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PREFACE
P. B. BROWN
AS
RECURSOR

S.C.

Platanus bicuspidata has ~~two~~ twins who do
not know they ~~are~~ are alike while
Shalespear's Comed. 1/2
has two sets of twins.

Chit.

Federal in North
July 1865

John Holmes Agnew

Cooke, G. F. B. reb.
2nd ed Rev. Lond 1813
II 296

Encyclopedia
Biographical dictionary etc
in French

cf. Lucrand Fr. list.

II 484 Seppin

(B)

Porter

Books & Reading

Godwin Bryant II 305

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Waldie's Lib. John
ed by [^] Sanderson
Knicker Apr 41, 358

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Francis, John W
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Knicker Jan 1847, p. 90

London Morning Chronicle
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as novs.

Knicker Jan 48, 71

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CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

His life and works
by
Daniel Edwards Kennedy

In nine volumes

I

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VIII

Charles Brockden Brown
as precursor

IX

Charles Brockden Brown
miscellanies

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CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

AS PRECURSOR

by

Daniel Edwards Kennedy

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PREFACE

The study of Brown as precursor was originally planned to be included in the introductory ^{ion} ~~volume~~ but it ^{flourished like a mushroom} ~~grew fast~~ and when it had [↑] ~~matured~~ ^{astonished} ~~surprised~~ me as much if not more than it will any reader. ~~All mushroom growth is astonishing to me.~~ ^{Often} ~~At times~~ in my literary studies fifty-seven varieties of mushrooms though ^{by nature} ~~ephemeral~~ have ^{proven} ~~been~~ as palatable and nourishing as the slow growing food of formal criticism.

In the ears of Kipling an author's influence sings itself as When 'Omer Smote 'is bloomin' lyre. For Brown's sake we are not going to keep it quiet. We have always loved Homer and we are inclined to believe his being so often called upon to wink had something to do with his blindness. Whenever we think we or others hear the old Brown songs turn up again we shall do our best to make a terrific fuss.

To prove the influence of an author is not only difficult but in most cases almost impossible. As long ago as ~~30 July~~ 1751 Johnson in his Rambler (No.143) touched the quick of the matter as well as anyone has ever done since, ~~when he said~~

"There is likewise a common stock of images, a settled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of transition, which all authors suppose themselves at liberty to use, and which produce the resemblances generally observable among contemporaries."

If there were not details that lie outside of, if not only partly within, the doctor's definition we should never have assembled this volume.

When there is only internal evidence it has to be cumulative. For a moral certainty the external ~~evidence~~ must supplement the internal; in fact the usual methods of circumstantial evidence ~~as~~ used in the courts must be followed and the conclusion must be tested for accuracy by the doctrine of chances. Some ladies are involved but there is no chivalry in this ^{court} ~~tournament~~; indeed sex can have nothing to do with conviction. In the cases of ~~the~~ men the welfare of wife and children has no power of dictation to our jury.

One corresponding detail does not constitute an influence; especially when it is common to several literatures and a common experience of humanity--it merely prompts further study. To make any indebtedness reasonable, there must be a number of details and the more there are the surer the influence. However in the case of the uncommon and the rare and unique we are justified in assuming an influence if we know

the accused author actually read or had a knowledge of the work in which it is found..

The paramount difficulty encountered is the fact that authors practically never analyse their own works for this purpose: they never know how much material they miss in thinking their interest does not lie in an investigation of this kind. Unfortunately, in many cases they are the only competent witnesses, but they cannot always be subpoenaed and if they come to the bar willingly they cannot be compelled to tell the whole truth.

When an author has had "genius" continually dinned into his ears he needs more than human courage if he would expose the wire-pulling of his marionettes to the public. Who ever heard a magician explain his own tricks while he had to get his living by performing them? If any author ever attempted what Poe did in his analysis of the Raven (The Philosophy of Composition) he would be laughed at--no one would even believe him, any more than the world believed Poe. In spite of the fact that every author's manuscript or his method of composition disproves it, the public prefers to believe in inspiration.

Often a similarity of names of characters or title have lead the investigator astray, and while similar names are interesting they are

hardly reliable evidence. Long ago we learned that no author has a monopoly or trade mark in a name. It becomes of value only when the case is otherwise overwhelmingly proved.

A warning should be given against the pitfall that has trapped too many. It is exemplified by Higginson when he represents that Brown¹ influenced British literature to the extent of setting the fashion for sliding panels, fatal epidemics, secret plots, etc. Of course that was what he really took from his predecessors in England and elsewhere across the Atlantic, for it was a part of the stock machinery of the prose fiction he somewhat followed, the Gothic Romance. We should be careful not to claim Brown influenced others who are known to have studied the early writers who influenced him.

