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CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 5

BACON, FRANCIS
- Of Truth 19
- Of Revenge 22
- Of Wisdom for a Man's Self . . 24
- Of Dispatch 25
- Of Friendship 28
- Of Discourse 37
- Of Riehes 39
- Of Youth and Age . . . 43
- Of Studies 46

OVERBURY, SIR THOMAS
- A Wise Man 49

HALL, JOSEPH
- He Is a Happy Man . . . 50

"EARLE, JOHN
- A Young Man 54
- A Good Old Man , 55
- A Tedious Man 56

BUTLER, SAMUEL
- A Romance Writer . . . 57

STEELE, SIR RICHARD
- Mr. Bickerstaff Visits a Friend . . 59
- The Art of Conferring Benefits . . 65
- A Fine Gentleman . 68

ADDISON, JOSEPH
- Opera Lions 72
- Westminster Abbey . . 76
- True and False Humor . 80
- The Vision of Mirzah . 84

JOHNSON, SAMUEL
- The Revolutions of a Garret . 90
- The Multiplication of Books . . 95

CONTENTS

	PAGE
GOLDSMITH, OLIVER	
A Service at St. Paul's	. 99
The Character of Beau Tibbs .	. 102
LAMB, CHARLES	
A. Chapter on Ears	. 110
Mackery End, in Hertfordshire .	. 118
Dream-Children: A Reverie	. 124
She Praise of Chimney-Sweepers	.]29
S Dissertation Upon Roast Pig	. 138
(Old China	. 146
The Superannuated Man	. 153
Preface (By a Friend of the Late Elia) .	. 1(32
HAZLITT, WILLIAM	
On Going a Journey	. 166
The Fight	. 180
Sir Walter Scott	. 190
On the Conversation of Authors	. 198
HUNT, LEIGH	
On the Graces and Anxieties of Pig-Driving	. 209
Spring and Daisies	. 213
QUINCEY	
On the Knocking at the Gate in "Macbeth"	221
introduction to the World of Strife .	227
MACAULAY, THOMAS BABINGTON	
Milton and the Puritans	. 242
CARLYLE, THOMAS	
Shakespeare	. 257
Labor	. 273
NEWMAN, JOHN HENRY	
yThe Educated Man	. 278
yThe Gentleman	. 279
The Great Writer	. 281
RUSKIN, JOHN	
turst. Mark's Cathedral	. 283
The White-Thorn Blossom	. 290
THACKERAY, WILLIAM MAKEPEACE	
Tunbridge Toys	. 307
ARNOLD, MATTHEW	
Sweetness and Light	. 316
STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS	
On the Enjoyment of Unpleasant Places .	. 331
Walking Tours	. 340
Æs Triplex	. 349
TRVING, WASHINGTON	
The Art of Book-Making	. 360

CONTENTS

	PAGE
EMERSON, RALPH WALDO	
Love	. 369
Heroism	. 382
Character	. 396
CURTIS, GEORGE *WILLIAM*	
m y Chateaux	. 414
HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL	
Boating	. 435
THOREAU, HENRY D.	
Walking	. 443
LANG, ANDREW	
TO Percy Bysshc Shelley .	. 458
DICKINSON, G. LOWES	
"China for the Chinese!" .	. 464
GALSWORTHY, JOHN	
-American and Briton	. 471
GIBBS, SIR PHILIP	
England Honors Unknown Soldier	. 488
BELLOC, HILAIRE	
ON an Unknown Country .	. 495
EGLINTON, JOHN	
Sincerity	. 501
SANTAYANA, GEORGE	
Emerson	. 508
MQRLEY, CHRISTOPHER	
The Anatomy of Manhattan	. 514
SLssoN, EDWIN E.	
The Changing Mind of Man	. 518
BENCHLEY, ROBERT C.	
A. Little Debit in Your Tonneau	. 537
BEEBE, WILLIAM	
A Yard of Jungle	. 543
LEACOCK, STEPHEN	
Homer and Humbug .	. 557

INTRODUCTION

THE term essay is used loosely of many different kinds of literature, but almost always means a relatively short prose composition of an expository character. It may exist for some useful purpose, and resemble a brief treatise; or, at the opposite extreme, it may be wholly concerned with pleasurable talk about personal or even trivial things. Upon its subject-matter, then, there are practically no limits at all. For the purposes of knowledge, we are likely to value most highly the essay which is most impersonal or objective,—that is, which emphasizes the subject under consideration and not the one considering it; for the purposes of pure literature, that essay is usually best which shows most of the writer's personality.

Essays may be conveniently classified in three groups: (1) the gnomic or aphoristic, (2) the personal or familiar, and (3) the didactic or critical. Those of the first type are chiefly made up of wise sayings or aphorisms. To see how an essay of this character naturally comes into existence, one has only to look at the Book of Proverbs in the Bible. The greater portion of that book is made up of detached aphorisms, or small groups of them dealing with a single subject; but at times something like a connected essay is developed, as in the account of the Virtuous Woman in the last chapter. Essays of the second type are accounts of a subject from the distinctive standpoint of the writer,—representing, it may be, his mere likes and dislikes, or some passing mood to which he wishes to give expression. As has already been suggested, this is the kind likely to be valued most highly from the literary point of view. Essays of the third type undertake to discuss a subject with critical judgment, representing not merely the

writer's taste but also facts which he can substantiate and theories which he can make appear reasonable. Of this type the higher class of book-review is a familiar example.

The word essay properly means "an attempt," and originally implied that the writer set out, with more or less modesty or informality, to open up a subject rather than to discuss it with formal completeness. It is from the French language that we get the word, and it was a Frenchman who first applied it in this way. Of course there had been compositions which we might well call essays, in one sense or another, in ancient times; Plutarch wrote them in Greek, and Cicero and Seneca in Latin. But the form was not a well recognized one, except in connection with serious attempts to expound a subject for moral or philosophic purposes. It was Montaigne, a Frenchman of the sixteenth century, who first hit upon the idea of devoting himself to the writing of short compositions which, though they might deal with serious subjects, would be chiefly the result of his individual living, reading, and thinking; and he called them Essays. Though he had been a man of affairs, he retired from active life while still under forty, to live "in quiet and reading," and in 1580 published the first edition of the essays in which he had noted down the fruits of these quiet years. In his prefatory address "To the Reader" he gave warning that in making his book "I have proposed unto myself no other than a familiar and a private end: I have no respect or consideration at all either to thy service or to my glory." His principal subject, he went on to say, was himself. "I desire therein to be delineated in mine own genuine, simple, and ordinary fashion." "Myself am the groundwork of my book. It is then no reason thou shouldest employ thy time about so frivolous and vain a subject." This whimsical preface strikes at once the keynote of the familiar essay, which Montaigne thus invented and of which he is still regarded as the chief master.

Montaigne's essays were soon translated into English, and

found perhaps as many readers across the Channel as at home. But before the translation had been published, Francis Bacon took Montaigne's term "essay" for the title of a little book of ten discourses on serious subjects, such as "Study," "Expense," "Honor and Reputation," and the like, which he published in 1597. Thus the modern English essay was born. In 1612 a second edition raised the number of Bacon's essays to thirty-eight, and a third, in 1625, to fifty-eight. Most of these, however, are quite different from the Montaigne type; they belong to our first class, the aphoristic, and represent Bacon's desire to bring together a collection of sound maxims for those who wished to study the art of prudent and successful living. In a few cases, as in his essay on Gardens, one finds something of the other type, getting a glimpse of the more intimate personality of the writer; but for the most part, in reading Bacon's essays, we remember the formal Elizabethan statesman, with starcked ruff and serious face, teaching worldly wisdom in something like the manner of the ancient sages.

The seventeenth century saw a number of other collections of essays, largely of the serious didactic sort. Sir William Cornwallis, a contemporary of Bacon's, published his in 1600 and later; Owen Felltham issued his in 1620, under the title *Resolves;* Abraham Cowley, one of the leading poets of the middle years of the century, included his in his collected works of 1668; Sir William Temple, a statesman of the court of Charles the Second, published his under the name *Miscellanea* in 1680. In this reign of Charles the Second an important new type of essay was developed by John Diyden, the leading man of letters of the age; namely, the type devoted to literary criticism. Most of Dry den's essays were much longer than those of the earlier period, and he wrote them originally as prefaces to his various poetical works, explaining and defending his literary principles and methods. The best of them, however, the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy,* was published separately, in the form of a dialogue, in which three gentlemen

were represented as discussing the history of the drama in friendly conversation.

During the seventeenth century, again, Englishmen were fond of a kind of composition which may be viewed as a special form of the essay,—that is, the "character." This type was not new; indeed it is usually traced to the invention of the Greek philosopher Theophrastus (of the fourth century B.C.), who portrayed typical faults and foibles in the form of descriptions of type-personages called "The Grumbler," "The Boastful Man," and the like. In 1608 Joseph Hall adopted this method in his *Characters of Vices and Virtues;* in 1614 a collection appeared written by Sir Thomas Overbury and some of his friends; in 1628 John Earle published his *Microcosmographie, or a Piece of the World Discovered in Essays and Characters;* and in the latter part of the century Samuel Butler, best known as the author of the poem *Hudibras,* wrote a series of witty "characters" which were not published till after his death. It is not possible to say with exactness how much this peculiar form influenced the growth of the essay, but it is clear that the art of the "character" is not dissimilar, in its blend of humor and moralizing, to the spirit of the famous essays of Addison and Steele in the next century. It might also be noted that the formal epistle, which was a recognized literary form from the days of classical antiquity to the seventeenth century, had much in common with the essay. Not many English writers attained special distinction in this form, but the letters of James Howell, published in 1645-55 as *Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ,* show how the purposes of the essay were served by the writing of letters intended for general reading as well as for the person originally addressed.

In the eighteenth century the essay was in large degree the product of journalism. That is, the growth of the periodical press gave a new opportunity for the writer of brief expository discourses on almost any subject, and a new reading

public was being rapidly developed which could be reached in this way for various practical ends. Many of the new periodical essays were of a purely political or otherwise non-literary character; perhaps the first man to write them abundantly and successfully was Daniel Defoe, author of *Robinson Crusoe.* But it was Steele and Addison who developed the form in a way suited not merely for temporary ends but for lasting literary significance, and their two chief periodicals, the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* (founded in 1709 and 1711 respectively), exerted the most important single influence on the essay which could easily be named.

Richard Steele, in beginning the *Tatler,* doubtless thought of the undertaking at first merely as a variety of the ordinary news-journal. These journals, in many cases, had come to be associated with particular London coffee-houses, social centers characteristic of the time, and in the first number of his new journal Steele made playful use of the fact in the announcement: "All accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment shall be under the article of White's Chocolate-house; poetry, under that of Will's Coffee-house; learning, under the title of Grecian; foreign and domestic news you will have from St. James's Coffee-house; and what else I shall on any other subject offer, shall be dated from my own apartment." Very soon, however, the elements of current news and of miscellaneous reading-matter took a smaller and smaller place, and the real function of the *Tatler* was seen to be the publication of Steele's personal discussions of manners and morals,—such questions as family life, scolding, dueling, party feeling, fashionable hours, and the like, furnishing his most characteristic topics. Presently the editor's old friend Joseph Addison became his collaborator, and under his influence the more serious elements of the journal were still more emphasized. The tone of the *Tatler* essays was partly determined by the fact that they were represented as the work of a person by the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, a whimsical old gentleman who

went about London noting matters for comment. This, it will be noticed, brought about an important combination of moods or methods,—that of the serious didactic essay, made for a useful end, and that of the familiar essay, representing individual fancies and experiences. The second journal, the *Spectator,* from the first frankly devoted each number to a single essay, of a suitable length to be read at the breakfast-table; the writer was now supposed to be a gentleman called simply "the Spectator," whose character Addison sketched in the first number. Other characters were also devised, as companions in his experiences, representing different types of English life; of these the most famous is Sir Roger de Coverley, who was gradually developed to the position of a character in a work of fiction. The papers of this sort show, therefore, how the essay sometimes tends to pass over into the field of the story. But the typical *Spectator* essay was even more didactic than in the case of the *Tatler,* dealing with problems of morals, manners, or literature, though familiar in tone and popular in appeal. "I shall be ambitious," wrote Addison, "to have it said of me that I have brought philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses." The journal ran to 555 numbers, of which Steele appears to have written some 236 and Addison 274, the remainder being contributed by their friends. The essays were also bound up for sale in book form, and exerted an extraordinary influence on journalism and the art of the essay for a century following; they were widely imitated not only in England, but also in France, Germany, and even Russia.

The most important successors of Addison and Steele in the periodical essay were Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith, the leading prose writers of the later eighteenth century. Dr. Johnson issued a journal called *The Rambler,* from 1750 to 1752, made up almost wholly of his essays, and again, from 1758 to 1760, contributed a series called "The Idler" to a

newspaper. But although on the serious side of life he was as sound a critic as Addison, he was not possessed of the lightness of touch, the deftness of familiar style, which had so distinguished the *Spectator;* hence few modern readers care to penetrate the heaviness of his style—which sometimes reminds one of the thick folds of an elephant's skin—to the substance of his essays. Goldsmith was much happier in following the *Spectator* tradition; indeed in the happy-go-lucky facility of both his life and his style he is more like Steele than Addison. He began his work in the periodical essay in 1759, in a little journal called *The Bee,* which lasted only eight weeks; but his chief reputation in the form depends on the series of papers called "The Citizen of the World," contributed to the *Public Ledger* in 1760. These were represented as letters written by a Chinaman, named Lien Chi Altangi, temporarily residing in London, who undertook to describe the course of English life and manners to a friend at home. The idea was not a new one; Addison himself had used it in a well-known paper presenting the views of some "Indian Kings" who had visited England, and in 1757 Horace Walpole had published "A Letter from Xo Ho." But Goldsmith developed the idea fully, and in describing the experiences of the imagined writer from day to day in London he gave the familiar essay the most distinctive form it had acquired for many years. Sometimes, as in the two papers on "Beau Tibbs," Goldsmith's essay closely approaches the methods of fiction, as we have seen was true of some of Addison's and Steele's.

In the early years of the nineteenth century the essay was again strongly affected by certain developments in periodical literature. We must once more distinguish between the familiar type and the critical, for which new opportunities were furnished by two different kinds of journal, the magazine and the critical review. *Blackwood's Magazine* was founded in 1817, the *London Magazine* in 1820; and both of them, esna*

cially the latter, did much to develop the essay of the more informal kind. With the former is especially associated the work of John Wilson, whose pen-name was "Christopher North." Wilson wrote very abundantly, and through a long series of years, but rarely put his compositions into the brief and finished form characteristic of the true essay; one therefore finds his most interesting work in the rambling talks of the *Nodes Ambrosianoe* (conversations called "Ambrosial Nights") rather than in pieces which can be selected for separate printing. The *London Magazine* had the honor of printing some of the best work of the essayists Hazlitt and De Quincey, and, above all, the Elia Essays of Charles Lamb. There was also a group of periodicals edited by the brothers John and Leigh Hunt; and for these Leigh Hunt, as well as his friend Hazlitt and other essayists, wrote informal papers on both literature and life. The result was a larger body of writing in this form than had been seen before at one time, and its quality remains unexcelled.

Charles Lamb, by common consent, is the chief master of the English familiar essay, and the most brilliant practitioner in that form since Montaigne. For this type, as we have seen, individual personality counts most, and Lamb chanced to have just the personality required for the finest results: he was whimsical in his tastes, sometimes fantastic in imagination, yet always showed a sound judgment which penetrated his foibles with solid wisdom. He was a great reader, and had the art of pouring into his writing the flavor of the masters of English prose, without seeming to write in any other style than his own. Above all, he was like a child in the simple and curious interest which he showed in people and things. Hence whatever he wrote of became interesting when seen through his eyes, and, whether he makes the reader grow serious or smiling, his personality remains charmingly companionable. William Hazlitt, his contemporary in the same field, is like Lamb in the richness of his interest and

in the skill with which he brings together in the essay form the results of his reading and his personal experiences. His personality, however, is less agreeable; he was a somewhat fretful and wayward person, who, falling short of the sweet and sound character of Lamb, falls short correspondingly in his work. Moreover, he did not have the art of doing finely finished work in brief space, but let his pen run on with little sense of definite plan or end. Hence one of his essays is like a piece of tapestry of no definite pattern, which can therefore be cut into lengths of varying dimensions without injury; whereas one of Lamb's is more likely to resemble a tapestry complete in itself. Yet despite these things, Hazlitt is an essayist of great importance, and the substance of his writings is so full and varied that one may take them up day after day for many days, always certain of coming upon ideas fresh and worth while. The third of these magazine essayists of the period, Leigh Hunt, is like Lamb in his amiability, and like Hazlitt in the rambling and uncertain quality of his art. His essays are almost always agreeable, but rarely the very best of their kind.

The other type of periodical, the critical, is represented chiefly by the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review,* founded respectively in 1802 and 1809. These journals devoted themselves chiefly to book notices, but they made of them much more than brief descriptions; those who wrote the reviews were encouraged to develop them into extended discussions of whatever subject was suggested by the book in hand. The result was a new type of essay. Of the review editors the greatest was Francis Jeffrey, who was connected with the *Edinburgh* from its beginning until 1829; his own critical essays are among the most readable of the period. In 1825, however, he found a young contributor whose fame soon surpassed his own. This was Thomas Babington Macaulay, who began his career with a review of a recently discovered work of Milton's, from which he branched out,

according to the accepted fashion, into a full essay on Milton and his times. When Jeffrey had read the manuscript, he is reported to have said, "The more I think, the less I can conceive where you picked up that style!" Henceforth Macaulay became the *Edinburgh's* leading reviewer, and he remains the most widely read English essayist of the critical type. Almost all his essays, one will see by looking into a collective edition, were book reviews in their origin, but were developed into brilliant discussions of the principal subject, overflowing with the riches of Macaulay's mind; for he was an enormous reader, and had the most retentive memory of any modern writer. He was particularly interested in the history and the biography of the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries—the period treated in his *History of England;* and it is in his essays which concern this same period that his most valuable work is found. Macaulay was a brilliant public speaker too, and combines something of the dogmatic clearness and force of an orator with the more usual style of the essayist.

Thomas De Quincey was equally a magazinist and a reviewer; he wrote with brilliancy of both his own experiences and literature, and so fluently and abundantly that he came to be called "the great contributor." His most famous personal essay, the "Confessions of an Opium-Eater," was rather too long to conform to the usual standards of the essay, and he later expanded it into an entire book. What has been said of Hazlitt, indeed, applies to De Quincey even more: he rarely thought of the essay form as setting definite bounds to his composition, but wrote on and on in colloquial fashion, never systematic, always fluent and clever. In consequence, one usually reads him in fragments, as one drops into a room to listen to a brilliant conversationalist, knowing that it matters comparatively little when one comes in or goes out.

Both Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin, the leading prose writers of the mid-nineteenth century, are also better **known**

as miscellaneous writers than as essayists in the stricter sense. Carlyle wrote a number of essays of the book-review type, of which those on the poet Burns and on Boswell's Life of Johnson are the chief; but his most characteristic work was done in books, like *Sartor Resartus* or *Past and Present,* which must be read pretty thoroughly to be well understood, though many of their chapters may be viewed separately as essays on moral and social themes. Ruskin never contributed to the magazines, nor set out to write essays at all. He wrote lectures, treatises, and letters, always designed to enforce some truth respecting art, ethics, or society, or to awaken his readers to more vivid views of both the physical and spiritual world. There is not, then, a single distinctive essay among his many works; but numerous passages stand out in the reader's memory with almost all the qualities of the essay,—such as the famous account of the two cathedrals, English and Venetian, included in this collection, a passage which in its original setting is merely incidental to Ruskin's exposition of the qualities of various types of architecture. If we may call him an essayist, then of all our essayists he shows the most remarkable combination of the methods of poetry and of prose; for he is like the poets in loving beautiful words and images for their own sake, and in expressing his personal feelings with great intensity, while at the same time, like the prose writers, he has in view some practical and didactic end.

The chief Victorian novelists also wrote essays by the way. Those of George Eliot are of the serious critical type, written for the great reviews. Those of Dickens and Thackeray are chiefly of the informal familiar type, often close to the border of fiction; Dickens's were written for his periodicals, *Household Words* and *All the Year Round,* and Thackeray's for the *Cornhill Magazine* during the period of his editorship.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century two English writers attained distinction in different forms of the essay,— Matthew Arnold in the critical type, and Robert Louis Steven-

son in the familiar. Arnold, like Ruskin, was always disposed to teach, and in both literary and social criticism he exerted a strong influence on thoughtful men of his time. His *Essay* in Criticism* (published in two collections, 1865 and 1888) are perhaps the finest specimens of the review essay in the modern period, while in the several chapters of the book called *Culture and Anarchy* he applies the essay method to the whole question of the art of living. Stevenson, on the other hand, viewed the essay like the romance, as a means of recreation, and revived the familiar form of it more successfully than anyone had done since the days of Lamb. His success, of course, was due to the same cause as Lamb's—the unmistakable charm of his personality, which made the mere writing down of himself a thing worth while. He began his work as an essayist while still an undergraduate at Edinburgh, and first attained distinction in the *Travels with a Donkey,* diary-like sketches of a tour in the south of France. Later essays appeared in various periodicals, and were collected in the volumes called *Virginihus Puerisque, Familiar Studies of Men and Books,* and *Memories and Portraits* (1881 to 1887).

In America the writing of essays began when the *Spectator* type was still the chief model in men's minds, and Washington Irving followed this type in the essays of his *Sketch-Book* (published 1820) so agreeably that he found many readers in Oreat Britain as well as in his own land. Emerson, however, was the earliest American essayist to attain a place of the first importance, and he remains our most distinguished name in the field of the essay. The most striking characteristic of his essays is their return to the method of the aphoristic form; in this sense they are more like Bacon's than those of any other modern writer. The reason for this is not that Emerson set out to write in the manner of Bacon, or of anyone else, but that his method of thought made him emphasize the separate sentence rather than the whole composition. He saw truths one at a time, and, instead of undertaking to argue

about them, or to build up a careful expository structure to make them clear, he simply *stated* them, like an oracle or a prophet, hoping that the truth in men's minds would recognize them instinctively. He knew as well as any one that the result was a style which could not be thought a model of coherence. "Here I sit and read and write," he once said, "with very little system, and as far as regards composition with the most fragmentary result; paragraphs incompressible, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle." In reading one of Emerson's essays, then, one must not expect to go from one definite point to another along a line of thought, but rather to move around and around the principal theme, viewing it from many rewarding points of view.

Of the other New England writers of the same period, Henry David Thoreau was most like Emerson, and indeed viewed himself in some sense as a disciple of "the sage of Concord." Yet he lived very much his own life, and wrote like no one else. Thoreau wrote no separate essays of great distinction; but the chapters of his chief book, *Walden,* and of his other books dealing with the life of the spirit as he lived it out-of-doors, have some of the fine qualities of both the serious and the familiar essay. Contemporary with these two men of Concord were two at Cambridge, Lowell and Holmes. James Russell Lowell may be regarded as the chief of American critical essayists; he wrote on many subjects, but most intimately and effectively on literature, in the volumes called *Among my Books* (1870-76). Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote no essays in the stricter sense, but in his Autocrat papers he developed the method of the essay in the free manner of conversation, and sometimes introduced passages which have the character of independent compositions, like that included in the present collection. These papers were first contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* and then published in the volume called *The Autocrat of the Break fast-Table,* a title which represents a personality—partly fictitious, partly

Holmes's own—as original and charming as the Spectator himself.

Another distinguished name in this connection is that of George William Curtis, a man of letters who combined something of the courtliness of the old school with a keen sense of the significant qualities of contemporary life. For many years his editorial contributions to *Harper's Weekly* maintained a high standard of social criticism; while on the lighter side his sketches in *Potiphar Papers* and *Prue and I* (1853 and 1856) hover on the border-line between the essay and fiction.

Since the year when *Essays English and American* first appeared, the world has passed through the convulsions of a great war and the throes of change and reconstruction. It is idle to conjecture what essays Professor Alden would have selected from contemporary writers had he been spared to provide a supplement to his volume, for the task of selection in any contemporary field is like searching for mountains hidden in veils of mist. Only with difficulty do we seem to discern their outlines. The winds of time have not driven away the obscurity and revealed the sunlit peaks. But it is certain that he could not have passed over some of the striking essays that reflect the struggles of a momentous epoch in world history. Like other literary types the essay in such a time does not confine itself to traditional forms, but changes to meet the demands of the new generation. It becomes, as never before, the medium for political and social criticism, for explaining the discoveries of science, for calling attention to differences in national viewpoints, or for expressing the moods of great occasions.

These changes in content, mood, or form may be found in the essays of several of the contemporary writers reprinted here. Andrew Lang and G. Lowes Dickinson in varying ways employ the essay in *letter* form, the one to point out in the

course of his tribute to Shelley how the world "still pursues its serious folly as of old" by ignoring and slandering the beautiful, the latter to warn the Occident against assuming that steam-shovel civilization embraces all the perfections of human living. John Galsworthy in "American and Briton" represents the group of contemporaries, Rudyard Kipling, John Masefield, Arnold Bennett, H. G. Wells, and other writers, who in time of war turned their literary talents to the service of their country. In this essay propaganda attains the higher aim of clarifying viewpoints and removing, instead of intensifying, national prejudices and misunderstandings. Sir Philip Gibbs in "England Honors Unknown Soldier" transforms the newspaper dispatch from a mere essay of knowledge into an enduring essay of power.

Even during these tumultuous years other contemporaries have somehow managed to keep alive values that are not born in the din of conflict and strife. In England, Augustine Birrell, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Alice Meynell, E. V. Lucas, John Eglinton, and Hilaire Belloc are among those who have achieved distinction in the traditional essay forms; and in America, William Dean Howells, Agnes Repplier, Samuel McChord Crothers, Paul Elmer More, and Stuart Sherman. Max Beerbohm and G. K. Chesterton have amused the world -with paradox and humor; and on this side of the Atlantic, Christopher Morley, Stephen Leacock, and Robert Benchley.

John Eglinton in "Sincerity" and Hilaire Belloc in "Of an Unknown Country" continue the ruminative essay in the tradition of De Quincey, Hazlitt, and Lamb. Among the masters of the philosophic essay, George Santayana is unsurpassed for discrimination in thought and purity of style. From Christopher Morley's descriptive essay comes a revelation of a spirit of beauty that does not disdain the great city of Manhattan. Edwin E. Slosson's expository essay aids us in finding our way amid the bewildering whirls of change set going in modern thought by revelations from the laboratories of science, and

new pronouncements from the schools of philosophy, art, and education. William Beebe in "Jungle Peace" unites the tradition of Darwin and Agassiz with the tradition of Thoreau, Muir, and Burroughs, by combining the exactitude of the scientist with the sensibility of the lover of nature. The contemporary essay of wit and humor—critical, paradoxical, playfully cynical about everything, whether it be modern contrivance, or ancient tradition—is exemplified by Robert Benchley's "A Little Debit in Your Tonneau," and Stephen Leacock's "Homer and Humbug."

In general, when we consider the essay with reference to the present time, we observe that like other literary types it changes and reappears in ways characteristic of each new generation. In giving expression to the condition of an ever-hurrying and less formal and conventional life, it has become more personal, intimate, and familiar; but it still clings to traditional forms for serious philosophical and literary discussion. Indeed, the essay form is so flexible, so adaptable to the spirit of different periods, that there is no reason to expect any decline of its importance so long as literature exists at all.

FRANCIS BACON

[FRANCIS BACON was born in London in 1561. He looked forward to a diplomatic career, and, after completing his formal education at Cambridge, went to Paris in the suite of Sir Amyas Paulet, ambassador to France. Returning to England, he was made Member of Parliament for Middlesex (1595), and thereafter rose rapidly in political life, becoming successively Attorney-General, Lord Keeper, Lord Chancellor and Baron Verulam, and Viscount St. Albans. His political enemies having sought out means to attack him, he was proved (and confessed) to have received gifts from some whose suits were before him as Lord Chancellor, and, being convicted of bribery, was sentenced to a fine of 40,000 pounds and deposed from office. This tragic end of his public career led Pope to describe Bacon in the famous but grossly exaggerated phrase, "the wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind." Meantime Bacon had devoted much of his time to literature and philosophy, and his monumental work, the *Novum Organum* (or "New Instrument" for the discovery of truth), first published in Latin in 1620, is one of the landmarks in the history of both philosophy and science. Bacon died in 1626. For his essays, see the Introduction, p. 7.]

OF TRUTH[1]

What is truth?[2] said jesting[3] Pilate, and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that[4] delight in giddiness,[5] and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits which are of the same veins,[6] though there

1. This essay, which appeared first in the collection of 1625, was given the place of honor in that volume, as Essay I.
2. **What is truth?** See *John* 18: 38.
3. **jesting.** Scoffing:.
4. **there be that.** There are those who. The reference is especially to the "sect" of Pyrrho, a Greek philosopher who flourished 800 B.C, and who, since he denied the possibility of human knowledge, was called the founder of the skeptical school.
5. **giddiness.** Levity or inconstancy.
6. **disooursing . • • veins.** Wits who still **argue** in **the** same

be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor which men take in finding out of truth, nor again that when it is found it imposeth[7] upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor; but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later schools[8] of the Grecians exainineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies; where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets; nor for advantage, as with the merchant; but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masques and mummeries and triumphs of the world, half so stately and daintily as candlelights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that sheweth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would,[9] and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the fathers,[10] in great severity, called poesy *vinum dcemonum,* because it filleth the imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in and settleth in it, that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it, the knowledge

7. **lmposeth.** Exerts a forcible influence.

8. **One of the later schools.** Lucian of Samosata, of the second century A.D.

9. **as one would.** At pleasure, unrestrained.

10. **One of the fathers.** St. Jerome had called the songs of poets "daemonum cibus", "food of demons"; and St. Augustine referred to poetry as "vinum erroris", "the wine of sin." Bacon may have confusea the two passages.

of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and his sabbath work, ever since, is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light upon the face of the matter or chaos; then he breathed light into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet[11] that beautified the sect that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: ***It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea: a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle and the adventures thereof below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth (A*** **hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene,),** ***and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below:*** **so[12] always that this prospect[13] be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.**

To pass from theological and philosophical truth, to the truth of civil business: it will be acknowledged, even by those that practice it not, that clear and round[14] dealing is the honor of man's nature; and that mixture of falsehood is like allay[15] in coin of gold and silver; which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth[16] it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There

11. The poet. Lucretius, who died 55 B.C. His "sect" was that of the Epicureans, whose doctrines he wrote his great poem *De Rerum Natura* to expound. The quotation is from Book ii, lines 1-13.

12. so. Provided.

13. **prospect.** Survey.

14. round- Fair.

15. **allay.** Alloy.

16. **embaaetli it.** Debases its value.

is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious. And therefore Montaigne[17] saith prettily, when he inquired the reason, why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace and such an odious charge; saith he, *If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth is as much to say as that he is brave towards God and a coward towards men.* For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men; it being foretold that, when Christ cometh,[18] *he shall not find faith upon the earth.*

OF REVENGE[1]

REVENGE is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law; but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon. And Salomon,[2] I am sure, saith, *It is the glory of a man to pass by an offense.* That which is past is gone, and irrevocable; and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come; therefore they do but trifle with themselves, that labor in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake; but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, or the like. Therefore why

17. **Montaigne.** See the Introduction, page 6. The quotation is from the 18th essay of Montaigne's second Book; he derived it from Plutarch's *Lives.*

18. **when Christ cometh,** etc. See *Luke* 18: 8. Bacon interprets the word "faith" in the sense of "fidelity" rather than in the New Testament sense.

1. First published in 1625 as Essay IV.
2. **Salomon.** See *Proverbs* 19:11.

should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me? And if any man should do wrong merely out of ill nature, why, yet it is but like the thorn or briar, which prick and scratch because they can do no other. The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy; but then let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish; else a man's enemy is still before-hand, and it is two for one. Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh: this is the more generous. For the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt as in making the party repent: but base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark. Cosmus, duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable: *You shall read* (saith he) *that we are commanded to forgive our enemies; but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends.* But yet the spirit of Job[3] was in a better tune: *Shall we* (saith he) *take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also!* And so of friends in a proportion. This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well. Public revenges are for the most part fortunate; as that for the death of Caesar; for the death of Pertinax;[4] for the death of Henry the Third[5] of France; and many more. But in private revenges it is not so. Nay rather, vindicative[6] persons live the life of witches; who as they are mischievous, so end they infortunate.

3. spirit of Job. See *Job* 2:10.

4. **Pertinax.** A Roman emperor who was murdered by the Pretorian Guard in the year 193 A.D.; the soldiers were disgraced and banished by Septimius Severus.

5. **Henry the Third** was assassinated in 1589 by a monk, acques Clement, who was himself slain on the spot by the king's g lards

6. **vindicative.** Vindictive.

OF WISDOM FOR A MAN'S SELF[1]

AN ANT is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd[2] thing in an orchard or garden. And certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste[3] the public. Divide with reason between self-love and society; and be so true to thyself, as thou be not false to others, specially to thy king and country. It is a poor center of a man's actions, himself. It is right earth;[4] for that only stands fast upon his own center, whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens move upon the center of another, which they benefit. The referring of all to a man's self is more tolerable in a sovereign prince; because themselves are not only themselves, but their good and evil is at the peril of the public fortune. But it is a desperate evil in a servant to a prince, or a citizen in a republic. For whatsoever affairs pass such a man's hands, he crooketh them to his own ends; which must needs be often eccentric to[5] the ends of his master or state. Therefore let princes, or states, choose such servants as have not this mark; except they mean their service should be made but the accessary. That which maketh the effect more pernicious is that all proportion is lost. It were disproportion enough for the servant's good to be preferred before the master's: but yet it is a greater extreme, when a little good of the servant shall carry things against a great good of the master's. And yet that is the case of bad officers, treasurers, ambassadors, generals, and other false and corrupt servants; which set a bias[6] upon their bowl, of their own petty ends and envies,

1. First published in 1612; called Essay XXIII in 1625. The title may be paraphrased, "Of Self-Seeking."
2. **shrewd.** Mischievous.
3. **waste.** Despoil.
4. right earth. Merely earthy. The phrase is explained by the following passage, based on the old Ptolemaic astronomy; the earth, the center of our universe, revolves only about its own axis, whereas the planets and the sun revolve around it.
5. **eccentric** to. Divergent from.
6. **bias.** In the game of bowls, a piece of lead inserted at one side of the bowl, deflecting it from the straight course.

to the overthrow of their master's great and important affairs. And for the most part, the good such servants receive is after the model of their own fortune; but the hurt they sell for that good is after the model of their master's fortune. And certainly it is the nature of extreme self-lovers, as[7] they will set an house on fire, and[8] it were but to roast their eggs; and yet these men many times hold credit with their masters, because their study is but to please them and profit themselves; and for either respect[9] they will abandon the good of their affairs.

Wisdom for a man's self is, in many branches thereof, a depraved thing. It is the wisdom of rats, that will be sure to leave a house somewhat before it fall. It is the wisdom of the fox, that thrusts out the badger, who digged and made room for him. It is the wisdom of crocodiles,[10] that shed tears when they would devour. But that which is specially to be noted is, that those which (as Cicero says of Pompey) are *sui amantes sine rivali,*[11] are many times unfortunate. And whereas they have all their time sacrificed to themselves, they become in the end themselves sacrifices to the inconstancy of Fortune, whose wings they thought by their self-wisdom to have pinioned.[12]

OF DISPATCH[1]

AFFECTED dispatch[2] is one of the most dangerous things to business that can be. It is like that which the physicians

7. **as.** That.
8. **and.** If.
9. **respect.** Consideration.
10. **crocodiles.** This belief was widespread, and gave rise to the still current expression, "crocodile tears." Cf. Shakespeare's *Henry VI,* Part 2, III, i, 226.
11. **sui amantes,** etc. "Lovers of themselves without a rival."
12. **pinioned.** Clipped.

1. First published in 1612; Essay XXV in the final collection. Bacon uses the term "dispatch" with special reference to public business, and his maxims will still be found admirable for the consideration of debaters, chairmen, and those in similar positions.
2. **affected dispatch.** Exaggerated haste.

call pre-digestion, or hasty digestion, which is sure to fill the body full of crudities and secret seeds of diseases. Therefore measure not dispatch by the times of sitting, but by the advancement of the business. And as in races it is not the large stride or high lift that makes the speed; so in business, the keeping close to the matter, and not taking of it too much at once, procureth dispatch. It is the care of some only to come off speedily for the time, or to contrive some false periods of business, because[3] they may seem men of dispatch. But it is one thing to abbreviate by contracting, another by cutting off: and business so handled at several sittings or meetings goeth commonly backward and forward in an unsteady manner. I knew a wise man[4] that had it for a by-word, when he saw men hasten to a conclusion: *Stay a little, that we may make an end the sooner.*

On the other side, true dispatch is a rich thing. For time is the measure of business, as money is of wares; and business is bought at a dear hand where there is small dispatch. The Spartans and Spaniards[5] have been noted to be of small dispatch: *Mi venga la muerte de Spagna; Let my death come from Spain;* for then it will be sure to be long in coming.

Give good hearing to those that give the first information in business; and rather direct them in the beginning than interrupt them in the continuance of their speeches: for he that is put out of his own order will go forward and backward, and be more tedious while he waits upon his memory than he could have been if he had gone on in his own course. But sometimes it is seen that the moderator is more troublesome than the actor.

3. **because.** That.

4. **a wise man.** Sir Amyas Paulet. (See the biographical note on Bacon.)

5. **Spaniards.** Bacon refers to the same proverb in one of his letters, saying-: "All which have made the delays of Spain to come into a byeword through the world."

Iterations[6] are commonly loss of time: but there is no such gain of time as to iterate often the state of the question; for it chaseth away many a frivolous speech as it is coming forth. Long and curious[7] speeches are as fit for dispatch, as a robe or mantle with a long train is for race. Prefaces, and passages,[8] and excusations,[9] and other speeches of reference to the person, are great wastes of time; and though they seem to proceed of modesty, they are bravery.[10] Yet beware of being too material,[11] when there is any impediment or obstruction in men's wills; for preoccupation of mind ever requireth preface of speech; like a fomentation[12] to make the unguent enter.

Above all things, order, and distribution, and singling out of parts, is the life of dispatch; so as the distribution be not too subtile: for he that doth not divide[13] will never enter well into business; and he that divideth too much will never come out of it clearly. To choose time is to save time; and an unseasonable motion is but beating the air. There be three parts of business: the preparation, the debate or examination, and the perfection. Whereof, if you look for dispatch, let the middle only be the work of many, and the first and last the work of few. The proceeding upon somewhat[14] conceived in writing doth for the most part facilitate dispatch; for though it should be wholly rejected, yet that negative is more pregnant of direction than an indefinite; as ashes are more generative than dust.

6. **Iterations.** Repetitions.
7. **curious.** Over-detailed.
8. **passages.** Digressions.
9. **excusations.** Apologies.
10. **bravery.** Display.
11. **being too** material. Sticking too closely to the mcin subject.
12. **fomentation,** A hot application to open the pores.
13. **divide.** Classify, analyze.
14. **somewhat.** Something.

OF FRIENDSHIP[1]

IT HAD been hard for him that spake it to have put **more** truth **than** untruth together in a few words, than in that speech, *Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god.*[2] For it is most true that a natural[3] and secret hatred and aversation[4] towards society, in any man, hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature; except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation:[5] such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen; as Epimenides the Candian, Numa the Roman, Empedocles the Sicilian, and Apollonius of Tyana;[6] and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal,[7] where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little, *Magna civitas, magna solitudo;*[8] because in a great town friends are scattered; so that there is not that fellowship, for the most

1. First published in 1612; rewritten as Essay XXVII for the final collection.
2. **Whosoever,** etc. From the *Politics* of Aristotle, Book i.
3. **natural.** Untamed.
4. **aversation.** Aversion.
5. **conversation.** Way of life, intercourse.
6. **Epimenides,** etc. All these were men who loved solitude, **and** who were rumored to have intercourse with spiritual powers. Epimenides was a Cretan poet of the seventh century B.C., who, after **a** long- period of retirement, reappeared with the claim that he had slept for fifty years, and assumed the role of one inspired. **Numa,** the traditional first king of Rome, was reputed to seek in solitude the counsel of the nymph Egeria. **Empedocles, a** Sicilian philosopher of the fifth century B.C. boasted miraculous powers conferred on him by the gods. **Apollonius,** a Greek philosopher of the first century A.D., spent many years in retirement at **a** temple dedicated to Æsculapius, and was also said to have conversed with the spirit of Achilles at his tomb.
7. **tinkling cymbal.** Cf. i *Corinthians* 13:1.
3. **Magna civitas,** etc. "A grreat city, **a** great solitude." This saying is found **in** the *Adagia* of Erasmus, and in various classical **writers.**

part, which is in less neighborhoods. But we may go further, and affirm most truly that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want[9] true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness; and even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fullness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kind do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind; you may take sarza[10] to open the liver, steel[11] to open the spleen, flowers of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum[12] for the brain; but no receipt openeth the heart, but a true friend, to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift[13] or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak: so great, as[14] they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions and almost equals to themselves, which many times sorteth to[15] inconvenience. The modern

9. **want.** Lack.
10. **sarga.** Sarsaparillsu
11. **steel.** A familiar remedy. Dorothy Osborne, a well-known letter-writer of the 17th century, wrote to Sir William Temple: "They do so frigrht me with strange stories of what the spleen will bring me to in time. . . . To prevent this, who would not take steel or anything-. . . . I do not take the powder, as many do. but only lay a piece of steel in white wine over night and drink the infusion next morning."
12. **castoreteum.** An oil obtained from a gland of the beaver.
13. **civil shrift.** Opposed to a religious shrift, made only in the church.
14. as. That.
15. **sorteth** to. Results in.

languages give unto such persons the name of *favorites,* or *privadoes;*[16] as if it were matter of grace, or conversation. But the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them *participes curarum;*[17] for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called *friends,* and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla,[18] when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (after sumamed the Great) to that height, that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla's overmatch. For when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his, against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great,[19] Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; *for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting.* With Julius Caesar, Decimus Brutus[20] had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew; and this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Caesar would have discharged the senate, in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calpurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his **chair, telling** him he hoped he would not dismiss the senate

16. privadoes. Familiars (Spanish).

17. **participes curarum.** Sharers of cares. Bacon appears to have found this "Roman **name"** in Dion Cassius's *History of Rome.*

18. **Sylla.** Sulla (138-78 B.C.) obtained command of Rome by leading its own army ag'ainst the state; his cause was espoused by Pompey. In what follows Bacon is inaccurate. According to Plutarch, "Pompey required the honor of a triumph, but Sylla denied it, alleging that none could enter in triumph into Rome but consuls or praetors. . . . All this blanked not Pompey, who told him frankly . . . how men did honor the rising- not the setting of the sun." (Life of Pompey, North's translation.)

19. **great.** Violently.

20. **Casar . . . Brutus.** See the faithful picture of the relations of these men given by Shakespeare in *Julius Cæsar,* based oa Plutarch's *Lives.*

till his wife had dreamt a better dream. And it seemeth his favor was so great, as Antonius, in a letter which is recited *verbatim* in one of Cicero's *Philippics,* calleth him *venefica,* "witch"; as if he had enchanted Caesar. Augustus raised Agrippa[21] (though of mean birth) to that height, as, when he consulted with Maecenas about the marriage of his daughter Julia, Maecenas took the liberty to tell him, *that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa, or take away his life; there was no third way, he had made him so great.* With Tiberius Caesar, Sejanus[22] had ascended to that height, as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith, *Hœc pro amicitia nostra non occultavi;*[23] and the whole senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them two. The like or more was between Septimius Severus[24] and Plautianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus; and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also in a letter to the senate by these words: *I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live*[25] *me.* Now if these princes had been as a Trajan,[26] or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise, of such strength

21. **Agrippa.** Son-in-law and minister of Augustus, and one of his two chief advisers; the other was Maecenas, a man of great wealth, best known as a patron of literature. The anecdote of Maecenas's advice respecting the marriage of the princess is from Dion Cassius.

22. **Sejanus.** A favorite adviser of the emperor Tiberius; put to death, however, on being discovered to have conspired against his master, in 31 A.D.

23. Hæ**C pro,** etc. "On account of our friendship I have not concealed these things." (Tacitus, *Annals,* Book iv.)

24. **Septlmlus Severus.** An African soldier (146-211 A.D.), who won the Roman throne by overthrowing his rivals with the aid of his troops. Plautianus was a fellow-townsman, to whom he virtually made over the government; like Sejanus, however, the favorite conspired against the master, and was executed in 203.

25. **over-live.** Survive.

26. **Trajan . . . Marcus Aurelius.** Emperors distinguished for their moderation and kindliness.

and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity (though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half piece,[27] except they might have a friend to make it entire: and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten, what Comineus[28] observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none; and least of all, those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on and saith that towards his latter time *that closeness did impair and a little perish[29] his understanding.* Surely Comineus might have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master, Lewis the Eleventh, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras[30] is dark, but true; *Cor ne edito,* "Eat not the heart." Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want[31] friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable[32] (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man's self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is, in truth of operation upon a man's mind, of like virtue as the alchemists use to

27. **half piece.** An allusion to the practice of cutting silver pennies in two, when smaller coins were scarce.

28. **Comineus.** Philippe de Comines (1445-1509), confidential adviser of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, until, in 1472, ho entered the service of Louis XI of France. (See Scott's *Quentin Durward* for brilliant portraits of all three men.) Later he composed an important volume of Memoirs.

29. **perish.** Cause to decay.

30. **Pythagoras.** A Greek philosopher of the sixth century B.C

31. **want.** Lack.

32. **admirable.** To be wondered at.

attribute to their stone[33] for man's body; that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet, without praying in aid[34] of alchemists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature. For in bodies, union strengthened and cherisheth any natural action; and, on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression: and even so is it of minds.

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests; but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up, in the communicating and discoursing with another: he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshalleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles[35] to the king of Persia, *that speech was like cloth of Arras,[36] opened and put abroad;[37] whereby the imagery doth appear in figure;[38] whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs.* Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained[39] only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel (they indeed are best);

33. **alchemists' stone.** More often called "the philosopher's stone," a substance believed to have the power of transmuting **base** metals into gold, and also of prolonging life.

34. **praying in aid.** Craving the assistance; a legal term.

35. **Themistocles.** An Athenian general (514-449 B.C), who, after being accused of treason by his own people, sought **refuge with** the Persian king Artaxerxes.

36. **cloth of Arras.** Art-tapestry (named from the town in Prance where the finest kinds were made).

37. **put abroad.** Spread out or hung.

38. **imagery . . . in figure.** The design is fully revealed.

39. **restrained.** Restricted.

but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not.[40] In a word, a man were better relate himself[41] to a statua[42] or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.[43]

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point, which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar[44] observation; which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus[45] saith well in one of his enigmas, *Dry light is ever the best.* And certain it is that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment; which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer. For there is no such flatterer as is a man's self; and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts; the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first; the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine, sometime, too piercing and corrosive. Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead. Observing our faults in others is sometimes unproper for our case. But the best receipt (best, I say, to work, and best to take) is the

40. **stone which itself cuts not.** A proverbial expression drawn from Horace.

41. **were better relate himself.** Would do better to converse.

42. **statua.** Statue (the Latin form). Cf. Shakespeare's *Julius Casar,* II, ii, 76 and III, ii, 192.

43. **in smother.** Stilled.

44. **vulgar.** Common, general.

45. **Heraclitus.** A Greek philosopher who flourished about 500 B.C. The words attributed to him are found in Plutarch's Life of Romulus. Whatever they originally meant, Bacon uses the phrase "dry light" (and it has ever since been used) to mean clear intellectual perception, free from the saturating moisture (see "infused and drenched," four lines further) of personal feeling.

admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit, for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune. For, as S. James[46] saith, they are as men *that look sometimes into a glass, and presently[41] forget their own shape and favor.* As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four-and-twenty letters;[48] or that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest;[49] and such other fond[50] and high imaginations, to think himself all in all. But when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight. And if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces, asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man; it is well (that is to say, better perhaps than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers. One, that he shall not be faithfully counseled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked[51] to some ends which he hath that giveth it. The other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief and partly of remedy; even as if you would call a physician, that is thought

46. S. James. See the *Epistle of James,* 1:23-24.

47. **presently.** Immediately, **favor.** Countenance.

48. **four-and-twenty letters.** To run through the alphabet was a form of the same process as that recommended in the adage, "When angry count a hundred." The letters were numbered as twenty-four because u and **v** were counted as but one letter; so also i and J.

49. **musket . . . upon a rest.** The musket was a heavy gun Introduced into the Spanish army by the Duke of Alva; it was originally flred from a rest, which the "musketeer" stuck into the ground in front of him.

60. **fond.** Foolish.

61. **bowed and crooked.** Bent and perverted.

good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind; and so cure the disease and kill the patient. But a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man's estate[52] will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon other inconvenience. And therefore rest not upon scattered counsels; they will rather distract and mislead than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment) followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship is to cast[53] and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself; and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients,[54] to say *that a friend is another himself:* for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing[55] of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him. So that a man hath as it were two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices[56] of life are as it were granted to him and his deputy; for he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself! A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less extol

62. •**state.** Condition.
53. **cast.** Consider, count up.
54. **speech of the ancients.** A widely quoted saying. Bacon probably drew it from Cicero's treatise *On Friendship,*
55. **bestowing.** Giving in marriage.
56. **offices.** Functional

them; **a man** cannot sometimes brook[57] to supplicate or beg; **and** a number of the like. But all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper[58] relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms: whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth[59] with the person. But to enumerate these things were endless: I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part: if he have not a friend, he may quit the stage.

OF DISCOURSE[1]

SOME in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment, in discerning what is true; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought. Some have certain common-places and themes wherein they are good, and want[2] variety; which kind of poverty is for the most part tedious, and, when it is once perceived, ridiculous. The honorablest part of talk is to give the occasion; and again to moderate[3] and pass to somewhat else; for then a man leads the dance. It is good, in discourse, and speech of conversation, to vary and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments; tales with reasons; asking of questions with telling of opinions; and jest with earnest: for it is a dull thing to tire, and, as we say now, to jade[4] anything too far. As for jest, there be certain things which ought to be privileged from it; namely, religion, matteis of state, great

57. **brook.** EndurQ.
58. **proper.** Peculiar to himself.
59. **sorteth.** Suits.

1. This essay first appeared in 1597; it was enlarged In 1612 and again in 1625, and was eventually numbered XXXII.
2. **want.** Lack.
3. **moderate.** Sum up the question (like a presiding officer).
4. **jade.** Exhaust.

persons, any man's present business of importance, and any case that deserveth pity. Yet there be some that think their wits have been asleep, except they dart out somewhat that is piquant and to the quick: that is a vein which would be[5] bridled:

***Parce, puer, stimulis, et fortius utere loris.*[6]**

And generally, men ought to find the difference between saltness and bitterness. Certainly, he that hath a satirical vein, as he maketh others afraid of his wit, so he had need be afraid of others' memory. He that questioneth much, shall learn much, and content much; but especially if he apply his questions to the skill of the persons whom he asketh: for he shall give them occasion to please themselves in speaking, and himself shall continually gather knowledge. But let his questions not be troublesome; for that is fit for a poser.[7] And let him be sure to leave other men their turns to speak. Nay, if there be any that would reign and take up all the time, lee him find means to take them off and to bring others on; as musicians used to do with those that dance too long galliards.[8] If you dissemble sometimes your knowledge of that you are thought to know, you shall be thought another time to know that you know not. Speech of a man's self ought to be seldom, and well chosen. I knew one was wont to say in scorn, *He must needs be a wise man, he speaks so much of himself:* and there is but one case wherein a man may commend himself with good grace, and that is in commending virtue in another, especially if it be such a virtue whereunto himself pretendeth.[9] Speech of touch[10] towards others should be sparingly used; for discourse ought to be as a field, without

6. would be. Should be. (Cf. *Hamlet,* III, iii, 75.)

6. **Parce, puer,** etc. "Boy, spare the spur, and hold the reins **more** tigrntly." (Ovid, *Metamorphoses,* ii, 127.)

7. **poser.** Examiner; one who sets test questions.

8. **galliards.** The gralliard was a formal but spirited dance.

9 **pretendeth.** Lays claim.

10. Speech of touch. Personalities.

coming home to any man. I knew two noblemen, of the west part of England, whereof the one was given to scoff, but kept ever royal cheer[11] in his house: the other would ask of those that had been at the other's table, *Tell truly, was there never a flout or dry[12] blow given?* to which the guest would answer, *Such and such a thing passed.* The lord would say, *I thought he would mar a good dinner.* Discretion of speech is more than eloquence; and to speak agreeably to him with whom we deal, is more than to speak in good words or in good order. A good continued speech, without a good speech of interlocution, shows slowness; and a good reply or second speech, without a good settled speech, showeth shallowness and weakness. As we see in beasts, that those that are weakest in the course are yet nimblest in the turn; as it is betwixt the greyhound and the hare. To use too many circumstances[13] ere one come to the matter, is wearisome; to use none at all, is blunt.

OF RICHES[1]

I CANNOT call riches better than the baggage of virtue. The Roman word is better, *impedimenta;* for as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue; it cannot be spared nor left behind, but it hindereth the march; yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory. Of great riches there is no real use, except it be in the distribution; the rest is but conceit.[2] So saith Salomon:[3] *Where much is, there are many to consume it; and what hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes?* The personal fruition in any man cannot reach to feel great riches: there is a custody of

11. **cheer.** Hospitality.
12. **dry.** Hard.
13. **circumstances.** Unessential details.
1. First published in 1612; enlarged in 1625 **as Essay XXXIV.**
2. **conceit.** Imagination.
3. saith **Salomon.** See *Ecclesiastes* 5:11.

them; or a power of dole and donative[4] of them; or a fame of them; but no solid use to the owner. Do you not see what feigned prices are set upon little stones and rarities ? and what works of ostentation are undertaken, because[5] there might seem to be some use of great riches? But then you will **say,** they may be of use to buy men out of dangers or trouble. As Salomon saith: *Riches are as a stronghold in the imagination of the rich man.*[6] But this is excellently expressed, that it is in imagination, and not always in fact. For certainly great riches have sold more men than they have brought out. Seek not proud riches, but such as thou mayest get justly, use soberly, distribute cheerfully, and leave contentedly. Yet have no abstract nor friarly[7] contempt of them. But distinguish, as Cicero saith[8] well of Rabirius Posthumus: *In studio rei amplificandee apparebat non avaritiœ prcœdam sed instrumentum bonitati quceri.*[9] Hearken also to Salomon, and beware of hasty gathering of riches: *Qui festinat ad divitias non erit insons.*[10] The poets feign that when Plutus (which is Riches) is sent from Jupiter,[11] he limps and goes slowly; but when he is sent from Pluto,[11] he runs and is swift of foot: meaning, that riches gotten by good means and just labor pace slowly; but when they come by the death of others (as by the course of inheritance, testaments, and the like), they **come** tumbling upon a man. But it might be applied likewise

4. **dole and donative.** Dealing out (as in charity) and **bestow. ing** (as in bequests, endowments, etc.)

5. **because.** So that.

6. **Riches are,** etc. *Proverbs* 10:15.

7. **abstract nor friarly.** As a matter of principle, or like the **friars** who abjure wealth.

8. **Cicero saith.** The speech in which the remark occurs **was a** defence of Posthumus, a famous money-lender accused of extortion, though the remark itself had reference to another man, Curius Rabirius.

9. **In studio rei,** etc. "In his desire for increased wealth he sought not, it was evident, the gratification of avarice but the means of doing good."

10. **Qui festinat,** etc. "He that maketh haste to be rich **shall** not be innocent." *Proverbs* 28:20.

11. **Jupiter . . . Pluto.** Rulers, respectively, of the celestial and the infernal regions.

to Pluto, taking him for the devil. For when riches come from the devil (as by fraud and oppression and unjust means), they come upon speed.[12] The ways to enrich are many, and most of them foul. Parsimony is one of the best, and yet is not innocent; for it withholdeth men from works of liberality and charity. The improvement of the ground is the most natural obtaining of riches; for it is our great mother's blessing, the earth's; but it is slow. And yet, where men of great wealth do stoop to husbandry, it multiplieth riches exceedingly. I knew a nobleman in England, that had the greatest audits[13] of any man in my time; a great grazier, a great sheep-master, a great timber man, a great collier, a great corn[14]-master, a great lead-man, and so of iron, and a number of the like points of husbandry: so as the earth seemed a sea to him, in respect of the perpetual importation. It was truly observed by one, that himself came very hardly[15] to a little riches, and very easily to great riches. For when a man's stock is come to that, that he can expect[16] the prime of markets, and overcome[17] those bargains which for their greatness are few men's money, and be partner in the industries of younger men, he cannot but increase mainly.[18] The gains of ordinary trades and vocations are honest, and furthered by two things chiefly: by diligence, and by a good name for good and fair dealing. But the gains of bargains are of a more doubtful nature; when men shall wait upon others' necessity, broke[19] by servants and instruments to draw them on, put off others cunningly that would be better chapmen,[20] and the like practices, which are crafty and

12. **upon speed.** With speed.
13. **Audits.** Receipts **from land.**
14. **corn. Grain.**
15. **Hardly.** With difficulty.
16. **expect.** Await.
17. **overcome. Get at, take advantage of.**
18. **mainly.** Greatly.
19. **broke.** Do business.
20. **onapmen.** Traders.

naught[21] As for the chopping of bargains, when a man buys, not to hold, but to sell over again, that commonly grindeth double, both upon the seller and upon the buyer. Sharings do greatly enrich, if the hands be well chosen that are trusted. Usury[22] is the certainest means of gain, though one of the worst; as that whereby a man doth eat his bread *in sudore vultus alieni,*[23] and besides, doth plow upon Sundays. But yet, certain though it be, it hath flaws; for that the scriveners[24] and brokers do value[25] unsound men, to serve their own turn. The fortune in being the first in an invention, or in a privilege, doth cause sometimes a wonderful overgrowth in riches; as it was with the first sugar man[26] in the Canaries: therefor if a man can play the true logician, to have as well judgment as invention, he may do great matters; especially if the times be fit. He that resteth upon gains certain, shall hardly grow to great riches: and he that puts all upon adventures, doth oftentimes break and come to poverty: it is good therefore to guard adventures with certainties that may uphold losses. Monopolies, and coemption[27] of wares for re-sale, where they are not restrained, are great means to enrich; especially if the party have intelligence what things are like to come into request, and so store himself beforehand. Riches gotten by service, though it be of the best rise,[28] yet when they are gotten by flattery, feeding humors, and other servile conditions, they may be placed amongst the worst. As for fishing for testaments and executorships (as

21. **naught.** Evil (naughty).

22. **Usury.** The lending of money for (not necessarily excessive) interest.

23. **in sudore,** etc. "In the sweat of another's brow."

24. **scriveners.** Brokers, who invested money on commission.

25. **value.** Represent as trustworthy.

26. **first sugar man.** No particular person is referred to. Sugar cane was taken from Sicily to Madeira and the Canaries near the end of the 15th century, and for the following two centuries Europe drew her sugar supply chiefly from these islands,

27. **coemption.** Buying up the whole supply.

28. **of the best rise.** In the highest rank.

Tacitus saith[29] of Seneca, *testamenta et orbos tanquam indagine capi*[30]), it is yet worse; by how much men submit themselves to meaner persons than in service. Believe not much them that seem to despise riches: for they despise them that despair of them; and none worse, when they come to them. Be not penny-wise; riches have wings, and sometimes they fly away of themselves, sometimes they must be set flying to bring in more. Men leave their riches either to their kindred, or to the public; and moderate portions prosper best in both. A great state[31] left to an heir, is as a lure to all the birds of prey round about to seize on him, if he be not the better stablished in years and judgment. Likewise glorious gifts and foundations[32] are like *sacrifices without salt;*[33] and but the painted sepulchers of alms, which soon will putrefy and corrupt inwardly. Therefore measure not thine advancements[34] by quantity, but frame them by measure:[35] and defet not charities till death; for certainly, if a man weigh it rightly. he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own.

OF YOUTH AND AGE[1]

A MAN that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time. But that happeneth rarely. Generally, youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise as the second. For there is a youth in thoughts as well as in ages. And yet the invention of young men is more lively than that of

29. Tacitu saith. Tacitus, one of the chief Roman historians, is quoting: Suillius, one of Seneca's enemies, who asks how the philosopher-statesman could have amassed 300,000,000 sesterces in four years by fair means.

80. **testamenta,** etc. "Wills and childless parents taken as with a net." {*Annals* of Tacitus, book xiii.)

81. state. Estate; compare "stablish," just below, for modern "establish."

32. **foundations.** Endowments.

33. **sacrifices without salt.** See *Leviticus* 2:13 for the Hebrew custom referred to. Bacon means that the gifts left behind **after** the death of the giver will spoil for lack of his personal care.

34. **advancements.** Settlements of property.

35. **measure.** Just proportion.

1. First published in 1612; revised in 1625. as Essay XLIL

old; **and** imaginations stream into their minds better, and as it were more divinely. Natures that have much heat, and great and violent desires and perturbations, are not ripe for action till they have passed the meridian of their years: as it was with Julius Caesar, and Septimius Severus;[2] of the latter of whom it is said, *Juventutem egit erroribus, imo furoribus, plenam.*[3] And yet he was the ablest emperor, almost, of all the list. But reposed[4] natures may do well in youth; as it is seen in Augustus Caesar, Cosmus duke of Florence,[5] Gaston de Foix,[6] and others. On the other side, heat and vivacity in age is an excellent composition[7] for business. Young men are fitter to invent than to judge; fitter for execution than for counsel; and fitter for new projects than for settled business. For the experience of age, in things that fall within the compass of it, directeth them; but in new things, abuseth[8] them. The errors of young men are the ruin of business; but the errors of aged men amount but to this, that more might have been done, or sooner. Young men, in the conduct and manage of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end, without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles which they have chanced upon absurdly; care not to innovate,[9] which draws unknown inconveniences; use extreme remedies at first; and, that which doubleth all errors,

2. **Septimus Severus.** See note above, page 31, under the essay on Friendship.

3. **Juventutem,** etc. "His youth was full not only of errors but of frantic passions/' (From Spartianus's Life of Severus.)

4. **reposed.** Calm.

5. **Cosmus duke of Florence.** Cosmo de Medici (1389-1464) became ruler of Florence at the age of seventeen.

6. **Gaston de Foix.** Bacon may refer to **a** Count de Folx of the 14th century, of whom the chroniclers relate that he won distinction both in civil and military life at the age of fourteen, or to a nephew of Louis XII who was made commander-in-chief of an expedition in which he was slain at the **age** of twenty-three, in 1512.

7. **composition.** Temperament.

8. **abusetn.** Deceives.

9. **care not to innovate. Are not cautious about making; innovations*.**

will not acknowledge or retract them; like an unready horse, that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period,[10] but content themselves with a mediocrity of success. Certainly, it is good to compound employments of both; for that will be good for the present, because the virtues of either age may correct the defects of both; and good for succession,[11] that young men may be learners, while men in age are actors; and, lastly, good for extern accidents,[12] because authority followeth old men, and favor and popularity youth. But for the moral part, perhaps youth will have the pre-eminence, as age hath for the politic. A certain rabbin, upon the text, *Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams,*[13] inferreth that young men are admitted nearer to God than old, because vision is a clearer revelation than a dream. And certainly, the more a man drinketh of the world, the more it intoxicateth; and age doth profit[14] rather in the powers of understanding than in the virtues of the will and affections. There be some have an over-early ripeness in their years, which fadeth betimes. These are, first, such as have brittle wits, the edge whereof is soon turned; such as was Hermogenes[15] the rhetorician, whose books are exceeding subtile, who afterwards waxed stupid. A second sort is of those that have some natural dispositions which have better grace in youth than in age; such as is a fluent and luxuriant speech, which becomes youth well, but not age: so Tully[16] saith of

10. period. Consummation.
11. **ancossion.** Provision for the future.
12. **extern accidents.** Chances coming from without (as from public opinion).
13. *Tour* **young men,** etc. See *Joel* 2:28. The "rabbin" Is Abravanel, a Jewish scholar of the early 16th century.
14. **profit.** Improve, advance in.
15. **Hermog-enes.** A writer of the second century, who at fifteen was famous as a rhetorician, but lost his memory at twenty-five, and spent the remainder of a long life uselessly.
16. **Tally.** Cicero.

Hortensius,[17] *Idem manebat, neque idem decebat.*[18] The third is of such as take too high a strain at the first, and are magnanimous[19] more than tract[20] of years can uphold; as was Scipio Africanus,[21] of whom Livy saith in effect, *Ultima primis cedebant.*[22]

OF STUDIES[1]

STUDIES serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men[2] can execute and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humor[3] of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need proyning[4] by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men[5] contemn studies; simple[6] men admire them; and wise men use them: for they teach not their

17. **Hortenslns.** A Roman orator, at first a rival and later a colleague of Cicero.

18. **Idem manebat,** etc "He remained the same, when the **same** was no longer becoming to him."

19. **magnanimous.** High-spirited.

20. **tract.** Course.

21. **Scipio Africanus.** A great Roman general, who died 183 B.C.; he was elected consul before he had attained the legal age, and won his great victories in Africa in his early thirties, but his later years were shadowed by public ingratitude and suspicion. Livy the historian treats of him in his *Annals.*

22. **Ultima,** etc. "The last fell short of the first."

1. First published in 1597; enlarged in 1612 **and again** in 1625; eventually called Essay L.

2. **expert men.** Men trained by experience.

3. **humor.** Whim, eccentricity.

4. **proyning.** Pruning, cultivation.

5. **crafty men.** Bacon probably means men skilled in handicrafts and other matters not requiring book learning.

6. **simple.** Ignorant, foolish.

own use; but that is a wisdom without them and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously;[7] and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments,[8] and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit;[9] and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty;[10] the mathematics subtile; natural philosophy[11] deep; moral[12] grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores.*[13] Nay, there is no stond[14] or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out[15] by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins;[16] shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never

7. **curiously.** Attentively.
8. **arguments.** Portions of the subject-matter.
9. **present wit.** A ready mind.
10. **witty.** Quick of fancy.
11. **natural philosophy.** Physical science.
12. **moral.** Understand "philosophy."
13. **Abeunt, etc.** "Studies have* an influence upon the manners of those that are conversant in them." (This is Bacon's own Saraphrase, in his *Advancement of Learning;* the original is from Svid's *Heroides,* Book **xv.)**
14. **stond.** Hindrance, stoppage.
15. **wrought out.** Removed.
16. **reins.** Kidneys.

so little, he must begin again: if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen;[17] for they are *cymini sectores:*[18] if he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases: so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

17. the schoolmen. Medieval philosophers (of the "scholastic" system).
18. cymlnl sectores. Splitters of cummin-seed, "hair-splitters."

CHARACTERS

[SIX THOMAS OVERBURY was born in 1581, of an aristocratic family: he did distinguished work at Oxford University, and later won a position at the court of James I, where he fostered literature and the arts. Becoming involved in a court scandal, he was imprisoned in the Tower and secretly poisoned (in 1613) by agents of Lady Essex. For his Characters, see the Introduction, page 8.

JOSEPH HALL was born in 1574, and educated at Cambridge. He won early success as poet and satirist, but after taking holy orders devoted himself largely to controversial writing on ecclesiastical matters; he was made Bishop of Exeter in 1627 and of Norwich in 1641. Under the Commonwealth he was removed from, office and imprisoned; he died in private life, in 1656.

JOHN EARLE was born about 1601, and educated at Oxford. While still a young man he attained literary fame through his collection of Characters called *Microcosmographie* (1628), which ran through many editions. He became tutor to Prince Charles (afterward Charles II), and during the Commonwealth followed the royal house to France; after the Restoration he was made Bishop, first of Worcester, then of Salisbury, dying in 1665. He was called "one of those men who could not have an enemy."

SAMUEL BUTLER was born in 1612, the son of a Worcestershire farmer, and had to make his own way in the world. Eventually he served as clerk to several justices of the peace and as secretary to country gentlemen. He engaged in some pamphleteering on the side of the Royalists, and after the Restoration attained fame through the publication of *Hudibras,* a mock-heroic poem in ridicule of the Puritans. Admired but not greatly rewarded by the court, he died in poverty in 1680.. Butler's Characters, together with many of his other writings, remained in manuscript until the middle of the eighteenth century.]

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY

A WISE MAN

Is THE truth of the true definition of man, that is, a reasonable creature. His disposition[1] alters; he alters **not.** He hides

1. disposition. Condition.

himself with the attire of the vulgar;[2] and in indifferent things is content to be governed by them. He looks according to nature; so goes his behavior. His mind enjoys a continual smoothness; so cometh it that his consideration is always at home. He endures the faults of all men silently, except his friends, and to them he is the mirror of their actions; by this means, his peace cometh not from fortune, but himself. He is cunning in men, not to surprise, but keep his own,[3] and beats off their ill-affected humors no otherwise than if they were flies. He chooseth not friends by the Subsidy-book,[4] and is not luxurious[5] after acquaintance. He maintains the strength of his body, not by delicates, but temperance; and his mind, by giving it pre-eminence over his body. He understands things, not by their form, but qualities; and his comparisons intend[6] not to excuse but to provoke him higher. He is not subject to casualties, for fortune hath nothing to do with the mind, except those drowned in the body; but he hath divided his soul from the case of his soul, whose weakness he assists no otherwise than eommiseratively—not that it is his, but that it is. He is thus, and will be thus; and lives subject neither to time nor his frailties, the servant of virtue, and by virtue the friend of the highest.

JOSEPH HALL

HE IS A HAPPY MAN

THAT hath learned to read himself more than all books, and hath so taken out this lesson that he can never forget it;

2. Tulfft. Common people.

3. is cunning* in mem, etc. Knows how to deal with men, not deceitfully but for self-protection.

4. Subsidy-book. A book in which were recorded the names of those liable to pay certain taxes; hence a list of people of means.

6. luxurious. Passionately desirous.

6. his comparisons Intend, etc. That is, when he compares his own work with that of others he does it not to apologize but to Improve.

that knows the world, and cares not for it; that, after many traverses of thoughts,[7] is grown to know what he may trust to, and stands now equally armed for all events; that hath got the mastery at home, so as he can cross his will without a mutiny, and so please it that he makes it not a wanton; that in earthly things wishes no more than nature, in spiritual is ever graciously ambitious;[8] that for his condition stands on his own feet, not needing to lean upon the great, and can so frame his thoughts to his estate that when he hath least he cannot want, because he is as free from desire as superfluity; that hath seasonably broken the headstrong restiness[9] of prosperity, and can now manage it at pleasure; upon whom all smaller crosses light as hailstones upon a roof; and for the greater calamities, he can take them as tributes of life and tokens of love; and if his ship be tossed, yet he is sure his anchor is fast. If all the world were his, he could be no other than he is, no whit gladder of himself, no whit higher in his carriage,[10] because he knows contentment lies not in the things he hath, but in the mind that values them. The powers of his resolution can either multiply or subtract at pleasure. He can make his cottage a manor or a palace when he lists, and his home-close[11] a large dominion, his stained cloth arras,[12] his earth[13] plate, and can see state in the attendance of one servant, as one that hath learned a man's greatness or baseness is in himself; and in this he may even contest with the proud, that he thinks his own the best. Or if he must be outwardly great, he can but turn the glass, and make his stately manor a low and straight[14] cottage, and in all his

7. traverses of thoughts. Thoughts on unhappy fortunes.
8. graciously ambitious. Ambitious to attain divine grace.
9. restiness. Stubbornness (of a horse).
10. carriage. Mode of carrying (deporting) himself.
11. liome-olose. House-yard.
12. arras. Wall-tapestry.
13. earth. Earthenware; that is, he can make his coarse dishes into gold plate.
14. straight. Narrow; now spelled "strait."

costly furniture he can see not richness but use; he can see dross in the best metal and earth through the best clothes, and in all his troupe[15] he can see himself his own servant. He lives quietly at home out of the noise of the world, and loves to enjoy himself always, and sometimes his friend, and hath as full scope to his thought as to his eyes. He walks ever even in the midway betwixt hopes and fears, resolved to fear nothing but God, to hope for nothing but that which he must have. He hath a wise and virtuous mind in a serviceable body, which that better part affects as a present servant and a future companion, so cherishing his flesh as one that would scorn to be all flesh. He hath no enemies; not for that[16] all love him, but because he knows to [17] make a gain of malice. He is not so engaged to any earthly thing that they two cannot part on even terms; there is neither laughter in their meeting, nor in their shaking of hands tears. He keeps ever the best company, the God of Spirits and the spirits of that God, whom he entertains continually in an awful familiarity, not being hindered either with too much light or with none at all. His conscience and his hand are friends, and (what devil soever tempt him) will not fall out. That divine part goes ever uprightly and freely, not stooping under the burden of a willing sin, not fettered with the gyves of unjust scruples. He would not, if he could, run away from himself or from God; not caring from whom he lies hid, so he may look these two in the face. Censures and applauses are passengers to him, not guests; his ear is their thoroughfare, not their harbor; he hath learned to fetch both his counsel and his sentence from his own breast. He doth not lay weight upon his own shoulders, as one that loves to torment himself with the honor of much employment; but as he makes work his game, so doth he not list to make himself work. His strife is ever to redeem

15. troupe. Household retinue.
16. for that. Because.
17. knows to. Knows how to.

and not to spend time. It is his trade to do good, and to think of it his recreation. He hath hands enough for himself and others, which are ever stretched forth for beneficence, not for need. He walks cheerfully in the way that God hath chalked, and never wishes it more wide or more smooth. Those very temptations whereby he is foiled[18] strengthen him; he comes forth crowned and triumphing out of the spiritual battles, and those scars that he hath make him beautiful. His soul is every day dilated to receive that God, in whom he is; and hath attained to love himself for God, and God for His own sake. His eyes stick so fast in heaven that no earthly object can remove them; yea, his whole self is there before his time, and sees with Stephen,[19] and hears with Paul,[20] and enjoys with Lazarus,[21] the glory that he shall have, and takes possession beforehand of his room amongst the saints; and these heavenly contentments have so taken him up that now he looks down displeasedly upon the earth as the region of his sorrow and banishment, yet joying more in hope than troubled with the sense of evils. He holds it no great matter to live, and his greatest business to die; and is so well acquainted with his last guest that he fears no unkindness from him: neither makes he any other of dying than of walking home when he is abroad, or of going to bed when he is weary of the day. He is well provided for both worlds, and is sure of peace here, of glory hereafter; and therefore hath a light heart and a cheerful face. All his fellow-creatures rejoice to serve him; his betters, the angels, love to observe him; God Himself takes pleasure to converse with him, and hath sainted him before his death, and in his death crowned him.

18. foiled. Partly thrown (in wrestling).
19. Stephen. See *Acts* 7:55-56.
20. paul. See *Acts* .9:3-4.
21. Lasarum. See *Luke* 16:23.

JOHN EARLE

A YOUNG MAN

HE IS now out of nature's protection, though not yet able to guide himself; but left loose to the world and fortune, from which the weakness of his childhood preserved him; and now his strength exposes him. He is, indeed, just of age to be miserable, yet in his own conceit[22] first begins to be happy; and he is happier in this imagination, and his misery not felt is less. He sees yet but the outside of the world and men, and conceives them according to their appearing glister,[23] and out of this ignorance believes them. He pursues all vanities for happiness, and enjoys them best in this fancy. His reason serveg not to curb but understand his appetite, and prosecute the motions thereof with a moro eager earnestness. Himself is his own temptation, .and needs not Satan, and the world will come hereafter. He leaves repentance for gray hairs, ana performs it in being covetous. He is mingled with the vices of the age as the fashion and custom, with which he longs to be acquainted, and sins to better his understanding. He conceives his youth as the season of his lust, and the hour wherein he ought to be bad; and because he would not lose his time, spends it. He distastes religion as a sad thing, and is six years elder for a thought of heaven. He scorns and fears, and yet hopes for old age, but dare not imagine it with wrinkles. He loves and hates with the same inflammation, and when the heat is over is cool alike to friends and enemies. His friendship is seldom so steadfast, but that lust, drink, or anger may overturn it. He offers you his blood today in kindness, and is ready to take yours tomorrow. He does seldom anything which he wishes not to do again, and is only wise after a mis-

22. **conceit.** Imagination.
23. **conceives . . . glister.** Judges them according to their **apparent** ..brllnance.

fortune. He suffers much for his knowledge, and a great deal of folly it is makes him a wise man. He is free from many vices, by being not grown to the performance, and is only more virtuous out of weakness. Every action is his danger, and every man his ambush. He is a ship without pilot or tackling, and only good fortune may steer him. If he scape this age, he has scaped a tempest, and may live to be a man.

A GOOD OLD MAN

Is THE best antiquity, and which we.may with least vanity admire. One whom time hath been thus long a working, and like winter fruit ripened when others are shaken down. He hath taken out as many lessons of the world as days, and learnt the best thing in it, the vanity of it. He looks over his former life as a danger well past, and would not hazard himself to begin again. His lust was long broken before his body, yet he is glad this temptation is broke too, and that he is fortified from it by this weakness. The next door of death-sads. him not but he expeets it calmly as his turn in, nature; and fears more his recoiling back to childishness than dust. All men look on him as a common father, and on old age, for his sake, as a reverent thing. His very presence and face puts vice out of countenance, and makes it an indecorum in a vicious man. He practices his experience on youth without the harshness of reproof, and in his counsel is good company. He has some old stories still of his own seeing to confirm what he says, and makes them better in the telling; yet is not troublesome neither with the same tale again, but remembers with them how oft he has told them. His Old savings and morals seem proper to his bearad; and the poetry of Cato[24] does well out of his mouth, and he speaks it as if he were the author. He is not apt to put the

24. **Cato.** The Roman statesman of the second century B.C, who was highly reputed for his old-fashioned and uncompromising virtue. He was not a poet, but in in later — **maxims,** in verse form, were attrib

boy on a younger man,[25] nor the fool on a boy, but can distinguish gravity from a sour look; and the less testy he is, the more regarded. You must pardon him if he like his own times better than these, because those things are follies to him now that were wisdom then; yet he makes us of that opinion too when we see him, and conjecture thosa times by so good a relic. He is a man capable of a dearness with the youngest men, yet he not youthfuller for them, but they older for him; and no man credits more his acquaintance. He goes away at last too soon whensoever, with all men's sorrow but his own; and his memory is fresh, when it is twice as old.

A TEDIOUS MAN

TALKS to no end, as well as to no purpose; for he would never come at it willingly. His discourse is like the road-miles in the north,[26] the filthier and dirtier the longer; and he delights to dwell the longer upon them to make good the old proverb that says they are good for the dweller, but ill for the traveler. He sets a tala upon the rack, and stretches it until it becomes lame and out of joint. Hippocrates[27] says art is *long;* but he is so for want of art. He has a vein of dullness that runs through all he says or does; for nothing can be tedious that is not dull and insipid. Digressions and repetitions, like bag and baggage, retard his march and put him to perpetual halts. He makes his approaches to a business by oblique lines, as if he meant to besiege it, and fetches a wide compass about to keep others from discovering what his design is. He is like one that travels in a dirty deep road, that moves slowly; and, when he is at a stop,

25. put . . . younger man. Take a younger man for a boy.

26. road-miles in the north. The Scottish mile was formerly about an eighth longer than the English. Cf. Burns in *Tam O'Shanter:* "we think na on the lang Scots miles."

27. Hippocrates. An ancient Greek physician. His famous aphorism was handed down later in Seneca's Latin version: "Vita brevls, ars longa," which Chaucer paraphrased in the line, "The lyf so short, the craft so long to lerne."

goes back again, and loses more time in picking of his way than in going it. How troublesome and uneasy soever he is to otheres not at_all perceixe it; for though home be homely, it is more delightful than finer things abroad; and he that is used to a thing and knows no better believes that other men, to whom it appears otherwise, have the same sense of it that he has; as melancholy[28] persons that fancy themselves to be glass believe that all others think them so too; and therefore that which is tedious to others is not so to him, otherwise he would avoid it; for it does not so often proceed from a natural defect as affectation and desire to give others that pleasure which they find themselves, though it always falls out quite contrary. He_that converses with him is,like one that-trvels with a.compflnimi that rides a lame jade; must-eiihex- endure to go his pace or stay for him; for though he understands long before what he would be at better than he does himself, he must have patience and stay for him, until, with much ado to little purjpp^IEiZiEjfin^ comes to him; for he believes hifiiself injured if he should abate a jot of his own diversion.

SAMUEL BUTLER
A ROMANCE WRITER

PULLS down old histories to build them up finer again, after a new model of his own desigaing. He takes away all the lights of truth in history to make it the fitter tutoress of life; for Truth herself has little or nothing to do in the affairs of the world, although all matters of the greatest weight and moment are pretended and done in her name, like a weak princess that has only the title, and falsehood all the power. He observes one very fit decorum in dating his histories in the days of old and putting all his own inventions upon ancient times; for when the world was younger, it might

28. melancholy. Mad.

perhaps love and fight and do generous things at the rate he describes them; but since it is grown old, all these heroic feats are laid by and utterly given over, nor ever like to come in fashion again; and therefore all his images of those virtues signify no more than the statues upon dead men's tombs, that will never make them live again. He is like one of Homer's gods, that sets men together by_jthe ears and fetches them off again how he pleases; brings armies "into the field uPiielcL like JaneIIo's leaden" soldiers; leads up both sides himself, and gives the victory* to which he pleases, according as he finds it fit the design of his storyj makes love and lovers too, brings them" "acquainted, and appoints meetings when and where he pleases, and at the same time betrays them in the height of all their felicity to miserable captivity, or some other horrid calamity; for which he makes them rail at the gods and curse their own innocent stars when he only has done them all the injury; makes men villains, compels them to act all barbarous inhumanities by his own directions, and after inflicts the cruelest punishments upon them for it. He makes all his knights fight in fortifications, and storm one another's armor before they can come to encounter body for body, and always matches them so equally one with another that it is a whole page before they can guess which is likely to have the better; and he that has it is so mangled that it had been better for them both to have parted fair at first; but when they encounter with those that are no knights, though ever so well armed and mounted, ten to one goes for nothing. As for the ladies, they are every one the most beautiful in the whole world, and that's the reason why no one of them, nor all together with all their charms, have power to tempt away any knight from another. He differs from a just historian as a joiner doer from a carpenter- the one does, things plainly and substanitially for use, and the other carves and polishes merely for show and ornament.

RICHARD STEELE

[RICHARD STEELE was born in 1672. He entered Oxford University, tut joined the army before he had taken a degree. In 1701 he began to write for the stage; later he was appointed state gazetteer, and engaged in political pamphleteering. He founded *The Tatler* in 1709 (see Introduction, page 9), and later joined Addison in *The Spectator* and various subsequent journals. After a stormy career as Member of Parliament, he was knighted by the King. In 1724 he retired to an estate in Wales, and died there in 1729. Though he fell short of the distinction which marked the literary work and reputation of Addison, Steele's character is as amiable and rather more vivacious than that of his friend.]

MR. BICKERSTAFF VISITS A FRIEND[1]

[Tatler No. 95. Thursday, November 17, 1709.]

THERE are several persons who have many pleasures and entertainments in their possession which they do not enjoy. It is, therefore, a kind and good office to acquaint them with their own happiness, and turn their attention to such instances of their good fortune as they are apt to overlook. Persons in the married state often want such a monitor; and pine away their days, by looking upon the same condition in anguish and murmur, which carries with it in the opinion of others a complication of all the pleasures of life, and a retreat from its inquietudes.

I am led into this thought by a visit I made an old friend, who was formerly my school-fellow. He came to town last week with his family for the winter, and yesterday morning sent me word his wife expected me to dinner. I am, as it

1. This essay is one of the most characteristic of those which represent the effort of Steele and Addison to attract their readers to the values of simple domestic morality and happiness, On "Mr. Bickerstaff," see the Introduction, page 9.

were, at home at that house, and every member of it knows me for their well-wisher. I cannot indeed express the pleasure it is, to be met by the children with so much joy as I am when I go thither. The boys and girls strive who shall come first, when they think it is I that am knocking at the door; and that child which loses the race to me runs back again to tell the father it is Mr. Bickerstaff. This day I was led in by a pretty girl, that we all thought must have forgot me; for the family has been out of town these two years. Her knowing me again was a mighty subject with us, and took up our discourse at the first entrance. After which, they began to rally me upon a thousand little stories they heard in the country, about my marriage to one of my neighbor's daughters. Upon which the gentleman, my friend, said, "Nay, if Mr. Bickerstaff marries a child of any of his old companions, I hope mine shall have the preference; there is Mrs. Mary[2] is now sixteen, and would make him as fine a, widow as the best of them. But I know him too well; he is so enamoured with the very memory of those who flourished in our youth, that he will not so much as look upon the modern beauties. I remember, old gentleman, how often you went home in a day to refresh your countenance and dress, when Teraminta[3] reigned in your heart. As we came up in the coach, I repeated to my wife some of your verses on her." With such reflections on little passages[4] which happened long ago, we passed our time during a cheerful and elegant meal. After dinner, his lady left the room, as did also the children. As soon as we were alone, he took me by the hand: "Well, my good friend," says he, "I am heartily glad to see thee; I was afraid you would never have seen all the company that dined with you today again. Do not you think the good

2. Mrs. Mary. Pronounced "Mistress." The term "Miss" was at this period reserved for little girls.

3. **Teraminta.** The fanciful name supposed to he applied to the young lady in question according to the practice of conventional love poetry.

4. pasiages. Incidents.

woman of the house a little altered, since you followed her from the play-house, to find out who she was, for me?" I perceived a tear fall down his cheek as he spoke, which moved me not a little. But, to turn the discourse, said I, "She is not indeed quite that creature she was when she returned me the letter I carried from you; and told me 'she hoped, as I was a gentleman, I would be employed no more to trouble her, who had never offended me, but would be so much the gentleman's friend as to dissuade him from a pursuit which he could never succeed in.' You may remember, I thought her in earnest; and you were forced to employ your cousin Will, who made his sister get acquainted with her for you. You cannot expect her to be forever fifteen." "Fifteen!" replied my good friend. "Ah! you little understand, you that have lived a bachelor, how great, how exquisite a pleasure there is, in being really beloved! It is impossible that the most beauteous face in nature should raise in me such pleasing ideas as when I look upon that excellent woman. That fading in her countenance is chiefly caused by her watching with me in my fever. This was followed by a fit of sickness, which had like to have carried her off last winter. I tell you sincerely, I have so many obligations to her, that I cannot with any sort of moderation think of her present state of health. But as to what you say of fifteen, she gives me every day pleasures beyond what I ever knew in the possession of her beauty when I was in the vigor of youth. Every moment of her life brings me fresh instances of her complacency to my inclinations, and her prudence in regard to my fortune. Her face is to me much more beautiful than when I first saw it; there is no decay in any feature, which 1 cannot trace from the very instant it was occasioned by some anxious concern for my welfare and interests. Thus at the same time, methinks, the love I conceived towards her for what she was, is heightened by my gratitude for what she is. The love of a wife is as much above the idle passion com-

monly called by that name, as the loud laughter of buffoons is inferior to the elegant mirth of gentlemen. Oh! she is an inestimable jewel. In her examination of her household affairs, she shows a certain fearfulness to find a fault, which makes her servants obey her like children; and the meanest we have has an ingenuous shame for an offence, not always to be seen in children in other families. I speak freely to you, my old friend; ever since her sickness, things that gave me the quickest joy before, turn now to a certain anxiety. As the children play in the next room, I know the poor things by their steps, and am considering what they must do, should they lose their mother in their tender years. The pleasure I used to take in telling our boy stories of the battles, and asking my girl questions about the disposal of her baby,[5] and the gossiping of it, is turned into inward reflection and melancholy."

He would have gone on in this tender way, when the good lady entered, and with an inexpressible sweetness in her countenance told us she had been searching the closet for something very good, to treat such an old friend as I was. Her husband's eyes sparkled with pleasure at the cheerfulness of her countenance; and I saw all his fears vanish in an instant. The lady, observing something in our looks which showed we had been more serious than ordinary, and seeing her husband receive her with great concern under a forced cheerfulness, immediately guessed at what we had been talking of; and applying herself to me, said, with a smile, "Mr. Bickerstaff, do not believe a word of what he tells you; I shall still live to have you for my second, as I have often promised you, unless he takes more care of himself than he has done since his coming to town. You must know, he tells me that he finds London is a much more healthy place than the country; for he sees several of his old acquaintance and school-fellows are here, young fellows

5. feer baby. That is, her doll; the *gossiping* is the christening.

with fair full-bottomed periwigs.[6] I could scarce keep him this morning from going out open-breasted."[7] My friend, who is always extremely delighted with her agreeable humor, made her sit down with us. She did it with that easiness which is peculiar to women of sense; and to keep up the good humor she had brought in with her, turned her raillery upon me. "Mr. Bickerstaff, you remember you followed me one night from the play-house; suppose you should carry me thither tomorrow night, and lead me into the front box."[8] This put us into a long field of discourse about the beauties who were mothers to the present, and shone in the boxes twenty years ago. I told her I was glad she had transferred so many of her charms, and 1 did not question but her eldest daughter was within half-a-year of being a toast.[9] We were pleasing ourselves with this fantastical preferment of the young lady, when on a sudden we were alarmed with the noise of a drum, and immediately entered my little godson to give me a point of war.[10] His mother, between laughing and childing, would have put him out of the room; but I would not part with him so. I found, upon conversation with him, though he was a little noisy in his mirth, that the child had excellent parts,[11] and was a great master of all the learning on the other side eight years old. I perceived him a very great historian in Æsop's Fables; but he frankly declared to me his mind, that he did not delight in that learning, because he did not believe they were true; for which reason I found he had very much turned his studies,

6. **full-bottomed periwig's.** Large curled wigs, reaching; to the shoulders, such as are familiar in the pictures of Addison and Steele.

7. **open-breasted.** That is, with the then fashionable long waistcoat unfastened over the chest, "out of an affectation of youth," as Steele put it in another essay (*Tatler* No. 246).

8. **front bos.** At this period the gentlemen occupied the side boxes at the theater, the ladies those in front of the stage.

9. **toast.** A belle, in whose honor toasts would be drunk at parties.

10. **point of war.** A short roll on the drum, used as a signal.

11. **parts.** Abilities.

for about a twelvemonth past, into the lives and adventures of Don Belianis[12] of Greece, Guy of Warwick,[13] the Seven Champions,[14] and other historians of that age. I could not but observe the satisfaction the father took in the forwardness of his son; and that these diversions might turn *to* some profit, I found the boy had made remarks[15] which might be of service to him during the course of his whole life. He would tell you the mismanagements of John Hickerthrift,[16] find fault with the passionate temper in Bevis of Southampton,[17] and loved Saint George for being the champion of England; and by this means had his thoughts insensibly molded into the notions of discretion, virtue, and honor. I was extolling his accomplishments, when the mother told me that the little girl who led me in this morning was in her way a better scholar than he. "Betty," said she, "deals chiefly in fairies and sprites, and sometimes in a winter night will terrify the maids with her accounts, until they are afraid to go up to bed."

I sat with them until it was very late, sometimes in merry, sometimes in serious discourse, with this particular pleasure, which gives the only true relish to all conversation, a sense that every one of us liked each other. I went home, considering the different conditions of a married life and that of a bachelor; and I must confess it struck me with a secret concern, to reflect that whenever I go off I shall leave no

12. **Bon Belianis.** The hero of an extravagant Spanish romance by Fernandez.

13. **Guy of Warwick.** A legendary English hero, whose adventures were narrated in many popular romances.

14. **the Seven Champion*.** National heroes (St. George, St Patrick, St Andrew, St. David, St Denis, St. Anthony, and St James) whose stories were related in a long romance called *The Famous History of the Seven Champions of Christendom,* by Richard Johnson, 1596-1616.

15. **made remarks.** Observed matters.

16. **John Hickerthrift.** A mythical boy (called also Tom Hickathrift), reputed to have had extraordinary strength, wherewith he slew giants, played merry pranks, etc.

17. **Bevis of Southampton-** The hero of another widely **popular** romance of the sixteenth century.

traces behind me. In this pensive mood I returned to my family; that is to say, to my maid, my dog, and my cat, who only can be the better or worse for what happens to me.

THE ART OF CONFERRING BENEFITS

[Spectator, No. 248. Friday, December 14, 1711.]

THERE are none who deserve superiority over others in the esteem of mankind, who do not make it their endeavor to be beneficial to society, and who, upon all occasions which their circumstances of life can administer, do not take a certain unfeigned pleasure in conferring benefits of one kind or other. Those whose great talents and high birth have placed them in conspicuous stations of life are indispensably obliged to exert some noble inclinations for the service of the world, or else such advantages become misfortunes, and shade and privacy are a more eligible portion. Where opportunities and inclinations are given to the same person, we sometimes see sublime instances of virtue, which so dazzle our imaginations that we look with scorn on all which in lower scenes of life we may ourselves be able to practice. But this is a vicious way of thinking; and it bears some spice of romantic madness for a man to imagine that he must grow ambitious, or seek adventures, to be able to do great actions. It is in every man's power in the world who is above mere poverty, not only to do things worthy, but heroic. The great foundation of civil virtue is self-denial; and there is no one above the necessities of life but has opportunities of exercising that noble quality, and doing as much as his circumstances will bear for the ease and convenience of other men; and he who does more than ordinarily men practice upon such occasions as occur in his life, deserves the value of his friends, as if he had done enterprises which are usually attended with the highest glory. Men of public spirit differ rather in their circumstances than

their virtue; and the man who does all he can, in a **low** station, is more a hero than he who omits any worthy action he is able to accomplish in a great one. It is not many years ago since Lapirius,[1] in wrong of his elder brother, came to a great estate by gift of his father, by reason of the dissolute behavior of the first-born. Shame and contrition reformed the life of the disinherited youth, and he became as remarkable for his good qualities as formerly for his errors. Lapirius, who observed his brother's amendment, sent him on a New Year's Day in the morning the following letter:

Honored Brother:

I enclose to you the deeds whereby my father gave me this house and land. Had he lived till now, he would not have bestowed it in that manner; he took it from the man you were, and I restore it to the man you are.

I am, Sir, your affectionate brother,

and humble servant,

P. T.

As great and exalted spirits undertake the pursuit of hazardous actions for the good of others, at the same time gratifying their passion for glory, so do worthy minds in the domestic way of life deny themselves many advantages, to satisfy a generous benevolence, which they bear to their friends oppressed with distresses and calamities. Such natures one may call stores of Providence, which are actuated by a secret celestial influence to undervalue the ordinary gratifications of wealth, to give comfort to an heart loaded with affliction, to save a falling family, to preserve a branch of trade in their neighborhood, and give work to the industrious, preserve the portion of the helpless infant, and raise the head of the mourning father. People whose hearts are wholly bent towards pleasure or intent upon gain, never hear of the noble occurrences among men of industry and humanity. It would look

1. **Lapirius.** A mere type-name, in Latin form according to literary usage.

like a city romance to tell them of the generous merchant who the other day sent this billet to an eminent trader, under difficulties to support himself, in whose fall many hundreds besides himself had perished;[2] but because I think there is more spirit and true gallantry in it than in any letter I have ever read from Strephon to Phillis,[3] I shall insert it even in the mercantile honest style in which it was sent.

Sir:

I have heard of the casualties which have involved you in extreme distress at this time, and, knowing you to be a man of great good nature, industry, and probity, have resolved to stand by you. Be of good cheer; the bearer brings with him five thousand pounds, and has my order to answer your drawing as much more on my account. I did this in haste, for fear I should come too late for your relief; but you may value yourself with me to the sum of fifty thousand pounds; for I can very cheerfully run the hazard of being so much less rich than I am now, *to* save an honest man whom I love.

Your friend and servant,

W. S.

I think there is somewhere in Montaigne mention made of a family-book, wherein all the occurrences that happened from generation of that house to another were recorded. Were there such a method in the families which are concerned in this generosity, it would be an hard task for the greatest in Europe to give in their own an instance of a benefit better placed, or conferred with a more graceful air. It has been heretofore urged how barbarous and inhuman is any unjust step made to the disadvantage of a trader; and by how much such an act towards him is detestable, by so much an act of kindness towards him is laudable. I remember to have heard

2. **had perished.** Would have perished.

3. **Strephon to Phillis.** Type-names of lovers in the pastoral school of poetry.

a bencher of the Temple[4] tell a story of a tradition in their house, where they had formerly a custom of choosing kings for such a season, and allowing him his expenses at the charge of the society. One of our kings, said my friend, carried his royal inclination a little too far, and there was a committee ordered to look into the management of his treasury. Among other things it appeared that his majesty, walking *incog,* in the cloister, had overheard a poor man say to another, "Such a small sum would make me the happiest man in the world." The king, out of his royal compassion, privately inquired into his character, and, finding him a proper object of charity, sent him the money. When the committee read the report, the house passed his accounts with a *plaudite*[5] without further examination, upon the recital of this article in them:

	£	s.	d.
For making a man happy.	10	0	0

A FINE GENTLEMAN

[Guardian, No. 34. Monday, April 20, 1713.]

IT IS a most vexatious thing to an old man who endeavors to square his notions by reason, and to talk from reflection and experience, to fall in with a circle of young ladies at their afternoon tea-table. This happened very lately to be my fate. The conversation, for the first half-hour, was so very rambling that it is hard to say what was talked of, or who spoke least to the purpose. The various motions of the fan, the tossings of the head, intermixed with all the pretty kinds of laughter, made up the greatest part of the discourse. At last this modish way of shining, and being witty, settled into something like conversation, and the talk ran

4. **bencher of the Temple.** A senior member of one of the societies of lawyers called the Inns of Court, whose headquarters were in the Inner and the Middle Temple. "Their house" means that of this society.

6. **a plaudite.** Approval.

upon fine gentlemen. From the several characters that were given, and the exceptions that were made, as this or that gentleman happened to be named, I found that a lady is not difficult to be pleased, and that the town swarms with fine gentlemen. A nimble pair of heels, a smooth complexion, a full-bottom wig, a laced shirt, an embroidered suit, a pair of fringed gloves, a hat and feather; any one or more of these and the like accomplishments ennobles a man, and raises him above the vulgar, in a female imagination. On the contrary, a modest, serious behavior, a plain dress, a thick pair of shoes, a leathern belt, a waistcoat not lined with silk, and such like imperfections, degrade a man, and are so many blots in his escutcheon. I could not forbear smiling at one of the prettiest and liveliest of this gay assembly, who excepted[1] to the gentility of Sir William Hearty, because he wore a frieze[2] coat, and breakfasted upon toast and ale. I pretended to admire the fineness of her taste, and to strike in with her in ridiculing those awkward healthy gentlemen that seem to make nourishment the chief end of eating. I gave her an account of an honest Yorkshire gentleman, who (when I was a traveler) used to invite his acquaintance at Paris to break their fast with him upon cold roast beef and mum.[3] There was, I remember, a little French marquis, who was often pleased to rally him unmercifully upon beef and pudding,[4] of which our countryman would despatch a pound or two with great alacrity, while this antagonist was piddling at[5] a mushroom, or the haunch of a frog. I could perceive the lady was pleased with what I said, and we parted upon very good friends, by virtue of a maxim I always observe, Never to contradict or reason with

1. **excepted.** Objected.
2. **friere.** A rough thick material.
3. **mum.** A strong ale.
4. **pudding.** The batter dressing cooked and served with roast, as "Yorkshire pudding."
5. **piddling at.** Toying fastidiously with.

a sprightly female. I went home, however, full of a great many serious reflections upon what had passed, and though, in complaisance, I disguised my sentiments, to keep up the good humor of my fair companions, and to avoid being looked upon as a testy old fellow, yet out of the good-will I bear to the sex, and to prevent for the future their being imposed upon by counterfeits, I shall give them the distinguishing marks of a true fine gentleman.

