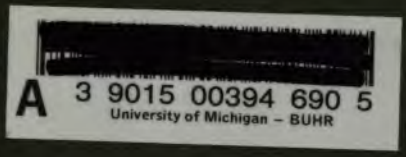

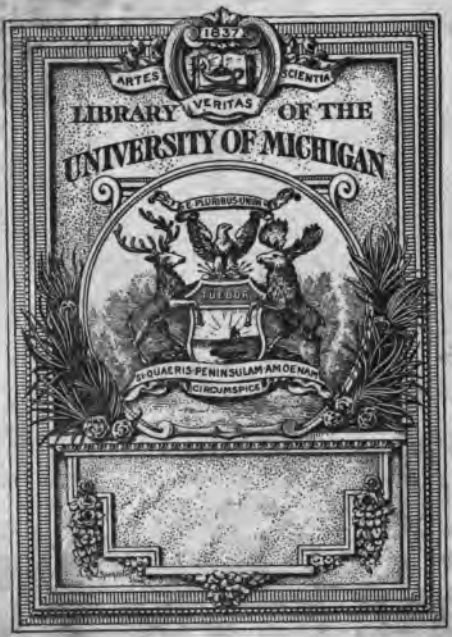

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REAL AND IDEAL

IN

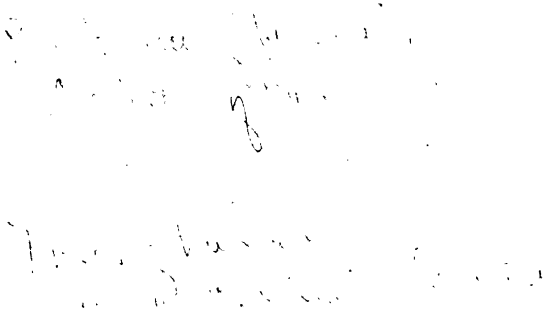
LITERATURE.

"*For nothing is or not but thinking makes it so.*"

SHAKSPEARE.

"*You may call me an Idealist-Utilitarian.*"

GOETHE.



Ever Your Friend

Fred. W. Loring

THE REAL AND IDEAL IN LITERATURE.

BY

FRANK PRESTON STEARNS,

EDITOR OF VON HOLST'S "JOHN BROWN."

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

Frederick Wadsworth Loring,

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

THE tendency to materialism at the present time is attracting more and more attention. It is to be found not only in the lives of men, and in philosophy, which is the theory of life, but in science, politics, medicine, jurisprudence, and art. Old spiritual forms are fast giving way before new facts, and the human mind, in the uncertainty which results from this, naturally clings to what is visible and tangible. Positivism, the popular philosophy of the day, would instruct us that our only source of knowledge is to be derived from our five senses. A majority of the medical profession deny the immortality of the soul. A European physiologist has attempted to prove that even thought is a material substance, and an American jurist denounces what are called legal principles as glittering generalities. The noble conception of our ancestors that the individual exists for the state, and finds his own interests best in an unselfish surrender to the good of the community, has been

replaced by the notion that government exists only to further the private ends of each individual. The doctrine of realism threatens to crush out everything that is great and elevating in our literature. Never has the Anglo-Saxon race, at least, been so devoted to the acquisition of wealth and the enjoyment of creature comforts.

If this condition of things were to continue indefinitely, civilization would come to an end. But that is not likely to happen. At the close of the last century, French art was wholly given over to realism. The works of the great masters were derided as fantasies and impossible creations, but an exhibition of Raphael's pictures brought from Italy changed the whole current of public opinion. So it will be again. The mind of man will never long rest contented with a purely physical existence. His spiritual nature will again assert itself, and instruct him that the only true rest is to be found in what is invisible and immutable. He will learn once more the lesson of his childhood; he will return again to the study of the great teachers in art, literature, and philosophy, and learn from them that we should not only hold fast to the real and avoid whatever is visionary and indefinite, but also to keep the ideal ever before us as the guiding star of our destiny.

To further this end, even in a small way, is the object of the present volume. A number of the essays included in it have been published in the *Unitarian Review*, and others elsewhere. The two chapters on "The Modern Novel" and "Romance and Realism" were declined by the editor of our best popular magazine, on the ground that nine-tenths of his readers would not be able to understand them. Now, a writer who writes down to his audience never comes to very much good. But I have a better opinion of the American people than this. The query occurred to me, what becomes of the thousands of graduates which our colleges turn out every year? Do they forget all that they have learned, or do they read only foreign periodicals? Leaving college graduates out of the question, I believe there is little in this book but what a large majority of my countrymen may readily comprehend.

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J. G. W.

Capricious is the Muse; no certain way
She holds directed by the will of man,
But ever seeks in fancy's sportive play
Her course by what strange mazy paths she can.
Wealth shuns she; scorned are power and place;
The eager lover toils for her in vain
Whilst suddenly she bends with radiant face
And showers on some shy boy her golden rain.
He in his turn power, wealth, and place doth leave
To muse on life — to watch the changing sky;
Till we through him a brighter world perceive,
With nobler forms, in inspiration high.
Why thus her course, he who is wise may tell:
That Fate approves it, be assured well.

REAL AND IDEAL IN LITERATURE.

I.

REAL AND IDEAL.

THE fine arts considered as a whole may be imagined as the terms of a proportion, in which music is to literature as architecture is to sculpture and painting. Music and literature are immaterial arts, which we apprehend primarily through the sense of hearing; architecture, painting, and sculpture are material arts, which we apprehend by the sense of sight. Fine architecture has often been compared to frozen music, and poems to pictures in verse. Architecture and music appeal to our love of order, proportion, harmony, and variation; literature, sculpture, and painting impress us by the representation of human life in its most important phases. The first terms of this proportion deal with general conceptions so subtle, vague, and recondite as almost to defy mental analysis; the last terms deal with particular instances, so clear and well defined as commonly to require no explanation.

If, however, we consider the fine arts in relation to their subject-matter, we find that sculpture is

closely related to architecture, painting to sculpture, literature to painting, and music to literature. In this scheme, architecture and music occupy the extremes, as the most material and immaterial of the arts; and, if we separate the others into such subdivisions as statuary, bas-relief, fresco and oil-painting; crayon drawing, history, fiction; epic, dramatic, and lyric poetry; we have a series as closely connected as the links of a chain. In the Gothic cathedrals we can see how sculpture springs to life out of architectural decoration: the incised outline of fresco painting brings it very close to incised bas-relief work; and the opera, with the songs which are *its* accompaniment, closes the gap between literature and music. There appears to be a rather sharp break between painting and literature; but this is physical rather than intellectual, — the sudden break between sight and hearing, — and as soon as we *think* of it, the circle becomes complete again. Some of Ruskin's descriptions of pictures and scenery surpass any pen-and-ink drawings. Architecture was the first and music the last of the arts to attain a consistent development, so that it seems as if there had been a kind of progress here from the visible to the invisible.

Literature, again, is divided into two important classes — prose and poetry. Of these, poetry is the earlier and more genuine. A mere narrative of facts, like the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, has no value as literature; nor have the numerous works of fiction which one gathers along the seacoast in summer, unless they happen to be something more than a rehearsal of imaginary events. Other accounts of

Charles XII. may be more correct than Voltaire's; but his is the most celebrated because of its rare artistic merit. In fact, if prose is to enter into the list of the fine arts, it must borrow from poetry one or more of its characteristics, either elegance, humor, imagination, or some other quality. On this account, the best prose writers are either poets also, like Goldsmith, or, like Plato and Carlyle, have attempted poetry in their youth. Now, prose is in its nature realistic. People speak to each other in prose, and describe each other's actions in prose. The very form of poetry, on the contrary, is an ideal. Priam and Achilles did not converse with each other in hexameters, as Homer represents them; and an accidental rhyme in our modern drawing-rooms sometimes tangles the thread of conversation. Poetry is therefore not an exact reproduction of life, but something different from that. "Art," says Goethe, "is called by that name in order to distinguish it from nature;" and yet Goethe is the poet of nature, if there ever was one. It is rather a reproduction of life with the co-ordinates transposed. Poetry is properly the art of versification, as architecture is that of building, and sculpture that of carving; but what people commonly mean by the word "poetic" is the ideal. We say that a scene, a statue, a picture, or a piece of music is poetic when it contains this element. A man is said to have a poetic nature when ideality is a prominent trait in his composition. It is not requisite that he should be a poet: he may be a merchant or a cavalry officer. It may be noticed, also, that poetic is often used to desig-

nate perfection of a high order, but rarely, if ever, that of a low order. We think of the night as poetic, but not of the day, because the former appeals more to our imagination.

This division of the arts into the real and the ideal runs through them all, though it is nowhere else indicated so definitely as in literature. Religious architecture has always been of an ideal sort, from the temple of Karnak to Trinity Church in Boston. The spires and minarets of the European cathedrals are supposed to exemplify the heavenward aspirations of Christian faith, and the rock temples of India make also a profound impression of religious solemnity. The Parthenon was the crowning glory of Hellas, and has never been excelled. Greek sculpture was an ideal, as all religious sculpture must be. The so-called Greek profile was ideal, as one can see from an examination of their portrait busts and statues. Mithridates of Pontus appears to have had a profile of this kind, and perhaps also Alcibiades; but it is doubtful if they were more common among the Greeks than among Americans of the present day. Italian sculpture was also of a strongly ideal cast, until it degenerated into the grotesque; while French sculpture, the best of the present century, is quite as forcibly realistic. English and American sculpture is, for the most part, neither one nor the other; but Crawford's statue of Beethoven is a fine example of ideal treatment in bronze.

In regard to painting, it may be said that in no other art are the real and ideal so conspicuous and clearly defined. Nothing can be more literal than

pictures of the old Dutch school, or less so than the Italian. Dürer, the greatest German master, occupies a peculiar position; for he was no less realistic in his treatment than ideal in his conception of a subject. In music, it is more difficult to make this distinction; but the poetic element is certainly strongest in Beethoven, and scarcely perceptible in Gounod. Neither are the lines sharply-drawn in literature itself. There is realistic poetry, though not very much of it, and, as already intimated, a large amount of idealism in prose. The true romance, like Hawthorne's "Marble Faun," is always ideal, and so also the romantic novel, if the romance in it is of a genuine kind. Works of humor are properly ideal, if the humor, as in "Don Quixote," is high comedy, but must be classed as realistic if the humor is of low comedy, like Rabelais, or burlesque, like Mark Twain. These are truths so plain that they require no argument to support them.

What, then, is this ideal which is so closely connected with art in all its different phases? Nothing more than the plan which the wise man makes in the morning for his day's work; nothing but the image of his vase which hovers before the mind of the potter as he turns his wheel; it is only this, and yet this is something of the highest import. Without it, civilization would be impossible. For, if we go back to the true genesis of human life, what was the first word spoken but an image of something in the mind of the speaker, brought forth in the inspiration of the moment? "In the beginning was the Word;" and what more likely

than that it was Elohim, Dyaus, or Zeus, — now the French *Dieu*, — a recognition of that Power above, from which man has no escape? Were not the oldest hieroglyphics all pictures, and very forcible ones, too, from which our alphabet is descended? Each letter was originally an ideal, now crystallized and made a dummy of, but with its former power and beauty still latent in it. There are no records, except in language perhaps, how humanity struggled on through unknown eras, with this vision constantly before it of something better than itself; how often it was led astray in pursuit of false ideals, and returned again through the inevitable chastisement of those who offend the universal laws; or how many nameless heroes struggled, fought, and perished for the advancement of the race, until we come to Moses and Homer, with whom civilization may be said to have fairly begun. These are the two greatest names of that Eocene period, in themselves, perhaps, equal to any who have since been born; and one was a lawgiver, and the other a poet. Each was the perfected type of an idealist.

It is one of the materialistic tendencies of the present period for jurists to ridicule legal principles as glittering generalities, and attempt to derive the elements of law from a sense of utility rather than from a sense of justice in mankind. It remained for the Anglo-Saxon race to invent a utilitarian philosophy: there was no such sect among the Greeks or among the old Roman founders of jurisprudence. The sense of justice is the highest of human attributes; for through it we

obtain the proof of immortality, and the completion of our too fragmentary life on earth. It is this ideal of right which Michel Angelo has expressed on the countenance of his statue of Moses, and which he has rendered more striking by contrast with its huge physique. So, some centuries later than Moses, an Indian prince retires to the depths of the forest to meditate upon a plan by which mankind might become better than he found them. The ten commandments formed the basis of Hebrew law, and many of the enactments now in force among European nations are derived from them. The laws of the New England colonies in regard to a strict observance of the Sabbath may be traced directly to the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy. Some less conspicuous hero-moralist, no doubt, long forgotten perhaps in Cicero's time, stood in the background of the Twelve Tables and Numa Pompilius. Civil law, however, has only a negative character. It forms a system of ideal limitations within which human nature can have free play. It serves as the framework of the house we live in, for which art supplies the furniture and decoration. Moses made a rough subjective sketch of the ideal man. Homer painted such types of human excellence that they served as models for the Greco-Roman world until the two streams of Aryan and Semitic culture were united in Christianity.

Dr. Harris defines art as logic expressed in form. This statement is, however, too concentrated to be easily intelligible. It would not be true if we are to understand by logic merely the investigation of

syllogisms; but if we are to accept it in a broader sense, as the *science of thought*, comprising the whole range of our mental reflections, the definition is correct, and we shall have to take logic in this way, if it is to have any practical application. Are not the decisions which a mature man makes every day based upon the whole experience of his past life? Is not he the minor premise himself, with infinite conclusions before him?

"Betwixt two worlds life hovers like a star," appears to be true also of our reasoning faculty.

And what are these words which the reasoning faculty makes use of but pictures, originally? Logic might be defined as art expressed in reason: in the beginning, art, language, and thought would seem to have been united.[1] Such a mind as Homer's or Dante's is like a magnificent picture-gallery, through which the soul moves in contemplation. Reasoning is to art what a rule in grammar or arithmetic is to the example that illustrates it. The rule is taken from the example; but, if it is rational, and not empirical, the rule has also an independent existence. We understand the example more readily than the rule, because our minds are more accustomed to dealing with pictures (called in this instance concrete objects) than with abstract ideas. After all, it is not the objects themselves which form our cognitions, but such mental pictures of them as we are capable of making for ourselves. A granite ledge forms in the geologist and the landscape painter

[1] The mental image, however, must have preceded any external expression of it.

two totally different conceptions. So the word "man" to a young child and a mature woman sounds differently enough. The best works of art are all founded upon some important philosophical truth. It must be this which draws us toward them so strongly. Murillo's Magdalen is a type of the mental reaction which is certain to follow the indulgence of an unreasonable wish. It is of little moment whether the desire be a physical or spiritual one: it may even be the divulgence of truth before its time. Goethe's ballad of the "Erlking," often called the finest of minor poems, instructs us that the tender minds of children require protection as well as their bodies. An idle myth causes the death of a boy even in the arms of his father. This is an ideal of the common tragedy of childhood; and only those who remember the sufferings of that period can appreciate its pathos. Aristotle analyzed the Greek drama so closely that it seems as if little were left to the genius of the poet; and modern German *Aesthetikers* have treated "Hamlet," the "Last Judgment," the "Sistine Madonna," and other great works, in the same manner.

Ruskin tells the story of a little girl who was left alone in his kitchen while pies were making, and, when the cook returned, she found her soft pastry cut into figures resembling birds and mice. This, the art critic thinks, must have been the origin of sculpture. So it may have been, but not of sculpture as one of the arts. In one of the caves of south-east France, among the bones and utensils of the early Celtic period, there was found

a flat piece of limestone, on which had been incised the figure of a mammoth. The delineation was evidently a truthful one, as could be seen from the long mane and cimeter-curved tusks which we know those animals to have possessed; but we do not dignify this or the pastry mice by the name of art. It may be called so in a secondary sense: it was art perhaps to the Celtic who chiselled it, but to us it is only a valuable relic. It is properly not a picture, but a sketch. Among forty young pupils in drawing or painting, there may be a dozen who can make good sketches, but only three or four who will ever create a picture. The artist must either transfer his own mind into his subject, or he must imitate nature with such skill as to excite our admiration. The former is called ideal, the latter realistic art. Let it be noticed, however, that even in the most realistic of all art, the representation of animal life, it is the human skill that we value chiefly. Realistic art began with the picture of the mammoth (or something similar); ideal art, with portraits of gods.

Carlyle says of Schiller what is equally true of himself, that art was with him an inspired function, and the artist a priest and prophet also. The hymns of the Rig-Veda compose the earliest literature that has come down to us, and the idols and temples of upper Egypt are the most ancient remains of sculpture and architecture. In the days when kings were shepherds of the people, art and religion could not be distinguished one from the other. The Homeric hymns are simple tales of the Greek divinities. The Book of Job is the

first and finest of all romances. What does Homer sing for, but to show that the destinies of men are ordained by the Immortals? There are many realistic passages in Homer, such as no French or Russian writer has ever equalled in accuracy; but it is doubtful if even Count Tolstoï could discover any realism in the Vedas. Those archaic sages cared little for things of earth. Their imaginations, vast and lofty as the Himalayas, pierced the heavens and brought back tidings of a world above, half articulate mutterings of a deathless life beyond the everlasting snows. They recounted the great phenomena of nature in metaphors more enigmatic than nature itself. Neither does Egyptian art appear more realistic than Sanskrit literature. Huge statues carved from granite and solid pyramids of stone are an ideal of strength and durability. The sculptors and architects of the Nile valley, like the Vedic poets, were filled with a sense of eternity; and it is this which their works represent to us. They belonged to the age of Saturn, which may have been no fiction, but referred to this period. Assyria, which was only a political nation, produced nothing to be compared with them. Those rigid statues, with the arms fastened to their sides, were not made according to the laws of anatomy; but they possess, what nineteenth century sculpture decidedly lacks, from Canova to Bartholdi, true dignity of style and character. It is this we are impressed by quite as much as by their antiquity. In the sphinx the Egyptians created an ideal which is among our most familiar conceptions.

Serious reflection upon what is grand, eternal, and awe-inspiring is a holy and elevating occupation, but it is not human. It even has a tendency to make men cold and inhuman. To be high-minded and at the same time warm-hearted is one of the most difficult problems of life. The Egyptian respect for *death* opened the door to Hebrew and Hellenic perception of an immortal life; but that could only be fully attained by a thorough respect for *human nature.* All nations of men have possessed a dim sense of immortality; but that is not like Plato's clear consciousness of it, nor the perfect confidence in a future state which illumined the life of Christ. Egyptian art was attained by a disregard of humanity which appears to us monstrous. Thousands of lives were sacrificed in building the tomb of one person. Likewise, in India, the gods were everything, and men were nothing. In mankind the finite and the infinite are united together. It was right and necessary that the infinite portion should be first considered; but the other also has all-important claims. A soul without a body may be valuable elsewhere; but there is no place for it in this world. Our thoughts may soar above the clouds; but our feet are rooted to the soil and partake of its nature. It may be compared to the infinite, as a bow-string is to the bow. The bow-string does not send the arrow, but neither could the arrow be sent without it. The right consideration in art of man's finite quality is called realism; and, in truth, the right consideration of it is not more common than the right consideration of man's spiritual

quality. There has been no really great artist without both of them. Plato has been called the idealist, and Aristotle the realist; but Plato was only somewhat more ideal than Aristotle, and Aristotle somewhat more realistic than Plato. Plato, however, was much the better artist of the two. Goethe styled himself an idealist-utilitarian.

This reconciliation of the real and ideal first found expression in the warm sunlight of Homer's genius. An English commentator has described him as "that savage with the lively eye;" but Homer knew what true civilization is better than that. The falcon is a very intelligent bird, and has the finest of all eyes; but a falcon could not write a line of poetry. Homer must have been a good observer; and if it be true that he was blind, he must have lived vigorously and witnessed some stirring events before he became so. But Dawes, the astronomer who discovered land and water on the planet Mars, was also a good observer, and yet we do not hear of his writing poetry. Behind the falcon eye there must have been a memory trained to preserve the most delicate impressions, an intellect capable of arranging and correlating these according to the mysterious rules of art, a reasoning faculty which divines correctly the motives of men from their actions, a musical nature eager to express its happiness in song, a love of beauty, order, and virtue, the keenest sympathy with the joys, sufferings, passions, with even the faults of mankind, and better than all, a clear consciousness of the spiritual in man and that in mortal life which seems to mock our own. If those are the

qualities of a savage, let us have more such Homeric savages. If he had been merely a good observer, that alone would have raised him above the rank of a savage, the best of whom have an eye for little besides their physical needs; but to be no more than that would also have placed him in the class of realistic imitators, — what no true Greek ever was, — and his work would be of value now only as a record of the life and manners of his time.

Homer saw life illuminated from *within*, as in Giorgione's paintings. He felt that there was a meaning in it which was better than itself. He did not perceive the immortality of the soul in the sense of Plato and Socrates; but he knew, like the Vedic poets, that there is an enduring life, and he discovered further that it is possible to live this life on earth. Achilles is the impersonation of this idea, and through this Homer also remains immortal to us. Achilles is about to draw his sword on Agamemnon when Pallas Athene seizes him by the yellow hair: he recognizes the goddess by her dazzling eyes, and the blade goes rattling back into its sheath.[1] What is Pallas Athene but *divine wisdom*, restraining the passions of men, and instructing them how they may become better than they are? Homer also had met the goddess face to face, and learned from her the same wisdom that Moses learned in the desert and Shake-

[1] This is only the story of Theodoré Parker and the tortoise in a different dress. Parker, when a small boy, came upon a tortoise in the Lexington meadows, and was going to strike it, but his arm was arrested by an impulse which he could not understand.

speare on the dreamy banks of Avon. Conscious of the wonderful gifts she had bestowed on him, he entered on the mission of his life with modesty and reverence. "Sing, O muse," he begins with, for he is aware that it is not himself in any finite sense that can achieve so grand an enterprise. He must seek aid continually from above. So the Iliad and the Odyssey became a bible to all Hellenic nations, — not a religious bible so much as an art-bible, which, indeed, was the sort best suited to the genius of that race. There is enough impure mythology in them, but also many passages of the purest religious character; and the famous prayer of Ajax, "Give us light, O Zeus, and then destroy us if thou wilt, but destroy us not in the darkness," has a deep significance which every spiritual-minded person will recognize.

Thus we see the typical artist as an idealist. Homer chose his subjects from an ideal past, in order to hold before his contemporaries the picture of an ideal future. He represented the Greeks of his time as they were, so far as was essential to their appearing human, and as they ought to be, to such extent as he could conceive of their improvement. With a just sense of reality, he neither attempted to recall an imaginary age of universal peace and happiness, nor did he look forward to a socialistic Utopia. He passed by the manners and fashions of his own time, which he knew would change with the next generation, and portrayed such traits of human nature as are invariable, unfailing. Thus his characters are at once individual and universal. His women are

more feminine, more charming, and more lovable than those of the less ideal *Nibelungen*, written two thousand years later; and in his heroes Homer presented his countrymen with such examples of manliness, piety, and self-devotion that one can hardly believe that without these models Xerxes could have been driven back to Asia. His divinities are, with the exception of Zeus, the forces of nature humanized. This is, no doubt, the genesis of that pantheistic tendency in poets to give a living personality to inanimate objects. Indeed, this is the mark of the true poet, if there is one. Homer's Zeus, however, is elevated above this divine naturalism, a genuine Deity and friendly arbiter in the affairs of men. He represents the spirit of justice tempered with mercy, — an ideal Homer, the cloud-compeller who lifts care from the soul and warms the hearts of his hearers. We know that Buonarotti considered art a sacred vocation; and so it has ever been to men of heroic nature.

It is the proper business of the artist to represent the real with the ideal shining through it.[1] A beautiful instance of this is the return of Ulysses to Ithaca, asleep after his twenty years' absence. Another is the last meeting of Hector and Andromache, repeated afterwards by Gustavus in the Thirty Years' War. The whole Odyssey is an ideal of the hardships and reverses of a prudent and sagacious man on his way through life. But there are in Homer purely realistic passages, sufficiently dry and accurate to satisfy the most prosaic mind. The

[1] A remark of D. A. Wasson's.

catalogue of Grecian ships in the Iliad must have been more interesting to the ancients than it is to us, though it possesses still a kind of scientific value. In the combats of his heroes, the gods frequently interfere, — what the Puritans call *divine providence*, — but otherwise they are terribly realistic. Hector's death-wound is just above the collar-bone, "but the wind-pipe was not severed, so that he was still able to speak." It is said that all the death-wounds he describes are in mortal parts of the body; and he never commits such errors as Desdemona's coming to life and dying again after she had once been smothered. No doubt, like Æschylus, he was a stout fighter himself. The tactics of Achilles are similar to those of Napoleon at Austerlitz. For a piece of the very finest realism, never since equalled, take the description of the games celebrated in honor of Patroclus, and compare it with that of the shield of Achilles, not only an ideal, but an impossible work; then say if one is more impressive than the other. Homer understood perfectly the value of realism, — indeed, there is no good literature without it, — but also that its place in art is a subordinate one, that it exists not for itself alone, but as a foundation upon which divine harmonies or heaven-piercing spires may be sustained. He is the first and one of the best examples of the complete reconciliation of the real and ideal; but fifty others in all branches of art, as well as among statesmen, philosophers, and ministers of the gospel, might have been selected to prove the same point. Lord Bacon — lawyer, courtier, and scientific investigator —

was filled to the brim with ideality. Napoleon also had his share of it. When his field-marshals were once discussing the problem of creation, he pointed to the stars and said, "You may talk, gentlemen, but look up there and tell me who made all that!"

II.

CLASSIC AND ROMANTIC.

After art, with civilization, had been wandering about in an uncertain way for hundreds and thousands of years, had been nearly strangled in Indian jungles, and had come to a full stop at last in the mud of the Euphrates, the Greeks in Asia and Europe took it up and set it on the right path once and forever. Accuracy seems to have been as strong in the Hellenic mind as vital force was in the Teutonic hordes.

> "On sea-girt isle and foreland bleak
> Forward stept the perfect Greek."

The Greeks were so correct that we have to return to them continually, and measure ourselves by their standard in order to see if we are right. One reason for this lies in the ideal which they endeavored to realize as a nation, and another in the fact that they trod on virgin soil and inherited no traditional formalities or affectations to blind and misguide them. In one sense, all art is classic which survives its own time, and is found useful by succeeding generations; but, more strictly, classic art is Grecian art. Its distinctive features are, first, an ideal conception of the subject; second, purity of feeling; third, a careful selection of mate-

rial; and, fourth, completeness of development and perfection of form. In addition to these there is another element which it is somewhat difficult to describe. We cannot quite call it temperance, though it reminds one of that; for it is necessary for a great artist sometimes to go to an extreme. Reserve is a better name for it. The artist hides himself behind his work, and yet we feel that he is there and animates the whole.

How exacting were these conditions we realize when we consider that out of many excellent American authors Nathaniel Hawthorne is the only one who has fulfilled them all. His material, it is true, was romantic rather than classic; but that matters little, since it was of good quality. Goldsmith, his English prototype, wrote also in a classic manner. Emerson was as ideal as Hawthorne, and equally pure in feeling, but not sufficiently a master of form. Where he has attained a perfect form, as in "Voluntaries," "The Humble Bee," "Days," and a few other poems, he rises to the very summit of Parnassus. Longfellow and Bryant are also classic in some respects, but do not maintain a sufficiently high standard in the choice of material. They are both lacking in the strength that comes from mental concentration. In England, also, if there has been any classic poet since Goldsmith, it is Matthew Arnold. He never rises to eloquence, and yet his verses are all of the best sort. His prose, however, is far from classic. Wordsworth, like Emerson, is sometimes beautifully classic, — as in "Matthew," the "Ode to Dion," and "We are Seven," — but he is also very

unequal. Byron, a wonderful master of rhyme and metre, did not descend to trivialities so often as Wordsworth; but his work often suffers from a painful lack of reserve. Tennyson belongs to the romantic school both in thought and expression. Dante, Raphael, Cervantes, Milton, Molière, Lessing, are all good examples of true classic style.

Purity of Feeling. — Art is the reflection of the life of the many in the mind of one; and it necessarily happens that, if the reflecting medium becomes discolored in any way, the objects reflected in it will become discolored likewise. We can see beautiful images of clouds and trees in a calm lake, but as soon as a breath of air stirs its surface the panorama vanishes. So it is with the mind of the artist. He must possess that calmness of nature which can only arise from a pure heart. No anger, envy, vain thought, or sordid motive may be allowed to intrude itself upon his work. If it does, the evil effect is at once perceptible. It has been repeatedly affirmed that there is no genius without passion. A strong interest in some elevated pursuit is without question essential to the development of genius; but how much passion there is also without any genius resulting from it! It would perhaps be better to say that there is no genius without self-development, which includes self-control. Passion may be necessary, but restraint of passion is more necessary still. Of all men, the artist should be habitually the most dispassionate. A celebrated Italian painter laid down the rule, "The utmost fervor in conceiving a subject, and the greatest coolness in executing it;"

but the conception must go on during the execution. This accounts for the supposed irritability of artists: a small matter such as men of the world would scarcely notice disturbs their mental balance. How are poems written? We learn from Goethe's confessions that his songs and ballads came to him in precious moments of contemplation, while there was peace without and harmony within. Only in such fine summer weather of the soul is the artist able to accomplish his best work, to bring his highest ideal to a complete realization. Only then can the lake be clear and smooth. The youths and maidens in procession on the frieze of the Parthenon appear to move in an atmosphere of joyous serenity; and a similar spirit pervades the plays of Sophocles and the dialogues of Plato. It was then the midsummer of Hellenic civilization. But the best witness of their mental serenity comes to us in the modesty of their nude statues. Take, for instance, the Discobolus of Myron. I should like to meet a man on Wall Street or Trafalgar Square who looks half so modest in his clothes as this ancient athlete does without them.

The classic artist may have weaknesses of character, — and, indeed, if he remains human, he must have them, — but originally he must be sincere and high-minded. Guido Reni became a gambler, Byron and Heine libertines; but they were never mercenary. In the beginning, they were pure and holy. If they had lived better lives, their pictures and poems (taken altogether) would hold a higher rank. Unhappily, we know little of the lives of the Greek sculptors and poets. The simple, out-

door, half-clad habits of their countrymen were favorable to the development of an artistic nature. It was more fortunate for them than for the public that there were neither printing-presses nor legislative committees. They never wrote for money; for there was little of that to be had, even by the merchants. The sculptors worked mainly in the service of religion. "Sufficiently provided for within, they had need of little from without." The Greeks and the Italians had a passion for poetry. People listened to a poet's recitation of spirited verses where we now beguile the hours with prosy novels. Fine statues were everywhere. It is only when a whole nation takes an interest in art that grand results can be obtained. A few isolated individuals can do little, no matter how gifted they may be, without the loyal support of the community in which they dwell. The community must possess sufficient intelligence to recognize what is of superior quality, and the good taste not to overpraise merit or glorify success. Hawthorne exposed the inconsistencies of New England Puritanism in a gracefully pitiless manner, but the severe virtues of Puritanism united to an artistic temperament made him what he was.

The Selection of Material. — A noted American carriage-maker always had the spokes of his wheels weighed in a balance, and those which were found to be lighter than the rest were thrown aside as unfit for service. Thus the classic artist always weighs his material mentally, and rejects all ideas, figures, tints, harmonies, attitudes, or expression of any kind which is not at least eighteen carat

fine. There must be no dead wood in his sentences: nothing commonplace is allowed. He will have nothing like Byron's, —

> "If thy dear hand still clasped in mine
> Should sweeten more these banks of Rhine,"

or Tennyson's, —

> "With that he turned, and look'd as keenly at her
> As careful robins eye the delver's toil."

(the comparison of one of King Arthur's knights to a robin being a decided anti-climax), or Crawford's statue of James Otis, which from a front view is a spirited and eloquent portrait (rather in the Bernini style), but when seen in profile is little better than a block of marble. Compare the even quality of Horace's Odes with the minor poems of Longfellow, or one of Virgil's Eclogues with Whittier's "Snow-Bound." Writing materials were so expensive in the age of Pericles that authors felt obliged to reflect prudently before they made use of them. This led to a habit, no doubt, of thinking over very carefully what they were going to say before they set it down. Phocion, when some one asked him what was in his mind, replied that he was studying how to abbreviate what he was about to say in the public assembly. Any one who may follow this method of composition will soon find that it tends to a concentration of both thought and expression. The cheap publication of books, with all its inestimable advantages, has brought about an unfortunate dilution of the material. The improvements in artificial light have contributed to

the same result. Three hundred years ago reading at night was not considered worth the candle. People now read more than they used to do, but the quality is not so good.

