following this, and written only four years later, in 1835, is the article of a critic, and takes the points of objection, seizes the weak side of Victor Hugo's poetry, how much it has of what is “ creux,” “sonore,” “artificiel" “voulu,” “théâtral,” “violent,” as distinctly as the author of the *Causeries* could seize it. “ The Frank, energetic and subtle, who has mastered to perfection the technical and rhetorical resources of the Latin literature of the decadence,” is a description never to be forgotten of Victor Hugo as a poet, and Sainte-Beuve launches it in this article, written when he was but thirty years old, and still a painter of “ portraits de jeunesse ” only.

He had thus been steadily working and growing; nevertheless, 1848 is an epoch which divides two critics in him of very unequal value. When, after that year of revolution and his stage of seclusion and labour at Liége, he came back to Paris in the autumn of 1849 and commenced in the *Constitutionnel* the *Causeries du lundi* he was astonishingly matured. Something of fervour, enthusiasm, poetry, he may have lost, but he had become a perfect critic—a critic of measure, not exuberant; of the centre, not provincial; of keen industry and curiosity, with “ Truth ” (the word engraved in English on his seal) for his motto; moreover, with gay and amiable temper, his manner as good as his matter—the "critique souriant,” as, in Charles Monselet’s dedication to him, he is called.

The root of everything in his criticism is his single-hearted devotion to truth. What he called “ fictions ” in literature, in politics, in religion, were not allowed to influence him. Some one had talked on his being tenacious of a certain set of literary opinions. “ I hold very little,” he answers, “to literary opinions; literary opinions occupy very little place in my life and in my thoughts. What does occupy me seriously is life itself and the object of it.” “ I am accustomed incessantly to call my judgments in question anew, and to re-cast my opinions the moment I suspect them to be without validity.” “ What I have wished ” (in *Port-Royal) "*is to say not a word more than I thought, to stop even a little short of what I believed in certain cases, in order that my words might acquire more weight as historical testimony.” To all exaggeration and untruth, from whatever side it proceeded, he had an antipathy. “ I turn my back upon the Michelets and Quinets, but I cannot hold out my hand to the Veuillots.”

But Sainte-Beuve could not have been the great critic he was had he not had, at the service of this his love of truth and measure, the conscientious industry of a Benedictine. “ I never have a holiday. On Monday towards noon I lift up my head, and breathe for about an hour; after that the wicket shuts again and I am in my prison cell for seven days.” The *Causeries* were at this price. They came once a week, and to write one of them as he wrote it was indeed a week's work. The “ irresponsible indolent reviewer ” should read his notes to his friend and provider with books, M. Paul Chéron of the National Library. Here is a note dated the 2nd of January 1853: "Good-day and a happy New Year. To-day I set to work on Grimm. A little dry; but after St François de Sales ” (his Monday article just finished) “ one requires a little relief from roses. I have of Grimm the edition of his *Correspondance* by M. Taschereau. I have also the *Memoirs* of Madame d’Épinay, where there are many letters of his. But it is possible that there may be *notices* of him mentioned in the bibliographical book of that German whose name I have forgotten. I should like, too, to have the *first editions* of his *Correspondance* ; they came out in successive parts.” Thus he prepared himself, not for a grand review article once a quarter, but for a newspaper review once a week.

His adhesion to the empire caused him to be represented by the Orleanists and Republicans as without character and patriotism, and to be charged with baseness and corruption. The Orleanists had, in a great degree, possession of the higher press in France and of English opinion—of Liberal English opinion more especially. And with English Liberals his indifference to parliamentary government was indeed a grievous fault in him; “you Whigs,” as Croker happily says, “are like quack doctors, who have but one specific for all constitutions.” To him either the doctrine of English Liberals, or the doctrine of Republicanism, applied absolutely, was what he called a “ fiction,” one of those fictions which “ always end by obscuring the truth.” Not even on M. de Tocqueville’s authority would he consent to receive “ les hypothèses dites les plus honor­

ables ”—“ the suppositions which nass for the most respectable.” AH suppositions he demanded to sift, to see them at work, to know the place and time and men to which they were to be applied. For the France before his eyes in 1849 he thought that something “ solid and stable ”—*un mur,* “ a wall,” as he said—was requisite, and that the government of Louis Napoleon supplied this walk But no one judged the empire more independently than he did, no one saw and enounced its faults more clearly ; he described himself as being, in his own single person, “ the *gauche* of the empire,” and the description was just.

