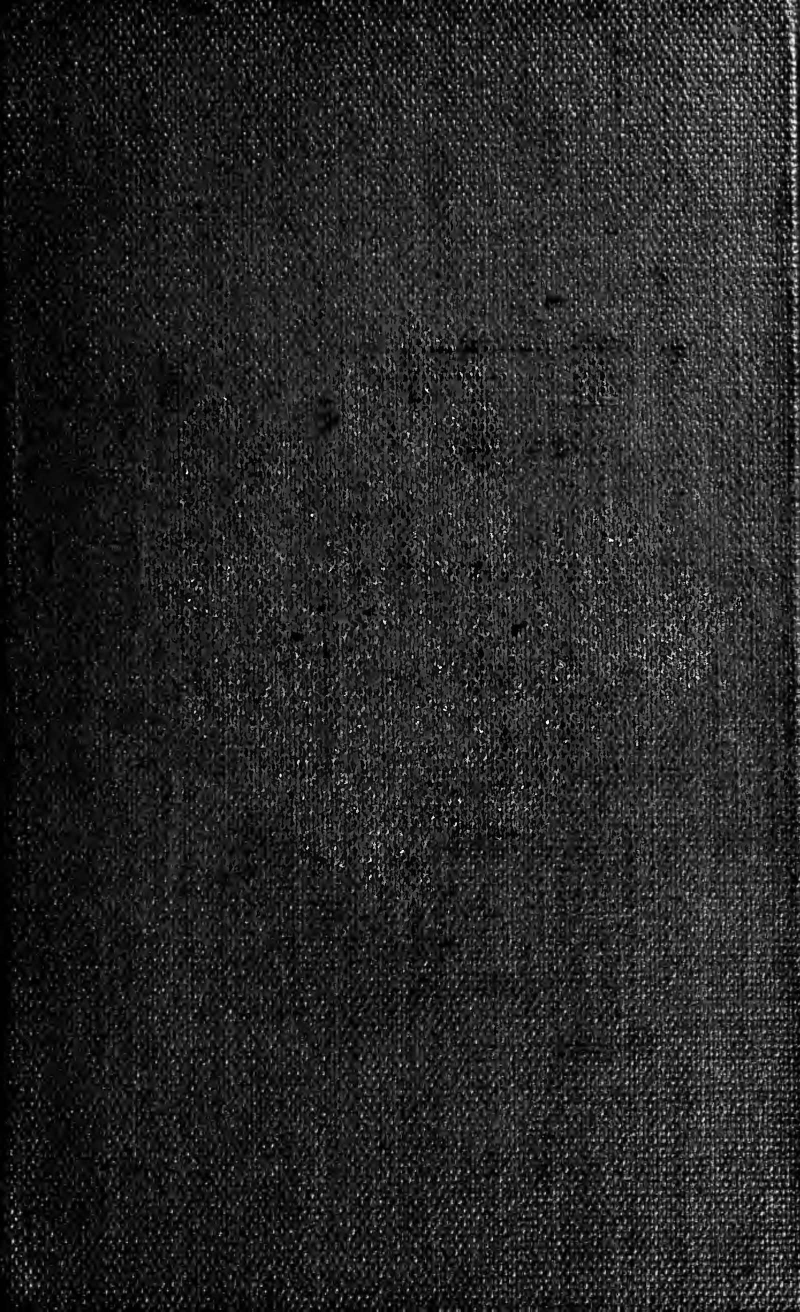

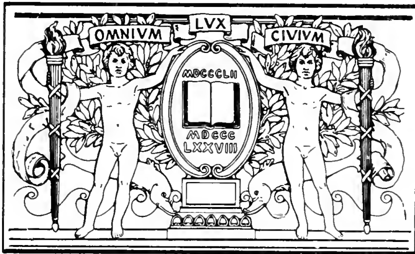

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An INQUIRENDO Into the WIT & Other Good Parts of HIS LATE MAJESTY KING CHARLES the Second

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TO BLISS CARMAN

A *patrin*, according to *Romano Lavo-Lil*, is "a Gypsy trail: handfuls of leaves or grass cast by the Gypsies on the road, to denote, to those behind, the way which they have taken." Well, these wild dry whims are *patrins* dropped now in the open for our tribe; but particularly for you. They will greet you as you lazily come up, and mean: Fare on, and good luck love you to the end! On each have I put the date of its writing, as one might make memoranda of little leisurely adventures in prolonged fair weather; and you will read, in between and all along, a record of pleasant lonely paths never very far from your own, biggest of Romanys! in the thought-country of our common youth.

Ingraham Hill, South Thomaston, Maine,
October 19, 1896.

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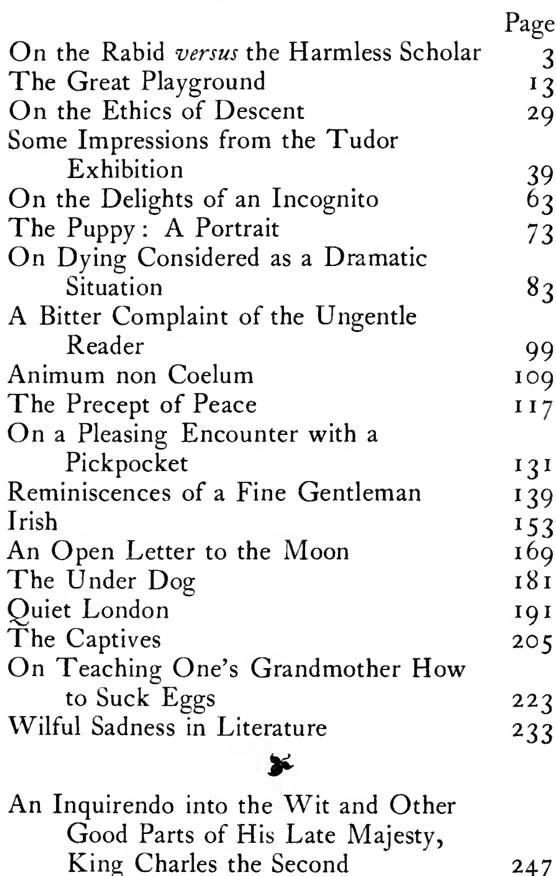

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On the Rabid *versus* the Harmless Scholar

ON THE RABID *VERSUS* THE HARMLESS SCHOLAR

A PHILOSOPHER now living, and too deserving for any fate but choice private oblivion, was in Paris, for the first time, a dozen years ago; and having seen and heard there, in the shops, parks, and omnibus stations, much more baby than he found pleasing, he remarked, upon his return, that it was a great pity the French, who are so in love with system, had never seen their way to shutting up everything under ten years of age! Now, that was the remark of an artist in human affairs, and may provoke a number of analogies. What is in the making is not a public spectacle. It ought to be considered very outrageous, on the death of a painter or a poet, to exhibit those rough first drafts, which he, living, had the acumen to conceal. And if, to an

impartial eye, in a foreign city, native innocents seem too aggressively to the fore, why should not the seclusion desired for them be visited a thousandfold upon the heads, let us say, of students, who are also in a crude transitional state, and undergoing a growth much more distressing to a sensitive observer than the physical? Youth is the most inspiring thing on earth, but not the best to let loose, especially while it carries swaggeringly that most dangerous of all blunderbusses, knowledge at half-cock. There is, indeed, no more melancholy condition than that of healthy boys scowling over books, in an eternal protest against their father Adam's fall from a state of relative omniscience. Sir Philip Sidney thought it was "a piece of the Tower of Babylon's curse that a man should be put to school to learn his mother-tongue!" The throes of education are as degrading and demoralizing as a hanging, and, when the millennium sets in, will be as carefully screened from the laity. Around the master and the pupil will be reared a portly and decorous Chinese wall, which shall pen within their proper precincts the din of *hic*, *hæc*, *hoc*,

and the steam of suppers sacrificed to Pallas.

The more noxious variety of student, however, is not young. He is "in the midway of this our mortal life"; he is fearfully foraging, with intent to found and govern an academy; he runs in squads after Anglo-Saxon or that blatant beast, Comparative Mythology; he stops you on 'change to ask if one has not good grounds for believing that there was such a person as Pope Joan. He can never let well enough alone. Heine must be translated and Junius must be identified. The abodes of hereditary scholars are depopulated by the red flag of the *nouveau instruit*. He infests every civilized country; the army-worm is nothing to him. He has either lacked early discipline altogether, or gets tainted, late in life, with the notion that he has never shown sufficiently how intellectual he really is. In every contemplative-looking person he sees a worthy victim, and his kindling eye, as he bears down upon you, precludes escape: he can achieve no peace unless he is driving you mad with all which you fondly dreamed you had left behind in old

S.'s accursed lecture-room. You may commend to him in vain the reminder which Erasmus left for the big-wigs, that it is the quality of what you know which tells, and never its quantity. It is inconceivable to him that you should shut your impious teeth against First Principles, and fear greatly to displace in yourself the illiteracies you have painfully acquired.

Judge, then, if the learner of this type (and in a bitterer degree, the learneress) could but be safely cloistered, how much simpler would become the whole problem of living! How profoundly would it benefit both society and himself could the formationary mind, destined, as like as not, to no ultimate development, be sequestered by legal statute in one imperative limbo, along with babes, lovers, and training athletes! *Quicquid ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi.*

For the true scholar's sign-manual is not the midnight lamp on a folio. He knows; he is baked through; all superfluous effort and energy are over for him. To converse consumedly upon the weather, and compare notes as to "whether it is likely to hold up for to-morrow," — this,

says Hazlitt, "is the end and privilege of a life of study." Secretly, decently, pleasantly, has he acquired his mental stock; insensibly he diffuses, not always knowledge, but sometimes the more needful scorn of knowledge. Among folk who break their worthy heads indoors over Mr. Browning and Madame Blavatsky, he moves cheerful, incurious, and free, on glorious good terms with arts and crafts for which he has no use, with extraneous languages which he will never pursue, with vague Muses impossible to invite to dinner. He is strictly non-educational:

> "Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!
> No hungry generations tread thee down."

He loathes information and the givers and takers thereof. Like Mr. Lang, he laments bitterly that Oxford is now a place where many things are being learned and taught with great vigor. The main business to him is to live gracefully, without mental passion, and to get off alone into a corner for an affectionate view of creation. A mystery serves his turn better than a history. It is to be remembered that had the Rev. Laurence Sterne gone to gaze

upon the spandrils of Rouen Cathedral, we should all have lost the *fille de chambre*, the dead ass, and Maria by the brookside. Any one of these is worth more than hieroglyphics; but who is to attain that insight that these are so, except the man of culture, who has the courage to forget at times even his sole science, and fall back with delight upon a choice assortment of ignorances?

The scholar's own research, from his cradle, clothes him in privacy; nor will he ever invade the privacy of others. It is not with a light heart that he contemplates the kindergarten system. He himself, holding his tongue, and fleeing from Junius and Pope Joan, from cubic roots and the boundaries of Hindostan, must be an evil sight to Chautauquans, albeit approved of the angels. By much contact shine divers and sundry; he, not inferior, fears lest it tarnish him. He has little to utter which will sound wise, the full-grown, finished soul! If he had, he would of his own volition seek a cell in that asylum for protoplasms, which we have made bold to recommend.

The truth is, very few can be trusted

with an education. In the old days, while this was a faith, boredom and nervous prostration were not common, and social conditions were undeniably picturesque. Then, as now, quiet was the zenith of power: the mellow mind was unexcursive and shy. Then, as now, though young clerical Masters of Arts went staggering abroad with heads lolling like Sisyphus' stone, the ideal worth and weight grew "lightly as a flower." Sweetly wrote the good Sprat of his famous friend Cowley: "His learning sat exceedingly close and handsomely upon him: it was not embossed on his mind, but enamelled." The best to be said of any knowing one among us, is that he does not readily show what deeps are in him; that he is unformidable, and reminds whomever he meets of a distant or deceased uncle. Initiation into noble facts has not ruined him for this world nor the other. It is a beautiful brag which James Howell, on his first going beyond sea, March the first, in the year sixteen hundred and eighteen, makes to his father. He gives thanks for "that most indulgent and costly Care you have

been pleased, in so extraordinary a manner, to have had of my Breeding, (tho' but one child of Fifteen) by placing me in a choice Methodical School so far distant from your dwelling, under a Learned (tho' Lashing) Master; and by transplanting me thence to Oxford to be graduated; and so holding me still up by the chin, until I could swim without Bladders. This patrimony of liberal Education you have been pleased to endow me withal, I now carry along with me abroad as a sure inseparable Treasure; nor do I feel it any burden or incumbrance unto me at all!"

There, in the closing phrase, spoke the post-Elizabethan pluck. Marry, any man does well since, who can describe the aggregated agonies of his brain as *no incumbrance*, as less, indeed, than a wife and posterity! To have come to this is to earn the freedom of cities, and to sink the schoolmaster as if he had never been.

1889.

The Great Playground

THE GREAT PLAYGROUND

IT has seemed to many thoughtful readers, within the last fifty or sixty years, that Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations* is altogether mistaken in its assumption that the open-air world is dearer to the child than to the man: or that the Heaven which so easily fuses with it in our idea lies nearer to the former than to the latter. Some abnormally perceptive child (like the infant W. W. himself) may have a clear sense of "glory in the grass, of splendor in the flower." But the appreciation of natural objects is infinitely stronger, let us say, in the babe of thirty; and so is even the the appreciation of the diversions which they provide. Were it not for the prospects of unforeseen and adventurous company abroad, the child prefers to play in the shed. But the post-meridian child,

who is not a "grown-up," but only a giant, desires "the house not made with hands": he gets a delicate madness in his blood, the moment he breathes wild air.

Scipio and Laelius cannot keep, to save them, from stone-skipping on the strand, though they have come abroad for purposes of political conversation. Poets and bookmen are famous escapers of this sort. Surrey shooting his toy arrows at lighted windows; Shelley sailing his leaves and bank-notes on the Hampstead ponds; Dr. Johnson, of all persons, rolling down the fragrant Lincolnshire hills; Elizabeth Inchbald ("a beauty and a virtue," as her epitaph at Kensington prettily says) lifting knockers on April evenings and running away, for the innocent deviltry of it; — these have discovered the fun and the solace of out-of-doors at a stroke, and with a conscious rapture impossible to their juniors. Master Robin Hood, Earl of Huntingdon, probably kept to his perfectly exemplary brigandage because he liked the "shaws shene," and objected to going home at nightfall. No child ever tastes certain romantic joys which come of intimacies with creation. That he may

write a letter upon birchbark, that he may eat a mushroom from the broken elm-trunk and drink the blood of the maple, that he may woo a squirrel from the oak, a frog from the marsh, or even a twelve-tined buck from his fastness, to be caressed and fed, strikes him as an experiment, not as an honor. It will not do to say that the worship of the natural world is an adult passion: it is quite the contrary; but only certain adults exemplify it. Coleridge, in the *Biographia Literaria*, has a very beautiful theory, and a profoundly true one. "To carry on the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood; to combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances which every day, for perhaps forty years, have made familiar:

> "'With sun and moon and stars throughout the year,
> And man and woman, —'

this is the character and privilege of genius." The genuine faun-heart is the child conscious and retrieved, the child by law established in happy natures. I knew one boy of six who met an ugly gypsy in a lane, and who, on being asked

whether he would like to go and live with her, replied in Americanese, with slow-breathed transports: "Oh-ee, yup!" In his mind was an instant vision of a bed suspended among leaves; and the clatter and glitter of the sacred leaves had nearly stolen his soul away. But he was not a common boy. His nurse being close behind, he was providentially saved, that time, to be abducted later by much more prosaic influences. Nor has the love of Nature, of late so laboriously instilled into the young, thanks to Froebel's impetus, made much progress among its small supposed votaries. The examination-papers, which, in a lustier age, began with—"Who dragged Which around the walls of What?" now stoop to other essentials:

"The wood-spurge has a cup of three."

Yet unless misled by the tender cant of their elders, even the modern Master and Missy would rather find and examine the gas-metre than the wood-spurge.

In his best estate, the out-of-doorling hunts not, neither fishes: he merely moves or sits, in eternal amalgamation

with the eternal: an enchanted toper of life and death, one with all that has ever been, or shall ever be, convinced that "there is a piece of divinity in us which is older than the elements, and owes no homage unto the sun." He is generally silent, because his sincere speech cannot be what we call sane. No one, however, who is truly content in the sought presence of Nature, can be sure that it is she who gives him all, or even most, of his comfort. It is only the poetic fashion to say so. It is at least doubtful if Nature be not, in her last exquisiteness, for the man already independent of her. There are those who may accost her, not as a petitioner, but as one sovereign to another in a congress of the Powers. Moral poise is the true passport to her favor, not a fine eye for "the leopard-colored trees" in late autumn, nor an ear for the bold diapasons of the surge. The man of vanities and ambitions and agitated fears may as well go to the football game: for the woods are cold to him. The lover, indeed, is notoriously rural while his fit lasts; he has been known to float into a mosquito-marsh, obliviously reading

Tristram of Lyonnesse. But so oblique a cult as his can count for nothing with the Mother. Her favorite spite is to deepen melancholy, as her prayer and purpose are to enhance joy. Not primary in her functions, she waits upon man's anterior dispositions, and gives her delights, as Fortuna is said to do, to the indifferent. But he shall not be indifferent after: her praise drips, honey-bright, from his lip. If any question him, remembering Vaughan's

> "O tell me whence that joy doth spring
> Whose diet is divine and fair,
> Which wears Heaven like a bridal ring?"

he may say that it is the possessing love of Nature which makes his day so rich. She meanwhile, could put a gloss upon that plausible text. The order and peace in him had first subjugated her terrible heart.

No babe, indeed, is born other than wild: he springs up on the farther border of civilization. Happy for him, if he can find his way back, with waking choice, even once a year, in his maturity, to recapture the perfect condition, and subject to it

his own developed faculties. How many have suffered the pure epic homesickness, the longing for decivilization, which has drawn them "to discover islands far away," or to roam without purpose at all, like Alastor and the Scholar Gypsy! Observe, that in all tradition the courtesies of the countryside are showered on the race of the deliberately glad. Magdalen of Pazzi, alone in the cloister-garden, rapturously catching up the roses to her face, and extolling Him who made them fair, signifies much: not only that she was dowered with the keen perception of beauty, — hardly that at all; but that she was at the apex of moral sanity, which has as much right to be passionate with beauty as the sun itself. It is inconceivable that barbarians should admire the sunset: though it is not inconceivable that barbarians in good society should say that they do so. For one of the earmarks of our latter-day culture is this patronal relish of the works of the Most High. Literature is over-ballasted with "descriptive passages," which the reader skips, but which no self-respecting author can afford to do without. We talk inces-

santly of the hills and the sea, and the flora and fauna thereof; and insolently take it for granted that we alone have arrived at the proper inwardness of these subjects. In naught have we more wronged the feudal ages than in denying to them an intimate knowledge and love of scenic detail. One glance at their cathedral capitals, at leaves, rose-haws, antlers, cobwebs, and shells, in stone carven since the tenth century, should have been corrective of that foolish depreciation of a people far nearer to the heart of things than we. The common dislike of gypsies is another revelation of jealousy: for we are not the Mother's favored children. Us she consigns to starched linen, and roofs, retorts of carbonic acid gas: would we sleep again on her naked breast, we come home to endure gibes, and the sniffles.

Well may the "sylvan" (a dear Elizabethan word gone into the dust-heap) feel that he is manumitted and exempt. He has no occasion to grow up. He looks with affectionate strangeness on his life past, as on his life to come, thinking it a solecism to anticipate decay where

hitherto no decay has been, or where indeed, if it have been, he "has had the wit never to know it." The Heaven which lies around us in our infancy is always there afterwards, waiting in vain, for the most part, for reciprocations. Symbolisms, sacraments, abound in the natural world, and to avail oneself of them is to regain and retain fleeting good, and to defy the time-dragon's tooth with a smile as of immortality. Devotion to a blackberry pasture and a swimming-pool confers youth on the devotee, provided he has not to pick fruit nor rescue ribald little boys for a living. A travelled man, a man of the world, has a ripe expert look: one says of him, admiring his talk and his manners, that he bears his age with grace. But nothing is so ageless as a sailor: he can bear his age neither well nor ill, for the obvious reason. In his hard cheek and blue eye are innocence, readiness, zest, taciturnity, daring, shyness, truth: all the fine wild qualities which "they that sit in parlors never dream of." It is not a physiological fact alone, that for health's sake you must be in league with the open. Whoever clings

to it for love, is known by his superior simplicity and balance. Many a coast-guardsman, or scout in the Canadian forest, has achieved the complete power which is mistakenly supposed to come, like an imposition of hands, upon the educated; and he gets this inestimable accolade, mark you, merely by smelling sea-kelp and sassafras, and welcoming a rainstorm as a pleasant sort of fellow: by the exercise of sheer natural piety, whose processes turn about and hit back by keeping him young. Would you perpetrate an elfin joke on such a one, present him with a calendar: the urban and domestic accuser. To register time, and consult its phases scientifically, is to give it a deplorable advantage over you. A brook scoffs at birthdays: and many a violet errs in chronology, and sidles forth at Martinmas. It is the shepherd-boy in the *Arcadia* who "pipes as if he should never grow old": marry, it is not anybody in a theatre orchestra! Which, think you, died with her girlhood yet unconsumed within her, Madame Récamier or the Nut-brown Maid? The victory is not with cosmetics. To the soirées of

the hermit thrush, tan is your only wear. The "sylvan" is anti-chronological. He who comes close to the heart-beat of progress and dissolution in the wilderness, the vicissitudes of the vegetable world, must feel that, save in an allegory, these things are not for him: they go under him as a swimmer's wave. "Change upon change: yet one change cries out to another, like the alternate seraphim, in praise and glory of their Maker." The human atom gets into the mood of the according leaf, caring not how long it has hung there, how soon it may fall. God's will, in short, is nowhere so plain and acceptable as on a lonely stretch of moor or water. Who can feel it so keenly in the town? The town has never allowed man to guess his superiority to it: creature of his own exaggerations, it cows him, and compels him to remember, in his unrest, that he is no longer a spirit, no longer a child.

At Hampton Court, in the Great Hall, in the right lower corner of the rich pagan borderings of one of the Old Testament tapestries (that of the Circumcision of Abraham), there is a tiny delicate faded figure

of a lad, all in soft duns and dusty golds. He wears curious sandals; a green chaplet is on his brows; a hare hangs over his shoulder; he carries a stocked quiver, and a spear. His look is one of sweet sensuous idleness and delight. He is centuries old, but to him the same sun is shining in the aromatic alleys of the forest. He does not know that there is a very fine Perpendicular roof over him, and he has never noticed the kings and their courts who have been blown away like smoke from before his path. The parent and the schoolmaster who sought him have also fallen to dust. But for him the hunt and the moist morning: for him the immortal pastoral life. We used to see him often, and we saw him once again, after a long interval. His charm was all that it had ever been: but at the encounter, he brought hot tears of envy to the eyes. All those years, those years of ours and the world's, wasted in prison on casuist industries, he had been at large with the wind, he had been playing! How some of us have always meant to do just that for ever, and that only! for why not do the sole thing one can do perfectly? But

an indoor demon, one Duty, a measly Eden-debarring angel armed with platitudes, has somehow clogged our career. Were it not for a cloud of responsibilities, a downpour of Things to Do, one might be ever at the other side of window-panes, and see Pan twelve hours a day. Ah, little Vita Silvestris! Blamelessly may we feel that you have found the way, and that we have missed it, growing gray at the silly desk, and sure only of this: that presently we shall indeed find ourselves inside sycamore planks, so that all the dryads in their boles, watching our very best approximation to their coveted estate, shall smile to see. But thereafter, at least, and for good, we are where we belong, "*sub dio*, under the canopy of Heaven," and ready for the elemental game.

1895.

On the Ethics of Descent

ON THE ETHICS OF DESCENT

IT will never do for a biographer to look too narrowly into his hero's genealogy; for speculation is at all times fatal to an accepted pedigree. Every man is presumably deduced from male and female, from generation to generation; and from these only. There is more of superstition than of science in this mode of reckoning: it has no great philosophic bearing, and it is very illiberal. The truth is, we belong, from the beginning, to many masters, and are unspeakably beholden to the forming hands of the phenomena of the universe, rather than to the ties of blood. What really makes one live, gives him his charter of rights, and clinches for him the significance without which he might as well be unborn, is, often enough, no human agency at all.

Where it happens to be human, it is glorious and attested: "I owe no more to Philip, my father, than to Aristotle, my preceptor."

But it may be debated that the climbing spider was considerably more to her appointed observer, Robert the Bruce, than his father; inasmuch as she alone put heart into his body, and revivified him into the doer whose deeds we know. A moral relation like that, at the critical moment, establishes the ineffable bond; annuls, as it were, every cause but the First, whereby the lesser causes arise; and makes men over new. No mere soldiering Bruce, but the spider's Bruce, the victor of Scotland; no mere Newton, but the dedicated heir of the falling apple and her laws; no mere young rhetorician of Carthage, but Austin the saint, perfected by the *Tolle, lege*, from Heaven. Many a word, many an event, has so, in the fullest sense, started a career, and set up a sort of paternity and authority over the soul. We are all "under influence," both of the natural and the supernatural kingdom. Far from being the domestic product we take ourselves to be, we are

strangely begotten of the unacknowledged, the fortuitous, and the impossible; we lead lives of astonishing adventure, consort with eternity, and owe the thing we are to the most trivial things we touch. We are poor relations of every conceivable circumstance, alike of our sister the Feudal System, and of our sister the rainbow. We are interwoven, ages before our birth, and again and again after, with what we are pleased to call our accidents and our fates.

> "For so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

There is real dutifulness in the recognition of all this by the science of heraldry; for heraldry exists but to commemorate some personal contact with marvels, and a generative occasion without which the race would not be itself; as if to reprove the boy who believes himself descended from Sir Magnifico, whose big shield hangs in the hall, and from nothing else in particular. Sir Magnifico's cat may, in reality, account for the continuity of the house; and a spindle or a vesper-bell come to the front in the history of its averted perils,

and get handsomely quartered upon the baronial arms. But heraldry avails very little; for she was always limited to the minority, and being old, has ceased to watch to-day and design for to-morrow, as she was wont. The best she can do is to suggest how it depends upon trifles and interferences whether we get here at all, or whether we cut a figure in the crowd; and how foolish it is in us to scorn anything that happens. The road is long from Adam to his present estimable and innumerable brood, and our past has been full of rescuing events. What has preserved us, under Providence, in the successive persons of our progenitors? Clearly, more items than are easily numbered, or could be set down in symbols and devices on the escutcheon: so that it is well to maintain an attitude of great and general deference toward creation at large, for fear of not honoring our father and our mother.

Stradella's kinsfolk yet in Italy may know, or may not know, the hymn which once saved his life. They may pass over the hymn as a tiresome affair, necessary on holy-days, or they may look upon

it as a lucky omen — how lucky! — for them. But what they ought to do is to pay it excessive ancestral honors; and canon law, the wide world over, would acquit them of the idolatry. Music, indeed, has been potent, first and last, in the crises of men. It becomes a factor of enormous importance in more than one history, if you search for it. Never do some of us hear that plaintive old song of Locke's, *My Lodging is on the Cold Ground*, without thinking of James Radcliffe, third Earl of Derwentwater, who had apparently no connection with it, but whom one finds himself regarding as its very harmony forwarded into another age, like Arethusa stream returned from underground. Fresh from the composer's meditations, it was sung on the stage by the comely Moll Davies (said to be daughter to the Earl of Berkshire), before the notorious Persian person who then graced the English throne, and who was struck immediately with an excellence new as Locke's, and hardly of a contrapuntal nature. Time conjured up, from the bonnie comedian and the bad king, the innocent figure of a girl, Mary, who duly married a great

noble, and vanished into history as the early-dying mother of the most stainless knight outside of a romance. Derwentwater was grandson, indeed, to vagabonds; but was he not great-grandson to the sweetest of the fine arts? His present representative, Lord Petre, may not openly refer one branch of his lineage to an origin which might seem more frankly fabulous than any divine descent of the ancients. At any rate, here is music of the seventeenth century, going its operative channel through imperfect humanity, and upspringing in the wild days of the Jacobite '15, into corporate beauty again: into a young life, dowered to the full with the strange winning charm of the Stuarts, and with a halo about it which they can scarcely boast. And therefore, reverting to "the source and spring of things," one is free to cry: "Well done, Master Matthew Locke, in F minor!" which is indeed reputed by tradition, the right heroic key. But who, writing of the darling of the legends of the North, will be bold enough to set *My Lodging is on the Cold Ground* in full song, on his genealogical tree? James the First and Charles the

First will be sure to show up there, and so will a number of other Britons not especially germane to the matter. This is how we forge pedigrees, in our blunt literal way, skipping over the vital forces, and laboriously reckoning the mediums and the tools of our own species. Any hard-headed encyclopedia will accredit an advocate of Ajaccio and his wife Letitia with the introduction into the nineteenth century of its most amazing man; but to William Hazlitt, an expert among paradoxes, Bonaparte was "the child and champion" of the Revolution.

1888.

Some Impressions from the Tudor Exhibition

SOME IMPRESSIONS FROM THE TUDOR EXHIBITION

THE New Gallery on Regent Street, filled, at this time last year, with the memories of the Stuarts and with the graded grace of Vandyke and Lely, has taken a step backward into history to show us a hardier and less enchanting society. The luckless, weak, romantic race are everlastingly dear, as Chopin cleverly said of his own music, to "the *cognoscenti* and the poets." But this present plunge into the sixteenth century is excellent cold water. The Stuarts are myths to these hard facts of Tudors, these strong-minded and dominant familiars, who destroyed, annexed, altered, and were deposed from nothing except from the Lord Pope's opinion of some of them. Everything here is wide-awake, matter-of-course, bracing: the spectator's mind tempers itself

to the indicative present of Queen Bess, and

> "to trampling horses' feet,
> More oft than to a chamber melody."

The men and women on the walls are neither sophisticated nor complex. They are vehement in oath as in compliment, and hit at Fate straight from the shoulder. The best among them has a certain fierce zest of habit. Sidney and Sir Thomas More, each in his stainless soul, would have put the other in the pillory for blunders of piety. And such characters, with their stormy circumstance, their distinct homogeneous look and mien, get to be fully understood. Nobody pretends to know the involutions of James the Second; but bluff Hal is no riddle. Wolsey and Drake, Archbishop Parker and Anne Boleyn, even Shakespeare, are more comprehensible units than, say, Dr. Donne, or the Duke of Monmouth. They stand in the red morning light, tangible as trees. They are the bread-and-cheese realities who have made English literature, English policy and manners, English religion. The heartbreak for Essex; that other heartbreak for Calais; Wyatt's

succoring cat; Raleigh's cloak in the mud; Sidney's cup of water; —

> "Battle nor song can from oblivion save,
> But Fame upon a white deed loves to build:
> From out that cup of water Sidney gave,
> Not one drop has been spilled!

Christina of Milan's reply to her suitor, the asking and axeing monarch: "Had I a second head in reserve, sire, I might dare to become your wife;" — all these are nursery tales, the very fibre of our earliest memory, as of our adult speculation. Old friends, these painted folk! You look at them on canvases which Evelyn admired at Weybridge; which Pepys longed to buy; to which Horace Walpole provided a date and a name; which brushed Ben Jonson and Carew passing towards the masques of Whitehall; which have seen change and the shadow of change, and are themselves ever richer for the remembered eyes which have looked up at them, during three hundred years.