Concentration in literature gives strength to the work, saves time, and invigorates the reader. Mind condensed in a fine sonata or a great painting invigorates as well; and sculpture is an art which necessitates concentration. Nothing that is weak or diluted proves to be durable in this world. Life is short, and literature is long. The scholar has much ground to go over and meanwhile a hundred cares distract his mind, and eat up his time. He prefers writers like Bacon and Mommsen, who give him the result of their investigations in a condensed form. Who can read through the fifty volumes of Voltaire or the hundred and fifteen plays of Calderon? Scott and Dickens might be cut down one-half, as Wordsworth and Byron have been. Books multiply with terrible rapidity. People become confused amid such a variety of material, and the best is easily lost sight of. Nothing except a vicious course of life is so weakening to the intellect of man as reading continuously what it requires neither study nor reflection to understand. After two or three hours spent upon a novel by Charles Reade or Victor Hugo, we close the book with a feverish sense of dissatisfaction, and find ourselves unfit for either mental or physical exertion. Information obtained in the same manner makes little impression on us, and is soon forgotten. But read a chapter of Thucydides or Napoleon's letters to Joseph Bona-

parte, and you feel stimulated as if by a dose of moral iron. Even the muscular system seems to be better for it. You spring to your feet in good spirits and ready for action; or, if you feel fatigue, it is of the healthy sort which leads to an increase of strength. Reading without reflection is a sensuous rather than intellectual occupation. It serves only to excite those sensations that are customary with us: it affects the nerves rather than the brain.

Perfection of form is not possible without completeness of development. This is the case in nature. A fir, a maple, or an American elm will attain a fair perfection of shape if its development is not hindered by winds or cattle or the proximity of other trees. A man who is to serve as a model for classes in drawing must exercise every muscle in his body. Consider the Discus-thrower already referred to. The poise of the head, the outstretched left arm, the graceful curvature of the back, the cautious station of the feet, the right leg thrown slightly across the left, as well as the self-possessed, self-forgetful expression of the face, all relate to and depend upon the action of the right hand. From every point of view it is equal and perfect. Compare with it the Perseus of Canova, in which the carriage of the head is supercilious, the right leg flying off in a half pirouette, and the rest of the posture a compromise between the artist's vanity and the conditions of his subject. In the Agamemnon of Æschylus, the first dark intimations of the watchman on the roof, the false-hearted greeting of the king by his wife, her harsh orders to Cassandra,

the prophetic ravings of the daughter of Priam, and the suspicious appearance of Ægisthus, all indicate more and more significantly the catastrophe of the piece. The dialogue is grave and majestic, the chorus of the highest lyric beauty. Nothing, apparently, is omitted that could add to its completeness, and nothing irrelevant is introduced. The "Manfred" of Byron, on the contrary, consists mostly of disconnected incidents, enlivened by flashes of poetic brilliancy, but leading to little in the end. In sculpture, good form is everything. One might suppose that the excellence of the Greeks in this respect was derived from their practice in chiselling marble. We find, however, that their genius culminated in literature nearly fifty years before it did in sculpture. Their fine military training may have had something to do with this excellence; but properly it is to be assigned to the faculty of the race.

Reserve is the reticence of nature, and no work is truly great without it. Who shall describe fine manners, or the perfume of violets, or the modesty of a beautiful maiden? If the artist appear personally in his work, it is spoiled; and yet his spirit must permeate it, or it will be lacking in style and character. William Hunt used to say that what an artist always needs is to express himself; but he ought to have added "through something different from himself." There must be a power behind the throne. We feel this especially in the works of Michel Angelo, whose reserve no critic has ever been able to fathom. How admirable is the reserve of the dramatist, who represents all characters but

his own, and yet is represented in them all! Even more admirable is the self-repression of Plato, who always gives the credit of his own wisdom to his master, Socrates. Dante does not hesitate to mention himself in the first person; but his reserve is still equal to the rest.

The net result of classic art is perfect beauty; but this is never its object. The portrayal of the ideal life of man, of which beauty is the outward symbol and expression, is the aim. Certain things which we esteem of great importance should never be sought for their own sake. Among these are wealth, power, and beauty. A merchant who seeks gain in order to be rich is sure to attain his object only by serious injury to his own character. Power judiciously exercised is the highest reward of the patriotic statesman; and yet how many statesmen have wrecked their fortunes in efforts to obtain it! So have many sculptors of various nations attempted since the time of Canova to create a type of perfect beauty, male or female; but the only result has been something pretty and insipid. Perfection of form is not sufficient of itself to give beauty: there must be a soul in the marble. The Greeks and the mediæval Italians of romantic art never wasted their talents in such efforts. Phidias desired to make such a statue of Zeus as would be worthy of the idea which Zeus represented, and the result was a type of majestic beauty which endured until the sixteenth century. Of all the statues of Venus which have been dug up, each has a certain individuality of style which prevents it from being accepted as an absolute standard of feminine beauty. Few

people are so lacking in æsthetic sense as to fail in admiration for the Venus of Milo; and yet her features taken separately are not of the finest tpye. It is the *tout ensemble* that impresses us.

Perfection, however, is a barren virtue: with it development is at an end. The course of mankind lies onward. Men are like drops of rain which fall from the sky and after a longer or shorter time find their way back to the ocean. They may be shut up for a time in stagnant pools or run off in clear brooks and turbid rivers; but change they must have by the laws of their nature, even if it be temporarily a change for the worse. The Greeks and Romans, having realized their ideal, disappeared, leaving a rich legacy to civilization. Meanwhile, there hunted in the woods of Germany or fished on the coast of the North Sea the rude ancestors of a man who was destined to carry literature, and art with it, by new methods, to a still higher and more comprehensive development. Of all genuine romantic writers Shakespeare is the chief.

Romantic art is essentially Christian art. In the last book of the Odyssey there is a sentence which sounds as if it were written by Emerson. Ulysses and Telemachus are preparing to fight with the friends of the suitors of Penelope, who had been slain the day previous, when old Laertes cries out, "What a day is this, when I behold my son and grandson contending in excellence!" This is in the true spirit of Hellenic culture, and a noble spirit it was, — the competition in excellence. Christianity, however, introduced a new principle,

that of *self-examination.* The Fathers of the Church taught that it was better to be pure within than fair without, better to save one's own soul than to gain a kingdom. As Hegel says, "The flame of self-consciousness consumed the pantheon of gods, and left only the One." Since the human race never learns more than one truth at a time, this doctrine made men so exceedingly self-conscious that art, which is only possible through self-forgetfulness, was entirely destroyed by it. The invasion of the Goths did not accomplish this downfall, as the rapid decline in sculpture between Aurelius and Constantine shows. The equestrian statue of Aurelius Antoninus is one of the finest that have been preserved; but one hundred and fifty years later bas-reliefs for the triumphal arch of Constantine were stolen from older monuments. Art lay buried, as it were, for a thousand years, when suddenly it sprang up all over western Europe, fresh and vigorous under the impulse of a new ideal. Among many different nations it appeared in several different forms — in Italy as painting, in Germany as song, in England as ballad poetry, and in France as romance. Gothic architecture, originating at Paris and extending far, became the most consistent exposition of the new era.

Fortunately, we can trace the modern art of painting to its very source, proving beyond question the close relation between art and religion. The artist steps in to finish the spiritual work roughly hewn out by priest and prophet. What an influence the "Inferno" of Dante must have had upon a public who believed there was a physical

hell to which sinners would be certainly condemned! The progress of Christian civilization was slow enough before his time, but afterwards much more rapid. Though of the purest Christian spirit, he followed after classic models. Not so Giotto, the painter, and his successors. While in the earliest Greek sculptures, the Æginetan marbles for instance, the expression of the face is strangely conventional, the form and attitude of the naked figures alone being considered of importance, in Italian pictures of the fourteenth century the figures are scrupulously draped, form and attitude are of no moment, and all the energy of the artist is concentrated upon the expression of the face and a spiritual conception of his subject. There is no more remarkable fact in history than this. The Greek began with what was external, and penetrated inwards: the Christian began at the heart, and thence proceeded outward. The subjects of the Italian artists were Christ, the Virgin, and the saints, that is, holy men. Their ideal was *moral perfection;* and at last, when it became united with the classic principle of perfection in form, during the Renaissance period, the noblest and most beautiful works were produced that the world has ever seen. Here, again, we are compelled to notice that the conception of the ideal precedes by some centuries the observation of the real, and that their union is attended by most important consequences.

Though Italian art was possessed of the pure romantic spirit, — more pure than the art of any other nation at that period, — nevertheless, it had not

the true romantic style. It can hardly be said to have had any style of its own, until it adopted the classic. During the dark ages the inhabitants of Italy suffered great hardships. They were ploughed over, harrowed, and trodden down by successive invasions of hostile armies. Only the spiritual power of the Church of Rome put an end to these horrors. The patience, resignation, humility, and exalted faith of the Saviour the Italians had in a measure made their own. Very different was the effect of Christianity upon the victorious German hordes. It could mitigate their arrogance; but it could not tame their impetuous nature. In their former northern home perpetual activity had become the rule of their lives; and perhaps this was the ultimate cause of that remarkable variety of detail, that fulness of material, which soon found its way into Germanic art. The Teutons surrendered their Scandinavian gods, Odin, Thor, and the rest; but they held fast to a mass of tradition about giants, dwarfs, witches, elves, gnomes, and dragons, just as the Catholic Church retained many of the old pagan ceremonials and customs. A belief in these figments of the mind did not interfere in any wise with the Catholic creed; it served an excellent purpose in providing subjects for the decoration of Gothic architecture. In their poetic form they have continued to subsist until the present day, and it is difficult to see what the English poets would have done without them.

The ancient Germans were a nation of soldiers. They believed in the spirit militant. Christianity

indeed, would have perished but for their stout resistance to Mohammedanism, or have survived only in the negative Byzantine type. Their ideal was incarnated in a Charlemagne, a Roland, and a Tancred, — men pure of faith and strong of limb. Modern fiction may be said to have its origin in the religious wars between Christians and the infidel. Whether we examine the legends of King Arthur or the more historical tales of Charlemagne's time, we come always upon the same story: incredible feats of courage and strength are accomplished for the sake of Christianity and to succor the oppressed. Roland, who was without doubt a real personage, is the favorite in these earliest works of fiction. Like Sir Gawain, he is represented as a model of honor, courtesy, and valor. The flaws, possible or probable, in his character are not mentioned. When a hero is being canonized in the holy conclave of artists, the mention of his faults is bad manners. Roland appears to have been the Achilles of the Franks. With a chronicler of true genius to celebrate him, he might have equalled Achilles in fame. Now he has become merely a name to most men; but he is the typical hero of romantic literature, and we meet him again and again in various disguises. He is Ogier the Dane, Godfrey the Crusader, the Ivanhoe of Scott, and, in a peasant costume, the Jean Valjean of Victor Hugo, a reformed convict who accomplishes incredible feats of strength in a most Christ-like spirit. In the course of history he is transformed from one century to another into the ideal crusader, the avenging knight-errant, Sir

Philip Sidney, the Duke of Wellington,[1] the modern French or English gentleman.

The supposition that heroes exist only in the imagination of authors is similar to the theory now in vogue that only an insane person will commit suicide. Both notions are derived from a poor observation. Shakespeare is supposed to have understood human nature pretty well. Does he represent Brutus and Othello as insane at the time of their death? Do they show signs of mental aberration in their last words? Shakespeare also has an Orlando, a fine young Hercules without a blemish, who defeats and kills the duke's wrestler, and very easily too. Because a few donkeys have been stripped of the lions' skins they were wearing, are we to become sceptical of the existence of lions? On the contrary, where did the skins come from? There can be no pretence where there is not some positive good to be imitated. The chief requisites of the hero are courage, self-denial, and fidelity to an ideal, all in the absolute degree. Marshal Ney, who was the last man to cross the Beresina with ten thousand Cossacks at his heels, was one kind of hero. Another was the common sailor, who in a naval action sat down on a box of ammunition lest it should be ignited by an exploding shell. Vambéry, the Hungarian philologist, was a third, when in his devotion to learning he disguised himself first as a Turk and afterwards as an Arab dervish, and thus, at the daily risk of his life, penetrated to the centre of Tartary. If the

[1] This should not be understood to mean the actual Sidney and Wellington, but the popular notion of them.

lives of these men could be followed, like a river to its source, they would be found, no doubt, consistent, harmonious, everywhere of a single piece. When we remember Leonardo da Vinci, an artist who could twist horse-shoes in his hands, a Richard Cœur de Leon, and Augustus the Strong, we need not be surprised to read of an Achilles, a Launcelot, and other prodigies of fiction. It is probable that an accurate account of Roland's exploits, could we obtain it, would be more wonderful than the fables told of him.

Thackeray says, "Depend upon it that the Duke of Wellington is no more a hero to his valet than you or I." This may be true; for the hero of a valet is only an idealized valet, not a Duke of Wellington. The sun does not shine on people in coal-mines; but there are heroes even at the present day for those who have eyes to see them. They are not easily discovered at an evening entertainment or on a seashore piazza. They cultivate reserve, because they must hide their virtue from themselves. Their seriousness prevents them from being popular companions. Their acquaintances cannot understand why they appear neither to seek pleasure nor to act from self-interest. They do not depend upon the ordinary formulas of society, but live by laws of their own which baffle calculation. They are recognized most quickly by those who have themselves endured something for an ideal (this may or may not be the same as suffering for a principle); but commonly they are looked upon as enigmas until the great occasion comes, sooner or later, for which their previous life has

only been a preparation. Sometimes the occasion does not come at all, and the hero remains unrecognized by all except one or two personal friends. Strength has its heroes, but weakness has its heroes as well, — such as from some infirmity or unfavorable situation must take life at a disadvantage from first to last. They play a losing game to the end, and only death can conquer them.

The spirit of Christian chivalry animated the body of mediæval romance. The fabulous element was only a wild kind of efflorescence, caused by Berserker young blood. Men delighted in the marvellous, as they do now in our newly settled Western country. The north of Europe was in the stage of must; but clear wine was sure to follow. After a time the boy becomes tired of his games: he discovers that they are unreal, and turns soberly to the plain facts of life. Some unexpected event, like the loss of property, perhaps, awakens in him a sense of his responsibility to fact. In romantic literature we can easily perceive the influence of the tales of Boccaccio, a keen, practical, and classical Italian mind, upon the strong honest sense of English Chaucer, the first important representative of the new era. Fiction as good as truth was more interesting than the most improbable chimeras. Human nature was not a thing to be despised, but a thing to be studied and made the most of. The real came once more to the assistance of the ideal, to give it a solid foundation. The details of Boccaccio's writing are frequently disgusting; but his love of truth and his cheerful healthy humor compensate

for this fault. The spirit of free inquiry, evoked by the classical renaissance, helped the work forward mightily. The fabulous portion of mediæval art — the giants, dragons, fairies, witches, and enchantments — came to be more and more clearly seen as mere phantasms, but by a peaceful evolution they were transformed into ornaments and allegories. The ideal of the age of chivalry, the man pure in thought, courteous in speech, and disinterested in action, survived in full force, and continued to be a vitalizing element in modern literature.

In Shakespeare we have the romantic style in all its fulness, freshness, and redundant strength. To read the opening lines of "Richard III.," —

> "Now is the winter of our discontent
> Made glorious summer by this sun of York" —

is like entering the doorway of Cologne cathedral. He is sometimes terribly realistic, and often beautifully classic, as in Antony's oration over the body of Cæsar; but his prevailing tone is the romantic one. He evidently read the Greek and Latin authors in translations, and the slight influence they exerted over him may be inferred from the use he makes of the tale of Troilus and Cressida. His two greatest tragedies were founded upon the mediæval legends of Hamlet and King Lear, and both are full of the quaint conceits of the romantic period. Like the Gothic architect, he produces an impression by greatness of design, splendor of diction (which may be compared to the stained glass windows), an exalted conception of his subject, a great variety of interesting characters, and a

greater variety of mental images or figures of speech. The action of his plays moves forward not with stately grace, but with the power of a river that has overflowed its banks. It reminds one distantly of the Gothic invasion of the Roman Empire. He is the perfect master of blank verse, but otherwise cares little for form or for the quality of his material. Everything human, infernal, or divine is grist to his mill; and yet he never loses self-control: we feel that Shakespeare is everywhere master. It has been said of the Prometheus of Æschylus that it is not only a tragedy but tragedy itself. In like manner it may be said that "The Tempest" is romance itself. A contemplative Duke of Milan is pushed from the throne by his worldly brother, and exposed upon an uninhabited island. There, however, by means of the wisdom he has learned from books he becomes master of the situation, and in the course of time fortune turns in his favor. His brother happens to be wrecked on the same island, falls into his power, repents, is forgiven, and the dukedom recovers its legitimate prince. The fairies and magical powers that Prospero calls to his aid represent his command over the forces of nature, as the witches who confront Macbeth after the battle is won represent the evil thoughts of an ambitious nature. Is not this the simple essence of romance? Is it not also a universal law that virtue is at first defeated, but afterward recovers itself by the aid of wisdom? "As You Like It" gives the same subject a different treatment, leaving out the supernatural element.

It is the final test of the ideal that it must ap-

pear perfectly real and yet beyond reality. Shakespeare was an idealist, if one ever existed. Even his historical plays seem to be lifted above the earth and to float in an atmosphere of their own. Henry V. and Cardinal Wolsey are not more lifelike to us than Rosalind and Ariel. So Hamlet says that nothing *is* but thinking makes it so; and this may be considered the keynote of the poet's own life. He distinguishes the ideal from the real in art by representing the former in verse and the latter in prose. It will be noticed that the principal personages in his plays, however they may differ in character, speak always in the same style, in Shakespeare's style. This is the ideal method of treatment, which, as in Greek sculpture, ignores unimportant peculiarities, and strives to reproduce only such traits as are necessary to form a symmetrical whole. Servants, jesters, rogues, tavern brawlers, and the like, are portrayed in a wholly different manner, and very much as Dickens represents the same class of people. They are highly individualized, and their peculiarities are made the most of. So it is with the pictures of Teniers and other painters of the Dutch realistic school. The only value they have comes from their accurate presentation of commonplace things. As there is no ideality in the scenes themselves, there is need of little in the pictures. The element of beauty does not enter into their composition. The proper relations and respective values of the real and ideal can be studied to the best advantage in the works of Shakespeare.

III.

ROMANCE, HUMOR, AND REALISM.

After a well-freighted ship has been running for many hours before the storm a serious moment comes, when the wind has died away and the rolling masses of water threaten continually to break over the stern and carry her down. Then the captain who can turn the bow of his vessel safely round to face the waves shows good seamanship. Something like this takes place in great social and political revolutions. After the popular ardor has somewhat spent itself it usually depends on the courage and sagacity of a single individual how the transition from the old to the new *régime* shall be accomplished. Cæsar has at length received the tardy credit of having swung civilization round on its axis in a time of greatest emergency, and a similar service to modern literature was performed by Shakespeare. He seized upon the romantic element when it was nearly at the point of dissolution; revived, energized, and improved it. He found it buried under a mass of stupid mediæval traditions, and he liberated it, as Prospero did Ariel. We owe to him the survival of the romantic spirit in England, and probably in Germany also, — the spirit of Christian chivalry, of which the motto of the Knights of the Garter is perhaps the most

modern expression, — and with it the freshness, vigor, and good moral health of English and German Literature. In France, where mediæval chivalry reached its finest development, the Catholic counter-revolution and massacre of St. Bartholomew prevented the possibility of such large magnanimous minds as graced the reign of Elizabeth. The classic revival of Richelieu and the French Academy was too exotic, not sufficiently in the national soil, and so led the way to the present unhappy decline in their literature. Certainly there have been no French writers of the present century who can be compared to advantage with Wordsworth, Byron, Thackeray, Carlyle, George Eliot, and Ruskin. If any, one would say Sainte-Beuve and Victor Hugo; but the style of the former lacks manliness, and the latter is ultra-romantic.

Cervantes and Shakespeare put an end to the mediæval romance with all its extravagances and vain conceits; but the kernel of truth that was in it, being imperishable, survived the renaissance period, and came to life again, first in the modern romance, and then in the romantic novel. What, then, is the difference between a novel and a romance in the modern sense? We have familiar examples before us. "The Vicar of Wakefield" is a celebrated romance, and "Middlemarch" an equally celebrated novel. Does not the difference chiefly reside in the ideality of the former? Is not a respect for the Christian ideal the best legacy we have inherited from the Middle Ages, and where do we find this ideal exemplified better than in "The Vicar of Wakefield"? It is this which gives the

modern romance its poetic character and spiritual undertone, so different from the practical good sense of the true novel. The poetic reflections and anthropomorphic touches of Hawthorne would be wholly out of place in an ordinary novel or even in such a novel as "Middlemarch." It is, in fact, a transposed form of the drama, sometimes a melodrama, as in the Vicar, but oftener a tragedy like the "Sorrows of Werther," and is governed mainly by the rules of dramatic composition. Thus we find that romances are generally written by fine poets, and there is little doubt that if Hawthorne had possessed the lyric gift he might have surpassed Longfellow and Whittier.

In a novel the movement of the story is continually retarded to prevent the reader from foreseeing prematurely its conclusion. The action of a romance hastens forward and hurries the reader to a result which he dreads, and hopes may be averted. It also permits the author much less freedom of choice than the novel in regard to plot and incident. Its characters have to be of a certain type and are obliged to follow given lines of action, which finally converge to a common centre. It is not necessary that the leading personage should be an ideal of excellence, rather the reverse; but he must possess some excellence which makes him ideal. It is the Christ-like serenity and resignation of Dr. Primrose, or the amiable simplicity of Donatello, which continually charms us, which leads up to the final good fortune of the one and the sudden downfall of the other. They arouse our sympathies the more keenly because

they possess distinction. A Vivian Grey, a Gwendolen, a Daisy Miller, or a Silas Lapham would not do. Goethe, who knew it best, says of a young man in his father's office who had ruined his health by over-study, "He was a true romance character, and I only regret that I have never made use of him as the mainspring in some work of fiction." This does not impress one as bearing much resemblance to the heroes of mediæval romance. Neither are modern romances written in what is called the romantic style. The best of them are purely classic; and hence much confusion has arisen in regard to these terms classic and romantic. It proves that the romantic spirit can be successfully united with the classic form in literature as well as in painting; where we find such bright examples of it as Correggio's Magdalen and the Sistine Madonna. There are likewise some instances of this in music, as in the Moonlight Sonata and Beethoven's Opus 90. These classic pure romances are the rarest and most valuable of literary productions. It would seem to be only the finest genius that could grapple with this species of art.

Louis the Fourteenth disciplined his courtiers in well-bred manners as he disciplined his army in military evolutions. It was to this high-toned school of gentility that Sir Walter Scott belonged; but with him it was not only a respect for dignified appearance, for his refined and sincere nature made him a gentleman to the soles of his feet. He was *par excellence* the man who thought evil of no one, the last of the garter knights. There was in him,

moreover, a profound respect for antiquity. The feudal castles and old suits of armor which filled his boyish mind with awe and mystery became the study and contemplation of his more mature years. He thought, what kind of life did these old fellows live in their heavy steel clothing? So the mantle of mediæval fiction descended upon him in a way, and by transferring this archæological interest into literature he originated what may be called the romantic novel. His mind was of the artistic order, but not profound enough for the higher sort of poetry. If we compare his verses with those of Burns we find something lacking in them, — what is called the anthropomorphic power. Then, if we compare Scott's prose with Hawthorne's we are compelled to notice the same difference. Hawthorne humanizes even the watches in a shop window, "inhospitably disinclined to show their faces," he says; while Scott appears almost formal and cold beside him. He could not have brought down the gods to men from Olympus, as Homer did.

If, however, Scott was not an idealist in the full sense, yet he had an ideal, and that was the type of hero whom he represented in his novels. A young man, handsome, brave, accomplished, courteous, and irreproachable, we immediately recognize in him the hero of the age of chivalry brought within the limits of reason and probability. Such are Quentin Durward, Waverley, Ivanhoe, Henry Smith, and others. Very naturally they become attached to young ladies as handsome and irreproachable as themselves, and the obstacles which

arise to prevent the happy consummation of their wishes form the current material of the story. This is not an elevating subject, but it is always a pleasant and interesting one. In the hands of a mediocre writer it becomes tame and commonplace, but with Scott it rises to the dignified level of the author's own character. Certainly it can do us no harm, but a great deal of good, to have these models of youthful purity and manliness before us. If there are such characters, is it any reason that they should not be chosen as subjects of fiction because they are rare? Major Winthrop, the author of "John Brent," and Col. Charles R. Lowell, both of whom were killed in the civil war, would have answered very well as heroes of the Walter Scott description, and there are others still living. We call them heroes as a conventional term for the leading character in a story; but we are conscious that they are not real heroes like Garibaldi and Charles Sumner. Scott's characters appear to us as people do in company, at their counting-rooms, or in the courts. It is not good manners to study human nature too closely in public, but in boarding-houses, on sea voyages, or in our own homes their peculiarities are thrown into relief, and we are compelled to notice them even against our own wills. This knowledge of human nature in its hidden sources is very valuable, but would be out of place in a novel of the romantic order. Scott's genius was not of the analytic sort. He delineated the actions of men and women, and left the reader to discover their motives. He always remembers that he is in polite

society. If he describes a scuffle in the street he narrates it as one would before ladies. Such an incident may be described in as many different ways as there are persons concerned in it. Scott chooses the one which combines the most dignity with dramatic effect. Thackeray's short story of "Lovell the Widower" is a delightful piece of humor, but Scott would have said that a gentleman had no right to visit at the house of a friend and find out so much of what was taking place behind the scenes. There *is* such a thing as "considering too curiously."

What he lacks in depth he atones for in breadth. His leading characters are not all like Ivanhoe, — witness Rob Roy and Jeannie Deans, — and none except the great dramatists have portrayed so many varied and striking personalities, and sustained them with so strong a hand. He is sufficiently realistic for all practical purposes: not realistic like Dürer, who represented almost every hair in a man's beard, but like Titian who could give the effect of a beard by skilfully disposed shadows and a few points of light. For an author to prove his sense of reality, it is not essential that he should follow a male character to the washing-room, or a female to her toilet-table. Such details belong to comic writing, and if not humorous they are insufferable. Are not Meg Merrilies and Dandie Dinmont sufficiently realistic, and the opening chapters of the Antiquary and Peveril? Scott was an enthusiastic royalist, but his personation of James the First presents the mean nature and ordinary quality of that

monarch without his saying it. His descriptions of scenery were taken, if possible, upon the spot, even the flowers by the roadside being noted down by him. How eloquent is the speech of Rob Roy to Mr. Osbaldistone: "You talk like a boy, who thinks the auld, gnarled oak can be bent as easily as the young sapling. Do you forget that I have been hunted as an outlaw, branded as a traitor, a price set upon my head as if I had been a wolf? . . . They shall hear of my vengeance who refused to listen to the story of my wrongs. They shall find that the name they have dared to proscribe, that the name of MacGregor *is* a spell to raise the wild devil withal." This breathes the true spirit of the mountaineer, rugged and untamable. Helen MacGregor, who sent one of their enemies to the bottom of a lake, was more realistic still.

In truth, the perfect union of the real and the romantic is no more impossible than the perfect union of the real and ideal. So it is with persons of a romantic or ideal temperament. Many years of experience in the world are often required before they succeed in reconciling themselves to the actual state of things, but if they earnestly strive for it they always succeed at length. The rule should be to keep each element well in hand, to restrict each to its proper limits, and never to permit a premature or inauspicious fusion of them; especially to hold the ideal and the romantic prudently in reserve, as a modest maiden conceals her affection until the last moment from her fortunate lover. To accomplish this either in one's own life

or in the other world of art shows a practical skill of the very highest order. It is in this that Scott's followers and imitators in romantic fiction, especially women, have commonly failed; their immature efforts resulting in an unreal, sentimental, and heterogeneous kind of work which has naturally brought the romantic style into disrepute. To pass by lesser examples, of whom the number is multitude, we find in Disraeli's Lothair, (a bright book, but wholly artificial and of no value therefore as literature) the romantic adventures of a rosy-faced scion of nobility, the great Roland in his last decadence, described in a vein of realistic incisiveness which borders on irony. Intelligent readers have pronounced it all a burlesque, but what makes it appear so is the discordant elements from which it was constructed. Mrs. Burnett's "Gwenn" is a charming story of Franco-American life, but in the concluding chapter she has introduced a romantic catastrophe which is too sudden and appalling. We feel that either she has not told us the whole truth about her heroine, or that she has sacrificed her to dramatic effect. A sensible, firm-hearted peasant girl is not likely to become distracted and throw away her life because a handsome man has kissed her two or three times. People who live an out-of-door life never suffer from fine-spun sensibilities. Jeannie Deans, when she saw the fine grazing land of England, thought little of the scenery, but much of her favorite cows. We are, however, drifting away from Scott's position. The "Waverley Novels" could not be repeated again any more than Shakespeare's plays

or the Æneid of Virgil. Yet their influence is perceptible in all English fiction that has since been written, even in the writings of those who are disposed to doubt their genius and quarrel with their form.

The Greeks despised prose fiction and would have nothing to do with it. If a man could not tell his fables in verse he was not considered worth listening to. Indeed, the first tales we find any record of appear to have been of a most disreputable kind. They are supposed to have originated in Persia, and were translated into Latin during Sulla's profligate reign. Prose was reserved for more serious subjects, — for history, rhetoric, and oratory; and one might almost wish that this distinction had been preserved perpetually when it is considered how habitual reading of fiction at the present day has taken the place of all better reading, distracts the young from their studies, enfeebles the minds of women, and weakens the bodies of men by late hours and an in-door life. Nothing, for one item, is more injurious to the eyesight than hasty and excited reading. The diamond edition of Dickens, published at the time of that author's last visit to America, placed thousands of dollars in the pockets of the oculists. The novel is the most diluted form of literature, and requires less imagination on the part of the reader than any other. The reading of novels will weary the mind from a pure lack of mental exertion; as people become more fatigued standing about at a fair than by a lively walk. Yet it must be admitted that on certain occasions there is no

comfort for a man like a good novel. It has this advantage over poetry, that it is less formal, more like conversation. It is, like the art of printing, one of the blessings we have not yet learned to use judiciously. Poetry has been called a criticism of life; and if this is to some degree correct, it is still more true that the novel is a criticism of one's neighbors. That is what Fielding, Dickens, George Eliot, Howells, and others have made of it. The criticism is, of course, good humored or the public would not permit it. In this way a novelist, if he possess genius, can wield great power. Dickens was a true philanthropist, not of the theoretical sort, but directing his satirical shafts for the reformation of real abuses. Aretino was not more the scourge of princes than Thackeray of London fashionable society, and recent developments have proved that he told of it nothing less than the truth. The royal family could not escape the keen edge of his sincerity. In a somewhat different manner Hawthorne exposed the unconscious duplicity of Puritanism.