To these merits of mental independence, industry, measure, lucidity, his criticism adds the merit of happy temper and disposition. Goethe long ago noticed that, whereas Germans reviewed one another as enemies whom they hated, the critics of the *Globe* reviewed one another as gentlemen. This arose from the higher social develop­ment of France and from the closer relations of literature with life there. But Sainte-Beuve has more, as a critic, than the external politeness which once at any rate distinguished his countrymen: he has a personal charm of manner due to a sweet and humane temper. He complained of *un peu de dureté,* “ a certain dose of hardness,” in the new generation of writers. The personality of an author had a peculiar importance for him; the poetical side of his subjects, however latent it might be, always attracted him, and he always sought to extricate it. This was because he had the moderate, gracious, amiably *human* instincts of the true poetic nature. “ Let me beg of you, he says in thanking a reviewer who praised him, “ to alter one or two expressions at any rate. I cannot bear to have it said that I am the *first* in anything whatever, as a writer least of all; it is not a thing which can be admitted, and these ways of classing people give offence.” Literary man and loyal to the French Academy as he was, he can yet write to an old friend after his election: “ All these academies, between you and me, are pieces of childishness; at any rate the French Academy is. Our least quarter of an hour of solitary reverie or of serious talk, yours and mine, in our youth, was better employed; but, as one gets old, one falls back into the power of these nothings; only it is well to know that nothings they are.”

Perhaps the best way to get a sense of the value and extent of the work done in the last twenty years of his life by the critic thus excellently endowed is to take a single volume of the *causeries du lundi,* to look through its list of subjects, and to remember that with the qualities above mentioned all these subjects are treated. Any volume will serve; let us take the fourth. This volume con- sists of articles on twenty-four subjects. Twenty of these are the following: Mirabeau and Sophie, Montaigne, Mirabeau and Comte de la. Marck, Mademoiselle de Scudéry, André Chénier as politician, Saint-Évremond and Ninon, Joseph de Maistre, Madame de Lambert, Madame Necker, the Abbé Maury, the Duc de Lauzun of Louis XVI.'s reign, Marie Antoinette, Buffon, Madame de Maintenon, De Bonald Amyot, Mallet du Pan, Marmontel, Chamfort, Rulhière. Almost every personage is French, it is true; Sainte- Beuve had a maxim that the critic should prefer subjects which he possesses familiarly. The great place of France in the world is very much due to her eminent gift for social life and development ; and this gift French literature has accompanied, fashioned, perfected, and continues to reflect And nowhere shall we find such interest more completely and charmingly brought out than in Sainte-Beuve’s *Causeries du lundi* and the *Nouveaux lundis.* As a guide to bring us to a knowledge of the French genius and literature he is unrivalled.

(M. A.)

Authorities.—See his “ Ma Biographie ” in *Nouveaux lundis,* xiii., *Lettres à la princesse* (1873) ; *Correspondance* (1877-1878) and *Nouvelle Correspondance* (1880); the Vicomte d’Haussonville’s *Sainte-Beuve* (1875); Scherer, *Études sur la littérature contemporaine,* iv.; G. Michaut, *Sainte-Beuve avant les Lundis* (1903). Sainte-Beuve’s centenary was celebrated in various ways; for centenary criticism see the *Edinburgh Review* (April 1905) (“ Sainte-Beuve and the Romantics”); *Monthly Review* (April 1905) (by F. Brunetière); *Revue des Deux Mondes* (March 1905) (by Victor Giraud). In the *Œuvres choisies de Juste Olivier* (1879) are some “Souvenirs”; and in 1903 the *Revue des Deux Mondes* published several interesting articles on a correspondence of Sainte-Beuve with Olivier.