is going off, and that we shall have a thoroughly amicable meeting next Friday. Brother Mair seems very frank and well meaning. If you could get Mr. Knipe, who is a favourite, I think, with his royal highness, to attend, it would be well.

'Ever, my dear Sir, faithfully yours,

'KENYON.'

No. LVI.

(Copy.)

'23, King-street, Westminster, Tuesday Evening.

'MY DEAR SIR,—By returning the Palladiums, with a small packet of letters from kings and princes I left for your perusal, you will oblige me very much. As circumstances will at length compel me to seek a compensation from royalty, for my services and surrenders in their service, should not an appeal to their justice, made confidentially and respectfully, in the first instance, be productive of the desired end, I shall enforce my claims through the medium of the press, both in pamphlets and papers, when a dread of exposure may prompt them to do that which ought to have emanated from a sense of gratitude.

'Most faithfully yours, my dear Sir,

'WM. BLENNERHASSETT FAIRMAN.

'P. S.—Mr. Aburrow will do me the favour to take charge of the above, when it shall suit your own convenience to hand them over to that gentleman.

'To D——— C———, Esq.'

ART. IX.

THEORY AND PRACTICE.

A DIALOGUE.

X. SIR, I am no theorist.

Y. Will you then give me leave to ask what you are?

X. I follow experience.

Y. You will probably accuse me of only starting a foolish paradox, if I affirm that experience and theory are the same; and that, of course, in saying that you follow experience and not theory, you declare your ignorance of both.

X. What, sir, theory and experience the same! Are they not direct contraries—the one opposed to the other?

Y. In my opinion they are not; and I am willing, if you think it worth your while, to enter upon the inquiry with you; and to seek for the means of determining whether your opinion or mine be correct.

X. There can be no means of showing me that experience is the same with theory. Why, sir, is not theory speculation, and is not experience practice? Are not practice and speculation opposed to one another?

Y. I admit that the terms are often opposed to one another. Many a man speaks of the one as good, the other as evil; but in the minds even of those men there is no opposition in the ideas.

What they praise under the name of experience, is theory; what they blame under the name of theory, is practice.

X. This is potently affirmed; you are on a way to reach the summit of paradox in time.

Y. I expected your accusations. But accusations, if they are not just, need only to be examined. I am, therefore, anxious to commence with you the examination of yours.

X. Well, sir, will you begin?

Y. Willingly, if you prefer that I should. You think there is a great difference between theory and experience. If I ask you to state the difference, do not accuse me of seeking in inanity the reputation of subtlety. I wish to narrow, as far as possible, the field of our investigation, and imagine that this single question involves the whole. I deny there is any difference; you say there is; it is for you to show what it is.

X. It seems no difficult matter to state the difference between theory and experience. In following experience we follow facts; in following theory we follow fancy.

Y. The difference you adduce is the difference between following facts and following fancy. What we have to do, then, is to compare the following of facts with the following of fancy. But in order to do so we must compare the ideas, and not merely the terms. We must, therefore, begin by stating the ideas.

X. We must do so.

Y. Will you then state what appear to you to be the ideas respectively designated by those two expressions, or will it be more agreeable to you that I should state them?

X. As you propose to make the comparison, it seems convenient that you should place in your own light the things to be compared.

Y. To this I have no objection, provided I carry you along with me; otherwise you are sensible that my comparison would not answer our common end, that of a mutual discussion.

X. Certainly not.

Y. I can only know that I carry you along with me, if you allow me, setting aside thus far the laws of modern politeness, to put my statements in the form of questions, you signifying in reply your assent or dissent.

X. I see that the form of question and answer will give facilities to our disquisition, and that the substance of politeness may be preserved though we dispense with some of its formalities.

Y. The first thing I have then to do is to set forth the ideas involved in the phrase 'following examples.'

An example is a past fact; it is an event of yesterday, or the last week, or year, or more distant period. But it is not every

event which is an example. A man died last week, a bird flew in the air: these are events, but not examples, meaning by example an act to be repeated. An act to be repeated, or an example to be followed, is an act followed by certain consequences. These consequences also must be agreeable consequences. Does this accord with your idea of an example? Shall we call it a past act followed by agreeable consequences?

X. This seems to be the proper account of it.

Y. But a past act is a thing done, and cannot be revived. There may be a series of acts one after another, but for an act to be after it has been is an evident impossibility. Your act of to-day is not your act of yesterday, nor is your act of any one moment that of the preceding moment. When an act is finished it is gone, and gone for ever. What then is it that you mean by following a past act?

