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37

1658-1676

Linn's VALERIAN - 1805

VALERIAN,
A NARRATIVE POEM:

INTENDED, IN PART, TO DESCRIBE
THE EARLY PERSECUTIONS OF CHRISTIANS,
AND RAPIDLY TO
ILLUSTRATE THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY
ON THE
MANNERS OF NATIONS.

BY JOHN BLAIR LINN, D. D.

LATE PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION, IN PHILADELPHIA.

WITH A SKETCH
OF THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR.

Philadelphia,

PRINTED BY THOMAS AND GEORGE PALMER,
116, HIGH STREET.

1805.

TITLE PAGE OF LINN'S VALERIAN

(Illustration to be placed

to face page 1658)

THE MEMOIR OF LINN'S VALERIAN

1805

During the early half of 1805 Brown published his most pretentious biographical work in the memoir of John Blair Linn. His *relation as brother-in-law* ~~connection with the subject~~ was the *writing it,* ~~obvious~~ reason for his ~~attempt~~ ~~ing what would otherwise appear veritable "hack work",~~ but his business relations with the Philadelphia publishers of Linn's Valerian,¹ a narrative poem had not a little to do with his selection as a biographer. From the view-point of the Palmers, ~~Brown, of all of Linn's~~ *he* ~~friends and acquaintance,~~ was possibly the most desirable, for his reputation could be counted upon to command attention.

²
The reference to the "sacred modesty" which "forbids a surviving friend to prune or retrench" any part of Linn's work would seem to suggest that *he* ~~that Brown~~ had been asked to edit Valerian as well as to introduce it but the "judgment" mentioned was hardly so "frail" as to lead him to attempt such an indiscretion.

Though it is offered to the public as an imperfect and incomplete

1 The first book was reprinted in the Burlington New Jersey Rural Visitor in the numbers dated 30 July, 6, 13, 20, 27 August, 10, 17 September 1810. With the exception of punctuation and one paragraph division it is complete.

2 P.xvi.

work the preface by the author makes it clear that Linn, ~~defeated~~

~~in his purpose by his illness~~, had done all he could

to the text of the three parts here published. True he

hoped to write more but what was posthumously published by Brown

had had its final revision at its author's hands. It is ~~also~~ likely

that ~~he~~ ^{he} had also selected this publisher.

~~That this is so is also~~ ^{had} made certain by the ^{inf} periodical appear-

ance in Brown's Literary Magazine ^{of} three selections, ~~from it~~

~~all~~ ¹ (signed I.O.) The first entitled Artaban the Robber comprises

lines 339 to 358 and with many ~~striking and noteworthy~~ ^{alterations} changes

of the lines following from 380 to 388 and again with ^{changes} ~~changes~~

following up to 399, ^{Book} of Part I. In some cases the revision is revolutionary

and many of the lines are not given in the book. All of them

should be studied carefully by those interested in this particular

department of early American ^{verse} ~~literary work~~. This ^{first} instalment

appeared in the November 1803 number. The second entitled Alcestes

² and Azora comprises lines 1 to 8 and 18 to 77 of ^{Book} ~~Part I~~. ¹ Com-

parison shows again a surprising amount of revision, ~~new~~ lines

being given not afterward used in the book, many ~~lines are~~ com-

pletely altered and epithets ~~are~~ bettered. It is important to

notice ~~that~~ this instalment appears in the same December 1803

number as Brown's ~~editor's~~ notice of the forthcoming book, ~~which~~

~~reads as follows:~~

1 Vol. I, p. 111 ff.

2 Literary Magazine, Vol. I, p. 192 ff.

"We are informed that a Narrative Poem, built upon the early sufferings of the Christians, and intended to illustrate the influence of Christianity on the manners of nations, may shortly be expected from a pen, with which the public are already acquainted."

