Anthon is the most regularly beautiful of any in our collection. We see the most scrupulous precision, finish, and neatness about every portion of it—in the formation of individual letters, as well as in the *tout-ensemble*. The perfect symmetry of the MS. gives it, to a casual glance, the appearance of Italic print. The lines are quite straight, and at exactly equal distances, yet are written without black rules, or other artificial aid. There is not the slightest superfluity, in the way of flourish or otherwise, with the exception of the twirl in the C of the signature. Yet the whole is rather neat and graceful than forcible. Of four letters now lying before us, one is written on pink, one on a faint blue, one on green, and one on yellow paper—all of the finest quality. The seal is of green wax, with an impression of the head of Cæsar.

It is in the chirography of such men as Professor Anthon that we look with certainty for indication of character. The life of a scholar is mostly undisturbed by those adventitious events which distort the natural disposition of the man of the world, preventing his real nature from manifesting itself in his MS.

The lawyer, who, pressed for time, is often forced to embody a world of heterogeneous memoranda, on scraps of paper, with the stumps of all varieties of pen, will soon find the fair characters of his boyhood degenerate into hieroglyphics which would puzzle Doctor Wallis or Champollion; and from chirography so disturbed it is nearly impossible to decide any thing. In a similar manner, men who pass through many striking vicissitudes of life, acquire in each change of circumstance a temporary inflection of the hand-writing; the whole resulting, after many years, in an unformed or variable MS., scarcely to be recognised by themselves from one day to the other. In the case of literary men generally, we may expect some decisive token of the mental influence upon the MS., and in the instance of the classical devotee we

may look with *especial* certainty for such token. We see, accordingly, in Professor Anthon's autography, each and all of the known idiosyncrasies of his taste and intellect. We recognise at once the scrupulous precision and finish of his scholarship and of his style—the love of elegance which prompts him to surround himself, in his private study, with gems of sculptural art, and beautifully bound volumes, all arranged with elaborate attention to form, and in the very pedantry of neatness. We perceive, too, the disdain of superfluous embellishment which distinguishes his compilations, and which gives to their exterior appearance so marked an air of Quakerism. We must not forget to observe that the "want of force" is a want as perceptible in the whole character of the man, as in that of the MS.



The MS. of Mr. IRVING has little about it indicative of his genius. Certainly, no one could suspect from it any nice *finish* in the writer's compositions; nor is this nice finish to be found. The letters now before us vary remarkably in appearance; and those of late date are not nearly so well written as the more antique. Mr. Irving has travelled much, has seen many vicissitudes, and has been so thoroughly satiated with

fame as to grow slovenly in the performance of his literary tasks. This slovenliness has affected his hand-writing. But even from his earlier MSS. there is little to be gleaned, except the ideas of simplicity and precision. It must be admitted, however, that this fact, in itself, is characteristic of the literary manner, which, however excellent, has no prominent or very remarkable features.



For the last six or seven years, few men have occupied a more desirable position among us than Mr. BENJAMIN. As the editor of the American Monthly Magazine, of the New Yorker, and more lately of the Signal, and New World, he has exerted an influence scarcely second to that of any editor in the country. This influence Mr. B. owes to no single cause, but to his combined ability, activity, causticity, fearlessness, and independence. We use the latter term, however, with some mental reservation. The editor of the World is independent so far as the word implies unshaken resolution to follow the bent of one's own will, let the consequences be what they may. He is no respecter of persons, and his vituperation as often assails the powerful as the powerless—indeed the latter fall rarely under his censure. But we cannot call his independence, at all times, that of principle. We can never be sure that he will defend a cause merely because it is the cause of truth—or even because he regards it as such. He is too frequently biassed by personal feelings—feelings now of friendship, and again of vindictiveness. He is a warm friend, and a bitter, but not implacable enemy. His judgment in literary matters should not be questioned, but there is some difficulty in getting at his real opinion. As a prose writer, his style is

lucid, terse, and pungent. He is often witty, often cuttingly sarcastic, but seldom humorous. He frequently injures the force of his fiercest attacks by an indulgence in merely vituperative epithets. As a poet, he is entitled to far higher consideration than that in which he is ordinarily held. He is skillful and passionate, as well as imaginative. His sonnets have not been surpassed. In short, it is as a poet that his better genius is evinced—it is in poetry that his noble spirit breaks forth, showing what the man is, and what, but for unhappy circumstances, he would invariably appear.