X. Doing one that is like it.

Y. Expecting, I presume, a similar result. Because a man who has thrown corn on the ground has reaped a greater quantity than that which he sowed, we too throw corn on the ground expecting a similar advantage.

X. Expectation of a similar result is doubtless included in the idea of following an example.

Y. An example, then, is a sequence; it includes at least an antecedent and a consequent.

X. It does so.

Y. This is one point of importance, and we may consider it settled; but here we have to remove a difficulty. A solitary fact yields no guidance. It is an admitted principle that from an individual instance no conclusion can be drawn. A man may have fallen from a high tower and have received little injury; he who should follow this as an example would probably pay dear for being so practical a man.

X. I think, sir, you may here be accused of some misrepresentation. In defining a practical man, two sets of cases are to be distinguished; the cases which may be regarded as constant, and the cases which are accidental. Practice does not follow the latter, but the former.

Y. You say well, sir, and have gone a great way towards proving my proposition, that what is called practice is in reality theory.

X. How you are to make good that affirmation it is for you to discover.

Y. It is so; then observe. Did you not say that practice was following cases of constancy?

X. Yes.

Y. What is it then we understand by cases of constancy? Is it

not cases in which like antecedents have been followed by like consequents many times?

X. It is.

Y. But to follow these cases we must know them: to follow them without error we must know them accurately, and distinguish them in every instance from cases merely accidental. It is very evident that all good practice must depend upon this knowledge, and whatever contributes most to render this knowledge perfect and unerring, contributes most to the perfection of practice.

X. No one will dispute that proposition.

Y. We acquire our knowledge of a case of constancy by having observed the event—an antecedent followed by a consequent in a variety of instances—first one, then another, then another, and so on. Having observed these instances we remember them; so far our knowledge consists of the remembrance of our observations. But this knowledge is only of the past; all practice regards the future. You will to do a certain thing not yet done, and you will to do it for the sake of a certain consequence. How is it that your knowledge of the past becomes a guide of the future?

X. Nothing is easier than the reply to that question. As things have happened in the past, so do they in the future. This we have always observed, and this we expect.

Y. That you expect, it is true; but how do you expect it? Why should things be in the future as they have been in the past?

X. The reason is because they have been always observed to be so.

Y. A like antecedent has been followed by a like consequent, not once, but many times. The remembrance of this is the first step of the proceeding which you call practice; the second is the act, performed by you under expectation of the usual consequence: the expectation, you say, grounded upon the remembrance. But the grounding of an expectation upon a remembrance is a metaphorical expression, and ought to be translated into simple language. Will you have the goodness to do so?

X. It may be done, I imagine, thus:—the antecedent A *has been* constantly followed by the consequent B; therefore the antecedent A *will be* constantly followed by the antecedent B.

Y. That is to say, you frame from your past experience a general theorem: having observed that A has been followed by B, you say, indefinitely, A is followed by B; and on this theorem you ground your practice. According to you, therefore, to draw up a theorem from observation of the past, and to act upon it, is practice?

X. It is.

Y. But is it not also theory?

X. How do you make it appear to be theory?

Y. Because theory consists in drawing up a theorem for the guidance of the future from the observation of the past.

X. That I should not call theory at all.

Y. Do you know any theory that is any thing else?

X. Certainly I do—many; for example, the vortices of Descartes.

Y. As you began this discussion by expressing a preference of experience to theory as a guide of practice, I concluded that we had in view only that class of theories which have a reference to future practice; not those attempts sometimes called theories, to account for certain phenomena, that is, bring them under some law which is already ascertained. The nature of this last class of theories I have no objection to discuss, as the consideration will confirm rather than invalidate the proposition I maintain. But as they are things which, though often confounded under one name, are very different in their nature, I should wish, with your leave, to confine our attention in the first instance to theories forming the groundwork of practice; such as the mercantile theory in political economy, the Brownonean theory in medicine. Do you know any theories of that kind which are not essentially theorems drawn up from the observation of the past for the guidance of the future?

X. Yes, I think I can mention various theories, the mere offspring of fancy as I called it at the beginning; the fancy, for example, of the alchemists about finding gold.

Y. It is not a very apposite example, as it may be alleged to partake more of bad practice than bad theory; unless you will call the gamester a theorist, and tell us that he commits his folly by quitting practice and pursuing theory.

X. This is a forced similarity, and neither proves that the gamester is a theorist, nor disproves that the alchemist is one.