As you glance from the entrance of the New Gallery, this London January of 1890, the first thing to take the eye is a loan from Hampton Court, the full-length

of the pioneer poet, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey: a young powerful figure all in red, poised on a hill-top above a vexed white-and-blue sky. He steps forward there, as if in dramatic confirmation of the little known of his proud, obstinate, disinterested career, straight through love, scholarship, adventure, to the Tower axe. One can hardly look at this stripling, with his jewelled cap's white blown feather, and hands laid airily but meaningly on hip and hilt, without remembering the most jocose and off-hand of his verses, written in the spring:

> "When I felt the air so pleasant round about,
> Lord! to myself how glad I was that I had gotten out."

This is No. 73, the authorship of it hanging undetermined between Holbein and Gwillim Stretes. No. 51, a famous and much-reproduced portrait of Surrey under an archway, is certainly Stretes'; but you covet this other for "Hans the Younger." Its vistas are not uncharacteristic of him; and what a daring bugle-blast of color it is! Masterfully does it light the room, and call you into the

Tudor company, and make you glad, likewise, that you have "gotten out." It is great so to find a certain Howard, which is a possible Holbein, the key-note of this exhibition. And the race crops out on the walls every here and there, making trouble in your thoughts, as once in thoughts long quieted. They are shown thus contemporaneously, from "Jocky of Norfolk" to the Philip who died for conscience' sake in the Beauchamp Tower; and wherever they are, there is a free wind, a rebel sunshine. Roam about a little; and you return with gratification to these lean, tense, greyhound personalities. The visitor wearies of the *Fidei Defensor*, the much-connected-by-marriage, and of the kinsmen and servants, the Brandons and Cromwells, who flatter him by fat approximate resemblance, and of the same dimly-recurrent aspect in the timid burgess noblewomen of the hour; so that his first and last impressions are fain to spring from the spectacle of these firm-chinned soldierly Howards, thin and bright as their own swords, with the conscious look of gentlemen among cads. From the dazzle of history it is a bit difficult, at

first, to turn the inward eye upon art alone. But it is Hans Holbein whom we have really come to see. And he is here in his plenary pomp: in chalk drawings, miniatures in hone-stone, burnt wood, and enamel, and in easel-pictures of every sort.

No. 42, in the West Gallery, is an immense cartoon with outlines pricked, made for a fresco in the old Whitehall, comprising a life-sized group of the two Henries and their respective queens, the estate of only one of whom, had, as the modern world knows, finality. It dates from the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Henry the Eighth. His admirable housekeeper of a father, long dead, is, as in Lord Braye's comely picture (No. 33), a white-haired, mild, austerely gracious presence, at physical variance, at every point, from his burly heir. The latter stands *à califourchon*, well to the front, his arms akimbo: a figure familiar to us as the alphabet, and with the force and value of spoken truth. There are many authentic Holbein portraits of the King in this collection, and their unanimity is without parallel. In the masterpiece labelled No.

126, Waagen "finds a brutal egotism, an obstinacy and a harshness of feeling such as I have never yet seen in any human countenance. In the eyes, too, there is the suspicious watchfulness of a wild beast; so that I became quite uncomfortable from looking at it." Holbein's greedy instinct for form wreaks itself on Henry's characteristic contours: everywhere you recognize the puffy flesh, the full jaw and beady eyes, the level close-shaven head; and, more than all, the round, protuberant, malformed chin, like an onion set in the thin growth of carroty beard. Other artists slur over that ugly little chin, but not the man from Augsburg. Hardly do the elaborations of embroidered doublets and jewelled surcoats with barrel sleeves, laughably misplaced on this hogshead Majesty, give the great court-painter such easy pleasure in the handling. Yet as Vandyke,

"Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy,"

is prone to temper the commonplace to his chivalrous ideals; as Sir Joshua "sees partially, slightly, tenderly, catches the flying lights of things, the momentary

glooms, paints also partially, tenderly, never with half his strength," — so here is one too much bent on his accuracy and his reporter's conscience. Nobody who has seen these thirty or more versions of the hero of matrimony according to Holbein, will ever forget his power in clinching an impression. High, low, east, west, straddles the royal Harry: a magnificent piece of pork, arrayed like Solomon in all his glory. There is no contradiction from first to last; the testimony is not patched. No historiographer, in face of them, has any option to think of Henry but as Holbein's brush thought of him. Mr. Froude is hereby checkmated: his idol crumbles. The perfectly square florid countenance, the little crowded features, the indomitable leer under the flat hat and feather, the expanding velvets, the sturdy calves of which their owner was vain, the whole air of an aggressive and successful personality, — these are your statistics, "State papers," as Hazlitt once happily called them. They do not allege; they convict. This, they seem to say, is he who celebrated his wedding on his old love's burial-day, who sacrificed the truest

liegemen in his islands, and who made war on the architecture of monastic England in a maintained fit of crazy and vulgar spite. The ornate No. 55 is also a terrific "human document." Yet the special plea, for all that, is not fair; it is only as fair as Holbein can make it. He had not the centrifugal mind. To look before and after is not his wont. The royal sitter is impeached unjustly.

> "Tell Isabel the Queen I looked not thus,
> When for her sake I ran at tilt in France."

Was this the mirror of chivalry in his youth? the handsome Henry of joust and debate, who walked by choice with thinking men, in an atmosphere of Christian statecraft and the fine arts? he who wrote devotional essays, and composed winning music? If so, that Henry has no survival here. Something of him must have lingered about the later aspect of the tyrant King, as good is sure to do wherever its shrine has been; but Holbein failed (for we cannot think he refused) to bear it witness.

It is pleasant to find Holbein in person looking from No. 52: a noble portrait, in

distemper, from his own hand, in his prime. It makes one revert, however, to the prior Holbein, also done by himself, now in the Museum at Basle: a sweet sketch, which, judged by the face alone, could instantly be relegated to the era where it belongs, that of the dawn of humanism. There, the straight hair has yet a soft ring or two over the brow; the mouth is sensitive, but ironic; the young neck full of power; the eyebrows are diversely arched, as if in passing press of thought; the whole mien already suggests, as Woltman says, "seriousness and mental superiority." This picture before us is very splendid, but it is not so reassuring. Holbein's body-color at Berlin, of the chunk-headed, thick-bearded, small-eyed Englishman, — a miracle of a drawing, — may be accepted as the crass original John Bull. With all manner of exception in favor of the painter, Holbein was rather that sort of a man. His work had the warrant of his genius: what he saw was what his whole habit fitted him to see. Each century has its own casts of physiognomy, greatly accentuated once by the passive individuality, now, alas, vanished, of

costume. There seem to have been, in Holbein's day, but two physical values: the grave, alert, "sunnily-ascetic" men, who were dissatisfied with the time; and the able bold time-servers, who kept their flesh upon them, and their peace. Henry himself, at his best, was the second type, as Erasmus was the first. It is with a sigh of relief that one turns from the imperious presence which chases you through the West Gallery, and "lards the lean earth as he walks along," to confront, in another room, the memorials of his little son.

Of these, there are some sixteen portraits, exclusive of the drawings, and five of them are from Holbein's hand. The half-length lent by the Earl of Yarborough, No. 174, shows a charming child with a great hat tied under his chin; No. 182, Lord Petre's, is a spirited bust on a misty green ground; in No. 190, a gem of the first water, belonging to the Earl of Denbigh's collection, the Prince stands, lovely as a lily, habited in white and cloth-of-gold, with a long fur-lined crimson surcoat, his slender beautifully-modelled hand closed on a dagger. The family beauty

begins and ends with Edward, in his grave at sixteen; there is no Edward, by Holbein, older than six. As usual, the master draws you from his own art to the root of the thing before you, even as he drew Ruskin from counting his skeleton's clacking ribs in the Dance of Death: and forthwith you begin speculating on the moral qualities of the royal bud, "the boy-patron of boys." There is no denying that he looks like Another. Yes, he is very Henry-the-Eighthy! when you study him at short range. And he had a unique talent, you suddenly remember, for signing the death-warrants of uncles. Princess Mary, from the same hand, is decorously dressed; she has flat hair and brown eyes. Acid and dismal as she is, you would say at once of her, that she is sincere, — *sine cera*, without wax. She also resembles a parent: but it is Katharine of Aragon. No. 94 (one mentally thanks Mr. Huth for a sight of it in the original!) is the warmest thing in the room: the famous portrait of Sir Thomas More. The nap of his claret velvet sleeves appears never to have lost a particle of its lustre. One knows not

which to admire the most in this picture: the breadth of composition, the precision and sweep of line, or the spiritual dignity and repose. Its mate, the half-length of Sir John More, the father, Senior Judge of the King's Bench, "*homo civilis, suavis, innocens*," is very nearly as superb, though it has less body. Both were done by Holbein during his happy stay at Chelsea. His presentation of More is always inestimable: you recognize, by some little accent ever and anon, that he painted him with enjoyment and understanding love. "Thy painter, dearest Erasmus," wrote More, "is an amazing artist." It was on a hint of the Earl of Arundel that Holbein went to England. When asked there who had persuaded him to cross the Channel, he could not remember the nobleman's name, though he remembered his face: one turn of the pen, and the answer was apparent. But it was Erasmus who gave him his letters of introduction, who was in reality his patron; for Erasmus sent him to More, and from the Chancellor's roof he passed to that of the King, at an honorarium of three hundred pounds a year. And as he painted these friends,

so he painted their colleagues: with sympathy and authority. Our most intimate knowledge of the finer spirits among the publicists of the sixteenth century comes from Holbein's canvas. We cannot fail to observe "the weight of thought and care in these studious heads of the Reformation." Such a weight is in every Holbein of Colet and Warham and More, of Melanchthon, Froben, Erasmus himself, (borne in him, as in More, with an almost whimsical sweetness), and of "the thoroughly Erasmic being," Bonifacius Amerbach. Looking at them, and mindful of their diverse sagacities, one must corroborate the celebrated wish of Goethe that the business of the Reformation, spoiled, as a work of art, by Luther and Calvin, and as a theological issue, by the popular interference, had been left to the trained leaders: to men like these in one generation, and to men like Pole and Hugo Grotius in the next!

Wolsey and the great and quietly-handled Archbishop Warham hang here together in strange posthumous amity, parted only by the panel of Anne, Bluebeard's fourth Queen, which Holbein went to Cleves to

paint. A very undistinguished person No. 108 must have been, quite worthy of her safe suburban pensioner's life, and the humorous commuting title of the King's Sister. All her forerunners and successors are here to the life, limned by Holbein's brush and pencil. The dearth of female beauty, from 1509 to 1547, was truly extraordinary, if we are to believe the believable pigments before us. The women of the court have the fullest possible representation, with the adjunct of exceptionally picturesque, though stiff, attire. But among them all, it would be a hard task to bestow the apple upon the belle, for a reason quite other than any known to Paris on Ida. Even Anne Boleyn, full-lipped and gay, has but an upper-housemaid prettiness. It is small compensation that most of them were learned. The best female portrait, admirably hung, is No. 92: the young Duchess of Milan, in Holbein's latest and largest manner. The demure girl, set in novel blacks and whites of her widow's mourning, posed with consummate simplicity, has always an admiring crowd in front of her. Wornum's critical

last word echoes: it is "a stupendous picture." But the Duchess might be Lancelot Gobbo's sweetheart, so far as the actual bearing and expression are concerned. No wonder that the fright Gloriana passed for all that was comely and thoroughbred! Could it be that her subjects had no loftier criterion in the memory of their own mothers?

The fine flower of the picture department of the Tudor Exhibition is the Queen's loan from Windsor Library: eighty-nine drawings on tinted paper, ranged on the screens of the West and South Galleries. Queen Caroline, in George the Second's time, found them in a Kensington Palace cupboard, and had them framed. (We know nothing else so nice of that bore of a martyr.) Behold Holbein's methods running free! In decisive and rapid chalk lines, with a mere suggestion of color, or a touch, here and there, of India ink, he gives us his English contemporaries: some in playful perfection commended to posterity, as a matter of a dozen conscientious touches. How he delights in a hollow cheek, a short silken beard, an outstanding ear,

or the hair sprouting oddly on the temples! Despite his uncompromising truth of locality, the result is often of astounding delicacy: notably in the heads of Lords Clinton and Vaux, and that of Prince Edward. Most of these Windsor sheets are studies for pictures; and thus we have Holbein's splendid roll of familiar faces over again; but that of Sir John Godsalve is complete, and in body-colors, of grand breadth and tone. The catalogue names were affixed much later, and are not perfectly trustworthy: but those indicated as Sir Harry Guilford, the Russells, Earls of Bedford, the Howards, Lord Wentworth, Sir Thomas Eliott, and John Poins (the latter overbrimming with individual force), lead in interest and technique. No. 514, the scholarly and lovable Eliott, is perhaps the thing one would choose, of all here, to win Holbein the admiration of those who have yet to appreciate him. Its refined finish and bold conception are in unique balance. Sir Thomas Eliott, in half profile, is grave and plain. But whoever likes to pay homage to intelligent human goodness, will delight in this report of him. You feel that

Rembrandt would have turned from his cloudless, treeless tableland of a countenance; and that such as Sir Peter Lely would have found him cryptic enough, and so smothered him in ultramarine draperies. But among Holbein's men, after the Jörg Gyze (1532) in the Museum at Berlin, the Hubert Morett in the Dresden Gallery (1537), and the Young Man with a Falcon (1542) in the Gallery of the Hague, after his immortal major achievements, in short, one might rank this little unshaded frost-fine drawing of Sir Thomas Eliott, a sitter placed forever on the hither side of death.

But the ladies, again, in their close bodices and triangular head-dresses, generally come off second-best. Holbein's elemental candor befitted them not. Failing to be themselves in full, they are more or less Elisabeth-Schmiddy! tinctured with reminiscences of the artist's muddy-tempered *Hausfrau* at home in Basle. The one quality they cannot convey is breeding, social distinction. Holbein's woman may have youth, goodness, capacity, even authority; but

"*Was* the lady such a lady?"

You miss the aroma of manners. The mystery of sex is absent, too: a thing the Florentines never missed, and which Gainsborough and Romney found it impossible not to convey. When you see Holbein's men, you wish you had known them; but his women merely remind you that he was a very great painter. It is well to remember, nevertheless, that he had no very great woman to paint: no such patroness, for instance, as "Anne, Dorset, Pembroke, and Montgomery." His organ-hand does what it can for souls frangible as lutes. Wherever there is sincerity, kindness, or a brave soul, wherever there is sagacity or thought in these Tudor faces, their delineator makes it tell. Did the she-visionaries, if there were any rich enough to engage Holbein, did the persons born in Hawthorne's "brown twilight atmosphere," habitually avoid his studio? No kirtled aristocracy of any age or country was ever so flat and dozy. Surrey occupied himself in scorning "the new men" of his day; and it is conceivable that new men abounded, to fill the places depopulated by the Wars of the Roses, when all that was gallant and sig-

nificant in the upper ranks, seemed, in one way or another, to have gone under. But the Wars of the Roses touched not the female succession in the ducal and baronial houses: and the wonder remains that Honthorst and Vandyke just after Holbein, and Jan de Mabuse just before him, could have found, among English maids and wives, the lofty graces which he never saw. Exceptions might be made, however, in favor of Elizabeth, Lady Rich; for "high-erected thought" is bodily manifest in her, as in the dark-eyed Lady Lister, and in Lady Surrey, a sweet patient good woman who had known tears. Lady Butts is pleasingly modern. At what four-to-six has one met her? All the ladies of the More family are alluring acquaintances; and no one is to be envied who does not declare for Lady Richmond, with her absurd cap and feather, the big water-drop-shaped pearls in her ears, the downcast lids, and that delicious, kissable, cheerful mouth!

Our famous old friend, the great sovereign who saw fit to box the ears of offending gentlemen, and make war upon their wives, possesses the North Gallery.

Pale, beaked, sinister; amiably shrewd, like Becky Sharp; now as a priggish infant with a huge watery head, anon as a parrot-like old woman; here with dogs frisking about her, and there with a grimace which would scatter a pack of dogs to the four winds; always swathed in inexpressible finery, Elizabetha Dei Gratia Regina arises on the awed spectator's eye. Her vanities were fairly inherited from her straddling sire. Any authentic portrait of her is a mass of fluff and sparkle, an elaborate cobweb several feet square, in which, after much search and many barricades of haberdashery surmounted, you shall light upon the spectral spider who inhabits them. There is nothing much more entertaining in this world than a study of the royal and virginal wardrobe. Those were epic clothes! They defy analysis, from the geyser of lace circling the neck and ears in a dozen cross-currents, to the acute angles of the diamonded, rubied stomacher, and the stiff acre of petticoat. They brought employment and money to artists, who painted in the significant occupant as they could, and they serve to illustrate for

ever the science of dress-making, whose heraldic shield should bear Eve couchant on one side, and Elizabeth rampant on the other. In the balcony above is No. 484, an appalling picture of Her Majesty, in a ruff like isinglass. When we recall that, grown old, she had all her mirrors broken, and all paintings of herself which were not liars destroyed, what must have been the terrors of that countenance for which such a copy as this proved sufficiently flattering! Despite Zucchero, Hilliard, and Pourbus, he is the wisest man alive who knows how that illustrious lady really looked. And as you glance about, be it on the first visit or the twentieth, full of optical and consequent historical bewilderment; as you see how to right and left of Queen Bess the hosts of that wonderful reign have gathered again, you become keenly aware that one who died in the parish of S. Andrew Undershaft, in 1543, "should have died hereafter." Hunger for that bygone genius is in your thought there: O for an hour of *Hans Ho. pinxit!*

1890.

On the Delights of an Incognito

ON THE DELIGHTS OF AN INCOGNITO

PERFECT happiness, which we pretend is so difficult to get at, lies at either end of our sentient pole: in being intimately recognized, or else in evading recognition altogether. An actor finds it inspiring to step forth from the wings, steeled cap-à-pie in self-consciousness, before a great houseful of enthusiastic faces and hands; but if he ever knows a moment yet more ecstatic, it is when he is alone in the hill-country, swimming in a clear pool, and undemonstratable as human save by his habiliments hanging on a bush, and his dog, sitting on the margin under, doubtfully eyeing now these, now the unfamiliar large white fish which has shed them. Thackeray once said that the purest satisfaction he ever took, was in hearing one woman name

him to another as the author of *Vanity Fair*, while he was going through a ragged and unbookish London lane. It is at least as likely that Aristides felt pleasure in accosting his own ostracizer, and helping him to ruin the man whom he was tired of hearing called The Just. And the young Charles the Second, between his defeat at Worcester, and his extraordinary escape over sea, was able to report, with exquisite relish, the conduct of that honest Hambletonian, who "dranke a goode glass of beare to me, and called me Brother Roundhead." To be indeed the King, and to masquerade as Will Jones, *alias* Jackson, "in a green cloth jump coat and breeches worn to shreds," in Pepys' sympathetic detail, with "little rolls of paper between his toes," and "a long thorn stick crooked three or four several ways" in his artificially-browned hand, has its dangers; but it is the top, nevertheless, of mundane romance and felicity.

In fact, there is no enjoyment comparable to walking about "unwept, unhonored, and unsung," once you have become, through your misfortune rather than your fault, ever so little of a public personage.

Lucky was the good Haroun Al Rasch-id, inasmuch as, being duly himself by day, he could stroll abroad, and be im-measurably and magnificently himself by night. Nothing but duty dragged him back from his post of spectator and specu-lator at the street-corner, to the narrow concrete humdrum of a throne. But there are, and have always been, in every age, men of genius who cling to the big cloak and the dark lantern, and who travel pseudonymously from the cradle to the grave; who keep apart, meddle not at all, have only distant and general dealings with their kind, and, in an inno-cent and endearing system of thieving, come to understand and explain every-thing social, without being once under-stood or explained themselves, or once breaking an inviolable privacy.

> "Not even the tenderest heart and next our own,
> Knows half the reason why we smile or sigh."

The arrangement is excellent: it induces and maintains dignity. Most of us who suffer keenly from the intolerable burden of self, are grateful to have our fits of sanity by the hour or the week, when we

may eat lotos and fern-seed, and die out of the ken of *The Evening Bugaboo.* To be clean of mortal contact, to resolve into grass and brooks, to be a royal nobody, with the dim imbecile spectrum taken to be you, by your acquaintanceship, temporarily hooted out of existence, is the privilege which the damned on a Saratoga piazza are not even blest enough to groan for. "Oh," cried Hazlitt, heartily inhaling liberty at the door of a country inn, after a march, "Oh, it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and public opinion, to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of Nature, and to 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 or meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than The Gentleman in the Parlour." Surely, surely, to be Anonymous is better than to be Alexander, and to have no care is a more sumptuous wealth than to have sacked ten cities. Cowley said it engagingly, in his little essay on

Obscurity: "*Bene qui latuit, bene vixit*: he lives well, that has lain well hidden; in which, if it be a truth, I 'll swear the world has been sufficiently deceived. For my part, I think it is; and that the pleasantest condition of life is in incognito. . . . It is, in my mind, a very delightful pastime for two good and agreeable friends to travel up and down together, in places where they are by nobody known, nor know anybody. It was the case of Æneas and his Achates, when they walked invisibly about the fields and streets of Carthage. Venus herself

"'A veil of thickened air around them cast,
That none might know or see them as they passed.'"

The atmosphere was so liberally allowed, in the Middle Ages, to be thick with spirits, that the subject arose in the debates of the schools whether more than a thousand and fifty-seven of them could execute a saraband on the point of a needle. We are not informed by what prior necessity they desired to dance; but something, after all, must be left to the imagination. Dancing, in their case, must be, as with lambs and children, the spon-

taneous witness of light hearts; and what is half so likely to make a shade whimsically frolicsome, as the sense of his own absolute intangibility in our world of wiseacres and mind-readers and myopic Masters of Arts? To watch, to listen, to know the heretofore and the hereafter, and to be at the same time dumb as a nail, and skilful at dodging a collision with flesh and blood, must be, when you come to think of it, a delightful vocation for ghosts. It is, then, in some sort, anticipatory of part of our business in the twenty-sixth century of the Christian era, to becloud now our name and nativity, and,

> "Beholding, unbeheld of all,"

to move musingly among strange scenes, with the charity and cheerfulness of those delivered from death. I am told that L. R. had once an odd spiritual adventure, agreeable and memorable, which demonstrated how much pleasure there is to be had out of these moods of detachment and non-individuality. He had spent the day at a library desk, and had grown hazy with no food and much reading. As he walked homeward in the evening,

he felt, for sheer buoyancy of mind, like that thin Greek who had to fill his pockets with lead, for fear of being blown away by the wind. It happened that he was obliged to pass, on the way to his solitary lodging of the night, the house where he was eternally the expected guest: the house of one with whom and with whose family he was on a most open and affectionate footing. Their window-shades were drawn, not so low but that he could see the shining dinner-table dressed in its pomp, and the cosy ring of merry faces closing it in. There was S., the bonniest of wives, smiling, in her pansy-colored gown, with a pearl comb in her hair: and opposite her was little S., in white, busy with the partridge; and there was A. H., the jolly artist cousin; and, facing the window at the head of his own conclave, (*quos inter Augustus recumbens purpureo bibit ore nectar!*), sat dear O., with his fine serious genial head bobbing over the poised carving-knife, as he demolished, perhaps, some quoted sophism of Schopenhauer. There were welcome and warmth inside there for R.: how well he knew it! But the silent day just over

had laid a spell upon his will; he looked upon them all, in their bright lamplight, like any vagrant stranger from the street, and hurried on, never quite so paradoxically happy in his life as when he quitted that familiar pane without rapping, and went back to the dark and the frost, unapprehended, impersonal, aberrant, a spirit among men.

1893.

The Puppy: A Portrait

THE PUPPY: A PORTRAIT

HE is the twenty-sixth in direct descent, and his coat is like amber damask, and his blue eyes are the most winning that you ever saw. They seem to proclaim him as much too good for the vulgar world, and worthy of such zeal and devotion as you, only you, could give to his helpless infancy. And, with a blessing upon the Abbot of Clairvaux, who is popularly supposed to have invented his species, you carry him home from the Bench show, and in the morning, when you are told that he has eaten a yard and a quarter of the new stair-carpet, you look into those dreamy eyes again: no reproach shall reach him, you swear, because you stand forevermore between. And he grows great in girth, and in character the very chronicle and log-book of his noble ancestry; he may be erratic, but he

puts charm and distinction into everything he does. Your devotedness to his welfare keeps him healthful and honest, and absurdly partial to the squeak of your boots, or the imperceptible aroma which, as it would seem, you dispense, a mile away. The thing which pleases you most is his ingenuous childishness. It is a fresh little soul in the rogue's body:

> "Him Nature giveth for defence
> His formidable innocence."

You see him touch pitch every day, associating with the sewer-building Italians, with their strange oaths; with affected and cynical "sales-ladies" in shops (she of the grape-stall being clearly his too-seldom-relenting goddess); and with the bony Thomas-cat down street, who is an acknowledged anarchist, and whose infrequent suppers have made him sour-complexioned towards society, and "thereby disallowed him," as dear Walton would say, "to be a competent judge." But Pup loses nothing of his sweet congenital absent-mindedness; your bringing-up sits firmly upon him and keeps him young. He expands into a giant, and such as meet

him on a lonely road have religion until he has passed. Seven, nine, ten months go over his white-hooded head; and behold, he is nigh a year old, and still Uranian. He begins to accumulate facts, for his observation of late has not been unscientific; but he cannot generalize, and on every first occasion he puts his foot in it. A music-box transfixes him; the English language, proceeding from a parrot in a cage, shakes his reason for days. A rocking-horse on a piazza draws from him the only bad word he knows. He sees no obligation to respect persons with mumps, or with very red beards, or with tools and dinner-pails; in the last instance, he acts advisedly against honest labor, as he perceives that most overalls have kicks in them. Following Plato, he would reserve his haughty demeanor for slaves and servants. Moreover, before the undemonstrated he comes hourly to a pause. If a wheelbarrow, unknown hitherto among vehicles, approach him from his suburban hill, he is aware of the supernatural; but he will not flinch, as he was wont to do once; rather will he stand four-square, with eyebrows and crinkled ears vocal

with wonder and horror. Then the man back of the moving bulk speaks over his truck to you, in the clear April evening: "Begorra, 't is his furrust barry!" and you love the man for his accurate affectionate sense of the situation. When Pup is too open-mouthed and curious, when he dilates, in fact, with the wrong emotion, it reflects upon you, and reveals the flaws in your educational system. He blurts out dire things before fine ladies. If he hear one of them declaiming, with Delsarte gestures, in a drawing-room, he appears in the doorway, undergoing symptoms of acutest distress, and singing her down, professedly for her own sake; and afterward he pities her so, and is so chivalrously drawn toward her in her apparent aberration, that he lies for hours on the flounce of her gown, eyeing you, and calumniating you somewhat by his vicarious groans and sighs. But ever after, Pup admits the recitation of tragic selections as one human folly more.

He is so big and so unsophisticated, that you daily feel the incongruity, and wish, in a vague sort of way, that there was a street boarding-school in your town, where he could rough it away from an

adoring family, and learn to be responsible and self-opinionated, like other dogs. He has a maternal uncle, on the estate across the field: a double-chinned tawny ogre, good-natured as a baby, and utterly rash and improvident, whose society you cannot covet for your tender charge. One fine day, Pup is low with the distemper, and evidence is forthcoming that he has visited, under his uncle's guidance, the much-deceased lobster thrown into hotel tubs. After weeks of anxious nursing, rubbings in oil, and steamings with vinegar, during which time he coughs and wheezes in a heartbreaking imitation of advanced consumption, he is left alone a moment on his warm rug, with the thermometer in his special apartment steady at seventy-eight degrees, and plunges out into the winter blast. Hours later, he returns; and the vision of his vagabond uncle, slinking around the house, announces to you in what companionship he has been. Plastered to the skull in mud and icicles, wet to the bone, jaded, guilty, and doomed now, of course, to die, Pup retires behind the kitchen table. The next morning he is well. The moral, to him at least, is

that our uncle is an astute and unappreciated person, and a genuine man of the world.

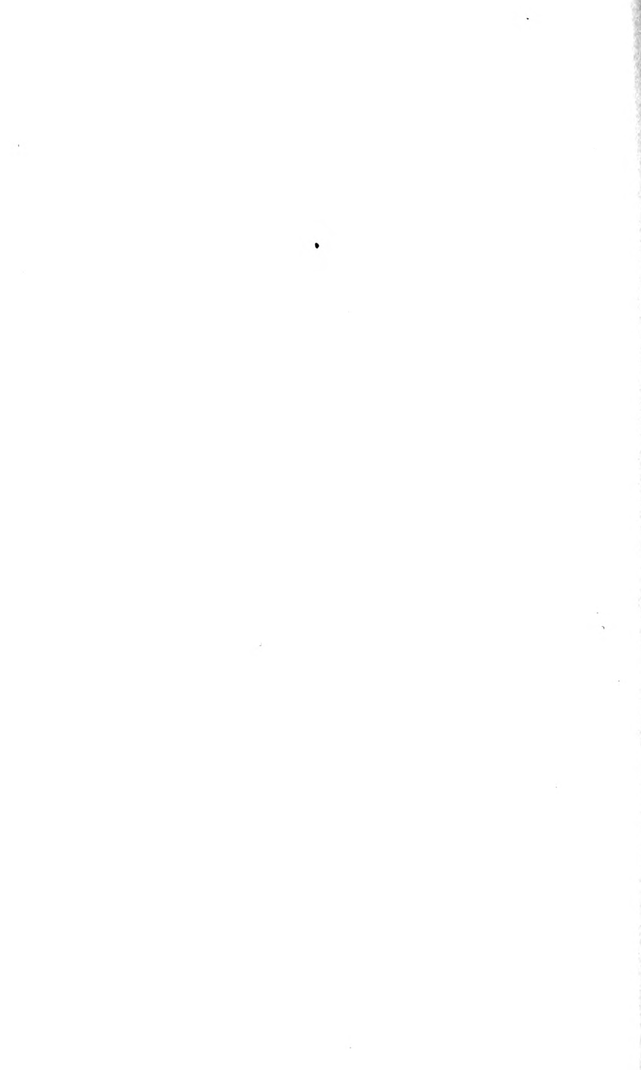
Yet our uncle, with all his laxity, has an honorable heart, and practises the *maxima reverentia puero.* It is not from him that Pup shall learn his little share of iniquity. Meanwhile, illumination is nearing him in the shape of a little old white bull-terrier of uncertain parentage, with one ear, and a scar on his neck, and depravity in the very lift of his stumped tail. This active imp, recently come to live in the neighborhood, fills you with forebodings. You know that Pup must grow up sometime, must take his chances, must fight and be fooled, must err and repent, must exhaust the dangerous knowledge of the great university for which his age at last befits him. The ordeal will harm neither him nor you: and yet you cannot help an anxious look at him, full four feet tall from crown to toe, and with a leg like an obelisk, preserving unseasonably his ambiguous early air of exaggerated goodness. One day he follows you from the station, and meets the small Mephisto on the homeward path. They

dig a bone together, and converse behind trees; and when you call Pup, he snorts his initial defiance, and dances away in the tempter's wake. Finally, your whistle compels him, and he comes soberly forward. By this time the ringleader terrier is departing, with a diabolical wink. You remember that, a moment before, he stood on a mound, whispering in your innocent's beautiful dangling ear, and you glance sharply at Pup. Yes, it has happened! He will never seem quite the same again, with

—"the contagion of the world's slow stain"

beginning in his candid eyes. He is a dog now. He knows.