It is well known that in the most civilized communities crimes take place which the ingenuity of jurists have never been able to reach. A famous instance of this was the hypochondria of Zimmermann, the German scholar, which first destroyed his son, then his daughter, and finally turned like the sting of a scorpion upon himself. A woman was not long since arrested for allowing her sick child to die of neglect, while she and her friends tried the faith cure experiment upon it; but how many children die of neglect whom we know nothing

about? Brutal husbands may torment their wives into insanity or death; unprincipled wives may desolate their husband's homes; parents, as Ruskin says, destroy their children, and sons ruin their parents; an unscrupulous lawyer may make use of his profession to defraud his creditors; a mischievous widow may spoil the peace of half a dozen families: and for all this there is neither remedy nor punishment except through the languid and uncertain action of public opinion. Neither is it judicious to attempt an exposure of these enormities in the public prints. The novelist, however, may do so under the mask of different scenery and fictitious names. He cannot avenge the wrong, but he may do much to prevent a repetition of it. Whether it be true or not that Dickens was threatened with a libel suit by a Yorkshire schoolmaster, Thackeray openly declared that his Marquis of Steyne was taken from one of the dissolute companions of George the Fourth. How open the imitations from real life are to be is, like most problems in literature, a question of good judgment. If we were always to consider the effect upon the tender sensibilities of our neighbors very little truth would ever have been told. The indignation of the people of Salem upon the publication of Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" arose, no doubt, from a misapprehension of the nature of art. The poet, if he is to make his characters life-like, must obtain models for them as well as the painter and sculptor. There is no need of attributing to the living model the wayward behavior of a fictitious character. Goethe's old friend Merck served as a

model for Mephistopheles. He was a good-hearted man, but liked to play the cynic among his familiar acquaintances. In most instances it ought to be looked upon as a compliment, this artistic theft of one's portrait; but the persons whom Hawthorne made use of in this manner, the young clergyman especially, were highly displeased by it. So it was with the friends of the young American painter who is represented in the story of "Guenn." It is the peculiar merit of the novel that in it we may see the spirit reflected with whatever limitation or eccentricity pertains to it.

If it is admitted that the coarseness of Fielding is an essential part of his subject (as in the play of Othello), then he is the perfection of a realistic novelist. His style is one of the best, if not the very best, of English prose writers. Thackeray says, "Since the author of Tom Jones died, it has not been permitted any English novelist to describe a man as he really is." The question arises, however, whether it is worth while to do this. Does not the same rule apply here which we have already accepted in regard to Greek sculpture. A young lady unwittingly purchased a copy of Fielding's "Amelia" at the railway station, but her more experienced friend advised her to throw it out of the car window, for it would ruin her reputation even to be seen with it. So greatly have we changed since the days of Burke and Dr. Johnson; but the remarkable part of it is that Fielding is now well-nigh excluded from polite society, while "Othello" is the most popular of all Shakespeare's plays (Macaulay considered it the best), and its per-

formance is invariably attended by crowds of young ladies. Is it not the grand sweep of the tragedy which carries us through and over everything that stands in the way, and in the final catastrophe we forget all unpleasant impressions. But the pure stream of Fielding's humor also does much to wash the mind of his impurities? That is why we call it humor, because it moistens and refreshes our mental faculties. It acts upon the intellect like a wet sponge on a slate, leaving it clean and ready for new sensations. In one of the Homeric hymns Hermes is represented as having, the day after his birth, stolen the cows of Phœbus Apollo, and, after eating up three of them, sequestrated the rest of the herd. Phœbus accordingly summoned him before a synod of the gods, and demanded the restoration of his property; but Hermes swore by the throne of Zeus that he knew nothing of the matter. "Then inextinguishable laughter seized upon Father Zeus and the other blessed gods when they heard little Hermes so stoutly denying the theft of the cows." This inextinguishable laughter is a strain of moral good health which runs through the whole course of Grecian art, and preserves it from ever becoming formal, cold, pedantic, or pretentious. The humor of Fielding is also of an Olympian quality, and saves him from being classed as merely a gifted realist.

The essence of humor consists in a disadvantagious comparison; and this may be either ideal or realistic, according as the comparison is of an elevated or inferior character. The former is called high comedy, and the latter low comedy. Tartuffe

is high comedy because we instinctively compare the shameless hypocrite of a priest with the ideal of religious devotion to which he pretends. The return of Rip Van Winkle to his home after the long sleep reminds us pathetically of the happy return of a father from a distant journey, and at the same time we are amused at the oddity of his appearance. Once when a self-important man of small stature was strutting about, a bystander said, quoting from the play of Julius Cæsar, "Ye gods, he is a colossus, and we petty beings walk under his huge limbs!" A realistic treatment of the same case would be to have compared the man to Falstaff or a bantam rooster. Irony and satire are properly ideal; sarcasm, ridicule, caricature, and burlesque, realistic. Good examples of realistic humor may be met with on Saturday evenings at the grocery stores and among men working on the highways; but for ideal humor we must look to the court room, because whatever is said there must be respectful. Was it not Rufus Choate who said of an immensely fat lawyer, "He carries all before him?" Yet realistic humor, when it is applied to a great subject, may rise to a higher plane than this, as in Lowell's verses: —

> "We own the ocean too, John; —
> You must not think it hard,
> If we can't agree with you, John,
> That it's just your own back yard."

And in the following the two are happily united: —

> "'Twas Concord bridge a' talking off to kill
> With the stun spike that's doun thro' Bunker Hill."

There is a kind of grand realism in the comparison of the monument to a stone spike, but the idea of a bridge talking across the country is anything but realistic. Sometimes two objects can be compared so as to make both of them appear in a humorous light. Carlyle, speaking of Southey's last marriage, says that the lady offered herself and her fortune most heroically to him, and he (perhaps quite as heroically) accepted her. Irony is the connecting link between tragedy and comedy.

Fielding's humor, like that of Shakespeare, ranges from the highest to the lowest, but its tone is always strong, sunny, and generous, — an emanation of the man. He never goes out of his path to seek it, nor introduces it on the wrong occasion. Ridicule of what is serious or venerable he never indulged in, and would have scorned to perpetrate jokes on the blindness of Milton or the lameness of Byron. Neither did he seek favor with his countrymen by ridiculing the ways and customs of other nations. Humor has its highest value when it also includes a profound truth. One of the best of Fielding's descriptions is his contrast of Squire Western and his sister, of whom he finally says that, different as they were in other respects, yet they were alike in this, for Miss Western who was ever looking into the future foresaw a great many things which never came to pass, and her brother who rarely realized an event until after it had taken place remembered a good deal more than ever had happened. It is one of the mysteries of heredity that in the same family there will be born two children one of whom will appear as an inverted counterpart of the other.

He is no pettifogging moralist, but respects real virtue, the virtue of character, wherever it is to be found. He proves his respect for woman by the finest female characters known to fiction. It is not too great a risk to say of Sophia Western that she is the peer of Imogen and Desdemona, delineated too as if by the hand of a Titian. Wherever she is introduced in the book she sheds a radiance like the evening star. Nor are Amelia Booth and Fanny Goodwill far behind her. Fielding lives vigorously and wishes others to do so. If he has not described men and women as they are, where shall we find the manliness and sincerity that will do it? He was a fine scholar, and his writings are replete with classical quotations, and so appropriate that not one could be spared.

Thackeray stands alone by himself, and perhaps always will. He is a satirist, but his satire contains no artificial acid: it is the pure, wholesome juice of ripe fruit. Nothing can be more healthful and refreshing than this; but many who think the devil still wears horns and a tail and lives in the woods (instead of right in the midst of us) do not like it. Others may have a secret misgiving that they are indirectly the subjects of his amiable censorship. In artistic skill he is not equal to Fielding, but surpasses him in his knowledge of human nature, in tenderness of feeling, in pathos, in refinement, and in wisdom. With such a writer it matters little what sort of a plot forms the framework of his narrative, or whether he have any plot. His place in literature is a high one, almost among the highest. It has been lately stated by an Eng-

lish critic, and repeated with approval in America, that "the mannerism of Dickens or the confidential attitude of Thackeray would no longer be permitted in a writer of fiction," — so much have we improved. These are faults, no doubt, and to be avoided in future if possible, but even greater defects would be condoned in writers who possessed the genius of Dickens or Thackeray. What is wanted in an orchard is not so much symmetrical trees as those which will bear good apples and pears. His female characters are not equal to his men, — sometimes it seems almost as if he had a spite against the sex, — and yet how many children have been named for Ethel Newcome! Henry Esmond, too, has become the ideal of a high-minded life.

IV.

THE MODERN NOVEL.

COMPARATIVELY few novels of the vast number that are written deserve the name of literature, and fewer still will be honored with a permanent place in it. Novelists were also numerous in the last century, and yet only three of them, Fielding, Smollett, and Richardson are now well known. Only three novelists have survived among more than twenty English writers of distinction; and is it safe to predict that a larger number will be remembered from the present century when another hundred years have passed? Scott and Thackeray and George Eliot certainly will; but who beside them? Is it safe to predict that even the broad-humored, philanthropic Dickens will last another generation? One cannot imagine a literary immortality for Charles Reade, Trollope, or William Black. How is this to be accounted for?

Novel-writing is the easiest and most lucrative form of art. It is the most lucrative because thousands of people will purchase a work of fiction who cannot be persuaded to read any other sort of book; and it is the easiest to write because neither training nor experience is required for the purpose. Poetry is a rare gift; music and sculpture require a course of the severest study; the painter must

spend years in practising with the brush; but to compose a moderately good novel requires only a lively fancy, a habit of imitation, and a faculty of consistent development. The last quality is essential to all constructive work, and the first two are so common that the wonder is we do not find twice as many novels as there are. To write a "Middlemarch" as much genius and self-denial are needed as for one of Wagner's operas, but to write a "Robert Falconer" little more than ink, paper, pens, and a moralising turn of mind. Leonardo da Vinci said, "He who cannot shade an object so that one can take hold of it, has no talent;" and it may be remarked of novelists and poets that those who are unable to write a satisfactory essay in prose have no claim upon literature. This might be a good test, not only with respect to aspirants for literary honors, but also for their readers. There are people still alive in America, though not very many, who look upon it as a sin to read anything which is not strictly true; and absurd as this is, there can be no doubt that the reading of even the best fiction, of Shakespeare himself, may have an injurious influence on a certain class of minds. Children they cannot hurt much, for nothing except pain, or the sight of suffering in others, makes a deep impression on the minds of children; but if read too sympathetically and without reflection they tend to perpetuate those illusions of childhood which we ought to leave behind us. The right corrective for this, if it can be applied, is to persuade these persons to read something that is *not* a story,

something which it requires reflection to understand, like Bacon's essays or Schiller's æsthetic prose. It is only when we have properly learned to think about what we read that works of fiction can bring to us their full measure of profit and enjoyment.

Fielding divides "Tom Jones" into a number of books according to the ancient manner, and begins each book with an introductory essay on some subject connected with his narrative. They are all good, and the one which forms the first chapter of the ninth book may be fairly compared to the "Ars Poetica" of Horace. In it he gives the net result of his experience as a writer of fiction, and those qualifications which are required for it. This is invaluable, and had better be studied by all young people who think of making a profession of novel-writing. The first qualification, he says, is *genius;* by which he means not so much the creative faculty (for what is altogether fabulous may be created on paper), but the inventive, discovering faculty "or, to explain it at large, a quick and sagacious penetration into the true essence of all the objects of our contemplation." The second is *learning.* A competent knowledge of history and belles-lettres he considers necessary even to a novelist; and if it be true that he who only knows one language knows none, it is as likely to be true that he knows little of the time he lives in who does not understand the current of all time. Scott, Thackeray, and George Eliot were all well versed in historical lore. Third, the novelist must acquire thorough observation of men and things —

that knowledge which books cannot supply to him. Especially should he converse with people of every description and condition of life, contrasting them together in his mind, and thus making their several peculiarities to appear more plainly, for correct behavior would scarcely attract attention if it were not for the follies and vices of others. The last is most important. The author must possess a generous, sensitive, and deeply-feeling heart: he must feel the joys and sorrows of the world if he is to move the world, "or," as Horace says, "if he is to make others weep, he must first weep himself." Fielding's definition of genius is rather too realistic, for it is precisely the greatest geniuses who have dealt most largely in the fabulous, or marvellous, element. It may also be noticed that he does not mention that which is his own chief excellence, the sense of humor.

It is a strange fact, and suitable food for the moralist, that the modern demand for realism should have originated among a people who, of all civilized nations, are at present the most unreal and the least veracious. In France fiction is expected to be real, and life has become mainly a fiction. The rational and customary order appears to be inverted. It is not that we charge the French with dishonesty. In their dealings between man and man they are quite as trustworthy as the English or Americans. The high standard of personal honor among French gentlemen has always been proverbial. The mischief would seem to be that they have separated themselves from what is actual and wandered off into the region

of illusion and self-deception. It is well known that they have slight regard for ordinary forms of veracity, but the evil lies deeper; it lies in a disregard for the plain facts of life. Figures of rhetoric are valued more highly than the objects or ideas they represent. M. Renan says, "There is no such thing as chastity in nature." Any good naturalist could have told him that in animal life there is a great deal of chastity, and that it almost might be said that only human beings could be unchaste; but that was not what M. Renan wanted. He wanted an effective sentence which would serve as an argument. Such brilliant guesses are frequent in the writings of Taine and Victor Hugo. Wendell Phillips was a good American example of the same mental dereliction; and those who recollect his graceful orations, so bright, so keen-witted, and yet so illusory, can understand what is the condition of a large portion of the French people at the present time.

Perhaps it is as a reactionary movement against this condition of affairs that the demand for absolute realism has arisen. Sober-minded men having observed what dangerous things ideas have often proved to be in the brains of their neighbors, have somewhat rashly concluded to let ideas altogether alone. Having satisfied themselves that men are unable to fly, they think their proper business must be to burrow in the ground.

Realistic art is correct, literal, and prosaic. It concerns itself mainly with the petty details of life, which may, however, be of great importance to certain individuals. Its true value consists in this,

that it must be genuine; and amid so much pretension, affectation, and unreality, this is not to be despised. Its place, however, is not a high one. It has no interior significance; it leads to nothing beyond itself. It represents life, and yet is without that spirit which informs all life. Its novelty may interest us, but it finds no abiding-place in our affection. It can have neither depth of thought nor feeling; for depth of thought leads directly to an ideal conception, and depth of feeling to romantic situations. In the art galleries of Europe the realistic paintings of Holland and France barely attract attention beside the ideal works of Italy. Rubens was a realist by inheritance, but he acquired a kind of reflected ideality by his study and admiration of Michel Angelo. Yet to pass from the magnificent collection of Rubens's paintings at Munich into the apartments devoted to the Italian masters is like going from Munich into the Tyrolese Alps. Two pictures, one by Luini and the other by Pordenone, at the right side of the doorway, show even by their tone of coloring the transition to a purer air and higher life.

The French are good actors because they are the best of imitators. This is also a prominent trait in their realistic literature, of which the "César Birotteau" of Balzac is an excellent example and to Anglo-Saxon taste one of the least objectionable. César himself is a good little shopkeeper, whose success in his own line of business emboldens him against the advice of his wise, cool-headed wife to try his hand in a more ambitious enterprise for which he has neither the skill nor the courage.

His given name is a piece of natural irony, and one can see from the first that he is doomed to failure. There is no more consistent character in the history of fiction. He swoons with joy when his sweetheart accepts him; wakes up in the night to think over his plans; ruins his last hope by an imprudent speech; and finally dies in the moment when his troubles have ended and honor has returned to him. These and similar incidents all betray the same kind of weakness, — a lack of reserved force. The story is written with perfect precision of statement, is lively and interesting; but when we close the book there is an end of it. We feel no affection for the author; he is so impersonal that we do not care to see a picture of him. We make a few simple reflections, and pass on. There are neither beautiful nor elegant passages in the book. It is not easy to imagine how a pure realist can be eloquent, as Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray are eloquent. There is a great deal of pathos in the narrative, — too much if anything; but there is little in the writing. It is not necessary, as some critics suppose, that a writer must be subjective in order to be pathetic. Of humor there are only a few light touches, chiefly in the chapter where Gandissart the illustrious makes his appearance, — a most refreshing chapter amid the long-drawn misery of Birotteau's financial embarrassments.

The tendency of realism is towards materialism. The life of civilized man is a continuous spiritual struggle, not so much *against* evil as *out of* evil. If he ceases to struggle the weight of his animal nature pulls him downward; and he returns to bar-

barism. Cases of this frequently happen and pass by the name of demoralization. Neither will a man struggle long without an object; what we have already called an ideal. Remove this from him, and you take away the staff of his moral nature. The real should no more be separated from the ideal than the body from its soul. It has been considered that souls may exist without bodies, but bodies without souls turn rapidly to clay.

Absolute realism tends either to what is minute and commonplace or to what is sensual and sensational. This follows from the foregoing. A materialized life, if it keeps within the bounds of propriety, soon becomes tame and monotonous. Otherwise it inevitably seeks entertainment in coarse and exciting pleasures. The direct statement of Thackeray on this point in regard to a large portion of the English nobility is strongly supported by the internal evidence of Disraeli's fashionable novels. Materialized people are proper food for satire, for that is the only corrective that will reach them. Balzac does not escape sensuality; Zola is notorious for it. It may be realistic, but it is very disagreeable. There are also sensational characters in real life as well as romantic and tragic ones. This form of sensationalism has not yet found a place in American prose; but such plays as Mr. William Story's "Nero" and Gen. Wallace's "Commodus" are more disgustingly sensational because they are realistic, and because the events related in them have actually happened. Not long since a poem was published in one of our popular magazines called "Morgan the Buccaneer;" and the

life of that desperado was described in it with such minuteness and precision of detail as would horrify almost any reader. Its effect upon the mind is to efface all pleasant impressions for several hours. It gratifies no sense of beauty or grandeur or any other artistic feeling. Perhaps it is well enough to know that there are such monsters in order to check our optimism; but are they suitable subjects for art? The photograph of a dead highwayman is refreshing in comparison.

Russia may be called a nation without a national existence. The individual exists properly for the state, as the leaf exists for the tree, but in Russia the individual exists for the government. Such a political machine is useful in Asia, to prevent the Tatars from gouging out each others' eyes, but in the European family of nations it is little better than a pest. Of intellectual life there, at least in the more advanced stages, there is and has been little or none, and of art only the reflection of such French or German originals as might be smuggled into the country. Among a people who are without an ideal it is quite natural that realism should predominate. Tūrgienief and Tolstoī are both good; better perhaps than the French models upon which they formed themselves. They are better because they are more serious. Tolstoï's narratives are, however, sometimes more like autobiography than literature; for a work of art must have a central figure, call it what you will. His true merit consists not in being a realist or a philanthropist, but because, like Thackeray, he handles human nature without gloves and is not afraid to

tell what he knows. He would be a still better writer if he were a wiser man. His socialistic theories are an injury to him.

Romance is dear to the human heart, and even the most severe realist cannot wholly escape from it. In the first chapter of "César Birotteau" his wife has a dream that she saw herself knocking at the door of her own house, — a presage of their coming misfortunes, — and in the last chapter César himself falls down and dies at the feet of his father confessor. On the third page of Tolstoï's "Invaders" we meet with a discussion concerning Plato's definition of a brave man, and that too in the camp of a Russian army. In the same narrative also occurs this sentence, "Nature breathed peacefully in beauty and power." The meeting of Ferris and Florida in "A Foregone Conclusion," in front of the portrait of the Venetian priest, is a romantic incident which every one will recognize. Hawthorne or George Eliot would have improved the situation in a telling manner. Such instances could be multiplied without number.

How are we to be sure of what is real, and what is not? Goethe in the "Walpurgis-night" introduces a realist who exclaims in this fashion (freely translated): —

> "Reality through every land
> I seek; yet doubts offend me,
> For fear the ground on which I stand
> Shall break, and hellward send me.

Here truth and poetry are in full agreement — as they always should be. A solid block of ebony seems real enough; but that black, heavy substance

is composed of gases, things invisible to the eye, and may be resolved into them again. All that we know of them is the qualities they possess. Whether the gas or the quality is the real essence it were difficult to say. A man is prosperous in his profession and saves fifty thousand dollars. He buys with it a building in the middle of a large city, and has it fully insured. He marries a handsome wife. He has several children and plenty of friends. But his building is destroyed in a general conflagration, and the insurance companies fail: his property disappears in a puff of smoke. He finds that Fair Rosamond is not the treasure that he thought her. His sons are a disappointment to him: not one of them will ever fill his place. His friends cannot do much to help him. Such has been the life of many a brave man, and he finds at last that amid all mutations of fortune the one solid rock that he can rest on is his own character, — that intangible, ideal something which he has built up within himself. His self-respect is of all things the most real.

Improvement in novel-writing probably lies in the direction of Auerbach's "On the Heights." The novel of the future was already written twenty years ago, it would seem. The sensation that it then produced has long since subsided, but the book yet remains to be fully appreciated. One reverend gentleman condemned it as an immoral publication, while another of the same denomination declared with equal boldness that in his estimation it held a place close to the Bible. These were the extremes, and between them there was

every shade and variety of opinion; but it was generally admitted to be a work of unusual power. Some people objected to it because, as they said, it had *ideas* in it: when they read for pleasure they did not like to think.

"On the Heights" is no more an immoral book than the Venus of Milo is immoral. It is rather too strictly and severely moral, for Auerbach was of Jewish parentage, and the rigorous Hebrew element was strong in him. Much more is it immoral to ignore what everybody knows, to cover up what cannot be hidden, and to evade those plain facts of life upon which the happiness of every married person must depend. How much can be said with propriety of any domestic matter is always a question of good judgment, and Auerbach keeps within safe limits. That the Countess Irma should expiate a transgression, for which she was not wholly to blame, by a voluntary exile which was the cause of her death, would seem almost an unequal penalty. Far better for her to have reformed her character in the world than out of it; far better to have preserved her health and maintained her relations with the society in which she was so useful and influential a member. Yet it is not every one who has the strength of will to do this, and Auerbach's solution is in accordance with human nature. The work is classic in its form, romantic in its incidents, realistic in its representation of German peasant life, and ideal in its noble thought and elevated tone. Scott and George Eliot are often heavy. Thackeray is sometimes garrulous. Dickens is turgid and prolix;

but none of these faults are to be found in "On the Heights." It is written with a light, swift touch, and few sentences in it could be spared. It has not the fine humor of "The Newcomes," or the dramatic power of "Middlemarch," but it surpasses them in a perfect and many-sided culture. When Count Eberhard says to his daughter, "I shall pass away and no trace of me will remain on the earth; but I have lived the enduring life with the greatest minds," one might suppose that Auerbach was speaking of himself. The book stands the test of every classical principle, and yet is fresh, modern, and progressive. Its *dramatis personæ* are interesting; and we follow their fortunes with something more than mere curiosity. It is a fault in "Daniel Deronda" that we have slight glimpses of characters like Miss Arrowpoint and Klesmer, who are more attractive than the leading personages of the story. Gwendolen Harleth is little better than a spirited animal, and she attracts the sordid nature of Guardcourt very much as a thoroughbred horse might be attractive to him; but Irma Wildenort is a gifted and delightful woman, whose gifts are largely the cause of her misfortune, as a ship goes down in the storm when too heavily freighted. Her peasant friend Walpurga has also the charm of true distinction; and the contrast between the two shows no slight artistic skill. Dr. Gunther and Colonel Bronnen are types of superior men, rare enough in real life and still more so in fiction. They remind one slightly of Titian's portraits in their quiet, stoical gravity.

There is yet more than this in the book. It will be admitted that one of the chief events of the present century is Darwin's development theory of the origin of species. It may even be called the keynote of the century. Goethe however preceded Darwin in this (as Lord Bacon preceded Newton in regard to the true method of scientific inquiry), by applying the same principle to the study of human nature. The undercurrent in "Wilhelm Meister" is the evolution of mental culture; in "Faust," that of the moral consciousness, — not of formal but of innate morality. This regeneration of the spirit, this being born from above (ἄνωθεν), as it says in the New Testament, is something not to be mistaken for the reform of criminals or civilizing the Indian. It comes not to the bad but to the good, not to the weak but to the strong; to the most valuable members of society, and not to those who are the least so. Victor Hugo's character of Jean Valjean — the regenerated convict who became a philanthropic Hercules — may be a failure, but his punctilious Javert is a fine success. Who does not know Javert, — the formal, correct, irreproachable, soulless man? Or you may call him Cato of Utica; the man who hates natural superiority. For such there can be no spiritual regeneration; but for the deeply feeling soul that forgets itself for both good and evil it is always possible even in the eleventh hour. It is this metamorphosis which must lead the way to the purer and better civilization of the future. Shakespeare has given in the "Taming of the Shrew" a salutary example of the

reformation of a spoiled child; but Goethe was the first to portray the evolution of a higher kind of life. Auerbach is his legitimate successor. We not only trace the Countess Irma's decline and fall, her remorse, repentance, and self-imposed punishment till she rises to a better life than she had known before; but Walpurga's fine nature expands in the sunshine of her educated friends like a plant that has been taken from the crowded forest and placed in a garden. The peasant goes to court to obtain mental culture; the courtier seeks moral vigor among the peasantry. The transformation in the King's character and in Hansei's are drawn with a firm, strong hand. The novel may have been written as a warning to the late King of Bavaria.

A great work of art often contains much that was not intended by its author. "On the Heights," considered analytically, might prove to be a better treatise on human freedom than those of Rousseau, or John S. Mill. The old count, whose name Wildenort is suggestive of political naturalism, retires from court in order to preserve his independence; and by permitting his children similar independence of action, especially by refusing his counsel and authority to his daughter at one of those critical moments when women need the control of a stronger nature than their own, becomes a factor in the demolition of his own family. Colonel Bronnen succeeds in preserving his independence of character amid the evils of court life, and rises at last to the highest position in the state. The responsibility, too, of a king to his subjects, or,

rather, to the good of the nation, is strongly set forth.

Thoughtless people care little whether what they read be true or false, but a serious person wants either the truth or what is as good as true. Every particle of truth, even the smallest and most remote from human activity, has some value, greater or less. Every one must have noticed in the best works of fiction certain passages which stand out for their intense reality in bold relief from the rest. Such are, the conversation at breakfast between Fred Vincy and his sister in "Middlemarch," and the awful family battle described in Thackeray's "Philip." There is good reason to believe, for we know it to be the fact in some cases, that these are literal transcripts of scenes that have actually taken place. In "Joseph Andrews" there is one sentence, of which Fielding considers it necessary to remark that he had once overheard a gentleman make such a statement; but any one would suspect as much without being told of it. So Miss Alexander's "Tales of Tuscan Life," besides being in the purest English seen since the days of Goldsmith and Addison, interest us more powerfully because we know that they are *true*. The "Story of Ida" is the common tragedy of womanhood in its simplest form. The innocent young girl escapes the snare intended for her, but afterwards dies of love for the man she cannot marry. How often has this subject been treated before, and yet here with renewed pathos and originality. The perfection of its charm lies in its freedom from all artistic contrivances. We owe

the suggestion of this new form of biography to John Ruskin, to whom we are also mainly indebted for whatever is beautiful and elevating in American architecture. In the preface to "Ida" he says, —

> "For now some ten or twelve years I have been asking every good writer whom I knew to write some part of what was exactly true in the greatest of the sciences, that of humanity. It seemed to me time that the poet and romance-writer should become now the strict historian of days which, professing the openest proclamation of themselves, kept yet in secrecy all that was most beautiful, all that was most woful, in the multitude of their unshepherded souls. And during these years of unanswered petitioning I have become more and more convinced that the wholesomest antagonism to whatever is dangerous in the temper, or foolish in the extravagance, of modern fiction, would be found in sometimes substituting for the artfully combined improbability the careful record of providentially ordered fact."

Here there opens a fresh, extensive, and fruitful field for the student of human nature to delve in.

The historical method that has been pursued in this investigation was not intentional on the part of the writer, but was found essential to the development of the subject. What other method is there of learning the whole truth of any matter? How can we judge of a man unless we know what his life has been, and how can we understand the true nature of romantic literature, unless we also appreciate the spirit of Christian chivalry which presided at its birth? The past is our inheritance; and we can no more escape from it than a hereditary prince can fly from the vacant throne of his father. It is cowardly to do so, and those who attempt it

soon find themselves, like the so-called radicals, in conflict with all the forces of human nature. A man may sail to Patagonia or the South Sea Islands, but an invisible cord, stronger than Bessemer steel, will hold him fast to the place whence he started, and will most likely bring him back there, if he remains a *man* and does not become a moral cast-away. And so the chain goes back from father to grandfather, from America to England, and from England to Greece and Egypt. Every well-educated person is as old as the pyramids, and contains within himself a large portion of what humanity has accomplished since that time. All great minds have recognized this fact, that the present is of little value unless built upon the past.

V.

IDOLS.

IDOL and ideal are so nearly alike that one might suppose they were derived from the same word in Latin or Greek. This, however, does not prove to be the case. Idol comes from "*eidolon*," an image, and ideal, or, rather, idea, is derived from "*idios*," that which is peculiar to one's self. Yet, if we trace them farther back, it seems probable that both originated in an old Aryan root similar to Sanskrit *vid*, perceiving or knowing: and curiously enough, after having been separated in this manner for several thousand years, they come together again in modern usage. For an idol is in reality a materialized ideal, and imagination, or the construction of mental forms, is the faculty which creates ideals.

"I never knew a thing but I saw it," said Webster, in explanation of the most brilliant and artistic of his orations. It seems likely that in this necessity of seeing what we know or believe in lies the genesis of all representations of deity. For the Greek or Roman mind idolatry had no existence. In spite of their mythological fables, which are only more absurd than many in the Roman Catholic creed, their religion was not lacking in true spirituality. They did not worship the sun,

but Apollo, the beneficent spirit of the sun: they did not try to propitiate the sea, but Poseidon, the ruling power of the sea. They felt that behind these great physical forces there was something intelligent, friendly, and akin to human nature. They believed, like the Hebrews, that the deity possessed a form similar to their own. Thus Zeus, Hera, Pallas, and others, from representing the chief active principles of life, became finally transformed into ideals of human excellence, and they erected statues to them portraying men and women, not as they are, or were, but very much better. Even the Grecian profile as we see it on the heads of their gods and goddesses, appears to have been an ideal, for little more than a tendency to it can be discovered in the portrait busts of that time. It was this keen perception of the divinity in nature and their delineation of it, so that all men might recognize its value, which gave Hellenic art its elevated character, and made the Greeks the first of civilized races.

They were the only people who ever brought their idols to an artistic perfection so as to make a clear and distinct impression on the beholder. The Hindoo gods with six arms, and the Assyrian deities are rude and indefinite ideals, intended to express *power*, which always has been and still is worshipped by a large portion of mankind. A sense of horror is closely related to the thrill of awe; and serpent-worship, thought by some writers to have been the earliest known type of religion, no doubt originated in the fear and dread of venomous reptiles. But the flame of self-conscious-

ness, as Hegel says, consumed all other deities and left only the One. Abraham and Moses perceived that the best evidence of a supreme being was to be found in the moral nature of man, in his sense of right and wrong. This was a grand discovery, destined in time to supersede the use of idols, at least for religious purposes. This is the reason why the Hebrew prophets so severely condemned the worship of images, because their god, being the deity of inner life, could not be represented by any outward form.

The time for this change was slow in coming. The evolution of man's spiritual nature requires that it should first become conscious of itself, then that it should go out from itself and forget itself in conflict with the external world, and finally return to itself in peace and rest. This is the experience of every cultivated man, as well as of the race. The dove returning to the ark with an olive branch is a poetic symbol of it. Hebrew monotheism could only escape from its selfish and unfruitful isolation — and the Jews continue an isolated people to the present day — through a union with Hellenic art, science, and practical activity. But a harmonious, spiritual union could not at first be accomplished; and indeed it has not been wholly accomplished yet. It first took the form of social antagonism. The Christians separated themselves from all others; they were looked upon as misanthropes, as haters of men. Next came political compromise. Niebuhr, who wrote history better than he understood it, doubts if Constantine who built several temples for the pagans can properly be called a Christian.

The fact is indicative of the times. It was a period of transition. The pagan party was still a strong one; and Constantine wisely concluded it was best to conciliate them. Many religious ceremonies and the religious festivals, with new names attached to them, were transferred from the old faith to the new. The adoration of images also continued as before. Statues of Hermes and Venus were broken in pieces, but their place was supplied by images of the saints and pictures of the holy virgin. In Italian art Christ was sometimes depicted with the features of Zeus, and sometimes with those of Apollo: and the representations of God in the Vatican at Rome would certainly have horrified Moses and Elijah. In Protestantism came again the return to a pure, spiritual, and immaterial faith; and the iconoclasts of the sixteenth century went about destroying statues and stained-glass windows, just as the early Christians had done twelve hundred years before.