When a good artist would express any remarkable character in sculpture, he endeavors to work up his figure into all the perfections his imagination can form, and to imitate not so much what is, as what may or ought to be. I shall follow their example, in the idea I am going to trace out of a fine gentleman, by assembling together such qualifications as seem requisite to make the character complete. In order to this I shall premise in general, that by a fine gentleman I mean a man completely qualified as well for the service and good as for the ornament and delight of society. When I consider the frame of mind peculiar to a gentleman, I suppose it graced with all the dignity and elevation of spirit that human nature is capable of. To this I would have joined a clear understanding, a reason free from prejudice, a steady judgment, and an extensive knowledge. When I think of the heart of a gentleman, I imagine it firm and intrepid, void of all inordinate passions, and full of tenderness, compassion, and benevolence. When I view the fine gentleman with regard to his manners, methinks I see him modest without bashfulness, frank and affable without impertinence, obliging and complaisant without servility, cheerful and in good humor without noise. These amiable qualities are not easily obtained; neither are there many men that have a genius to excel this way. A finished gentleman is perhaps the most uncommon of all the great characters in life. Besides the natural endowments with which this distinguished man is to be born, he must run through a long series of education.

Before he makes his appearance and shines in the world, he must be principled in religion, instructed in all the moral virtues, and led through the whole course of the polite arts and sciences. He should be no stranger to courts and to camps; he must travel to open his mind, to enlarge his views, to learn the policies and interests of foreign states, as well as *to* fashion and polish himself, and to get clear of national prejudices, of which every country has its share. To all these more essential improvements he must not forget to add the fashionable ornaments of life, such as are the languages and the bodily exercises most in vogue; neither would I have him think even dress itself beneath his notice.

It is no very uncommon thing in the world to meet with men of probity; there are likewise a great many men of honor to be found. Men of courage, men of sense, and men of letters are frequent; but a true fine gentleman is what one seldom sees. He is properly a compound of the various good qualities that embellish mankind. As the great poet animates all the different parts of learning by the force of his genius, and irradiates all the compass of his knowledge by the luster and brightness of his imagination, so all the great and solid perfections of life appear in the finished gentleman, with a beautiful gloss and varnish; every thing he says or does is accompanied with a manner, or rather a charm, that draws the admiration and good-will of every beholder.

ADVERTISEMENT

For the benefit of my female readers

N. B.—The gilt chariot, the diamond ring, the gold snuff-box, and brocade sword-knot,[6] are no essential parts of a fine gentleman; but may be used by him, provided he casts his eye upon them but once a day.

6. sword-knot. A strap or sling on the sword-hilt, attached—in action—to the wrist.

JOSEPH ADDISON

[JOSEPH ADDISON was born in 1672, and was educated at **Oxford,** where for some time he held a fellowship. Later he became a government official, a member of Parliament, and an important figure in the political and social life of London. In 1716 he married the Countess of Warwick, in 1718 retired from government service, and died in 1719. In 1711 he joined Steele in the founding of the journal called *The Spectator,* and was soon regarded as the first essayist of the age. For his work in journalism and the essay, see the Introduction, page 10.]

OPERA LIONS[1]

[The Spectator, No. 13. Thursday, March 15, 1710-11.]

THERE is nothing that of late years has afforded matter of greater amusement to the town than Signior Nicolini's[2] combat with a lion in the Haymarket,[3] which has been very often exhibited to the general satisfaction of most of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom of Great Britain. Upon the first rumor of this intended combat, it was confidently affirmed, and is still believed by many in both galleries, that there would be a tame lion sent from the Tower[4] every opera night, in order to be killed by Hydaspes;[5] this report, though altogether groundless, so universally prevailed in the upper

1. This essay is a typical example of Addison's method of criticizing contemporary life by subjecting it to gentle ridicule. His mood is humorous, but not wholly without serious intent.

2. Nic**olini.** Nicolini Grimaldi, a Neapolitan, who sang in England with great success between 1708 and 1712.

3. **Haymarket.** A theater devoted at this time to opera.

4. **Tower.** This ancient fortress contained for many years a small menagerie of lions, leopards, etc., grreatly enjoyed by the public.

5. **Hydaspes.** In an Italian opera called *L'Idaspe Fidele,* **by** Mancini. **The hero is thrown to** a **lion,** whom he conquers **barehanded.**

regions of the playhouse that some of the most refined politicians in those parts of the audience gave it out in whisper that the lion was a cousin-german[6] of the tiger who made his appearance in King William's days, and that the stage would be supplied with lions at the public expense during the whole session. Many likewise were the conjectures of the treatment which this lion was to meet with from the hands of Signior Nicolini; some supposed that he was to subdue him in *recitativo,* as Orpheus[7] used to serve the wild beasts in his time, and afterwards to knock him on the head; some fancied that the lion would not pretend to lay his paws upon the hero, by reason of the received opinion that a lion will not hurt a virgin.[8] Several, who pretended to have seen the opera in Italy, had informed their friends that the lion was to act a part in High-Dutch, and roar twice or thrice to a thorough bass before he fell at the feet of Hydaspes. To clear up a matter that was so variously reported, I have made it my business to examine whether this pretended lion is really the savage he appears to be, or only a counterfeit.

But before I communicate my discoveries, I must acquaint the reader that upon my walking behind the scenes last winter, as I was thinking on something else, I accidentally jostled against a monstrous animal that extremely startled me and, upon my nearer survey of it, appeared to be a lion rampant. The lion, seeing me very much surprised, told me, in a gentle voice, that I might come by him if I pleased: "For (says he) I do not intend to hurt anybody." I thanked him very kindly, and passed by him; and in a little time after saw him leap upon the stage, and act his part with very great applause. It has been observed by several that the lion has changed his manner of acting twice or thrice since

6. **coasln-fferman.** First cousin.

7. **Orpheus.** The first musician, in Greek tradition; he was said to tame wild beasts by his music.

8. **not hurt a virgin.** A belief widespread in the medieval period, and surviving into modern times.

his first appearance; which will not seem strange when I acquaint my reader that the lion has been changed upon the audience three several times. The first lion was a candle-snuffer,[9] who, being a fellow of a testy choleric temper, over-did his part, and would not suffer himself to be killed so easily as he ought to have done; besides, it was observed of him that he grew more surly every time he came out of the lion; and having dropped some words in ordinary conversation, as if he had not fought his best, and that he suffered himself to be thrown upon his back in the scuffle, and that he would wrestle with Mr. Nicolini for what he pleased, out of his lion's skin, it was thought proper to discard him; and it is verily believed to this day that had he been brought upon the stage another time, he would certainly have done mischief. Besides, it was objected against the first lion that he reared himself so high upon his hinder paws, and walked in so erect a posture, that he looked more like an old man than a lion.

The second lion was a tailor by trade, who belonged to the playhouse, and had the character of a mild and peaceable man in his profession. If the former was too furious, this was too sheepish, for his part; insomuch that, after a short modest walk upon the stage, he would fall at the first touch of Hydaspes, without grappling with him, and giving him an opportunity of showing his variety of Italian trips? it is said indeed, that he once gave him a rip in his flesh-color doublet, but this was only to make work for himself, in his private character of a tailor. I must not omit that it was this second lion who treated me with so much humanity behind the scenes.

The acting lion at present is, as I am informed, a country gentleman, who does it for his diversion, but desires his name may be concealed. He says very handsomely in his own excuse,

9. candle-snuffer! One who trimmed and snuffed the candles **used** for the lighting of the theater.

that he does not act for gain, that he indulges an innocent pleasure in it, and that it is better to pass away an evening in this manner than in gaming and drinking; but at the same time says, with a very agreeable raillery upon himself, that if his name should be known, the ill-natured world might call him "the ass in the lion's skin."[10] This gentleman's temper is made out of such a happy mixture of the mild and the choleric that he outdoes both his predecessors, and has drawn together greater audiences than have been known in the memory of man.

I must not conclude my narrative without taking notice of a groundless report that has been raised, to a gentleman's disadvantage of whom I must declare myself an admirer; namely, that Signior Nicolini and the lion have been seen sitting peaceably by one another, and smoking a pipe together, behind the scenes; by which their common enemies would insinuate that it is but a sham combat which they represent upon the stage. But upon inquiry I find that if any such correspondence had passed between them, it was not till the combat was over, when the lion was to be looked upon as dead, according to the received rules of the drama. Besides, this is what is practiced every day in Westminster Hall,[11] where nothing is more usual than to see a couple of lawyers, who have been tearing each other to pieces in the court, embracing one another as soon as they are out of it.

I would not be thought, in any part of this relation, to reflect upon Signior Nicolini, who in acting this part only complies with the wretched taste of his audience; he knows very well that the lion has many more admirers than himself; as they say of the famous equestrian statue[12] on the Pont-Neuf at Paris, that more people go to see the horse

10. **ass in the lion's skin:** As in Æsop's fable.

11. **Westminster Hall!** The ancient building adjoining the houses of Parliament, used by the courts in Addison's time.

12. **equestrian statue:** The mounted figure of Henry IV, on the New Bridge *(Pont Neuf).*

than the king who sits upon it. On the contrary, it gives me a just indignation to see a person whose action gives new majesty to kings, resolution to heroes, and softness to lovers, thus sinking from the greatness of his behavior, and degraded into the character of the London Prentice.[13] I have often wished that our tragedians would copy after this great master in action. Could they make the same use of their arms and legs, and inform their faces with as significant looks and passions, how glorious would an English tragedy appear with that action which is capable of giving a dignity to the forced thoughts, cold conceits, and unnatural expressions of an Italian opera. In the meantime, I have related this combat of the lion to show what are at present the reigning entertainments of the politer part of Great Britain.

Audiences have often been reproached by writers for the coarseness of their taste, but our present grievance does not seem to be the want of a good taste, but of common sense.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY[1]

[The Spectator, No. 26. Friday, March 30, 1711.]

WHEN I am in a serious humor, I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey; where the gloominess of the place, and the use to which it is applied, with the solemnity of the building, and the condition of the people who lie in it, are apt to fill the mind with a kind of melancholy, or rather thoughtfulness, that is not disagreeable. I yesterday passed a whole afternoon in the churchyard, the cloisters, and the church, amusing myself with the tombstones and inscriptions that I met with in those several regions of the dead. Most of them recorded nothing else of the buried person but that

13. **London Prentice.** The hero of a story long popular among the lower classes, of an apprentice who traveled far and engaged in heroic adventures equal to those of high-born knights.

1. With this essay it is interesting to compare one of Irving's in the *Sketch Book,* on the same theme.

he was born upon one day and died upon another: the whole history of his life being comprehended in those two circumstances that are common to all mankind. I could not but look upon these registers of existence, whether of brass or marble, **as** a kind of satire upon the departed persons, who had left no other memorial of them but that they were born and that they died. They put me in mind of several persons mentioned in the battles of heroic poems, who have sounding names given them, for no other reason but that they may be killed, and are celebrated for nothing but being knocked on the head.

Γλαῦκόν τε Μέδοντά τε Θερσίλοχόν τε.

—*Homer.*

Glaucumque, Medontaque, Thersilochumque[2]

—*Virgil.*

The life of these men is finely described in Holy Writ[3] by "the path of an arrow," which is immediately closed up and lost.

Upon my going into the church, **I entertained myself** with the digging of a grave; and saw in every shovelful of it that was thrown up the fragment of **a** bone or skull intermixed with a kind of fresh mouldering earth that some time or other had a place in the composition of **a** human body. Upon this, I began to consider with myself what innumerable multitudes of people lay confused together under the pavement of that ancient cathedral; how men and women, friends and enemies, priests and soldiers, monks **and** prebendaries, were crumbled amongst one another, and blended together in the same common mass; how beauty, strength, and

2. **Glancumaue,** etc. Virgil's rendering *(Æneid,* vi, 483) of a **line in** the *Iliad* (xvii, 210).

3. **Holy Writ.** Probably the apocryphal book called *The Wisdom of Solomon:*

As when an arrow is shot at a mark,
The air disparted closeth up again immediately.
So that men know not where it passed through:
So we also, as soon as we were born, ceased to be.
(chap. v, **12-13.)**

youth, with old age, weakness, and deformity, lay undistinguished in the same promiscuous heap of matter.

After having thus surveyed this great magazine of mortality, as it were, in the lump, I examined it more particularly by the accounts which I found on several of the monuments which are raised in every quarter of that ancient fabric. Some of them were covered with such extravagant epitaphs that, if it were possible for the dead person to be acquainted with them, he would blush at the praises which his friends have bestowed upon him. There are others so excessively modest that they deliver the character of the person departed in Greek or Hebrew, and by that means are not understood once in a twelvemonth. In the poetical quarter, I found there were poets who had no monuments, and monuments which had no poets. I observed indeed that the present war had filled the church with many of these uninhabited monuments, which had been erected to the memory of persons whose bodies were perhaps buried in the plains of Blenheim,[4] or in the bosom of the ocean.

I could not but be very much delighted with several modern epitaphs, which are written with great elegance of expression and justness of thought, and therefore do honor to the living as well as to the dead. As a foreigner is very apt to conceive an idea of the ignorance or politeness[5] of a nation from the turn of their public monuments and inscriptions, they should be submitted to the perusal of men of learning and genius before they are put in execution. Sir Cloudesley Shovel's[6] monument has very often given me great offense: instead of the brave rough English admiral, which was the distinguishing character of that plain, gallant man, he is

4. **Blenheim.** An English victory in the war of the Spanish Succession (1701-13), won by the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugrene of Austria, August 13, 1704. Addison celebrated it in his early poem called "The Campaign."

5. **politeness.** Polish, civilization.

6. **Sir Cloudesley Shovel.** A British admiral who was drowned in the wreck of his ship off the Scilly Isles, in 1707.

represented on his tomb by the figure of a beau, dressed in a long periwig, and reposing himself upon velvet cushions under a canopy of state. The inscription is answerable[7] to the monument; for instead of celebrating the many remarkable actions he had performed in the service of his country, it acquaints us only with the manner of his death, in which it was impossible for him to reap any honor. The Dutch, whom we are apt to despise for want of genius, show an infinitely greater taste of antiquity and politeness in their buildings and works of this nature than what we meet with in those of our own country. The monuments of their admirals, which have been erected at the public expense, represent them like themselves, and are adorned with rostral[8] crowns and naval ornaments, with beautiful festoons of seaweed, shells, and coral.

But to return to our subject. I have left the repository of our English kings for the contemplation of another day,[3] when I shall find my mind disposed for so serious an amusement. I know that entertainments of this nature are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds, and gloomy imaginations; but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy; and can therefore take a view of nature in her deep and solemn scenes, with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones. By this means I can improve myself with those objects which others consider with terror. When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly fol-

7. **is answerable.** Corresponds.

8. **rostral** Adorned with figures of ships' prows *(rostra).*

9. **anotbex day.** This promise was carried out in the 329th number of *The Spectator.*

low. When I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I cof writing there is nonsider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together.[10]

TRUE AND FALSE HUMOR

[Spectator, No. 35: Tuesday, April 10, 1711:]

AMONG all kinds of writing in which authors are more apt to miscarry than in works of humor, as there is none in which they are more ambitous-toexeel.—It is not an imagination that teems with monsters, an head that is filled with extravagant conceptions, which is capable of furnishing the world with diversions of this nature; and yet if we look into the productions of several writers, who set up for men of humor, what wild irregular fancies, what unnatural distortions of thought, do we meet with? If they speak nonsense, they believe they are talking humor; and when they have drawn together a scheme of absurd inconsistent ideas, they are not able to read it over to themselves'without laughing. These poor gentlemen endeavor to gain themselves the reputation of wits and humorists, by such monstrous conceits[1] as almost qualify them for Bedlam;[2] not considering that humor should always lie under the check of reason, and that it requires the direction of the nicest judgment, by so much the more as it indulges itself in the most boundless freedoms. There is a kind of nature that is to be observed in this sort of

10! The closing sentences of this essay represent the highest reach of Addison's more serious style.

1: conceits. Ideas (especially, novel or ingenious ones).

2: Bedlam, "Bethlehem hosnital for the insane.

compositions, as well as in all other; and a certain regularity of thought which must discover[3] the writer to be a man of sense, at the same time that be appears altogether given up to caprice. For my part, when I read the delirious mirth of an unskilful author, I cannot be so barbarous as to divert myself with it, but am rather apt to pity the man than to laugh at anything he writes.

The deceased Mr. Shadwell,[4] who had himself a great deal of the talent which I am treating of, represents an empty rake, in one of his plays, as very much surprised to hear one say that breaking of windows was not humor; and I question not but several English readers will be as much startled to hear me affirm that many of those raving incoherent pieces which are often spread among us, under odd chimerical titles, are rather the offsprings of a distempered brain than works of humor.

It is indeed much easier to describe what is not humor, than what is; and very difficult to define it otherwise than as Cowley[5] has done wit, by negatives. Were I to give my own notions of it, I would deliver them after Plato's manner,[6] in a kind of allegory, and by supposing Humor to be a person, deduce to him all his qualifications, according to the following genealogy. Truth was the founder of the family, and the father of Good Sense. good Sense Was the father of Wit, who marrird a lndy of a collnteral line called Mirth,by whom

3. **discover.** Show.

4. **Shadwell.** Dramatist and Poet Laureate; died 1692.

6. **Cowley.** One of the most popular of the seventeenth century poets. Addison here refers to his poem "Of Wit," one **stanza** of which runs as follows:

> 'Tis not such lines as almost crack the stage,
> When Bajazet begins to rage;
> Nor a tall metaphor in the bombast way.
> Nor the dry chips of short-lung'd Seneca;
> Nor upon all things to obtrude,
> And force some odd similitude.
> What is it, then, which, like the Power Divine,
> We only can by negatives define?

6. **Plato's manner.** The great Greek philosopher was distinguished by **a** fondness for presenting ideas in mythical or symbolic form.

he had issue Humor. Humor therefore being the youngest of this illustrious family, and descended from parents of such different dispositions, is very various and unequal in his temper; sometimes you see him putting on grave looks and a solemn habit, sometimes airy in his behavior, and fantastic in his dress: insomuch that at different times he appears as serious as a judge, and as jocular as a Merry-Andrew.[7] But as he has a great deal of the mother in his constitution, whatever mood he is in, he never fails to make his company laugh.

But since there is an impostor abroad, who takes upon him the name of this young gentleman, and would willingly pass for him in the world; to the end that well-meaning persons may not be imposed upon by cheats, I would desire my readers, when they meet with this pretender, to look into his parentage, and to examine him strictly, whether or no he be remotely allied to Truth, and lineally descended from Good Sense; if not, they may conclude him a counterfeit. They may likewise distinguish him by a loud and excessive laughter, in which he seldom gets his company to join with him. For as True Humor generally looks serious, while everybody laughs about him, False Humor is always laughing, whilst everybody about him looks serious. I shall only add, if he has not in him a mixture of both parents, that is, if he would pass for the offspring of Wit without Mirth, or Mirth without Wit, you may conclude him to be altogether spurious and a cheat.

The impostor of whom I am speaking descends originally from Falsehood, who was the mother of Nonsense, who was brought to bed of a son called Frenzy, who married one of the daughters of Folly, commonly known by the name of Laughter, on whom he begot that monstrous infant of which I have been here speaking. I shall set down at length the genealogical table of False Humor, and, at the same time, place under it the genealogy of True Humor, that the reader may at one view behold their different pedigrees and relations.

7! **Merry-Andrew:** Mountebank, clown.

FALSEHOOD
NONSENSE
FRENZY LAUGHTER
FALSE HUMOR

TRUTH
GOOD SENSE
WIT MIRTH
HUMOR

I might extend the allegory, by mentioning several of the children of False Humor, who are more in number than the sands of the sea, and might in particular enumerate the many sons and daughters which he has begot in this island. But as this would be a very invidious task, I shall only observe in general, that False Humor differs from the True, as a monkey does from a man.

First of all, he is exceedingly given to little apish tricks and buffooneries.

Secondly, he so much delights in mimicry, that it is all one to him whether he exposes by it vice and folly, luxury and avarice, or, on the contrary, virtue and wisdom, pain and poverty.

Thirdly, he is wonderfully unlucky, insomuch that he will bite the hand that feeds him, and endeavor to ridicule both friends and foes indifferently. For having but small talents, he must be merry where he *can,* not where he *should.*

Fourthly, being entirely void of reason, he pursues no point either of morality or instruction, but is ludicrous only for the sake of being so.

Fifthly, being incapable of any thing but mock representations, his ridicule is always personal, and aimed at the vicious man, or the writer; not at the vice, or at the writing.

I have here only pointed at the whole species of false humorists; but as one of my principal designs in this paper is to beat down that malignant spirit which discovers itself in the writ-

ings of the present age, I shall not scruple, for the future, to single out any of the small wits that infest the world with such compositions as are ill-natured, immoral, and absurd. This is the **only** exception which I shall make to the general rule I have prescribed myself, of attacking multitudes; since every honest man ought to look upon himself as in a natural state of war with the libeller and lampooner, and to annoy them wherever they fall in his way. This is but retaliating upon them, and treating them as they treat others.[8]

THE VISION OF MIRZAH[1]

[The Spectator, No. 159. Saturday, September 1, 1711

WHEN I was at Grand Cairo,[2] I picked up several oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one, entitled The Visions of Mirzah, which I have read over with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the public when I have no other entertainment for them; and shall begin with the first vision, which I have translated, word for word, as **follows:**

"On the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always keep holy, after having washed myself and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, Surely, said I, man is but a shadow

8. Addison further developed the subject of this paper in a whole series of *Spectator* essays, Numbers 58-63, on True and False Wit

1. This paper is perhaps the most famous example, in English, of the essay in the form of an *apologue,* or symbolic moral tale.

2. **Grand Cairo.** In the first number of the *Spectator* the imaginary writer, in giving: some account of his life, had said: "Upon the death of my father, I resolved to travel, . . . I made **a** voyage to Grand Cairo on purpose to take the measure of **a** pyramid."

and life a dream. Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes toward the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him, he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from any thing I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in Paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

"I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a gemus,[3] and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts, by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, 'Mirzah,' said he, 'I have heard thee in thy soliloquies; follow me.'

"He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, 'Cast thy eyes eastward/ said he, 'and tell me what thou seest.' 'I see,' said I, 'a huge valley and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it.' 'The valley that thou seest,' said he, 'is the vale of misery, and the

3. genius. Spirit

tide of water that thou seest is part of the great tide of eternity.' 'What is the reason,' said I, 'that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?' 'What thou seest,' said he, 'is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now,' said he, 'this sea that is bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it.' 'I see a bridge,' said I, 'standing in the midst of the tide.' 'The bridge thou seest,' said he, 'is human life; consider it attentively.' Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. 'But tell me further,' said he, 'what thou discoverest on it.' 'I see multitudes of people passing over it,' said I, 'and a black cloud hanging on each end of it.' As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge, into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon but they fell through them into the tide and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner toward the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together together toward the end of the arches that were entire.

"There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

"I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at every thing that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them, but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them their footing failed and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scimitars in their hands, and others with urinals,[4] who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them.

"The genius, seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it: 'Take thine eyes off the bridge,' said he, 'and tell me if thou yet seest any thing thou dost not comprehend.' Upon looking up, 'What mean,' said I, 'those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants; and among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches.' 'These,' said the genius, 'are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions, that infest human life.'

"I here fetched a deep sigh. 'Alas,' said I, 'man was made in vain! How is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!' The genius being moved with compassion toward me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect: 'Look no more,' said he, 'on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the

4. urinals. Testing-glasses used by physicians.

several generations of mortals that fall into it.' I directed my sight as 1 was ordered, and (whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the further end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it, but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining 6eas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits, with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers; and could hear a confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. 'The islands,' said he, 'that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the seashore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, 0 Mirzah, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is

death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him.' I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length said I, 'Show me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant.' The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me; I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating, but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdat, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it"

SAMUEL JOHNSON

[SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Lichfield in 1709. He entered Pembroke College, Oxford, but left without a degree for lack of means; he was a precocious scholar, but always in poor health. After an unsuccessful period as schoolmaster, he engaged in literary hack-work in London, reporting the debates in Parliament, planning a new edition of Shakespeare, and contributing to periodicals. In 1750 he founded *The Rambler,* a short-lived periodical in the manner of *The Spectator.* His English Dictionary, an epochal work for the time, appeared in 1755. From this time Johnson was recognized as a scholar and critic of importance, and in 1775 Oxford University conferred on him the honorary degree of LL.D. He lived always in London lodgings, in comparatively meager circumstances, but was the center of an interesting social group, especially in the "Literary Club" made up of men of letters and wits,—commonly called simply Dr. Johnson's Club. His last important writings were the critical *Lives of the English Poets,* 1779-81; he died in 1784. Dr. Johnson's character, especially as depicted by his friend Boswell in his great biography, is distinguished for its eccentricity, sturdiness, and clear-sightedness. Though melancholy and dogmatic in temperament, he was profoundly friendly and just; "clear your mind of cant" is one of his sayings considered to be essentially characteristic of the man.]

THE REVOLUTIONS OF A GARRET[1]

[Rambler, No. 161. Tuesday, October 1, 1751.]

MR. RAMBLER,

Sir,

You have formerly observed that curiosity often terminates in barren knowledge, and that the mind is prompted to study

1. For *The Rambler* (and *The Idler),* see the Introduction, page 10. The present essay is a fine example of the somewhat ponderous and grim, but genuine and pathetic, humor with which Johnson viewed common life. In reading his essays the modern reader must make allowance for his habit of beginning with some abstract idea or generalization, which at first gives no direct clue to the subject.

and inquiry rather by the uneasiness of ignorance than the hope of profit. Nothing can be of less importance to any present interest than the fortune of those who have been long lost in the grave, and from whom nothing now can be hoped or feared. Yet to rouse the zeal of a true antiquary, little more is necessary than to mention a name which mankind have conspired to forget; he will make his way to remote scenes of action through obscurity and contradiction, as Tully[2] sought amidst bushes and brambles the tomb of Archimedes.

It is not easy to discover how it concerns him that gafhers the produce, or receives the rent of an estate, to know through what families the land has passed, who is registered in the Conqueror's survey[3] as its possessor, how often it has been forfeited by treason, or how often sold by prodigality. The power or wealth of the present inhabitants of a country cannot be much increased by an inquiry after the names of those barbarians who destroyed one another twenty centuries ago, in contests for the shelter of woods or convenience of pasturage. Yet we see that no man can be at rest in the enjoyment of a new purchase till he has learned the history of his grounds from the ancient inhabitants of the parish, and that no nation omits to record the actions of their ancestors, however bloody, savage, and rapacious.

The same disposition, as different opportunities call it forth, discovers itself in great or little things. I have always thought it unworthy of a wise man to slumber in total inactivity, only because he happens to have no employment equal to his ambition or genius; it is therefore my custom to apply my attention to the objects before me, and as I cannot think any place wholly unworthy of notice that affords a habitation to

2. **Tully.** Cicero. When Cicero held the office of quaestor In Sicily, 75 B.C. he discovered the tomb of Archimedes, a great Syracusan mathematician of the third century B.C.

3. **the Conqueror's survey.** William the Conqueror in 1086 ordered a survey and census of the landholders of the kingdom, in order to apportion their liability to taxation and military service. The result was the famous "Domesday Book."

a man of letters, I have collected the history and antiquities of the several garrets in which I have resided.

Quantulacunque estis, vos ego magna voce.[4]

How small to others, but how great to me!

Many of these narratives my industry has been able to extend to a considerable length; but the woman with whom I now lodge has lived only eighteen months in the house, and can give no account of its ancient revolutions; the plasterer having at her entrance obliterated, by his whitewash, all the smoky memorials which former tenants had left upon the ceiling, and perhaps drawn the veil of oblivion over politicians, philosophers, and poets.

When I first cheapened[5] my lodgings, the landlady told me that she hoped I was not an author, for the lodgers on the first floor had stipulated that the upper rooms should not be occupied by a noisy trade. I very readily promised to give no disturbance to her family, and soon dispatched a bargain on the usual terms.

I had not slept many nights in my new apartment before I began to inquire after my predecessors, and found my landlady, whose imagination is filled chiefly with her own affairs, very ready to give me information.

Curiosity, like all other desires, produces pain as well as pleasure. Before she began her narrative, I had heated my head with expectations of adventures and discoveries, of elegance in disguise, and learning in distress; and was somewhat mortified when I heard that the first tenant was a tailor, of whom nothing was remembered but that he complained of his room for want of light; and, after having lodged in it a month, and paid only a week's rent, pawned a piece of cloth which he was trusted to eut out, and was forced to make a precipitate retreat from this quarter of the town.

4. QuantnlactUKiTie **estis,** etc. From Ovid's *Amoves.*
6. cheapened. Bargained for.

The next was a young woman newly arrived from the country, who lived for five weeks with great regularity, and became, by frequent treats, very much the favorite of the family, but at last received visits so frequently from a cousin in Cheapside, that she brought the reputation of the house into danger, and was therefore dismissed with good advice.

The room then stood empty for a fortnight; my landlady began to think that she had .judged hardly, and often wished for such another lodger. At last an elderly man of a 'grave aspect read the bill, and bargained for the room at the very first price that was asked. He lived in close retirement, seldom went out till evening, and then returned early, sometimes cheerful, and at other times dejected. It was remarkable that, whatever he purchased, he never had small money in his pocket, and, though cool and temperate on other occasions, was always vehement and stormy till he received his change. He paid his rent with great exactness, and seldom failed once a week to requite my landlady's civility with a supper. At last, such is the fate of human felicity, the house was alarmed at midnight by the constable, who demanded to search the garrets. My landlady assuring him that he had mistaken the door, conducted him upstairs, where he found the tools of a coiner;[6] but the tenant had crawled along the roof to an empty house, and escaped; much to the joy of my landlady, who declares him a very honest man, and wonders why any body should be hanged for making money when such numbers are in want of it. She however confesses that she shall for the future always question the character of those who take her garret without beating down the price.

The bill was then placed again in the window, and the poor woman was teased for seven weeks by innumerable passengers, who obliged her to climb with them every hour up five stories, and then disliked the prospect, hated the noise of a public street, thought the stairs narrow, objected to a low ceiling,

6. colner. Counterfeiter.

required the walls to be hung with a fresher paper, asked questions about the neighborhood, could not think of living so far from their acquaintance, wished the windows had looked to the south rather than the west, told how the door and chimney might have been better disposed, bid her half the price that she asked, or promised to give her earnest[7] the next day, and came no more.

At last, a short meager man, in a tarnished waistcoat, desired to see the garret, and, when he had stipulated for two long shelves and a larger table, hired it at a low rate. When the affair was completed, he looked round him with great satisfaction, and repeated some words which the woman did not understand. In two days he brought a great box of books, took possession of his room, and lived very inoffensively, except that he frequently disturbed the inhabitants of the next floor by unseasonable noises. He was generally in bed at noon, but from evening to midnight he sometimes talked aloud with great vehemence, sometimes stamped as in a rage, sometimes threw down his poker, then clattered his chairs, then sat down in deep thought, and again burst out into loud vociferations; sometimes he would sigh, as oppressed with misery, and sometimes shake with convulsive laughter. When he encountered any of the family, he gave way or bowed, but rarely spoke, except that as he went upstairs he often repeated,

Ὃς ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίει,

This habitant th'aerial regions boast,—[8]

hard words, to which his neighbors listened so often that they learned them without understanding them. What was his employment she did not venture to ask him, but at last heard a printer's boy inquire for "the author." My landlady was very often advised to beware of this strange man, who, though he was quiet for the present, might perhaps become outrageous

7. earnest. A payment "to bind the bargain."

8. This habitant, etc. From Hesiod's *Works and Days,* where it is said of the god Zeus.

in the hot months; but as she was punctually paid, she could not find any sufficient reason for dismissing him, till one night he convinced her, by setting fire to his curtains, that it was not safe to have an author for her inmate.

She had then, for six weeks, a succession of tenants, who left her house on Saturday, and, instead of paying their rent, stormed at their landlady. At last she took in two sisters, one of whom had spent her little fortune in procuring remedies for a lingering disease, and was now supported and attended by the other. She climbed with difficulty to the apartment, where she languished for eight weeks without impatience or lamentation, except for the expense and fatigue which her bister suffered, and then calmly and contentedly expired. The sister followed her to the grave, paid the few debts which they had contracted, wiped away the tears of useless sorrow, and, returning to the business of common life, resigned to me the vacant habitation.

Such, Mr. Rambler, are the changes which have happened in the narrow space where my present fortune has fixed my residence. So true it is that amusement and instruction are always at hand for those who have skill and willingness to find them; and so just is the observation of Juvenal,[9] that a single house will show whatever is done or suffered in the world.

I am, Sir, &c.

THE MULTIPLICATION OF BOOKS

[Idler, No. 85. Saturday, December 1, 1759.]

ONE of the peculiarities which distinguish the present age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertisements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promises of growing wise on easier terms than our progenitors.

9. Juvenal. A Latin satirist of the second century.

How much either happiness or knowledge is advanced by this multitude of authors, it is not very easy to decide. He that teaches us any thing which we knew not before, is undoubtedly to be reverenced as a master. He that conveys knowledge by more pleasing ways, may very properly be loved as a benefactor; and he that supplies life with innocent amusement will certainly be caressed as a pleasing companion. But few of those who fill the world with books have any pretensions to the hope either of pleasing or instructing. They have often no other task than to lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third, without any new materials of their own, and with very little application of judgment to those which former authors have supplied.

That all compilations are useless, I do not assert. Particles of science are often very widely scattered. Writers of extensive comprehension have incidental remarks upon topics very remote from the principal subject, which are often more valuable than formal treatises, and which yet are not known because they are not promised in the title. He that collects those under proper heads is very laudably employed, for though he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progress of others, and, by making that easy of attainment which is already written, may give some mind, more vigorous or more adventurous than his own, leisure for new thoughts and original designs.

But the collections poured lately from the press have been seldom made at any great expense of time or inquiry, and therefore only serve to distract choice without supplying any real want. It is observed that "a corrupt society has many laws"; I know not whether it is not equally true that an ignorant age has many books. When the treasures of ancient knowledge lie unexamined, and original authors are neglected and forgotten, compilers and plagiaries are encouraged, who give us again what we had before, and grow great by setting before us what our own sloth had hidden from our view.

Yet are not even these writers to be indiscriminately censured and rejected. Truth, like beauty, varies its fashions, and is best recommended by different dresses to different minds; and he that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly said to advance the literature of his own age. As the manners of nations vary, new topics of persuasion become necessary, and new combinations of imagery are produced; and he that can accommodate himself to the reigning taste may always have readers who, perhaps, would not have looked upon better performances. To exact of every man who writes that he should say something new, would be to reduce authors to a small number; to oblige the most fertile genius to say only what is new, would be to contract his volumes to a few pages. Yet surely there ought to be some bounds to repetition; libraries ought no more to be heaped for ever with the same thoughts differently expressed, than with the same books differently decorated.

The good or evil which these secondary writers produce is seldom of any long duration. As they owe their existence to change of fashion, they commonly disappear when a new fashion becomes prevalent. The authors that in any nation last from age to age are very few, because there are very few that have any other claim to notice than that they catch hold on present curiosity, and gratify some accidental desire, or produce some temporary conveniency.

But however the writers of the day may despair of future fame, they ought at least to forbear any present mischief. Though they cannot arrive at eminent heights of excellence, they might keep themselves harmless. They might take care to inform themselves, before they attempt to inform others, and exert the little influence which they have for honest purposes.

But such is the present state of our literature, that the ancient sage,[1] who thought "a great book a great evil," would

1. **ancient sage.** Callimachus, an Alexandrian scholar of the third century B.C.

now think the multitude of books a multitude of **evils.** He would consider a bulky writer who engrossed a year, and **a** swarm of pamphleteers who stole each an hour, as equal wasters of human life, and would make no other difference between **them than between a** beast of **prey and a** flight of locusts.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

[**OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born** in the village of **Pallas, Ireland, In** 1728. He entered Trinity College at Dublin, but was a poor student and was graduated "by special favor." Later he studied medicine in Scotland and on the continent, and wandered adventurously through various European countries, returning to' London in destitution about 1756. He now did hack-work of various kinds for publishers, and presently attained some reputation by his pen, but was usually in debt and often in difficulties arising from journalistic quarrels. One of his principal pleasures **was** his friendship with Dr. Johnson, who procured the publication of Goldsmith's chief work. *The Vicar of Wakefield,* in 1766. He is also remembered **for** a permanently successful comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer.* When he died, in 1774, Dr. Johnson wrote a Latin epitaph for his monument in Westminster Abbey (though he was buried elsewhere), in which occurs the famous saying: "There is almost no kind of composition which he did not touch, and nothing he touched which he did not adorn."]

A SERVICE AT ST. PAUL'S

[The Citizen of the World,[1] Letter XLL]

SOME time since I sent thee, 0 holy disciple of Confucius, an account of the grand abbey,[2] or mausoleum, of the kings and heroes of this nation. I have since been introduced to a temple not so ancient,[3] but far superior in beauty and magnificence. In this, which is the most considerable of the empire, there are no pompous inscriptions, no flattery paid the dead, but all is elegant and awfully simple. There are, however, a

1. On *The Citizen of the World,* from which these essays are taken, see- the Introduction, page 11,

2. **the grand abbey.** Westminster, described by the writer in his 13 th Letter.

3. not so **ancient.** The original St. Paul's Cathedral had been destroyed in the fire of 1666; the structure here described, which still stands, was built in 1675-1710.

few rags[4] hung round the walls, which have, at a vast expense, been taken from the enemy in the present war.[5] The silk of which they are composed, when new, might be valued at half a string of copper money in China; yet this wise people fitted out a fleet and an army in order to seize them, though now grown old, and scarcely capable of being patched up into a handkerchief. By this conquest the English are said to have gained, and the French to have lost, much honor. Is the honor of European nations placed only in tattered silk?

In this temple I was permitted to remain during the whole service; and were you not already acquainted with the religion of the English, you might from my description be inclined to believe them as grossly idolatrous as the disciples of Lao. The idol[6] which they seem to address strides like a colossus over the door of the inner temple, which here, as with the Jews, is esteemed the most sacred part of the building. Its oracles are delivered in a hundred various tones, which seem to inspire the worshipers with enthusiasm and awe. An old woman, who appeared to be the priestess, was employed in various attitudes as she felt the inspiration. When it began to speak, all the people remained fixed in silent attention, nodding assent, looking approbation, appearing highly edified by those sounds which to a stranger might seem inarticulate and unmeaning.

When the idol had done speaking, and the priestess had locked up its lungs with a key, observing almost all the company leaving the temple, I concluded the service was over, and, taking my hat, was going to walk away with the crowd, when I was stopped by the Man in Black,[7] who assured me that the ceremony had scarcely yet begun.

4. rags. It is still customary to hang: national battle trophies In St. Paul's.

5. present war. The war which was ended In the following: year (1763) by the Peace of Paris.

6. The Idol. The great organ.

7. the Man In Black. The grentleman who guides the Chinese traveler about London.

"What!" cried I. "Do I not see almost the whole body of worshipers leaving the church? Would you persuade mo that such numbers who profess religion and morality would, in this shameless manner, quit the temple before the service was concluded? You surely mistake; not even the Kalmouks[8] would be guilty of such an indecency, though all the object of their worship was but a joint-stool."

My friend seemed to blush for his countrymen, assuring me that those whom I saw running away were only a parcel of musical blockheads, whose passion was merely for sounds, and whose heads were as empty as a fiddle-case. "Those who remain behind," says he, "are the true religious. They make use of music to warm their hearts, and to lift them to a proper pitch of rapture. Examine their behavior, and you will confess there are some among us who practice true devotion."

I now looked round me as he directed, but saw nothing of that fervent devotion which he had promised. One of the worshipers appeared to be ogling the company through a glass. Another was fervent, not in addresses to heaven, but to his mistress; a third whispered; a fourth took snuff; and the priest himself, in a drowsy tone, read over the "duties" of the day.

"Bless my eyes!" cried I, as I happened to look toward the door, "what do I see? One of the worshipers fallen fast asleep, and actually sunk down on his cushion! He is now enjoying the benefit of a trance; or does he receive the influence of some mysterious vision?"

"Alas! alas!" replied my companion. "No such thing. He has only had the misfortune of eating too hearty a dinner, and finds it impossible to keep his eyes open."

Turning to another part of the temple, I perceived a young lady just in the same circumstances and attitude. "Strange!" cried I. "Can she too have overeaten herself?"

"Oh, fie!" replied my friend, "you now grow censorious. She grow drowsy from eating too much! That would be pro-

8. Kalmouks. Nomadic Mongolians of western China.

fanation. She only sleeps now from having sat up all night at a brag[9] party."

"Turn me where I will, then," says I, "I can perceive no single symptom of devotion among the worshipers, except from that old woman in the corner, who sits groaning behind the long sticks of a mourning fan. She indeed seems greatly edified with what she hears."

"Ay," replied my friend, "I knew we should find some *to* catch you. I know her; that is the deaf lady who lives in the cloisters."

In short, the remissness of behavior in almost all the worshipers, and some even of the guardians, struck me with surprise. I had been taught to believe that none were ever promoted to offices in the temple but men remarkable for their superior sanctity, learning, and rectitude; that there was no such thing heard of as persons being introduced into the church[10] merely to oblige a senator, or provide for the younger branch of a noble family. I expected, as their minds were continually set upon heavenly things, to see their eyes directed there also, and hoped from their behavior to perceive their inclinations corresponding with their duty. But I am since informed that some are appointed to preside over temples they never visit,[11] and, while they receive all the money, are contented with letting others do all the good.—Adieu.

THE CHARACTER OF BEAU TIBBS

[The Citizen of the World, Letter LIV

THOUGH naturally pensive, yet am I fond of gay company, and take every opportunity of thus dismissing the mind from

9. **brag.** The old name for poker.

10. **introduced into the church.** That is, into the priesthood, and given a "living" or endowed pastorate.

11. **temples they never visit.** A reference to the custom of turning over the care of an endowed living to a poorly paid curate; this was complained of by Chaucer in his Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, as early as the fourteenth century, and remained a subject of criticism in the Church of England well into the nineteenth.

duty. From this motive I am often found in the center of a crowd; and wherever pleasure is to be sold, am always a purchaser. In those places, without being remarked by any, I join in whatever goes forward; work my passions into a similitude of frivolous earnestness, shout as they shout, and condemn as they happen to disapprove. A mind thus sunk for a while below its natural standard is qualified for stronger flights, as those first retire who would spring forward with greater vigor.

Attracted by the serenity of the evening, my friend and I lately went to gaze upon the company in one of the public walks near the city. Here (we sauntered together for some time, either praising the beauty of such as were handsome, or the dresses of such as had nothing else to recommend them) We had gone thus deliberately forward for some time, when, stopping on a sudden, my friend caught me by the elbow, and led me out of the public walk. I could perceive by the quickness of his pace, and by his frequently looking behind, that he was attempting to avoid somebody who followed: we now turned to the right, then to the left; as we went forward, he still went faster; but in vain: the person whom he attempted to escape hunted us through every doubling, and gained upon us each moment, so that at last we fairly stood still, resolving to face what we could not avoid.

Our pursuer soon came up, and joined us with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. "My dear Drybone," cries he, shaking my friend's hand, "where have you been hiding yourself this half a century? Positively I had fancied you were gone to cultivate matrimony and your estate in the country." During the reply I had an opportunity of surveying the appearance of our new companion: his hat was pinched up with peculiar smartness; his looks were pale, thin, and sharp; round his neck he wore a broad black riband, and in his bosom a buckle studded with glass; his coat was trimmed with tarnished twist; he wore by his side a sword with a black

hilt; and his stockings of silk, though newly washed were grown yellow by long service. I was so much engaged with the peculiarity of his dress that I attended only to the latter part of my friend's reply, in which he complimented Mr. Tibbs on the taste of his clothes, and the bloom in his countenance. "Pshaw, pshaw, Will," cried the figure, "no more of that, if you love me: you know I hate flattery,—on my soul I do; and yet, to be sure, an intimacy with the great will improve one's appearance, and a course of venison will fatten; and yet, faith, I despise the great as much as you do; but there are a great many damned honest fellows among them, and we must not quarrel with one half, because the other wants weeding. If they were all such as my Lord Mudler, one of the most good-natured creatures that ever squeezed a lemon, I should myself be among the number of their admirers. I was yesterday to dine at the Duchess of Piccadilly's. My lord was there. 'Ned,' says he to me, 'Ned,' says he, 'I'll hold gold to silver I can tell where you were poaching last night.' 'Poaching, my lord?' says I: 'faith, you have missed already; for I stayed at home, and let the girls poach for me. That's my way; I take a fine woman as some animals do their prey—stand still, and, swoop, they fall into my mouth.'"

"Ah, Tibbs, thou art a happy fellow," cried my companion, with looks of infinite pity; "I hope your fortune is **as much** improved as your understanding in such company?"

"Improved!" replied the other: "you shall know,—but let it *go* no farther—a great secret—five hundred a year to begin with—my lord's word of honor for it. His lordship took me down in his own chariot yesterday, and we had a *tete-a-tete* dinner in the country, where we talked of nothing else."

"I fancy you forget, sir," cried I; "you told us but this moment of your dining yesterday in town."

"Did I say so?" replied he coolly. "To be sure, if I said so, it was so. Dined in town! Egad, **now** I do remember, I **did** dine in town; **but I** dined **in** the country too; for you **must**

know, my boys, I eat two dinners. By the by, I am grown as nice[1] as the devil in my eating. I'll tell you a pleasant affair about that: we were a select party of us to dine at Lady Grogram's,—an affected piece, but let it go no farther—a secret.—Well, there happened to be no asafoetida in the sauce to a turkey, upon which, says I, 'I'll hold a thousand guineas, and say done first, that'—But, dear Drybone, you are an honest creature; lend me half-a-crown for a minute or two, or so, just till—but harkee, ask me for it the next time we meet, or it may be twenty to one but I forget to pay you."

When he left us, our conversation naturally turned upon so extraordinary a character. "His very dress," cries my friend, "is not less extraordinary than his conduct. If you meet him this day, you find him in rags; if the next, in embroidery. With those persons of distinction of whom he talks so familiarly he has scarce a coffee-house acquaintance. However, both for the interests of society, and perhaps for his own, Heaven has made him poor; and while all the world perceive his wants, he fancies them concealed from every eye. An agreeable companion, because he understands flattery; and all must be pleased with the first part of his conversation, though all are sure of its ending with a demand on their purse. While his youth countenances the levity of his conduct, he may thus earn a precarious subsistence; but when age comes on, the gravity of which is incompatible with buffoonery, then will he find himself forsaken by all; condemned in the decline of life to hang upon some rich family whom he once despised, there to undergo all the ingenuity of studied contempt, to be employed only as a spy upon the servants, or a bugbear to fright the children into obedience."—Adieu.

[Letter LV.]

I am apt to fancy I have contracted a new acquaintance whom it will be no easy matter to shake off. My little beau[2]

1. nice. Fastidious.
2. besu. Dandy.

yesterday overtook me again in one of the public walks, and, slapping me on the shoulder, saluted me with an air of the most perfect familiarity. His dress was the same as usual, except that he had more powder in his hair, wore a dirtier shirt, a pair of temple spectacles, and his hat under his arm.

As I knew him to be a harmless, amusing little thing, I could not return his smiles with any degree of severity: so we walked forward on terms of the utmost intimacy, and in a few minutes discussed all the topics preliminary to particular conversation. The oddities that marked his character, however, soon began to appear; he bowed to several well-dressed persons, who, by their manner of returning the compliment, appeared perfect strangers. At intervals he drew out a pocket-book,[3] seeming to take memorandums, before all the company, with much importance and assiduity. In this manner he led me through the length of the whole walk, fretting at his absurdities, and fancying myself laughed at not less than him by every spectator.

When we were got to the end of our procession, "Blast me," cries he, with an air of vivacity, "I never saw the Park so thin in my life before! There's no company at all today; not a single face to be seen."

"No company!" interrupted I peevishly; "no company, where there is such a crowd? Why, man, there's too much. What are the thousands that have been laughing at us but company?"

"Lord, my dear," returned he, with the utmost good humor, "you seem immensely chagrined; but, blast me, when the world laughs at me, I laugh at the world, and so we are even. My Lord Tripp, Bill Squash the Creolian, and I, sometimes make a party at being ridiculous; and so we say and do a thousand things for the joke's sake. But I see you are grave, and if you are for a fine grave sentimental companion, you shall dine with me and my wife today; I must insist on't. I'll introduce

3. pocket-book. Note-book.

you to Mrs. Tibbs, a lady of as elegant qualifications as any in nature; she was bred, but that's between ourselves, under the inspection of the Countess of Ail-Night. A charming body of voice; but no more of that,—she shall give us a song. You shall see my little girl too, Carolina Wilhelmina Amelia Tibbs, a sweet pretty creature! I design her for my Lord Drumstick's eldest son; but that's in friendship, let it go no farther; she's but six years old, and yet she walks a minuet, and plays on the guitar immensely already. I intend she shall be as perfect as possible in every accomplishment. In the first place, I'll make her a scholar: I'll teach her Greek myself, and learn that language purposely to instruct her; but let that be a secret."

Thus saying, without waiting for a reply, he took me by the arm, and hauled me along. We passed through many dark alleys and winding ways; for, from some motives to me unknown, he seemed to have a particular aversion to every frequented street; at last, however, we got to the door of a dismal looking house in the outlets of the town, where he informed me he chose to reside for the benefit of the air.

We entered the lower door, which ever seemed to lie most hospitably open; and I began to ascend an old and creaking staircase, when, as he mounted to show me the way, he demanded whether I delighted in prospects ;[4] *to* which answering in the affirmative, "Then," says he, "I shall show you one of the most charming in the world out of my windows; we shall see the ships sailing, and the whole country for twenty miles round, tip-top, quite high. My Lord Swamp would give ten thousand guineas for such a one; but, as I sometimes pleasantly tell him, I always love to keep my prospects at home, that my friends may visit me the oftener."

By this time we were arrived as high as the stairs would permit us to ascend, till we came to what he was facetiously pleased to call the first floor down the chimney; and knocking

4. prospects. Fine views.

at the door, a voice from within demanded, "Who's there?" My conductor answered that it was him. But this not satisfying the querist, the voice again repeated the demand; to which he answered louder than before; and now the door was opened by an old woman with cautious reluctance.

When we were got in, he welcomed me to his house with great ceremony, and turning to the old woman, asked where was her lady? "Good troth," replied she, in a peculiar dialect, "she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because they have taken an oath against lending out the tub any longer."—

"My two shirts!" cried he in a tone that faltered with confusion; "what does the idiot mean V9

"I ken what I mean weel enough," replied the other; "she's washing your twa shirts at the next door, because—"

"Fire and fury, no more of thy stupid explanations!" cried he; "go and inform her we have got company. Were that Scotch hag," continued he, turning to me, "to be forever in my family, she would never learn politeness, nor forget that absurd poisonous accent of hers, or testify the smallest specimen of breeding or high life; and yet it is very surprising too, as I had her from a parliament man, a friend of mine from the Highlands, one of the politest men in the world; but that's a secret."

We waited some time for Mrs. Tibbs' arrival, during which interval I had a full opportunity of surveying the chamber and all its furniture, which consisted of four chairs with old wrought bottoms, that he assured me were his wife's embroidery; a square table that had been once japanned; a cradle in one corner, a lumbering cabinet in the other; a broken shepherdess, and a mandarin[5] without a head, were stuck over the chimney; and round the walls several paltry unframed pictures which, he observed, were all his own drawing.

"What do you think, sir, of that head in the corner, done in the manner of Grisoni?[6] There's the true keeping in it;

5. mandarin. Grotesque Chinese figure.

6. Gruisoni. A Florentine painter of the eighteenth century, popular for his portraits.

it's my own face, and though there happens to be no likeness, a Countess offered me an hundred for its fellow. I refused her, for hang it! that would be mechanical,[7] you know."

The wife at last made her appearance, at once a slattern and a coquette; much emaciated, but still carrying the remains of beauty. She made twenty apologies for being seen in such odious dishabille, but hoped to be excused, as she had stayed out all night at the gardens with the Countess, who was excessively fond of the horns. "And, indeed, my dear," added she, turning to her husband, "his lordship drank your health in a bumper."

"Poor Jack!" cries he; "a dear good-natured creature, I know he loves me. But I hope, my dear, you have given orders for dinner; you need make no great preparations neither, there are but three of us; something elegant and little will do,—a turbot, an ortolan,[8] a—"

"Or what do think, my dear," interrupts the wife, "of a nice pretty bit of ox-cheek, piping hot, and dressed with a little of my own sauce?"

"The very thing!" replies he; "it will eat best with some smart bottled beer: but be sure to let us have the sauce his Grace was so fond of. I hate your immense loads of meat; that is country all over; extreme disgusting to those who are in the least acquainted with high life."

By this time my curiosity began to abate, and my appetite to increase: the company of fools may at first make us smile, but at last never fails of rendering us melancholy; I therefore pretended to recollect a prior engagement, and, after having shown my respect to the house, according to the fashion of the English, by giving the servant a piece of money at the door, I took my leave; Mr. Tibbs assuring me that dinner, if I stayed, would be ready at least in less than two hours.

7. mechanical. Like a common workman.

8. turbot . . . ortolan. Highly fashionable delicacies; the one a fish, the other a bird.

CHARLES LAMB

[CHARLES LAMB was born in London, February 10, 1775, and was a resident of the city throughout his life. He was educated at Christ's Hospital, an endowed residence school for boys in poor circumstances, entering at the same time with Coleridge, who became his lifelong friend. On leaving school he went to work as a clerk, and soon found a place with the East India Company, in whose establishment he served from 1792 to 1825, when he was retired on a pension of 450 pounds. Early in life Lamb devoted himself to the care of his sister Mary, who was subject to attacks of insanity, and they lived together, neither marrying, till his death. They collaborated in writing *Tales from Shakespeare,* and their unaristocratic drawing-room was the center of a brilliant literary circle. In 1820 Lamb began to contribute the Elia essays to the *London Magazine,* in which two series (representing nearly all his best work in the essay) were eventually published (see the Introduction, page 12). Within a year after the publication of the volume called *Last Essays* he died, in 1834.]

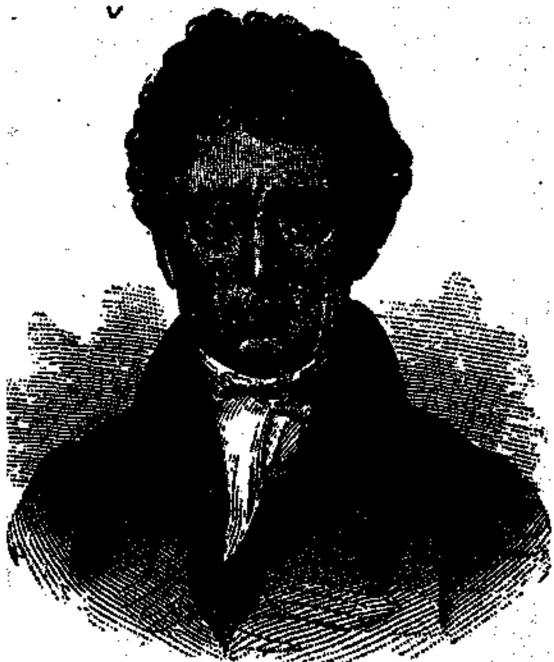
A CHAPTER ON EARS[1]

I HAVE no ear.—

Mistake me not, reader,—nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me.—I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his

1. This essay, like most of the series, is in good part autobiographical; Lamb's indifference to music was one of his best known eccentricities. The amusing postscript to the essay, defending the personality of Elia, was written in reply to a passage in Leigh Hunt's journal, *The Indicator,* under date of Jan. 31, 1821: "We believe that we are taking no greater liberty with him [Lamb] than our motives will warrant, when we add that he sometimes writes in the *London Magaeine* under the signature of Elia." Just why Lamb dubbed his friend Boldero is not known.

subtle - has strong sense o
the congruous & incongrue
Uses alliteration.
Dramatizes self. - autobio
bits throughout.



C. Lamb

plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable side-intelligencers.

Neither have I incurred or done anything to incur, with Defoe,[2] that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance—to feel "quite unabashed," and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory; nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean—*for music.*—To say that this heart never melted at the concourse of sweet sounds,[3] would be a foul self-libel.—*"Water parted from the sea"* never fails to move it strangely. So does *"In infancy."*[4] But they were used to be sung at her harpsichord (the old-fashioned instrument in vogue in those days) by a gentlewoman—the gentlest, sure that ever merited the appellation—the sweetest—why should I hesitate to name Mrs. S——,[5] once the blooming Fanny Weatherall of the Temple—who had power to thrill the soul of Elia, small imp as he was, even in his long coats; and to make him glow, tremble, and blush with a passion that not faintly indicated the day-spring of that absorbing sentiment, which was afterwards destined to overwhelm and subdue his nature quite, for Alice W—n.[6]

I even think that *sentimentally* I am disposed to harmony. But *organically* I am incapable of a tune. I have been practising *"God save the King"* all my life; whistling and humming it over to myself in solitary corners; and am not yet

2. **Defoe.** The reference is to a famous but inaccurate line in Pope's *Dunciad:* "Earless on high stood unabashed Defoe." Defoe was imprisoned in the pillory, in 1703, for a political offense, and such offenders often had their ears clipped; but he did not

3. **concourse of sweet sounds.** A Shakespearean phrase (*Merchant of Venice,* V, i), save that the first word should be "concord."

4. **Water parted from the sea . . . In Infancy.** Songs by Dr. Arne, which Lamb heard in *Artaxerxes,* the first play he ever attended.

5. Mrs. S. Lamb noted that the full name was Spinkes.

6. **Alice W n.** See note on page 124, under the essay on Dream Children.

arrived, they tell me, within many quavers[7] of it. Yet hath the loyalty of Elia never been impeached.

I am not without suspicion that I have an undeveloped faculty of music within me. For thrumming, in my wild way, on my friend A.'s[8] piano, the other morning, while he was engaged in an adjoining parlor,—on his return he was pleased to say *he thought it could not be the maid!* On his first surprise at hearing the keys touched in somewhat an airy and masterful way, not dreaming of me, his suspicions had lighted on Jenny. But a grace, snatched from a superior refinement, soon convinced him that some being—technically perhaps deficient, but higher informed from a principle common to all the fine arts—had swayed the keys to a mood which Jenny, with all her (less cultivated) enthusiasm, could never have elicited from them. I mention this as a proof of my friend's penetration, and not with any view of disparaging Jenny.

Scientifically I could never be made to understand (yet I have taken some pains) what a note in music is; or how one note should differ from another. Much less in voices can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough-bass I contrive to guess at, from its being supereminently harsh and disagreeable. I tremble, however, for my misapplication of the simplest terms of that which I disclaim. While I profess my ignorance, I scarce know what to say I am ignorant of. I hate, perhaps, by misnomers. *Sostenuto* and *adagio* stand in the like relation of obscurity to me; and *Sol, Fa, Mi, Re,* is as conjuring[9] as *Baralipton.*[10]

It is hard to stand alone in an age like this (constituted to the quick and critical perception of all harmonious combinations, I verily believe, beyond all preceding ages, since Jubal[11]

7. quavers. Notes (strictly, eighth-notes).

8. my friend A. Doubtless Lamb's friend William Ayr ton (1777-1858), a well known musical critic.

9. conjuring. Mysterious.

10. Baralipton. The symbolic name **for** one of the figures of the syllogism, in logic.

11. **Jubal.** The reputed founder of the art of music; see *Genesis* **4:21.**

stumbled upon the gamut[12]), to remain as it were singly unimpressible to the magic influences of an art which is said to have such an especial stroke at soothing, elevating, and refining the passions.—Yet rather than break the candid current of my confessions, I must avow to you that I have received a great deal more pain than pleasure from this so cried-up faculty.

I am constitutionally susceptible of noises. A carpenter's hammer, in a warm summer noon, will fret me into more than midsummer madness.[13] But those unconnected, unset sounds are nothing to the measured malice of music. The ear is passive to those single sirokes; willingly enduring stripes, while it hath no task to con. To music it cannot be passive. It will strive—mine at least will—spite of its inaptitude, to thrid[14] the maze; like an unskilled eye painfully poring upon hieroglyphics. I have sat through an Italian Opera, till, for sheer pain, and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren attention! I take refuge in the unpretending assemblage of honest common-life sounds;—and the purgatory of the Enraged Musician[11] becomes my paradise.

I have sat at an Oratorio (that profanation of the purposes of the cheerful playhouse) watching the faces of the auditory in the pit (what a contrast to Hogarth's Laughing Audience!)[16] immovable, or affecting some faint emotion,—till (as some have said that our occupations in the next world will be but a shadow of what delighted us in this) I have imagined myself in some cold theater in Hades, where some

12. gamut. Musical scale.

13. **midsummer madness.** A Shakespearean phrase *(Twelfth Night,* III, iv).

14. thrid. Thread, i. e., find one's way through.

15. **Enragfed Musician.** A well known picture by Hograrth, in which a musician is seen at a window frantically holding his head from distraction at the noises in the street.

16. **Lrauirhing- Audience.** Another familiar sketch, representing a section of a theatrical audience.

of the *forms* of the earthly one should be kept up, with none of the *enjoyment;* or like that

———Party in a parlor,
All silent, and all DAMNED![17]

Above all, those insufferable concertos, and pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension.—Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a-dying, to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze on empty frames, and be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book *all stops,* and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music.*

I deny not that in the opening of a concert I have experienced something vastly lulling and agreeable:—afterwards followeth the languor, and the oppression. Like that disappointing book in Patmos,[18] or like the comings on of melancholy, described by Burton,[19] doth music make her first insinuating approaches:—"Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightsome and pleasant subject, which shall affect him most, *amabilis insania,*[20] and *mentis gratissimus error.*[21] A

17. Party in a parlor, eta From a stanza in the original draft of Wordsworth's poem "Peter Bell"; omitted in later editions.

18. **book in Patmos.** See *Revelation* 10:10.

19. **Burton.** Author of a once famous work, *The Anatomy of Melancholy,* 1621; one of the seventeenth century prose writers loved and imitated by Lamb.

20. **amabilis insania. Delightful madness (a phrase from** Horace).

21. **mentis gratissimus error.** Most pleasing hallucination of the mind (again from Horace).

most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done.—So delightsome these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations, and fantastical meditations, which are like so many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them—winding and unwinding themselves as so many clocks, and still pleasing their humors, until at last the SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN, and they being now habitated to such meditations and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subjects. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor,*[22] discontent, cares, and weariness of life, surprise them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else: continually suspecting, no sooner are their eyes open, but this infernal plague of melancholy seizeth upon them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds; which now, by no means, no labor, no persuasions, they can avoid, they cannot be rid of, they cannot resist."

Something like this "SCENE-TURNING" I have experienced at the evening parties, at the house of my good Catholic friend *Nov*——;[23] who, by the aid of a capital organ, himself the most finished of players, converts his drawing-room into a chapel, his week-days into Sundays, and these latter into minor heavens.*

When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems, which peradventure struck upon my heedless ear, rambling in the side aisles of the dim Abbey, some five-and-thirty years since, waking a new sense, and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension—(whether it be that

22. subrnstions pndor. Rustic bashfulness; a phrase of Cicero's.
23. Nov Vincent Novello, a well-known organist and composer.

•I have been there, and still would go;
Tis like a little heaven below.—Dr. Watts.

in which the psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove's wings,[24] or that other, which with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind[25])—a holy calm pervadeth me.—I am for the time

rapt above earth,
And possess joys not promised at my birth.[26]

But when this master of the spell, not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive,—impatient to overcome her "earthly" with his "heavenly,"[27]—still pouring in, for protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted German ocean, above which, in triumphant progress, dolphin-seated, ride those Arions[28] Haydn and Mozart, with their attendant tritons Bach, Beethoven, and a countless tribe, whom to attempt to reckon up would but plunge me again in the deeps,—I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wit's end;—clouds, as of frankincense, oppress me—priests, altars, censers, dazzle before me—the genius of *his* religion hath me in her toils—a shadowy triple tiara[29] invests the brow of my friend, late so naked, so ingenuous—he is Pope,—and by him sits, like as in the anomaly of dreams, a she-Pope too,—tri-coroneted like himself!—I am converted, and yet a Protestant;—at once *malleus hereticorum?*[30] and myself grand heresiarch :[31]

24. **dove's wings.** *Psalm* 55:6.
25. **young man . . . cleanse his mind.** *Psalm* 119:9.
26. **rapt above earth,** etc. Adapted from an unknown poet quoted by Izaak Walton in *The Complete Angler.*
27. **earthly . . . heavenly.** See I *Corinthians* 15:48.
28. **Arions.** Arion, an early Greek poet, according to legend charmed the dolphins and tritons of the sea so that they crowded about the vessel on which he traveled, and he rode to land on the back of one of them.
29. **triple tiara.** The crown of the Pope of Rome.
30. **malleus heretlcorum.** Hammer of heretics; the Latin title of a work by Johann Faber (1478-1541), a Catholic opponent of Luther.
81. **hereslaroh.** Arch-heretic.

or three heresies center in my person: I am Marcion, Ebion, and Cerinthus[32]—Gog and Magog[33]—what not?—till the coming in of the friendly supper-tray dissipates the figment, and a draught of true Lutheran beer[34] (in which chiefly my friend shows himself no bigot) at once reconciles me to the rationalities of a purer faith, and restores to me the genuine unterrifying aspects of my pleasant-countenanced host and hostess.

P. S.—A writer, whose real name it seems is *Boldero,* but who has been entertaining the town for the last twelve months with some very pleasant lucubrations under the assumed signature of *Leigh Hunt,** in his "Indicator" of the 31st January last has thought fit to insinuate that I, *Elia,* do not write the little sketches which bear my signature in this magazine, but that the true author of them is a Mr. L—b. Observe the critical period at which he has chosen to impute the calumny!—on the very eve of the publication of our last number,—affording no scope for explanation for a full month; during which time I must lie writhing and tossing under the cruel imputation of nonentity. Good heavens! that a plain man must not be allowed *to be*——

They call this an age of personality; but surely this spirit of anti-personality (if I may so express it) is something worse.

Take away my moral reputation,—I may live to discredit that calumny; injure my literary fame—I may write that up

32. **Marcion,** etc. Famous heretics of the early Christian era.
33. Gog and Magog. See *Revelation* 20:8-9.
34. **true** Lutheran **beer.** Lucas (in the *Works of Charles and Mary Lamb)* relates this story: "Once at a musical party at Leigh Hunt's, being oppressed with what to him was nothing better than a prolonged noise . . . [Lamb] said, 'If one only had **a** pot of porter, one might get through this.' It was procured for him, and he weathered the Mozartian storm."

*Clearly **a** fictitious appellation; for, if we admit the latter of these names to be in a manner English, what is *height* **Christian** nomenclature knows no such. [Lamb's note.]

again; but, when a gentleman is robbed of his identity, where is he?

Other murderers stab but at our existence, a frail and perishing trifle at the best; but here is an assassin who aims at our very essence; who not only forbids us *to be* any longer, but *to have been* at all. Let our ancestors look to it.

Is the parish register nothing? Is the house in Princes Street, Cavendish Square, where we saw the light six-and-forty years ago, nothing? Were our progenitors from stately Genoa, where we flourished four centuries back, before the barbarous name of Boldero was known to a European mouth, nothing? Was the goodly scion of our name, transplanted into England in the reign of the seventh Henry, nothing? Are the archives of the steelyard,[35] in succeeding reigns (if haply they survive the fury of our envious enemies), showing that we flourished in prime repute, as merchants, down to the period of the Commonwealth, nothing?

> Why, then the world, and all that's in't, is nothing;
> The covering sky is nothing; Bohemia nothing.[36]

I am ashamed that this trifling writer should have power to move me so.

MACKERY END, IN HERTFORDSHIRE[1]

BRIDGET ELIA has been my housekeeper for many a long year. I have obligations to Bridget, extending beyond the period of memory. We house together, old bachelor and maid, in a sort of double singleness; with such tolerable comfort, upon the whole, that I, for one, find myself in no sort of disposition to go out upon the mountains, with the rash

35. **steelyard.** The ancient London seat of the warehouses of a leading merchants' company.

36. **Why, then,** etc. From Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale,* I, II.

1. This essay is of special interest for the opening character-sketch of Mary Lamb, under the guise of Ella's cousin Bridget. The other names (Bruton, Gladman, Field) are real ones, and the Mackery End farmhouse was the home of Lamb's grandmother's sister, Mrs. Gladman.

king's offspring,[2] to bewail my celibacy. We agree pretty well in our tastes and habits—yet so, as "with a difference."[8] We are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings—as it should be among near relations. Our sympathies are rather understood, than expressed; and once, upon my dissembling a tone in my voice more kind than ordinary, my cousin burst into tears, and complained that I was altered. We are both great readers in different directions. While I am hanging over (for the thousandth time) some passage in old Burton,* or one of his strange contemporaries, she is abstracted in some modern tale, or adventure, whereof our common reading-table is daily fed with assiduously fresh supplies. Narrative teases me. I have little concern in the progress of events. She must have a story—well, ill, or indifferently told—so there be life stirring in it, and plenty of good or evil accidents. The fluctuations of fortune in fiction—and almost in real life—have ceased to interest, or operate but dully upon me. Out-of-the-way humors and opinions—heads with some diverting twist in them—the oddities of authorship please me most. My cousin has a native disrelish of anything that sounds odd or bizarre. Nothing goes down with her that is quaint, irregular, or out of the road of common sympathy. She "holds Nature more clever."[5] I can pardon her blindness to the beautiful obliquities of the *Religio Medici;** but she must apologize to me for certain disrespectful insinuations which she has been pleased to throw out latterly, touching the intellectuals of a dear favorite of mine, of the last century but one—the thrice noble, chaste, and virtuous, but again some-

2. **rath king's offspring'.** Jephthah's daughter; see *Judges* **11:38.**
3. **with a difference.** A Shakespearean phrase (*Hamlet* IV, v).
4. **Burton.** See note on page 114 above.
5. **holds Nature more clever.** Counts it more clever to be natural. The phrase is from a poem by John Gay, "Epitaph of By-Words."
6. R**eligio Medici.** By Sir Thomas Browne, another **of the** quaint seventeenth century authors to whom Lamb was devoted.

what fantastical and original-brained, generous Margaret Newcastle.[7]

It has been the lot of my cousin, oftener perhaps than I could have wished, to have had for her associates and mine, free-thinkers—leaders and disciples of novel philosophies and systems; but she neither wrangles with, nor accepts, their opinions. That which was good and venerable to her when a child retains its authority over her mind still. She never juggles or plays tricks with her understanding.

We are both of us inclined to be a little too positive; and I have observed the result of our disputes to be almost uniformly this—that in matters of fact, dates, and circumstances, it turns out that I was in the right, and my cousin in the wrong. But where we have differed upon moral points, upon something proper to be done, or let alone, whatever heat of opposition, or steadiness of conviction, I set out with, I am sure always, in the long run, to be brought over to her way of thinking.

I must touch upon the foibles of my kinswoman with a gentle hand, for Bridget does not like to be told of her faults. She hath an awkward trick (to say no worse of it) of reading in company: at which times she will answer *yes* or *no* to a question, without fully understanding its purport—which is provoking, and derogatory in the highest degree to the dignity of the putter of the said question. Her presence of mind is equal to the most pressing trials of life, but will sometimes desert her upon trifling occasions. When the purpose requires it, and is a thing of moment, she can speak to it greatly; but in matters which are not stuff of the conscience,[8]

7. **Margraret Newcastle.** The Duchess of Newcastle (died 1673), who wrote a celebrated memoir of her husband. In his essay called "Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading" Lamb said of this *Life of the Duke of Newcastle* that "no casket is rich enough, no casing sufficiently durable, to honor and keep safe such **a** jewel."

8. **stuff of the conscience.** A Shakespearean phrase *(Othello,* I, II.

she hath been known sometimes to let slip a word less seasonably.

Her education in youth was not much attended to; and she happily missed all that train of female garniture, which passeth by the name of accomplishments. She was tumbled early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet[9] of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. Had I twenty girls, they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chance in wedlock might not be diminished by it; but I can answer for it, that it makes (if the worst come to the worst) most incomparable old maids.

In a season of distress, she is the truest comforter; but in the teasing accidents, and minor perplexities, which do not call out the *will* to meet them, she sometimes maketh matters worse by an excess of participation. If she does not always divide your trouble, upon the pleasanter occasions of life she is sure always to treble your satisfaction. She is excellent to be at play with, or upon a visit; but best, when she goes a journey with you.

We made an excursion together a few summers since, into Hertfordshire, to beat up the quarters of some of our less-known relations in that fine corn country.

The oldest thing I remember is Mackery End; or Mackarel End, as it is spelt, perhaps more properly, in some old maps of Hertfordshire; a farm-house,—delightfully situated within a gentle walk from Wheathampstead. I can just remember having been there, on a visit to a great-aunt, when I was a child under the care of Bridget; who, as I have said, is older than myself by some ten years. I wish that I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might

9. **a spacious closet.** This was the library of Samuel Salt, a lawyer, from whom the Lamb family rented chambers in the grounds of the Temple, the father and mother of Charles and Mary acting as his secretary and housekeeper.

share them in equal division. But that is impossible. The house was at that time in the occupation of a substantial yeoman, who had married my grandmother's sister. His name was Gladman. My grandmother was a Bruton, married to a Field. The Gladmans and the Brutons are still flourishing in that part of the county, but the Fields are almost extinct. More than forty years have elapsed since the visit I speak of; and, for the greater portion of that period, we had lost sight of the other two branches also. Who or what sort of persons inherited Mackery End—kindred or strange folk—we were afraid almost to conjecture, but determined some day to explore.

By somewhat a circuitous route, taking the noble park at Luton in our way from St. Albans, we arrived at the spot of our anxious curiosity about noon. The sight of the old farm-house, though every trace of it was effaced from my recollection, affected me with a pleasure which I had not experienced for many a year. For though *I* had forgotten it, *we* had never forgotten being there together, and we had been talking about Mackery End all our lives, till memory on my part became mocked with a phantom of itself, and I thought I knew the aspect of a place, which, when present, O how unlike it was to *that,* which I had conjured up so many times instead of it!

Still the air breathed balmily about it; the season was in the "heart of June,"[10] and I could say with the poet,

> But thou, that didst appear so fair
> To fond imagination,
> Dost rival in the light of day
> Her delicate creation![11]

Bridget's was more a waking bliss[12] than mine, for she easily remembered her old acquaintance again—some altered features,

10. **heart of June.** The phrase is from Ben Jonson's Epithalamion written for the marriage of Lady Frances Stuart.
11. **But thou,** etc. Prom Wordsworth's "Yarrow Visited."
12. **waking bliss.** The phrase is from Milton's *Comus.*

of course, a little grudged at. At first, indeed, she was ready to disbelieve for joy; but the scene soon reconfirmed itself in her affections—and she traversed every outpost of the old mansion, to the wood-house, the orchard, the place where the pigeon-house had stood (house and birds were alike flown), with a breathless impatience of recognition, which was more pardonable perhaps than decorous at the age of fifty odd. But Bridget in some things is behind her years.

The only thing left was to get into the house—and that was a difficulty which to me singly would have been insurmountable: for I am terribly shy in making myself known to strangers and out-of-date kinsfolk. Love, stronger than scruple, winged my cousin in without me; but she soon returned with a creature that might have sat *to* a sculptor for the image of Welcome. It was the youngest of the Gladmans; who, by marriage with a Bruton, had become mistress of the old mansion. A comely brood are the Brutons. Six of them, females, were noted as the handsomest young women in the county. But this adopted Bruton, in my mind, was better than they all—more comely. She was born too late to have remembered me. She just recollected in early life to have had her cousin Bridget once pointed out to her, climbing a stile. But the name of kindred, and of cousinship, was enough. Those slender ties, that prove slight as gossamer in the rending atmosphere of a metropolis, bind faster, as we found it, in hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire. In five minutes we were as thoroughly acquainted as if we had been born and bred up together; were familiar, even to the calling each other by our Christian names. So Christians should call one another. To have seen Bridget, and her—it was like the meeting of the two scriptural cousins.[13] There was a grace and dignity, an amplitude of form and stature, answering to her mind, in this farmer's wife, which would have shined in a palace—or so we thought it. We were made wel-

13. **scriptural couaina.** Mary and Elizabeth; see *Luke* 1:39-40.

come by husband and wife equally—we, and our friend that was with us.—I had almost forgotten him—but B. F.[14] will not so soon forget that meeting, if peradventure he shall read this on the far-distant shores where the Kangaroo haunts. The fatted calf was made ready, or rather was already so, as if in anticipation of our coming; and, after an appropriate glass of native wine, never let me forget with what honest pride this hospitable cousin made us proceed to Wheathampstead, to introduce us (as some new-found rarity) to her mother and sister Gladmans, who did indeed know something more of us, at a time when she almost knew nothing.—With what corresponding kindness we were received by them also—how Bridget's memory, exalted by the occasion, warmed into a thousand half-obliterated recollections of things and persons, to my utter astonishment, and her own—and to the astoundment of B. F. who sat by, almost the only thing that was not a cousin there,—old effaced images of more than half-forgotten names and circumstances still crowding back upon her, as words written in lemon come out upon exposure to a friendly warmth,—when I forget all this, then may my country cousins forget me; and Bridget no more remember that in the days of weakling infancy I was her tender charge—as I have been her care in foolish manhood since—in those pretty pastoral walks, long ago, about Mackery End, in Hertfordshire.

DREAM-CHILDREN: A REVERIE[1]

CHILDREN love to listen to stories about their elders, when *they* were children: to stretch their imagination to the con-

14. B. F. Barron Field, a friend of the Lambs, who at this time was living: in Australia.

1. This essay, perhaps the finest of Lamb's as a work of art, la an odd blend of autobiography and fiction. It may have been prompted by the recent death of the writer's brother John, sketched here as the children's "uncle John." The "great house in Norfolk" is Blakesware, Hertfordshire, where Lamb's grandmother, Mary Field, was housekeeper. "Alice W——n" may be somewhat vaguely identified as Ann Simmons, a girl to whom Lamb had been devoted for a time in his youth, and who had actually married a merchant named Bartrum.

ception of a traditionary great-uncle, or grandame, whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by everybody, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by its owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay,[2] and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish, indeed." And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all

2. .**came to decay.** The house was pulled down **in 1822. The** "other house" was Gilston, the principal seat of the Plumer family, some miles distant.

the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighborhood for many miles around, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman; so good indeed that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was, and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—here little Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said "those innocents would do her no harm"; and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eyebrows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grandchildren, having us to the great house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the twelve Caesars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I could never be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken panels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without

my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because 1 had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew-trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavors of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grandchildren, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L—, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how

in after-life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowance enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been t*o me* when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him *to* be alive again, to be quarreling with him (for we quarreled sometimes), rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he, their poor uncle, must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a-crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W——n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: "We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice call Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have

been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe[3] millions of ages, before we have existence, and a name"——and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

I LIKE to meet a sweep—understand me—not a grown sweeper—old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive—but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigrifaide, the maternal washings not quiteeffaced from the cheek-such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise?

I have a kindly yearning towards these dim specks—poor blots—innocent blacknesses—

Ieverence these young Africans of our own growth—thejaa almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind. "

when a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni*[1]—to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades!—to shudder with the idea that "now, surely, he must be lost for ever!"—to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight—and then (0 fulness of delight) running out of

3. **Lethe.** The river of Hades, of which (according to a passage in Vergil's *Æneid*) departed spirits drink forgetfulness so that they may be willing to enter mortal bodies once more.

1. **fauces Averni.** Jaws of Hades (a Vergilian phrase).

doors, to come just in time to see the—sable phenomenon, emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly; not much unlike the old stage direction in *Macbeth,*[2] where the "Apparition of a child crowned with a tree in his hand rises."

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better to give him twopence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed[3] heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.[4]

There is a composition, the groundwork of which I have understood to be the sweet wood yclept[5] sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this "wholesome and pleasant beverage," on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street—*the only Salopian house,*[6]—I have never yet adventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients—cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

2. **stage direction in Macbeth.** Act IV, scene 1.
3. **kibed.** Chapped or swollen with chilblains.
4. **tester.** Sixpence.
5. **yclept.** Called.
6. **Salopian house.** A place for the sale of *saloop,* a drink similar to sassafras tea.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper—whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften tha fuliginous concretions,[7] which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive—but so it is, that no possible taste or odor to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense, if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals —cats—when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house;* yet be it known to thee, reader —if thou art one who keepest what is called good hours, thou art happily ignorant of the fact—he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savory mess to humbler customers, at the dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labors of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honors of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odors. The rake who wisheth to dissipate his o'er-night vapors in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume,

7. **fuliginous concretion.** Deposits of soot. Lamb is imitating: the sonorous Latinized style of his favorite seventeenth century authors.

as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *Saloop*—the precocious herb-woman's darling—the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent Garden's[8] famed piazzas—the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldst thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny); so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'ercharged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin—so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingredienced soups—nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney,* invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket!

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness. In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough—yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened—when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves

8. **Hammersmith . . . Covent Garden.** Hammersmith was a district at the west of London, famed for its market gardens. The piazzas of Covent Garden were (and still are) the chief market-place of the city.

out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth—— but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in "The March to Finchley,"[9] grinning at the pie-man—— there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever—with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth—for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it—that I could have been content, if the honor of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to "air" them[10] as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

A sable cloud
Turns forth her silver lining on the night.n

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility:—and, doubtless, under the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguisement, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticements of these tender victims give but

9. **The March to Pinchley.** One of Hogarth's studies of eighteenth century life, showing a village street overrun with soldiers making their way to Finchley, where a military camp was established. One soldier is emptying the contents of a milkmaid's pail into his hat, to the delight of the little sweep and the pie-man just behind him

10. **"air" them.** An allusion to a phrase in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline,* II, iv: "I beg but leave to air this jewel."

11. A **sable cloud,** etc. From Milton's *Comus.*

too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine and almost infantile abductions; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels mourning[12] for their children, even in our days, countenance the fact; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu[11] be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless *defiliations.*[14]

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since—under a ducal canopy—(that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late Duke was especially a connoisseur)—encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven—folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius[15]—was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noonday, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle.—But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor

12. **Rachls mourning.** See *Matthew* 2:17-18.

13. **young Montagu.** Edward Wortley Montagu (1713-1776), a well known character, son of Lady Mary Montagu; he ran away from school and (among other adventures) was for a time a chimney-sweep.

14. **deflliatlong.** Losses of sons.

15. **Ascanius.** The young son of Æneas; the reference is to a scene in the first book of the *Æneid.*

child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions—is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was now but creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*[16] and resting place. By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend Jem White[17] was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew.[18] Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who, relying upon his dusky suit,

16. incunabula. Cradle (originally swaddlingr-ciothe).

17. **Jem White.** James "White (1775-1820) was a school-fellow of Lamb's at Christ's Hospital; at this time he was London agent of provincial newspapers.

18. fair of St. Bartholomew. A famous fair **formerly** held in Smithfield (an open **district of London) on September 3; it was abolished in 1865.**

had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quoited out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment,[19] but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity, but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlors three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savor. James White, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion Bigod,[20] ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clamoring and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table—for Rochester[21] in his maddest days could not have done the humors of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honor the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing, "the gentleman," and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute,whereat the universal host[22] would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. (0 it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctu-

19. **wedding garment.** See *Matthew* 22:11-13.

20. **Bigod.** The name stands for John Fenwick, **a** journalist friend of Lamb's.

21. **Rochester.** The second Earl of Rochester, a notorious roystering nobleman of the court of Charles the Second.

22. **universal host.** An allusion to Milton's account of **the** army of Satan:

> At which the universal host up-sent
> A shout that tore Hell's concave.
> {*Paradise Lost,* **i, 541-2.)**

"Concave" is arched roof.

ous sayings—how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors—how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it "must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating"—how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust,[23] to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony,J-how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lips before drinking. Then we had our toasts—"The King,"—the "Cloth,"[24]—which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering;—and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, "May the Brush supersede the Laurel." All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a "Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so," which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; and every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savoriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

> Golden lads and lasses must,
> As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.25

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died—of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed forever.

23. **kissing-crust.** An overhanging edge of the upper crust of the loaf, that touches another loaf while baking.

24. **the "Cloth."** The clergy.

25. **Golden lads,** etc. From the dirge in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline,* IV, ii

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG[1]

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his *Mundane Mutations,* where he designates a kind of golden age by the term *Cho-fiang,* literally the Cook's holiday. The manuscript goes on to say that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swineherd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast[2] for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as younkers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion, till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian make-shift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in the utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labor of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an

1. The story told in this essay has been found to be rather widely scattered in early literature, but Lamb seems to have obtained it, as he says, from a Chinese tale communicated to him by his friend Thomas Manning, a traveler and Orientalist.

2. **mast.** Nuts and acorns.

odor assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from?—not from the burnt cottage—he had smelt that smell before—indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young firebrand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crumbs of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted—*crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up to the newborn pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole hand fills of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hail-stones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure which he experienced in his lower regions had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued:

"You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring ? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must

be eating fire, and I know not what—what have you got there, I say?"

"0 father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats."

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out, "Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste—0 Lord,"—with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled in every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavor, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretense, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbors would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible

mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town.[3] Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, **and** verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burnt their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given,—to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present—without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision; and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on lire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear all over the districts. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke,[4] who made a discovery that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked *(burnt* as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes

3. assize town. Town where a circuit court sits.
4. our Locke. A seventeenth century philosopher.

the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind.——

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favor of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis,*[5] I will maintain it *to* be the most delicate—*princeps obsoniorum.*[6]

I speak not of your grown porkers—things between pig and pork—those hobbydehoys—but a young and tender suckling—under a moon old—guiltless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the *amor immunditiœ,*[7] the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble and a grumble—the mild forerunner, or *prreludium,* of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled—but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling,* as it is well called—the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—0 call it not fat—but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat—fat cropped in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food—the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna—or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is "doing"—it seemeth rather a refresh-

5. mundus edibilis. World of eatables.
6. princeps obsoniorum. Chief of delicacies.
7. amor immundltlae. Love of filth.

ing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string!—Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars[8]—

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth!—wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swine-hood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal—wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation[9]—from these sins he is happily snatched away—

> **Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,**
> **Death came with timely care—10**

his memory is odoriferous—no clown[11] curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon—no coalheaver bolteth him in reeking sausages—he hath a fair sepulcher in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure—and for such a tomb might be content to die.[12]

He is the best of Sapors.[13] Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcndent—a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause—too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her—like lovers' kisses, she biteth—she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish—but she stoppeth at the palate—she meddleth not with the appetite—and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

8. shooting' atari. Lamb may be alluding" to the old belief that shooting stars dropped jelly-like substances upon the **earth.**

9. **filthy conversation.** The phrase is from *2 Peter* 2:7; "conversation" means manner **of** life.

10. **Ere sin could blight,** etc. **From** Coleridge's "Epitaph on **an** Infant."

11. clown. Rough, low-born **person,**

12. **for such, a tomb.** An allusion to the closing lines of **Milton's** verses on Shakespeare:

> And so sepulchred in such pomp dost lie
> That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

13. **Sapors.** Flavors.

Pig—let me speak his praise—is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and the weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwisted, and not to be unraveled without hazard, he is—good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbors' fare.

I am one of those who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. "Presents," I often say, "endear Absents." Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chickens (those "tame villatic fowl"),[14] capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, "give everything." I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good favors, to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house, slightingly (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what), a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate—It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweetmeat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London Bridge) a gray-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counter-

14. tame villatic fowl. The phrase is from Milton's *Samson Agonistes;* "villatic" means farmyard.

feit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy-like, I made him a present of—the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I — I myself, and not another—would eat her nice cake—and what should I say to her the next time I saw her—how naughty I was to part with her pretty present—and the odor of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last—and I blamed my impertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old gray impostor.

Our ancestors were nice[15] in their method of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipped to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenerating and dulcifying[16] a substance naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto—

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young

15. nice. Discriminating.

16. **intenerating and** dulcifying. Making tender and sweet; compare the note on "fuliginous concretions," page 131 above.

students, when I was at St. Omer's,[17] and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, "Whether, supposing that the flavor of a pig who obtained his death by whipping *(per flagellationem extremam)*[18] superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?" I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are—but consider, he is a weakling—a flower.

OLD CHINA[1]

I HAVE an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I enquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture gallery. I cannot defend the order of preference, but by saying that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play, and the first exhibition, that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then—why should I now have?—to those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that, under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any

17. **St. Omer'g.** A Jesuit collegre in Prance; here playfully mentioned because of the reputation of Jesuit theologians for the discussion of subtle questions of morality.

18. **per flagellationem extremam.** Lamb puts "by whipping" into a Latin phrase such as the theologians might have used.

1. This essay is valued especially for its picture of the life of Charles and Mary Lamb during their early days of comparative poverty.

element, in that **world before** perspective—a china tea-cup. I like to see my old friends—whom distance cannot diminish—figuring up in the air (so they appear to **our** optics), yet on *terra firma* still—for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, had made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another—for likeness is identity on tea-cups—is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead—a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!

Farther on—if far or near can be predicated of their world—see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.[2]

Here—a cow and rabbit couchant,[3] and co-cxtensive—so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.[4]

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson[5] (which we are old-fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon), some of these *speciosa miracula*[6] upon a set of extraordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking how favorable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort—when a passing sentiment seemed to over-

2. **the hays.** An old English country dance.
3. **couchant.** An heraldic term: lying down with the head raised.
4. **Cathay.** China.
6. **Hyson.** Fragrant green tea.
6. **speciosa miracula.** Shining wonders; a phrase from Horace.

shade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.[7]

"I wish the good old times would come again," she said, "when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state"—so she was pleased to ramble on—"in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, 0! how much ado I had *to* get you to consent in those times!), we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against,* and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.

"Do you remember the brown suit which you made to hang upon you till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so thread-bare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher,[8] which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it *(collating* you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till daybreak—was there no pleasure in being a poor

7. Bridget. Mary Lamb, of course; see the introductory note to "Mackery End."

8. Beaumont and Fletcher. Elizabethan dramatists who collaborated

man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you half the honest vanity with which you flaunted it about in that overworn suit—your old corbeau[9]—for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen—or sixteen shillings was it?—a great affair we thought it then—which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now.

"When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Lionardo,[10] which we christened the 'Lady Blanch'; when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money—and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's,[11] and buy a wilderness of Lionardos. Yet do you?

"Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's Bar, and Waltham, when we had a holiday—holidays, and all other fun, are gone, now we are rich—and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savory cold lamb and salad—and how you would pry about at noontide for some decent house, where we might go in, and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth—and wish for such another honest hostess as Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a-fishing—and sometimes they would prove obliging enough,

9. **corbeau.** A dark green goods.

10. **Lionardo.** Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), the famous Italian artist. The picture here called "Lady Blanch" is usually known as "Modesty and Vanity"; it is the subject of one of Mary Lamb's poems.

11. **Colnag-hi's.** The shop of **a** print-seller, more **properly** **t**yled Colnago.

and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us—but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savorily, scarcely grudging Piscator[12] his Trout Hall? Now, when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom moreover, we *ride* part of the way—and go into a fine inn, and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense —which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage and a precarious welcome.

"You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw *The Battle of Hexham,* and *The Surrender of Calais,*[13] and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in *The Children in the Wood*[14] —when we squeezed out our shillings a-piece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me —and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria? You used to say that the gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the in frequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged *to* attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because a word lost would have been a chasm which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then— and I appeal to you whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation than I have done since in

12. Piscator. A character in Walton's *Complete Angler,* one of whose favorite resorts was Trout Hall, "an honest ale-house."

13. Battle of Hexham . . . Surrender of Calais. Plays by Georgre Colman the younger (1762-1836).

14. **Children in the Wood.** A short play by Thomas Morton (1764-1838).

more expensive situations in the house? The getting in indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough,—but there was still a law of civility to woman recognized to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages—and how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat, and the play, afterwards 1 Now we can only pay our money and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then—but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty.

"There was pleasure in eating strawberries, before they became quite common—in the first dish of peas, while they were yet dear—to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can we have now? If we were to treat ourselves now—that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked. It is very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, that makes what I call a treat—when two people living together, as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like; while each apologizes, and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now—what I mean by the word—we never do make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

"I know what you were going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet,—and much ado we used to have every Thirty-first Night of December to account for our exceedings—many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much—or that we had not spent so much—or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing with-

out that for the future—and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now), we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with 'lusty brimmers'[15] (as you used to quote it out of *hearty cheerful Mr, Cotton,* as you called him), we used to welcome in the 'coming guest.' Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year—no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us."

Bridget is so sparing of her speech on most occasions, that when she gets into a rhetorical vein I am careful how I interrupt it. I could not help, however, smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of poor — hundred pounds a year. "It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin. I am afraid we must put up with the excess, for if we were to shake the superflux into the sea, we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other, if we had always had the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power—those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances cannot straighten—with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is supplementary youth, a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride, where we formerly walked: live better, and lie softer—and shall be wiser to do so—than we had means to do in those good old days you speak of. Yet could those days return—could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a day—could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young to see them—could the good old one-shilling gallery days return—they are dreams, my cousin, now—but could you and I at this moment, instead of this quiet argument,

15. lusty brimmers. Pleasant cups. **Mr. Cotton** was a miscellaneous writer of the seventeenth century; he translated the essays of Montaigne, and wrote a continuation of Walton's *Angler.* The quotations are from his poem called "The New year."

by our well-carpeted fire-side, sitting on this luxurious sofa—be once more struggling up those inconvenient staircases, pushed about, and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers—could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours—and the delicious *Thank God, we are safe,* which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theater down beneath us—I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Croesus[18] had, or the great Jew R——[17] is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed-tester,[18] over the head of that pretty insipid half-Madonnaish chit of a lady in that very blue summer-house."

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN[1]

IF PERADVENTURE, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six and thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing Lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant playtime and the frequently intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and some-

16. Croesus. An ancient Lydian king, famed for **his wealth.**

17. **the great Jew R.** Nathan Rothschild, founder of **the** banking house of that name.

1S. **bed-tester.** Bed canopy.

1. This essay is almost purely autobiographical, giving an account of Lamb's retirement from his clerkship at the India House, in March, 1825. He devises, however, a fictitious name **for** the firm for which he had been working so long. "Superannuated" means "retired for age."

times ten hours' a-day attendance at a counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly content, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and recreation. In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a week-day saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No book-stalls deliciously to idle over—no busy faces to recreate the idle man who contemplates them ever passing by—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour, and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day look anything but comfortable.

But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields[2] of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in rest-

2, native fields. Lamb, as has been noted, was a native of London, but his family came from Hertfordshire; see the essay on "Mackery End."

less pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thraldom.

Independently of the rigors of attendance, I have ever been, haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were; and the wood had entered into my soul.[8]

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when on the 5th of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L——, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly enquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained laboring under the impression that I had acted inprudently in my disclosure; that I had foolishly given a

3. wood bad entered my soul. A playful adaptation of a phrase in the Prayer-Book version of *Psalm* 105:18, "the iron altered his soul."

handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one, I verily believe, in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to *go* home (it might be about eight o'clock) I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlor. I thought now my time is surely come, I have dene for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L——, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me,—when to my utter astonishment B——, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find that out? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted!), and, asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life *to* the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary—a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever. This noble benefit—gratitude forbids me to conceal their names—I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world—the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet, and Lacy. *Esto perpetual**

For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner

4. Esto perpetua. May it be perpetual!

in the Old Bastile,[5] suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have his Time all to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue; I could see no end of my possessions; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their own resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away, but I do *not* read in that violent measure with which, having no Time my own but candlelight Time, I used to weary out my head and eyesight in by-gone winters. I walk, read, or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure; I let it come to me. I am like the man

> —that's born, and has his years come to him,
> In some green desert.*

"Years," you will say; "what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon? He has already told us he is past fifty."

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For

6. **Old Bastila.** The notorious state prison in Paris.
6. **that's** born, etc. Inaccurately quoted from a comedy called *The Mayor of Quimborough,* by Thomas Middleton.

that is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own, that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me threefold. My next ten years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting House. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been so closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a tragedy[7] by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death:

> ——'Twas but just now he went away;
> I have not since had time to shed a tear;
> And yet the distance does the same appear
> As if he had been a thousand years from me.
> Time takes no measure in Eternity.

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since; to visit my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill—that I had left below in the state militant.[8] Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk, the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D——l

7. **a tragedy.** *The Vestal Virgin* (1665).

8. **state militant.** A theological phrase applied to the state of the church on earth, as opposed to its *triumphant* state hereafter.

take me, if I did not feel some remorse—beast, if I had not—at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toils for six and thirty years, that smoothed for me with their jokes and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional road. Had it been so rugged then after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent; and I also know that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell, Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly I Pl—,[9] officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!—and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham[10] or a Whittington[11] of old, stately House of Merchants; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one-half the year supplied the place of the sun's light; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my "works!" There let them rest, as I do from my labors, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas[12] left, and full as useful! My mantle I bequeath among ye.—

A fortnight had passed since the date of my first communication. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unac-

9. ch ; Do—, P1 Characters at the India House, said to be named Chambers, Dodwell, and Plumley.

10. **Gresham-** Sir Thomas Gresham, who founded **the** Royal Exchange in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

11. **Whittington.** Sir Richard Whittington (died 1423), famous as thrice Lord Mayor of London.

12. **Aauinas.** St. Thomas Aquinas (died 1274), a theologian and philosopher, whose works, in the first printed edition, filled seventeen folio volumes.

eustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian,[13] from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural to me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at eleven o'clock in the day in Bond Street,[14] and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a book-stall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine etching in the morning. Was it ever otherwise? What is become of Fish Street Hill Where is Fenchurch Street? Stones of old Mincing Lane, which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six and thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints[15] now vocal? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is 'Change time,[16] and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles.[17] It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to a passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week, or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days; in its distance from, or propinquity to, the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during, the whole of it, affecting

13. **Carthusian.** Monk of the Carthusian order.

14. **Bond Street,** etc. Bond Street is a main thoroughfare, once a fashionable promenade, now filled with shops. Soho is a London square, the scene of much gaiety in the Georgian era. **Fish Street Hill,** Fenchurch Street, and Mincing Lane are all in the "city" proper,—the central wholesale business district, whereas the **Pall Mall** is a handsome street leading toward the residential West End.

15. **everlasting flints.** A Shakespearean phrase *(Romeo and Juliet,* II, vi).

16. **'Change time.** The time when the Exchange is open for business.