An important point that should be noticed is that, while it may be true that the author in question did not read Brown's novels, there is more than a probability that the knowledge of their characteristics had been received at second or third hand. After the lapse of time our ideas are usually retained independent of their

1 In American Prose edited by G.F. Caprenter, New York 1903, p. 84.

origin so that few are able to state with precision the source ~~of~~
~~those ideas.~~

A very fair example of a proof of the character ~~that is~~ necessary is
~~to be found in~~ the Reply to Outis by Poe. Undoubtedly Poe had the
 ability of the thoroughly trained detective--an ability so uncanny ~~that~~ it
 passes beyond the belief of the multitude; but to the rare reader who
 has any compelling interest in this side of a literary and biographical
 work, ^{his} ~~Poe's~~ essay is recommended for study. The importance is in the
 completeness of the proof for it is not only cumulative but conclusive.
~~It should be remembered that~~ "Outis" argued from the internal evidence--
 which often may be coincident--and like any resourceful advocate he
 tried to have ruled out the three details which complete the proof. Poe
 with ~~his~~ remarkable acuteness was not to be lead astray--he made the
 case overwhelming when he followed the fifteen details by calling atten-
 tion to the peculiarity of the metre, verse and stanza. ~~So far as the~~
~~testimony is concerned the case is one of the best illustrations we~~
~~have found.~~ J.I. Adolphus' Letters to Richard Heber on the authorship
 of Waverley, J.T.T. Brown's Authorship of the Kingis Quair, Kettlewell's
 proof of Thomas A Kempis' authorship of the Imitation of Christ,

Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, translated by George Eliot, ~~and~~ especially for those who understand Greek— 175
Samuel Butler's *Autographs of the Odyssey* and Chabot's study of the Handwriting of Junius are also of great value in ~~such~~ studies of the kind.

Some cases are like these in that the evidence appears conclusive; others are based on the flimsiest of foundations. According as the reader understands the ^{five points} ~~minute~~ of circumstantial evidence he is free to accept or reject the instances at will. We ~~are willing for him to~~ ^{merely present the} evidence and a judge's charge, being willing to have the reader designate himself ^{constitute} the judge or jury, ~~if he so wishes~~. Proof by direct evidence, which some think they want in all affairs, is not to be expected here. Save in the possible instances of Dana, Godwin, Neal and ~~Shelley~~ we have none so sure as those, and even in their cases the evidence does not make them actually complete.

Probably the strongest reason why many refuse any traces of an author's influence is ~~to be found in~~ the belief that it implies censure of the one showing it. This is far from the truth. Emerson has given expression to the facts of all cases in the essay entitled Quotation and Originality, where he says

"If we confine ourselves to literature, 't is easy to see that the debt is immense to past thought. None escapes it. The originals are not original. There is imitation, model, and suggestion, to the very archangels, if we knew their history."

Emerson had courage--he was not afraid of any literary detective. So was Poe, but he displayed¹ bad taste when he expressed the idea by the ugly word plagiarism which should be only used of deliberate literary theft. If he had used the word influence for the case of Longfellow's Midnight Mass for the Dying Year and Tennyson's Death of the Old Year he would have better expressed his meaning. It is this quasi-synonymous confusion of words utterly different that warps the minds of all, unjustly prejudicing the reader against many able, valuable and interesting studies of the influence of one author on another.

1 Probably he relied on the fact that some years before he had clearly expressed his ideas of plagiarism. See his remarkable review of Stephens' Incidents of Travel, New York Review, October 1837, pp. 351-67.

Conspiring with this to make our work the more difficult is the custom of giving attention only to an author's characteristic and most mature work, so that the wonder should be not that the influence is not clearly proven to the reader so poorly equipped to understand it but that it is ever suspected at all.

Our present intention is to examine the whole known field of Brown's influence. Every hint that has come to our notice has been studied at first hand; for which reason, some instances will be found to be merely refutations. But refutations are often necessary because slovenly writers too often perpetuate ideas that are wholly unfounded. Besides following up these hints a study of early American fiction has helped to add other examples. The list does not pretend to be complete; undoubtedly there are omissions, especially in the cases of most authors of the twentieth century. A hundred years is a very fair test of an author's influence. Any one who survives that long is reasonably certain of permanence.

In the instances of foreign authors it is hoped that some one familiar with the whole course of French and German literature--which is more than a life study in itself--may follow the work here begun.