1893.



On Dying Considered as a Dramatic Situation

ON DYING CONSIDERED AS A DRAMATIC SITUATION

A MAN of thought wears himself out, standing continually on the defensive. The more original a character, the more it is at war with common conditions, the more it wastes its substance scourging the tides and charging windmills ; and this being recognized, the exceptional person, your poet or hero, is expected to show an ascetic pallor, to eat and sleep little, to have a horrible temper, and to die at thirty-seven. Has he an active brain, he must pay for it by losing all the splendid passivity, inner and outer, which belongs to oxen and philosophers. Nor, on the other hand, will stupidity and submission promote longevity : for this is a bullying world. A wight with no mind to end himself by fretting and overdoing, is charitably ended by the action of his superiors,

social or military. How many privates had out of Balaklava but a poor posthumous satisfaction! The Saxon soldier does not shed his skin in times of peace: he is the same in garrisons and barracks as amid the roar of guns; and his ruling passion is still to stand in herds and be killed. A few years ago, an infantry company, in the south of England, were marching into the fields for rifle-practice. Filing through a narrow lane, they saw two runaway horses, half-detached from their carriage, round the bend and rush towards them. The officer in charge either did not perceive them so soon as the others, or else he was slow to collect his wits, and give the order to disperse into the hedgerows for safety. As the order, for whichever cause, was not uttered, not a single recruit moved a muscle; but the ranks strode on, with as solid and serene a front as if on dress-parade, straight under those wild hoofs and wheels: and afterwards, what was left of eleven men was cheerfully packed off, not to the cemetery, by great luck, but to the hospital. And in Germany, only the other day, the sergeant who superintends the daily gym-

nastic exercises of a certain camp, marched a small detachment of men, seven or eight in number, into the lake to swim. In went the men, up to their necks and over their heads, and made an immediate and unanimous disappearance. The sergeant, impatient to have them finish their bath, returned presently, and was shocked to discover that they were all drowned! Now, it happened that the seven or eight could not swim a stroke between them, but they thought it unnecessary to make any remark to that effect. Is it not evident that these fine dumb fellows can beat the world at a fight? Yet their immense practical value has no artistic significance. They strike the unintelligent attitude. It is no part of a private's business to exert his choice, his volition; and without these, he loses pertinence. Therefore, to wear the eternal "piece of purple" in a ballad, you must be at least a corporal.

The mildest and sanest of us has a sneaking admiration for a soldier: lo, it is because his station implies a disregard of what we call the essential. The only elegant, gratifying exit of such a one is in artillery-smoke. A boy reads of Winkel-

ried and d'Assas with a thrill of satisfaction. Hesitation, often most meritorious, is unforgivable in those who have espoused a duty and a risk. Courage is the most ordinary of our virtues: it ought to win no great plaudits; but for one who withholds it, and "dares not put it to the touch," we have tremendous vituperations. In short, that man makes but a poor show thenceforward among his fellows, who having had an eligible chance to set up as a haloed ghost, evades it, and forgets the serviceable maxim of Marcus Aurelius, that "part of the business of life is to lose it handsomely." Of like mind was Musonius Rufus, the teacher of Epictetus: "Take the first chance of dying nobly, lest, soon after, dying indeed come to thee, but noble dying nevermore." Once in a while, such counsels stir a fellow-mortal beyond reason, and persuade him "for a small flash of honor to cast away himself." And if so, it proves that at last the right perception and application of what we are has dawned upon him.

Though we get into this world by no request of our own, we have a great will to stay in it: our main desire, despite a

thousand buffets of the wind, is to hang on to the branch. The very suicide-elect, away from spectators, oftenest splashes back to the wharf. Death is the one visitor from whom we scurry like so many children, and terrors thrice his size we face with impunity at every turn. The real hurt and end-all may be in the shape of a fall, a fire, a gossamer-slight misunderstanding. Or "the catastrophe is a nuptial," as Don Adriano says in the comedy. But we can breast out all such venial calamities, so that we are safe from that which heals them. We have, too, an unconscious compassion for the men of antiquity. Few, if it came to the point, would change day for day, and be Alexander, on the magnificent consideration that, although Alexander was an incomparable lion, Alexander is dead. Herrick's ingenuous verse floats into memory:

> "I joy to see
> Myself alive: this age best pleaseth me."

Superfluous adorners of the nineteenth century, we have no enthusiasm to be what our doom makes us, mere gradators, little mounting buttresses of a coral-reef, atoms

atop of several layers, and presently buried under several more. We would strut, live insects for ever, working and waltzing over our progenitors' bones. Seventy-five flushing years are no boon to us, if at that tender period's end, we must be pushed aside from the wheel of the universe, and swept up like so much dust and chaff. Nor does it help us, when it comes to the inevitable deposal, to recall that while there were as yet no operas, menus, nor puns, one Methusalem and his folk had nine lazy centuries of it, and that their polar day, which was our proper heritage, vanished with them, and beggared the almanac. Appreciation of life is a modern art: it seems vexing enough that just in inverse proportion to the growing capacity of ladies and gentlemen, is the ever-diminishing room allotted wherein to exhibit it to "the scoffing stars." Time has stolen from us our decades sacred to truancy and the circus, to adventure and loafing. Where is the age apiece in which to explode shams, to do vast deeds, to generalize, to learn a hawk from a hernshaw, to be good — O to be good! an hour before bedtime? Evening for us should be a

dogma *in abstracto;* seas and suns should change; horizons should stretch incalculably, cities bulge over their boundaries, deserts thicken with carriages, polite society increase and abound in caves and balloons, and in starlit tavern doorways on Matterhorn top: and still, crowded and jostled by less favored humanity, elbowing it through extinct and unborn multitudes, we would live, live! and there should be no turf broken save by the plough, and no urns except for roses.

It demonstrates what an amusing great babe a man is, that his love of life is usually equivalent to love of duration of life. To be ninety, we take to mean that one has had ninety years' worth out of the venture: a calculation born of the hoodwinking calendar, and of a piece with Dogberry's deductions. But this estimable existence of ours is measured by depths and not by lengths; it is not uncommon for those who have compassed its greatest reach to be translated young, and wept over by perspicuous orators. And the smug person who expires "full of years," and empty, forsooth, of all things else, whose life is indeed covered, in several

senses, by a life-insurance, is thought to be the enviable and successful citizen. It is quite as well that the gods have allowed us no vote concerning our own fates: it would be too hard a riddle to guess whether it be a dignified thing to continue, or when it is a profitable hour to cease. A greedy soul, desiring to live, reaps his wish, like Endymion, between moonrise and dawn, and gapes, yet unaware, for a bank-account and octogenarianism. Why wouldst thou grow up, sirrah? "To be a philosopher? a madman. An alchemist? a beggar. A poet? *esurit:* an hungry jack." Mere possibility of further sensation is a curious object of worship and desire. It has no meaning, save in relation to its starry betters in whose courts it is a slave, for whose good it may become a victim. A lover protesting to his lady that she is dearer than his life, is paying her, did he but consider it, a tricksy trivial compliment: as if he had said that she was more precious than a prejudice, adorable beyond a speculation. On the negative side only, in the subjective application, life is dear. Certainly, one can conceive of no more monstrous wrong to

a breathing man than to announce his demise. Swift's mortuary joke on Partridge is the supreme joke. A report that you are extinct damages your reputation beyond repair. We may picture a vision of wrath bursting into the editor's office: "I am told that yesterday you had my name, sir, in your column of Deaths. I demand contradiction." Unto whom the editor: "*The Evening Bugaboo* never contradicts itself. But I will, with pleasure, put you in, to-night, under the heading of Births." Some considerations are to the complainant a fiery phooka: strive as he will to adjust them, he gets thrown, and bruises his bones.

Life is legal tender, and individual character stamps its value. We are from a thousand mints, and all genuine; despite our infinitely diverse appraisements, we "make change" for one another. So many ideals planted are worth the great gold of Socrates; so many impious laws broken are worth John Brown. We may give ourselves in penny fees for horses, social vogue, tobacco, books, a journey; or be lavished at once for some good outranking them all. And of the two dan-

gers of hoarding and spending, the former seems a thousand times more imminent and appalling. Our moralists, who have done away with duels, and taught us the high science of solidarity, have deflected us from our collateral relative, the knight-errant, who seemed to go about seeking that which might devour him. But there are times when a prince is called suddenly to his coronation, and must throw largesses as he rides; when the commonest workaday life hears a summons, and wins the inalienable right to spill itself on the highway, among the crowd. We make a miserable noisy farcical entry, one by one, on the terrene stage; it is a last dramatic decency that we shall learn to bow ourselves out with gallantry, be it even among the drugs and pillows of a too frequent lot. But the enviable end is the other: some situations have inherent dignity, and exist already in the play. Death in battle is (for the commissioned officer) a gracefully effective mode of extinction; so is any execution for principle's sake. The men who fill the historic imagination are the men who strove and failed, and put into port at Traitors' Gate. The political

scaffold, in fact, is an artistic creation. When a scholar looks up, the first eyes he meets are the eyes of those who stand there, in cheerful acquiescence, "alive, alert, immortal." "An axe," says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "is a much less affliction than a strangury." While the headsman awaited on every original inspiration, under "hateful Henry" as under Nero, life certainly had a romance and gusto unknown to modern spirits. The rich possibilities of any career got, at some time, congested tragically into this. How readily any one might see that, and welcome the folly and ignominy which drove him to an illustrious early grave! Raleigh, at the last, kisses the yet bloodless blade "which ends this strange eventful history," saying: "'T is a sharp medicine, but a cure for all diseases." Disguised and hunted, Campion of S. John's, following his duty, steals along the Harrow Road, by Tyburn tree, and passing it, in a sort of awful love-longing, and as if greeting the promised and foreordained, smilingly raises his hat. Not by grace only are men "so in love with death," but by habit, by humor, and through economic effort. Logic as

well as faith understands the evangel: "Whoso loseth his life shall find it." The hero can await, without a flutter, the disarming of his hand and hope; for he can never be stolen upon unawares. His prayer has always been for

> "Life that dares send
> A challenge to its end,
> And when it comes, say, 'Welcome, friend!'"

He must cease *en gentilhomme*, as he has heretofore continued. To have Azrael catch him by the leg, like a scampering spider, is not agreeable to his ideas of etiquette. At any age, after any fashion, it is only the hero who dies; the rest of us are killed off. He resembles Cartright's "virtuous young gentlewoman":

> "Others are dragged away, or must be driven;
> She only saw her time, and stepped to Heaven."

We act out to its close our parable of the great babe, who has clutched his little treasure long and guardedly, unwilling to share it, and from whom, for discipline's sake, it must needs be taken. But the martyr-mind, in conscious disposal, is like the young Perseus, bargaining with Pallas

Athene for a brief existence and glory. The soul meets its final opportunity, as at a masked ball; if it cannot stand and salute, to what end were its fair faculties given? Or, we are all pedestrians in a city, hurrying towards our own firesides, eager, preoccupied, mundane. Perhaps at the turn of a steep street, there is the beauty of sunset, "brightsome Apollo in his richest pomp," the galleons of cloud-land in full sail, every scarlet pennon flying. One or two pause, as if from a sharp call or reminder, and beholding such a revelation, forget the walk and the goal, and are rapt into infinitude. Now, most of us crawl home to decease respectably of "a surfeit of lampreys." We keep the names, however, of those who seem to make their exit to the sound of spiritual trumpets, and who fling our to-morrow's innocent gauds away, to clothe themselves with immortality.

1887.

A Bitter Complaint of the Ungentle Reader

A BITTER COMPLAINT OF THE UNGENTLE READER.

AN editor, a person of authority and supposed discretion, requested a friend of mine, the other day, to write an essay with this weird title: "How to Read a Book of Poems so as to Get the Most Good out of It." My friend, "more than usual calm," politely excused himself, suffering the while from suppressed oratory. He felt that the diabolic suggestion, made in all

"Conscience and tendre herte,"

amounted to a horrible implied doubt concerning the lucidity of himself and other minor bards, publishing to-day and to-morrow. They have become difficult to read, only because a too educational world of readers is determined to find them so. Now, eating is to eat, with variations in

haste, order, quantity, quality, and nocturnal visions: with results, in short; but eating is to eat. Even thus, as it would appear to a plain mind, reading is to read. Can it be that any two or two thousand can wish to be preached at, in order that they may masticate a page correctly, in squads? that they may never forget, like Mr. Gladstone's progeny, to apportion thirty-two bites to every stanza, with the blessing before, and the grace after? No full-grown citizen is under compulsion to read; if he do so at all, let him do it individually, by instinct and favor, for wantonness, for private adventure's sake: and incidental profit be hanged, drawn and quartered! To enter a library honorably, is not to go clam-digging after useful information, nor even after emotions. The income to be secured from any book stands in exact disproportion to the purpose, as it were, of forcing the testator's hand: a moral very finely pointed in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and again in *Aurora Leigh*. To read well is to make an impalpable snatch at whatever item takes your eye, and run. The schoolmaster has a contradictory theory. He would

have us in a chronic agony of inquisitiveness, and with minds gluttonously receptive, not of the little we need (which it is the ideal end and aim of a university education, according to Newman, to perceive and to assimilate) but of the much not meant for us. Wherefore to the schoolmaster there may be chanted softly in chorus: *Ah, mon père, ce que vous dites là est du dernier bourgeois.* The Muse is dying nowadays of over-interpretation. Too many shepherd swains are trying to Get the Most Good out of her. When Caius Scriblerius prints his lyric about the light of Amatoria's eyes, which disperses his melancholy moods, the average public, at least in Boston, cares nothing for it, until somebody in lack of employment discovers that as Saint Patrick's snakes were heathen rites, and as Beatrice Portinari was a system of philosophy, so Amatoria's eyes personify the sun-myth. And Caius shoots into his eleventh edition.

Mr. Browning, perhaps, will continue to bear this sort of enlargement and interfusion; indeed, nothing proves his calibre quite so happily as the fact that his capacious phantasmal figure, swollen with the

gas of much comment and expounding, has a fair and manly look, and can still carry off, as we say, its deplorable circumference. But at the present hour, there is nothing strange in imagining less opaque subjects being hauled in for their share of dissection before Browning societies. Picture, for instance, a conclave sitting from four to six over the sensations of Mrs. Boffkin,

> "Waiting for the Sleary babies to develop Sleary's fits."

(For Mr. Kipling must be a stumbling-block unto some, as unto many a scandal.) Is there no fun left in Israel? Have we to endure, for our sins, that a super-civilization insists on being vaccinated by the poor little poets, who have brought, alas, no instrument but their lyre? Can we no longer sing, without the constraint of doling out separately to the hearer, what rhetoric is in us, what theory of vowel color, what origin and sequences, what occult because non-existent symbolism? without setting up for oracles of dark import, and posing romantically as "greater than we know"? To what a pass has the

ascendant New England readeress brought the harmless babes of Apollo! She seeks to master all that is, and to raise a complacent creation out of its lowland wisdom to her mountainous folly's level; she touches nothing that she does not adorn —with a problem; she approves of music and pictures whose reasonableness is believed to be not apparent to the common herd; she sheds scholastic blight upon "dear Matt Prior's easy jingle," and unriddles for you the theological applications of

> "Says gorging Jack to guzzling Jimmy:
> 'I am extremely hungaree.'"

She is forever waking the wrong passenger: forever falling upon the merely beautiful, and exacting of it what it was never born to yield. The arts have a racial shyness: the upshot of this scrutiny of their innocent faces is that they will be fain to get into a hole and hide away for good. We lay it all to the ladies; for the old lazy unprovincialized world of men was never so astute and excruciating. There were no convenings for the purpose of illuminating the text of Dr. John

Donne, although the provocation was unique. Poets were let alone, once upon a time; and all they did for their own pleasure and sowed broadcast for the pleasure of others, failed not, somehow, to fulfil itself from the beginning unto the end. What is meant for literature now, begotten in simpleness and bred in delight, arises as a quarrel between producer and consumer,

> "And thereof come in the end despondency and madness."

The man's attitude, even yet, towards a book of poetry which is tough to him, is to drop it, even as the gods would have him do; the woman's is to smother it in a sauce of spurious explanation, and gulp it down.

In a sophisticating age, it is the nature of poets to remain young. Their buyers are always one remove nearer to the sick end of the century, and being themselves tainted with a sense of the importance of the scientific, are in so much disqualified to judge of the miracle, the phenomenon, which poetry is. To whomever has an idle and a fresh heart, there is great encourage-

ment in the poetic outlook. The one harassing dread is that modern readers may scorch that hopeful field. They refuse to take us for what we are: they are of one blood with the mediæval Nominalists, who regarded not the existence of the thing, but the name by which they denoted it. They make our small gift futile, and their own palates a torment. We solemnly pronounce our wares, such as they be, handsomer in the swallowing than in the chewing: alas, so far, it is our fate to be chewed. Who can help applying to an adult magazine constituency which yearns to be told How to Read a Book of Poems, the "so help me God" of dear Sir Thomas More? "So help me God, and none otherwise but as I verily think, that many a man buyeth Hell with so much pain, he might have Heaven with less than the one-half."

1894.

Animum non Coelum

ANIMUM NON COELUM

HORACE was not often wrong, in his habitual beautiful utterance of commonplace; but was he not altogether wrong when he gave us the maxim that the traveller may change the sky over him, but not the mind within him? that the mood, the personal condition, is not to be driven forth by any new sea or land, but must cling to a man in his flight, like the pollen under a bee's wing? Sick souls started out from the Rome of Augustus, with intent to court adventure and drown care, even as they do now from Memphremagog and Kalamazoo, U. S. A. These Horace noted, and discouraged with one of his best fatalisms. Human trouble, nevertheless, has for its sign-manual a packed valise and a steamer-ticket. Broken hearts pay most of the bills at European hotels. For they know, better than the wounded in body, that the

one august inevitable relief, the wizard pill against stagnation, is, was, shall ever be, "strange countries for to see." In the long run, self cannot withstand the overwhelming spectacle of other faces, and the vista of other days than ours. Unrest, however caused, must melt away insensibly in the glow of old art, and before the thought, widening the breast, in cities or on the Alpine slopes, of what has been. The tourist, be he of right mettle, falls in love with the world, and with the Will which sustains it. As much solace or exhilaration as comes into the eye and ear, so much evil, in the form of sadness, rebellion, ignorance, passes out from us, as breathed breath into the purer air. Boast as we may, we are not, immigrating, what we were, emigrating. We come away bewitched from the great playhouse of our forefathers; no thorn in the flesh seems so poignant now as it was, in that remembrance. Time, master-workman that he is, annuls and softens grief, and allows joy to sink in and spread. What we alter, surely, is not the same dumb blue ether overhead, but the little carnal roof and heaven domed between that and us.

Travel, to the cheerful, is cheerful business; to the overcast nature it is something better. Upon the smoky and clouded ceiling of his own consciousness, darkened once despite him, but perhaps kept wilfully dark since, "for very wantonness," travel lays her cunning finger. Sudden frescos begin, unawares, to gleam and flush there, in gold and olive and rose, as if Fra Angelico had been set loose with his palette in a sequestered cloister. Your Horace, be it known, was a home-keeper, and, as Stevenson claimed that dogs avoid doing, "talks big of what does not concern him."

There is but one thing which can honorably draw the heart out of an American in Europe. He has wrought for himself the white ideal of government; he belongs to a growing, not a decaying society; there is much without, upon which he looks with wonder and even with pity; for he is, as the monkish chroniclers would say, *filius hujus sæculi*, a child of to-day and to-morrow. In "that state of life to which it has pleased God to call" him, he should be the proclaimed brother of mankind, and the outrider of civiliza-

tion; he has an heroic post and outlook, and these bring their responsibilities: why should he, how can he, forego them for the accidental pleasure to be had in alien capitals? But one thing he sees far away which he can never live to call his, in the west; he cannot transfer hither the yesterday of his own race, the dark charm of London, the glamour of Paris, the majesty and melancholy of Rome. If he has a nature which looks deep and walks slowly, he shall not pass the image of any old kingdom unbeguiled; either to his living senses, or to his distant and hopeless meditations, that world beyond wide waters will seem to him the fairest of created things, like the unbought lamp worth all that Aladdin ever cherished in his narrow youth. For yesterday is ours also, to have and to hold, though it be an oak which grows not within our own garden walls, and is to be reached only by a going forth, and a wrenching of the heart-strings. And that which makes the worthy pilgrim into an exile and a cosmopolite is no vanity, no ambition, no mere restless energy: it is truly the love of man which calleth over seas, and from

towers a great way off. His shrine is some common and unregarded place, a mediæval stair, it may be, worn hollow as a gourd by the long procession of mortality. That concave stone touches him, and makes his blood tingle: it has magic in it, of itself, without a record; for it speaks of the transit of human worth and human vices, both of which Dante makes his Ulysses long for, and seek to understand. It is our sunken footfall, ages ere we were born, while we were on forgotten errands, nursing irrecoverable thoughts. To have marked it, with perhaps the largest emotion of our lives, is to walk Broadway or a Texan tow-path humbler and better ever after.

Who is to be blamed if he do indeed go "abroad," or stay abroad, so strangely finding there, rather than here, the soul's peace? for the soul has rights which may cancel even the duties of the ballot. Of what avail is Americanism, unless it earn for a man the freedom of rival cities, wrap him in a good dream, taking rancor from him, and put him in harmony with all master events gone by? The young Republic has children who come into the

field of historic Christendom, to bathe themselves in the dignity and roominess of life, and to walk gladly among the ever-green traditions, which surge like tall June grass about their knees. What they never had, natural piety teaches them to desire and to worship, and their happy Parthian faces are bright with the setting sun. There are hundreds such, and blessed are they; for they move meanwhile under an innocent spell, and ignobler visions cannot touch them. It is their vocation to make a thronged spiritual solitude of their own. Under the self-same night of stars, they are changed: they have found other minds, more reverent, more chastened, more sensitized. Because they are converts, they cannot always be judged fairly. You shall meet them in summer-time at Bruges and Nuremberg, and in the transept of Westminster Abbey, elbowed by pilgrims of another clay, but ever rapt and mute: "whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth."

1892.

The Precept of Peace

THE PRECEPT OF PEACE

A CERTAIN sort of voluntary abstraction is the oddest and choicest of social attitudes. In France, where all æsthetic discoveries are made, it was crowned long ago: *la sainte indifférence* is, or may be, a cult, and *le saint indifférent* an articled practitioner. For the Gallic mind, brought up at the knee of a consistent paradox, has found that not to appear concerned about a desired good is the only method to possess it; full happiness is given, in other words, to the very man who will never sue for it. This is a secret neat as that of the Sphinx: to "go softly" among events, yet domineer them. Without fear: not because we are brave, but because we are exempt; we bear so charmed a life that not even Baldur's mistletoe can touch us to harm us. Without solicitude: for the essential thing is trained, falcon-like, to light from

above upon our wrists, and it has become with us an automatic motion to open the hand, and drop what appertains to us no longer. Be it renown or a new hat, the shorter stick of celery, or

> "The friends to whom we had no natural right,
> The homes that were not destined to be ours,"

it is all one: let it fall away! since only so, by depletions, can we buy serenity and a blithe mien. It is diverting to study, at the feet of Antisthenes and of Socrates his master, how many indispensables man can live without; or how many he can gather together, make over into luxuries, and so abrogate them. Thoreau somewhere expresses himself as full of divine pity for the "mover," who on May-Day clouds city streets with his melancholy household caravans: fatal impedimenta for an immortal. No: furniture is clearly a superstition. "I have little, I want nothing; all my treasure is in Minerva's tower." Not that the novice may not accumulate. Rather, let him collect beetles and Venetian interrogation-marks; if so be that he may distinguish what is truly extrinsic to him, and bestow

these toys, eventually, on the children of Satan who clamor at the monastery gate. Of all his store, unconsciously increased, he can always part with sixteen-seventeenths, by way of concession to his individuality, and think the subtraction so much concealing marble chipped from the heroic figure of himself. He would be a donor from the beginning; before he can be seen to own, he will disencumber, and divide. Strange and fearful is his discovery, amid the bric-à-brac of the world, that this knowledge, or this material benefit, is for him alone. He would fain beg off from the acquisition, and shake the touch of the tangible from his imperious wings. It is not enough to cease to strive for personal favor; your true *indifférent* is Early Franciscan: caring not to have, he fears to hold. Things useful need never become to him things desirable. Towards all commonly-accounted sinecures, he bears the coldest front in Nature, like a magician walking a maze, and scornful of its flower-bordered detentions. "I enjoy life," says Seneca, "because I am ready to leave it." Meanwhile, they who act with too jealous respect for their morrow of

civilized comfort, reap only indigestion, and crow's-foot traceries for their deluded eye-corners.

Now nothing is farther from *le saint indifférent* than cheap indifferentism, so-called: the sickness of sophomores. His business is to hide, not to display, his lack of interest in fripperies. It is not he who looks languid, and twiddles his thumbs for sick misplacedness, like Achilles among girls. On the contrary, he is a smiling industrious elf, monstrous attentive to the canons of polite society. In relation to others, he shows what passes for animation and enthusiasm; for at all times his character is founded on control of these qualities, not on the absence of them. It flatters his sense of superiority that he may thus pull wool about the ears of joint and several. He has so strong a will that it can be crossed and counter-crossed, as by himself, so by a dozen outsiders, without a break in his apparent phlegm. He has gone through volition, and come out at the other side of it; everything with him is a specific act: he has no habits. *Le saint indifférent* is a dramatic wight: he

loves to refuse your proffered six per cent, when, by a little haggling, he may obtain three-and-a-half. For so he gets away with his own mental processes virgin: it is inconceivable to you that, being sane, he should so comport himself. Amiable, perhaps, only by painful propulsions and sore vigilance, let him appear the mere inheritor of easy good-nature. Unselfish out of sheer pride, and ever eager to claim the slippery side of the pavement, or the end cut of the roast (on the secret ground, be it understood, that he is not as Capuan men, who wince at trifles), let him have his ironic reward in passing for one whose physical connoisseurship is yet in the raw. That sympathy which his rule forbids his devoting to the usual objects, he expends, with some bravado, upon their opposites; for he would fain seem a decent partisan of some sort, not what he is, a bivalve intelligence, *Tros Tyriusque.* He is known here and there, for instance, as valorous in talk; yet he is by nature a solitary, and, for the most part, somewhat less communicative than

"The wind that sings to himself as he makes stride,
Lonely and terrible, on the Andëan height."

Imagining nothing idler than words in the face of grave events, he condoles and congratulates with the genteelest air in the world. In short, while there is anything expected of him, while there are spectators to be fooled, the stratagems of the fellow prove inexhaustible. It is only when he is quite alone that he drops his jaw, and stretches his legs; then, heigho! arises like a smoke, and envelops him becomingly, the beautiful native well-bred torpidity of the gods, of poetic boredom, of "the Oxford manner."

"How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable!"

sighed Hamlet of this mortal outlook. As it came from him in the beginning, that plaint, in its sincerity, can come only from the man of culture, who feels about him vast mental spaces and depths, and to whom the face of creation is but comparative and symbolic. Nor will he breathe it in the common ear, where it may woo misapprehensions, and breed ignorant rebellion. The unlettered must ever love or hate what is nearest him, and, for lack of perspective, think his own fist the size of the sun. The social

prizes, which, with mellowed observers, rank as twelfth or thirteenth in order of desirability, such as wealth and a foothold in affairs, seem to him first and sole; and to them he clings like a barnacle. But to our *indifférent*, nothing is so vulgar as close suction. He will never tighten his fingers on loaned opportunity; he is a gentleman, the hero of the habitually relaxed grasp. A light unprejudiced hold on his profits strikes him as decent and comely, though his true artistic pleasure is still in "fallings from us, vanishings." It costs him little to loose and to forego, to unlace his tentacles, and from the many who push hard behind, to retire, as it were, on a never-guessed-at competency, "richer than untempted kings." He would not be a life-prisoner, in ever so charming a bower. While the tranquil Sabine Farm is his delight, well he knows that on the dark trail ahead of him, even Sabine Farms are not sequacious. Thus he learns betimes to play the guest under his own cedars, and, with disciplinary intent, goes often from them; and, hearing his heart-strings snap the third night he is away, rejoices that

he is again a freedman. Where his foot is planted (though it root not anywhere), he calls that spot home. No Unitarian in locality, it follows that he is the best of travellers, tangential merely, and pleased with each new vista of the human Past. He sometimes wishes his understanding less, that he might itch deliciously with a prejudice. With cosmic congruities, great and general forces, he keeps, all along, a tacit understanding, such as one has with beloved relatives at a distance; and his finger, airily inserted in his outer pocket, is really upon the pulse of eternity. His vocation, however, is to bury himself in the minor and immediate task; and from his intent manner, he gets confounded, promptly and permanently, with the victims of commercial ambition.

The true use of the much-praised Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland, has hardly been apprehended: he is simply the patron saint of *indifférents*. From first to last, almost alone in that discordant time, he seems to have heard far-off resolving harmonies, and to have been rapt away with foreknowledge. Battle, to which all knights were bred, was peniten-

tial to him. It was but a childish means: and to what end? He meanwhile, — and no man carried his will in better abeyance to the scheme of the universe, — wanted no diligence in camp or council. Cares sat handsomely on him who cared not at all, who won small comfort from the cause which his conscience finally espoused. He labored to be a doer, to stand well with observers; and none save his intimate friends read his agitation and profound weariness. "I am so much taken notice of," he writes, "for an impatient desire for peace, that it is necessary I should likewise make it appear how it is not out of fear for the utmost hazard of war." And so, driven from the ardor he had to the simulation of the ardor he lacked, loyally daring, a sacrifice to one of two transient opinions, and inly impartial as a star, Lord Falkland fell: the young never-to-be-forgotten martyr of Newbury field. The imminent deed he made a work of art; and the station of the moment the only post of honor. Life and death may be all one to such a man: but he will at least take the noblest pains to discriminate between Tweedledum and

Tweedledee, if he has to write a book about the variations of their antennæ. And like the Carolian exemplar is the disciple. The *indifférent* is a good thinker, or a good fighter. He is no "immartial minion," as dear old Chapman suffers Hector to call Tydides. Nevertheless, his sign-manual is content with humble and stagnant conditions. Talk of scaling the Himalayas of life affects him, very palpably, as "tall talk." He deals not with things, but with the impressions and analogies of things. The material counts for nothing with him : he has moulted it away. Not so sure of the identity of the higher course of action as he is of his consecrating dispositions, he feels that he may make heaven again, out of sundries, as he goes. Shall not a beggarly duty, discharged with perfect temper, land him in "the out-courts of Glory," quite as successfully as a grand Sunday-school excursion to front the cruel Paynim foe ? He thinks so. Experts have thought so before him. Francis Drake, with the national alarum instant in his ears, desired first to win at bowls, on the Devon sward, "and afterwards to settle with the Don."