The third selection is ¹entitled the Boar Hunt and the Combat and comprises ^{ing} lines 136 to 300 of ^{Book} ~~Part~~ III. This appears in the January 1804 number and has only a few unimportant alterations. Having ~~about a sixth part~~ ^{while Linn was living} tried ~~these three hundred odd lines~~ on the public nothing further ^{about a sixth part} ~~was~~ seems to have been done with the poem until ^{about three months} ~~after Linn's death~~ ^{his} and ~~about the end of the year.~~

A prospectus was issued ~~for this work~~, as mentioned in Brown's letter of 8 December 1804 to William Linn, but ~~no copy~~ of it has not ^{could be seen} been found. If it ~~were~~ ^{could be seen} perhaps ~~some~~ new light might be shed on the book ^{but place it} and in ~~lieu~~ of ~~that~~ we shall ~~have to~~ derive our information from other scattered sources. The most important detail which we should like to supply is whether Brown or Linn wrote the prospectus. Probably ^{Brown} ~~from~~ did; but Linn might have. ^{Dennie's Port Folio 3 November 1804 and} Poulson's American Daily Advertiser ~~of the~~ 19th. of November 1804 announced the work as proposed so it is ^{likely} ~~probable~~ the prospectus was issued ^{at that time.} ~~at that time.~~

The death of Linn was a severe shock to all the family ^{but} and they

did not bear it in silence. Samuel Blair, his kinsman, had the
¹
 fortitude to preach the funeral sermon from which Brown probably
 derived assistance. One of Linn's sisters, probably Brown's wife,
 wrote a couplet elegy on his memory which also appeared in ~~the~~
²
~~Brown's Literary Magazine, so that it would seem quite natural~~
~~that the man of letters who had married into the family should~~
~~become the official biographer.~~

Perhaps Brown's position ^{might be thought} ~~would appear~~ to give him as severe
 a handicap as the others labored under; but it was not to result
 so. While he ~~undoubtedly~~ was surrounded by mourners and ~~although~~
~~he was~~ a friend of the deceased he came to ^{his} work not only
 prepared to make ~~of~~ it a notable thing better than any other
 connection of the family could have done ^{for} ~~but~~ he had something
 more of a stimulus to excellence than an affection for ^{the} ~~this~~ author.

Brown's brother-in-law was more than ~~usually~~ notable in his day.
 He was born at Shippensburg (Newville) Pennsylvania, 14 March 1777
 and was graduated from Columbia College in 1795. For a time he
 studied law under Alexander Hamilton but soon renounced the pro-
 fession and turned to a study of theology under Dr. Derick Romeyne

² Vol. IV, p. 318.

¹ Vol. II, p. 554 ff. It was revised for James Hardie's Biographical Dictionary Vol. IV, Appendix pp. 1-7 New York 1805. It is notable for its omission of Linn's connection with the theatre.

of Schenectady. He was sought by more than one society ^{1 and} but was
ordained co-pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at Philadel-
phia in June 1799, ² ~~and died in 1804~~. Alden's Epitaphs gives the
inscription from the Philadelphia tombstone:

"To the memory of John Blair Linn, D.D. late pastor of
this church, who died 30 August, 1804, aged 27 years, Dis-
tinguished as a poet, an orator, a scholar, and a divine;
beloved as a husband, a father, a son, and a friend; as a
minister revered; grateful affection hath erected this
monumental stone. Precious in the sight of the Lord is
the death of his servants."

The usual encyclopaedias and biographies give lists of Linn's
publications but ^{only} ~~none~~ mention ^X the Poetical Wanderer, (N.Y.,
1796) attributed to him by Cushing's Anonyms. ^{was here mention} ~~or~~ the poems and
criticism which he contributed to Brown's Literary Magazine under
the initials of I.O. ^{of them} ~~of which fact~~ Due notice will be taken [^] in
our study of the ~~editorial work of that~~ periodical.