Y. A short examination will show us whether the similarity is imaginary or not. The alchemist has observed very strange and unexpected results from chemical compositions and decompositions. He says to himself, why may not gold be among these results? He sees no reason why, nor can any man see a reason why. So far he theorizes, and so far only; and so far he proceeds correctly. He next advances to practice, and there he errs. The gamester has also observed very strange turns of fortune at the gaming table in favour of various individuals as well as himself. On each renewed occasion he says to himself, why should there not be a turn of fortune highly favourable to me on this occasion? No man can deny that there may be. Thus far he

also theorizes, and theorizes correctly. He proceeds, however, immediately to a practice which is wrong. Is there not now something of a similarity?

X. There is the appearance at least of a similarity; but there seems to be also an essential difference. Because certain remarkable things have resulted from certain known chemical operations, to suppose that gold will result from certain unknown chemical operations is a very different thing from expecting that dice will turn up in a way in which they have turned up before.

Y. All comparisons hold only in certain respects. A dog taking arsenic and a man taking arsenic are very different things; with respect to the arsenic and its effects the cases are similar. So in the cases of the gamester and the alchemist, the similarity to the purpose in hand is complete. In the case of the alchemist there is a chance of his making gold, but there are many chances against him; in the case of the gamester there is a chance of his having good luck, but there are many chances against it. Each of them chooses to act upon the one chance and disregard the many. This is not theory: all theory shows that the many chances are better than the few. The instances you have produced are not, therefore, instances of theories drawn up from fancy. It still remains to be known if you can produce others which are.

X. Though it may not be possible to produce a theory which has not some reference to facts, which is not in some degree founded on the observation of the past, (for any theory laid down for the guidance of the future, which is not in some degree founded on the past, would be a mere exhibition of insanity,) yet I think any theory drawn from a very insufficient observation of the past, any theory inconsistent with facts and an erroneous guide for the future, may be justly enough denominated the creature of the fancy.

Y. If we give up the existence of theories which are not founded on the observation of the past, and allow that all theories are founded on it, we have then but two classes of theories—those which are accurately founded on an observation of the past, and those which are not accurately founded on it. The former, I suppose, you would not call fancies, but only the latter.

X. Only the latter.

Y. I have no objection to your calling them by any name you please, provided only you do not confound them with the other; and having advanced thus far it is time to see what conclusions we are prepared to draw.

X. I shall be happy to hear what they are.

Y. We have seen that all practice, all at least which deserves

the name of rational, is founded upon an observation of the past, have we not?

X. We have so.

Y. We have also agreed that all theories are founded, thoug some correctly, some incorrectly, upon an observation of the past Theory and practice therefore are both founded on the sam thing.

X. They are so; but few theories are correctly founded.

Y. Is there not such a thing as erroneous practice?

X. There is, but not so common as erroneous theory.

Y. Is not erroneous practice that which is not correctly founded upon the observation of the past?

X. I tis.

Y. Is not erroneous theory that which is not correctly founded upon the observation of the past?

X. It is.

Y. Error of practice and error of theory then are both owing to the same thing?

X. It seems so.

Y. We have said that all practice, which is the producing antecedents for the sake of consequents, is acting according to the remembrance of constancy in many instances?

X. We have.

Y. The remembrance of the constancy of sequence in many instances, when put into language, is a theorem. Thus, corn thrown into the ground produces corn, and the quantity produced is greater than the quantity producing. This is the remembrance of a constant sequence, and it is a theorem. The practice of sowing corn, is founded upon this remembrance; it is, therefore, founded upon the theorem. Is it not so?

X. It is.

Y. But what is the difference between a theorem and a theory?

X. They seem indeed to be pretty closely connected.

Y. The theory is merely a name of the thought or idea, and theorem is the name of the proposition which gives it expression.

X. It seems so.

Y. In following a theorem, therefore, or the remembrance of a constant sequence, we are following a theory; and as all practice follows this remembrance, all practice is founded upon theory, and there is no practice without theory?

X. I cannot deny that it is so.

Y. But if there is no practice without theory, it is altogether absurd to set practice in opposition to theory; and those people who condemn others by saying you follow theory, and extol themselves by saying we follow practice, only show the wretched state

of their own minds; they know not what practice is. When a man says that he follows practice, he says by the same words that he follows theory. All men, therefore, in every rational action of their lives are followers of theory; and they may be divided, may they not, into the two following classes—those who follow good and those who follow bad theory; the first sort acting always right, the second always wrong?

X. The conclusion is legitimately drawn.

Y. The inquiry then of principal importance is what are the properties of a good theory and a bad?

X. Certainly.

Y. We have already made some progress in that inquiry. We have seen that in the formation of all theories the object is to ascertain a case of constant sequence; when that is correctly ascertained and correctly expressed in words, the expression may be said to be a correct theory. Any set of words, on the other hand, which professes to set forth a case of constant sequence, but sets forth as constant a case that is not constant, or sets forth one that is, incorrectly—such set of words may be termed a wrong theory. May we not assume these, as just descriptions of good theories and bad theories in kind?