17. **Elgin marbles.** Pieces of Greek sculpture in the British Museum, brought to England by Lord Elgin.

my appetite, spirits, &c. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sate as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed the Ethiop white?[18] What is gone of Black Monday? All the days are the same. Sunday itself—that unfortunate failure of a holiday, as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and over-care to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a week day. I can spare to *go* to church now, without grudging the huge cantle[19] which it used to cut out of the holiday. I have Time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt the man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May-morning. It is Lucretian pleasure[20] to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking[21] and caring; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all for? A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly earthquake come and swallow up those accursed cotton mills?[22] Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.[23]

I am no longer * * * * * *, clerk to the firm of, &c. I am Retired Leisure.[24] I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless

18. **washed the Ethiop white. See** *Jeremiah* 13:23.
19. cautle. Slice.
20. **Lucretian pleasure.** A phrase derived from a famous passage in the poet Lucretius; see Bacon's rendering of it on page 21.
21. **carking.** Anxious.
22. **accursed cotton mills.** Chosen as typical of the busy **age** of machinery.
23. As **low,** etc. From *Hamlet,* II, ii.
24. **Retired Leisure.** A Miltonic phrase, from *It Penseroso.*

gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate*[25] air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est*[20] I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task-work, and have the rest of the day to myself.

PREFACE[1]

BY A FRIEND OF THE LATE ELIA

THIS poor gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature.

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humor of the thing, if there ever was much in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess that much which I have heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you—a sort of unlicked, incondite[2] things—villainously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his,* if they had been other than such; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know that what he

25. **cum dlgnltate.** In allusion to the Ciceronian phrase *otium cum dignitate,* dignified leisure.

26. **Opus operatum est.** The work is finished.

1. This essay first appeared in the *London Magazine* for January, 1823, shortly after the publication of the first volume of Elia Essays, when Lamb apparently intended to discontinue the series. He later used it, in revised form, as the preface to the volume of *Last Essays of Elia,* 1833. It is a notable example of his ability to understand himself and criticize his own work,—playfully but soundly.

2. **incondite.** Unpolished.

tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another; as in a former essay[3] (to save many instances)—where the *first person* (his favorite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connections—in direct opposition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs and affections of another—making himself many, or reducing many unto himself—then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist of all; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who, doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings, and expresses his own story modestly?

My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He too much affected that dangerous figure—irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred.—He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant, in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was

3. **a former essay.** The one called "Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago," in which Lamb wrote from the assumed viewpoint of Coleridge and his boyhood, rather than from his own.

petit[4] and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him sometimes in what is called good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow; till, some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken), which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss with him; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but struggling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested.—Hence, not many persons of science, and few professed *literati,* were of his councils. They were, for the most part, persons of an uncertain fortune; and, as to such people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados,*[5] to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the surface of society; and the color, or something else, in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him—but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalized (and offences were sure to arise), he could not help it. When he has been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, what one point did these good people ever concede to himf He was temperate in his meals and diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry—as

4. petit. Slight.
6. Intimados. Intimates.

the friendly vapor ascended, how his prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments which tongue-tied him were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statist ![6]

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan or rejoice that my old friend is departed. His jests were beginning to grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discoursing with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness which I thought unworthy of him. In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and curtseyed, as he thought, in an especial manner to *him.* "They take me for a visiting governor,"[7] he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age that should so entitle him. He herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His manners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis*[8] never sate gracefully upon his shoulders. The impressions of infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

6. **statltt.** Statesman.
7. **governor.** Director **of** the school.
8. **toga virllis.** Garment of manhood.

WILLIAM HAZLITT

[WILLIAM HAZLITT was born April 10, 1778, into the family of a dissenting (Unitarian) minister. He was himself educated for the ministry, but turned his attention to painting, philosophy, and literature. In 1797 he made the acquaintance of Coleridge, who exerted a strong influence upon him, and whose character he has vividly portrayed. He became a dramatic critic for the London *Chronicle,* and a contributor to various journals, especially those edited by Leigh Hunt, winning a reputation as one of the most vigorous writers on the side of radicalism in society and politics. His personal life was prevailingly unhappy, his marriage proving unfortunate, and his disposition sometimes interfering with friendships; the defeat of the cause of republicanism in France also embittered his later years. He died in comparative poverty in 1830.]

ON GOING A JOURNEY[1]

ONE of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

> The fields his study, Nature was his book.[2]

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticizing hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer incumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

> a friend in my retreat,
> Whom I may whisper, Solitude is sweet.[3]

1. This essay is found in the volume called *Table Talk* (1822).
2. **The fields his study,** etc. From a poem by Robert Bloomfield, "The Farmer's Boy."
3. a **friend** in my **retreat,** etc. From Cow per's poem "Retirement."

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do, just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

> May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
> That in the various bustle of resort
> Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,[4]

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury,[5] to exchange good things with and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud, I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like "sunken wrack and sumless treasuries,"[6] burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull commonplaces, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!"[7] I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff *o'* the con-

4. **May plume her featheri, etc.** From Milton's *Comus.*

5. Tilbury. A gig" or two-wheeled carriage without a top, named for the inventor.

6. **sunken** wrack, etc. Prom Shakespeare's *Henry Fifth,* I, ii.

7. **Leave, oh leave me,** etc. The refrain of Gray's translation of the Norse "Descent of Odin."

science."[8] Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald ? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, as neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship,"[9] say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's,[10] that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne,[11]" were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said; but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the synthetical

8. **stuff o' the conscience.** From *Othello,* **I,** ii.

9. **Out upon,** etc. From Shakespeare's *Henry Fourth,* **Part I,**

10. **Cobbett. A political writer** and **Member of** Parliament (1766-1835).

11. **Sterne.** A novelist **and** miscellaneous writer of the eighteenth century.

method[12] on a journey in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveler has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the color of a cloud which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill-humor. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company, seems extravagance or affectation; and on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must "give it an understanding, but no' tongue."[13] My old friend C——,[14] however, could do both. He could go on in

12. **synthetical** method. The method of putting together, as compared with that of taking- apart (analytical).
13. **give It an understanding,** etc. From *Hamlet,* I, ii.
14. **old friend C.** Coleridge.

the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. "He talked far above singing."[15] If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden.[16] They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had";[17] and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following:

Here be woods as green
As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
Face of the curled stream, with flowers as many
As the young spring gives, and as choice as **any;**
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,
Arbors o'ergrown with woodbine, caves and dells;
Choose where thou wilt, while I sit by and sing,
Or gather rushes to make many a ring
For thy long fingers; tell thee tales of love,
How the pale Phoebe, hunting in a grove,
First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
She took eternal fire that never dies;
How she convey'd him softly in a sleep,
His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
Head of old Latraos, where she stoops each night,
Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
To kiss her sweetest. (The Faithful *shepherdess.*[13])

15. He talked, etc. From Beaumont and Fletcher's play *Philaster.*

16. All-Foxden. The residence of Wordsworth, in Somerset, in 1797, when Coleridg-e lived near by at Nether Stowey. The young- Hazlitt paid them both a visit at this time, which he has described in an essay called "My First Acquaintance with Poets." Of the walk home from Alfoxden (as it is commonly written) he writes: "Coleridge and myself walked back to Stowey that evening, and his voice sounded high . . . as we passed through echoing grove, by fairy stream or waterfall, gleaming in the summer moonlight."

17. **that flne madness;,** etc. From a poem by Drayton, "Censure of Poets."

18. The Faithful **Shepherdess.** A play by John Fletcher (1609).

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds: but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot:—I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for table-talk. L——[19] is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors; because he is the best within. I grant, there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey; and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavor of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of night-fall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then, after inquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn!"[20] These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heart-felt happiness, to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop; they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,

The cups that cheer, but not inebriate, [21]

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, **or an excellent veal cutlet! Sancho**[22]

19. L Lamb.
20. **take one's ease,** etc. From *Henry Fourth,* Part I, III, iii.
21. **cups that cheer,** etc From Cowper's poem "The Task."
22. Sancho. The squire of Don Quixote, in Cervantes's romance.

in such a situation once fixed upon cow-heel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean[23] contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen —*Procul, 0 procul este profani!*[24.] These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding[25] of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares.[26] I associate nothing with my traveling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forgot myself. But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits; or from having someone with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world; but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumspection and confine."[27] The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges—"lord

23. Shandean. In the manner of Mr. Shandy, father of Tristram Shandy, in Sterne's novel of that title; the meaning is, whimsically discursive.

24. **Procul,** etc. "Retire hence, ye profane!"—the warning to the uninitiated to keep aloof from sacred ceremonies (found in Vergil's *Æneid,* Book VI).

25. **West Hiding.** One of the "ridings," administrative divisions, into which Yorkshire was divided; a person from this district would be an extreme provincial.

26. **breaks no squares.** Does not throw things out **of order;** makes no difference.

27. **unhoused free condition.** From *Othello,* I, ii.

of one's self, uncumbered with a name."[28] Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweetbreads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlor!* One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretentions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed commonplaces that we appear in the world: an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Witham Common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas—at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings[29] of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's[30] drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in a boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember

28. lord of oneself, etc. From a poem of Dryden's, "To my Honored Kinsman John Dryden."

29. **Gritoelin's engraving.** In 1707 the engraver Gribelin made a series of plates of the famous cartoons (drawingrs) of **Raphael** kept in Hampton Court palace.

30. **Wertall.** A prominent historical painter **(1765-1836).**

sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*[31] which I pieked up at an inn at Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's *Camilla.*[32] It was on the 10th of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise,*[33] at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud,[34] which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche*[35] to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighborhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham; and on passing a certain point, you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheater, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks"[36] below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these

31. **Paul and Virginia.** A romance by Bernardin de St. Pierre, published in 1788; translated into English in 1796.

32. **Camilla.** A novel by Frances Burney (Madame d'Arblay); published 1796.

33. **New Eloiie.** A romance by Jean Jacques Rousseau; published 1761.

34. **Pays de Vaud.** The country of the Vaudois.

35. **bon bouche.** Delicacy.

36. **green upland swells,** etc. From Coleridgre's "Ode on the Departing Year":

> Thy valleys, fair as Eden's bowers,
> Glitter green with sunny showers;
> Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells
> Echo to the bleat of flocks.

four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day,[37] or mock my idle gaze.

The beautiful is vanished, and returns not.[38]

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret, and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced! I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now?[39] Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, 0 sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly any thing that shows the short-sightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than traveling does. With change of place we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think but of one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our

37. **faded into the** *light,* etc. A phrase drawn from Wordsworth's ode, "Intimations of Immortality"; Hazlitt is referring to the fading: of the hopes excited on behalf of liberty by the French Revolution,

88. **The beautiful is vanished,** etc. From Coleridge's version of Schiller's *The Death of Wallenstein,* V, i.

39. **Where is he now?** At this time Coleridge was living in retirement, with friends who sought to help him to conquer the opium habit; Hazlitt's question alludes, however, to the whereabouts of his opinions, Coleridge having deserted the radical group of thinkers.

point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it; the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In traveling through a wild barren country, I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter,[40] "all is a desert." All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast; the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China to us? An inch of pasteboard on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have

40. Sir Fopllnff Flatter. The hero of a comedy by Etheregre (1676).

found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names, that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten!

To return to the question I have quitted above.—I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge[41] will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place;"[42] nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honors indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party[43] to Oxford with no mean ***eclat***—**showed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,**

With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd,[44]

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and cottages—was at home in the Bodleian ;[45] and at Blenheim[46] quite superseded the

41. Stonehenge. A prehistoric group of monumental stones on Salisbury Plain, associated with ancient Celtic civilization.

42. **The** mind **is,** etc. From *Paradise Lost,* Book I.

43 once took **a** party. In 1810 Hazlitt visited Oxford with Charles and Mary Lamb In the essay "On the Conversation of Authors" (the latter portion, not included in the present volume) he refers to this visit in an interesting passage, saying that among country people Lamb seemed odd and out of place; "but when we crossed the country to Oxford, then he spoke a little. He and the old colleges were hail-fellow well met, and in the quadrangles he 'walked gowned.'

44. **With, glistering" spires,** etc. From *Paradise Lost,* Book III.

45. **Bodleian.** The great ancient library at Oxford.

46. **Blenheim.** A mansion in Oxfordshire, built by the nation for the first Duke of Marlborough after his victory at the Battle of Blenheim.

powdered Cicerone[47] that attended us, **and** that pointed in **vain** with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures. As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary .antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen: there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, **one** seems a species by one's self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support. Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France.[48] Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the Mariners' Hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbor, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France,"[49] erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory,

47. **Cicerone.** Guide.
48. **first set my foot.** In October, 1802, when Hazlitt was on his way to Paris to study painting.
49. **the vine-covered hills,** etc. From a poem by William Roscoe, "Lines Written in 1788."

freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons[50] and the French people!—There is undoubtedly a sensation in traveling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else: but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort *to* exchange our actual for our ideal identity; and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connections. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful, and, in one sense, instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings,

Out of my country and myself I go.

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts do well to absent themselves **for** a while from the ties and objects that recall them: but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in traveling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

60. Bourbons. The royal house of France.

THE FIGHT[1]

. . . READER, have you ever seen a fight? If not, you have a pleasure to come, at least if it is a fight like that between the Gas-man and Bill Neate. The crowd was very great when we arrived on the spot; open carriages were coming up, with streamers flying and music playing, and the country-people were pouring in over hedge and ditch in all directions, to see their hero beat or be beaten. The odds were still on Gas, but only about five to four. Gully[2] had been down to try Neate, and had backed him considerably, which was a damper to the sanguine confidence of the adverse party. About two hundred thousand pounds were pending. The Gas says he has lost 3000l. which were promised him by different gentlemen if he had won. He had presumed too much on himself, which had made others presume on him. This spirited and formidable young fellow seems to have taken for his motto the old maxim that "there are three things necessary to success in life—Impudence! Impudence! Impudence!" It is so in matters of opinion, but not in the *fancy,*[3] which is the most practical of all things; though even here confidence is half the battle, but only half. Our friend had vapored and swaggered too much, as if he wanted to grin and bully his adversary out of the fight. "Alas, the Bristol man was not so tamed!"[4] "This is the grave-digger," would Tom Hickman exclaim in the moments of intoxication from gin and success, showing his tremendous

1. This essay was contributed to the *New Monthly Magazine* after Hazlitt's trip to the scene of the great prize-fight of December 11, 1821, between Thomas Hickman (called "the Gas-man") and Bill Neate. The first portion, here omitted, describes the journey to Hungerford, some sixty miles west of London. The whole composition is remarkable for Hazlitt's success in making a real work of art out of an unpromising subject; the critic Augustine Birrell says of it, "It is full of poetry, life, and motion.—Shakespeare, Hogarth, and Nature."

2. **Gully.** A retired prize-fighter of considerable fame.

3. **the fancy.** Long a popular term for the sport of pugilism, Its representatives and its admirers.

4; **Alas, the Bristol man,** etc. Adapted from a line in Cowper's poem *The Task:* "Alas, Leviathan is not so tamed."

right hand; "this will send many of them to their long homes; I haven't done with them yet!" Why should he—though he had licked four of the best men within the hour, yet why should he threaten to inflict dishonorable chastisement on my old master Richmond,[5] a veteran going off the stage, and who has borne his sable honors meekly? Magnanimity, my dear Tom, and bravery should be inseparable. Or why should he go up to his antagonist, the first time he ever saw him at the Fives Court, and measuring him from head to foot with a glance of contempt, as Achilles surveyed Hector, say to him, "What, are you Bill Neate? I'll knock more blood out of that great carcass of thine, this day fortnight, than you ever knocked out of a bullock's!" It was not manly, 'twas not fighter-like. If he was sure of the victory (as he was not), the less said about it the better. Modesty should accompany the *fancy* as its shadow. The best men were always the best behaved. . . . Perhaps I press this point too much on a fallen man—Mr. Thomas Hickman has by this time learnt that first of all lessons, "that man was made to mourn."[6] He has lost nothing by the late fight but his presumption, and that every man may do as well without! By an over-display of this quality, however, the public had been prejudiced against him, and the "knowing ones" were taken in. Few but those who had bet on him wished Gas to win. With my own prepossessions on the subject, the result of the 11th of December appeared to me as fine a piece of poetical justice as I had ever witnessed. The difference of weight between the two combatants (fourteen stone to twelve)[7] was nothing to the sporting men. Great heavy, clumsy, long-armed Bill Neate kicked the beam in the scale of the Gas-man's vanity. The amateurs were frightened at his big words, and thought that they

5. **Richmond.** *A* negro pugilist and teacher of boxing.

6. **man was made to mourn.** From Burns's poem "A Dirge."

7. **fourteen stone to twelve.** A stone, the English unit of weight measure, is equal to fourteen pounds. Hence this was **a** battle of heavyweights,—196 pounds to 168.

would make up for the difference of six feet and five feet nine. Truly, the *fancy* are not men of imagination. They judge of what has been, and cannot conceive of anything that is to be. The Gas-man had won hitherto; therefore he must beat a man half as big again as himself—and that to a certainty. Besides, there are as many feuds, factions, prejudices, pedantic notions in the *fancy* as in the state or in the schools. Mr. Gully is almost the only cool, sensible man among them, who exercises an unbiased discretion, and is not a slave to his passions in these matters.

But enough of reflections, and to our tale. The day, as I have said, was fine for a December morning. The grass was wet and the ground miry, and plowed up with multitudinous feet, except that within the ring itself there was a spot of virgin green closed in and unprofaned by vulgar tread, that shone with dazzling brightness in the mid-day sun. For it was now noon, and we had an hour to wait. This is the trying time. It is then the heart sickens, as you think what the two champions are about, and how short a time will determine their fate. After the first blow is struck, there is no opportunity for nervous apprehensions; you are swallowed up in the immediate interest of the scene; but

> Between the acting of a dreadful thing
> And the first motion, all the interim is
> Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream.[8]

I found it so, as I felt the sun's rays clinging to my back, and saw the white wintry clouds sink below the verge of the horizon. "So, I thought, my fairest hopes have faded from my sight!—so will the Gas-man's glory, or that of his adversary, vanish in an hour." The "swells" were parading in their white box-coats, the outer ring was cleared with some bruises on the heads and shins of the rustic assembly (for the Cockneys[9] had been distanced by the sixty-six miles); the time

8. **Between the acting"**, eta From *Julius Caesar,* II, i.
9. **Cockneys.** Londoners.

drew near, I had got a good stand. A bustle, a buzz, ran through the crowd, and from the opposite side entered Neate, between his second and bottle-holder. He rolled along, swathed in his loose greatcoat, his knock-knees bending under his huge bulk, and, with a modest cheerful air, threw his hat into the ring. He then just looked round, and began quietly to undress; when from the other side there was a similar rush and an opening made, and the Gas-man came forward with a conscious air of anticipated triumph, too much like the cock-of-the-walk. He strutted about more than becomes a hero, sucked oranges with a supercilious air, and threw away the skin with a toss of his head, and went up and looked at Neate, which was an act of supererogation. The only sensible thing he did was, as he strode away from the modern Ajax,[10] to fling out his arms, as if he wanted to try whether they would do their work that day. By this time they had stripped, and presented a strong contrast in appearance. If Neate was like Ajax, "with Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear"[11] the pugilistic reputation of all Bristol, Hickman might be compared to Diomed,[12] light, vigorous, elastic; and his back glistened in the sun, as he moved about, like a panther's hide. There was now a dead pause—attention was awestruck. Who at that moment, big with a great event, did not draw his breath short—did not feel his heart throb? All was ready. They tossed up for the sun, and the Gas-man won. They were led up to the "scratch," shook hands, and went at it.

In the first round every one thought it was all over. After making play a short time, the Gas-man flew at his adversary like a tiger, struck five blows in as many seconds,—three first, and then, following him as he staggered back, two more, right and left, and down he fell, a mighty ruin. There was a shout,

10. **Ajax.** The Greek warrior, in the Trojan War, of greatest size and strength.

11. **with. Atlantean shoulders,** etc. With shoulders equal to those of Atlas the earth-bearer; from *Paradise Lost,* Book II.

12. **Diomed.** Another of the Greek warriors at Troy; he helped Ulysses carry off the horses of Rhesus.

and I said, "There is no standing this." Neate seemed like a lifeless lump of flesh and bone, round which the Gas-man's blows played with the rapidity of electricity or lightning, and you imagined he would only be lifted up to be knocked down again. It was as if Hickman held a sword or a fire in that right hand of his, and directed it against an unarmed body. They met again, and Neate seemed, not cowed, but particularly cautious. I saw his teeth clenched together, and his brows knit close against the sun. He held out both his arms at full length straight before him, like two sledge-hammers, and raised his left an inch or two higher. The Gas-man could not get over this guard—they struck mutually, and fell, but without advantage on either side. It was the same in the next round; but the balance of power was thus restored—the fate of the battle was suspended. No one could tell how it would end. This was the only moment in which opinion was divided; for in the next, the Gas-man aiming a mortal blow at his adversary's neck with his right hand, and failing from the length he had to reach, the other returned it with his left at full swing, planted, a. tremendous blow on his cheek-bone and eyebrow and made a red ruin of that-Sile. of his faee. The Gas-man went down, and there was another shout—a roar of triumph and the waves of fortune rolled turaultuously from side to side. This was a settler. Hickman got up, and "grinned horrible a gnastly smile,"[13] yet he was evidently dashed in his opinion of himself; it was the first time he had ever been so punished; all one side of his face was perfect scarlet, and his right eye was closed in dingy blackness, as he advanced to the fight, less confident, but still determined. After one or two rounds, not receiving another such remembrancer, he rallied and went at it with his former impetuosity. But in vain. His strength had been weakened,—his blows could not tell at such a distance,—he was obliged to fling himself at his adversary, and could not strike from his feet;

13. **grinned horrible,** etc. Said of Death in *Paradise Lost,* Book II.

and almost as regularly as he flew at him with his right hand, Neate warded the blow, or drew back out of its reach, and felled him with the return of his left. There was little cautious sparring—no half-hits—no tapping and trifling, none of the *petit-maitre*-ship[14] of the art—they were almost all knock-down blows; the fight was a good stand-up fight. The wonder was the half-minute time. If there had been a minute or more allowed between each round, it would have been intelligible how they should by degrees recover strength and resolution; but to see two men smashed to the ground, smeared with gore, stunned, senseless, the breath beaten out of their bodies,—and then, before you recover from the shock, to see them rise up with new strength and courage, stand ready to inflict or receive mortal offense, and rush upon each other "like two clouds over the Caspian"[15]—this is the most astonishing thing of all,—this is the high and heroic state of man!

From this time forward the event became more certain every round, and about the twelfth it seemed as if it must have been over. Hickman generally stood with his back to me; but in the scuffle he had changed positions, and Neate just then made a tremendous lunge at him, and hit him full in the face. It was doubtful whether he would fall backwards or forwards; he hung suspended for a second or two, and then fell back, throwing his hands in the air, and with his face lifted up to the sky. I never saw anything more terrific than his aspect just before he fell. All traces of life, of natural expression, were gone from him. His face was like a human skull, a death's-head, spouting blood. The eyes were filled with blood, the nose streamed with blood, the mouth gaped blood. He was not like an actual man, but like a preternatural, spectral appearance, or like one of the figures in Dante's *Inferno.*[16] Yet he fought on after this for several rounds, still striking the first desper-

14. petit-maitre-ship. Coxcombry, daintiness (from *petit-maitre,* dandy).
15. **like two cloudf,** etc. Prom *Paradise Lost,* Book II.
16. In**forno.** Hell; the first part of the *Divine Comedy.*

ate blow, and Neate standing on the defensive, and using the same cautious guard to the last, as if he had still all his work to do; and it was not till the Gas-man was so stunned in the seventeenth or eighteenth round, that his senses forsook him, and he could not come to time, that the battle was declared over.* Ye who despise the *fancy,* do something to show as much pluck or as much self-possession as this, before you assume a superiority which you have never given a single proof of by any one action in the whole course of your lives!

When the Gas-man came to himself, the first words he uttered were, "Where am I? What is the matter?" "Nothing :s the matter, Tom,—you have lost the battle, but you are the bravest man alive." And Jackson whispered to him, "I am collecting a purse for you, Tom." Vain sounds, and unheard at that moment! Neate instantly went up and shook him cordially by the hand, and seeing some old acquaintance, began o flourish with his fists, calling out, "Ah, you always said I couldn't fight—what do you think now?" But all in good humor, and without any appearance of arrogance; only it was evident Bill Neate was pleased that he had won the fight. When it was over, I asked Cribb if he did not think it was a good one. He said, "Pretty well!" The carrier-pigeons now mounted into the air, and one of them flew with the news of her husband's victory to the bosom of Mrs. Neate. Alas for Mrs. Hickman!

Mais au revoir,[17] as Sir Fopling Flutter says. I went down

•Scroggins said of the Gas-man that **he thought he was** a man **of that** courage, that if his hands were cut off **he would still fight** on with the stumps—like that of Widrington—

In doleful dumps,
Who, when his legs were smitten off,
Still fought upon his stumps.

. THazlitt's note. Scroggins was a well-known pugilist: Widrington a warrior celebrated in the ballad of "Chevy Chase," **from** which the lines are quoted.]

17. **Mais an revoir.** But to return. On **Sir Fopling Flutter,** see **note** above, page 176.

with Toms;[18] I returned with Jack Pigott,[19] whom I met on the ground. Toms is a rattlebrain, Pigott is a sentimentalist. Now, under favor, I am a sentimentalist too,—therefore I say nothing but that the interest of the excursion did not flag as I came back. Pigott and I marched along the causeway leading from Hungerford to Newbury, now observing the effect of a brilliant sun on the tawny meads or moss-colored cottages, now exulting in the fight, now digressing to some topic of general and elegant literature. My friend was dressed in character for the occasion, or like one of the *fancy;* that is, with a double portion of greatcoats, clogs, and overhauls; and just as we had agreed with a couple of country lads to carry his superfluous wearing apparel to the next town, we were overtaken by a return post-chaise, into which I got, Pigott preferring a seat on the bar.[20] There were two strangers already in the chaise, and on their observing they supposed I had been to the fight, I said I had, and concluded they had done the same. They appeared, however, a little shy and sore on the subject, and it was not till after several hints dropped, and questions put, that it turned out that they had missed it. One of these friends had undertaken to drive the other there in his gig; they had set out, to make sure work, the day before at three in the afternoon. The owner of the one-horse vehicle scorned to ask his way, and drove right on to Bagshot, instead of turning off at Hounslow; there they stopped all night, and set off the next day across the country to Reading, from whence they took coach, and got down within a mile or two of Hungerford, just half an hour after the fight was over. This might be safely set down as one of the miseries of human life. We parted with these two gentlemen who had been to see the fight but had returned as they went, at Wolhampton,

18. **Toms.** Joseph Parkes, a London friend of Hazlitt's, and his companion on this holiday.

19. **Jack Pigott.** P. G. Patmore, another friend, who in a volume of reminiscences describes this same fight and the journey homeward.

20. on **the bar.** With the driver.

where we were promised beds (an irresistible temptation, for Pigott had passed the preceding night at Hungerford as we had done at Newbury), and we turned into an old bow-windowed parlor with a carpet and a snug fire; and, after devouring a quantity of tea, toast, and eggs, sat down to consider, during an hour of philosophic leisure, what we should have for supper. . . . The next morning we rose refreshed; and on observing that Jack had a pocket volume in his hand, in which he read in the intervals of our discourse, I inquired what it was, and learned to my particular satisfaction that it was a volume of the *New Eloise*-[21] Ladies, after this will you contend that a love for the *fancy* is incompatible with the cultivation of sentiment?

We jogged on as before, my friend setting me up in a genteel drab greatcoat and green silk handkerchief (which I must say became me exceedingly), and after stretching our legs for a few miles, and seeing Jack Randall, Ned Turner, and Scroggins pass on the top of one of the Bath coaches, we engaged with the driver of the second to take us to London for the usual fee. I got inside, and found three other passengers. One of them was an old gentleman with an aquiline nose, powdered hair, and a pigtail, and who looked as if he had played many a rubber at the Bath rooms.[22] I said to myself, he is very like Mr. Windham;[23] I wish he would enter into conversation, that I might hear what fine observations would come from those finely turned features. However, nothing passed, till, stopping to dine at Reading, some inquiry was made by the company about the fight, and I gave (as the reader may believe) an eloquent and animated description of it. When we got into the coach again, the old gentleman, after a graceful exordium, said he had when a boy been to a fight

21. **New Eloise.** See note above, page 174.

22. **the Bath rooms.** Famous pleasure-rooms at Bath, the most brilliant watering-place of eighteenth century England.

23. **Mr. Windham-** William Windham (1750-1810), a prominent parliamentary statesman of the Georgian era, distinguished incidentally for his fine appearance and his love of sport.

between the famous Broughton and George Stevenson, who was called the "Fighting Coachman," in the year 1770,[24] with the late Mr. Windham. This beginning flattered the spirit of prophecy within me, and riveted my attention. He went on: "George Stevenson was coachman to a friend of my father's. He took hold of his own arm and said, 'there was muscle here once, but now it is no more than this young gentleman's.' He added, 'Well, no matter; 1 have been here long, I am willing to go hence, and I hope I have done no more harm than another man.' Once," said my unknown companion, "I asked him if he ever beat Broughton? He said Yes; that he had fought with him three times, and the last time he fairly beat him, though the world did not allow it. 'I'll tell you how it was, master. When the seconds lifted us up in the last round, we were so exhausted that neither of us could stand, and we fell upon one another, and as Master Broughton fell uppermost, the mob gave it in his favor, and he was said to have won the battle. But,' says he, 'the fact was that as his second (John Cuthbert) lifted him up, he said to him, "I'll fight no more, I've had enough"; which,' says Stevenson, 'you know gave me the victory. 'And to prove to you that that was the case, when John Cuthbert was on his death-bed, and they asked him if there was anything on his mind which he wished to confess, he answered Yes, that there was one thing he wished to set right, for that certainly Master Stevenson won that last fight with Master Broughton; for he whispered him as he lifted him up in the last round of all, that he had had enough.' This," said the Bath gentleman, "was a bit of human nature"; and I have written this account of the fight on purpose that it might not be lost to the world. He also stated, as a proof of the candor of mind in this class of men, that Stevenson acknowledged that Broughton could have beat him in his best (lay, but that he (Broughton) was getting old in their last

24. the year 1770. Unfortunately for the accuracy of the old gentleman's story, this fight took place in the year 1741.

rencounter. When we stopped in Piccadilly, I wanted to ask the gentleman some questions about the late Mr. Windham, but had not courage. I got out, resigned my coat and green silk handkerchief to Pigott(loath to part with these ornaments of life), and walked home in high spirits.

P. S. Toms called upon me the next day, to ask me if I did not think the fight was a complete thing. I said I thought it was. **I** hope he will relish my account of **it.**

SIR WALTER SCOTT[1]

. . . SIR WALTER has found out (0 rare discovery!) that facts are better than fiction; that there is no romance like the romance of real life; and that if we can but arrive at what men feel, do, and say in striking and singular situations, the result will be "more lively, audible, and full of vent,"[2] than the fine-spun cobwebs of the brain. With reverence be it spoken, he is like the man who, having to imitate the squeaking of a pig upon the stage, brought the animal under his coat with him. Our author has conjured up the actual people he has to deal with, or as much as he could get of them, in "their habits as they lived."[3] He has ransacked old chronicles, and poured the contents upon his page; he has squeezed out musty records; he has consulted wayfaring pilgrims, bed-rid sibyls; he has invoked the spirits of the air; he has conversed with the living and the dead, and let them tell their story their own way; and by borrowing of others, has enriched his own genius

1. This essay, of which only a part is reprinted here, is one of a number of extraordinarily vivid and frank sketches of his contemporaries, which Hazlitt published (anonymously) in 1825, with the title *The Spirit of the Age.* It is an interesting- example of his combined literary and social criticism; Hazlitt greatly admired Scott as a novelist, but hated his political conservatism, and had been made freshly indignant by some notes which Sir Walter had recently added to new editions of his novels, deprecating the radical movement and expressing the hope that his own writings had done something "to revive the declining spirit of loyalty" to British institutions (see page 194.)

2. **more lively,** etc. From Shakespeare's *Coriolanus,* IV, v.

3. **hablts as they lived.** From *Hamlet,* **III,** iv. "Habits" **means** garments.

with everlasting variety, truth, and freedom. He has taken his materials from the original, authentic sources, in large concrete masses, and not tampered with or too much frittered them away. He is only the amanuensis of truth and history. It is impossible to say how fine his writings in consequence are, unless we could describe how fine nature is. All that portion of the history of his country that he has touched upon (wide as the scope is), the manners, the personages, the events, the scenery, lives over again in his volumes. Nothing is wanting—the illusion is complete. There is a hurtling in the air, a trampling of feet upon the ground, as these perfect representations of human character or fanciful belief come thronging back upon our imaginations. We will merely recall a few of the subjects of his pencil to the reader's recollection; for nothing we could add, by way of note or commendation, could make the impression more vivid.

There is—first and foremost, because the earliest of our acquaintance—the Baron of Bradwardine,[4] stately, kind-hearted, whimsical, pedantic; and Flora Maclvor (whom even *we* forgive for her Jacobitism), the fierce Vich Ian Vohr, and Evan Dhu, constant in death, and Davie Gellatly roasting his eggs or turning his rhymes with restless volubility, and the two stag-hounds that met Waverley, as fine as ever Titian painted, or Paul Veronese;[5]—then there is old Balfour of Burley,[6] brandishing his sword and his Bible with fire-eyed fury, trying a fall with the insolent, gigantic Both well at the ' Change-house, and vanquishing him at the noble battle of Loudon Hill; there is Bothwell himself, drawn to the life, proud, cruel, selfish profligate, but with the love-letters of the gentle Alice, written thirty years before, and his verses to her memory, found in

4. **Baron of Bradwardine.** This and the other characters, through Davie Gellatly, are from *Waverley,* the romance that gave the name to the whole series.

5. **Titian . . . Paul Veronese.** Italian painters of the six teenth century.

6. **Balfour of Barley.** A partially historical character, in the novel *Old Mortality.*

his pocket after his death; in the same volume of *Old Mortality* is that lone figure, like a figure in Scripture, of the woman sitting on the stone at the turning to the mountain, to warn Burley that there is a lion in his path; and the fawning Claverhouse, beautiful as a panther, smooth-looking, blood-spotted; and the fanatics, Macbriar and Mucklewrath, crazed with zeal and sufferings; and the inflexible Morton, and the faithful Edith, who refused to "give her hand to another while her heart was with her lover in the deep and dead sea." And in *The Heart of Midlothian* we have Effie Deans, that sweet, faded flower, and Jeanie, her more than sister, and old David Deans, the patriarch of St. Leonard's Crags, and Butler, and Dumbiedikes, eloquent in his silence, and Mr. Bartoline Saddletree and his prudent helpmate, and Porteous swinging in the wind, and Madge Wildfire, full of finery and madness, and her ghastly mother. Again, there is Meg Merrilies,[7] standing on her rock, stretched on her bier with "her head to the east," and Dirk Hatterick (equal to Shakespeare's Master Barnardine[8]), and Glossin, the soul of an attorney, and Dandy Dinmont, with his terrier-pack and his pony Dumple, and the fiery Colonel Mannering, and the modish old counselor Pleydell, and Dominie Sampson,* and Rob Roy,[9] like the eagle in his eyry, and Baillie Nicol Jarvie, and the inimitable Major Galbraith, and Rashleigh Osbaldistone, and Die Vernon, the best of secret-keepers; and in *The Antiquary* the ingenious and abstruse Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck, and the old beadsman[10] Edie Ochiltree, and that preternatural figure of old Edith

•Perhaps the finest scene in all these novels is that where the Dominie meets his pupil, Miss Lucy, the morning after her brother's arrival. [Hazlitt's note.]

7. **Meg Merrilies.** A gypsy woman in *Guy Mannering;* the following characters, through Dominie Sampson, are in the same novel.

8. **Master Barnardine.** In *Measure for Measure.*

9. **Bob Boy.** In the novel of the same name; so with the four following characters.

10. **beadsman.** One dependent on alms.

Elspeth, a living shadow, in whom the lamp of life had been[11] long extinguished, had it not been fed by remorse and "thick-coming"[12] recollections, and that striking picture of the effects of feudal tyranny and fiendish pride, the unhappy Earl of Glenallan; and the Black Dwarf,[13] and his friend Habby of the Heughfoot, the cheerful hunter, and his cousin Grace Armstrong, fresh and laughing like the morning; and the "Children of the Mist,"[14] and the baying of the bloodhound that tracks their steps at a distance (the hollow echoes are in our ears now); and Amy and her hapless love, the villain Varney,[15] and the deep voice of George of Douglas[16]—and the immovable Balafre, and Master Oliver the barber, in *Quentin Durward*—and the quaint humor of *The Fortunes of Nigel,* and the comic spirit of *Peveril of the Peak*—and the fine old English romance of *I vanhoe.* What a list of names! What a host of associations! What a thing is human life! What a power is that of genius! What a world of thought and feeling is thus rescued from oblivion! How many hours of heartfelt satisfaction has our author given to the gay and thoughtless! How many sad hearts has he soothed in pain and solitude! It is no wonder that the public repay with lengthened applause and gratitude the pleasure they receive. He writes as fast as they can read, and he does not write himself down. He is always in the public eye, and we do not tire of him. His worst is better than any other person's best. His backgrounds (and his later works are little else but backgrounds capitally made out) are more attractive than the principal figures and most complicated actions of other writers. His works, taken together, are almost like a new edition of human nature. This is indeed to be an author!

11. **Had been.** Would have been.
12. **thick-coming".** A Shakespearean phrase *(Macbeth, V,* iii).
13. **the Black Dwarf.** In the novel of the same name.
14. **Children of the Mist.** In *The Legend of Montrose.*
15. **Amy . . . the villain Varney.** In *Kcnilworth.*
16. **Georffe of Douglas.** In *The Abbot.*

The political bearing of the Scotch Novels has been a considerable recommendation to them. They are a relief to the mind, rarefied as it has been with modern philosophy and heated with ultra-radicalism. At a time, also, when we bid fair to revive the principles of the Stuarts,[17] it is interesting to bring us acquainted with their persons and misfortunes. The candor of Sir Walter's historic pen levels our bristling prejudices on this score, and sees fair play between Roundheads and Cavaliers, between Protestant and Papist. He is a writer reconciling all the diversities of human nature to the reader. He does not enter into the distinctions of hostile sects or parties, but treats of the strength or the infirmity of the human mind, of the virtues or vices of the human breast, as they are to be found blended in the whole race of mankind. Nothing can show more handsomely or be more gallantly executed. There was a talk at one time that our author was about to take Guy Faux[18] for the subject of one of his novels, in order to put a more liberal and humane construction on the Gunpowder Plot than our "No Popery" prejudices have hitherto permitted. Sir Walter is a professed "clarifier" of the age from the vulgar and still lurking old English antipathy to Popery and slavery. Through some odd process of servile logic, it should seem that, in restoring the claims of the Stuarts by the courtesy of romance, the House of Brunswick are more firmly seated in point of fact, and the Bourbons, by collateral reasoning, become legitimate! In any other point of view we cannot possibly conceive how Sir Walter imagines "he has done something to revive the declining spirit of loyalty"[19]

17. **the Stuarts.** The royal family driven from the throne by the Revolution of 1688. Hazlitt views their absolutism as in some sense revived by the Tory reaction followingr the era of the French Revolution. Scott was notoriously somewhat tender-hearted toward the house of Stuart.

18. **Guy Faux.** The chief agrent of the conspirators in the "Gunpowder Plot" of 1605, which was designed to destroy the Houses of Parliament in revenge for the laws directed a grainst Roman Catholics. The name is more commonly spelled Fawkes.

19. he **has done something,** etc. See note on page 190.

by these novels. His loyalty is founded on would-be treason; he props the actual throne by the shadow of rebellion. Does he really think of making us enamoured of the "good old times" by the faithful and harrowing portraits he has drawn of thein? Would he carry us back to the early stages of barbarism, of clanship, of the feudal system, as "a consummation devoutly to be wished"?[20] Is he infatuated enough, or does he so dote and drivel over his own slothful and self-willed prejudices, as to believe that he will make a single convert to the beauty of Legitimacy,[21]—that is, of lawless power and savage bigotry,—when he himself is obliged to apologize for the horrors he describes, and even render his descriptions credible to the modern reader by referring to the authentic history of these delectable times? He is indeed so besotted as to the moral of his own story, that he has even the blindness to go out of his way to have a fling at "flints" and "dungs"[22] (the contemptible ingredients, as he would have us believe, of a modern rabble), at the very time when he is describing a mob of the twelfth century—a mob, one should think, after the writer's own heart, without one particle of modern philosophy or revolutionary politics in their composition, who were to a man, to a hair, just what priests and kings and nobles *let* them be, and who were collected to witness (a spectacle proper to the times) the burning of the lovely Rebecca at a stake for a sorceress, because she was a Jewess, beautiful and innocent, and the consequent victim of insane bigotry and unbridled profligacy. And it is at this moment (when the heart is kindled and bursting with indignation at the revolting abuses of self-constituted power), that Sir

20. a **consummation,** eta From *Hamlet,* III, i.

21. **Legitimacy.** The doctrine of the hereditary right of the existing royal governments.

22. **flints,** etc. Hazlitt is alluding to the opening paragraph of the 43rd chapter of *I vanhoe,* where apropos of the crowd gathered to witness the combat which was to decide the fate of Rebecca, Scott contemptuously refers to mobs of "our own days," who gather to see "whether the heroes of the day are, in the heroic language of insurgent tailors, flints or dunghills."

Walter "stops the press" to have a sneer at the people, and to put a spoke—as he thinks—in the wheel of upstart innovation ! This is what he "calls backing his friends"[23]—it is thus he administers charms and philters to our love of Legitimacy, makes us conceive a horror of all reform, civil, political, or religious, and would fain put down the Spirit of the Age. The author of *Waverley* might just as well get up and make a speech at a dinner at Edinburgh, abusing Mr. Mac Adam[21] for his improvements in the roads, on the ground that they were nearly impassable in many places "sixty years since,"[25] or object to Mr. Peel's Police Bill[26] by insisting that Hounsiow Heath[27] was formerly a scene of greater interest and terror to highwaymen and travelers, and cut a greater figure in the Newgate Calendar[28] than it does at present.

Oh! Wickliff,[29] Luther, Hampden, Sidney, Somers, mistaken Whigs and thoughtless reformers in religion and politics, and all ye, whether poets or philosophers, heroes or sages, inventors of arts or sciences, patriots, benefactors of the human race, enlighteners and civilizers of the world, who have (so far)

23. **calls backing,** etc. A phrase of Falstaff's, in *Henry Fourth,* Part I, II, iv.

24. **Mr. MacAdam.** A Scotchman (1756-1836) who devoted himself to the study of road-making, and from whose name, in consequence, the term "macadamise" was formed.

25. **sixty years since.** "'Tis Sixty Years Since" was the subtitle of *Waverley.*

26. **Mr. Peel's Police Bill.** Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) planned the system of police for the metropolitan district of London, established by a law of 1829.

27. **Hounslow Heath-** An open region west of London, near an important coaching center, and notorious as the resort of highwaymen.

28. **Newgate Calendar.** A record of the most important criminals confined in Newgate prison.

29. **Wickliff,** etc. These names are those of reformers who in their time came into conflict with established authority; Wickliff with the ecclesiastical authorities of the fourteenth century, when he undertook to translate the Bible into English; **Hampden** and **Sidney** with Charles the First, in the days of the Parliamentary Wars; **Somers** with James the Second, in the days of the Revolution of 1688. The paragraph that follows is one of the finest specimens of Hazlitt's prose eloquence; and it should **be** noted how cleverly he draws his series of examples of outworn tyranny from incidents in Scott's own stories.

reduced opinion to reason, and power to law, who are the cause that we no longer burn witches and heretics at slow fires, that the thumbscrews are no longer applied by ghastly, smiling judges, to extort confession of imputed crimes from sufferers for conscience's sake,—that men are no longer strung up like acorns on trees without judge or jury, or hunted like wild beasts through thickets and glens,—who have abated the cruelty of priests, the pride of nobles, the divinity of kings in former times,—to whom we owe it that we no longer wear round our necks the collar of Gurth the swineherd and of Wamba[30] the jester; that the castles of great lords are no longer the dens of banditti, from whence they issue with fire and sword to lay waste the land; that we no longer expire in loathsome dungeons without knowing the cause, or have our right hands struck off for raising them in self-defense against wanton insult; that we can sleep without fear of being burnt in our beds, or travel without making our wills; that no Amy Robsarts[31] are thrown down trap-doors by Richard Varneys with impunity; that no Red Reiver[32] of "Westburn Flat sets fire to peaceful cottages; that no Claverhouse[33] signs cold-blooded death-warrants in sport; that we have no Tristan the Hermit, or Petit-Andre,[34] crawling near us, like spiders, and making our flesh creep and our hearts sicken at every moment of our lives;—ye who have produced this change in the face of nature and society, return to earth once more, and beg pardon of Sir Walter and his patrons, who sigh at not being able to undo all that you have done! . . .

30. **Gurth . . . Wamba.** The thrall and the jester of Cedric the Saxon, in *I vanhoc.* The following clause, on the castles of great lords, alludes to the same novel.

31. **Amy Robsart.** In *Kcnilworth.*

32. **Bed Reiver.** In *The Black Dwarf.*

33. **Claverhouse.** In *Old Mortality.*

34. **Tristan . . . Petit-Andre.** In *Qucntin Durward.*

ON THE CONVERSATION OF AUTHORS[1]

THE conversation of authors is not so good as might be imagined; but, such as it is (and with rare exceptions) it is better than any other. The proof of which is, that when you are used to it you cannot put up with any other. That of mixed company becomes utterly intolerable—you cannot sit out a common tea and card party, at least if they pretend to talk at all. You are obliged in despair to cut all your old acquaintance who are not *au fait*[2] on the prevailing and most smartly contested topics, who are not imbued with the high gusto of criticism and *virtu.*[3] You cannot bear to hear a friend whom you have not seen for many years tell at how much a yard he sells his laces and tapes, when he means to move into his next house, when he heard last from his relations in the country, whether trade is alive or dead, or whether Mr. Such-a-one gets to look old. This sort of neighborly gossip will not go down after the high-raised tone of literary conversation. The last may be very absurd, very unsatisfactory, and full of turbulence and heart-burning; but it has a zest in it which more ordinary topics of news or family-affairs do not supply.

Neither will the conversation of what we understand by *gentlemen* and men of fashion do after that of men of letters. It is flat, insipid, stale, and unprofitable, in the comparison. They talk about much the same things,—pictures, poetry, politics, plays; but they do it worse, and at a sort of vapid second-hand. They, in fact, talk out of newspapers and magazines what we write there. They do not feel the same interest in the subjects they affect to handle with an air of fashionable condescension, nor have they the same knowledge

1. **Two** essays under this title, the second immediately continuing the first, are included in the collection called *The Plain Speaker*. The present selection omits the first portion of **the first** essay and the latter portion of the second.
2. **au fait.** Fashionably informed.
3. **virtu.** Æsthetics.

of them, if they were ever so much in earnest in displaying it. If it were not for the wine and the dessert, no author in his senses would accept an invitation to a well-dressed dinner party, except out of pure good nature and unwillingness to disoblige by his refusal. Persons in high life talk almost entirely by rote. There are certain established modes of address, and certain answers to them expected as a matter of course, as a point of etiquette. The studied forms of politeness do not give the greatest possible scope to an exuberance of wit or fancy. The fear of giving offense destroys sincerity, and without sincerity there can be no true enjoyment of society, nor unfettered exertion of intellectual activity. Those who have been accustomed to live with the great are hardly considered as conversible persons in literary society. They are not to be talked with, any more than puppets or echoes. They have no opinions but what will please; and you naturally turn away, as a waste of time and words, from attending to a person who just before assented to what you said, and whom you find, the moment after, from something that unexpectedly or perhaps by design drops from him, to be of a totally different way of thinking. This bush-fighting is not regarded as fair play among scientific men.

As fashionable conversation is a sacrifice to politeness, so the conversation of low life is nothing but rudeness. They contradict you without giving a reason, or if they do, it is a very bad one,—swear, talk loud, repeat the same thing fifty times over, get to calling names, and from words proceed to blows. You cannot make companions of servants, or persons in an inferior station in life. You may talk to them on matters of business, and what they have to do for you (as lords talk to bruisers on subjects of *fancy*,[4] or country squires to their grooms on horse-racing), but out of that narrow sphere to any general topic you cannot lead them; the conversation soon flags, and you go back to the old question,

4. fancy. See note above, page 180.

or are obliged to break up the sitting for want of ideas in common.

The conversation of authors is better than that of most professions. It is better than that of lawyers, who talk nothing but *double entendre;*[5] than that of physicians, who talk of the approaching deaths of the College,[6] or the marriage of some new practitioner with some rich widow; than that of divines, who talk of the last place they dined at; than that of university men, who make stale puns, repeat the refuse of the London newspapers, and affect an ignorance of Greek and mathematics; it is better than that of players, who talk of nothing but the green-room, and rehearse the scholar, the wit, or the fine gentleman, like a part on the stage; or than that of ladies, who, whatever you talk of, think of nothing, and expect you to think of nothing, but themselves. It is not easy to keep up a conversation with women in company. It is thought a piece of rudeness to differ from them; it is not quite fair to ask them a reason for what they say. You are afraid of pressing too hard upon them; but where you cannot differ openly and unreservedly, you cannot heartily agree. It is not so in France. There the women talk of things in general, and reason better than the men in this country. They are mistresses of the intellectual foils. They are adepts in all the topics. They know what is to be said for and against all sorts of questions, and are lively and full of mischief into the bargain. They are very subtle. They put you to your trumps immediately. Your logic is more in requisition even than your gallantry. You must argue as well as bow yourself into the good graces of these modern Amazons. What a situation for an Englishman to be placed in!

The fault of literary conversation in general is its too great

5. **double entendre.** Vulvar witticisms based on double **or** concealed meanings of words.

6 **the College.** The College of Physicians, the professional **society.**

tenaciousness. It fastens upon a subject, and will not let it go. It resembles a battle rather than a skirmish, and makes a toil of a pleasure. Perhaps it does this from necessity, from a consciousness of wanting the more familiar graces, the power to sport and trifle, to touch lightly and adorn agreeably, every view or turn of a question *en passant,*[7] as it arises. Those who have a reputation to lose are too ambitious of shining to please. "To excel in conversation," said an ingenious man, "one must not be always striving to say good things; to say one good thing, one must say many bad, and more indifferent ones." This desire to shine without the means at hand often makes men silent:

The fear of being silent strikes us dumb.[8]

A writer who has been accustomed to take a connected view of a difficult question, and to work it out gradually in all its bearings, may be very deficient in that quickness and ease which men of the world, who are in the habit of hearing a variety of opinions,—who pick up an observation on one subject, and another on another, and who care about none any farther than the passing away of an idle hour,—usually acquire. An author has studied a particular point—he has read, he has inquired, he has thought a great deal upon it; he is not contented to take it up casually in common with others, to throw out a hint, to propose an objection: he will either remain silent, uneasy, and dissatisfied, or he will begin at the beginning and go through with it to the end. He is for taking the whole responsibility upon himself. He would be thought to understand the subject better than others, or indeed would show that nobody else knows anything about it. There are always three or four points on which the literary novice, at his first outset in life, fancies he can enlighten every company, and bear down all opposition; but he is

7. en passant. In passing.
8. The fear of, etc. Misquoted from Cowper's poem "Conversation"; Cowper says, "makes us mute."

cured of this quixotic and pugnacious spirit as he goes more into the world, where he finds that there are other opinions and other pretensions to be adjusted besides his own. When this asperity wears off, and a certain scholastic precocity is mellowed down, the conversation of men of letters becomes both interesting and instructive. . . .

The soul of conversation is sympathy. Authors should converse chiefly with authors, and their talk should be of books. "When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war."[9] There is nothing so pedantic as pretending not to be pedantic. No man can get above his pursuit in life; it is getting above himself, which is impossible. There is a free-masonry in all things. You can only speak to be understood; but this you cannot be, except by those who are in the secret. Hence an argument has been drawn to supersede the necessity of conversation altogether; for it has been said that there is no use in talking to people of sense, who know all that you can tell them, nor to fools, who will not be instructed. There is, however, the smallest encouragement to proceed, when you are conscious that the more you really enter into a subject, the farther you will be from the comprehension of your hearers, and that the more proofs you give of any position, the more odd and out-of-the-way they will think your notions. C—[10] is the only person who can talk to all sorts of people, on all sorts of subjects, without caring a farthing for their understanding one word he says,—and he talks only for admiration

9. **When Greek,** etc. Misquoted, as commonly, from Lee's play, *Alexander the Great,* where the line reads: "When Greeks joined Greeks, then was the tug of war."

10. C——. Coleridge. Carlyle describes the conversation of Coleridgre in this same period, in a caustic chapter of his *Life of Sterling.* Speaking: of the home of the Gilmans, with whom Coleridg-e lived, he says: "Here for hours would Coleridge talk, concerning all conceivable or inconceivable things; and liked nothing better than to have an intelligent, or failing that, even a silent and patient listener. . . . Nothing could be more copious than his talk; and furthermore it was always, virtually or literally, of the nature of a monologue; suffering no interruption, however reverent; hastily putting aside all foreign additions, annotations, or most ingenious desires for elucidation, as well-**meant** superfluities which would never do."

and to be listened to, and accordingly the least interruption puts him out. I firmly believe he would make just the same impression on half his audiences if he purposely repeated absolute nonsense with the same voice and manner and inexhaustible flow of undulating speech! In general, wit shines only by reflection. You must take your cue from your company—must rise as they rise, and sink as they fall. You must see that your good things, your knowing allusions, are not flung away, like the pearls in the adage. What a check it is to be asked a foolish question; to find that the first principles are not understood! You are thrown on your back immediately; the conversation is stopped like a country dance by those who do not know the figure. But when a set of adepts, of ***illuminati,***[11] **get about a question, it is worth while to hear them talk. They may snarl and quarrel over it, like dogs; but they pick it bare to the bone, they masticate it thoroughly.**

This was the case formerly at L—'s,[12] **where we used to have many lively skirmishes at their Thursday evening parties. I doubt whether the Small-coal man's**[13] **musical parties could exceed them. Oh! for the pen of John Buncle**[14] **to consecrate a** ***petit souvenir***[15] **to their memoiy! There was L——himself, the most delightful, the most provoking, the most witty and sensible of men. He always made the best pnn and the best remark in the course of the evening. His serious conversation, like his serious writing, is his best. No** ***one ever stammered*** **out such fine, piquant, deep, eloqugnt tiings in half a d*ozen*** **sentences as he does. His jests scald like tears; and he probes a question with a play upon words. What a keen, laughing,**

11. **illuminati. Persons initiated into special knowledge.**
12. **L—'s. Lamb's.**
13. **Small-coal man's. This man was Thomas Britton, a coal-**dealer and amateur in music, who devoted the floor above **his** shop to weekly concerts in which the greatest performers of **the** time were heard.
14. **John Buncle.** Thomas Amory, a writer of the eighteenth •century, whose eccentric work called *Life of John Buncle* (1756-66) Hazlitt greatly admired.
15. **petit souvenir.** Little memoir.

hair-brained vein of home-felt truth! What choice venom! How often did we cut into the haunch of letters, while we discussed the haunch of mutton on the table! How we skimmed the cream of criticism! How we got into the heart of controversy! How we picked out the marrow of authors! "And, in our flowing cups, many a good name and true was freshly remembered."[10] Recollect, most sage and critical reader, that in all this I was but a guest! Need I go over the names? They were but the old everlasting set—Milton and Shakespeare, Pope and Dry den, Steele and Addison, Swift and Gay, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, Richardson, Hogarth's prints,[17] Claude's landscapes,[18] the cartoons at Hampton Court,[19] and all those things that, having once been, must ever be. The Scotch Novels[20] had not then been heard of; so we said nothing about them. In general, we were hard upon the moderns. The author of the *Rambler*[21] was only tolerated in Boswell's Life of him, and it was as much as any one could do to edge in a word for Junius.[22] L——could not bear *Gil Blas.*[23] This was a fault. I remember the greatest triumph I ever had was in persuading him, after some years' difficulty, that Fielding was better than Smollett.[24] On one occasion, he was for making out a list of persons famous in history that one would wish to see[25] again;—at the head of

16. **In our flowing cups,** etc. Inaccurately quoted from *Henry Fifth,* IV, ill.

17. **Hogarths' prints.** See page 133.

18. **Claude's landscapes.** Those of **Claude** Lorrain, a French painter of the seventeenth century.

19. **cartoons at Hampton Court.** See note above, page 173.

20. **Scotch Novels.** Scott's.

21. **author of the Rambler.** Dr. Samuel Johnson.

22. **Junius.** The writer of certain famous political letters published between 1768 and 1772; his identity has never been established.

23. **Gil Blas. A French novel of adventure by Le Sage (published** 1715-35).

24. **Fielding . . . Smollett. Contemporary English novelists of** the mid-eighteenth century.

25. **persons . . . that one would wish to see.** To the conversation that followed this proposal Hazlitt devoted an entire essay, called "On Persons One Would Wish to Have Seen."

whom were Pontius Pilate, Sir Thomas Browne,[26] and Dr. Faustus[27]—but we black-balled most of his list! But with what a gusto would he describe his favorite authors, Donne, or Sir Philip Sidney,[28] and call their most crabbed passages *delicious!* He tried them on his palate as epicures taste olives, and his observations had a smack in them, like a roughness on the tongue. With what discrimination he hinted a defect in what he admired most—as in saying that the display of the sumptuous banquet[20] in *Paradise Regained* was not in true keeping, as the simplest fare was all that was necessary to tempt the extremity of hunger, and stating that Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost* were too much like married people. He has furnished many a text for C——to preach upon. There was no fuss or cant about him; nor were his sweets or his sours ever diluted with one particle of affectation.

I cannot say that the party at L——'s were all of one description. There were honorary members, lay-brothers. Wit and good-fellowship was the motto inscribed over the door. When a stranger came in, it was not asked, "Has he written anything?"—we were above that pedantry; but we waited to see what he could do. If he could take a hand at piquet, he was welcome to sit down. If a person liked anything, if he took snuff heartily, it was sufficient. He would understand, by analogy, the pungency of other things besides Irish blackguard[30] or Scotch rappee. A character was good anywhere, in a room or on paper. But we abhorred insipidity, affectation, and fine gentlemen. There was one of our party who never failed to mark "two for his nob"[31] at cribbage, and he was

26. Sir Thomas Browne. See note above, page 119.
27. Dr. Fanstui. A German magician, partly historic and partly legendary, made the subject of a play by the Elizabethan dramatist Marlowe.
28. Donne . . . Sidney. Elizabethan poeta
29. banquet. Represented by Milton as displayed to Christ by Satan at the time of the Temptation in the wilderness.
30. Irish blackguard. A strong snuff; rappee is much the same.
31. two for his nob. A term for a point counted in the game.

thought no mean person. This was Ned P——,[32] and a better fellow in his way breathes not. There was——, who asserted some incredible matter of fact as a likely paradox, and settled all controversies by an *ipse dixit,*[33] a fiat of his will, hammering out many a hard theory on the anvil of his brain—the Baron Munchausen[34] of politics and practical philosophy. There was Captain——,[35] who had you at an advantage by never understanding you. There was Jem White,[36] the author of *Falstaff's Letters,* who the other day left this dull world to go in search of more kindred spirits, "turning like the latter end of a lover's lute."[37] There was A——,[38] who sometimes dropped in, the Will Honeycomb of our set; and Mrs. R——,[39] who, being of a quiet turn, loved *to* hear a noisy debate. An utterly uninformed person might have supposed this a scene of vulgar confusion and uproar. While the most critical question was pending, while the most difficult problem in philosophy was solving, P——cried out, "That's game," and M. B.[40] muttered a quotation over the last remains of a veal-pie at a side-table. Once, and once only, the literary interest overcame the general. For C——was riding the high German horse, and demonstrating the Categories[41] of the trans-

32. **Ned** P. Edward Phillips, a friend of Lamb's, much addicted to card-playing-.

33. **ipse dixit.** Dogmatic announcement (literally, "Himself has said it").

34. **Baron Munchausen.** A German of the eighteenth century, to whose name was attached a famous collection of absurd tales.

35. **Captain——**Rear Admiral Burney (1750-1821), brother of the novelist Frances Burney.

36. **Jean White.** See Lamb's essay on Chimney-Sweeps, and the note on page 135. White had written a humorous work called ***Original Letters of Sir John Falstaff,* etc.**

37. turning like, etc. The phrase is from one of the letters in White's book.

38. A——. William Ayrton; see note on page 112.

39. **Mrs. R**. Mrs. Reynolds, a friend and old schoolmistress of Lamb's.

40. M. B. Martin Burney, an eccentric character familiar in this circle.

41. **Categories.** A term connected with the philosophic doctrines of Kant.

cendental philosophy to the author of *The Road to Ruin,*[42] who insisted on his knowledge of German and German metaphysics, having read the *Critique of Pure Reason*[43] in the original. "My dear Mr. Holcroft," said C——, in a tone of infinitely provoking conciliation, "you really put me in mind of a sweet pretty German girl, about fifteen, that I met with in the Hartz Forest in Germany, and who one day, as I was reading *The Limits of the Knowable and the Unknowable,* the profoundest of all his works, with great attention came behind my chair, and leaning over, said, 'What, *you* read Kant? Why I that am German born don't understand him!' " This was too much to bear, and Holcroft, starting up, called out in no measured tone, "Mr. C——, you are the most eloquent man I ever met with, and the most troublesome with your eloquence!" P——— held the cribbage-peg that was to mark him game, suspended in his hand, and the whist table was silent for a moment. I saw Holcroft downstairs, and, on coming to the landing-place in Mitre Court, he stopped me to observe that "he thought Mr. C——— a very clever man, with a great command of language, but that he feared he did not always affix very precise ideas to the words he used." After he was gone, we had our laugh out, and went on with the argument on the nature of Reason, the Imagination, and the Will. I wish I could find a publisher for it; it would make a supplement to the *Biographia Literaria*[44] in a volume and a half octavo.

Those days are over! An event,[45] the name of which I wish never to mention, broke up our party, like a bomb-shell thrown into the room; and now we seldom meet—

42. **The Road to Ruin-** By Thomas Holcroft, dramatist and radical pamphleteer.

43. Critique **of Pure Season.** One of the chief works of the philosopher Kant.

44. Biographia Literaria. By Coleridge; a valuable but rambling: account of his career and theories.

45. **An event,** etc. Probably the return of Napoleon from Elba and his final defeat at Waterloo. This Hazlitt viewed as being: in a sense the end of the grreat revolutionary era

Like angels' visits, short and far between.[46]

There is no longer the same set of persons, nor of associations. L——does not live where he did. By shifting his abode, his notions seem less fixed. He does not wear his old snuff-coloured coat and breeches. It looks like an alteration in his style. An author and a wit should have a separate costume, a particular cloth; he should present something positive and singular to the mind, like Mr. Douce[47] of the Museum. Our faith in the religion of letters will not bear to be taken to pieces, and put together again by caprice or accident. L. H.——[48] goes there sometimes. He has a fine vinous spirit about him, and tropical blood in his veins; but he is better at his own table. He has a great flow of pleasantry and delightful animal spirits; but his hits do not tell like L——'s; you cannot repeat them the next day. He requires not only to be appreciated, but to have a select circle of admirers and devotees, to feel himself quite at home. He sits at the head of a party with great gaiety and grace; has an elegant manner and turn of features; is never at a loss—*aliquando sufflaminandus crat*[49]—has continual sportive sallies of wit or fancy; tells a story capitally; mimics an actor or an acquaintance to admiration; laughs with great glee and good humor at his own or other people's jokes; understands the point of an equivoque or an observation immediately; has a taste and knowledge of books, of music, of medals; manages an argument adroitly; is genteel and gallant, and has a set of bye-phrases and quaint allusions always at hand to produce a laugh;—if he has a fault, it is that he does not listen so well as he speaks, is impatient of interruption, and is fond of being looked up to, without considering by whom. . . .

46. **Like angels' visits,** etc. Inaccurately quoted from Blair's poem "The Grave."

47. **Mr. Douce.** Francis Douce, an antiquarian who was Keeper of Manuscripts in the British Museum.

48. L. H. Leigh Hunt.

49. **aliquando,** etc. "Sometimes he had to be checked"; **a** saying- of the Latin writer Seneca's.

LEIGH HUNT

[JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT was born in 1784, and (like Lamb and Coleridge) received his early education at Christ's Hospital. He wavered between the study of law and his love for writing, until he won some success through critical papers published in the journal called the *Traveler.* Later, with his brother John, he founded a weekly paper, the *Examiner,* which had the honor of publishing some of the early poems of Keats and Shelley. Other journals followed, some of them giving attention to politics from the Radical standpoint; and in 1813 the two brothers were sentenced to fine and imprisonment for an article attacking the personal character of the Prince Regent. While in prison, and for the remainder of his life, Hunt devoted himself to miscellaneous writing, especially in the field of literary criticism. In 1822 he went to Italy to join Byron and Shelley in the founding of a new journal, the *Liberal;* but it was shortlived partly because of the death of Shelley and misunderstandings between Byron and Hunt. Hunt's whole body of writing is large, but does not contain a single work of outstanding importance. His character was amiable but lacking in strength and responsibility. He died in 1859.]

ON THE GRACES AND ANXIETIES OF PIG-DRIVING[1]

FROM the perusal of this article we beg leave to warn off vulgar readers of all denominations, whether of the "great vulgar or the small."[2] Warn, did we say? We drive them off; for Horace tells us that they, as well as pigs, are to be so

1. In this essay Hunt is obviously following in the footsteps of Lamb, and for once attains the whimsical art of his master. Carlyle wrote of it that he found it "a most tickling thing; not a word of which I can remember, only the whole *fact* of it, pictured in such sub-quizzical sweet-acid geniality of mockery, stands here, and, among smaller and greater things, will stand."

2. **great vulgar,** etc. From Cowley's translation **of Horace's line,** *Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo:*

Hence ye profane; I hate you all;
Both the great vulgar, and the small.

treated. *Odi profanum vulgus,* says he, *et arceo.* But do thou lend thine ear, gentle shade of Goldsmith, who didst make thy bear-leader[3] denounce "every thing as is low"; and thou, Steele, who didst humanize[4] upon public-houses and puppet-shows; and Fielding, thou whom the great Richardson,[5] less in that matter (and some others) than thyself, did accuse of vulgarity, because thou didst discern natural gentility in a footman, and yet was not to be taken in by the airs of Pamela and my Lady G.

The title is a little startling; but "style and sentiment," as a lady said, "can do anything." Remember, then, gentle reader, that talents are not to be despised in the humblest walks of life; we will add, nor in the muddiest. The other day we happened to be among a set of spectators who could not help stopping to admire the patience and address with which a pig-driver huddled and cherished onward his drove of unaccommodating *eleves,*[6] down a street in the suburbs. He was a born genius for a maneuver. Had he originated in a higher sphere he would have been a general, or a stage-manager, or, at least, the head of a set of monks. Conflicting interests were his forte; pig-headed wills, and proceedings hopeless. To see the *hand* with which he did it! How hovering, yet firm; how encouraging, yet compelling; how indicative of the space on each side of him, and yet of the line before him; how general, how particular, how perfect! No barber's could quiver about a head with more lightness of apprehension;

3. **bear-leader.** One who leads about a bear to exhibit its tricks. Hunt is referring: to a vulgar character in the inn scene of *She Stoops to Conquer,* who says of Tony Lumpkin, "I loves to hear him sing, bekays he never gives us nothing that's low."

4. **didst humanize.** In his periodical essays on familiar life.

5. **BichardBon.** A novelist contemporary with Fielding and Smollett (see note above, page 204). **Pamela** is the heroine of his first novel,—a virtuous maid-servant,—Lady **Ctrandlson** of his last novel, *Sir Charles Grandison.* Hunt views the somewhat affected morality and good manners of these characters as inferior to the more hearty and genuine standards of Fielding's characters; the "footman" is the hero of Fielding's first novel, *Joseph Andrews.*

6. **eleves.** Pupils, charges

no cook's pat up and proportion the side of a pasty with a more final eye. The whales, quoth old Chapman, speaking of Neptune,

The whales exulted under him, and knew their mighty king. 7

The pigs did not exult, but they knew their king. Unwilling was their subjection, but "more in sorrow than in anger."[8] They were too far gone for rage. Their case was hopeless. They did not see why they should proceed, but they felt themselves bound to do so; forced, conglomerated, crowded onwards, irresistibly impelled by fate and Jenkins. Often would they have bolted under any other master. They squeaked and grunted as in ordinary; they sidled, they shuffled, they half stopped; they turned an eye to all the little outlets of escape; but in vain. There they stuck (for their very progress was a sort of sticking), charmed into the center of his sphere of action, laying their heads together, but to no purpose; looking all as if they were shrugging their shoulders, and eschewing the tip-end of the whip of office. Much eye had they to their left leg; shrewd backward glances; not a little anticipative squeak and sudden rush of avoidance. It was a superfluous clutter, and they felt it; but a pig finds it more difficult than any other animal to accommodate himself to circumstances. Being out of his pale, he is in the highest state of wonderment and inaptitude. He is sluggish, obstinate, opinionate, not very social; has no desire of seeing foreign parts. Think of him in a multitude, forced to travel, and wondering what the devil it is that drives him! Judge by this of the talents of his driver.

We beheld a man once, an inferior genius, inducting a pig into the other end of Long Lane, Smithfield. He had got him thus far towards the market. It was much. His air announced success in nine parts out of ten, and hope for the remainder.

7. **The whales,** etc. From Chapman's translation of Homer's *Iliad.*

8. more in sorrow, etc. From *Hamlet,* I, ii.

It had been a happy morning's work; he had only to look for the termination of it; and he looked (as a critic of an exalted turn of mind would say) in brightness and in joy. Then would he go to the public-house, and indulge in porter and a pleasing security. Perhaps he would not say much at first, being oppressed with the greatness of his success; but by degrees, especially if interrogated, he would open, like Æneas,[9] into all the circumstances of his journey and the perils that beset him. Profound would be his set-out; full of tremor his middle course; high and skillful his progress; glorious, though with a quickened pulse, his triumphant entry. Delicate had been his situation in Ducking Pond Row; masterly his turn at Bell Alley. We saw him with the radiance of some such thought on his countenance. He was just entering Long Lane. A gravity came upon him, as he steered his touchy convoy into this his last thoroughfare. A dog moved him into a little agitation, darting along; but he resumed his course, not without a happy trepidation, hovering as he was on the borders of triumph. The pig still required care. It was evidently a pig with all the peculiar turn of mind of his species; a fellow that would not move faster than he could help; irritable, retrospective; picking objections, and prone to boggle; a chap with a tendency to take every path but the proper one, and with a sidelong tact for the alleys.

He bolts!

He's off!—*Evasit! erupit!*[10]

"Oh," exclaimed the man, dashing his hand against his head, lifting his knee in agony, and screaming with all the weight of a prophecy which the spectators felt to be too true—*"He'll go up all manner of streets!"*

Poor fellow! We think of him now sometimes, driving up Duke Street, and not to be comforted in Barbican.

9. **like Æneas.** In the second book of the *Æneid* of Vergil.

10. **Evasit!** etc. "He has escaped! he has broken away!" (From Cicero's second oration on Catiline.)

SPRING AND DAISIES

SPRING, while we are writing, is complete. The winds have done their work. The shaken air, well tempered and equalized, has subsided; the genial rains, however thickly they may come, do not saturate the ground beyond the power of the sun to dry it up again. There are clear crystal mornings; noons of blue sky and white cloud; nights, in which the growing moon seems to lie looking at the stars, like a young shepherdess at her flock. A few days ago she lay gazing in this manner at the solitary evening star, like Diana, on the slope of a valley, looking up at Endymion.[1] His young eye seemed to sparkle out upon the world; while she, bending inwards, her hands behind her head, watched him with an enamoured dumbness.

But this is the quiet of Spring. Its voices and swift movements have come back also. The swallow shoots by us, like an embodied ardor of the season. The glowing bee has his will of the honeyed flowers, grappling with them as they tremble. We have not yet heard the nightingale or the cuckoo; but we can hear them with our imagination, and enjoy them through the content of those who have.

Then the young green. This is the most apt and perfect mark of the season—the true issuing forth of the Spring. The trees and bushes are putting forth their crisp fans; the lilac is loaded with bud; the meadows are thick with the bright young grass, running into sweeps of white and gold with the daisies and butter-cups. The orchards announce their riches, in a shower of silver blossoms. The earth in fertile woods is spread with yellow and blue carpets of primroses, violets, and hyacinths, over which the birch-trees, like stooping nymphs, hang with their thickening hair. Lilies-of-the-valley, stocks, columbines, lady-smocks, and the intensely red peony which seems to anticipate the full glow of summer-time, all come out to wait upon the season, like fairies from their subterraneous palaces.

1. **Endymion.** The youth beloved of the moon-goddess.

Who is to wonder that the idea of love mingles itself with that of this cheerful and kind time of the year, setting aside even common associations? It is not only its youth, and beauty, and budding life, and "the passion of the groves,"[2] that exclaim with the poet:

> Let those love now, who never loved before;
> And those who always loved, now love the more.[3]

All our kindly impulses are apt to have more sentiment in them than the world suspect; and it is by fetching out this sentiment, and making it the ruling association, that we exalt the impulse into generosity and refinement, instead of degrading it, as is too much the case, into what is selfish and coarse, and pollutes all our systems. One of the greatest inspirers of love is gratitude—not merely on its common grounds, but gratitude for pleasures, whether consciously or unconsciously conferred. Thus we are thankful for the delight given us by a kind and sincere face; and if we fall in love with it, one great reason is, that we long to return what we have received. The same feeling has a considerable influence in the love that has been felt for men of talents, whose persons or address have not been much calculated to inspire it. In springtime, joy awakens the heart; with joy awakes gratitude and nature; and in our gratitude we return, on its own principle of participation, the love that has been shown us.

This association of ideas renders solitude in spring, and solitude in winter, two very different things. In the latter, we are better content to bear the feelings of the season by ourselves; in the former, they are so sweet, as well as so overflowing, that we long to share them. Shakespeare, in one of his sonnets,[4] describes himself as so identifying the beauties

2. **the passion,** etc. From Thomson's *Seasons* ("Spring").

3. **Let those love,** etc. Parnell's version of the opening line Of a famous Latin poem called *Pervigilium Veneris:*

Cras amet qui nunquam amavit, quique amavit cras amet.

4. **one of his sonnets.** The **98 th.**

of the Spring with the thought of his absent mistress, that he says he forgot them in their own character, and played with them only as her shadow. See how exquisitely he turns a commonplace into this fancy; and what a noble, brief portrait of April he gives us at the beginning. There is indeed a wonderful mixture of softness and strength in almost every one of the lines:

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in everything;
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
Yet not the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odor and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose:
They were but sweet, but patterns of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seemed it winter still; and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

Shakespeare was fond of alluding to April. He did not allow May to have all his regard, because she was richer. Perdita, crowned with flowers, in the *Winter's Tale,* is beautifully compared to

Flora,
Peering in April's front.[5]

There is a line in one of his sonnets, which, agreeably to the image he had in his mind, seems to strike up in one's face, hot and odorous, like perfume in a censer.

In process of the seasons have I seen
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned.[6]

5. **April's front.** The beginning of April *(W. Tale,* IV, iv).
6. **In process** of, etc. Sonnet 104.

His allusions to Spring are numerous in proportion. We all know the song containing that fine line, fresh from the most brilliant of pallettes:—

> When daisies pied, and violets blue,
> And lady-smocks all silver white,
> And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue.
> *Do paint the meadows with delight,*[7]

We owe a long debt of gratitude to the daisy; and we take this opportunity of discharging a millionth part of it. If we undertook to pay it all, we should have had to write such a book as is never very likely to be written—a journal of numberless happy hours in childhood, kept with the feelings of an infant and the pen of a man. For it would take, we suspect, a depth of delight and a subtlety of words to express even the vague joy of infancy, such as our learned departures from natural wisdom would find it more difficult to put together, than criticism and comfort, or an old palate and a young relish. But knowledge is the widening and the brightening road that must conduct us back to the joys from which it led us, and which it is destined perhaps to secure and extend. We must not quarrel with its asperities, when we can help.

We do not know the Greek name of the daisy, nor do the dictionaries inform us; and we are not at present in the way of consulting books that might. We always like to see what the Greeks say to these things, because they had a sentiment in their enjoyments. The Latins called the daisy *Bellis* or *Bellus,* as much as to say Nice One. With the French and Italians it has the same name as a Pearl—Marguerite, Margarita, or, by way of endearment, Margheretina. The same word was the name of a woman, and occasioned infinite intermixtures of compliment about pearls, daisies, and fair mistresses.

7. When **daislies** pied, etc. From *Love's Labour's Lost,* V, ii.

Chaucer, in his beautiful poem of *The Flower and the Leaf,*[8] which is evidently imitated from some French poetess, says:

> And at the laste there began anon
> A lady for to sing right womanly
> A bargaret[9] in praising the daisie,
> For as me thought among her notes sweet,
> She said "Si douset est la Margarete."

"The Margaret is so sweet." Our Margaret, however, in this allegorical poem, is undervalued in comparison with the laurel; yet Chaucer perhaps was partly induced to translate it on account of its making the figure that it does; for he has informed us more than once, in a very particular manner, that it was his favorite flower. He says that he finds it ever new, and that he shall love it till his "heart dies";[10] and afterwards, with a natural picture of his resting on the grass,

> Adown full softeley[11] I gan to sink,
> And leaning on my elbow and my side,
> The long day I shope me for to abide
> For nothing else, and I shall not lie,
> But for to look upon the daisie;
> That well by reason men it calle may
> The daisie, or else the eye of day.

This etymology, which we have no doubt is the real one, is repeated by Ben Jonson, who takes occasion to spell the word

8. **The Flower and the leaf.** A Middle English poem included in old editions of Chaucer, but now known not to be his.

9. **bargaret.** A pastoral *song* and dance.

10. **till hie heart dies.** "Till that myn herte dye"; Prologue **to** the *Legend of Good Women.*

11. **Adown full softoley,** etc. This passage, from the same Prologue of Chaucer's, Hunt quotes from an imperfect text which it is almost impossible to read metrically. The more correct text (in which the final *e's* are to be read as separate syllables) runs:

> A-doun ful softely I gan to sinke;
> And, lening on myn elbowe and my syde,
> The longe day I shoop me for to abyde
> For nothing elles, and I shal nat lye,
> But for to loke upon the dayesye,
> That wel by reson men hit calle may
> The 'dayesye' or elles 'ye of day.'

"Shop me" means planned, resolved.

"days-eyes," adding, with his usual tendency to overdo a matter of learning,

Days-eyes, and lippes of cows,—12

videlicet, cowslips: which is a disentanglement of compounds, in the style of our pleasant parodists —

Puddings of the plum,
And fingers of the lady.

Mr. Wordsworth introduces his homage to the daisy with a passage from George Wither;[13] which, as it is an old favorite of ours, and extremely applicable both to this article and our whole work, we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of repeating. It is the more interesting, inasmuch as it was written in prison, where the freedom of the author's opinions had thrown him. He is speaking of his Muse, or Imagination.

Her divine skill taught me this,
That from everything I saw
I could some instruction draw,
And raise pleasure to the height
From the meanest object's sight.
By the murmur of a spring,
Or the least bough's rustelling;[14]
By a daisy, whose leaves spread
Shut, when Titan goes to bed;
Or a shady bush or tree;
She could more infuse in me,
Than all Nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man.

12. Days-eyes, etc. From the masque of *Pan's Anniversary.*
13. George Wither. A poet of the early seventeenth century, who in 1613 suffered imprisonment, apparently as a result of some satires he had published. The passagre quoted is from the fourth eclogue of his collection called *The Shepherd's Hunting;* Wordsworth prefaces it to his poem on "The Daisy"—the one beginning "In youth from rock to rock I went."
14. rnstelling. So spelled to indicate the trisyllabic pronunciation.

Mr. Wordsworth undertakes to patronize the Celandine,[15] because nobody else will notice it; which is a good reason. But though he tells us, in a startling piece of information, that

> **Poets, vain men in their mood,**
> **Travel with the multitude,**

yet he falls in with his old brethren of England and Normandy, and becomes loyal to the daisy.

Mr. Wordsworth calls the daisy "an unassuming commonplace of Nature,"[16] which it is; and he praises it very becomingly for discharging its duties so cheerfully, in that universal character. But we cannot agree with him in thinking that it has a "homely face." Not that we should care if it had; for homeliness does not make ugliness; but we appeal to everybody, whether it is proper to say this of *la belle Marguerite.* In the first place, its shape is very pretty and slender, but not too much so. Then it has a boss of gold, set round and irradiated with silver points. Its yellow and fair white are in so high a taste of contrast, that Spenser has chosen the same colors for a picture of Leda reposing:

> **Oh wondrous skill and sweet wit of the man!**
> **That her in daffodillies sleeping laid.**
> **From scorching heat her dainty limbs to shade.[17]**

It is for the same reason that the daisy, being chiefly white, makes such a beautiful show in company with the buttercup. But this is not all; for look at the back,[18] and you find its fair

16. **the Celandine.** The "lesser celandine" or pilewort. Hunt quotes from Wordsworth's poem called "To a Small Celandine."

16. **an unassuming,** etc. Prom another poem of Wordsworth's on the Daisy, called "To the Same Flower."

17. **On wondrous skill,** etc From the *Faerie Qutene,* Book III, canto xi.

18. **look at the back.** Hunt of course refers to the English daisy, which, unlike the American wild variety, shows the red color underneath the petals. It was to this that Tennyson referred, as he explained, in the lines in which he described Maud's feet as having- "touched the meadows, and left the daisies rosy"—that is, with some of the petals upturned.

petals blushing with a most delightful red. And how compactly and delicately is the neck set in green! *Belle et douce Marguerite, aimable soeur du roi Kingcup,*[19] we would tilt[20] for thee with a hundred pens, against the stoutest poet that did not find perfection in thy cheek.

But here somebody may remind us of the spring showers, and what drawbacks they are upon going into the fields.—Not at all so, when the spring is really confirmed, and the showers but April-like and at intervals. Let us turn our imaginations to the bright side of spring, and we shall forget the showers. You see they have been forgotten just this moment. Besides, we are not likely to stray too far into the fields; and if we should, are there not hats, bonnets, barns, cottages, elm-trees, and good wills? We may make these things zests, if we please, instead of drawbacks.

19. **Belle et douce,** etc. "Lovely and gentle Marguerite, charming sister of the sovereign Kingcup." Hunt is imitating the address of a medieval courtier to his lady.

20. **tilt** Combat In the tourney.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

[THOMAS DE QUINCEY was born at Manchester in 1785, of a prosperous family. A precocious, moody, and eccentric boy, he left school when about seventeen and led a rambling life, first on the highways of England and Wales, later in London; of these days he has given an account, of which it is difficult to distinguish the real and the imaginative elements, in *The Confessions of an Opium Eater.* After a short period of study at Worcester College, Oxford, he devoted himself to the private study of philosophy, economics, German, etc., and began to write for magazines. To the *London Magazine* he made his most famous contribution, the "Confessions," but for the most part was on the staff of *Blackwood's.* After a stay in the Lake country, made because of his admiration for Wordsworth, De Quincey settled in Edinburgh, where he died in 1859. From his college days he was always addicted to opium, but owing to an extraordinary constitution it did not greatly affect his vigor or industry; he wrote an enormous number of essays and monographs, but no entire book of outstanding importance. His character was amiable but incurably eccentric, and he seemed to his best friends a somewhat mysterious, not quite human, personality.]

ON THE KNOCKING AT THE GATE IN "MACBETH"[1]

FROM my boyish days I had always felt a great perplexity on one point in *Macbeth.* It was this:—the knocking at the gate which succeeds to the murder of Duncan produced to my feelings an effect for which I never could account. The effect was that it reflected back upon the murderer a peculiar awfulness and a depth of solemnity; yet, however obstinately

1. This essay was published in the *London Magazine* in 1823; it is the best known of De Quincey's excursions into literary criticism. His attitude toward Shakespeare, especially the concluding paragraph, represents the feeling of the early nineteenth century romanticists, who viewed the great dramatist as a genius almost infallibly inspired in his art. The "Knocking" occurs at the opening of scene 3 of Act II of the play.

I endeavored with my understanding to comprehend this, for many years I never could see *why* it should produce such an effect.

Here I pause for one moment to exhort the reader never to pay any attention to his understanding when it stands in opposition to any other faculty of his mind. The mere understanding, however useful and indispensable, is the meanest faculty in the human mind and the most to be distrusted; and yet the great majority of people trust to nothing else,—which may do for ordinary life, but not for philosophical purposes. Of this, out of ten thousand instances that I might produce, I will cite one. Ask of any person whatsoever who is not previously prepared for the demand by a knowledge of perspective, to draw in the rudest way the commonest appearance which depends upon the laws of that science—as, for instance, to represent the effect of two walls standing at right angles to each other, or the appearance of the houses on each side of a street, as seen by a person looking down the street from one extremity. Now, in all cases, unless the person has happened to observe in pictures how it is that artists produce these effects, he will be utterly unable to make the smallest approximation to it. Yet why? For he has actually seen the effect every day of his life. The reason is that he allows his understanding to overrule his eyes. His understanding, which includes no intuitive knowledge of the laws of vision, can furnish him with no reason why a line which is known and can be proved to be a horizontal line should not *appear* a horizontal line; a line that made any angle with the perpendicular less than a right angle would seem to him to indicate that his houses were all tumbling down together. Accordingly he makes the line of his houses a horizontal line, and fails of course to produce the effect demanded. Here then is one instance out of many, in which not only the understanding is allowed to overrule the eyes, but where the understanding is positively allowed to obliterate the eyes, as it were; for not

only does the man believe the evidence of his understanding in opposition to that of his eyes, but (what is monstrous) the idiot is not aware that his eyes ever gave such evidence. He does not know that he has seen (and therefore *quoad* his consciousness[2] has *not* seen) that which he *has* seen every day of his life.

But to return from this digression. My understanding could furnish no reason why the knocking at the gate in *Macbeth* should produce any effect, direct or reflected. In fact, my understanding said positively that it could *not* produce any effect. But I knew better; I felt that it did; and I waited and clung to the problem until further knowledge should enable me to solve it. At length, in 1812, Mr. Williams[3] made his *debut* on the stage of Ratcliffe Highway, and executed those unparalleled murders which have procured for him such a brilliant and undying reputation. On which murders, by the way, I must observe, that in one respect they have had an ill effect, by making the connoisseur in murder very fastidious in his taste, and dissatisfied with anything that has been since done in that line. All other murders look pale by the deep crimson of his; and, as an amateur once said to me in a querulous tone, "There has been absolutely nothing *doing* since his time, or nothing that's worth speaking of." But this is wrong, for it is unreasonable *to* expect all men *to* be great artists, and born with the genius of Mr. Williams. Now it will be remembered that in the first of these murders (that of the Marrs) the same incident (of a knocking at the door soon after the work of extermination was complete) did actually occur which the genius of Shakespeare has invented; and all good judges, and the most eminent dilettanti,[4] acknowl-

2. quoad **his consciousness** So far as his consciousness is concerned.

3. Mr. **Williams,** A well-known murderer of the period. De Quincey professed, in a grimly humorous fashion, to be a connoisseur in the art of murder, and in this paragraph **adopts the** same tone which be assumed in two quizzical essays "On Murder as one of the Fine Ait

4. dilettanti. Amateurs of the art.

edged the felicity of Shakespeare's suggestion as soon as it was actually realized. Here, then, was a fresh proof that I had been right in relying on my own feeling in opposition to my understanding; and again I set myself to study the problem. At length I solved it to my own satisfaction; and my solution is this:—Murder, in ordinary cases, where the sympathy is wholly directed to the case of the murdered person, is an incident of coarse and vulgar horror; and for this reason,—that it flings the interest exclusively upon the natural but ignoble instinct by which we cleave to life: an instinct which, as being indispensable to the primal law of self-preservation, is the same in kind (though different in degree) amongst all living creatures. This instinct, therefore, because it annihilates all distinctions, and degrades the greatest of men to the level of "the poor beetle that we tread on," exhibits human nature in its most abject and humiliating attitude. Such an attitude would little suit the purposes of the poet. What then must he do? He must throw the interest on the murderer. Our sympathy must be with *him* (of course I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them—not a sympathy of pity or approbation).* In the murdered person all strife of thought, all flux and reflux of passion and of purpose, are crushed by one overwhelming panic; the fear of instant death smites him "with its petrific mace."[5] But in the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm of passion—jealousy, ambi-

* It seems almost ludicrous to guard and explain my use of a word in a situation where it would naturally explain itself. But it has become necessary to do so, in consequence of the unscholarlike use of the word sympathy, at present so general, by which, instead of taking it in its proper sense, as the act of reproducing in our minds the feelings of another, whether for hatred, indignation, love, pity, or approbation, it is made a mere synonym of the word *pity;* and hence, instead of saying, "sympathy *with* another," many writers adopt the monstrous barbarism of "sympathy *for* another." [De Quincey's note.]

5. **petrific mace.** Staff having the power of turning what it strikes to stone. The quotation is from *Paradise Lost,* Book x.

tion, vengeance, hatred—which will create a hell within him; and into this hell we are to look.

In *Macbeth,* for the sake of gratifying his now enormous and teeming faculty of creation, Shakespeare has introduced two murderers; and, as usual in his hands, they are remarkably discriminated; but—though in Macbeth the strife of mind is greater than in his wife, the tiger spirit not so awake, and his feelings caught chiefly by contagion from her—yet, as both were finally involved in the guilt of murder, the murderous mind of necessity is finally to be presumed in both. This was to be expressed; and on its own account, as well as to make it a more proportionable antagonist to the unoffending nature of their victim, "the gracious Duncan," and adequately to expound "the deep damnation of his taking off,"[6] this was to be expressed with peculiar energy. We were to be made to feel that the human nature—i.e., the divine nature of love and mercy, spread through the hearts of all creatures, and seldom utterly withdrawn from man—was gone, vanished, extinct, and that the fiendish nature had taken its place. And, as this effect is marvelously accomplished in the *dialogues* and *soliloquies* themselves, so it is finally consummated by the expedient under consideration; and it is to this that I now solicit the reader's attention. If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, daughter, or sister, in a fainting fit, he may chance to have observed that the most affecting moment in such a spectacle is that in which a sigh and a stirring announce the recommencement of suspended life. Or, if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis on the day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and, chancing to walk near the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully, in the silence and desertion of the streets and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deep interest which at that moment was possessing the heart of man,—if all at once he should hear the death-like stillness broken up by the

6. deep damnation, etc. Frcm *Macbeth,* I, vii.

sound of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision was dissolved, he will be aware that at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly resumed. All action in any direction is best expounded, measured, and made apprehensible, by reaction. Now apply this to the case in *Macbeth.* Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart and the entrance of the fiendish heart was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stepped in; and the murderers are taken out of the region of human things, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured: Lady Macbeth is "unsexed"; Macbeth has forgot that he was born of woman; both are conformed to the image of devils;[7] and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers, and the murder, must be insulated—cut off by an immeasurable gulf from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested—laid asleep—tranced—racked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated, relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is that, when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds: the knocking at the gate is heard, and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced; the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live

7. **conformed to *the i*mage,** etc. De Quincey adapts, **by way Of** contrast, the phrasing of St. Paul in *Romans* 8:29.

first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them.

0 mighty poet! Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art, but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the stars and the flowers, like frost and snow, rain and dew, hail-storm and thunder, which are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing useless or inert, but that, the farther we press in our discoveries, the more we shall see proofs of design and self-supporting arrangement where the careless eye had seen nothing but accident!

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD OF STRIFE[1]

. . . [MY BROTHER] had resented, with a shower of stones, an affront offered to us by an individual boy, belonging to a cotton factory; for more than two years afterwards this became the *teterrima causa*[2] of a skirmish or a battle as often as we passed the factory; and, unfortunately, that was twice a day on every day, except Sunday. Our situation in respect to the enemy was as follows:—Greenhay, a country-house, newly built by my father, at that time was a clear mile from the outskirts of Manchester; but in after years, Manchester, throwing out the *tentacula** of its vast expansions, absolutely enveloped Greenhay; and, for anything I know, the grounds and gardens which then insulated the house may have long disappeared. Being a modest mansion, which (including hot

1. This is not the title of a single essay, but of one section of matter which De Quincey brought together in the volume called *Autobiographic Sketches*. The portion here used is the most remarkable account of his childhood experiences, which it will be seen were in part natural and in part (like his character) abnormal and morbid. His older brother William, whom he portrays so vividly, was a boy of extraordinary promise, who died at the age of sixteen.

2. **teterrima causa.** Most dreadful cause.

3. **tentaenla.** Tentacles,

walls,[4] offices, and gardener's house) had cost only six thousand pounds, I do not know how it should have risen to the distinction of giving name to a region of that great town; however, it *has* done so; and at this time, therefore, after changes so great, it will be difficult for the *habitue* of that region to understand how my brother and myself could have a solitary road to traverse between Greenhay and Princess Street, then the termination, on that side, of Manchester. But so it was. Oxford *Street,* like its namesake in London, was then called the Oxford *Road;* and during the currency of our acquaintance with it, arose the first three houses in its neighborhood; of which the third was built for the Reverend S. H., one of our guardians, for whom his friends had also built the church of St. Peter's—not a bowshot from the house. At present, however, he resided in Salford, nearly two miles from Greenhay; and to him we went over daily, for the benefit of his classical instructions. One sole cotton factory had then risen along the line of Oxford Street; and this was close to a bridge, which also was a new creation; for previously all passengers to Manchester went round by Garrat. This factory became to us the *officina gentium,*[5] from which swarmed forth those Goths and Vandals[6] that continually threatened our steps; and this bridge became the eternal arena of combat, we taking good care to be on the right side of the bridge for retreat—i.e., on the town side, or the country side, accordingly as we were going out in the morning, or returning in the afternoon. Stones were the implements of warfare; and by continual practice both parties became expert in throwing them.

The origin of the feud it is scarcely requisite to rehearse, since the particular accident which began it was not the true efficient cause of our long warfare, but simply the casual occasion. The cause lay in our aristocratic dress. As children

4. hot walls. Walls with sunny exposure, used for the growing of fruit
5. officina gentium. Factory of the nations.
6. Goths and Vandals. The barbarian invaders of Rome.

of an opulent family, where all provisions were liberal, and all appointments elegant, we were uniformly well-dressed; and, in particular, we wore trousers (at that time unheard of, except among sailors), and we also wore Hessian boots[7]—a crime that could not be forgiven in the Lancashire of that day, because it expressed the double offense of being aristocratic and being outlandish. We were aristocrats, and it was vain to deny it; could we deny our boots? whilst our antagonists, if not absolutely *sansculottes,*[8] were slovenly and forlorn in their dress, often unwashed, with hair totally neglected, and always covered with flakes of cotton. Jacobins[9] they were not, as regarded any sympathy with the Jacobinism that then desolated France; for, on the contrary, they detested everything French, and answered with brotherly signals to the cry of "Church and King," or "King and Constitution." But, for all that, as they were perfectly independent, getting very high wages, and these wages in a mode of industry that was then taking vast strides ahead, they contrived to reconcile this patriotic anti-Jacobinism with a personal Jacobinism of that sort which is native to the heart of man, who is by natural impulse (and not witliout a root of nobility, though also of base envy) impatient of inequality, and submits to it only through a sense of its necessity, or under a long experience of its benefits.

It was on an early day of our new *tirocinium,*[10] or perhaps *on* the very first, that, as we passed the bridge, a boy happening to issue from the factory sang out to us, derisively, "Holloa, Bucks!" In this the reader may fail to perceive any atrocious insult commensurate to the long war which followed. But the reader is wrong. The word *"dandies"* which was what the villain meant, had not then been born, so that he

7. **Hessian boots.** High boots of a typo especially associated with Hessian soldiers; sometimes called simply "Hessians."
8. **sansculottes.** Men without breeches; **a** term applied to the members of some of the Parisian mobs in **the** French Revolution.
9. **Jacobins.** Sympathizers with the French **revolutionists** (from the name of a revolutionary club at Pari
10. **tirocinium.** First military service.

could not have called us by that name, unless through the spirit of prophecy. *Buck* was the nearest word at hand in his Manchester vocabulary; he gave all he could, and let us dream the rest. But in the next moment he discovered our boots, and he consummated his crime by saluting us as "Boots! boots!" My brother made a dead stop, surveyed him with intense disdain, and bade him draw near, that he might "give his flesh to the fowls of the air." The boy declined to accept this liberal invitation, and conveyed his answer by a most contemptuous and plebeian gesture, upon which my brother drove him in with a shower of stones.

During this inaugural flourish of hostilities, I, for my part, remained inactive, and therefore, apparently neutral. But this was the last time that I did so: for the moment, indeed, I was taken by surprise. To be called a *buck* by one that had it in his choice to have called me a coward, a thief, or a murderer, struck me as a most pardonable offense; and as to *boots,* that rested upon a flagrant fact that could not be denied; so that at first I was green enough to regard the boy as very considerate and indulgent. But my brother soon rectified my views; or, if any doubts remained, he impressed me, at least, with a sense of my paramount duty to himself, which was threefold. First, it seems that I owed military allegiance to *him,* as my commander-in-chief, whenever we "took the field"; secondly, by the law of nations, I being a cadet[11] of my house, owed suit and service to him who was its head; and he assured me, that twice in a year, on *my* birth-day and on *his,* he had a right, strictly speaking, to make me lie down, and to set his foot upon my neck; lastly. by a law not so rigorous, but valid amongst gentlemen—vi2., "by the *comity* of nations"—it seems I owed eternal deference to one so much older than myself, so much wiser, stronger, braver, more beautiful, and more swift of foot. Something like all this in tendency I had already believed, though I had not so minutely investigated the

11. cadet. Younger brother.

modes and grounds of my duty. By temperament, and through natural dedication to despondency, I felt resting upon me always too deep and gloomy a sense of obscure duties attached to life, that I never *should* be able to fulfill; a burden which I could not carry, and which yet I did not know how to throw off. Glad, therefore, I was to find the whole tremendous weight of obligations—the law and the prophets—all crowded into this one pocket command, "Thou shalt obey thy brother as God's vicar upon earth." For now, if by any future stone leveled at him who had called me a "buck," I should chance to draw blood—perhaps I might not have committed so serious a trespass on any rights which he could plead: but if I *had* (for on this subject my convictions were still cloudy), at any rate the duty I might have violated in regard to this general brother, in right of Adam, was canceled when it came into collision with my paramount duty to this liege brother of my own individual house.

From this day, therefore, I obeyed all my brother's military commands with the utmost docility; and happy it made me that every sort of doubt, or question, or opening for demur, was swallowed up in the unity of this one papal principle, discovered by my brother—viz., that all rights and duties of casuistry were transferred from me to himself. *His* was the judgment—*his* was the responsibility; and to me belonged only the sublime obligation of unconditional faith in *him.* That faith I realized. It is true that he taxed me at times, in his reports of particular fights, with "horrible cowardice," and even with a "cowardice that seemed inexplicable, except on the supposition of treachery." But this was only a *facon de parler*[12] with him: the idea of secret perfidy, that was constantly moving under-ground, gave an interest to the progress of the war, which else tended to the monotonous. It was a dramatic artifice for sustaining the interest, where the incidents might happen to be too slightly diversified. But that he did

12. facon de parler. Manner of speaking:.

not believe his own charges was clear, because he never repeated them in his "General History of the Campaigns/' which was a *resume,* or recapitulating digest, of his daily reports.