Mr. Benjamin's MS. is not very dissimilar to Mr. Irving's, and, like his, it has no doubt been greatly modified by the excitements of life, and by the necessity of writing much and hastily; so that we can predicate but little respecting it. It speaks of his exquisite sensibility and passion. These betray themselves in the nervous variation of the MS. as the subject is diversified. When the theme is an ordinary one, the writing is legible and has force; but when it verges upon any thing which may be supposed to excite, we see the characters falter as they proceed. In the MSS. of some of his best poems this peculiarity is very remarkable. The signature conveys the idea of his *usual* chirography.

John P. Kennedy

Mr. KENNEDY is well known as the author of "Swallow Barn," "Horse-Shoe Robinson," and "Rob of the Bowl," three works whose features are strongly and decidedly marked. These features are boldness and force of thought, (disdaining ordinary embellishment, and depending for its effect upon masses rather than upon details) with a predominant *sense of the picturesque* pervading and giving color to the whole. His "Swallow Barn," in especial (and it is by the first effort of an author that we form the truest idea of his mental bias), is but a rich succession of picturesque still-life pieces. Mr. Kennedy is well to do in the world, and has always taken the world easily. We may therefore expect to find in his chirography, if ever in any, a full indication of the chief feature of his literary style—especially as this chief feature is so remarkably prominent. A glance at his signature will convince any one that the indication is to be found. A painter called upon to designate

the main peculiarity of this MS. would speak at once of the *picturesque*. This character is given it by the absence of hair-strokes, and by the abrupt termination of every letter without tapering; also in great measure by varying the size and slope of the letters. Great uniformity is preserved in the whole air of the MS., with great variety in the constituent parts. Every character has the clearness, boldness and precision of a wood-cut. The long letters do not rise or fall in an undue degree above the others. Upon the whole, this is a hand which pleases us much, although its *bizarrerie* is rather too piquant for the general taste. Should its writer devote himself more exclusively to light letters, we predict his future eminence. The paper on which our epistles are written is very fine, clear, and *white*, with gilt edges. The seal is neat, and just sufficient wax has been used for the impression. All this betokens a love of the elegant without effeminacy.

G. Mellen

The hand-writing of GRENVILLE MELLEN is somewhat peculiar, and partakes largely of the character of his signature as seen above. The whole is highly indicative of the poet's flighty, hyper-fanciful character, with his unsettled and often erroneous ideas of the

beautiful. His straining after effect is well paralleled in the formation of the preposterous G in the signature, with the two dots by its side. Mr. Mellen has genius unquestionably, but there is something in his temperament which obscures it.*

M. Paulding

No correct notion of Mr. PAULDING'S literary peculiarities can be obtained from an inspection of his MS., which, no doubt, has been strongly modified by adventitious circumstances. His small *cs*, *ts*, and *cs* are all alike, and the style of the characters gene-

rally is French, although the entire MS. has much the appearance of Greek text. The paper which he ordinarily uses is of a very fine glossy texture, and of a blue tint, with gilt edges. His signature is a good specimen of his general hand.

L. M. Sigourney

Mrs. SIGOURNEY seems to take much pains with her MSS. Apparently she employs *black lines*. Every *t* is crossed, and every *i* dotted, with precision, while the punctuation is faultless. Yet the whole has nothing of effeminacy or formality. The individual characters are large, well and freely formed, and preserve a perfect uniformity throughout. Something in her hand-writing puts us in mind of Mr. Paulding's. In both MSS. perfect regularity exists, and

in both the style is *formed* or *decided*. Both are beautiful; yet Mrs. Sigourney's is the most legible, and Mr. Paulding's nearly the most illegible in the world. From that of Mrs. S. we might easily form a true estimate of her compositions. Freedom, dignity, precision, and grace, without originality, may be properly attributed to her. She has fine taste, without genius. Her paper is usually good—the seal small, of green and gold wax, and without impression.

Robert Walsh

Mr. WALSH'S MS. is peculiar, from its large, sprawling and irregular appearance—rather rotund than

angular. It always seems to have been hurriedly written. The *t*'s are crossed with a sweeping scratch

* Since this article was prepared for the press, we have been grieved to hear of the death of Mr. Mellen.

of the pen, which gives to his epistles a somewhat droll appearance. A *dictatorial* air pervades the whole. His paper is of ordinary quality. His seal is commonly of brown wax mingled with gold, and bears a Latin motto, of which only the words *trans* and *mortuus* are legible.