No one will claim a buccaneering hero for an *indifférent*, however. The Jesuit novices were ball-playing almost at that very time, three hundred years ago, when some too speculative companion, figuring the end of the world in a few moments (with just leisure enough, between, to be shriven in chapel, according to his own thrifty mind), asked Louis of Gonzaga how he, on his part, should employ the precious interval. "I should go on with the game," said the most innocent and most ascetic youth among them. But to cite the behavior of any of the saints is to step over the playful line allotted. Indifference of the mundane brand is not to be confounded with their detachment, which is emancipation wrought in the soul, and the ineffable efflorescence of the Christian spirit. Like most supernatural virtues, it has a laic shadow; the counsel to abstain, and to be unsolicitous, is one not only of perfection, but also of polity. A very little non-adhesion to common affairs, a little reserve of unconcern, and the gay spirit of sacrifice, provide the moral immunity which is the only real estate. The *indifférent* believes

in storms: since tales of shipwreck encompass him. But once among his own kind, he wonders that folk should be circumvented by merely extraneous powers! His favorite catch, woven in among escaped dangers, rises through the roughest weather, and daunts it:

> "Now strike your sailes, ye jolly mariners,
> For we be come into a quiet rode."

No slave to any vicissitude, his imagination is, on the contrary, the cheerful obstinate tyrant of all that is. He lives, as Keats once said of himself, "in a thousand worlds," withdrawing at will from one to another, often curtailing his circumference to enlarge his liberty. His universe is a universe of balls, like those which the cunning Oriental carvers make out of ivory; each entire surface perforated with the same delicate pattern, each moving prettily and inextricably within the other, and all but the outer one impossible to handle. In some such innermost asylum the right sort of dare-devil sits smiling, while men rage or weep.

1894.

On a Pleasing Encounter with a Pickpocket

ON A PLEASING ENCOUNTER WITH A PICKPOCKET.

I WAS in town the other evening, walking by myself, at my usual rapid pace, and ruminating, in all likelihood, on the military affairs of the Scythians, when, at a lonely street corner not adorned by a gas-lamp, I suddenly felt a delicate stir in my upper pocket. There is a sort of mechanical intelligence in a well-drilled and well-treated body, which can act, in an emergency, without orders from head-quarters. My mind, certainly, was a thousand years away, and is at best drowsy and indifferent. It had besides, no experience, nor even hearsay, which would have directed it what to do at this thrilling little crisis. Before it was aware what had happened, and in the beat of a swallow's wing, my fingers had brushed the flying thief, my eyes saw him, and my legs (retired race-horses, but still great at a

spurt) flew madly after him. I protest that from the first, though I knew he had under his wicked thumb the hard-earned wealth of a notoriously poor poet (let the double-faced phrase, which I did not mean to write, stand there, under my hand, to all posterity), yet I never felt one yearning towards it, nor conceived the hope of revenge. No: I was fired by the exquisite dramatic situation; I felt my blood up, like a charger

> "that sees
> The battle over distances."

I was in for the chase in the keen winter air, with the moon just rising over the city roofs, as rapturously as if I were a very young dog again. My able bandit, clearly viewed the instant of his assault, was a tiger-lily of the genus "tough": short, pallid, sullen, with coat-collar up and hat-brim down, and a general air of mute and violent executive ability. My business in devoting this chapter to reminiscences of my only enemy, is to relate frankly what were my contemporaneous sensations. As I wheeled about, neatly losing the chance of confronting him, and favored with a hasty survey, in the dark,

of his strategic mouth and chin, the one sentiment in me, if translated into English, would have uttered itself in this wise: "After years of dulness and decorum, O soul, here is some one come to play with thee; here is Fun, sent of the immortal gods!"

The divine emissary, it was evident, had studied his ground, and awaited no activity on the part of the preoccupied victim, in a hostile and unfamiliar neighborhood. He suffered a shock when, remembering my ancient prowess in the fields of E——, I took up a gallop within an inch of his nimble heels. Silently, as he ran, he lifted his right arm. We were soon in the blackness of an empty lot across the road, among coal-sheds and broken tins, with the far lights of the thoroughfare full in our faces. Quick as kobolds summoned up from earth, air, and nowhere, four fellows, about twenty years old, swarmed at my side, as like the first in every detail as foresight and art could make them; and these darting, dodging, criss-crossing, quadrilling, and incessantly interchanging as they advanced, covering the expert one's flight,

and multiplying his identity, shot separately down a labyrinth of narrow alleys, leaving me confused and checkmated, after a brief and unequal game, but overcome, nay, transported with admiration and unholy sympathy! It was the prettiest trick imaginable.

It was near Christmas; and, brought to bay, and still alone, I conjured up a vision of a roaring cellar-fire, and the snow whistling at the bulkhead, as the elect press in, with great slapping of hands and stamping of shoes, to a superfine night-long and month-long bowl of grog, MY grog, dealt out by Master Villon, with an ironic toast to the generous founder. I might have followed the trail, as I was neither breathless nor afraid, but it struck me that the sweet symmetry of the thing ought not to be spoiled; that I was serving a new use and approximating a new experience; that it would be a stroke of genius, in short, almost equal to the king pickpocket's own, to make love to the inevitable. Whereupon, bolstered against an aged fence, I laughed the laugh of Dr. Johnson, "heard, in the silence of the night, from Fleet Ditch to Temple Bar."

I thought of the good greenbacks won by my siren singing in the *Hodgepodge Monthly;* I thought of my family, who would harbor in their memories the inexplicable date when the munificent church-mouse waxed stingy. I thought even of the commandment broken and of the social pact defied, gave my collapsed pocket a friendly dig, and laughed again. The police arrived, with queries, and ineffective note-books. I went home, a shorn lamb, conscious of my exalted financial standing; for had I not been robbed? All the way I walked with Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, who came to mind promptly as my corporeal blessings departed. He intoned no requiem for the lost, but poured a known philosophy, in which I had now taken my degree, into my liberal ear: —

"Why shouldst thou vex thyself, that never willingly vexed anybody?"

"A man has but two concerns in life: to be honorable in what he does, and resigned under what happens to him."

"If any one misconduct himself towards thee, what is that to thee? The deed is his; and therefore let him look to it."

"Welcome everything that happens as necessary and familiar."

Marry, a glow of honest self-satisfaction is cheaply traded for a wad of current specie, and an inkling into the ways of a bold and thirsty world. Methinks I have "arrived"; I have attained a courteous composure proof against mortal hurricanes. Life is no longer a rude and trivial comedy with the Beautifully Bulldozed, who feels able to warm to his own catastrophe, and even to cry, "Pray, madam, don't mention it," to an apologizing lady in a gig, who drives over him and kills him, and does so, moreover, in the most bungling manner in the world.

1892.

Reminiscences of a Fine Gentleman

REMINISCENCES OF A FINE GENTLEMAN

MY friend was of illustrious ancestry. While so many trace their life-stream to pirates or usurpers who shed their brothers' blood to possess their brothers' power, it is a distinction worth recording, that this Fine Gentleman was descended from a princely person in Switzerland who saved some sixty lives, and whose ancient portrait is loaded, like a French marshal's, with the ribbons and medals of recognition. Though of foreign origin, he did an American thing at my introduction to him: he shook hands. I dropped the white pebble of the Cretans to mark the day he arrived. It is needless to say I loved and understood him, — blond, aggressive, wilful, from the first. He had then, despite his extreme youth, the air of a fighting aristocrat, a taking swashbuckler attitude, as he stood at the

open door: the look of one who has character, and a defined part to play, and whose career can never reach a common nor ignoble end. Comely in the full sense he was not; but impressive he was, despite the precocious leanness and alertness which come of too rapid growth.

He had every opportunity, during his babyhood and later, of gratifying his abnormal love of travel; he managed to see more of city life than was good for him, thanks to many impish subterfuges. His golden curiosity covered everything mundane, and he continued his private studies in topography until he was kidnapped, and restored by the police: an abject, shamefaced little tourist, heavy with conscience, irresponsive to any welcomes, who sidled into his abandoned residence, and forswore from that day his unholy peregrinations. But he had a roaming housemate, and grew to be supremely happy, journeying under guidance.

His temper, at the beginning, was none of the best, and took hard to the idea of moral governance; he overcame obstacles after the fashion of a catapult. His sense

of humor was always grim: he had a smile, wide and significant, like a kobold's; but a mere snicker, or a wink, was foreign to his nature. With certain people he was sheer clown; yet he discriminated, and never wore his habitual air of swaggering consequence before any save those he was pleased to consider his inferiors. The sagacious and protective instincts were strong in him. For children he had the most marked indulgence and affection, an inexhaustible gentleness, as if he found the only statecraft he could respect among them. For their delight he made himself into a horse, and rode many a screaming elf astride of his back for a half-mile through the meadow, before coming to the heart of the business, which was to sit or kneel suddenly, and cast poor Mazeppa yards away in the wet grass: a proceeding hailed with shouts of acclaim from the accompanying crowd of playfellows. And again, in winter, he became an otter, and placing himself upon his worthy back at the summit of a hill, rolled repeatedly to the bottom, drenched in snow, and buried under a coasting avalanche of boys.

He never found time, in so short a life, to love many. Outside his own household and his charming cat, he was very loyal to one lady whose conversation was pleasingly ironical, and to one gentleman whose character was said to resemble his own. Several others were acceptable, but for these two visitors he had the voice and gesture of joyful greeting. He had so arrant an individuality that folk loved or hated him. One could not look with indifference on that assertive splendid bearing, or on the mighty muscles as of a Norse ship. A civil address from you made him your liegeman. But the merest disregard or slight, no less than open hostility, sealed him your foe. And there were no stages of vacillation. A grudge stood a grudge, and a fondness a fondness. He was a famous retaliator; none ever knew him to ride first into the lists. Battle he loved, but he had a gentlemanly dislike of "scenes": when a crisis came, he preferred to box or wrestle; and what he preferred he could do, for no opponent ever left a scar upon him. A rival less in size, or impudent solely, he took by the nape of the neck and tossed over the near-

est fence, resuming his walk with composure. Training and education helped him to the pacific solving of many problems. His good dispositions, all but established, were once badly shaken by a country sojourn; for he had been taught there a bit of cabalistic boys' Latin whose slightest whisper would send him tiptoeing to every window in the house, scanning the horizon for a likely enemy, with a rapture worthy of another cause.

He was rich in enemies, most of them of the gentler sex. Upon a civic holiday, three villageous women were seen to bear down upon him, as he was calmly inspecting the outposts of their property, laden with weapons (*timor arma ministrat!*) no less classic than a pail, a broom, and an axe. Not Swift's self could have added to the look of withering comment with which he turned and confronted his assailants: a single glance which dispersed the troops, and held in itself the eloquence of an Aristophaneian comedy. Eternal warfare lay between him and the man who had peevishly flapped that haughty nose with a glove, before his first birthday-anniversary, and revenge boiled in his eye,

long after, at sight of a citizen who had once addressed to him a word unheard in good society. A loud tone, a practical joke, a teasing reminder of a bygone fault, disconcerted him wholly. Sensitive and conservative of mood, my Fine Gentleman could never forget a rudeness, nor account satisfactorily for such a thing as a condescension. All his culture and his thinking had not taught him to allow for the divers conditions and dispositions of mankind. To the last he looked for courtesy, for intelligence, and, alas, for fashionable clothes, in his ideal. For the Fine Gentleman was a snob. Hunger and nakedness, even honest labor, had for him no occult charm. Throughout his youth, he courted patrician acquaintances, and on the very highway ached to make worse rags yet of the floating rags of a beggar's coat; but the experience of friendship with a kindly butcher-lad made inroads upon his exclusiveness; and I know that, had he outlived his years, there would have been one more convert democrat. His own personal appearance was of the nicest; by scrupulous superintendence of his laundry, chiefly by night,

he kept himself immaculate and imposing. His colors were those of the fallen leaves and the snow; the November auburn falling away on either side from the magnificent brow and eyes, and from the neck in its triple white fold: a head to remind you of Raleigh in his ruff.

He must have been patriotic, for he revelled in the horns, gunpowder, rockets, and smoke of the Fourth of July. Archery and rifle-practice seemed to strike him as uncommonly pleasant devices to kill time. In all games which had noise and motion, he took the same strong vicarious interest. He had heard much music, and learned something of it; he was once known to hum over an august recitative of the late Herr Wagner. Singular to relate, he had an insuperable objection to books, and protested often against the continued use of the pen by one he would fain esteem. Yet he seemed greatly to relish the recital of a tribute of personal verse from a United States Senator, and the still more elaborate lines of a delightful professional satirist.

His health, aside from his great size, his spirit and nervous vigor, was never

steady nor sound. Every chapter of the Fine Gentleman's biography is crammed with events, perils, excitements, catastrophes, and blunders, due in great part, by a scientific verdict, to this tremendous vitality balancing on too narrow a base. With years, there began to come the "philosophic mind." His sweetness and submission grew with his strength; never was there a sinner so tender of conscience, so affected by remonstrance, so fruitful, after, in the good works of amended ways. New virtues seemed to shoot on all sides, and the old ones abided and flourished. He had never tried to deceive, nor to shirk, nor to rebel, nor to take what was not his, nor to appear other than he was. In the country town where he had many a frolic, and where he lies buried, he found congenial circumstances. There were no gardens there, no timid neighbors; he had opportunity, being allowed to inspect everything that stirred in air, or upon the earth, or in the waters under, for the pursuit of natural history, which was his passion; he ate what he pleased, he lorded it as he liked, he shifted his responsibilities, he won endless flattery from the

inhabitants. His frank acknowledgment of all this was unique. On his return, while his escort was still in the room, the Fine Gentleman was asked whether he would rather remain now at home, or spend a week longer in the fascinating precincts of Cambrook. He arose briskly, bestowed on the questioner, whom he professed to adore, his warmest embrace (a thing unusual with him), and immediately, pulling his escort by the sleeve, placed himself at the door-knob which led into the more immoral world. His last accomplishment was to acquire an accurate sense of time, to make his quarter-hour calls, his half-hour walks, when sent out alone: "as wise as a Christian," an honest acquaintance was wont to say of him, perhaps on the suspicion that the Fine Gentleman, after he reached his majority, was a free-thinker.

He was in his perfect prime when a slight seeming disgrace fell upon him, though an incident never clearly understood. His believers believed in him still; but, for the need of quiet and impartial adjustment of matters, persuaded him to stay an indefinite while in the be-

loved farming district where many of his earlier vacations were spent. So that, after all his tender rearing, he was at last abroad and divorced: with a mist, such as we recognized immortals call sin, upon his spirit, and, because of that, a scruple and a doubt upon mine, answerable for much of what he was. Before the eventual proof came that he was clear of blame, there were thoughts even of an imperative parting, and a reaching for the rectification towards the Happy Hunting-Grounds, where, at an era's end, we could be joyous together; and where under the old guiding then never unskilful, the old sympathy then never erring, the Fine Gentleman could be to his virtue's full, and in no misapprehending air, his innocent, upright, loving self again. But instantly, as if to wipe out forever that possible evil of which men could dream him guilty, came the moving and memorable end. Amid the tears of a whole town, and the thanksgiving of some for a greater grief averted, very quietly and consciously, under the most painful conditions, the Fine Gentleman laid down his life for a little child's sake. The fifth

act of his tragedy had a sort of drastic consistency, to those who knew him; it was in line with his odd, inborn, unconventional ways: the fate one would have chosen for him, and the fittest with which to associate his soldierly memory. In exile and cashiered, he had overturned his defamers at a stroke.

It is not too proud a sentence to write over him, that this world, for the most part, was jealous of his nobility. Human society was some sort of huge jest to him; he did not always do his best there, as if the second-best were the shrewder policy, and the neater adaptation to the codes of honor he found established. His main concern was certainly the study of mankind, and he stood to it, a free and unbookish philosopher, looking on and not partaking, with his reticent tongue, his singularly soft foot-fall, his "eye like a wild Indian's, but cordial and full of smothered glee." To his own race he must be an epic figure and a precedent, and to ours something not undeserving of applause.

"Go seek that hapless tomb, which if ye hap to find,
Salute the stones that keep the bones that held so good
a mind."

Such are the only annals of the Fine Gentleman, a Saint Bernard dog, faithful and forgotten, who bore a great Bostonian's name nearly five years without a stain, and who is, to one or two of us, not alone a friend lost, but an ideal set up: Perseus become a star.

1889.

Irish

IRISH

THEY say the Celt is passing away,

> "Encompassed all his hours
> By fearfullest powers
> Inflexible to him."

For he represents yesterday, and its ideals: legendry, ritual, the heroic and indignant joy of life, belong to him; and he can establish no manner of connection with modern science and the subjugating of the material universe; with the spirit of to-day and to-morrow. Of all Celtic countries, Ireland has the richest background; with so varied and exciting a past, it may well be that she has difficulty in concentrating herself on the new, and hangs to her own consistencies in a world of compromise. Every one save herself has forgotten what she was, and how her precedents, rather than any outer consideration, must still govern her, and keep her antagonist and unreconciled. It is not to

be modified, this pauper's pride of blood. She says to the powers, in charming futile bravado, what a Howard once said to a Spencer: "My ancestors were plotting treason, while yours were keeping sheep!" The word warms her heart like wine. "*Le moyen âge énorme et délicat*," in Verlaine's beautiful colors, seems a phrase made for Irish mediævalism. It was the watershed of European knowledge and moral culture: the watershed truly, which, sending streams down and out and far away, can never call them back. It gave Scotland her "naked knee" and her kingly line; it gave England its Christian creed; it gave Austria, France, and Spain the noble enrichment of its banished and stainless gentry, Jacobite Wild Geese. It has been in America, from the Revolution on, an influence incalculable. It won the perfect understanding sympathy of De Beaumont, Renan, Kuno Meyer, and Matthew Arnold: men of antipodal judgments. It has an intangible throne in every mind which loves scholarship, and imaginings more beautiful than any folk-lore in the world. "See you this skull?" Lucian makes Hermes say to

Menippus, in the shades: "this is Helen." Great is the gulf between happy Innisfail, sovereign and wise, with her own laws, language, sports, and dress, and the wrecked Ireland we know: a country of untended flax-fields, unworked marble-quarries, silent mills on river-banks, little collapsing baronies whose landlords are absent and cold, and a capital whose lordly houses are given over, since the Union, to neglect and decay.

Yet of her glory there are glorious witnesses. Her rough and winding historic roads are open all along. The country is full of ruins and traditions and snatches of strange song, to "tease us out of thought." A gander off on a holiday, with his white spouse and their pretty brood, lifts his paternal hiss at the passer-by from a Druid's altar; and where young lambs lie, in a windy spring, to lee of their mothers, is a magnificent doorway, Lombardic, Romanesque, or Hiberno-Saxon, arch in arch, with its broken inscription, an *Orate* for immemorial kings. At well-sides are yet seen ablutions and prayers, and May-Day offerings of corn and wool, even as they were "before the advent of

the Desii into the County Waterford." By a waterfall, plunging under cleanest ivy and long grass, is a cross with circled centre and intricate Byzantine ornament, displaying David with his harp, or Peter with his keys, set up by a monastic hand twelve hundred years ago. Forty feet away, is something dearer to the archæologist: a kitchen of the primeval hunters, its wall and hearth and calcined lime-stones bedded among laughing bluebells. A brook's freshet, any March, may bring ashore a strange staff or necklace; a rock is overturned under a yew-tree, and discloses horns and knives elder than Clontarf. But yesterday, in a Carlow garden adjoining the ruins of a Butler fortress, put up at the time when Richard the Lionheart was looking with tears of envy over the walls of Jerusalem, closed urns were found in vaults, each with its shining dust: a tenantry long anterior to Christianity, and conscious perhaps, of Christian goings-on overhead, when The MacMorrough Kavanagh was pressed to dine with the Warden of the Black Castle, and slain among his followers at the pouring of the wine. There can be no

other country so fatal to the antiquarian: for zest and labor are superfluous, and a long course of incomparable luck must drive him, for very satiety, from the field.

Venerable Ireland has failed, as the world reckons failure. She cannot take prettily to her rôle of subjugated province. Abominably misruled, without a senate, without commerce, she has fallen back into the sullen interior life, into the deep night of reverie. From that brooding dark she has let leap no modern flame supremely great. For the great artist is not Irish, as yet, though with warm exaggerations, uncritical enthusiasms, affectionate encouragements, her own exalt her own. As Goldsmith accused Dr. Johnson of doing, she lets her little fishes talk like whales. And this, of course, tends to no good: it only blunts the ideals of the populace, lowers the mark of achievement, and makes it difficult indeed for the true prince to be recognized in the hubbub of mistaken acclaim. The constituency of Aneurin and Ossian lacks a single sovereign poet: a lack apparent enough to all but itself. Verse, from of old, is per-

vasive as dew or showers: but nowhere is it in process of crystallization. The persecution of age-long ignorance, imposed upon a most intellectual people, is a miasmatic cloud not yet altogether withdrawn. Only in the best is Ireland perfect: in heroes and in saints. In life, if not in art, we can sometimes do away with economy, restraint, equipose. We can hardly judge the epic figures of antiquity: but from Columba to "J. K. L.," from Hugh O'Neill and Sarsfield to Emmet and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, runs an endearing family likeness: scorn, pity, sweetness, disinterestedness, honor, power, brave ill luck, in them all. Most of these are rebels; their names are under the baffling shadow of exile and the scaffold, and, alas, count for naught save in their mother's memory.

"Where be thy gods, O Israel?" The gibe comes with ill grace from the English. England has, by the world's corroboration, her divine sons, whose names are in benediction. But she has also a Sahara spectacle of the most stolid, empty folk in the universe: the sapless, rootless, flowerless millions who pay, as it were, for

Shakespeare and Shelley, for Turner and Purcell, for Newton and Darwin. Easy, is it not, for the superlative quality to form and act, in fullest power here and there, in a nation where no smallest grain of it is ever wasted on the common mortal? But Ireland reeks with genius impartially distributed. It is infectious; every one suffers from it, in its various stages and manifestations. "The superior race" makes the superior individual impossible. There is no situation open to him; he is notoriously superfluous: a coal brought to Newcastle. It is his lot to awake contradiction, and to be made to feel that he has no nominating committee behind him. He may be a great man in theory: but where every other man is demonstrably quite as great as he, he may be excused if he fail to move mountains. Eccentricity is in your Irishman's blood; and organization he hates and fears, perhaps through a dim consciousness that in organizations mental activities must be left to the leaders. If Celticism, with its insuperable charm, has never led the world in trade or war, can never so lead it, the cause is only that the units, which can hardly be said to

compose it, use their brains with unhallowed persistence. The most dashing spirited troops in Europe, the Irish are natural critics even of authority. Their successes are everywhere spasmodic: they juggle with success, they do not woo it to wife. In a career dramatically checkered, it happens that their onset wins Fontenoy, and that their advice forfeits Culloden.

It has been well said that the cultured classes are everywhere much the same, and that the true range of observation lies among the lowly and the poor. Now, no peasantry in the world furnishes such marked examples as does the Irish, of original speculation, accessibility to ideas. Threadbare old farmers and peddlers keep you in amused astonishment, and in an attitude of impious doubt towards the precedency of the trained thinker. You fall, nay, you run into cordial agreement with the suggestion of Tom Jones to the Ensign, "that it is as possible for a man to know something without having been at school, as it is to have been at school and to know nothing!" To handle the inscrutable Celt on his own acres is to learn,

or at least to apprehend, the secret of a live resistance, incredibly prolonged, to a power almost wearied out with maintaining mastery. The sense of equity, the sense of humor itself, in the humblest and silentest Irishman, is armor enough against fate. He, the law-breaker, has compensations which the law-makers wot not of, in his own ethic subtleties. His soul swells big with dreams. In his native village, he is rated sympathetically by the dream's size and duration, rather than, as in grosser communities, by the deed. The man is a trafficker in visions; he becomes a cryptic mystery to his wife. She admires him for his madness, and has heard of fairy influences: "*satis est*, it suffices," as old Burton oracularly says. Ah, well, the poor devil is with Fergus in his woodland car, when the rent comes due, and the crops are rotting in the rain! He has no turn for temporalities, no ambition to rise; yet in a pictorial sense, by the grace of God, or the witchcraft of the soil, he walks unique and illustrious. It is a memorable sight, this monstrous average and aggregate of whim. Nowhere the lonely planetary effulgence: everywhere the jovial

defiant twinkle of little stars! According to Emerson's sweet prediction, —

> "As half-gods go,
> The gods arrive."

But in Ireland no clever half-god ever gets up to go, for the sake of any sequel.

Niecks, the biographer of Chopin, noting the extreme nationalism of Chopin's genius, would have us mark that the same force of patriotism in an Italian, Frenchman, German, or Englishman, could not have promoted a similar result. Poland is a realm, he tells us, where racial traits remain intact, and uninfluenced from without: she is more esoterical than any state can be which is on the highway of Continental progress, in touch with to-morrow; and therefore her expression in the arts is sure to be more individual, distinct, and striking. Ireland is such another spiritually isolated country. Her best utterance, or her least, is alike betrayingly hers, to be scented among a thousand. And this homogeneity, in her case, is quite unaccountable, unless we accept as its explanation, the magnetic and absorbent quality in the strange isle itself, which

has blended a dozen alien strains in one, and made of Scythian, Erse, Norse, Iberian, the Norman, the Dane, the English of the Pale, the Huguenot, and the horde of Elizabethan and Cromwellian settlers, something "more Irish than the Irish." And in Poland, again, the aristocracy, though malcontent and impoverished, for honor's sake, maintains its own traditions in its own station, as the feudal vassals maintain theirs. But the genuine Irish gentry is extinct, or utterly transformed, on its ancient acres. The original peasant stock has all but perished from famines and immigrations. Most significant of all, what remains of the two, blends as in no other European territory. The peasants were long ago driven from the estate of free clansmen; the gentry, who would neither conform nor flee, were crushed into the estate of peasants, by the penal laws of the Protestant victor, which made education treason; by the most hateful code, as Lord Chief Justice Coleridge named it, framed since the beginning of the world: and one class impacted on the other, as mortar among stones, became

indistinguishable in a generation. Time, which was expected to bring about No Ireland, has in reality engendered a national life more intense than ever. The physical strength, the patience and passion, of the common people; the grace, loyalty, and play of thought of gentlemen, have in that national life come together. Unique patrician wit, delicacy of feeling, knightly courtesy, have run out of their allotted conduits, and they color the speech of beggars. Distinction of all sorts sprouts in the unlikeliest places. Violent Erin produces ever and anon the gentlest philosopher; recluse Erin sends forth the consummate cosmopolitan; hunted and jealous Erin holds up on its top stalk the open lily of liberality,

> — "courteous, facile, sweet,
> Hating that solemn vice of greatness, pride."

Ireland is at work in every department of every civilization: it is a seed-shedding, an aroma, intangible as April. No pioneer post, no remote wave, no human enterprise from Algiers to Peru, but can answer for it, ill or well. Yet none know

whether Ireland itself is at this hour a mere menace of terrible import, like Samson, or ready, another Odysseus, to throw off disguises, and draw, at home, "in Tara's halls," the once familiar bow. Its own future, in its own altered valleys, is hidden. The tragic cloud hangs there. Foreboding, unrest, are stamped on the very water and sky, and on proud sensitive faces. It was on a day in spring, in sight of Wicklow headlands, the Golden Spears of long ago; — a day when primroses and celandine and prodigal furze splashed the hillsides, down to the rocks where fishers sat mending nets, and stitching tawny sails; when there was a sense of overhanging heights, and green inlands, and ruined abbeys whose stone warriors sleep in hearing of the surf, and of huge cromlech, fairy rath, and embattled wall, long and low, looking sadly down; when the shadows in that cold enchanted air at sea, fringing every sapphire bay, chased from silver through carmine to purple, and back again; — on such a day of caprice and romance, the true day of the Gael, a woman beautiful as the young

Deirdre said to a stranger, walking the cliff-path at her side: "No: we have never been conquered: we are unconquerable. But we are without hope."

1889.

An Open Letter to the Moon

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MOON

"To the Celestial and my Soul's Idol, the Most Beautified": —

IT might appear to us an imperative, though agreeable duty, most high and serene Madame, to waft towards you, occasionally, a transcript of our humble doings on this nether planet, were we not sure, in the matter of friendly understanding, that we opened correspondence long ago. You were one of our earliest familiars. You stood in that same office to our fathers and mothers, back to your sometime contemporary, Adam of the Garden; and while we are worried into acquiescence with the inevitable design of age, we are more pleased than envious to discover that you grow never old to the outward eye, and that you appear the same "lovesome ladie bright," as when

we first stared at you from a babe's pillow. You are acquainted, not by hearsay, but by actual evidence, with the family history, having seen what sort of figure our ancestors cut, and being infinitely better aware of the peculiarities of the genealogical shrub than we can ever be. Therefore we make no reference to a matter so devoid of novelty. But we do mean to free our minds frankly on the subject of your Ladyship's own behavior. We take this resolve to be no breach of that exalted courtesy which befits us, no less than you, in your skyey station.

We have in part, lost our ancient respect for you: a sorry fact to chronicle. There were once various statements floating about our cradle, complimentary to your supposed virtues. You were Phœbe, twin to Phœbus: a queen, having a separate establishment, coming into a deserted court by night, and kindling it into more than daytime revelry. You were an enchantress, the tutelary divinity of water-sprites and greensward fairies. Your presence was indispensable for felicitous dreams. To be moonstruck, then, meant to be charmed inexpressibly, to be lifted off our feet.

Now, we allow that you have suffered by misrepresentation, or else are we right in detecting your arts; for, by all your starry handmaidens, you are not what we took you to be! We are informed (our quondam faith in you beshrews the day we learned to read!) that you are a timid dependent only of the sun, afraid to show yourself while he is on his peregrinations; that you slyly steal the garb of his splendor as he lays it aside, and blaze forthwith in your borrowed finery. That you are no friend to innocent goblins, but abettor to housebreakers; conspirator in many direful deeds, attending base nocturnal councils, and tacitly arraigning yourself against the law. "Let us be Diana's foresters, gentlemen of the shade, . . . governed, as the sea is, by our noble and chaste mistress, the moon, under whose countenance we — steal." That your gossip is the ominous owl, and not Titania. Your inconstancy, to come on delicate ground, shineth above your other characteristics. Since we have seen your color come and go, we surmise that there is no dearth of intrigue and repartee up there; and in a red or a grey veil, you masquer-

ade periodically, at unseasonable hours. Of painting your complexion we are disposed to acquit you; yet it is a severe blow to us to learn, from the most trustworthy sources, that you wax.

Selene, Artemis! you are worldly beyond worldlings. We hear that you have quarters, and that you jingle them triumphantly in the ears of Orion, who is nobody but a poor hunter. Beware of the exasperation of the lower classes! whose awakening is what we call below a French Revolution. Who, indeed, that hath a mote in his eye, cannot still discern a huge beam in yours? Have you no resident missionary? for you persist in obstinate schisms, and flaunt that exploded Orientalism, the crescent, in the teeth of Christendom. You are much more distant and reserved, O beguiler! than you pretend. Your temper is said to be volcanic.

You that were Diana! who is the Falstaffian, Toby Belchian, Kriss Kringlish person to be seen about your premises? He hangeth his great ruddy comfortable phiz out of your casements, and holdeth it sidewise with a wink or a leer, having never yet found his rhyming way to

Norwich. We look on him as an officious rascal. He peereth where you only, by privilege, have permission to enter. He hath the evil eye. He thinketh himself a proper substitute for you, and King of the Illuminari; he reproduceth your smile, and scattereth your largesses; he maketh faces (we say it shudderingly) at your worshippers below. Frequently hath he appropriated kisses that were blown to you personally, or consigned to you for delivery, from one sweetheart to another.