X. I think we may.

Y. But good theory as a kind is a very lumping expression, and combines species which he who would arrive at clearness of ideas on this important subject must not neglect to distinguish.

Of two theories, each the expression of one constant sequence, the sequence expressed by the one may be a sequence on the due or undue observance of which much of human happiness or misery may depend; the sequence expressed by the other may be one with which good or evil to mankind has little or no connexion. Thus, the sequence of night and day is one, the knowledge of which is of vast importance to mankind. The regular revolution of the satellites of Jupiter round that planet is a sequence, the knowledge of which is of little importance. Theories are of importance, therefore, in proportion as the sequences of which they are the expression have much or little influence on human life.

X. That is true.

Y. A theory may express correctly the tracing of a sequence, but a tracing which has proceeded only a certain way. A theory may also express correctly the tracing of the same sequence, when the tracing has proceeded a greater way. The theory expressing the tracing which has gone the furthest is of course the most valuable. Instances to illustrate the observation are innumerable. The tendency of bodies to the earth was traced at an early

period, and the sequence was at last correctly expressed in the theorem, that the tendency of bodies to the earth, or the time required in falling to it, is as the squares of the distances. The sequence was traced much further when Sir Isaac Newton discovered that the same law regulated the motions of the planets, and to this enlargement of the comprehensiveness of the theory the greatest honour was attached.

X. And very justly.

Y. We may, therefore, lay it down, with your consent, as a rule, that a theory is always the more valuable the greater the extent of sequence which it correctly announces. This, in reality, is neither more nor less than saying tnat more knowledge is better than less.

X. The truth of this is sufficiently clear.

Y. Every theory, therefore, the more general and comprehensive it is, the more valuable it is.

X. Certainly.

Y. The man whose mind contains the greatest number of general theories, is the man best furnished for correct practice; the man whose mind contains the smallest number the least.

X. I see it is so.

Y. The whole business of philosophy consists in the endeavour to render each theory as comprehensive as possible. The whole business of philosophy, therefore, is to furnish men as completely as possible for practice; and the best philosopher is by necessary consequence the best practitioner.

X. It must be so, however wide of my former notions.

Y. The evidence is irresistible. All practice proceeds upon the supposition of an ascertained sequence, meaning by sequence constancy of sequence. As far as the sequence is correctly ascertained, that is, as far as the theory goes, the practice founded on it is correct. Suppose a sequence in regard to the human body ascertained as far as the entire species is concerned, this collected information, or theory, is of far more importance than if the sequence had been traced as far only as men of a particular description. Suppose the sequence is next traced through horses: the theory is now enlarged, and is so much the more valuable. It would receive an additional value if the sequence were traced through another species and another; it would become exceedingly valuable if it were traced through all; and it would become the most valuable possible if the sequence were traced through all the objects of which our system is composed.

X. It would so.

Y. It thus appears, that the proper business of philosophy is to trace every sequence as far as possible, and ascertain its greatest extent. It is very often found that sequences, which at first view,

appear to be different, and to constitute a variety of species, are, when more closely examined, found to be one. And it is not at all impossible, it is on the other hand very probable, that all the changes which we observe in this world, innumerable as they seem to be, may be the result of a small number of sequences, traceable through all terrestrial beings.

X. I allow it all.

Y. If philosophy shall ever discover these sequences, and it is making constant advances, all knowledge competent to human nature will be correctly summed up in a few propositions; and mistaken practice will be no longer possible.

X. What a magnificent idea you present of the importance of theorizing, and what a revolution you have produced in my mind since our conversation began!

Y. From this doctrine it is very difficult not to draw some practical conclusions.

X. Why should we abstain from drawing those conclusions if we think they are of importance?

Y. I am willing to give a specimen of them if you consent.

X. I heartily consent.

Y. We have seen that the language which contrasts theory and practice, setting the one above the other, is the very consummation of ignorance—that it proves a man to be unacquainted with the very first elements of thought, and goes a great way towards proving his mind to be so perverted as to be incapable of being taught them.