Brown's memoir to Valerian, entitled "a sketch of the life and
character of the author" covered twenty-two pages, set generously
~~headed~~ in a size of type small for a quarto page. It is approx-
imately ten thousand words, the usual extent of similar memoirs
~~prefixed to similar books~~ of the day.

The title-page gives no name of the ^{biographer} ~~author~~ and the means of

1 His 13 April 1799 letter to John B. Romeyne says he had a call
to Elizabethtown at £300 and parsonage. Philadelphia offered
\$1300 with promise of increase.

2 N.Y., 1814, Vol. I, p. 168. Second edition p. 172.

X 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

1
identifying him is ~~in~~ Brown's three initials at the end.

Starting with a few details of ~~his~~ ancestry, Brown follows the conventional ~~plan~~ of noticing his birth, his precocious youth, his extended education, his study of law under ~~Alexander~~ Hamilton, his dramatic compositions, his clerical training under Dr. Romeyne, his entrance into the ministry at Albany, his call to Philadelphia, his marriage to Hester Bailey, his children, his prose and poetical publications, his failing health and his early death. The conclusion comprises letters from his friends Dr. Romeyne and Alexander McLeod and a summary of ~~his~~ character as a preacher and poet.

As a memoir, ~~mainly biographical~~, the work is well done. ~~Of the~~ Biographical dictionaries and works of a similar character even ~~in the cases of~~ those which have appeared since Brown's memoir, ~~was published~~ ^{do} not ~~one equals~~ it in thoroughness ~~of detail~~. ~~What~~ ~~Saintsbury says of the criticism of "colonial" times in a measure~~ ~~applies well to this work of Brown's.~~ ^{There is no} ~~There was little evident~~ attempt ~~at actual~~ literary criticism in Brown's handling of the ~~it~~ works of Linn. What might pass for ~~criticism~~ are ~~only~~ generalized statements, such as "the poem closes with a concise view of the

1 The authorship was a matter of doubt to Alden in his Epitaphs, N.Y., Second Edition, 1814, Vol. I, p. 172, where he adds a note "The late Charles B. Browne is supposed to be the author of the much admired life of the amiable, pious, and eloquent doctor Linn." Evidently Alden had not seen the book.
2 ~~History of Criticism~~, N.Y., 1904, Vol. III, p. 631.

progress of genius" etc., "some of which have merit considerably above mediocrity", "the merit of ~~this~~ performance" and the customary outline, ~~of the work~~. In these particulars it recalls the reviews Brown wrote for his American Review and Literary Journal. It is only when he has given the closing scene of Linn's life that he approaches ~~what is~~ real criticism. ~~He says:~~

" All his performances, however, candour compels us to consider as preludes to future exertions, and indications of future excellence. While their positive merit is considerable, they are chiefly characteristic of the writer, by suggesting to us what might have been expected from him, had Providence allowed him a longer date. "

~~As we have seen~~ Brown had previously given quite thorough reviews of Linn's works in his various editorial capacities and undoubtedly he now felt ~~somewhat~~ restrained by his affinity ~~so~~ ^{from going} ~~that he did not think it proper to go~~ beyond biographical details and general summaries of Linn's works. The Poem on the Death of Washington had been noticed in the Monthly Magazine.² In the American Review and Literary Journal,³ ~~we found~~ ^{ed} Brown reviewing the first edition of the Powers of Genius and the next year in the same magazine he ⁴ ~~had~~ reviewed the second edition, ~~of the same work~~. When

1 P.xxi. 2 Vol.II,p.307. It is interesting to compare Brown's ~~the~~ mention of Linn's poem on the Death of Washington in this memoir to the review ~~that~~ Brown undoubtedly wrote for his Monthly Magazine for April 1800,p.307.