Idols have done their work, and now belong to the past, except for the illiterate classes in countries like Spain and Italy. They serve now, like the giant in Goethe's fable, as a dial to mark the progress of religious ideas. No one who can read a religious book will care much for a religious picture, merely as such. We now regard the madonnas of Raphael or the angel of Fra Angelico purely as works of genius, as the outward reflection of beautifully gifted minds. A sunset or a symphony is quite as likely to inspire us with devotional feeling. Yet we come to have no slight respect for image-worship when we consider that

the two sister arts, sculpture and painting, not only owe their existence to it, but through its influence they attained that exalted perfection which even excels the best of nature's prodigies. The Dresden Gallery is more interesting than the Falls of Niagara, and more pilgrims visit it than go to the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky. The refining and elevating influence of great works of art is incalculable: and it is a noteworthy fact that at the time when the Roman Catholic Church had degenerated into a corrupt political machine, and the sale of indulgences was threatening to exterminate the moral sense of Europe, the spirit of truth and holiness, which never wholly leaves this planet, took refuge in the art of painting, and blazed forth there in such splendor as was never known before. That the best poets and artists should possess a strikingly ethical nature is not to be wondered at, for it is only by constant self-denial and a conscientious devotion to their work that they can reach the highest pitch of excellence.

The transition from sculpture to painting in the early Christian period is a significant one, and marks an epoch in the spiritual development of the race. Sculpture is the more tangible, realistic, and concrete art: its range of expression is a limited one. The eyes have been called the windows of the soul, and the eyes of a statue have no expression. Grecian sculpture charms us after the manner of young children, by its natural grace and self-contained repose. It represents the eocene period of life — the dawn of civilization, before man had become fully conscious of his

existence. Painting is the more abstract, — immaterial art, and capable of a much wider range of expression. Its main principle is intention, or light and shade; while that of sculpture is extension, or form. It permits, therefore, not only a greater freedom and variety of action, but a greater depth of thought and feeling. In the best portraits the eyes are the chief centre of expression, and are sometimes more eloquent than words. It will readily be seen how this applies to Christianity. The life of Christ and the works of the Apostles are the best subjects that painters have ever had, even better than scenes from Shakespeare. It may also be perceived that in painting the danger of mistaking a material object for the idea it stands for, which is the one evil of image-worship, is very much diminished.

It is this exaggerated respect for religious form rather than the animating idea that is commonly known by the name of idolatry. The Reformation did not put an end to it, nor is there any present prospect that it will come to an end. Religious bigots are always idolaters; and I think this is the rational explanation of such characters as Caraffa, Loyola, Ferdinand of Austria, and Mary of England. They persecuted heretics in so savage and relentless a manner because they were at heart savages themselves, and had no more sense of Christianity than a newly converted Polynesian. They idolized the church as a sacerdotal organization, but they probably never considered what churches and creeds were instituted for. Wasson used to say of Archbishop Laud that he was not a

man at all, but a preaching and praying machine, and he persecuted the Puritans because he wished to make machines of all other men. The race of such people is not yet extinct, though they are not so conspicuous and harmful as formerly. A milder form of the same evil is met with in too great veneration for creeds, — as if they had a divine origin, though it is very well known they have not. Unitarians, for instance, are often spoken of as infidels because they do not believe in the Trinity, a doctrine which may have a deep philosophical meaning, but which originated with the Greek theologians of Alexandria in the fourth century. It is curious to see how the general public, after it had lost faith in the divinity of the pope, suddenly discovered the divine right of kings, and now that having been exploded, sets up for a motto *vox populi vox dei*, or the divine right of the people. A common form of idolatry among women is to worship the clergyman instead of the faith that he professes. In the case of a young and handsome minister this is often very embarrassing; and the annals of the church are full of anecdotes relating to it.

Secondary types of idolatry arise from false ideals, realized ideals, idols of possession, and self-idolatry. Either of these might be made the subject of a chapter.

It has been said that every man has his ideal, the stock-gambler and the fashionable dandy, as well as the statesman and the poet. This is not quite correct. A genuine ideal should always be an intellectual conception. A statesman's object

is an improved organization of the community; but the object of the stock-gambler is a mixed and sensual one, and that of the dandy is the gratification of an artistic self-love. These are false ideals. So also are wealth, power, and fame, things of themselves of great value, but which to be of real benefit must be acquired indirectly. The pursuit of wealth makes men covetous and hard-hearted; of power, unprincipled and domineering; of fame, vain and worthless. They are the strong forces of society, — which only men of integrity and a well-rounded character, men who are neither vain nor covetous, can employ to advantage: others are only too likely to be crushed by them. But this is mere truism. What is not so generally recognized is that reform and philanthropy often become idols to those who practise them, and in this way sometimes do no slight mischief. This may be because the chief evils of humanity are so inherent in the race that they cannot be removed, or even very much ameliorated, except in specific cases; and even these require delicacy and nice judgment; but whatever may be the reason, it is certain that the professed philanthropist too readily degenerates into a demagogue and a trickster. If men are to have sound, healthy minds, they must live a vigorous, objective life, and not trouble themselves too much about their own fate or that of others.

Realized ideals are always in danger of becoming idols. A brilliant coquette once said with a laugh, "We break our idols in order to form new ones;" and though this may seem rather heartless

on her part, it is actually what happens all through life. An ideal once realized ceases to be an ideal, and we must either go forward to new and, if possible, higher conceptions, or descend to batten on the moor of materialism. It is better, at any rate, to destroy our idols than to cherish and preserve them, and the gentlemen who were attracted by the young woman referred to probably made a fortunate escape. As a moral disease idolization comes next to infatuation. Carlyle has given the name of *realized ideals* to one of the chapters in his history of the French Revolution, and nothing could better express in abstract terms the condition of France previous to that catastrophe. His friend, Edward Irving, a strong and vigorous man, went to pieces in middle life, evidently, as Alexander of Macedon is supposed to have done, because he had reached the summit of his ambition, which was to be a popular London preacher. A good many cases of intemperance originate in this manner. After a man ceases to have an object in life, even good habits will not always save him from losing his balance. Such has been the fate of some of our most noted public men; while youth often takes to dissipation wholly from the lack of an ideal. A curious phenomenon happened in 1865, after the liberation of the Southern negroes. The national anti-slavery society divided itself into two factions, like the horses which Cortez left in Mexico, and fought each other with as much energy as they had formerly contended against the slaveholders.

Idols of possession are closely related to realized

ideals. Familiar examples of them are: the farmer who prates about the superiority of his land and cattle; the banker who counts up the market value of his stocks and bonds; the husband who idolizes his pretty wife; and the mother who idolizes her children, valuing her interest in them rather than their own welfare. This idealization, as it is called, of one's own property is often favorably spoken of as tending to make people contented with what they have, but I do not believe that any habit can be of ultimate good which encourages self-deception. The Canadian who sent a barrel of apples to Queen Victoria probably thought they were the best in the world, but he equally deserved their being returned to him. His neighbors must have been rejoiced at it. To the outside world such people only appear very disagreeable, but it is in the retirement of their families that they do mischief. The law of primogeniture which prevails in most European countries was in the first place a military necessity, but it has long since become an ancestral idol to which the younger members of the family are sacrificed for the sake of a certain social prestige.

Of all forms of idolatry, self-idolatry is the worst. "Self," says Bacon, "is a mean centre of one's actions: it is right earth." What shall we say, then, of that egotism which imagines itself a thing of glory and the centre of animated life? The poor savage worshipping his fetich is at least seeking something external to himself and is so far disinterested; in the course of a thousand years his descendants may come to some good:

but what hope can there be for the soul that considers itself perfect! Such was the mainspring of Nero and Commodus, exaggerated by their abnormal position in life, and so it is of the Southern duellist, the Western desperado, and the Parisian communist who wishes to guillotine all men who are better than himself. It was evidently a large ingredient in the composition of Guiteau, and of Nöbeling, the would-be assassin of Emperor William. It sometimes leads to crime, and is sometimes apparently harmless — as in the self-made man who erects a statue to his own memory, and a worldly-religious woman who lives on the adoration of priests and parasites. Idolatry, like the spirit of pedantry, enters into us unawares, and there is no escape from it except as the good artist escapes from mannerism — by a persistent effort so see things as they are.

VI.

F. W. L.

EVER the ripest blackberries
Are hid beneath the leaves;
In thicket deep the mavis
Her pretty nest-home weaves.

Where walks a maiden lonely
The violet loves to grow;
And ah! what tender confidence
They to each other show!

Apart the poet lingers
And silent waits his time;
If the gay saloon he enters,
His verses cease to rhyme.

Thus hide deep natures ever
From souls unlike their own:
Through love or friendship only
Their virtue can be known.

VII.

FRED W. LORING.

In the autumn of 1866 the editors of the *Harvard Advocate* received a manuscript poem called the "Old Innkeeper," which was so much better than the ordinary verses of college students that they were afraid the same trick was intended for them which afterwards led a New York editor to pay for and publish an old poem of Herbert's written in the last century. It proved to be, however, an original production, being easily traced to one Loring, a Freshman, who roomed in Gray's Hall. He soon became the chief support of our paper, writing witty and sensible prose as well as poetry, and in his Sophomore term was elected an editor, a year in advance of the usual time.

He was a slender, fragile-looking youth, with wavy, brown hair which evidently covered a large brain. His features were delicate and feminine, and yet there was something in the cast of them, especially of his brow, which reminded every one of the head of Crawford's Beethoven. In his large hazel eyes could sometimes be seen a flickering light, like the reflection of a fire on the window-pane. His face, his voice, his manners, his dress, all gave evidence of a refined and sensitive nature. He was by turns either gay, witty, and animated,

or serious and thoughtful. There was a slightly scornful curl to his thin lips, — a scorn, as we discovered at length, not of inferior people, but of mean and despicable things. He disliked the gymnasium, and all athletic games, especially base-ball, but was fond of walking to Boston, and could do unlimited brain work without much fatigue. It is of more importance for a young man to keep his mind in good training than to acquire the muscles of a gladiator: even in the long run better for his health. I never could learn much about Loring's earlier life. His father was a stock and money broker in Boston (most unpoetic of professions), and at this time resided in Newton. His mother belonged to the Wadsworth family of New York, and he had a cousin of that name in the class of 1867, who resembled him in figure but not otherwise. She died, unfortunately, while he was still very young, and was followed by two or more step-mothers, of whom Fred used to speak in a mildly satirical, but not unkind manner. He learned to read with marvellous rapidity. At the age of six he was familiar with a number of Shakespeare's plays, and declaimed passages from them about the house. He went through the puppet theatre experience, which Goethe and so many others have before him; and one of his companions in that affair was Greener, the first colored graduate of Harvard University. He was not, however, a diligent scholar, but rather desultory, so that he was nearly, if not quite, eighteen when he entered college, though he might easily have done so one or two years earlier. He was fitted for college at Andover.

The *Advocate* and *Yale Courant* were the first of that brood of college newspapers since become so numerous. In the spring term of 1866 a paper appeared at Harvard called the *Collegian*, edited chiefly by Charles Sibley Gage of the class of 1867, a fellow of rare talents who only lacked the spur of ambition to have become a distinguished man. As it was, he suited college life so perfectly and enjoyed it so much that it almost seems to be a pity that he should ever have graduated. His witty pen, however, soon brought him into collision with the college government. In the second number he entered a strong argument against morning prayers (which were afterwards abolished for similar reasons), and in the third he published a pointed but harmless satire on the recitations of our Latin professor. "It encourages radicalism," said the faculty, and voted to suppress the *Collegian;* but it was not to be suppressed. There was need of an organ to represent the opinions and interests of the students, however crude and short-sighted these might be. New and unknown editors came to the front, and in a short time another paper appeared called the *Advocate*, but similar in other respects to the former one. In a temperate and logical editorial the right of free speech was argued anew, and the Boston daily press warmly supported the cause of the students. Before these invisible adversaries the college faculty yielded, and the *Advocate* still continues to flourish now in its twenty-seventh year. It has rarely been since, however, what it was while Loring was editor. He gave it a life, a style, and an

independence of character, such as are rare among American periodicals. He satirized the bad verses of the students, the sensational novels they read, and the sensational plays they attended; and in this he did them great service. He discovered old college legends and set them to verse. One was about a French tutor who amused his classes with an account of the strange dreams he had: another was of a student named Sargent, who was expelled for using profane language before a meeting of the faculty. His poems were copied into the Boston *Advertiser*, and from that all over the country. The following is one of his earliest pieces, and shows both his peculiar wit and graceful diction: —

CHILDREN AT PLAY. — No. 1.

From the German.

I SAT by my window in summer,
And I heard the voices clear
Of merry and happy children
Who knew not that I was near, —
Herbert, the son of a neighbor;
Charley, and Arthur, and Paul;
And my fair little golden-haired Alice,
The mistress and queen of all.

And softly were they talking,
As they played there in the sun;
And I listened to their chatters
Till evening had begun.
Their heads, black, brown, and golden,
Together were nestling there;
And I said, "Ah, happy childhood!
There is nothing half so fair."

CHILDREN AT PLAY. — No. 2.

From the Hibernian.

I SAT by my window in summer;
The "Prim'ry school had let out,"
And remarkably noisy children
Were constantly running about.
Patrick, the son of a Fenian;
Michael and Tommy and Jim;
And Tim O'Hara, and Biddy,
Who was much beloved by him.

And loudly were they squalling,
And nothing was going right;
And Tim O'Hara and Tommy
Showed symptoms of a fight;
And I looked at my mathematics,
While their noise was racking my head;
And I said, "O confounded children!
Why won't somebody put you to bed?"

This would have done credit to Heinrich Heine at the age of nineteen, and I doubt if any American poet has succeeded better at so early a period. It was not appreciated by the editors who received it, and it was put on the last page with the advertisements. I suspect it would be difficult to find the German original of the first part, but it may be a free version of something.

Loring was initiated into the mysteries of the green room even before he went to college. His father was an inveterate frequenter of theatres, was well acquainted with actors and actresses, — knew William Warren, Maggie Mitchell, and others. In that den of iniquity, as some people think it, Loring contracted no evil ways, save at times a slightly theatrical manner; but he learned to have a great respect for the professionals he met there.

He always contended that the life of a player was a very hard one, and required more self-control and self-denial than any other. Maggie Mitchell made quite a pet of him, and in his junior year he wrote a play for her which he called "Ahleke Pott's Daughter." When he produced it at an afternoon's rehearsal, Collyer, who acted the part of Babo in "Fanchon," said, "You will have to change the name of this, Loring. All the boys in the street will cry out, 'A leaky pot's daughter! A leaky pot's daughter!'" Maggie, in the bountiful kindness of her heart, at first decided to try the piece, and even posted up a notice for its first rehearsal, but after studying it somewhat she changed her mind, and no doubt it was better for Fred that she did so.

The danger of such matters lies in our being praised for them. It takes a good many years for young men to learn that the value of praise or censure depends on the source whence it cometh. I remember in those days an excellent fellow whose college course was utterly ruined by the admiration of his classmates for his fine muscular physique and imperturbable temper. He fancied himself a modern Hercules, a glorious creation, and studying was no longer possible. Loring spent a good deal of time at theatres which might have been better employed. His older friends shook their heads gravely and said, "Fred is not laying a solid foundation for his future career." I do not think he was intended by nature for a close student, but what may be called diligent study never hurts any one. There was at this

time a growing sentiment of distrust in the community in regard to the methods of instruction in our colleges. This had already found a vigorous expression in Dr. Hedge's celebrated university address in which he attacked the existing order of things, and opened the door for that magnificent reform in higher education for which the young men of to-day have so much reason to be grateful. Loring had read this address, and very likely was influenced by it.

There is nothing like the charm of a youthful friendship.

It pains me now to recall those happy hours when we dreamed, and argued, and discussed, often on subjects that were much too deep for us. He was not always logical, but his good taste seemed to be infallible. This was his final test for everything; and he was not far wrong, for what is good taste but the logic of perfect sensation? It was on this ground that he condemned the woman suffrage movement, which followed in the wake of negro suffrage, and was being supported by some very sensible men. "If it were going to do good," he would say, "these females who rampage about the country would not appear so absurdly ridiculous. If there is anything I hate it is a bold-faced woman on a platform. There are two or three of them I would like to dangle over a precipice." The only cloud upon our sky was the feeling I often had of being unequal to this brilliant, aspiring young soul.

One day he was walking in an open field with a friend who had lately returned from Europe, when

he said, "Now, I want to say just here that I have missed you very much, and I hope we shall never be separated so long again." At that moment they came in sight of a dead cat, almost in their path. "There," he said, "look at that. Nature no longer abhors a vacuum, but I believe she does abhor sentiment."

I never knew him to quite lose his mental balance, but he sometimes met with situations which were unfavorable to him. He was too sensitive and excitable to make a good presiding officer, or to stop a runaway horse. He was at our house during the September hurricane of 1869, and as the trees began to blow over, his alarm, excitement, and fruitless efforts to be of service were very amusing. Still more so was an adventure which happened to him at Mount Desert, during one of his summer vacations. Base-ball was then the rage, and some enterprising spirits started a match game. Loring was invited to play to fill up the number, but he said, "No; it is quite impossible." — "Yes, Loring, you must play," said a clergyman present. "*I* am going to play, and when the clergy play — " — "Enough," replied Fred. "I will sacrifice myself for the occasion."

The captain placed him in right field, where he could do little harm or good, but when his turn to strike came, he was so evidently afraid of being hit by the ball, that every one began to laugh. After he had made several vain efforts, a stout gentleman in a white vest came forward and said, "I will strike for Loring." Fred gracefully yielded the bat, and presently the stout gentleman made a

very good hit: then he and Loring and a small boy, who had caught the excitement, started together for first base, amid unlimited laughter and applause. After completing the circuit of the bases, he took refuge with one of his lady friends, and declared that on no account would he risk his life in that manner again.

Loring was not popular at college. College popularity is a freaky thing at best, and depends largely on the constitution of the class one is in. I think he could have found himself at home in the class of 1869, and have been a general favorite. In those days there were two cliques at Harvard, called the Boston set and the Exeter set, and woe to the unlucky outsider who failed to make himself acceptable to one of the two. They held possession of the societies, the boat clubs, and the ball grounds, and handed them down from one class to another. It would have been better for him if he had come from a distance instead of from the suburbs of Boston. It was very much against him that he did not use tobacco. College life is like a play in which the actors imagine that they really are what they represent. The students' games, societies, class elections, seem to them the most important things in the world. Loring saw through this childlike illusion, and was too frank and manly to conceal the fact. "My neighbor Lawrence," he said, "who is a leading spirit in our class, always addresses me as 'Mr. Loring.' It may be complimentary, but it shows I have no chance for the Hasty Pudding Club." It

was generally considered a disgrace to his class that he was not elected to the Institute of 1770. That he was not a member of the Hasty Pudding was more of a loss to that venerable society than to himself. Negro minstrel songs, clog dances, and bad claret were never much to his taste, and he was at least saved from an unpleasant and humiliating initiation. He belonged to a secret society called the Zeta Psi, which, to escape observation, held its meetings in Somerville; but this was little comfort to him. It was supposed as a matter of course that he would be chosen class poet, and there were many who supported him for that place, but the choice fell instead upon the *nephew* of a distinguished American poet.

A friendly professor made some inquiries among Loring's classmates as to the cause of the disfavor in which he was held, but could get little satisfaction. Many said that they could see no reason for it; others said that he was conceited. I suppose they meant self-conceited. Conceited in the old Shakespearian sense, certainly he could be called, but not otherwise. He was, no doubt, fully conscious of his own ability, but for a Harvard student he was remarkably modest and unpretending. Had he been a bold, swaggering fellow who wore loud trousers and played on the banjo, he might have been quite a favorite.

Revenge, however, was in store for him. His friend, Rev. Edward E. Hale, who was then editing an excellent monthly magazine, said to him: "It was too bad, Fred, but if you'll write me a poem, and do your level best, I will publish it in *Old and*

New." Loring was not slow to take such a hint as this, and in the April number there appeared a poem over his signature entitled "The Queen and Elisor." It was not one of his very best pieces, being more in the style of William Morris than in his own, and more remarkable in its graceful versification than for elevation of thought or depth of sentiment; but its effect at Harvard was like a thunderbolt in a clear sky. It was an honor to the University, and no one could recollect when such an event had happened before. Loring's superiority was now fairly established. The snobs still held up their noses, but all others manfully admitted it. Young women wrote to him for his autograph. There was even talk of carrying him in a procession around the college yard. Fiske, of 1869, a brilliant scholar and former editor, wrote to him, "Let me congratulate you on your rising fame of which the air is full." One of the gravest professors called to him in the college yard and said, "Loring, I have read your poem with great pleasure." — "Thank you, sir," replied Fred, "I wish I could say the same of your work on logic." The professor laughed and invited him to tea. In the midst of all this Loring was assigned the Bowdoin prize for an essay on the "Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays," taking the ground that they were written by Shakespeare.

"I hope it won't spoil you, Fred," his father said to him one Sunday morning at breakfast. "If such stuff can do it, I deserve to be spoiled," was his reply. It did not spoil him. It increased his self-confidence and his contempt for base and

mean things, but he remained as modest and respectful as before. I remember that he kept Lent this year, although his religious views were of a decidedly transcendental character. In a letter written at this time he said: "The other day a certain amiable professor met me in the yard, and, laying his hand on my shoulder, said with patriarchal sweetness, 'My young friend, let me advise you not to be a reformer because — it doesn't pay.'" Loring had no idea of being a reformer except so far as all people have to be reformers who think for themselves and act according to their thoughts. For a college student to attempt the *rôle* of a world-reformer is absurd enough, but is it not even more absurd for matured and experienced men? In a young man it proves at least a certain nobility of nature, a love of the ideal. Loring's acquaintance in college was largely with this class of men, but he saw, or perhaps *felt*, the matter more clearly than they did. Like Goethe, he recognized the value of radicalism, but he also respected conservatism. He thought it was best to leave the roots of things under ground only to be dug up sometimes for scientific purposes, or when the tree shows signs of bad health. All dogmatism, blind traditionalism, living upon formulas or fixed principles was very repugnant to him, and he was fond of quoting these lines: —

> "Leave to the pedants their vain disputations;
> Strict and sedate let the pedagogues be;
> Ever the wise of all ages and nations
> Nod to each other and wink and agree."

He held a high admiration for Rev. John Weiss, and went to hear him preach as often as possible. He considered him the most eloquent, witty, and altogether brilliant man of that time.

After graduating, Loring ought to have been sent to a German university for a year, with a trip to Florence and Rome in the winter. This would have expanded and deepened his artistic nature, and when he returned to America he might have started in life on a broad, historical basis. Whether there was any one about him at this time wise enough to give such advice I do not know. Loring wished to be independent, to earn his own living, and he soon found employment on a weekly Boston newspaper. This saved him from the injurious haste of daily journalism, and allowed him time for better work. It was wonderful the amount of writing he accomplished during the next year — the last of his precious life. He carried two poems to the editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, who, to his surprise, accepted both of them. The best of these was about an epitaph of a man who lies buried in Fredericksburg, Va., and was one of those who bore the pall at the funeral of Shakespeare. It was composed in a simple and pleasing manner. He also published several poems in *Old and New*, and wrote a succession of short stories for that periodical, — "Two Song and Dance Men," "Rebecca's Ma," "Two College Friends," and others. He was in frequent demand as a dramatic critic, often working at the newspaper offices until one in the morning. But his most important work was a vaudeville play called "The Wild Rose,"

which he wrote for his friend, Miss Mary Carey, the *ingénue* actress.

His life must have been very well regulated, for I never knew him to seem weary or dispirited. This may be attributed to the purity of his taste, and shows how much can be accomplished with a slender physique, when the powers of body and mind are both directed to the right point. He was not obliged to control himself, for he never wished to do anything that was bad for him. He was a literary athlete in full training; he lived five years in one. It is the mental purity which gives the final charm to his early writings. His stories were good in themselves, but written too much in the style of Charles Reade — a very poor style for any one to imitate. Why he should not rather have followed after Thackeray, who was to him the king of novelists, is not very clear. Still, they prove a decided talent in this direction, a rare combination scarcely met with since Goldsmith's time. "The Wild Rose" was performed for a fortnight at the Globe Theatre, and with very good success. It was a simple, refined play, as its title indicates. What attracted more attention at this time was a poem of Loring's in society verse called "Alice to Gertrude." It runs very smoothly, but he told his friends that he never had labored so much over any of his other pieces. Here it is: —

Dear Gerty, — Tom will give you this;
He leaves us by this evening's boat:
No chance of seeing you he'll miss,
And so I've made him take this note,

And pattern, too. You'll see the cape
  Is half turned back, which brings in view
The rose-tint, and improves the shape,
  And makes the whole effect quite new.

Speaking of Tom, — you must recall,
  A week before you went from town,
That waltz at Mrs. Upham's ball,
  When all your lovely hair came down.
Well, Tom's not been the same since then,
  Not that he's said a word to me:
But I'm eighteen, and I know men;
  And I've got eyes, and I can see.

Two weeks ago he went away
  To spend some days at Harry Bright's;
Mamma and I both saw our way
  To set the fellow's room to rights,
So in we went. Oh, such a pile
  Of clothes and books thrown hit and miss!
But, darling, — I can see you smile, —
  Midst the disorder I found this:

To G——.

If your eyes were dusky gray,
  Instead of azure rare;
If your bloom should fade away,
  Still would you be fair:
E'en though your lovely smile went too,
  Still, still would you be fair,
If you but kept your hair, my love,
  If you but kept your hair.

When its heavy coils unrolled
  Amidst the ballroom's glare,
In a floating cloud of gold
  You stood an instant there;
And then you blushed and fled away:
  My heart went with you there;
You bound it in your hair, my love,
  In the meshes of your hair.

. . . . . .

Well, dear, are you surprised, or not?
It's a nice piece of work you've made!
Isn't it lucky you forgot
That evening to put on your braid?
Tom's heart at last is really gone:
It seems so awfully absurd!
So, darling, as affairs go on,
Be sure you often write me word.

Tom's a good fellow, you must own;
And handsome, too, as all can see.
A better brother ne'er was known
Than Tom has always been to me.
So, Gerty, though you'll flirt, of course,
Still give his woes a speedy end;
And please, now, don't use all your force,
For he's the brother of your friend.

ALICE.

This reminds one again of Heine, but it has a better tone than Heine's. It is more Hellenic, and less subjective, less self-conscious.

And now our story hastens to its catastrophe.

It is part of the machinery of American politics that every prominent politician must have several young journalists in his retinue who depend on him for information and whom he depends on in turn to keep his name before the public. One of these took notice of Loring, and marked him for his prey. He invited him to his house and made a pet of him. His wife also played her part, and found Fred very useful for social purposes. But affairs soon took an unexpected turn. There was a dark-haired, elfish-looking daughter in the house, and she and Loring fell suddenly and desperately in love with each other. It was a most imprudent business, for the girl was only sixteen and had not

yet finished her education. It was said that Fred used to dance about her on the sidewalk on her way from school. Why are not young men told by their parents that falling in love is a serious and even dangerous matter not to be indulged in without due caution? Some, no doubt, are properly instructed, but the majority have their heads filled by their female relatives with such nonsense as often leads to a great deal of trouble. And yet there are cases which seem to resemble chemical affinities and no foresight is proof against them.

The politician and his wife decided that the only remedy was complete separation, and plainly told Loring so: neither did they give him any hope for the future. At this juncture, as the devil would have it, a New York publishing house offered Loring a large sum to go on Lieutenant Wheeler's exploring expedition in Arizona and write an account of it for their magazine. It was a miserable piece of work for which a common reporter would have done just as well, but Boston had become hateful to him, the money was a temptation, and he decided to go. He was aware of the danger before him, but his mind was made up for desperate things. His departure was sudden, and I have never heard that any attempt was made to dissuade him from going. After leaving Boston he remained several days in New York with a friend, who was the first person at Harvard to discover his poetic gift. Of these final hours in which Loring is visible to us he writes as follows: —

> Those last nights we did not go to bed much before morning. It was twenty years ago, and to think of what Fred

said and did, makes me feel very young again. Wagner was new, except that we had had some bits of him in this country. The Germans were giving his entire operas, in an humble way as regards scenery, but with much outpouring of soul. They were given on the Bowery. Fred had never seen the like. He enjoyed Lohengrin more than I can tell you. Probably Wachtel sang, and Habelmann, and maybe Carl Fornes. It was before their decay. All Germany in our town was alive and enthusiastic. His soul expanded with them.

At midnight of the last night we called at his private office on the chief editor of the *Tribune*, Whitelaw Reid, to arrange with him that Fred should write for the *Tribune*. This editor received Loring as one assured of a literary future, as one already admitted within the sacred fold. It made him feel very, very happy. He told me that he knew he could do work and make a fame that would win the love of the girl whose love he lived for.

Several letters from Loring appeared in *Appleton's Journal* during the summer and autumn of 1871. They are only interesting now, as all his writings are interesting, from his pleasant personality. The last one, published November eighteenth, described what is called the Valley of Death where the bones of many a prairie voyager lie whitening under the sun that never sees a cloud. But the news of his death had already reached us. The expedition had accomplished its course, and Loring, with six others, was returning to San Francisco by stage when they were attacked by savages near Wickenburg, Arizona, and the whole party, including a woman, were massacred. No clew to their murderers has ever been discovered, but this in itself is enough to indicate that they were Indians and not white savages. Where so many were engaged in a plot it is likely that in course of time, if they

had been highwaymen, the secret would have leaked out. Indians never confess anything, and it is only Indians usually who do such thorough work. He was buried near Wickenburg, and a plain sort of monument has been erected over his grave.

Tragedy has been said to result from a superior intelligence coming under the power of an inferior one; but what a travesty of tragedy is this, when a man of genius becomes the prey of a villanous redskin, himself a mere caricature of humanity. Some years afterwards an Apache chief was convicted and executed in New Mexico for the murder of a stage-driver with whom he had previously been on social and intimate terms. When he was asked why he committed such a deed, he replied, "The coward can kill his enemies, but it takes a brave man to kill his friends." I have always thought of this wretch as the possible assassin of Fred Loring; certainly he was worthy of it.

Who knows what he might have been! One felt in him a certain lack of vital strength which is too often the case among poets, but otherwise he was armed at all points. His mental purity, his fine taste, and accurate observation, it is safe to conclude, would have carried him a long way. Moreover, he was an idealist, and without ideality there is not even a sense of real greatness. He showed this trait in his first poem, "The Old Innkeeper," and still more in his conversation about art and literature. Yet he made no vain attempts to soar among the clouds, but walked the earth with a firm step to bring the real and ideal into a harmonious union.

That is the difficult thing. Only a perfectly healthy mind can do it, and Loring proved his mental healthfulness in this, that he could admire and honor the works of the greatest writers without even attempting to imitate them. He was always himself: no easy matter in one who had so keen a sense of character. Greatness of design only comes after our natures have been broadened and deepened by the strain of a severe struggle. Those who float with the current of things about them never meet with this, but Loring's independence of character made it inevitable that he should. It is enough that he was genuine and original; the rest would have come in time. In native talent he seems to me as a humorist somewhat less than Thackeray, and as a poet somewhat better than Matthew Arnold. The quality of the man lay between these two and was superior to anything he wrote.

VIII.

THE ART CONSCIENCE.

LIFE is duty — is not beauty,
So they tell me — till the grave.
But I find a life of duty
Maketh one a drudge or slave.

Better then to live *for* beauty,
Make each life a work of art;
When beauty is sustained by duty,
Each fulfils its lawful part.

IX.

HERMAN GRIMM.

THE LIFE OF RAPHAEL.

A NEW volume by Herman Grimm is to the cultivated reader of to-day what a new volume of Emerson's was to the mind which thirsted for spiritual truth forty years ago. More than any other living writer, he succeeds in lifting us out of the miserable things which surround us into that clear blue sky where everything mean and hateful disappears from view.

When a number of great poets, artists, thinkers, and statesmen come together in the history of a people, and unite in mutually aiding and sustaining each other, there results what may be called an epoch of culture, which urges civilization forward with a mighty impetus. Such was the epoch of Michel Angelo in Italy, of Shakespeare in England, and Molière in France. Shakespeare was born within a year after Michel Angelo died; and Molière was born not seven years after Shakespeare's death. The latest, and on some accounts the most important, of the great epochs of culture is the German, which began with Lessing and Winkelmann in the middle of the last century and ended with Heinrich Heine and Mendelssohn.