We fought every day; and, generally speaking, *twice* every day; and the result was pretty uniform—viz., that my brother and I terminated the battle by insisting upon our undoubted right to run away. *Magna Charta,* I should fancy, secures that great right to every man; else, surely, it is sadly defective. But out of this catastrophe to most of our skirmishes, and to all our pitched battles except one, grew a standing schism between my brother and myself. My unlimited obedience had respect to action, but not to opinion. Loyalty to my brother did not rest upon hypocrisy; because I was faithful, it did not follow that I must be false in relation to his capricious opinions. And these opinions sometimes took the shape of acts. Twice, at the least, in every week, but sometimes every night, my brother insisted on singing "Te Deum"[13] for supposed victories he had won; and he insisted also on my bearing a part in these "Te Deums." Now, as I knew of no such victories, but resolutely asserted the truth—viz., that we ran away—a slight jar was thus given to the else triumphal effect of these musical ovations. Once having uttered my protest, however, willingly I gave my aid to the chanting; for I loved unspeakably the grand and varied system of chanting in the Romish and English Churches. And, looking back at this day to the ineffable benefits which I derived from the church of my childhood, I account among the very greatest those which reached me through the various chants connected with the *"O,* Jubilate,"[14] the "Magnificat,"[15] the "Te Deum," the "Bene-

13. **Te Deum.** The ancient hymn beginning- "Te Deum laudamus," "We praise Thee, O God."

14. **O Jubilate.** "Be joyful"; the opening of the Latin version of the 100th Psalm.

15. **Magnificat.** The hymn based **on** *Luke* 1:46-65; "My **soul doth** magnify the Lord," etc.

dicite,"[16] etc. Through these chants it was that the sorrow which laid waste my infancy, and the devotion which nature had made a necessity of my being, were profoundly interfused: the sorrow gave reality and depth to the devotion; the devotion gave grandeur and idealization to the sorrow. Neither was my love for chanting altogether without knowledge. A son of my reverend guardian, much older than myself, who possessed a singular faculty of producing a sort of organ accompaniment with one-half of his mouth, whilst he sang with the other half, had given me some instructions in the art of chanting: and, as to my brother, he, the hundred-handed Briareus,[17] could do all things; of course, therefore, he could chant.

Once having begun, it followed naturally that the war should deepen in bitterness. Wounds that wrote memorials in the flesh, insults that rankled in the heart—these were not features of the case likely to be forgotten by our enemies, and far less by my fiery brother. I, for my part, entered not into any of the passions that war may be supposed to kindle, except only the chronic passion of anxiety. *Fear* it was not; for experience had taught me that, under the random firing of our undisciplined enemies, the chances were not many of being wounded. But the uncertainties of the war; the doubts in every separate action whether I could keep up the requisite connection with my brother; and, in case I could not, the utter darkness that surrounded my fate; whether, as a trophy won from Israel, I should be dedicated to the service of some Manchester Dagon, or pass through fire to Moloch;[18] all

16. **Benedloite.** An ancient hymn beginning "Benedicite omnia opera Domini," "0 bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord"; in the service of the English Church used as an alternate to the *Te Deum.*

17. **Briareus.** A monster of Greek mythology, son of Uranua, with a hundred arms.

18. **Dagon . . . Moloch.** Gods of the ancient Canaanites, famed for their bloodthirstiness. To "pass through the fire to Moloch" was to be burned in a furnace constructed in the **image** of the god.

these contingencies, for me that had no friend to consult, ran too violently into the master-current of my constitutional despondency, ever to give way under any casual elation of success. Success, however, we really had at times; in slight skirmishes pretty often; and once, at least, as the reader will find to his mortification, if he is wicked enough to take the side of the Philistines, a most smashing victory in a pitched battle. But even then, and whilst the hurrahs were yet ascending from our jubilating lips, the freezing remembrance came back to my heart of that deadly depression which, duly at the coming round of the morning and evening watches, traveled with me like my shadow on our approach to the memorable bridge. . . .

Both my brother and myself, for.the sake of varying our intellectual amusements, occupied ourselves at times in governing imaginary kingdoms. I do not mention this as anything unusual; it is a common resource of mental activity and of aspiring energies amongst boys. Hartley Coleridge,[19] for example, had a kingdom which he governed for many years; whether well or ill, is more than I can say. Kindly, I am sure, he would govern it; but, unless a machine had been invented for enabling him to write without effort (as was really done for our Fourth George during the pressure of illness), I fear that the public service must have languished deplorably for want of the royal signature. In sailing past his own dominions, what dolorous outcries would have saluted him from the shore —"Holloa, royal sir! here's the deuce to pay; a perfect lock there is, as tight as locked jaw, upon the course of our public business; throats there are to be cut, from the product of ten jail-deliveries, and nobody dares to cut them, for want of the proper warrant; archbishoprics there are to be filled, and, because they are *not* filled, the whole nation is running helter-skelter into heresy;—and all in consequence of your majesty's

19. Hartley Coleridge. The brilliant son of the poet Coleridgre. Like his father, he was irresponsible and given to disappointing the expectations of his friends.

sacred laziness." *Our* governments were less remissly administered; since each of us, by continued reports of improvements and gracious concessions to the folly or the weakness of our subjects, stimulated the zeal of his rival. And here, at least, there seemed to be no reason why I should come into collision with my brother. At any rate, I took pains *not* to do so. But all was in vain. My destiny was, to live in one eternal element of feud.

My own kingdom was an island called Gombroon. But in what parallel of north or south latitude it lay, I concealed for a time as rigorously as ancient Rome through every century concealed her real name.[20] The object in this provisional concealment was, to regulate the position of my own territory by that of my brother's; for I was determined to place a monstrous world of waters between us, as the only chance (and a very poor one it proved) for compelling my brother to keep the peace. At length, for some reason unknown to me, and much to my astonishment, he located his capital city in the high latitude of 65 deg. north. That fact being once published and settled, instantly I smacked my little kingdom of Gombroon down into the tropics, 10 deg., I think, south of the line. Now, at least, I was on the right side of the hedge, or so I flattered myself; for it struck me that my brother never would degrade himself by fitting out a costly nautical expedition against poor little Gombroon; and how else could he get at me? Surely the very fiend himself, if he happened to be in a high arctic latitude, would not indulge his malice so far as to follow its trail into the Tropic of Capricorn. And what was to be got by such a freak? There was no Golden Fleece[21] in Gombroon. If the fiend or my brother fancied *that,* for once they were in the wrong box; and there

20. **concealed h*er* real name.** A reference to leg-ends which related that there was a secret name of Rome (sometimes said to be Valentia) which for mystical religious reasons was never openly used.

21. **Golden Fleece.** The precious object of the mythical expedition of the Argonauts to Colchis.

was no variety of vegetable produce, for I never denied that the poor little island was only 270 miles in circuit. Think, then, of sailing through 75 deg. of latitude only to crack such a miserable little filbert as that. But my brother stunned me by explaining that, although his capital lay in lat. *65* deg. N., not the less his dominions swept southwards through a matter of 80 or 90 deg.; and, as to the Tropic of Capricorn, much of it was his own private property. I was aghast at hearing *that.* It seemed that vast horns and promontories ran down from all parts of his dominions towards any country whatsoever, in either hemisphere—empire, or republic; monarchy, polyarchy, or anarchy—that he might have reasons for assaulting.

Here in one moment vanished all that I had relied on for protection; distance I had relied on, and suddenly I was found in close neighborhood to my most formidable enemy. Poverty I had relied on, and *that* was not denied; he granted the poverty, but it was dependent on the barbarism of the Gombroonians. It seems that in the central forests of Gombroonia there were diamond mines, which my people, from their low condition of civilization, did not value, nor had any means of working. Farewell, therefore, on *my* side, of all hopes of enduring peace, for here was established, in legal phrase, *a lien* for ever upon my island, and not upon its margin, but its very center, in favor of any invaders better able than the natives to make its treasures available. For, of old, it was an article in my brother's code of morals—that, supposing a contest between any two parties, of which one possessed an article, whilst the other was better able to use it, the rightful property vested in the latter. As if you met a man with a musket, then you might justly challenge him to a trial in the art of making gunpowder; which if you *could* make, and he could *not,* in that case the musket was *de jure*[22] yours. For what shadow of a right had the fellow to a noble instrument which he could not "maintain" in a serviceable condition, and

22. de Jure. Lawfully.

"feed" with its daily rations of powder and shot? Still, it may be fancied that, since all the relations between us as independent sovereigns (whether of war, or peace, or treaty) rested upon our own representations and official reports, it was surely within my competence to deny or qualify, as much as within his to assert. But, in reality, the *law* of the contest between us, as suggested by some instinct of propriety in my own mind, would not allow me to proceed in such a method. What he said was like a move at chess or draughts, which it was childish to dispute. The move being made, my business was—to face it, to parry it, to evade it, and, if I could, to overthrow it. I proceeded as a lawyer who moves as long as he can, not by blank denial of facts (or *coming to an issue),* but by *demurring* (i.e., admitting the allegations of fact, but otherwise interpreting their construction). It was the understood necessity of the case, that I must passively accept my brother's statements so far as regarded their verbal expression; and, if I would extricate my poor islanders from their troubles, it must be by some distinction or evasion lying *within* this expression, or not blankly contradicting it.

"How, and to what extent," my brother asked, "did I raise taxes upon my subjects?" My first impulse was to say that I did not tax them at all, for I had a perfect horror of doing so; but prudence would not allow of my saying *that;* because it was too probable he would demand to know how, in that case, I maintained a standing army; and if I once allowed it to be supposed that I had none, there was an end for ever to the independence of my people. Poor things! they would have been invaded and dragooned in a month. I took some days, therefore, to consider that point, but at last replied that my people, being maritime, supported themselves mainly by a herring fishery, from which I deducted a part of the produce, and afterwards sold it for manure to neighboring nations. This last hint I borrowed from the conversation of a stranger who happened to dine one day at Greenhay, and mentioned

that in Devonshire, or at least on the western coast of that country, near Ilfracombe, upon any excessive take of herrings, beyond what the markets could absorb, the surplus was applied to the land as a valuable dressing. It might be inferred from this account, however, that the arts must be in a languishing state, amongst a people that did not understand the process of salting fish; and my brother observed derisively, much to my grief, that a wretched ichthyophagous[23] people must make shocking soldiers, weak as water, and liable to be knocked over like nine-pins; whereas in *his* army not a man ever ate herrings, pilchards, mackerels, or, in fact, condescended to anything worse than sirloins of beef.

At every step I had to contend for the honor and independence of my islanders; so that early I came to understand the weight of Shakespeare's sentiment—

Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown! 24

Oh, reader, do not laugh ! I lived for ever under the terror of two separate wars in two separate worlds; one against the factory boys, in a real world of flesh and blood, of stones and brickbats, of flight and pursuit, that were anything but figurative; the other in a world purely aerial, where all the combats and the sufferings were absolute moonshine. And yet the simple truth is—that, for anxiety and distress of mind, the reality (which almost every morning's light brought round) was as nothing in comparison of that dream-kingdom which rose like a vapor from my own brain, and which apparently by the *fiat* of my will could be for ever dissolved. Ah! but no; I had contracted obligations to Gombroon; I had submitted my conscience to a yoke; and in secret truth my will had no such autocratic power. Long contemplation of a shadow, earnest study for the welfare of that shadow, sympathy with the wounded sensibilities of that shadow under accumulated wrongs, these bitter experiences, nursed by

23. **ichthyophagous.** Fish-eating.
24. **Uneasy lies,** etc. *Henry Fourth,* Part II, III, i.

brooding thought, had gradually frozen that shadow into a rigor of reality far denser than the material realities of brass or granite. Who builds the most durable dwellings'? asks the laborer[25] in *Hamlet;* and the answer is, The gravedigger. He builds for corruption; and yet *his* tenements are incorruptible; "the houses which *he* makes last to doomsday." Who is it that seeks for concealment? Let him hide himself in the unsearchable chambers of light—of light which at noonday, more effectually than any gloom, conceals the very brightest stars, rather than in labyrinths of darkness the thickest. What criminal is that who wishes to abscond from public justice? Let him hurry into the frantic publicities of London, and by no means into the quiet privacies of the country. So, and upon the analogy of these cases, we may understand that, to make a strife overwhelming by a thousandfold to the feelings, it must not deal with gross material interests, but with such as rise into the world of dreams, and act upon the nerves through spiritual, and not through fleshly, torments. Mine, in the present case, rose suddenly, like a rocket, into their meridian altitude, by means of a hint furnished to my brother from a Scottish advocate's reveries. . . .

Chance directed the eye of my brother, one day, upon that part of the work in which Lord M.[28] unfolds his hypothesis that originally the human race had been a variety of the ape. On which hypothesis, by the way, Dr. Adam Clarke's[27] substitution of *ape* for *serpent,* in translating the word *nachash* (the brute tempter of Eve), would have fallen to the ground, since this would simply have been the case of one human being tempting another. It followed inevitably, according to Lord M., however painful it might be to human dignity, that,

25. **the laborer.** The grave-digger in Act V, scene i.

26. **Lord M.** Lord Monboddo (James Burnet), author of **a** once famous book on *The Origin and Progress of Language.* **In the** preceding **(omitted) passage De Quincey gives some account of him.**

27. Adam Clarke. A theologian who made a widely used commentary on the Bible.

in this their early stage of brutality, men must have had tails. My brother mused upon this reverie, and, in a few days, published an extract from some scoundrel's travels in Gombroon, according to which the Gombroonians had not yet emerged from this early condition of apedom. They, it seems, were still *homines caudati.*[28] Overwhelming to me and stunning was the ignominy of this horrible discovery. Lord M. had not overlooked the natural question, In what way did men get rid of their tails? To speak the truth, they never *would* have got rid of them had they continued to run wild; but growing civilization introduced arts, and the arts introduced sedentary habits. By these it was, by the mere necessity of continually sitting down, that men gradually wore off their tails! Well, and what should hinder the Gombroonians from sitting down? *Their* tailors and shoemakers would and could, I hope, sit down, as well as those of Tigrosylvania.[29] Why not? Ay, but my brother had insisted already that they *had* no tailors, that they *had* no shoemakers; which *then* I did not care much about, as it merely put back the clock of our history—throwing us into an earlier, and therefore, perhaps, into a more warlike stage of society. But, as the case stood now, this want of tailors, etc., showed clearly that the process of sitting down, so essential to the ennobling of the race, had not commenced. My brother, with an air of consolation, suggested that I might even now, without an hour's delay, compel the whole nation to sit down for six hours a day, which would always "make a beginning." But the truth would remain as before—viz., that I was the king of a people that had tails; and the slow, slow process by which, in a course of many centuries, their posterity might rub them off, a hope of vintages never to be enjoyed by any generations that are yet heaving in sight—*that* was to me the worst form of despair.

Still there was one resource: if I "didn't like it"—meaning

28. **homines caudati.** Tailed men.
29. **Tigrsylvania.** The name of the brother's kingdom.

the state of things in Gombroon—I might "abdicate." Yes, I knew *that.* I might abdicate; and, once having cut the connection between myself and the poor abject islanders, I might seem to have no further interest in the degradation that affected them. After such a disruption between us, what was it to me if they had even three tails apiece? Ah, *that* was fine talking; but this connection with my poor subjects had grown up so slowly and so genially, in the midst of struggles so constant against the encroachments of my brother and his rascally people; we had suffered so much together; and the filaments connecting them with my heart were so aerially fine and fantastic, but for that reason so inseverable, that I abated nothing of my anxiety on their account; making this difference only in my legislation and administrative cares, that I pursued them more in a spirit of despondency, and retreated more shyly from communicating them. • • •

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

[THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY was born of a well-to-do Leicestershire family in 1800. As a child he showed great precocity, at the agre of seven beginning- to write a "universal history." He went througrh Cambridge University, was admitted to the bar, and at the age of thirty became a Member of Parliament Meantime, in 1S25 he had contributed an essay on Milton to the *Edinburgh Review* which at once made his fame as an essayist; thereafter, thougrh frequently engaged in public affairs, he became the most brilliant representative in England of the review type of essay, and the leading contributor to the *Edinburgh* In 1848 the first volume of his *History of England* appeared, a work which made Macaulay also the most popular of historians. He is further remembered as a poet for his *Lays of Ancient Rome,* He had an extraordinary memory, was a brilliant conversationalist and letter-writer, an effective parliamentary orator, and a favorite in social life; on the other hand, his tendency to dogmatism and exaggeration gave him a reputation for prejudice, and the same tendency makes it necessary to read his historical and critical statements with some caution. He was made Baron Macaulay of Rothley in 1857; in 1859 he died, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.]

MILTON AND THE PURITANS[1]

WE WOULD speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced- The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been

1. This is the closing section of the essay on Milton (see above). The essays of the *Edinburgh Review* were in the first instance reviews of books (see Introduction, page 13), and this one took its origin in a recent publication of a translation of Milton's Latin treatise "On Christian Doctrine," which had been discovered only in 1823. Macaulay declared his intention to make the discovery the occasion of a general account of Milton, as the Capuchin monks "never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint, till they have awakened the devotional feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him." The significance of this concluding section is chiefly in its interpretation of the age of Milton as represented by the great social and religious groups of seventeenth century England.

wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration, they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves, and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces,[2] their Hebrew names, the Scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learnt. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

> Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio
> Che mortali perigli in se contiene:
> Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,
> Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene.[3]

Those who roused the people to resistance, who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years, who formed out of the most unpromising materials the finest army that Europe had ever seen, who trampled down king, church, and aristocracy, who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of free-

2. graces. That is, prayers before eating.

3. Ecco il fonte, etc. "This is the fount of laughter, this the stream which contains mortal peril: here it is fitting that we should hold our desire in check and be exceeding cautious." (From Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered,* Book XV.)

masonry or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles the First, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles the Second was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play,[4] turn from the specious caskets which contain only the death's head and the fool's head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on his intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish, when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but his favor; and, confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets,[5] they were deeply

4. **Bassanio in the play.** *The Merchant of Venice,* III, ii.

5. If they **were** unacquainted, etc. The passage beginning here Is a characteristic one for Macaulay's style,—its balanced clauses, tending- to & kind of rhythm, and its vivid concrete illustrations of a leading idea.

read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt; for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged, on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest, who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the Evangelist and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion, the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker, but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement he prayed with convulsions and groans and tears. He was half-maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the

Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the scepter •of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood,[6] he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoics,[7] had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus with his flail,[8] crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities, insensible to

6. **Vane . . . Fleetwood.** Sir Henry Vane and Charles Fleetwood, Parliamentary leaders in opposition to Charles I.

7. **Stoics.** Philosophers contemptuous of suffering.

8. **Sir Arteffal . . . Talus.** In Spenser's *Faerie Queene,* Book v, canto 1:

> His name was Talus, made of iron mould,
> Immovable, resistless, without end;
> Who in his hand an iron flail did hold,
> With which he threshed out falsehood, and
> did truth unfold.

fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain, not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach; and we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system, intolerance and extravagant austerity,—that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstans and their De Montforts, their Dominies and their Escobars.[9] Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and an useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the Heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless Gallios[10] with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshippers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch[11] as their examples. They seem to have borne

9. **Dunstans . . . De Montforts,** etc. All these were powerful (and, in Macaulay's view, more or less cruel and unscrupulous) representatives of the Catholic Church in the state. St. Dunstan was Archbishop of Canterbury in the 10th century; Simon dt Montfort was a French commander who in 1208 led the persecution of the heretical religionists called Albigenses; St. Domlzdo was a Spaniard of the 12 th and 13th centuries, the founder of the religious order of the Dominicans; Escobar was a Spanish Jesuit theologian of the 17th century.

10. **Thomases . . . Gallios.** See *John* 20:24-25 and *Acts* 18:12-17.

11. **Plutarch.** Author of *Lives* of Greek and Roman heroes, written about 100 A.D.

some resemblance to the Brissotines[12] of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect zandor. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horse-boys, gamblers, and bravoes, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars[13] to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the Parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favorable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of the King was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ,—with the mutes who throng their antechambers, and the janissaries[14] who mount guard at their gates. Our royalist countrymen were not heartless, dangling courtiers, bowing at every step and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction, dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valor, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honor, the prejudices of childhood, and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as

12. **Brissotines.** Followers of Brissot, a leading- member of the **revolutionary** Convention; he was guillotined in 1793. His **party were** also called "Girondists."

13. **Wnitefriars.** An ill-reputed district of London.

14. **janissaries.** Troops of the Turkish Sultan.

that of Duessa;[15] and, like the Red-Cross Knight, they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty, while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions, they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table, they had also many of its virtues,—courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a freethinker. He was not a Royalist. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the Court, from the conventicle[16] and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

As ever in his great Taskmaster's eye.[17]

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their

15. **Duessa . . . the Bed-Cross Knight. In** the *Faerie **Queene,*** Book i.

16. **conventicle.** Meeting-house of a dissenting sect.

17. **As ever,** etc. The last line (with "my" changed to "his") of Milton's Sonnet on Having Arrived at the Age of **Twenty-three.**

contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest skeptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolized by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honor and love. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonize best with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like the hero of Homer,[18] he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination, but he was not fascinated. He listened to the song of the Sirens, yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe,[19] but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendor, the solemnity, and the romance which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on Prelacy[20] with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music

18. **hero of Homer.** Ulysses, who had his ears stopped while his ship passed within sound of the Sirens' song.

19. **Circe.** An enchantress visited by Ulysses and his crew (In the *Odyssey).*

20. **Prelacy.** Clerical authority in the Established Church. In 1641 Milton published two tracts, one called "of Prelatical Episcopacy," the other "Reason of Church Government Urged against Prelaty."

in the *Penseroso*,[21] which was published about the same time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than anything else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed, in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello.[22] His heart relents, but his hand is firm. He does nought in hate, but all in honor. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendor, still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a forsworn king and a persecuting hierarchy,[23] he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against ship-money[24] and the Star Chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the

21. **Penseroso.** "I I Fenseroso" was published in 1634. Macaulay refers to the lines:

> But let my due feet never fail
> To walk the studious cloister's pale,
> And love the high embowed roof,
> With antique windows massy-proof,
> And storied windows richly dight,
> Casting" a dim religious light.
> There let the pealing organ blow
> To the full-voiced quire below,
> In service with and anthems clear,
> As may with sweetness, through mine **ear,**
> Dissolve me into ecstasies,
> And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

22. **Othello.** Who killed his wife Desdemona because he believed her guilty. For the kiss, see *Othello,* V, ii, line 16.

23. **hierarchy.** Body of church officials.

24. **ship-money.** A tax levied by the King upon certain commodities. In 1637 those in opposition to it resisted payment in the court of the "Star Chamber."

objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the King and imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem,[25] who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

> Oh, ye mistook! Ye should have snatched his wand
> And bound him fast. Without the rod reversed,
> And backward mutters of dissevering power,
> We cannot free the lady that sits here
> Bound in strong fetters fixed and motionless.

To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle, but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf.[26] With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system,[27] in that sublime treatise[28] which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand

25. h**is** own poem. The masque of *Comus.* The quotation that follows is from lines 815-819.

26. **Presbyterian wolf.** Macaulay borrows this from Dryden, who, in his allegory of "The Hind and the Panther," had represented the Presbyterian sect as a wolf.

27. **licensing system.** The system by which freedom of printing-was limited through a kind of censorship.

28. **that sublime treatise.** The *AreoQagitico.* published 1644.

and as frontlets between his eyes.[29] His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply-seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded,—the servile worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear when the outworks had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice **and** the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapors, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide. He attacked the prevailing systems of education. His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility.

> Nitor in adversum; nee me, qui cætera, vincit
> Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi.so

29. sign upon his hand, etc. See *Deuteronomy* 11:18.

30. **Nitor in advertum,** etc From a speech of Phoebus Apollo, the sun-god, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* Book ii: "I struggle against the adverse movement, nor does the force which overcomes everything else avail against me, as I am borne out against the **revolving sphere."**

It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should in our time be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of eloth-of-gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the *Paradise Lost h*as the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies." We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyze the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the *Areopagitica* and the nervous[31] rhetoric of the *Iconoclast,*[32] and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the *Treatise of Reformation* and the *Animadversions on the Remonstrant.* But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic[33] of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hang-

31. **nervous.** Vigorous (based on the old meaning of "nerves," sinews).

32. **the Iconoclast.** Published in 1649, with the Greek title *Eikonoklastes;* a defense of the execution of Charles I. The two tracts next mentioned were published **in 1641.**

33. **this relic.** See note on page 242.

ings,—that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day,—that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word, the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it, the earnestness with which we should endeavor to console him—if indeed such a spirit should need consolation—for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues, the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Elwood,[34] the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them, nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolizing either the living or the dead; and we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism.[35] But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription[36] of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize; and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers

34. **Elwood.** A young Quaker who, in Milton's days of blindness **and** retirement, took lodglng-s near him, and came to read to him every afternoon.

35. **Boswellism.** Excessive hero-worship, such as Boswell showed for Dr. Johnson.

36. lmaffe and superscription. See *Matthew* 22:20.

which the Virgin Martyr[37] of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils not only by superior bloom and sweetness but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. Tkey are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot, without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he labored for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

37. Virgin Martyr. In a play of the same name, based on early martyr legends; published 1622.

THOMAS CARLYLE

[THOMAS CARLYLE was born in the village of Ecclefechan, Scotland, In 1795, and was educated at the University of Edinburgh. After various experiments as teacher, law student, etc., he took up the study of German, and began to write on German subjects for magazines and reviews; later he became a regular contributor to the *Edinburgh Review,* the leading critical journal of the period. From 1837 he lived in London, where he continued his literary work and also did some lecturing,—his most notable lectures being those on "Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History," published in 1841. Meantime he had made his reputation as a moral philosopher and a historian by *Sartor Resartus* (1833-35) and *The French Revolution* (1837). In later years, while continuing his historical studies, Carlyle devoted himself increasingly to social and political questions, concerning which he held pessimistic, or at any rate somber, views which rather impaired than increased his public influence. Saddened also very greatly by the death of his wife, Jane Welsh Carlyle, in 1866, he spent his last period in much solitude and gloom; at the same time he maintained warm friendships, of which one of the most noteworthy was that with Emerson in America. He died in 1881. Carlyle's style often repels rather than attracts readers, through its eccentricity and crabbedness, which have won for it the satiric term "Carlylese"; and it is never commended as a model for other writers; at its best, however, it rises to splendid eloquence, and everywhere brings the reader close to the deep feeling and thinking of one of the strongest personalities of nineteenth century literature.]

SHAKESPEARE[1]

AS DANTE, the Italian man, was sent into our world to embody musically the religion of the Middle Ages, the religion of our modern Europe, its inner life; so Shakespeare, we may say, embodies for us the outer life of our Europe as

1. This is the second part of the third lecture in *Heroes and Hero-Worship,* the real subject of which is Great Men; the first part is devoted to Dante, the chief poet of the Middle Ages, whom Carlyle finely contrasts with Shakespeare, the latter representing the splendid but more worldly spirit of the Renaissance era.

developed then, its chivalries, courtesies, humors, ambitions, what practical way of thinking, acting, looking at the world, men **then had.** As in Homer we may still construe old Greece; so in Shakespeare and Dante, after thousands of years, what our modern Europe was, in faith and in practice, will still be legible. Dante has given us the faith or soul; Shakespeare, in a not less noble way, has given us the practice or body. This latter also we were to have; a man was sent for it, the man Shakespeare. Just when that chivalry way of life had reached its last finish, and was on the point of breaking down into slow or swift dissolution, as we now see it everywhere, this other sovereign poet, with his seeing eye, with his perennial singing voice, was sent to take note of it, to give long-enduring record of it. Two fit men: Dante, deep, fierce as the central fire of the world; Shakespeare, wide, placid, far-seeing as the sun, the upper light of the world. Italy produced the one world-voice; we English had the honor of producing the other.

Curious enough how, as if it were by mere accident, this man came to us. I think always, so great, quiet, complete and self-sufficing is this Shakespeare, had the Warwickshire Squire[2] not prosecuted him for deer-stealing, we had perhaps never heard of him as a poet! The woods and skies, the rustic life of man in Stratford there, had been enough for this man! But indeed that strange outbudding of our whole English existence, which we call the Elizabethan Era, did not it too come as of its own accord? The "Tree Igdrasil"[3] buds and withers by its own laws,—too deep for our scanning. Yet it does bud and wither, and every bough and leaf of it is there, by fixed eternal laws; not a Sir Thomas Lucy but comes at the hour fit for him.

2. Warwickshire Squire. Sir Thomas Lucy, who, according to a widespread but unhistoric tradition, was responsible for the young Shakespeare's leaving Stratford after an escapade of deer-poaching on the Lucy estate.

3. **Tree Igdrasil.** Carlyle alludes to a Scandinavian myth which he had explained in the first lecture: "All life is figured by them as a tree. Igdrasil, the ash-tree of existence, has its roots deep **down** in the kingdoms of Hela or Death; its trunk reaches up heaven-high, spreads its boughs over the whole universe."

Curious, I say, and not sufficiently considered: how everything does cooperate with all; not a leaf rotting on the highway but is indissoluble portion of solar and stellar systems; no thought, word, or act of man but has sprung withal out of all men, and works sooner or later, recognizably or irrecognizably, on all men! It is all a tree: circulation of sap and influences, mutual communication of every minutest leaf with the lowest talon of a root, with every other greatest and minutest portion of the whole. The Tree Igdrasil, that has its roots down in the kingdoms of Hela and Death, and whose boughs overspread the highest Heaven!—

In some sense it may be said that this glorious Elizabethan Era with its Shakespeare, as the outcome and flowerage of all which had preceded it, is itself attributable to the Catholicism of the Middle Ages. The Christian faith, which was the theme of Dante's song, had produced this practical life which Shakespeare was to sing. For religion then, as it now and always is, was the soul of practice; the primary vital fact in men's life. And remark here, as rather curious, that Middle-Age Catholicism was abolished, so far as Acts of Parliament could abolish it, before Shakespeare, the noblest product of it, made his appearance. He did make his appearance nevertheless. Nature at her own time, with Catholicism or what else might be necessary, sent him forth; taking small thought of Acts of Parliament. King Henrys, Queen Elizabeths go their way; and Nature too goes hers. Acts of Parliament, on the whole, are small, notwithstanding the noise they make. What Act of Parliament, debate at St. Stephen's,[4] on the hustings[5] or elsewhere, was it that brought this Shakespeare into being? No dining at Freemasons' Tavern,[6] opening subscription lists, selling of shares, and infinite other jangling and true or false

4. **St. Stephen's.** St. Stephen's Hall, used by the House of Commons.

5. **hustings.** A platform for the delivery of campaign speeches.

6. **Freemasons' Tavern.** A popular London meeting-place.

endeavoring! This Elizabethan Era, and all its nobleness **and** blessedness, came without proclamation, preparation of ours. Priceless Shakespeare was a free gift of Nature; given altogether silently;—received altogether silently, as if it had been a thing of little account. And yet, very literally, it is a priceless thing. One should look at that side of matters too.

Of this Shakespeare of ours, perhaps the opinion one sometimes hears a little idolatrously expressed is, in fact, the right one; I think the best judgment not of this country only, but of Europe at large, is slowly pointing to the conclusion that Shakespeare is the chief of all poets hitherto, the greatest intellect who, in our recorded world, has left record of himself in the way of literature. On the whole, I know not such a power of vision, such a faculty of thought, if we take all the characters of it, in any other man. Such a calmness of depth; placid joyous strength; all things imaged in that great soul of his so true and clear, as in a tranquil unfathomable sea! It has been said that in the constructing of Shakespeare's dramas there is, apart from all otlier "faculties" as they are called, an understanding manifested, equal to that in Bacon's *Novum Organum.*[7] That is true; and it is not a truth that strikes everyone. It would become more apparent if we tried, any of us for himself, how, out of Shakespeare's dramatic materials, *we* could fashion such a result! The built house seems all so fit,—every way as it should be, as if it came there by its own law and the nature of things,—we forget the rude disorderly quarry it was shaped from. The very perfection of the house, as if Nature herself had made it, hides the builder's merit. Perfect, more perfect than any other man, we may call Shakespeare in this: he discerns, knows as by instinct, what condition he works under, what his materials are, what his own force and its relation to them is. It is not a transitory glance of insight that will suffice; it is deliberate illumination of the whole matter; it is a calmly *seeing* eye; a

7. **Novum Organum.** See the note on Bacon, page 19.

great intellect, in short How a man, of some wide tiling that he has witnessed, will construct a narrative, what kind of picture and delineation he will give of it, is the best measure you could get of what intellect is in the man. Which circumstance is vital and shall stand prominent; which unessential, fit to be suppressed; where is the true beginning, the true sequence and ending? To find out this, you task the whole force of insight that is in the man. He must *understand* the thing; according *to* the depth of his understanding will the fitness of his answer be. You will try him so. Does like join itself to like; does the spirit of method stir in that confusion, so that its embroilment becomes order? Can the man say, *Fiat lux,* Let there be light; and out of chaos make a world? Precisely as there is *light* in himself, will he accomplish this.

Or indeed, we may say again, it is in what I called portrait-painting, delineating of men and things, especially of men, that Shakespeare is great. All the greatness of the man comes out decisively here. It is unexampled, I think, that calm creative perspicacity of Shakespeare. The thing he looks at reveals not this or that face of it, but its inmost heart, and generic secret:[8] it dissolves itself as in light before him, so that he discerns the perfect structure of it. Creative, we said: poetic creation, what is this too but *seeing* the thing sufficiently? The word that will describe the thing follows of itself from such clear intense sight of the thing. And is not Shakespeare's morality, his valor, candor, tolerance, truthfulness, his whole victorious strength and greatness, which can triumph over such obstructions, visible there too? Great as the world! No twisted, poor convex-concave mirror, reflecting all objects with its own convexities and concavities; a perfectly *level* mirror;—that is to say withal, if we will understand it, a man justly related to all things and men, a good man. It is truly a lordly spectacle how this great soul takes in all kinds of men and objects, a Falstaff, an Othello, a Juliet, a

8. ***generic* secret.** Secret of its nature.

Coriolanus, sets them all forth to us in their round completeness; loving, just, the equal brother of all. *Novum Organum,* and all the intellect you will find in Bacon, is of a quite secondary order; earthly, material, poor in comparison with this. Among modern men, one finds, in strictness, almost nothing of the same rank. Goethe alone, since the days of Shakespeare, reminds me of it. Of him too you say that he *saw* the object; you may say what he himself says of Shakespeare: "His characters are like watches with dial-plates of transparent crystal; they show you the hour like others, and the inward mechanism also is all visible."

The seeing eye! It is this that discloses the inner harmony of things; what Nature meant, what musical idea Nature has wrapped up in these often rough embodiments. Something she did mean. To the seeing eye that something were discernible. Are they base, miserable things'? You can laugh over them, you can weep over them; you can in some way or other genially relate yourself to them;—you can, at lowest, hold your peace about them, turn away your own and others' face from them, till the hour come for practically exterminating and extinguishing them! At bottom, it is the poet's first gift, as it is all men's, that he have intellect enough. He will be a poet if he have: a poet in word; or failing that, perhaps still better, a poet in act. Whether he write at all; and if so, whether in prose or in verse, will depend on accidents: who knows on what extremely trivial accidents,—perhaps on his having had a singing-master, on his being taught to sing in his boyhood! But the faculty which enables him to discern the inner heart of things, and the harmony that dwells there (for whatsoever exists has a harmony in the heart of it, or it would not hold together and exist), is not the result of habits or accidents, but the gift of Nature herself; the primary outfit for a heroic man in what sort soever. To the Poet, as to every other, we say, first of all, *See.* If you cannot do that, it is of no use to keep stringing rhymes together, jingling sensibilities against

each other, and *name* yourself a Poet; there is no hope for you. If you can, there is, in prose or verse, in action or speculation, all manner of hope. The crabbed old schoolmaster[9] used to ask, when they brought him a new pupil, "But are ye sure he's *not a dunce?"* Why, really one might ask the same thing, in regard to every man proposed for whatsoever function; and consider it as the one inquiry needful: Are ye sure he's not a dunce? There is, in this world, no other entirely fatal person.

For, in fact, I say the degree of vision that dwells in a man is a correct measure of the man. If called to define Shakespeare's faculty, I should say superiority of intellect, and think I had included all under that. What indeed are faculties? We talk of faculties as if they were distinct, things separable; as if a man had intellect, imagination, fancy, etc., as he has hands, feet, and arms. That is a capital error. Then again, we hear of a man's "intellectual nature," and of his "moral nature," as if these again were divisible and existed apart. Necessities of language do perhaps prescribe such forms of utterance; we must speak, I am aware, in that way, if we are to speak at all. But words ought not to harden into things for us. It seems to me, our apprehension of this matter is, for most part, radically falsified thereby. We ought to know withal, and to keep forever in mind, that these divisions are at bottom but *names;* that man's spiritual nature, the vital force which dwells in him, is essentially one and indivisible; that what we call imagination, fancy, understanding, and so forth, are but different figures of the same power of insight, all indissolubly connected with each other, physiognomically[10] related; that if we knew one of them, we might know all of them. Morality itself, what we call the moral quality of a man, what is this but another *side* of the one vital force

9. **old schoolmaster.** A real person, mentioned in one of Carlyle's letters to Emerson.

10. physiogrnomically. With reference to the **signs** of inner character.

whereby he is and works? All that a man does is physiognomical of him. You may see how a man would fight, by the way in which he sings; his courage, or want of courage, is visible in the word he utters, in the opinion he has formed, no less than in the stroke he strikes. He is *one;* and preaches the same self abroad in all these ways.

Without hands a man might have feet, and could still walk; but, consider it,—without morality, intellect were impossible for him; a thoroughly immoral man could not know anything at all To know a thing, what we call knowing, a man must first *love* the thing, sympathize with it: that is, be *virtuously* related to it. If he have not the justice to put down his own selfishness at every turn, the courage to stand by the dangerous-true at every turn, how shall he know? His virtues, all of them, will lie recorded in his knowledge. Nature, with her truth, remains to the bad, to the selfish and pusillanimous, forever a sealed book: what such can know of Nature is mean, superficial, small; for the uses of the day merely. But does not the very fox know something of Nature? Exactly so: it knows where the geese lodge! The human Reynard,[11] very frequent everywhere in the world, what more does he know but this and the like of this? Nay, it should be considered too, that if the fox had not a certain vulpine[12] morality, he could not even know where the geese were, or get at the geese! If he spent his time in splenetic atrabiliar reflections on his own misery, his ill usage by Nature, Fortune, and other foxes, and so forth, and had not courage, promptitude, practicality, and other suitable vulpine gifts and graces, he would catch no geese. We may say of the fox too, that his morality and insight are of the same dimensions; different faces of the same internal unity of vulpine life! These things are worth stating; for the contrary of them acts with manifold very baleful perversion, in this time: what limitations, modifications they require, your own candor will supply.

11. Reynard. Fox.
12. vulpine. Pertaining to a fox.

If I say, therefore, that Shakespeare is the greatest of intellects, I have said all concerning him. But there is more in Shakespeare's intellect than we have yet seen. It is what I call an unconscious intellect; there is more virtue in it than he himself is aware of. Novalis[13] beautifully remarks of him, that those dramas of his are products of Nature too, deep as Nature herself. I find a great truth in this saying. Shakespeare's art is not artifice; the noblest worth of it is not there by plan or precontrivance. It grows up from the deeps of Nature, through this noble sincere soul, who lis a voice of Nature. The latest generations of men will find new meanings in Shakespeare, new elucidations of their own human being; "new harmonies with the infinite structure of the Universe; concurrences with later ideas, affinities with the higher powers and senses of man."[14] This well deserves meditating. It is Nature's highest reward to a true simple great soul, that he get thus to be *a part of herself.* Such a man's works, whatsoever he with utmost conscious exertion and forethought shall accomplish, grow up withal unconsciously, from the unknown deeps in him; as the oak tree grows from the earth's bosom, as the mountains and waters shape themselves; with a symmetry grounded on Nature's own laws, conformable to all truth whatsoever. How much in Shakespeare lies hid,—his sorrows, his silent struggles known to himself; much that was not known at all, not speakable at all: like roots, like sap and forces working underground! Speech is great; but silence is greater.

Withal the joyful tranquillity of this man is notable. I will not blame Dante for his misery: it is as battle without victory; but true battle,—the first, indispensable thing. Yet I call Shakespeare greater than Dante, in that he fought truly, and did conquer. Doubt it not, he had his own sorrows: those Son-

13. Novalis. The pen-name of a German writer, Friedrich **von** Hardenberg.

14. **new harmonies,** etc. Also from Novalis.

nets[15] of his will even testify expressly in what deep waters he had waded, and swum struggling for his life;—as what man like him ever failed to have to do? It seems to me a heedless notion, our common one, that he sat like a bird on the bough, and sang forth, free and offhand, never knowing the troubles of other men. Not so; with no man is it so. How could a man travel forward from rustic deer-poaching to such tragedy-writing, and not fall in with sorrows by the way? Or, still better, how could a man delineate a Hamlet, a Coriolanus, a Macbeth, so many suffering heroic hearts, if his own heroic heart had never suffered? And now, in contrast with all this, observe his mirthfulness, his genuine overflowing love of laughter! You would say, in no point does he *exaggerate* but only in laughter! Fiery objurgations, words that pierce and burn, are to be found in Shakespeare; yet he is always in measure here; never what Johnson would remark as a specially "good hater." But his laughter seems to pour from him in floods; he heaps all manner of ridiculous nicknames on the butt he is bantering, tumbles and tosses him in all sorts of horse-play; you would say, with his whole heart laughs. And then, if not always the finest, it is always a genial laughter. Not at mere weakness, at misery or poverty; never. No man who *can* laugh, what we call laughing, will laugh at these things. It is some poor character only *desiring to* laugh, and have the credit of wit, that does so. Laughter means sympathy; good laughter is not "crackling of thorns under the pot."[16] Even at stupidity and pretension this Shakespeare does not laugh otherwise than genially. Dogberry and Verges[17] tickle our very hearts, and we dismiss them covered with explosions of laughter; but we like the poor fellows only the

15. **Sonnets.** Shakespeare's Sonnets contain allusions, apparently personal, to unhappy experiences in friendship and love, **though** nothing" certain is known of the extent to which they cure based on fact.

16. **crackling of thorns,** etc. See *Ecclesiastes* 7:6.

17. **Dogberry and** ***Verge**.** Clownish constables in *Much Ado about Nothing.*

better for our laughing, and hope they will get on well there, and continue Presidents of the City-watch. Such laughter, like sunshine on the deep sea, is very beautiful to me.

We have no room to speak of Shakespeare's individual works; though perhaps there is much still waiting to be said on that head. Had we, for instance, all his plays reviewed as *Hamlet,* in *Wilhelm Meister,*[18] is! A thing which might, one day, be done. August Wilhelm Schlegel[19] has a remark on his historical plays, *Henry Fifth* and the others, which is worth remembering. He calls them a kind of national epic. Marlborough,[20] you recollect, said, he knew no English history but what he had learned from Shakespeare. There are really, if we look to it, few as memorable histories. The great salient points are admirably seized; all rounds itself off, into a kind of rhythmic coherence; it is, as Schlegel says, *epic;*—as indeed all delineation by a great thinker will be. There are right beautiful things in those pieces, which indeed together form one beautiful thing. That battle of Agincourt[21] strikes me as one of the most perfect things, in its sort, we anywhere have of Shakespeare's. The description of the two hosts: the worn-out, jaded English; the dread hour, big with destiny, when the battle shall begin; and then that deathless valor: "Ye good yeomen, whose limbs were made in England!"[22] There is a noble patriotism in it,—far other than the "indifference" you sometimes hear ascribed to Shakespeare. A true English heart breathes, calm and strong, through the whole business; not boisterous, protrusive; all the better for that. There is a sound in it like the ring of steel. This man too had a right stroke in him, had it come to that!

But I will say, of Shakespeare's works generally, that we

18. **Wilhelm Meister.** A work by Goethe (1795-6).

19. **SolileffeL** A German critic who did much to interest **his** countrymen in Shakespeare.

20. **Marlborough.** Duke and famous general (died 1722).

21. **Battle of Agincourt.** In the fourth act of *Henry Fifth.*

22. Ye good **yeomen,** etc. This speech (from Act III, scene i) was made at Harfleur.

have no full impress of him there, even as full as we have of many men. His works are so many windows, through which we see a glimpse of the world that was in him. All his works seem, comparatively speaking, cursory, imperfect, written under cramping circumstances; giving only here and there a note of the full utterance of the man. Passages there are that come upon you like splendor out of heaven; bursts of radiance, illuminating the very heart of the thing: you say, "That is *true,* spoken once and forever; wheresoever and whensoever there is an open human soul, that will be recognized as true!" Such bursts, however, make us feel that the surrounding matter is not radiant; that it is, in part, temporary, conventional. Alas, Shakespeare had to write for the Globe Playhouse: his great soul had to crush itself, as it could, into that and no other mould. It was with him, then, as it is with us all. No man works save under conditions. The sculptor cannot set his own free thought before us; but his thought as he could translate it into the stone that was given, with the tools that were given. *Disjecta membra*[23] are all that we find of any poet, or of any man.

Whoever looks intelligently at this Shakespeare may recognize that he too was a *Prophet,*[2]* in his way; of an insight analogous to the prophetic, though he took it up in another strain. Nature seemed to this man also divine; unspeakable, deep as Tophet,[25] high as Heaven: "We are such stuff as dreams are made of !" That scroll[26] in Westminster Abbey, which few read with understanding, is of the depth of any seer. But the man sang; did not preach, except musically. We called Dante the melodious priest of Middle-Age Catholicism. May we not call Shakespeare the still more melodious

23. **Disjecta membra.** Scattered bits.

24. **a Prophet. .**Carlyle refers to the preceding: lecture, in which he had discussed Mahomet as prophet-hero.

25. **Tophet.** Hell (originally, a place of pagan sacrifice, near Jerusalem).

26. **That scrollL** In the hand of Shakespeare, on his monument in the Abbey, bearing the words just quoted from *The Tempest*

priest of a *true* Catholicism, the "Universal Church" of the future and of all times? No narrow superstition, harsh asceticism, intolerance, fanatical fierceness or perversion: a revelation, so far as it goes, that such a thousandfold hidden beauty and divineness dwells in all Nature; which let all men worship as they can! We may say without offense, that there rises a kind of universal psalm out of this Shakespeare too, not unfit to make itself heard among the still more sacred Psalms. Not in disharmony with these, if we understood them, but in harmony! I cannot call this Shakespeare a "skeptic," as some do; his indifference to the creeds and theological quarrels of his time misleading them. No: neither unpatriotic, though he says little about his patriotism, nor skeptic, though he says little about his faith. Such "indifference" was the fruit of his greatness withal: his whole heart was in his own grand sphere of worship (we may call it such); these other controversies, vitally important to other men, were not vital to him.

But call it worship, call it what you will, is it not a right glorious thing, and set of things, this that Shakespeare has brought us? For myself, I feel that there is actually a kind of sacredness in the fact of such a man being sent into this earth. Is he not an eye to us all, a blessed heaven-sent bringer of light? And, at bottom, was it not perhaps far better that this Shakespeare, everyway an unconscious man, was conscious of no heavenly message? He did not feel, like Mahomet, because he saw into those internal splendors, that he specially was the "Prophet of God"; and was he not greater than Mahomet in that? Greater; and also, if we compute strictly, as we did in Dante's case, more successful. It was intrinsically an error that notion of Mahomet's, of his supreme prophethood, and has come down to us inextricably involved in error to this day, dragging along with it such a coil[27] of fables, impurities, intolerances, as makes it a questionable step for me here and now to say, as I have done, that Mahomet was a true

27. coiL Tumultuous mass.

speaker at all, and not rather an ambitious charlatan, perversity, and simulacrum;[28] no speaker, but a babbler! Even in Arabia, as I compute, Mahomet will have exhausted himself and become obsolete, while this Shakespeare, this Dante may still be young; while this Shakespeare may still pretend to be a priest of mankind, of Arabia as of other places, for unlimited periods to come!

Compared with any speaker or singer one knows, even with Æschylus or Homer, why should he not, for veracity and universality, last like them? He is sincere as they; reaches deep down like them, to the universal and perennial. But as for Mahomet, I think it had been belter for him *not to* be so conscious! Alas, poor Mahomet; all that he was conscious of was a mere error; a futility and triviality,—as indeed such ever is. The truly great in him too was the unconscious: that he was a wild Arab lion in the desert, and did speak out with that great thunder-voice of his, not by words which he *thought* to be great* but by actions, by feelings, by a history which *were* great! His Koran[29] has become a stupid piece of prolix absurdity; we do not believe, like him, that God wrote that! The great man here too, as always, is a force of Nature; whatsoever is truly great in him springs up from the inarticulate deeps.

Well: this is our poor Warwickshire peasant, who rose to be manager of a playhouse, so that he could live without begging; whom the Earl of Southampton[30] cast some kind glances on; whom Sir Thomas Lucy, many thanks to him, was for sending to the treadmill! We did not account him a god, like Odin,[31] while he dwelt with us;—on which point there were much to be said. But I will say rather, or repeat: in spite of the sad state hero-worship now lies in, consider what this Shakespeare

28. **simulacrum.** Image, imitation.
29. **Koran.** The sacred book of Mohammedism.
30. **Earl of Southampton.** See note on page 432.
31. **Odin. The Norse** deity, discussed in the first lecture **of this series.**

has actually become among us. Which Englishman we ever made, in this land of ours, which million of Englishmen, would we not give up rather than the Stratford peasant? There is no regiment of highest dignitaries that we would sell him for. He is the grandest thing we have yet done. For our honor among foreign nations, as an ornament to our English household, what item is there that we would not surrender rather than him? Consider now, if they asked us, Will you give up your Indian Empire or your Shakespeare, you English; never have had any Indian Empire, or never have had any Shakespeare? Really it were a grave question. Official persons would answer doubtless in official language; but we, for our part too, should not we be forced to answer: Indian Empire, or no Indian Empire; we cannot do without Shakespeare! Indian Empire will go, at any rate, some day; but this Shakespeare does not go, he lasts forever with us; we cannot give up our Shakespeare!

Nay, apart from spiritualities, and considering him merely as a real, marketable, tangibly useful possession. England, before long, this island of ours, will hold but a small fraction of tbe English: in America, in New Holland,[32] east and west to the very antipodes, there will be a Saxondom covering great spaces of the globe. And now, what is it that can keep all these together into virtually one nation, so that they do not fall out and fight, but live at peace, in brotherlike intercourse, helping one another? This is justly regarded as the greatest practical problem, the thing all manner of sovereignties and governments are here to accomplish: what is it that will accomplish this? Acts of Parliament, administrative prime ministers cannot. America is parted from us, so far as Parliament could part it. Call it not fantastic, for there is much reality in it: here, I say, is an English king, whom no time or chance, Parliament or combination of Parliaments, can dethrone! This King Shakespeare, does not he shine, in

32. new Holland. The old name of Australia.

crowned sovereignty, over us all, as the noblest, gentlest, yet strongest of rallying-signs; indestructible; really more valuable in that point of view than any other means or appliance whatsoever? We can fancy him as radiant aloft over all the nations of Englishmen, a thousand years hence. From Paramatta,[33] from New York, wheresoever, under what sort of Parish Constable soever, English men and women are, they will say to one another: "Yes, this Shakespeare is ours; we produced him, we speak and think by him; we are of one blood and kind with him." The most common-sense politician, too, if he pleases, may think of that.

Yes, truly, it is a great thing for a nation that it get an articulate voice: that it produce a man who will speak forth melodiously what the heart of it means! Italy, for example, poor Italy lies dismembered,[34] scattered asunder, not appearing in any protocol or treaty as a unity at all; yet the noble Italy is actually *one:* Italy produced its Dante; Italy can speak! The Czar of all the Russias, he is strong, with so many bayonets, Cossacks, and cannons, and does a great feat in keeping such a tract of earth politically together; but he cannot yet speak. Something great in him, but it is a dumb greatness.[35] He has had no voice of genius, to be heard of all men and times. He must learn to speak. He is a great dumb monster hitherto. His cannons and Cossacks will all have rusted into nonentity, while that Dante's voice is still audible. The nation that has a Dante is bound together as no dumb Russia can be.—We must here end what we had to say of the *Hero-Poet.*

33. Paramatta. In New South Wales.

34. Italy lies dismembered. Written, of course, before the unification of modern Italy.

35. a dumb greatness. Written, again, before Russia had made her spirit known to the world through her great writers of the era of Tolstoy.

LABOR[1]

THERE is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works: in idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Work, never so Mammonish,[2] mean, *is* in communication with Nature ,, the real desire to get work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to Nature's appointments and regulations, which are truth.

The latest gospel in this world is, Know thy work and do it. "Know thyself": long enough has that poor "self" of thine tormented thee; thou wilt never get to "know" it, I believe! Think it not thy business, this of knowing thyself; thou art an unknowable individual: know what thou canst work at; and work at it, like a Hercules! That will be thy better plan.

It has been written, "an endless significance lies in work"; a man perfects himself by working. Foul jungles are cleared away, fair seedfields rise instead, and stately cities; and withal the man himself first ceases to be a jungle and foul unwholesome desert thereby. Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of labor, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony, the instant he sets himself to work! Doubt, Desire, Sorrow, Remorse, Indignation, Despair itself, all these like hell-dogs lie beleaguering the soul of the poor day-worker, as of every man; but he bends himself with free valor against his task, and all these are stilled, all these shrink murmuring far off into their caves. The man is now a man. The blessed glow of labor in him, is it not as purifying fire, wherein all poison is burnt up, and of sour smoke itself there is made bright blessed flame!

Destiny, on the whole, has no other way of cultivating us. A

1. This is chapter 11 of the third book of *Past and Present,* published in 1843, a work primarily devoted to the new economic and social problems of modern industrial England. It sets forth one of Carlyle's chief doctrines.

2. **Mammonish.** Sordid (see *Matthew* 6:24).

formless chaos, once set it *revolving*[3] grows round and ever rounder; ranges itself, by mere force of gravity, into strata, spherical courses; is no longer a chaos, but a round compacted world. What would become of the earth, did she cease to revolve? In the poor old earth, so long as she revolves, all inequalities, irregularities disperse themselves; all irregularities are incessantly becoming regular. Hast thou looked on the potter's wheel,—one of the venerablest objects; old as the Prophet" Ezekiel[4] and far older? Rude lumps of clay, how they spin themselves up, by mere quick whirling, into beautiful circular dishes. And fancy the most assiduous Potter, but without his wheel; reduced to make dishes or rather amorphous[5] botches, by mere kneading and baking! Even such a potter were destiny, with a human soul that would rest and lie at ease, that would not work and spin! Of an idle unrevolving man the kindest destiny, like the most assiduous potter without wheel, can bake and knead nothing other than a botch; let her spend on him what expensive coloring, what gilding and enamelling she will, he is but a botch. Not a dish; no, a bulging, kneaded, crooked, shambling, squint-cornered, amorphous botch,—a mere enamelled vessel of dishonor! Let the idle think of this.

Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life-purpose; he has found it, and will follow it! How, as a free-flowing channel, dug and torn by noble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever-deepening river there, it runs and flows; —draining off the sour festering water gradually from the root of the remotest grass-blade; making, instead of pestilential swamp, a green fruitful meadow with its clear-flowing stream. How blessed for the meadow itself, let the stream and *its* value

3. once set it revolving". An allusion to the "nebular hypothesis" respecting- the forming of planets.

4. old as the Prophet Ezekiel. Not referred to, however, by Ezekiel; Carlyle may have been thinking of Jeremiah (18: 3).

5. amorphous. Formless.

be great or small! Labor is life: from the inmost heart of the worker rises his god-given force, the sacred celestial Life-essence breathed into him by Almighty God; from his inmost heart awakens him to all nobleness,—to all knowledge, "self-knowledge" and much else, so soon as work fitly begins. Knowledge? The knowledge that will hold good in working, cleave thou to that; for Nature herself accredits that, says Yea to that. Properly thou hast no other knowledge but what thou hast got by working: the rest is yet all a hypothesis of knowledge; a thing to be argued of in schools, a thing floating in the clouds, in endless logic-vortices, till we try it and fix it. "Doubt, of whatever kind, can be ended by action alone."

And again, hast thou valued patience, courage, perseverance, openness to light; readiness to own thyself mistaken, to do better next time? All these, all virtues, in wrestling with the dim brute powers of fact, in ordering of thy fellows in such wrestle, there and elsewhere not at all, thou wilt continually learn. Set down a brave Sir Christopher[6] in the middle of black ruined stone-heaps, of foolish unarchitectural bishops, red-tape officials, idle Nell Gwyn Defenders of the Faith;[7] and see whether he will ever raise a Paul's Cathedral out of all that, yea or no! Rough, rude, contradictory are all things and persons, from the mutinous masons and Irish hodmen, up to the idle Nell Gwyn Defenders, to blustering red-tape officials, foolish unarchitectural bishops. All these tilings and persons are there not for Christopher's sake and his cathedral's; they are there for their own sake mainly! Christopher will have to conquer and constrain all these,—if he be able. All these are against him. Equitable Nature herself, who carries her mathematics and architectonics not on the face of her, but deep in

6. **Sir Christopher.** Christopher Wren, architect of the new St. Paul's Cathedral, built 1675-1710.

7. **idle Nell Gwyn Defenders.** Such as Charles the Second, in whose reign Wren began his work. One of the titles of the English king is "Defender of the Faith," but Charles was notoriously frivolous and immoral; one of his favorites was the actress Nell Gwyn.

the hidden heart of her,—Nature herself is but partially for him; will be wholly against him, if he constrain her not! His very money, where is it to come from? The pious munificence of England lies far-scattered, distant, unable to speak, and say, "I am here";—must be spoken to before it can speak. Pious munificence, and all help, is so silent, invisible, like the gods; impediment, contradictions manifold are so loud and near! 0 brave Sir Christopher, trust thou in those notwithstanding, and front all these; understand all these; by valiant patience, noble effort, insight, by man's strength, vanquish and compel all these,—and, on the whole, strike down victoriously the last topstone of that Paul's edifice; thy monument for certain centuries, the stamp "Great Man" impressed very legibly on Portland stone there!

Yes, all manner of help, and pious response from men or Nature, is always what we call silent; cannot speak or come to light, till it be seen, till it be spoken to. Every noble work is at first "impossible." In very truth, for every noble work the possibilities will lie diffused through immensity; inarticulate, undiscoverable except to faith. Like Gideon[8] thou shalt spread out thy fleece at the door of thy tent; see whether under the wide arch of Heaven there be any bounteous moisture, or none. Thy heart and life-purpose shall be as a miraculous Gideon's fleece, spread out in silent appeal to Heaven: and from the kind immensities, what from the poor unkind localities and town and country parishes there never could, blessed dew-moisture to suffice thee shall have fallen!

Work is of a religious nature:—work is of a *brave* nature; which it is the aim of all religion to be. All work of man is as the swimmer's: a waste ocean threatens to devour him; if he front it not bravely, it will keep its word. By incessant wise defiance of it, lusty rebuke and buffet of it, behold how it loyally supports him, bears him as its conqueror along. "It

S. Gideon. See *Judges* 6:36-40.

is so," says Goethe, "with all things that man undertakes in this world."

Brave sea-captain, Norse sea-king,—Columbus, my hero, royalest sea-king of all! it is no friendly environment this of thine, in the waste deep waters; around thee mutinous discouraged souls, behind thee disgrace and ruin, before thee the unpenetrated veil of night. Brother, these wild water-mountains, bounding from their deep bases (ten miles deep, I am told), are not entirely there on thy behalf! Meseems *they* have other work than floating thee forward:—and the huge winds, that sweep from Ursa Major[9] to the tropics and equators, dancing their giant-waltz through the kingdoms of chaos and immensity, they care little about filling rightly or filling wrongly the small shoulder-of-mutton sails in this cockle-skiff of thine! Thou art not among articulate-speaking friends, my brother; thou art among immeasurable dumb monsters, tumbling, howling wide as the world here. Secret, far off, invisible to all hearts but thine, there lies a help in them; see how thou wilt get at that. Patiently thou wilt wait until the mad Southwester spends itself, saving thyself by dextrous science of defense, the while: valiantly, with swift decision, wilt thou strike in, when the favoring East, the Possible, springs up. Mutiny of men thou wilt sternly repress; weakness, despondency, thou wilt cheerfully encourage: thou wilt swallow down complaint, unreason, weariness, weakness of others and thyself;—how much wilt thou swallow down! There shall be a depth of silence in thee, deeper than this sea, which is but ten miles deep: a silence unsoundable; known to God only. Thou shalt be a great man. Yes, my world-soldier, thou of the World Marine-service,—thou wilt have to be *greater* than this tumultous unmeasured world here round thee is; thou, in thy strong soul, as with wrestler's arms, shalt embrace it, harness it down; and make it bear thee on,—to new Americas, or whither God wills!

9. Ursa Major. The constellation of the Great Bear.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

[JOHN HENRY NEWMAN was born at London in 1801, and was educated at Oxford University. He became a clergyman of the English Church, and distinguished himself as a preacher at St. Mary's Church, Oxford. In 1845 he entered the Roman Catholic Church, of which he soon became one of the leading representatives in England, and in 1879 was made Cardinal. Meantime he had done much writing on theological and educational subjects, and had served as Rector of the Catholic University of Dublin. In connection with the founding of the university, and during his rectorship, he delivered a number of lectures which were later published under the titles *The Idea of a University* and *Lectures on University Subjects,*—Newman's chief non-religious works. He died in 1890.]

THE EDUCATED MAN[1]

A UNIVERSITY is not a birthplace of poets or of immortal authors, of founders of schools, leaders of colonies, or conquerors of nations. It does not promise a generation of Aristotles or Newtons, of Napoleons or Washingtons, of Raphaels or Shakespeares, though such miracles of nature it has before now contained within its precincts. Nor is it content on the other hand with forming the critic or the experimentalist, the economist or the engineer, though such too it includes within its scope. But a university training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at

1. This and the two following selections are not, of course, essays in the usual sense of the term, but brief passages from Newman's University lectures. They are justly famous for the breadth and fineness of their descriptive characterization, and may be interestingly compared with the "character" essays of the seventeenth century (pages 49-58 above).

facilitating the exercise of political power, **and** refining the intercourse of private life. It is the education which gives a man a clear conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, a truth in developing them, an eloquence in expressing them, and a force in urging them. It teaches him to see things as they are, to get right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. It prepares him to fill any post with credit, and to master any subject with facility. It shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own, how to influence them, how to come to an understanding with them, how to bear with them. He is at home in any society, he has common ground with every class; he knows when to speak and when to be silent; he is able to converse, he is able to listen; he can ask a question pertinently, and gain a lesson seasonably, when he has nothing to impart himself; he is ever ready, yet never in the way; he is a pleasant companion, and a comrade you can depend upon; he knows when to be serious and when to trifle, and he has a sure tact which enables him to trifle with gracefulness and to be serious with effect. He has the repose of mind which lives in itself, while it lives in the world, and which has resources for its happiness at home when it cannot go abroad. He has a gift which serves him in public, and supports him in retirement, without which good fortune is but vulgar, and with which failure and disappointment have a charm.

THE GENTLEMAN

It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. This description is both refined and, as far as it goes, accurate. He is mainly occupied in merely removing the obstacles which hinder the free and unembarrassed action of those about him, and he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. Fis bene-

fits may be considered as parallel to what are called comforts or conveniences in arrangements of a personal nature; like an easy chair or a good fire, which do their part in dispelling cold and fatigue, though nature provides both means of rest and animal heat without them. The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast;—all clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make every one at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unreasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favors while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mlstakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a long-sighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend. He has too much good sense to be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain because it is inevitable, to bereavement because it is irreparable, and to death because it is his destiny. If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, perhaps, but less educated minds, who, like blunt weapons, tear and hack, instead of cutting clean, who mistake the point in

argument, waste their strength on trifles, misconceive their adversary, and leave the question more involved than they find it. He may be right or wrong in his opinion, but he is too clear-headed to be unjust; he is as simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive. Nowhere shall we find greater candor, consideration, indulgence: he throws himself into the minds of his opponents, he accounts for their mistakes. He knows the weakness of human reason as well as its strength, its province and its limits. If he be an unbeliever, he will be too profound and large-minded to ridicule religion or to act against it; he is too wise to be a dogmatist or fanatic in his infidelity. He respects piety and devotion; he even supports institutions as venerable, beautiful, or useful, to which he does not assent; he honors the ministers of religion, and it contents him to decline its mysteries without assailing or denouncing them. He is a friend of religious toleration, and that not only because his philosophy has taught him to look on all forms of faith with an impartial eye, but also from the gentleness' and effeminacy of feeling which is the attendant on civilization.

THE GREAT WRITER

A great author is not one who merely has a +*copia verborum,* whether in prose or verse, and can, as it were, turn on at his will any number of splendid phrases and swelling sentences; but he is one who has something to say and knows how to say it. I do not claim for him, as such, any great depth of thought, or breadth of view, or philosophy, or sagacity, or knowledge of human nature, or experience of human life, though these additional gifts he may have, and the more he has of them the greater he is; but I ascribe to him, as his characteristic gift, in a large sense the faculty of expression. He is master of the two-fold Logos, the thought and the word, distinct, but inseparable from each other. He may, if so be, elaborate his compositions, or he may pour out his improvisations, but in

1. copia verborum- Abundant supply of words.

either case he has but one aim, which he keeps steadily before him, and is conscientious and single-minded in fulfilling. That aim is to give forth what he has within him; and from his very earnestness it comes to pass that, whatever be the splendor of his diction or the harmony of his periods, he has with him the charm of an incommunicable simplicity. Whatever be his subject, high or low, he treats it suitably and for its own sake. If he is a poet, "nil molitur *inepte.*"[2] If he is an orator, then too he speaks, not only "distincte" and "splendide," but also "apte."[3] His page is the lucid mirror of his mind and life—

> Quo fit, ut omnis
> Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
> Vita senis.[4]

He writes passionately, because he feels keenly; forcibly because he conceives vividly; he sees too clearly to be vague; he is too serious to be otiose;[5] he can analyze his subject, and therefore he is rich; he embraces it as a whole and in its parts, and therefore he is consistent; he has a firm hold of it, and therefore he is luminous. When his imagination wells up, it overflows in ornament; when his heart is touched, it thrills along his verse. He always has the right word for the right idea, and never a word too much. If he is brief, it is because few words suffice; when he is lavish of them, still each word has its mark, and aids, not embarrasses, the vigorous march of his elocution. He expresses what all feel, but all cannot say; and his sayings pass into proverbs among his people, and his phrases become household words and idioms of their daily speech, which is tesselated with the rich fragments of his language, as we see in foreign lands the marbles of Roman grandeur worked into the walls and pavements of modern palaces.

2. **nil molituff Inepte.** "He attempts nothing foolishly" (from Horace's "Art of Poetry").

3. **apte.** Fittingly.

4. **Quo fit,** etc. "Whence it happens that the whole life of the old man lies open to view as if displayed on a votive tablet" (from Horace's *Satires,* II, i).

5. **otiose.** Negligent.

JOHN RUSKIN

[JOHN RUSK IN was born at London in 1819, the son of a wealthy merchant. During and after his college years he traveled largely, for the sake of his health, and at the same time studied drawing and the history of painting, thus developing- his interest in nature and in art. In order to introduce to the public the work of the artist Turner, whom he passionately admired, he began the composition of *Modem Painters,* which made his reputation as critic and essayist when he was still a young man. Later his art classes for workingmen led him to take a deep interest in, labor and other economic problems, to which he devoted the greater part of his attention after 1860. He founded the Guild of St George, an experiment for rural living- on principles Intended as a protest against the tendencies of modern civilization, and to this and other social objects gave away the greater part of his fortune. In his later years he became Insane. He died at his beautiful home at Coniston, in the Lake country, in 1900. Though somewhat crabbed and controversial in his thinking, Buskin's sincerity, unselfishness, and eloquence won him faithful friends and disciples in every walk of life; and even those who had no sympathy with his opinions were forced to recognize him as one of the masters of English prose.]

ST. MARK'S CATHEDRAL[1]

I WISH that the reader, before I bring him into St. Mark's Place, would imagine himself for a little time in a quiet English cathedral town,[2] and walk with me to the west front of its cathedral. Let us go together up the more retired street,

1. Ruskin wrote no separate and distinctive essays (see Introduction, p. 15). The present selection is a section of *The Stones of Venice,* 1853), a work devoted to the medieval art and architecture of Venice. It is the most famous, if not the finest, example of Ruskin's descriptive prose. The cathedral of St. Mark's, built at Venice in the 10th and 11th centuries, is the chief surviving specimen of the Byzantine school of architecture, and one of the most beautiful structures in the world. Ruskin heightens the description by a comparison with an English Gothic cathedral—equally admired in its own kind.

2. English cathedral town. Some elements of the description that follows have been identified with Canterbury, others with Salisbury. Evidently Ruskin meant it to be typical rather than specific.

at the end of which we can see the pinnacles of one of the towers, and then through the low gray gateway, with its battlemented top and small latticed window in the center, into the inner private-looking road or close, where nothing goes in but the carts of the tradesmen who supply the bishop and the chapter, and where there are little shaven grass-plots, fenced in by neat rails, before old-fashioned groups of somewhat diminutive and excessively trim houses, with little oriel and bay windows jutting out here and there, and deep wooden cornices and eaves painted cream color and white, and small porches to their doors in the shape of cockle-shells, or little, crooked, thick, indescribable wooden gables warped a little on one side; and so forward till we come to larger houses, also old-fashioned, but of red brick, and with gardens behind them, and fruit walls, which show here and there, among the nectarines, the vestiges of an old cloister arch or shaft, and looking in front on the cathedral square itself, laid out in rigid divisions of smooth grass and gravel walk, yet not uncheerful, especially on the sunny side, where the canons' children are walking with their nursery-maids. And so, taking care not to tread on the grass, we will *go* along the straight walk to the west front, and there stand for a time, looking up at its deep-pointed porches and the dark places between their pillars where there were statues once, and where the fragments, here and there, of a stately figure are still left, which has in it the likeness of a king, perhaps indeed a king on earth, perhaps a saintly king long ago in heaven; and so higher and higher up to the great mouldering wall of rugged sculpture and confused arcades, shattered, and gray, and grisly with heads of dragons and mocking fiends, worn by the rain and swirling winds into yet unseemlier shape, and colored on their stony scales by the deep russet-orange lichen, melancholy gold; and so, higher still, to the bleak towers, so far above that the eye loses itself among the bosses of their traceries, though they are rude and strong, and only sees like a drift of eddying

black points, now closing, now scattering, and now settling suddenly into invisible places among the bosses and flowers, the crowd of restless birds that fill the whole square with that strange clangor of theirs, so harsh and yet so soothing, like the cries of birds on a solitary coast between the cliffs and sea.

Think for a little while of that scene, and the meaning of all its small formalisms, mixed with its serene sublimity. Estimate its secluded, continuous, drowsy felicities, and its evidence of the sense and steady performance of such kind of duties as can be regulated by the cathedral clock; and weigh the influence of those dark towers on all who have passed through the lonely square at their feet for centuries, and on all who have seen them rising far away over the wooded plain, or catching on their square masses the last rays of the sunset, when the city at their feet was indicated only by the mist at the bend of the river. And then let us quiokly recollect that we are in Venice, and land at the extremity of the Calla Lunga[3] San Moise which may be considered as there answering to the secluded street that led us to our English cathedral gateway.

We find ourselves in a paved alley, some seven feet wide where it is widest, full of people, and resonant with cries of itinerant salesmen,—a shriek in their beginning, and dying away into a kind of brazen ringing, all the worse for its confinement between the high houses of the passage along which we have to make our way. Overhead, an inextricable confusion of rugged shutters, and iron balconies and chimney flues, pushed out on brackets to save room, and arched windows with projecting sills of Istrian stone, and gleams of green leaves here and there where a fig-tree branch escapes over a lower wall from some inner cortile,[4] leading the eye up to the narrow stream of blue sky high over all. On each side, a row of

3. Calla Lunsga. Long avenue.
4. cox-til* Court.

shops, as densely set as may be, occupying, in fact, intervals between the square stone shafts, about eight feet high, which carry the first floors: intervals of which one is narrow and serves as a door; the other is, in the more respectable shops, wainscoted to the height of the counter and glazed above, but in those of the poorer tradesmen left open to the ground, and the wares laid on benches and tables in the open air, the light in all cases entering at the front only, and fading away in a few feet from the threshold into a gloom which the eye from without cannot penetrate, but which is generally broken by a ray or two from a feeble lamp at the back of the shop, suspended before a print of the Virgin. The less pious shopkeeper sometimes leaves his lamp unlighted, and is contented with a penny print; the more religious one has his print colored and set in a little shrine with a gilded or figured fringe, with perhaps a faded flower or two on each side, and his lamp burning brilliantly. Here, at the fruiterer's where the dark-green water-melons are heaped upon the counter like cannon balls, the Madonna has a tabernacle of fresh laurel leaves; but the pewterer next door has let his lamp out, and there is nothing to be seen in his shop but the dull gleam of the studded patterns on the copper pans, hanging from his roof in the darkness. Next comes a "Vendita Frittole e Liquori,"[5] where the Virgin, enthroned in a very humble manner beside a tallow candle on a back shelf, pre* sides over certain ambrosial morsels of a nature too ambiguous to be defined or enumerated. But a few steps farther on, at the regular wine-shop of the calle, where we are offered "Vino Nostrani a Soldi 28.32,"[6] the Madonna is in great glory, enthroned above ten or a dozen large red casks of three-year-old vintage, and flanked by goodly ranks of bottles of Maraschino,[7] and two crimson lamps; and for the evening, when

5. Vendita Frittole, etc. "Fritters and Liquors for Sale.'*
6. Vino Nostrani, etc. "Native Wines, at 28-82 halfpennies,"
7. Maraschino. A cherry cordial.

the gondoliers will come to drink out, under her auspices, the money they have gained during the day, she will have a whole chandelier.

A yard or two farther, we pass the hostelry of the Black Eagle, and, glancing as we pass through the square door of marble, deeply moulded, in the outer wall, we see the shadows of its pergola of vines resting on an ancient well, with a pointed shield carved on its side; and so presently emerge on the bridge and Campo San Moise, whence to the entrance into St. Mark's Place, called the Bocca di Piazza (mouth of the square), the Venetian character is nearly destroyed, first by the frightful facade of San Moise, which we will pause at another time to examine, and then by the modernizing of the shops as they near the piazza, and the mingling with the lower Venetian populace of lounging groups of English and Austrians. We will push fast through them into the shadow of the pillars at the end of the "Bocca di Piazza," and then we forget them all; for between those pillars there opens a great light, and, in the midst of it, as we advance slowly, the vast tower of St. Mark seems to lift itself visibly forth from the level field of chequered stones; and, on each side, the countless arches prolong themselves into ranged symmetry, as if the rugged and irregular houses that pressed together above us in the dark alley had been struck back into sudden obedience and lovely order, and all their rude casements and broken walls had been transformed into arches charged with goodly sculpture, and fluted shafts of delicate stone.

And well may they fall back, for beyond those troops of ordered arches there rises a vision out of the earth, and all the great square seems to have opened from it in a kind of awe, that we may see it far away;—a multitude of pillars and white domes, clustered into a long low pyramid of colored light; a treasure-heap, it seems, partly of gold, and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic, and beset with sculp-

ture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory,—sculpture fantastic and involved, of palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes; and in the midst of it the solemn forms of angels, sceptred, and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them, interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded back among the branches of Eden, when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago. And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep-green serpentine spotted with flakes of snow, and marbles, that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like, "their bluest veins to kiss"[8]—the shadow, as it steals back from them, revealing line after line of azure undulation, as a receding tide leaves the waved sand; their capitals rich with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, and mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the Cross; and above them, in the broad archivolts,[9] a continuous chain of language and of life —angels, and the signs of heaven,[10] and the labors of men, each in its appointed season upon the earth; and above these another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers,—a confusion of delight, amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses[11] are seen blazing in their breadth of golden strength, and the St. Mark's Lion,[12]

8. **their 'bluett veins,** etc. From Shakespeare's *Antony & Cleopatra,* II, v.

9. **archivolts.** Ornamental moldings of arches.

10. **signs of heaven.** The "signs of the zodiac."

11. **Greek horses.** These bronze horses were sent *to* Venice from Constantinople in 1204, after its capture in the Fourth Crusade. Napoleon took them to Paris in 1797, but they were restored in 1815.

12. **St. Mark's Lion.** In ancient Christian art the lion was the symbol of the evangelist St. Mark. Hence its figure forms an Important element in the decoration of the cathedral dedicated to him.

lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers on the Lido shore[13] had been frost-bound before they fell, and the sea-nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethyst.

Between that grim cathedral of England and this, what an interval! There is a type of it in the very birds that haunt them; for, instead of the restless crowd, hoarse-voiced and sable-winged, drifting on the bleak upper air, the St. Mark's porches are full of doves, that nestle among the marble foliage, and mingle the soft iridescence of their living plumes, changing at every motion, with the tints, hardly less lovely, that have stood unchanged for seven hundred years.

And what effect has this splendor on those who pass beneath it? You may walk from sunrise to sunset, to and fro, before the gateway of St. Mark's, and you will not see an eye lifted to it, nor a countenance brightened by it. Priest and layman, soldier and civilian, rich and poor, pass by it alike regardlessly. Up to the very recesses of the porches, the meanest tradesmen of the city push their counters; nay, the foundations of its pillars are themselves the seats—not "of them that sell doves"[14] for sacrifice, but of the vendors of toys and caricatures. Round the whole square in front of the church there is almost a continuous line of cafes, where the idle Venetians of the middle classes lounge, and read empty journals; in its center the Austrian bands play during the time of vespers, their martial music jarring with the organ notes,—the march drowning the *miserere,*[15] and the sullen crowd

13. Lido shore. At one of the entrances to the harbor of Venice. This passage Ruskin did not wish to have taken as mere rhetorical embellishment; he believed that "the Venetians . . . were always influenced in their choice of guiding: lines of sculpture by their sense of the action of wind or sea."

14. them that sell doves. See *Matthew* 21:12.

15. **miserere.** The chanted 51st Psalm, whose first **word is** *miserere* in Latin.

thickening round them,—a crowd, which, if it had its will, would stiletto every soldier[16] that pipes to it. And in the recesses of the porches, all day long, knots of men of the lowest classes, unemployed and listless, lie basking in the sun like lizards; and unregarded children—every heavy glance of their young eyes full of desperation and stony depravity, and their throats hoarse with cursing—gamble, and fight, and snarl, and sleep, hour after hour, clashing their bruised centesimi[17] upon the marble ledges of the church porch. And the images of Christ and His angels look down upon it continually.

THE WHITE-THORN BLOSSOM[1]

For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone,
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come.
Arise, O my fair one, my dove,
And come.*

DENMARK HILL, 1st May, 1871.

MY FRONDS:

It has been asked of me, very justly, why I have hitherto written to you of things you were likely little to care for, in words which it was difficult for you to understand. I have no fear but that you will one day understand all my poor words—the saddest of them perhaps too well. But I have great fear

16. **stiletto every soldier.** Because the soldiers represented the tyranny of Austrian rule over the city at this time.

17. **centeslmi.** Coppers (each the hundredth of a lira).

1. This is the fifth Letter of the collection called *Fors Clavigero,* made up of letters (96 in all) addressed "to the Workmen and Laborers of Great Britain," which Ruskin issued in various forms between 1871 and 1884. He was fond of poetically symbolic titles; this one, suggested by the date, probably signifies the simple beauties which rural England was losing" through the coming of the day of machinery and coal. The letter is one of the most vivid and representative, if exaggerated, of Ruskin's protests against the tendencies of the age. The closing passage resulted in the forming of St. George Guild (see biographical note above), which undertook the development of certain tracts of land in Worcestershire and elsewhere, and to which Ruskin personally contributed some 8000 pounds.

2. **For** 10, etc Prom the *Song of Solomon,* 2:11-13.

that you may never come to understand these written above, which are a part of a king's love-song, in one sweet May, of many long since gone. I fear that for you the wild winter's rain may never pass, the flowers never appear on the earth; that for you no bird may ever sing; for you no perfect Love arise and fulfill your life in peace. "And why not for us as for others?" Will you answer me so and take my fear for you as an insult? Nay, it is no insult; nor am I happier than you. For me the birds do not sing, nor ever will. But they would for you, if you cared to have it so. When I told you that you would never understand that love-song, I meant only that you would not desire to understand it.

Are you again indignant with me? Do you think, though you should labor and grieve and be trodden down in dishonor,, all your days, at least you can keep that one joy of Love, and that one honor of Home? Had you, indeed, kept that, you had kept all. But no men yet, in the history of the race, have lost it so piteously. In many a country and many an age, women have been compelled to labor for their husbands' wealth or bread; but never until now were they so homeless as to say, like the poor Samaritan,[3] "I have no husband." Women of every country and people have sustained without complaint the labor of fellowship; for the women of the latter days in England it has been reserved to claim the privilege of isolation.[4]

This, then, is the end of your universal education and civilization, and contempt of the ignorance of the Middle Ages and of their chivalry. Not only do you declare yourselves too indolent to labor for daughters and wives, and too poor to support them, but you have made the neglected and distracted creatures hold it for an honor to be independent of you and shriek for some hold of the mattock for themselves. Believe

3. **poor Samaritan.** See *John* 4:17.

4. **privilege of isolation.** That is, of economic (and ultimately political) independence. Ruskin did not believe in this tendency of modern society.

it or not, as you may, there has not been so low a level of thought reached by any race since they grew to be male and female out of star-fish, or duckweed, or whatever else they have been made from by natural selection[5]—according to modern science.

That modern science, also, economic and of other kinds, has reached its climax at last. For it seems to be the appointed function of the nineteenth century to exhibit in all things the elect pattern of perfect Folly, for a warning to the farthest future. Thus the statement of principle which I quoted to you in my last letter, from the circular of the Emigration Society, that it is overproduction which is the cause of distress, is accurately the most foolish thing, not only hitherto ever said by men, but which it is possible for men ever to say, respecting their own business. It is a kind of opposite pole (or negative acme of mortal stupidity) to Newton's discovery of gravitation as an acme of mortal wisdom: as no wise being on earth will ever be able to make such another wise discovery, so no foolish being on earth will ever be capable of saying such another foolish thing, through all the ages.

And the same crisis has been exactly reached by our natural science and by our art. It has several times chanced to me, since I began these papers, to have the exact thing shown or brought to me that I wanted for illustration, just in time; and it happened that, on the very day on which I published my last letter, I had to go to the Kensington Museum,[6] and there I saw the most perfectly and roundly ill-done thing which as yet in my whole life I ever saw produced by art. It had a tablet on front of it, bearing this inscription:—

"Statue in black and white marble, a Newfoundland Dog

5. **natural •election.** The process, according to one doctrine of biological evolution, by which successive species are developed. Ruskin is sneering at the mechanical or materialistic tendencies of this recent doctrine.

6. **Kensington Museum.** A very large museum of science and **art,** in southwestern London, opened in 1857. **It** is **now** called **officially the "Victoria and Albert** Museum."

standing on a Serpent, which rests on a marble cushion, the pedestal ornamented with *pietra dura* fruits in relief.—*English, Present Century.* No. I . "

It was so very right for me, the Kensington people having been good enough to number it " I , " the thing itself being almost incredible in its one-ness, and, indeed, such a punctual accent over the iota[7] of Miscreation, so absolutely and exquisitely miscreant,[8] that I am not myself capable of conceiving a Number Two or Three, or any rivalship or association with it whatsoever. The extremity of its unvirtue consisted, observe, mainly in the quantity of instruction which was abused in it. It showed that the persons who produced it had seen everything, and practiced everything; and misunderstood everything they saw, and misapplied everything they did. They had seen Roman work, and Florentine work, and Byzantine work, and Gothic work; and misunderstanding of everything had passed through them as the mud does through earthworms, and here at last was their worm-cast of a Production.

But the second chance that came to me that day was more significant still. From the Kensington Museum I went to an afternoon tea, at a house where I was sure to meet some nice people. And among the first I met was an old friend who had been hearing some lectures on botany at the Kensington Museum, and been delighted by them. She is the kind of person who gets good out of everything, and she was quite right in being delighted; besides that, as I found by her account of them, the lectures were really interesting, and pleasantly given. She had expected botany to be dull, and had not found it so, and "had learned so much." On hearing this I proceeded naturally to inquire what; for my idea of her was that before she went to the lectures at all she had known more botany than she was likely to learn by them.

7. Iota. The Greek letter i.

8. miscreant. Properly, disbelieving; Ruskin here plays on its **resemblance to** "miscreate."

So she told me that she had learned first of all that "there were seven sorts of leaves." Now I have always a great suspicion of the number Seven; because, when I wrote *The Seven Lamps of Architecture,*[9] it required all the ingenuity I was master of to prevent them from becoming Eight, or even Nine, on my hands. So I thought to myself that it would be very charming if there were only seven sorts of leaves, but that, perhaps, if one looked the woods and forests of the world carefully through, it was just possible that one might discover as many as eight sorts; and then where would my friend's new knowledge of botany be? So I said, "That was very pretty; but what more?" Then my friend told me that the lecturer said "the object of his lectures would be entirely accomplished if he could convince his hearers that there was no such thing as a flower."[10] Now in that sentence you have the most perfect and admirable summary given you of the general temper and purposes of modern science. It gives lectures on Botany, of which the object is to show that there is no such thing as a Flower; on Humanity, to show that there is no such thing as a Man; and on Theology, to show there is no such thing as a God. No such thing as a Man, but only a Mechanism; no such thing as a God, but only a series of Forces. The two faiths are essentially one: if you feel yourself to ,be only a machine, constructed to be a regulator of minor machinery, you will put your statue of such science on your Holborn Viaduct,[11] and necessarily recognize only major machinery as regulating yOU.

I must explain the real meaning to you, however, of that

9. **Seven** Lamps. One of Ruskin's early works, in which he discussed the principles of architecture under the topics. Sacrifice, Truth, Power, Beauty, Life, Memory, Obedience.

10. **no such** thing[1] **as a flower.** In the following: letter Ruskin said, "I find I did much injustice to the botanical lecturer, as well as to my friend; . . . but having: some botanical notions myself, which I am vain of, I wanted the lecturer's to be wrong."

11. Holborn Viaduct. An elevated structure in central London where Hig:h Holborn, one of the principal streets, crosses several thoroughfares which are on a lower level. The statue was erected in 1869 when the Viaduct was opened.

saying of the botanical lecturer, for it has a wide bearing. Some fifty years ago the poet Goethe discovered that all the parts of plants had a kind of common nature and would change into each other. Now, this was a true discovery and a notable one; and you will find that, in fact, all plants are composed of essentially two parts—the leaf and root; one loving the light, the other darkness; one liking to be clean, the other to be dirty; one liking to grow for the most part up, the other for the most part down; and each having faculties and purposes of its own. But the pure one, which loves the light, has, above all things the purpose of being married to another leaf, and having child-leaves and children's children of leaves, to make the earth fair forever. And when the leaves marry, they put on wedding-robes, and are more glorious than Solomon in all his glory, and they have feasts of honey; and we call them "Flowers."

In a certain sense, therefore, you see the botanical lecturer was quite right. There are no such tilings of Flowers—there are only gladdened Leaves. Nay, farther than this, there may be a dignity in the less happy but unwithering leaf, which is, in some sort, better than the brief lily in its bloom; which the great poets always knew well, Chaucer[12] before Goethe, and the writer of the First Psalm[13] before Chaucer. The botanical lecturer was, in a deeper sense than he knew, right.

But in the deepest sense of all, the botanical lecturer was, to the extremity of wrongness, wrong; for leaf and root and fruit exist, all of them, only that there may be flowers. He disregarded the life and passion of the creature, which were its essence. Had he looked for these, he would have recognized that in the thought of Nature herself there is in a plant nothing else but its flowers.

12. Chancer. Ruskin alludes to the poem of "The Flower and the Leaf," formerly attributed to Chaucer (see note on page 217 above).

13. F*iest* **Psalm.** In which verse 3 speaks of the leaf that "shall not wither."

Now, in exactly the sense that modern science declares there is no such thing as a Flower, it has declared there is no such thing as a Man, but only a transitional form of Ascidians[14] and apes. It may or may not be true—it is not of the smallest consequence whether it be or not. The real fact is that, rightly seen with human eyes, there is nothing else but Man; that all animals and beings beside him are only made that they may change into him; that the world truly exists only in the presence of Man, acts only in the passion of Man. The essence of Light is in his eyes, the center of Force in his soul, the pertinence of Action[15] in his deeds. And all true science—which my Savoyard guide rightly scorned me when he thought I had not—all true science is *savoir vivre.*[16] But all your modern science is the contrary of that. It is *savoir mourir.*

And of its very discoveries, such as they are, it cannot make use.

That telegraphic signaling was a discovery, and conceivably, some day, may be a useful one. And there was some excuse for your being a little proud when, about last sixth of April[17] (Cœur de Lion's death-day, and Albert Durer's), you knotted a copper wire all the way to Bombay, and flashed a message along it, and back. But what was the message, and what the answer? Is India the better for what you said to her?[18]

14. **Ascidiana.** A rudimentary class of marine animals.

15. **pertinence of Action,** Ruskin supplied this definition of the phrase as he used it: "action which pertains or properly belongs to the agent and aim, as opposed to accidental and impertinent action."

16. **savoir vivre.** Knowing how to live. In the preceding letter Ruskin had told of a Savoyard guide, who, when "I had fatigued and provoked him with less cheerful views of the world than his own, . . . would fall back to my servant behind me, and console himself with a shrug of the shoulders, and a whispered, Le pauvre enfant, il ne salt pas vivre!' " ("Poor child, he does not know how to live.") *Savoir mourir* is "knowing how to die."

17. **last sixth of April.** That is, in 1870. **Coeur de Lion** is Richard I of England ("the Lion-Hearted"); **Albert Diirer** a Bavarian painter who died 1528.

18. **Is India the better,** etc. Henry David Thoreau, the American essayist who shared Ruskin's distrust of civilization, had said something very similar to this in his *Walden* (published 1854): "We are in great haste to construct a magnetic telegraph from Maine to Texas; but Maine and Texas, it may be, have nothing important to communicate."

Are you the better for what she replied? If not, you have only wasted an all-around-the-world's length of copper wire—which is, indeed, about the sum of your doing. If you had had perchance, two words of common sense to say, though you had taken wearisome time and trouble to send them,—though you had written them slowly in gold, and sealed them with a hundred seals, and sent a squadron of ships of the line to carry the scroll, and the squadron had fought its way round the Cape of Good Hope, through a year of storms, with loss of all its ships but one,—the two words of common sense would have been worth the carriage, and more. But you have not anything like so much as that to say, either to India or to any other place.

You think it a great triumph to make the sun draw brown landscapes for you. That was also a discovery, and some day may be useful. But the sun had drawn landscapes before for you, not in brown, but in green and blue and all imaginable colors, here in England. Not one of you ever looked at them then; not one of you cares for the loss of them now, when you have shut the sun out with smoke, so that he can draw nothing more except brown blots through a hole in a box. There was a rocky valley between Buxton and Bakewell,[19] once upon a time, divine as the Vale of Tempe;[20] you might have seen the gods there morning and evening—Apollo and all the sweet Muses of the light—walking in fair procession on the lawns of it and to and fro among the pinnacles of its crags. You cared neither for gods nor grass, but for cash (which you did not know the way to get); you thought you could get it by what the *Times* calls "Railroad Enterprise." You Enterprised a Railroad through the valley—you blasted rocks away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone, and the gods with it; and now every fool in Buxton

19. **Buxton and Bakewell.** In the region known as the Derbyshire Peak, southeast of Manchester.
20. **Tempe.** A beautiful valley below Mount Olympus, in Greece.

can be at Bakewell in half an hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange—you Fools Everywhere.

To talk at a distance, when you have nothing to say though you were ever so near; to go fast from this place to that, with nothing to do either at one or the other:—these are powers certainly. Much more, power of increased Production, if you indeed had got it, would be something to boast of. But are you so entirely sure that you *have* got it—that the mortal disease of plenty, and afflictive affluence of good things, are all you have to dread?

Observe. A man and a woman, with their children, properly trained, are able easily to cultivate as much ground as will feed them, to build as much wall and roof as will lodge them, and to spin and weave as much cloth as will clothe them. They can all be perfectly happy and healthy in doing this. Supposing that they invent machinery which will build, plow, thresh, cook, and weave, and that they have none of these things any more to do, but may read, or play croquet or cricket, all day long, I believe myself that they will neither be 60 good nor so happy as without the machines. But I waive my belief in this matter for the time. I will assume that they become more refined and moral persons, and that idleness is in future to be the mother of all good. But observe, I repeat, the power of your machine is only in enabling them to be idle. It will not enable them to live better than they did before, nor to live in greater numbers. Get your heads quite clear on this matter. Out of so much ground only so much living is to be got, with or without machinery. You may set a million of steam-plows to work on an acre, if you like—out of that acre only a given number of grains of corn will grow, scratch or scorch it as you will. So that the question is not at all whether, by having more machines, more of you can live. No machines will increase the possibilities of life. Suppose, for instance, you could get the oxen in your

plow driven by a goblin, who would ask for no pay, not even a "ream bowl[21] (you have nearly managed to get it driven by an iron goblin, as it is); well, your furrow will take no more seeds than if you had held the stilts yourself. But instead of holding them you sit, I presume, on a bank beside the field, under an eglantine,—watch the goblin at his work, and read poetry. Meantime, your wife in the house has also got a goblin to weave and wash for her. And she is lying on the sofa, reading poetry.

Now, as I said, I don't believe you would be happier so, but I am willing to believe it; only, since you are already such brave mechanists, show me at least one or two places where you *are* happier. Let me see one small example of approach to this seraphic condition. *I* can show *you* examples, millions of them, of happy people made happy by their own industry. Farm after farm I can show you, in Bavaria, Switzerland, the Tyrol, and such other places, where men and women are perfectly happy and good, without any iron servants. Show me, therefore, some English family, with its fiery familiar, happier than these. Or bring me—for I am not inconvincible by any kind of evidence—bring me the testimony of an English family or two to their increased felicity. Or if you cannot do so much as that, can you convince even themselves of it? They *are* perhaps happy, if only they knew how happy they were; Virgil[22] thought so, long ago, of simple rustics; but you hear at present your steam-propelled rustics are crying out that they are anything else than happy, and that they regard their boasted progress "in the light of a monstrous Sham."[2S]

21. a cream bowl. Traditionally set out to reward goblins for their tasks. Cf. Milton's "L.'Allegro":

> Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
> To earn his cream-bowl duly set.

22. **Virgil.** An allusion to a fine in the *Georgia* (Book ii): "O fortunatos nimium," etc. ("O too happy farmers, if only they knew their blessings," etc.)

23. **in the light of,** etc. In the preceding letter Buskin **had** quoted this from **a** circular of the "Cooperative Colonization Company."

I must tell you one little thing, however, which greatly perplexes my imagination of the relieved plowman sitting under his rose-bower, reading poetry. I have told it you before,[24] indeed, but I forget where. There was really a great festivity, and expression of satisfaction in the new order of things, down in Cumberland, a little while ago; some first of May, I think it was, a country festival such as the old heathens, who had no iron servants, used to keep with piping and dancing. So I thought, from the liberated country people—their work all done for them by goblins—we should have some extraordinary piping and dancing. But there was no dancing at all, and they could not even provide their own piping. They had their goblin *to* pipe for them. They walked in procession after their steam-plow, and their steam-plow whistled to them occasionally in the most melodious manner it could. Which seemed to me, indeed, a return to more than Arcadian simplicity; for in old Arcadia[25] plow-boys truly whistled as they went, for want of thought;[26] whereas here was verily a large company walking without thought, but not having any more even the capacity of doing their own whistling.

But next, as to the inside of the house. Before you got your power-looms, a woman could always make herself a chemise and petticoat of bright and pretty appearance. I have seen a Bavarian peasant-woman at church in Munich, looking a much grander creature, and more beautifully dressed, than any of the crossed and embroidered angels in Hesse's high-art frescoes[27] (which happened to be just above her, so

24. **told It you "before*** In the work called *The Crown of Wild Olive* Ruskin had told, with horror, how some Cumberland country people employed **a** whistling: steam-plow to make the music for their festival.

25. **old Arcadia.** Reputed to be the special home of rural simplicity and happiness.

26. **for want of thought.** A quotation from a familiar couplet of Dryden's, in the poem "Cymon and Iphigenia":

He trudg'd along, unknowing what he sought,
And whistled as he went, for want of thought.

27. **Heme's . . . frescoes.** Hesse was a painter of 'the **"Duseeldorf** school" (1798-1863).

that I could look from one to the other). Well, here you are, in England, served by household demons, with five hundred fingers at least, weaving, for one that used to weave in the days of Minerva, You ought to be able to show me five hundred dresses for one that used to be; tidiness ought to have become five-hundredfold tidier; tapestry should be increased into *cinque-cento-fo\&*[28] iridescence of tapestry. Not only your peasant-girl ought to be lying on the sofa, reading poetry, but she ought to have in her wardrobe five hundred petticoats instead of one. Is that, indeed, your issue? or are you only on a curiously crooked way to it?

It is just possible, indeed, that you may not have been allowed to get the use of the goblin's work—that other people may have got the use of it, and you none; because, perhaps, you have not been able to evoke goblins wholly for your own personal service, but have been borrowing goblins from the capitalist, and paying interest in the "position of William,"[29] on ghostly self-going planes.[30] But suppose you had laid by capital enough, yourselves, to hire all the demons in the world —nay all that are inside of it; are you quite sure you know what you might best set them to work at, and what "useful things" you should command them to make for you? I told you, last month, that no economist going (whether by steam or ghost) knew what are useful things and what are not. Very

28. **cinque-cento-fold.** Five-hundred-fold; perhaps with incidental allusion to the "cinque-cento" period of Italian art—the 16th century.

29. **"position of "William."** This is a reference to the first letter of the series, in which Ruskin had illustrated what he thought to be the fallacious character of the existing- business system, as follows: "James makes a plane, lends it to William on 1st January for a year. William gives him a plank for the loan of it, wears it out, and makes another for James which he gives him on 31st December. On 1st January he again borrows the new one; and the arrangement is repeated continuously. The position of William therefore is, that he makes a plane every 31st December, lends it to James till the next day, and pays James a plank annually for the privilege of lending it to him on that evening."

30. g**hostly self-going planes.** That is, steam-planes, propelled by the "goblin" steam.

few of you know, yourselves, except by bitter experience of the want of them. And no demons, either of iron or spirit, can ever make them.

There are three material things, not only useful but essential to life. No one "knows how to live" till he has got them.

These are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

There are three immaterial things, not only useful, but essential to life. No one knows how to live till he has got them also.

These are Admiration, Hope, and Love.[31]

Admiration—the power of discerning and taking delight in what is beautiful in visible Form and lovely in human Character, and, necessarily, striving to produce what is beautiful in form and to become what is lovely in character.