3 Apl.,May,June 1801.

4 Oct.,Nov.,and Dec.,1802.

~~We come to~~ study the Literary Magazine we shall find in one of the

¹
Visitor essays which we shall ascribe to Brown, Linn's life and
 work briefly alluded to with praise. ~~Apparently the lack of extended
 criticism here was as the title indicates not only a part of the plan
 of the author but under the circumstances was necessary.~~

Despite ^{the critical} ~~this~~ deficiency Brown ^{gave} ~~has in passing~~ given an admirable
 picture of ~~the~~ poetic temperament though there again ~~the work is~~
 general in nature, ~~and might just as well have been applied to any~~
~~poet~~. However, the picture is one that bears repeated examination and
 it is not out of place even though it ^{could} ~~might~~ be better exhibited in
~~connection with a person possessing more universal genius, than Linn did.~~

A significant omission of comment even ~~of a~~ generalized character
 may be found in the mention of Linn's Bourville Castle.² We know Brown
~~had not a little to do with that play,~~ ^{the} he corrected it and wrote out
 the parts for the players. For that reason we are doubly interested in
Bourville Castle, ~~and have made some attempt to find the play.~~ Here
 where we might naturally

expect more information we have failed and have had to content

1 Literary Magazine, Vol. III, p. 469.

2 P. viii. Smith records reading it 28 February 1796.

ourselves with the notices found in the Minerva newspaper of 1797.

A similar fault is to be found in a break in the continuity of the biography. Brown was at a loss when he came to ~~write of~~ Linn's youth and the reading he pursued when a minister. ~~Just why no one tells of these times in his life is a mystery not only not made clear but not even mentioned.~~

ho ff A ~~third~~ omission which escaped Brown's notice is to be found only by reading the verse itself. There we find ~~one of~~ Brown's favorite methods of narration, which should have had an unusual interest to and appeal for him, in the fact that the story is a tale within a tale, Valerian being the narrator secondary to the author.

ho ff The Priestley controversy is another case in point and is not being elaborated as it might be, especially when Linn was so much absorbed in religious work. Brown's lack of information ~~on that particular theological dispute~~ handicapped him here, ^{or else} and it is probable he did not consider the controversy so important, as to lead him to study out the matter. Be that as it may, what has its peculiar interest for us is in the parallel of the Priestley discussion with the similar one which we have had our author carry

~~ing on with one of the friends of his youth.~~

Occasionally we find complicated sentences so ~~that~~ we are forced to conclude the work was done hurriedly. Linn died 30 August 1804 and the memoir was not published until some time after the new year so ~~that Brown undoubtedly~~ ^{he may not have} had time to do it carefully, ~~although~~ ^{for} he did have a lot of literary work ^{his} on hand^s.

An example of ~~the~~ haste ~~displayed~~ is shown in the inconsistency of the statement that he gave up all ambition when he assumed his clerical duties. The memoir goes on to say ~~that~~ he wrote and published verses while a minister. The truth of the matter was as Brown knew only too well, Linn held faithfully to his literary ambition, especially in the poetical department, throughout his ~~external changes in~~ life.

However this and other details ~~that seem to be~~ due to a hurry apply mostly to the handling of the material and not at all to the length of the ^{memoir.} ~~work~~. Had Brown been accustomed to repeated revision there is little doubt ^{it} ~~that the memoir~~ would have been ~~much~~ shorter and had he been given time to recover from the painful end of his friend ~~it seems that~~ the death scenes and details would

have moved more rapidly, ~~that they would not have palled on the~~
~~reader as they now do~~ and other more interesting parts would
 have been developed. However the speed of the composition has
 its value in that it stamps it with its character ^{of} ~~so that on~~
~~the whole the narrative~~ moves ^{ing} under an ~~unerring~~ destiny ⁱⁿ ~~taking on~~
 the semblance of a tragedy.

The model of ~~this character of work~~, of the memoirist, is Dr.
 Johnson's Lives of the Poets and of course Brown's work falls
 far below the perfect Dryden, ~~of these immortal essays~~, lacking
 its breadth and thoroughness and elegance, but it hardly descends
 to the level of the superficial ~~John~~ Pomfret.