Mr. Walsh cannot be denied talent; but his reputation, which has been bolstered into being by a *clique*, is not a thing to live. A blustering self-conceit betrays itself in his chirography, which upon the whole, is not very dissimilar to that of Mr. E. Everett, of whom we shall speak hereafter.



Mr. INGRAHAM, or Ingrahame, (for he writes his name sometimes with, and sometimes without the *e*,) is one of our most *popular* novelists, if not one of our best. He appeals always to the taste of the ultra-romanticists, (as a matter, we believe, rather of pecuniary policy than of choice) and thus is obnoxious to

the charge of a certain cut-and-thrust, blue-fire, melodramaticism. Still, he is capable of better things. His chirography is very unequal; at times, sufficiently clear and flowing, at others, shockingly scratchy and uncouth. From it nothing whatever can be predicated, except an uneasy vacillation of temper and of purpose.



Mr. BRYANT'S MS. puts us entirely at fault. It is one of the most common-place clerk's hands which we ever encountered, and has no character about it beyond that of the day-book and ledger. He writes, in short, what mercantile men and professional penmen call a fair hand, but what artists would term an

abominable one. Among its regular up and down strokes, waving lines and hair-lines, systematic taperings and flourishes, we look in vain for the force, polish, and decision of the poet. The *picturesque*, to be sure, is equally deficient in his chirography and in his poetical productions.



Mr. HALLECK'S hand is strikingly indicative of his genius. We see in it some force, more grace, and little of the picturesque. There is a great deal of freedom about it, and his MSS. seem to be written

currente calamo, but without hurry. His flourishes, which are not many, look as if thoughtfully planned, and deliberately, yet firmly executed. His paper is very good, and of a blueish tint—his seal of red wax.

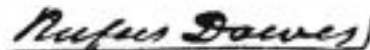


Mr. WILLIS, when writing carefully, would write a hand nearly resembling that of Mr. Halleck; although no similarity is perceptible in the signatures. His usual chirography is dashing, free, and not ungraceful, but is sadly deficient in force and picturesqueness.

It has been the fate of this gentleman to be alternately condemned *ad infinitum*, and lauded *ad nauseam*—a fact which speaks much in his praise. We know of no American writer who has evinced greater

versatility of talent; that is to say, of high talent, often amounting to genius; and we know of none who has more narrowly missed placing himself at the head of our letters.

The paper of Mr. Willis' epistles is always fine and glossy. At present, he employs a somewhat large seal, with a dove, or carrier-pigeon, at the top, the word "Glenmary" at bottom, and the initials "N. P. W." in the middle.



Mr. DAWES has been long known as a poet; but his claims are scarcely yet settled—his friends giving him rank with Bryant and Halleck, while his oppo-

nents treat his pretensions with contempt. The truth is, that the author of "Geraldine" and "Athenia of Damascus" has written occasional verses very well—

so well, that some of his minor pieces may be considered equal to any of the minor pieces of either of the two gentlemen above-mentioned. His longer poems, however, will not bear examination. "Athenia of Damascus" is pompous nonsense, and "Geraldine" a most ridiculous imitation of Don Juan, in which the beauties of the original have been as sedulously avoided, as the blemishes have been blunderingly culled. In style, he is, perhaps, the most inflated,

involved, and falsely-figurative, of any of our more noted poets. This defect, of course, is only fully appreciable in what are termed his "sustained efforts," and thus his shorter pieces are often exceedingly good. His apparent erudition is mere verbiage, and, were it real, would be lamentably out of place where we see it. He seems to have been infected with a blind admiration of Coleridge—especially of his mysticism and cant.

H. W. LONGFELLOW, (Professor of Moral Philosophy at Harvard,) is entitled to the first place among the poets of America—certainly to the first place among those who have put themselves prominently forth as poets. His good qualities are all of the highest order, while his sins are chiefly those of affectation and imitation—an imitation sometimes verging upon downright theft.