O Lady, O Light-dispenser, think, we hereby beseech you, of the danger of his being taken for you! Picture the discomfiture of your minstrel, who, intoning a rapturous recital of your charms, and casting about for a sight of your delectable loveliness, is confronted, instead, with that broad ingenuous vagabond! In some such despairing rage as the minstrel's, must have been the inventor of the German tongue, who discarded all other chances of observation after once beholding this thing, ycleped your Man, and angrily insisted on "Der Mond," — the Moon, he — as the proper mode of speech. I cite you this from old John

Lyly: "There liveth none under the sunne that know what to make of the man in the moon." We clamor at you from the throats of the five races: Abolish him, or at least, depose the present incumbent, and get you straightway some acceptable minion, one of more chivalric habit, of more spare and ascetic exterior! Your credit and our comfort demand it. "Pray you, remember."

What scenes, Cosmopolite, Circumnavigator, Universalist, have you beheld: what joy, what plenty, what riot and desolation! You are the arch-spectator. Death sees not half so widely. He lurketh like an anxious thief in the crowd, seeking what he may take away. But your bland leisurely eye looketh down disinterestedly on all. Caravans rested thrice a thousand years ago beneath you in the desert; Assyrian shepherds chanted to you with their long-hushed voices; the south wind, while the infant world fell into its first slumber, leaped up and played with you in Paradise. You have known the chaos before man, and yet we saw you laugh upon last April's rain. Are there none for whom you are lonely through

the ages? Are there not centuries of old delight in your memory, unequalled now? faces fairer than the lilies, on whose repose you still yearn to shine? Do you miss the smoke of altars? Have you forgotten the beginners of the "star-ypointing pyramid"? Can you not tell us a tale of the Visigoth? How sang Blondel against the prison door? How brawny was Bajazet? How fair was Helen; Semiramis, how cruel? Moon! where be the treasures of the doughty Kidd?

You, Cynthia and Hecate, sweet Lady of Ghosts and guardian of the under-world, have been fed upon the homage of mortal lips: you have had praises from the poets exquisite as calamus and myrrh. Many a time have we rehearsed before you such as we recall, from the sigh of Enobarbus:—

> "O sovereign mistress of true melancholy!"

to the hymnal

> "Orbèd maiden, with white fire laden,"

of the noble salutation of a mirthful-mournful spirit:

"Oh! thou art beautiful, howe'er it be,
Huntress or Dian, or whatever named;
And he the veriest pagan, that first framed
His silver idol, and ne'er worshipped thee."

Have we not sung oft that strophe of Ben Jonson's, full of inexpressible music to our ear?

'Lay thy bow of pearl apart
And thy crystal shining quiver;
Give unto the flying hart
Space to breathe, how short soever,
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess excellently bright!''

and the beloved rhymeless cadence of old Jasper Fisher's drama, beginning:—

"Thou queen of Heaven, commandress of the deep,
Lady of lakes, regent of woods and deer.''

Sidney, Drummond, Milton, glorified your wanderings. And your truest votary, one John Keats, spake out boldly that

— "the oldest shade midst oldest trees
Feels palpitations when thou lookest in.''

You are an incorrigible charmer: but as he reports you likewise as

— "a relief
To the poor, patient oyster, where he sleeps
Within his pearly house,"

we infer, with pleasurable surprise, that you have set up as a humanitarian.

Now, we venture to assert that you remember compliments meant to be of the same Orphic strain, and inscribed to you, of which we are not wholly guiltless. We have all but knelt to you, with the Libyan. The primeval heathen has stirred within us. We have been under the witchery of Isis. We aspire to be a Moonshee, rather than any potentate of this universe. Have we not followed you, O "planet of progression!" all our bright, volatile, restless, tide-like days? We wound you not with the analytic eye, nor startle you with telescopes. The scepticisms of astronomy enter not into our rubric. Are you not comely? Do you not spiritualize the darkness with one touch of your pale garment? Then what are they to us, your dimensions and your distances? Gross vanity of knowledge! Mere abuse of privilege!

If we affect the abusive, shy of more ceremonious forms of address, forgive us, Luna. We make recantation, and disown our banter. We extend the hand of cordiality even to your month-old Man.

How blithe and beauteous he is! He is embodied Gentility. We bow to him as your anointed Viceroy, your illustrious Nuncio. You know our immemorial loyalty, nor shall our rogueries teach you so late to doubt it.

> "*Da Lunæ propere novæ,*
> *Da noctis mediæ, da, puer!*"

Forgive us, benignant, peaceful, affable, propitious Moon. Poet are we not, nor lunatic, nor lover; "but that we love thee best, O Most Best! believe it."

1885.

The Under Dog

THE UNDER DOG

WHAT a pity a memoir cannot be written without regard to its alleged incidents! Annalists are naturally the slaves of what happens; and that glows between them and the eternal, like gorgeous-colored minster glass, a spurious man-made heaven. A written Life may be true to fact and false to law, even as a lived life may be so. It is utterly impossible for the most philosophic among us to know, to judge, or even to speculate, in behalf of any but himself. A word, a risk, a blunder, the breadth of a hair, the difference betwixt the two Kings of Brentford, lifts the obscure into apparent greatness, or forbids the potentially greater to descend to that table-land where there is no mist, where human senses come into play, and where he may become a subject for the approbation of history. In whatsoever degree a creature is burdened

with conscience and stiffened with will, his course must be continuously deflected by countless little secret interior collisions and readjustments, which have final cumulative influence on what we call his character and his achievement. The means to this end are nowhere discoverable, unless in a perfect autobiography, and under the eye of the perfect reader. Fate must have her joke sometimes, as well as the least of us, and she suffers cheap energy to fill the newspapers for a lustrum, and genius to await identification at the morgue. These are truisms, but here is truth: in nine hundred and ninety-nine instances out of a thousand, it is folly to name any success or failure as such; for either is a mystery, and the fairest evidences by which we can form an opinion of it are altogether and irremediably fallacious.

Now, what has often used up and ended a man's vital force, is some constraint much more significant than that of early death, a constraint sought and willingly undergone. His own moral weakness stopped Coleridge; but Erasmus might have uttered with Sidney:

> "My life melts with too much thinking."

Socrates, it will be remembered "corrupted the Athenian youth." Not one of them he moulded or breathed upon, except the transient pupil Alcibiades, turned his hand cordially to the practical, or ramped in the civic china-shop. What ghost is it which certain minds see upon the way, and which lessens their destined momentum? Something extra-rational, we may be sure: something with an august enchantment. They act under the impulse of an heroic fickleness, and forsake a known and very good result for "the things that are more excellent." The spectators can only wonder; the crucial third act has passed swiftly and in silence behind the curtain, and the rest of the drama sounds perverted and confused. A mere secular enthusiasm may have the power to draw a career to itself, absorb and devour it, and keep it shut forever from the chance of distinction in selfish and pleasant ways. But what shall be said for those who have become impassioned of the supernatural, beholding it in amaze, as Hubert the hunter beheld the holy sign between the antlered brows in the Aquitanian forest: a sight enough to

stay them and carry them out of themselves, and change what was their prospect, because "the former things are passed away?" What of the allegiance to a cause, the espousal of hunger and thirst, the wilderness, and the scaffold, in the hope, never ultimately in vain, of awakening and bettering the world? "If the law require you to be the agent of injustice to another," wrote Thoreau, in his good manful essay on John Brown, "then I say to you, break the law. Let your life be a friction to stop the machine." Even thus have many gone under, of whom no audiences have heard, but whose love and wisdom feed the race, century after century. In our reckoning of the saints, we lose sight of half their meaning; for we cannot guess accurately which of them has lost most, humanly and aesthetically, nor how much any one individual has lost, by his chosen concentration on matters in which there is no general competition, and where there can be no established canons of criticism. Some saints, in a double sense, follow their vocations; they attain their only legitimate development in the cloister. But others are

saints at a sacrifice. An infinite number of men and women, painfully approximating moral perfection, lose, either gradually, or at once and forever, in that supreme compensation, their aptitude for common affairs. "*Ejiciebas eas, et intrabas pro eis, omne voluptate dulcior*," says the son of Monica's tears, himself gloriously stricken out from the pagan roll of honor.

Such as these have outgrown their own existence; they become impalpable to the general apprehension; they have sold the mess of pottage again for the birthright of the sons of God. And God, in the audacious old phrase, has "destroyed" them. What they bade fair to be, or what they could have done, before they were crippled by vigils and visions, rolls back into the impossible and the unimagined. We have no clue to alienated souls: we can compute with those solely, who, as we say, get along and amount to something; and we seldom perceive what purely fortuitous reputations, what mere bright flotsam and jetsam, accidentally uppermost, are those whom we set first in a fixed place, and cry up as exemplars in art,

trade, and policy. For what might have been is not this crass world's concern: her absent have no rights. The spiritual man is likely to be possessed of a divine indolence; would he strive, he is hampered and thwarted by the remembrance, or the forecast, of whiter ideals in Paradise. It is sometimes urged as a reproach against the courteous Latin nations that they lag behind in modern progressiveness; that they do not, like the Border lads, "march forward in order." The reproach is, at bottom, a delicate and exquisite compliment. With genius in their blood, and beauty never far from their hand, what wonder if they continue to be careless about rapid transit?

> "I have seen higher, holier things than these,
> And therefore must to these refuse my heart."

The endearing fable of elf-shot or bewitched children, little goose-girls waylaid on the hillside by fairies in green and silver, and enticed away, and set free after a while, though with the dream and the blight ever upon them, is, like most fables, deep as immortality. The mystic has already gone too far, and seen too

much ; he is useless at the plough : he is, as it were, one citizen less. The fine lines just quoted are from an expert in inaction, the poet who, among all others with an equal equipment in English letters, may be named pre-eminently as a failure: Arthur Hugh Clough. Let his lovers proclaim as much with gentle irony. Most poets, it may be, are heroes spoiled ; they know somewhat of the unknown, and suffer from it ; the usual measure of their esoteric worth must still be the measure of their mundane impracticability : like Hamlet, they have seen spirits, and forswear deeds for phrases. Artists and thinkers, in fact, must outwardly follow the profession of the queen bee, not as yet with honor, nor by general request. But they are omens ; they are, let us hope, the type and the race, the segregated non-cohesive thing, the protest which counts. The noblest of them is least in love with civilization and its awards ; but what they have not hoarded for themselves, strangers hoard for them ; and because success is most truly to them a thing foregone, therefore they prevail forever. If they have not "made a liv-

ing," they have, in the opinion of a young Governor of Massachusetts, a philosopher not of the Franklin breed,—"made a life."

1893.

Quiet London

QUIET LONDON

IF one had to try his hand at the eternal parallel of London and Paris (next weariest, in the scale of human comparisons, to that between D——s and T——y), or, indeed, of London with any city of known size, it might be said, in a word, that the chief variance between them is a variance of sound: and that under this, and expressed by it, — "alas, how told to them who felt it never?" as Dante sighs over the abstruse sweetness of his lady, — is a profound spiritual difference. Whatever tradition may say of

— "the chargeable noise of this great town,"

its instructed inhabitant knows it by strange whispers, meek undertones. Conceive anything more diverting than that a monstrous awe-engendering institution like the 'bus should be almost as deft and as still as a humming-bird! Monosyllables, and

pipe-smoke, and sciential collecting of fares make up the rolling van masculine; ever and anon the less certain step and the swish of a skirt on the lurching stair, announce to the heroes of the serene height that

> "Helen is come upon the wall to see."

With perfect skill, with masterful rapidity, the wheels slide over surfaces smooth as an almond-shell, in a mere ballroom jingle and rustle. Cabs are dragon-flies by day, and glowworms by night: they dart, noiseless, from north to west. Even the tuft-footed dray-horses vanish with such reverberation as might follow Cinderella's coach. Exquisite voices of children, soft and shy, fall like the plash of water on the open paths of the Parks. In the viscid openings of alleys off the Strand, in the ancient astonishing tinkerdom of Leather Lane, where villainous naphtha torches light up the green lettuce on peddler's carts, the pawnbroker's golden balls significant above, and a knot of Hogarth faces in the Saturday evening flare, — there also, are the cockney gamins with honey-bright hair: profiles which cor-

roborate Millais' brush, and illustrate a lovely phrase of Mistral in *Mirèio*, "couleur de joue;" flushed little legs in ragged socks, which have piteously set out on the dark thoroughfares of life; voices, above all, which have often a low harp-like tone not to be heard elsewhere out of drawing-rooms. It is as if tremendous London, her teeming thoughts troubling her, said "Hush!" in the ear of all her own. Hyde Park orators are seldom brawlers; immense crowds, out for sight-seeing, are controlled by the gentlest of police, who say "Please," and are obeyed. Few stop to salute or exchange a word at the shelters. This is no experimental or villageous world: one man's affairs are in India, another's on the deep sea, and a third's in a cradle three stories up. Sidneys and pickpockets intermingle, each on a non-communicated errand. Here whisks a Turk, in his extraordinary unnoticed dress; and yonder, a sprout of a man who might have been bow-legged, had he any legs at all: nothing new goes at its value, nothing strange begets comment. The long-distance ironies, or intelligential buzz of street-life in New York, where folk go

two and two, are here foreign and transatlantic indeed. The even pavements drink in all that might mean concussion, the soft golden air deadens it, the preoccupied seriousness of the human element contradicts and forbids it. An awful, endearing, melancholy stillness broods over the red roofs of High Holborn, and hangs, like a pale cloud, on the spires of the Strand, and the yellow-lustred plane tree of Cheapside: gigantic forces seem trooping by, like the boy-god Harpocrates, finger on lip. The hushing rain, from a windless sky, falls in sheets of silver on gray, gray on violet, violet on smouldering purple, and anon makes whole what it had hardly riven: the veil spun of nameless analogic tints, which brings up the perspective of every road, the tapestry of sun-shot mist which Théophile Gautier admired once with all his eye. The town wears the very color of silence. No one can say of S. Paul's that it is a talking dome, despite the ironic accident of the whispering gallery in the interior. Like Wordsworth upon Helvellyn, in Haydon's odd memorable portrait, it sees with drooped eyes, and exhorts

with grand reticences and abstractions. Mighty stone broods above, on either hand, its curiously beautiful draperies of soot furled over the brow, in the posture of the speechless martyrs of Attic tragedy. There is an alchemic atmosphere in London, which interdicts one's perception of ugliness. At the angles of the grimiest places, choked with trade, we stumble on little old bearded graveyards, pools of ancestral sleep; or low-lying leafy gardens where monks and guildsmen have had their dream: closes inexpressibly pregnant with peace, the cæsural pauses of our loud to-day. Nothing in the world is so remote, so pensive, so musty-fragrant of long ago, as the antique City churches where the dead are the only congregation; where the effigies of Rahere the founder, Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, John Gower, and our old friend Stow are awake, in their scattered neighborhoods, to make the responses; and where the voices of the daily choir, disembodied by the unfilled space about, breathe ghostly four-part Amens, to waver like bubbles up and down the aisles. And to go thence into the highway creates no great jar. The tide there is always at

the flood, and frets not. The perfectly ordered traffic, its want of blockade and altercation, the sad-colored, civil-mannered throng, the dim light and the wet gleam, make it as natural to be absent-minded at Charing Cross as in the Abbey. Shelley must have found it so; else whence his simile,

> "The City's voice itself is soft like Solitude's."

There is no congestion of the populace; yet the creeks and coves of that ancient sea remain brimmed with mortality, hour after hour, century after century, as if in subjection to a fixed moon. It is the very poise of energy, the aggregation of so much force that all force is at a standstill; the miraculous moment, indefinitely prolonged, when fruition becalms itself at the full, and satiety hesitates to set in. A certain subdued mighty hum, as of "the loom of time," London lacks not; but a crass explosion never breaks it. The imponderable quiet of the vast capital completes her inscrutable charm. She has the effect of a muted orchestra on ears driven mad with the horrible din of new America. As still as her deep history on

library shelves, so still are her pace and her purpose to-day: her grave passing, would, like Lincoln in camp, discourage applause. Everywhere is the acoustically perfect standpoint. The cosmic currents ripple audibly along.

> "Therein I hear the Parcæ reel
> The threads of life at the spinning-wheel,
> The threads of life and power and pain."

Coal-smoke and river-fog are kind to the humanist. They build his priory cell, where he can sit and work on his illuminations, and know that he lays his colors true. "The man, sir, who is tired of London," said the great Doctor, in one of his profound generalities, "is tired of life."

At certain hours, the City is tenantless, and sunrise or sunset, touching the vidual tower of All Hallows Staining, gives it the pearl and carmine tints of a shell. At such a time you may wander in the very luxury of loneliness, from London Bridge to Lambeth, watching the long yards swing at their moorings by the palace wall, and Thames running tiger-coated to sea; and from the Gray's Inn limes pass on

to an unvisited and noble old bronze of an inconsiderable Stuart, lustrous from the late shower, beyond whom are the forgotten water-stairs of Whitehall, above whom is his own starlit weather-vane, with "the Protestant wind still blowing." Where the Boar's Head was, where the Roman Baths are, in strange exchanges of chronology, where, in a twinkle, the merchants and journalists shall be, are the depopulated presence-halls in which you are

"In dreams a king, but waking, no such matter."

All that was temporal in them has been swallowed by the wave of the generations of men who are no more. Poet by poet, from the beginning, has known the look of London's void heart at night, and has had, next it, his keenest gust of sovereignty, on jealous marches when his own footfall is soft as a forest creature's, for fear of man and of mortal interruption. The living are gone for the moment: the dead and their greatness are "nearer than hands and feet." The divinest quality of this colossal calm, "mirk miles broad," is that, to the sensitive mind, it is a magic glass for musings. In such a

mysterious private depth Narcissus saw himself, and died of his own beauty. The few who have had eternity most in mind, have worshipped London most; and their passion, read of in biographies, has expanded, insensibly, the imagination of the many. The terror of the vast town lies on any thoughtful spirit; but without some touch or other of golden casuistry, of neo-Platonism, none can sincerely adore her. For the adorable in her is man's old adoration itself, breathed forth and crystallized. That indeed, is the everlasting delight: London has nothing so simple in her bosom as instinctive charm. She is the dear echo, the dear mirror, of humanity. The Charles Lamb who was wont to relieve his tender overburdened nature by a plunge in the surging crowd, and who was not ashamed that he had wept there, "for fulness of joy at so much life," might be the first to apply to the majestic and bitter mother who bred him, the illumining line of Alfred de Musset:

"*Car sa beauté pour nous, c'est notre amour pour elle.*"

She gives us freedom, recollection, reverence; and we attribute to her the sweet-

ness of our own dispositions at her knee. Blessing us with her silence, the glad incredible thing, she lets us believe we have discovered it, as a fresh secret between lover and lover.

On Sundays, too, the dreary English Sundays of old complaint, what idyllic opportunity wastes itself at the door! Hampstead and Blackheath are efflorescent with the populace, but dark London wears her troth-plight ring of meditation. Her church-bells, indeed, speak: there is a new one at every turning, like the succession of perfumes as you cross a conservatory, and felt as a discord no more than these. Good to hear are the chimes of S. Giles Cripplegate, the aged bells of S. Helen, with their grace-notes and falling thirds, the great octave-clash of Wren's cathedral, which booms and sprays like the sea on the chalk-cliffs almost within its sight. And the ghosts are out again under the eaves of Little Britain and Soho. It is usually on Sundays, or at night, that you may view the young Cowley (curled up, among the geraniums, on the window-ledge of an Elizabethan house near S. Dunstan's-in-the-West) reading

Spenser, his light bronze curls curtaining the folio page; and a figure of uncontemporaneous look, coming heavily from the Temple gateway, almost opposite, with a black band on his sleeve, is saying brokenly to himself: "Poor Goldy was wild, very wild; but he is so no more."

The elective London of choicest companionship, of invited sights and sounds, of imperial privacy, is always open to the explorer: "London small and white and clean," walled and moated, fairer than she ever was at any one time, warless, religious, pastoral, where hares may course along the friendly highway, and swans breast the unpolluted Fleet. Like the gods, you may, if you will, apprehend all that has ever been, at a glance, and out of that all, seize the little which is perfect and durable, and live in it: "in the central calm at the heart of agitation." By so much as London and her draggled outer precincts are bulging and vile, and her mood stupid, cruel, and senseless, victory is the larger for having found here a spiritual parterre of perpetual green. And it is, perhaps, owing to respect towards those who yet believe in her, whose presence imposes

upon her, in romantic tyranny, the remembrance of what she has been to her saints, that she does, in reality, walk softly, speak low, as if her life-long orgies were fabulous, and wear, to her faithful lover, the happy innocent look becoming the young Republic of Selected Peace. Donne's subtly beautiful cry is ever in his ear:

> "O stay heere! for to thee
> England is only a worthy gallerie
> To walk in Expectation: till from thence
> Our greatest King call thee to His presénce."

O stay here! Who would not be such a city's citizen?

1890.

The Captives

THE CAPTIVES

THE lions at the Zoo "bring sad thoughts to the mind": they chiefly, for they are the most impressive figures among our poor hostages. The pretty moons of color, cream or bronze, pulsating along their tawny sides, seem but so many outer ripples of a heart-ache subtle enough to move your own. Couchant, with a droop of the bearded chest, or erect, with an eternal restless four steps and back again, they drag through, in public, their defeated days. It is inconceivable that we should attach the idea of depravity to a lion. Surely, it is no count against him that he can kill those of us who are adjacent, and juicy! In the roomy name of reciprocity, why not? Yet what he can do, he leaves undone. A second glance at him corrects inherited opinion:

"I trow that countenance cannot lie."

Benignity sits there, and forbearance; else we know not what such things mean. Those golden eyes, pools of sunlit water, make one remember no blood-curdling hap; but rather the gracious legendry of long ago: how a lion buried the Christian penitent in the lone Egyptian sands, and another gambolled in the thronged Coliseum, kissing the feet of the Christian youth, when the task laid upon him, in his hunger, was to rend his body in twain. Something about the lion reminds one of certain sculptured Egyptian faces. This great intellectual mildness, when blended with enormous power (power which in him must be expressed physically, or we were too dull to feel it), appears to some merely sly and sinister. Incredible goodness we label as hypocrisy. For the ultimate quality in the expression of the lion is its sweetness. He may be, as one hears him called, the king of brutes, but the gentleman among brutes he is, beyond a doubt. He has tolerance, dignity, and an oak-leaf cleanliness. With passing accuracy, Landor or William Morris, is often described as "leonine"; but the real lion-men of England are the thin

and mild dynamos: Pitt, Newman, Nelson. In these are the long austere lines of the cheek, the remote significant gaze, the look of inscrutable purpose and patience. As Theseus says, smiling upon his Hippolyta, of the lion in the masque of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*: "A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience."

Year after year, so long as the splendid creatures are cheapened "to make a Roman holiday," they move not so much under protest as with black sullen fatalism. We have all seen them rise to the lash in the hands of a spangled circus female, who must end, forsooth, by inserting her pomatumed head in their too-enduring jaws; and it is not unusual for them to spring at the just-closed door, with the fell strength of that soft and terrible left forepaw. Their action is, of course, perfunctory; and since they are notoriously brave, and not to be cowed, obedience in them has a strange pathos. They are trained to sit up, and roll barrels, and fire cannon, and jump hoops; yes, even to scowl and swear, to the terror of "men, women and Herveys," between the scenes of their bitter comedy; yet the

clown's circumstance cannot touch a hair of those mournful magnific heads. Their sleep is broken with poked umbrellas, and a patter of foolish nuts and cookies; and, from a dream of the fragrant jungles and the torrents of home, they come anew upon the cyclorama of human faces, and the babble of foreign tongues. They live no longer from hand to mouth, as they do in their native haunts; their needs, nay, their whims, are studied and gratified; they serve painters, naturalists, schoolboys; they give employment; they call forth thought, love, courage. And many sympathizers and well-wishers are short-sighted enough to congratulate caged animals, and think them happily circumstanced. Your point of view depends, perhaps, on how much passion for out-of-doors, for solitude, is in your own blood; and on your sense of the lengths to which human interference may go with the works of God. We give these lives subjected to our laudable curiosity, strange exchanges: for moss knee-deep, and the dews and aroma of the woody ground, a raised sawdust floor; and for an outlook through craggy glens,

"Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras
of leaves,"

a whitewashed wall nine feet high, a stucco sky which has not the look of Nubia, nor Barbary, nor Arabia, any more.

Our father Adam is said to have dwelt in peace with all the beasts in his Garden. And there is no evidence in the Mosaic annals that it was they who became perverted, and broke faith with man! Marry, man himself, in the birth of his moral ugliness, set up the hateful division, estranged these inestimable friends, and then, unto everlasting, pursues, maligns, subjugates, and kills the beings braver, shrewder, and more innocent than he. He has wrested from its beautiful meaning his "dominion over them." Power made him tyrannous, and tyranny bred in its victims hate and revenge and fear, and from the footfall of man all creation flees away, unless, indeed, as in Swift's most telling allegory, where the cultured Houyhnhnms may succeed in subjecting the Yahoos. For man alone is the fallen angel of the lower order:

"The King, from height of all his painted glory,"

has sunk into vulgar dreams of coercion, breathing dual impiety against his Maker and his mates. Save him, there is no other perverted animal; not one clad otherwise, or minded otherwise, than his archetype. Men in sealskins; women in swansdown, with heron-aigrettes; children in cocoon-spun silk, their hands and feet in strange sheathings torn from the young of the goat and the cow;—what are these but ludicrous violators of the decencies of the universe? If there be beasts in Heaven "with eye downdropt" upon the temperate and polar zones, they cannot lack diversion. It is, moreover, part of our plot to deny them immortality, and to attempt to interpose our jurisdiction, in such abstruse matters, between them and their Author, towards whom they yet bear an unshamed front. For man the animal is but a beggarly lump. He has never shown himself so provident as the ant, so ingenious as the beaver, so faithful as the dove, so forgiving as the hound. His senses are eternally below par; his artistic faculties are befogged. The humblest thrush is an architect and musician by eldest family tradition,

while it takes him a thousand years to conceive an ogee arch and a viol d' amore. And having driven from his pestilential company the whole retinue of dear esquires, he began shamefacedly to reclaim them to his service. The horse came back, generously hiding his apprehensions; the pig and the hen mechanically, at the prospect of free bed and board; the dog with his glad conciliation, the cat with her aristocrat reserves. These abide with us, suffer through us, are persuasive and voluble, and endeavor to reconcile us with the great majority of wild livers, from whom we are divorced. In vain do they so press upon us our own lack of logic. We address them individually: "You, O immigrant, are personally pleasing unto me; but your fellows, your blood-relations, your customs in your own country, — *ach Himmel!*" Our popular speech insults them at every turn: "as silly as a goose," "as vain as a peacock," "as ugly as a rat," "as obstinate as a mule," "as cross as a bear," "as dirty as a dog," "as sick as a dog," "to be hanged like a dog," "a dog's life," "Cur!" "Puppy!" Surely, no class of creatures, unless Jews in the twelfth cen-

tury, have ever undergone such groundless contumely. Every word of Shylock's famous plea stands good for them, as also its close. "If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and, if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that." When we hear of a writer who advises the practice of "courtesy" towards animals, and of a little girl who hoarded up wisdom from the speech of a turtle, our memories couple them as Alice — and Sir Arthur Helps — in Wonderland. If it be in *Utopia* alone that murderous "sport" is impossible, and that only there it can breed a rational pity when after a run, "a harmless and fearfull Hare should be devour'd by strong, fierce, and cruell Dogges," how far are we not from the time when modern conscientiousness shall make us just even to the exiles pent in a menagerie? Our laws deal with these in a spirit of the most flagrant injustice. While every jury allows for reprisals, when dealing with human crime, no biped else, and no quadruped, with however blameless a record,

under whatever provocation, can be allowed an instant's hearing, when so much as suspected of a transgression. A leopard here at the Zoo revolts, perhaps for no specific cause. He is tired of being enslaved, and would resume sincerity. He offends; he is executed, leaving ineradicable influences among the cages, as if their Danton had gone by, audible again: "*Que mon nom soit flétri; que la France soit libre!*" Or the keeper abominably abuses a certain elephant, a very saint for patience, a genius for cleverness, a hero for humor; and six years after, the same elephant, in another duchy, spies his old tormentor, winds his lithe proboscis about his waist, and neatly cracks him against a wall. A dozen influential persons plead, as defence for the assassin, his unparalleled nobleness of character; but the public blood is up: he has to die. To some reforms we shall never come, for thought about them is deadened in us by the operation of our accursed generic pride. Our codes approximate too painfully to the largeness of the universal plan. We have, indeed, conceived of other suns, other systems, than ours; but the hope is slight that

we can ever admit beasts, not to certain terms of equality with our own esteemed species, but even to their relative pronoun, and a place in the divine economy. Arrogance is bad for us, and bad for them. The very bliss of power is to protect and forbear; could we learn it, we might, perhaps, inspire it in the shark, the jackal, and the butcher-bird. Meanwhile, in the maintenance of penal laws against our Ishmaels, it can at least be urged that, as yet, we know no better. As we are drowned in ignorance, it is inconceivable that we shall be hanged for sacrilege! Could we analyze the impressions of uncultivated persons, received from the centaurs in the Parthenon frieze, or the Sphinx of elder Egypt, we should probably discover that these are looked upon as mere monsters: a compound of man and horse, or of woman and lioness, the conception of which is abhorrent and distressing to the mind. (It is to be hoped that there are snobbish horses and lionesses to take the corresponsive view). But the artists of the race, from the world's beginning, souls of a benign fancy, have gone on creating these mythic "monsters."

Long-eared fauns abound, and mermaids with silver and vermilion scales, and angels borne on vast white gull-like wings: dear non-anatomical shapes, for the most part, full of odd charm, and of an application which will last out until we become humble and humorous enough to read it. Nor, on second thought, can we fail to see gravest changes adumbrating the subject. The Latin nations lag behind in conciliations, and England leads. There were not many, long ago, who passed the fraternal word to beasts: those who did so, Sidney, More, Vaughan, were the flower of their kind, and not without suspicion of "queerness." Lord Erskine, less than three generations back, suffered great obloquy for his championship of what we are almost ready to concede as the "rights" of animals. Coleridge was well laughed at for saluting the ass's little foal as his brother. But Burns was not laughed at for his field-mouse, nor Blake for his fly. And there is no single characteristic of modern life so novel, so significant, as the yearning affectionateness with which our youngest poets allude to fauna, and so adorn a moral. The habit

has grown with them, until every Pan's pipe breathes sweet pieties to the less articulate world. A line of Celia Thaxter, addressed to a mussel on the stormy Maine strand, has struck their unconscious key-note.

> "Thou thought of God! . . . what more than thou am I!"

For Darwin has come and gone, and cut our boast from under us.