At a later period which Brown antedated so ~~that~~ he was unable
 to study them as models Scott¹ ~~in his~~ Biographical Memoirs of
~~Eminent Novelists and other distinguished persons~~ only excelled
~~this work of~~ Brown's because of the greater repute of the subjects
~~he chose to memorialize~~. Had he written Linn's life he would not
 have improved it; as witness the memoir of John Leyden¹ which in
 character is the nearest related to Brown's of any Scott wrote.

The one on Robert Bage² is as far beneath Brown's as Johnson's

1 Edinburgh, 1834, Vol. II, p. 137 ff.

2 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 441 ff.

~~Pomfret. and was probably Scott's lowest level in this class of literary composition.~~

Two very interesting ~~contemporary~~ notices of this memoir have been selected from all those found. The first, already referred to, ~~in a foot note~~ is in the literary intelligence ^{of} ~~in Joseph~~ Dennie's Portfolio ~~for the~~ 3rd. of November 1804. It reads:

"The friends of the late Dr. Linn perceive with pleasure that proposals have been issued, by John Conrad and Co. of this city, for publishing, by subscription, 'A narrative Poem, founded on some events, in early Christian History, and designed, in part, to illustrate the effects of religion on the manners of barbarous nations.' An additional value is conferred on this posthumous work, by the promise of a Biography of its amiable and ingenious author. This we know will be written by a Man of Letters, abundantly well qualified for the task, and not only intimate with the deceased Poet, but with all the beauties of fine writing. We wish this work brilliant success, because we have always viewed the character of the author with respect, and because the profits of the publication are destined for his bereaved family, who, from merit, as well as from misfortune, are entitled to the benevolence of every liberal spirit."

As in other instances Dennie did not allow the matter to rest there. In 1809 he ~~evidently~~ thought it worthy of resurrection and reprinted it in the Portfolio.²

The second ~~of the contemporary~~ notices may be found in the Monthly Anthology and Boston Review for June 1807. It rather tardily pro-

- 1 The full title reads somewhat differently. ~~appeared in the Anthology for the year 1807.~~
- 2 January, pp. 21-29; February, pp. 129-134; March, pp. 195-203. Unfortunately for the editor's purpose of preserving the memoir, in some copies four pages, 22-23 and 26-27 were left out in the make up of the magazine.

tests the publication of the work. ~~In regard to~~ ^{The} memoir it merely spoke of ~~it~~ as ~~being~~ gratifying to the friends of the deceased, and with a few exceptions, which we wish Gardiner had stated, well written, -- which surely is damning with faint praise.

The truth appears to be ~~that~~ the reviewer was ~~a~~ very unwilling servant in the matter. According to the records of the Anthology society ^{it} ~~the review of~~ Valerian was first assigned to ~~Mr.~~ Thacher and later to John Gardiner who offered the review on 21 May 1807.

~~It never seems to have occurred to these authors that the verse was the least important part of the publication.~~

~~Though undoubtedly not a just estimate,~~ ^{In} pleasing contrast to ^{unsigned} ~~this priggishness~~ we have the mention of it in the memoir of Brown in the Goodrich Boston 1827 edition of Wieland.¹

"In the year succeeding his marriage, he commemorated the virtues and abilities of his departed friend, Dr. J. B. Linn, the brother of his wife, in one of the most elegant and interesting biographical sketches, with which we are acquainted. It is, indeed, in our apprehension, a model of its kind. The facts, though few, are judiciously arranged, and the character is gradually and distinctly developed with singular correctness and felicity."