From a literary point of view, the English epoch may surpass it, — Shakespeare being a sort of Sirius in that constellation, — and in the matter of brilliancy so may the Italian and Spanish; but when we consider the broad basis which the Germans laid in philosophy, criticism, and scholarship, and their wonderful achievements in the art of music, not inferior to those of the Greeks in sculpture or of the Italians in painting, we feel confident that it was fully equal to any epoch of culture that has preceded it. Never since the age of Pericles had a whole people roused itself to so vigorous an intellectual effort. The influence of this was soon felt in other countries, and still continues to be felt more and more. German philosophy is said to have played an important part in the reconstruction of Italy. German literature struck upon the shores of America like a wave of light, and was reflected back in the writings of Channing, Emerson, and Longfellow. Even the recluse Hawthorne was finally penetrated by it, as may be seen in the last of his romances, where he attempts to reconcile the tradition of an expulsion from Paradise with the evolution of man's moral nature through experience of evil. The music of Germany has become, almost as much as poetry, a refining and elevating power among the forces of civilization. In Great Britain at the same period were assembled a brilliant coterie of literary men; but they were not sufficiently united nor of such individual greatness of character as to form a true national epoch. They were, besides, too strongly under German influences. Words-

worth and Byron pulled in opposite directions; Scott modelled ten or a dozen novels upon a single play of Goethe's; Coleridge became a poetical exponent of German metaphysics; and Carlyle, the strongest and most self-reliant man in England, went wholly over to the conqueror, and wrote in a half-Germanized English.

This last of the golden ages seems now to have passed away; but it has left a rich inheritance to such as were worthy to receive it, and, of all Germans that we hear of at this distance, Herman Grimm has received the fullest share. Whatever is best in literature, painting, Greek art, music, philosophy, classic and mediæval life, that he has made his own, — not as a man adorns himself with accomplishments, but as a tree assimilates the nourishment which will make it grow. Whatever is second or third rate he discards: he has no use for it. German criticism has taught him that no infinite number of small things will ever make a great one; that little grains of sand do not constitute the pleasant land, but only arid and unfruitful deserts. He deals always in what is large, generous, and of the best quality. This comes to him not only by education, but inheritance, and is so thoroughly his nature that he moves among such elements with the grace and simplicity of a child in its home. Like Goethe, the only things he hates are envy and hatred. He lives to let live, and to develop the best that is in him. Is it the result of this, or was it a special birth-gift of the Muses, — that mellow atmosphere in his writing, that Ionian climate, such as one meets with in the

Odyssey, Plato's Republic, and the best of Plutarch's Lives? Yet he is no child in literature, but a trained and well-disciplined intelligence, — trained in thought and observation as thoroughly as the Prussian soldier is in his military evolutions. He is the first living authority on the German language, and as a critic ranks as Matthew Arnold does in England and James R. Lowell in America. If he has not the keen penetration of Ruskin and Arnold, neither has he their incisiveness, their love of vivisection. He criticises, not to find fault, but to separate the chaff from the wheat; and, as to what becomes of the chaff afterward, he does not trouble himself. He knows that the winds of heaven will take care of it. Such mental serenity, such confidence in man and nature, are scarcely possible any longer in the turmoil of English and American life. How much longer will it be so in Germany also? Arnold and Ruskin are not to be blamed for their incisiveness: they are noble natures in perpetual warfare with the demons of modern life; and it will not be until the demons are all quelled that another epoch of culture will make its appearance. Neither would I say that Grimm was lacking in insight. His quick appreciation of Emerson's genius, for which we cannot be too grateful, is proof against that. Perhaps he sometimes sees more than he is willing to tell us; and his criticism of Vasari in the *Life of Michel Angelo* could not have been equalled by Sainte-Beuve. But it is his mental attitude, his perfect tone, that we value the most.

A great deal has been written about Raphael

Sanzio; but a good life of him has long been one of the things which were much to be desired. It is a pity that Ruskin has said so little of him, as he has also said little of Michel Angelo. Mrs. Jameson has written of him in an eloquent but not sufficiently discriminating manner. Professor Lübke has given, in his History of Art, the most adequate statement hitherto of the man's genius; but the standard authority on the subject during this present generation, for England and America at least, has been the biography of J. D. Passavant, formerly director of the museum of Frankfort-on-the-Main. This, however, though an excellent work of its kind, is little better than a catalogue of Raphael's works, with a critical estimate of the principal of them. It is much to say of Passavant that he is almost invariably right; but, as Grimm says, Raphael was not only a great artist, but a great man, and he deserves to be considered equally from both points of view. Passavant's book also is written in brief paragraphs, — a manner well suited to its general character, but one which prevents it from being easy and pleasurable reading. It is the work of a connoisseur in art, and not of a literary artist.

Herman Grimm is a literary artist and a connoisseur as well. He is not only a good judge of paintings, but of painting itself. It is impossible to copy the old masters now so as to avoid detection even from a fairly experienced amateur, so different is the handling from one period to another; but there have been many writers on art who could easily be deceived by a skilful copy executed during the lifetime of the artist or soon afterwards.

There have, in fact, been instances of this. Grimm's eyes, however, have been trained to distinguish what is genuine in painting or sculpture, as a diplomat learns to decide between true and false information. He ranks among the best judges of Germany in this respect. In the picture galleries of Europe there are many paintings attributed to Raphael which, nevertheless, strike a careful observer as essentially lacking in genius. All these he sweeps into oblivion, — even the portrait of Johanna of Aragon (which certainly is not of Raphael's coloring), and the so-called Raphaels of the royal gallery at Berlin, — and proceeds at once to indubitable and more important works. As an evidence of the thorough investigation he has made of his subject may be cited a foot-note in which Grimm records his first observations on Raphael's portrait of Julius II. in the Pitti Palace. He says of it: —

> Compared with Leo X. and his cardinals, it impresses us like a Titian, — soft, no harsh outlines, coloring made of chief importance, the brush everywhere visible. Color soft and liquid. Facial outlines done with the brush. Delicacy of the hands (the left repainted). Softness of the beard and of the fur trimming. Transparency of the shadows. Grand, broad handling of accessories. Radiance over the whole. Entirely new treatment of the red silk collar. Background of a very dark green. (1873.)

Here the curtain is lifted for a moment, and we catch a view of Grimm's methods of study and the permanent basis which underlies his work. Nothing could be more interesting; for otherwise we would hardly have felt the same confidence in the certainty of his conclusions. It is a fresh instance

of German thoroughness. Writing about Raphael is like working in a rose garden; and, as there is a good deal of diligent toil required in the latter case, so there is in the former.

The life of Raphael Sanzio might throw some light upon our ignorance of that of Shakespeare. He lived in the full noontide splendor of fame and popularity. He and Michel Angelo together were the most conspicuous persons at the most brilliant court of modern times. From morning till night he was under public observation; and yet how little is recorded of him! He surrendered himself wholly to his art, and apparently had no other external life. What are called the biographies of great men are too often only the chips that have fallen at the base of the finished statue. We know that Raphael was born in Urbino, probably nine years before the discovery of America. In early youth he was placed under the care and tuition of Perugino. At what age he went to Florence, upon what occcasion, or how long he remained, cannot be positively ascertained. It is quite as uncertain when he was invited to Rome by Pope Julius, though there is little doubt of his being there at the commencement of his twenty-sixth year. His attachment to a beautiful young woman called the Fornarina is likely enough, but also legendary. He died on the 6th of April, 1520, — as Grimm likes to believe, on the anniversary of his birth. He was buried in the Pantheon. This, besides a few simple anecdotes, is all that we can learn of a genius so famous that there are not ten others who have ever equalled him. What signs and omens accompanied

his advent here? What education did he have beyond the pale of his art? Whence did he draw his lofty ethical consciousness as well as his marvellous skill? None of these could he have derived in any large measure from his master Perugino. Grimm says, truly enough, that it is of vastly more importance to know into what intellectual atmosphere Raphael entered as a child with Perugino than how far he was influenced by Perugino's style as an artist. "The maturity of soul which shines forth from the 'Sposalizio,' painted when Raphael was twenty years old, imposes on us the task of inquiring whence he could have attained such mental development." Here we have the keynote of the book.

Of Raphael's internal life we have plenty of evidence in his drawings and paintings. To interpret these rightly is to understand the man; and this is the task Grimm sets himself to do. Of the divine, incomparable Raphael, the Shakespeare of painters, of the genius, as Passavant says, which defies estimation, we have long since heard enough. What we have wanted has been a clear, impartial estimate of his merits. Ruskin might have given this, if his inclination had led him to do so; for none have ever gone deeper into the psychology of art than he. But Ruskin, for some mysterious reason, has always slighted the giants of the Roman school: the Venetians, Turner, and the earlier Florentines have wholly absorbed his interest. It has rather been the fashion with English critics of late to disparage Raphael as an effeminate painter, the first of the eclectics, and so on. Passavant, on

the other hand, exalts him by a comparison with Michel Angelo to the latter's disadvantage. Even his pliant and amiable disposition (which appears to have been a limitation to him in one way as an artist) is held up by Passavant in contrast to the less popular manners of his rival. Grimm, having already written a life of Michel Angelo, would not be likely to commit such an ordinary blunder as this, even if his sense of propriety permitted it; neither is he to be caught in the snares of modern scepticism. He who has a true feeling for the beautiful cannot be a disbeliever. Already, in an essay published many years since, he said that Titian and Veronese were great painters, but Raphael and Michel Angelo were also great men. In the present volume he offers us his estimate of this twofold greatness, not in a single passage of concentrated rhetoric, but quietly and gradually, as the charms of Italian scenery unfold themselves on the journey from Florence to Rome. The impression made at first is not a strong one; but, as we proceed from the account of one work to another, we become filled with an enthusiasm which it is at last difficult to restrain. Among these occasional glimpses of the real Raphael which he gives us there are none finer than the following extract from his chapter on "The Entombment": —

> He creates like nature herself. A rose is a rose, and it is nothing more; the song of the nightingale is the nightingale's song; there are no further mysteries to fathom. Thus Raphael's works are free from personal accessories; it is only by a peculiar glamour over everything by his hand that we are led to exclaim, "Raphael painted this!"
>
> We never enjoy a work of Michel Angelo with the same

immunity. A low voice seems to whisper out of each one of them, "I am the work of Michel Angelo, and only through his character can the way be found to any correct interpretation." This breathes also from Dante's verses.

The German critics have not a good reputation for brevity and conciseness. They run their investigations into rather too minute details. In regard to the present volume, however, we feel that it comes to an end too soon, and then we recollect that a portion has been omitted by the American translator. The studies which Grimm has made of Raphael's great dramatic compositions are all interesting, but especially so what he says of "The Entombment" and the Tapestries. A number of sketches for "The Entombment" are in existence, all differing from each other and from the finished picture. The subject seems to have gone through a regular process of development in the artist's mind, and to have been worked out to his satisfaction only by slow degrees.

Thus we see Raphael sparing no pains to create a work which he could allow himself in the end to pronounce perfect. At first nothing is really his own. From all sides he takes what is adapted to his aim. Antique bas-reliefs, an engraving by Mantegna, a painting by Signorelli, a marble by Michel Angelo, all these work most powerfully on his imagination. He imitates unhesitatingly. . . . But when has he taken anything without transforming it by his own genius into what he needs?

What Raphael struggled with here was the relation of the different figures in his group to the body of the Saviour. In the first conception (called the "Death of Adonis"), three figures appear, bearing

the corpse. In the Oxford sketch, three figures appear again, but in a more compact group, the body being nearly doubled up. "In the Florentine design, the body is once more stretched, and the bearers are separated into two distinct groups." The final representation, however, shows these groups resolved again, and only two persons bearing the body of the Saviour, — an elderly man at the head and a stout athletic youth carrying the feet. Now comes the wonderful part of it. Upon Greek urns dug up in recent times there are representations of entombments in which an old man with wings bears the head, and a strong youth with wings is at the feet, and these two are supposed to be meant for Death and Sleep; and who that has read Lessing can doubt it? It is nearly impossible that Raphael should have been aware of this fact; and thus we see the two great streams of antique and Christian art perfectly united by his genius.

In the "Saint Cecilia" group, frequently in the Stanze of the Vatican, and throughout the Tapestries, Saint Paul with the book and the sword appears in ever varying conception of heroic manliness. Was this accidental, or to serve the purposes of art? or was he a favorite ideal of Raphael's contemplation? Grimm considers the last the true solution. Saint Paul is the pure type of the religious reformer; and at this time church reformation was in the air. Savonarola and Macchiavelli, who were the antipodes of each other, had both proclaimed the necessity of it. In fact, there had been a demand for it since Dante's time. There was the same feeling in France, Germany,

and England. Men welcomed the bright red sunrise of a new day without realizing that it was the forerunner of another deluge. It is incredible that Raphael, whose nature was so deeply religious, could have escaped this influence. Though of slender physique, he was of a most powerful intellect, devouring knowledge upon all sides and interested in everything elevated or refining. Grimm is not far wrong in comparing his mental *quality* with that of Emerson. The difference in ability between them is undeniable; but, as he says, there was in both the same transparent purity, the same unfailing serenity and cheerfulness, which lifted them above the evils of their time. As Emerson, however, was horrified at African slavery, it seems as if the unholy practices of the Roman clergy must have been equally abhorrent to Raphael. Could he, with his clear perceptions of human life, be imposed upon by the mixture of ecclesiastical mummery and shallow political makeshifts which emanated from the Vatican? Emerson, also, was interested in religious reform, and had a special liking for an engraving of Raphael's "Saint Paul at Lystra." Now Luther, as Grimm again says, in the preface to his translation of the Bible, speaks of Paul's letters as the proper source of all Christian doctrine.

The book should be read with a collection of photographs from Raphael's paintings and drawings before one, but is also interesting if these do not happen to be accessible. Engravings of the Madonnas are everywhere; and the chapter on that subject may be illustrated without difficulty. We

are naturally curious to know Grimm's opinion of them. The Madonna of the Goldfinch is the first one which he praises warmly. "The Virgin has a supreme motherliness; and her exquisite face is painted with indescribable care." Next comes the Madonna da Foligno, which only the Madonna of the Fish, the della Sedia, and the Sistine Madonna surpass in excellence. The large "Holy Family" in the Louvre is comparatively an inferior work, of which only the drawing of the Virgin bears certain evidence of Raphael's own hand. It is worthy of notice that the Madonna della Sedia, which runs a very close risk of being eclectic, — for her eyebrows might have been drawn with compasses almost, — he ranks next to the Dresden wonder. Such eyebrows are, however, sometimes to be met with, as is proved by a photograph of an American girl now before me; as another phenomenon to be seen in several of Raphael's works, of a shadow dividing the face by a perpendicular line, may also be observed in real life. The Sistine Madonna is treated at greater length than the others, as it deserves to be. Grimm notices that the floating movement of her veil shows that the Virgin is being borne through the air, and that the simplicity of her dress, whose texture is invisible, gives her a spiritual superiority over Pope Sixtus and Saint Barbara, whose garments are of a richer and more earthly type. Her eyes are painted in such a reserved manner that upon cloudy days the drawing can scarcely be distinguished; and this gives a depth of expression to her face which could not otherwise be obtained. The green curtains serve

to bring the scene home to us; just as the moon appears to be nearer when we look at it through the branches of a tree.

Herman Grimm considers Friedrich Müller's engraving of the Sistine Madonna the only satisfactory one. An English traveller once, in his *Notes on America*, said that in every Boston parlor there might be seen an engraving or copy of the Dresden masterpiece. While walking on Beacon Street one evening, I remembered this statement by some chance, and looked in through the windows of the nearest house, where the gas had already been lighted, but the shades not yet drawn down. There, truly enough, was the Sistine Madonna, in a conspicuous position; and, as I believe, it was Müller's engraving also. The influence of this picture in softening the manners and elevating the moral tone of our New England women has been very great. It has given them an ideal of perfect motherhood such as no written description in prose or verse could impress upon the mind.

One of the *desiderata* at present is an equally good engraving of Raphael's "Transfiguration," which properly holds the next place among his oil paintings. It has been heretofore slighted somewhat, from the supposition that it was not completed by Raphael himself, but by Giulio Romano after the death of his master. Grimm says that there is no better proof of this than of many of the other allegations in regard to him. Neither does a close examination of the painting show evidence of any but Raphael's own handling. Among so many wonderful works in the Vatican, its true

value is not readily appreciated: if it were hung in the gallery of the Louvre, it would no doubt eclipse all others there. Its ethical import is the relief we obtain from the confusion and ruin of our earthly life by the consideration of spiritual subjects. As it says in the Dhammapada, "Run not after the pleasures of love; in contemplation there is sufficient joy." On earth there is perpetual conflict, but peace may be obtained in the serene sky of the soul. Critics have not been wanting who condemned the painting on this account, as lacking in essential unity; whereas no higher type of artistic unity is conceivable. It is the drama of man's spiritual nature. Giovio, who was a contemporary of Raphael, speaks of "The Transfiguration" as his last and greatest work; and yet, strangely enough, asserts that the best thing in it is the boy possessed of demons, — a truly fearful *reductio ad absurdum.* Grimm says of this, "it is the opinion of a realistic dilettante." Is it not the tendency of realism always to interest itself in demoniac boys and other distortions of nature rather than with what is beautiful and elevated in human life? Raphael has never failed of being a stumbling-block to the realist; for, with all his ideality, none of them could ever draw so correctly as he. What is the real, after all, but an unsuccessful attempt to attain the ideal? Unless we recognize this, it has no value for us.

There is a kind of glory which emanates from these pictures, and it is a satisfaction to know that they were painted wholly by Raphael. They will always be more popular than his greater Roman

frescos, both because they can be seen to better advantage and because they are more genuine. His designs were always of the finest, but only a well-practised eye can readily distinguish the strokes of his own brush from those of his numerous and mediocre assistants. If he was unable to maintain constantly his own highest level, his work became still more unequal by the infusion of this foreign element. In some degree, it vitiates the whole. We recollect that Buonarotti closed the doors of the Sistine Chapel to his incompetent followers, and hesitated to approve of organizing industry in this way. In the beautiful group at one side of the "Fire in the Borgo," the boy, a figurative Iulus, who leads the way, has arms which are conspicuously too large for him. Who is responsible for this? Did Raphael draw them so, or did he leave it to another? Sometimes, as in the angels who support the robe of Pope Urban, Raphael fell under the tyranny of Michel Angelo's style, always to his disadvantage. Another peculiarity of his was to give his faces a *washed* expression, as if they had just come from a bath. This is most noticeable in the bust of a lady said to have been modelled by him. The effect intended would seem to be to reproduce a delicate softness of complexion; in one case, also, perhaps to depict mental emotion.

The quality of an artist's work depends largely upon the intelligence and character of his patrons. Pope Julius the Second was by no means a Pericles; but he appreciated Michel Angelo and Raphael equally well, and employed them both in a suitable manner. But Leo the Tenth, a man of

fine tastes, but luxurious and effeminate, disliked Michel Angelo, and would have nothing to do with him. The nobler nature of Buonarotti was a reproach to him. So much the more he showered favors upon Raphael, and thereby produced that enmity between their respective adherents for which Michel Angelo has been often unjustly blamed. That Raphael should have been appointed architect of St. Peter's, while Michel Angelo lacked employment, was an absurdity of the first magnitude. Raphael's work does not contain the element of grandeur, though it often reaches a dizzy height of moral elevation, what we call sublimity. It is to be feared that Leo the Tenth shortened Raphael's life by over-stimulating it in this way, just as he squandered the treasures of his prudent predecessor, and provoked the German Reformation. The fever of which Raphael died might have been fatal to a strong man, but it was more likely to be so to one in a debilitated condition. But I must absolve Professor Grimm from the responsibility of these last remarks.

In the author's introductory letter to the American edition there is a mention of Bismarck in a way that will surprise many people on this side of the ocean. He speaks as if his advent had proved an era of liberation to Germany. So it has, according to Grimm's own definition, that a nation is free when its people obey laws which they believe to be just. His father, Wilhelm Grimm, and his uncle Jacob were expelled from Hesse-Cassel some fifty years ago, by the duke of that

state for their liberal opinions, and were welcomed to Berlin, where the persecuted of other countries have always found a refuge, even the Jesuits when Kauniz drove them out of Austria. The greater part of Germany was then governed by irresponsible small princes, who made their subjects happy or miserable according to their different dispositions. Bismarck has replaced this by the government of uniform constitutional law; and now, though the individual has not the same freedom of speech and action as in America, he is as certain of justice as if he lived under the Antonines, and nowhere else is crime so rare. In Prussia there can hardly be said to be any criminal class at all.

Herman Grimm was rewarded for his *Life of Michel Angelo* by a professorship of art and *belles-lettres* in the University of Berlin. American readers of Goethe will also be interested to know that his wife is the youngest daughter of Bettina von Arnim. He is now in his sixty-first year, a tall, elegant man, of distinguished manners and judicial aspect. Franz Tybolt, a respected German contemporary, says of him: —

> When I was a young student and did not know Herman Grimm, I involuntarily pictured to myself, particularly on account of his descent, a typically German personality; and I was quite astonished, on first meeting him at the college, to see a man who wore a cylinder hat and appeared to have French sympathies. Herman Grimm resembles externally neither his father nor his uncle. The only thing that reminds one of the brothers Grimm is the long gray hair, which he also — though not in such abundance — allows to wave smoothly down each side of his face. The somewhat long

and large-featured face gets from its steadfast, searching eyes an attractive expression. A short, white beard, showing here and there traces of its former reddish blond, encircles it. On the whole, the more than average-sized figure makes a striking impression. When Herman Grimm, his arms folded over his breast, stands on the platform and speaks, one does not think of the professor, who has prepared an exact address for the college, and now teaches, but rather feels himself in good company with a finely educated elderly gentleman, who with taste and amiability gives one the advantage of his rich stores of knowledge. In his lectures sparkles, here and there, a witty turn, and sometimes he will make a humorous remark without changing his face; and he is always interesting and able to command attention. The way Herman Grimm talks is rather a chat than a delivery. He speaks in an easy, comfortable way, wholly without restraint, and always bears entirely the character of an extemporist.

He is sometimes accused of indifference by the extremists, as Goethe was formerly; but those who possess the key to his writings know better than that. Power to move the hearts of thousands never emanated from a cold nature. Also, to reach the acme of good taste either in art or literature requires a life of persistent self-denial.

X.

HERMAN GRIMM. — II.

It is not an uncommon error to suppose that style is untranslatable. This is usually the case with regard to poetry, for in verse choice and arrangement of words, which constitute the style of an author, must often be sacrificed to the urgent demands of rhyme and metre; but there is no such reason in prose. The neat elegance of Voltaire, the resonance of Rousseau, and the cimeter strokes of Macchiavelli have all been faithfully rendered into English. Miss Adams has given new proof of this by translating not only the style and tone of Grimm, but also by showing how much his style has changed at different periods. The clear and vigorous sentences of the "Life of Goethe" are replaced in the "Life of Raphael" by graceful, delicate touches which resemble the handling of a painter. The volume of Grimm's essays called "Literature," for which we are indebted also to Miss Adams's scholarly enterprise, is written in this last manner. They are not brilliant or remarkable essays, and that is just their charm, — that they are not intended to be remarkable. It is, as the excellent literary critic of the *Boston Post* has called it, that rare commodity, a book of fine manners. They are like easy, pleasant conversation in Professor Grimm's own study. In the two

essays on Emerson he pays a rare tribute to the most famous American of our time. He does not, like Matthew Arnold, attempt a critical estimate of his merits and limitations, but speaks of him as we like to hear our friends spoken of. "I think," he says, "no other writer of the present age has had so great and so good an influence upon me." The book is remarkable for its light and shade. His tender and affectionate treatment of Albert Dürer is a striking contrast to the censorious remarks on the character of Voltaire, which seem almost like a reflection of the Franco-Prussian war. He has written more in praise of Voltaire in the "Life of Goethe," and the two statements should be taken together. Voltaire was determined to be revenged, and what he says against Frederick is not likely to be true or we should have heard of it from other sources. Grimm never poses for effect, and if a commonplace sentence will serve his purpose, he makes no effort to avoid it.

He places Lord Macaulay in the same box with Voltaire. Macaulay knew neither the German language nor German history, and his essay on Frederick the Great was based on an unfinished life by the poet Campbell. In France or Germany such a piece of charlatanism would have been exposed and condemned at once, but it passed current in England for about thirty years, and is still accepted by those who are unwilling to read Carlyle and Saint-Beuve. Macaulay himself lays down the rule that an historian should not take too much pains to be accurate, or his narrative will become dry, and he will lose the interest of

his readers. After this, one need not be surprised to find mistakes by the dozen in his writing. With a really great writer, the main point is always not to consider his readers, but to satisfy his own conscience. I think, however, that Grimm lets Macaulay off easily enough. He says nothing of his vicious rhetorical style, his bad manners, his love of scandal, or his savage treatment of other writers. Yet, in spite of these defects the man has his value. He speaks his mind out boldly and freely. He fills a popular demand for general information on a great variety of subjects. He has a clear understanding of politics, and is always interesting when he discourses in that line. He is a patriot of the best order, without national vanity or national prejudices. He appreciates the solid qualities in other nations, and does not fail to reprimand the errors and delinquencies of his own countrymen when there is sufficient reason for it. Would this have been permitted of him on our side of the Atlantic?

Macaulay's faults as a writer do not apply to Voltaire, who was in his way a consummate artist. Of all the qualifications necessary for a great dramatist, he lacks only two, a depth of feeling and nobility of conception. They do apply, however, pretty closely to George H. Lewes, well known in America as the author of the "Life of Goethe." Never has a great man suffered from a more unworthy biographer. In a certain English history of sixty years ago, it says that after the battle of Borodino, Napoleon issued the following bulletin: "My soldiers, this is the first time that

you have been defeated. Wash out the disgrace in the blood of the Russians!" This sounds sufficiently ferocious, but as the French were victorious at Borodino there cannot be much truth in it. There are passages not very unlike this in Lewes's "Life of Goethe." Men who are endowed with a keen sense of the beautiful are always fond of the society of ladies. To this Goethe was no exception. He was perhaps careless in forming a large number — no doubt too great a number — of feminine attachments. Some of these were friendships pure and simple; others may be classed as mere summer flirtations; others also were of a more serious character. Had he been the president of a bank or a popular physician they would have attracted but little attention. Lewes, however, concludes upon no better evidence than a common report, that most of them were of an immoral nature. We all know what common report is worth in such matters, and I pity any man who is willing to condemn the character of another upon such evidence. The view that Grimm takes in his "Life of Goethe" is a different one, more human, charitable, and sensible. It has already done much, and it is to be hoped will yet do more, to correct the mischievous impression that Lewes long since created here and in England. There is an excellent article on Goethe in the "New British Encyclopedia" which supports Grimm and states the case in a few sentences.

"My friend," said Dr. Johnson to Boswell, "do not mix up virtue and vice." This is good counsel; but we should also remember Hamlet's

saying, that if we all had our deserts, few would escape hanging. Women are not the innocent lambs some men suppose. They calculate their matrimonial chances with more exactness, and look after their future interests more closely, than the stronger sex do. A fly-away lover soon becomes a marked man, and the woman who accepts attentions from him knows that she does so at her peril. Many like to take this risk, as men like to take their chances in real estate or the stock market. Grimm does not spare Goethe for his desertion of Frederica, but blames him severely; and yet this happened during his academic years; and such an experience is more likely to happen to a modest, virtuous youth than to one who is otherwise. Beethoven also is said to have been always in love, and perhaps it is to that we owe the beautifully appealing tone of his music.

At a dinner party many years ago, the conversation chanced to fall upon German wine, and a gentleman remarked that Goethe was accustomed to drink two bottles of hock a day. The poet Longfellow, who was fortunately present, asked, "Who says he did?" "It is in Lewes's 'Life,'" replied the gentleman. "I don't believe it," said the poet, setting down his glass with some emphasis. Surely Goethe is a modern instance of the evolution of a myth.

He has been accused of coldness, selfishness, ingratitude, and, worst of all, of taking no interest in the politics of his time. These are fearful charges, and fearfully has Goethe answered them.

I have been informed on better authority than

Mr. Lewes that Goethe spent a large part of his income for several years in supporting a miserable outcast whom nobody else would touch. He did this so quietly that few were aware of it. At the time of Schiller's death he was slightly unwell and his friends were afraid to inform him of it for several days. The death of his son nearly killed him. He avoided every one, and studied mathematics until he burst a blood vessel. There you have the man.

It is folly to suppose that a cold, selfish nature can move the hearts of millions as they were moved by the "Sorrows of Werther." If heat comes from the furnace there must be a fire within it. High art is the perfection of disinterestedness, and such poems as "Iphigenia," "The Minstrel," and "The Erl King" could only have emanated from a pure and beautiful soul.

Mr. Lowell speaks of both Goethe and Burke as sentimentalists. I should call them anti-sentimentalists. Neither was troubled with Utopian virtues. It were well if some of our representatives in Washington were as much interested in the noble science of politics as Goethe was. We see by his conversations with Eckermann and others that he took a lively interest in politics, and could predict political events with great certainty. What is meant by his political indifference is that he did not take part in the general attack upon Napoleon in 1813. Goethe knew his duty in that matter better than his commentators. He was a member of the grand duke's cabinet, and could take no independent action without compromising his

friend and patron. The duchy of Weimar lay just outside of the Prussian lines, so that the interest of the duke and of his people consisted in remaining neutral as long as possible. To suppose that Goethe at sixty-four ought to have shouldered a musket and thrown his valuable life away at the battle of Leipsic is the depth of all absurdities.

What is the meaning of all this? Why is Goethe so often denounced as a reprobate, while Burns, Byron, and Heine, who were dissolute men, only receive a mild censure?

President Lincoln objected to General Fremont because he was too much bespattered with the mud of reform. It is true that nothing disturbs the minds of men so much as to interfere with their customs and traditions, for these are the foundation on which the social fabric rests. A reformer who is a reformer excites more hatred than a highway robber. He is fortunate if nothing worse than mud is thrown at him. Socrates was put to death for enlightening the minds of the young men of Athens. Goethe also was a great intellectual reformer, the standard-bearer of the new light, and there were many who would have liked to kill him too, if they could have done it with impunity. He represented the law of nature as opposed to historical tradition. He respected custom and tradition, — no man more so, — and he knew their proper value, but he lived by reason and reflection and he said to mankind, "You must live so too, if you would fulfil the destiny of the race. Think for yourselves, and do not try to believe any longer what is contrary to the laws of nature."

His motto was not "Watch and pray," but "Work and think." For this he was called an infidel, an enemy to Christianity; but let them say what they will, all intelligent people now act upon these principles. The code Napoleon, also, is largely based upon the law of nature, and it is not without significance that these two giants of modern times should have coincided in this manner. Like Goethe, Napoleon has been greatly abused and misrepresented, accused of crimes which were not crimes at all. He said, "God is always on the side with the strongest battalions." And so it proved to him in the end. The equal laws which he enacted still remain in force over Western Europe, and they are all that remain of his wonderful career. He did not, however, understand the laws of history; he set himself against them and they overthrew him. Goethe in this respect was his superior.

A good deal of irritation has been occasioned in England, and some in America also, by Grimm's statement in the "Life and Times of Goethe," that Goethe was the superior of Shakespeare. There is no reason, however, why this should occasion surprise. Much worse things have been said of Shakespeare before, and by eminent writers. Ben Jonson thought his works would be better for a good deal of pruning. Goldsmith was always railing at him. Voltaire considered him barbarous, monstrous. Wordsworth had no great admiration for him. Lord Byron, according to Macaulay, thought Pope as a poet greatly his superior. The admirers of Browning are wont to exalt their

favorite to an equality with him; and Mr. S. L. Thaxter, the apostle of Browning in America, a man of broad views and fine culture, also considered Aeschylus "as good as Shakespeare any day." Meanwhile Shakespeare remains immutably what he was and is.

The man himself, as well as Goethe, has long been beyond the reach of critics. The value of his works, however, depends largely at any given time upon the opinions of them which are expressed by leading authorities in such matters. Here, as it is with personal character, extravagant praise is more injurious than its opposite. More absurd statements have been made in favor of Shakespeare than against him. An English poet has said of him: —

> "Others abide our question; thou alone art free."