On their own part, how benevolent are the estranged allies far away! how ready to resume "the league of heart to heart" with some soul a little primal! Any one, indeed, may tame a wild thing, by no deeper necromancy than a succession of suppers and of kind words. Animals are disinterested also, and ready to serve without rewards. Ravens are gentle marketers for Elijah; the lions purr about the prophet Daniel; the shyest fish swim into Thoreau's hand; S. Francis, in the tenderest of folk-tales, goes out to the hills, and reasons with the wicked wolf who sacks the Umbrian villages. He offers him free and ample maintenance, promises him immunity from the hunters, and brings him

down among the women and children, to pledge himself to better behavior on his apologetic paw. S. Francis was not a very great fool: he was only Adam sane again, and interharmonized with the physical universe. The majority of infants still show pleasure at the sight of a beetle, or a toad. Of course, their grasp kills it; but that is not voluntary, as the pleasure is. The fatuous parents, however, are certain to change all that: toads, be it known, produce warts, and beetles sting. A lizard on a tree-trunk, a mink in the creek, a delicate gray squirrel on the stone wall, (charming persons exclusively minding their own business,) are at all times providentially provided for our sweet little boys to kill. Strange that, whereas, by Tigris and Euphrates, we creatures had our communication with creatures in one kindly language, we should now roam over the face of the earth, everywhere accosting our demonstrable superiors with a gun! Mr. Bryan, candidate for the Presidency of the United States, went into the forest, the other day, for rest and recreation, and had a stroke of luck: he shot something. It was a beautiful doe. We learn from

the newspapers that she had "stood looking at him, without any fear." Here is your typical high treason in these nice matters. Who will say but that the doe was about to give some sign? *Ça donne furieusement à penser.* Blind bullies, sodden usurpers that we are! It is our dense policy to rebuff the touching advances of our old allies and kindred. Not Rhœcus only instinctively bruises the ambassador bee, and stifles the immortal message.

If the Oriental religions have any mission to discharge in our behalf, let them teach us speedily, through any gracious superstition whatsoever, their grave respect for animal life. When we are thoroughly converted, we shall not only cease to vivisect, but manumit our slaves of the exhibition-hall and the Zoo: we shall hear no longer from the lion-house the fell foreboding sound, as of Vercingetorix, Jugurtha, Zenobia, all together, imploring the gods for vengeance upon Rome. The captives have borne their fate, yet not quite dispassionately. They lose, behind bars, day by day, something of themselves hard to part with; and they know it: but they

are no atheists. Outside is the hateful city, but the sun also, bringing strange fancies to them as it crosses the threshold. So much lies back of them, in that cell of humiliation, where they were not born! What if there should be freedom again for them, beyond death? Some thought as profound surges this morning in a vast antiphonal cry among the tanks and cages, and shakes, in passing, the soul of man.

"O comrades of mine, we are not ignorant of previous sorrow; and O ye who have outlived yet greater ills! behold, the god unto these also will put an end."

1896.

On Teaching One's Grandmother How to Suck Eggs

ON TEACHING ONE'S GRANDMOTHER HOW TO SUCK EGGS.

IN the days of the Schoolmen, when no vexed question went without its fair showing, it seems incredible that the important thesis hereto affixed as a title went a-begging among those hair-splitting philosophers. Since Aristotle himself overlooked it, Duns Scotus and the noted Paracelsus, Aureolus Philip Theophrastus Bombast de Hohenheim, were quite content to repeat his sin of omission. Even Sir Thomas Browne, "the horizon of whose understanding was much larger than the hemisphere of this world," neither unearthed the origin of this singular implied practice, nor attempted in any way to uphold or depreciate it. The phrase hath scarce the grace of an Oriental precept, and scarce the dignity of Rome. It might sooner appertain to

Sparta, where the old were held in reverence, and where their education, in a burst of filial anxiety, might be prolonged beyond the usual term of mental receptivity.

It is reserved therefore, for some modern inquirer to establish, whether the strange accomplishment in mind was at any time, in any nation, barbarous or enlightened, in universal repute among venerable females; or else especially imparted, under the rose, as a sort of witch-trick, to conjurers, fortune-tellers, pythonesses, sibyls, and such secretive and oracular folk; whether the initiatory lessons were theoretical merely; and at what age the grandams (for the condition of hypermaternity was at least imperative) were allowed to begin operations.

It is a partial argument against the antiquity of the custom, and against the supposition of its having prevailed among old Europe's nomadic tribes, that several of these are accused by historians of having destroyed their progenitors so soon as the latter became idle and enfeebled: whereas it is reasonably to be inferred that the gentle process of ovi-

sugescence, had such then been invented, would have kept the savage fireside peopled with happy and industrious centenarians. After the arduous labor of their long lives, this new, leisurely, mild, and genteel trade could be acquired with imperceptible trouble. Cato mastering Greek at eighty, Dandolo leading hosts when past his October, are kittenish and irreverend figures beside that of a toothless Goth grandmother, learning, with melancholy energy, to suck eggs.

We know not why the privilege of education, if granted to them without question, should have been withheld from their gray spouses, who certainly would have preferred so sociable an industry to whetting the knives of the hunters, or tending watch-fires by night. But no one of us ever heard of a grandfather sucking eggs. The gentle art was apparently sacred to the gentle sex, and withheld from the shaggy lords of creation, by whom the innutritious properties of the shell were happily unsuspected.

By what means was the race of hens, for instance, preserved? Statistics might be proffered concerning the ante-natal

consumption of fledglings, which would edify students of natural history. One bitterly-disputed point, the noble adage under consideration permanently settles; a quibble which ought to have

"staggered that stout Stagyrite,"

and which has come even to the notice of grave inductive theologians: *videlicet*, that the bird, and not the egg, may claim the priority of existence. For had it been otherwise, one's grandmother would been early acquainted with the very article which her posterity recommended to her as a novelty, and which, with respectful care, they taught her to utilize, after a fashion best adapted to her time of life.

Fallen into desuetude is this judicious and salutary custom. There must have been a time when a yellowish stain about the mouth denoted an age, a vocation, a limitation, effectually as did the bulla of the lad, the maiden's girdle, "the marshal's truncheon, or the judge's robe," or any of the picturesque distinctions now crushed out of the social code. But the orthodox sucking of eggs, the innocent,

austere, meditative pastime, is no more, and the glory of grandams is extinguished forever.

The dreadful civility of our western woodsmen, the popular dissentient voice alike of the theatre and of the political meeting, — the casting of eggs wherefrom the element of youth is wholly eliminated, affords a speculation on heredity, and appears to be a faint echo of some traditional squabble in the morning of the world, among disagreeing kinswomen; the very primordial battle, where reloading was superfluous, where every shell told, whose blackest spite was spent in a golden rain and hail. What havoc over the face of young creation; what coloring of pools, and of errant butterflies! What distress amid the cleanly pixies and dryads, whose shady haunts trickled unwelcome moisture: a terror not unshared in the recesses of the coast: —

> "*Intus aquæ dulces, vivoque sedilia saxo,*
> *Nympharum domus.*"

One can fancy the younglings of the vast human family, the success of whose lesson to their elders was thus over-well demonstrated, marking the ebb and flow of hos-

tilities, like the superb spirits of Richelieu and the fourteenth Loúis, eyeing the great Revolution. What marvel, if, struck with remorse at the senile strife of the "she-citizens," they vowed never, never to teach another grandmother to suck eggs! So it was, maybe, that the abused custom was lost from the earth.

Nay, more; its remembrance is perverted into a taunt more scorching than lightning, more silencing than the bolt of Jove. *Sus Minervam* is Cicero's elegant equivalent; and Partridge says to Tom Jones, quoting his old schoolmaster: "Polly Matete cry town is my daskalon": the English whereof runneth: Teach your grandmother how to suck eggs! Is not the phrase the cream of scorn, the catchword of insubordination, the blazing defiance of tongues unbroken as a one-year's colt? It grated strangely on our ear. We grieved over the transformation of a favorite saw, innocuous once, and conveying a meek educational suggestion. We came to admit that the Academe where the old sat at the feet of their descendants, to be ingratiated into the most amiable of professions, was

nothing better, in memory, than an impertinence. And we sadly avowed, in the underground chamber of our private heart, that, as for worldly prospects, it would be fairly suicidal, all things considered, to aspire now to the chair of that professorship.

Let some reformer, who cherishes his ancestress, and who is not averse to break his fast on an omelet, dissuade either object of his regard from longer lending name and countenance to a vulgar sneer Shall such be thy mission, reader? We would wish the extended acquaintance with that mysterious small cosmos which suggests to the liberal palate broiled wing and giblets *in posse*; and joy for many a year of thy parent's parent, who is in some sort thy reference and means of identification, the hub of thy far-reaching and more active life; but, prithee, wrench apart their sorry association in our English speech. Purists shall forgive thee if thou shalt, meanwhile, smile in thy sleeve at the fantastic text which brought them together.

1885.

Wilful Sadness in Literature

WILFUL SADNESS IN LITERATURE.

"Leave things so prostitute,
And take the Alcaic lute!"

BEN JONSON.

MR. MATTHEW ARNOLD, in the preface to the first edition of his collected poems (1853) withdrew from circulation, and gave reasons for withdrawing, his splendid *Empedocles on Etna.* Nothing in Mr. Arnold's career did him more honor than that fine scrupulousness leading him to decry his dramatic masterpiece as too mournful, too introspective, too unfruitful of the cheer and courage which it is the business of poets to give to the world. He says of it, that it belongs to a class of faulty representations "in which suffering finds no vent in action; in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged, unrelieved

by incident, hope, or resistance; in which there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done. In such situations there is inevitably something morbid, in the description of them something monotonous. When they occur in actual life, they are painful, not tragic: the representation of them in poetry is painful also." The same verdict that condemns the stagnant sadness of *Empedocles*, reacts upon Clough's *Dipsychus*, to some of us the most attractive of modern monodies, on Marlowe's *Faustus*, and on *Hamlet* itself. But every one of these is an inestimable experience to the happy and the virtuous who love the intimate study of humanity, and are made, by the perusal, more thoughtful and tender. On none but general considerations, could Mr. Arnold have attempted to suppress *Empedocles*. The great rules of æsthetics, as for ethics, must be for the many, not for the few; and the many are neither happy nor virtuous: and it may well seem a sort of treachery in a man of genius to speak aloud at all, in our vast society of the desponding and the unspiritual, unless he can speak the helping word. This

cannot be sufficiently insisted upon before young writers, who are too ready to burst in upon us with their Ahs and Welladays, and to set up, at twenty, for jaded cynics, and lovers who have loved, according to their own pinched measure, too well. Some public censor, a Stoic having a heart, and perfect control of it, should be appointed, in every township, to kill off in the egg, whatever is uselessly doleful, and spread abroad the right idea of what is fit to be uttered in this valley of tears. The elect should be supplied with Empedocleian extras: but the multitude which can be impressed by their intrinsic evil should never be incited to approach their extrinsic beauty.

The play which leaves us miserable and bewildered, the harrowing social lesson leading nowhere, the transcript from commonplace life in which nothing is admirable but the faithful skill of the author, — these are bad morals because they are bad art. With them ranks the invertebrate poetry of two and three generations ago, which has bequeathed its sickly taint to its successor in popular favor, our modern minor fiction. Au-

thors are, in a sense, the universal burden-bearers: those who can carry much vicariously, without posing or complaining. Mr. Arnold's penance for his melancholy is a noble spectacle; and it will always do what he feared *Empedocles* would fail to do, "inspirit and rejoice the reader." The ancients stepped securely in this matter of sadness; for piety, retribution, awe, spring from every agony of Œdipus and Orestes. Many of the Elizabethan dramas are dark and terrible; but they compel men to think, and teach more humanities than a university course. Mr. Meredith's influence, in our own day, is not such as will induce you to sit shaking your maudlin head over yourself and all creation; neither — need it be added? —is Mr. Stevenson's. Mr. Henry James has just said of Mr. Lowell: "He is an erect fighting figure on the side of optimism and beauty." What made Browning exceedingly popular at last, was his courage in overthrowing blue devils.

> "What had I on earth to do
> With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?"

His many and unique merits have small share in the result.

Now, wilful sadness, as Plato thinks, as the School-men heartily thought after him, is nothing less than an actual crime. Sadness which is impersonal, reluctantly uttered, and adjusted, in the utterance, to the eternal laws, is not so. It is well to conceal the merely painful, as did the Greek audiences and the masters of their drama. That critic would be crazy, or excessively sybaritic, who would bar out the tragic from the stage, the studio, the orchestra, or the library shelf. Melancholy, indeed, is inseparable from the highest art. We cannot wish it away; but we can demand a mastery over it in the least, as well as in the greatest: a melancholy like that of Burns, truth itself, native dignity itself; or the Virgilian melancholy of Tennyson, in his sweet broodings over the abysses of our unblest life, and the turn of his not hopeless thought and phrase. We can demand, in these matters, the insincerity of the too-little, rather than the cant of the too-much. The danger of expressing despondency is extreme. The maudlin shoots like a parasite from the most moving themes, and laughter dogs us in our rapt mood. It

was not without reason that Thackeray made fun of Werther. What Sidney sweetly calls —

"Poore Petrarch's long-deceasèd woes,"

stirred up the scepticism of one Leigh Hunt, and of the indelicate public after him. No poet can put fully into words the ache and stress of human passion: no very wise poet will ever try to do so, save by the means of reserves, elisions, evasions. The pathos which goes deep is generally a plain statement, not a reflection. The old ballad, *Waly, Waly*, for instance, is a hard thing to get away from, dry-eyed. Nothing is so poignant, at times, in poetry, as a mere obituary announcement. Hear the long throbbing lines of the old elegy supposed to be by Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke:

"Learning her light hath lost, Valor hath slain her knight:
Sidney is dead, dead is my friend, dead is the world's delight."

Or Chapman:

"For now no more of Æneus' race survived: they all were gone.
No more his royal self did live; no more his noble son,
The golden Meleager now: their glasses all were run."

The heart-breaking climax of *Lear*, the bursting-point of so much grandeur and so much suffering, is a dying commonplace almost grotesque: "Pray you, undo this button." But to harrow us is another affair altogether. Plato could never forgive a subject not inevitable, chosen simply because it is in itself piteous or startling, and invites the rhetorical gabble which its creator, after one fashion or another, can spend upon it.

The French and their followers have driven us into a demand for decency, and unmuzzled pessimism is no more decent than the things oftener named and contested by our worthiest critics. What use have we for any Muse, be she the most accomplished in the world, who lives but to be, in a charming phrase of Southey's, "soothed with delicious sorrow"? Art has little to do with her: for art is made of seemly abstinences. The moment it speaks out fully, lets us know all, ceases to represent a choice and a control of its own material, ceases to be, in short, an authority and a mystery, and prefers to set up for a mere Chinese copy of life, — just so soon its birthright is transferred.

"I answer paradoxically, but truly, I think truly," that even Beauty has her responsibilities, and Art her ideals of conduct. Nay, she has her definite dogma. "Our only chance," says Addington Symonds in a private letter to Robert Louis Stevenson, "seems to me to maintain, against all appearances, that evil can never, and in no way, be victorious."

We owe our gratitude to the men of letters who deliberately undertake to be gay: for nobody expects unconscious and spontaneous gayety in books nowadays. The modern spirit has seen to that. No thanks of ours are too good even for the bold bad Mr. Henley, who is so acrid towards Americans: for he is the one living poet already famous, who has struck, and means to strike, the very note of "How happy is he born and taught," and "Shall I, wasting in despair." But if our dilettantes lament a withered wild-flower, or praise a young face, they feel that they have done enough towards clearing the air, and justifying "the ways of God to man." It is inconvenient to have the large old fundamental feelings: to be energetic, or scornful, or believing. The

fashionable poetic utterance is dejected, and of consummate refinement; *le besoin de sentir* is about it like a strange fragrance. We have had disheartening modern music, and of the highest order, too long. Beginning with Byron, and, in a far different manner, with Shelley, we may count those problems of our life few indeed which have lacked the poor solution of a protest or a tear. Wordsworth was the last great man

> — "contented if he might enjoy
> The things that others understand."

Yet Wordsworth counts for little in this case, since he had no marked constitutional sensitiveness. The lyres of "Parnaso mount" have grown passive and unpartisan. They have ceased to rouse us, and we have ceased to wonder at them because of it. To sigh, to scowl, to whimper, is the ambition of minstrels in the magazines; of the three, whimpering is the favorite. Now, to "make a scene" is not mannerly, even on paper. Before the implacable Fates we may as well be collected. It seems less than edifying to ask the cold one, though in enchanting

numbers, whether her bosom be of marble, or of her ghost whether it will not visit us in the garden. Yet such attitudinizing pathos, impossible so long as faith was general, and true emotion therefore unexhausted, the pathos of the decadence, the exaggeration of normal moods and affectation of more than is felt, *l'expression forte des sentiments faibles*,—is the prevailing feature of current verse. Rather, to be quite accurate, it was the prevailing feature a moment ago. There are, in the east, other portents more significant. It is indicative not only of his middle age, but of something touching ourselves and our to-morrow, that Mr. Swinburne, let us say, is less stormy and less maledictory, and longs not so incessantly to be laid in the exquisite burial-places of his imagination. They that wail well in duodecimo may presently be accused of giddiness and shallow thought. For literature, at last, is picking up heart: health and spring and fight are re-establishing themselves. Out of the alcoves of time, certain sunny faces of old look fatherly and smiling, as the vapors disperse. Hail also, young meek out-riders, morning-colored contempora-

ries! At least, you are of excellent cheer. You have done with sourness, and

> — "hear it sweep
> In distance down the dark and savage vale."

Change is at hand. The Maypole is up in Bookland.

1892.

An Inquirendo into the Wit and Other Good Parts of His Late Majesty, KING CHARLES THE SECOND

AN INQUIRENDO INTO THE WIT AND OTHER GOOD PARTS OF HIS LATE MAJESTY, KING CHARLES THE SECOND

SCENE: Saint James's Park, on the afternoon of the twenty-ninth of May. Edward Clay, with a twig of oak stuck in his hat is on the bank of the little lake, feeding the water-fowl. Percy Wetherell, a fellow-author, and Rhoda, his wife, who are crossing the bridge, perceive him.

MRS. WETHERELL

See! there's our dear Mr. Clay. What is he doing that for?

WETHERELL

The motive must be pure benevolence. Give me a little start, and I will run him down. [*Followed by Rhoda, he goes down*

the steps, close to his friend's shoulder, observes the decoration, and utters in a sepulchral tone: "Long live Oliver!" Clay looks up, and smiles, still breaking his biscuit. Finally he speaks :]

CLAY

You have guessed it: I am keeping Restoration Day. It struck me as a pleasing rite to come up here and feast the descendants of King Charles the Second's water-fowl. I have to lecture on him to-night.

MRS. WETHERELL

King Charles the Second! Why, Mr. Clay, I thought he was the dreadfullest person!

WETHERELL

Easy now, my only love: don't hurt Edward's little feelings. He is a notorious Carolian specialist, a quasi-Cavalier, a pre-Jacobite, a seventeenth-centurion, and all that.

MRS. WETHERELL

Oh! a Royalist, a White Rose man? I never dreamed it.

CLAY

Nothing so concrete, Mrs. Wetherell. Only, you see, I honestly like the rogue;

people don't understand him. If I had your husband's leisure, I should never rest until I had moused in the archives at first hand, and said the authentic last good word for him. There would be no end of fun in it, and fun and justice are a fine pair.

WETHERELL

That green bird on your boot will choke himself. It is wonderful how tame they are! — I thought you knew more than anybody alive, on that subject, these ten years.

CLAY

I might say with Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle: "I have thought more than I have read, and read more than I have written."

MRS. WETHERELL

Do you really mean to make people like him? They taught us in the school-books that he was a bad good-for-nothing king.

WETHERELL

Perhaps, as Mark Twain might allege, he did not choose to consider himself as being in "the king business." He was a choice wag, at any rate.

CLAY

Yes: though not much worse than you. And he was the last Mind we have seen, or shall ever see, on the throne.

WETHERELL

Owch! Treason! She is all she should be, God bless her.

CLAY

[*Laughing.*] Allowed. I was contending that Charles the Second had wit, and a keen survey of men and things: he had the literary-philosophic turn, in short. He was n't good, he was n't beautiful, he was n't much of a Protestant, or a Constitutional Sovereign; but it is my long-standing theory that he was an indolent original genius of the first water, and a fine character spoiled. Here, billy, quack, quack, quack!

WETHERELL

Your indolent original point of view! I don't deny we have some pretty valuable bequests from that bacchanalian reign: the Habeas Corpus Act, for instance. But Charles himself! Who is a neater Pocket Compendium of all the vices? How are you going to excuse him? Because he was weak?

CLAY

Why do you think he must be excused? My pious intention is only to extra-illustrate him: "nothing extenuate, and set down naught in malice." I mean to provide the ordinary listener at the Institute with a little dispassionate extra acquaintanceship, pleasant in its nature, with the gentleman in question; and I distinctly mean not to tamper with what knowledge of him he may have acquired on other themes, and from other sources. You see how sly a plan of campaign it is. But your adjective, Wetherell, will never do. Weak? Where did you hear that fiddle-faddle? He had the most tremendous will. Repeatedly, and with the greatest severity and despatch, he took matters over into his own hands; and very often he was right, and ahead of contemporary policy. Look at the way he prorogued Parliament, in the May of 1679, after the famous quarrel over the trial of the five lords; the way he rejected the application of the Roos divorce bill, shaped so as to give himself latitude and precedent; his speech in the Upper House, insisting on holding to the terms of pardon which he had offered

from Breda; his letters to the young Duke of Gloucester, when there was rumor of a change of religion; or, to come to smaller and uglier matters, look at his obstinate maintenance of his right to appoint the ladies of the Queen's bedchamber, his whole inexcusable treatment of the great Chancellor. Weak! Have n't you read Green? Green, who comes down hard on him, would sooner have you think him an accomplished tyrant, and so should I.

WETHERELL

Ungrateful, then. He was ungrateful to the very people who brought about the Restoration, was n't he? — Rhoda, these swans are actually fatter than Lord Whidbourne's. (Do you like to hear Clay talk? I am egging him on; it does me good.)

MRS. WETHERELL

I shall ask him to dinner, Percy, to atone for you. Yes: it is great to find so much animation expended on dead issues.

CLAY

Never wilfully ungrateful, that I can see. Think of the times, think of the hue and cry after indemnities and offices; think of the million million services, little

and great, reported, invented, exaggerated, and real, all being urged together, on the day when fortune first smiled on the King. Could any one man satisfy such greed? Might not any one man get confused in such a muddle of beseeching hungry hands, and despair of ever dealing justly, save with the few he knew and remembered? And those he never forgot: not the least Penderell among them.

WETHERELL

How about the epigram, — Barrow's, was n't it? A very good hit: let me see. *Te magis*, that 's it:

Te magis optavit rediturum, Carole, nemo:
Et nemo sensit te rediisse minus.

CLAY

That is just the sort of dig Charles enjoyed. It is n't malicious. He was immensely amused by the protestations of the realm which, according to its own tale, had prayed for him, longed for him, and labored to bring him to his own again. He said ironically: "The fault is plainly mine that I came not before." How did he keep his patience through the incessant begging? He must have suffered more than a newly-elected president in America.

As it was, he granted innumerable pardons, and restitutions, and awards, "hearing anybody against anybody," and sure to be of propitious bent when petitions forced their way into his own hand. But he kept no memoranda. Or, as his apologist, Roger North, put it in capital plain Saxon, "he never would break his Head with Business." Long before there was much chance of his securing his succession to the crown, the hints of his adherents fell about him as thick as snow-flakes. Has n't he told us how the country innkeeper, alone with him a moment, during his fugitive days, read him through his disguise? "He kissed my hand that was upon the back of the chair, and said to me: 'God bless you wherever you go, for I do not doubt, before I die, to be a lord, and my wife a lady.' So I laughed and went away. . . . He proved very honest." That same innkeeper must have turned up, two hundred strong at least, at Whitehall. Again, you know how poor the King was, and how estates and emoluments had been parcelled out, and tied up, during the Protectorate. He had actually nothing, at first, to give.

WETHERELL

Except scandal.

CLAY

Irrelevant!

WETHERELL

And, of course, the immortal house-warming: a gift to the imaginations of all Englishmen forever. I am sorry I was n't there myself.

CLAY

O that day! What a wonderful procession it must have been, from London Bridge to Whitehall, through what Evelyn, in his Diary, so beautifully calls "a lane of happy faces," and troops pressing to their lips the hilts of their weapons, and waving them overhead, in a unique salutation; the King, whom the Speaker of the House of Commons was about to address as King of Hearts, riding, on his thirtieth birthday, between his brothers of York and Gloucester, past the long waving of scarfs and glitter of rapiers, bowing to left and right, like a dark pine in the wind; the saddle-cloths of purple and gold, the salvos, the tears, "the ways strewn all with flowers, bells ringing, steeples hung with tapestries, fountains running with wine, trumpets,

music, and myriads of people flocking; and two hundred thousand horse and foot brandishing their swords, and shouting with inexpressible joy."

WETHERELL

Yes; joy with a bill of expenses. England clamored against the Judges, and for the King; and, like Saul, he came: tall, robust, keen, suave, comely, with the curse of retrogression behind him.

MRS. WETHERELL

Hear the magnificent phrases!

CLAY

But they are true.

WETHERELL

Our collaborated Prose Works, specimen sheets.

MRS. WETHERELL

And to think you are all out of practice!

WETHERELL

Of what, shepherdess? Of truth?

MRS. WETHERELL

Mr. Clay, have n't you some more nice Charles-Secondy things to tell me? I am so interested.

WETHERELL

More of your ingenious charities, Clay,

by all means. Those faithless ducks of yours are seceding to the children, and Rhoda and I are out for a walk. Come, let us sink to the occasion. We might pace up and down awhile, under the trees beyond, at the edge of the old tilt-yard. Then let us all go together to the Abbey. We have promised to meet two American relatives of Rhoda's, at half after three. They wrote us that they arrived only yesterday; but your homing pigeon of a Yankee always must make straight for the Abbey. Meanwhile, can't you give us a sort of rehearsal of that lecture?

MRS. WETHERELL

He will, he will!

CLAY

I have n't all my notes with me. You are sure it won't tire you?

WETHERELL

Never. I love the æsthetic point of view. If any man remind me now that my father was a Whig, I shall bray at him.

CLAY

Well, well, nice of you, I 'm sure. You know my idea is just to present a special plea. How will you have me begin? I

can't go on automatically, as if you were the Public Eye.

WETHERELL

Oh, anecdotes: or his witticisms. There must be scores of them running wild. Leave out the done-to-death ones. Cut me no sirloin, sirrah; starve me no Nellies.

CLAY

I believe "Sir Loin" to be spurious. It belongs with ever so many Charles Lamb puns, sayable enough, only not said by the sayer.

WETHERELL

There is n't much chance for a king who has a genius for concise conversation.

CLAY

No. He does n't get reported correctly, for one thing. How could Sir Walter, weighted as he was, as writers of his time were, by the heavy-artillery ideas of diction, reproduce, in *Peveril* or *Woodstock*, this light super-civilized fashion of speech, supple and stinging as a whip? And no writer of fiction since, has quite captured it, except Mr. Marriott Watson. You remember that episode in *Galloping Dick*? Exquisite! Charles the Second's talk is

altogether the most admirable thing about him: though courtly, it had none of the circumlocutions of courtliness; it was exclusive and pertinent. "All this," as Walton sweetly says of Donne, "with a most particular grace, and an inexpressible addition of comeliness." The King's only long story, which for years he was always ready to tell from the beginning, "ever embellished," says mischievous Buckingham, "with some new circumstance," and which was wont to gather a knot of listeners old and new, was the story of his adventures after the battle of Worcester, in 1650. No heartier romance exists of pluck and patience, save the later record, so like it, of Prince Charlie's hardships, and his heroism under them; and its author's attachment to his only novel is simply a connoisseurship, a piece of esoteric appreciation: he took and gave delight with such thrilling biographical details as might have come from the mouth of Odysseus himself. His short sayings are all sterling, and his nicknames stuck like burs. Mr. Henry Bennet, afterwards Earl of Arlington, the grave and too inductive gentleman who so moved

the mirth of Miss Frances Stewart, was "Whereas" to his royal master; the yacht named after the stout Duchess of Portsmouth, the yacht to whose great sheets the King and the Duke of York sprang "like common seamen," in a terrible storm once, off the Kentish coast, was known far and wide as "The Fubbs." Another joke about "Hans in Keldar," patronizing the ice-fair on the Thames, and inscribing his name there among the visitors, one need not recall too circumstantially. The Queen Dowager, Henrietta Maria, was always "Mam," to her perfectly respectful and solicitous eldest son; in an alliteration like an early English poet's, he congratulated his sister on her recovery from a grave illness, "between Mam's Masses, and M. de Mayerne's pills." His little portraitures of people, his given reason for a human like or dislike, his insight into character, and his gently sarcastic turn of phrase in expressing it, — are they not all superior things of their kind? He felt it impossible to marry a princess out of Germany: she would be "so dull and foggy." Of Isaac Vossius, the imperfect sceptic,

Charles said: "Voss refuses to believe nothing, save the Bible." A celebrated man of affairs, then a deft page at court, won this neat encomium: "Sidney Godolphin is never in the way, and never out of the way." Sedley, shining Sedley, whom Charles greatly liked, he dubbed "Apollo's viceroy." His "Save the Earl of Burford!" when riding under the window whence Mistress Eleanor Gwynne ironically offered to throw her small son, since she had no name to call him by, is like the very finest *coup de théâtre*, and too like him not to be true. This climate he rated as the best climate, "because it gives the greatest number of out-of-door days." Not so thought Charles of Orleans, long before him, arraigning English weather from the standpoint of its unwilling guest, as at all times "prejudicial to the human frame." And every one knows the inimitable apology of Charles to his watchers, for "being so unconscionably long a-dying."

Unlike most wits, he preferred dialogue to monologue. His gravity and authority were so fixed, his merriment so obviously local and temporal, that repartee was part

of his game; he winced at nothing, and often accepted, with excellent grace, sharper thrusts than his own. It is sometimes repeated that he was angered by Rochester's incomparable epigram, pinned to his chamber door:

> "Here lies our sovereign lord the King,
> Whose word no man relies on;
> Who never said a foolish thing,
> Nor ever did a wise one."