Of course we should remember ~~that~~ this notice was written by Brown's wife, the sister of Linn, and its enthusiastic praise is



J. P. LINN.

(Illustration to be placed

to face page 1671)

therefore not ~~to be seriously considered as an impartial criticism,~~

At the same time it is real criticism. But Brown's wife was not

the only one to receive the ^{book} ~~work~~ favorably. Samuel L. Knapp, a

writer of ¹ ~~good~~ taste and genius if not of popularity has claimed

^{it was} ~~the work as~~ superior to most writings of the kind. Continuing he

says:

"Brown excelled in drawing characters, and his subject was full of romantic beauty. The melancholy of the mind and imagination of both Brown and Linn is slightly incorporated in the coloring of the picture. The light falls upon it as passing through the painted glass of a gothick window into the chancel of a monastery, throwing a religious solemnity over the group of the painting, and the artist, and all the scene around them."

On the whole the work has few of Brown's usual faults of language.

The only obscure sentence is to be found near the end where former and latter are confused, and while some Latinisms are present they are not ~~so obtrusive, as in other instances.~~

One of the notable unliterary characteristics of this work is the sameness of ~~certain~~ details in the life of Linn and Brown.

Both showed early literary tendencies, both were tutored to become lawyers, both had reserved natures, both renounced the law, ~~for very similar reasons,~~ both had touches of melancholy, both travelled for

health, both died of consumption, and both died young, one at twenty-
1 Lectures on American Literature, N.Y., 1829, p. 132.

nine, the other at thirty-nine. That the more fortunate of these two unfortunates should write the only account of any length and of any pretension of the other not only demanded a real interest in his subject but also a great deal of ^{Courage} ~~heroism~~, especially if ^{it} Brown knew when he was writing ~~this memoir~~ that he himself would in all probability die a similar death.

Faint traces of Brown himself may be found especially in the excellent digression on the advantages ^{finds} ~~that~~ youth ~~imbibes~~ in a school in the country and in the accurate and painful details of a death by consumption. That he allowed his personality to creep into the memoir but not to assert itself too strongly is perhaps the most remarkable thing about ^{it} ~~the work~~, and takes it out of ~~the~~ ~~realm of~~ ephemeral literature to which it obviously but not really belongs ^{no} ~~any~~ more than Scott's memoirs ~~written~~ for Ballantyne's Novelist's Library.

~~One of the best pieces of writing Brown did here is~~ ^{the} ~~that~~ digression on country life, ¹ ~~The~~ excuse for inserting ^{it} ~~it~~ is ~~found in~~ giving the account of Linn's early life, but our interest is ~~mostly in~~ ~~the fact~~ that it is a spontaneous outburst of Brown's own feeling and as such deserves quotation.

"Fortunate is that man who has spent any part of his early years at a country school. In youth, every object possesses the charms of novelty; care and disease have as yet made no inroads on the heart, nor stained that pure and bright medium, through which the external world makes its way to the fancy. The noise, the filth, the dull sights and unwholesome exhalations of a city are, in consequence of this enchantment, ever new and delightful to the youthful heart; but how much is this pleasure heightened, when the objects presented to view, and by which we are surrounded, are in themselves agreeable! There is something in the refreshing smells, the green, the quiet, the boundless prospects of the country, congenial to the temper of human beings, at all ages; but these possess ineffable charms at that age, when the joints are firm and elastic, when the pulse beats cheerily, and no dark omens or melancholy retrospects invade the imagination. To roam through a wood with gay companions, to search the thicket for blackberries, to bathe in the clear running brook, are pleasures which fill the memory with delicious images, and are frequently called up to afford a little respite to the heart from the evils of our subsequent experience."

The reader cannot fail to feel the almost classical pastoral quality of that. While not as perfect a specimen as it could be made to be by a few alterations it is a very creditable piece of rhythmic prose and many a better known name than Brown's might gladly receive it as an added grace.

Linn attended Princeton college but Brown at about the same time in life had had no such good fortune as to go to any institution of higher learning. For that reason his expression of the importance of the critical age in life¹ is interesting aside from its application to Linn.