His MS. is remarkably good, and is fairly exemplified in the signature. We see here plain indications of the force, vigor, and glowing richness of his

literary style; the deliberate and steady finish of his compositions. The man who writes thus may not accomplish much, but what he does, will always be thoroughly done. The main beauty, or at least one great beauty of his poetry, is that of *proportion*; another, is a freedom from extraneous embellishment. He oftener runs into affectation through his endeavors at simplicity, than through any other cause. Now this rigid simplicity and proportion are easily perceptible in the MS., which, altogether, is a very excellent one.

The Rev. J. PIERPONT, who, of late, has attracted so much of the public attention, is one of the most accomplished poets in America. His "Airs of Palestine" is distinguished by the sweetness and vigor of its versification, and by the grace of its sentiments. Some of his shorter pieces are exceedingly terse and forcible, and none of our readers can have forgotten his Lines on Napoleon. His rhythm is at least equal in strength and modulation to that of any poet in America. Here he resembles Milman and Croly.

His chirography, nevertheless, indicates nothing beyond the common-place. It is an ordinary clerk's hand—one which is met with more frequently than any other. It is decidedly *formed*; and we have no doubt that he *never* writes otherwise than thus. The MS. of his school-days has probably been persisted in to the last. If so, the fact is in full consonance with the steady precision of his style. The flourish at the end of the signature is but a part of the writer's general enthusiasm.

Mr. SIMMS is the author of "Martin Faber," "Atlantis," "Guy Rivers," "The Partisan," "Mellichampe," "The Yemassee," "The Damsel of Darien," "The Black Riders of the Congaree," and one or two other productions, among which we must not forget to mention several fine poems. As a poet, indeed, we like him far better than as a novelist. His qualities in this latter respect resemble those of Mr. Kennedy, although he equals him in no particular,

except in his appreciation of the graceful. In his sense of beauty he is Mr. K.'s superior, but falls behind him in force, and the other attributes of the author of Swallow-Barn. These differences and resemblances are well shown in the MSS. That of Mr. S. has more slope, and more uniformity in detail, with less in the mass—while it has also less of the picturesque, although still much. The middle name is Gilmore; in the cut it looks like Gilmore.

O. A. Brownson

The Rev. ORESTES A. BROWNSON is chiefly known to the literary world as the editor of the "Boston Quarterly Review," a work to which he contributes, each quarter, at least two-thirds of the matter. He has published little in book-form—his principal works being "Charles Elwood," and "New Views." Of these, the former production is, in many respects, one of the highest merit. In logical accuracy, in comprehensiveness of thought, and in the evident frankness and desire for truth in which it is composed, we know of few theological treatises which can be compared with it. Its conclusion, however, bears about it a species of hesitation and inconsequence, which betray the fact that the writer has not altogether succeeded in convincing himself of those important truths which he is so anxious to impress upon his readers.

We must bear in mind, however, that this is the fault of Mr. Brownson's subject, and not of Mr. Brownson. However well a man may reason on the great topics of God and immortality, he will be forced to admit tacitly in the end, that God and immortality are things to be felt, rather than demonstrated.

On subjects less indefinite, Mr. B. reasons with the calm and convincing force of a Combe. He is, in every respect, an extraordinary man, and with the more extensive resources which would have been afforded him by early education, could not have failed to bring about important results.

His MS. indicates, in the most striking manner, the unpretending simplicity, directness, and especially, the *indefatigability* of his mental character. His signature is more *petite* than his general chirography.

B. Tucker

Judge BEVERLY TUCKER, of the College of William and Mary, Virginia, is the author of one of the best novels ever published in America—"George Balcombe"—although, for some reason, the book was never a popular favorite. It was, perhaps, somewhat too didactic for the general taste.

He has written a great deal, also, for the "Southern Literary Messenger" at different times; and, at one period, acted in part, if not altogether, as editor of that Magazine, which is indebted to him for some very racy articles, in the way of criticism especially. He is apt, however, to be led away by personal feelings, and is more given to vituperation for the mere sake of *point* or pungency, than is altogether consonant with his character as judge. Some five years ago there appeared in the "Messenger," under the editorial head, an article on the subject of the "Pickwick Papers" and some other productions of Mr. Dickens. This article, which abounded in well-written but extravagant denunciation of everything composed by the author of "The Curiosity Shop,"

and which prophesied his immediate downfall, we have reason to believe was from the pen of Judge Beverly Tucker. We take this opportunity of mentioning the subject, because the odium of the paper in question fell altogether upon our shoulders, and it is a burthen we are not disposed and never intended to bear. The review appeared in March, we think, and we had retired from the Messenger in the January preceding. About eighteen months previously, and when Mr. Dickens was scarcely known to the public at all, except as the author of some brief tales and essays, the writer of this article took occasion to predict, in the Messenger, and in the most emphatic manner, that high and just distinction which the author in question has attained. Judge Tucker's MS. is diminutive, but neat and legible, and has much force and precision, with little of the picturesque. The care which he bestows upon his literary compositions makes itself manifest also in his chirography. The signature is more florid than general hand.