But we have on record his amusing and sufficient footnote, that his sayings were his own, and his doings were his ministers'. This answer, by the way, must have been made to fit the occasion, and the gay exigency of it, for he was exceedingly jealous of his unused prerogative. "I assure you," he writes to one of his family, about 1668, "that my lord of Buckingham does not govern affairs here." And Clarendon attests later, that "he abhorred to be thought to be governed by any single person." At Whitehall, as the gentlemen-in-waiting laid the plates before the King, they bent a knee. "You see how they serve me," Charles said pleasantly to his guest, the Chevalier

de Grammont. "I thank your Majesty for the explanation," that accomplished wag replied, "for I thought they were begging your Majesty's pardon for so bad a dinner." No reply at all, were it but pungent, offended him. "Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury, I do believe thou art the wickedest fellow in my dominions!" "Of a subject, Sire, mayhap I am." "Killigrew, whither goest thou, booted and spurred?" "To Hell, to fetch up Oliver to look after the welfare of the English." As a monitor, this same lewd, lying, scribbling, kindly, music-loving Killigrew was almost as successful with Charles as was Nell Gwynne. For sharp sensible comment went home to him; he saw a point none the less because it told against him. "Such ability and understanding has Charles Stuart," growled the man who was called his jester, "that I do long to see him employed as King of England." Libels and satires had small sting for him. Mistress Holford, a young lady of the court, seated in her own apartment, warbles *Old Rowley*, the ballad of close but inelegant libel, at the top of her silvery voice. A rap comes at

the outer door, from one strolling by. "Who's there?" she asks, with unconcern. "Old Rowley himself, Madam!" in the "plump bass" of Carolus Secundus. Nothing much more diverting ever happened to him than the inverted salute of a worthy citizen, who once ran along in the street, beside his coach, with a half-formed fervent "God bless your Majesty!" upon his lips: the spaniel pup on his Majesty's knee, suddenly reaching out, gave the man a nip, and caused the ready benison to blurt forth incontinently as "God bl—amn your dogs!" The well-worn tradition of Master Busby of Westminster School reversing conditions with the King, is characteristic on both sides: Charles all humor and toleration, the little man stiffened with conscious reputation, to be upheld at all costs, and heroically wearing his cap before the face of visiting royalty, "lest the boys should think there lived a greater than myself." And was it not a prettier pass yet, between the monarch and his impregnable Quaker who wanted a charter? Penn came to his first audience with his hat, on the principle of unconvention and

equality, firmly fixed upon his brows. Presently the King, having moved apart from the attendants, in his gleaming dress, slowly and ceremoniously bared his head. Penn interrupted his own plea. "Friend Charles, why hast taken off thy hat?" "Because it has so long been the custom here," said the other, with that peculiar lenient smile of his, "for but one person to remain covered at a time." (It strikes one that a little of this humor would have saved his father from much woe on a not dissimilar occasion in the Commons; and, indeed, throughout.) Equally charming was his behavior, on being laid hold of, by the hiccoughing Lord Mayor, — Vyner, was n't that his name? — who insisted that he should come back and "finish t' other bottle." Charles, instead of glowering, hummed a line of an old song, a synopsis of the difficult situation to the company, which none other but he could have given with any grace:

> "The man that is Drunke is as good as a King!"

and sat again. He never became, as his tutor, the loyal Duke of Newcastle, feared, "seared with majestie."

The Lord's Anointed liked to forego his authority, and come as a mere spectator into a session of Parliament. "'Tis as good as a play," the provoking creature said. He would get down from his throne in the Lords, to stand with folded arms by the hearth, drawing a group around him, and breaking up the order and impressiveness of the place. Those really interested in statecraft, whose fond incubations he so overturned, must have found him an *enfant terrible* to an incorrigible degree. A memorandum-book, to be seen in one of the cases at the Bodleian, lies open at a bit of scribbled correspondence between himself and his Chancellor, passed from one to the other in the middle of debate. The King's share is as wayward and roguish as Sterne could have made it.

—"I would willingly make a visite to my sister at tunbridge, for a night or two at farthest. When do you thinke I can best spare that time?"

—"I know no reason why you may not, for such a tyme (two nights) go the next weeke about Wednsday or Thursday, and return tyme enough for the adiourne-

ment, which you ought to do the weeke following. I suppose you will goe with a light Trayne."

—"I intend to take nothing but my night-bag."

—"God, you will not go without forty or fifty horses?"

—"I counte that part of my night-bag."

The young fugitive at Boscobel, a more willing Alfred, insisted on preparing supper, and produced "Scots collops," with Colonel Careless for under-cook. His minute solicitude for others, at this time and after, in the stress of his own troubles, left indelible impress on many hearts. He was at his bravest on the open road, and in the secret manor and the oak tree: the odd situations became him as if he were King of the Romany. For ceremony and trammels of all kinds he had a thorough disrelish, and passed his time but resignedly amid "the pomp of music and a host of bowing heads." Cosmo III., Grand Duke of Tuscany, relates, in his book of travels, that at a state banquet at Whitehall, the host privily requested that his chair be re-

moved and changed, because it was conspicuously the most comfortable in the room. Could informality farther go? But Charles maintained his gay grace and easy simplicity deliberately, and in conjunction with decisive dignity. With mere standoffishness he had nothing to do. Sir Walter Besant tells us in his *London:* "The palace was accessible to all; the guard stood at the gate, but everybody was admitted, as to a town; the King moved freely about the courts, in the mall, in the parks, sometimes unattended. The people drove their packhorses or their waggons up and down the road, and hardly noticed the swarthy-faced man who stood under the shade of a tree, watching the players along the mall. This easy and fearless familiarity vanished with the Stuarts." Whosoever wished it, might see his sovereign dance the brantle, perhaps with the young delicate-footed Italian Duchess, his brother's wife; or hear him tell over the "grouse-in-the-gunroom" stories of his Scotch captivity. Here at home he went his way, with a nod, a smile, and a word for all: "a far more successful kingcraft," says Macaulay,

"than any his father or grandfather had practised." In the beginning, Charles had a beggarly income, and whimsically complained of it. "What troubles me most, is to see so many of you come to me to Whitehall, and to think that you must go somewhere else to seek your dinner!" He was hostile only to "fuss and feathers," the dry husk of social laws. He had his father's instinct for what was beautiful and imposing. At his coronation, he revived for the last time, and with its most august splendors, the ancient custom of procession from the Tower to the Abbey: a personal revelation, moreover, of that generous kindness towards the common people, which made them adore him. He also endeavored, though in vain, to re-establish the masque, the most charming form of court entertainment, intertwined with all manner of old fragrant poetic associations. At his coming, he found the Maypoles down, the shows over, races, dances, and merry-hearted sports cut short; the theatres were dismantled, and the sole appreciation that actors got, or hoped for, was at the whipping-post. His first thought was for the

London parks and drives; his second, for the London stage. The way was soon cleared for those dramas which managers must now handle, as Thoreau handled a certain newspaper, "with cuffs turned up"; but these, despite their build and basis, have never been surpassed for wit, vitality, and mastery of incident. The plays seen by our friends Mr. and Mrs. Pepys from the middle gallery, were nearly all equipped at the expense of the King and the gentry, and were brought out with nice details of costly scenery and costuming. Charles, Queen Catherine, and the Duke of York even gave their coronation suits to the actors. When Nokes played Sir Arthur Addle, in 1670, before the beautiful Duchess of Orleans, young Monmouth, beautiful as she, loosened the jewelled sword and belt which he wore, and enthusiastically clasped them upon the comedian, proud of both to his dying day. Charles originated the plot of Crowne's sprightly production, *Sir Courtly Nice* (the King died the night of its final rehearsal), and also that of Dryden's *Secret Love*: he was very vain of the latter when it was nobly cast, in 1666, and always

delighted to have it called his play. He was responsible, in the same degree, for *Oronokoo:* for it was he who first discerned, in the affecting tale of the West Indian insurrection of slaves, led by an enslaved prince, choice material for a tragedy.

He was no reader, no student, in the usual sense: he read folk, and not folios. Newcastle had written him, then the child Prince of Wales: "Whensoever you are too studious, your contemplation will spoil your government; for you cannot be a good contemplative man, and a good commonwealth's man. Therefore take heed of too much book." Never was tutor eventually better obeyed. Charles was a shrewd observer; he could sift ambassadors, ministers, and "persons of quality," as ably as Elizabeth herself; and remain, the while, impervious as rock. His early education was neglected: he was forced too soon into active life. Fortunately, he had the æsthetic bent of his race: thought and travel taught this Oxonian, by easy processes, all he knew. He became a good mathematician, and a good draughtsman; he was something of an expert in

anatomy; he perfectly understood the sciences of fortification and shipping. He once invited his beloved Prince Rupert to race "the two sloopes builte at Woolidge, which have my invention in them." (It is to be hoped the landsman Rupert of the Rhine did not command his crew, as Monk did, to wheel to the left!) Charles was as thorough a sailor as his brother, and would have made as fair a record on deck, had his lines been cast there. Aboard "The Surprise" Tattersal averred that he directed the course better than himself. It was this King who gave the charter to the Royal Society, and founded the Observatory at Greenwich, as well as the Mathematical School at Christ Hospital. Nor were these things done perfunctorily, but from close personal interest. Charles could gossip in several languages. His taste for chemistry was almost as marked as his cousin Rupert's; and in the month he died, he was running a process for fixing mercury. Cowley, before that period, had lapsed into a pretty conceit about his liege lord in the laboratory.

"Where, dreaming chemics, are your pain and cost?
How is your toil, how is your labor lost!

Our Charles, blest alchemist, (tho' strange,
Believe it, future times!) did change
The Iron Age of old
Into this Age of Gold."

Dr. Burney remarks, and almost with justice, that the King seems never to have considered music as anything but an incentive to gayety. Catherine of Braganza had a genuine passion for the art, and was its munificent patron so long as she remained in England. It is well to remember, when Charles is accused of developing only the newly-imported French music, that in his day cathedral organs were reestablished, and the way was opened for the return of those beautiful choral services which had a potent successive influence over Purcell, Croft, Bennet, Barnby, and which have forever enriched themselves through association with these dedicated talents. The King had examined the principles of Romanesque architecture with some enthusiasm. No one followed Wren's great labor, after the Fire, especially in S. Paul's, with closer attention; and when he had a practical suggestion in mind, no one could have offered it more modestly. It was not Charles the Second

who hampered that great man, and vexed his heart with mean conditions. He had a rational admiration for Wren; it did not prevent him, however, from jesting on occasion. The architect was a very little man, and the King a very tall one. They had an amiable dispute at Winchester. "I think the middle vault not high enough." "It is high enough, your Majesty." With the same air, no doubt, the young Mozart contradicted his Archduke: "The number of notes is not at all too many, but exactly sufficient." In this case, the critic looked at the roof, and then he looked at Wren. Presently, he crumpled himself up, and brought his anointed person erect, within four feet of the floor, as if from the other's illiberal point of view. "High enough, then, Sir Christopher!" he said.

His relation to literary men was one of ample appreciation and no pay. He is reported to have wished to buy the favor of George Wither, and especially of Andrew Marvell: yet he never approximately endeavored to discharge his long-standing debts to his own choir. Sedley, Edmund Waller, Rochester, and the Roscommon

of "unspotted lays," were in no need of encouragement; but it would have befitted Charles to do something for the others, before it was too late. It seems to have been his purpose to make Wycherley tutor to the Duke of Richmond, at fifteen hundred pounds a year, had not Wycherley, in the nick of time, snubbed the King by marrying Lady Drogheda, and drifted into the Fleet prison. The poets always returned his liking. Though he was an entrancingly pat subject for pasquinades, even Marvell touched him gently.

"I 'll wholly abandon all public affairs,
And pass all my time with buffoons and with players,
And saunter to Nelly when I should be at prayers.

I 'll have a fine pond, with a pretty decoy,
Where many strange fowl shall feed and enjoy,
And still in their language quack *Vive le roy*."

Charles, at his birth, came into the poetic atmosphere of his more poetic father. When the latter set out, at the head of a triumphant train, to return thanks at the Cathedral for his heir, the planet Venus (*absit omen!*) was clearly shining in the May-noon sky. The

people saw it, and were wild with superstitious delight; and they recalled it at the Restoration. Festal lyres, because of it, were struck with redoubled zest. "Bright Charles," Crashaw began; and old Ben Jonson's voice arose in greeting:

> "Blest be thy birth
> That hath so crowned our hopes, our spring, our earth."

And Francis Quarles, not long after, quaintly offered his *Divine Fancies* to the "royall budde," "acknowledging myself thy servant, ere thou knowest thyself my Prince." Again, no sooner was Charles the Second laid in his grave, than the flood of seventeenth-century panegyric, which he had never invited, but held back considerably while he lived, burst forth over England: unstemmed by any compensating welcomes for the ascendant Duke of York. Dryden, in his *Threnodia Augustalis*, Otway, Montagu, Earl of Halifax, and a hundred lesser bards, intoned the requiem. Most of this prosody is pretty flat: but it has feeling. One of Richard Duke's stanzas is questionable enough; only the shortsighted-

ness of genuine grief can save it from worse than audacity. Following Dryden in his quasi-invocation, he named the dead King as "Charles the Saint"; and wherever the poor ghost chanced to be, that surely hurt him like an arrow.

If he was not so protective as he might have been to his poets, it was not owing to any parsimony on his part. He was by nature a giver. The thrifty Teutons who inherited the throne and the royal bric-à-brac have long begrudged divers treasures scattered by Charles among persons and corporations of his individual fancy. While in exile, he had sold his favorite horses, to provide comforts for his suite; and in 1666, when he was in need of all he had, he allowed nothing to interfere with his lavish and wisely-placed donations to the houseless City. Perhaps he neglected the fees of literature, as he neglected to put up a monument to his father's memory: not because he failed to know his duties, but because he must have held your true procrastinator's creed, and discovered, in the end, that what can be done at any time gets done at no time. Dryden helps us to think, however, that

the King was not wholly oblivious of his bookmen:

> "Tho' little was their hive and light their gain,
> Yet somewhat to their share he threw."

Perhaps he was almost as liberal as his gaping pocket allowed. Long-headed sirens, too, were battening on the national revenues, and Charles had no strength of purpose left to withstand them. He had bartered that for rose-leaves and musk and mandragora: eternal quackeries which had never for an instant eased him of his sore conscience. For downright hypocrisy (to which, with whatever wry faces, he had to come), nothing in the snuffling deeps of Puritanism can beat the wording of a clause in the grant made to Barbara, Countess of Castlemaine, in 1670, when she received her magnificent domains, titles, and pensions, "in consideration," as the patent states, "of her noble descent, her father's death in the service of the crown, and by reason of her personal virtues." This lady "hectored the King's wits out of him." The reason is not far to seek why Butler went hungry, and *deliciæ decus desiderium ævi sui*, otherwise Abra-

ham Cowley, Esquire, felt that his fidelity was at a discount. Royalty occasionally tossed gold to its admired Dryden, in the shape of several capital suggestions, which availed, as we know. "Now, were I a poet (and I think I am poor enough to be one), I should make a satire upon sedition." The parenthesis is sympathetic. The knights of the ink-bottle were very welcome to Whitehall; there was no class with which Charles, who was not a promiscuous friend, liked better to surround himself. It is a pity he did not have illustrious opportunity to associate with the best of these altogether and forever, as his cousin of France did, as he himself seemed born to do; for he had the patronal temperament. There is a beautiful expression in Montesquieu, which might be applied as sanctioning as a virtue the passive intellectual perception of the Stuarts: "Que le prince ne craint point ses rivaux qu'on appelle les hommes de mérite: il est leur égal dès qu'il les aime." This is the principle of faith without good works. Charles the Second, interpreted by it, ought to cut a rather fair figure before posterity.

He was no stranger to a pen. How well he could employ it, his speeches, letters, and despatches show. Grace and point are in every line. He had, in fact, a curious neat mastery of words, not to be excelled by most trained hands. Good pithy prose came easy to him: which is a phenomenon, since nobody expects King's English from a king. He had much to write, "and often in odd situations," as Mr. Disraeli the elder amicably adds. His performances in rhyme seem to have been discredited by himself, and are, perhaps happily, irrecoverable. Excellent David Lloyd, of Oriel, mentions "several majestick Poems" of Charles's youth. He does not quote them. "Majestick" reminds one of the reputed Muse paternal, pontificating from Carisbrooke:

> "And teach my soul, that ever did confine
> Her faculties in Truth's seraphic line,
> To track the treason of Thy foes and mine."

The son's productions were not quite of this order, if we may judge from a specimen given by Burney, in the appendix to his *History of Music*. It is an artificial pastoral, in singable numbers, which Pel-

ham Humphrey took pains to set in D major.

Humphrey was an ex-chorister boy then newly come back from over seas, to be "mighty thick with the King"; bringing with him French heresies of time and tune. Charles had musical theories of his own; and would sit absently in chapel, swaying his head to Master Humphrey's rhythm, and laughing at a dissonance in the anthem before the singers themselves were half-conscious of the slip. When he was not sleeping there, he seems to have done a deal of laughing in chapel. On one classic occasion, his father felt called upon to "hit him over the head with his staff," in S. Mary the Virgin's, Oxford, "for laughing at sermon-time upon the ladies that sat against him." He sang tenor to Gostling's great bass: the Duke of York (afterwards James the Second) accompanying them upon the guitar. His favorite song was an English one, and a very grave one: Shirley's beautiful dirge in *The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses*:

> "The glories of our birth and state
> Are shadows, not substantial things."

Many a time young Bowman was bidden to the solitary king, and chanted those austere measures. The true semblance of the Merry Monarch, undreamed-of by Gibbons or Lely, would be his portrait as he sat listening, in a tapestried alcove, to the touching text on the vanity of mortal pride, and the ever-during fragrance of "the actions of the just": his little dogs at his feet, his dark eyes fixed on the unconscious lad; the motley somehow fallen from him, and a momentary truce set up between him and his defrauded thinking soul. How the court which he had taught, the court with its sarcasms and sallies, would have laughed at the preposterous situation! Yet, if he had any outstanding spiritual characteristic, it was precisely this love for serious and worthy things. His perception of human excellence was never clouded. We all know his reputed saying, which must have been more than half in jest, and unallowable even so, that the "honor" of every man and of every woman has its price. Yet this furious cynic was a tender believer in disinterestedness, wherever he found it. Not once or twice alone did he yield

applause to a life which followed virtue "higher than the sphery chime," though his cue lay not in that part, though he went back on the morrow to the Hörselberg. From the middle of the revelry which filled his opening years in London, he stole away privately to Richmond, to kneel beside the dying Bishop Duppa, and beg a blessing. He had a most deferent regard for Sir William Coventry. Towards the close of his life, he was troubled with memories of the fate of Sidney and Russell. He was not thinking of intellectual achievement when he said: "I hear that Mr. Cowley is dead. He hath left no better man behind him." He appreciated something else beside the comeliness of the sweet Duchess of Grammont (la belle Hamilton), when he wrote to his favorite sister in Paris: "Be kinde to her: for besides the meritt her family has, she is as good a creature as ever lived." That young lily of perfection, Mistress Godolphin, observed a rule of her own in never speaking to the King. How prudent, to be sure, and how obtuse! And it will be admitted by every reader of historical gossip that, to

whatever humiliations Charles subjected his poor queen (who ceased not to love him, and to love his memory) he would at no time hear her disparaged, were she even so disparaged ostensibly for his own political advantage. For he respected in her the abstract unprofanable woman. He wrote to his Chancellor, on his first sight of Catherine, who had been described to him as an ugly princess: "Her face is not so exact as to be called a beauty, though her eyes are excellent good; and not anything on her face that can in the least shoque one. On the contrary, she has as much agreebleness altogether in her look as ever I saw, and if I have any skill in Physiognomy (which I think I have!) she must be as good a woman as ever was born." And again: "I must be the worst man living, (which I hope I am not,) if I be not a good husband." In Edward Lake's diary, we are told that to the patron who recommended Dr. Sudbury to the Deanery of Durham, and Dr. Sandcroft to that of S. Paul, the King said, after some years of that attentive observation of his saints which no one would suspect in him: "My lord, recom-

mend two more such to me, and I will return you any four I have for them." Most pertinent of all such cases, was that of the beloved Bishop Ken. When the King went to Winchester, in 1681, to superintend Wren's building of his palace, he put up at the Deanery, and sent word to Ken, then one of the Prebendaries, to resign his house to Nell Gwynne. Ken stoutly refused, to the fear and amazement of the time-servers. Three years later, the last year of the King's life, there was a great scramble for a rich vacant see. Charles did not lack a dramatic inspiration. "Od's fish!" he cried: "who shall have Bath and Wells but the little fellow that would not give poor Nelly a lodging!" In 1679, the King did his best to keep in their high offices the many useful and loyal magistrates whom his councillors voted to supplant on account of their being "favourable to Popery." His more general plea having been passed by, he read the list of names over again, before placing the signature which he could no longer refuse; and since his opposition was then as strenuous as ever, took leave of the subject in some remembered oblique

remarks. Why depose Such-a-one? He had peerless beef in his larder, and no kickshaws. What had So-and-so done, that he should be removed? Surely, no man kept better foxhounds! And he could not only thus discern and prefer goodness, but he submitted himself to it, and bore reproofs from it with boyish humbleness. There is no reminiscence of the Prince's comic catechumen experiences in Scotland, in the accents of "your affectionate friend, Charles Rex," addressed to the admonishing Mr. James Hamilton, a minister of Edinburgh, from Saint Germain. "Yours of the 26th May was very welcome to me, and I give you hearty thanks for all your good counsel, which I hope God will enable me the better to follow through your prayers: and I conjure you still to use the same old freedom with me, which I shall always love." But his instinct was sharp: his sarcasms were forth in a moment against mere bullies and meddlers. Checked once for employing a light oath, he had ready a shockingly brusque though legitimate retaliation: "Your Martyr swore twice more than ever I did!"

As we have seen, he had no appetite whatever for compliments. He probably thought quite as Pepys did, regarding the silly adulations lavished on a certain January tennis-playing. "Indeed, he did play very well, and deserved to be commended; but such open flattery is beastly." Charles *fils* habitually "kept his head," as we say in one of the most telling of our English idioms. It was difficult indeed so to do, through the highest known fever of national enthusiasm, while he was fed every hour of every day with praises out of all proportion to the deeds of an Alexander. Virtuous men like Cowley went into frenzies of approbation at the outset of the reign; sensible men like Evelyn thanked Heaven with seraphic devotion for each execution and exhumation wherewith the King, or rather the wild popular will, to which he was no breakwater, signalized his entry. Hear the same temperate Evelyn, in a dedication: "Your Majesty was designed of God for a blessing to this nation in all that can render it happy; if we can have the grace but to discover it, and be thankful for it." Genuine toadies had small countenance from

this acute Majesty. When he propounded his celebrated joke to The Royal Society, concerning a dead fish, *i. e.*, that a pail of water receiving one would weigh no more than before, and when he watched the wiseacres all solemnly conferring, it cannot have been that they were unanimously caught by the impish query he had put upon them, but rather that they would avoid correcting the Crown: fain would they humor it with an acquiescent reason why. But one little hero of science, far down the table, greatly daring, spake: "I — I — I do believe the pail *would* weigh heavier!" and was acquitted by a peal of the royal laughter: "You are right, my honest man." Waller's clever excuse, when rallied on his fine Cromwellian strophes, and on their superiority to those written for the King's home-coming, that "poets succeed better in fiction than in truth," must have been met with the appreciative smile due to so exquisite a casuistry. Persons chosen to preach before Charles, bored him, long after his accession, with superfluous abuse of the regicides and of the mighty Protectorate in general. One bishop, squarely asked

why he read his sermons instead of delivering them extempore, made the elegant response to his questioner, that it was for awe of such august assemblies, and of so wise a prince. Charles instantly rejoined that it was a monstrous pity no such consideration weighed with himself, in reading his speeches in the House: for the truth was, he had prayed for money so often, he could no longer look his hearers in the face! To the Earls of Carlisle and Shaftesbury, unduly anxious for the Protestant succession, who announced themselves as able to prove Monmouth's legitimacy, to the satisfaction of the nation, the King replied: "Dearly as I love the Duke, rather than acknowledge him will I see him hanged on Tyburn tree." Plain-speaking at a crisis was the hall-mark of the loose and conniving time. When a clergyman of the Establishment was called to see the Duke of Buckingham, and inquired, by way of the usual preliminary, in what religion he had lived, the dying firefly answered gallantly: "In none, I am well pleased to say; for I should have been a disgrace to any. Can you do me any good now, bestir your-

self." It was this engaging reprobate, (remembered rather through Pope and Dryden than through his own extraordinary talent) to whom the King once gave a kindly but authoritative rebuke for his atheistic talk. It is possible that on that occasion fastidiousness, and not reverence, was the motive power in Charles.

For it was his humor to disarm all moral questions by applying to them the measure of mere good taste. We know the characteristic exception he took to Nonconformity, as being "no religion for a gentleman." He had, in the perfect degree, what Mr. James Russell Lowell calls "that urbane discipline of manners, which is so agreeable a substitute for discipline of mind." As in Prince Charlie, (whose career was so closely to resemble his own, much in its heyday, and more in its decline), winning courtesy was founded on genuine sweetness of nature. He brought back into storm-beaten England the vision of the Cavalier: a vision like a rainbow, which made beholders giddy. The very first things he did, on his triumphant entry into London, on May 29th, 1660, were gracious

grand-opera things: he singled out the pink-cheeked hostess of The Rose, in the Poultry, kissing his hand to her, as he passed; and he brought the tears to the eyes of Edmund Lovell, riding at the head of his troop of horse raised for the Restoration, by drawing off his rich leather gauntlets then and there, as a memento of thanks for one loyal welcome. Such a carriage was sure to establish him in the popular heart: he might light his fire with Magna Charta! His tact and his evenness of deportment stood forth like moral perfections. Addison, who, as a child, had seen the King humming lyrics over D'Urfey's shoulder, and knew all the folk-tales of his twenty-five years' reign, must surely have been thinking of him, when he painted this picture of "one of Sir Roger's ancestors." "He was a man of no justice, but great good manners. He ruined everybody that had anything to do with him, but never said a rude thing in his life; the most indolent person in the world, he would sign a deed that passed away half his estate, with his gloves on, but would not put on his hat before a lady, if it were

to save his country." All this enchanting punctilio was but the velvet sheathing of uncommon power and purpose. Charles was never off his guard. No contingency ever got the better of him. He had reasons for being gentle and affable, for being, as the peerless Lady Derby thought him, on her own staircase, "the most charming prince in the world," for keeping his extremely happy chivalry of speech, equal to that of his cousin Louis the Fourteenth: the speech "which gives delight and hurts not." "Civility cannot unprince you," was another saying of the Newcastle beloved of his childhood, who seems to have had a strong influence over him. The gay address and gentle bearing, deliberate as we now perceive them to have been, had the highest extrinsic value in that severe masculine personality. "These advantages," says a contemporary writer, "were not born with him, for he was too reserved in his youth." It is ludicrous that we should speak of him as The Merry Monarch. He was, in sober truth, under his beautiful mask of manners, a morose, tormented, unhappy man. It was part of

his perfect courage that he had learned small talk, banter, puns, games, and dances: they were so many weapons to keep the blue devils at bay. He had to beguile the thing he was with perpetual cap and bells. Before he became a distinguished actor, he was not "merry." The gilded courtiers of France, during his exile, found him a serious and awkward figure of a lad; his admired Mademoiselle Montpensier, the great prime-ministerial Mademoiselle, trailing her new satin gowns back and forth under Henrietta Maria's knowing eye, looked on Henrietta Maria's son, standing reticent the while, lamp in hand, with girlish derision.

Nothing in human history is plainer, I think, than this double personality of Charles the Second, evoked by the inescapable situation in which he lived and died. He had the benefit of parental example, and he started life as a sweet, slow, attractive, thoughtful child, the sad-eyed child of Vandyck's tender portraits between 1632 and 1642. He was not strong of frame then. "His Highness' particular grief," we smile to read in the pages of the good Lloyd, "is thought to

be a consumption." From that house where all the children were fondly measured and painted and chronicled from year to year, his mother wrote of him to Madame Saint George, and to Marie de Medicis. "He has no ordinary mien . . . he is so full of gravity." Prince James, however, was her favorite. At four years old, Charles staggered some Oxford dons with a display of infant philosophy. A twelvemonth before that, as we learn from a pretty passage in the Harleian MSS., he had been condemned to take a certain drug; and his attempts to get off, his retaliating talk afterward, are already very much of a piece with the makeshifts of the Charles the Second we know. But in general, he cannot be said to have been in the bud what he was in the flower. Besides his seriousness, he had other apparently exotic qualities: piety and candor among them. Lord Capel declared on the scaffold: "For certainly, I have been a counsellor to him, and have lived long with him, and in a time when discovery is easily enough made; (he was about thirteen, fourteen, fifteen and sixteen years of age, those years I was with

him,) and truly I never saw greater hopes of virtue in any young person than in him: great judgment, great understanding, great apprehension; much honor in his nature, and truly a very perfect Englishman in his inclination. And I pray God restore him to this kingdom." Montrose, on the scaffold, in his turn, "exceedingly commended," says Clarendon, in his *History*, "the understanding of the present King." The glorious Marquis bore less testimony to Charles's ethic make-up: but that could have lacked no lustre in his eyes, since the January of the preceding year, when the heir to the crown twice offered his life, or the acceptance of any conditions imposed upon himself, in exchange for his father's safety. Madame de Motteville assures us that "the greatest heroes and sages of antiquity did not rule their lives by higher principles than this young Prince at the opening of his career."

The poverty and inaction of his eleven years' exile, the sickness of hope deferred, the temporizing, the misery of his faithful friends, the wretched worry and privation of the sojourn at Brussels and Breda, he

bore passing well: but they spoiled him. He grew recklessly indifferent; at thirty he could have said his *diu viximus*, for the savor of life was gone. An innate patrician, he could never have been ruined, as most men are all too ready to be, by "success and champagne." Hardship, which heartens the weak, was a needless ordeal for him: yet he had nothing else from his fourteenth to his thirty-first year. In him, endurance and courage were already proven, and the "mild, easy, humble" temperament which, long after, was to be allotted to him in *Absalom and Achitophel.* His chief diversions, while abroad, were the single military campaign in Spain, the reading and staging of amateur plays, the ever-welcome associations with his brothers and sisters. When Grenville brought thirty thousand pounds, and the invitation from the Parliamentary Commissioners, to the ragged royalties at the Hague, Charles called his dear Mary and James to look at the wonder, jingling it well before he emptied it from the portmanteau: a more innocent satisfaction than he was able to take later when, as Bussy de Rabutin remarked, "the King of Eng-

land turned shopkeeper, and sold Dunkirk," and rode to the Tower to see the first three million livres rolled into his coffers. That he managed to fight besetting trouble may be inferred from his letters to Mr. Henry Bennet. "Do not forget to send me the Gazette Burlesque every week. . . . My cloaths at last came, and I like them very well, all but the sword, which is the worst that ever I saw. . . . We pass our time as well as people can do, that have no more money, for we dance and play as if we had taken the Plate Fleet. . . . Pray get me pricked down as many new corrants and sarrebands, and other little dances, as you can, and bring them with you; for I have got a small fiddler that does not play ill on the fiddle." King Charles the First, in his affecting last advices to his eldest son, had apprehended nothing but good results for him from the difficult circumstances of his minority. "This advantage of wisdom have you above most Princes, that you have begun and now spent some years of discretion in the experience of trouble and the exercise of patience. . . . You have already tasted of that cup whereof I have

liberally drunk, which I look upon as God's physic, having that in healthfulness which it lacks in pleasure." But too much trial is enervating, as well as too little. Could the spirited Prince have had, ever and again, through those dark seasons, a pittance of the abounding prosperity which befell him after he had given up self-discipline, and had almost given up hope, it might have saved from fatal torpor "the only genius of the Stuart line."

So perverted grew his habit of mind, that eventually the strongest incentives could barely move, anger, or rouse him. To act like a man awake, he needed a shock, an emergency. He was of the greatest possible use at the Fire; he was of no use at all during the Plague. Planning a thing out, thinking of it beforehand, came to be intolerable to him. He who feared nothing else, feared communion with himself. "For he dared reflect, and be alone," is a sentence in the *Warwick Memoirs*, touching Charles the First, which looks as if it were intended for an oblique comment on his son. As it was, even at the worst, he

prided himself on certain temperances. He liked good wine, but he kept his brain clear of hard drinking. "It is a custom your soul abhors," said the Speaker of the Commons before him, in the August of 1660. He liked a game of chance, but he never won or lost a pound at dice. In a time of the silliest superstition, when my lord and my lady conferred mysteriously with M. le Voisin or the Abbé Pregnani over in France, to whom the casting of horoscopes and the concocting of philters were "easy as lying," Charles held his own strong-minded attitude, and was delighted to see some applauded predictions quite overturned in the Newmarket races. "I give little credit to such kind of cattle," he writes to Henrietta, "and the less you do it, the better; for if they could tell anything, 't is inconvenient to know one's fortune beforehand, whether good or bad." Yet he amused himself with the psychological, when it suited him. "Sir A. H. and Mrs. P., I beleeve, will end in Matrimony: I conclude it the rather because I have observed a cloud in his face, any time these two months, which

Giovanni Battista della Porta, in his *Physionomia*, says, foretells misfortune." He frowned on irreligion, and stopped religious controversy with a wave of his hand. "No man," says Roger North, "kept more decorum in his expression and behavior in regard to things truly sacred than the King. . . . And amongst his libertines, he had one bigot, at least, (Mr. Robert Spencer) whom he called Godly Robin, and who used to reprove the rest for profane talking."