Hope—the recognition, by true foresight, of better things to be reached hereafter, whether by ourselves or others; necessarily issuing in the straightforward and undisappointable effort to advance, according to our proper power, the gaining of them.

Love—both of family and neighbor, faithful and satisfied.

These are the six chiefly useful things to be got by Political Economy, when it *has* become a science. I will briefly tell you what modern Political Economy—the great *savoir mourir* —is doing with them.

The first three, I said, are Pure Air, Water, and Earth.

Heaven gives you the main elements of these. You can destroy them at your pleasure, or increase, almost without limit, the available quantities of them.

You can vitiate the air by your manner of life and of death, to any extent. You might easily vitiate it so as to bring such a pestilence on the globe as would end all of you. You, or your fellows, German and French, are at present vitiating it to the best of your power in every direction—chiefly at this

31. **Admiration, etc.** Ruskin cites a line from Wordsworth's *Excursion* (Book iv): "We live by admiration, hope, and love."

moment with corpses, and animal and vegetable ruin in war, changing men, horses, and garden-stuff into noxious gas. But eveiywhere, and all day long, you are vitiating it with foul chemical exhalations; and the horrible nests, which you call towns, are little more than laboratories for the distillation into heaven of venomous smokes and smells, mixed with effluvia from decaying animal matter and infectious miasmata from purulent disease.

On the other hand, your power of purifying the air, by dealing properly and swiftly with all substances in corruption, by absolutely forbidding noxious manufactures, and by planting in all soils the trees which cleanse and invigorate earth and atmosphere, is literally infinite. You might make every breath of air you draw, food.

Secondly, your power over the rain and river-waters of the earth is infinite. You can bring rain where you will, by planting wisely and tending carefully; drought where you will, by ravage of woods and neglect of the soil. You might have the rivers of England as pure as the crystal of the rock; beautiful in falls, in lakes, in living pools; so full of fish that you might take them out with your hands instead of nets. Or you may do always as you have done now—turn every river of England into a common sewer, so that you cannot so much as baptize an English baby but with filth, unless you hold its face out in the rain; and even *that* falls dirty.

Then for the third, earth, meant to be nourishing for you and blossoming. You have learned about it that there is no such thing as a flower, and as far as your scientific hands **and** scientific brains, inventive of explosive and deathful instead of blossoming and life-giving dust, can contrive, you have turned the Mother Earth, Demeter, into the Avenger Earth, Tisiphone[32]—with the voice of your brother's blood crying out of it in one wild harmony round all its murderous sphere.

32. Demeter . . . Tisiphone. Demeter was goddess of the earth's fertility: Tisiphone one of the Furies.

That is what you have done for the Three Material Useful Things.

Then for the Three Immaterial Useful Things. For Admiration, you have learned contempt and conceit. There is no lovely thing ever yet done by man that you care for, or can understand; but you are persuaded you are able to do much finer things yourselves. You gather an exhibit together, as if equally instructive, what is infinitely bad with what is infinitely good. You do not know which is which; you instinctively prefer the Bad, and do more of it. You instinctively hate the Good, and destroy it.

Then, secondly, for Hope. You have not so much spirit of it in you as to begin any plan which will not pay for ten years; nor so much intelligence of it in you (either politicians or workmen) as to be able to form one clear idea of what you would like your country to become.

Then, thirdly, for Love. You were ordered by the Founder of your religion to love your neighbor as yourselves. You have founded an entire science of Political Economy on what you have stated to be the constant instinct of man—the desire to defraud his neighbor. And you have driven your women mad, so that they ask no more for Love nor for fellowship with you, but stand against you, and ask for "justice."

Are there any of you who are tired of all this? Any of you, Landlords or Tenants? Employers or Workmen? Are there any landlords, any masters, who would like better to be served by men than by iron devils? Any tenants, any workmen, who can be true to their leaders and to each other? who can vow to work and to live faithfully, for the sake of the joy of their homes?

Will any such give the tenth of what they have, and of what they earn, not to emigrate with, but to stay in England with, and do what is in their hands and hearts to make her a happy England?

I am not rich (as people now estimate riches), and great

part of what I have is already engaged in maintaining art-workmen, or for other objects more or less of public utility. The tenth of whatever is left to me, estimated as accurately as I can (you shall see the accounts), I will make over to you in perpetuity, with the best security that English law can give, on Christmas Day of this year, with engagement to add the tithe of whatever I earn afterwards. Who else will help, with little or much? the object of such fund being to begin, and gradually—no matter how slowly—to increase the buying and securing of land in England, which shall not be built upon, but cultivated by Englishmen with their own hands and such help of force as they can find in wind and wave. I do not care with how many or how few this thing is begun, nor on what inconsiderable scale—if it be but in two or three poor men's gardens. So much, at least, I can buy, myself, and give them. If no help come, I have done and said what I could, and there will be an end. If any help come to me, it is to be on the following conditions:

We will try to make some small piece of English ground beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam-engines upon it, and no railroads; we will have no untended or unthought-of creatures on it; none wretched but the sick; none idle but the dead. We will have no liberty upon it, but instant obedience to known law and appointed persons; no equality[33] upon it, but recognition of every betterness that we can find, and reprobation of every worseness. When we want to go anywhere, we will go there quietly and safely, not at forty miles an hour in the risk of our lives; when we want to carry anything anywhere, we will carry it either on the backs of beasts, or on our own, or in carts or boats. We will have plenty of flowers and vegetables in our gardens, plenty of corn and grass in our fields,—and few bricks. We

33. no liberty . . . no equality. Ruskin uses these watch-words of the French Republic as symbols of the (in his view) foolish modern striving for individual libertv in place of the old virtues, loyalty, content, and obedience.

will have some music and poetry; the children shall learn to dance to it and sing it; perhaps some of the old people, in time, may also. We will have some art, moreover; we will at least try if, like the Greeks, we can't make some pots. The Greeks used to paint pictures of gods on their pots. We, probably, cannot do as much; but we may put some pictures of insects on them, and reptiles—butterflies and frogs, if nothing better. There was an excellent old potter[34] in France who used *to* put frogs and vipers into his dishes, to the admiration of mankind; we can surely put something nicer than that. Little by little, some higher art and imagination may manifest themselves among us, and feeble rays of science may dawn for us:—botany, though too dull to dispute the existence of flowers; and history, though too simple to question the nativity of men; nay, even perhaps an uncalculating and uncovetous wisdom, as of rude Magi, presenting, at such nativity, gifts of gold and frankincense.

Faithfully yours,

JOHN RUSKIN.

34. **old potttr.** Bernard Palissy, who died 1589.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

[WILLIAM MAKEPEACK THACKERAY was born in India in 1811; after the death of his father (a government officer) he was sent to England to be educated, and from 1822 to 1828 was at the famous boys' school in London called the Charterhouse. He attended Trinity College, Cambridge, but did not graduate; then traveled on the Continent, and for a time studied law. Still not finding himself with any satisfactory vocation, he went to Paris to study drawing, and won some reputation as a caricaturist. From 1887 he contributed both stories and pictures to various London journals, becoming famous especially through his "Snob Papers" in *Punch.* His career as an important novelist opened with *Vanity Fair,* 1848, and continued throughout his life. In 1855 he lectured in America. From 1860 to 1862 he edited the *Comhill Magazine,* for which he wrote not only stories but the essays called "Roundabout Papers." He died 1863. Thackeray's personality was friendly and lovable, though somewhat given to satire.]

TUNBRIDGE TOYS[1]

I WONDER whether those little silver pencil-cases with a movable almanac at the butt-end are still favorite implements with boys, and whether peddlers still hawk them about the country? Are there peddlers and hawkers still, or are rustics and children grown too sharp to deal with them? Those pencil-cases, as far as my memory serves me, were not of much use. The screw, upon which the movable almanac turned, was constantly getting loose. The 1 of the table would work from its moorings, under Tuesday or Wednesday, as the case might be, and you would find, on examination, that Th. or W. was the 231/2 of the month (which was absurd

1. This is No. 7 of the "Roundabout Papers." The word "toys" in the title means trifles or caprices. Tunbridge Wells, where the essay was written, is one of the popular watering-places of southern England, and in the eighteenth century was famous as a resort of fashion.

on the face of the thing), and in a word your cherished pencil-case an utterly unreliable time-keeper. Nor was this a matter of wonder. Consider the position of a pencil-case in a boy's pocket. You had hard-bake[2] in it; marbles, kept in your purse when the money was all gone; your mother's purse knitted so fondly and supplied with a little bit of gold, long since — prodigal little son! — scattered amongst the swine — I mean amongst brandy-balls, open tarts, three-cornered puffs, and similar abominations. You had a top and string; a knife; a piece of cobbler's wax; two or three bullets; a *Little Warbler:*[3] and I for my part, remember, for a considerable period, a brass-barreled pocket pistol (which would fire beautifully, for with it I shot off a button from Butt Major's[4] jacket);—with all these things, and ever so many more, clinking and rattling in your pockets, and your hands, of course, keeping them in perpetual movement, how could you expect your movable almanac not to be twisted out of its place now and again—your pencil-case to be bent—your licorice-water not to leak out of your bottle over the cobbler's wax, your bull's-eyes[5] not to ram up the lock and barrel of your pistol, and so forth?

In the month of June, thirty-seven years ago,[6] I bought one of those pencil-cases from a boy whom I shall call Hawker, and who was in my form.[7] Is he dead? Is he a millionaire? Is he a bankrupt now? He was an immense screw[8] at school, and I believe to this day that the value of the thing for which I owed and eventually paid three-and-sixpence, was in reality not one-and-nine.

2. **bard-bake.** A brittle nut candy made of brown sugar or molasses.
3. **Iittle Warbler.** Either a cheap song book or a musical toy.
4. **Butt Major.** The older Butt. In English schools two boys of the same name were distinguished as "major" and "minor."
5. **bull's-eyes.** Marbles; or perhaps candy-balls.
6. **thirty-seven years ago.** That is, in 1823, when Thackeray was at Charterhouse (see the biographical note above).
7. **form.** Class.
8. **screw.** Hard dealer.

I certainly enjoyed the case at first a good deal, and amused myself with twiddling round the movable calendar. But this pleasure wore off. The jewel, as I said, was not paid for, and Hawker, a large and violent boy, was exceedingly unpleasant as a creditor. His constant remark was, "When are you going to pay me that three-and-sixpence? What sneaks your relations must be! They come to see you. You go out to them on Saturdays and Sundays, and they never give you anything! Don't tell *me,* you little humbug!" and so forth. The truth is that my relations were respectable; but my parents were making a tour in Scotland; and my friends in London, whom I used to go and see, were most kind to me, certainly, but somehow never tipped me. That term, of May to August, 1823, passed in agonies then, in consequence of my debt to Hawker. What was the pleasure of a calendar pencil-case in comparison with the doubt and torture of mind occasioned by the sense of the debt, and the constant reproach of that fellow's scowling eyes and gloomy, coarse reminders? How was I to pay off such a debt out of sixpence a week? Ludicrous! Why did not some one come to see me, and tip met Ah! my dear sir, if you have any little friends at school, go and see them, and do the natural thing by them. You won't miss the sovereign. You don't know what a blessing it will be to them. Don't fancy they are too old—try 'em. And they will remember you, and bless you in future days; and their gratitude shall accompany your dreary after-life; and they shall meet you kindly when thanks for kindness are scant. O mercy! Shall I ever forget that sovereign you gave me, Captain Bob? or the agonies of being in debt to Hawker? In that very term, a relation of mine was going to India. I actually was fetched from school in order to take leave of him. I am afraid I told Hawker of this circumstance. I own I speculated upon my friend's giving me a pound. A pound? Pooh! A relation going to India, and deeply affected at parting from his darling kinsman, might give five pounds

to the dear fellow! There was Hawker when I came back—of course there he was. As he looked in my scared face, his turned livid with rage. He muttered curses, terrible from the lips of so young a boy. My relation, about to cross the ocean o fill a lucrative appointment, asked me with much interes about my progress at school, heard me construe a passage of Eutropius,[9] the pleasing Latin work on which I was then engaged; gave me a God bless you, and sent me back to school; upon my word of honor, without so much as a half-crown! It is all very well, my dear sir, to say that boys contract habits of expecting tips from their parents' friends, that they become avaricious, and so forth. Avaricious ! fudge! Boys contract habits of tart and toffee-eating, which they do not carry into after life. On the contrary, I wish I *did* like 'em. What raptures of pleasure one could have now for five shillings, if one could but pick it off the pastry-cook's tray! No. If you have any little friends at school, out with your half-crowns, my friend, and impart to those little ones the little fleeting joys of their age.

Well, then. At the beginning of August, 1823, Bartlemy-tide[10] holidays came, and I was to go to my parents, who were at Tunbridge Wells. My place in the coach was taken by my tutor's servants—"Bolt-in-Tun",[11] Fleet street, seven o'clock in the morning, was the word. My tutor, the Rev. Edward P———, to whom I hereby present my best compliments, had a parting interview with me: gave me my little account for my governor: the remaining part of the coach hire; five shillings for my own expenses; and some five-and-twenty shillings on an old account which had been overpaid, and was to be restored to my family.

Away I ran and paid Hawker his three-and-six. Ouf!

9. **Eutropius.** A Latin historian of the fourth century.

10. **Bartlemy-tide.** The season of the church festival of St. Bartholomew, Augrust 24.

11. **Bolt-in-Tnu.** The name of the inn from which the coach started.

What a weight it was off my mind! (He was a Norfolk boy, and used to go home from Mrs. Nelson's "Bell Inn", Aldgate —but that is not to the point.) The next morning, of course, we were an hour before the time. I and another boy shared a hackney-coach; two-and-six: porter for putting luggage on coach, threepence. I had no more money of my own left. Rasherwell, my companion, went into the "Bolt-in-Tun" coffee-room, and had a good breakfast. I couldn't; because, though I had five-and-twenty shillings of my parents' money, I had none of my own, you see.

I certainly intended to *go* without breakfast, and still remember how strongly I had that resolution in my mind. But there was that hour to wait. A beautiful August morning—I am very hungry. There is Rasherwell "tucking" away in the coffee-room. I pace the street, as sadly almost as if I had been coming to school, not going thence. I turn into a court by mere chance—I vow it was by mere chance—and there I see a coffee-shop -with a placard in the window: *Coffee, twopence. Round of buttered toast, twopence.* And here am I, hungry, penniless, with five-and-twenty shillings of my parents' money in my pocket.

What would you have done? You see I had had my money, and spent it in that pencil-case affair. The five-and-twenty shillings were a trust—by me to be handed over.

But then would my parents wish their only child to be actually without breakfast? Having this money, and being so hungry, so *very* hungry, mightn't I take ever so little? Mightn't I at home eat as much as I chose?

Well, I went into the coffee-shop, and spent fourpence. I remember the taste of the coffee and toast to this day—a peculiar, muddy, not-sweet-enough, most fragrant coffee—a rich, rancid, yet not-buttered-enough, delicious toast. The waiter had nothing. At any rate, fourpence I know was the sum I spent. And the hunger appeased, I got on the coach a guilty being.

At the last stage,—what is its name? I have forgotten in seven-and-thirty years,—there is an inn with a little green and trees before it; and by the trees there is an open carriage. It is our carriage. Yes, there are Prince and Blucher, the horses; and my parents in the carriage.—Oh! how I had been counting the days until this one came! Oh! how happy had I been to see them yesterday! But there was that fourpenee. All the journey down the toast had choked me, and the coffee poisoned me.

I was in such a state of remorse about the fourpenee that I forgot the maternal joy and caresses, the tender, paternal voice. I pull out the twenty-four shillings and eightpence with a trembling hand.

"Here's your money," I gasp out, "which Mr. P——— owes you, all but the fourpenee. I owed three-and-sixpenee to Hawker out of my money for a pencil-case, and I had none left, and I took fourpenee of yours, and had some coffee at a shop."

I suppose I must have been choking whilst uttering this confession.

"My dear boy," says the governor, "why didn't you go and breakfast at the hotel ?"

"He must be near starved," said my mother.

I had confessed; I had been a prodigal; I had been taken back to my parents' arms again. It was not a very great crime as yet, or a very long career of prodigality; but don't we know that a boy who takes a pin which is not his own, will take a thousand pounds when occasion serves, bring his parents' gray heads with sorrow *to* the grave, and carry his own to the gallows? Witness the career of Dick Idle, upon whom our friend Mr. Sala[12] has been discoursing. Dick only began by playing pitch-and-toss on a tombstone; playing fair, for what we know: and even for that sin he was promptly

12. "Mr. Sala. Oeorgre Augustus Sala (1828-1895), **a journalist and** writer of tales

caned by the beadle. The bamboo was ineffectual to cane that reprobate's bad courses out of him. From pitch-and-toss he proceeded to manslaughter if necessary: to highway robbery; to Tyburn[13] and the rope there. Ah! heaven be thanked, my parents' heads are still above the grass, and mine still out of the noose.

As I look up from my desk, I see Tunbridge Wells Common and the rocks, the strange familiar place which I remember forty years ago. Boys saunter over the green with stumps[14] and cricket-bats. Other boys gallop by on the riding-master's hacks. I protest it is *Cramp, Riding Master,* as it used to be in the reign of George IV., and that Centaur Cramp must be at least a hundred years old. Yonder comes a footman with a bundle of novels from the library. Are. they as good as *our* novels? Oh! how delightful they were! Shades of Valancour,[15] awful ghost of Manfroni,[16] how I shudder at your appearance! Sweet image of Thaddeus of Warsaw,[17] how often has this almost infantile hand tried to depict you in a Polish cap and richly embroidered tights! And as for the Corinthian Tom[18] in light blue pantaloons and Hessians,[19] and Jerry Hawthorn from the country, can all the fashion, can all the splendor of real life which these eyes have subsequently beheld, can all the wit I have heard or read in later times, compare with your fashion, with your brilliancy, with your delightful grace, and sparkling, vivacious rattle?

13. **Tyburn.** Formerly the place of public execution in London.

14. **stumps.** The three upright stakes constituting the wicket, in cricket.

15. **Valancour.** A character in the novel called *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), by Mrs. Ann Radcliffe; famous in its day for its thrilling, "creepy" scenes.

16. **Manfroni.** For the full title see page 314.

17. **Thaddens of Warsaw.** The hero of a romance of the same name, by Jane Porter (1803).

18. **Corinthian Tom,** etc. Characters in a story called *Life in London* (see the full title in the following paragraph), by Pierce Egan. It was published in monthly shilling numbers, beginning 1821, and dealt with sporting life in London.

19. **Hessians.** Boots; see note on page 229.

Who knows? They *may* have kept those very books at **the** library still—at the well-remembered library on the Pantiles,[20] where they sell that delightful, useful Tunbridge ware. I will go and see. I wend my way to the Pantiles, the queer little old-world Pantiles, where, a hundred years since, so much good company came *to* take its pleasure. Is it possible that, in the past century, gentlefolks of the first rank (as I read lately in a lecture on George II.[21] in the *Comhill Magazine)* assembled there and entertained each other with gaming, dancing, fiddling, and tea? There are fiddlers, harpers, and trumpeters performing at this moment in a weak little old balcony, but where is the fine company? Where are the earls, duchesses, bishops, and magnificent embroidered gamesters? .A half dozen of children and their nurses are listening to the musicians; an old lady or two in a poke bonnet passes, and for the rest, I see but an uninteresting population of native tradesmen. As for the library, its window is full of pictures of burly theologians, and their works, sermons, apologues, and so forth. Can I go in and ask the young ladies at the counter for "Manfroni, or the One-handed Monk," and "Life in London, or the Adventures of Corinthian Tom, Jeremiah Hawthorn, Esq., and their friend Bob Logic"?—absurd. I turn away abashed from the casement—from the Pantiles—no longer Pantiles, but Parade. I stroll over the Common and survey the beautiful purple hills around, twinkling with a thousand bright villas, which have sprung up over this charming ground since first I saw it. What an admirable scene of peace and plenty! What a delicious air breathes over the heath, blows the cloud shadows across it, and murmurs through the full-clad trees! Can the world show a land fairer, richer, more cheerful? I see a

20. the Pantiles. The old plaza or "parade" at Tunbridge, still the center of town life; named from an old style of tiled walk.

21. **lecture on George XX.** By Thackeray himself; one of the lectures on "The Four Georges" which he gave in America in 1855.

portion of it when I look up from the window at which I write. But fair scene, green woods, bright terraces gleaming in sunshine, and purple clouds swollen with summer rain—nay, the very pages over which my head bends—disappear from before my eyes. They are looking backward, back into forty years off, into a dark room, into a little house hard by on the Common here, in the Bartlemy-tide holidays. The parents have gone to town for two days; the house is all his own, his own and a grim old maid-servant's, and a little boy is seated at night in the lonely drawing-room, poring over "Manfroni, or the One-handed Monk," so frightened that he scarcely dares to turn round.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

[MATTHEW ARNOLD was born in 1822; a son of Dr. Thomas Arnold, the famous Head Master of Rug-by School, in whose memory he wrote the noble poem called "Rugby Chapel." After completing his course of study at Oxford he became first a Fellow of Oriel College, then a teacher at Rugby, then secretary to the Marquis of Lansdowne, and finally a government inspector of schools; this latter position he held until his retirement on a pension in 1883. Meantime he attained distinction as a man of letters, first as a poet, in volumes of verse published between 1849 and 1855, then as critic of literature and society, in essays and lectures published between 1861 and 1875. Some of Arnold's best literary criticism first appeared in lectures given at Oxford while he served as Professor of Poetry in the University (a lectureship rather than a professorship in the ordinary sense). In his social criticism he became known as an "apostle of culture," especially to the English "middle class" of which he was himself a member and which he thought had been intellectually and spiritually degraded by the material content and prosperity of the manufacturing era. Arnold lectured twice in America, in 1884 and 1886. He died in 1888.]

SWEETNESS AND LIGHT[1]

THE disparagers of culture make its motive curiosity; sometimes, indeed, they make its motive mere exclusiveness and vanity. The culture which is supposed to plume itself on a smattering of Greek and Latin is a culture which is begotten by nothing so intellectual as curiosity; it is valued either out of sheer vanity and ignorance or else as an engine of social and class distinction, separating its holder, like a badge or title, from other people who have not got it. No serious man

1. This essay is the most significant chapter (abbreviated) of what is on the whole Arnold's most representative book, called *Culture and Anarchy*. The title means Beauty and Intelligence; see the passage on page 327.

would call this *culture,* or attach any value to it, as culture, at all. To find the real ground for the very different estimate which serious people will set upon culture, we must find some motive for culture in the terms of which may lie a real ambiguity; and such a motive the word *curiosity* gives us.

I have before now pointed out that we English do not, like the foreigners, use this word in a good sense as well as in a bad sense. With us the word is always used in a somewhat disapproving sense. A liberal and intelligent eagerness about the things of the mind may be meant by a foreigner when he speaks of curiosity, but with us the word always conveys a certain notion of frivolous and unedifying activity. In the *Quarterly Review,* some little time ago, was an estimate of the celebrated French critic, M. Sainte-Beuve,[2] and a very inadequate estimate it in my judgment was. And its inadequacy consisted chiefly in this: that in our English way it left out of sight the double sense really involved in the word *curiosity,* thinking enough was said to stamp M. Sainte-Beuve with blame if it was said that he was impelled in his operations as a critic by curiosity, and omitting either to perceive that M. Sainte-Beuve himself, and many other people with him, would consider that this was praiseworthy and not blameworthy, or to point out why it ought really to be accounted worthy of blame and not of praise. For, as there is a curiosity about intellectual matters which is futile, and merely a disease, so there is certainly a curiosity,—a desire after the things of the mind simply for their own sakes and for the pleasure of seeing them as they are,—which is, in an intelligent being, natural and laudable. Nay, and the very desire to see things as they are implies a balance and regulation of mind which is not often attained without fruitful effort, and which is the very opposite of the blind and diseased impulse of mind which is what we mean to blame when we blame

2. **M. Sainte-Beuve.** A distinguished French critic (1804-1869).

curiosity. Montesquieu[3] says: "The first motive which ought to impel us to study is the desire to augment the excellence of our nature, and to render an intelligent being yet more intelligent." This is the true ground to assign for the genuine scientific passion, however manifested, and for culture, viewed simply as a fruit of this passion; and it is a worthy ground, even though we let the term *curiosity* stand to describe it.

But there is of culture another view, in which not solely the scientific passion, the sheer desire to see things as they are, natural and proper in an intelligent being, appears as the ground of it. There is a view in which all the love of our neighbor, the impulses towards action, help, and beneficence, the desire for removing human error, clearing human confusion, and diminishing human misery, the noble aspiration to leave the world better and happier than we found it,—motives eminently such as are called social,—come in as part of the grounds of culture, and the main and pre-eminent part. Culture is then properly described not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is *a study of perfection.* It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing good. As, in the first view of it, we took for its worthy motto Montesquieu's words: "To render an intelligent being yet more intelligent!" so, in the second view of it, there is no better motto which it can have than these words of Bishop Wilson:[4] "To make reason and the will of God prevail!"

Only, whereas the passion for doing good is apt to be overhasty in determining what reason and the will of God say, because its turn is for acting rather than thinking and it wants to be beginning to act; and whereas it is apt to take

3. **Montesquieu.** A French social philosopher and critic (1689-1755).

4. **Bishop Wilson.** Dr. Thomas Wilson (died 1755), author of a **work** called *Maxims,* which Arnold frequently quoted and praised.

its own conceptions, which proceed from its own state of development and share in all the imperfections and immaturities of this, for a basis of action; what distinguishes culture is, that it is possessed by the scientific passion as well as by the passion of doing good; that it demands worthy notions of reason and the will of God, and does not readily suffer its own crude conceptions to substitute themselves for them. And knowing that no action or institution can be salutary and stable which is not based on reason and the will of God, it is not so bent on acting and instituting, even with the great aim of diminishing human error and misery ever before its thoughts, but that it can remember that acting and instituting are of little use, unless we know how and what we ought to act and to institute.

This culture is more interesting and more far-reaching than that other, which is founded solely on the scientific passion for knowing. But it needs times of faith and ardor, times when the intellectual horizon is opening and widening all around us, to flourish in. And is not the close and bounded intellectual horizon within which we have long lived and moved now lifting up, and are not new lights finding free passage to shine in upon us? For a long time there was no passage for them to make their way in upon us, and then it was of no use to think of adapting the world's action to them. Where was the hope of making reason and the will of God prevail among people who had a routine which they had christened reason and the will of God, in which they were inextricably bound, and beyond which they had no power of looking? But now the iron force of adhesion to the old routine—social, political, religious—has wonderfully yielded; the iron force of exclusion of all which is new has wonderfully yielded. The danger now is, not that people should obstinately refuse to allow anything but their old routine to pass for reason and the will of God, but either that they should allow some novelty or other to pass for these too easily, or else that they should

underrate the importance of them altogether, and think it enough to follow action for its own sake, without troubling themselves to make reason and the will of God prevail therein. Now, then, is the moment for culture to be of service, culture which believes in making reason and the will of God prevail, believes in perfection, is the study and pursuit of perfection, and is no longer debarred, by a rigid invincible exclusion of whatever is new, from getting acceptance for its ideas, simply because they are new.

The moment this view of culture is seized, the moment it is regarded not solely as the endeavor to see things as they are, to draw towards a knowledge of the universal order which seems to be intended and aimed at in the world, and which it is a man's happiness to go along with or his misery to go counter to,—to learn, in short, the will of God,—the moment, I say, culture is considered not merely as the endeavor to *see* and *learn* this, but as the endeavor, also to make it *prevail,* the moral, social, and beneficent character of culture becomes manifest. The mere endeavor to see and learn the truth for our own personal satisfaction is indeed a commencement for making it prevail, a preparing the way for this, which always serves this, and is wrongly, therefore, stamped with blame absolutely in itself and not only in its caricature and degeneration. But perhaps it has got stamped with blame, and disparaged with the dubious title of curiosity, because in comparison with this wider endeavor of such great and plain utility it looks selfish, petty, and unprofitable.

And religion, the greatest and most important of the efforts by which the human race has manifested its impulse to perfect itself,—religion, that voice of the deepest human experience,—does not only enjoin and sanction the aim which is the great aim of culture, the aim of setting ourselves to ascertain what perfection is and to make it prevail; but also, in determining generally in what human perfection consists, religion comes to a conclusion identical with that which culture—culture seek-

ing the determination of this question through *all* the voices of human experience which have been heard upon it, of art, science, poetry, philosophy, history, as well as of religion, in order to give a greater fullness and certainty to its solution—likewise reaches. Religion says: *The kingdom of God is within youy;5* and culture, in like manner, places human perfection in an *internal* condition, in the growth and predominance of our humanity proper, as distinguished from our animality. It places it in the ever-increasing efficacy and in the general harmonious expansion of those gifts of thought and feeling, which make the peculiar dignity, wealth, and happiness of human nature. As I have said on a former occasion: "It is in making endless additions to itself, in the endless expansion of its powers, in endless growth in wisdom and beauty, that the spirit of the human race finds its ideal. To reach this ideal, culture is an indispensable aid, and that is the true value of culture." Not a having and a resting, but a growing and a becoming, is the character of perfection as culture conceives it; and here, too, it coincides with religion.

And because men are all members of one great whole, and the sympathy which is in human nature will not allow one member to be indifferent to the rest or to have a perfect welfare independent of the rest, the expansion of our humanity, to suit the idea of perfection which culture forms, must be a *general* expansion. Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. And here, once more, culture lays on us the same obligation as religion, which says, as Bishop Wilson has admirably put it, that "to promote the kingdom of God is to increase and hasten one's own happiness."

5. The kingdom, etc. See *Luke* 17:21.

But, finally, perfection—as culture from a thorough disinterested study of human nature and human experience learns to conceive it—is a harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest. Here culture goes beyond religion, as religion is generally conceived by us.

If culture, then, is a study of perfection, and of harmonious perfection, general perfection, and perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something, in an inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances,—it is clear that culture, instead of being the frivolous and useless thing which Mr. Bright,[6] and Mr. Frederic Harrison,[7] and many other Liberals are apt to call it, has a very important function to fulfill for mankind. And this function is particularly important in our modern world, of which the whole civilization is, to a much greater degree than the civilization of Greece and Rome, mechanical and external, and tends constantly to become more so. But above all in our own country has culture a weighty part to perform, because here that mechanical character, which civilization tends to take everywhere, is shown in the most eminent degree. Indeed nearly all the characters of perfection, as culture teaches us to fix them, meet in this country with some powerful tendency which thwarts them and sets them at defiance. The idea of perfection as an *inward* condition of the mind and spirit is at variance with the mechanical and material civilization in esteem with us, and nowhere, as I have said, so much in esteem as with us. The idea of perfection as a *general* expansion of the human family is at variance with our strong individualism, our hatred of all limits to the unrestrained swing of the individ-

6. Mr. Bright. John Bright (1811-1889), a well-known leader of the Liberal Party, representing: the middle-class manufacturing: district of Birmingham in Parliament.

7. Mr. Frodorlo Harrison. A social philosopher and critic (born 1831); especially well known as the leading representative in England of the religion or philosophy called Positivism.

ual's personality, our maxim of "every man for himself." Above all, the idea of perfection as a *harmonious* expansion of human nature is at variance with our want of flexibility, with our inaptitude for seeing more than one side of a thing, with our intense energetic absorption in the particular pursuit we happen to be following. So culture has a rough task to achieve in this country. Its preachers have, and are likely long to have, a hard time of it, and they will much oftener be regarded, for a great while to come, as elegant or spurious Jeremiahs[8] than as friends and benefactors. That, however, will not prevent their doing in the end good service if they persevere. And, meanwhile, the mode of action they have to pursue, and the sort of habits they must fight against, ought to be made quite clear for every one to see, who may be willing to look at the matter attentively and dispassionately.

Faith in machinery is, I said, our besetting danger; often in machinery most absurdly disproportioned to the end which this machinery, if it is to do any good at all, is to serve; but always in machinery, as if it had a value in and for itself. What is freedom but machinery? what is population but machinery? what is coal but machinery? what are railroads but machinery? what is wealth but machinery? what are even religious organizations but machinery? Now almost every voice in England is accustomed to speak of these things as if they were precious ends in themselves, and therefore had some of the characters of perfection indisputably joined to them. I have before now noticed Mr. Roebuck's[9] stock argument for proving the greatness and happiness of England as she is, and

8. Jeremiahs. Complaining prophets. Arnold was sometimes called an "elegant Jeremiah" by his critics.

9. Mr. Roebuck. John Arthur Roebuck, a Member of Parliament for Sheffield (died 1879). In his essay on "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," Arnold had quoted or paraphrased one of Roebuck's speeches as follows: "I look around me and ask what is the state of England? Is not property safe? Is not every man able to say what he likes? Can you not walk from one end of England to the other in perfect security? I ask you whether, the world over or in past history, there is anything like it? Nothing."

for quite stopping the mouths of all gainsayers. Mr. Roebuck is never weary of reiterating this argument of his, so I do not know why I should be weary of noticing it. "May not every man in England say what he likes?"—Mr. Roebuck perpetually asks; and that, he thinks, is quite sufficient, and when every man may say what he likes, our aspirations ought to be satisfied. But the aspirations of culture, which is the study of perfection, are not satisfied, unless what men say, when they may say what they like, is worth saying,—has good in it, and more good than bad. In the same way the *Times,* replying to some foreign strictures on the dress, looks, and behavior of the English abroad, urges that the English ideal is that every one should be free to do and to look just as he likes. But culture indefatigably tries, not to make what each raw person may like the rule by which he fashions himself, but to draw ever nearer to a sense of what is indeed beautiful, graceful, and becoming, and to get the raw person to like that.

And in the same way with respect to railroads and coal. Every one must have observed the strange language current during the late discussions as to the possible failure of our supplies of coal. Our coal, thousands of people were saying, is the real basis of our national greatness; if our coal runs short, there is an end of the greatness of England. But what *is* greatness?—culture makes us ask. Greatness is a spiritual condition worthy to excite love, interest, and admiration; and the outward proof of possessing greatness is that we excite love, interest, and admiration. If England were swallowed up by the sea tomorrow, which of the two, a hundred years hence, would most excite the love, interest, and admiration of mankind,—would most, therefore, show the evidences of having possessed greatness,—the England of the last twenty years, or the England of Elizabeth, of a time of splendid spiritual effort, but when our coal, and our industrial operations depend. ing on coal, were very little developed? Well, then, what an unsound habit of mind it must be which makes us talk of

things like coal or iron as constituting the greatness of England, and how salutary a friend is culture, bent on seeing things as they are, and thus dissipating delusions of this kind and fixing standards of perfection that are real!

Wealth, again, that end to which our prodigious works for material advantage are directed,—the commonest of commonplaces tells us how men are always apt to regard wealth as a precious end in itself; and certainly they have never been so apt thus to regard it as they are in England at the present time. Never did people believe anything more firmly than nine Englishmen out of ten at the present day believe that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being so very rich. Now, the use of culture is that it helps us, by means of its spiritual standard of perfection, to regard wealth as but machinery, and not only to say as a matter of words that we regard wealth as but machinery, but really to perceive and feel that is is so. If it were not for this purging effect wrought upon our minds by culture, the whole world, the future as well as the present, would inevitably belong to the Philistines.[10] The people who believe most that our greatness and welfare are proved by our being very rich, and who most give their lives and thoughts to becoming rich, are just the very people whom we call Philistines. Culture says: "Consider these people, then, their way of life, their habits, their manners, the very tones of their voice; look at them attentively; observe the literature they read, the things which give them pleasure, the words which come forth out of their mouths, the thoughts which make the furniture of their minds; would any amount of wealth be worth having with the condition that one was to become just like these people by having it?" And thus culture begets a dissatisfaction which is of the highest possible value in stemming the common tide of men's

10. the Philistines. Arnold's pet term for the non-idealist middle-class English. In a subsequent passage he defines the Philistine as "the enemy of the children of light or servants of **the** idea."

thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community, and which saves the future, as one may hope, from being vulgarized, even if it cannot save the present.

Population, again, and bodily health and vigor, are things which are nowhere treated in such an unintelligent, misleading, exaggerated way as in England. Both are really machinery; yet how many people all around us do we see rest in them and fail to look beyond them! Why, one has heard people, fresn from reading certain articles of the *Times* on the Registrar-General's returns of marriages and births in this country, who would talk of our large English families in quite a solemn strain, as if they had something in itself beautiful, elevating, and meritorious in them; as if the British Philistine would have only to present himself before the Great Judge with his twelve children, in order to be received among the sheep[11] as a matter of right!

But bodily health and vigor, it may be said, are not to be classed with wealth and population as mere machinery; they have a more real and essential value. True; but only as they are more intimately connected with a perfect spiritual condition than wealth or population are. The moment we disjoin them from the idea of a perfect spiritual condition and pursue them, as we do pursue them, for their own sake and as ends in themselves, our worship of them becomes as mere worship of machinery, as our worship of wealth or population, and as unintelligent and vulgarizing a worship as that is. Every one with anything like an adequate idea of human perfection has distinctly marked this subordination to higher and spiritual ends of the cultivation of bodily vigor and activity. "Bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things," says the author of the Epistle to Timothy.[12] And the utilitarian Franklin says just as explicitly:—"Eat and drink such an exact quantity as suits the constitution of thy body,

11. anions **the sneep.** See *Matthew* 25:32-33.
L.s. sodily exercise, eta I *Timothy* 4:8.

in reference to the services of the mind."[13] But the point of view of culture, keeping the mark of human perfection simply and broadly in view, and not assigning to this perfection, as religion or utilitarianism assigns to it, a special and limited character, this point of view, I say, of culture is best given by these words of Epictetus:[14] "It is a sign of *dovla ,"* says he,—that is, of a nature not finely tempered,—"to give yourselves up to things which relate to the body; to make, for instance, a great fuss about exercise, a great fuss about eating, a great fuss about drinking, a great fuss about walking, a great fuss about riding. All these things ought to be done merely by the way: the formation of the spirit and character must be our real concern." This is admirable; and, indeed, the Greek word *evpvla,* a finely tempered nature, gives exactly the notion of perfection as culture brings us to conceive it: a harmonious perfection, a perfection in which the characters of beauty and intelligence are both present, which unites "the two noblest of tilings,"—as Swift, who of one of the two, at any rate, had himself all too little, most happily calls them in his *Battle of the Books,*[15]—"the two noblest of things, *sweetness and light."* The evpvns is the man who tends towards sweetness and light; the apuns, on the other hand, is our Philistine. The immense spiritual significance of the Greeks is due to their having been inspired with this central and happy idea of the essential character of human perfection; and Mr. Bright's misconception of culture, as a smattering of Greek and Latin, comes itself, after all, from this wonderful

13. Eat and drink, etc. The first of the "Rules of Health and Long Life" in Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac,* December, 1742.

14. **Epletetus.** A Greek philosopher of the Stoic school, **who** taught at Rome in the first century A.D.

15. **Battle of the Books.** An allegory published by Swift in 1704, on the quarrel between the extreme partisans of ancient **and** modern literature. Swift took the side of the ancients, whom he symbolized in the Bee, the moderns in the Spider. **"Instead** of dirt and poison," say the bees, "we have rather chose to **fill** our hives with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind **with the** two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light."

significance of the Greeks having affected the very machinery of our education, and is in itself a kind of homage to it. . . .

The pursuit of perfection, then, is the pursuit of sweetness and light. He who works for sweetness and light, works to make reason and the will of God prevail. He who works for machinery, he who works for hatred, works only for confusion. Culture looks beyond machinery, culture hates hatred; culture has one great passion, the passion for sweetness and light. It has one even yet greater!—the passion for making them *prevail.* It is not satisfied till we *all* come to a perfect man;[16] it knows that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. If I have not shrunk from saying that we must work for sweetness and light, so neither have I shrunk from saying that we must have a broad basis, must have sweetness and light for as many as possible. Again and again I have insisted how those are the happy moments of humanity, how those are the marking epochs of a people's life, how those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius, when there is a *national* glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive. Only it must be *real* thought and *real* beauty; *real* sweetness and *real* light. Plenty of people will try to give the masses, as they call them, an intellectual food prepared and adapted in the way they think proper for the actual condition of the masses. The ordinary popular literature is an example of this way of working on the masses. Plenty of people will try to indoctrinate the masses with the set of ideas and judgments constituting the creed of their own profession or party. Our religious and political organizations give an example of this way of working on the masses. I condemn neither way: but culture works differently. It does not try to teach down to the level of inferior classes; it does not try to win them

16. till we all come, etc. See *Ephesians* 4:13.

for this or that sect of its own, with ready-made judgments and watchwords. It seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely,—nourished, and not bound by them.

This is the *social idea;* and the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have labored to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light. Such a man was Abelard[17] in the Middle Ages, in spite of all his imperfections; and thence the boundless emotion and enthusiasm which Abelard excited. Such were Lessing and Herder[18] in Germany, at the end of the last century; and their services to Germany were in this way inestimably precious. Generations will pass, and literary monuments will accumulate, and works far more perfect than the works of Lessing and Herder will be produced in Germany; and yet the names of these two men will fill a German with a reverence and enthusiasm such as the names of the most gifted masters will hardly awaken. And why? Because they *humanized* knowledge; because they broadened the basis of life and intelligence; because they worked powerfully to diffuse sweetness and light, to make reason and the will of God prevail. With Saint Augustine[19] they said: "Let us not leave thee alone to make in the secret of thy knowledge,

17. **Abelard.** A French theologian and professor **(1079-1142).**
18. **Leasing- and Herder.** German critics of the late eighteenth century.
19. **Saint Augustine.** A church father of the fourth and **fifth** centuries. The quotation is from his famous *Confessions.*

as thou didst before the creation of the firmament, the division of light from darkness; let the children of thy spirit, placed in their firmament, make their light shine upon the earth, mark the division of night and day, and announce the revolution of the times; for the old order is passed, and the new arises; the night is spent, the day is come forth; and thou shalt crown the year with thy blessing, when thou shalt send forth laborers into thy harvest sown by other hands than theirs; when thou shalt send forth new laborers to new seed-times, whereof the harvest shall be not yet."

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

[ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON was born at Edinburgh, Scotland, In 1850, and was educated at the University of Edinburgh. While still in college he devoted much attention to writing, and some of his early essays were first written for the University Magazine. In 1876 and 1878 he went on camping trips in France and Belgium for the sake of his health, and his earliest books—*An Inland Voyage* and *Travels with a Donkey*—were among the results. His first fame as a writer of fiction was won with *Treasure Island,* a story written primarily for boys. Always forced to seek climates favorable to his health, Stevenson lived successively in Switzerland, France, America (spending some time in California, and some in the Adirondacks), and the South Seas; oventually (in 1889) he settled at Samoa, where he died in 1894. Meantime he had published two or three volumes of essays and many more of stories, such as *New Arabian Nights, The Black Arrow,* and *Kidnapped.* Stevenson's personality was among the best beloved of his time, and is perpetuated attractively in his published letters and other more or less personal writings.]

ON THE ENJOYMENT OF UNPLEASANT PLACES[1]

IT IS a difficult matter to make the most of any given place, and we have much in our own power. Things looked at patiently from one side after another generally end by showing a side that is beautiful. A few months ago some words were said in the *Portfolio* as to an "austere regimen in scenery"; and such a discipline was then recommended as

1. This essay was written in 1874, for a periodical called *The Portfolio.* It will be noticed that all three of Stevenson's essays here included were written when he was still a young man. They represent not only his personality in that period, but his interest in the art of style, which he studied with great care, not merely with a view to clearness and force but to beauty of imagery and sound akin to that of poetry (for example, see the sentence on page 338f.: "Two great tracts of motionless blue air and peaceful sea looking on, unconcerned and apart, at the turmoil of the present moment and the memorials of the precarious past"). In particular, he studied the art of previous essayists, notably Hazlitt ton whom see his remarks in the following essay).

"healthful and strengthening to the taste." That is the text, so to speak, of the present essay. This discipline in scenery, it must be understood, is something more than a mere walk before breakfast to whet the appetite. For when we are put down in some unsightly neighborhood, and especially if we have come to be more or less dependent on what we see, we must set ourselves to hunt out beautiful things with all the ardor and patience of a botanist after a rare plant. Day by day we perfect ourselves in the art of seeing nature more favorably. We learn to live with her, as people learn to live with fretful or violent spouses: to dwell lovingly on what is good, and shut our eyes against all that is bleak or inharmonious. We learn, also, to come to each place in the right spirit. The traveler, as Brantome[2] quaintly tells us, "fait des discours en soi pour se soutenir en chemin"; and into these discourses he weaves something out of all that he sees and suffers by the way: they take their tone greatly from the varying character of the scene; a sharp ascent brings different thoughts from a level road; and the man's fancies grow lighter as he comes out of the wood into a clearing. Nor does the scenery any more affect the thoughts than the thoughts affect the scenery. We see places through our humors as through differently colored glasses. We are ourselves a turn in the equation, a note of the chord, and make discord or harmony almost at will. There is no fear for the result, if we can but surrender ourselves sufficiently to the country that surrounds and follows us, so that we are ever thinking suitable thoughts or telling ourselves some suitable sort of story as we *go.* We become thus, in some sense, a center of beauty; we are provocative of beauty, much as a gentle and sincere character is provocative of sincerity and gentleness in others. And even where there is no harmony to be elicited by the quickest and most obedient of spirits, we

2. Brantdme. An old French chronicler (died 1614). The sentence reads: "The traveler holds discourse within himself in **order** to bear up on his road."

may still embellish a place with some attraction of romance. We may learn to go far afield for associations, and handle them lightly when we have found them. Sometimes an old print comes to our aid; I have seen many a spot lit up with picturesque imaginations, by a reminiscence of Callot, or Sadeler, or Paul Brill.[3] Dick Turpin[4] has been my lay figure for many an English lane. And I suppose the Trossachs[5] would hardly be the Trossachs for tourists if a man of admirable romantic instinct had not peopled it for them with harmonious figures, and brought them thither with minds rightly prepared for the impression. There is half the battle in this preparation. For instance: I have rarely been able to visit, is the proper spirit, the wild and inhospitable places of our own Highlands. I am happier where it is tame and fertile, and not readily pleased without trees. I understand that there are some phases of mental trouble that harmonize well with such surroundings, and that some persons, by the dispensing power of the imagination, can go back several centuries in spirit, and put themselves into sympathy with the hunted, houseless, unsociable way of life, that was in its place upon these savage hills. Now, when I am sad, I like nature to charm me out of my sadness, like David before Saul;[6] and the thought of these past ages strikes nothing in me but an unpleasant pity; so that I can never hit on the right humor for this sort of landscape, and lose much pleasure in consequence. Still, even here, if I were only let alone, and time enough were given, I should have all manner of pleasures, and take many clear and beautiful images away with me when I left. When we cannot think ourselves into

3. **Callot,** etc. Well-known artists. Callot was a French painter and engraver of the early seventeenth century; **Sadeler** and **Brill** were Flemish artists of the same period.

4. **Dick Turpin.** A famous highwayman who was executed in 1739.

5. **The Trossftcns.** A glen in the Scotch Highlands, famous **as** the scene of some of the events in Scott's *Lady of the Lake.*

6. **David before Saul** See I *Samuel* 16:23.

sympathy with the great features of a country, we learn to ignore them, and put our head among the grass for flowers, or pore, for long times together, over the changeful current of a stream. We come down to the sermon in stones,[7] when we are shut out from any poem in the spread landscape. We begin to peep and botanize,[8] we take an interest in birds and insects, we find many things beautiful in miniature. The reader will recollect the little summer scene in *Wuthering Heights*[9]—the one warm scene, perhaps, in all that powerful, miserable novel—and the great feature that is made therein by grasses and flowers and a little sunshine: this is in the spirit of which I now speak. And, lastly, we can go indoors; interiors are sometimes as beautiful, often more picturesque, than the shows of the open air, and they have that quality of shelter of which I shall presently have more to say.

With all this in mind, I have often been tempted to put forth the paradox that any place is good enough to live a life in, while it is only in a few, and those highly favored, that we can pass a few hours agreeably. For, if we only stay long enough, we become at home in the neighborhood. Reminiscences spring up, like flowers, about uninteresting corners. We forget to some degree the superior loveliness of other places, and fall into a tolerant and sympathetic spirit which is its own reward and justification. Looking back the other day on some recollections of my own, I was astonished to find how much I owed to such a residence; six weeks in one unpleasant country-side had done more, it seemed, to quicken and educate my sensibilities than many years in places that jumped more nearly with my inclination.

The country to which I refer was a level and treeless plateau, over which the winds cut like a whip. For miles

7. **sermon la stones.** A Shakespearean phrase, from *As You Like It,* II, i.

8. **psep and botanize.** A phrase of Wordsworth's, from "A Poet's Epitaph."

9. Wuthering" **Heights.** A novel by Emily Bronte (1847).

on miles it was the same. A river, indeed, fell into the sea near the town where I resided; but the valley of the river was shallow and bald for as far up as ever I had the heart to follow it. There were roads, certainly, but roads that had no beauty or interest; for, as there was no timber, and but little irregularity of surface, you saw your whole walk exposed to you from the beginning; there was nothing left to fancy, nothing to expect, nothing to see by the wayside, save here and there an unhomely-looking homestead, and here and there a solitary, spectacled stone-breaker; and you were only accompanied, as you went doggedly forward, by the gaunt telegraph-posts and the hum of the resonant wires in the keen sea-wind. To one who had learned to know their song in warm pleasant places by the Mediterranean, it seemed to taunt the country, and make it still bleaker by suggested contrast. Even the waste places by the side of the road were not, as Hawthorne liked to put it, "taken back to Nature" by any decent covering of vegetation. Wherever the land had the chance, it seemed to lie fallow. There is a certain tawny nudity of the South, bare sunburnt plains, colored like a lion, and hills clothed only in the blue transparent air; but this was of another description—this was the nakedness of the North; the earth seemed to know that it was naked, and was ashamed and cold.

It seemed to be always blowing on that coast. Indeed, this had passed into the speech of the inhabitants, and they saluted each other when they met with "Breezy, breezy," instead of the customary "Fine day" of farther south. These continual winds were not like the harvest breeze, that just keeps an equable pressure against your face as you walk, and serves to set all the trees talking over your head, or bring round you the smell of the wet surface of the country after a shower. They were of the bitter, hard, persistent sort, that interferes with sight and respiration, and makes the eyes sore. Even such winds as these have their own merit

in proper time and place. It is pleasant to see them brandish great masses of shadow. And what a power they have over the color of the world! How they ruffle the solid woodlands in their passage, and make them shudder and whiten like a single willow! There is nothing more vertiginous[10] than a wind like this among the woods, with all its sights and noises; and the effect gets between some painters and their sober eyesight, so that, even when the rest of their picture is calm, the foliage is colored like foliage in a gale. There was nothing, however, of this sort to be noticed in a country where there were no trees and hardly any shadows, save the passive shadows of clouds or those of rigid houses and walls. But the wind was nevertheless an occasion of pleasure; for nowhere could you taste more fully the pleasure of a sudden lull, or a place of opportune shelter. The reader knows what I mean; he must remember how, when he has sat himself down behind a dyke on a hillside, he delighted to hear the wind hiss vainly through all the crannies at his back; how his body tingled all over with warmth, and it began to dawn upon him, with a 6ort of slow surprise, that the country was beautiful, the heather purple, and the far-away hills all marbled with sun and shadow. Wordsworth, in a beautiful passage of *The Prelude,* has used this as a figure for the feeling struck in us by the quiet by-streets of London after the uproar of the great thoroughfares; and the comparison may be turned the other way with as good effect:

> Meanwhile the roar continues, till at length,
> Escaped as from an enemy, we turn
> Abruptly into some sequestered nook,
> Still as a sheltered place when winds blow loud!

I remember meeting a man once, in a train, who told me of what must have been quite the most perfect instance of this pleasure of escape. He had gone up, one sunny, windy

10. vertiginous. Dizzying

morning, to the top of a great cathedral somewhere abroad; I think it was Cologne Cathedral, the great unfinished marvel[11] by the Rhine; and after a long while in dark stairways, he issued at last into the sunshine, on a platform high above the town. At that elevation it was quite still and warm; the gale was only in the lower strata of the air, and he had forgotten it in the quiet interior of the church and during his long ascent; and so you may judge of his surprise when, resting his arms on the sunlit balustrade and looking over into the *Place*[12] far below him, he saw the good people holding on their hats and leaning hard against the wind as they walked. There is something, to my fancy, quite perfect in this little experience of my fellow-traveler's. The ways of men seem always very trivial to us when we find ourselves alone on a church top, with the blue sky and a few tall pinnacles, and see far below us the steep roofs and foreshortened buttresses, and the silent activity of the city streets; but how much more must they not have seemed so to him as he stood, not only above other men's business, but above other men's climate, in a golden zone like Apollo's.[13]

This was the sort of pleasure I found in the country of which I write. The pleasure was to be out of the wind, and to keep it in memory all the time, and hug oneself upon the shelter. And it was only by the sea that any such sheltered places were to be found. Between the black worm-eaten headlands there are little bights and havens, well screened from the wind and the commotion of the external sea, where the sand and weeds look up into the gazer's face from a depth of tranquil water, and the sea-birds, screaming and flickering from the ruined crags, alone disturb the silence and the sunshine. One such place has impressed itself on my memory beyond all others. On a rock by the water's edge,

11. unfinished marvel. The Cologne Cathedral was begun in 1248 and completed in 1880.

12. **Place.** Open square.

13. Apollo'*. The sun-god's.

old fighting men of the Norse breed had planted a double castle; the two stood wall to wall like semi-detached villas;[14] and yet feud had run so high between their owners that one, from out of a window, shot the other as he stood in his own doorway. There is something in the juxtaposition of these two enemies full of tragic irony. It is grim to think of bearded men and bitter women taking hateful counsel together about the two hall-fires at night, when the sea boomed against the foundations and the wild winter wind was loose over the battlements. And in the study we may reconstruct for ourselves some pale figure of what life then was. Not so when we are there; when we are there such thoughts come to us only to intensify a contrary impression, and association is turned against itself. I remember walking thither three afternoons in succession, my eyes weary with being set against the wind, and how, dropping suddenly over the edge of the down, I found myself in a new world of warmth and shelter. The wind, from which I had escaped, "as from an enemy," was seemingly quite local. It carried no clouds with it, and came from such a quarter that it did not trouble the sea within view. The two castles, black and ruinous as the rocks about them, were still distinguishable from these by something more insecure and fantastic in the outline, something that the last storm had left imminent and the next would demolish entirely. It would be difficult to render in words the sense of peace that took possession of me on these three afternoons. It was helped out, as I have said, by the contrast. The shore was battered and bemauled by previous tempests; I had the memory at heart of the insane strife of the pigmies who had erected these two castles and lived in them in mutual distrust and enmity, and knew I had only to put my head out of this little cup of shelter to find the hard wind blowing in my eyes; and yet there were the two great tracts of motionless blue air and

14. **semi-detached villas.** The usual term in Great Britain for what Americans call "double houses."

peaceful **sea looking on,** unconcerned **and apart, at the turmoil** of the present moment and the memorials of the precarious past. There is ever something transitory and fretful in the impression of a high wind under a cloudless sky; it seems to have no root in the constitution of things; it must speedily begin to faint and wither away like a cut flower. And on those days the thought of the wind and the thought of human life came very near together in my mind. Our noisy years did indeed seem moments in the being of the eternal silence:[15] and the wind, in the face of that great field of stationary blue, was as the wind of a butterfly's wing. The placidity of the sea was a thing likewise to be remembered. Shelley speaks of the sea as "hungering for calm,"[16] and in this place one learned *to* understand the phrase. Looking down into these green waters from the brol:en edge of the rock, or swimming leisurely in the sunshine, it seemed to me that they were enjoying their own tranquillity; and when now and again it was disturbed by a wind ripple on the surface, or the quick black passage of a fish far below, they settled back again (one could fancy) with relief.

On shore too, in the little nook of shelter, everything was. so subdued and still that the least particular struck in me a pleasurable surprise. The desultory crackling of the whin-pods[17] in the afternoon sun usurped the ear. The hot, sweet breath of the bank, that had been saturated all day long with sunshine, and now exhaled it into my face, was like the breath of a fellow-creature. I remember that I was haunted by two lines of French verse; in some dumb way they seemed to fit my surroundings and give expression to the contentment that was in me, and I kept repeating to myself—

IB. **Our noisy** years, etc. From Wordsworth's ode on "Intimations of Immortality"; not marked as a quotation because of its familiarity.

16. **"hungering** for **calm."** Prom Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound,* **Act** III.

17. **whin-pods.** The pods of grorse or furze.

Mon ooeur est un luth suspendu,
Sitot qu'on le touche, il resonne,[18]

I can give no reason why these lines came to me at this time; and for that very cause I repeat them here. For all I know, they may serve to complete the impression in the mind of the reader, as they were certainly a part of it for me.

And this happened to me in the place of all others where I liked least to stay. When I think of it I grow ashamed of my own ingratitude. "Out of the strong came forth sweetness."[19] There, in the bleak and gusty North, I received, perhaps, my strongest impression of peace. I saw the sea to be great and calm; and the earth, in that little corner, was all alive and friendly to me. So, wherever a man is, he will find something to please and pacify him; in the town he will meet pleasant faces of men and women, and see beautiful flowers at a window, or hear a cage-bird singing at the corner of the gloomiest street; and for the country, there is no country without some amenity—let him only look for it in the right spirit, and he will surely find.

^WALKING TOURS[1]

IT MUST not be imagined that a walking tour, as some would have us fancy, is merely a better or worse way of seeing the country. There are many ways of seeing landscape quite as good; and none more vivid, in spite of canting dilettantes, than from a railway train. But landscape on a walking tour is quite accessory. He who is indeed of the brotherhood does not voyage in quest of the picturesque, but of certain jolly humors—of the hope and spirit with which the march begins at morning, and the peace and spiritual repletion of the evening's rest. He cannot tell whether he puts his knapsack

18. "Mon coeur," etc. "My heart is a lute hung in the air; the monientany one touches it, it sounds."

L9. "Ont of the strong," etc. See *Judges* 14:14.

1. This essay was published in the *Cornhill Magagine* in 1876.

on, or takes it off, with more delight. The excitement of the departure puts him in key for that of the arrival. Whatever he does is not only a reward in itself, but will be further rewarded in the sequel; and so pleasure leads on to pleasure in an endless chain. It is this that so few can understand; they will either be always lounging or always at five miles an hour; they do not play off the one against the other, prepare all day for the evening, and all evening for the next day. And, above all, it is here that your overwalker fails of comprehension. His heart rises against those who drink their cura^oa[2] in liqueur glasses, when he himself can swill it in a brown John.[3] He will not believe that to walk this unconscionable distance is merely to stupefy and brutalize himself, and come to his inn, at night, with a sort of frost on his five wits, and a starless night of darkness in his spirit. Not for him the mild luminous evening of the temperate walker! He has nothing left of man but a physical need for bedtime and a double night-cap; and even his pipe, if he be a smoker, will be savorless and disenchanted. It is the fate of such an one to take twice as much trouble as is needed to obtain happiness, and miss the happiness in the end; he is the man of the proverb, in short, who goes further and fares worse.

Now, to be properly enjoyed, a walking tour should be gone upon alone. If you go in a company, or even in pairs, it is no longer a walking tour in anything but name; it is something else and more in the nature of a picnic. A walking tour should be gone upon alone, because freedom is of the essence; because you should be able to stop and *go* on, and follow this way or that, as the freak takes you; and because you must have your own pace, and neither trot alongside a champion walker, nor mince in time with a girl. And

2. curacoa. More properly curagao; a **South** dial, flavored with bitter orange.

3. brown John. Earthenware demijohn.

then you must be open to all impressions and let your thoughts take color from what you see. You should be as a pipe for any wind to play upon. "I cannot see the wit," says Hazlitt,[4] "of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country,"—which is the gist of all that can be said upon the matter. There should be no cackle of voices at your elbow, to jar on the meditative silence of the morning. And so long as a man is reasoning he cannot surrender himself to that fine intoxication that comes of much motion in the open air, that begins in a sort of dazzle and sluggishness of the brain, and ends in a peace that passes comprehension.

During the first day or so of any tour there are moments of bitterness, when the traveler feels more than coldly towards his knapsack, when he is half in a mind to throw it bodily over the hedge and, like Christian[5] on a similar occasion, "give three leaps and go on singing." And yet it soon acquires a property of easiness. It becomes magnetic; the spirit of the journey enters into it. And no sooner have you passed the strap over your shoulder than the lees of sleep are cleared from you, you pull yourself together with a shake, and fall at once into your stride. And surely, of all possible moods, this, in which a man takes the road, is the best. Of course, if he *will* keep thinking of his anxieties, if he *will* open the merchant Abudah's chest[6] and walk arm-in-arm with the hag—why, wherever he is, and whether he walk fast or slow, the chances are that he will not be happy. And so much the more shame to himself! There are perhaps thirty men setting forth at that same hour, and I would lay a large wager there is not another dull face among the thirty. It would be a fine thing to follow, in a coat of darkness, one

4. "X cannot see," etc. See page 166.

6. like Christian. In *The Pilgrim's Progress;* the scene is that in which Christian loses his burden at the Cross.

6. Abndah's chest. In a story from *Tales of the Genii,* by James Ridley, in which a man is represented as hag-ridden in his dreams until he learns virtue.

after another of these wayfarers, some summer morning, for the first few miles upon the road. This one, who walks fast, with a keen look in his eyes, is all concentrated in his own mind; he is up at his loom, weaving and weaving, to set the landscape to words. This one peers about, as he goes, among the grasses; he waits by the canal to watch the dragon-flies; he leans on the gate of the pasture, and cannot look enough upon the complacent kine. And here comes another, talking, laughing, and gesticulating to himself. His face changes from time to time, as indignation flashes from his eyes or anger clouds his forehead. He is composing articles, delivering orations, and conducting the most impassioned interviews, by the way. A little farther on, and it is as like as not he will begin to sing. And well for him, supposing him to be no great master in that art, if he stumble across no stolid peasant at a corner; for on such an occasion, I scarcely know which is the more troubled, or whether it is worse to suffer the confusion of your troubadour,[7] or the unfeigned alarm of your clown. A sedentary population, accustomed, besides, to the strange mechanical bearing of the common tramp, can in no wise explain to itself the gaiety of these passers-by. I knew one man who was arrested as a runaway lunatic, because, although a full-grown person with a red beard, he skipped as he went like a child. And you would be astonished if I were to tell you all the grave and learned heads who have confessed to me that, when on walking tours, they sang—and sang very ill—and had a pair of red ears when, as described above, the inauspicious peasant plumped into their arms from around a corner. And here, lest you should think I am exaggerating, is Hazlitt's own confession, from his essay *On Going a Journey,* which is so good that there should be a tax levied on all who have not read it:

"Give me the blue sky over my head," says he, "and the

7. **troubadour.** Public singer. **Clown** is the same as peasant, countryman.

green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy."

Bravo! After that adventure of my friend with the policeman, you would not have cared, would you, to publish that in the first person? But we have no bravery nowadays, and, even in books, must pretend to be as dull and foolish as our neighbors. It was not so with Hazlitt. And notice how learned he is (as, indeed, throughout the essay) in the theory of walking tours. He is none of your athletic men in purple stockings, who walk their fifty miles a day: three hours' march is his ideal. And then he must have a winding road, the epicure!

Yet there is one thing I object to in these words of his, one thing in the great master's practice that seems to me not wholly wise. I do not approve of that leaping and running. Both of these hurry the respiration; they both shake up the brain out of its glorious open-air confusion; and they both break the pace. Uneven walking is not so agreeable to the body, and it distracts and irritates the mind. Whereas, when once you have fallen into an equable stride, it requires no conscious thought from you to keep it up, and yet it prevents you from thinking earnestly of anything else. Like knitting, like the work of a copying clerk, it gradually neutralizes and sets to sleep the serious activity of the mind. We can think of this or that, lightly and laughingly, as a child thinks, or as we think in a morning doze; we can make puns or puzzle out acrostics, and trifle in a thousand ways with words and rhymes; but when it comes to honest work, when we come to gather ourselves together for an effort, we may sound the trumpet as loud and long as we please; the great barons of the mind will not rally to the standard, but sit, each one, at home, warming his hands over his own fire and brooding on his own private thought!

In the course of a day's walk, you see, there is much variance in the mood. From the exhilaration of the start to the happy phlegm of the arrival, the change is certainly great. As the day goes on, the traveler moves from the one extreme towards the other. He becomes more and more incorporated with the material landscape, and the open-air drunkenness grows upon him with great strides, until he posts along the road, and sees everything about him, as in a cheerful dream. The first is certainly brighter, but the second stage is the more peaceful. A man does not make so many articles towards the end, nor does he laugh aloud; but the purely animal pleasures, the sense of physical well-being, the delight of every inhalation, of every time the muscles tighten down the thigh, console him for the absence of the others, and bring him to his destination still content.

Nor must I forget to say a word on bivouacs. You come to a milestone on a hill, or some place where deep ways meet under trees; and off goes the knapsack, and down you sit to smoke a pipe in the shade. You sink into yourself, and the birds come round and look at you; and your smoke dissipates upon the afternoon under the blue dome of heaven; and the sun lies warm upon your feet, and the cool air visits your neck and turns aside your open shirt. If you are not happy, you must have an evil conscience. You may dally as long as you like by the roadside. It is almost as if the millennium were arrived, when we shall throw our clocks and watches over the housetop, and remember time and seasons no more. Not to keep hours for a lifetime is, I was going to say, to live forever. You have no idea, unless you have tried it, how endlessly long is a summer's day, that you measure out only by hunger, and bring to an end only when you are drowsy. I know a village where there are hardly any clocks, where no one knows more of the days of the week than by a sort of instinct for the *fete* on Sundays, and where only one person can tell you the day of the month, and she is generally wrong;

and if people were aware how slow Time journeyed in that village, and what armfuls of spare hours he gives, over and above the bargain, to its wise inhabitants, I believe there would be a stampede out of London, Liverpool, Paris, and a variety of large towns, where the clocks lose their heads, and shake the hours out each one faster than the other, as though they were all in a wager. And all these foolish pilgrims would each bring his own misery with him, in a watch-pocket! It is to be noticed, there were no clocks and no watches in the much-vaunted days before the flood. It follows, of course, there were no appointments, and punctuality was not yet thought upon. "Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure," says Milton, "he has yet one jewel left; ye cannot deprive him of his covetousness."[8] And so I would say of a modern man of business, you may do what you will for him, put him in Eden, give him the elixir of life—he has still a flaw at heart, he still has his business habits. Now, there is no time when business habits are more mitigated than on a walking tour. And so during these halts, as I say, you will feel almost free.

But it is at night, and after dinner, that the best hour comes. There are no such pipes to be smoked as those that follow a good day's march; the flavor of the tobacco is a thing to be remembered, it is so dry and aromatic, so full and fine. If you wind up the evening with grog, you will own there was never such grog; at every sip a jocund tranquillity spreads about your limbs, and sits easily in your heart. If you read a book—and you never do so save by fits and starts —you find the language strangely racy and harmonious; words take a new meaning; single sentences possess the ear for half an hour together; and the writer endears himself to you, at every page, by the nicest coincidence of sentiment. It seems as if it were a book you had written yourself in

8. "Though ye take," etc. From the *Areopagitica,* Milton's tract on the freedom of the press.

a dream. To all we have read on such **occasions** we **look back** with special favor. "It was **on** the 10th of **April, 1798,"** says Hazlitt, with amorous precision, "that **I** sat **down** to a volume of the *New Heloise,* at the Inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken." I should wish to quote more, for though we are mighty fine fellows nowadays, we cannot write like Hazlitt. And, talking of that, a volume of Hazlitt's essays would be a capital pocket-book on such a journey; so would a volume of Heine's songs; and for *Tristram Shandy*[9] I can pledge a fair experience.

If the evening be fine and warm, there is nothing better in life than to lounge before the inn door in the sunset, or lean over the parapet of the bridge, to watch the weeds and the quick fishes. It is then, if ever, that you taste Joviality[10] to the full significance of that audacious word. Your muscles are so agreeably slack, you feel so clean and so strong and so idle, that whether you move or sit still, whatever you do is done with pride and a kingly sort of pleasure. You fall in talk with any one, wise or foolish, drunk or sober. And it seems as if a hot walk purged you, more than of anything else, of all narrowness and pride, and left curiosity to play its part freely, as in a child or a man of science. You lay aside all your own hobbies, to watch provincial humors develop themselves before you, now as a laughable farce, and now grave and beautiful like an old tale.

Or perhaps you are left to your own company for the night, and surly weather imprisons you by the fire. You may remember how Burns,[11] numbering past pleasures, dwells upon the hours when he has been "happy thinking." It is a phrase that may well perplex a poor modern, girt about on every side

9. **Trlatrain Shandy.** A rambling novel by Sterne, published la 1759-67.

10. **Joviality.** The literal meaning is Jove-likeness.

11. **Burns.** In the song running:

> I hae been blithe wi' comrades dear;
> I hae been merry drinking;
> T hae been joyfu gath'rin gear;
> I hae been happy thinking.

by clocks and chimes, and haunted, even at night, by flaming dial-plates. For we are all so busy, and have so many far-off projects to realize, and castles in the fire to turn into solid, habitable mansions on a gravel soil, that we can find no time for pleasure trips into the Land of Thought and among the Hills of Vanity. Changed times, indeed, when we must sit all night, beside the fire, with folded hands; and a changed world for most of us, when we can pass the hours without discontent, and be happy thinking. We are in such haste to be doing, to be writing, to be gathering gear, to make our voice audible a moment in the derisive silence of eternity, that we forget that one thing, of which these are but the parts—namely, to live. We fall in love, we drink hard, we run to and fro upon the earth like frightened sheep. And now you are to ask yourself if, when all is done, you would not have been better to sit by the fire at home, and be happy thinking. To sit still and contemplate,—to remember the faces of women without desire, to be pleased by the great deeds of men without envy, to be everything and everywhere in sympathy, and yet content to remain where and what you are—is not this to know both wisdom and virtue, and to dwell with happiness? After all, it is not they who carry flags, but they who look upon it from a private chamber, who have the fun of the procession. And once you are at that, you are in the very humor of all social heresy. It is no time for shuffling, or for big, empty words. If you ask yourself what you mean by fame, riches or learning, the answer is far to seek; and you go back into that kingdom of light imaginations, which seem so vain in the eyes of Philistines[12] perspiring after wealth, and so momentous to those who are stricken with the disproportions of the world, and, in the face of the gigantic stars, cannot stop to split differences between two degrees of the infinitesimally small, such as a tobacco pipe or the Roman Empire, a million of money or a fiddlestick's end.

12. p*hilistines.* See note on page 325.

You lean from the window, your last pipe reeking whitely into the darkness, your body full of delicious pains, your mind enthroned in the seventh circle of content; when suddenly the mood changes, the weather-cock goes about, and you ask yourself one question more: whether, for the interval, you have been the wisest philosopher or the most egregious of donkeys? Human experience is not yet able to reply; but at least you have had a fine moment, and looked down upon all the kingdoms of the earth. And whether it was wise or foolish, tomorrow's travel will carry you, body and mind, into some different parish of the infinite.

AES TRIPLEX[1]

The changes wrought by death are in themselves so sharp and final, and so terrible and melancholy in their consequences, that the thing stands alone in man's experience and has no parallel upon earth. It outdoes all other accidents because it is the last of them. Sometimes it leaps suddenly upon its victims, like a Thug; sometimes it lays a regular siege, and creeps upon their citadel during a score of years. And when the business is done, there is sore havoc made in other people's lives, and a pin knocked out by which many subsidiary friendships hung together. There are empty chairs, solitary walks, and single beds at night. Again, in taking away our friends, death does not take them away utterly, but leaves behind a mocking, tragical, and soon intolerable residue, which must be hurriedly concealed. Hence a whole chapter of sights and customs striking to the mind, from the pyramids of Egypt

1. This essay was published in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1878. The title means "Triple Bronze," and is taken from an ode of Horace's, running: "He was armed with oak and triple bronze who first entrusted a frail bark to the fierce sea." The conclusion of the essay is not only regarded as one of the finest pieces of Stevenson's prose, but is especially valued as reflecting his own courageous character,—cheerful and persistent in labor throughout a life greatly handicapped by ill health.

to the gibbets and dule trees[2] of medieval Europe. The poorest persons have a bit of pageant going towards the tomb; memorial stones are set up over the least memorable; and, in order to preserve some show of respect for what remains of our old loves and friendships, we must accompany it with much grimly ludicrous ceremonial, and the hired undertaker parades before the door. All this, and much more of the same sort, accompanied by the eloquence of poets, has gone a great way to put humanity in error; nay, in many philosophies the error has been embodied and laid down with every circumstance of logic, although in real life the bustle and swiftness, in leaving people little time to think, have not left them time enough to go dangerously wrong in practice.

As a matter of fact, although few things are spoken of with more fearful whisperings than this prospect of death, few have less influence on conduct under healthy circumstances. We have all heard of cities of South America built upon the side of fiery mountains, and how, even in this tremendous neighborhood, the inhabitants are not a jot more impressed by the solemnity of mortal conditions than if they were delving gardens in the greenest corner of England. There are serenades and suppers, and much gallantry among the myrtles overhead; and meanwhile the foundation shudders underfoot, the bowels of the mountain growl, and at any moment living ruin may leap sky-high into the moonlight, and tumble man and his merry-making in the dust. In the eyes of very young people, and very dull old ones, there is something indescribably reckless and desperate in such a picture. It seems not credible that respectable married people, with umbrellas, should find appetite for a bit of supper within quite a long distance of a fiery mountain; ordinary life begins to smell of high-handed debauch when it is carried on so close to a catastrophe; and even cheese and salad, it seems, could

2. dule trees. Mourning: trees; that is, trees especially associated with lamentation for public calamities.

hardly be relished in such circumstances without something like a defiance of the Creator. It should be a place for nobody but hermits dwelling in prayer and maceration,[3] or mere born-devils drowning care in a perpetual carouse.

And yet, when one comes to think upon it calmly, the situation of these South American citizens forms only a very pale figure for the state of ordinary mankind. This world itself, traveling blindly and swiftly in overcrowded space, among a million other worlds traveling blindly and swiftly in contrary directions, may very well come by a knock that would set it into explosion like a penny squib. And what, pathologically looked at, is the human body, with all its organs, but a mere bagful of petards? The least of these is as dangerous to the whole economy as the ship's powder-magazine to the ship; and with every breath we breathe, and every meal we eat, we are putting one more of them in peril. If we clung as devotedly as some philosophers pretend we do to the abstract idea of life, or were half as frightened as they make out we are for the subversive accident that ends it all, the trumpets might sound by the hour and no one would follow them into battle—the blue-peter* might fly at the truck, but who would climb into a sea-going ship? Think (if these philosophers were right) with what a preparation of spirit we should affront the daily peril of the dinner-table—a deadlier spot than any battle-field in history, where the far greater proportion of our ancestors have miserably left their bones! What woman would ever be lured into marriage, so much more dangerous than the wildest sea? And what would it be to grow old? For, after a certain distance, every step we take in life we find the ice growing thinner below our feet, and all around us and behind us we see our contemporaries going through. By the time a man gets well into the seventies,

3. **maceration.** Self-denial resulting in loss of flesh.

4. **blue-peter . . . truck.** The blue-peter is a flag displayed to indicate that a vessel is ready to sail; the truck is the **masthead.**

his continued existence is a mere miracle; and when he lays his old bones in bed for the night, there is an overwhelming probability that he will never see the day. Do the old men mind it, as a matter of fact? Why, no. They were never merrier; they have their grog at night, and tell the raciest stories; they hear of the death of people about their own age, or even younger, not as if it was a grisly warning, but with a simple childlike pleasure at having outlived some one else; and when a draught might puff them out like a guttering candle, or a bit of a stumble shatter them like so much glass, their old hearts keep sound and unaffrighted, and they go on, bubbling with laughter, through years of man's age compared *to* which the valley at Balaklava[5] was as safe and peaceful as a village cricket-green on Sunday. It may fairly be questioned (if we look at the peril only) whether it was a much more daring feat for Curtius[6] to plunge into the gulf than for any old gentleman of ninety to doff his clothes and clamber into bed.

Indeed, it is a memorable subject for consideration, with what unconcern and gaiety mankind pricks on along the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The whole way is one wilderness of snares; and the end of it, for those who fear the last pinch, is irrevocable ruin. And yet we go spinning through it all, like a party for the Derby.[7] Perhaps the reader remembers one of the humorous devices of the deified Caligula:[8] how he encouraged a vast concourse of holiday-makers on *to* his bridge over Baiae bay, and, when they were in the height of their enjoyment, turned loose the Pretorian guards among the company and had them tossed into the sea. This is no bad minia-

5. **Balaklava.** The scene of "the Charge of the Light Brigade" in the Crimean War.

6. **Curtius.** A Roman who, according to legend, bravely leaped into a chasm which had been formed by an earthquake, because the soothsayers had intimated that only in some such way could it be closed.

7. **the Derby.** The greatest of the English race-meets.

8. **Caligula.** Emperor of Rome 37-41 A.D., who had himself worshipped as a god.

ture of the dealings of nature with the transitory race of man. Only, what a chequered picnic we have of it, even while it lasts! and into what great waters, not to be crossed by any swimmer, God's pale Pretorian throws us over in the end!

We live the time that a match flickers; we pop the cork of a ginger-beer bottle, and the earthquake swallows us on the instant. Is it not odd, is it not incongruous, is it not in the highest sense of human speech, incredible, that we should think so highly of the ginger-beer and regard so little the devouring earthquake? "The love of Life" and "the fear of Death" are two famous phrases that grow harder to understand the more we think about them. It is a well-known fact that an immense proportion of boat accidents would never happen if people held the sheet in their hands instead of making it fast; and yet, unless it be some martinet of a professional mariner, or some landsman with shattered nerves, every one of God's creatures makes it fast. A strange instance of man's unconcern and brazen boldness in the face of death !

We confound ourselves with metaphysical phrases, which we import into daily talk with noble inappropriateness. We have no idea of what death is, apart from its circumstances and some of its consequences to others; and although we have some experience of living, there is not a man on earth who has flown so high into abstraction as to have any practical guess at the meaning of the word "life." All literature, from Job and Omar Khayyam[9] to Thomas Carlyle or Walt Whitman, is but an attempt to look upon the human state with such largeness of view as shall enable us to rise from the consideration of living to the Definition of Life. And our sages give us about the best satisfaction in their power when they say that it is a vapor, or a show, or made out of the same stuff with dreams. Philosophy, in its more rigid sense, has

9. Omar Khayyam. A Persian poet of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, whose "Rubaiyat" is well known through the **translation** of Edward Fitzgerald.

been at the same work for ages; and after a myriad bald heads have wagged over the problem, and piles of words have been heaped one upon another into dry and cloudy volumes without end, philosophy has the honor of laying before us, with modest pride, her contribution towards the subject: that life is a Permanent Possibility of Sensation. Truly a fine result! A man may very well love beef, or hunting, or a woman; but surely, surely, not a Permanent Possibility of Sensation! He may be afraid of a precipice, or a dentist, or a large enemy with a club, or even an undertaker's man; but not, certainly, of abstract death. We may trick with the word "life" in its dozen senses until we are weary of tricking; we may argue in terms of all the philosophies on earth; but one fact remains true throughout—that we do not love life, in the sense that we are greatly preoccupied about its conservation; that we do not, properly speaking, love life at all, but living. Into the views of the least careful there will enter some degree of providence; no man's eyes are fixed entirely on the passing hour; but although we have some anticipation of good health, good weather, wine, active employment, love, and self-approval, the sum of these anticipations does not amount to anything like a general view of life's possibilities and issues; nor are those who cherish them most vividly at all the most scrupulous of their personal safety. To be deeply interested in the accidents of our existence, to enjoy keenly the mixed texture of human experience, rather leads a man to disregard precautions and risk his neck against a straw. For surely the love of living is stronger in an Alpine climber roping over a peril, or a hunter riding merrily at a stiff fence, than in a creature who lives upon a diet and walks a measured distance in the interest of his constitution.

There is a great deal of very vile nonsense talked upon both sides of the matter; tearing divines reducing life to the dimensions of a mere funeral procession, so short as to be hardly decent; and melancholy unbelievers yearning for the tomb as

if it were a world too far away. Both sides must feel a little ashamed of their performances now and again, when they draw in their chairs to dinner. Indeed, a good meal and a bottle of wine is an answer to most standard works upon the question. When a man's heart warms to his viands, he forgets a great deal of sophistry, and soars into a rosy zone of contemplation. Death may be knocking at the door, like the Commander's statue;[10] we have something else in hand, thank God, and let him knock. Passing bells are ringing the world over. All the world over, and every hour, some one is parting company with ail his aches and ecstasies. For us also the trap is laid. But we are so fond of life that we have no leisure to entertain the terror of death. It is a honeymoon with us all through, and none of the longest. Small blame to us if we give our whole hearts to this glowing bride of ours—to the appetites, to honor, to the hungry curiosity of the mind, to the pleasure of the eyes in nature, and the pride of our own nimble bodies.

We all of us appreciate the sensations; but as for caring about the Permanence of the Possibility, a man's head is generally very bald, and his senses very dull, before he comes to that. Whether we regard life as a lane leading to a dead wall—a mere bag's end,[11] as the French say—or whether we think of it as a vestibule or gymnasium, where we wait our turn and prepare our faculties for some more noble destiny; whether we thunder in a pulpit, or pule in little atheistic poetry-books, about its vanity and brevity; whether we look justly for years of health and vigor, or are about to mount into a Bath-chair[12] as a step towards the hearse; in each and all of these views and situations there is but one con-

10. **the Commander's statue.** In the legend of Don Juan, a partially historic villain of the fourteenth century. He had killed the Commander; later, when he had jeeringly insulted the statue of the murdered man, it was said to have descended from the pedestal and dragged him to destruction.

11. **bag's end.** French *cul de sac,* a short street with no outlet at one end.

12. **Bath-chair.** Invalid's chair, so named from its use at **Bath,** the watering-place.

elusion possible—that a man should stop his ears against paralyzing terror, and run the race that is set before him with a single mind. No one surely could have recoiled with more heartache and terror from the thought of death than our respected lexicographer;[13] and yet we know how little it affected his conduct, how wisely and boldly he walked, and in what a fresh and lively vein he spoke of life. Already an old man, he ventured on his Highland tour; and his heart, bound with triple brass, did not recoil before twenty-seven individual cups of tea. As courage and intelligence are the two qualities best worth a good man's cultivation, so it is the first part of intelligence to recognize our precarious estate in life, and the first part of courage to be not at all abashed before the fact. A frank and somewhat headlong carriage, not looking too anxiously before, not dallying in maudlin regret over the past, stamps the man who is well armored for this world.

And not only well armored for himself, but a good friend and a good citizen to boot. We do not go to cowards for tender dealing; there is nothing so cruel as panic; the man who has least fear for his own carcase has most time to consider others. That eminent chemist who took his walks abroad in tin shoes, and subsisted wholly upon tepid milk, had all his work cut out for him in considerate dealings with his own digestion. So soon as prudence has begun to grow up in the brain, like a dismal fungus, it finds its first expression in a paralysis of generous acts. The victim begins to shrink spiritually; he develops a fancy for parlors with a regulated temperature, and takes his morality on the principle of tin shoes and tepid milk. The care of one important body or soul becomes so engrossing that all the noises of the outer world begin to come thin and faint into the parlor with the regulated temperature, and the tin shoes *go* equably forward over blood and rain. To be otherwise is to ossify; and the scruple-monger ends by standing stock still. Now the man who has

13. **our respected lexicographer.** Dr. Samuel Johnson.

his heart on his sleeve, and a good whirling weathercock of a brain, who reckons his life as a thing to be dashingly used and cheerfully hazarded, makes a very different acquaintance of the world, keeps all his pulses going true and fast, and gathers impetus as he runs, until, if he be running towards anything better than wildfire, he may shoot up and become a constellation in the end. Lord look after his health, Lord have a care of his soul, says he; and he has at the key of the position, and swashes through incongruity and peril towards his aim. Death is on all sides of him with pointed batteries, as he is on all sides of all of us; unfortunate surprises gird him round; mim-mouthed friends and relations hold up their hands in quite a little elegiacal synod about his path: and what cares he for all this? Being a true lover of living, a fellow with something pushing and spontaneous on his inside, he must, like any other soldier, in any other stirring, deadly warfare, push on at his best pace until he touch the goal. "A peerage or Westminster Abbey!" cried Nelson[14] in his bright, boyish, heroic manner. These are great incentives; not for any of these, but for the plain satisfaction of living, of being about their business in some sort or other, do the brave, serviceable men of every nation tread down the nettle danger, and pass flyingly over all the stumbling-blocks of prudence. Think of the heroism of Johnson,—think of that superb indifference to mortal limitation that set him upon his dictionary, and carried him through triumphantly to the end! Who, if he were wisely considerate of things at large, would ever embark upon any work much more considerable than a halfpenny post-card? Who would project a serial novel, after Thackeray and Dickens[15] had each fallen in mid-course? Who would find heart enough to begin to live, if he dallied with the consideration of death?

14. **Nelson.** Admiral Horatio Nelson, later Lord Nelson, victor of the Battle of the Nile (1798).

15. **Thackeray and Dickens.** Both these writers were accustomed to publish novels in serial form, and left their last works unfinished at the time of their death.

And, after all, what sorry and pitiful quibbling all this is! To forego all the issues of living, in a parlor with a regulated temperature—as if that were not to die a hundred times over, and for ten years at a stretch! As if it were not to die in one's own lifetime, and without even the sad immunities of death! As if it were not to die, and yet be the patient spectators of our own pitiable change! The Permanent Possibility is preserved, but the sensations carefully held at arm's length, as if one kept a photographic plate in a dark chamber. It is better to lose health like a spendthrift than to waste it like a miser. It is better to live and be done with it than to die daily in the sick room. By all means begin your folio; even if the doctor does not give you a year,—even if he hesitates about a month, make one brave push and see what can be accomplished in a week. It is not only in finished undertakings that we ought to honor useful labor. A spirit goes out of the man who means execution, which outlives the most untimely ending. All who have meant good work with their who}e hearts, have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it. Every heart that has beat strong and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse behind it in the world, and bettered the tradition of mankind. And even if death catch people, like an open pitfall, and in mid-career, laying out vast projects, and planning monstrous foundations, flushed with hope, and their mouths full of boastful language, they should be at once tripped up and silenced; is there not something brave and spirited in such a termination? and does not life go down with a better grace, foaming in full body over a precipice, than miserably straggling to an end in sandy deltas ? When the Greeks made their fine saying that those whom the gods love die young, I cannot help believing they had this sort of death also in their eye. For surely, at whatever age it overtake the man, this is to die young. Death has not been suffered to take so much as an illusion from his heart. In the hot-fit of life, a-tiptoe on the highest point of

being, he passes at a bound on to the other side. The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory,[16] this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.

16. **trailing . . . clouds of glory.** A phrase from Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality."

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WASHINGTON IRVING

[WASHINGTON IRVING was born at New York in 1783; he received no formal education, but studied law, read abundantly, and very early began to write for a newspaper published by his brother. Later he had part in a periodical called *Salmagundi,* devoted to miscellaneous papers much in the manner of Addison's and Steele's *Spectator.* He made his first real reputation as an author with a humorous history of New York under the Dutch, commonly called *Knickerbocker's History of New York,* which appeared in 1809. From 1815 to 1832 he lived in Europe, devoting much of his time to the observation of men and manners in England, and making many friends there, thus fitting himself, both in his personality and his writings, to bring about a better feeling between America and the mother country than had been common since the Revolution. It was while in England that he wrote the *Sketch-Book* papers, published in America in 1819 under the pen-name of "Geoffrey Crayon," an imagined personality like Isaac Bickerstaff and "The Spectator"; this work was much admired in both countries, especially for the Hudson River sketches, "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." A journey to Spain resulted in other books, notably *The Conquest of Granada* and *The Alhambra* (1829 and 1832). Thereafter Irving resided in his own country, except for a period of absence as American Minister to Spain. He established a home near Sleepy Hollow, on the banks of the Hudson, where he lived quietly but in the enjoyment of no little popularity, and where he died in 1859. The character of Irving is well reflected in his essays: it was marked always by geniality, friendliness, and cultivated good taste, never by any remarkable originality or force.]

THE ART OF BOOK-MAKING[1]

I HAVE often wondered at the extreme fecundity of the press, and how it comes to pass that so many heads, on which Nature seems to have inflicted the curse of barrenness, yet teem with voluminous productions. As a man travels on,

1. This is one of the *Sketch-Book* papers, belonging to the group devoted to Irvingr's rambles in England. It is perhaps the best example of his imitation of the gentle satiric manner of Addison.

however, in the journey of life, his objects of wonder daily diminish, and he is continually finding out some very simple cause for some great matter of marvel. Thus have I chanced, in my peregrinations about this great metropolis, to blunder upon a scene which unfolded to me some of the mysteries of the book-making craft, and at once put an end to my astonishment.

1 was one summer's day loitering through the great saloons of the British Museum, with that listlessness with which one is apt to saunter about a room in warm weather; sometimes lolling over the glass cases of minerals, sometimes studying the hieroglyphics on an Egyptian mummy, and sometimes trying, with nearly equal success, to comprehend the allegorical paintings on the lofty ceilings. While I was gazing about in this idle way, my attention was attracted *to* a distant door, at the end of a suite of apartments. It was closed, but every now and then it would open, and some strange-favored[2] being, generally clothed in black, would steal forth, and glide through the rooms, without noticing any of the surrounding objects. There was an air of mystery about this that piqued my languid curiosity, and I determined to attempt the passage of that strait, and to explore the unknown regions that lay beyond. The door yielded to my hand, with all that facility with which the portals of enchanted castles yield to the adventurous knight-errant. I found myself in a spacious chamber, surrounded with great cases of venerable books. Above the cases, and just under the cornice, were arranged a great number of black-looking portraits of ancient authors. About the room were placed long tables, with stands for reading and writing, at which sat many pale, cadaverous personages, poring intently over dusty volumes, rummaging among mouldy manuscripts, and taking copious notes of their contents. The most hushed stillness reigned through this mysterious apartment, excepting that you might hear the racing of pens over sheets of paper,

2. strange-favored. Odd-looking-; *favor* formerly meant "face."

or, occasionally, the deep sigh of one of these sages, as he shifted his position to turn over the page of an old folio,—doubtless arising from that hollowness and flatulency incident to learned research.

Now and then one of these personages would write something on a small slip of paper, and ring a bell, whereupon a familiar[3] would appear, take the paper in profound silence, glide out of the room, and return shortly, loaded with ponderous tomes, upon which the other would fall, tooth and nail, with famished voracity. I had no longer a doubt that I had happened upon a body of magi, deeply engaged in the study of occult sciences. The scene reminded me of an old Arabian tale, of a philosopher who was shut up in an enchanted library, in the bosom of a mountain, that opened only once a year; where he made the spirits of the place obey his commands, and bring him books of all kinds of dark knowledge, so that at the end of a year, when the magic portal once more swung open on its hinges, he issued forth so versed in forbidden lore as to be able to soar above the heads of the multitude, and to control the powers of nature.

My curiosity being now fully aroused, I whispered to one of the familiars, as he was about to leave the room, and begged an interpretation of the strange scene before me. A few words were sufficient for the purpose: I found that these mysterious personages, whom I had mistaken for magi, were principally authors, and were in the very act of manufacturing books. I was, in fact, in the reading-room of the great British Library, an immense collection of volumes of all ages and languages, many of which are now forgotten, and most of which are seldom read. To these sequestered pools of obsolete literature, therefore, do many modern authors repair, and draw buckets full of classic lore, or "pure English, undefined,"[4] wherewith to swell their own scanty rills of thought.

3. familiar. Attendant.

4. English undefiled. An allusion to Spenser's characterization of Chaucer as a "well of English undefiled."

Being now in possession of the secret, **I sat down** in **a** corner, and watched the process of this book manufactory. I noticed one lean, bilious-looking wight, who sought none but the most worm-eaten volumes, printed in black-letter.[5] He was evidently constructing some work of profound erudition, that would be purchased by every man who wished to be thought learned, placed upon a conspicuous shelf of his library, or laid open upon his table—but never read. I observed him, now and then, draw a large fragment of biscuit out of his pocket, and gnaw; whether it was his dinner, or whether he was endeavoring to keep off that exhaustion of the stomach produced by much pondering over dry works, I leave harder students than myself to determine.

There was one dapper little gentleman in bright-colored clothes, with a chirping, gossiping expression of countenance, who had all the appearance of an author on good terms with his bookseller. After considering him attentively, I recognized in him a diligent getter-up of miscellaneous works, which bustled off well with the trade. I was curious to see how he manufactured his wares. He made more show and stir of business than any of the others; dipping into various books, fluttering over the leaves of manuscripts, taking a morsel out of one, a morsel out of another, "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little."[6] The contents of his book seemed to be as heterogeneous as those of the witches' cauldron in *Macbeth.* It was here a finger and there a thumb, toe of frog and blind-worm's sting, with his own gossip poured in like "baboon's blood," to make the medley "slab[7] and good."

After all, thought I, may not this pilfering disposition be implanted in authors for wise purposes? May it not be the way in which Providence has taken care that the seeds of knowledge and wisdom shall be preserved from age to age,

5. **black-Utter.** Gothic or Old English type, commonly used from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries.

6. **line upon line,** etc. See *Isaiah* 28:13.

7. **slab.** Thick, glutinous.

in spite of the inevitable decay of the works in which they were first produced? We see that Nature has wisely, though whimsically, provided for the conveyance of seeds from clime to clime, in the maws of certain birds; so that animals which in themselves are little better than carrion, and apparently the lawless plunderers of the orchard and the corn-field, are in fact Nature's carriers to disperse and perpetuate her blessings. In like manner, the beauties and fine thoughts of ancient and obsolete writers are caught up by these flights of predatory authors, and cast forth, again to flourish and bear fruit in a remote and distant tract of time. Many of their works, also, undergo a kind of metempsychosis,[8] and spring up under new forms. What was formerly a ponderous history revives in the shape of a romance,—an old legend changes into a modern play,—and a sober philosophical treatise furnishes the body for a whole series of bouncing and sparkling essays. Thus it is in the clearing of our American woodlands; where we burn down a forest of stately pines, a progeny of dwarf oaks start up in their place; and we never see the prostrate trunk of a tree, mouldering into soil, but it gives birth to a whole tribe of fungi.

Let us not, then, lament over the decay and oblivion into which ancient writers descend; they do but submit to the great law of nature, which declares that all sublunary shapes of matter shall be limited in their duration, but which decrees also that their elements shall never perish. Generation after generation, both in animal and vegetable life, passes away, but the vital principle is transmitted to posterity, and the species continue to flourish. Thus also do authors beget authors, and, having produced a numerous progeny, in a good old age they sleep with their fathers,—that is to say, with the authors who preceded them, and from whom they had stolen.

Whilst I was indulging in these rambling fancies I had

8. **metempsychosis.** Change of soul into another body.

leaned my head against a pile of reverend **folios.** Whether it was owing to the soporific emanations from these works, or to the profound quiet of the room, or to the lassitude arising from much wandering, or to an unlucky habit of napping at improper times and places with which I am grievously afflicted, so it was that I fell into a doze. Still, however, my imagination continued busy, and indeed the same scene remained before my mind's eye, only a little changed in some of the details. I dreamt that the chamber was still decorated with the portraits of ancient authors, but the number was increased. The long tables had disappeared, and in place of the sage magi I beheld a ragged, threadbare throng, such as may be seen plying about the great repository of cast-off clothes, Monmouth Street. Whenever they seized upon a book, by one of those incongruities common to dreams, methought it turned into a garment of foreign or antique fashion, with which they proceeded to equip themselves. I noticed, however, that no one pretended to clothe himself from any particular suit, but took a sleeve from one, a cape from another, a skirt from a third, thus decking himself out piecemeal, while some of his original rags would peep out from among his borrowed finery.

There was a portly, rosy, well-fed parson, whom I observed ogling several mouldy polemical writers through an eye-glass. He soon contrived to slip on the voluminous mantle of one of the old fathers, and, having purloined the gray beard of another, endeavored to look exceedingly wise; but the smirking commonplace of his countenance set at naught all the trappings of wisdom. One sickly looking gentlemen was busied embroidering a very flimsy garment with gold thread drawn out of several old court dresses of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Another had trimmed himself magnificiently from an illuminated manuscript, had stuck a nosegay in his bosom, culled from "The Paradise of Dainty Devices,"[9] and, having

9. **Paradise** of **Dainty Devices.** A once famous collection of lyrics, published 1576.

put Sir Philip Sidney's[10] hat on one side of his head, strutted off with an exquisite air of vulgar elegance. A third, who was but of puny dimensions, had bolstered himself out bravely with the spoils from several obscure tracts of philosophy, so that he had a very imposing front; but he was lamentably tattered in rear, and I perceived that he had patched his small-clothes with scraps of parchment from a Latin author.

There were some well-dressed gentlemen, it is true, who only helped themselves to a gem or so, which sparkled among their own ornaments without eclipsing them. Some, too, seemed to contemplate the costumes of the old writers, merely to imbibe their principles of taste, and to catch their air and spirit; but I grieve to say that too many were apt to array themselves, from top to toe, in the patchwork manner I have mentioned. I should not omit to speak of one genius, in drab breeches and gaiters, and an Arcadian[11] hat, who had a violent propensity to the pastoral, but whose rural wanderings had been confined to the classic haunts of Primrose Hill[12] and the solitudes of the Regent's Park. He had decked himself in wreaths and ribbons from all the old pastoral poets, and, hanging his head on one side, went about with a fantastical, lackadaisical air, "babbling about green fields."[13] But the personage that most struck my attention was a pragmatical old gentleman, in clerical robes, with a remarkably large and square but bald head. He entered the room wheezing and puffing, elbowed his way through the throng with a look of sturdy self-confidence, and, having laid hands upon a thick Greek quarto, clapped it upon his head, and swept majestically away in a formidable frizzled wig.

In the height of this literary masquerade, a cry suddenly resounded from every side, of "Thieves! thieves!" I looked,

10. **Sir Philip Sidney.** One of the most distinguished lyric poets of Queen Elizabeth's reign.

11. **Arcadian.** Of pastoral style.

12. **Primrose BUI . . . Regent's Park.** In London.

13. **babbling- about green fields.** From the story of **the** death of Falstaff, in Shakespeare's *Henry Fifth,* II, iii.

and lo! the portraits about the walls became animated! The old authors thrust out first a head, then a shoulder, from the canvas, looked down curiously, for an instant, upon the motley throng, and then descended, with fury in their eyes, to claim their rifled property. The scene of scampering and hubbub that ensued baffles all description. The unhappy culprits endeavored in vain to escape with their plunder. On one side might be seen half a dozen old monks, stripping a modern professor; on another, there was sad devastation carried into the ranks of modern dramatic writers. Beaumont and Fletcher,[14] side by side, raged round the field like Castor and Pollux,[15] and sturdy Ben Jonson[16] enacted more wonders than when a volunteer with the army in Flanders. As to the dapper little compiler of farragos,[17] mentioned some time since, he had arrayed himself in as many patches and colors as Harlequin,[18] and there was as fierce a contention of claimants about him as about the dead body of Patroclus.[10] I was grieved to see many men, to whom I had been accustomed to look up with awe and reverence, fain to steal off with scarce a rag to cover their nakedness. Just then my eye was caught by the pragmatical old gentleman in the Greek grizzled wig, who was scrambling away in sore affright with half a score of authors in full cry after him. They were close upon his haunches; in a twinkling off went his wig; at every turn some strip of raiment was peeled away; until in a few moments, from his domineering pomp he shrunk into a little pursy, "chopp'd bald shot,"[20] and made his exit with only a few tags and rags fluttering at his back.