John Sanderson

Mr. SANDERSON, Professor of the Greek and Latin languages in the High School of Philadelphia, is well known as the author of a series of letters, entitled "The American in Paris." These are distinguished by ease and vivacity of style, with occasional profundity of observation, and, above all, by the frequency of

their illustrative anecdotes, and figures. In all these particulars, Professor Sanderson is the precise counterpart of Judge Beverly Tucker, author of "George Balcombe." The MSS. of the two gentlemen are nearly identical. Both are neat, clear and legible. Mr. Sanderson's is somewhat the more crowded.

H. F. Goulds.

About Miss GOULD'S MS. there is great neatness, picturesqueness, and finish, without over-effeminacy. The literary style of one who writes thus will always

be remarkable for sententiousness and epigrammatism; and these are the leading features of Miss Gould's poetry.

C. S. Henry

Prof. HENRY, of Bristol College, is chiefly known by his contributions to our Quarterlies, and as one of the originators of the New-York Review, in conjunction with Dr. Hawks and Professor Anthon. His chirography is now neat and picturesque, (much resembling that of Judge Tucker,) and now excessively scratchy, clerky, and slovenly—so that it is near-

ly impossible to say anything respecting it, except that it indicates a vacillating disposition, with unsettled ideas of the beautiful. None of his epistles, in regard to their chirography, ~~is~~ as well as they begin. This trait denotes *futility*. His signature, which is bold and decided, conveys not the faintest idea of the general MS.

Emma C. Embury

Mrs. EMBURY is chiefly known by her contributions to the Periodicals of the country. She is one of the most nervous of our female writers, and is not destitute of originality—that rarest of all qualities in a woman, and especially in an American woman.

Her MS. evinces a strong disposition to fly off at a tangent from the old formulæ of the Boarding Academies. Both in it, and in her literary style, it would be well that she should no longer hesitate to discard the absurdities of mere fashion.

Wm. Landor

Mr. LANDOR acquired much reputation as the author of "Stanley," a work which was warmly commended by the press throughout the country. He has also written many excellent papers for the Magazines. His chirography is usually *petite*, without hair-lines, close, and somewhat stiff. Many words are carefully

erased. His epistles have always a rigorous formality about them. The whole is strongly indicative of his literary qualities. He is an elaborately careful, stiff, and pedantic writer, with much affectation and great talent. Should he devote himself ultimately to letters, he cannot fail of high success.

Eliza Leslie

Miss LESLIE is celebrated for the homely naturalness of her stories and for the broad satire of her comic style. She has written much for the Magazines. Her chirography is distinguished for neatness and finish, without over-effeminacy. It is rotund, and somewhat diminutive; the letters being separate, and the words always finished with an inward twirl.

She is never particular about the quality of her paper or the other externals of epistolary correspondence. From her MSS. in general, we might suppose her solicitous rather about the effect of her compositions as a whole, than about the polishing of the constituent parts. There is much of the picturesque both in her chirography and in her literary style.

Joseph C. Neal

Mr. NEAL has acquired a very extensive reputation through his "Charcoal Sketches," a series of papers originally written for the "Saturday News," of this city, and afterwards published in book form, with illustrations by Johnston. The whole design of the "Charcoal Sketches" may be stated as the depicting of the wharf and street loafer; but this design has been executed altogether in caricature. The extreme of burlesque runs throughout the work, which is, also, chargeable with a tedious repetition of slang and incident. The loafer always declaims the same nonsense, in the same style, gets drunk in the same way, and is taken to the watch-house after the same fashion. Reading one chapter of the book, we read all. Any single description would have been an original idea well executed, but the dose is repeated *ad nauseam*, and betrays a woful poverty of invention. The

manner in which Mr. Neal's book was belauded by his personal friends of the Philadelphia press, speaks little for their independence, or less for their taste. To dub the author of these "Charcoal Sketches" (which are really very excellent police-reports) with the title of "the American Boz," is either outrageous nonsense, or malevolent irony.

