deserves the higher praise as being in most instances the more difficult achievement. The fault of the opposite school, on the other hand, is to disparage interpretation and to regard correc­tion as the proper field of a scholar and gentleman. This bias is reflected in the maxim that “ correction should precede interpretation,” which is no more than a half-truth. For emendation must inevitably fail unless it express the meaning which the proper interpretation of the passage has shown to be required. Further, a corrector may propose the right word with the wrong meaning. Yet the custom is to give the credit of the emendation to him, and not to a successor who has seen what the right sense was and that this was the only word to express it, whereas the first scholar blundered once if not twice, first assigning the wrong sense to the passage and then selecting what (in most cases) would be the wrong word to express it. The proper course would be not to mention the first conjecturer or to mention him only for his error.

One of the most vexed questions of textual criticism, and one which divides scholars more perhaps than any other, is the question to what extent admitted imperfections and incon­sistencies may properly be left in a text as due to the default of an author rather than of a scribe or compositor. No uni­versal rule is here attainable. Each case must be considered on its merits; and the critic’s procedure must of necessity be "eclectic ”—an epithet often used with a tinge of reproach, the ground for which it is not easy to discover. Two general considerations may be indicated. If the autograph of a work is not accessible, there is no means of distinguishing between the involuntary errors of a scribe and the involuntary errors— “ slips of pen ”—of an author. For the latter are in fact only scribe’s mistakes, the author being his own amanuensis. To take the example given under *Confusions of Words* above, *loin* for *lion* in *Cranford* is probably a printer’s error, but it is con­ceivable that it is due to a deflexion of the authoress’s mind or pen through the accidental proximity of the “ mutton chop.”

Passing over this class we come to one about which there may frequently be serious doubt. What is clearly erroneous or faulty may as clearly be intended, and therefore *not* to be re­moved by the critic. In Chaucer’s “ Miller’s Tale ” (3451, 3457) *astromie* is used for *astronomie,* and *Noë* and *Noël* (Christmas) confused, “ Nowélis flood” (3451, 3457), because the speaker is an illiterate carpenter. In the Prologue to the “ Parson’s Tale ” (10) there is, on the other hand, a mistake of Chaucer’s own, which no judicious critic would think of removing, the constellation Libra being said to be “ *the moon's* exaltation ” when it should be *Saturn’s.* But this error in an astrological detail would not warrant us in assigning to the poet the blunder about Jacob and Laban in the same tale (see above). Much depends on the precision with which an error can be corrected: wherever there are more plausible ways than one of doing this, the faulty reading must be allowed to remain. Collateral as well as direct evidence must be obtained. If there are a number of instances where there is faultiness which is hard to remove, it is probable that the evil lies too deep for emendation. The author’s own carelessness may be to blame, or, as in the case of Virgil and Lucan, he may not have been allowed to put the finishing touches to his work.

Certain lapses from grammatical correctness and metrical regu­larity that we find in the poems of Shelley are undoubtedly due to the author, though the number of these has been reduced (as Mr Buxton Forman has pointed out) with our improved knowledge of the sources of the text. Amongst such lapses we may instance *Prince Athanase* (287), “ The shadow of thy moving wings *imbue* [ Its deserts and its mountains “ To a Skylark ” (80), “ Thou lovest— but ne’er *knew* love’s sad satiety.” The solecism in the Preface to the *Adonais, “* My known repugnance to the narrow principles of taste on which several of his earlier compositions were modelled *prove* at least that I am an impartial judge,” would probably have been corrected by the poet if his attention had been called to it ; but the two first ones, with others, cannot be thus regarded. We may detect occasional laxity also in his handling of his verse. Lines are left unrhymed: e.g., *Julian and Maddalo* (211); *Rosalind and Helen* (366). Or the same word is used in place of another rhyming word: *Revolt of Islam* (3573 and 3576, 3829 and 3831). In the *Daemon of the World* (341-2), Shelley himself cancelled a metrical reading for one that makes the verse a syllable too short. It is in this department of criticism that the personal equation has the freest play, and hence the natural adherents of either school of critics should be specially on their guard against their school's peculiar bias.

The part which conjectural emendation should play must obviously be very different in different texts. In the New Testament, for example, this part is very small indeed, though it cannot be altogether excluded. Colossians ii. 18 is corrupt as it appears; but the adoption of a correction recommended by Bishop Lightfoot and Dr C. Taylor will restore it to sense.

It has been maintained that emendation (being guessing) is no part of textual criticism at all, though judgment upon emendation is. The position approaches to paradox and is not likely to be generally accepted. But it does contain an element of truth and indicates a well-founded reproach against the majority of those who practise conjecture. Nothing has discredited emendation as a means of improving texts more than the want of method, common care and research, which those addicted to it show. Some of the most distinguished scholars have offended worst. The *Milton* of Bentley, England’s greatest critic, is a by-word. To examine all the causes which may vitiate emendations would mean writing a treatise upon human frailty. But the reason why the vast majority of them fail is that the vast majority of them should never have been made at all. Their proposers do not take even elementary precautions to be right. An inquirer who examines the stars with a shilling telescope is not likely to make observations of value, and even a trained astronomer has to allow for his “ personal equation ”—a point to which even a finished critic rarely attends. Successful emendation requires a rare union of qualifications—insight, prudence, patience and familiarity with the author emended and the conditions of his text. If any of these is absent, the work is apt to be wasted.

Authority, as already hinted, has properly no place in textual criticism. For his facts a textual critic may, and often must, be beholden to others: but never for his opinions. It adds nothing to the evidence for a reading that it has been approved by a Lachmann or a Madvig or rejected by a Stoeber or a Carutti: and an appeal to names on any such question confuses issues and deters inquiry. But inasmuch as there are many persons, including most makers of school editions, who prudently and modestly desire a better road to truth than their own investigations can discover and think thus to find it, it will not be amiss to observe on the one hand that the concurrence of a succession of editors in a reading is no proof and often no presumption either that their agreement is independent or that their reading is right; and on the other that, though inde­pendence may generally be granted to coinciding emendations of different scholars, yet from the general constitution of the human mind it is likely that not a few of these will be coin­cidences in error rather than in truth.

One of the marks of a great textual critic is his attention to details. He will not consider his work upon the text com­plete until he has made it, as far as he can, such as the author would approve in every particular. Accordingly he will restore the spelling of the author if that can be ascertained: he will not accept the corruptions which have been introduced into it by copyists or printers, even though these may not affect its sense, nor will he modernize it so as to bring it into harmony with that of a later and to him a more familiar age. Thus, to take an example, he will not print a critical text of Plautus with two letters (Y and Z) which were no part of the Latin alphabet in the age of that comedian; still less will he introduce into Latin texts distinctions, such as *i,j* and *u, v,* which were not used till long after the middle ages.

As time goes on, textual criticism will have less and less to do. In the old texts its work will have been performed so far as it is performable. What is left will be an obstinate remainder of difficulties, for which there is no solution or only too many. In the newer texts, on the other hand, as experience has already shown, it will have from the outset but a very contracted field.

(J∙ p. p.)