And also an American: —

> "Unmeasured still my Shakespeare sits,
> Lone as the blessed Jew."

It is true that such hyperbolas are considered admissible in poetry when they would not be in prose; but I do not find it in the best poetry, especially in classic poetry. Shakespeare appears to have been almost without influence upon his own time, and for more than a hundred years afterward received little attention from the public; but now to be told that any other writer can compare with him creates only astonishment and incredulity in the general Anglo-Saxon mind. Is he, however, so very much greater than some others?

He is certainly the greatest of dramatic poets. That is a fact generally, perhaps universally, admitted. Homer, however, is the greatest of epic poets, and considering the prehistoric period in which he lived, he appears to us the most wonderful of all human phenomena save one. He excels Shakespeare in the mellow tone and purity of his style, as Shakespeare excels him in subtlety of thought and in the variety of human moods and passions he portrays. Such plays as "Troilus and Cressida" or "Timon" seem fantastic after reading the interview between Priam and Achilles, and as the perfection of art on a grand scale the Odyssey remains still without an equal. Professor Sophocles was of opinion that Homer was also a great man of affairs like Pisistratus. The "Prometheus" of Æschylus stands like the Matterhorn in solitary grandeur: there is nothing else like it. So the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus and the "Œdipus" of Sophocles may not be equal to "Hamlet" and "Macbeth," but they make a stronger impression than "Julius Cæsar" and "Coriolanus." Only here and there in Shakespeare's plays are passages to be met with which can compare with the lyric beauty of the Greek chorus. The "Œdipus Tyrannus" is the most terrible of tragedies, and yet the man himself is perfectly human. Considerable portions of Shakespeare's Roman plays, especially "Antony and Cleopatra," were taken from a sixteenth-century translation of Plutarch; and yet these extracts, slightly adorned with the author's own genius, do not appear greatly inferior to the rest. As Dr. Johnson remarked, the last half of

"Julius Cæsar" is injured by a too close following after Plutarch, and has rather a cold effect. Yet had the literature of the Greeks been even better than it was, it could never be to the modern European what Shakespeare's plays are. We are at too great a distance from their modes of life and thought. It is only after years of patient study and *reflection* that we can appreciate them.

But this is a rule which also holds good in another way. Each nation must depend upon its own representatives in the general congress of letters. Shakespeare cannot be to the Italians what Dante is, nor to the Germans what Goethe is, nor perhaps to the Spanish even what Calderon is. No doubt it is largely owing to Shakespeare's influence that the Anglo-Saxon race has attained such political importance; and the invigorating effect of Goethe's writings upon the modern German mind is sufficiently evident. Calderon's burgher character, the sturdy *alcalde* of Zalamea, who tells the king's officer: "My daughter has become the bride of one who is no respecter of hidalgos," still keeps alive the spirit of manliness in a nation that has suffered overmuch from the pride of hidalgos.

A just comparison of Shakespeare's and Goethe's genius would be a valuable contribution to critical literature; but it could only be done by a writer of rare intellectual attainments. They are both of such wide extent, such lofty altitude, that it seems at first glance as if a whole battalion of critical surveyors would be required to take their dimensions. Whichever the eye rests upon seems for that moment to surpass the other. It is not, how-

ever, so important to decide which is the greater of the two, as to discriminate properly between them and thus by contrast to cause each to appear more clearly as he is. Shakespeare — to speak briefly here upon this question — is the chief modern poet of the romantic class; Goethe of the classic. To say that they are idealists is only to say they are true poets; making use of realism only in subordinate scenes, or for artistic effect. They are both equally forcible, spirited, and so well sustained in the varied and numberless details of their work that it seems as if they could have easily achieved even greater undertakings. Yet they are not more remarkable for this than for their depth of feeling and delicacy of perception. Their judgment was equal to their penetration. Never were Damascus blades tempered so well for strength, keenness, and flexibility. Whatever mental gifts the heart of man could desire were theirs at birth, and the use they made of them was better than the gifts. Of Shakespeare's early training we know nothing, but we read in "Wahrheit und Dichtung" how Goethe improved all his opportunities, and schooled himself to endure whatever was fearful or disagreeable. Their courses did not, however, like those of Sophocles and Æschylus, run side by side. It is likely enough they would have if they had lived in the same age and country; but as it was each did the work assigned to him by the destinies of his time. Shakespeare was an Homeric Æschylus; Goethe a Sophoclean Plato. If the creed of the Theosophists be true, Homer may have returned to us as Shakespeare, Æschylus as Michel Angelo,

Sophocles as Goethe, time and situation making what differences are evident between them. Shakespeare has supplied the modern world, as Homer did the ancient, with varied forms of human nature; and while these appear to us as creatures of flesh and blood and so transparent that we can see the working of their minds and the beating of their hearts, we thus learn from him what life is, and in a manner how to face its dangers. Goethe has given us, like Sophocles, types of poetic beauty, and like Plato, instructed us better how to understand ourselves. There is a deal of Platonism in Shakespeare, but I am not aware that he goes anywhere beyond Plato except in his adaptation to modern conditions. Goethe has, however, taken a clear step forward, and is as much beyond his time and ours as the Attic philosophers were in advance of the age of Alexander. Plato taught the gospel of reflection; Goethe the gospel of reflection and work. In "Wilhelm Meister" he says, "To do is easy; to think is difficult; and to act according to our thought is very hard." Emerson has caught this from him, and expressed it in the verse: —

"Right thou feelest, rush to do."

Goethe knew better than to attempt to do Shakespeare's work over again, even in another language. He was not only a poet but a seer: he accepted the knowledge Shakespeare had stored up, and instructed us how to make use of it for our own and the common good.

Shakespeare is the genius of the present; Goethe of the future. One represents action, passion, and

the conflict of life; the other repose, harmony, and internal development. One is the poet of war; the other of peace. We go to Shakespeare as we set forth in the morning eager and confident for the day's struggle; we seek Goethe as we return at night worn and weary to the quiet and composure of our homes.

It is in his pathos that the secret lies of Shakespeare's hold upon the hearts of men. We miss this in the French dramatists, and if we think well, it is what we prize most in Beethoven and Michel Angelo. Yet the most marvellous of Shakespeare's mental qualities was his faculty of divination, of discovering by imagination what he could not have known by experience. This is something more than Wellington's guessing at "what was on the other side of the hill," and in Shakespeare it appears at times almost like a supernatural gift. We have to reckon it in the same category with the radiance of Raphael and the early prodigies of Mozart. An American physiologist,[1] after investigating the phenomena of visions, of which he had known remarkable instances, by purely scientific methods, anatomical studies, and inductive reasoning, found to his surprise that Shakespeare, who knew nothing of inductive reasoning and less than Homer about anatomy, had already anticipated his conclusions *seriatim* in the murder scene of "Macbeth." When he speaks of the phantom dagger as "a dagger of the heated brain" it is no mere figure of poetry. The heat produced by extreme mental

[1] Dr. Edward H. Clark of Boston.

excitement disorders the nervous centres and causes them to report falsely.

Shakespeare within his own lines — and they are exceeding wide ones — may fairly be styled omnipotent. He has limits, however, though it might require a good deal of intellectual surveying and engineering to find their exact location. They must be high qualifications if he does not possess them. We find in him the heroism that comes from necessity, the heroism of Imogen and Henry the Fifth; but not the voluntary heroism which is born of a lofty and aspiring mind. The legal masquerade of Portia is his nearest approach to this, but it falls far short of the self-devotion of Alcestis, Antigone, or the Constant Prince. He missed an excellent opportunity of this sort in the case of Joan of Arc, who in the First Part of Henry the Sixth is sorrowfully sacrificed either to dramatic effect or national prejudice. Shakespeare, however (and Goethe as well), was not in the habit of glorifying his own country at the expense of others; and this play is probably one of those which were remodelled by him. Antigone's reply to Creon, "Not for fear of any man was I going to disobey the unwritten and immovable laws of the gods," has no parallel by any other dramatist. Shakespeare is not wanting in religious feeling, but neither is it conspicuous in him. Hamlet's soliloquy contains no evidence of serious reflection on that subject. We know now that dreams after death are an impossibility. The ghost of the old monarch comes back from purgatory to claim vengeance for his assassination; he complains that he was taken

off with all his sins upon his head, and it has been argued from this that Shakespeare must have been a Roman Catholic. Yet this is contradicted again in the last act by the well-known speech of Laertes: —

> "I tell thee, churlish priest,
> A ministering angel shall my sister be,
> When thou liest howling;"

and both taken together would seem to show that Shakespeare cared little for church doctrines and tenets.

Neither did Goethe care for them; yet he yields to none in ethical insight or purity of religious belief. Let the opening chapters of "Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre" be a witness of this; of which Edward Irving, who did not like Goethe, confessed that nothing else so well expressed the true spirit of Christianity. Such truths are only possible in the simple epic form, perhaps only in epic prose. Neither is there anything in Shakespeare like Faust's reply to Gretchen when she asks him, "Do you believe in God?" nor this single line which holds so much: —

> "The thrill of awe is humanity's best portion;"

nor: —

> "Were not the eye itself a sun,
> No sun for it would ever shine:
> By nothing godlike could the heart be won,
> Were not the heart itself divine;"

nor these lines from Emerson's "Garden" (not inferior to the rest): —

> "Wonderful verse of the gods:
> Of one accent yet varied tone.
> They chant the bliss of their abodes
> To man imprisoned in his own."

A certain power of poetic generalization seems to be almost a specialty with Goethe, and when this is combined with humor (the human element), it proves very effective, as in the following: —

> "Leave to the pedants their vain disputations;
> Strict and sedate let the pedagogues be;
> Ever the wise of all ages and nations
> Nod to each other, and wink, and agree."

We are gradually moving away from Shakespeare's standpoint, and approaching Goethe's. Lear, Othello, Cleopatra exist to-day only as the blindly obstinate parent, the jealous husband, and the extravagant wife. All the grandeur has departed from them in this transition. Meanwhile Tassos, Mignons, Fausts, and Ottilies live and walk amongst us unrecognized. Shakespeare's characters are the common types of mankind intensified by exceptional conditions; Goethe's characters are exceptional personages taken from every-day life. No doubt the time will come when Goethe's writings will be the rage among nations, and it is to be hoped that his breadth of statement and freedom from dogma will prevent any religious sect, as in the case of the Swedenborgians, from identifying themselves with his name. The time may also come when both these prodigious men will, like far-off luminaries, be to the human race only what Homer and Plato are now.

Neither Goethe nor Grimm has been wanting in proper respect for Shakespeare. The latter refers to him constantly in the Life of Raphael, and says in his account of the Transfiguration: "In Shake-

speare's finest tragedies the figures are such comprehensive types of real beings as to inspire us with the feeling that the share they have in the scenes (where we imagine they only accidentally appear before us) seems to reveal but a small portion of a life which we know throughout as a whole," — and then proceeds to apply this principle to the Transfiguration. No higher praise can be given to a dramatist as dramatist. Likewise Goethe's criticism of "Hamlet" is the only one which does the play full justice, and it is not read nearly so much as it deserves to be. He considered Shakespeare superior to himself, but also said of Byron, "If it were not for his hypochondria he would be equal to Shakespeare and the ancients;" intimating that there might be others who were very great. There is something exquisitely good-humored in the following tribute which he pays to Shakespeare's immortality on earth: —

"Old Saturn eats his children up,
And makes no conscience of it:
For sauce or mustard he doesn't stop;
His taste is quite above it.

Now Shakespeare's turn was coming fast;
His day is well-nigh done.
'Set him aside; I'll eat *him* last,'
Quoth Cyclops' dainty son."[1]

There is a certain simplicity in Grimm's writing which is more noticeable in his essays than in the larger works. When a common phrase will

[1] This and the other translations are taken, with a few changes, from Dwight's translations of Goethe's and Schiller's minor poems.

serve his purpose he does not hesitate to make use of it rather than to seek some more novel expression. There is no harm in this certainly, and it is much better than the continual effort for ingenuity which is not so common now perhaps as it was among the *litterateurs* of thirty years ago. Those shrewd fellows who can walk on their hands and turn back summersaults soon become tiresome in literature or anywhere except a circus.

XI.

R. W. E.

As pale-blue mountain that I see from far,
  Its classic beauty marked against the sky;
Or diamond splendor of some midnight star,
  That first in sparkling grandeur awes my eye;
Look I on him, who, parted from his age
  By measure like none other of our day,
Stands like some Teneriffe alone, while rage
  Vain storms, and cast about his feet their spray.
For those same laws that placed the peak sublime,
  And move each planet in majestic curve,
This man have guided in such noble rhyme
  That from their limit would he never swerve.
Who lives on manna fallen from the skies
Must soon or late all other men surprise.

XII.

EMERSON AS A POET.

It was said of Dawes, the astronomer, called the eagle-eyed, who helped to discover land and water on the planet Mars, that he was perhaps the most sharp-sighted person that ever used a telescope, but was greatly averse to mathematical calculations. He therefore left others to work out the problems for which he provided the material. Emerson likewise was a star-gazer, of the more ancient sort, and brought down celestial observations which will always be of value, but as he said of himself, he was a stranger to reasoning. He was no stranger to that every-day logic which is called common sense, and in all practical matters he had the very best judgment, but true constructive thinking did not belong to him. Architectural skill, the power of numbers, of co-ordination, were not among his gifts. With the fire, the pathos, the tenderness, and, it may also be added, the severity of a Dante, he could not have composed a canto of the "Divina Commedia." He is famous for his pithy, keen-pointed sentences, but he rarely wrote a connected symmetrical paragraph, and perhaps never a clear comprehensive statement on any subject. In the last book that he published[1] he evidently attempted

[1] Society and Solitude.

to improve his style in this respect, but only succeeded at the expense of his pristine vigor and freshness. As one of his friends remarked, Emerson invented rifled projectiles in literature long before they were used for firearms.

Every notable man should be considered in relation to the times in which he lives. This cannot be said too often, for it is rather the fashion with critics, and even among historians, to measure all men by an arbitrary standard of their own ideal of human excellence.[1] Now, the hard doctrines of John Calvin, so strengthening to the character but so narrowing to the intellect, had for nearly two centuries been dominant in New England. It was spiritual faith without spiritual insight. It filled men with a tremendous energy, but it blinded them to the true perception of things as they are; to the fine arts, as well as singing, dancing, and every species of merriment. The active conflict with Catholicism which was the primal cause of its being, had long since come to an end, and Puritanism having become traditional, was tightening like an iron band the minds of New England people. It seemed as if all future progress would be cut off; but the American oak was not to be dwarfed in that manner. A new sun had arisen in the east, bright and warm with the true spirit of intellectual humanity. Every importation of foreign books brought with it an invoice of fresh and invigorating thought. Channing, Emerson, Hawthorne, Long-

[1] Because Emerson himself has judged Cæsar, Goethe, and others much in this manner is the more reason why it should be made a point of here.

fellow, came forward as the champions of a new faith, — of that which has been the soul of every faith, a belief in the *ideal.* Each of them fought against Puritanism in his own way and with his own weapons. To Emerson the lot fell to break through the chalybeate crust of traditionalism, and let daylight in there again. So he concentrated himself in single sentences as the panther concentrates in his spring and the hunter in his single shot. If he had, like Spinoza, written out his thought in more pure and flowing language, he might have attained greater posthumous fame, but he would scarcely have been noticed in his own day and generation. It was his moral vehemence, united with rare perfection of character, that won the victory for him.

Nothing could be more inimical to the formation of good verses than a lack of continuity, unless it be this epigrammatic concentration, for the one interferes with the harmonious movement of the poem, and the other prevents that mental flexibility which is a chief requisite of poetic art. Yet Emerson was essentially a poet, probably the most poetic nature of his time. He was always the same; morning and evening, at home and abroad, with friends or with strangers, his conversation like his books was filled with poetic thoughts and images. "What, are there clocks in Newport?" he said in reference to the somnolent forgetful atmosphere of that place as one of them struck the midnight hour; and to a boy who was picking up horse-chestnuts by his gate, "Ah, they are apples of Sodom; you can do nothing with

them." Still more significant was his anthropomorphic trait, his faculty for making all things human. Goethe is much the best authority on these matters, for he not only excelled in nearly every branch of literature, but was equally correct as an author and as a critic. It is, he said of Robert Burns, his lively, cheerful anthropomorphism in which we discover at once the genuine poet. The same trait is to be recognized in Homer's line: —

"And the dark wave roared loudly around the hollow speeding ship."

and in Shakespeare: —

"The daffodil that comes before the swallow dares
And takes the winds of March with beauty;

and Emerson says in "The Sphinx:" —

"The waves unashaméd,
In difference sweet,
Play glad with the breezes,
Old playfellows meet."

It also appears in his prose in sentences like this: "An apple-tree is but a stupid creature, yet it knows the soil that is good for it."

Anthropomorphism can only succeed with such objects as are familiar to us and possess at the same time an interesting character. Wordsworth could humanize a mountain, but not a wash-tub; Burns a field-mouse, but not a white rabbit; Emerson a chickadee, but not a turkey buzzard. It is the cheering note and friendly confidence of the chicadee that make him the possible subject

of a poem. And here we may discover the meaning of this matter, and a pretty deep one it is. We find continually in external nature something that corresponds to our own nature and with which we feel an involuntary sympathy. We reflect with awe that there must be an invisible mind without us which is closely related to that within. This is the burden of those oldest chronicles of human thought, the Sanscrit hymns. It seems probable that poetry may have arisen in this manner, the earliest poets being also priests and prophets. In fact, the correlation and conservation of spiritual forces was discovered by the poets centuries before the same principle was thought of in chemical physics. Nothing less was the old Hellenic imagination that there was a demi-god in every river and various kinds of deities in the woods and mountains. Thus we find also Goethe's statement verified, that it was a poet who first made gods for us, who brought them down to us and lifted us up to them. A generous interest in all things about him, a desire to penetrate to the heart of them, is the special happiness of poetic natures, and separates them from that larger class who seek only material advantages.

We must not expect therefore to find Emerson either a melodious singer or an elegant master of versification. He gave us no songs, no ballads. He appears to have cared little for his rhymes, and even less about metre. To rhyme *hearth* with *worth*, and *wood* with *flood* is well enough, and even gives a pleasant variety to the measure, like the change in music from the dominant to the

sub-dominant; but *cowl* and *soul* chime but harshly together, while *pans* and *romance* can scarcely be called a rhyme at all. The metres he commonly depends on are the eight-syllable couplet of Scott and the eight- and six-syllable stanza as in the Boston Hymn. These are the metres which schoolboys resort to when requested to write a composition in verse; but it is also true that a great deal of fine poetry has been written in them. By his habit of concentration he frequently abbreviates the eight syllables to seven, thus forming a metre of his own as in the poem on Art.

> "Give to barrows, trays, and pans
> Grace and glimmer of romance."

He might have said, —

> *It* gives to barrows, trays, and pans
> *The* grace and glimmer of romance,

but it would not have been Emersonian nor so dramatic. He also used effectively a short iambic or choriambic measure of four or five syllables, but this is generally rather irregular. "The Sphinx" is a good example of it, and is perfectly sustained throughout. The sonnet on Days, the most artistic of his poems, is a rare instance of faultless blank verse; and there are certain passages in "The Problem," "Wood Notes," and "Voluntaries" which cannot be excelled for grace and melody. For the most part, however, Emerson's lines remind me of chips freshly struck off by the woodsman; and they have that kind of beauty, but often make a rough path for tender feet to walk over. In addition to this it may be said that of his longer poems only two or

three can be considered a decided success. "Monadnoc," "Uriel," "Saadi," "The Adirondacks," are, like Wordsworth's "Excursion," dry and ineffective, composed probably in hours of imaginary inspiration. "May-Day" and "Threnody" also, though they contain some very fine verses, do not as a whole make a strong impression. Brevity is the natural child of concentration.

"Do not quarrel with the form," said Jarno to Wilhelm Meister, on loaning him a volume of Shakespeare; and it is undeniable that the same complaints one often hears of Emerson as a poet, that his verse is unpolished, his diction quaint, his metaphors strange, and his thought abstruse, would apply quite as well to large portions of the great master's plays. It is not easy to comprehend "King Lear," and "Troilus and Cressida" is still more difficult. We cannot remind ourselves too often that no die however perfect can stamp gold coin without pure metal. Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome" are only a fraction of the counterfeits current in literature and admired even by persons of good taste. Form is itself an ideal and of great value, but it must be matched by an equally ideal context. The literal translation of Dante's "Inferno" is more poetic and more beautiful than any of the metrical ones, and the reason plainly is because Dante was more completely a poet than Cary or Longfellow. It is the same case with Virgil and Horace. Genuine poetic thought, too often replaced by rhetoric or mere sentiment, is rare and precious. We are glad to recognize it even in disguise.

Yet it was precisely in his poems that Emerson's thought found at times its free and complete expression. Whoever has once felt "the rapture of rhyme and metre" knows that it is a most powerful solvent. It takes hold of mind and body like new wine. It brings with it an atmosphere in which all things acquire fresh color, and the most diverse elements become reconciled. It gives clearer insight, purer thought, and a sense of higher freedom. It cuts loose the bonds of conventionality; pedantry and every form of egotism fly from it like mists driven by the sun. The cadence of verse affects the poet more strongly than his hearers: under its influence the mightiest works have been accomplished. And the secret of it lies in this, — in an unselfish devotion to the ideal, which always leads up to high art of some kind (though it may not appear in external form). Emerson knew this secret; probably he knew it as a boy, and had grown up with it as the companion of his lonely and contemplative hours, sure to become an *open* secret in due season, as fruit-trees bloom in May. It was the stimulus he needed to overcome his hereditary infirmity, weld his ideas together, and make the "hard repellent particles" give place to more tender thought.

Besides this, a lack of continuity in verse not only offends against our sense of perfection, but is a blow aimed at the foundation itself of poetic art. Consider what art is for. The painter and sculptor seize upon an ideal expression or attitude, and preserve for us permanently what would otherwise vanish in a moment. The poet cannot well do

this; he must follow the ideal through a series of events or a train of thought till it reaches its logical conclusion. Every poem has its movement like a musical composition. Whether Emerson was conscious of this or not, it is certain that a large number of his poems possess both unity and continuity of a high order, and many of his shorter pieces are gems of artistic perfection, while a few rise above even this and can only be compared with the noblest passages in English and German verse. Consider his tribute to Michel Angelo in "The Problem:" —

> "The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
> And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
> Wrought in a sad sincerity.
> Himself from God he could not free;
> He builded better than he knew; —
> The conscious stone to beauty grew."

This is in the grand manner. "The hand that rounded Peter's dome!" Did Milton ever write six better lines?

Emerson's poetry is chiefly of the reflective or philosophic order, and only those who have reflected[1] disinterestedly, who value *thought* for its own sake, can be expected to appreciate it. Sentimentalizing over reform, or young women, or the beauties of nature, will not help one to understand it; neither will the calculations of self-interest, or other ingenious mental devices. If a work of art

[1] What is called reflection differs from reasoning in being mostly a matter of *insight*. We examine and judge of the pictures in our own minds as an art critic does those in a gallery. There is, however, no dividing line between them.

does not give pleasure it fails of its effect, but the fault may lie in the spectator or hearer. Reflective poetry is the most modern form of poetry, and a few conservative critics (as well as a good many other persons) decline to recognize it as poetry at all. Instead of investigating the true nature of poetry, and making that the touchstone of excellence, they rest their case on an old decision of Aristotle that "poetry is an imitative art," — a realistic deduction too hastily drawn from the Greek drama. They argue that the subject of a poem, like that of a picture, should always be something concrete; that the poet should avoid everything of an abstract nature; and they point to the mischievous effect of philosophical ideas in the plays of Schiller and Euripides. Lemcke, Lötze, and other German writers on æsthetics, hold a different opinion, and a number of Emerson's poems have been translated into German; but æsthetics as a serious study has not yet penetrated to England and America.

This is not one of Aristotle's best statements, though it has a value in the connection in which he uses it. All the arts, even music and architecture, are based on imitation; but if they were nothing more than this, civilization might have perished from lack of nourishment. The artist must, like Prometheus, bring down fire from heaven if he would give enduring life to his forms of clay. If he acquires for himself a distinct spiritual personality it becomes manifest in his work. He must become something in order to create something. This is the subjective element

in art, frequently in its most striking effects called inspiration. It is strong even in the earliest and most objective poets, and still stronger in the great masters of modern times. It is what gives them style and character. Strictly imitative poetry is objective, and necessarily realistic; but the subjective and objective are often as closely united together as lead and silver in the ore. Plato, who was already laying the broad foundations of Christian art, distinguished between imitative poetry and that which is not, and wished to exclude the former from his republic on the ground that it filled the minds of men with illusions. This may be looked on now as a strong demand for sincerity; but it is likely that Plato noticed the same evil effects among the Athenians from too much theatre going that result nowadays from reading too many novels. Even Shakespeare's plays may prove deleterious for minds unaccustomed to an honest self-examination. It is by means of the lesson we have learned from Plato that the theatre is now a most beneficent instructor of mankind.

The Satires of Horace certainly are not imitative; nor Petrarch's sonnets and many others that hold high rank in literature. "Childe Harold" also is in its general tenor a reflective poem.

Subjective poetry is not always philosophical poetry, but it leads naturally thereto. There is no exact boundary line between the simplest reflection and the most profound thought. Little Jane Carlyle's saying, "Wine makes cosy, mother," and the *Cogito ergo sum* of Descartes are only extreme links in the great intellectual chain. The mistake

of Schiller and Euripides appears to have been in mixing their poetry with philosophical conceptions instead of extracting the poetry that is to be found in philosophy. There are few things connected with human life, from the union of the sexes to Springfield armory, which have not their poetic side; and the vocation of the poet is always to seize upon this and leave everything else, — just as we winnow wheat and chaff. There is a fine philosophy in Horace. In Dante and Shakespeare also there are many long philosophical passages. A demon of the Inferno says, "For it is not possible to will a thing and at the same time repent of it, the contradiction not permitting it. Perhaps thou didst not think that I was a logician." Is it not its philosophic character that gives "Hamlet" the precedence over "Macbeth" and "Othello"? and would not Hamlet's famous soliloquy still be highly valuable if the rest of the play were lost and that only remained? Is not "Faust" a great philosophic poem which contains both subjective and imitative poetry of every form and shade? "Troilus and Cressida" never appears on the stage, but it is greatly prized for the discussions that are in it on metaphysics and politics. Then there is Wordsworth's "Ode on Immortality," and Byron's lines of similar import commencing: —

"Betwixt two worlds life hovers like a star."

In brief, it is no longer possible for a poet to be really great unless he is a good deal of a philosopher likewise, as of old they were sages and prophets. It is only the lesser lights that resent

this fact and refuse to believe it. Concreteness has no doubt an inestimable virtue; for we must stand on firm unshaken ground when we take observations of the stars; but is there not quite as much virtue in what is abstract and immaterial? They are related to each other as the real and ideal are related. Let us return again to Homer, that old art-conscience of the Greeks, and see what he thinks of it.

"Sing unto me, O Muse, the wrath of Achilles Pelides," the Iliad begins. The burden of his song is not the Trojan war, nor the pathetic fate of Hector, but the injustice of Agamemnon and the chain of unhappy events resulting from it. Perhaps if we were to look closely enough we might discover that all ideal art work has a similiar nucleus. Is not thought itself an abstraction, — Schiff says it is an abstraction of the brain, — and has that no value? In this commercial and scientific period, when the pursuit of gain and the investigation of matter threaten to absorb the whole energy of mankind, let us be grateful to one who never swerved from his devotion to the ideal, the invisible.

An English critic, whom we always read with interest and respect, lays down the rule that poetry should be simple, sensuous, and impassioned,"[1] and proceeds to judge Emerson by this standard in rather a severe manner. This is the popular notion with respect to poetry, and it is true that a large number of the poems which we like best an-

[1] Milton is not responsible for this æsthetic formula, as Dr. O. W. Holmes has fortunately shown.

swer to this description; but it does not cover the subject. Tested by the logic of identification, we see plainly that it applies well enough to the melodies of Burns and Moore, to "Highland Mary" or

"Lesbia hath a beaming eye,"

but not to works of the highest kind like "Paradise Lost" or Molière's "Misanthrope." It does not describe Emerson certainly, nor any intellectual poetry. Life is not altogether simple and sensuous. It is oftener hard, difficult, and complicated. Simplify it as much as possible, and it is still more than a match for the brightest men. What is civilization but a constant effort to simplify life, and the pond fills up as fast as we can drain it. The very worst solecism of the present time is the prevalent notion that politics and government are such simple matters that any one who reads a newspaper can understand them. Let us not introduce the same error in the republic of letters. There are simple truths of great value; others are more recondite and require study. It is the same in art. Of sensuous poetry there is and always has been enough and to spare. Too much of it is debilitating.

Apart from its philosophic quality, and whatever else may have already been said of it, Emerson's poetry is distinguished for its earnestness, its depth of feeling, its manliness, and its originality. That it should be perfectly sincere is a matter of course. Art is the refuge of sincerity from the tyranny of trade and the professions. No great writer ever was without that. More than all is it remarkable for its ideality.

In the union of these qualities he remains now almost alone. We do well to admire the natural grace of Longfellow and the more studied elegance of Tennyson; but these are feminine traits, and we require masculine ones as well. The oak can stand without the ivy, but not the ivy by itself. One can barely imagine Tennyson and Longfellow as fighting, like Æschylus, in the battle of Salamis. Emerson had not the physique of a hero, but he fairly proved his courage in the anti-slavery conflict, and there are passages of Æschylus which sound like his own sentences. He wished his son to learn boxing, fencing, and all manly exercises. Too much of the fiction and poetry of the nineteenth century has been written for women, and especially for young women. Byron was the last of the manly vigorous English poets, and yet with his incomparable genius he lacks earnestness and depth of feeling. There is something in his verses which resembles new silver; too bright and shining. They need the toning down that comes from hard work, from the attrition of the world. We are sensible of the man, and the kind of life he led behind his writing.

The thought of Emerson's temperate, industrious, and resolute life is vitalizing. He preached the gospel of Goethe's three Kings, Wisdom, Beauty, and Strength; and he lived this gospel. His earnestness is sometimes terrible. He says a thing as if he willed it: he speaks of the hero as if he knew him, of the eternal laws as if he *saw* them. Where he has set his foot he remains master. Moreover, he possesses the rare distinction of a musical tone,

— a tone like that from an Æolian harp, by turns weird, tender, penetrating, and resonant. Those now living who are so fortunate as to have heard his voice will recognize what is meant by this; but an attentive ear may detect it also in his verse. I think it can be heard plainly in the opening passage of "Voluntaries" which was Emerson's best contribution to the civil war period.

"Low and mournful be the strain,
Haughty thought be far from me;
Tones of penitence and pain,
Moanings of the tropic sea;
Low and tender in the cell
Where a captive sits in chains,
Crooning ditties treasured well
From his Afric's torrid plains.
Sole estate his sire bequeathed, —
Hapless sire to hapless son, —
Was the wailing song he breathed,
And his chain when life was done."

Certainly there is more music here than such simple versification can account for. Its peculiar harmony arises no doubt from the author's style, from the careful selection and disposition of his words. To those who can hear it there is no more enchanting strain. One other American genius was endowed with a similar gift. In Webster's orations there is often an undertone like the roll of distant thunder.

The nineteenth century has not been favorable for the production of great works of art.

It is commonly called an age of progress, but to the artistic mind it seems more like an age of

confusion. It is really an era of religious and political reorganization. When that has been accomplished, we shall move forward again. All historical periods consider themselves ages of progress, but whether they are so or not is determined afterwards. Possibly the Goths and Vandals, when they overran the Roman empire, thought they were making very fine progress; whereas they went to their own destruction. Tall trees do not grow in windy places. "Paradise Lost" is the last of the epics, and some think it the last that ever will be. Tennyson's tragedies have not been found satisfactory, and his legends of the knights of King Arthur, though more poetic, represent a period too far removed from the author's own. If art is to be enduring, it must be based on a radical study of its subject; but in this case such study is no longer possible. Place Tennyson's "Idyls" beside the German "Nibelungen" or the best old English ballads, and they seem unreal and fastidious. "Hiawatha," too, is in truth a sylvan sort of Longfellow, and no red Indian at all. One must live among the aborigines in order to know them. It is from these and similar works that the mischievous notion has arisen that poetry does not represent actual life, but something fanciful and altogether different.