"The ensuing four years were active and important ones. The moral and intellectual dispositions, which men may possibly bring into the world with them, become fixed and settled, and receive their final direction at this age. When the appetites are vigorous, the senses keen, and the conduct regulated by temper and passion, rather than by prudence and experience, we are most alive to all impressions, and generally take that path which we pursue for the rest of our days. It was during this period that Mr. Linn's taste was formed; and though his moral and professional views underwent considerable changes afterwards, the literary inclinations which he now imbibed, or unfolded, continued to adhere to him for the rest of his life."

Fortunately for Brown a like inclination for literary work had guided him.

In other places ~~We may delve~~ somewhat into the speculation of Brown's part in the theatre in New York,¹ but here we find him considering the matter in relation to Linn's life in a manner that has a double interest for us. We only need to substitute the name of Brown for Linn and the following extracts will be just as true.

" In a city where there is an established theatre, a young man, smitten with a passion for letters, can scarcely fail of becoming an assiduous frequenter of its exhibitions. Plays form a large portion of the fashionable literature of a refined nation. The highest powers of invention are displayed in the walks of dramatic poetry; and what the young enthusiast devours in his closet, he hastens with unspeakable eagerness to behold invested with the charms of life and action on the stage. At that period, some performers of merit had been recently imported from Europe, the theatre was, in an eminent degree, a popular amusement, and Mr. Linn was at that age when the enchantment of such exhibitions is greatest. The theatre accordingly became his chief passion.

To austere and scrupulous minds, the theatre is highly obnoxious, not only as hurtful in itself, but as seducing unwary youth into collateral vices and undue expences. On this account, such establishments are certainly liable to much censure. Whether reasonably or not, mankind have always annexed some disrepute to the profession of an actor; and hence no one will give himself to that profession, who cherishes in himself any lively regard for reputation. The odium with which any profession is loaded, even though originally groundless, has an unfortunate tendency to create an excuse for itself in the principles and manners of those who adopt it. To make men vicious, little more is necessary than to treat them as if they were so. "

In regard to the practise of law he found in Linn the same experience that he himself had had. It should be remembered that Brown was six years older and he had faced the problem two years
1 P.vi.

earlier in his life so that Linn's struggle ~~with the same~~
~~difficulty~~ came ~~about~~ eight years after Brown's.

^{Possibly}
~~One of~~ the most interesting copies of the book which has come
 before the public is that with Elizabeth Linn Brown's name on
 the title-page. Not being accessible we do not know if it was
 a presentation copy from Brown. The catalogue ~~of the Pollock sale~~
 speaks of it as if it were ~~in~~ her handwriting.

After ~~one has considered~~ certain noticeable details of this
 work it is of importance to remember ~~that~~ it is ^{likely} ~~probable~~ Brown
 did his part of Valerian ~~mostly~~ as a labor of love. It could
 hardly be possible he received ~~any~~ pay for ~~the memoir~~; for,
 as the notice in the Portfolio ~~had~~ said, the profits of the
 work were to go to the ~~indigent~~ widow and children and any charge
 of Brown's would have made smaller what was already too small.

How many copies were sold we do not know. The Portfolio of 1809
^{when reprinting the memoir}
 found it not at all a commonly found book.

Besides the ^{1st} reprint in Dennie's Portfolio ² ~~of 1809~~ Samuel Hazard
 thought the memoir of sufficient value to be reprinted in the
 second volume of his Register of Pennsylvania. ³ The details of

1 No. 595 in the Pollock sale 9-10 March 1904 at Philadelphia.
 2 January 1809, pp. 21-9, February pp. 129-34 and March pp. 195-203.
 3 Vol. II, 27 September 1828, pp. 171-3 and 4 October pp. 178-82.

these two reprints is a matter ~~principally~~ of bibliography.

This memoir is a narrative of personal interest. In the study of Linn's character we can often see Brown as a friend scarcely veiled so that we have an intimate estimate. ~~in which~~ most of the literary faults are ~~undoubtedly~~ due to the fact that author and subject were related by marriage. The good points are too prominent to be unnoticed or belittled, and among them the digressions are its master-strokes. They considerably lighten what would otherwise appear depressing.