14. **Beaumont and Fletcher.** Collaborating- dramatists of the early seventeenth century.
15. **Castor and Pollux.** Twin brother warriors of Greek legendry.
16. **Ben Jonson.** Elizabethan dramatist, who fought in Flanders as a young man.
17. **farragos.** Medleys.
18. **Harlequin.** An Italian clown.
19. **Patroclus.** A Greek warrior slain by Hector at Troy.
20. **chopp'd bald shot.** A Shakespearean phrase *(Henry Fourth,* Part 2, III, ii).

There was something so ludicrous in the catastrophe of this learned Theban,[21] that I burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, which broke the whole illusion. The tumult and the scuffle were at an end. The chamber resumed its usual appearance. The old authors shrunk back into their picture-frames, and hung in shadowy solemnity along the walls. In short, I found myself wide awake in my corner, with the whole assemblage of bookworms gazing at me with astonishment. Nothing of the dream had been real but my burst of laughter, a sound never before heard in that grave sanctuary, and so abhorrent to the ears of wisdom as to electrify the fraternity. The librarian now stepped up to me, and demanded whether I had a card of admission. At first I did not comprehend him, but I soon found that the library was a kind of literary "preserve," subject to game laws, and that no one must presume to hunt there without special license and permission. In a word, I stood convicted of being an arrant poacher, and was glad to make a precipitate retreat, lest I should have a whole pack of authors let loose upon me.

21, learned Tneban. Greek scholar. (A phrase of the mad king's in Shakespeare's *Lear,* III, iv).

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

[RALPH WALDO EMERSON was born at Boston in 1803, and was graduated from Harvard College in 1821. For a time he taught, then took a theological course and entered the Unitarian ministry; but in 1832 he resigned his Boston pastorate because of conscientious scruples regarding certain church forms which he could not observe in the traditional manner. Henceforth ha felt free to devote himself to the things of the spirit, apart from all organized external life of any kind; and this was characteristic of his whole philosophy—that the inner life is the only-important one. He attracted attention as a thinker by his Phi Beta Kappa oration at Harvard in 1837, and by later addresses which made him in some demand as a public speaker, though he was never an orator in the usual sense. In 1847 he lectured in England. He published various volumes of essays and addresses, including also a few choice poems; he associated himself with other New England thinkers of the so-called "Transcendental" group in the periodical named *The Dial* (see also below, under Thoreau) and in a little "School of Philosophy" at Concord, where he lived. In all these ways his influence on the thought of his time was out of all proportion to the Importance of any single book that he published. In a spiritual way he was also associated with the anti-slavery movement, but his life had no events of a strictly public character. He died at his Concord home in 1882.]

LOVE[1]

Every promise of the soul has innumerable fulfillments; each of its joys ripens into a new want. Nature, uncontainable, flowing, forelooking, in the first sentiment of kindness

1. This essay was originally the fourth lecture in the course on "Human Life," delivered in 1838-39. It is *one* of the noblest discussions of the subject in our language, and, in particular, one of the best expressions of the teaching of "Platonism" respecting the relations of body and soul,—that is, the doctrines which go back to the writings of Plato and his followers. Plato, for example taught that "the end of all liberal training should be the love of beauty," because the beauty of earthly forms is an image or copy designed to lead us to the divine idea of beauty which originated them. See page 377 for Emerson's development of the same thought

anticipates already a benevolence which shall lose all particular regards in its general light. The introduction to this felicity is in a private and tender relation of one to one, which is the enchantment of human life; which, like a certain divine rage and enthusiasm, seizes on man at one period and works a revolution in his mind and body; unites him to his race, pledges him to the domestic and civic relations, carries him with new sympathy into nature, enhances the power of the senses, opens the imagination, adds to his character heroic and sacred attributes, establishes marriage, and gives permanence to human society.

The natural association of the sentiment of love with the heyday of the blood seems to require that in order to portray it in vivid tints, which every youth and maid should confess to be true to their throbbing experience, one must not be too old. The delicious fancies of youth reject the least savor of a mature philosophy, as chilling with age and pedantry their purple bloom. And therefore I know I incur the imputation of unnecessary hardness and stoicism from those who compose the Court and Parliament of Love. But from these formidable censors I shall appeal to my seniors. For it is to be considered that this passion of which we speak, though it begin with the young, yet forsakes not the old, or rather suffers no one who is its servant to* grow old, but makes the aged participators of it not less than the tender maiden, though in a different and nobler sort. For it is a fire that, kindling its first embers in the narrow nook of a private bosom, caught from a wandering spark out of another private heart, glows and enlarges until it warms and beams upon multitudes of men and women, upon the universal heart of all, and so lights up the whole world and all nature with its generous flames. It matters not therefore whether we attempt to describe the passion at twenty, thirty, or at eighty years. He who paints it at the first period will lose some of its later, he who paints it at the last, some of its earlier traits. Only it is to be hoped

that by patience and the Muses' aid we may attain to that inward view of the law which shall describe a truth ever young and beautiful, so central that it shall commend itself to the eye at whatever angle beholden.

And the first condition is that we must leave a too close and lingering adherence to facts, and study the sentiment as it appeared in hope, and not in history. For each man sees his own life defaced and disfigured, as the life of man is not to his imagination. Each man sees over his own experience a certain stain of error, whilst that of other men looks fair and ideal. Let any man go back to those delicious relations which make the beauty of his life, which have given him sincerest instruction and nourishment, he will shrink and moan. Alas! I know not why, but infinite compunctions embitter in mature life the remembrances of budding joy, and cover every beloved name. Every thing is beautiful seen from the point of the intellect, or as truth. But all is sour if seen as experience. Details are melancholy; the plan is seemly and noble. In the actual world—the painful kingdom of time and place—dwell care and canker and fear. With thought, with the ideal, is immortal hilarity, the rose of joy. Round it all the Muses sing. But grief cleaves to names and persons and the partial interests of today and yesterday.

The strong bent of nature is seen in the proportion which this topic of personal relations usurps in the conversation of society. What do we wish to know of any worthy person so much as how he has sped in the history of this sentiment? What books in the circulating library circulate? How we glow over these novels of passion, when the story is told with any spark of truth and nature! And what fastens attention, in the intercourse of life, like any passage betraying affection between two parties? Perhaps we never saw them before and never shall meet them again. But we see them exchange a glance or betray a deep emotion, and we are no longer strangers. We understand them and take the warmest interest in the develop-

ment of the romance. All mankind love a lover. The earliest demonstrations of complacency and kindness are nature's most winning pictures. It is the dawn of civility and grace in the coarse and rustic. The rude village boy teases the girls about the schoolhouse door;—but today he comes running into the entry and meets one fair child disposing her satchel; he holds her books to help her, and instantly it seems to him as if she removed herself from him infinitely, and was a sacred precinct Among the throng of girls he runs rudely enough, but one alone distances him; and these two little neighbors, that were so close just now, have learned to respect each other's personality. Or who can avert his eyes from the engaging, half-artful, half-artless ways of school-girls who go into the country shops to buy a skein of silk or a sheet of paper, and talk half an hour about nothing with the broad-faced, good-natured shop-boy. In the village they are on a perfect equality, which love delights in, and without any coquetry the happy, affectionate nature of woman flows out in this pretty gossip. The girls may have little beauty, yet plainly do they establish between them and the good boy the most agreeable, confiding relations; what with their fun and their earnest, about Edgar and Jonas and Almira, and who was invited to the party, and who danced at the dancing-school, and when the singing-school would begin, and other nothings concerning which the parties cooed. By and by that boy wants a wife, and very truly and heartily will he know where to find a sincere and sweet mate, without any risk such as Milton deplores[2] as incident to scholars and great men.

I have been told that in some public discourses of mine my reverence for the intellect has made me unjustly cold to the personal relations. But now I almost shrink at the remembrance of such disparaging words. For persons are

2. **such as Milton deplores.** In arguments which Milton wrote in behalf of liberal divorce laws. "For all the wariness can be used," he said, "it may yet befall a discreet man to be mistaken in his choice"; and "the soberest and best governed *men* are least practiced in these affairs."

love's world, and the coldest philosopher cannot recount the debt of the young soul wandering here in nature to the power of love, without being tempted to unsay, as treasonable to nature, aught derogatory to the social instincts. For though the celestial rapture falling out of heaven seizes only upon those of tender age, and although a beauty overpowering all analysis or comparison and putting us quite beside ourselves we can seldom see after thirty years, yet the remembrance of these visions outlasts all other remembrances, and is a wreath of flowers on the oldest brows. But here is a strange fact; it may seem to many men, in revising their experience, that they have no fairer page in their life's book than the delicious memory of some passages wherein affection contrived to give a witchcraft, surpassing the deep attraction of its own truth, to a parcel of accidental and trivial circumstances. In looking backward they may find that several things which were not the charm have more reality to this groping memory than the charm itself which embalmed them. But be our experience in particulars what it may, no man ever forgot the visitations of that power to his heart and brain, which created ail things anew; which was the dawn in him of music, poetry, and art; which made the face of nature radiant with purple light, the morning and the night varied enchantments; when a single tone of one voice could make the heart bound, and the most trivial circumstance associated with one form is put in the amber of memory; when he became all eye when one was present, and all memory when one was gone; when the youth becomes a watcher of windows and studious of a glove, a veil, a ribbon, or the wheels of a carriage; when no place is too solitary and none too silent for him who has richer company and sweeter conversation in his new thoughts than any old friends, though best and purest, can give him; for the figures, the motions, the words of the beloved object are not, like other images, written in water, but, as Plutarch said, "enamelled in fire," and make the study of midnight:—

Thou art not gone being gone, where'er thou art,
Thou leav'st in him thy watchful eyes, in him thy loving heart.[3]

In the noon and the afternoon of life we still throb at the recollection of days when happiness was not happy enough but must be drugged with the relish of pain and fear; for he touched the secret of the matter who said of love,—

All other pleasures are not worth its pains:[4]

and when the day was not long enough, but the night too must be consumed in keen recollections; when the head boiled all night on the pillow with the generous deed it resolved on; when the moonlight was a pleasing fever and the stars were letters and the flowers ciphers and the air was coined into song; when all business seemed an impertinence, and ail the men and women running to and fro in the streets, mere pictures.

The passion rebuilds the world for the youth. It makes all things alive and significant. Nature grows conscious. Every bird on the boughs of the tree sings now to his heart and soul. The notes are almost articulate. The clouds have faces as he looks on them. The trees of the forest, the waving grass and the peeping flowers have grown intelligent; and he almost fears to trust them with the secret which they seem to invite. Yet nature soothes and sympathizes. In the green solitude he finds a dearer home than with men:—

Fountain-heads and pathless groves,
Places which pale passion loves,
Moonlight walks, when all the fowls
Are safely housed, save bats and owls,
A midnight bell, a passing groan,—
These are the sounds we feed upon.[5]

3. **Tnon art not gone,** etc. From the Epithalamium, or marriage-ode, written by John Donne for the marriage of the Earl of Somerset, 1613.

4. **All other pleasures,** etc. Perhaps a misquotation from a song in Dryden's *Tyrannic Love:*

Pains of love be sweeter far
Than all other pleasures are.

5. **Fountain-beads,** etc. From a song in Fletcher's *Nice Valour.*

Behold there in the wood the line madman! He is a palace of sweet sounds and sights; he dilates; he is twice a man; he walks with arms akimbo; he soliloquizes; he accosts the grass and the trees; he feels the blood of the violet, the clover, and the lily in his veins; and he talks with the brook that wets his foot.

The heats that have opened his perceptions of natural beauty have made him love music and verse. It is a fact often observed, that men have written good verses under the inspiration of passion, who cannot write well under any other circumstances.

The like force has the passion over all his nature. It expands the sentiment; it makes the clown[6] gentle and gives the coward heart. Into the most pitiful and abject it will infuse a heart and courage to defy the world, so only it have the countenance of the beloved object. In giving him to another it still more gives him to himself. He is a new man, with new perceptions, new and keener purposes, and a religious solemnity of character and aims. He does not longer appertain to his family and society; *he* is somewhat; *he* is a person; *he* is a soul.

And here let us examine a little nearer the nature of that influence which is thus potent over the human youth. Beauty, whose revelation to man we now celebrate, welcome as the sun wherever it pleases to shine, which pleases everybody with it and with themselves, seems sufficient to itself. The lover cannot paint his maiden to his fancy poor and solitary. Like a tree in flower, so much soft, budding, informing loveliness is society for itself; and she teaches his eye why Beauty was pictured with Loves and Graces attending her steps. Her existence makes the world rich. Though she extrudes all other persons from his attention as cheap and unworthy, she indemnifies him by carrying out her own being into somewhat impersonal, large, mundane, so that the maiden stands to him for a representative of all select things and virtues. For that

6. **the down.** The rustic boor.

reason the lover never sees personal resemblances in his mistress to her kindred or to others. His friends find in her a likeness to her mother, or her sisters, or to persons not of her blood. The lover sees no resemblance except to summer evenings and diamond mornings, to rainbows and the song of birds.

The ancients called beauty the flowering of virtue. Who can analyze the nameless charm which glances from one and another face and form? We are touched with emotions of tenderness and complacency, but we cannot find whereat this dainty emotion, this wandering gleam, points. It is destroyed for the imagination by any attempt to refer it to organization. Nor does it point to any relations of friendship or love known and described in society, but, as it seems to me, to a quite other and unattainable sphere, to relations of transcendent delicacy and sweetness, to what roses and violets hint and foreshow. We cannot approach beauty. Its nature is like opaline dove's-neck lusters, hovering and evanescent. Herein it resembles the most excellent things, which all have this rainbow character, defying all attempts at appropriation and use. What else did Jean Paul Richter[7] signify, when he said to music, "Away I away! thou speakest to me of things which in all my endless life I have not found and shall not find." The same fluency may be observed in every work of the plastic arts. The statue is then beautiful when it begins to be incomprehensible, when it is passing out of criticism and can no longer be defined by compass and measuring-wand, but demands an active imagination to go with it and to say what it is in the act of doing. The god or hero of the sculptor is always represented in a transition *from* that which is representable to the senses, *to* that which is not. Then first it ceases to be a stone. The same remark holds of painting. And of poetry the success is not attained when it lulls and satisfies, but when it astonishes and fires us with new endeavors after the unattainable. Concerning it Land or

7. Jean Paul Richter. A German author (died 1825).

inquires "whether it is not to be referred to some purer state of sensation and existence."

In like manner, personal beauty is then first charming and itself when it dissatisfies us with any end; when it becomes a story without an end; when it suggests gleams and visions and not earthly satisfactions; when it makes the beholder feel his unworthiness; when he cannot feel his right to it, though he were Caesar; he cannot feel more right to it than to the firmament and the splendors of a sunset.

Hence arose the saying, "If I love you, what is that to you?" We say so because we feel that what we love is not in your will, but above it. It is not you, but your radiance. It is that which you know not in yourself and can never know.

This agrees well with that high philosophy of Beauty which the ancient writers[8] delighted in; for they said that the soul of man, embodied here on earth, went roaming up and down in quest of that other world of its own out of which it came into this, but was soon stupefied by the light of the natural sun, and unable to see any other objects than those of this world, which are but shadows of real things. Therefore the Deity sends the glory of youth before the soul, that it may avail itself of beautiful bodies as aids to its recollection of the celestial good and fair; and the man beholding such a person in the female sex runs to her and finds the highest joy in contemplating the form, movement, and intelligence of this person, because it suggests to him the presence of that which indeed is within the beauty, and the cause of the beauty.

If, however, from too much conversing with material objects, the soul was gross, and misplaced its satisfaction in the body, it reaped nothing but sorrow; body being unable to fulfill the promise which beauty holds out; but if, accepting the hint of these visions and suggestions which beauty makes to his mind, the soul passes through the body and falls to admire strokes

8. the ancient writers, Plato and the Platonists; see note on page 369.

of character, and the lovers contemplate one another in their discourses and their actions, then they pass to the true palace of beauty, more and more inflame their love of it, and by this love extinguishing the base affection,[9] as the sun puts out fire by shining on the hearth, they become pure and hallowed. By conversation with that which is in itself excellent, magnanimous, lowly, and just, the lover comes to a warmer love of these nobilities, and a quicker apprehension of them. Then he passes from loving them in one to loving them in all, and so is the one beautiful soul only the door through which he enters to the society of all true and pure souls. In the particular society of his mate he attains a clearer sight of any spot, any taint which her beauty has contracted from this world, and is able to point it out, and this with mutual joy that they are now able, without offense, to indicate blemishes and hindrances in each other, and give to each all help and comfort in curing the same. And beholding in many souls the traits of the divine beauty, and separating in each soul that which is divine from the taint which it has contracted in the world, the lover ascends to the highest beauty, to the love and knowledge of the Divinity, by steps on this ladder of created souls.

Somewhat like this have the truly wise told us of love in all ages. The doctrine is not old, nor is it new. If Plato, Plutarch, and Apuleius taught it, so have Petrarch, Angelo, and Milton.[10] It awaits a truer unfolding in opposition and rebuke to that subterranean prudence which presides at marriages with words that take hold of the upper world, whilst one eye is prowling in the cellar; so that its gravest discourse

9. **base** affection. The lower or basic (fundamental to the higher).

10. Plutarch, etc. Plutarch, the Greek biographer and essayist, of the first century A. D.; Apuleius a Roman philosopher of the Platonic school, of the second century; Petrarch the Italian poet of the fourteenth century, who devoted much of his verse to the Platonic view of love; **Angelo** the sculptor (Michelangelo Buonarotti) of the sixteenth century, who also wrote platonic love poetry.

has a savor of hams and powdering-tubs.[11] Worst, when this sensualism intrudes into the education of young women, and withers the hope and affection of human nature by teaching that marriage signifies nothing but a housewife's thrift, and that woman's life has no other aim.

But this dream of love, though beautiful, is only one scene in our play. In the procession of the soul from within outward, it enlarges its circles ever, like the pebble thrown into the pond, or the light proceeding from an orb. The rays of the soul alight first on things nearest, on every utensil and toy, on nurses and domestics, on the nouse and yard and passengers, on the circle of household acquaintance, on politics and geography and history. But things are ever grouping themselves according to higher or more interior laws. Neighborhood, size, numbers, habits, persons, lose by degrees their power over us. Cause and effect, real affinities, the longing for harmony between the soul and the circumstance, the progressive, idealizing instinct, predominate later, and the step backward from the higher to the lower relations is impossible. Thus even love, which is the deification of persons, must become more impersonal every day. Of this at first it gives no hint. Little think the youth and maiden who are glancing at each other across crowded rooms with eyes so full of mutual intelligence, of the precious fruit long hereafter to proceed from this new, quite external stimulus. The work of vegetation begins first in the irritability of the bark and leaf-buds. From exchanging glances, they advance to acts of courtesy, of gallantry, then to fiery passion, to plighting troth and marriage. Passion beholds its object as a perfect unit. The soul is wholly embodied, and the body is wholly ensouled:—

> Her pure and eloquent blood
> Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
> That one might almost say her body thought.12

11. **powdering-tubs.** Vessels for the salting or "corning" of beef.

12. **Her pure and eloquent blood,** etc. From John Donne's poem called "The Second Anniversary," in memory of Mistress Elizabeth Drury.

Romeo, if dead, should be cut up into little stars to make the heavens fine.[13] Life, with this pair, has no other aim, asks no more, than Juliet,—than Romeo. Night, day, studies, talents, kingdoms, religion, are all contained in this form full of soul, in this soul which is all form. The lovers delight in endearments, in avowals of love, in comparisons of their regards. When alone, they solace themselves with the remembered image of the other. Does that other see the same star, the same melting cloud, read the same book, feel the same emotion, that now delights me? They try and weigh their affection, and adding up costly advantages, friends, opportunities, properties, exult in discovering that willingly, joyfully, they would give all as a ransom for the beautiful, the beloved head, not one hair of which shall be harmed. But the lot of humanity is on these children. Danger, sorrow, and pain arrive to them as to all. Love prays. It makes covenants with Eternal Power in behalf of this dear mate. The union which is thus effected and which adds a new value to every atom in nature—for it transmutes every thread throughout the whole web of relation into a golden ray, and bathes the soul in a new and sweeter element—is yet a temporary state. Not always can flowers, pearls, poetry, protestations, nor even home in another heart, content the awful soul that dwells in clay. It arouses itself at last from these endearments, as toys, and puts on the harness and aspires to vast and universal aims. The soul which is in the soul of each, craving a perfect beatitude, detects incongruities, defects, and disproportion in the behavior of the other. Hence arise surprise, expostulation, and pain. Yet that which drew them to each other was signs of loveliness, signs of virtue; and these virtues are there, however eclipsed. They appear and reappear and continue to attract; but the regard changes,

13. **Borneo, if dead,** etc. From Juliet's words in *Romeo and Juliet,* III, ii:

> Give me my Romeo; and, **when** he **shall** die,
> Take him and cut him out in little stars,
> And he will make the face of heaven so fine
> That all the world will be in love with night.

quits the sign and attaches to the substance. This repairs the wounded affection. Meantime, as life wears on, it proves a game of permutation and combination of all possible positions of the parties, to employ all the resources of each and acquaint each with the strength and weakness of the other. For it is the nature and end of this relation that they should represent the human race to each other. All that is in the world, which is or ought to be known, is cunningly wrought into the texture of man, of woman:—

> The person love does to us fit,
> Like manna, has the taste of all in it.14

The world rolls; the circumstances vary every hour. The angels that inhabit this temple of the body appear at the windows, and the gnomes and vices also. By all the virtues they are united. If there be virtue, all the vices are known as such; they confess and flee. Their once flaming regard is sobered by time in either breast, and, losing in violence what it gains in extent, it becomes a thorough good understanding. They resign each other without complaint to the good offices which man and woman are severally appointed to discharge in time, and exchange the passion which once could not lose sight of its object, for a cheerful disengaged furtherance, whether present or absent, of each other's designs. At last they discover that all which at first drew them together,—those once sacred features, that magical play of charms,—was deciduous, had a prospective end, like the scaffolding by which the house was built; and the purification of the intellect and the heart from year to year is the real marriage, foreseen and prepared from the first, and wholly above their consciousness. Looking at these aims with which two persons, a man and a woman, so variously and correlatively gifted, are shut up in one house to spend in the nuptial society forty or fifty years, I *do* not wonder at the emphasis with which the heart prophe-

14. The person, etc. From a poem of Cowley's, "Resolved to Be Beloved."

sies this crisis from early infancy, at the profuse beauty with which the instincts deck the nuptial bower, and nature and intellect and art emulate each other in the gifts and the melody they bring to the epithalamium.

Thus are we put in training for a love which knows not sex, nor person, nor partiality, but which seeks virtue and wisdom everywhere, to the end of increasing virtue and wisdom. We are by nature observers, and thereby learners. That is our permanent state. But we are often made to feel that our affections are but tents of a night. Though slowly and with pain, the objects of the affections change, as the objects of thought do. There are moments when the affections rule and absorb the man and make his happiness dependent on a person or persons. But in health the mind is presently seen again,—its overarching vault, bright with galaxies of immutable lights, and the warm loves and fears that swept over us as clouds must lose their finite character and blend with God, to attain their own perfection. But we need not fear that we can lose anything by the progress of the soul. The soul may be trusted to the end. That which is so beautiful and attractive as these relations, must be succeeded and supplanted only by what is more beautiful, and so on for ever.

HEROISM[1]

IN THE elder English dramatists, and mainly in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher,[2] there is a constant recognition of gentility, as if a noble behavior were as easily marked in the society of their age as color is in our American population. When any Rodrigo,[3] Pedro, or Valerio enters, though he be a stranger, the duke or governor exclaims, "This is a gentleman,"—and proffers civilities without end; but all the rest are slag and refuse. In harmony with this delight in personal

1. This essay was based on a lecture given under the same name, in the course on "Human Culture" (1837-38).
2. Beaumont and Fletcher. See note on page 367.
3. Rodrlgo, etc. Type-names from these dramas, which are largely located in Italian or Spanish scenes.

advantages there is in their plays a certain heroic cast of character and dialogue,—as in *Bonduca, Sophocles,*[4] *The Mad Lover, The Double Marriage,*—wherein the speaker is so earnest and cordial and on such deep grounds of character that the dialogue, on the slightest additional incident in the plot, rises naturally into poetry. Among many texts take the following. The Roman Martius has conquered Athens,—all but the invincible spirits of Sophocles, the duke of Athens, and Dorigen, his wife. The beauty of the latter inflames Martius, and he seeks to save her husband; but Sophocles will not ask his life, although assured that a word will save him, and the execution of both proceeds:—

Valerius. Bid thy wife farewell.

Soph. No, I will take no leave. My Dorigen,
Yonder, above, 'bout Ariadne's crown,[5]
My spirit shall hover for thee. Prithee, haste.

Dor. Stay, Sophocles,—with this tie up my sight;
Let not soft nature so transformed be,
And lose her gentler sexed humanity,
To make me see my lord bleed. So, 't is well;
Never one object underneath the sun
Will I behold before my Sophocles:
Farewell; now teach the Romans how to die.

Mar. Dost know what't is to die?

Soph. Thou dost not, Martius,
And, therefore, not what 't is to live; to die
Is to begin to live. It is to end
An old, stale, weary work and to commence
A newer and a better. 'T is to leave
Deceitful knaves for the society
Of gods and goodness. Thou thyself must part
At last from all thy garlands, pleasures, triumphs,
And prove thy fortitude what then 't will do.

4. Sopnooles. Not the title of any of the Beaumont and Fletcher plays; Emerson evidently means by it the one called *The Triumph of Honour,* from which the long? quotation is taken.

5. Ariadne's crown. A constellation said to have been placed In the heavens by Bacchus in honor of Ariadne.

Val. But art not grieved nor vexed to leave thy life thus?
Soph. Why should I grieve or vex for being sent
To them I ever loved best? Now I'll kneel,
But with my back toward thee: 't is the last duty
This trunk can do the gods.
Afar. Strike, strike, Valerius,
Or Marti us' heart will leap out at his mouth.
This is a man, a woman. Kiss thy lord,
And live with all the freedom you were wont.
0 love! thou doubly hast afflicted me
With virtue and with beauty. Treacherous heart,
My hand shall cast thee quick into my urn,
Ere thou transgress this knot of piety.
Val. What ails my brother ?
Soph. Martius, O Martius,
Thou now hast found a way to conquer me.
Dor. 0 star of Rome! what gratitude can speak
Fit words to follow such a deed as this?
Mar. This admirable duke, Valerius,
With his disdain of fortune and of death,
Captived himself, has captivated me,
And though my arm hath ta'en his body here,
His soul hath subjugated Martius' soul.
By Romulus, he is all soul, I think;
He hath no flesh, and spirit cannot be gyved,
Then we have vanquished nothing; he is free,
And Martius walks now in captivity.

I do not readily remember any poem, play, sermon, novel, or oration that our press vents in the last few years, which goes to the same tune. We have a great many flutes and flageolets, but not often the sound of any fife. Yet Wordsworth's "Laodamia," and the ode of "Dion," and some sonnets, have a certain noble music; and Scott will sometimes draw a stroke like the portrait of Lord Evandale6 given by

6. portrait *of L*ord Evandale. In *Old Mortality,* chapter xliii: "Lord Evandale is a maligmant, of heart like flint, and brow like adamant; the goods of the world fall on him like leaves on the frost-bound earth, and unmoved he will see them whirled off by the first wind."

Balfour of Burley. Thomas Carlyle, with **his natural** taste for what is manly and daring in character, has suffered no heroic trait in his favorites to drop from his biographical and historical pictures. Earlier, Robert Burns has given us a song or two. In the *Harleian Miscellanies*[7] there is an account of the battle of Lutzen which deserves to be read. And Simon Ockley's[8] *History of the Saracens* recounts the prodigies of individual valor, with admiration all the more evident on the part of the narrator that he seems to think that his place in Christian Oxford requires of him some proper protestations of abhorrence. But if we explore the literature of Heroism we shall quickly come to Plutarch,[9] who is its doctor and historian. To him we owe the Brasidas, the Dion, the Epaminondas, the Scipio of old, and I must think we are more deeply indebted to him than to all the ancient writers. Each of his "Lives" is a refutation to the despondency and cowardice of our religious and political theorists. A wild courage, a Stoicism not of the schools but of the blood, shines in every anecdote, and has given that book its immense fame.

We need books of this tart cathartic virtue more than books of political science or of private economy. Life is a festival only to the wise. Seen from the nook and chimney-side of prudence, it wears a ragged and dangerous front. The violations of the laws of nature by our predecessors and our contemporaries are punished in us also. The disease and deformity around us certify the infraction of natural, intellectual, and moral laws, and often violation on violation to breed such compound misery. A lock-jaw that bends a man's head back to his heels; hydrophobia that makes him bark at his wife and babes; insanity that makes him eat grass; war, plague, cholera, famine, indicate a certain ferocity in nature, which, as it had

7. **Harleian miscellanies.** Medieval English writings published from manuscripts collected by Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford.
8. **Ockley.** A student of Oriental history (died 1720).
9. **Plutarch.** See note on page 378.

its inlet by human crime, must have its outlet by human suffering. Unhappily no man exists who has not in his own person become to some amount a stockholder in the sin, and so made himself liable to a share in the expiation.

Our culture therefore must not omit the arming of the man. Let him hear in season that he is born into the state of war, and that the commonwealth and his own well-being require that he should not *go* dancing in the weeds of peace, but warned, self-collected, and neither defying nor dreading the thunder, let him take both reputation and life in his hand, and with perfect urbanity dare the gibbet and the mob by the absolute truth of his speech and the rectitude of his behavior.

Towards all this external evil the man within the breast assumes a warlike attitude, and affirms his ability to cope single-handed with the infinite army of enemies. To this military attitude of the soul we give the name of Heroism. Its rudest form is the contempt for safety and ease which makes the attractiveness of war. It is a self-trust which slights the restraints of prudence, in the plenitude of its energy and power to repair the harms it may suffer. The hero is a mind of such balance that no disturbances can shake his will, but pleasantly and as it were merrily he advances to his own music, alike in frightful alarms and in the tipsy mirth of universal dissoluteness. There is somewhat not philosophical in heroism; there is somewhat not holy in it; it seems not to know that other souls are of one texture with it; it has pride; it is the extreme of individual nature. Nevertheless we must profoundly revere it. There is somewhat in great actions which does not allow us to go behind them. Heroism feels and never reasons, and therefore is always right; and although a different breeding, different religion, and greater intellectual activity would have modified or even reversed the particular action, yet for the hero that thing he does is the highest deed, and is not open to the

censure of philosophers or divines. It is the avowal of the unschooled man that he finds a quality in him that is negligent of expense, of health, of life, of danger, of hatred, of reproach, and knows that his will is higher and more excellent than all actual and all possible antagonists.

Heroism works in contradiction to the voice of mankind and in contradiction, for a time, to the voice of the great and good. Heroism is an obedience to a secret impulse of an individual's character. Now to no other man can its wisdom appear as it does to him, for every man must be supposed to see a little farther on his own proper path than any one else. Therefore just and wise men take umbrage at his act, until after some little time be past; then they see it to be in unison with their acts. All prudent men see that the action is clean contrary to a sensual prosperity;[10] for every heroic act measures itself by its contempt of some external good. But it finds its own success at last, and then the prudent also extol.

Self-trust is the essence of heroism. It is the state of the soul at war, and its ultimate objects are the last defiance of falsehood and wrong, and the power to bear all that can be inflicted by evil agents. It speaks the truth and it is just, generous, hospitable, temperate, scornful of petty calculations, and scornful of being scorned. It persists; it is of an undaunted boldness and of a fortitude not to be wearied out. Its jest is the littleness of common life. That false prudence which dotes on health and wealth is the butt and merriment of heroism. Heroism, like Plotinus,[11] is almost ashamed of its body. What shall it say then to the sugar-plums and cats'-cradles, to the toilet, compliments, quarrels, cards, and custard, which rack the wit of all society? What joys has kind nature provided for us dear creatures! There seems to be no interval

10. **sensual prosperity.** Prosperity in a material or worldly sense.

11. **Plotinus.** A mystical philosopher of the third century, of whom his biographer had said that he lived so wholly in the speculative life as to seem ashamed of his bodily existence.

between greatness and meanness. When the spirit is not master of the world, then it is its dupe. Yet the little man takes the great hoax so innocently, works in it so headlong and believing, is born red, and dies gray, arranging his toilet, attending on his own health, laying traps for sweet food and strong wine, setting his heart on a horse or a rifle, made happy with a little gossip or a little praise, that the great soul cannot choose but laugh at such earnest nonsense. "Indeed, these humble considerations make me out of love with greatness. What a disgrace it is to me to take note how many pairs of silk stockings thou hast, namely, these, and those that were the peach-colored ones; or to bear the inventory of thy shirts, as, one for superfluity, and one other for use!"[12]

Citizens, thinking after the laws of arithmetic, consider the inconvenience of receiving strangers at their fireside, reckon narrowly the loss of time and the unusual display; the soul of a better quality thrusts back the unseasonable economy into the vaults of life, and says, I will obey the God, and the sacrifice and the fire he will provide. Ibn Haukal,[13] the Arabian geographer, describes a heroic extreme in the hospitality of Sogd, in Bukharia. "When I was in Sogd I saw a great building, like a palace, the gates of which were open and fixed back to the wall with large nails. I asked the reason, and was told that the house had not been shut, night or day, for a hundred years. Strangers may present themselves at any hour and in whatever number; the master has amply provided for the reception of the men and their animals, and is never happier than when they tarry for some time. Nothing of the kind have I seen in any other country." The magnanimous know very well that they who give time, or money, or shelter, to the stranger,—so it be done for love and not for ostentation,—do, as it were, put God under obli-

12. Indeed, etc. Said by Prince Hal to Poins, in the second part of Shakespeare's *Henry Fourth,* IV, ii.

13. **Ibn HaukaL** Author of a famous work on his travels, in the tenth century.

gation to them, so perfect are the compensations of the universe. In some way the time they seem to lose is redeemed and the pains they seem to take remunerate themselves. These men fan the flame of human love and raise the standard of civil virtue among mankind. But hospitality must be for service and not for show, or it pulls down the host. The brave soul rates itself too high to value itself by the splendor of its table and draperies. It gives what it hath, and all it hath, but its own majesty can lend a better grace to bannocks[14] and fair water than belong to city feasts.

The temperance of the hero proceeds from the same wish to do no dishonor to the worthiness he has. But he loves it for its elegancy, not for its austerity. It seems not worth his while to be solemn and denounce with bitterness flesh-eating or wine-drinking, the use of tobacco> or opium, or tea, or silk, or gold. A great man scarcely knows how he dines, how he dresses; but without railing or precision his living is natural and poetic. John Eliot,[15] the Indian Apostle, drank water, and said of wine,—"It is a noble, generous liquor and we should be humbly thankful for it, but, as I remember, water was made before it." Better still is the temperance of King David,[16] who poured out on the ground unto the Lord the water which three of his warriors had brought him to drink at the peril of their lives.

It is told of Brutus, that when he fell on his sword after the battle of Philippi, he quoted a line of Euripides,—"O Virtue! I have followed thee through life, and I find thee at last but a shade." I doubt not the hero is slandered by this report. The heroic soul does not sell its justice and its nobleness. It does not ask to dine nicely and to sleep warm. The essence of greatness is the perception that virtue is

14. **bannocks.** Oatmeal cakes.
15. **John Eliot.** The first missionary to the **American Indians (died 1690).**
16. **Sing; David.** See *I Chronicles* 11:16-19.

enough. Poverty is its ornament. It does not need plenty, and can very well abide its loss.

But that which takes my fancy most in the heroic class, is the good-humor and hilarity they exhibit. It is a height to which common duty can very well attain, to suffer and to dare with solemnity. But these rare souls set opinion, success, and life at so cheap a rate that they will not soothe their enemies by petitions, or the show of sorrow, but wear their own habitual greatness. Scipio,[17] charged with peculation, refuses to do himself so great a disgrace as to wait for justification, though he had the scroll of his accounts in his hands, but tears it to pieces before the tribunes. Socrates's condemnation[18] of himself to be maintained in all honor in the Prytaneum, during his life, and Sir Thomas More's[10] playfulness at the scaffold, are of the same strain. In Beaumont and Fletcher's *Sea Voyage,* Juletta tells the stout captain and his company,—

> ***Jul.*** **Why, slaves, 't is in our power to hang ye.**
> ***Master.*** **Very likely,**
> **'T is in our powers, then, to be hanged and scorn ye.**

These replies are sound and whole. Sport is the bloom and glow of a perfect health. The great will not condescend to take any thing seriously; all must be as gay as the song of a canary, though it were the building of cities or the eradication of old and foolish churches and nations which have cumbered the earth long thousands of years. Simple hearts put all the history and customs of this world behind them, and

17. Scipio. See note on page 46.

18. **Socrates'! condemnation.** A quizzical remark of Socrates's at the time of his trial, as recorded by Plato, to the effect that he deserved rather to be maintained at the Prytaneum, where distinguished visitors of Athens were lodged, than to be condemned to death.

19. **Sir Thomas More.** Executed in 1535. He was said to have asked to be helped up the steps of the scaffold, adding that on the way down he could fend for himself; also, to have arranged his beard out of the way of the axe, saying that "it had **never** committed treason."

play their own game in innocent defiance of the Blue-Laws[20] of the world; and such would appear, could we see the human race assembled in vision, like little children frolicking together, though to the eyes of mankind at large they wear a stately and solemn garb of works and influences.

The interest these fine stories have for us, the power of a romance over the boy who grasps the forbidden book under his bench at school, our delight in the hero, is the main fact to our purpose. All these great and transcendent properties are ours. If we dilate in beholding the Greek energy, the Roman pride, it is that we are already domesticating the same sentiment. Let us find room for this great guest in our small houses. The first step of worthiness will be to disabuse us of our superstitious associations with places and times, with number and size. Why should these words, Athenian, Roman, Asia, and England, so tingle in the ear? Where the heart is, there the muses, there the gods sojourn, and not in any geography of fame. Massachusetts, Connecticut River, and Boston Bay you think paltry places, and the ear loves names of foreign and classic topography. But here we are; and, if we will tarry a little, we may come to learn that here is best. See to it only that thyself is here, and art and nature, hope and fate, friends, angels, and the Supreme Being shall not be absent from the chamber where thou sittest. Epaminondas,[21] brave and affectionate, does not seem to us to need Olympus to die upon, nor the Syrian sunshine. He lies very well where he is. The Jerseys were handsome ground enough for Washington to tread, and London streets for the feet of Milton. A great man makes his climate genial in the imagination of men, and its air the beloved element of all delicate spirits. That country is the fairest which is inhabited by the

20. Blue-Laws. An excessively severe puritanical code traditionally (but fictitiously) attributed to the early Connecticut colonies; hence, rigid laws of conduct in general.

21. Epaminondas. A Greek general, slain at the battle of Mantinea, 362 B.C.

noblest minds. The pictures which fill the imagination in reading the actions of Pericles, Xenophon, Columbus, Bayard,[22] Sidney, Hampden,[23] teach us how needlessly mean our life is; that we, by the depth of our living, should deck it with more than regal or national splendor, and act on principles that should interest man and nature in the length of our days.

We have seen or heard of many extraordinary young men who never ripened,[24] or whose performance in actual life was not extraordinary. When we see their air and mien, when we hear them speak of society, of books, of religion, we admire their superiority; they seem to throw contempt on our entire polity and social state; theirs is the tone of a youthful giant who is sent to work revolutions. But they enter an active profession and the forming Colossus[25] shrinks *to* the common.size of man. The magic they used was the ideal tendencies, which always make the Actual ridiculous; but the tough world had its revenge the moment they put their horses of the sun to plow in its furrow. They found no example and no companion, and their heart fainted. What then? The lesson they gave in their first aspirations is yet true; and a better valor and a purer truth shall one day organize their belief. Or why should a woman liken herself to any historical woman, and think, because Sappho, or Sevigne, or De Stael,[26] or the cloistered souls who have had genius and cultivation, do not satisfy the imagination and the serene Themis,[27] none can,—certainly not she? Why not? She has a new and unattempted problem to solve, perchance

22. **Bayard.** A French knight of the early sixteenth century, said to have lived *sans peur et sans reproche.*

23. **Sidney,** Hampden. See note on page 196. But Emerson may refer to Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586).

24. men who never ripened. Compare the observations of Bacon, in his essay on Youth and Age, page 45.

25. forming **Colossus.** Form apparently destined to be gigantic.

26. Sappho, etc. Sappho was a Greek poetess; **Madame** de sevi**gne** and Madame de Stael were brilliant Frenchwomen of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively.

27. **Themis.** The Greek goddess of law and order.

that of the happiest nature that ever bloomed. Let the maiden, with erect soul, walk serenely on her way, accept the hint of each new experience, search in turn all the objects that solicit her eye, that she may learn the power and the charm of her new-born being, which is the kindling of a new dawn in the recesses of space. The fair girl who repels interference by a decided and proud choice of influences, so careless of pleasing, so wilful and lofty, inspires every beholder with somewhat of her own nobleness. The silent heart encourages her; 0 friend, never strike sail to a fear! Come into port greatly, or sail with God the seas. Not in vain you live, for.every passing eye is cheered and refined by the vision.

The characteristic of heroism is its persistency. All men have wandering impulses, fits and starts of generosity. But when you have chosen your part, abide by it, and do not weakly try to reconcile yourself with the world. The heroic cannot be the common, nor the common the heroic. Yet we have the weakness to expect the sympathy of people in those actions whose excellence is that they outrun sympathy and appeal to a tardy justice. If you would serve your brother, because it is fit for you to serve him, do not take back your words when you find that prudent people do not commend you. Adhere to your own act, and congratulate yourself if you have done something strange and extravagant and broken the monotony of a decorous age. It was a high counsel[28] that I once heard given to a young person,—"Always do what you are afraid to do." A simple manly character need never make an apology, but should regard its past action with the calmness of Phocion,[29] when he admitted that the event of the battle was happy, yet did not regret his dissuasion from the battle.

28. a high, counsel. Given to Emerson by his "brilliant, loving:, and eccentric aunt," Mary Moody Emerson.

29. **Phocion,** An Athenian general who died nobly after being: falsely charged with treason, because of his opposition to the war with Macedonia; he left the admonition for his son, "to bear no grudge against the Athenians."

There is no weakness or exposure for which we cannot find consolation in the thought—this is a part of my constitution, part of my relation and office to my fellow-creature. Has nature covenanted with me that I should never appear to disadvantage, never make a ridiculous figure? Let us be generous of our dignity as well as of our money. Greatness once and for ever has done with opinion. We tell our charities, not because we wish to be praised for them, not because we think they have great merit, but for our justification. It is a capital blunder; as you discover when another man recites his charities.

To speak the truth, even with some austerity, to live with some rigor of temperance, or some extremes of generosity, seems to be an asceticism which common good-nature would appoint to those who are at ease and in plenty, in sign that they feel a brotherhood with the great multitude of suffering men. And not only need we breathe and exercise the soul by assuming the penalties of abstinence, of debt, of solitude, of unpopularity,—but it behooves the wise man to look with a bold eye into those rarer dangers which sometimes invade men, and to familiarize himself with disgusting forms of disease, with sounds of execration, and the vision of violent death.

Times of heroism are generally times of terror, but the day never 6hines in which this element may not work. The circumstances of man, we say, are historically somewhat better in this country and at this hour than perhaps ever before. More freedom exists for culture. It will not now run against an axe at the first step out of the beaten track of opinion. But whoso is heroic will always find crises to try his edge. Human virtue demands her champions and martyrs, and the trial of persecution always proceeds. It is but the other day that the brave Lovejoy[80] gave his breast to the bullets of a

30. lovejoy. A Presbyterian minister who was mobbed and shot In 183.' because of his activity in the anti-slavery movement.

mob, for the rights of free speech and opinion, and died when it was better not to live.

I see not any road of perfect peace which a man can walk, but after the counsel of his own bosom. Let him quit too much association, let him *go* home much, and stablish himself in those courses he approves. The unremitting retention of simple and high sentiments in obscure duties is hardening the character to that temper which will work with honor, if need be in the tumult, or on the scaffold. Whatever outrages have happened to men may befall a man again; and very easily in a republic, if there appear any signs of a decay of religion. Coarse slander, fire, tar and feathers and the gibbet, the youth may freely bring home to his mind and with what sweetness of temper he can, and inquire how fast he can fix his sense of duty, braving such penalties, whenever it may please the next newspaper and a sufficient number of his neighbor? to pronounce his opinions incendiary.

It may calm the apprehension of calamity in the most susceptible heart to see how quick a bound Nature has set to the utmost infliction of malice. We rapidly approach a brink over which no enemy can follow us:—

Let them rave;
Thou art quiet in thy grave.31

In the gloom of our ignorance of what shall be, in the hour when we are deaf to the higher voices, who does not envy those who have seen safely to an end their manful endeavor ? Who that sees the meanness of our politics but inly congratulates Washington that he is long already wrapped in his shroud, and for ever safe; that he was laid sweet in his grave, the hope of humanity not yet subjugated in him? Who does not sometimes envy the good and brave who are no more to suffer from the tumults of the natural world, and await

31. Let them rave. The refrain of Tennyson's poem called "A Dirge/" though the second line is not his.

with curious complacency the speedy term[32] of his own conversation with finite nature? And yet the love that will be annihilated sooner than treacherous has already made death impossible, and affirms itself no mortal but a native of the deeps of absolute and inextinguishable being.

CHARACTER[1]

I have read that those who listened to Lord Chatham[2] felt that there was something finer in the man than anything which he said. It has been complained of our brilliant English historian of the French Revolution that when he has told all his facts about Mirabeau, they do not justify his estimate of his genius. The Gracchi, Agis, Cleomenes, and others of Plutarch's heroes, do not in the record of facts equal their own fame. Sir Philip Sidney, the Earl of Essex, Sir Walter Raleigh, are men of great figure and of few deeds. We cannot find the smallest part of the personal weight of Washington in the narrative of his exploits. The authority of the name of Schiller is too great for his books. This inequality of the reputation to the works or the anecdotes is not accounted for by saying that the reverberation is longer than the thunder-clap, but somewhat resided in these men which begot an expectation that outran all their performance. The largest part of their power was latent. This is that which we call Character,—a reserved force, which acts directly by presence and without means. It is conceived of as a certain undemonstrable force, a Familiar or Genius, by whose impulses the man is guided, but whose counsels he cannot impart; which is company for him, so that such men are often solitary, or if they chance to be social, do not need society but can entertain themselves very well alone. The purest literary talent appears

32. **term.** End.

1. This essay is partly based on a lecture in a course called "The Times" (1841-2).

2. **lord Chatham.** William Pitt, Earl of Chatham (1708-1778).

at one time great, at another time small, but character is of a stellar and undiminishable greatness. What others effect by talent or by eloquence, this man accomplishes by some magnetism. "Half his strength he put not forth."[3] His victories are by demonstration of superiority, and not by crossing of bayonets. He conquers because his arrival alters the face of affairs. "0 Iole! how did you know that Hercules was a god?"[4] "Because," answered lole, "I was content the moment my eyes fell on him. When I beheld Theseus, I desired that I might see him offer battle, or at least guide his horses in the chariot-race; but Hercules did not wait for a contest; he conquered whether he stood, or walked, or sat, or whatever thing he did." Man, ordinarily a pendant to events, only half attached, and that awkwardly, to the world he lives in, in these examples appears to share the life of things, and to be an expression of the same laws which control the tides and the sun, numbers and quantities.

But to use a more modest illustration, and nearer home, I observe that in our political elections, where this element, if it appears at all, can only occur in its coarsest form, we sufficiently understand its incomparable rate. The people know that they need in their representative much more than talent, namely the power to make his talent trusted. They cannot come at their ends by sending to Congress a learned, acute, and fluent speaker,[5] if he be not one who, before he was appointed by the people to represent them, was appointed by Almighty God to stand for a fact,—invincibly persuaded of that fact in himself,—so that the most confident and the most violent persons learn that here is resistance on which both impudence and terror are wasted, namely faith in a fact. The men who carry their points do not need to inquire of their

3. **Half MB strength,** etc. From *Paradise Lost,* Book VI.

4. **O Iole!** etc. In Greek legend Iole was a daughter **of King** Eurytus, whom Hercules took captive on slaying her father.

5. **fluent speaker.** This passage probably alludes to Daniel Webster, then Senator from Massachusetts.

constituents what they should say, but are themselves the country which they represent; nowhere are its emotions or opinions so instant and true as in them; nowhere so pure from a selfish infusion. The constituency at home hearkens to their words, watches the color of their cheek, and therein, as in a glass, dresses its own. Our public assemblies are pretty good tests of manly force. Our frank countrymen of the west and south have a taste for character, and like to know whether the New Englander is a substantial man, or whether the hand can pass through him.

The same motive force appears in trade. There are geniuses in trade, as well as in war, or the state, or letters; and the reason why this or that man is fortunate is not to be told. It lies in the man; that is all anybody can tell you about it. See him and you will know as easily why he succeeds, as, if you see Napoleon, you would comprehend his fortune. In the new objects we recognize the old game, the habit of fronting the fact, and not dealing with it at second hand, through the perceptions of somebody else. Nature seems to authorize trade, as soon as you see the natural merchant,[6] who appears not so much a private agent as her factor and Minister of Commerce. His natural probity combines with his insight into the fabric of society to put him above tricks, and he communicates to all his own faith that contracts are of no private interpretation. The habit of his mind is a reference to standards of natural equity and public advantage; and he inspires respect and the wish to deal with him, both for the quiet spirit of honor which attends him, and for the intellectual pastime which the spectacle of so much ability affords. This immensely stretched trade, which makes the capes of the Southern Ocean his wharves and the Atlantic Sea his familiar port, centers in his brain only; and nobody in the universe can make his place good. In his parlor I see very well that

6. **the natural** merchant. This passage Is supposed to be a sketch of Abel Adams, a Boston merchant and friend of Emerson's.

he has been at hard work this morning, with that knitted brow and that settled humor, which all his desire to be courteous cannot shake off. I see plainly how many firm acts have been done; how many valiant *noes* have this day been spoken, when others would have uttered ruinous *yeas*. I see, with the pride of art and skill of masterly arithmetic and power of remote combination, the consciousness of being an agent and playfellow of the original laws of the world. He too believes that none can supply him, and that a man must be born to trade or he cannot learn it

This virtue draws the mind more when it appears in action to ends not so mixed. It works with most energy in the smallest companies and in private relations. In all cases it is an extraordinary and incomputable agent. The excess of physical strength is paralyzed by it. Higher natures overpower lower ones by affecting them with a certain sleep. The faculties are locked up, and offer no resistance. Perhaps that is the universal law. When the high cannot bring up the low to itself, it benumbs it, as man charms down the resistance of the lower animals. Men exert on each other a similar occult power. How often has the influence of a true master realized all the tales of magic! A river of command seemed to run down from his eyes into all those who beheld him, a torrent of strong sad light, like an Ohio or Danube, which pervaded them with his thoughts and colored all events with the hue of his mind. "What means did you employ?" was the question asked of the wife of Concini,[7] in regard to her treatment of Mary of Medici; and the answer was, "Only that influence which every strong mind has over a weak one." Cannot Caesar in irons shuffle off the irons and transfer them to the person of Hippo or Thraso[8] the turnkey? Is an iron handcuff so immutable a bond? Suppose a slaver on the coast of

7. wife of Concini. The Marchioness of Ancre, who was executed as a witch because of her power over the mind of Maria de Medici, wife of Henry IV of France.

8. Hippo or Thraso. Type-names for slaves in ancient comedy.

Guinea should take on board a gang of negroes which should contain persons of the stamp of Toussaint L'Ouverture:[9] or, let us fancy, under these swarthy masks he has a gang of Washingtons in chains. When they arrive at Cuba, will the relative order of the ship's company be the same? Is there nothing but rope and iron? Is there no love, no reverence? Is there never a glimpse of right in a poor slave-captain's mind; and cannot these be supposed available to break or elude or in any manner over-match the tension of an inch or two of iron ring?

This is a natural power, like light and heat, and all nature cooperates with it. The reason why we feel one man's presence and do not feel another's is as simple as gravity. Truth is the summit of being; justice is the application of it to affairs. All individual natures stand in a scale, according to the purity of this element in them. The will of the pure runs down from them into other natures, as water runs down from a higher into a lower vessel. This natural force is no more to be withstood than any other natural force. We can drive a stone upward for a moment into the air, but it is yet true that all stones will forever fall; and whatever instances can be quoted of unpunished theft, or of a lie which somebody credited, justice must prevail, and it is the privilege of truth to make itself believed. Character is this moral order seen through the medium of an individual nature. An individual is an encloser. Time and space, liberty and necessity, truth and thought, are left at large no longer. Now, the universe is a close or pound. All things exist in the man tinged with the manners of his soul. With what quality is in him he infuses all nature that he can reach; nor does he tend to lose himself in vastness, but, at how long a curve soever, all his regards return into his own good at last. He animates all he can, and he sees only what he animates. He encloses the

9. Toussaint L'Ouverture. The negro "Napoleon of Hayti" (1743-1803).

world, as the patriot does his country, as a material basis for his character, and a theater for action. A healthy soul stands united with the Just and the True, as the magnet arranges itself with the pole; so that he stands to all beholders like a transparent object betwixt them and the sun, and whoso journeys towards the sun, journeys towards that person. He is thus the medium of the highest influence to all who are not on the same level. Thus men of character are the conscience of the society to which they belong.

The natural measure of this power is the resistance of circumstances. Impure men consider life as it is reflected in opinions, events, and persons. They cannot see the action until it is done. Yet its moral element preexisted in the actor, and its quality as right or wrong it was easy to predict. Everything in nature is bipolar, or has a positive and a negative pole. There is a male and a female, a spirit and a fact, a north and a south. Spirit is the positive, the event is the negative. Will is the north, action the south pole. Character may be ranked as having its natural place in the north. It shares the magnetic currents of the system. The feeble souls are drawn to the south or negative pole. They look at the profit or hurt of the action. They never behold a principle until it is lodged in a person. They do not wish to be lovely, but to be loved. Men of character like to hear of their faults; the other class do not like to hear of faults; they worship events; secure to them a fact, a connection, a certain chain of circumstances, and they will ask no more. The hero sees that the event is ancillary;[10] it must follow *him.* A given order of events has no power to secure to him the satisfaction which the imagination attaches to it; the soul of goodness escapes from any set of circumstances; whilst prosperity belongs to a certain mind, and will introduce that power and victory which is its natural fruit, into any order of events. No change of circumstances can repair a defect of character.

10. ancillary. Subordinate (like a servant).

We boast our emancipation from many superstitions; but if we have broken any idols it is through a transfer of the idolatry. What have I gained, that I no longer immolate a bull to *Jove* or to Neptune, or a mouse to Hecate;[11] that I do not tremble before the Eumenides,[12] or the Catholic Purgatory, or the Calvinistic Judgment-day,—if I quake at opinion, the public opinion as we call it; or at the threat of assault, or contumely, or bad neighbors, or poverty, or mutilation, or at the rumor of revolution, or of murder? If I quake, what matters it what I quake at? Our proper vice takes form in one or another shape, according to the sex, age, or temperament of the person, and, if we are capable of fear, will readily find terrors. The covetousness or the malignity which saddens me when I ascribe it to society, is my own. I am always environed by myself. On the other part, rectitude is a perpetual victory, celebrated not by cries of joy but by serenity, which is joy fixed or habitual. It is disgraceful to fly to events for confirmation of our truth and worth. The capitalist does not run every hour to the broker to coin his advantages into current money of the realm; he is satisfied to read in the quotations of the market that his stocks have risen. The same transport which the occurrence of the best events in the best order would occasion me, I must learn to taste purer in the perception that my position is every hour meliorated, and does already command those events I desire. That exultation is only to be checked by the foresight of an order of things so excellent as to throw all our prosperities into the deepest shade.

The face which character wears to me is self-sufficingness. I revere the person who is riches; so that I cannot think of him as alone, or poor, or exiled, or unhappy, or a client, but as perpetual patron, benefactor, and beatified man. Char-

11. **Hecate.** Goddess of night, worshipped by wizards.

12. **Eumenides.** The Furies of Greek mythology. These, like Purgatory and the Day of Judgment, Emerson treats as symbols of the exaggeration of fear in religion.

acter is centrality, the impossibility of being displaced or overset. A man should give us a sense of mass. Society is frivolous, and shreds its day into scraps, its conversation into ceremonies and escapes. But if I go to see an ingenious man I shall think myself poorly entertained if he give me nimble pieces of benevolence and etiquette; rather he shall stand stoutly in his place and let me apprehend, if it were only his resistance; know that I have encountered a new and positive quality;—great refreshment for both of us. It is much that he does not accept the conventional opinions and practices. That non-conformity will remain a goad and remembrancer, and every inquirer will have to dispose of him, in the first place. There is nothing real or useful that is not a seat of war. Our houses ring with laughter and personal and critical gossip, but it helps little. But the uncivil, unavailable man, who is a problem and a threat to society, whom it cannot let pass in silence but must either worship or hate,—and to whom all parties feel related, both the leaders of opinion and the obscure and eccentric,—he helps; he puts America and Europe in the wrong, and destroys the skepticism which says, "Man is a doll, let us eat and drink, 't is the best we can do," by illuminating the untried and unknown. Acquiescence in the establishment and appeal to the public, indicate infirm faith, heads which are not clear, and which must see a house built before they can comprehend the plan of it. The wise man not only leaves out of his thought the many, but leaves out the few. Fountains,[13] the self-moved, the absorbed, the commander because he is commanded, the assured, the primary,—they are good; for these announce the instant presence of supreme power.

Our action should rest mathematically on our substance. In nature there are no false valuations. A pound of water in the ocean-tempest has no more gravity than in a mid-

13. **Fountains.** Men of inner power; "conductors of the water of life,"

summer pond. All things work exactly according to their quality and according to their quantity; attempt nothing they cannot do, except man only. He has pretension; he wishes and attempts things beyond his force. I read in a book of English memoirs, "Mr. Fox[14] (afterwards Lord Holland) said, he must have the Treasury; he had served up to it and would have it." Xenophon[15] and his Ten Thousand were quite equal to what they attempted, and did it; so equal, that it was not suspected to be a grand and inimitable exploit. Yet there stands that fact unrepeated, a high-water mark in military history. Many have attempted it since, and not been equal to it. It is only on reality that any power of action can be based. No institution will be better than the institutor. I knew an amiable and accomplished person[16] who undertook a practical reform, yet I was never able to find in him the enterprise of love he took in hand. He adopted it by ear and by the understanding from the books he had been reading. All his action was tentative, a piece of the city carried out into the fields, and was the city still, and no new fact, and could not inspire enthusiasm. Had there been something latent in the man, a terrible undemonstrated genius agitating and embarrassing his demeanor, we had watched[17] for its advent. It is not enough that the intellect should see the evils and their remedy. We shall still postpone our existence, nor take the ground to which we are entitled, whilst it is only a thought and not a spirit that incites us. We have not yet served up to it

These are properties of life, and another trait is the notice of incessant growth. Men should be intelligent and earnest.

14. **Pox.** A British politician (1773-1840).

15. **Xenophon.** Leader of the Greek force called "the Ten Thousand," from Cunaxa to the Black Sea (401 B.C); the expedition was described in his work called *The Anabasis.*

16. **accomplished perron.** George Ripley, founder of the philosophic community at Brook Farm (see note on page 434, below).

17. **bad watched.** Should have watched.

They must also make us feel that they have a controlling happy future opening before them, whose early twilights already kindle in the passing hour. The hero is misconceived and misreported; he cannot therefore wait to unravel any man's blunders; he is again on his road, adding new powers and honors to his domain and new claims on your heart, which will bankrupt you if you have loitered about the old things and have not kept your relation to him by adding to your wealth. New actions are the only apologies and explanations of old ones which the noble can bear to offer or to receive. If your friend has displeased you, you shall not sit down to consider it, for he has already lost all memory of the passage, and has doubled his power to serve you, and ere you can rise up again will burden you with blessings.

We have no pleasure in thinking of a benevolence that is only measured by its works. Love is inexhaustible, and if its estate is wasted, its granary emptied, still cheers and enriches, and the man, though he sleep, seems to purify the air and his house to adorn the landscape and strengthen the laws. People always recognize this difference. We know who is benevolent, by quite other means than the amount of subscription to soup-societies. It is only low merits that can be enumerated. Fear, when your friends say to you what you have done well, and say it through; but when they stand with uncertain timid looks of respect and half-dislike, and must suspend their judgment for years to come, you may begin *to* hope. Those who live to the future must always appear selfish to those who live to the present. Therefore it was droll in the good Riemer, who has written memoirs of Goethe, to make out a list of his donations and good deeds, as, so many hundred thalers given to Stilling, to Hegel, to Tischbein; a lucrative place found for Professor Voss, a post under the Grand Duke for Herder, a pension for Meyer, two professors recommended to foreign universities; etc., etc. The longest list of specifications of benefit would look very short.

A man is a poor creature if he is to be measured so. For all these of course are exceptions, and the rule and hodiurnal life of a good man is benefaction. The true charity of Goethe is to be inferred from the account he gave Dr. Eckermann of the way in which he had spent his fortune. "Each m*ot mot* of mine has cost a purse of gold. Half a million of my own money, the fortune I inherited, my salary, and the large income derived from my writings for fifty years back, have been expended to instruct me in what I now know. I have besides seen," etc.

I own it is but poor chat and gossip to go to enumerate traits of this simple and rapid power, and we are painting the lightning with charcoal; but in these long nights and vacations I like to console myself so. Nothing but itself can copy it. A word warm from the heart enriches me. I surrender at discretion. How death-cold is literary genius before this fire of life! These are the touches that reanimate my heavy soul and give it eyes to pierce the dark of nature. I find, where I thought myself poor, there was I most rich. Thence comes a new intellectual exaltation, to be again rebuked by some new exhibition of character. Strange alternation of attraction and repulsion! Character repudiates intellect, yet excites it; and character passes into thought, is published so, and then is ashamed before new flashes of moral worth.

Character is nature in the highest form. It is of no use to ape it or to contend with it. Somewhat is possible of resistance, and of persistence, and of creation, to this power, which will foil all emulation.

This masterpiece is best where no hands but nature's have been laid on it. Care is taken that the greatly-destined shall slip up into life in the shade, with no thousand-eyed Athens to watch and blazon every new thought, every blushing emotion of young genius. Two persons lately, very young children of the most high God, have given me occasion for thought. When I explored the source of their sanctity and charm for

the imagination, it seemed as if each answered, "From my non-conformity; I never listened to your people's law, or to what they call their gospel, and wasted my time. I was content with the simple rural poverty of my own; hence this sweetness; my work never reminds you of that,—is pure of that" And nature advertises me in such persons that in democratic America she will not be democratized. How cloistered and constitutionally sequestered from the market and from scandal! It was only this morning that I sent away some wild flowers of these wood-gods. They are a relief from literature,—these fresh draughts from the sources of thought and sentiment; as we read, in an age of polish and criticism, the first lines of written prose and verse of a nation. How captivating is their devotion to their favorite books, whether 'Æschylus, Dante, Shakespeare, or Scott, as feeling that they have a stake in that book; who touches that, touches them,— and especially the total solitude of the critic, the Patmos of thought[18] from which he writes, in unconsciousness of any eyes that shall ever read this writing. Could they dream on still, as angels, and not wake to comparisons and to be flattered! Yet some natures are too good to be spoiled by praise, and wherever the vein of thought reaches down into the profound, there is no danger from vanity. Solemn friends will warn them of the danger of the head's being turned by the flourish of trumpets, but they can afford to smile. I remember the indignation of an eloquent Methodist[19] at the kind admonitions of a Doctor of Divinity,—"My friend, a man can neither be praised nor insulted:" But forgive the'counsels; they are very natural. I remember the thought which occurred to me when some ingenious and spiritual foreigners[20] came to America,

18. Patmos of thought. See *Revelation* 1:9.
19. **eloquent Methodist.** Rev. Edward Taylor, of the Sailors* Mission in Boston.
20. **spiritual foreigners.** Two Englishmen, named Lane and Wrigrht, who came to America in 1842 in the interest of **plana for a** new type of social community.

was, Have you been victimized in being brought hither?—or, prior to that, answer me this, "Are you victimizate?"

As I have said, Nature keeps these sovereignties in her own hands, and however pertly our sermons and disciplines would divide some share of credit, and teach that the laws fashion the citizen, she goes her own gait and puts the wisest in the wrong. She makes very light of gospels and prophets, as one who has a great many more to produce and no excess of time to spare on any one. There is a class of men, individuals of which appear at long intervals, so eminently endowed with insight and virtue that they have been unanimously saluted as *divine,* and who seem to be an accumulation of that power we consider. Divine persons are character born, or, to borrow a phrase from Napoleon, they are victory organized. They are usually received with ill-will, because they are new and because they set a bound to the exaggeration that has been made of the personality of the last divine person. Nature never rhymes her children, nor makes two men alike. When we see a great man we fancy a resemblance to some historical person, and predict the sequel of his character and fortune; a result which he is sure *to* disappoint. None will ever solve the problem of his character according to our prejudice, but only in his own high unprecedented way. Character wants room; must not be crowded on by persons nor be judged from glimpses got in the press of affairs or on few occasions. It needs perspective, as a great building. It may not, probably does not, form relations rapidly; and we should not require rash explanation, either on the popular ethics, or on our own, of its action.

I look on Sculpture as history. I do not think the Apollo and the Jove impossible in flesh and blood. Every trait which the artist recorded in stone he had seen in life, and better than his copy. We have seen many counterfeits, but we are born believers in great men. How easily we read in old books, when men were few, of the smallest action of the patriarchs.

We require that a man should be so large and columnar in the landscape, that it should deserve to be recorded that he arose, and girded up his loins, and departed to such a place. The most credible pictures are those of majestic men who prevailed at their entrance, and convinced the senses; as happened to the eastern magian[21] who was sent to test the merits of Zertusht or Zoroaster. "When the Yunani sage arrived at Balkh, the Persians tell us, Gushtasp appointed a day on which the Mobebs of every country should assemble, and a golden chair was placed for the Yunani sage. Then the beloved of Yezdam, the prophet Zertusht, advanced into the midst of the assembly. The Yunani sage, on seeing that chief, said, 'This form and this gait cannot lie, and nothing but truth can proceed from them.'" Plato said it was impossible not to believe in the children of the gods, "though they should speak without probable or necessary arguments." I should think myself very unhappy in my associates if I could not credit the best things in history. "John Bradshaw,"[22] says Milton, "appears like a consul, from whom the fasces[23] are not to depart with the year; so that not on the tribunal only, but throughout his life, you would regard him as sitting in judgment upon kings." I find it more credible, since it is anterior information, that one man should *know heaven,* as the Chinese say, than that so many men should know the world. "The virtuous prince confronts the gods, without any misgiving. He waits a hundred ages till a sage comes, and does not doubt. He who confronts the gods, without any misgiving, knows heaven; he who waits a hundred ages until a sage comes, without doubting, knows men. Hence the virtuous prince moves, and for ages shows empire the way." But

21. **magian.** Priest of Persia. The anecdote is quoted from the *Desatir,* one of the sacred books of Persia.

22. **Bradihaw.** An English judge, one of the "regicides" connected with the execution of Charles I.

23. **fasces.** The rods and axe that symbolized the magistracy at Rome.

there is no need to seek remote examples. He is a dull observer whose experience has not taught him the reality and force of magic, as well as of chemistry. The coldest precisian cannot *go* abroad without encountering inexplicable influences. One man fastens an eye on him and the graves of the memory render up their dead; the secrets that make him wretched either to keep or to betray must be yielded;—another, and he cannot speak, and the bones of his body seem to lose their cartilages; the entrance of a friend adds grace, boldness, and eloquence to him; and there are persons he cannot choose but remember, who gave a transcendent expansion to his thought, and kindled another life in his bosom.

What is so excellent as strict relations of amity, when they spring from this deep root? The sufficient reply to the skeptic who doubts the power and the furniture[24] of man, is in that possibility of joyful intercourse with persons, which makes the faith and practice of all reasonable men. I know nothing which life has to offer so satisfying as the profound good understanding which can subsist, after much exchange of good offices, between two virtuous men, each of whom is sure of himself and sure of his friend. It is a happiness which postpones all other gratifications, and makes politics, and commerce, and churches cheap. For when men shall meet as they ought, each a benefactor, a shower of stars, clothed with thoughts, with deeds, with accomplishments, it should be the festival of nature which all things announce. Of such friendship, love in the sexes is the first symbol, as all other things are symbols of love. Those relations to the best men, which, at one time, we reckoned the romances of youth, become, in the progress of the character, the most solid enjoyment.

If it were possible to live in right relations with men!—if we could abstain from asking anything of them, from asking their praise, or help, or pity, and content us with compelling

24. furniture. Equipment.

them through the virtue of the eldest laws! Could we not deal with a few persons,—with one person,—after the unwritten statutes, and make an experiment of their efficacy? Could we not pay our friend the compliment of truth, of silence, of forbearing? Need we be so eager to seek him? If we are related, we shall meet.. It was a tradition of the ancient world that no metamorphosis[25] could hide a god from a god; and there is a Greek verse which runs,—

The gods arc to each other not unknowns

Friends also follow the laws of divine necessity; they gravitate, to each other, and cannot otherwise:—

When each the other shall avoid,
Shall each by each be most enjoyed.[27]

Their relation is not made, but allowed. The gods must seat themselves without seneschal[28] in our Olympus, and as they can instal themselves by seniority divine. Society is spoiled if pains are taken, if the associates are brought a mile to meet. And if it be not society, it is a mischievous, low, degrading jangle, though made up of the best. All the greatness of each is kept back and every foible in painful activity, as if the Olympians[29] should meet to exchange snuff-boxes.

Life goes headlong. We chase some flying scheme, or we are hunted by some fear or command behind us. But if suddenly we encounter a friend, we pause; our heat and hurry look foolish enough; now pause, now possession is required, and the power to swell the moment from the resources of the heart. The moment is all, in all noble relations.

A divine person is the prophecy of the mind; a friend is

25. **Metamorphosis.** Change of form.
26. **The g*ods,** etc. Prom the *Odyssey,* Book v.
27. **"When each the other,** etc. From Emerson's own poem called "Initial, Daemonic, and Celestial Love."
28. **without seneschal.** That is, without the services of one who seats persons according to rank.
29. **Olympians.** Gods.

the hope of the heart. Our beatitude waits for the fulfillment of these two in one. The ages are opening this moral force. All force is the shadow or symbol of that. Poetry is joyful and strong as it draws its inspiration thence. Men write their names on the world as they are filled with this. History has been mean; our nations have been .mobs; we have never seen a man; that divine form we do not yet know, but only the dream and prophecy of such: we do not know the majestic manners which belong to him, which appease and exalt the beholder. We shall one day see that the most private is the most public energy, that quality atones for quantity, and grandeur of character acts in the dark, and succors them who never saw it. What greatness has yet appeared is beginnings and encouragements to us in this direction. The history of those gods and saints which the world has written and then worshipped, are documents of character. The ages have exulted in the manners of a youth who owed nothing to fortune, and who was hanged at the Tyburn of his nation,[30] who, by the pure quality of his nature, shed an epic splendor around the facts of his death which has transfigured every particular into an universal symbol for the eyes of mankind. This great defeat is hitherto our highest fact. But the mind requires a victory to the senses; a force of character which will convert judge, jury, soldier, and king; which will rule animal and mineral virtues, and blend with the courses of sap, of rivers, of winds, of stars, and of moral agents.

If we cannot attain at a bound to these grandeurs, at least let us do them homage. In society, high advantages are set down to the possessor as disadvantages. It requires the more wariness in our private estimates. I do not forgive in my friends the failure to know a fine character and to entertain it with thankful hospitality. When at last that which we have always longed for is arrived and shines on us with

30. **Tyburn of his nation.** For Tyburn, see the note on pag-e 313. Here of course the phrase means Calvary.

glad rays out of that far celestial land, then to be coarse, then to be critical, and treat such a visitant with the jabber and suspicion of the streets, argues a vulgarity that seems to shut the doors of heaven. This is confusion, this the right insanity, when the soul no longer knows its own, nor where its allegiance, its religion, are due. Is there any religion but this, to know that wherever in the wide desert of being the holy sentiment we cherish has opened into a flower, it blooms for me? if none sees it, I see it; I am aware, if I alone, of the greatness of the fact. Whilst it blooms, I will keep sabbath or holy time, and suspend my gloom and my folly and jokes. Nature is indulged by the presence of this guest. There are many eyes that can detect and honor the prudent and household virtues; there are many that can discern Genius on his starry track, though the mob is incapable; but when that love which is all-suffering, all-abstaining, all-aspiring, which has vowed to itself that it will be a wretch and also a fool in this world sooner than soil its white hands by any compliances, comes into our streets and houses,—only the pure and aspiring can know its face, and the only compliment they can pay it is to own it.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

[GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS was born at Providence, Rhode Island, In 1824. He early became interested in both social and literary movements of the time, and when only eighteen went to live for a time at the Brook Farm community founded by some of the New England Transcendentalists. He first attained notice as a writer by books of travel reporting his Journeys in Europe and Africa *(Nile Notes,* etc.). The greater part of his life was spent in New York City, where he devoted himself to the higher type of journalism and to the betterment of public life. For a long time he conducted the "Easy Chair" department of *Harper's Magazine,* and later edited *Harper's Weekly* during its most influential period. He was especially identified with the cause of Civil Service reform, to which he devoted no small gifts as a public speaker. Curtis published no single volume of outstanding importance, but his familiar essays in the collections called *Potiphar Papers* and *Prue and I* (1853, 1856) became classics of a modest sort. Both his character and style were marked by something of the grace and dignity of a gentleman "of the old school." He died in 1892.]

MY CHATEAUX[1]

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree.
—*Coleridge.*

I am the owner of great estates. Many of them lie in the West; but the greater part are in Spain. You may see my western possessions any evening at sunset, when their spires and battlements flash against the horizon.

It gives me a feeling of pardonable importance, as a proprietor, that they are visible, to my eyes at least, from any part of the world in which I chance to be. In my long voyage

1. This Is one of the chapters of *Prue and* 7, which are—in a sense—separate essays yet are connected by a slender thread of story, that of the life of a married pair characterized by "plain living and high thinking."

around the Cape of Good Hope to India (the only voyage I ever made, when I was a boy and a supercargo), if I fell homesick, or sank into a revery of all the pleasant homes I had left behind, I had but to wait until sunset, and then, looking toward the west, I beheld my clustering pinnacles and towers brightly burnished as if to salute and welcome me.

So in the city, if I get vexed and wearied, and cannot find my wonted solace in sallying forth at dinner-time to contemplate the gay world of youth and beauty hurrying to the congress of fashion,—or if I observe that years are deepening their tracks around the eyes of my wife, Prue, I go quietly up to the housetop, toward evening, and refresh myself with a distant prospect of my estates. It is as dear to me as that of Eton to the poet Gray;[2] and, if I sometimes wonder at such moments whether I shall find those realms as fair as they appear, I am suddenly reminded that the night air may be noxious, and descending, I enter the little parlor where Prue sits stitching, and surprise that precious woman by exclaiming with the poet's pensive enthusiasm:

> Thought would destroy their Paradise,
> No more;—where ignorance is bliss,
> Tis folly to be wise.

Columbus, also, had possessions in the West; and as I read aloud the romantic story of his life, my voice quivers when I come to the point in which it is related that sweet odors of the land mingled with the sea-air, as the admiral's fleet approached the shores; that tropical birds flew out and fluttered around the ships, glittering in the sun, gorgeous promises of the new country; that boughs, perhaps with blossoms not all decayed, floated out to welcome the strange wood from which the craft were hollowed. Then I cannot restrain myself. I think of the gorgeous visions I have seen before I have even

2. **Eton . . . Gray.** The poet Gray, author of the Elegy, had been a student at Eton, and wrote an ode "On a Distant Prospect of Eton" viewed from his home near Stoke Pogis. It is from this poem that the quotation a few lines below is taken.

undertaken the journey to the West, and I cry aloud to Prue:

"What sun-bright birds and gorgeous blossoms and celestial odors will float out to us, my Prue, as we approach our western possessions!"

The placid Prue raises her eyes to mine with a reproof so delicate that it could not be trusted to words; and after a moment she resumes her knitting, and I proceed.

These are my western estates, but my finest castles are in Spain. It is a country famously romantic, and my castles are all of perfect proportions and appropriately set in the most picturesque situations. I have never been to Spain myself, but I have naturally conversed much with travelers to that country; although, I must allow, without deriving from them much substantial information about my property there. The wisest of them told me that there were more holders of real estate in Spain than in any other region he had ever heard of, and they are all great proprietors. Every one of them possesses a multitude of the stateliest castles. From conversation with them you easily gather that each one considers his own castles much the largest and in the loveliest positions. And, after I had heard this said, I verified it by discovering that all my immediate neighbors in the city were great Spanish proprietors.

One day as I raised my head from entering some long and tedious accounts in my books, and began to reflect that the quarter was expiring, and that I must begin to prepare the balance-sheet, I observed my subordinate, in office but not in years (for poor old Titbottom will never see sixty again!), leaning on his hand, and much abstracted.

"Are you not well, Titbottom?" asked I.

"Perfectly, but I was just building a castle in Spain," said he.

I looked at his rusty coat, his faded hands, his sad eyes, and white hair, for a moment, in great surprise, and then inquired:

"Is it possible that you own property there toot"

He shook his head silently; and, still leaning on his hand, and with an expression in his eye as if he were looking upon the most fertile estate of Andalusia,[3] he went on making his plans; laying out his gardens, I suppose, building terraces for the vines, determining a library with a southern exposure, and resolving which should be the tapestried chamber.

"What **a** singular whim," thought I, as I watched Titbottom and filled up a check for four hundred dollars, my quarterly salary, "that a man who owns castles in Spain should be deputy book-keeper at nine hundred dollars a year!"

When I went home I ate my dinner silently, and afterward sat for a long time upon the roof of the house, looking at my western property, and thinking of Titbottom.

It is remarkable that none of the proprietors have ever been to Spain to take possession and report to the rest of us the state of our property there. I, of course, cannot go; I am too much engaged. So is Titbottom. And I find it is the case with all the proprietors. We have so much to detain us at home that we cannot get away. But it is always so with rich men. Prue sighed once as she sat at the window and saw Bourne, the millionaire, the president of innumerable companies, and manager and director of all the charitable societies in town, going by with wrinkled brow and hurried step. I asked her why she sighed.

"Because I was remembering that my mother used to tell me not to desire great riches, for they occasioned great cares," said she.

"They do indeed," answered I, with emphasis, remembering Titbottom, and the impossibility of looking after my Spanish estates.

Prue turned and looked at me with mild surprise; but I saw that her mind had gone down the street with Bourne. I could never discover if he held much Spanish stock. But I

3. **Aadaluiia.** A district of southern Spain.

think he does. All the Spanish proprietors have a certain expression. Bourne has it to a remarkable degree. It is a kind of look, as if—in fact, as if a man's mind were in Spain. Bourne was an old lover of Prue's, and he is not married, which is strange for a man in his position.

It is not easy for me to say how I know so much, as I certainly do, about my castles in Spain. The sun always shines upon them. They stand lofty and fair in a luminous, golden atmosphere, a little hazy and dreamy, perhaps, like the Indian summer, but in which no- gales blow and there are no tempests. All the lofty mountains, and beautiful valleys, and soft landscape, that I have not yet seen, are to be found in the grounds. They command a noble view of the Alps; so fine, indeed, that I should be quite content with the prospect of them from the highest tower of my castle, and not care to go to Switzerland.

The neighboring ruins, too, are as picturesque as those of Italy, and my desire of standing in the Coliseum,[4] and of seeing the shattered arches of the Aqueducts stretching along the Campagna[5] and melting into the Alban Mount, is entirely quenched. The rich gloom of my orange groves is gilded by fruit as brilliant of complexion and exquisite of flavor as any that ever dark-eyed Sorrento[6] girls, looking over the high plastered walls of southern Italy, hand to the youthful travelers, climbing on donkeys up the narrow lane beneath.

The Nile flows through my grounds. The desert lies upon their edge, and Damascus stands in my garden. I am given to understand, also, that the Parthenon[7] has been removed to my Spanish possessions. The Golden Horn[8] is my fish-

4. Coliseum. The great ruined Amphitheatre at Home.

5. Campagna. The Italian plain surrounding Rome and extending- to the Alban mountains on the southeast.

6. Sorrento. A favorite town on the Bay of Naples.

7. Parthenon. The ruined temple of Athena on the Acropolis of Athens.

8. Golden Born, The harbor of Constantinople, on the Bosporus.

preserve; my flocks of golden fleece are pastured on the plain of Marathon,[9] and the honey of Hymettus[10] is distilled from the flowers that grow in the vale of Enna[11]—all in my Spanish domains.

From the windows of those castles look the beautiful women whom I have never seen, whose portraits the poets have painted. They wait for me there, and chiefly the fair-haired child, lost to my eyes so long ago, now bloomed into an impossible beauty. The lights that never shone glance at evening in the vaulted halls upon banquets that were never spread. The bands I have never collected play all night long, and enchant the brilliant company that was never assembled, into silence.

In the long summer mornings the children that I never had, play in the gardens that I never planted. I hear their sweet voices sounding low and far away, calling, "Father! father!" I see the lost fair-haired girl, grown now into a woman, descending the stately stairs of my castle in Spain, stepping out upon the lawn, and playing with those children. They bound away together down the garden; but those voices linger, this time airily calling, "Mother! mother!"

But there is a stranger magic than this in my Spanish estates. The lawny slopes on which, when a child, I played, in my father's old country place, which was sold when he failed, are all there, and not a flower faded, nor a blade of grass sere. The green leaves have not fallen from the spring woods of half a century ago, and a gorgeous autumn has blazed undimmed for fifty years among the trees I remember.

Chestnuts are not especially sweet to my palate now, but those with which I used to prick my fingers when gathering them in New Hampshire woods are exquisite as ever to my taste, when I think of eating them in Spain. I never ride

9. Marathon. A plain in Attica, famed for the great battle between Persians and Greeks in 490 B.C.

I0 Hymettus. A mountain in Attica famed for its honey.

11. Enna. A town in Sicily, now called Castrogiovanni.

horseback now at home; but in Spain, when I think of it, I bound over all the fences in the country, bare-backed, upon the wildest horses. Sermons I am apt to find a little soporific in this country; but in Spain I should listen as reverently as ever, for proprietors must set a good example on their estates.

Plays are insufferable to me here—Prue and I never go. Prue, indeed, is not quite sure it is moral; but the theaters in my Spanish castles are of a prodigious splendor, and when I think of going there, Prue sits in a front box with me—a kind of royal box—the good woman, attired in such wise as I have never seen her here, while I wear my white waistcoat, which in Spain has no appearance of mending, but dazzles with immortal newness, and is a miraculous fit.

Yes, and in those castles in Spain, Prue is not the placid, breeches-patching helpmate, with whom you are acquainted, but her face has a bloom which we both remember, and her movement a grace which my Spanish swans emulate, and her voice a music sweeter than those that orchestras discourse. She is always there what she seemed to me when I fell in love with her, many and many years ago. The neighbors called her then a nice, capable girl; and certainly she did knit and darn with a zeal and success to which my feet and my legs have testified for nearly half a century. But she could spin a finer web than ever came from cotton, and in its subtle meshes my heart was entangled, and there has reposed softly and happily ever since. The neighbors declared she could make pudding and cake better than any girl of her age; but stale bread from Prue's hand was ambrosia to my palate.

"She who makes everything well, even to making neighbors speak well of her, will surely make a good wife," said I to myself, when I knew her; and the echo of a half century answers, "a good wife."

So, when I meditate my Spanish castles, I see Prue in them as my heart saw her standing by her father's door.

"Age cannot wither her."[12] There is a magic in the Spanish air that paralyzes Time. He glides by, unnoticed and unnoticing. I greatly admire the Alps, which I see so distinctly from my Spanish windows; I delight in the taste of the southern fruit that ripens upon my terraces; I enjoy the pensive shade of the Italian ruins in my gardens; I like to shoot crocodiles, and talk with the Sphinx upon the shores of the Nile, flowing through my domain; I am glad to drink sherbet in Damascus, and fleece my flocks on the plains of Marathon; but I would resign all these forever rather than part with that Spanish portrait of Prue for a day. Nay, have I not resigned them all forever, to live with that portrait's changing original?

I have often wondered how I should reach my castles. The desire of going comes over me very strongly sometimes, and I endeavor to see how I can arrange my affairs, so as to get away. To tell the truth, I am not quite sure of the route,—I mean, to that particular part of Spain in which my estates lie. I have inquired very particularly, but nobody seems to know precisely. One morning I met young Aspen, trembling with excitement.

"What's the matter ?" asked I with interest, for I knew that he held a great deal of Spanish stock.

"Oh!" said he, "I'm going out to take possession. I have found the way to my castles in Spain."

"Dear me!" I answered, with the blood streaming into my face; and, heedless of Prue, pulling my glove until it ripped —"what is it?"

"The direct route is through California," answered he.

"But then you have the sea to cross afterward," said I, remembering the map.

"Not at all," answered Aspen, "the road runs along the shore of the Sacramento River."

He darted away from me, and I did not meet him again.

12. **Age cannot wither her.** Said of Cleopatra In Shakespeare's *Antony& Cleopatra,* II, ii.

I was very curious to know if he arrived safely in Spain, and was expecting every day to hear news from him of my property there, when, one evening, I bought an extra, full of California news, and the first thing upon which my eye fell was this: "Died, in San Francisco, Edward Aspen, Esq., aged 35." There is a large body of the Spanish stockholders who believe with Aspen, and sail for California[13] every week. I have not yet heard of their arrival out at their castles, but I suppose they are so busy with their own affairs there, that they have no time to write to the rest of us about the condition of our property.

There was my wife's cousin, too, Jonathan Bud, who is a good, honest youth from the country, and, after a few weeks' absence, he burst into the office one day, just as I was balancing my books, and whispered to me, eagerly:—

"I've found my castle in Spain."

I put the blotting-paper in the leaf deliberately, for I was wiser now than when Aspen had excited me, and looked at my wife's cousin, Jonathan Bud, inquiringly.

"Polly Bacon," whispered he, winking.

I continued the interrogative glance.

"She's going to marry me, and she'll show me the way to Spain," said Jonathan Bud, hilariously.

"She'll make you walk Spanish, Jonathan Bud," said I.

And so she does. He makes no more hilarious remarks. He never bursts into a room. He does not ask us to dinner. He says that Mrs. Bud does not like smoking. Mrs. Bud has nerves and babies. She has a way of saying, "Mr. Bud!" which destroys conversation, and casts a gloom upon society.

It occurred to me that Bourne, the millionaire, must have ascertained the safest and most expeditious route to Spain; so I stole a few minutes one afternoon and went into his office. He was.sitting at his desk, writing rapidly, and sur-

13„sail for California. This was written when the "gold fever" of 1849 was still ragring\

rounded by files of papers and patterns, specimens, boxes, everything that covers the tables of a great merchant. In the outer rooms clerks were writing. Upon high shelves over their heads were huge chests, covered with dust, dingy with age, many of them, and all marked with the name of the firm, in large black letters—"Bourne & Dye." They were all numbered also with the proper year; some of them with a single capital B and dates extending back into the last century, when old Bourne made the great fortune, before he went into partnership with Dye. Everything was indicative of immense and increasing prosperity.

There were several gentlemen in waiting to converse with Bourne (we all call him so, familiarly, down town), and I waited until they went out. But others came in. There was no pause in the rush. All kinds of inquiries were made and answered. At length I stepped up.

"A moment, please, Mr. Bourne."

He looked up hastily, wished me good morning, which he had done to none of the others, and which courtesy I attributed to Spanish sympathy.

"What is it, sir?" he asked, blandly, but with wrinkled brow.

"Mr. Bourne, have you any castles in Spain?" said I, without preface.

He looked at me for a few moments without speaking, and without seeming to see me. His brow gradually smoothed, and his eyes, apparently looking into the street, were really, I have no doubt, feasting upon the Spanish landscape.

"Too many, too many," said he at length, musingly, shaking his head, and without addressing me.

I suppose he felt himself too much extended—as we say in Wall Street. He feared, I thought, that he had too much impracticable property elsewhere, to own so much in Spain, so I asked:—

"Will you tell me what you consider the shortest and safest

route thither, Mr. Bourne? for, of course, a man who drives such an immense trade with all parts of the world will know all that I have come to inquire."

"My dear sir," answered he, wearily, "I have been trying all my life to discover it; but none of my ships have ever been there—none of my captains have any report to make. They bring me, as they brought my father, gold dust from Guinea; ivory, pearls, and precious stones, from every part of the earth; but not a fruit, not a solitary flower, from one of my castles in Spain. I have sent clerks, agents, and travelers of all kinds, philosophers, pleasure-hunters, and invalids, in all sorts of ships, to all sorts of places, but none of them ever saw or heard of my castles, except one young poet, and he died in a mad-house."

"Mr. Bourne, will you take five thousand at ninety-seven?" hastily demanded a man, whom, as he entered, I recognized as a broker. "We'll make a splendid thing of it."

Bourne nodded assent, and the broker disappeared.

"Happy man!" muttered the merchant, as the broker went out; "he has no castles in Spain."

"I am sorry to have troubled you, Mr. Bourne," said I, retiring.

"I am glad you came," returned he; "but I assure you, had I known the route you hoped to ascertain from me, I should have sailed years and years ago. People sail for the North-west Passage,[14] which is nothing when you have found it. Why don't the English Admiralty fit out expeditions to discover all our castles in Spain?"

He sat lost in thought

"It's nearly post-time sir," said the clerk.

Mr. Bourne did not heed him. He was still musing; and I turned to go, wishing him good morning. When I had nearly

14. North-west Passage. The long sought-for passage by sea from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in the Arctic region.

reached the door, he called me back, saying, as if continuing his remarks:—

"It is strange that you, of all men, should come to ask me this question. If I envy any man, it is you, for I sincerely assure you that I supposed you lived altogether upon your Spanish estates. I once thought I knew the way to mine. I gave directions for furnishing them, and ordered bridal bouquets, which were never used, but I suppose they are there still."

He paused a moment, then said slowly—"How is your wife?"

I told him that Prue was well—that she was always remarkably well. Mr. Bourne shook me warmly by the hand.

"Thank you," said he. "Good morning."

I knew why he thanked me; I knew why he thought that I lived altogether upon my Spanish estates; I knew a little bit about those bridal bouquets. Mr. Bourne, the millionaire, was an old lover of Prue's. There is something very odd about these Spanish castles. When I think of them, I somehow see the fair-haired girl whom I knew when I was not out of short jackets. When Bourne meditates them, he sees Prue and me quietly at home in their best chambers. It is a very singular thing that my wife should live in another man's castle in Spain.

At length I resolved to ask Titbottom if he had ever heard of the best route to our estates. He said that he owned castles, and sometimes there was an expression in his face as if he saw them. I hope he did. I should long ago have asked him if he had ever observed the turrets of my possessions in the West, without alluding to Spain, if I had not feared he would suppose I was mocking his poverty. I hope his poverty has not turned his head, for he is very forlorn,

One Sunday I went with him a few miles into the country, It was a soft, bright day; the fields and hills lay turned to the sky, as if every **leaf** and blade of grass **were nerves,**

bared to the touch of the sun. I almost felt the ground warm under my feet. The meadows waved and glittered, the lights and shadows were exquisite, and the distant hills seemed only to remove the horizon farther away. As we strolled along, picking wild flowers, for it was in summer, I was thinking what a fine day it was for a trip to Spain, when Titbottom suddenly exclaimed:—

"Thank God! I own this landscape."

"You?" returned I.

"Certainly," said he.

"Why," I answered, "I thought this was part of Bourne's property."

Titbottom smiled.

"Does Bourne own the sun and sky? Does Bourne own that sailing shadow yonder? Does Bourne own the golden luster of the grain, or the motion of the wood, or those ghosts of hills, that glide pallid along the horizon? Bourne owns the dirt and fences; I own the beauty that makes the landscape, or otherwise how could I own castles in Spain?"

That was very true. I respected Titbottom more than ever.

"Do you know," said he, after a long pause, "that I fancy my castles lie just beyond those distant hills. At all events, I can see them distinctly from their summits."

He smiled quietly as he spoke, and it was then I asked:

"But, Titbottom, have you never discovered the way to them?"

"Dear me! yes," answered he, "I know the way well enough; but it would do no good to follow it. I should give out before I arrived. It is a long and difficult journey for a man of my years and habits—and income," he added slowly.

As he spoke he seated himself upon the ground; and while he pulled long blades of grass, and, putting them between his thumbs, whistled shrilly, he said:—

"I have never known but two men who reached their estates in Spain."

"Indeed!" said I, "how did they go!"

"One went over the side of a ship, and the other out of a third-story window," said Titbottom, fitting a broad blade between his thumbs and blowing a demoniacal blast.

"And I know one proprietor who resides upon his estates constantly," continued he.

"Who is that?"

"Our old friend Slug, whom you may see any day at the asylum, just coming in from the hunt, or going to call upon his friend the Grand Lama,[15] or dressing for the wedding of the Man in the Moon, or receiving an ambassador from Timbuctoo. Whenever I go to see him, Slug insists that I am the Pope, disguised as a journeyman carpenter, and he entertains me in the most distinguished manner. He always insists upon kissing my foot, and I bestow upon him, kneeling, the apostolic benediction. This is the only Spanish proprietor in possession with whom I am acquainted."

And, so saying, Titbottom lay back upon the ground, and making a spy-glass of his hand, surveyed the landscape through it. This was a marvelous book-keeper of more than sixty!

"I know another man who lived in his Spanish castle for two months, and then was tumbled out head-first. That was young Stunning, who married old Buhl's daughter. She was all smiles, and mamma was all sugar, and Stunning was all bliss, for two months. He carried his head in the clouds, and felicity absolutely foamed at his eyes. He was drowned in love; seeing, as usual, not what really was, but what he fancied. He lived so exclusively in his castle that he forgot the office down town, and one morning there came a fall, and Stunning was smashed."

Titbottom arose, and stooping over, contemplated the landscape, with his head down between his legs.

"It's quite a new effect, so," said the nimble book-keeper.

15. Grand **Lama.** The great High Priest of the Thibetans.

"Well," said I, "Stunning failed?"

"Oh, yes, smashed all up, and the castle in Spain came down about his ears with a tremendous crash. The family sugar was all dissolved into the original cane in a moment. Fairy-times are over, are they? Heigh-ho! the falling stones of Stunning's castle have left their marks all over his face. I call them his Spanish scars."

"But, my dear Titbottom," said I, "what is the matter with you this morning,—your usual sedateness is quite gone?"

"It's only the exhilarating air of Spain," he answered. "My castles are so beautiful that I can never think of them, nor speak of them, without excitement; when I was younger I desired to reach them even more ardently than now, because I heard that the philosopher's stone[16] was in the vault of one of them."

"Indeed!" said I, yielding to sympathy; "and I have good reason to believe that the fountain of eternal youth flows through the garden of one of mine. Do you know whether there are any children upon your grounds?"

"'The children of Alice call Bartrum father!'"[17] replied Titbottom, solemnly, and in a low voice, as he folded his faded hands before him, and stood erect, looking wistfully over the landscape. The light wind played with his thin white hair, and his sober, black suit was almost somber in the sunshine. The half-bitter expression, which I had remarked upon his face during part of our conversation, had passed away, and the old sadness had returned to his eyes. He stood, in the pleasant morning, the very image of a great proprietor of castles in Spain.

"There is wonderful music there," he said: "sometimes I awake at night and hear it. It is full of the sweetness of youth, and love, and a new world. I lie and listen, and I

16. philosopher's stone. See note on page 33.

17. The children of Alice, etc. The "Dream Children" of Lamb; for the quotation, see page 128.

seem to arrive at the great gates of my estates. They swing open upon noiseless hinges, and the tropic of my dreams receives me. Up the broad steps, whose marble pavement mingled light and shadow print with shifting mosaic, beneath the boughs of lustrous oleanders, and palms, and trees of unimaginable fragrance, I pass into the vestibule, warm with summer odors, and into the presence-chamber beyond, where my wife awaits me. But castle, and wife, and odorous woods, and pictures, and statues, and all the bright substance of my household, seem to reel and glimmer in the splendor, as the music fails.

"But when it swells again, I clasp the wife to my heart, and we move on with a fair society, beautiful women, noble men, before whom the tropical luxuriance of that world bends and bows in homage; and, through endless days and nights of eternal summer, the stately revel of our life proceeds. Then, suddenly, the music stops. I hear my watch ticking under the pillow. I see dimly the outline of my little upper room. Then I fall asleep, and in the morning some one of the boarders at the breakfast-table says:—

"'Did you hear the serenade last night, Mr. Titbottom?'"

I doubted no longer that Titbottom was a very extensive proprietor. The truth is that he was so constantly engaged in planning and arranging his castles that he conversed very little at the office, and I had misinterpreted his silence. As we walked homeward, that day, he was more than ever tender and gentle. "We must all have something to do in this world," said he, "and I, who have so much leisure—for you know I have no wife nor children to work for—know not what I should do, if I had not my castles in Spain to look after."

When I reached home, my darling Prue was sitting in the small parlor, reading. I felt a little guilty for having been so long away, and upon my only holiday, too. So I began to say that Titbottom invited me to go to walk, and that I had no idea we had gone so far, and that——

"Don't excuse yourself," said Prue, smiling as she laid down her book; "I am glad you have enjoyed yourself. You ought to go out sometimes, and breathe the fresh air, and run about the fields, which I am not strong enough to do. Why did you not bring home Mr. Titbottom to tea? He is so lonely, and looks so sad. I am sure he has very little comfort in this life," said my thoughtful Prue, as she called Jane to set the tea-table.

"But he has a good deal of comfort in Spain, Prue," answered I.

"When was Mr. Titbottom in Spain?" inquired my wife.

"Why, he is there more than half the time," I replied.

Prue looked quietly at me and smiled. "I see it has done you good to breathe the country air," said she. "Jane, get some of the blackberry jam, and call Adoniram and the children."

So we went in to tea. We eat in the back parlor, for our little house and limited means do not allow us to have things upon the Spanish scale. It is better than a sermon to hear my wife Prue talk to the children; and when she speaks to me it seems sweeter than psalm singing,—at least, such as we have in our church. I am very happy.

Yet I dream my dreams, and attend to my castles in Spain. I have so much property there that I could not, in conscience, neglect it. All the years of my youth, and the hopes of my manhood, are stored away, like precious stones, in the vaults; and I know that I shall find everything convenient, elegant, and beautiful, when I come into possession.

As the years go by, I am not conscious that my interest diminishes. If I see that age is subtly sifting his snow in the dark hair of my Prue, I smile, contented, for her hair, dark and heavy as when I first saw it, is all carefully treasured in my castles in Spain. If I feel her arm more heavily leaning upon mine, as we walk around the squares, I press it closely to my side, for I know that the easy grace of her youth's

motion will be restored by the elixir of that Spanish air. If her voice sometimes falls less clearly from her lips, it is no less sweet to me, for the music of her voice's prime fills, freshly as ever, those Spanish halls. If the light I love fades a little from her eyes, I know that the glances she gave me, in our youth, are the eternal sunshine of my castles in Spain.