"Until near twenty," we learn from an anonymous pamphleteer who claims to have been eighteen years in the Prince's friendship and service, "until near twenty, the figure of his face was very lovely. But he is since grown leaner, and now the majesty of his countenance supplies the lines of beauty." "Majesty" sounds euphemistic; yet there was a great deal of genuine majesty in Charles the Second. Black armor was always wonderfully becoming to him, as we see in at least one Cooper miniature, in the print by Faithorne, and the rarer one by Moncornet. The lines of his cheek and mouth were very marked; when he needlessly began

to wear a wig, their severity became intensified. He had the shadowy Stuart eyes, red-brown, full of soft light; but his look, in all of his portraits, is something so sombre that we have no English word for it: it is *morne*, it is *macabre*. Leigh Hunt well implies, in *The Town*, that such an appearance, linked with such a character, was a witticism in itself. He says: "If the assembled world could have called out to have a specimen of 'the man of pleasure' brought before it, and Charles the Second could have been presented, we know not which would have been greater, the laughter or the groans." His face was brown as a Moor's, and singularly reserved and forbidding; though "very, very much softened whensoever he speaks." One hardly knows why it was thought necessary to blacken it further with walnut-juice, for disguise, to provide the "reechy" appearance dwelt upon in Blount's narrative, when he set out from Boscobel. His long hair had been of raven hue, thick and glossy, "naturally curling in great rings"; but at the Restoration he was already becoming "irreverendly gray."

When he turned suddenly upon you, we read, in *Ralph Esher* (Hunt, first and last, shows a Rembrandtesque preoccupation with this dusky King), "it was as if a black lion had thrust his head through a hedge in winter." To the Rye House conspirators he was known as "the Blackbird," as they named the Duke of York, who was blonde, "the Goldfinch." It is a little curious that a Jacobite ballad, very familiar in Ireland, dating from before the Fifteen, bestows the same secret name (as a love-name, it need hardly be added) on James the Third, called the Pretender. James Howell, in a dedication to Charles the child, says: —

> "Wales had one glorious Prince of haire and hue
> (Which colour sticks unto him still!) like you."

Howell had in mind the Black Prince, when he set out so to compliment his swarthy little successor; but he must have forgotten that the hero had his sobriquet from his dread prowess, or his armor, not from his complexion. Charles was well-made. "Le roi ne cédait à personne, ni pour la taille ni pour la mine." But he was too grim and gaunt to be handsome.

Burnet, who had no regard for him, tells us that he resembled the Emperor Tiberius: "a statue of the latter at Rome looks like a statue made for him." Any reader of Tacitus knows that the parallel could be maintained throughout. But it would be unfair. Tiberius, with all his high handed capability, was jealous and perfidious; Tiberius, — this is the core of the matter, — could not take a joke! Standing before the portrait of himself by Riley, Charles sighed sympathetically: "Od's fish! but I'm the ugly fellow." Vanity was not in him, and he left the last refinements of the fashions, the crève-cœur locks and the passagère, and the venez-à-moi, to his retainers, to the men of great personal beauty, like the Villiers, Wilmots, and Sidneys, whom they became. He turned dress-reformer in 1666, and brought the whole court to habits of simplicity. No better and manlier clothing ever was devised: the silk doublet and breeches, the collar, shoes and sword-belt of the time, without the slashes or the furbelows. But he was driven out of his model costume by the bantering motion of the French monarch, who im-

mediately arrayed his footmen in it. This is a fine historic instance of the truth of Hazlitt's epigram: "Fashion is gentility running away from vulgarity, and afraid of being overtaken by it." At Whiteladies, in old days, the young King was eager to get into his leathern doublet and white and green yarn stockings, "his Majesty refusing to have any gloves," though his hands were of tell-tale shape and slenderness. His fellow-fugitive, Lord Wilmot, was not so enchanted at the prospect of a peasant disguise; "he saying that he should look frightfully in it." "Wilmot also endeavored to go on horseback," continues the playful King's own animated dictation to Pepys, "in regard, as I think, of his being too big to go on foot." Charles himself was a hard rider, though he preferred, whenever he could, to walk. His little suite had every reason to remember his posting through France and Spain, in 1659, when his energy tired them all out. His long legs always went at a tremendous pace. "I walked nine miles this morning with the King," Claverhouse writes wearily in 1683, "besides cockfighting and courses."

(He was waiting, in vain, to catch his sovereign in a humor for business.) Charles was fond of foot-racing, tennis, pall-mall, and all out-of-door sports. According to Reresby, he would have preferred retirement, angling, and hearty country life, to his thorny throne. But who, except a tyrant, would not? Most of the Stuarts were excellent marksmen, and he among them. He took intelligent care of his health, and liked to weigh himself after exercise. We learn that his lonely leisure was sometimes invaded by afflicted but admiring subjects. "Mr. Avise Evans," writes dear garrulous Aubrey, "had a fungous nose; and said it was revealed unto him that the King's hand would cure him; so at the first coming of King Charles Second into S. James's Park, he kissed the royal hand and rubbed his nose with it. Which did disturb the King, but cured him."

Charles's physical activity set in early; he succeeded, at nine, in breaking his arm. All his life, he was up with the lark: it was almost the only circumstance in which he differed from *Le Roi d'Yvetot*, in Béranger's biting ballad, which did so

take Mr. Thackeray; and he played all morning and every morning. Early-risen Londoners, like the child Colley Cibber, used to watch him romping with his hounds and spaniels, stroking the deer, feeding the wooden-legged Balearic crane, or visiting the old lion in the Tower, not the least of his pets, whose death, accepted as a portent, was soon almost to coincide with his own. For birds he had a passion; he was an unexampled dog-lover. He squandered much of his professional time in the society, innocent at least, of these favorite animals, and much of his professional money, in seeking and reclaiming such of them as were lost. There is a funny little advertisement in *Mercurius Publius* for June 28th, 1660, the sly good-humor of which marks it as having been written out by none but the King himself. The advertisement was a renewed one. "We must call upon you again for a Black Dog, between a greyhound and a spaniel; no white about him, onely a streak on his Brest, and Tayl a little bobbed. It is His Majesties own Dog, and doubtless was stoln, for the Dog was not born or

bred in England, and would never forsake his Master. Whosoever findes him, may acquaint any at Whitehall, for the Dog was better known at Court than those who stole him. Will they never leave robbing His Majesty? Must he not keep a Dog? This Dog's place, (though better than some imagine) is the onely place which nobody offers to Beg."

It is not uncharacteristic of his hatred of suffering, that it was Charles the Second who abolished the statute which had thoughtfully provided for the roasting of heretics. He might quite as well have abolished "cockfighting and courses," but he did not. On a certain 22nd of July, he wrote to his "deare, deare Sister" Henrietta: "I am one of those Bigotts who thinke that malice is a much greater sinn than a poore frailty of nature." And Burnet has assured us that the same remark was made, by the same moralist, to him, "that cruelty and falsehood are the worst vices": an opinion of pedigree, antedated by Taliesin, Chief of the Bards, in the sixth century. It would seem an irresistible inference that Butler must have heard

of the royal speculation when he penned his immortal couplet:

> "Compound for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to."

Charles used to carry in his pocket a copy of *Hudibras* which Buckhurst gave him. Cruelty, especially, was very far from this indulgent King. His first official appearance had been on an errand of mercy. As a spectator of ten, he had sat through the first session of Strafford's trial, "in his little chair beside the throne"; but he was sent as Prince of Wales, to carry his father's letter to the Peers, urging them to forbear or delay Strafford's execution. As the young nominal leader of the army in the west, he was full of compassion. "There's a child," said the Earl of Lindsay, "born to end this war we now begin. How gravely doth he pity the dead, the sick, the maimed!" His nature was thoroughly humane; and more: it was affectionate. It is the modern fashion to say he had no feeling. In this regard he has never been fairly appraised, and no wonder! He affected cynicism, and disclaimed sensitiveness;

he made no confidences; he avoided "scenes." Yet he originated at least two scenes, which may be worth something to those who recognize true emotion, from whatever unexpected source, and honor it. One was in 1663, when the good Queen fell very ill, and Charles, more and more conscience-stricken, threw himself beside the bed, and begged her, with tears, to live for his sake. The other was when he himself lay dying, in his fifty-fifth year; when his old friend, the Benedictine monk, John Huddleston, came into the room before the lords, physicians, and gay gentlemen, to reconcile him to the Catholic Church, and give him the Holy Communion. The King was extremely weak, and in the greatest pain; but he was with difficulty kept in his recumbent position. "I would kneel," he said aloud several times, endeavoring to rise: "I would kneel to my Heavenly Lord." What if by such touching demonstrations, rather than by his miserable stifling stoicism, his taint of drugged indifference, he were to be judged? But to some he had always shown his heart. The dearest to him were those longest about him: even his

old nurse, Mrs. Wyndham, had an extraordinary hold upon him. He was kindness itself to his sister-in-law, Anne Hyde, the first Duchess of York, at the very time when she was exposed to ridicule, and most needed a powerful friend; and he was no less kind to her successor, Mary of Modena, who never forgot him. His attachment to Monmouth is beyond question; yet it was no greater than his attachment to James, whose succession he safeguarded, with whom he had few qualities in common. For besides being the perfect companion Hume allows him to have been, he was a perfect brother. Mrs. Ady (Julia Cartright) justly observes, in the preface to *Madame*, her valuable memoir of Charles the First's youngest daughter, Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, that the private letters from the French archives, there first printed, written by Charles the Second, establish two novel points greatly in his favor: "the courage and spirit with which he could defend the privileges of his subjects and the rights of the British flag," and the extreme love and concern he had for his only surviving sister. Patriotism and

affection are about the last things of which historians seem even yet likely to accuse him. Let us have a few of these epistolary extracts, at random; they are delightful, and worded with a careless idiomatic force equal to that of any correspondence of the time. Moreover, they make one surmise that a volume of Charles's less accessible letters to his mother and Prince Rupert, those to his sister Mary, not excluding the beautiful one on the occasion of their father's death, those to Clarendon, Lord Jermyn and others, would make, if collected from the private packets or state papers where they lie unread, in his own delicate, clear, whimsical hand, an uncommonly pleasant publication.

"To my deare, deare Sister.

Pour l'avenir, je vous prie, ne me traitez pas avec tant de cérémonie, en me donnant tant de 'majestés,' car je ne veux pas qu'il y ait autre chose entre nous deux, qu'amitié."

"I will not now write to you in French, for my head is dosed with business!"

"Pray send me some images, to put in prayer-books: they are for my wife, who can gett none heere. I assure you it will be a great present to her, and she will looke upon them

often; for she is not onlie content to say the greate office in the breviere every day, but likewise that of Our Lady too; and this is besides goeing to chapell, where she makes use of none of these. I am iust now goeing to see a new play; so I shall say no more but that I am intierly yours." (These are "the pretty pious pictures" which Pepys saw and admired.)

"They who will not beleeve anything to be reasonably designed unless it be successfully executed, have neede of a less difficult game to play than mine; and I hope friends will thinke I am now too old, and have had too much experience of things and persons to be grossly imposed upon; and therefore they who would seem to pity me so for being so often deceeved, do upon the matter declare what opinion they have of my understanding and judgment. And I pray you, discountenance those kind of people."

"I hope it is but in a compliment to me, when you say my niece" (the little Marie-Louise d'Orléans, afterwards Queen of Spain) "is so like me: for I never thought my face was even so much as intended for a beauty! I wish with all my heart I could see her; for at this distance I love her."

"Sir George Downing is come out of Holland, and I shall now be very busy upon that

matter. The States keepe a great braying and noise, but I beleeve, when it comes to it, they will looke twise before they leape. I never saw so great an appetite to a warre as is in both this towne and country, espetially in the parlament-men, who, I am confident, would pawne there estates to maintaine a warre. But all this shall not governe me, for I will look meerly to what is just, and best for the honour and goode of England, and will be very steady in what I resolve: and if I be forsed to a warre, I shall be ready with as good ships and men as ever was seen, and leave the successe to God." (Here we have a sort of original for the modern chant:

> "We don't want to fight:
> But, by Jingo, if we do,
> We've got the ships, we've got the men,
> We've got the money, too.")

(Of Harry Killigrew.) "I am glad the poore wrech has gott a meanes of subsistence; but have one caution of him, that you beleeve not one worde he sayes of us heere; for he is a most notorious lyar, and does not want witt to sett forth his storyes pleasantly enough."

"There is nobody desires more to have a strict frindship with the King of France than I do; but I will never buy it upon dishonourable termes; and I thanke God my condition is not

so ill but that I can stande upon my own legges, and beleeve that my frindship is as valuable to my neighbours as theirs is to me."

"I have sent, this post, the extracts of the letters to my Ld. Hollis, by which you will see how much reason I have to stande upon the right my father had, touching the precedency of my ambassador's coach before those of the princes of the blood there. I do assure you, I would not insist upon it, if I had not cleerely the right on my side; for there is nobody that hates disputes so much as I do, and will never create new ones, espetially with one whose frindship I desire so much as that of the King of France. But, on the other side, when I have reason, and when I am to yeelde in a point by which I must goe less than my predesessours have done, I must confesse that consernes me so much as no frindship shall make me consent unto."

"Your kindnesse I will strive to diserve by all the endeavours of my life, as the thing in the worlde I value most."

Charles was dear to the masses, as any ruler of his unimperious humor is sure to be. When the King and Queen came down from Hampton Court in their barge, the Thames watermen shouted

cheerfully at him: "God bless thee, King Charles, and thy good woman there. Go thy ways for a wag!" Among his inferior subjects he never lacked partisans and apologists. He was something of a hero even to his valet: faithful Tobias Rustat, Yeoman of the Robes, spent a fortune in putting up statues, at Chelsea and Windsor, "domino suo clementissimo." The Roundheads whom Charles had released, chiefly men of no rank or influence, watched him after, with friendliest longing and regret; never without extenuations, and certain hope of change. "By enlarging us," they said in their message of thanks, "you have multiplied our captivity, and made us more your prisoners than we could be in the Tower." When Death gave him his abrupt summons, "amid inexpressible luxury and profaneness," on a wintry Monday in his town palace, the poor crowded the churches, for the whole six days, "sobs and tears interrupting the prayers of the congregations." Joy-bells and bonfires bespoke their relief at the mistaken report that he was convalescent. Every schoolboy, prentice, and serv-

ing-maid in London wore mourning for him; although he had been buried secretly by night, and there was no pageant at Westminster to memorialize their grief. Always, and despite all, he was sure of the loyalty of the people. "Fret not that I go unattended," he would tell his brother: "for they will never kill me, James, to make you king." "The horrid plot" found him the coolest head in England. But towards the end, it began to tell upon him and dash his spirits. He closed his doors for the first time, and went abroad with a guard, hurt and dejected. This was but an incident in a life as free from suspicion as a tree's. The folk who came to see Charles at his masques and fairs and Twelfth-Night dice-throwings and Easter alms-givings; the two hundred and forty thousand whom, with great boredom and greater patience, he touched for the King's Evil; the multitudes who had experienced his concern and practical energy during the Fire, when he had done them all manner of personal service, — these were his vassals to the last. Nor had he ever a private enemy. He was popular in the

extreme; and might be commemorated as an admirable prince, if tested by the measure of Martial's epigram, that a prince's main virtue is intimate knowledge of his subjects. Tradition does not aver that he made integrity of living contagious among them, though society copied his tolerance and affability, his sense, spirit, and gracefulness. But nothing ever broke their faith in him. Says Lingard: "During his reign the arts improved, trade met with encouragement, the wealth and comforts of the people increased. To this flourishing state of the nation we must attribute the acknowledged fact, that whatever the personal failings or vices of the King, he never forfeited the love of his subjects. Men are always ready to idolize the sovereign under whose sway they feel themselves happy." Charles might have confessed with Elia: "How I like to be liked, and what don't I do to be liked!" His wheedling charm was irresistible. He was an adept, when he willed, in the science of honeyed suasion. Like the Florentine painters, he could suffer no slovenly detail, nor a convention

to pass him without some individualizing touch. Before he had contracted the Portuguese alliance, Count Da Ponte had taken his letter to Lisbon: "To the Queen of Great Britain, my wife and lady, whom God preserve." The blood royal has a pretty etiquette of its own; not quite this, however. How beautifully, again, was it said to the Commons, shortly after the accession: "I know most of your faces and names, and can never hope to find better men in your places." And this intimate conciliatory tone, which it was Charles's pleasure to employ towards others, others used in speaking of him. There is a fatherly pang in some of the little messages plying between the noble colleagues, Clarendon and Ormonde. "The King is as decomposed as ever: which breaks my heart. . . . He seeks for his satisfaction and delight in other company, which do not love him so well as you and I do." And there is nothing tenderer in all history than the narration of Charles's leave-taking from his hushed Whitehall, written at the time by the Reverend Francis Roper, chaplain to the Bishop of Ely, unless it be an ac-

count of the same strange and moving scene, sent later by the Catholic Earl of Perth to the Catholic Countess of Kincardine, on the tenth of December, 1685.

Every street-corner evangelist may harp on the rottenness of the Restoration: what concerns us is its human sparkle. There was an astonishing dearth of dull people; the bad and bright were in full blossom, and the good and stupid were pruned away. The company reminds one of Aucassin's hell, which, on a certain occasion, he chose with such gusto, for its superior social qualities. "Charles the Second!" exclaims William Hazlitt, in his most enjoying mood: "what an air breathes from the name! What a rustle of silks and waving of plumes! What a sparkle of diamond earrings and shoe-buckles! What bright eyes! (Ah, those were Waller's Sacharissa's, as she passed.) What killing looks and graceful motions! How the faces of the whole ring are dressed in smiles! How the repartee goes round; how wit and folly, elegance, and awkward imitation of it, set one another off!" These are the days when young Henry Purcell bends for hours

over the Westminster Abbey organ, alone; and Child, Locke, Lawes, and Gibbons are setting ballads to entrancing cadences, and conveying them to Master W. Thackeray, the music-printer, at The Angel, in Duck Lane; when another Gibbons, rival of the spring, carving on wood, makes miraculous foliage indoors, to cheat the longing wind; when a diligent Clerk of the Acts of the Navy, curiously scanning the jugglers and gymnasts on his leisurely way, trots by in "a camlett coat with silver buttons"; when Robert Herrick, the aged town-loving country vicar, ordering his glass, stands watching through the tavern window-pane the King gravely pacing the greensward with Hobbes and Evelyn, or bantering Nell Gwynne over her garden wall; when Walton angles with his son Cotton in the Dove, and Claude Duval exquisitely relieves travellers' bags of specie; when the musical street-cries run like intersecting brooks: "Rosemary and sweetbrier: who'll buy my lavender?" "Fresh cheese and cream for you!" "Oranges and citrons, fair citrons and oranges!" when Richardson, the eater of glass and fire, is bidden to

entertain in drawing-rooms, broiling an oyster on a live coal held in his mouth, and the instant he departs, hears the company fall to playing blind-man's buff, and "I love my love with an A"; when the click of duelling swords is heard in the parks at sundown, and groups of affectionate gentlemen sway homewards by the fainter morning ray, and coaches roll along lending glimpses of pliant fans, and of Lely's languishing faces. In and out of this whirl of thoughtless life move the august figures of Sir Thomas Browne and "that Milton that wrote for the regicides," and, later, of Sir Isaac Newton; the golden shadow of Jeremy Taylor, and the childish footsteps of Steele and his head boy Addison, regenerators to be; the vanishing presence of Clarendon, and the patriots, Russell, Vane, Algernon Sydney, good hearts in the dungeon and at the block; of Bunyan the tinker, and the fighters Fairfax and Rupert, and the scholar poets who prodigally strew their delicate numbers on the wind. Execrable ministries, Dutch defiances and insults, French pensions, pestilence and plot: but still the moth-hunts go on. "At all which I am

sorry, but it is the effect of idleness" (who should it be but Pepys, making this deep elemental excuse?) "and having nothing else to employ their great spirits upon." The irised bubbles were soon to scatter, and the Hanoverian super-solids to come and stay. The great change is germinal, as all great changes are, and more visible in its processes than most. The reign of Charles the Second is full of supplements and reserves; nothing is so lawless as it seems; the genius ever unemployed, the virtue in arrest, "tease us out of thought," and change color under our eyes. Hornpipes turn to misereres; masks, one by one, fall away. Mrs. Aphra Behn, be it remembered, was, off the printed page, nothing more unspeakable than a decent industrious woman. That bygone England played at having no moral sense: on a subtle argument of Browning's, one may quarrel with it that it did not play equally well to the end. Neither was it the minor actor of the Restoration who, near the exit, flagged, saw visions, and spoke strange words out of his part: it was Rochester, it was Louise de Quérouailles, it was the King. "Without desire of renown,"

Macaulay finds him, "without sensibility to reproach." Why arraign the King? He will agree with Macaulay or another, charge by charge: which is damaging to the arraigner. As for accusations not personal, his retorts might be less gentle. Great Britain sued for him: and he never posed for a moment as other than he was. His coming hastened a reparative holiday; itself but the breath of reaction. That inevitable abuses should be ranked among the laws of Nature, is one of Vauvenargues' fine profound inferences. If, in some of his inspirational moments, the King exceeded his prerogative (by endeavoring, for instance, to abrogate the code bearing so cruelly upon all persons of other religious opinions than those of the State), Parliament and the people had foregone their right of complaint: they had deliberately chosen to make him an autocrat. No fanatic on any point, Charles would have bound himself readily to reasonable conditions, while his fortunes were pending; yet no pledges were exacted. Moderate precautions and safeguards, suggested in the Commons by Hale and Prynne, had been set aside by Monk, and overruled.

Monk was but a dial's shadow, "the hand to the heart of the nation." He brought in not only the monarchy, but a potent individuality: one not led hither and thither, but a maker and marrer of his time. That melancholy figure was the axis of fast-flying and eccentric revelry. To some of us he is one of the most complex and interesting men in history. Judge him by old report and general current belief, and he is "dead body and damnèd soul"; examine his own speech and script, and the testimony of those who had him at close range from his boyhood: and lo, he has heights and distances, as well as abysses; he is self-possessed, not possessed of the devil; he is dangerous, if you will, but not despicable. Following an evil star, he, at least, after Ovid, perceived and approved the highest. Until the Georgian succession, his was a popular memory. But with the Stuart decadence, and the consummation of what *The Royalist* smartly labels as "the great Protestant Swindle," down went his name with better names: all, from Laud to Claverhouse, doomed to share a long obloquy and calumny, from which they are singly being

rescued at last, as from the political pit. I know nothing so illustrious of Charles the Playgoer as that he was able to win the strong attachment of Dr. Samuel Johnson, albeit a century of ill repute lay between. Our wise critic, though he formulated it not, must have seen clearly the duplex cause of the King's failure in life. For half of that failure there is a theological term. Permit me to use it, and to illumine the whole subject by it: no flash-light is keener. Charles the Second was unfaithful to Divine Grace. Again, no man, endowed with so exquisite a sense of humor in over-development, can, of his own volition alone, escape lassitude, errancy, and frivolity founded on scorn. Humor, as a corrective, is well: but

— "the little more, and how much it is!"

To have been born with a surplus of it is to be elf-struck and incapacitated. Nothing is worth while, nothing is here nor there; the only way to cut short the torture of self-observation and the infamy of not being able to form a prejudice, is to abandon ideals. Pass over, in the King, this too mordant and too solvent intelli-

gence, and you lose the key to a strange career. Perhaps two of his ancestors, two of the Haroun-al-Raschid temper, dominated him: the gallant Gudeman of Ballangleich, and as a nearer influence on Charles, that gay, beloved, fickle, easily-masterful man, his grandsire of Navarre. He was like these, and in harmony with their adventurous soldier-world: naturally, he was incurably out of joint with his own isle, her confused introspective moods hardly subsided. He was a philosopher, and above all, an artist: such a king, in England, can never be the trump card. He seems to have thought out the situation, and to have capitulated with all his heart. We need not tell each other that he might have been different. Let us mend our tenses, and agree that he would and must have been different, in Scotland or in France.

Yet Lord Capel's dying word was right: his King, though a traitor, and intellectually as homesick for France as Mary Stuart before him, was "a very perfect Englishman": he had, in some degree, every quality which goes to make up the lovableness of English character; and his

Latin vices, large to the eye, are festooned around him, rather than rooted in him. One who knows the second Charles, all in all, and still preserves a great kindness for him, might do worse than borrow for his epitaph what Mr. Henley has written of Lovelace, Richardson's Lovelace, "the completest hero of fiction." "He has wit, humor, grace, brilliance, charm: he is a scoundrel and a ruffian; and he is a gentleman, and a man."

CLAY

(*After a pause, shyly.*) That 's all. Will it do, Wetherell?

WETHERELL

Why, yes; on the whole. It is — well, lopsided; and so mortal serious, you know. Not that it is n't great fun, too. You will carry the audience. You really ought not to: it is a sort of abduction! (*They stroll out through the Horse Guards, and towards Parliament Square.*)

MRS. WETHERELL

I thought you might say something about Chelsea Hospital. It is a good thing, I am sure; and Charles the Second was the founder.

WETHERELL

No, Nell Gwynne: she put him up to it. I am told the old war-dogs over there will eat you, Lord love 'em, if you say a word against either of these.

MRS. WETHERELL

What was she like?

CLAY

Oh, wild honey. Just such a one as Mr. Du Maurier's Trilby.

WETHERELL

Quite true, quite true! (*They laugh.*) A capital comparison: thank you for it. And comparisons, being odorous, remind me of my dinner. Rhoda very much wishes you to come home with us.

MRS. WETHERELL

Please do, Mr. Clay, and quite as you are. No one but ourselves and my nice New York cousins, whom we are going to meet. We shall dine early, so that you may have time afterwards, before your lecture.

WETHERELL

To repent.

CLAY

Aye, quicksilver creature! to re-dress. There! Mrs. Wetherell, have I not understood you and avenged you, too?

MRS. WETHERELL

Indeed, you always do. Will you come?

CLAY

Many thanks to you; I should like nothing better. Shall you mind if we go directly into the Abbey? It is early yet for your appointment; but I should delight in showing you the effigy. I 'll wager a full farthing Percy never saw it.

MRS. WETHERELL

The effigy?

CLAY

Yes; King Charles the Second's.

WETHERELL

Heigho! it would seem that we have not buried the biographee, after all. But I am sceptical. I remember no effigy. Unfold.

CLAY

Here we are at the porch. Just follow me. . . . (*They go quietly in file through the north transept and ambulatory, and up the great steps of Henry the Seventh's Chapel.*) There: to the right; inside, east end. How dark it is!

MRS. WETHERELL

Are n't you coming?

CLAY

No; if you will excuse me. Conceive of me as sentimental; I hate to step over that slab, or go by it, somehow.

WETHERELL

(*Farther up.*) Not a soul here, to adore this surpassing tomb of Lady Richmond. There's art for you! But no effigy of yours visible. Your infallibility waneth. *Animus vester ego, Argilla mea!* the which is choice Schoolboy for — Mind your eye, O Clay.

CLAY

Of course there's none now.

WETHERELL

Avaunt, then, deceiving monster!

CLAY

But it used to stand, with Anne, William and Mary, and with Monk behind it, there on the site of the old altar-stone; his name is cut over the vault. That is where Dr. Johnson visited it often.

WETHERELL

I had forgotten. What were you saying about stepping over the slab?

CLAY

Not that slab. I meant the other,

where Mrs. Wetherell is standing. The tragic names are all together there: Mary Queen of Scots, Rupert, and the lovely and dear Queen of Bohemia, and young Henry of Gloucester, and poor Arabella Stuart, and —

MRS. WETHERELL

(*Slowly reading*) — ten infant children of King James the Second, and eighteen infant children of Queen —

WETHERELL

Tee-hee!

MRS. WETHERELL

Percy!

CLAY

Sure enough, it does sound ticklish! But hush, Wetherell: people will hear. (*They descend.*) That verger in the dim amber light, standing in the dear little doorway of S. John's, will let us see the cases in the chantry. You have to show the Dean's pass. Wait a moment: I must get mine. (*He draws a card from his pocket and approaches the verger, who immediately leads the way to the stair of the Islip Chapel.*)

MRS. WETHERELL

(*First on the stair, five minutes after.*)

Ghastly things! Truly, are n't they perfectly appalling?

THE VERGER

Oh, it 's wax, you know, *is n't* it? We think them uncommonly precious. So ancient, ma'am. Carried at their own funerals, and dressed in their own clothes. King Charles the Second, this is: he 's the oldest genuine one of those we show.

MRS. WETHERELL

Can it be possible that this lace all black with age, this beautiful lace—? Yes, it is point! (*Hangs enraptured.*)

WETHERELL

The head is surprisingly fine, for anything of the half-spook, half-dolly order. You say it was modelled on the death-mask?

CLAY

Yes; you have seen it in the Museum.

WETHERELL

I like it better than any of the portraits. It gives one a gentler impression, somehow. Who are these? (*He and his wife move on to the Duchess of Buckinghamshire and Queen Anne.*)

CLAY

As for me, I shall stay with you, of

course, my poor old never-obsolete Most Sacred Majesty. What a pity you shirked your work so!

> "Qu'as-tu fait, ô toi que voilà,
> De ta jeunesse?"

Ah, well! It is not beyond my right to say that to you, since I am the only one alive who loves you.

TWO FEMALE VOICES BELOW

Cousin Rhoda! Rhoda! Percy! We saw you come up, from where the Coronation Chair is; and the little door was left open. Oh, is n't this splendid to find you? How DO you do?

THE VERGER

I beg your pardon, gentlemen; Evensong is just about to begin.

WETHERELL

Thank you; then we the heathen must go at once. Clay, let me present you to — See: he's in dreamland.

MRS. WETHERELL

I wonder if thoughts of dinner can rouse him.

WETHERELL

Not unless you can provide the suitably archaic wild boar, and the flask of canary.

THE MISSES FRANEY

You both look so well! Dreadful, Percy, if you'll believe it. The stewardess said there had not been such a passage for —

MRS. WETHERELL

Hurry, Cornelia. The service is beginning.

(*A strain from the organ wakes Clay. He follows them down, tiptoeing past the filling pews, covering the oak-twig still in his hat.*)

WETHERELL

(*In an undertone, on the threshold.*) The air is good, again. Lo, I perceive the genial 'bus yonder, also several nimble cabs. Come, ladies fair; come, Clay. You shall eat posthumously in the nineteenth century, and make us all drink the health of "the Blackbird"; as the old song has it,

(*Clay smiles, and they pass out into the Square.*)

1886.
1896.

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