In other respects, Mr. N. has evinced talents which cannot be questioned. He has conducted the "Pennsylvanian" with credit, and, as a political writer, he stands deservedly high. His MS. is simple and legible, with much space between the words. It has force, but little grace. Altogether, his chirography is good; but as he belongs to the editorial corps, it would not be just to suppose that any deductions, in respect to character, could be gleaned from it. His signature conveys the general MS. with accuracy.



MR. SEBA SMITH has become somewhat widely celebrated as the author, in part, of the "Letters of Major Jack Downing." These were very clever productions; coarse, but full of fun, wit, sarcasm and sense. Their manner rendered them exceedingly popular, until their success tempted into the field a host of brainless imitators. Mr. S. is also the author of several poems; among others, of "Powhatan, a Metrical Romance," which we do not very particularly admire. His MS. is legible, and has much simpli-

city about it. At times it vacillates, and appears unformed. Upon the whole, it is much such a MS. as David Crockett wrote, and precisely such a one as we might imagine would be written by a *veritable* Jack Downing; by Jack Downing himself, had this creature of Mr. Smith's fancy been endowed with a real entity. The fact is, that "The Major" is not *all* a creation; at least one half of his character actually exists in the bosom of his originator. It was the Jack Downing half that composed "Powhatan."



JUDGE HOPKINSON'S hand is forcible, neat, legible, and devoid of superfluity. The characters have much slope, and whole words are frequently run together. The lines are at equal distances, and a broad margin is at the left of the page, as is the case

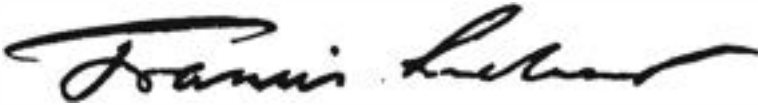
with the MSS. of Judge Marshall, and other jurists. The whole is too uniform to be picturesque. The writing is always as good at the conclusion, as at the commencement of the epistles—a rare quality in MSS., evincing *indefatigability* in the writer.



LIEUTENANT SLIDELL, some years ago, took the additional name of Mackenzie. His reputation, at one period, was extravagantly high—a circumstance owing, in some measure, to the *esprit de corps* of the navy, of which he is a member, and to his private influence, through his family, with the Review-cliques. Yet his fame was not altogether undeserved; although it cannot be denied that his first book, "A Year in Spain," was in some danger of being overlooked by his countrymen, until a benignant star directed the attention of the Loudon bookseller, Murray, to its merits. Cockney octavos prevailed; and the clever young writer who was cut dead in his

Yankee habiliments, met with bows innumerable in the gala dress of an English *imprimatur*. The work now ran through several editions, and prepared the public for the kind reception of "The American in England," which exalted his reputation to its highest pinnacle. Both these books abound in racy description; but are chiefly remarkable for their gross deficiencies in grammatical construction.

Lieut. Slidell's MS. is peculiarly neat and even—quite legible, but altogether too petite and effeminate. Few tokens of his literary character are to be found, beyond the *petiteness*, which is exactly analogous with the minute detail of his descriptions.



FRANCIS LIEBER is Professor of History and Political Economy in the College of South Carolina, and has published many works distinguished by acumen and erudition. Among these we may notice a "Journal of a Residence in Greece," written at the instigation of the historian Niebuhr; "The Stranger in America," a piquant book abounding in various information relative to the United States; a treatise on "Education;" "Reminiscences of an intercourse with Niebuhr;" and an "Essay on International Copy-Right"—this last a valuable work.

Professor Lieber's personal character is that of the frankest and most unpretending *bonhomme*, while his erudition is rather *massive* than minute. We may therefore expect his MS. to differ widely from that of his brother scholar, Professor Anthon; and so in truth it does. His chirography is careless, heavy, black, and forcible, without the slightest attempt at ornament—very similar, upon the whole to the well-known chirography of Chief Justice Marshall. His letters have the peculiarity of a wide margin left at the top of each page.



MRS. HALE is well known for her masculine style of thought. This is clearly expressed in her chirography, which is far larger, heavier, and altogether

bolder than that of her sex generally. It resembles in a great degree that of Professor Lieber, and is not easily deciphered.