I defy time and change. Each year laid upon our heads is a hand of blessing. I have no doubt that I shall find the shortest route to my possessions as soon as need be. Perhaps, when Adoniram is married, we shall all go out to one of my castles to pass the honeymoon.

All *I* if the true history of Spain could be written, what a book were there! The most purely romantic ruin in the world is the Alhambra.[18] But of the Spanish castles, more spacious and splendid than any possible Alhambra, and forever unruined, no towers are visible, no pictures have been painted, and only a few ecstatic songs have been sung. The pleasure-dome of Kubla Khan,[19] winch Coleridge saw in Xanadu (a province with which I am not familiar), and a fine Castle of Indolence[20] belonging to Thomson, and the Palace of Art[21] which Tennyson built as a "lordly pleasure-house" for his soul, are among the best statistical accounts of those Spanish estates. Turner,[22] too, has done for them much the same service that Owen Jones[23] has done for the

18. **Alhambra.** The great palace of the Spanish Moors at Granada.

19. Ku**bla Khan.** A Mongol emperor of the thirteenth century, who gave the title to a famous poem by Coleridge (see the quotation at the beginning" of the essay).

20. **Castle of Indolence.** The subject of a fanciful poem, of the same name, by James Thomson (1748).

21. **Palace of Art.** The subject of **a** poem of the same name by Tennyson.

22.. **Turner.** A great British artist (1775-1851). His landscapes, from their glowing imaginative beauty, suggested to Curtis the same sort of unreal sights as the poems just referred to.

23. **Owen Jone*.** A British writer on architectural subjects (died 1874).

Alhambra. In the vignette to Moore's *Epicurean*[24] you will find represented one of the most extensive castles in Spain; and there are several exquisite studies from others, by the same artists, published in Rogers's *Italy.*[25]

But I confess I do not recognize any of these as mine, and that fact makes me prouder of my own castles, for, if there be such boundless variety of magnificence in their aspect and exterior, imagine the life that is led there,—a life not unworthy such a setting.

If Adoniram should be married within a reasonable time, and we should make up that little family party to go out, I have considered already what society I should ask to meet the bride. Jephthah's daughter[26] and the Chevalier Bayard,[27] I should say—and fair Rosamond[28] with Dean Swift[29]—King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba would come over, I think, from his famous castle—Shakespeare and his friend the Marquis of Southampton[30] might come in a galley with Cleopatra; and, if any guest were offended by her presence, he should devote himself to the Fair One with Golden Locks. Mephistopheles31[1] is not personally disagreeable, and is exceedingly well-bred in society, I am told; and he should come *tete-a-tete* with Mrs. Rawdon Crawley.[32] Spenser should escort his Faerie Queene, who would preside at the tea-table.

24. **Epicurean.** A novel by the poet Thomas Moore, published 1827.

25. **Italy.** A poem' by Samuel Rogrers, published 1822.

26. **Jephthah's daughter.** See *Judges* 11:34-40.

27. **Chevalier Bayard.** See note on page 392.

28. **Rosamond.** Rosamond Clifford, a beauty beloved of Henry the Second.

29. **Dean Swift.** Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels* (1667-1745).

30. **Marquis of Southampton.** More properly, Earl of Southampton, a nobleman who for a time was Shakespeare's patron, and to whom some think that Shakespeare addressed many of his sonnets.

31. **Mephistopheles.** The devil, as he appears in Goethe's *Faust* and other forms of the same story.

32. **Mrs. Rawdon Crawley.** Becky Sharp, the unscrupulous heroine of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair.*

Mr. Samuel Weller[33] I should ask as Lord of Misrule, and Dr. Johnson as the Abbot of Unreason. I would suggest to Major Dobbin[34] to accompany Mrs. Fry;[35] Alcibiades[38] would bring Homer and Plato in his purple-sailed galley; and I would have Aspasia,[37] Ninon de l'Enclos,[38] and Mrs. Battle,[39] to make up a table of whist with Queen Elizabeth. I shall order a seat placed in the oratory for Lady Jane Grey and Joan of Arc. I shall invite General Washington to bring some of the choicest cigars from his plantation for Sir Walter Raleigh; and Chaucer, Browning, and Walter Savage Landor should talk with Goethe, who is to bring Tasso on one arm and Iphigenia[40] on the other.

Dante and Mr. Carlyle[41] would prefer, I suppose, to go down into the dark vaults under the castle. The Man in the Moon, the Old Harry, and William of the Wisp would be valuable additions, and the Laureate Tennyson might compose an official ode upon the occasion: or I would ask "They" to say all about it.

Of course there are many other guests whose names I do not at the moment recall. But I should invite, first of all, Miles

33. **Mr. Samuel Weller.** One of the chief characters in Dickens's *Pickwick Papers.* The IiOrd of Misrule was the director of the Christmas sports at old English festivals. The **Abbot of Unreason** was a similar title, used in Scotland.

34. **Major Bobbin.** Another character in *Vanity Fair.*

35. **Mrs. Pry.** An English Friend or Quakeress (died 1845), distinguished for her work in prison reform.

36. **Alcibiades.** A young Athenian politician; friend of Socrates.

37. **Aspasia.** An Athenian beauty, beloved of Pericles.

38. **Mlnon de l'Enclos.** A beauty of the French salons of the late seventeenth century.

39. **Mrs. Battle.** A character described by Lamb in his essay c tiled "Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist."

40. **Tasso . . . Iphigenia.** The Italian poet and the ancient Greek heroine were the subjects of dramatic poems of Goethe's.

41. **Dante and Mr. Carlyle.** Curtis assigns these characters to the lower regions in the one case because of Dante's authorship of the *Inferno,* in the other because of Carlyle's reputation for a morose or gloomy view of the world.

Coverdale,[42] who knows everything about these places and this society, for he was at Blithedale, and he has described "a select party" which he attended at a castle in the air.

Prue has not yet looked over the list. In fact I am not quite sure that she knows my intention. For I wish to surprise her, and I think it would be generous to ask Bourne to lead her out in the bridal quadrille. I think that I shall try the first waltz with the girl I sometimes seem to see in my fairest castle, but whom I very vaguely remember. Titbottom will come with old Burton[43] and Jaques. But I have not prepared half my invitations. Do you not guess it, seeing that I did not name, first of all, Elia, who assisted at the "Rejoicings upon the new year's coming of age"?[44]

And yet, if Adoniram should never marry? — or if we could not get to Spain?—or if the company would not come?

What then? Shall I betray a secret? I have already entertained this party in my humble little parlor at home; and Prue presided as serenely as Semirarais[45] over her court. Have I not said that I defy time, and shall space hope to daunt me? I keep books by day, but by night books keep me. They leave me to dreams and reveries. Shall I confess that sometimes when I have been sitting reading to my Prue, *Cymbeline*,*[6] perhaps, or a Canterbury Tale, I have seemed to see clearly before me the broad highway to my castles in Spain; and as she looked up from her work, and smiled in sympathy, I have even fancied that I was already there.

42. Milles Coverdale. A character in Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*, supposed in part to represent Hawthorne's own personality. Blithedale was the scene of a philosophic colony, sketched after that at Brook Farm, where Hawthorne spent some time as well as Curtis; this is the "castle in the air."

43. **Burton.** A quaint writer of the seventeenth century, author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. This allies him with Jaques, **the** melancholy gentleman of *As You Like It*.

44. Rejoioings, etc One of Lamb's Elia Essays, 1821.

45. Semiramis. Ancient Queen of Assyria.

46. Cymbeline. One of Shakespeare's romantic plays.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

[OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES was born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1809. He was graduated from Harvard in the class of 1829,—a class remembered especially by a series of class poems which he wrote for successive anniversaries. He studied medicine, and in 1847 became Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in the Harvard Medical School, remaining on the faculty for thirty-five years. Very early he attained some reputation as a poet, and when *The Atlantic Monthly* magazine was founded in 1857, he became its leading prose contributor; indeed his papers, "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," are sometimes said to have been the chief cause of the prompt success of the new periodical. Later series, sequels to the first, dealt with the Poet and the Professor at the breakfast-table. Dr. Holmes was famous as a brilliant conversationalist, and in his Breakfast-Table papers he was often doing little more than developing in written form actual conversations between himself and his friends. He was one of the most genial and best beloved of the circle of writers which in the third quarter of the nineteenth century made Boston and Cambridge famous in the world of letters. Leading an active life, both physical and intellectual, almost to the last, he died in 1894.]

BOATING[1]

A YOUNG friend has lately written an admirable article in one of the journals, entitled, "Saints and their Bodies." Approving of his general doctrines, and grateful for his records

1. This essay is a part of one of the Autocrat papers (the seventh), in which the Professor reads an essay on old age, and thus is led to discuss the forms of exercise that remain desirable for those past their youth. The author is representing his own life and opinions very definitely, and, though the Professor is an older man than Holmes was at this time (1858), yet he anticipates his own actual later years; for he kept up his active boating habits to an advanced age. His home was near the Back Bay, the shallow basin into which the Charles River originally widened between East Cambridge and Boston; and there are those still living who remember seeing him row up stream to the Cambridge shore, where stood (and still stands) the Riverside Press, at which the *Atlantic* was printed, in order to correct the proofsheets of his articles. Since those days the Back Bay has been largely filled in with made land, built up with an important new residential district of Boston; so that one can no longer moor a river boat at the edge of the Common or the Public Garden, as Holmes speaks of doing in the essay. The opening sentence refers to an essay by Thomas Wentworth Higginson, in the *Atlantic* for March, 1858.

of personal experience, I cannot refuse to add my own experimental confirmation of his eulogy of one particular form of active exercise and amusement, namely, boating. For the past nine years I have rowed about, during a good part of the summer, on fresh or salt water. My present fleet on the River Charles consists of three row-boats. 1. A small flat-bottomed skiff in the shape of a flat-iron, kept mainly to lend to boys. 2. A fancy "dory" for two pairs of sculls, in which I sometimes go out with my young folks. 3. My own particular water-sulky, a "skeleton" or "shell" race-boat, twenty-two feet long, with huge outriggers, which boat I pull with ten-foot sculls,—alone, of course, as it holds but one, and tips him out if he doesn't mind what he is about. In this I glide around the Back Bay, down the stream, up the Charles to Cambridge and Watertown, up the Mystic,[2] round the wharves, in the wake of steamboats, which leave a swell after them delightful to rock upon; I linger under the bridges,—those "caterpillar bridges," as my brother professor so happily called them; rub against the black sides of old wood-schooners; cool down under the overhanging stern of some tall Indiaman;[8] stretch across to the Navy Yard, where the sentinel warns me off from the *Ohio,*—just as if I should hurt her by lying in her shadow; then strike out into the harbor, where the water gets clear and the air smells of the ocean,—till all at once I remember that, if a west wind blows up of a sudden, I shall drift along past the islands, out of sight of the dear old State-house,—plate, tumbler, knife and fork all waiting at home, but no chair drawn up at the table,—all the dear people waiting, waiting, waiting, while the boat is sliding, sliding, sliding into the great desert, where there is no tree and no fountain. As I don't want my wreck to be washed

2. the Myotic The Mystic River unites with the Charles at Charlestown, and they flow together into Boston harbor.

3 **Zndlaman.** Formerly the common name for a freight vessel that sailed to the Orient.

up on one of the beaches in company with devil's-aprons,[4] bladder-weeds, dead horse-shoes,[5] and bleached crab-shells, I turn about and flap my long, narrow wings for home. When the tide is running out swiftly, I have a splendid fight to get through the bridges, but always make it a rule to beat,—though I have been jammed up into pretty tight places at times, and was caught once between a vessel swinging round and the pier, until our bones (the boat's, that is) cracked as if we had been in the jaws of Behemoth.[6] Then back to my moorings at the foot of the Common, off with the rowing-dress, dash under the green translucent wave, return to the garb of civilization, walk through my Garden,[7] take a look at my elms on the Common, and, reaching my habitat, in consideration of my advanced period of life, indulge in the Elysian abandonment of a huge recumbent chair.

When I have established a pair of well-pronounced feathering-calluses on my thumbs, when I am in training so that I can do my fifteen miles at a stretch without coming to grief in any way, when I can perform my mile in eight minutes or a little more, then I feel as if I had old Time's head in chancery,[8] and could give it to him at my leisure.

I do not deny the attraction of walking. I have bored this ancient city through and through in my travels, until I know it as an old inhabitant[9] of a Cheshire knows his cheese. Why, it was I who, in the course of these rambles, discovered that remarkable avenue called Myrtle Street, stretching in one long line from east of the Reservoir to a precipitous and rudely paved cliff which looks down on the grim abode of

4. **devll's-apront.** Sea-mosses of a familiar species.
6. **horse-shoes.** Horse-shoe crabs.
6. **Behemoth.** A sea-monster of Hebrew literature (see *Job* 40:15, where it probably is a name for the hippopotamus) ; Holmes may be using the term for a whale.
7. **my Garden.** The Public Garden, adjoining Boston Common.
8. In chancery. Under my arm (a pugilistic position).
9. **old Inhabitant.** That is, a cheese-mite.

Science,[10] and beyond it to the far hills; a promenade so delicious in its repose, so cheerfully varied with glimpses down the northern slope into busy Cambridge Street with its iron river of the horse-railroad, and wheeled barges gliding back and forward over it,—so delightfully closing at its western extremity in sunny courts and passages where I know peace, and beauty, and virtue, and serene old age must be perpetual tenants,—so alluring to all who desire to take their daily stroll, in the words of Dr. Watts,[11]

Alike unknowing and unknown,—

that nothing but a sense of duty would have prompted me to reveal the secret of its existence. I concede, therefore, that walking is an immeasurably fine invention, of which old age ought constantly to avail itself.

Saddle-leather is in some respects even preferable to sole-leather. The principal objection to it is of a financial character. But you may be sure that Bacon and Sydenham[12] did not recommend it for nothing. One's *hepar,* or, in vulgar language, liver,—a ponderous organ, weighing some three or four pounds,—goes up and down like the dasher of a churn in the midst of the other vital arrangements, at every step of a trotting horse. The brains are also shaken up like coppers in a money-box. Riding is good, for those that are born with a silver-mounted bridle in their hand, and can ride as much and as often as they like, without thinking all the time they hear that steady grinding sound as the horse's jaws triturate with calm lateral movement the bank-bills and promises to pay upon which it is notorious that the profligate animal in question feeds day and night.

Instead, however, of considering these kinds of exercise in

10. **grim abode of Science.** The old Harvard Medical School.

11. **Dr. Watts.** The well-known religious poet of the early eighteenth century.

12. **Sydenham.** A medical writer of the seventeenth century. For Bacon's remark see page 47.

this empirical way, I will devote a brief space to an examination of them in a more scientific form.

The pleasure of exercise is due first to a purely physical impression, and secondly to a sense of power in action. The first source of pleasure varies of course with our condition, and the state of the surrounding circumstances; the second with the amount of kind of power, and the extent and kind of action. In all forms of active exercise there are three powers simultaneously in action,—the will, the muscles, and the intellect. Each of these predominates in different kinds of exercise. In walking, the will and muscles are so accustomed to work together, and perform their task with so little expenditure of force, that the intellect is left comparatively free. The mental pleasure in walking, as such, is in the sense of power over all our moving machinery. But in riding, I have the additional pleasure of governing another will, and my muscles extend to the tips of the animal's ears and to his four hoofs, instead of stopping at my hands and feet. Now in this extension of my volition and my physical frame into another animal, my tyrannical instincts and my desire for heroic strength are at once gratified. When the horse ceases to have a will of his own and his muscles require no special attention on your part, then you may live on horseback as Wesley[13] did, and write sermons or take naps, as you like. But you will observe that in riding on horseback you always have a feeling that, after all, it is not you that do the work, but the animal, and this prevents the satisfaction from being complete.

Now let us look at the conditions of rowing. I won't suppose you to be disgracing yourself in one of those miserable tubs, tugging in which is to rowing the true boat what riding a cow is to bestriding an Arab. You know the Esquimau *kayak* (if that is the name of it), don't you? Look at that model of one over my door. Sharp, rather ?—On the contrary,

13. Weiley. The founder of Methodism.

it is a lubber to the one you and I must have; a Dutch fish-wife to Psyche,[14] contrasted with what I will tell you about. Our boat, then, is something of the shape of a pickerel, as you look down upon his back, he lying in the sunshine just where the sharp edge of the water cuts in among the lily-pads. It is a kind of giant pod, as one may say,—tight everywhere, except in a little place in the middle, where you sit. Its length is from seven to ten yards, and as it is only from sixteen to thirty inches wide in its widest part, you understand why you want those "outriggers," or projecting iron frames with the rowlocks in which the oars play. My row-locks are five feet apart; double or more than double the greatest width of the boat.

Here you are, then, afloat with a body a rod and a half long, with arms, or wings, as you may choose to call them, stretching more than twenty feet from tip to tip; every volition of yours extending as perfectly into them as if your spinal cord ran down the center strip of your boat, and the nerves of your arms tingled as far as the broad blades of your oars, —oars of spruce, balanced, leathered, and ringed under your own special direction. This, in sober earnest, is the nearest approach to flying[15] that man has ever made or perhaps ever will make. As the hawk sails without flapping his pinions, so you drift with the tide when you will, in the most luxurious form of locomotion indulged to an embodied spirit. But if your blood wants rousing, turn round that stake in the river, which you see a mile from here; and when you come in in sixteen minutes (if you do, for we are old boys, and not champion scullers, you remember), then say if you begin to feel a little warmed up or not! You can row easily and gently

14. **Psyche.** In Greek myth, a beautiful creature symbolic of the human soul.

15. **nearest approach, to flying".** In **a** late edition of the *Autocrat* (1891) Holmes adds **a** note here on the coming of the bicycle. Whose rider flies "like feathered Mercury, with his wings on his feet," and observes that nothing seems to be left but "aerial swimming, **which some fancy is to be a conquest of** the **future."**

all day, and you can row yourself blind and black in the face in ten minutes, just as you like. It has been long agreed that there is no such way in which a man can accomplish so much labor with his muscles as in rowing. It is in the boat, then, that man finds the largest extension of his volitional and muscular existence; and yet he may tax both of them so slightly, in that most delicious of exercises, that he shall mentally write his sermon, or his poem, or recall the remarks he has made in company and put them in form for the public, as well as in his easy-chair.

I dare not publicly name the rare joys, the infinite delights, that intoxicate me on some sweet June morning, when the river and bay are smooth as a sheet of beryl-green silk, and I run along ripping it up with my knife-edged shell of a boat, the rent closing after me like those wounds of angels which Milton tells of,[16] but the seam still shining for many a long rood behind me. To lie still over the Flats, where the waters are shallow, and see the crabs crawling and the sculpins gliding busily and silently beneath the boat,—to rustle in through the long harsh grass that leads up some tranquil creek,—to take shelter from the sunbeams under one of the thousand-footed bridges, and look down its interminable colonnades, crusted with green and oozy growths, studded with minute barnacles, and belted with rings of dark mussels, while overhead streams and thunders that other river whose every wave is a human soul flowing to eternity as the river below flows to the ocean, —lying there moored unseen, in loneliness so profound that the columns of Tadmor[17] in the Desert could not seem more remote from life—the cool breeze on one's forehead, the stream whispering against the half-sunken pillars,—why should

16. **angels which Milton tells of.** *Paradise Lost,* Book vi:

> The griding sword with discontinuous wound
> Passed through him. But the ethereal substance closed,
> Not long- divisible; and from the gash
> A stream of nectarous humour issuing flowed.

17. **Tadmor.** The same as Palmyra, a ruined city of the Syrian desert.

I tell of these things, that I should live to see my beloved haunts invaded, and the waves blackened with boats as with a swarm of water-beetles? What a city of idiots we must be not to have covered this glorious bay with gondolas and wherries, as we have just learned to cover the ice in winter with skaters!

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

[HENRY DAVID THOREAU was born at Concord, Massachusetts, in 1817. He went to Harvard College, being graduated in 1837; taught school for a time; assisted his father in the manufacture of plumbago and pencils; and studied surveying, working in that profession when in need of money. He also gave occasional lectures in the "lyceums" of the day, but reserved the greater portion of his time for walking, thinking, reading, and writing. When statistics of his college class were being gathered, ten years after graduation, Thoreau replied to the questions asked: "I am a Schoolmaster, a private Tutor, a Surveyor, a Gardener, a Farmer, a Painter (I mean a House Painter), a Carpenter, a Mason, a Day-laborer, a Pencilmaker, a Glass-paper-maker, a Writer, and sometimes a Poetaster." Between 1845 and 1847 he lived in a little hut on the shore of Walden Pond, near Concord, in order to test his theories of the simple life, and recorded the results in his chief book, *Walden* (1854). He was a close friend of Emerson and others of the New England group of philosophers, and one of the chief contributors to the magazine called *The Dial.* Like the other Concord writers, he was enthusiastic in the anti-slavery cause, but in general despised politics and held to a rather exaggerated individualism. A strong, eccentric character, he put the original flavor of his personality into his few writings with marked success. He died in 1862.]

WALKING[1]

I HAVE met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of Walking, that is, of taking walks,—who had a genius, so to speak, for *sauntering:* which word is beautifully derived from "idle people who roved about the country, in the Middle Ages, and asked charity, under pretence of going *a la Sainte Terre,"* to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, "There goes a *Sainte-Terrer,"*[2] a Saunterer,—a Holy-Lander. They who never go to the Holy Land in their walks, as they pretend, are indeed mere idlers

1. This essay first appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly,* in 1862, and was later included in the volume called *Excursions.*

2. Salnte-Terrer. Thoreau was rather fond of etymologies more fanciful than correct, and this is such an instance. The real origin of the word is uncertain; the most probable view la that it came from "s'aventurer," to adventure one's self.

and vagabonds; but they who do go there are saunterers in the good sense, such as I mean. Some, however, would derive the word from *sans terre,* without land or a home, which, therefore, in the good sense, will mean, having no particular home, but equally at home everywhere. For this is the secret of successful sauntering. He who sits still in a house all the time may be the greatest vagrant of all; but the saunterer, in the good sense, is no more vagrant than the meandering river, which is all the while sedulously seeking the shortest course to the sea. But I prefer the first, which, indeed, is the most probable derivation. For every walk is a sort of crusade, preached by some Peter the Hermit[8] in us, to go forth and reconquer this Holy Land from the hands of the infidels.

It is true, we are but faint-hearted crusaders, even the walkers, nowadays, who undertake no persevering, never-ending enterprises. Our expeditions are but tours, and come round again at evening to the old hearth-side from which we set out. Half the walk is but retracing our steps. We should go forth on the shortest walk, perchance, in the spirit of undying adventure, never to return,—prepared to send back our embalmed hearts[4] only as relics to our desolate kingdoms. If you are ready to leave father and mother, and brother and sister, and wife and child and friends, and never see them again,—if you have paid your debts, and made your will, and settled all your affairs, and are a free man, then you are ready for a walk.

To come down to my own experience, my companion and I, for I sometimes have a companion, take a pleasure in fancying ourselves knights of a new, or rather an old, order,—not Equestrians or Chevaliers, not Ritters[5] or Riders, but Walkers,

3. Peter the Hermit. One of the leaders of the First Crusade (1096).

4. **embalmed hearts.** Thoreau may have had in mind various medieval legends concerning the **hearts of** king's, such as that of Robert Bruce, who at his death directed that his heart be embalmed and borne to the Holy Land.

5. **Chevaliers . . . Bitters.** The literal meaning- of these old **French** and German words for "knights" is "horsemen."

a still more ancient and honorable class, I trust The chivalric and heroic spirit which once belonged to the Rider seems now to reside in, or perchance to have subsided into, the Walker,—not the Knight, but Walker Errant. He is a sort of fourth estate, outside of Church and State and People.

We have felt that we almost alone hereabouts practiced this noble art; though, to tell the truth, at least, if their own assertions are to be received, most of my townsmen would fain walk sometimes, as I do, but they cannot. No wealth can buy the exquisite leisure, freedom, and independence, which are the capital in this profession. It comes only by the grace of God. It requires a direct dispensation from Heaven to become a walker. You must be born into the family of the Walkers. *Ambulator nascitur, non fit.*[6] Some of my townsmen, it is true, can remember and have described to me some walks which they took ten years ago, in which they were so blessed as to lose themselves for half an hour in the woods; but I know very well that they have confined themselves to the highway ever since, whatever pretensions they may make to belong to this select class. No doubt they were elevated for* a moment as by the reminiscence of a previous state of existence, when even they were foresters and outlaws.

"When he came 7 to grene wode,
In a mery mornynge,
There he herde the notes small
Of byrdes mery syngynge.

"It is ferre gone, sayd Robin,
That I was last here;
Me lyste[8] a lytell for to shote
At the donne9 dere."

6. Ambulator nasdtur, etc. "A walker is born, not made"; altered from the familiar saying respecting a poet
7. When he came, etc. From one of the Robin Hood ballads.
8. Me lyste. I desire.
9. donne. Dun; the conventional color of deer In the greenwood literature.

I think that I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least,—and it is commonly more than that,—sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements. You may safely say, A penny for your thoughts, or a thousand pounds. When sometimes I am reminded that the mechanics and shopkeepers stay in their shops not only all the forenoon, but all the afternoon too, sitting with crossed legs, so many of them,—as if the legs were made to sit upon, and not to stand or walk upon,—I think that they deserve some credit for not having all committed suicide long ago.

I, who cannot stay in my chamber for a single day without acquiring some rust, and when sometimes I have stolen forth for a walk at the eleventh hour of four o'clock in the afternoon, too late to redeem the day, when the shades of night were already beginning to be mingled with the daylight, have felt as if I had committed some sin to be atoned for,—I confess that I am astonished at the power of endurance, to say nothing of the moral insensibility, of my neighbors who confine themselves to shops and offices the whole day for weeks and months, ay, and years almost together. I know not what manner of stuff they are of,—sitting there now at three o'clock in the afternoon, as if it were three o'clock in the morning. Bonaparte[10] may talk of the three-o'clock-in-the morning courage, but it is nothing to the courage which can sit down cheerfully at this hour in the afternoon over against one's self whom you have known all the morning, to starve out a garrison to whom you are bound by such strong ties of sympathy. I wonder that about this time, or say between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, too late for the morning papers and too early for the evening ones, there is not a general explosion heard up and down the street, scattering

10. Bonaparte. Napoleon was reported to have said that **true** courage was most evident at three o'clock in the morning-.

a legion of antiquated and house-bred notions and whims to the four winds for an airing,—and so the evil cure itself.

How womankind, who are confined to the house still more than men, stand it I do not know; but I have ground to suspect that most of them do not *stand* it at all. When, early in a summer afternoon, we have been shaking the dust of the village from the skirts of our garments, making haste past those houses with purely Doric[11] or Gothic fronts, which have such an air of repose about them, my companion whispers that probably about these times their occupants are all gone to bed. Then it is that I appreciate the beauty and glory of architecture, which itself never turns in, but forever stands out and erect, keeping watch over the slumberers.

No doubt temperament, and, above all, age, have a good deal to do with it. As a man grows older, his ability to sit still and follow indoor occupations increases. He grows vespertinal[12] in his habits as the evening of life approaches, till at last he comes forth only just before sundown, and gets all the walk that he requires in half an hour.

But the walking of which I speak has nothing in it akin to taking exercise, as it is called, as the sick take medicine at stated hours,—as the swinging of dumb-bells or chairs; but is itself the enterprise and adventure of the day. If you would get exercise, go in search of the springs of life. Think of a man's swinging dumb-bells for his health, when those springs are bubbling up in f ar-oif pastures unsought by him!

Moreover, you must walk like a camel, which is said to be the only beast which ruminates when walking. When a traveler asked Wordsworth's servant to show him her master's study, she answered, "Here is his library, but his study is out of doors."

Living much out of doors, in the sun and wind, will no

11. Boric. The New England homes of the well-to-do, at this period, were commonly finished in the style of classical architecture.

12. vespertlnal Of the evening-.

doubt produce a certain roughness of character,—will cause a thicker cuticle to grow over some of the finer qualities of our nature, as on the face and hands, or as severe manual labor robs the hands of some of their delicacy of touch. So staying in the house, on the other hand, may produce a softness and smoothness, not to say thinness of skin, accompanied by an increased sensibility to certain impressions. Perhaps we should be more susceptible to some influences important to our intellectual and moral growth, if the sun had shone and the wind blown on us a little less; and no doubt it is a nice matter to proportion rightly the thick and thin skin. But methinks that is a scurf that will fall off fast enough,—that the natural remedy is to be found in the proportion which the night bears to the day, the winter to the summer, thought to experience. There will be so much the more air and sunshine in our thoughts. The callous palms of the laborer are conversant with finer tissues of self-respect and heroism, whose touch thrills the heart, than the languid fingers of idleness. That is mere sentimentality that lies abed by day and thinks itself white, far from the tan and callous of experience.

When we walk, we naturally go to the fields and woods: what would become of us, if we walked only in a garden or a mall? Even some sects[13] of philosophers have felt the necessity of importing the woods to themselves, since they did not go to the woods. "They planted groves and walks of Platanes,"[14] where they took *subdiales ambulationes*[15] in porticos open to the air. Of course it is of no use to direct our steps to the woods, if they do not carry us thither. I am alarmed when it happens that I have walked a mile into the woods bodily, without getting there in spirit. In my after-

1S. **some** sects. Among: the Greeks, Aristotle's school was called "peripatetic" because of their habit of discussing: philosophy while walking- abroad; Plato's "Academic" because of their meeting in the grove of Academe.

14. **platanes.** Plane-trees.

15. **subdiales ambulationes.** Walks in the open air.

noon walk I would fain forget all my morning occupations and my obligations to society. But it sometimes happens that I cannot easily shake off the village. The thought of some work will run in my head, and I am not where my body is, —I am out of my senses. In my walks I would fain return to my senses. What business have I in the woods, if I am thinking of something out of the woods? I suspect myself, and cannot help a shudder, when I find myself so implicated even in what are called good works,—for this may sometimes happen.

My vicinity affords many good walks; and though for so many years I have walked almost every day, and sometimes for several days together, I have not yet exhausted them. An absolutely new prospect is a great happiness, and I can still get this any afternoon. Two or three hours' walking will carry me to as strange a country as I expect ever to see. A single farmhouse which I had not seen before is sometimes as good as the dominions of the King of Dahomey. There is in fact a sort of harmony discoverable between the capabilities of the landscape within a circle of ten miles' radius, or the limits of an afternoon walk, and the threescore years and ten of human life. It will never become quite familiar to you.

Nowadays almost all man's improvements, so called, as the building of houses, and the cutting down of the forest and of all large trees, simply deform the landscape, and make it more and more tame and cheap. A people who would begin by burning the fences and let the forest stand! I saw the fences half consumed, their ends lost in the middle of the prairie, and some worldly miser with a surveyor looking after his bounds, while heaven had taken place around him, and he did not see the angels going to and fro, but was looking for an old post-hole in the midst of paradise. I looked again, and saw him standing in the middle of a boggy, stygian[16] fen, surrounded by devils; and he had found his bounds without a doubt, three little stones, where a stake had been driven; and

16. stygian. Like the region of the river Styx, in Hades.

looking nearer, I saw that the Prince of Darkness was his surveyor.

I can easily walk ten, fifteen, twenty, any number of miles, commencing at my own door, without going by any house, without crossing a road except where the fox and the mink do: first along by the river, and then the brook, and then the meadow and the woodside. There are square miles in my vicinity which have no inhabitant. From many a hill I can see civilization and the abodes of man afar. The farmers and their works are scarcely more obvious than woodchucks and their burrows. Man and his affairs, church and state and school, trade and commerce, and manufactures and agriculture, even politics, the most alarming of them all,—I am pleased to see how little space they occupy in the landscape. Politics is but a narrow field, and that still narrower highway yonder leads to it. I sometimes direct the traveler thither. If you would go to the political world, follow the great road, —follow the market-man, keep his dust in your eyes, and it will lead you straight to it; for it, too, has its place merely, and does not occupy all space. I pass from it as from a bean-field into the forest, and it is forgotten. In one half-hour I can walk off to some portion of the earth's surface where a man does not stand from one year's end to another, and there, consequently, politics are not, for they are but as the cigar-smoke of a man. . . •

What is it that makes it so hard sometimes to determine whither we will walk? I believe that there is a subtile magnetism in Nature, which, if we unconsciously yield to it, will direct us aright It is not indifferent to us which way we walk. There is a right way; but we are very liable from heedlessness and stupidity to take the wrong one. We would fain take that walk, never yet taken by us through this actual world, which is perfectly symbolical of the path which we love to travel in the interior and ideal world; and sometimes,

no doubt, we find it difficult to choose our direction, because it does not yet exist distinctly in our idea.

When I go out of the house for a walk, uncertain as yet whither I will bend my steps, and submit myself to my instinct to decide for me, I find, strange and whimsical as it may seem, that I finally and inevitably settle southwest, toward some particular wood or meadow or deserted pasture or hill in that direction. My needle is slow to settle,—varies a few degrees, and does not always point due southwest, it is true, and it has good authority for this variation, but it always settles between west and south-south-west. The future lies that way to me, and the earth seems more unexhausted and richer on that side. The outline which would bound my walks would be, not a circle, but a parabola, or rather like one of those cometary orbits which have been thought to be non-returning curves, in this case opening westward, in which my house occupies the place of the sun. I turn round and round irresolute sometimes for a quarter of an hour, until I decide, for a thousandth time, that I will walk into the southwest or west. Eastward I go only by force; but westward I go free. Thither no business leads me. It is hard for me to believe that I shall find fair landscapes or sufficient wildness and freedom behind the eastern horizon. I am not excited by the prospect of a walk thither; but I believe that the forest which I see in the western horizon stretches uninterruptedly toward the setting sun, and there are no towns nor cities in it of enough consequence to disturb me. Let me live where I will, on this side is the city, on that the wilderness, and ever I am leaving the city more and more, and withdrawing into the wilderness. I should not lay so much stress on this fact, if I did not believe that something like this is the prevailing tendency of my countrymen. I must walk toward Oregon, and not toward Europe. And that way the nation is moving, and I may say that mankind progress from east to west. Within a few years we have witnessed the phenom-

enon of a southeastward migration, in the settlement of Australia; but this affects us as a retrograde movement, and, judging from the moral and physical character of the first generation of Australians, has not yet proved a successful experiment. The eastern Tartars think that there is nothing west beyond Thibet. "The world ends there," say they, "beyond there is nothing but a shoreless sea." It is unmitigated East where they live.

We *go* eastward to realize history and study the works of art and literature, retracing the steps of the race; we go westward as into the future, with a spirit of enterprise and adventure. The Atlantic is a Lethean stream,[17] in our passage over which we have had an opportunity to forget the Old World and its institutions. If we do not succeed this time, there is perhaps one more chance for the race left before it arrives on the banks of the Styx; and that is in the Lethe of the Pacific, which is three times as wide.

I know not how significant it is, or how far it is an evidence of singularity, that an individual should thus consent in his pettiest walk with the general movement of the race; but I know that something akin to the migratory instinct in birds and quadrupeds,—which, in some instances, is known to have affected the squirrel tribe, impelling them to a general and mysterious movement, in which they were seen, say some, crossing the broadest rivers, each on its particular chip, with its tail raised for a sail, and bridging narrower streams with their dead,—that something like the *furor*[18] which affects the domestic cattle in the spring, and which is referred to a worm in their tails, — affects both nations and individuals, either perennially or from time to time. Not a flock of wild geese cackles over our town, but it to some extent unsettles the value of real estate here, and, if I were a broker, I should probably take that disturbance into account.

17. **Lethean stream.** See note on page 129.
18. **furor.** Madness.

Than longen folk to gon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres for to seken strange strondes."

Every sunset which I witness inspires me with the desire to go to a West as distant and as fair as that into which the sun goes down. He appears to migrate westward daily, and tempt us to follow him. He is the Great Western Pioneer whom the nations follow. We dream all night of those mountain-ridges in the horizon, though they may be of vapor only, which were last gilded by his rays. The island of Atlantis, and the islands and gardens of the Hesperides,[20] a sort of terrestrial paradise, appear to have been the Great West of the ancients, enveloped in mystery and poetry. Who has not seen in imagination, when looking into the sunset sky, the gardens of the Hesperides, and the foundation of all those fables ?

Columbus felt the westward tendency more strongly than any before. He obeyed it, and found a new world for Castile and Leon.[21] The herd of men in those days scented fresh pastures from afar.

And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropped into the western bay;
At last *he* rose, and twitched his mantle blue;
Tomorrow to fresh woods and pastures new.22

Where on the globe can there be found an area of equal extent with that occupied by the bulk of our States, so fertile and so rich and varied in its productions, and at the same time so habitable by the European, as this is? Michaux,[23] who

19. **Than longon,** etc. From the opening of Chaucer's Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales.*

20. **Atlantis . . . Hesperidea.** Mythical islands of Greek legend. The latter were named from the "Daughters of Night," reputed to dwell in beautiful gardens in the far West.

21. **Castile and Leon.** The joint kingdom of Ferdinand and Isabella.

22. **And now the sun,** etc. The closing lines of Milton's *Lycidas.*

23. **michaux.** A French botanist of the opening of the nineteenth century, who wrote a work on the trees of North America. His son, referred to in Thoreau's next paragraph, wrote on the same subject.

knew but part of them, says that "the species of large trees are much more numerous in North America than in Europe; in the United States there are more than one hundred and forty species that exceed thirty feet in height; in France there are but thirty that attain this size." Later botanists more than confirm his observations. Humboldt[24] came to America to realize his youthful dreams of a tropical vegetation, and he beheld it in its greatest perfection in the primitive forests of the Amazon, the most gigantic wilderness on the earth, which he has so eloquently described. The geographer Guyot,[25] himself a European, goes farther,—farther than I am ready to follow him; yet not when he says,—"As the plant is made for the animal, as the vegetable world is made for the animal world, America is made for the man of the Old World. . . . The man of the Old World sets out upon his way. Leaving the highlands of Asia, he descends from station to station towards Europe. Each of his steps is marked by a new civilization superior to the preceding, by a greater power of development. Arrived at the Atlantic, he pauses on the shore of this unknown ocean, the bounds of which he knows not, and turns upon his footprints for an instant." When he has exhausted the rich soil of Europe, and reinvigorated himself, "then recommences his adventurous career westward as in the earliest ages." So far Guyot.

From this western impulse coming in contact with the barrier of the Atlantic sprang the commerce and enterprise of modern times. The younger Michaux, in his "Travels West of the Alleghanies in 1802," says that the common inquiry in the newly settled West was, " 'From what part of the world have you *come?* As if these vast and fertile regions would naturally be the place of meeting and common country of all the inhabitants of the globe."

24. **Humboldt.** A German scientist, who went on an expedition to South America in 1799.

25. **Guyot.** A Swiss scientist, who came to America and from 1855 was professor at Princeton College.

To use an obsolete Latin word, I might say, *Ex Oriente lux; ex Occidente* FRUX. From the East light; from the West fruit.

Sir Francis Head, an English traveler and a Governor-General of Canada, tells us that "in both the northern and southern hemispheres of the New World, Nature has not only outlined her works on a larger scale, but has painted the whole picture with brighter and more costly colors than she used in delineating and in beautifying the Old World, . . . The heavens of America appear infinitely higher, the sky is bluer, the air is fresher, the cold is intenser, the moon looks larger, the stars are brighter, the thunder is louder, the lightning is vivider, the wind is stronger, the rain is heavier, the mountains are higher, the rivers are longer, the forests bigger, the plains broader." This statement will do at least to set against Buffon's[26] account of this part of the world and its productions.

Linnaeus[27] said long ago, "Nescio quae facies *lata, glabra* plantis Americanis: I know not what there is of joyous and smooth in the aspect of American plants"; and I think that in this country there are no, or at most very few, *Africans bestice,* African beasts, as the Romans called them, and that in this respect also it is peculiarly fitted for the habitation of man. We are told that within three miles of the center of the East-Indian city of Singapore, some of the inhabitants are annually carried off by tigers; but the traveler can lie down in the woods at night almost anywhere in North America without fear of wild beasts.

These are encouraging testimonies. If the moon looks larger here than in Europe, probably the sun looks larger also. If the heavens of America appear infinitely higher, and the stars brighter, I trust that these facts are symbolical of

26. **Buffon.** A famous French naturalist of the eighteenth century.
27. **Linnnseus.** A Swedish botanist of the eighteenth century.

the height to which the philosophy and poetry and religion of her inhabitants may one day soar. At length, perchance, the immaterial heaven will appear as much higher to the American mind, and the intimations that star it as much brighter. For I believe that climate does thus react on man, —as there is something in the mountain air that feeds the spirit and inspires. Will not man grow to greater perfection intellectually as well as physically under 'these influences? Or is it unimportant how many foggy days there are in his life? I trust that we shall be more imaginative, that our thoughts will be clearer, fresher, and more ethereal, as our sky,—our understanding more comprehensive and broader, like our plains,—our intellect generally on a grander scale, like our thunder and lightning, our rivers and mountains and forests,—and our hearts shall even correspond in breadth and depth and grandeur to our inland seas. Perchance there will appear to the traveler something, he knows not what, of *lata* and *glabra,* of joyous and serene, in our very faces. Else to what end does the world go on, and why was America discovered?

To Americans I need hardly say,—

Westward the star of empire takes its way.28

As a true patriot, I should be ashamed to think that Adam in Paradise was more favorably situated on the whole than the backwoodsman in this country.

Our sympathies in Massachusetts are not confined to New England; though we may be estranged from the South, we sympathize with the West. There is the home of the younger sons, as among the Scandinavians they took to the sea for their inheritance. It is too late to be studying Hebrew; it is more important to understand even the slang of today.

28. Westward the **star,** etc. A common misquotation of a line from a poem by Bishop Berkeley, English philosopher of the eighteenth century, "On the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America." It properly reads "course of empire."

Some months ago I went to see a panorama of the Rhine. It was like a dream of the Middle Ages. I floated down its historic stream in something more than imagination, under bridges built by the Romans, and repaired by later heroes, past cities and castles whose very names were music to my ears, and each of which was the subject of a legend. There was Ehrenbreitstein[29] and Rolandseck and Coblentz, which I knew only in history. They were ruins that interested me chiefly. There seemed to come up from its waters and its vine-clad hills and valleys a hushed music as of Crusaders departing for the Holy Land. I floated along under the spell of enchantment, as if I had been transported to an heroic age, and breathed an atmosphere of chivalry.

Soon after, I went to see a panorama of the Mississippi, and as I worked my way up the river in the light of today, and saw the steam-boats wooding up, counted the rising cities, gazed on the fresh ruins of Nauvoo,[30] beheld the Indians moving west across the stream, and, as before I had looked up the Moselle now looked up the Ohio and the Missouri, and heard the legends of Dubuque[31] and of Wenona's Cliff,[32]—still thinking more of the future than of the past or present,—I saw that this was a Rhine stream of a different kind; that the foundations of castles were yet to be laid, and the famous bridges were yet to be thrown over the river; and I felt that *this was the heroic age itself,* though we know it not,—for the hero is commonly the simplest and obscurest of men. . . .

29. **Ehrenbreitstein,** etc. Towns on the Rhine famous for castles or fortifications; Ehrenbreitstein is directly across the river from Coblentz, at the confluence of the Moselle.

30. **Nauvoo.** A town on the Mississippi, in Illinois, settled by Mormons in their early migrations; they were expelled from it, with fire and bloodshed, in 1846.

31. **Dubuque.** Near the present city of Dubuque, Iowa, occurred a famous Indian battle between the tribe of the Fox and Sacs and the Sioux.

32. **Wenona'B Cliff.** In Wisconsin, on the eastern shore of Lake Pepin, where, according: to legend, a Dakota Indian maiden named Weenonah drowned herself because her parents had opposed her love for a young" warrior.

ANDREW LANG

[ANDREW LANG (1844-1912), born in Selkirk, Scotland, was educated at St. Andrews University and Balltol College, Oxford. During his long service to letters he won distinction as a journalist, poet, historian, critic, and Homeric scholar. His *Ballads in Blue China, History of Scotland, Custom and Myth, Homer and the Epic,* and his *Essays in Little* are examples of his varied scholarly efforts. *Letters to Dead Authors* is a classic of familiar literary appraisals.]

TO PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY*

SIR: In your lifetime on earth you were not more than commonly curious as to what was said by "the herd of mankind," if I may quote your own phrase. It was that of one who loved his fellowmen, but did not in his less enthusiastic moments overestimate their virtues and their discretion. Removed so far away from our hubbub, and that world where, as you say, we "pursue our serious folly as of old," you are, one may guess, but moderately concerned about the fate of your writings and your reputation. As to the first, you have somewhere said, in one of your letters, that the final judgment on your merits as a poet is in the hands of posterity and that you fear the verdict will be "Guilty," and the sentence "Death." Such apprehensions cannot have been fixed or frequent in the mind of one whose genius burned always with a clearer and steadier flame to the last. The jury of which you spoke has met: a mixed jury and a merciful. The verdict is "Well dona," and the sentence Immortality-of *fame* There have been, there are, dissenters; yet probably they will be less and less heard as the years go on.

One judge, or juryman, has made up his mind that prose was your true province, and that your letters will outlive your lays. I know not whether it was the same or an equally well-inspired critic who spoke of your most perfect lyrics (so Beau

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Brummel[1] spoke of his ill-tied cravats) as "a gallery of your failures." But the general voice does not echo these utterances of a too subtle intellect. At a famous University[2] (not your own) once existed a band of men known as "The Trinity Sniffers." Perhaps the spirit of the sniffer may still inspire some of the jurors who from time to time make themselves heard in your case. The *Quarterly Review?* I fear, is still unreconciled. It regards your attempts as tainted by the spirit of "The Liberal Movement in English Literature"; and it is impossible, alas! to maintain with any success that you were a Throne and Altar Tory. At Oxford you are forgiven; and the old rooms where you let the oysters burn (was not your founder, King Alfred, once guilty of similar negligence?) are now shown to pious pilgrims.

But Conservatives, 'tis rumored, are still averse to your opinions, and are believed to prefer to yours the works of the Reverend Mr. Keble,[4] and, indeed, of the clergy in general. But, in spite of all this, your poems, like the affections of the true lovers of Theocritus,[5] are still "in the mouths of all, and chiefly on the lips of the young." It is in your lyrics that you live, and I do not mean that every one could pass an examination in the plot of *Prometheus Unbound.6* Talking of this piece, by the way, a Cambridge critic finds that it reveals in you a hankering after life in a cave—doubtless an unconsciously inherited memory from cave-man. Speaking of cave-man reminds me that you once spoke of deserting song for

1. **Bean Brummel.** George Bryan (1778-1840), the English "glass of fashion" in the days of George IV.
2. **famous University.** Cambridge. Shelley was expelled from Oxford for writing on atheism.
3. **Quarterly Review.** This periodical, established in 1809, was one of the powerful Tory organs in which critics of unexampled severity and political prejudice assailed the Romantic poets who, by voicing revolutionary views, were aiding the Liberal movement in English politics and letters.
4. **Mr. Keble.** An Anglican clergyman, the author of *The Christian Year.*
5. **Theocritus.** A Greek pastoral poet, the writer of a noted elegy.
6. **Prometheus Unbound.** Shelley's lyric drama; obscure in plot, but abounding in beautiful lyrics.

prose, and of producing a history of the moral, intellectual, and political elements in human society, which, we now agree, began, as Asia[7] would fain have ended, in a cave.

Fortunately you gave us "Adonais" and "Hellas"[8] instead of this treatise, and we have now successfully written the natural history of Man for ourselves. Science tells us that before becoming a cave-dweller he was a Brute; Experience daily proclaims that he constantly reverts To his original condition "Lh*omme est un mechant animal*"[9] in spite of your boyish efforts to add pretty girls "to the list of the good, disinterested, and the free."

Ah, not in the wastes of Speculation, nor the sterile din of Politics, were "the haunts meet for thee." Watching the yellow bees in the ivy bloom, and the reflected pine forest in the water-pools, watching the sunset as it faded, and the dawn as it fired, and weaving all fair and fleeting things into a tissue where light and music were at one, that was the task of Shelley! "To ask you for anything human," you said, "was like asking for a leg of mutton at a gin-shop." Nay, rather, like asking Apollo and Hebe, in the Olympian abodes, to give us beef for ambrosia, and port for nectar. Each poet gives what he has, and whathecan..offer ; you spread before us fairy bread, andenchanted wine, and shall we turn away with a sneer because, out of all the multitudes of singers, one is spiritual anostrange, one has seen[10] Artemis unveiled? One, like Anchises,[11] has been beloved of the Goddess, and his eyes, when he looks on the common world of common men, are, like the eyes of Anchises, blind with excess of light. Let Shelley sing of what he saw, what none saw but Shelley!

7. Asla. Beloved by Prometheus in Shelley's drama.

8. Adonais and Hellas. The former, the elegy on the death of Keats; the latter, Shelley's poem celebrating' Greek independence.

9. L'homme, etc. Man is a vicious brute.

10. one has seen. Actaeon, whom Artemis turned into a stag.

11. Anchises. The father of Aeneas in Virgil's epic, who was beloved by Aphrodite.

Notwithstanding the popularity of your poems (the most romantic of things didactic), our world is no better than the world you knew. This will disappoint you, who had "a passion for reforming it." Kings and priests are very much where you left them. True, we have a poet who assails them, at large, frequently, and fearlessly; yet Mr. Swinburne[12] has never, like "kind Hunt,"[13] been in prison, nor do we fear for him a charge of treason. Moreover, chemical science has discovered new and ingenious ways of destroying principalities and powers. You would be interested in the methods, but your peaceful Revolutionism, which disdained physical force, would regret their application.

Our foreign affairs are not in a state which even you would consider satisfactory; for we have just had to contend with a Revolt of Islam,[14] and we still find in Russia exactly the qualities which you recognized and described. We have a great statesman whose methods and eloquence somewhat resemble those you attribute to Laon and Prince Athanase.[15] Alas! he is a youth of more than seventy summers; and not in his time will Prometheus retire to a cavern and pass a peaceful millennium in twining buds and beams.

In domestic affairs most of the Reforms you desired to see have been carried. Ireland has received Emancipation,[16] and almost everything else she can ask for. I regret to say that she is still unhappy; her wounds unstanched, her wrongs unforgiven. At home we have enfranchised the paupers, and expect the most happy results. Paupers (as Mr. Gladstone

12. Swinburne. Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837-1909), the last of the great Victorian poets.
13. kind Hunt. Leigh Hunt (1784-1859), poet and friend of Shelley.
14. Revolt of Islam. Lang refers here to the Crimean War, 1854, in which England and France allied themselves with Turkey and declared war on Russia.
15. **Lnon** and Athanase. Characters in *The Revolt of Islam* and in the fragment entitled "Prince Athanase."
16. Emancipation. In a speech in Dublin, February 28, 1812, Shelley advocated political emancipation for Catholics. Parliament passed the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829. Shelley also urged universal enfranchisement.

says) are "our own flesh and blood," and, as we compel them to be vaccinated, so we should permit them to vote. Is it a dream that Mr. Jesse Collings (how you would have loved that man!) has a Bill for extending the priceless boon of the vote to inmates of Pauper Lunatic Asylums? This may prove that last element in the Elixir of political happiness which we have long sought in vain. Atheists, you will regret to hear, are still unpopular but the new Parliament has done something for Mr. Bradlaugh.[17] You should have known our Charles while you were in the *Queen Mab*[18] stage. I fear you wandered, later, from his robust condition of intellectual development.

As to your private life, many biographers contrive to make public as much of it as possible. Your name, even in life, was, alas! a kind of ducdame[10] to bring people of no great sense into your circle. This curious fascination has attracted round your memory a feeble folk of commentators, biographers, anecdotists, and others of the tribe. They swarm round you like carrion-flies round a sensitive plant, like night-birds bewildered by the sun. . . . These biographers fight terribly among themselves, and vainly prolong the memory of "old, unhappy, far-off things, and sorrows long ago." Let us leave them and their squabbles over what is unessential, their raking up of old letters and old stories.

The town lately yawned a weary laugh over an enemy of yours, who has produced two heavy volumes, styled by him *The Real Shelley.*[20] The real Shelley, it appears, was Shelley as conceived of by a worthy gentleman so prejudiced and so

17. **Bradlaugh.** Charles Bradlaugh, though elected to Parliament in 1880, was deprived of his seat until 1885, for, as a professed atheist, he was denied the right to take the oath of office.

18. **Queen Mab.** Shelley's early radical poem.

19. **ducdame.** A call of uncertain origin employed by Jacques in *As You Like It.* He says it is "a Greek invocation, to call fools into a circle" (II, v, 55),

20. **The Real Shelley.** Written by J. C. Jeaffreson, 1885.

skilled in taking up things by the wrong handle that I wonder he has not made a name in the exact science of Comparative Mythology. He criticizes you in the spirit of that Christian Apologist, the Englishman, who called you "a damned Atheist" in the post-office at Pisa. He finds that you had "a little turned-up nose," a feature no less important in his system than was the nose of Cleopatra (according to Pascal)[21] in the history of the world. To be in harmony with your nose, you were a "phenomenal" liar, an ill-bred, ill-born profligate, partly insane, an evil-tempered monster, a self-righteous person, full of self-approbation—in fact, you were the Beast of this pious Apocalypse. Your friend, Dr. Lind,[22] was an embittered and scurrilous apothecary, "a bad old man." But enough of this inopportune brawler.

For Humanity, of which you hoped such great things, Science predicts extinction in a night of Frost. The sun will grow cold, slowly—as slowly as doom came on Jupiter in your *Prometheus,* but as surely, If this nightmare be fulfilled, perhaps the Last Man, in some fetid huton the icebound Equator, will read, by_a fadinglampchargedwith,the dregs of the oil inhiscrusethe poetry of Shelley. So reading, he, the latest of his racewill not wholly be deprived of those sights which alone (says the nameless Greek) make life worth enduring. In your verse he will have sight of sky, and sea, and cloud, the gold of dawn, and the gloom of earthquake and eclipse. He will be face to face, in fancy, with the great powers that are dead, sun, and ocean, and the illimitable azure of the heavens. In Shelley's poetry, while Man endures, all those will survive; for your "voice is as the voice of winds and tides," and perhaps more deathless than all of these, and only perishable with the perishing of the human spirit.

21. Pascal. Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), a French philosopher and cleric.
22. Dr. Lind. The radical physician of Windsor who influenced Shelley at Eton, and who thereafter received Shelley's, admiration.

G. LOWES DICKINSON

[G. LOWES DICKINSON, essayist and philosopher, educated at Charterhouse School and Cambridge, has been for many years a lecturer and publicist. His *Letters from a Chinese Official,* issued in 1901—a wholly imaginary valuation of the Occidental world from the point of view of an Oriental—was mistaken for an attack upon Western civilization by a living Chinaman, and answered by William Jennings Bryan in *Letters to a Chinese Official,* 1903. Other noted books from Mr. Dickinson's pen are *The Greek View of Life,* 1906, *A Modern Symposium,* 1908, and *Religion and Immortality,* 1911.]

"CHINA FOR THE CHINESE!"*

IN ONE of your journals I recently read that "the civilization of China" is the ultimate object of the nations of Europe. If so, the methods they adopt to attain their ends are singular indeed: but of these I do not trust myself to speak. Looting, wanton destruction, cold-blooded murder, and rape—these are the things which you do not, I know, here in England approve, which you would prevent, I am convinced, if you could, and which I am willing to set down to the license of ill-disciplined troops.[1] It is for another purpose than that of idle deprecation that I refer to them in this place. The question always before my mind when you speak of civilization is this: What kind of men has your civilization produced? And to such a question current events in China seem to suggest an answer not altogether reassuring. But that answer I do not press. It may be that all culture, ours as much as yours, is no more than a veneer; that deep in the den of every human heart Lurks the

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1. license of ill-disciplined troops. A reference to the conduct of the allied troops in China at the time of the Boxer uprising".

brute, ready to leap on its prey when chance or design has unbarred the gates. We at any rate, in China, lie under the same condemnation as you; and our reproaches, like yours, fly back to the mouths of them that utter them. I pass, therefore, from scenes like these to normal conditions of life. What manner of men, I ask, are we, what manner of men are you, that you should take upon yourselves to call us barbarians?

What manner of men are we? The question is hard to answer. Turning it over in my thoughts, hour after hour, day after day, I can hit on no better device to bring home *to* you something of what is in my mind than to endeavor to set down here, as faithfully as I can, a picture that never ceases to haunt my memory as I walk in these dreary winter days the streets of your black metropolis.

Far away in the East, under sunshine such as you never saw (for even such light as you have you stain and infect with sooty smoke), on the shore of a broad river stands the house where I was born. It is one among thousands; but every one stands in its own garden, simply painted in white or gray, modest, cheerful, and clean. For many miles along the valley, one after the other, they lift their blue or red-tiled roofs out of a sea of green; while here and there glitters out over a clump of trees the gold enamel of some tall pagoda. The river, crossed by frequent bridges and crowded with barges and junks, bears on its clear stream the traffic of thriving village-markets. For prosperous peasants people all the district, owning and tilling the fields their fathers owned and tilled before them. The soil on which they work, they may say, they and their ancestors have made. For see! almost to the summit what once were barren hills are waving green with cotton and rice, sugar, oranges, and tea. Water drawn from the river-bed girdles the slopes with silver; and falling from channel to channel in a thousand bright cascades, plashing in cisterns, chuckling in pipes, soaking and oozing in the soil, distributes freely to all alike fertility, verdure, and life. Hour

after hour you may traverse, by tortuous paths, over tiny bridges, the works of the generations who have passed, the labors of their children of today; till you reach the point where man succumbs and Nature has her way, covering the highest crags with a mantle of azure and gold and rose, gardenia, clematis, azalea, growing luxuriantly wild. How often here have I sat for hours in a silence so intense that, as one of our poets has said, "you may hear the shadows ofthe. trees rustling onthe ground";a silencebroken only now and again from far below by voices of laborers calling across the water-courses, or, at evening or dawn, by the sound of gongs summoning to worship from the temples in the valley. Such silence! Such sounds! Such perfume! Such color! The senses respond to their objects; they grow exquisite to a degree you cannot well conceive in your northern climate; and beauty pressing in from without molds the spirit and mind insensibly to harmony with herself. If in China we have manners, if we have art, if we have morals, the reason, to those who can see, is not far to seek. Nature has taught us; and so far, we are only more fortunate than you. But, also, we have had the grace to learn her lesson; and that, we think, we may ascribe to our intelligence. Tor, consider, here in the lovely valley live thousands of souls without any law save that of custom, without any rule save that of their own hearths. Industrious they are, as you hardly know industry in Europe; but it is the industry of free men working for their kith and kin, on the lands they received from their fathers, to transmit, enriched by their labors, to their sons. They have no other ambition; they do not care to amass wealth; and if in each generation some must needs go out into the world, it is with the hope, not commonly frustrated, to return to the place of their birth and spend their declining years among the scenes and faces that were dear to their youth. Among such a people there is no room for fierce, indecent rivalries. None is master,

none servant; but equality, concrete and real, regulates and sustains their intercourse. Healthy toil, sufficient leisure, frank hospitality, a content born of habit and undisturbed by chimerical ambitions, a sense of beauty fostered by the loveliest Nature in the world, and finding expression in gracious and dignified manners where it is not embodied in exquisite works of art—such are the characteristics of the people among whom I was born. Does my memory flatter me? Do I idealize the scenes of my youth? It may be so. But this I know: that some such life as I have described, reared on the basis of labor on the soil, of equality and justice, does exist and flourish throughout the length and breadth of China. What have you to offer in its place, you our would-be civilizers? Your religion? Alas! it is in the name of that that you are doing unnamable deeds 1 Your morals? Where shall we find them? Your intelligence? Whither has it led? What counter-picture have you to offer over here in England to this which I have drawn of life in China? That is the question which I have now to endeavor to reply.

In attempting to lay before you a characteristic scene of Chinese life I selected for the purpose a community of peasants. I did so because it is there that I find the typical product of our civilization. Cities, it is true, we have, and cities as monstrous, perhaps, as yours; but they are mere excrescences on a body politic whose essential constitution is agricultural. With you all this is reversed; and for that reason you have no country life deserving the name. On the one hand waste of common and moor, on the other villas and parks, laborers poorly clad, wretchedly housed, and miserably paid, dreary villages, decaying farms, squalor, brutality, and vice—such is the picture you give, yourselves, of your agricultural districts. Whatever in England is not urban is parasitic or moribund. If, then, I am to give an impression that shall be candid and just of the best results of your civiliza-

tion, I must turn from the country to the life of your great cities. And in doing so I will not seek to win an easy victory by dwelling unduly on those more obvious points which you no less than I admit and deplore. Your swarming slums, your liquor-saloons, your poorhouses, your prisons—these, it is true, are melancholy facts. But the evils of which they are symptoms you are setting yourselves to cure, and your efforts, I do not doubt, may be attended with a large measure of success. It is rather the goal to which you seem to be moving when you have done the best you can that I would choose to consider in this place. Your typical product, your average man, the man you call respectable, him it is that I wish to characterize, for he it is that is the natural and inevitable outcome of your civilization. What manner of man, then, is he? It is with some hesitation that I set myself to answer this question. I am a stranger among you; I have enjoyed your hospitality; and I am loath to seem to repay you with discourtesy. But if there be any service I can do you, I know none greater than to bring home to you, if I could, without undue offense, certain important truths (so they seem to me) to which you appear to be singularly blind. Your feet, I believe, are set on the wrong path; I would fain warn you; and useless though the warning may be, it is offered in the spirit of friendship, and in that spirit, I hope, it will be received.

When I review my impressions of the average English citizen, impressions based on many years' study, what kind of man do I see? I see one divorced from Nature, but unreclaimed by Art; instructed, but not educated; assimilative, but incapable of thought. Trained in the tenets of a religion in which he does not really believe—for he sees it flatly contradicted in every relation of life—he dimly feels that it is prudent to conceal under a mask of piety the atheism he is hardly intelligent enough to avow. His religion is conventional; and, what is more important, his morals are as con-

ventional as his creed. Charity, chastity, self-abnegation, contempt of the world and its prizes—these are the words on which he has been fed from his childhood upward. And words they have remained, for neither has he anywhere seen them practiced by others, nor has it ever occurred to him to practice them himself. Their influence, while it is strong enough to make him a chronic hypocrite, is not so strong as to show him the hypocrite he is. Deprived on the one hand of the support of a true ethical standard, embodied in the life of the society of which he is a member, he is duped, on the other, by lip-worship of an impotent ideal. Abandoned thus to his instinct, he is content to do as others do, and, ignoring the things of the spirit, to devote himself to material ends. He becomes a mere tool; and of such your society is composed. By your works you may be known. Your triumphs in the mechanical arts are the obverse of your failure in all that calls for spiritual insight. Machinery of every kind you can make and use *to* perfection; but you cannot build a house, or write a poem, or paint a picture; still less can you worship or aspire. Look at your streets! Row upon row of little boxes, one like another, lacking in all that is essential, loaded with all that is superfluous—this is what passes among you for architecture. Your literature is the daily press, with its stream of solemn fatuity, of anecdotes, puzzles, puns, and police-court scandal. Your pictures are stories in paint, transcripts of all that is banal, clumsily botched by amateurs as devoid of tradition as of genius. Your outer sense as well as your inner is dead; you are blind and deaf. Ratiocination has taken the place of perception; and your whole life is an infinite syllogism from premises you have not examined to conclusions you have not anticipated or willed. Everywhere means, nowhere an end! Society a Luge engine, and that engine itself out of gear! Such is the picture your civilization presents to my imagination. I will not say that it is so that it appears to every

intelligent Chinaman; for the Chinese, unlike you, are constitutionally averse to drawing up an indictment against a nation. If I have been led into that error, it is under strong provocation; and already I feel that I owe you an apology. Yet what I have said I cannot withdraw; and I shall not regret that I have spoken if I may hope that my words have suggested to some among my readers a new sense in the cry, "China for the Chinese!"

JOHN GALSWORTHY

[JOHN GALSWORTHY, born in Surrey in 1867, and educated at Harrow and Oxford, studied law until 1890, when he was admitted to the Bar. Since then he has led the life of a traveler, writer, and country gentleman. Galsworthy writes with distinction in any form he chooses. He is one of the few who succeed equally with the novel or the drama; he is a charmingr essayist and writer of sketches; and his volume of poetry, overshadowed by his work in prose, is well worth reading. In fiction his remarkable *Forsyte Saga* belongs with the few novels that endure—like Tolstoi's *Anna Karenina,* and Hardy's *The Return of the Native.* His arresting dramas, *Strife, Justice,* and *Loyalties,* make people think in the theater and continue to think after they have gone home. The greatest values in his world are sympathy, insight, kindly feeling, and gentle but penetrating irony. In "American and Briton" he tries to remove some of the obstacles in the way of mutual understanding between the two great Anglo-Saxon nations.]

AMERICAN AND BRITON*

ON THE mutual understanding of each other by Britons and Americans the future happiness of nations depends more than on any other world cause.

I have never held a whole-hearted brief for the British character. There is a lot of good in it, but much which is repellent. It has a kind of deliberate unattractiveness, setting out on its journey with the words: "Take me or leave me." One may respect a person of this sort, but it is difficult either to know or to like him* I am told that an American officer said recently to a British staff officer in a friendly voice: "So we're going to clean up Brother Boche together!" and the British staff officer replied "Really!" No wonder Americans sometimes say: "I've got no use for those fellows."

•Reprinted from *Another Sheaf,* 1919, by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

The world is consecrate to strangeness and discovery, and the attitude of mind concreted in that "Really!" seems unforgivable, till one remembers that it is manner rather than matter which divides the hearts of American and Briton.

In a huge, still half-developed country, where every kind of national type and habit comes to run a new thread into the rich tapestry of American life and thought, people must find it almost impossible to conceive the life of a little old island where traditions persist generation after generation without anything to break them up; where blood remains undoctored by new strains; demeanor becomes crystallized for lack of contrasts; and manner gets set like a plaster mask. The English manner of today, of what are called the classes, is the growth of only a century or so. There was probably nothing at all like it in the days of Elizabeth or even of Charles II. The English manner was still racy when the inhabitants of Virginia, as we are told, sent over to ask that there might be dispatched to them some hierarchical assistance for the good of their souls, and were answered. "D—n, your souls, grow tobacco!"[1] The English manner of today could not even have come into its own when that epitaph of a lady, quoted somewhere by Gilbert Murray,[2] was written: "Bland, passionate, and deeply religious, she was second cousin to the Earl of Leitrim; of such are the Kingdom of Heaven." About that gravestone motto was a certain lack of the self-consciousness which is now the foremost characteristic of the English manner.

But this British self-consciousness is no mere fluffy gaucherie, it is our special form of what Germans would call "Kultur." Behind every manifestation of thought or emotion the Briton retains control of self, and is thinking: "That's all

1. grow tobacco. The reply Governor Berkeley is said to have made to representatives of the Colony who were seeking ministerial and educational aid from the British Crown.

2. Gilbert Murray. Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, and England's foremost classical scholar.

I'll let them see"; even: "That's all I'll let myself **feel."** This stoicism is good in its refusal to be foundered; bad in that it fosters a narrow outlook; starves emotion, spontaneity, and frank sympathy; destroys grace and what one may describe roughly as the lovable side of personality. The English hardly ever say just what comes into their heads. What we call "good form," the unwritten law which governs certain classes of the Briton, savors of the dull and glacial; but there lurks within it a core of virtue. It has grown up like callous shell round two fine ideals—suppression of the ego lest it trample on the corns of other people, and exaltation of the maximum: "Deeds before words." Good form, like any other religion, starts well with some ethical truth, but soon gets commonized and petrified till we can hardly trace its origin, and watch with surprise its denial and contradiction of the root idea.

Without doubt good form has become a kind of disease in England. A French friend told me how he witnessed in a Swiss hotel the meeting between an Englishwoman and her son, whom she had not seen for two years; she was greatly affected—by the fact that he had not brought a dinner-jacket. The best manners are no "manners," or at all events no mannerisms; but many Britons who have even attained to this perfect purity are yet not free from the paralytic effects of "good form"; are still self-conscious in the depths of their souls, and never do or say a thing without trying not to show what they are feeling. All this guarantees a certain decency in life: but in intimate intercourse with people of other nations who have not this particular cult of suppression, we English disappoint, and jar, and often irritate. Nations have their differing forms of snobbery. At one time the English all wanted to be second cousins to the Earl of Leitrim, like that lady bland and passionate. Nowadays it is not so simple. The Earl of Leitrim has become etherealized. We no longer care how a fellow is born so long as he behaves as the Earl of Leitrim would have, never makes himself conspicuous or ridic-

ulous, never shows too much what he's really feeling, never talks of what he's going to do, and always "plays the game." The cult is centered in our public schools and universities.

At a very typical and honored old public school the writer of this essay passed, on the whole, a happy time; but what a curious life, educationally speaking! We lived rather like young Spartans; and were not encouraged to think, imagine, or see anything that we learned in relation to life at large. It's very difficult to teach boys, because their chief object in life is not to be taught anything, but I should say we were crammed, not taught at all. Living as we did the herd-life of boys with little or no intrusion from our elders, and they, men who had been brought up in the same way as ourselves, we were debarred from any real interest in philosophy, history, art, literature, and music, or any advancing notions in social life or politics. I speak of the generality, not of the few black swans among us. We were reactionaries almost to a boy. I remember one summer term Gladstone came down to speak to us, and we repaired to the Speech Room with white collars and dark hearts, muttering what we would do to that Grand Old Man if we could have our way. But he contrived to charm us, after all, till we cheered him vociferously. In that queer life we had all sorts of unwritten rules of suppression. You must turn up your trousers; must not go out with your umbrella rolled. Your hat must be worn tilted forward; you must not walk more than two-a-breast till you reached a certain form,[8] not be enthusiastic about anything, except such a supreme matter as a drive over the pavilion at cricket, or a run the whole length of the ground at football. You must not talk about yourself or your home people, and for any punishment you must assume complete indifference.

I dwell on these trivialities because every year thousands of British boys enter these mills which grind exceeding small, and

3. form. The term for denoting the grades of the English school system.

because these boys constitute in after life the great majority of the official, military, academic, professional, and a considerable proportion of the business classes of Great Britain. They become the Englishmen who say, "Really!" and they are for the most part the Englishmen who travel and reach America. The great defense I have always heard put up for our public schools is that they form character. As oatmeal is supposed to form bone in the bodies of Scotsmen, so our public schools are supposed to form good, sound moral fiber in British boys. And there is much in this plea. The life does make boys enduring, self-reliant, good-tempered, and honorable, but it most carefully endeavors to destroy all original sin of individuality, spontaneity, and engaging freakishness. It implants, moreover, in the great majority of those who have lived it the mental attitude of that swell, who when asked where he went for his hats, replied: "Blank's, of course. Is there another fellow's?"

To know all is to excuse all—to know all about the bringing-up of English public school boys makes one excuse much. The atmosphere and tradition of those places is extraordinarily strong, and persists through all modern changes. Thirty-seven years have gone since I was a new boy, but cross-examining a young nephew who left not long ago, I found almost precisely the same features and conditions. The War, which has changed so much of our social life, will have some, but no very great, effect on this particular institution. The boys still go there from the same kind of homes and preparatory schools and come under the same kind of masters. And the traditional unemotionalism, the cult of a dry and narrow stoicism, is rather fortified than diminished by the times we live in.

Our universities, on the other hand, are now mere ghosts of their old selves. At a certain old college in Oxford, last term,[4] they had only two English students. In the chapel

4. last term. During the year of the War when the author was writing the essay.

under the Joshua Reynolds[5] window, through which the sun was shining, hung a long "roll of honor," a hundred names and more. In the college garden an open-air hospital was ranged under the old city wall, where we used to climb and go wandering in the early summer mornings after some all-night spree. Down on the river the empty college barges lay void of life. From the top of one of them an aged custodian broke into words: "Ah! Oxford'll never be the same again in my time. Why, who's to teach 'em rowin'? When we do get undergrads again, who's to teach 'em? All the old ones gone, killed, wounded, and that. No! Rowin'll never be the same again—not in my time." That was the tragedy of the War for him. Our universities will recover faster than he thinks, and resume the care of our particular "Kultur," and cap the products of our public schools with the Oxford accent and the Oxford manner.

An acute critic tells me that Americans reading such deprecatory words as these by an Englishman about his country's institutions would say that this is precisely an instance of what an American means by the Oxford manner. Americans whose attitude toward their own country is that of a lover to his lady or a child to its mother, cannot—he says—understand how Englishmen can be critical of their own country, and yet love her. Well, the Englishman's attitude to his country is that of a man to himself, and the way he runs her down is but a part of that English bone-deep self-consciousness. Englishmen (the writer amongst them) love their country as much as the French love France and the Americans America; but she is so much a part of them that to speak well of her is like speaking well of themselves, which they have been brought up to regard as bad from." When Americans hear Englishmen speaking critically of their own country, let them note it for a sign of complete identification with that country

5. **Joshua Reynolds.** The celebrated portrait painter (1732-1792), a member of Doctor Johnson's Circle.

rather than of detachment from it. But on the whole it must be admitted that English universities have a broadening influence on the material which comes to them so set and narrow. They do a little to discover for their children that there are many points of view, and much which needs an open mind in this world. They have not precisely a democratic influence, but taken by themselves they would not be inimical to democracy. Heaven forbid that we should see vanish all that is old, and has, as it were, the virginia-creeper, the wistaria bloom of age upon it; there is a beauty in age and a health in tradition, ill dispensed with. What is hateful in age is its lack of understanding and of sympathy; in a word—its intolerance. Let us hope this wind of change[6] may sweep out and sweeten the old places of our country, sweep away the cobwebs and the dust, our narrow ways of thought, our manikinisms. But those who hate intolerance dare not be intolerant with the foibles of age; we should rather see them as comic, and gently laugh them out. I pretend to no proper knowledge of the American people; but, though amongst them there are doubtless pockets of fierce prejudice, I have on the whole the impression of a wide and tolerant spirit. To that spirit one would appeal when it comes to passing judgment on the educated Briton. He may be self-sufficient, but he has grit; and at bottom grit is what Americans appreciate more than anything. If the motto of the old Oxford college, "Manners makyth man,"[7] were true, one would often be sorry for the Briton. But his manners do not make him; they mar him. His goods are all absent from the shop window; he is not a man of the world in the wider meaning of that expression. And there is, of course, a particularly noxious type of traveling Briton, who does his best, unconsciously, to deflower his country wherever he goes. Selfish, coarse-fibered, loud-voiced—

6.. **wind of *change,* i: e.", the War.**
7.,**Manners makyth man; The phrase of William of Wickham, the founder of New College, Oxford;**

the sort which thanks God he is a Briton—I suppose because nobody else will do it for him.

We live in times when patriotism is exalted above all other virtues, because there happen to lie before the patriotic tremendous chances for the display of courage and self-sacrifice. Patriotism ever has that advantage, as the world is now constituted; but patriotism and provincialism are sisters under the skin, and they who can only see bloomon the plumage of. their ownlond", who "prefer the bad points of their countrymen to thegoodpointsof foreigners, merelywritethemselves down Wind ofan eye, and panderers tp_herd feeling. America is advantaged in this matter. She lives so far away from other nations that she might well be excused for thinking herself the only people in the world; but in the many strains of blood which go to make up America there is as yet a natural corrective to the narrower kind of patriotism. America has vast spaces and many varieties of type and climate, and life to her is still a great adventure. Americans have their own form of self-absorption, but seem free as yet from the special competitive self-centerment which has been forced on Britons through long centuries by countless continental rivalries and wars. Insularity was driven into the very bones of our people by the generation-long wars of Napoleon. A distinguished French writer, Andre Chevrillon, whose book[8] may be commended to anyone who wishes to understand British peculiarities, used these words in a recent letter: "You English are so strange to us French, you are so utterly different from any other people in the world." Yes! We are a lonely race. Deep in our hearts, I think, we feel that only the American people could ever really understand us. And being extraordinarily self-conscious, perverse, and proud, we do our best to hide from Americans that we have any such feeling. It would distress the Briton to confess that he wanted to be

8. book. ***England and the War,***

understood, had anything so natural as a craving for fellowship or for being liked. We are a weird people, though we seem so commonplace. In looking at photographs of British types among photographs of other European nationalities, one is struck by something which is in no other of those races—exactly as if we had an extra skin; as if the British animal had been tamed longer than the rest. And so he has. His political, social, legal life was fixed long before that of any other Western country. He was old, though not moldering, before the *Mayflower* touched American shores and brought there avatars, grave and civilized as ever founded nation. There is something touching and terrifying about our character, about the depth at which it keeps its real yearnings, about the perversity with which it disguises them, and its inability to show its feelings. We are, deep down, under all our lazy mentality, the most combative and competitive race in the world, with the exception, perhaps, of the Americans. This is at once a spiritual link with America, and yet one of the great barriers to friendship between the two peoples. We are not sure whether we are better men than Americans. Whether we are really better than French, Germans, Russians, Italians, Chinese, or any other race is, of course, more than a question; but those peoples are all so different from us that we are bound, I suppose, secretly to consider ourselves superior. But between Americans and ourselves, under all differences, there is some mysterious deep kinship which causes us to doubt and makes us irritable, as if we were continually being tickled by that question: Now am I really a better man than he? Exactly what proportion of American blood at this time of day is British, I know not; but enough to make us definitely cousins—always an awkward relationship. We see in Americans a sort of image of ourselves; feel near enough, yet far enough, to criticize and carp at the points of difference. It is as though a man went out and encountered, in

the street, what he thought for the moment was himself, and, wounded in his amour propre, instantly began to disparage the appearance of that fellow. Probably community of language rather than of blood accounts for our sense of kinship, for a common means of expression cannot but mold thought and feeling into some kind of unity. One can hardly overrate the intimacy which a common literature brings. The lives of great Americans, Washington and Franklin, Lincoln and Lee and Grant, are unsealed for us, just as to Americans are the lives of Marlborough and Nelson, Pitt and Gladstone and Gordon. Longfellow and Whittier and Whitman can be read by the British child as simply as Burns and Shelley and Keats. Emerson and William James are no more difficult to us than Darwin and Spencer to Americans. Without an effort we rejoice in Hawthorne and Mark Twain, Henry James and Howells, as Americans can in Dickens and Thackeray, Meredith and Thomas Hardy. And, more than all, Americans own with ourselves all literature in the English tongue before the *Mayflower* sailed; Chaucer and Spenser and Shakespeare, Raleigh, Ben Jonson, and the authors of the English Bible Version are their spiritual ancestors as much as ever they are ours. The tie of language is all-powerful—for language is the food formative of minds. A volume could be written on the formation of character by literary humor alone. The American and Briton, especially the British townsman, have a kind of bone-deep defiance of Fate, a readiness for anything which may turn up, a dry, wry smile under the blackest sky, and an individual way of looking at things which nothing can shake. Americans and Britons both, we must and will think for ourselves, and know why we do a thing before we do it. We have that ingrained respect for the individual conscience which is at the bottom of all free institutions. Some years before the War an intelligent and cultivated Austrian, who had lived long in England, was asked for his opinion of

the British. "In many ways," he said, "I think you are inferior to us; but one great thing I have noticed about you which we have not. You think and act and speak for yourselves." If he had passed those years in America instead of in England he must needs have pronounced the same judgment of Americans. Free speech, of course, like every form of freedom, goes in danger of its life in war-time. The other day, in Bussia, an Englishman came on a street meeting shortly after the first revolution had begun. An extremist was addressing the gathering and telling them that they were fools to go on fighting, that they ought to refuse and go home, and so forth. The crowd grew angry, and some soldiers were for making a rush at him; but the chairman, a big, burly peasant, stopped them with these words: "Brothers, you know that our country is now a country of free speech. We must listen to this man, we must let him say anything he will. But, brothers, when he's finished, we'll bash his head in!"

I cannot assert that either Britons or Americans are incapable in times like these of a similar interpretation of "free speech." Things have been done in our country, and will be done in America, which should make us blush. But so strong is the free instinct in both countries that some vestiges of it will survive even this war, for democracy is a sham unless it means the preservation and development of this instinct of thinking for oneself throughout a people. "Government of the people, by the people, for the people" means nothing unless individuals keep their consciences unfettered and think freely. Accustom people to be nose-led and spoon-fed, and democracy is a mere pretense. The measure of democracy is the measure of the freedom and sense of individual responsibility in its humblest citizens. And democracy—I say it with solemnity—has yet to prove itself.

A scientist, Dr. Spurrell, in a recent book, *Man and His Forerunners,* diagnoses the growth of civilization somewhat as

follows: A civilization begins with the enslavement by some hardy race of a tame race living a tame life in more congenial natural surroundings. It is built up on slavery, and attains its maximum vitality in conditions little removed therefrom. Then, as individual freedom gradually grows, disorganization sets in and the civilization slowly dissolves away in anarchy. Dr. Spurrell does not dogmatize about our present civilization, but suggests that it will probably follow the civilizations of the past into dissolution. I am not convinced of that, because of certain factors new to the history of man. Recent discoveries are unifying the world; such old isolated swoops of race on race are not now possible. In our great industrial States, it is true, a new form of slavery has arisen, but not of man by man, rather of man by machines. Moreover, all past civilizations have been more or less Southern, and subject to the sapping influence of the sun. Modern civilization is essentially Northern. The individualism, however, which, according to Dr. Spurrell, dissolved the Empires of the past, exists already, in a marked degree, in every modern State; and the problem before us is to discover how democracy and liberty of the subject can be made into enduring props rather than dissolvents. It is the problem of making democracy genuine. And certainly, if that cannot be achieved and perpetuated, there is nothing to prevent democracy drifting into anarchism and dissolving modern States, till they are the prey of pouncing dictators, or of States not so far gone in dissolution. What, for instance, will happen to Russia if she does not succeed in making her democracy genuine? A Russia which remains anarchic must very quickly become the prey of her neighbors on West and East.

Ever since the substantial introduction of democracy nearly a century and a half ago with the American War of Independence, Western civilization has been living on two planes or levels—the autocratic **plane, with which is bound up the**

idea of nationalism, and the democratic, to which has become conjoined the idea of internationalism. Not only little wars, but great wars . . . come because of inequality in growth, dissimilarity of political institutions between States; because this State or that is basing its life on different principles from its neighbors. The decentralization, delays, critical temper, and importance of home affairs prevalent in democratic countries make them at once slower, weaker, less apt to strike, and less prepared to strike than countries where bureaucratic brains subject to no real popular check devise world policies which can be thrust, prepared to the last button, on the world at a moment's notice. The free and critical spirit in America, France, and Britain has kept our democracies comparatively unprepared for anything save their own affairs.

We fall into glib usage of words like democracy and make fetiches of them without due understanding. Democracy is inferior to autocracy from the aggressively national point of view; it is not necessarily superior to autocracy as a guarantee of general well-being; it may even turn out to be inferior unless we can improve it. But democracy is the rising tide; it. may bedamnedor delayed, but cannot be stopped. It seems to be a law inhuman naturethartr where, in any corporate society, the idea of self-government sets foot it refuses to take that foot up again. State after State, copying the American example, has adopted the democratic principle; the world's face is that way set. And civilization is now so of a pattern that the Western world may be looked on as one State and the process of change therein from autocracy to democracy regarded as though it were taking place in a single old-time country such as Greece or Rome. If throughout Western civilization we can secure the single democratic principle of government, its single level of State morality in thought and action, we shall be well on our way to unanimity throughout the world; for even in China and Japan the democratic virus

is **at work. It is my belief that only in a world thus uniform,** and freed from the danger of pounce by autocracies, have States any chance to develop the individual conscience to **a** point which shall make democracy proof against anarchy, and themselves proof against dissolution; and only in such a world can a League of Nations to enforce peace succeed.

But even **if** we do secure **a** single plane **for** Western civilization and ultimately for the world, there will be but slow and difficult progress in the lot of mankind. And unless we secure it, there will be only **a** march backwards.

For this advance to a uniform civilization of solidarity **of** the English-speaking races is vital. Without that there will be no bottom on which to build.

The ancestors of the American people sought **a** new country because they had in them a reverence for the individual conscience; they came from Britain, the first large State in the Christian era to build up the idea of political freedom. The instincts and ideals of our two races have ever been the same.

That great and lovable people, the French, with their clear thought and expression, and their quick blood, have expressed those ideals more vividly than either of us. But the phlegmatic and the dry tenacity of our English and American temperaments has ever made our countries the most settled and safe homes of the individual conscience, and of its children—Democracy, Freedom, and Internationalism. Whatever their faults—and their offenses cry aloud to such poor heaven as remains of chivalry and mercy—the Germans are in many ways a great race, but they possess two qualities dangerous to the individual conscience—unquestioning obedience and exaltation. When they embrace the democratic idea they may surpass us all in its logical development, but the individual conscience will still not be at ease with them. We must look to our two countries to guarantee its strength and activity, and if we English-speaking races quarrel and become disunited,

civilization will split up again and go its way to ruin. We are the ballast of the new order.

I do not believe in formal alliances or in grouping nations to exclude and keep down other nations. Friendships between countries should have the only true reality of common sentiment, and be animated by desire for the general welfare of mankind. We need no formal bonds, but we have a sacred charge in common, to let no petty matters, differences of manner, or divergencies of material interest, destroy our spiritual agreement. Our pasts, our geographical positions, our temperaments, make us, beyond all other races, the hope and trustees of mankind's advance along the only line now open—democratic internationalism. It is childish to claim for Americans or Britons virtues beyond those of other nations, or to believe in the superiority of one national culture to another; they are different, that is all. It is by accident that we find ourselves in this position of guardianship to the main line of human development; no need to pat ourselves on the back about it. But we are at a great and critical moment in the world's history—how critical none of us alive will ever realize. The civilization slowly built since the fall of Rome has either to break up and dissolve into jagged and isolated fragments through a century of wars; or, unified and reanimated by a single idea, to move forward on one plane and attain greater height and breadth.

Under the pressure of this War there is, beneath the lip-service we pay to democracy, a disposition to lose faith in it because of its undoubted weakness and inconvenience in a struggle with States autocratically governed; there is even a sort of secret reaction of autocracy. On those lines there is no way out of a future of bitter rivalries, chicanery, and wars, and the probable total failure of our civilization. The only cure which I can see lies in democratizing the whole world and removing the present weaknesses and shams of democracies by

education of the individual conscience in every country. Good-by to that chance if Americans and Britons fall foul of each other, refuse to pool their thoughts and hopes, and to keep the general welfare of mankind in view. They have got to stand together, not in aggressive and jealous policies, but in defense and championship of the self-helpful, self-governing, "live and let live" philosophy of life.

The house of the future is always dark. There are few corner-stones to be discerned in the temple of our fate. But of these few one is the brotherhood and bond of the English-speaking races, not for narrow purposes, but that mankind may yet see faith and good-will enshrined, yet breathe a sweeter air, and know a life where Beauty passes, with the sun on her wings.

We want in the lives of men "A Song of Honor," as in Ralph Hodgson's[9] poem:

> The song of men all sorts and kinds,
> As many tempers, moods, and minds
>   As leaves are on a tree,
> As many faiths and castes and creeds,
> As many human bloods and breeds,
>   As in the world may be.

In the making of that song the English-speaking races will assuredly unite. What made this world we know not; the principle of life is inscrutable and will forever be; but we know that Earth is yet on the up-grade of existence, the mountain-top of man's life not reached, that many centuries of growth are yet in front of us before Nature begins to chill this planet till it swims, at last, another moon, in space. In the climb to that mountain-top of a happy life for mankind our two great nations are as guides who go before, roped together in perilous ascent. On their nerve, loyalty, and

9. **Ralph Hodgson.** One of the graceful "younger word-magicians" among the modern English poets; born in the eighteen seventies.

wisdom the adventure now hangs. What American or British knife will sever the rope?

He who ever gives a thought to the life of man at large, to his miseries and disappointments, to the waste and cruelty of existence, will remember that if American or Briton fail himself, or fail each other, there can be for us both, and for all other peoples, a hideous slip, a swift and fearful fall into an abyss, whence all shall be to begin over again.

We shall not fail—neither ourselves, nor each other. Our comradeship will endure.

SIR PHILIP GIBBS

[SIR PHILIP GIBBS, journalist and novelist, served as War Correspondent with the French, Belgian, and British armies, 1914-1918. He is one of the few writers who can make literature out of journalism. Americans have not forgotten his vivid pictures of the realities of the Great War in *Now It Can Be Told,* 1920.]

ENGLAND HONORS UNKNOWN SOLDIER*

LONDON, NOV. 11.—It did not seem an unknown warrior whose body came on the gun carriage down Whitehall[1] where we were waiting for him. He was known to us all. It was one of "our boys," not warriors, as we called them in the days of darkness, lit by faith.

To some women, weeping a little in the crowd after an all-night vigil, he was their boy who went missing one day and was never found till now, though their souls went searching for him through dreadful places in night.

To many men among those packed densely on each side of the empty street, wearing ribbons and badges on civil clothes, he was a familiar figure—one of their comrades, the one they liked best, perhaps, in the old crowd who went into the fields of death and stayed there with the great companionship.

It was the steel helmet, the old "tin hat," lying there on the crimson of the flag which revealed him instantly, not as a mythical warrior aloof from common humanity, a shadowy type of the national pride and martial glory, but as one of

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1. **Whitehall.** A London street famous for its public buildings, the Admiralty office, the Horse Guards, etc.

those fellows, dressed in the drab of khaki, stained by mud and grease, who went into the dirty ditches with this steel hat on his head and in his heart the unspoken things, which made him one of us in courage and in fear, with some kind of faith not clear, full of perplexities, often dim in the watchwords of those years of war.

So it seemed to me, at least, as I looked down Whitehall and listened to the music which told us that the unknown was coming down the road. The band was playing the old "Dead March in Saul,"[2] with heavy drumming, but as yet the roadway was clear where it led up to that altar of sacrifice as it looked, covered by two flags, hanging in long folds of scarlet and white.

About that altar cenotaph there were little groups of strange people, all waiting for the dead soldier. Why were they there?

There were great folk to greet the dust of a simple soldier. There were the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London and other clergy in gowns and hoods. What had they to do with the body of a soldier who had gone trudging through the mud and muck like one ant in a legion of ants, unknown to fame, not more heroic, perhaps, than all his pals about him, not missed much when he fell dead between the tangled wire and the shell holes?

There were great Generals and Admirals, Lord Haig himself, Commander in Chief of our armies in France, and Admiral Beatty, who held the seas; Lord French of Ypres,[3] with Home of the First Army and Byng of the Third, and Air Marshal Trenchard, who commanded all the birds that flew above the lines on the mornings of enormous battle.

These were the high powers, infinitely remote, perhaps, in the imagination of the man whose dust was now being brought toward them. It was their brains that had directed his movements down the long roads which galled his feet, over

2. **Dead March In Saul.** Funeral march composed by Handel.
3. **Yprea.** Noted scene of conflict in Belgium.

ground churned up by gunfire, up duck boards from which he slipped under his heavy pack if he were a foot slogger, and whatever his class as a soldier ordained at last the end of his journey, which finished in a grave marked by a metal disk—"unknown."

In life he had looked upon these Generals as terrifying in their power "for the likes of him." Sometimes, perhaps, he had saluted them as they rode past. Now they stood in Whitehall to salute him, to keep silence in his presence, to render him homage, more wonderful, with deeper reverence than any General of them all has had. There were Princes there about the cenotaph, not only of England but of the Indian Empire. These Indian rajahs, that old white-bearded, white-turbaned man with the face of an Eastern prophet—was it possible that they, too, were out to pay homage to an unknown British soldier?

There was something of the light of Flanders in Whitehall. The tattered ruins of Cloth Hall[4] at Ypres used to shine white. A mist, suffused a little by wan sunlight, white as the walls and turrets of the War Office in this mist of London. The tower of Big Ben[5] was dim through the mist like the tower of Albert Church until it fell into a heap under the fury of gunfire.

Presently the sun shone brighter, so that the picture of Whitehall was etched with deeper lines. On all the buildings flags were flying at half mast. The people who kept moving about the cenotaph were there for mourning, not for mere pageantry. The Grenadier officers, who walked about with drawn swords, wore crape on their arms. Presently they passed the word along, "Reverse arms," and all along the line of route soldiers turned over their rifles and bent their heads

4. **Cloth Hall.** One of the group of Gothic buildings on the Grande Place, Ypres, Belgium.

5. **Big Ben.** The clock on the tower of the Parliament building.

over their butts. It was when the music of the Dead March came louder up the street.

A number of black figures stood in a separate group apart from the Admirals and Generals, people of importance to whom the eyes of the crowd turned while men and women tiptoed to get a glimpse of them.

The Prime Minister and Ministers and ex-Ministers of England were there—Asquith, Lord Curzon, and other Statesmen who in those years of conflict were responsible for all the mighty effort of the nation, who stirred up its passion and emotions, who organized its labor and service, who won that victory and this peace. I thought the people about me stared at them as though conscious of the task that is theirs, now that peace is the test of victory.

But it was one figure who stood alone as the symbol of the nation in this tribute to the spirit of our dead. As Big Ben struck three-quarters after ten the King advanced toward the cenotaph, followed by the Prince of Wales, the Prince's two brothers, and the Duke of Connaught. And while the others stood in line looking toward the top of Whitehall the King was a few paces ahead of them alone, waiting motionless for the body of the unknown warrior who had died in his service.

It was very silent in Whitehall. Before the ordered silence the dense lines of people had kept their places without movement and only spoke little in their long time of waiting, and then as they caught their first glimpse of the gun-carriage were utterly quiet, all heads were bared and bent. Their emotion was as though a little cold breeze was passing. One seemed to feel the spirit of the crowd. Above all this mass of plain people something touched one with a sharp, yet softening thought.

The massed bands passed with their noble music and their drums thumping at the hearts of men and women. Guards with their reversed arms passed and then the gun-carriage with its team of horses halted in front of the cenotaph where

the King stood, and every hand was raised to salute the soldier who died that we might live, chosen by fate for this honor which is in remembrance of this great army of comrades who went out with him to no man's land.

The King laid a wreath on the coffin and then stepped back again. Crowded behind the gun-carriage in one long vista was an immense column of men of all branches of the navy and army moving up slowly before coming to a halt, and behind again other men in civilian clothes, and everywhere among them and above them flowers in the form of wreaths and crosses.

Then all was still, and the picture was complete, framing in that coffin where the steel hat and the King's sword lay upon the flag which draped it. The soul of the nation at its best, purified at this moment by this emotion, was there in silence about the dust of that unknown.

Guns were being fired somewhere in the distance. They were not loud, but like the distant thumping of guns on a misty day in Flanders when there was "nothing to report," though on such a day, perhaps, this man had died.

Presently there was a far-off wailing like the cry of a banshee. It was a siren giving the warning of silence in some place by the river.

The deep notes of Big Ben struck two, and then the King turned quickly to a lever behind him, touched it, and let fall the great flags which had draped the altar. The cenotaph stood revealed, utterly austere except for three standards with their gilt wreaths.

It was a time of silence. What thoughts were in the minds of all the people, only God knows, as they stood there for those two minutes, which were very long.

There was dead stillness in Whitehall, only broken here and there by the coughing of a man or woman, quickly hushed.

The unknown warrior I Was it young Jack, perhaps, who had never been found ? Was it one of those fellows in the

battalion that moved up through Ypres before the height of the battle in the bogs?

Men were smoking this side of Ypres. One could see the glow of their cigarette ends as they were halted around the old mill house at Vlamertinghe. It rained after that, beating sharply on tin hats, pouring in spouts down the waterproof capes. They went out through Menin Gate. Shelling began along the duck boards by Westhoek ridge, gas shelling, every old thing.

Fellows dropped into the shell holes full of water. They had their packs on, all their fighting kit. Some of them lay there in pits where the water was reddish.

There were a lot of unknown warriors in the bogs by Glencorse Wood and Inverness Copse.[6] They lay by upturned tanks and sank in slime. Queer how fellows used to drop and never give a sound, so that their pals passed on without knowing.

In all sorts of places the unknown warrior lay down and was not quickly found. In Boulon Wood they were lying after the battle among the river trees. On the fields of Somme they lay in the churned-up earth, in High Wood and Delville Wood and this side of Loupart Wood. It was queer one day how the sun shone on Loupart Wood, which was red with autumn tints. Old "Boche" was there then, and the wood seemed to have a thousand eyes staring at our lines newly dug. An airplane came through the fleecy sky, wonderfully careless of the black shrapnel bursting about it. Wonderful chaps, those airmen.

For the man afoot it wasn't good to stumble in that ground; barbed wire tore one's hands damnably. There was a boy lying in a tangle of barbed wire. He looked as though he was asleep, but he was dead all right. An airplane passed overhead with a loud humming song.

6. Glen corse and Inverness. Note the Scotch names applied to French places.

What is this long silence, all this crowd in London streets two years after the armistice peace? Yes, those were old dreams that have passed, old ghosts passing down Whitehall among the living.

The silence ended. Some word rang out, bugles were blowing, they were sounding "the last post" to the unknown warrior of the great war in which many men died without record or renown. Further than Whitehall sounded the last post to the dead. Did the whole army of the dead hear that call to them from the living?

In the crowd below me women were weeping quietly. It was the cry from their hearts that was heard furthest, perhaps. The men's faces were hard like masks, hiding all they thought and felt.

HILAIRE BELLOC

[HILAIRE BELLOC, essayist, journalist, and historian, was born In 1870 near Paris. His childhood was spent in Sussex, England. As a young man he came under the influence of Cardinal Newman, who fostered the intense love and reverence of Belloc for the Roman Catholic Church. With his fellow Englishman, Gilbert K. Chesterton, he is a trenchant controversialist in behalf of the values of the past as revealed in medieval Christianity. In an age devoted to science and material progress, Belloc leads us to remember our search for the Kingdom of the Spirit not made with hands, and not to be quantitatively measured by intelligence tests or laboratory scales.

ON AN UNKNOWN COUNTRY*

TEN YEARS ago, I think, or perhaps a little less or perhaps a little more, I came in the Euston Road[1]—that thoroughfare of Empire—upon a young man a little younger than myself whom I knew, though I did not know him very well. It was drizzling and the second-hand booksellers (who are rare in this thoroughfare) were beginning to put out the waterproof covers over their wares. This disturbed my acquaintance, because he was engaged upon buying a cheap book that should really satisfy him.

Now this was difficult, for he had no hobby, and the book which should satisfy him must be one that should describe or summon up, it is better to say, hint at—or, the theologians would say, reveal, or the Platonists would say recall—the Unknown Country, which he thought was his very home.

I had known his habit of seeking such books for two years, and had half wondered at it and half sympathized. It was an appetite partly satisfied by almost any work that brought to him the vision of a place in the mind which he had always intensely desired, but to which, as he had then long guessed,

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1. **Euston Road.** One of London's noted streets.

and as he is now quite certain, no human paths directly lead. He would buy with avidity travels to the moon and to the planets, from the most worthless to the best. He loved Utopias and did not disregard even so prosaic a category as books of real travel, so long as by exaggeration or by a glamour in the style they gave him a full draft of that drug which he desired. Whether this satisfaction the young man sought was a satisfaction in illusion (I have used the word "drug" with hesitation), or whether it was, as he persistently maintained, the satisfaction of a memory, or whether it was, as I am often tempted to think, the satisfaction of a thirst which will ultimately be quenched in every human soul I cannot tell. Whatever it was, he sought it with more than the appetite with which a hungry man seeks food. He sought it with something that was not hunger but passion.