Neither are there great works in painting, sculpture, or architecture. Classical music is an exception; and so is Carlyle's prose epic of the French Revolution, really of much more value than some of the metrical ones. Emerson may not have equalled that, — for Carlyle is one of the

giants of history, — but his literary work, taken as a whole, must be considered a great one, and in parts he is not only great but a match for the greatest. The true grandeur of poetry is found nowhere more plainly than in the sonnets on "Days" and "Character."

> "The sun set, but set not his hope;
> Stars rose; his faith was earlier up;
> Fixed on the enormous galaxy,
> Deeper and older seemed his eye;
> And matched his sufferance sublime
> The taciturnity of time."

What a glorious picture is this! a portrait worthy of Bishop Latimer or John Brown. We have seen it too, — some time-worn, venerable man looking silently at the stars as if they, and they alone, were conscious of his thought and motive. "Deeper and older seemed his eye" shows imagination of the nobler sort; and we do not notice the faulty rhymes so strong is the current that carries us along. There are many great passages in "Voluntaries;" but the best of them is that wherein he speaks of his young friends who enlisted for the war, who —

> "Break sharply off their jolly games,
> Forsake their comrades gay,
> And leave bright homes and high-born dames,
> For famine, toil, and fray."

Then follow the already famous lines: —

> "So close is grandeur to our dust,
> So near is God to man,
> When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
> The youth replies, *I can*."

This is probably the finest quatrain in the Anglo-American tongue. At least I cannot now think of another that equals it, and it is difficult to imagine how anything could surpass it. What is more rare than this perfect union of grandeur and simplicity? It has the grace and purity of Gray, but also what Gray apparently never dreamed of, the sublimity of Æschylus or Goethe. In form it is classic, but the thought is eminently modern. Emerson says in an essay, "The discovery of the correlation and conservation of forces brings us very near to God," — a parallel statement, and in itself a discovery equal to the other. But the crowning glory of this verse is its beautiful humility.

Another fine passage is his description of Cromwell, — an heroic subject well suited to him: —

> "He works, plots, fights in rude affairs,
> With squires, lords, kings, his craft compares,
> Till late he learned, through doubt and fear,
> Broad England harbored not his peer:
> Obeying Time, the last to own
> The genius on his cloudy throne."

This is a grand climax; but the last four lines of the poem are an anti-climax and might have been replaced by something better.

Neither is he wanting in beautifully musical passages, — as in this quatrain from "Wood Notes:" —

> "Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,
> Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
> But it carves the bow of beauty there,
> And ripples in rhymes the oar forsake."

And again: —

> "When the forest shall mislead me,
> When the night and morning lie,
> When sea and land refuse to feed me,
> 'Twill be time enough to die;
> Then will yet my mother yield
> A pillow in her greenest field,
> Nor the June flowers scorn to cover
> The clay of their departed lover."

These extracts are so far from being exceptional that any true lover of Emerson can easily recollect a dozen or more like them. That we remember them without an effort, or even intending to do so, is a signal proof of their power and perfection. If a collection could be made of American poetry in which only such pieces were included as might be compared to gold coinage twenty-two carat fine, I believe that even in number Emerson's poems would hold the first rank. He became a better critic of his verses as he ripened in years, and there is little in his second volume which has not intrinsic value. To appreciate them one must be high-minded and have a clear sense of the ideal.

XIII.

A POETIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

EVERY good writer paints a portrait of himself; and the more unconscious he is of this the more perfect will be the picture he delineates. Yet, among poets at least, very few have ever given an account of themselves, either direct or indirect. Shakespeare concealed himself so perfectly behind his work that he has long since become a mythical personage. All that we know of him is that he read Plato, Plutarch, and some other good books. From the plays of Molière and Schiller, who come next to him as dramatists, we can only learn that they were observing, reflective, and practical men. In the present century, however, there have lived three conspicuous poets who have left us a pretty clear account of themselves; not certainly in a direct narrative, but by such indications as we follow a path in the forest, or a trail up the side of a mountain. Where Byron went, what he saw, and what he thought about it, as well as his love affairs, his hatred and quarrels, are plainly evident to us. Of Wordsworth we know the kind of life he lived, the lakes and old ruins that he frequented, the character of his companions, and many other matters. We may add to these an American writer whose resolute and independent attitude towards

the public has often found a reflection in his prose and verse.

There is extant an early poem of Emerson's in which he laments the frail physique which he has inherited from his ancestors, and considers whether he had better under such conditions attempt a public career, but finally decides that a bold course is the best one, and that he will, if need be, "die for fame, a glorious martyr." The ambition which this shows is the more remarkable because his friends never could be sure whether the transparent man cared for his celebrity or not. About this time Elizur Wright, afterwards the founder of American life-insurance, travelled with him in a stage from Fitchburg to Groton, and discovered him to be a most agreeable companion, but so fragile-looking that it seemed impossible that he should live many years. It is likely that his ambition saved him and carried him through his long career.

"The Sphinx" has often proved a barrier to those who wish to know what Emerson's poetry was like. It deserves, however, the first place in the volume; for he who cannot understand it will never comprehend Emerson. Considered abstractly it is the same subject that was treated dramatically in "Faust" and in "The Marble Faun" — the question of man's moral nature, the problem of good and evil. The solution in each case is the same, that man's moral nature can only be developed through experience of sin, and that the expulsion from Paradise was properly a rise in life. It says in "The Sphinx:" —

"The fiend that man harries
Is love of the Best;
Yawns the pit of the Dragon,
Lit by rays from the Blest.
The Lethe of Nature
Can't trance him again,
Whose soul seeks the perfect,
Which his eyes seek in vain."

And yet neither of them has explained why one man is regenerated by sinning, and another is degraded by it; while Lucretia Borgia became an exemplary wife and mother, Nero turned into a human tiger. Much would seem to depend on the nature of the individual. "The Sphinx" is not an inspired work of genius like "The Problem," but it is graceful, artistic, and well sustained throughout. The four lines: —

"Had I a lover
Who was noble and free,
Would he were nobler
Than to love me,"

deserve an equal celebrity with Goethe's noted expression for generosity: "True, if I love you, what is that to you!"

As he deals in "The Sphinx" with the genesis of evil, in "Each and All" he considers the inequality of human conditions. He evidently needed to settle these two weighty questions for himself before plunging into active life.

"The Problem" and his Divinity School address in 1838 are what made Emerson famous. It combines the breadth and eloquence of Byron with the ethical purity of Milton. It is remarkable for the

grandeur of its figures, and almost every line of it has been quoted again and again. It marks the turning-point in the writer's life. His mind is fully made up. He will cruise no longer in the narrow channels and fog-banks in which he was educated, and sails forth bravely upon the high seas. He has resolved the problem of his own life. He finds that an artistic career is the only one which will permit him sufficient freedom of thought and action. He respects religious observances, but he perceives the immanence of God just as clearly in nature and in those works of high art which most resemble nature.

"Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone,
And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
. . . . . .
These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within."

This came to the thirsty souls of that time, wearied with dry formalism, like the proclamation of a higher spiritual life. It was the word that

needed to be said, and believers of every sect and denomination are better for it to-day.

After "The Problem" come a number of poems — "Rhea," "Uriel," "Alphonso of Castile," "Destiny," "Guy," and others, which indicate little or nothing to us, and if published at all ought to have been placed at the close of the volume. No wonder that Matthew Arnold and other critics have condemned Emerson's verses, since they found such a mass of dead wood between them and what was really excellent. In "The World-Soul" he expresses his dislike of city life and the follies and vices engendered by it. The first stanza of it is fine and spirited. "The Visit" leads one to suspect that he was much troubled at this time, as he was also afterwards, by idle persons who wished to consult him in regard to the condition of their souls.

> "Askest how long thou shalt stay,
> Devastator of the day?"

Latterly he used to turn these people over to his friend, Bronson Alcott.

The next poem of importance is called "Good-bye," and celebrates his return to Concord, the home of his ancestors. He has descended from the pulpit, and given up a profession which he felt unsuited to him. Every line of it is spirited, and the whole is a perfect gem.

> "Good-bye to Flattery's fawning face;
> To Grandeur with his wise grimace;
> To upstart Wealth's averted eye;
> To supple Office, low and high.
> . . . . . .

I am going to my own hearth-stone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone, —
A secret nook in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned;
Where arches green, the livelong day,
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,
And vulgar feet have never trod
A spot that is sacred to thought and God."

Walking across his little farm in Concord he feels a conscious pride in the possession of the soil, but the thought occurs to him, "In the end also the earth will own me." Upon this hint he writes "Hamathreya" and "The Earth Song." "The Rhodora," "The Titmouse," "The Snowstorm," and especially "The Humble Bee," are the most genuine of American poetry, for they could not have been written elsewhere. There was formerly a dark pool of water at the edge of the woods on the way from his house to Walden Pond, where the rhodora grew. An eminent critic has called "The Humble Bee" the finest of its kind in any language.

To bathe in Walden on a summer afternoon, and read Emerson's "Wood Notes" under the pine-trees, is one of the luxuries of life. It is the best of all his longer pieces, and very interesting from the insight it gives us into his views and opinions at that time. The proper way to look at Emerson's naturalism is as a protest and reaction against the stilted conventionality of the day. Never since the Norman Conquest had the artistic sense of the Saxon race been at so low an ebb as from 1815 to 1850. This is indicated plainly enough by the public buildings of that period, which are made as nearly as possible

like prisons, a symbol perhaps of the mental condition of mankind. Of all the arts architecture is most dependent on an enlightened patronage. We discover from Hawthorne's Diary how barren and insipid was the social life of Boston and the smaller cities. What enjoyment is there in such a case for a noble mind except in the beauty of nature, in the wild flowers, the songs of the birds, the stateliness of trees, the graceful lines of rivers, and the glory of the sunset?

"The World-Soul" begins: —

> "Thanks to the morning light,
> Thanks to the foaming sea,
> To the uplands of New Hampshire,
> To the green-haired forest free."

Man is often false, but nature is always true: her laws are immutable, and we have to return again and again to the "foaming sea" and the "green-haired forest" to correct ourselves morally and repair ourselves physically. At the same time we should recollect that the tornado, and the rattlesnake, and malaria are also products of nature, and that even blue Walden is a dismal place in an easterly storm. One cannot live wholly on admiration: after a while we feel the need of action, and that brings us back to the haunts and ways of our fellowmen. To live according to nature, in the way Thoreau attempted it, would ultimately make savages of us again. Emerson was too sensible to imitate his friend in this respect, and in his mature years he came to the conclusion that an isolated life was bad for any

one, but especially for women. At this time, however, he sympathized theoretically with Thoreau, as the following passage from "Wood Notes" clearly indicates: —

"The rough and bearded forester
Is better than the lord;
God fills the scrip and canister,
Sin piles the loaded board.
The lord is the peasant that was,
The peasant the lord that shall be;
The lord is hay, the peasant grass,
One dry, and one the living tree."

. . . . . .

"What prizes the town and the tower?
Only what the pine-tree yields;
Sinew that subdued the fields."

. . . . . .

"He shall be happy whilst he wooes,
Muse-born, a daughter of the Muse.
But if with gold she bind her hair,
And deck her breast with diamond,
Take off thine eyes, thy heart forbear,
Though thou lie alone on the ground."

This falls little short of French communism which took shape soon afterward in the celebrated Brook Farm experiment. It does not jar upon us here, because we all feel so more or less in our youth when camping in the Adirondacks, or hunting on the great plains.

A large portion of "Wood Notes" is devoted to Thoreau and his solitary pilgrimage in the forests of Maine. He is the only one of Emerson's friends who enjoyed such an honor.

"And such I knew, a forest seer,
A minstrel of the natural year,
Foreteller of the vernal ides,
Wise harbinger of spheres and tides,

A lover true, who knew by heart
Each joy the mountain dales impart;
It seemed that Nature could not raise
A plant in any secret place,
But he would come in the very hour
It opened in its virgin bower,
As if a sunbeam showed the place, —
And tell its long-descended race."

. . . . . .

"Through these green tents, by eldest nature dressed,
He roamed, content alike with man and beast.
Where darkness found him he lay glad at night;
There the red morning touched him with its light.
Three moons his great heart him a hermit made,
So long he roved at will the boundless shade."

Thoreau deserved this; for though he was neither a naturalist nor a poet, he was a *character*. His ideal in life was a mistaken one, but he lived up to it as few men ever do. His brave and eloquent address in behalf of John Brown in 1859 proved the stuff he was made of. In the last part of this poem may be found also the only confession of faith that its author ever seems to have made. He believes in God as "conscious law," that

"Ever fresh the broad creation,
A divine improvisation,
From the heart of God proceeds,
A single will, a million deeds."

And —

"The world is the ring of his spells,
And the play of his miracles."

Finally —

"He is the axis of the star;
He is the sparkle of the spar;

> **He is the heart of every creature;**
> **He is the meaning of each feature;**
> **And his mind is the sky,**
> **Than all it holds more deep, more high."**

In brief, he is the *idea* of everything. Emerson has often been called a pantheist; but this is not the pantheism of Spinoza and Theophilus Parsons, who concluded that since even God could not make something out of nothing, he must have made the universe out of himself. Neither is it like the Greek pantheism which discovered a god in everything; for Emerson always held fast to the divine unity. It is of a similar strain with Pope's couplet: —

> **"We are all parts of one stupendous whole,**
> **Whose body nature is, and God the soul."**

Yet we never hear of Pope as a pantheist.

"Monadnoc" is not what it might have been, but there are good passages in it.

> **"Thousand minstrels woke within me,**
> **'Our music's in the hills,'"**

is a lively expression for the exultation we feel upon setting out for our summer campaign. The mountain is in full view from the hills about Walden; and Emerson was tempted to visit it sometimes for solitude, and sometimes to enjoy better the society of a friend. The fable of the "Mountain and the Squirrel" perhaps occurred to him on one of these excursions. It is well worthy Æsop or La Fontaine, and strange to say, the only fable, as far as I know, ever written in English.

Thoreau again is the subject of "Forbearance." The line —

> "He who has named the birds without a gun,"

evidently refers to him. The attachment between those two men who seemed so strange to their fellow townsmen must have been a very strong one. It was sadly interfered with afterwards by the attack on Thoreau in Lowell's "Fable for Critics," for which Emerson never quite forgave Lowell. It caused Thoreau to avoid his society, and in 1860 Emerson complained that he saw little of him.

"Thine Eyes still shine for me," it is natural to presume, was written while he was engaged to Miss Lidior Jackson, who had very bright, keen eyes. In "Threnody" he laments the death of his eldest boy. It has an archaic simplicity, something like Hesiod, and it is the only one of Emerson's poems which contains much pathos.

The year 1846 marks an epoch in the politics of America. The era of Clay, Webster, and Calhoun went out, and the era of Seward, Sumner, and Lincoln came in. Emerson was not one of the early abolitionists. His conciliatory nature and dislike of controversy were enough to account for this; but to a mind which was almost pure ethics, there could be no hesitation as to which side of the slavery question he ought to range himself on. President Polk's invasion of Mexico aroused all thinking and feeling people to the great peril which menaced the republic. Rev. Dr. Channing sounded the alarm from his pulpit, and urged Emerson to come forward also and take the field.

To this Emerson replied in an ode so full of pith, sense, and concentrated invective that it may be fairly said to stand alone.

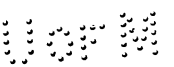
> "What boots thy zeal,
> O glowing friend,
> That would indignant rend
> The northland from the South?
> Wherefore? to what good end?
> Boston Bay and Bunker Hill
> Would serve things still;—
> Things are of the snake."

This is a truly original argument against the dissolution of the Union.

> "Virtue falters; Right is hence;
> Freedom praised, but hid;
> Funeral eloquence
> Rattles the coffin-lid."

After the passage of the Fugitive Slave bill, he felt that the time had come for him to act, and made a number of speeches in aid of the Free Soil party. One of them was delivered at Cambridgeport, and a body of Southern students from Harvard College attended it for the purpose of mobbing him; but they were so much impressed by his calmness, dignity, and intrepid courage, that after making some slight disturbance, they settled quietly in their seats, and went peaceably home — a conclusion very creditable to all concerned.

He seems somehow to have missed in John Brown of Harper's Ferry the best subject that he ever had, or could have had. Brown was a veritable Samson Agonistes, and perhaps only one of the



epic Titans of literature could deal with him. He visited Concord during the winter of 1857, and then Emerson recognized for the first and last time in his life a stronger personality than his own. In this or the following year the people of Concord invited Emerson to write a Fourth of July ode for them. This he did, but included in it a serious warning: —

> "Be just at home, then write your scroll
> Of honor o'er the sea;
> And bid the broad Atlantic roll
> A ferry of the free."

The *Atlantic Monthly*, from 1855 to 1864, edited by Lowell, and with Agassiz, Holmes, Whittier, Emerson, Longfellow, as contributors, was a periodical of which any nation might justly be proud. Whom have we now to replace such men, and when shall we see their like again? With Hunt the artist, and a few other friends, they formed a Saturday dinner club which they called after the title of their magazine. In the summer of 1858 they all decided to go to the Adirondacks. Considering the number of guns they carried, it was certainly fortunate that they all came home alive. I never heard that they killed many deer, but one can easily imagine what a glorious summer they made of it. Emerson has left us a memorial of the expedition in a journal in blank verse which is more interesting on this account than for anything it contains.

Much the best of his *Atlantic* poems, and as it seems to me the best he ever wrote, is the "Song of Nature." To appreciate it we must recollect that it is not Emerson, but Nature, that is speaking. She

communes with herself over the great things she has accomplished, but laments at the end that she has never created a man in whom is fulfilled the promise of the child.

> "But he, the man-child glorious, —
> Where tarries he the while?
> The rainbow shines his harbinger,
> The sunset gleams his smile.
>
> Must time and tide forever run?
> Will never my winds go sleep in the west?
> Will never my wheels which whirl the sun
> And satellites have rest?"

This is the counterpart of Michel Angelo's fresco of the Ancestors of Christ. Every verse in the poem is perfect and linked closely to the succeeding one so that the whole forms a series of grand pictures much like those in the Sistine Chapel. There is a cadence through it like the roar of a cataract; it is a conception of the universe.

Still grander, were it wholly original with Emerson, is the poem called "Brahma." Nothing except transcendentalism was ever made so much fun of as this when it first appeared, and for a very good reason. It is in itself the foundation of all transcendentalism. Those easily amused people who ridiculed "Brahma" probably were not aware that it was a nearly literal translation from the Sanscrit Vedas, those earliest records of human speech, in which thought, poetry, and religion are one. Neither is it likely that if they had been asked what a transcendentalist was, they could have

given an intelligible answer. What is transcendentalism? It is the consciousness or *perception* of a mind or spiritual entity, something different from matter in man, and of a great spirit, or universal mind outside of man: or in more common language, a perception that there is a soul in man, and God in the universe. It differs from religious faith or belief as the discovery of a truth differs from the knowledge of it. One is philosophy; the other, theology. Many of the Vedic sages were transcendentalists; so were the twelve disciples of Christ; and Socrates and Plato, and Shakespeare and Goethe. There is nothing to prevent a transcendentalist from being a Christian, or a Christian from being a transcendentalist; but those who care more for the form than for the spirit in which a thing is done are not willing to admit this.

The "Boston Hymn" was recited by Emerson in the Boston Music Hall, Jan. 1, 1863, almost at the same moment that President Lincoln issued his proclamation of emancipation.

When he came to the stanza,

> "Pay ransom to the owner,
> And fill the bag to the brim.
> Who is the owner? The slave is owner
> And ever was. Pay him,"

he spoke the last verse with such emphasis that the whole audience were startled by it. I can see him now. It was not a hymn that could be set to music — full of rough, grand sentences which would seem to have been struck out with an axe. Its politics remind us of "Wood Notes," and are, to say the

least, rather provincial, but in this they agree with the colonial period he describes. This same winter he went to Washington to lecture, and called upon Lincoln, of whom he always spoke afterwards with great respect.

"Voluntaries," evidently taken from volunteer, is another contribution to the war period, and stands next in merit to "The Problem" and the "Song of Nature." There is great comfort in it. How tenderly beautiful are the lines: —

> "O, well for the fortunate soul
> Whom Music's wings infold,
> Stealing away the memory
> Of sorrow, new and old!"

They probably refer to the Jubilee concert on the first of January, and bring us face to face with a very strange fact. Emerson, like the great majority of poets, cared little or nothing for music. This is the more surprising when we consider that the art of poetry is based on melody, and in extreme cases can scarcely be distinguished from it. Elsewhere he says, "Music casts on mortals its beautiful disdain." But those who are so fortunate as to enjoy good music, find in it a helpful and sustaining friend. In "Voluntaries" he complains, as was the fashion of those days, that our earlier statesmen, by recognizing the right to hold slaves under the Constitution, brought upon us the horrors of the civil war. This is not quite just to those great men; for if we consider it, what would have happened if there had been no national government? There can be no doubt that slavery would

still be flourishing in a large portion of the country. It was only through the Constitution that slavery was finally abolished; and any one who examines the history of that period will see plainly that the agitation of so momentous a side issue would have wrecked the whole undertaking. The sovereign will of the people was opposed to forming a national government, and the project was carried through only by the strenuous exertions of far-sighted and patriotic men.

After the war came rest, peace, the happy marriage of his daughter, and such celebrity as does not often fall to the lot of those who deserve it. An English traveller who was present at a dinner of the Harvard Alumni, said in his remarks, "When I return home I shall be asked two questions, 'Have I seen Niagara?' and 'Have I met Emerson?'" Even the highest praise does not weigh heavily where it is well deserved. The Concord sage had long since known his own value, and with the same courageous humility which had carried him through the severest trials, he returned to his books, his writing, and his woodland walks. He wrote "May-Day," and published it in a fresh volume of poetry which was much better received than the former one. Compared with "Wood Notes" and other pieces, "May-Day" is like a water-color landscape, full of delicate tints and fine aerial effects. I think there are glimpses in it of a place where his daughter and other maidens of Concord used to go to celebrate the day. There are exquisite passages in it, one of which has been commended by Matthew Arnold for its rare grace and purity.

"Sea-Shore" is a reminiscence of Cape Ann. One of his critics called it Tennysonian, and it is true that the style is somewhat different from his usual vein. When his young friends informed him of this he remarked, "It is not Tennysonian but Pigeon Covean," and then told them how he happened to compose it. He was resting on the rocks at Pigeon Cove one afternoon, and not to waste his time, took note of the objects about him; afterwards he noticed that with some slight changes they would form a poem. "The Titmouse" is also said to have been a personal experience; and the last line, "Pæan! *veni, vidi, vici,*" spoken rapidly is supposed to represent the short song of the chickadee.

"Rubies," "Days," "Politics," "Heroism," "Character," "Freedom," and Culture," poems on abstract subjects, are all manly, vigorous, and original. They have a purifying and strengthening effect on the reader. "Politics" especially is like a dose of moral iron; and "Freedom" might have served as an antidote to the Fourth of July orations of former days. It should be taught in the public schools as an after-piece to the national Constitution. He says, —

> "Speak it not, or speak it low."

Whether the "Ode to Friendship" was addressed to any particular person is uncerain. Who can be the subject of these impassioned lines: —

> "O friend, my bosom said,
> Through thee alone the sky is arched,
> Through thee the rose is red,"

except that rugged old human volcano, Thomas Carlyle. Despite their many differences of opinion, there was no other man for whom he cared so much, or perhaps felt was really his equal. A man named Holmes, who served under John Brown in the Kansas fights, once carried this poem to the top of Pike's Peak and read it aloud there to the snow-clad summits.

Finally old age comes upon him, and with characteristic calmness he writes "Terminus," a fitting consummation of a glorious life.

"As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime;
Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed."

XIV.

THE MÜLLER AND WHITNEY CONTROVERSY.

[*Note.* My excuse for bringing this subject before the public now is that it has never been properly considered before. Not long since I made inquiries among professors and other learned men in regard to it, and found, to my surprise, that they either knew nothing about the matter, or were decidedly of the opinion that Prof. Whitney was in the right and Prof. Müller in the wrong. One of these went so far as to call Max Müller a tricky fellow, while several regretted the acrimonious manner with which Prof. Whitney had conducted his side of the controversy. I decided, therefore, to examine into the case myself, which I accordingly did, with the result which is here given.]

THERE can be no greater mistake than to suppose it takes two to make a quarrel, or even a controversy, and of this the case now before us is a sufficient example. When Prof. Max Müller's lectures on the Science of Language were first published they carried the Anglo-Saxon public by storm. Only the more scholarly class were already aware of the existence of such a science, and among those only a very few had more than a vague and nebulous idea of its general scope and bearings. Prof. Müller was remarkably fortunate in his exposition of the subject. His book was written in clear, vivid, and copious English, such as is most likely

to sustain the interest of the reader. Its popular style may be attributed rather to the native freshness and vigor of the author's mind than to any conscious desire to please his hearers. It read like a good novel. It was the history of civilization viewed from a fresh standpoint, projected, as it were, upon human speech; and not only fine scholars, but those who knew little of foreign languages, could find profit and satisfaction in it. About two years later another book appeared on nearly the same subject, by Prof. W. D. Whitney of Yale College, written in the dry and argumentative manner of an attorney who was pleading a case in court, a most unsuitable style for either literary or scientific writing. The book, however, contained much that was new and interesting, especially in regard to languages of the North American savages, and was otherwise remarkable for its similarity to Prof. Müller's work in some parts and for the inimical manner in which his opinions and statements were contradicted in others. The ethical tone of the book is of a low quality.

Prof. Müller made no reply to this attack, and Prof. Whitney continued his assaults through a series of years in the *North American Review* and other magazines. This part of the controversy is very difficult to follow, scattered as it is through a number of periodicals, nor does it seem to be important that we should follow it. It does not differ in essential character from what is to be found in Prof. Whitney's book, and now that the case has been dismissed from court, it is not likely

to have the dust shaken from it again. What has been published in book form is of more importance, for it is still studied by many, and exercises a certain influence on public opinion. Prof. Whitney's chief objections to Prof. Müller are, in regard to the power of creating new words; in regard to the so-called Turanian group of languages; whether we are able to think without the use of words; and in regard to the origin of human speech. The difference between these renowned philologists would seem to be largely owing to the difference of their philosophical training. Prof. Müller was educated in the metaphysics of his native country, while Prof. Whitney belongs to the Scotch-English school of Locke and Reid. Now, the outcome of German philosophy is to consider the individual as a fractional part of the human race to which he is bound socially and politically by inseparable ties; and the outcome of Locke's philosophy considers the individual as a unit whose self-will is only limited by its interference with the will of others. From another point of view it is indeterminism against determinism, or the universal *versus* the particular. If we bear this continually in mind, the subject before us becomes more intelligible.

THE FORMATION OF NEW WORDS.

This is, as every one will recognize, an extensive subject, and Prof. Müller devotes considerable space to it.

In the beginning he says, —

> Although there is a continuous change in language, it is not in the power of man either to produce or to prevent it.

We might think as well of changing the laws which control the circulation of our blood, or of adding an inch to our height, as of altering the laws of speech or inventing new words according to our pleasure.

He then supports and illustrates his meaning by two anecdotes: one of a German Emperor who vainly attempted to set himself above the rules of grammar; and the other of a Roman grammarian, who boldly told Tiberius that he could give Roman citizenship to men but not to words. A better instance than either perhaps is what Suetonius relates of Claudius Cæsar who was much given to dilettante literature, and made a number of changes in the Latin language which he had introduced into the public documents, but they went no further, and after his death wholly disappeared.

Here Prof. Whitney, without waiting for a further explanation, springs suddenly upon his prey. "The utter futility," he says, "of deriving such a doctrine from such a pair of incidents, or from a score, a hundred, or a thousand like them, is almost too obvious to be worth the trouble of pointing out." (Ex. p. 36, No. 2.)

Where do the new words come from that appear in a language from time to time? If they were not made by man, who could have made them? All men do not speak at once, so the change must have originated with some one individual. St. Louis of France changed, by a witty remark, the word "Tatar" into "Tartar." It is permitted, says Prof. Whitney, for a famous writer or orator now and then to coin a new word; and a Yankee shipbuilder gave the name of schooner to a vessel of his own invention. He

gives galvanism, silurian, paleontology, oölite, pliocene, as examples of words that originated in our own time. He then proceeds to consider in what manner new words came into existence, and says, —

> The speakers of language constitute a republic, or rather a democracy, in which authority is conferred only by general suffrage and for due cause, and is exercised under constant supervision and control. Individuals are abundantly permitted to make additions to the common speech, if there be reason for it, and if, in their work, they respect the sense of the community.

(And Prof. Müller makes a statement also not very unlike this.) Prof. Whitney continues to argue on this line, approaching constantly nearer to Prof. Müller's standpoint, and finally concludes as follows: —

> Thus it is indeed true that the individual has no power to change language. But it is not true in any sense which excludes his agency, but only so far as that agency is confessed to be inoperative except as it is ratified by those about him. Speech and the changes of speech are the work of the community; but the community cannot effect this except through the initiative of its individual members, which it follows or rejects. (Ex. p. 45.)

And taking one step more, says on page 52, —

> So far as concerns the purposes for which he examines them, and the results he would derive from them, words are almost as little the work of the man as is the form of his skull, the outlines of his face, or the construction of his arm and hand.

A casuist may discover some slight difference between this last and the proposition which the Yale professor first attempted to disprove, but I do not think the candid reader will find much.

The fact is, that Prof. Whitney's subject has led him about in a circle; and absurd as this may seem, he really deserves credit for having worked it out to a logical conclusion. The case is a metaphysical one of great interest. It is a problem of fate and free will, or as it is now called, determinism and indeterminism. We are conscious of free will, but unless we act according to certain inviolable laws whose number is legion, we are compelled by mental or physical suffering to retrace our steps and begin over again. Thus we are ultimately obliged, not as individuals perhaps, but as a race, to accept our destiny, and fate and free will become reconciled in just and normal action. Political freedom can only be attained by obedience to good government; social freedom by submitting to sensible rules of etiquette. So it is in language. Of what use to us is freedom of speech unless other people will listen to what we wish to say? We must speak what is agreeable to our hearers or they will leave us and go away; and if we make use of new and strange words they will be likely to laugh at us. Language is so imbedded in the mental methods of mankind that it will only change as those methods change.

The changes of English in our own time do not amount to much; but from the age of Bacon to Pope, which was a revolutionary period, the change was marked and decided. The most famous writers seem to have but little effect upon language, so far as the use of a particular form is concerned. Nobody thinks of imitating Shakespeare's double superlatives, and the most devout readers of the

Bible do not use scriptural language in common conversation. Byron, Webster, and Hawthorne have not added one syllable to their native tongue. Dickens coined the word "rampage" either from ram or rampant, and for a time it was quite popular, and then passed into oblivion. Good writers are the true conservators of speech, and do the best they can to prevent it from changing. There is a fashion in the current use of words, as there is in dress, carriages, and other matters. Now the leaders of fashion in large cities are invariably pleasant, popular persons, who reflect the prevailing sentiment of those about them. Strong, original, decisive characters they could not be. A good deal depends in this discussion on what we choose to call a new word or a change in language. If the names of proprietary articles are to be considered such, then any quack can force a new word upon the community, and both our learned professors are in the wrong. Next to these come slang terms like "dude," "blizzard," "skedaddle," — the peculiar wit of the *vulgus*. I am told there is a large number of such in the new edition of Webster's Dictionary, but most of them might just as well have been left out. "Skedaddle" is already obsolete, and "dude" is following after it. Such words are short-lived because they have no roots. Compounds derived from the Greek like *oölite* and *pliocene* have greater dignity, but are not in current use and cannot be said to form part of the solid body of our language. The change from *Tatar* to *Tartar* was not intentional on the part of King Louis, and took place at a time when small respect

was paid to spelling. Schooner is a better instance, but it is easy to see that the term has been preserved chiefly by good luck. If the shipbuilder had named his vessel a skimmer, should we consider that an original word? On the whole, Prof. Whitney's exceptions tend strongly to confirm Prof. Müller's rule. Dr. Johnson once said to Boswell: "If I tell you there are no apples in that orchard and there comes a prying fellow who finds half a dozen on different trees, he does not, for all that, controvert my statement."