Though it has been thought ~~that~~ Brown ~~may have~~ influenced some French novelists in his high-strung narratives and eccentric heroes few instances have been found. The usual reference books, biographies, collections of correspondence and critical works never seem to have heard Brown's name. There was ~~apparently~~ more than one French translation of his work so ~~that~~ material bearing on this side of the present study must exist and some day ~~will very probably come~~ ^{may come} to public attention.

In the instance of the Germans besides the cases considered some possible general traces have been found but they are so weak they deserve no more than brief mention. Bettina Von Arnim was an idolizer of Goethe and could hardly have gone elsewhere for any traces of the romantic. Chamisso's Peter Schlemihl also echoes Goethe. Grabbe reeked in horrors of the realistic rather than the supernatural.

Grillparzer was ^a Schiller enthusiast and his ghosts were all children of Schiller. ~~Hoffmann's Elixirs of the Devil did not go across the Atlantic for what could easier be found at home even though he did use sleep-walking.~~ Tieck undoubtedly found his inspiration in the Gothic Romance and probably never read Brown. With so many other writers using the epistolary form of narrative it is hardly to be

supposed he took such a method from Brown when he used it in William Lovell. He went to Richter for his psychological analysis. On the whole the German field is more barren than the French.

It should be ^{emphasized} ~~known~~ that ~~it is~~ only the novels or romances of Brown ~~that~~ exert his influence as precursor. This may be ^{due to} ~~explained~~ by the fact that the instances are few where his other works are known and if known are actually read.

The obvious arrangement of the authors here considered is the chronological but, though recommending itself strongly, it is at best believed to be confusing and for consultation does not make the book ^{readily} as useful as the alphabetical order does. An index will make the topics easily ^{traced} ~~found~~.

We shall examine ninety cases, closed in groups.

ACKNOWLEDGED (3)

R.H.Dana
Godwin
Neal

CONCLUSIVE (14)

Balzac
Bird
Fulwer-Lytton
Burk
Cooper
Hawthorne
Irving
Keats
LeFanu
Weir Mitchell
Monimia

Poe
Shelley
Watterston

PROBABLE (28)

Blackmore
Brontes (3)
Cockton
Collins
De Acton
Doyle
Zane Grey
Hoffmann
Holmes
M.G.Lewis
Longfellow
Mac Donald
Maturin
Melville
Isaac Mitchell
O'Brien
Ollier
Paulding
Peacock
Richter
Rush
Sand
Scott
Mrs.Shelley
Shorthouse
Horace Smith

INDECISIVE (33)

Ainsworth
Aucketill
Bryant
Byron
Cable
Carlyle
De Nerval
De Quincey
Dickens
Godwin, Junior
Haggard
J.Hawthorne
Higginson
Kennedy

Laura
Sinclair Lewis
Lippard
Marryat
Payne
Pemberton
Quincy
Scribe
Simms
Stevenson
Tales of Terror
Thackeray
Tonnewonte
Tucker
Verne
Wendell
Whittier
Zola
Zschokke

IMPROBABLE and REFUTED (12)

Jane Austen
Wm.Austin
Bailey
Coleridge
Disraeli
Edgeworth
Heine
Lowell
Nodier
Ohnet
Wallace
Ward

The acknowledged,conclusive and probable make a noble company of

^{forty-five}
~~thirty-seven~~. If we add those who were possibly influenced but are at

present indecisive we have ^{seventy-eight}
~~fifty-five~~ well known authors in English,

75

French, German and American ~~fiction~~.

The most remarkable ^{peculiarity in} ~~fact about~~ the matter of Brown's influence is that in most cases it appears in the author's maturity. It would

naturally be expected that youth would imitate more, but the figures do not show it: ^{about one-third} ~~twenty four are probably youthful works~~ while ^{two-thirds} ~~forty four~~ are of maturity.

When there was ^{yet a} ~~no~~ collected edition ^{of his novels} on the market ~~and including the~~ ^{the} ~~time when Brown was alive~~ the influence of original publication was felt for twenty-seven years. After that the dates when the influence was shown do not immediately follow the publication of new editions, ~~of Brown's works~~. The Boston 1827 edition took four years before its influence was felt. The Pollock 1857 may have immediately influenced three authors but only ^{five} ~~two~~ more have been found in the next ten years. The cheap publication in paper wrappers at twenty-five cents and the popular Bentley Standard Novels Edgar Huntly may be the ^{reasons why} ~~cause for~~ 1845 to 50 ^{was a} ~~being the most~~ prolific period ~~of the whole century studied~~. ~~From 1830 to 1850 forty two instances enter the record~~ ^{show} ~~No other five years has proven his influence so strongly~~. The 1887 McKay edition was followed by ^{six} ~~two~~ influences ~~eight years later one~~ appeared.