X. It is impossible not to assent to this.

Y. This appearing with a clearness and cogency of reason not inferior to demonstration, let us next turn our eyes upon a few historical facts. The language, demonstrative of this ignorance, has been a prevalent language in our two Houses of Parliament time out of mind. Our leaders in Parliament have always used it so profusely as if they did it in emulation of one another, and as a proof of their wisdom. We need not go too far back; let us begin with Pitt. It became a settled formula with him and his school. Fox was not behind him, in a nimble use of the same instrument; nor Windham, nor Grenville. Burke outran them all. Nor has there been any intermission. All the great men who have taken the lead in Parliament, from these men to the present, the greatest of all (the present are always the greatest), have been equally eager in the use of the same language, and have taken equal credit to themselves for the reach of mind which it displayed. History will find its advantage in this. It affords a measure of the men, perfectly accurate. They great men, who do not know the relation of theory to practice, and of practice to theory!

Another melancholy fact is, that this language, the offspring

and display of the most deplorable ignorance, has always been peculiarly acceptable to the Members of both Houses of Parliament. They crow and look triumphant whenever they hear it. Whenever a great man gets up, and with a commanding voice and manner says, 'Away with such or such a scheme of improvement! We will have no theories! Give us practice!' the *hear hims* are more fervent than on almost any other occasion.

The Scripture tells us that on one occasion our Lord said, 'My people perish for lack of knowledge.' Well may this be said of the people of England, when their rulers in both Houses of Parliament have their heads in such a state.

The cry of practice against theory began to be used when the force of the cry against philosophy began to grow feeble, and it grew rife as the cry against philosophy died away.

The cry against philosophy was raised as soon as the eyes of the public began to be prying. There is never anything which needs amendment in the state, but there are numbers of men who see it is their interest to fight against the amendment; because they make their profit out of the abuse. All this disposition to pry into abuses was imputed to philosophy. If philosophy, that is, the disposition to inquire, could be successfully cried down, men would be quiet; and those good things which good men had so long enjoyed at the expense of others, would rest in peace. The clergy of such a church as the Church of England form the great section of the men who fight against amendment. Their establishment being altogether one overgrown abuse, a desperate attachment to abuses is a necessary part of their nature. Philosophy, therefore, they have always treated as their great enemy. Their accusations, like those of all impostors, are vague. Philosophy was very dangerous to men's souls. The clergy are always remarkable for their care of men's souls, when it is synonymous with care of their own interests. Philosophy being dangerous to men's souls, God hates philosophers; and philosophers hate God. This foundation well laid, everything followed of course.

But men began to distrust the clergy. They found that philosophy was a thing originally of good repute. The highest eulogiums, and by the wisest men, had been bestowed upon it. Also, when they began to look into the thing itself, they could easily perceive that though there might be evil in it, there was also good. Men might be the better for it. What, then, could be the reason of the abhorrence of the clergy? That soon appeared. The light of philosophy made apparent the enormous abuses accumulated in such a thing as a corporation of priests set up with exorbitant wealth, and hence influence and power. The outcry against philosophy immediately lost a great share of its power, and the statesman needed a more usable instrument. Practice

against theory was found very suitable to his purpose, and accordingly it superseded the other. Not but that a sneer at philosophy is still very acceptable to honourable and noble houses. To call a man a philosopher, in the way of contempt, is still sure of a cordial cheer; and it is probable that the two Houses of the British Legislature will be the last places on earth where, in an assembly of men pretending to be educated, philosophy will be treated with disrespect. P. Q.

ART. X.

ENGLISH LITERATURE OF 1835.

TO read much, but not many things, is an old direction, applicable enough to the age in which it was propounded, but difficult to comply with in the present day, if we are to partake of the literature of our own times, for the select books of a very short period would form a larger library than was in the contemplation of the author of the rule; and even an attempt to make the selection would involve the reading of *multa*, ere the lover of literature could study *multum*. To spare its readers some part of this labour of selection is one of the especial duties of a review, and it is one of which we have not been unmindful; but, in addition to the notices we have given from time to time of such books as from their objects; the facts or ideas they contained, or their literary excellence, seemed to require separate consideration, it may be useful to take a general survey of all the more noticeable books of the past year, with a view to compare their literary characteristics with those of a former period, to describe the object, scope, and character of each, to indicate their relative grades of excellence, and to estimate the results of the whole.

The literature of 1835 will be found fully to bear out the remark commonly made on the later as compared with the earlier literature of nations, that in the department of pure belles lettres it is inferior, although superior in works of a more scientific and practical kind. This superiority of the early writers of a nation has often been noticed, and usually attributed to the accidents of their position, which compelled them to gather their notions and images fresh from reality, and enabled them to select the most striking—an opinion certainly true (for, having no one to copy, they must perforce be original), but scarcely the whole truth. The utmost novelty of subject will avail a man little without perceptive and observing faculties of a high order. The creative faculty, moreover, must exist in considerable perfection, or the writer would be unable to contrive the general structure of his work; since, having