TURANIAN AND SCYTHIAN.

Prof. Whitney objects to the classification by Prof. Müller and others of all the agglutinative languages of central and eastern Asia as Turanian until some closer connection has been proved to exist between them than we have now evidence of. It is well enough to enter this protest, for the term Turanian would indicate properly a blood relationship between those races such as evidently exists among the different branches of the Aryan family. At the same time Prof. Whitney's own classification of Chinese and Scythian is open to an equal objection that it excludes the possibility of such a relationship which, if not certain, is yet very likely. Neither do we know surely whether the ancient Scythians were a Sclavonic race. That the Greeks should have learned from them, as Æschylus tells us, the manufacture of steel, would seem to indicate the latter, for no good has ever come to civilization from the Tartar hordes. But it is no more safe to class languages by races than

races by their languages. Neither agglutination nor physical resemblances between the two races would be sufficient to prove that the languages of China and Bokhara had emanated from the same source; and I have always believed from internal evidence that the Hungarians, one of the most enlightened races of men, were originally an Aryan tribe, which at some ancient period came under the dominion of Tartars and afterwards absorbed its conquerors.

THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH.

This is purely a philosophical question and a most profound one, but no account of the science of language would be complete without some consideration of it. It is a problem on which metaphysicians have been divided for at least a hundred and fifty years. There is indeed a strong array of distinguished names on either side of the question, and the subject is one so subtle, far-reaching, and difficult of apprehension, that there would seem to be no near prospect of an agreement upon it. Prof. Müller is a fine philosophical scholar; and after giving his own view of the subject, he supports this by extracts from the best writers on his side. He considers language the distinguishing characteristic between man and the brute; that it is impossible to think without the use of words; and, unless I do him injustice, he believes that language even preceded thought, and is its natural parent.

To follow human speech to its origin is like trying to trace the lines of a river which loses itself in the horizon.

This can only be done, if accomplished at all, by careful and delicate perception and a disinterested comparison with the observations of others. The worst possible way to treat such a subject is by the dogmatic method; but Prof. Whitney has been educated in that and knows no other. He quotes no authorities in support of his position, nor is he willing to let the fair-minded reader judge for himself, but, having stated his opinion, proceeds to enforce it with the customary ardor of an advocate. Language, he declares, is only the vehicle of thought; — that a great deal of thinking is done without the use of words, and the best proof of it is that babies think before they are able to talk at all; that crows can count, and that dogs deliberate at the street corners which way they shall go. He condemns Prof. Müller's view as the emanation of "that superficial and unsound philosophy which confounds and identifies speech, thought, and reason" (p. 439), and says (p. 407), —

> How often must we labor by painful circumlocution, by gradual approach and limitation, to place before the minds of others a conception which is clearly present to our own consciousness! How often when we have the expression nearly complete, we miss a single word that we need, and must search for it, in our memories or our dictionaries, perhaps not finding it in either!

And again (p. 414), —

> And who will dare to deny even to the uninstructed deaf-mute the possession of ideas, of cognitions multitudinous and various, of powers to combine observations and draw conclusions from them, of reasonings, of imaginings, of

hopes? Who will say then that he does not think, though his thinking faculty has not been trained and developed by the aid of a system of signs?

And elsewhere, —

If only that part of man's superior endowments which finds its manifestation in language is to receive the name of reason, what shall we style the rest? We had thought that the love and intelligence, the soul, that looks out of a child's eye upon us to reward our care long before it begins to prattle, were also marks of reason.

And so on through a long and closely printed chapter.

These extracts do not quite give a fair account of Prof. Whitney's statement, portions of which are both valuable and interesting, but they indicate plainly that it is an argument rather than a scientific investigation.

It strikes my humble judgment that both these distinguished writers have carried their respective theories to somewhat of an extreme. I do not see how Prof. Müller can reconcile the essential unity of thought and speech with the statement he makes on page 389, that parrots (and squirrels) can distinguish hollow nuts from good ones, by syllogistic reasoning. I have studied the mental faculties of animals for many years past, and I do not believe that any of them can think or reason. What supplies the place of reason with them — as it often does with men and women — is habit and what is called the association of ideas, that is, of sensuous impressions. A setter will follow a man with a gun, because it reminds him of chasing quails and grouse. If a bridge shakes under the

tread of an elephant, a sense of danger is communicated to his brain. Even the smallest insects take alarm at anything new and strange. That crows should be able to count is incredible to me. Let any one place a roll of gold coin before him, and then imagine if he can, how he is to count it without the aid of numerals. The stories of farmers about crows are like those of whalers about the kaler, a marine animal unknown to naturalists. A crow is quickly frightened at the sight of an unarmed man, but he is not afraid of a man with a gun if he is riding in a wagon. So a horse is a very intelligent animal, but he does not realize his danger on the edge of a precipice. As for thinking babies, one may well ask what kind of unsound and superficial philosophy it is which mixes up intellectual concepts with hereditary instincts, sensuous impressions, and emotional feeling. Thought can only come with or after self-consciousness, for it is only after consciousness that we can wholly separate ourselves from the rest of the world and individuality becomes possible. *Cogito ergo sum* was not written in vain. I have always believed that a certain amount of elementary thinking can be done without the aid of language. *Thinking*, as Carlyle says, originally meant dealing with *things*. So it is in German — *denken* and *dinge*. We think primarily in objects, and we use names when the objects are not before us. It is true that we sometimes remember the sensuous image of a distant object before we do its name, but it is hardly possible to unite two or more such images without the help of words. Besides language, there is another

prominent distinction between man and other animals, and this consists in the use of tools. It seems likely that it may even have preceded the use of language. Consider the origin of a club. For the primeval man to break off the branch of a tree and use it as a weapon of offence must have resulted from a mental calculation, even if he knew no name for tree or branch.

A carpenter working at his bench thinks partly in his tools, and partly in words. Perhaps a good part of his work could be accomplished without any words at all. St. John says, "In the beginning was the Word;" but Goethe says, "In the beginning was the act." However, it is only the simplest kind of thinking — thinking in a single syllogism — that can be done in this way. Commonly we think in three or four syllogisms together, and for that, as well as for all abstract reasoning, and in fact for whatever passes by the name of thinking, language is indispensable. It is often difficult to describe sensuous impressions, for these do not come to us in words; but otherwise when we have acquired a clear understanding of the problem before us, it is easy enough to demonstrate it to others.

THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

Our theories on this subject will inevitably be affected by our theories in regard to the origin of mankind. We are brought face to face with the conflict between the Mosaic cosmogony and Darwinian evolution, and here we must consider the position in which Prof. Whitney is placed. How-

ever it may be now, no Yale professor thirty years ago could have ranged himself on Darwin's side, without losing his position in a summary manner. Prof. Whitney dees not, however, offer any supernatural explanation for the origin of language, but traces human speech from father to grandfather and so on until he comes to a single pair — presumably Adam and Eve — before whom the beasts of the field and the birds of the air presented themselves for the first time. He says (p. 181), —

> But if a population of scattered communities implies dispersion from a single point, if we must follow back the fates of our race until they centre in a limited number of families or in a single pair, which expanded by natural increase, and scattered, forming the little communities which later fused together into greater ones — and who will deny that it was so? — then also, both by analogy and by historical necessity, it follows that that is the true view of the relation of dialects and language to which we have been led above: namely, that growth and diversification of dialects accompany the spread and disconnection of communities, and that assimilation of dialects accompanies the coalescence of communities.

Does "dispersion from a common centre" refer to the tower of Babel, or to the ancient home of the Aryan family? I believe that philologists are agreed that there is nothing to prove or disprove the common origin of language, but ethnologists find many difficulties in the way of it. If all races came from the River Euphrates, why do we find the lowest specimens of humanity in Patagonia, in Borneo, and at the Cape of Good Hope? Prof. Whitney believes the earliest root words were formed partly from interjections and partly from

imitation of the natural sounds of objects. Now the cries of animals are properly interjections; and at one time Mr. George Darwin and Prof. Müller had a lively controversy about this theory; a subject which we have not space to enter on here. Prof. Whitney places his main dependence on the imitative theory, and argues that since there are many such words as *rush, roar, plunge, cuckoo, katydid,* etc., in every mordern language, and as time produces great modifications in speech, it is highly probable that in the beginning they were very much more numerous. He says (on p. 430), —

> There is no real discordance between the onomatopoetic and interjectional theories, nor do the advocates of either, it is believed, deny or disparage the value of the other, or refuse its aid in the solution of their common problem. The definition of the onomatopoetic principle might be without difficulty or violence so widened that it should include the interjectional. We must indeed beware of restricting its action too narrowly. It is by no means limited to a reproduction of the sounds of animate and inanimate nature — it admits also a kind of symbolical representation — as an intimation of abrupt, or rapid, or laborious, or smooth action by utterances making an analogous impression upon the ear.[1]

[1] There can be no doubt that the onomatopoetic principle has a decided influence on the formation of language, but there is this objection to it, that it cannot possibly cover the whole ground. In fact, the great majority of objects and human actions have no characteristic sound that can very well be imitated in words; and out of more than fifty Sanscrit words which I have examined for this purpose, I do not find as many onomatopoetic words as among the corresponding terms in English. Very young children often make up root words which last them for a year or more. One small boy, now a well-known artist, always insisted on calling water *ap* which was Sanscrit for water; and a certain young girl also called it *ar*. She called

He then proceeds to make war on Max Müller again for supporting Prof. Heyse's ring theory of language, namely: that as everything in nature has its peculiar ring, — oak gives forth one sound, silver another, every bird and beast has its peculiar cry, — so language is the peculiar cry or ring of human beings. This seems rather fanciful, and Prof. Whitney is not slow to condemn it. He says (p. 427), —

> It is indeed not a little surprising to see a man of the acknowledged ability and great learning of Prof. Müller, after depreciating and casting ridicule upon the views of others respecting so important a point, put forward one of his own as a mere authoritative dictum, resting it upon nothing better than a fanciful comparison which lacks every element of true analogy, not venturing to attempt its support by a single argument, instance, or illustration drawn from either the nature or history of language.

Now this passage indicates plainly enough the spirit in which Prof. Whitney's book was written. On referring to the Science of Language (p. 429), we find that Prof. Müller has no idea of supporting such a theory. Nothing could be more sensible nor, one may add, more just, than what he says of it (p. 429), —

> There may be some value in speculations of this kind, but I should not like to indorse them, for we have no right to say that a vague analogy is an explanation of the problem of the origin of roots.

What Prof. Müller does believe in is the theory of language by evolution or elimination from

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the river "the big cold ar," and a brook "the bit cold ar;" a curious case of agglutinative language. Both children were nearly related to distinguished writers.

phonetic types. Speech did not originate probably with a single pair or at a particular time, but gradually, and, like the art of printing, in a number of different places. We speak as we do because our vocal organs are constructed as they are, and not otherwise. He says (p. 429), —

> The number of these phonetic types must have been almost infinite in the beginning; and it was only through the same process of *natural elimination* which we observed in the early history of words, that clusters of roots, more or less synonymous, were gradually reduced to one definite type.

This would seem to be reasonable.

For a long time Prof. Müller could not imagine the cause of these merciless attacks upon himself; but he finally concluded that it was on account of his opposition to the Boehtlingk and Roths' Sanscrit Lexicon, a work compiled by a group of philologists in St. Petersburg, with whom Prof. Whitney was for some time in correspondence. This may account for some portion of it; but I think much was due to Prof. Whitney's intolerance of German philosophy, which forms the basis of Prof. Müller's writing, and to which he is largely indebted for what he is. At the time his book was written the feeling against German philosophy was very strong in all American colleges. Little was known of it (perhaps nothing in the original, for Kant's "Critique" and Hegel's "Philosophy of History" had alone been translated), but that little was considered bad. If not atheistic, it was certainly pantheistic, and the main support of Goethe and Emerson, two very dangerous writers, one of whom

studied it but little, and the other never at all. It permitted the discussion of the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, two subjects which properly belonged to religion, and metaphysics had no right to deal with. It was confounded with New England transcendentalism, — a very different affair, more poetical than philosophical. It was called senseless, absurd, monstrous, ridiculous, — the very terms with which Prof. Whitney attacks Prof. Müller's views on the science of languages. In brief, it was looked upon much as a Spanish Jesuit of two hundred years ago looked upon Lutheranism. But the last third of the nineteenth century was intended for better things. Sherman's march through Georgia and the battle of Sadowa had their counterpart in the intellectual world also. In 1868 Prof. Max Müller, in an address on assuming the chair of comparative philology at Oxford, pointed out in unsparing terms the time-honored shortcomings of English universities. Then came President Eliot of Harvard, in 1869, with his emphatic inaugural statement that philosophical subjects *should not be taught with authority*, and a new era began. The retreating past still casts a long shadow over us; there are yet to be found pedants and philistines among us, the natural offspring of dogmatism; but we may trust that like the shadow of the giants in Goethe's fable, it is now doing mischief for the last time.

XV.

THE SCIENCE OF THOUGHT.

1873.

THERE is no word which we hear more frequently than "logic;" we are told every day by lawyers, politicians, and the newspapers, what is logical and what is not; yet to tell us exactly what logic itself is would puzzle many a skilful manufacturer of arguments. There are not a few indeed who have been applied to lately, men who possess considerable scholarship, and yet were unable to supply the information required. One might have begun to suspect that the power of defining logic was among the lost arts, had not the recent publication of a book, called "The Science of Thought," by Rev. C. C. Everett, arrived to convince us of the contrary. This octavo volume has now been before the public for about three years, and as yet only one edition of it has been sold, — a discouraging fact when we consider its possible value not only to American, but to universal literature. Evidently, like many other works of art, it must wait its time for due appreciation. One alone, whose extensive scholarship and deep philosophical penetration ought to give weight to his opinion, declares it to be the most important work of its kind in English since the time of Bacon and his

"Novum Organum." This is certainly a startling announcement. The development of modern science with all its wonderful results can be traced, it is said, directly back to Bacon's exposition of the inductive method of reasoning. Leibnitz, Newton, Herschel, and others deserve credit for what each specially did, but it was Bacon who first pointed out the way for them to work in. When we consider the immense importance which modern science has for us — how, for instance, we depend upon it for our commercial prosperity — we may begin to measure the value of a theory, if only that theory be a true one. It would be hazardous to prophesy that Mr. Everett's theories were also to produce such remarkable effects. History does not usually repeat itself in that way. But that he has also, like Bacon, been instrumental in bringing somewhat out of darkness into daylight, I venture to say will one day be admitted.

Take, to commence with, his definition of logic, which is also the title to his book — "the science of thought." What light that throws upon the subject at once! The indistinct impressions of those who have so long used the word without knowing what it meant, must now be cleared up. Statements are logical which are made according to those laws which govern the correct use of our minds; and the illogical is what results from mental perversion. Notice how this widens our horizon. The old theory was that logic had only to do with the truth or falsehood of arguments, but here we have it extended over every department of human activity; for there is nothing done

but what mind directs the doing of it; and to be done well and wisely, it must be done logically too. The most practical arts, and most abstract sciences as well, are then in direct dependence upon this new system of reasoning, which indeed has long been in use with the best reasoners, such as Shakespeare and Lessing, but for want of explanation has remained even to philosophers unknown.

From the time of Aristotle to the opening of the present century, logic had remained almost entirely unprogressive. What is now taught in the schools of England and America is Aristotle's theory of logic, invented by him twenty-two centuries ago, at a historic period of great intellectual brilliancy indeed, but at the same time one almost destitute of science and scholarship. Fortunately few ever undertake to use it in practice. During the middle ages, when people did use it, the result was such an enormous mass of tangled and twisted discussions as modern times only look at to laugh over. To the great German Hegel belongs the honor of taking up again the thread where Aristotle had let it fall. He was the inventor, and Mr. Everett now the translator, although not without considerable invention, too, of his own. What Hegel in his effort for discovery stated in so difficult and obscure a manner that even in Germany his name has become a symbol for perplexity, Mr. Everett has been so fortunate as to explain in a style so clear and intelligible as English prose has rarely seen before. Schopenhauer and Stuart Mill have also stood behind Mr. Everett's work to a slight extent, but, for all that, there is such value in the

superior form of his statement that we must still consider the entire book in the light of an original production.

To explain this new system of reasoning satisfactorily would require hardly less space than Mr. Everett himself has given to it. Where a subject is so vast as the domain of thought, it is not to be described, or even more than hinted at, in any such sketch as the present. If one or two principal points are seized upon and put forward in a clear light, something, however, will be gained, and public attention, it is to be hoped, attracted in the right direction.

One such point we find in the statement that logic is not, and never can be, an exact science. As far as Truth extends its path into the region of the unknown, Logic must march with her, and be at the same time both guide and follower. As fast as human thought improves, the science of thought will have a chance to improve with it, in the same way that chemistry must be ready at any moment to accept the discovery of a new element or chemical principle. This is in direct contradiction of the old doctrine which teaches that logic is only concerned with the *form* of thought, not with *thought itself*, and therefore to be contained in certain rigid formulas, the complete mastery of which would enable the student to reason correctly under all circumstances. Instead of doing so, however, it rather tends to make him dogmatic and sophistical. The difference is like that between a progressive and a stationary civilization. Then, since the progress to be real must be unlimited, we

feel ourselves enabled, with the prospect before us, not only of making infinite new discoveries, but infinite improvement of the means of discovery. The deficiencies of the old system in this respect are just what inclined Bacon to throw it aside altogether and adopt a new method of his own. In his day it stood in the way of physical science, but now with us in the way of metaphysical — although, what at first sight seems rather strange, not so much so as that very method which Bacon's genius established.

The most important difference, however, the precise point where Hegel and Everett leave all predecessors behind them, is in their treatment of the syllogism. Every one is familiar with the old Aristotelic syllogism, its major premise, minor premise, and conclusion. One quite common example in the schools is: —

> "No person deserving respect is a boaster; but
> Some heroes are boasters; and therefore
> Some heroes do not deserve respect."

By means of an A B C formula this was changed into four different figures, all of them amounting to pretty much the same thing, as, for instance, "No boaster deserves respect," in place of "No person deserving respect is a boaster." Each particular argument which came into the mind, or issued from the lips of man, was to be reduced to this form, and its truth or falsehood decided by simply ascertaining whether the minor premise was really included by the major or not. To make this reduction correctly, however, it was

necessary to use a contrivance of five Latin verses to assist the memory, a contrivance which Mr. DeMorgan, an English logician of the old school, has named "the magic words more full of meaning than any that were ever made," and they certainly are wonderful after their fashion. Here we have them: —

> **Barbara, Celarent, Darii, Ferioque prioris,**
> **Cesare, Camestres, Festino, Baroko secundæ,**
> **Tertia Darapti, Disamis, Datisi, Felapton,**
> **Bokardo, Ferison habet. Quarta insuper addit,**
> **Bramantip, Camenes, Dimaris, Fesapo, Fresison.**

Of course, it is evident to all practical persons that no effective thinking can be done while a man's brain is encumbered with such a load as that. In justice to Mr. DeMorgan's own writings, it should be said that he probably never used it himself. To explain the special significance of each of these magic words, and the way in which they can be made to work, would require many pages of difficult reading, and even then might not help us to a better understanding of the case. It is enough to have taken this bird's-eye view of the Aristotelic syllogism, and perceived in a rough general way what its special characteristics are. Now let us look at the Hegelian.

In the argument, "No person deserving respect is a boaster, and some heroes are boasters, and therefore some heroes do not deserve respect," the conclusion is undoubtedly correct if we can be sure, among other things, that the first clause is true. But this *if* is just what probably gave Hegel the key to his great discovery. How are

we to know whether it is true or not? Evidently not by means of other syllogisms of this same kind. Where are we to find a major premise which will now and forever be absolutely true? The universal consent of the human race would not make one so as long as the possibility remained of one individual changing his mind. Some sceptics may even be found who will demand proof of the fact that all men are mortal; and how are you going to prove that they are? In the case of the example given above, any discriminating person acting upon common-sense principles would declare at once that the major premise was false — not because boasters do deserve respect, but because a man may have many virtues, and be a boaster besides. Common sense, however, works without explaining itself, and cannot be taken as a standard for us to judge by. Hegel knows better than the common sense of most men. He tells us that we must have two other forms of the syllogism to prove and correct the first, the three together forming a triad, mutually supporting each other. The one already given, the Aristotelic, is called Deduction; the second, the Baconian, Induction; and the third, belonging especially to Hegel, Identification. Mr. Everett represents them by the formulas

I P U, P I U, and I U P,

in which U represents the universal, P the particular, and I the Individual term; the important point in each form being, which of the three terms connects the two others. It makes no difference

which stands first or last; we can have U P I as well as I P U. "*John is mortal because all men are mortal.*" The individual *John* is connected with the universal term *mortal* by means of the particular term *men.*

It is proved that John is mortal if we are sure at the same time that all men are mortal, and that John is a man. These facts are necessary to make the deduction of any value, and how are we to obtain them? The second form, the Inductive, gives us P I U, or "Man is mortal because John is mortal," only in this case it is not really John but our experience of all other men besides John that we insert for the individual term. Also the third form, that of Identification, ends the series, convincing us in the formula I U P that John is a man because he possesses those marks and peculiarities which distinguish mankind from brutes. In going through this process, however, and in the second step as well, we shall find ourselves continually falling back for support upon the two other forms of the syllogism. Thus do we arrive at a unity in the three, a sort of logical trinity, by means of which the separate results of the different forms may be combined together in a harmonious and substantial whole. Indeed, no course of reasoning can be considered sound unless conducted by this method, and the results of deduction, induction, and identification are made to harmonize and combine with each other as naturally and perfectly as the elements in a chemical compound.

So far all seems sufficiently simple. But when we come to practical application, each form branches

out into a science by itself. The pursuit of these different sciences becomes an unlimited study, although not on that account an indefinite or obscure one. This will best be seen when we consider that in Induction alone the materials to be used are coextensive with the scientific knowledge of the world, and liable to increase with every future discovery. Full information in this regard, however, is not necessary for good reasoning. A certain amount of ignorance is inevitable in the best furnished minds, and every day we are all of us compelled to think and act according to the best light we have. A machinist may make good engines without knowing anything of the last invention in mechanics. He knows enough to be logical in his department. Common sense is the average logical power of the community. It has already been hinted that common sense and Hegelianism are not very different. It admits of progress, and becomes a better common sense as the community becomes more and more civilized. The best common sense for any individual must always be the amount of logical science which he is capable of putting to a practical application. It is necessary, however, that caution should be observed in this application, not to attempt to deal with problems more extensive than one's logical knowledge. The logic which will teach a man to get out of the way of a mad dog, though perfectly good and efficient for the occasion, is of a much lower degree than that a judge has need of to decide properly upon a case in court.

Mr. Everett sketches the outlines of these three

sciences, Deduction, Induction, and Identification, in a most clear and interesting manner. First, under Deduction we have a consideration of those transcendental facts or truths through which alone experience becomes possible. Existence, or the universal, comes before the particular and individual; and the very idea which would induce one to learn the lesson which experience teaches, must be admitted before any experience can take place. In this direction we are led into the provinces of Theology, Philosophy, Ethics, and Æsthetics. Knowledge and progress in truth, beauty, and goodness are requisite for sound deductive reasoning. This is certainly the most abstruse and difficult branch of the subject. But it must be a great satisfaction to those who esteem the good and beautiful as well as cold truth, to find that these also are logical. The old system leaves no place for such an idea. In that, logic was an inflexible mathematical form, rigid as a railroad track — upon which, indeed, those who would educate their minds were to be dragged along at such a rate that no sight could be had of what the world and life was made of.

With Induction we come upon the extensive array of the natural sciences and the correct course of pursuing them. A number of facts are collected together. On examination a certain similarity is detected among them, which leads to the suspicion that a natural law pervades the group. This law immediately has to be tested by application to other facts, and if it agrees with all the instances we know of, then its real existence may

be inferred. Absolute certainty, however, is not assured until the rule thus obtained has been put into the other two forms of syllogism also, and found to answer for what they require of it. There is a distinction, however, to be drawn between rules which may be temporarily serviceable, as a sort of scaffolding of thought, and those which have their origin in the nature of things, existing as necessary laws. Both are requisite, but the last are much more important than the first. The peculiar art of inductive reasoning consists in judging how many facts ought to be collected before we proceed to generalize from them. Clearly it is impossible to collect all facts, and hasty generalization from an insufficient number is the most common of all sources of error. No exact regulations can be given in this direction; but much experience in thinking and testing the truth of one's thoughts finally gives a sort of intuitive perception of when the right point has been reached. Practice, also, and the sense of harmony which is innate in all good minds, give intuitively the power to reach true generalizations from very few instances, or even from only one. Drawing inferences from a single example, however, can only be done by the class we call geniuses, — those wonderfully endowed minds whose action, even in unconscious moments, is similar to that of the universal laws. Analogy, or what the phrenologists call comparison, is another variety of inductive reasoning. The old school admit it only in the way of a rhetorical finish to other and more solid arguments. They say, "Compare a man with

a horse, if you like, for the sake of a figure of speech, but not for practical purposes." Mr. Everett, on the contrary, explains how all things in the world, physical and metaphysical, are related to each other as the parts of an organic whole, and are not to be justly considered except through this faculty of comparison. In truth, considering our present lack of facts sufficiently broad to serve for universal terms in deduction, Analogy, raised to this high rank, becomes at least as important as any other branch of reasoning. It might be called the poetic form of logic, because poets so much depend upon it; and on that account there is more correct reasoning in Homer's Iliad than in all the metaphysics written previous to the last century. A satisfactory explanation of how the science of thought is concerned with poetry as the highest form in which mind ever states itself, is yet among the things of the future. We yet await the philosopher who shall tell us wherein the superiority of Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare consists. Mr. Wasson, in his Epic Philosophy,[1] has opened the doorway in this direction, but the grandeur and beauty of a new unappropriated world is yet to be sought for in the subject.

In the third and last form of the syllogism another and quite different process must be followed. In order to identify the individual "John" with the particular "man," we have to observe and note down all the general characteristics which belong to John, then consider whether they agree with the special characteristics of man. For such an opera-

[1] *North American Review* for October, 1868.

tion rules and theories are of little use; it is rather the field of the scientific investigator. A good example would be, the discovery of a new species of fish, and the discussion which would follow as to which of the numerous genera of fishes it should properly be classed with. As heretofore, we have to face and overcome an element of uncertainty. Different authorities give different systems of classification, improvements are continually appearing, and, above all, it is difficult to decide at what point to draw the line where subdivision of genera into species is to stop. The very example you have in hand may be the cause of changing the arrangements of whole groups. This uncertainty, however, is not illogical, as I have already tried to prove. Its right interpretation is, that we should not consider our results too much as absolute facts, but as being the best to be had now, and to be acted on in the way a merchant invests his money where there is the greatest probability of gain. It also teaches a careful and studious investigation of the world as it is, and admonishes not to hurry on hastily to unripe conclusions.

In Identification, as already in Deduction and Induction, the other two forms of the syllogism play an important part. The naturalist reasons down from all the established facts in regard to fishes, and up from the peculiarities of the specimen before him. Thus is the unity and mutual dependence of the three established. To quote Mr. Everett's own words, "The first form is that of abstract deduction. The second that of comparison. The scattered objects of the world are taken

in all their diversity and arranged over against each other. The third brings us to concrete individuality, and thus appropriately forms the climax and close of the series." The new system is, indeed, compared with the old, what a living, active, thinking human being is to an Egyptian mummy. The last is an historical relic, valuable and interesting to the student; but the first is the real fact of to-day, on a mission of vital imporance, and with all the great possibilities of the future before him.

POSTSCRIPT.

Now that I take up this book again, after many years, I am more than ever astonished at its clearness, its simplicity, its completeness, — in short, its rare perfection. I cannot hear of another book like it in any language, at least, no philosophical work. As D. A. Wasson has said, it can only be compared to Bacon's Exposition of the Inductive Method. If the study of logic, which has always been considered difficult, can be made as easy as reading a novel at forty pages an hour, there is good hope that other branches of metaphysics may yet be made more intelligible and interesting than they are at present. This were a better objective for writers to aim at than to spend their spare hours in controversies with one another. As a matter of course, Rev. Mr. Everett's work has not received the recognition it deserves, and another century may pass by before this happens. Let us trust that in the mean while it may not fall into oblivion. Those instructors who have given it to their classes have been surprised at the eagerness and enthusiasm with which their scholars seized upon it. It ought to be translated into other languages.

I knew an undergraduate who studied Bowen's

Logic for sveral months before he discovered that it had anything to do with the operations of his own mind. The art of reasoning should be taught practically as well as theoretically, as sophistry was among the Greeks. Problems in logic might be given to the students to solve, as they are now in mathematics. This would make the recitations more interesting, and the instructors might also learn something. What can be more important than that educated men should learn to reason correctly? As the case now stands, lawyers are the best logicians, and doctors are the worst, because the former always argue before a judge, and the latter can rarely be called to account for what they say or do. I do not often take up a book, newspaper, or periodical but I meet with some instances of erroneous reasoning which were evidently not intended for misrepresentations. The following example will illustrate this point: —

When Cæsar was about to take possession of the Roman treasury one of the senators interposed to prevent him, but Cæsar said, "If you stand in my way, I shall have you put to death; and it will be easier to do it than to say it." A certain famous writer comments upon this anecdote, saying, "It must be confessed that an entire lack of principle gives a man great power." According to the old method this would be looked upon as a satisfactory deduction; but it is really very bad logic. It is in fact no deduction at all, but an induction from a single instance, and needs to be identified with other instances before it can be accepted as the living truth. There are, indeed, a few incidents in

Cæsar's career which tend to support this view, but the great majority of them are against it. He reformed the calendar, enacted just laws, was a constructive statesman, faithful to his friends and beyond measure merciful to his enemies. Such men cannot be wholly unprincipled. On the other hand, there are thousands of unprincipled men in the world who possess no power worth mentioning.

The doctrine of infant damnation is another case in point. This was falsely derived by the theologians from two dogmatic premises: First, that only Christians could go to heaven; second, that the rite of baptism was essential to becoming a Christian. Nothing could be more repugnant to the merciful and self-denying spirit of Christ than this infernal notion, and yet it has been believed in by many millions of people. Christ said, "Let little children come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," but the learned magnates of the church thought they knew better. In this instance identification was out of the question.

That legal enormity, the judicial combat of the feudal period, could only have originated in an age of extreme credulity. It was believed that a just God, if appealed to in a suitable manner, would always give victory to the right side. In the course of time men learned by induction that this was not the case.

Murat attempted to regain his kingdom of Naples by an enterprise based on Napoleon's return from Elba. He neglected to consider that Napoleon returned to his own country, and to a people

who honored him, while he was going back to a foreign country where the French have always been disliked. He lost his life from a lack of identification.

An English wit has said that studying Hegel was like walking the highway with a cannon-ball attached to each ankle; and there is a good deal of truth in this. Yet it is a highway which goes to the stars, and among a great many difficult and obscure sentences there are some which cannot be spared for their clear and luminous intelligence. He is in philosophy what Browning is in poetry — gold in the quartz rock which has to go through a milling process in our own minds before we can get at it. Later writers may have added to him or amended him, yet none of these have equalled him in breadth, or depth, or in that personal quality which gives distinction. He is one of the great figures of the past, and must remain so. His writings on politics and history are of the highest value. Next to Bismarck and Von Moltke, no other has done so much for German national unity, itself a historical event of the first magnitude. He created a new German Empire in the minds of his countrymen, and it only required the wand of the magician to give it external form. In Italy also he has had great influence, and has been largely studied by those statesmen who are now regenerating that country. Taine and Ernest Renan have drawn extensively from him. Sterling's "Secret of Hegel" is one of the best Scotch works on metaphysics. Perhaps he may yet regenerate America, after Rousseau's doctrine of political egotism has

borne its inevitable fruit. Instead of representing the executive as the servant of the people, Hegel would have him the servant of the state as an ideal. —a much nobler conception; but the reform in logic is his finest achievement.

FINIS.