That evening he found a book.

It is well known that men purchase with difficulty second-hand books upon the stalls, and that in some mysterious way the sellers of these books are content to provide a kind of library for the poorer and more eager of the public, and a library admirable in this, that it is accessible upon every shelf and exposes a man to no control, except that he must not steal, and even in this it is nothing but the force of public law that interferes. My friend therefore would in the natural course of things have dipped into the book and left it there; but a better luck persuaded him. Whether it was the beginning of the rain or a sudden loneliness in such terrible weather and in such a terrible town, compelling him to seek a more permanent companionship with another mind, or whether it was my sudden arrival and shame lest his poverty should appear in his refusing to buy the book—whatever it was, he bought that same. And since he bought the Book I also have known it and have found in it, as he did, the most complete expression that I know of the Unknown Country, of which he was a citizen—oddly a citizen, as I then thought, wisely as I now conceive.

All that can best be expressed in words should be expressed in verse, but verse is a slow thing to create; nay, it is not really created; it is a secretion of the mind, it is a pearl that gathers round some irritant and slowly expresses the very essence of beauty and of desire that has lain long, potential and unexpressed, in the mind of the man who secretes it. God knows that this Unknown Country has been hit off in verse a hundred times. If I were perfectly sure of my accents I would quote two lines from the *Odyssey* in which the Unknown Country stands out as clear as does a sudden vision when the mist lifts after a long climb and one sees beneath one an unexpected and glorious land; such a vision as greets a man when he comes over the Saldeu into the simple and secluded Republic of the Andorrans.[2] Then, again, the Germans in their idioms have flashed it out, I am assured, for I remember a woman telling me that there was a song by Schiller which exactly gave the revelation of which I speak. In English, thank Heaven, emotion of this kind, emotion necessary to the life of the soul, is very abundantly furnished. As, who does not know the lines:

> Blessed with that which is not in the word
> Of man nor his conception: Blessed Land!

Then there is also the whole group of glimpses which Shakespeare amused himself by scattering as might a man who had a great oak chest full of jewels and who now and then, out of kindly fun, poured out a handful and gave them to his guests. I quote from memory, but I think certain of the lines run more or less like this:

> Look how the dawn in russet mantle clad
> Stands on the steep of yon high eastern hill.[3]

2. **Republic of the Andorrans.** A nominally independent state in the Pyrenees mountains inhabited by a simple pastoral folk speaking Catalan Spanish.

3. These lines are even better as Shakespeare wrote them in Hamlet I, i, 166-167.

> "But look, the morn in russet mantle clad,
> Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill."

And again:

> Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
> Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.[4]

Which moves me to digress . . . How on earth did any living man pull it off as well as that? I remember arguing with a man who very genuinely thought the talent of Shakespeare was exaggerated in public opinion, and discovering at the end of a long wrangle that he was not considering Shakespeare as a poet. But as a poet, then, how on earth did he manage it?

Keats did it continually, especially in the "Hyperion." Milton does it so well in the Fourth Book of *Paradise Lost* that I defy any man of a sane understanding to read the whole of that book before going to bed and not to wake up next morning as though he had been on a journey. William Morris does it, especially in the verses[5] about a prayer over the corn; and as for Virgil, the poet Virgil, he does it continually like a man whose very trade it is. Who does not remember the swimmer who saw Italy from the top of the wave?

Here also let me digress. How do the poets do it? (I do not mean where do they get their power, as I was asking just now of Shakespeare, but how do the words, simple or complex, produce that effect?) Very often there is not any adjective, sometimes not any qualification at all: often only one subject with its predicate and its statement and its object. There is never any detail of description, but the scene rises, more vivid in color, more exact in outline, more wonderful in influence, than anything we can see with our eyes, except perhaps those things we see in the few moments of intense emotion which come to us, we know not whence, and expand out into completion and into manhood. Catullus[6] does it. He does it so powerfully in the opening lines of "Vesper adest . . ."[7]

4. Romeo's speech **at dawn** just before he takes last farewell of Juliet, III. v, 9-10.

5. **verses.** His lyric, "Summer Dawn."

6. **Catullus.** A Roman lyric poet (94-54 B.C.).

7. **Vesper adest.** Prom the poem celebrating Hymen, **"The evening is** come; **rise up.** ye **youths."**

that a man reads the first couplet of that Hymeneal, and immediately perceives the Apennines.

The nameless translator of the Highland song does it, especially when he advanced that battering line:

And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

They all do it, bless their hearts, the poets, which leads me back again to the mournful reflection that it cannot be done in prose. . . .

Little friends, my readers, I wish it could be done in prose, for if it could, and if I knew how to do it, I would here present to you that Unknown Country in such a fashion that every landscape which you should see henceforth could be transformed, by the appearing through it, the shining and uplifting through it, of the Unknown Country upon which reposes this tedious and repetitive world.

Now you may say to me that prose can do it, and you may quote to me the end of *The Pilgrim's Progress,* a very remarkable piece of writings Or, better still, as we shall be more agreed upon it, the general impression left upon the mind by the book which set me writing—Mr. Hudson's *Crystal Age.* I do not deny that prose can do it, but when it does it, it is hardly to be called prose, for it is inspired. Note carefully the passages in which the trick is worked in prose (for instance, in the story of Ruth in the Bible, where it is done with complete success), you will perceive an incantation and a spell. Indeed this same episode of Ruth in exile has inspired two splendid passages of European verse, of which it is difficult to say which is the more national, and therefore the greatest, Victor Hugo's in the *Legende des Siecles* or Keats's astounding four lines.[8]

8. linen.
"Perhaps the selfsame song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn."
("Ode to a Nightingale")

There was a shepherd the other day up at Findon Fair who had come from the east by Lewes with sheep, and who had in his eyes that reminiscence of horizons which makes the eyes of shepherds and of mountaineers different from the eyes of other men. He was occupied when I came upon him in pulling Mr. Fulton's sheep by one hind leg so that they should go the way they were desired to go. It happened that day that Mr. Fulton's sheep were not sold, and the shepherd went driving them back through Findon Village, and up on to the High Downs. I went with him to hear what he had to say, for shepherds talk quite differently from other men. And when we came on to the shoulder of Chanctonbury and looked down upon the Weald, which stretched out like the Plains of Heaven, he said to me: "I never come here but it seems like a different place down below, and as though it were not the place where I have gone afoot with sheep under the hills. It seems different when you are looking down at it." He added that he had never known why. Then I knew that he, like myself, was perpetually in perception of the Unknown Country, and I was very pleased. But we did not say anything more to each other about it until we got down into Steyning. There we drank together and we still said nothing about it, so that to this day all we know of the matter is what wa knew when we started, and what you knew when I began to write this, and what you are now no further informed upon, namely, that there is an Unknown Country lying beneath the places that we know, and appearing only in moments of revelation.

Whether we shall reach this country at last or whether we shall not, it is impossible to determine.

*

JOHN EGLINTON

[JOHN EGLINTON is the pen name of William McGee. He was bom and educated in Dublin, and has been a librarian in the National University of Ireland for many years. He Is a classical scholar and a Platonist; and has been called "one of the finest critical intellects writing in the English language of today." "Sincerity" comes from his *Anglo-Irish Essays,* published in 1917.]

SINCERITY*

"Beware of that man," said Diderot[1] of Rousseau;[2] "he believes every word he says!" We are reminded by such a saying that sincerity, or the habit of throwing the vital powers into our words and actions, so far from being merely the attribute of good and undesigning men, is an engine of influence and innovation within the compass of the few. There are indeed certain men—Rousseau was one of them, and there is no doubt a Rousseau in every man of genius—who are born into the world to apply to our arts and institutions the test of genuine feeling. "I am not like any man whom I have ever seen," said Rousseau; "I venture to think I am not like any man that ever existed." But he was mistaken. In all the foibles described by him so lovingly in his *Confessions,* thousands of readers in every generation since have confessed themselves vicariously. What was so exceptional in Rousseau was the complete absence in him of that power to adapt himself to his environment, a power which almost everyone possesses, and which parents are perhaps right in choosing to encourage in their children rather than genius; and on the other hand the strength in him of that power whose rarity

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1. **Diderot.** The French philosopher (1713-1784).
2. **Rousseau.** Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), the celebrated and influential philosopher of the French Revolution.

nature seems to atone for by the enormous attraction and compulsive force with which she occasionally endows it. From time to time a moment befalls when the martyrs of sincerity are transformed into the founders of New eras, and the "creators," to adopt Nietzsche's[3] language, of the "new values." But for Rousseau, if we may accept the testimony of Napoleon, there would have been no French Revolution; and two centuries earlier, a man who had at first seemed likely to end as one more obscure victim of a sincerity as helpless as that of Rousseau, Martin Luther, apparently by a mere accident, suddenly found on his side the suffrages of men, and himself the honored father of the coming world.

It is a common fallacy, bequeathed to us perhaps from pre-Lutheran times, that people are by preference and intention insincere, and that the strong man will wear a mask, whereas the truth probably is that insincerity is almost invariably a sign of weakness. If it were in our power to be sincere we should no more think of being insincere than a pleader would bewilder his audience with subtleties when facts were at his disposal. The power of genius is essentially the same as the disconcerting quality of sincerity when brought face to face with false pretensions. The rest of us are constantly peeling off new wrappages which conceal us from ourselves, and finding that yesterday we acted a part; but the genius is he who has arrived at the basis of his nature and whose morrow belies not his yesterday. Genius is that fire which kindles only the altars of sincerity. To be sincere is what every man, from the poet to the Archbishop of Canterbury, finds his account in being. In literature it is style, the power of leaning one's whole weight on the pen. If ever we poor pagans, adrift in what Myers[4] called the "inter-space between faiths decayed and faiths re-risen," shall devise for ourselves some consoling ritual, it ought to be one which should

3. Nietasiiche. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), a German philosopher, who advocated "the will to power" and called for transvaluation of values.

4. Myers. P. W. H. Myers (1843-1901), an English physicist and philosopher.

recall us, were it only one day in the week, to spiritual nakedness and self-realization. Meanwhile, to have confided oneself even to paper brings relief and peace, as only those actions do which have the sanction of heart, soul, and intellect. If we could believe that a certain number of those actions in trade, politics, and social life, which make up the world's doings for a day, were done with the whole-heartedness with which, in a lonely country road, one makes an entry in one's notebook, we might believe in the "progress of civilization," and that the world was going excellently well; but it is only those who have no plans and no schemes, and perhaps even not too much brains, who can afford to act and speak only from conviction. Verily we need a brood of fakirs and eremites, with souls uncompromisingly exclusive of the otiose and insincere; poets whose poverty in mere opinion perhaps excludes them from society, but whose rare thoughts have the beauty and finality of wayside flowers.

Most people have at one time or another had the dream of how good a thing it would be to say and do nothing except with sincerity; to say "Thank you" and "Good-morning" only when you mean it, to laugh only when amused, to listen only when interested, etc. So resolute an attempt, however, to simplify life, very soon breaks down. To begin with, we ourselves have a dozen different sincerities, a sincerity of ill-humor, of jollity, of cynicism, of misunderstanding, to mention some of the less worthy kind; and are we to inflict our moods on our neighbors? Besides, it is only with the sincere that sincerity is possible; and as the greater number of those with whom the day's doing bring us into contact have not attained sincerity, we must trim our course as we may among conflicting moods. If it is rare that we are sincere even with ourselves, it is rarer still for two persons to be simultaneously and mutually sincere. Sincerity is attained for the most part in solitude, but even there it is to be feared the necessity of inconstancy and variety pursues us. If we felt the force of

those intuitions which visit us so absolutely as to feel them always, we should hardly get through life. We cannot afford to be too sincere. Who has not felt, for example, at certain times that existence itself is something to feel ashamed of, and perhaps even said heartily with Sophocles, "Not to have been born is past utterance the best." Yet to feel this to the exclusion of the ideals of Stoicism, of epicureanism, of skepticism, of religion, which in their different ways enable us to live, was impossible not only for Sophocles, who was most likely, like Shakespeare and Goethe, a man of a cheerful and hopeful disposition, but for human nature. The excuse, if one is needed, for this inconstancy to our deepest intuitions is that we are something in ourselves, independently of all the truths we visit as a bee the flower. In reply to that naive inquiry, "What do you believe?" one can only say, This and that! I can no more tell what I believe than I can tell what the universe believes. The chief event of each day should be a fresh discovery of what one believes, and every mood has its own creed. People sometimes talk as though a creed, capable of weekly recitation, were an essential part of the equipment of life, but really it is surprising how well one can get along without a creed. As the Indian scripture says, "Drinking of the pleasant beverage called the perception of truth, one becomes free from excitement and sin."

It is contended that science and religion are not necessarily opposed, yet it is hardly to be denied that Scio[5] has ascended the throne of Credo,[5] who sits as a kind of dowager-empress, wearing the insignia of former greatness, and even insisting on precedence, yet yielding all her real authority to her successor. What we "believe" has not the value of what we know; what we have heard from another we say we believe, but what we have found out for ourselves we know. For a long time humanity, having quite insufficient notions of the phenomena of external and of human nature, of the stars and

5. **Scio . . . Credo.** The former, I know; the latter I believe.

the-earth and the cause of thunder, formed the habit of distinguishing between the truth of faith and the truth of knowledge. It must, however, be admitted that the notion of faith as a special organ of the human mind is not one which bears examination now. The disappearance of faith simply means that the mind is now called upon to verify things for itself, and to bring them within range of knowledge. In regard to a difficult and involved subject, for example, like the origins of Christianity, in which certainty is so difficult to arrive at, but in which the well-disposed are not to be satisfied with the mere criticism of common sense or with denial, a kind of tacit or provisional assent is adopted by minds unable or too indolent to enter on a general examination of the evidence bequeathed to us; but it is quite certain that those who do not attempt such research are at the mercy of those who arrive at their own conclusions in doing so. As we study an age like the fourth century,[6] and gradually gain clear ideas of its various tendencies, conviction inevitably rises in the mind as to the nature of historic Christianity and the claims made for it. Such a study may lead to very different conclusions in different minds—that is a question of temperament or the will to believe—but certainty, whether in affirmation or denial, is only to be gained by resolute inquiry.

The New Testament is generally allowed to exhibit a great advance on the Old in respect of the suppression of that hatred of one's enemies so candidly avowed by David in his Psalms. But to love one's enemies is a different thing from making friends with everybody, a thing impossible. There are persons unfortunately to whom our true relationship is one of enmity. We can persuade ourselves that we love our enemy, or rather, out of consideration for ourselves, we refrain from breaking through that thin medium of general good will in which we confound our enemy with our friends, until des-

6. fourth century. The time of the crystallizing of Christian dogmas and doctrines, and the establishment of Christianity as a lawful religion within the Roman State.

tiny, in some malign hour, throws us into some situation in which we rub shoulders with him all day long, and we discover that the laws of incompatibility of temperament are not to be eluded by any counsel of perfection. To love each man is doubtless the goal to aim at, but until love, hatred! To pray for the discomfiture of our enemies indicates a frame of mind far more likely to succeed in bringing about an ultimate rapprochement than to acquiesce in the continuance of a mutual toleration in which our attitude toward mankind at large, generally egoistic, is not particularized into a personal relationship. Perhaps when our enemy is discomfited and punished as we believe he deserves, we shall find him tractable and accessible, a man whom one can love. What each man really is, is disguised from us in most cases by circumstances which preclude a genuine contact with him at any point, and to upset these false relations and substitute true ones, the lever of hatred may be meanwhile necessary. On the whole, next to love, this hatred is the highest compliment which we can pay our neighbor, and the most promising of a happy eventuation. A lover will not hear of any sentiment between love and hatred from his mistress, and we see that mortal enemies, when brought face to face in a duel, are willing to die to give each other "satisfaction." In the pure ether of the inmost consciousness, the region in which the Gospels call upon us to live, where identity is perceived, we may love our neighbor truly as ourselves; to meet him at all in that region is to love him as ourselves. But to love the man whose true personality we cannot reach because of the circumstances which make him our obstacle, it is needful to break down those barriers first.

A certain confusion of thought seems to vitiate those schemes for the abolition of war, etc., which seem to suggest that nations should be governed in their conduct toward one another by principles derived from what the Quakers called the "inner light." Nations, however, have a sincerity of their own in their dealings with one another which statesmen un-

derstand. They live, as the jurists of the seventeenth century taught, in a "state of nature" rather than as individuals composing a society, and we delegate to governments the duty of maintaining our safety and securing our interests after a code which we might otherwise have to practice individually, but which we have discarded as members of society. !N[either Laotze[7] nor Socrates nor Jesus interfered with this code, or denied the necessary authority of the State, which on condition of our readiness to sacrifice our lives for it when it is assailed, takes upon its own shoulders the disgraceful struggle for existence. They limited themselves to the demonstration that the true interests of men in every State are identical. The use of terms and of ideals, which have reference originally to the relation of man to his neighbor, have an air of unreality and cant when applied, as they are nowadays by some of our publicists, to the relation of these Titanic beings toward one another, whose normal relations of formal courtesy and watchful neutrality represent a great refinement in the conditions of. the struggle for existence, in so much that we scarcely realize at times that the struggle still goes on, or why the nations should not live together according to the maxims of the Sermon on the Mount. Yet to talk of love between nations is merely a capitulation to the newspapers. So long as their part is simply to look after our interests, there may be honorable and prudent dealings in their mutual rivalries, but not love, which begins with renunciation; and were the nations empowered to practice this they might vanish, their task accomplished. A sincere and regretful admission that civilization is but a refinement of the struggle for life, and that the cause of social well-being is distinct from the fact of personal salvation, and even perhaps the private and inevitable foe of the latter, might if it were general be the most effective deterrent from war, inasmuch as mankind would then be less likely to be led by specious phrases into unforeseen calamities.

7. **Laotze.** A Chinese philosopher born about 600 B.C.

GEORGE SANTAYANA

[GEORGE SANTATANA, the poet, critic, and philosopher, was born in Madrid, Spain, in 1863. He came to the United States for his education, and secured his A.B., A.M. and Ph.D. degrees from Harvard University during the years 1886-1889. In 1889 he began to teach philosophy at Harvard, and continued as professor from 1907-1912. Since the war he has resided principally in England. His philosophic series, *The Life of Reason,* followed by his recent work, *Scepticism and Animal Faith,* have given him an unquestioned place among the foremost thinkers of the day. Two books, *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* and *Three Philosophical Poets,* illustrate his gift for literary criticism. This selection on "Emerson" is taken from *Little Essays,* 1920—selected, with the author's collaboration, by Logan Pearsall Smith.]

EMERSON*

IF WE ask ourselves what was Emerson's relation to the scientific and religious movements of his time, and what place he may claim in the history of opinion, we must answer that he belonged very little to the past, very little to the present, and almost wholly to that abstract sphere into which mystical or philosophic aspiration has carried a few men in all ages. The religious tradition in which he was reared was that of Puritanism, but of a Puritanism which, retaining its moral intensity and metaphysical abstraction, had minimized its doctrinal expression and become Unitarian. Emerson was indeed the Psyche[1] of Puritanism, "the latest-born and fairest vision far" of all that "faded hierarchy." A Puritan whose religion was all poetry, a poet whose only pleasure was thought, he showed in his life and personality the meagerness, the constraint, the frigid and conscious consecration which belonged to his clerical ancestors, while his inmost impersonal

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1. Psyche. From the Greek word meaning "spirit."

spirit ranged abroad over the fields of history and nature, gathering what ideas it might, and singing its little snatches of inspired song.

The traditional element was thus rather an external and inessential contribution to Emerson's mind; he had the professional tinge, the decorum, the distinction of an old-fashioned divine; he had also the habit of writing sermons, and he had the national pride and hope of a religious people that felt itself providentially chosen to establish a free and godly commonwealth in a new world. For the rest, he separated himself from the ancient creed of the community with a sense rather of relief than of regret. A literal belief in Christian doctrines repelled him as unspiritual, as manifesting no understanding of the meaning which, as allegories, those doctrines might have to a philosophic and poetical spirit. Although, being a clergyman, he was at first in the habit of referring to the Bible and its lessons as to a supreme authority, he had no instinctive sympathy with the inspiration of either the Old or the New Testament; in Hafiz[2] or Plutarch, in Plato or Shakespeare, he found more congenial stuff.

While he thus preferred to withdraw, without rancor and without contempt, from the ancient fellowship of the church, he assumed an attitude hardly less cool and deprecatory toward the enthusiasms of the new era. The national ideal of democracy and freedom had his entire sympathy; he allowed himself to be drawn into the movement against slavery; he took a curious and smiling interest in the discoveries of natural science and in the material progress of the age. But he could go no further. His contemplative nature, his religious training, his dispersed reading, made him stand aside from the life of the world, even while he studied it with benevolent attention. His heart was fixed on eternal things, and he was in no sense a prophet for his age or country. He belonged by

2. **Halls.** A Persian poet-philosopher of the fourteenth century, a favorite author of Emerson's.

nature to that mystical company of devout souls that recognize no particular home and are dispersed throughout history, although not without intercommunication. He felt his affinity to the Hindoos and the Persians, to the Platonists and the Stoics. Yet he was a shrewd Yankee, by instinct on the winning side; he was a cheery, child-like soul, impervious to the evidence of evil, as of everything that it did not suit his transcendental individuality to appreciate or to notice. More, perhaps, than anybody that has ever lived, he practiced the transcendental method[3] in all its purity. He had no system. He opened his eyes on the world every morning with a fresh sincerity, marking how things seemed to him then, or what they suggested to his spontaneous fancy. This fancy, for being spontaneous, was not always novel; it was guided by the habits and training of his mind, which were those of a preacher. Yet he never insisted on his notions so as to turn them into settled dogmas; he felt in his bones that they were myths. Sometimes, indeed, the bad example of other transcendentalists, less true than he to their method, or the pressing questions of unintelligent people, or the instinct we all have to think our ideas final, led him to the very verge of system-making; but he stopped short. Had he made a system out of his notion of compensation, or the over-soul, or spiritual laws, the result would have been as thin and forced as it is in other transcendental systems. But he coveted truth; and he returned to experience, to history, to poetry, to the natural science of his day, for new starting-points and hints toward fresh transcendental musings.

To covet truth is a very distinguished passion. Every philosopher says he is pursuing the truth, but this is seldom the case. As a philosopher has observed, one reason why philosophers often fail to reach the truth is that often they

3. **transcendental method.** The intuitional, inspirational as opposed to the rational method of arriving at conclusions and beliefs.

do not desire to reach it. Those who are genuinely concerned in discovering what happens to he true are rather the men of science, the naturalists, the historians; and ordinarily they discover it, according to their lights. The truths they find are never complete, and are not always important; but they are integral parts of the truth, facts and circumstances that help to fill in the picture, and that no later interpretation can invalidate or afford to contradict. But professional philosophers are usually only apologists: that is, they are absorbed in defending some vested illusion or some eloquent idea. Like lawyers or detectives, they study the case for which they are retained, to see how much evidence or semblance of evidence they can gather for the defense, and how much prejudice they can raise against the witnesses for the prosecution; for they know they are defending prisoners suspected by the world, and perhaps by their own good sense, of falsification. They do not covet truth, but victory and the dispelling of their own doubts. What they defend is some system, that is, some view about the totality of things, of which men are actually ignorant. No system would have ever been framed if people had been simply interested in knowing what is true, whatever it may be. What produces systems is the interest in maintaining against all comers that some favorite or inherited idea of ours is sufficient and right. A system may contain an account of many things which, in detail, are true enough; but as a system, covering infinite possibilities that neither our experience nor our logic can prejudge, it must be a work of imagination and a piece of human soliloquy. It may be expressive of human experience, it may be poetical; but how should anyone who really coveted truth suppose that it was true?

Emerson had no system; and his coveting truth had another exceptional consequence; he was detached, unworldly, contemplative. When he came out of the conventicle or the reform meeting, or out of the rapturous close atmosphere of the lecture-room, he heard nature whispering to him: "Why

so hot, little sir?" No doubt the spirit or energy of the world is what is acting in us, as the sea is what rises in every little wave; but it passes through us, and cry out as we may, it will move on. Our privilege is to have perceived it as it moves. Our dignity is not in what we do, but in what we understand. The whole world is doing things. We are turning in that vortex; yet within us is silent observation, the speculative eye before which all passes, which bridges the distances and compares the combatants. On this side of his genius Emerson broke away from all conditions of age or country and represented nothing except intelligence itself.

There was another element in Emerson, curiously combined with transcendentalism, namely, his love and respect for nature. Nature, for the transcendentalist, is precious because it is his own work, a mirror in which he looks at himself and says (like a poet relishing his own verses), "What a genius I am! Who would have thought there was such stuff in me?" And the philosophical egotist finds in his doctrine a ready explanation of whatever beauty and commodity nature actually has. No wonder, he says to himself, that nature is sympathetic, since I made it. And such a view, one-sided and even fatuous as it may be, undoubtedly sharpens the vision of a poet and a moralist to all that is inspiriting and symbolic in the natural world. Emerson was particularly ingenious and clear-sighted in feeling the spiritual uses of fellowship with the elements. This something in which all Teutonic poetry is rich and which forms, I think, the most genuine and spontaneous part of modern taste, and especially of American taste. Just as some people are naturally enthralled and refreshed by music, so others are by landscape. Music and landscape make up the spiritual resources of those who cannot or dare not express their unfulfilled ideals in words. Serious poetry, profound religion (Calvinism,[4] for instance), are the

4. Calvinism. The rigid system of theology derived from John Calvin (1509-1564), which underlay Puritan thought and belief.

joys of an unhappiness that confesses itself; but when a genteel tradition forbids people to confess that they are unhappy, serious poetry and profound religion are closed to them by that; and since human life, in its depths, cannot then express itself openly, imagination is driven for comfort into abstract arts, where human circumstances are lost sight of, and human problems dissolve in a purer medium. The pressure of care is thus relieved, without its quietus being found in intelligence. To understand oneself is the classic form of consolation; to elude oneself is the romantic. In the presence of music or landscape human experience eludes itself; and thus romanticism is the bond between transcendental and naturalistic sentiment. The winds and clouds come to minister to the solitary ego.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

[CHRISTOPHER MORLEY, born at Haverford, Pennsylvania, was graduated from Haverford College, in 1910, and for the next three years was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. Subsequently he has held editorial positions on American newspapers and magazines. Since 1922 he has come prominently into view as an accomplished writer of familiar essays and fiction. "The Anatomy of Manhattan" may serve as an answer to those who think, in Dr. Slosson's phrase, that "God made the country, and the Devil made the city," and who believe that books like *Manhattan Transfer* contain all that can be said for modern city life.]

THE ANATOMY OF MANHATTAN*

SHE is the only city whose lovers live always in a mood of wonder and expectancy. There are others where one may sink peacefully, contentedly into the life of the town, affectionate and understanding of its ways. But she, the woman city, who is bold enough to say he understands her? The secret of her thrilling and inscrutable appeal has never been told. How could it be? She has always been so much greater than anyone who has lived with her. (Shall we mention Walt Whitman as the only possible exception? 0. Henry[1] came very near to her, but did he not melodramatize her a little, sometimes cheapen her by his epigrammatic appraisal, fit her too neatly into his plot? Kipling seemed to see her only as the brutal, heedless wanton.) Truly the magic of her spell can never be exacted. She changes too rapidly, day by day.

*From *Pipefulls,* by Christopher Morley. Published and copyrighted by Doubleday, Page and Company.

1. **Whitman . . . O. Henry.** Morley has in mind such poems of Whitman as "Crossing Brooklyn Perry"; such stories of New York as 0. Henry wrote in *The voice of the City.*

Realism, as they call it, can never catch the boundaries of her pearly beauty. She needs a mystic.

No city so challenges and debilitates the imagination. Here, where wonder is a daily companion, desire to tell her our ecstasy becomes at last only a faint pain in the mind. If you would mute a poet's lyre, put him on a ferry from Jersey City some silver April morning; or send him aboard at Liberty Street in an October dusk. Poor soul, his mind will buzz (for years to come) after adequate speech to tell those cliffs and scarps, amethyst and lilac in the mingled light; the clear topaz chequer of window panes; the dull bluish olive of the river, streaked and crinkled with the churn of the screw! Many a poet has come to her in the wooing passion. Give him six months, he is merely her Platonist.[2] He lives content with placid companionship. Where are his adjectives, his verbs? That inward knot of amazement, what speech can unravel it?

Her air, when it is typical, is light, dry, cool. It is pale, it is faintly tinctured with pearl and opal. Heaven is unbelievably remote; the city itself daring so high, heaven lifts in a cautious remove. Light and shadows are fantastically banded, striped, and patchworked among her cavern streets; a cool, deep gloom is cut across with fierce jags and blinks of brightness. She smiles upon man, who takes his ease in her colossal companionship. Her clean, soaring perpendiculars call the eye upward. One wanders as a botanist in a tropical forest. That great smooth groinery of the Pennsylvania Station train shed—is it not the arching fronds of iron palm trees? Oh, to be a botanist of this vivid jungle, spread all about one, anatomist of the ribs and veins that run from the great backbone of Broadway!

To love her, one thinks, is to love one's fellows; each of them having some unknown share in her loveliness. Any one of

2. **Platonist.** Captivated by her beauty, as a disciple of Plato worships the beautiful.

her streets would be the study and delight of a lifetime. To speak at random, we think of that little world of brightness and sound bourgeois cheer that spreads around the homely Verdi[3] statue at Seventy-Third Street. We have a faithful affection for that neighborhood, for reasons of our own. Within a radius, thereabouts, of a quarter-mile each way, we could live a year and learn new matters every day. They call us a hustling folk. Observe the tranquil afternoon light in those brownstone byways. Pass along leisurely Amsterdam Avenue, the region of small and genial shops, Amsterdam Avenue of the many laundries. See the children trooping upstairs to their own room at the Saint Agnes branch of the Public Library. See the taxi-drivers, sitting in their cars alongside the Verdi grass plot (a rural breath of new-mown turf sweetening the crisp warm air), and smoking pipes. Every one of them is as fascinating to us as a detective story. What a hand they have had in ten thousand romances. At this very moment, what quaint and many-stranded destinies may hail them and drive off? But there they sit, placid enough, with a pipe and the afternoon paper. The light, fluttering dresses of enigmatic fair ones pass gayly on the pavement. Traffic flows, divides, and flows on, a sparkling river. Here is that mystery, a human being, buying a cigar. Here is another mystery asking for a glass of frosted chocolate. Why is it that we cannot accost that tempting riddle and ask him to give us an accurate precis of his life to date? And that red-haired burly sage, he who used to bake the bran muffins in the little lunchroom nearby, and who lent us his Robby Burns one night—what has become of him?

So she teases us, so she allures. Sometimes, on the L, as one passes along that winding channel where the walls and windows come so close, there is a felicitous sense of being im-

2h Verdi. Giuseppe Verdi (1814-1901), the distinguished composer of Italian opera.

mersed, surrounded, drowned in a great, generous ocean of humanity. It is a fine feeling. All life presses around one, the throb and the problem are close, are close. Who could be weary, who could be at odds with life, in such an embrace of destiny? The great tall sides of the buildings fly open, the human hive is there, beautiful and arduous beyond belief. Here is our worship and here our lasting joy, here is our immortality of encouragement. Yes, perhaps 0. Henry did say the secret after all: "He saw no longer a rabble, but his brothers seeking the ideal."

EDWIN E. SLOSSON

[DR. EDWIN E. SLOSSON was born at Albany, Kansas, in 1865, and educated at the State University. Later he was Professor of Chemistry at the University of Wyoming. From 1903 to 1920 he was literary editor of *The Independent.* He is at present director of Science Service, Washington, D. C, an organization of scientists and learned societies formed for the purpose of spreading scientific knowledge. Among his books devoted to this end are *Creative Chemistry, Chats on Science,* and *Keeping up with Science.* By his clear, vigorous, and witty style, Dr. Slosson enables the lay reader to comprehend and enjoy the fruits of abstruse and technical research in the field of science.]

THE CHANGING MIND OF MAN*

WHEN this weary old World got to the end of Chapter XIX of his history he turned over the page with a yawn and the wish that he would find Chapter XX more exciting than the *fin de siecle*[1] stuff he had been reading. He found it so.

The real dividing line between the two eras is not the century mark, but August 1,1914. If any book written after that date is the same as though it had been written before we may safely say that it has little relation to actual life. It is not merely in trivial externalities such as the use of Petrograd or Leningrad instead of St. Petersburg but an indefinable though easily detectable alteration of spirit. In more than one novel appearing shortly after 1914 it was possible to tell just how far the author had got when he opened the morning paper and saw that war was declared. We of the present generation used to be amused at our parents because they dated every

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1. *ton* de sieecle. "End of the age," an expression denoting: decadence and boredom.

event in their lives as "before the war" or "after." But we have fallen into the same habit.

What an effect the Civil War had upon American literature is more readily realized by an outsider than by one of us. It is not merely that the struggle against slavery brought out the best of our poetry and prose, but that the great conflict is still furnishing our writers with motives and plots. A few years before the War when I was on a Pacific steamer, I got to talking with a young New Zealander about American literature. "I have stopped reading American novels," he said. "They are all the same and I know the formula. Virginia mansion—southern girl—northern lover—southern rival—Fort Sumter fired upon—war—wounded—she saves him—he saves her—peace and wedding bells."

Of course I denied the slander on American literature, but I could not help thinking of it the other night when I dropped into a motion picture show and found them reeling off this same old plot. Now if sixty years after the Civil War is over its incidents are still the staple of our stories, we may imagine how long literature will be concerned with the Great War.

There was at first manifest as a reaction from the long strain upon our sympathies a disposition to ignore not only the War but whatever else is repugnant in life. This feeling gave rise to an ostrich-literature of astonishing extent and variety. The movement in its best forms may be what William James called it, "the religion of healthy-mindedness"; in its worst forms it is hardly more than a callous hedonism.[2] A single Mark Tapley[3] is a blessing to the community, but when everybody tries to look on the bright side of things all at once, there is apt to be a jam, and toes are likely to get stepped on. Someone has defined a pessimist as "one who has been living in the society of optimists." It was natural that an overdose

2. **hedonism.** Living for immediate pleasure to the exclusion of all other values.

3. **Mark Tapley.** The young man in Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewitj* whose ambition in life was "to come out jolly."

of the gladiola books should plunge us later into Schopenhauerean[4] gloom. If we do too much whistling to keep our courage up we are likely to get down in the mouth.

Now we are in the midst of a reaction from the war enthusiasm. Ex-service men write novels and plays exposing the seamy side of life in the trenches. Pessimism is a dominant note among conquerors and conquered, alike victims of the great catastrophe.

Anatole France[5] said: "Europe is ill, dying. It is Europe that is now the sick man of the world. And peace has not brought its balm."

In France Professor Demangeon of the Sorbonne writes of "Le Declin de l'Europe," published in the United States under the title of "America and the Race for World Dominion." He sees the center of gravity of international politics removed from Europe and the hegemony of the world passing into the hands of Asiatic and American peoples. In England Webb's ***Collapse of Capitalism,*** **and Dean Inge's** ***England,*** **in our own country Stoddard's** ***'Revolt Against Civilization*** **must be regarded as symptomatic though they may be considered unsound.[6] Professor Santayana in his** ***Character and Opinion in the United States*** **suggests that: "Civilization is perhaps approaching one of those long winters that overtake it from time to time. A flood of barbarism from below may soon level all the fair works of our Christian ancestors, as another flood two thousand years ago leveled those of the ancients."**

In Germany Oswald Spengler has produced a book which in scope of scholarship and eloquence of style reminds one of Schopenhauer, Hegel,[7] and Hartmann.[8] It is ***Der Untergang***

4. **Schopenhaaerenn.** The pessimism of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), a German philosopher.
5. **Anatole Prance.** A celebrated French writer (1844-1926).
6. **unsound.** Cf. also Henry Adams's *The Degradation of the Democratic Dogma.*
7. **Hegel.** Georg Wilhelm Hegel (1770-1831), a German philosophical opponent of Schopenhauer.
8. **Hartmann.** Karl Robert Hartmann (1842-1906), whose *The Philosophy of the Unconscious* is **a** classic reared upon the foundations of Schopenhauer.

des Abendlandes, "The Downfall of Western Europe"; a comparative morphology of world history, in two large volumes. That it struck the tone of the times is shown by the fact that it figured in the list of best sellers in Germany and America and has already engendered a young library of Spenglerian philosophy. Spengler claims to have discovered the universal formula for the development and decline of political institutions, art, science, religion, and philosophy. He shows the courage of his convictions in daring to project his curve into the future and lay out a course of events. According to Spengler's theory Europe passed from the stage of Culture to that of Civilization in 1800 and has before it the stage of Caesarism (2000 to 2200) manifested by increasing naturalism in political forms; decomposition of folk organisms into amorphous masses of men; their reabsorption in an empire gradually assuming the character of primitive despotism. The final state (after 2200) is "Egyptianism, Mandarinism, Byzantinism";[9] torpidity and dissolution of the imperial mechanism; the booty of younger peoples or foreign robbers; slow relapse into the state of early man.

Whether or not we believe with Spengler that political life and philosophic thought move in cycles, it is evident that there is in history an alternation of periods of integration and disintegration, of unification and dissolution, of synthesis and analysis.

The political and intellectual worlds are, like the physical world, balanced between centrifugal and centripetal forces and they sway alternately to either side. The nineteenth century was an epoch of aggregation, of the drawing together of nations into empires and of like-minded groups of different nationalities into world-wide organizations. In the twentieth century the opposite tendency obviously prevails. **The** great **empires are** split up into little, isolated, jealous, and antago-

9. Eflryptlanism, etc. Torpid and oppressive regimes in Egypt, China, and the Eastern Roman Empire.

nistic nationalities. Probably none of us—perhaps no future generation—will live to see as much international intercourse and individual freedom of movement as we saw in 1914. While engineering is reducing the national barriers that have held peoples apart, while railroads and radios are short-circuiting time and space and, as we say, "making the world smaller," the artificial barriers of national boundaries, tariff walls, divergent speech, and hostile attitude are being erected or resurrected.

It is an era of secession, of separation, when the desire for self-determination may overcome the instinct for self-preservation and the lure of self-interest. Languages are being resolved into their constituent dialects and obsolescent tongues revived to serve as a basis for further subdivision. The Ukrainian, Irish, Finnish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Slovak, and Hebrew languages are ardently cultivated, but the advocates of Esperanto and Ido[10] are now rarely heard. Race prejudices are encouraged and systematically cultivated. Sectarian distinctions are being emphasized.

The partition of the common world is naturally followed by the partition of the common mind. The Balkanization[11] of Europe results necessarily in the Balkanization of the mentality. The new map of Europe looks like a patch-work crazy-quilt, and doubtless our brains seen under the proper rays would look the same. We are living in an era of speeding up and splitting up. The" general trend of the times is toward particuTarization in politics, science, art;"and philosophy. '

In literature we have shorter stories and shorter paragraphs, shorter sentences and shorter words. A volume of fiction is usually made up of a chain of short stories. We might call it the catenary type of fiction as distinguished from the reticulate form of the last century.

10. Esperanto and Ido. Two artificial international languages.
11. **Balkanization.** Cutting up into small, competitive, and quarrelsome **states.**

In painting we see the stipple, the pointillist,[12] the separately discernible brush-strokes. In a futuristic[18] portrait arms, legs, ears, and eyes are scattered over the canvas as though it were a battlefield.

In the most popular form of art today, the motion picture, each scene lasts but a thirtieth of a second, and an act of over thirty-five seconds is considered long and tedious. In the movie drama only fifteen minutes may elapse between the introduction of the man and the maid to one another at the beginning and the close-up of the close-up of the couple at the close,

In education specialization has been carried to the extreme, and the field of scholarship is parceled out in private claims like the map of an oil field in a boom.

Nature study in its modern form is characterized by the recognition of individuality in animals and plants. The old idea of evolution was a long, slow accumulation of minute differences, no sudden breaks. The new theory is evolution by jerks. Darwin's favorite was *Natura non feoit salt urn,* "Nature never makes a jump." The Mendelist[14] keeps nature on the jump all the time.

In physics we have the jerk theory of energy taking the place of the old continuum. The ether is abrogated by edict of Einstein.[15] He denies the possibility of simultaneity and has given us the conception of local time, as well as space. The ultimate indivisible unit of matter that the Greek named

12. **stipple, pointillist.** The former, a painting by repeated small touches; the latter, a producer of light effects by dots of unmixed pigments of various colors which are blended by the eye.

13. **futuristic.** The effort to portray movement or continuous impressions in painting.

14. **Mendelist.** From G. J. Mendel (1S22-1884), the Austrian botanist, who demonstrated that unit characters in hybridization segregate independently, and that one of the contrasting characters is lost in the first generation of offspring, but reappears in one of three individuals of the second generation.

15. **Einstein.** The German scientist who is the center of present controversy in physics.

the "atom" proves to be divisible. It should henceforth be deprived of its alpha privative and be called the "torn." The elusive electrons, though thousands of times smaller than the atom and moving with almost the speed of light, can be caught and counted as individuals.

In philosophy we may trace the same trend in the dominance of pluralism over monism and of pragmatism over universalism.[18]

It would be highly improbable that all these tendencies should be disconnected. We must assume that they are all characteristic of the man's mental mood in the present time, though what may be their common cause we may be able to discover.

I must not be understood as meaning that I object to all these movements. That would be as erroneous as it would be futile. Some of them I like and some I do not like, but that makes no difference to anybody but myself. The same tendency that is an advance in science and philosophy may be a retrogression in art or literature.

What makes our age different from all the preceding and invalidates the deductions from history is the possession of inanimate power. Man is drawing upon the accumulated capital of the millions of years prior to his advent. In his use of coal and oil he is lighting his houses and running his machines with the sunshine of the Carboniferous Era. Science has given each of us, every man, woman, and child in America, if the apportionment were equal, a train of twenty slaves to wait upon him night and day.

What this acquisition of inanimate energy might mean for the advancement of civilization we can hardly conceive, for of late it has been largely used for the destruction of civilization.

We have now come to realize that what is done by an engine

16. pluralism, praprmatism. Philosophies propounding: the belief that "things are many"; "monism," "universalism," that "things are one."

depends as much on the character of the engineer as on the power of the machine. Pur horse-power per capita has risen to an unprecedented freight. But has our mind-power per capita increased with it in proportion? If not, this new-found force may prove dangerous to us. The question on which the future depends is whether men can muster up among them enough mentality and morality to manage the stupendous powers which applied science has recently placed in their hands. Once upon a time, long before the oldest of us was born, before any man was born for that matter—I refer to the Jurassic Era[17]—the ruling race was composed of creatures much larger and more powerful than we are. There were giants on the earth in those days, gigantic saurians which when they stood up on their hind legs would tower up four times as tall as a man. But their cranial cavity was smaller than ours. The Jurassic saurians had grown too big for their brains; so they perished.

Now the addition of machine power to the natural strength of man is equivalent to adding stronger arms and longer legs, more skillful hands and sharper senses. It increases his physical capacity but does not directly enlarge his mental ability. It endows him with a giant's strength but does not teach him how to use it.

Among the horrid fancies that haunted the head of Samuel Butler of Erewhon[18] was a nightmare of a coming age when the machines that man has made for his service should rise in Spartacan revolt[19] and enslave man. This skit of Butler's on "The Mechanical Creation" is brought to mind by recent events.

The last few years have made it manifest that in our civil-

17. Jurassic Era. So named from the Jura mountains, but referring to the geological age abounding in reptiles, dinosaurs, and saurians.

18. Erewhon. The fantastic vision of the nineteenth century writer, Samuel Butler, in the novel of that name.

19. Spartacan revolt. The revolt of the gladiators led by Spartacus in 73-71 B.C.

ization the mechanical forces have got ahead of the moral forces. Man is mounted on a bigger horse than he can ride. Making war was an efficient process; making peace is—not. The chemist did his bit with amazing, even alarming, proficiency. The diplomat fell down on his job. The physical sciences have evidently been developed so far beyond the political science as to constitute a menace to civilization. The modern man, like the Arabian fisherman, has liberated from the bottle genii that he does not know how to control.

The late War revealed to the horror of the world the possibilities for destruction that science has placed in the hands of mortal man. Unless he has undergone a moral reformation, of which there is no apparent sign, he is not likely to be deterred from using them by a paper prohibition. The Prince of the Power of the Air will be the ruling spirit in the next war—if there is a next war. It is now possible to send an airplane, with or without a pilot, by day or night, over the enemy's country to sprinkle the ground with a liquid so deadly that a whiff inhaled or a few drops touching the skin will cause death. There is no need for fine sighting and mathematical calculations such as the artillery man requires; no need to know where the enemy is. The airships of self-propelled projectiles will simply move over the land, as a farmer's potato-bug sprinkler goes over a field, and a certain strip of territory, say a mile wide and a hundred miles long, will be instantaneously depopulated and will remain uninhabitable for days to come. In the next war there will be no frontiers, no entrenched line, no exempt cities, no distinction between combatant and non-combatant. Fortifications will be futile, for the wall that will withstand a forty-two centimeter projectile is easily penetrable to a molecule of poison gas. On sea the revolution will be quite as complete. There will be no need to sink ships in the next war, for the reason that it is not worth while shooting a riderless cavalry horse.

Can we say that man has reached a moral and mental matur-

ity so that he can be safely entrusted with such dangerous weapons? We cannot take them from him as we can take a revolver from a child. But it is clear that unless man can learn how to make proper use of his new-found knowledge he is likely to destroy himself. Science has endowed man with the power of a superman, but his mind remains human, all too human. He is like a pauper come into a fortune, a laborer who has been put into the position of boss of the shop, a private promoted to command the regiment, a slave made the master of slaves. Man has had no training for such responsibilities as have now been thrust upon him. This new command of time and space, this mastery of unknown forces, this apparition of new perils, this entrance into untried fields, all these are too much for man of today. He secretly shrinks and openly blusters. He alternately cowers and brags. He lacks confidence in himself and therefore he suspects others. He is afraid of the dark. He is afraid of his shadow, for that is dark. He shudders with ancient fears. The modern man is suffering from shell shock. He has all the various symptoms. Those who stayed at home are often worse than those that went over there. The victorious nations show the same symptoms as the defeated.

The causeless suspicions, the sudden hatreds, the erratic actions, the intolerance of opposing opinion, the unwillingness to face facts, the return to primitive modes of thought, the alternations of despair and dissipation, the substitution of emotionalism for rationality, the revival of superstition—such are the stigmata of hysteria and such are the characteristics of our time.

In mental diseases where the conscious will relaxes and the more recent centers of thought decay, the patient relapses into a sort of second childhood, using baby-talk, drawing the crude pictures that he made when first he took pencil in hand and reverting consciously to the unconscious voices of infancy. We see the same symptoms in society today.

An uprush of infantilism from the unconscious mind of the human race is dragging the modern world back to. the superstitions, obscurantism, formalism, gargoylism, and parochialism of the Dark Ages.

Our most advanced artists take as their teachers the most backward savages surviving on the earth. Formerly ambitious young painters went to Greece or Rome to study. Now they journey to Tahiti or the Congo. If a modernist art gallery should be preserved for several thousand years, the archeologist of that day studying the style would unhesitatingly assign it to a period prior to, and more primitive than, the Upper Palaeolithic when the Cro-Magnon[20] man depicted the mammoth and the reindeer on the walls of the caves of Altamira, 25,000 years ago.

Modern literature, especially poetry, shows marked reversion to infantile types, in the breaking up of the logical sentence into disconnected fragments, in the appearance of nouns without verbs and adjectives without nouns, in the shortened paragraphs, in the ejaculatory style, in the over-ruling of sense by sound, in the repetitions almost reaching the point of echolalia.[21]

In music the same reversion to the childhood of the race is apparent. The tom-tom sets the pace for modern progress, and the primitive piper calls the tune to which we dance.

The movement toward medievalism in art, religion, industrial organization, and social forms is gaining strength tinder the leadership of such brilliant writers as Gilbert K. Chesterton. It seems as if man, with his eyes half opened, resents the light. "Pull down the curtain," he shouts *to* the scientist, "or I'll pitch you out of the window." Then he rolls over and pulls the cover over his head to get another nice long sleep such as he had from A.D. 300 to A.D. 1200.

20. **Cro-Masmon.** Referring to the early peoples described by H. F. Osborne in *Men of the Old Stone Age.*

21. **echolalia.** Meaningless repetition of words.

The world, like a child at Christmas, is willing to receive thematerial gifts of science but refuses itsmorallessons. The world will accept from the hands of science, railroads and radios, soft raiment and foreign foods, airplanes and submarines, but turns a deaf ear when science would talk of peace, efficiency, economy, foresight, and the frank facing of facts.

It was commonly supposed that the fights for evolution and the higher criticism of the Bible which has absorbed so large a part of the intellectual activity of the nineteenth century had been virtually won by the beginning of the twentieth, but we see now a strong movement against both.

We became accustomed to the censorship and the mass suppression of unpopular opinions during the war, and the disposition to use such legal and illegal means for the repression of undesirable views has been growing ever since. The most remarkable feature of the situation is that there is almost universal acquiescence in the restriction of the rights of free speech and propaganda for which our ancestors fought and suffered martyrdom.

Along with the suspicion of science and scholarship comes a distrust and dislike of modern civilization, which is built on a scientific foundation. People are looking back with longing eyes to a presumed primitive paradisial period, or forward to a rural Utopia, to an Edenic or Arcadian life. Some would have us take to the woods; some to the South Seas. "Back to Nature" is the theme of poets, romancers, and even preachers. In India Mahatma Ghandi[22] heads a powerful movement for the elimination of machine power and its products. In Germany the multiform *Wandervogef** movement shows a tendency to revert to prehistoric sun-worship and to discard the costumes and customs of civilized life.

The revival of the worship of the heathen earth-goddess,

22. **Mahatma Ghandi.** The redoubtable Indian leader and preacher of non-resistance, and boycott.

23. **Wandervovel.** Wandering-bird.

Magna Mater,[24] began in an inoffensive fashion in the literature of the latter part of the eighteenth century and has since infected all classes and countries. It is now securely enthroned in the two strongholds that were erected against it, church and school. The neo-pagan poet Swinburne, who wrote

> Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean;
> The world has grown gray from thy breath,[25]

was premature in his despair. He might better have written

> Thou hast conquered, O rosy Rousseau;
> The world has grown gay from thy breath.

Those who say "God made the country but the devil made the city" are reading history backward. The word "pagan" means literally "countryman" *(paganus).* "Civilization" is by self-definition a product of the city dweller *(civis).* Our modern nature-lovers are trying to rob the Creator of credit for the highest products of creative activity, those manifested by man. They would make a scapegoat of God and drive him out of the town into the desert. But God is not in the thunder or whirlwind, but in the voice, the artificial creation of man. It is only by overcoming nature that man can rise.

The cult of naturalism is now dominant everywhere. The call of the wild is drowning out the appeal of civilization. "Back to barbarism!" is the slogan of the hour. Sink into savagery. Praise the country and denounce the city. Admire cliffs but make fun of skyscrapers. Extol forests and despise laboratories. Exalt the physical and ignore the intellectual. Spend $500,000 on a new gymnasium and let the old library go to ruin. Abolish compulsory Latin and establish compulsory swimming. Patronize football and neglect debating. Up with the soldier and down with the savant. Promote

24. *Magna* **Mater.** The worship of nature as the Great Mother, exemplified by romanticists like Rousseau, Victor Hugo, and Swinburne. See Swinburne's poem "Hertha."

25. Lines from "The Hymn to Proserpine."

pugilism and suppress pacifism. Jazz your music and cube your painting. Roughcast your walls, corrode your bricks, deckle your book-edges, wormhole your furniture, coarsen your fabrics, and deform your pottery. Condemn everything new and worship everything old. Regenerate obsolescent languages, restore antiquated spelling, adopt medieval costumes, revive ancient rituals, inflame traditional animosities, resurrect forgotten realms, re-erect overthrown barriers. Cultivate the primitive virtues of personal bravery and clan loyalty. Reprove and repress the Christian virtues of kindliness and universal sympathy.

Some of the signs of the times I have enumerated are good things in themselves, some are trifles of no consequence, but they all hang together and a floating straw shows the current of a river as well as a log. A change in taste is often .the precursor of a shift of the trend of human affairs. The dominant tendency of the times is undoubtedly, downward and backward, and the advance of science has not yet availed to check it.

It is a reactionary spirit, antagonistic to progress and destructive to civilization. Science and Christianity are at one in abhorring the natural man and calling upon the civilized man to fight and subdue him. The conquest of nature, not the imitation of nature, is the whole duty of man.

We should "move upward, working out the brute, and let the ape and tiger die."[26] Our sins are mostly survivals. Like the vermiform appendix they are vestigial organs, needing excision. It is those who believe in perpetuating the pugnacious propensities of the lower animals and man in his lower stages who are responsible for these years of war and the consequent anarchy. Modern literature is tainted throughout by that most pestilential heresy, zoolatry.[27] From the child's

26. From the 118th lyric of Tennyson's "In Memoriam."
27. **zottlatry.** Love and imitation of the antics of animals in **a** zoo.

primer to the sociological treatise, animals and insects **are** held up for our admiration and imitation.

The back-to-Nature movement is more psychological than actual. Hundreds of books appear annually in favor of country life, and the only volume in opposition is the decennial census report. For in spite of the eloquent advocates of rurality the cities continue to grow. Thousands of men are forced to labor in dark coal mines in order that they may read the praises of God's own sunshine. Thousands of editors, artists, and nature-writers live in the world's largest city all the year round in order that they may depict its horrors and hardships and urge others to flee to the freedom of the country.

I have often seen and admired the editor of some metropolitan garden magazine, sticking bravely at his desk in the hottest days of summer and pursuing his studies late at night in the roof garden or the winter garden. Others may take his advice and take to the woods but he, like Casabianca,[28] still stands upon the burning deck of the mammoth metropolis. Such heroism inspires like unselfishness. The youths and maidens of our villages and farms, reading in these journals how much more happily situated they are, near to nature's heart, are seized with compassion for the unfortunate urbanite and rush into the largest city within reach in order to leave more room in the country for the over-crowded city dwellers.

I have referred to the reversion of primitive modes of thought and expression, the blind worship of Nature, meaning by that the sub-human or sub-civilized.

Along with the increasing admiration for the natural comes an increasing belief in the supernatural. The modern believer is disposed to repudiate the Saints and prophets and to pin his faith on Sir Oliver Lodge and Eusapia Palladino.[29] Amu-

28. Casablanca. The hero of the poem by Mrs. Hemans beginning "The boy stood on the burning deck."

29. Sir Oliver Lodge and Ensapia Palladino. The former, the eminent physicist and spiritualist; the latter, the famous medium, whose trickery was finally exposed.

lets are again in fashion. The ouija board rivals the typewriter in the production of literature. Astrology has more adherents than lived in ancient Egypt and Babylon. Palmistry is more studied than botany. Rosicrucianism[30] has had a renaissance. The old Roman method of divination has been revived and the apparatus consisting of a ball on the end of a thread is being sold for $2.00 to determine the sex of a chicken from the *egg.* The magic wand, the divining rod, is used now to find water and gold and lost articles. A mint of money has been made out of those who were willing to believe that the disease, sex, religion, and race of a distant patient could be determined from the electronic oscillations of a drop of ink or blood. Rain-making, one of the earliest of the magic arts, is today a profitable profession. Speaking with tongues, which Paul tried to eradicate from the church of Corinth, is a growing practice in certain of our sects. As David Starr Jordan says: "War lifted the lid on society, and secret actions and beliefs held in the dark now dance openly on every green."

Witchcraft has appeared again in our courts. In a recent French trial evidence was brought forward in court to prove that the accused had killed people by sticking pins into their wax figures. Satan-worship has become a cult, and the Black Mass is celebrated in Paris. That Lord Carnarvon[31] was the victim of Tut-Ankh-Amen's curse is commonly believed. Bleeding images appear in Ireland and weeping virgins in France. Necromancy, or communion with the spirits of the dead, is the fashionable faith of the hour. Sir Conan Doyle, doctor and detective, published photographs of fairies. The Great War was most prolific in miracles. Volumes have been written on the visions and legends of this War. St. George and St. Jeanne d'Are made up their ancient quarrel and fought on

30. **Rosicrucianism.** The philosophy of the "Brothers of the Rosy Cross," a secret, mystical order believed to have originated in the seventeenth century.

31. **Lord Carnarvon.** The discoverer of an ancient Egyptian tomb at Luxor. He died suddenly of pneumonia and erysipelas not many weeks after his discovery.

the same side, as numerous witnesses attest. The angels of Mons[32] formed the theme of many a sermon and learned article, and the fact that the vision was traced back to a short story by Arthur Machen in a London daily did not shake faith in it. The 80,000 Russian soldiers who were transported from Archangel to Scotland and down through England to France were seen by many people en route. One lady who reported seeing them in a railway station said she knew they were Russians because "they wore their cossacks." It seems this legend originated in the fact that the supply of Russian eggs was cut off when Petrograd was blockaded, and so the exporter telegraphed to the London house "80,000 Russians shipped via Archangel."

Against witchcraft and necromancy State and Church fought for hundreds of years by all the means in their power. It must not be assumed that the warfare against witches was altogether irrational and unjustified. There was really never any such thing as witchcraft, but there have always been witches. Some of them were harmless; some of them were harmful. A malignant old woman who was believed and believed herself to have the power to inflict injury on her neighbors by her curses and conjurations was undeniably a nuisance to the community. There were two ways the community might have adopted to get rid of the nuisance; one was to punish witches, and the other was not to believe in them. The latter course was impracticable in most communities until recent times; so the former was generally adopted. The same penalty was imposed for catching a hare or cutting down a tree; that is to say, death. But killing off witches did not eliminate the belief in witchcraft. On the contrary it gave it judicial confirmation. So the laws against witchcraft have been abrogated or allowed to fall into innocuous desuetude.

The last prosecution under the witchcraft law in England

32. angrels of Mons. A reference to the story that a squadron of angels interposed themselves between the Allies and the Germans at the battle of Mons.

took place in 1904, when Sir Alfred Harmsworth, editor of the *Daily Mail,* instituted proceedings against Professor and Madame Keiro, palmists and crystal gazers. The jury found them guilty of both fortune-telling and of obtaining money under false pretenses, but the judge only took into consideration the latter count and suspended sentence at that. Instead of burning witches we advertise them. The general atmosphere is becoming so foggy with superstition that we may expect a revival of witchcraft mania and persecution to break out at any time even in our own enlightened land. The death of Mr. Bryan at the close of his fight against evolution at Dayton, Tennessee, is ascribed by many of his adherents to "mental assassination" by his opponents all over the country.[83]

One of the changes that we must frankly face is the rebellion against the code of morals on which our civilization is based. Formerly those who broke with the Church were careful to declare that they acted in the interests of a purer religion and a higher morality. Those who denied the divinity of Christ were loud in their profession of admiration for the teachings of Jesus. Now, however, we must recognize that a large and increasing class of people in every country not only violate the standards of Christian ethics, but explicitly repudiate them. Violence is advocated as a necessity of the class struggle and even as a desirable thing in itself. Murder is taught as a fine art; the opium dream of De Quincey has become a re'Iity. The destruction of property, the smashing of machines, the damaging of products, the ruination of business, are urged as a sacred duty. Handbooks on the theory and practice of sabotage[34] are published. Work is neglected,

33. On the very day that I am revising" this essay for publication in *Essays—English and American* an unknown woman, well dressed and educated, called at my home to complain that she was bewitched and begging to know how she could be relieved of the torment inflicted upon her by the malign influences of her enemies. I hasten to add for the benefit of others who may be suffering from the same complaint that I could not afford her any relief. E. E. S.

34. sabotasre. Willful destruction of machinery or other industrial property.

not. merely from natural laziness, but from conscientious causes. The violation of contract, the breaking of promises, is regarded as the highest ethics. Hatred is diligently cultivated. Licentiousness is openly advocated. Altruism is denied as undesirable or impossible. Sympathy is denounced as a symptom of weakness and degeneracy. Charity is considered as a double injury; it curses him that gives and him that takes. Thrift and industry are classed as vices instead of virtues. Cursing is commended; drunkenness is defended; family quarrels are encouraged; and wife-beating is advocated by popular writers of the day.

Such sentiments in one form or another crop up in current literature so frequently and in such varied forms that it is vain to try to suppress them by any sort of censorship. If it were possible to crush out the Bolsheviki in Russia, the syndicalists of France, the anarchists of Italy, the Nietzscheans of Germany, and the I. W. W. of America, there would still persist this spirit of denial of the established principles of ethics. It is not merely anti-Christian; it is clearly anti-moral, for it is a challenge to all that has been regarded as the code of morality throughout the recorded history of the human race. The code of Hammurabi[35] of Babylon, the maxims of Ptah-Hotep[86] of Egypt, and the laws of Moses show that essentially the same fundamental principles of right and justice were held then as now. In the seven thousand years since, few persons have questioned them though many have disregarded them. The new thing is that now we hear them openly and emphatically denied and denounced. We can only hope that the advocates of the new immorality may be as unsuccessful as the preachers of the old morality in persuading the people to follow their injunctions.

35. Hammurabi. The codifler of the Babylonian laws, 2124-2081 B.C.

36. **Ptah-Hotep.** The codifler of the Egyptian laws.

ROBERT C. BENCHLEY

[ROBERT C. BENCHLEY was born at Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1889. Since his graduation from Harvard in 1912, he has been associated with several magazines as contributor and editor. More recently he has been dramatic critic for *Life*. Two of his collections of humorous essays are *Of All Things,* 1921, and *Love Conquers All,* 1922.]

A LITTLE DEBIT IN YOUR TONNEAU*

MOTORISTS, as a class, are not averse to public discussion of their troubles. In fact, one often wonders how some of them ever get time to operate their cars, so tied up do they seem to be with these little experience-meetings, at which one man tells, with appropriate gestures, how he ran out of gas between Springfield and Worcester, while another gives a perfect bit of character acting to show just how the policeman on the outskirts of Trenton behaved.

But there seems to be one phase of the motorist's trials which he never bares to the public. He will confide to you just how bad the gasoline was that he bought at the country garage; he will make it an open secret that he had four blowouts on the way home from the country-club; but of one of his most poignant sorrows he never speaks. I refer to the guests who snuggle in his tonneau.

Probably more irritations have arisen from the tonneau than from the tires, day in and day out, and yet you never hear a man say, "Well, I certainly had an unholy crew of camp-followers out with me today—friends of my wife." Say what

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you will, there is an innate delicacy in the average motorist, or such repression could not be.

Consider the types of tonneau guests. They are as generic and fundamental as the spectrum, and you will find them in Maine and New Mexico at the same time.

There is the first, or major, classification, which may be designated as the Financially Paralyzed. Persons in this class, on stepping into your machine, automatically transfer all their money troubles to you. You become, for the duration of the ride, whether it be to the next corner or to Palm Beach, their financial guardian, and any little purchases which are incidental to the trip (such as three meals a day) belong to your "list of running expenses." There seems to be something about the motion of the automobile that inhibits their ability to reach for their purses, and they become, if you want to be poetical about it, like clay in the hands of the potter. Whither thou goest they will go; thy check-book is their check-book. It is just like the one great, big, jolly family—of which you are the father and backer.

Such people always make a great to-do about starting off on a trip. You call for them and they appear at the window and wave, to signify that they see you, and go through motions to show that just as soon as Clara has put on her leggings they will be down. Soon they appear, swathed in a tremendous quantity of motor wraps and veils (you can usually tell the guests in a car by the number of head-veils they wear), and get halfway down the walk, when Clara remembers her raincoat and has to swish back upstairs, veils and all. Out again, and just as they get wedged into the tonneau, the elderly guest wonders if there is time for someone to run in again and tell Helma that if the Salvation Army man comes for the old magazines she is to tell him to come again tomorrow. By the time this message is relayed to Helma Garcia[1] one solid half-

1. Garcia. A reference to the "Message to Garcia," by Elbert Hubbard.

hour has been dissipated from the cream of the morning. This does not prevent the guests from remarking, as the motor starts, that it certainly is a heavenly day and that it couldn't have been better if it had been ordered. Knowing the type, you can say to yourself that if the day *had* been ordered you know who would have had to give the order and pay the check.

From that time on, you are the moneyed interest behind the venture. Meals at road-houses, toll charges, evening papers, hot chocolates at the country drug store, hair net for Clara, and, of course, a liberal injection of gasoline on the way home, all of these items and about fourteen others come in your bailiwick. The guests have been asked out for a ride, and "findings is keepings." If you have money enough to run a car, you probably have money enough to support them for a day or so. That's only fair, isn't it?

Under a subhead (a), in this same category, come the guests who are stricken with *rigor mortis* when there are any repairs to be made about the machine. Male offenders in this line are, of course, the only ones that can be dealt with here; putting on a tire is no job for women and children. But the man who is the life of the party in the tonneau throughout the trip, who thinks nothing of climbing all over the back of the car in imitation of a Roman charioteer, will suddenly become an advocate of the basic eight-hour working day which began just eight hours before, whenever there is a man's work to be done on one of the tires. He will watch you while you work, and always has a good word to say or a quip to snap at you to keep you cheered up, but when it comes to taking off his coat and lending a hand at the jack he is an Oriental incense-holder on the guest-room mantel. He admits, in no uncertain tones, that he is a perfect dub when it comes to handling machinery and that he is more apt to be in the way at a time like this than not. And maybe he is right, after all.

We next come to the class of tonneau-freight who are great

believers in what Professor Muensterberg called "Auto-Suggestion." These people, although not seated in the driver's seat, have their own ideas on driving and spare no pains to put their theories in the form of suggestion. In justice to the Great Army of the Unemployed known as "guests" it must be admitted that a large percentage of these suggestions emanate from some member of the owner's family and not from outsiders. It is very often Mrs. Wife who is off-side in this play, but as she is usually in the tonneau, she comes under the same classification.

There are various ways of framing suggestions to the driver from the back seat. They are all equally annoying. Among the best are:

"For heaven's sake, George, turn in a little. There is a car behind that wants to pass us."

"Look out where you're going, Stan."

"Henry, if you don't slow down I'm going to get out and take the train back home."

If this is accompanied by a clutching gesture at the driver's arm it is sure to throw him into a good humor for the rest of the trip, so that a good time will be had by all present.

Although guests are not so prone to make suggestions on the running of the car as are those who, through the safety of family connection, may do so without fear of bodily assault from the driver, nevertheless, a guest may, according to the code, lean over the back of the seat and slip little hints as to the route. Especially if one of them be entrusted with a Blue Book does this form of auto-suggestion.become chronic.

"It says here that we should have taken that road to the right back there by the Soldiers' Monument," informs the reader over your shoulder. Or—

"Somehow this doesn't seem like the right road. Personally, I think that we ought to turn around and go back to the cross-roads."

If it is Mrs. Wife in the tonneau who has her own ideas on

the route, you might as well give in at her first suggestion, for the risk that she is right is too great to run. If she says that she would advise taking the lane that runs around behind that school-house, take it. Then, if it turns out to be a blind alley, you have the satisfaction of saying nothing, very eloquently and effectively. But if you refuse to take her suggestion, and *your* road turns out to be even halfway wrong, you might as well turn the wheel over to your little son and go South for the winter, for you will ever hear the ultimate cry of triumph. Your season will practically be ruined. I can quote verbatim from the last affair of this kind:

(Voice from tonneau): "Albert, I think we ought to have taken the road to the left."

"No, we hadn't."

"I'm sure of it. I saw a sign which said Paxton' on it."

"No, you didn't."

"Well, you wait and see."

"I'm waiting."

There is a silence for ten minutes, while the car jounces along a road which gets narrower and rockier.

(Voice from the tonneau): "I suppose you think this is the way to Paxton?"

"I certainly *do"*

"Oh, you make me sick!"

Silence and jounces.

Sudden stop as the road ends at a silo.

"I beg your pardon [addressed to a rustic], which is the road to Paxton?"

"Paxton?"

"Yes."

"The road to Paxton?"

"Yes."

"Well, you go back over the rud you just come over, about three mile, till you come to a rud turnin' off to the right with a sign which says Taxton.'"

(Voice from the tonneau, beginning at this point and continuing all the way back, all the rest of the day and night and until snow falls): "There! what did I tell you? But, oh no, you know it all. Didn't I tell you"—etc., etc.

On the whole, it would seem that the artists who draw the automobile advertisements make a mistake in drawing the tonneau so roomy and so full of people. There should be no tonneau.

WILLIAM BEEBE

[WILLIAM BEEBE was born at Brooklyn, New York, in 1877. Educated as a scientist at Columbia University, he was appointed Honorary Curator of Ornithology, New York Zo5logical Society, in 1899. He has traveled in Asia, South America, and Mexico in. search of botanical and zoological specimens. *Jungle Peace,* 1918, and *Edge of the Jungle,* 1921, followed recently by *The Arcturua Adventure,* show Beebe's mastery of colorful and rhythmic prose.]

A YARD OF JUNGLE*

WITHIN five minutes the daily downpour of tropical rain would drench the jungle. At this moment the air was tense with electricity, absolutely motionless, and saturated with odorous moisture. The voices of all the wild creatures were hushed. The sense of mystery which is always so dominant in a tropical jungle seemed nearer, more vital, but more than ever a mystery. Its insistency made one oblivious of the great heat. The beating of one's heart became a perceptible sound, absurdly loud. All the swamp and jungle seemed listening to it.

Suddenly a voice came out of the heart of this mystery, and fittingly enough, the voice seemed something a little more or less than human, and also fittingly it uttered but a single word, and that word a question. And the listener realized that the answer to the question was the only thing which made life and work worth while. The throb of the blood in his veins was forgotten, and all his senses reached out to the sights and sounds and scents about him. And again the great black frog called from its slimy seat hidden in the still blacker water of the jungle swamp. Its voice was deep, guttural, and a little

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inhuman, but it asked as plainly as any honest man could ask, *Wh—yf* And after a minute, *Wh—y?*

I squatted in the center of **a** trail. Within walking distance behind me flowed the yellow waters of the Amazon, and the igarape[1] from which the frog had called was even now feeling the tidal heave of the ocean. Ahead, the jungle stretched without a break for three thousand miles or more. And here for a week I had suffered bodily torture, twisting into unhappy positions for hours at a time, watching the birds which crowded the berry-laden foliage of a single jungle tree. In the cool of early morning, throughout the terrible breathless heat of midday and the drenching downpour of afternoon, the frog and I put our questions. There was hope in our interrogation. And my five senses all gave aid, and my hand wrote down facts, and my mind pondered them.

In the very suburbs of Para, at the mouth of the great Amazon and within a hundred miles of the equator, I found a Mecca of bird-life. It was a gastronomic Mecca to be sure, a tall, slender, wild cinnamon tree—"canella do matto" the natives called it. For a full week I invited torture by attempting to study the bird-life of this single tree. This thing had not been done before; it might not be worth the doing. But testing such possibilities are as important to a naturalist's work as following along the more conventional and consequently more certain lines of investigation. I had no time for exploration of the surrounding country; so I had determined to risk **all** my precious hours upon intensive observation in one spot.

The century before, a plantling had pushed up through the jungle mold and had won success in the terrible competition of the tropics—the helpless, motionless, silent strife **of** the vegetable **folk.** Year by year the **lichen-sculptured trunk had** pushed **its way upward toward light and air, miraculously**

1. igrarape. A water channel in a forest, opening into a main river.

saved from the deadly embraces of the lianas which crawled forever through the jungle. Today it had gained an accepted place. Although no forest giant, with no great buttresses or masses of parasitic growths, it held up its branches and twigs in full sunlight a hundred feet or more above the ground. And its twiggy fingers were laden with a wonderful harvest of fruit, uncounted berries which attracted the birds from distant roosts and drinking places.

Here, then, a thousand combinations of fate had led me, and here I suffered day by day. Bound to the earth like other normal men, my eyes should have been directed forward. Now I forced them upward for hours at a time, and all the muscles of neck and shoulders revolted. Then eye strain and headache and a touch of fever followed, and I cast about for means to ameliorate my bodily ills. I dragged a canvas steamer chair to my place of vigil and all my body was grateful.

In memory, there now remain only the high lights of new discoveries, the colorful moments of unalloyed realization of success. Nevertheless this new method of tropical work brought its own new delights and trials. One joy lay in the very difficulties to be overcome. Every sense came into play. Sight, first and foremost, had been put to the most severe of tests in attempting to record the happenings against the glare of the sky high up among the foliage of this bit of jungle. I strained through my high-power glasses, until, when I looked without them, the world seemed withdrawn, dwarfed, as in the horrid imaginings of fever. The glasses gained in weight as I held them pointing vertically until they fairly dropped from my aching arms. My ears strove to catch every song, every note which might prove a character of worth. The jungle scents played upon my emotions and sometimes dominated my work; the faint aroma from some invisible orchid overhead, the telltale musk from a passing mammal, the healthful scent of clean jungle mold. As for taste, I had tested the aromatic berries and fruit of my canella tree, and for science' sake had

proved two warningly colored insects. My sense of feeling had operated involuntarily and wholly aside from my scientific desires. Whether stimulated by dozens of mosquitoes, scores of ants, or hundreds of "betes rouges" or "mucuims," the insistency of discomfort never discouraged a primary desire to delve as deeply as possible into the secrets of this small area of tropical jungle.

As I walked slowly about beneath the tree or lay back resting in the chair, I seemed to be watching creatures of another world. Whether I ogled them with glasses or now and then brought one down with a charge of small shot, I was a thing of no account to the berry-eating flocks high overhead. A vulture soaring lower than usual passed over the tree, and the shadow of his partial eclipse of the sun froze every bird to instant silence and complete immobility. But my terrestrial activities wrought no excitement. The shot whistled through the foliage, one of their number dropped from sight, and life for the rest went on without a tremor. To ancestral generations, danger had come always from above, not below.

The very difficulty of observation rendered this mode of research full of excitement, and at the same time made my method of work very simple. Against the sky, green, blue, or black feathers all appear black, and the first two days my glasses helped but little. For several minutes I would watch some tiny bird which might have been a yellow warbler had I been three thousand miles farther north. After memorizing personal characters, scrutinizing its flight and method of feeding, striving to fix its individuality, I would secure the bird, and find in all probability that it was a calliste, or tanager of brilliant plumage. Tomorrow, if I were lucky, I might be able to tell off the numbers of this species, to watch them and to know that I was watching them. But recognition would not be by way of the cerulean or topaz or amethystine hues of plumage, but by the slight idiosyncrasies of flirting tail or wing or of general carriage.

Day by day, as I came to know better the jungle about me, I began to perceive a phase which did not change. Even when the sun shone most brightly, when the coolness of early morning had not yet passed, the mood of the Amazon jungle remained. It was consistent, this low swampy jungle, in its uniform, somber mystery. In spite of wholesale exaggeration it was the dangers which came to mind. Of all places in the world this was probably fullest of life, both in numbers and diversity. Yet it was death—or the danger of death—which seemed in waiting, always just concealed from view.

Beneath my tree I squatted silently. Just overhead the foliage might have been almost northern. The finely cut leaves were like willow, and at one side an oak, unusual but still an oak, reached out a thousand thousand motionless leaves, breaking the glare into innumerable patches. But overhead, the terrible interlacing of vines and thorny ropes, the strangle-hold of serpentine lianas on every available trunk—all this could be only tropic.

The ground glistened here and there with a film of black water which revealed the swamp. Everywhere the mold and leaves of a hundred years lay scattered, the last fallen still green. Many feet above, great fans dangled, rayed fronds dry and crackling, fallen from high overhead, and suspended, waiting for the interfering twigs and foliage to die in turn and permit them to seek dissolution in the mold.

The jungle was bright with flowers, but it was a sinister brightness—a poisonous, threatening flash of pigment, set off by the blackness of the shadows. Heliconia spikes gleamed like fixed scarlet lightning, zigzagging through the pungent air. Now and then a bunch of pleasing, warm-hued berries reminded one of innocuous currants, but a second glance showed them ripening into swollen, liver-hued globes which offered no temptation to taste. One tree dangled hideous purple cups filled with vermilion fruits, and not far away the color sequence was reversed. A low-growing pleasant-leaved plant

lifted bursting masses of purple-black, all dripping like wounds upon the foliage below. Many flowers were unrecognizable save by their fragrance and naked stamens, advertised neither by color nor form of blossom. I despaired of flowers worthy of the name, until close by my foot I saw a tiny plant with a comely, sweet-scented blossom, grateful to the eye and beautiful as our northern blooms are beautiful. The leaf was like scores lying about, and I realized that this was a sproutling of the giant tree. Nothing but the death of this monster could give the light and air which the little plant needed. It was doomed, but it had performed its destiny. It had hinted that much of the beauty of the jungle lay far above the mold and stagnant water. And then I remembered the orchids high overhead. And the realization came that the low-growing blooms needed their glaring colors to out-shine the dim, shadowy under-jungle, and their nauseous fumes to outscent the musky vapors of decay.

The plants of the jungle won success either by elbowing their neighbors and fighting their path up to sunlight, or else by adapting their needs to the starvation need of air and light allotted to the lowly growths. The big-leaved churacas had found another means of existence. They lived like permanent rockets, bursting in mid-air. A long, curved stem shot up and reached far out into space. It was so slender as to be almost invisible in the dim light. At its tip radiated a great burst of foliage, leaves springing out in all directions, and absorbing nutrition which a sapling growing amid the undergrowth could not possibly do.

From daybreak to dark the canella tree was seldom deserted. Usually a score or more birds fluttered and fed among its branches, and true to tropic laws, there were comparatively few individuals but a multitude of species. In the few hours I was able to devote to its study, I identified seventy-six different kinds, and together with those which I saw but could not name, I judge that more than a hundred species must have

come to the herries during that week in early May. The first day I secured sixteen specimens, all different; and the following day yielded fourteen more, only one of which was a duplicate of the first day's results.

The bird visitors to the tree arrived in one of two characteristic ways. Many came direct and swiftly, singly or in pairs, flying straight and with decision. These came from a distance, with full knowledge of the berries. They fed quietly, and when satiated flew off. The second method of arrival was wholly casual—loose flocks drifting slowly from the neighboring jungle, sifting into the tree, and feeding for a time before passing on. When these left it was rather hastily, and in answer to the chirps and calls of the members of their flock who had not been beguiled by the berries and hence had forged steadily ahead.

These more or less well-defined flocks are very characteristic of all tropical jungles. Little assemblages of flycatchers, callistes, tanagers, antbirds, manakins, woodhewers, and woodpeckers are drawn together by some intangible but very social instinct. Day after day they unite in these fragile fraternities which drift along, gleaning from leaves, flowers, branches, trunks, or ground, each bird according to its structure and way of life. They are so held together by an intangible gregarious instinct that day after day the same heterogeneous flock may be observed, identifiable by peculiarities of one or several of its members. The only recognizable bond is vocal—a constant low calling; half unconscious, absent-minded little signals which keep the members in touch with one another, spurring on the laggards, retarding the overswift.

While I watched, there came to my tree a single species of pigeon, two hawks, and two parrots, four humming-birds, and an equal number of toucans and woodpeckers. The remaining fifty-nine were all passerine birds, of which there were eight each of the families of flycatchers, manakins, and cotingas. Eleven were tanagers.

The greedy, noisy parrakeets were always the center of commotion, wasting more berries than they ate. The toucans, those bizarre birds of whose lives we know so little, yelped and called and bathed in the water caught in the stubs of branches, and fed to repletion. All the flycatchers forgot their usual diet and took to berrying as ardently as the tanagers themselves. Not all the birds came to feed on the berries. A wren hunted insects among the branches, and a hawk found a giant snail crawling up the trunk and devoured it. The insect-eaters of the trunk numbered nine and showed no interest in the berries. Two were woodpeckers and seven woodhewers.

These latter are a strange tropical family four hundred strong, and all the very essence of protective coloring. Their habits of life make of them wandering bits of bark, easy to detect when they are in motion, but vanishing utterly when they are quiet. Their similarity in dress is remarkable. They may be large or small, short or long-tailed, with beaks blunt, sharp, straight, curved, thick, or needle-pointed. In these characters they differ; by these points they must know one another. But their colors are almost identical. Their olives or browns invariably warm into rich foxy rufous on wings and tail, while over head and shoulders a shower of light streaks has fallen, bits of sunlight fixed in down.

Further details belong to the literature of ornithology. But the colors of the berry-hunters—these baffle description, yet we cannot pass them by in silence. The blood and orange splashed on black of the toucans, the scarlet and yellow of woodpeckers, the soft greens and buffs of flycatchers, all these paled when a flock of manakins or tanagers or honeycreepers came to the tree. Every precious stone found its counterpart in the metallic hues of these exquisite feathered folk.

The glory of all was the opal-crowned manakin, a midget in green coat and sulphur waistcoat, with a cap of scaly, iridescent, silvery mother-of-pearl plates, in no way akin to feathers. Until now the life of this Hop o' my Thumb, like

those of all his ancestors, had gone smoothly on, with never a human to admire, to wonder, and vainly to echo the question of the great frog, *Wh—y?*

On the last day of my stay I walked slowly up the trail toward the *"canella do matto."* For the last time I strained upward at the well-known branches, and with the very movement there came the voice of the swamp. Its tone was insistent, with a tinge of accusation, a note of censure. *Wh—yf* and after a little time, *Wh—y?*

I looked about me despairingly. What had I learned, after all? Was there any clearing up of the mystery of the jungle? Had my week of scrutiny brought me any closer to the real intimacies of evolution? Or—evading these questions for the time—was there nothing I could do in the few precious moments left?

In five minutes I should turn my back on all this wildness, this jungle seething with profound truths, and great solutions within arm's reach. I should pass to the ocean, where monotony compels introspection, and finally to the great center of civilization, where the veneer covers up all truths.

Even if my studies had taught only the lesson of the tremendous insurgence of life, could I not emphasize this, make it a more compelling factor to be considered in future efforts toward the frog's question and mine?

My eyes left the foliage overhead and sought the ground. Acting on impulse, I brought from my camping stores an empty war-bag, and scraped together an armful of leaves, sticks, moss, earth, mold of all sorts. Four square feet of jungle debris went into my bag, and I shouldered it.

Then I said adieu to my trail and my tree—a sorrowful leave-taking, as is always my misfortune. For the bonds which bind me to a place or a person are not easily broken. And, as usual when the trail passed from view, the ideal alone remained. The thoughts of mosquitoes, of drenchings, of hours of breathless disappointed waiting, all sank in the mem-

ory of the daily discoveries, the mental delights* of new research.

A week later, when the sky-line was unbroken by land, when a long groundswell waved but did not disturb the deep blue of the open sea, I unlaced my bag of jungle mold. Armed with forceps, lens, and vials I began my search. For days I had gazed upward; now my scrutiny was directed downward. With binoculars I had scanned without ceasing the myriad leaves of a great tree; now with lens or naked eye I sought for life or motion on single fallen leaves and dead twigs. When I studied the life of the great tree I was in the land of Brobdingnag; now I was verily a Gulliver in Lilliput. The cosmos in my war-bag teemed with mystery as deep and as inviting as any in the jungle itself.

When I began work I knew little of what I should find. My vague thoughts visualized ants and worms, and especially I anticipated unearthing myriads of the unpleasant "mucuims" or betes rouges, whose hosts had done all in their power to make life in the jungle unhappy.

Day by day my vials increased. Scores of creatures evaded my search; many others, of whose kind I had captured a generous number, I allowed to escape.

My lilliputian census was far from the mere aggregation of ants and worms which I had anticipated, and a review of the whole showed that hardly any great group of living creatures was unrepresented.

As hinting of the presence of wild animals, a bunch of rufous hairs had in some way been tweaked from a passing agouti.[2] Man himself was represented in the shape of two wads which had dropped from my gun-shots some time during the week. One had already begun to disintegrate and sheltered half a dozen diminutive creatures. Five feathers were the indications of birds, two of which were brilliant green plumes from a calliste. Of reptiles there were a broken skull

2. agouti. A rodent, about the size of a rabbit.

of some lizard, long since dead, and the eggshell of a lizardling which had hatched and gone forth upon his mission into the jungle. A third reptilian trace may have been his nemesis—a bit of shed snake-skin. The group of amphibians was present even in this square of four feet—a very tiny, dried, black, and wholly unrecognizable little frog. Fishes were absent, though from my knees as I scraped up the debris, I could almost have seen a little igarape in which dwelt scores of minnows.

As I delved deeper and examined the mold more carefully for the diminutive inhabitants, I found that this thin film from the floor of the jungle appeared to have several layers, each with its particular fauna. The upper layer was composed of recently fallen leaves, nuts, seeds, and twigs, dry and quite fresh. Here were colonies of small ants and huge, solitary ones; here lived in hiding small moths and bettles and bugs, awaiting dusk to fly forth through the jungle. The middle layer was by far the most important, and in it lived four-fifths of all the small folk. The lowest layer was *one of matted* roots and clayey soil, and its animal life was meager.

Between the upper and the middle strata were sprouting nuts and seeds, with their blanched roots threaded downward into the rich dark mold, and the greening cotyledons curling upward toward light and warmth. Thus had the great bird-filled canella begun its life. In my war-bag were a score of potential forest giants doomed to death in the salt ocean. But for my efforts toward the *Wh—y,* their fate might have been very different.

Some of the half-decayed leaves were very beautiful. Vistas of pale, bleached fungus lace trailed over the rich mahogany-colored tissues, studded here and there with bits of glistening, transparent quartz. Here I had many hints of a world of life beyond the power of the unaided eye. And here, too, the grosser fauna scrambled, hopped, or wriggled. Everywhere were tiny chrysalides and cocoons, many empty. Now and then a plaque of eggs, almost microscopic, showed veriest

pin-pricks where still more minute parasites had made their escape. When one contracted the field of vision to this world where leaves were fields and fungi loomed as forests, competition, the tragedies, the mystery lessened not at all. Minute seeds mimicked small bettles in shape and in exquisite tracery of patterns. Bits of bark simulated insects, a patch of fungus seemed a worm, while the mites themselves were invisible until they moved. Here and there I discovered a lifeless boulder of emerald or turquoise—the metallic cuirass of some long-dead beetle.

Some of the scenes which appeared as I picked over the mold, suddenly unfolding after an upheaval of debris, were like Aladdin's cave. Close to the eye appeared great logs and branches protruding in confusion from a heaped-up bank of diamonds. Brown, yellow, orange, and white colors played over the scene; and now over a steep hill came a horrid, ungainly creature with enormous proboscis, eight legs, and a shining, liver-colored body, spotted with a sickly hue of yellow. It was studded with short, stiff, horny hairs—a mite by name, but under the lens a terrible monster. I put some of these on my arm, to see if they were the notorious "mucuims" which tortured us daily. Under the lens I saw the hideous creature stop in its awkward progress, and as it prepared to sink its proboscis I involuntarily flinched, so fearful a thing seemed about to happen.

The lesser organisms defy description. They are nameless except in the lists of specialists, and indeed most are of new, quite unnamed forms. The only social insects were small twigfuls of ant and termite[3] colonies, with from *five* to fifteen members. All others were isolated, scattered. Life here, so far beneath the sunlight, is an individual thing. Flocks and herds are unknown; the mob has no place here. Each tiny organism must live its life and meet its fate single-handed.

Little pseudo-scorpions were very abundant, and I could

3. termite. The white ant.

have vialed hundreds. They rushed out excitedly and, unlike all the other little beings, did not seek to hide. Instead, when they were disturbed, they sought open spaces, walking slowly and brandishing and feeling ahead with their great pincer-tipped arms, as long as their entire body. When irritated or frightened, they scurried backwards, holding up their chelae[4] in readiness.

Mites were the most abundant creatures, equaling the ants in number, always crawling slowly along, tumbling over every obstacle in their path and feeling their way awkwardly. Their kinds were numerous, all villainous in appearance. Ticks were less common but equally repellant. Small spiders and beetles were occasionally found, and hundred-legged wrigglers fled to shelter at every turn of a leaf. The smallest snails in the world crawled slowly about, some flat-shelled, others turreted. Tiny earthworms, bright red and very active, crept slowly through fungus jungles until disturbed, when they became an amazingly active tangle of twisting curves, dancing all about. Simple insects, which we shall have to call collembolas, were difficult to capture. They leaped with agility many times their own length, and when quiescent looked like bits of fungus. As for the rest, only Adam and a few specialists hidden in museums could call them by name. They were a numerous company, some ornamented with weird horns and fringes and patterns, others long of legs or legless, swift of foot or curling up into minute balls of animate matter.

One thing was evident early in my exploration: I was in a world of little people. No large insects were in any of the debris. The largest would be very small in comparison with a May beetle. And another thing was the durability of chitin.[5] The remains of beetles, considering the rareness of living ones, were remarkable. The hard wing-cases, the thorax armor, the segments of wasps, eyeless head masks, still remained perfect

4. **chelae.** Pincer-like claws.
5. **chitin.** The shell-like coverings.

in shape and vivid in color. Even in the deepest layers where all else had disintegrated and returned to the elements, these shards of death were as new.

And the smell of the mold, keen and strong as it came to my nostrils an inch away—it was pungent, rich, woody. It hinted of the age-old dissolution, century after century, which had been going on. Leaves had fallen, not in a sudden autumnal downpour, but in a never-ending drift, day after day, month after month. With a daily rain for moisture, with a temperature of three figures, for the quicker increase of bacteria, and an excess of humidity to foster quick decay, the jungle floor was indeed a laboratory of vital work—where only analytic chemistry was allowed full sway, and the mystery of synthetic life was ever handicapped, and ever a mystery.

Before the vessel docked I had completed my task and had secured over five hundred creatures of this lesser cosmos. At least twice as many remained, but when I made my calculations I estimated that the mold had sheltered only a thousand organisms plainly visible to the eye.

And when I had corked my last vial and the steward had removed the last pile of shredded debris, I leaned back and thought of the thousand creatures in my scant four square feet of mold. Then there came to mind a square mile of jungle floor with its thin layer of fallen leaves sheltering more than six billion creatures. Then I recalled the three thousand straight miles of jungle which had lain west of me, and the hundreds of miles of wonderful unbroken forest north and south, and my mind became a blank. And then from the mist of unnamable numerals, from this uncharted arithmetical census, there came to, memory a voice, deep and guttural—and this time the slow enunciation was jeering, hopeless of answer, *Wh—y?* And soon afterwards, *Wh—y?* And I packed up my last box of vials and went on deck to watch the sunset.

STEPHEN LEACOCK

[STEPHEN LEACOCK, born in England in 1869, received his education in Canada and the United States. He is Professor of Political Science at McGill University, and also author of a series of humorous sketches: *Nonsense Novels, Behind the Beyond, Moonbeams from the Larger Lunacy, Frenzied Fiction, My Discovery of England,* etc.]

HOMER AND HUMBUG*

AN ACADEMIC DISCUSSION

THE following discussion is of course only of interest to scholars. But, as the public schools' returns show that in the United States there are now over a million colored scholars alone, the appeal is wide enough.

I do not mind confessing that for a long time past I have been sceptical about the classics. I was myself trained as a classical scholar. It seemed the only thing to do with me. I acquired such a singular facility in handling Latin and Greek that I could take a page of either of them, distinguish which it was by merely glancing at it, and, with the help of a dictionary and a pair of compasses, whip off a translation of it in less than three hours.

But I never got any pleasure from it. I lied about it. At first, perhaps, I lied through vanity. Any colored scholar will understand the feeling. Later on I lied through habit; later still because, after all, the classics were all that I had and so I valued them. I have seen thus a deceived dog value a pup with a broken leg, and a pauper child nurse a dead doll with the sawdust out of it. So I nursed my dead Homer and my broken Demosthenes, though I knew in my heart that there was

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more sawdust in the stomach of one modern author than in the whole lot of them. Observe, I am not saying which it is that has it full of it.

So, as I say, I began to lie about the classics. I said to people who knew no Greek that there was a sublimity, a majesty about Homer which they could never hope to grasp. I said it was like the sound of the sea beating against the granite cliffs of the Ionian Esophagus: or words to that effect. As for the truth of it, I might as well have said that it was like the sound of a rum distillery running a night shift on half time. At any rate this is what I said about Homer, and when I spoke of Pindar—the dainty grace of his strophes—and Aristophanes, the delicious sallies of his wit, sally after sally, each sally explained in a note calling it a sally—I managed to suffuse my face with an animation which made it almost beautiful.

I admitted of course that Virgil in spite of his genius had a hardness and a cold glitter which resembled rather the brilliance of a cut diamond than the soft grace of a flower. Certainly I admitted this: the mere admission of it would knock the breath out of anyone who was arguing.

From such talks my friends went away sad. The conclusion was too cruel. It had all the cold logic of a syllogism (like that almost brutal form of argument so much admired in the Paraphernalia of Socrates). For if:

Virgil and Homer and Pindar had all this grace, and pith and these sallies—

And if I read Virgil and Homer and Pindar,

And if they only read Mrs. Wharton and Mrs. Humphrey Ward

Then where were they?

So continued lying brought its own reward in the sense of superiority and I lied more.

When I reflect that I have openly expressed regret, as a personal matter, even in the presence of women, for the mis-

sing books of Tacitus, and the entire loss of the Abacadabra of Polyphemus of Syracuse, I can find no words in which to beg for pardon. In reality I was just as much worried over the loss of the ichthyosaurus. More, indeed: I'd like to have seen it: but if the books Tacitus lost were like those he didn't, I wouldn't.

I believe all scholars lie like this. An ancient friend of mine, a clergyman, tells me that in Hesiod he finds a peculiar grace that he doesn't find elsewhere. He's a liar. That's all. Another man, in politics and in the legislature, tells me that every night before going to bed he reads over a page or two of Thucydides to keep his mind fresh. Either he never goes to bed or he's a liar. Doubly so: no one could read Greek at that frantic rate: and anyway his mind isn't fresh. How could it be, he's in the legislature. I don't object to this man talking freely of the classics, but he ought to keep it for the voters. My own opinion is that before he goes to bed he takes whisky: why call it Thucydides?

I know there are solid arguments advanced in favor of the classics. I often hear them from my colleagues. My friend the professor of Greek tells me that he truly believes the classics have made him what he is. This is a very grave statement, if well founded. Indeed I have heard the same argument from a great many Latin and Greek scholars. They all claim, with some heat, that Latin and Greek have practically made them what they are. This damaging charge against the classics should not be too readily accepted. In my opinion some of these men would have been what they are, no matter what they were.

Be this as it may, I for my part bitterly regret the lies I have told about my appreciation of Latin and Greek literature. I am anxious to do what I can to set things right. I am therefore engaged on, indeed, have nearly completed, a work which will enable all readers to judge the matter for themselves. What I have done is a translation of all the great

classics, not in the usual literal way but on a design that brings them into harmony with modern life. I will explain what I mean in a minute.

The translation is intended to be within reach of everybody. It is so designed that the entire set of volumes can go on a shelf twenty-seven feet long, or even longer. The first edition will be an Edition de Luxe bound in vellum, or perhaps in buckskin, and sold at five hundred dollars. It will be limited to five hundred copies and, of course, sold only to the feeble minded. The next edition will be the Literary Edition, sold to artists, authors, actors, and contractors. After that will come the Boarding House Edition, bound in board and paid for in the same way.

My plan is to so transpose the classical writers as to give, not the literal translation word for word, but what is really the modern equivalent. Let me give an odd sample or two to show what I mean. Take the passage in the First Book of Homer that describes Ajax the Greek dashing into the battle in front of Troy. Here is the way it runs (as nearly as I remember), in the usual word for word translation of the classroom, as done by the very best professor, his spectacles glittering with the literary rapture of it.

Then he too Ajax on the one hand leaped (or possibly jumped) into the fight wearing on the other hand, yes certainly a steel corselet (or possibly a bronze under-tunie) and on his head of course, yes without doubt he had a helmet with a tossing plume taken from the mane (or perhaps extracted from the tail) of some horse which once fed along the banks of the Seamander (and sees the herd and raises its head and paws the ground) and in his hand a shield worth a hundred oxen and on his knees too especially in particular greaves made by some cunning artificer (or perhaps blacksmith) and he blows the fire and it is hot. Thus Ajax leapt (or, better, was propelled from behind), into the fight.

Now that's grand stuff. There is no doubt of it. There's

a wonderful movement and force to it. You can almost see it move, it goes so fast. But the modern reader can't get it. It won't mean to him what it meant to the early Greek. The setting, the costume, the scene has all got to be changed in order to let the reader have a real equivalent to judge just how good the Greek verse is. In my translation I alter it just a little, not much but just enough to give the passage a form that reproduces the proper literary value of the verses, without losing anything of the majesty. It describes, I may say, the Directors of the American Industrial Stocks rushing into the Balkan War Cloud—

Then there came rushing to the shock of wa
Mr. McNicoll of the C.P.R.
He wore suspenders and about his throat
High rose the collar of a sealskin coat.
About his waist a woolen undervest
Bought from a sad-eyed farmer of the West.
(And every time he clips a sheep he sees
Some bloated plutocrat who ought to freeze).
Thus in the Stock Exchange he burst to view,
Leaped to the post, and shouted, "Ninety-two!"

There! That's Homer, the real thing! Just as it sounded to the rude crowd of Greek peasants who sat in a ring and guffawed at the rhymes and watched the minstrel stamp it out into "feet" as he recited it!

Or let me take another example from the so-called Catalogue of the Ships that.fill up nearly an entire book of Homer. This famous passage names all the ships, one by one, and names the chiefs who sailed on them, and names the particular town or hill or valley that they came from. It has been much admired. It has that same majesty of style that has been brought to an even loftier pitch in the New York Business Directory and the City Telephone Book. It runs along, as I recall it, something like this—

And first, indeed, oh yes, was the ship of Homistogetes the Spartan, long and swift, having both its masts covered with cowhide and two rows of oars. And he, Homistogetes, was born of Hermogenes and Ophthalmia and was at home in Syncope beside the fast-flowing Paresis. And after him came the ship of Preposterus the Eurasian, son of Oasis and Hysteria, . . .
and so on endlessly.

Instead of this I substitute, with the permission of the New York Central Railway, the official catalogue of their locomotives taken almost word for word from the list compiled by their superintendent of works. I admit that he wrote in hot weather. Part of it runs—

Out in the yard and steaming in the sun
Stands locomotive engine number forty-one;
Seated beside the windows of the cab
Are Pat McGaw and Peter James McNab.
Pat comes from Troy and Peter from Cohoes,
And when they pull the throttle off she goes;
And as she vanishes there comes to view
Steam locomotive engine number forty-two.
Observe her mighty wheels, her easy roll,
With William J. Macarthy in control.
They say her engineer some time ago
Lived on a farm outside of Buffalo
Whereas his fireman, Henry Edward Foy,
Attended School in Springfield, Illinois.
Thus does the race of man decay or rot—
Some men can hold their jobs and some can not.

Please observe that if Homer had actually written that last line it would have been quoted for a thousand years as one of the deepest sayings ever said. Orators would have rounded out their speeches with the majestic phrase, quoted in sonorous and unintelligible Greek verse, "some men can hold their jobs and some can not"; essayists would have begun their most scholarly dissertations with the words—'It has been

finely said by Homer that (in Greek) 'some men can hold their jobs'"; and the clergy in mid-pathos of a funeral sermon would have raised their eyes aloft and echoed "Some men can not!"

This is what I should like to do. I'd like to take a large stone and write on it in very plain writing—

"The classics are only primitive literature. They belong in the same class as primitive machinery and primitive music and primitive medicine"—and then throw it through the windows of a University and hide behind a fence to see the professors buzz!!