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ESSAYS.

By RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOLUME II.

NEW YORK:
A. L. BURT, PUBLISHER.

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TO VIRU
ALBONIA

MORSE STEPHENS

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THE POET.

A moody child and wildly wise
Pursued the game with joyful eyes,
Which chose, like meteors, their way,
And rived the dark with private ray :
They overleapt the horizon's edge,
Searched with Apollo's privilege ;
Through man, and woman, and sea, and star,
Saw the dance of nature forward far ;
Through worlds, and races, and terms, and times,
Saw musical order, and pairing rhymes.

Olympian bards who sung
Divine ideas below,
Which always find us young
And always keep us so.

ESSAY I.

THE POET.

THOSE who are esteemed umpires of taste, are often persons who have acquired some knowledge of admired pictures or sculptures, and have an inclination for whatever is elegant; but if you inquire whether they are beautiful souls, and whether their own acts are like fair pictures, you learn that they are selfish and sensual. Their cultivation is local, as if you should rub a log of dry wood in one spot to produce fire, all the rest remaining cold. Their knowledge of the fine arts is some study of rules and particulars, or some limited judgment of color or form, which is exercised for amusement or for show. It is a proof of the shallowness of the doctrine of beauty, as it lies in the minds of our amateurs, that men seem to have lost the perception of the instant dependence of form upon soul. There is no doctrine of forms in our philosophy. We were put into our bodies, as fire is put into a pan, to be carried about;

but there is no accurate adjustment between the spirit and the organ, much less is the latter the germination of the former. So in regard to other forms, the intellectual men do not believe in any essential dependence of the material world on thought and volition. Theologians think it a pretty air-castle to talk of the spiritual meaning of a ship or a cloud, of a city or a contract, but they prefer to come again to the solid ground of historical evidence; and even the poets are contented with a civil and conformed manner of living, and to write poems from the fancy, at a safe distance from their own experience. But the highest minds of the world have never ceased to explore the double meaning, or, shall I say, the quadruple, or the centuple, or much more manifold meaning, of every sensuous fact: Orpheus, Empedocles, Heraclitus, Plato, Plutarch, Dante, Swedenborg, and the masters of sculpture, picture, and poetry. For we are not pans and barrows, nor even porters of the fire and torch-bearers, but children of the fire, made of it, and only the same divinity transmuted, and at two or three removes, when we know least about it. And this hidden truth, that the fountains whence all this river of Time, and its creatures, floweth, are intrinsically ideal and beautiful, draws us to the consideration of the nature and functions of the Poet, or

the man of Beauty, to the means and materials he uses, and to the general aspect of the art in the present time.

2. The breadth of the problem is great, for the poet is representative. He stands among partial men for the complete man, and apprises us not of his wealth, but of the commonwealth. The young man reveres men of genius, because, to speak truly, they are more himself than he is. They receive of the soul as he also receives, but they more. Nature enhances her beauty, to the eye of loving men, from their belief that the poet is beholding her shows at the same time. He is isolated among his contemporaries, by truth and by his art, but with this consolation in his pursuits, that they will draw all men sooner or later. For all men live by truth, and stand in need of expression. In love, in art, in avarice, in politics, in labor, in games, we study to utter our painful secret. The man is only half himself, the other half is his expression.

3. Notwithstanding this necessity to be published, adequate expression is rare. I know not how it is that we need an interpreter; but the great majority of men seem to be miners, who have not yet come into possession of their own, or mutes, who cannot report the conversation they have had with nature. There is

no man who does not anticipate a supersensual utility in the sun, and stars, earth, and water. These stand and wait to render him a peculiar service. But there is some obstruction, ^{them} ~~or some excess of phlegm~~ in our constitution, which does not suffer them to yield the due effect. Too feeble fall the impressions of nature on us to make us artists. Every touch should thrill. Every man should be so much an artist, that he could report in conversation what had befallen him. Yet, in our experience, the rays or appulses have sufficient force to arrive at the senses, but not enough to reach the quick, and compel the reproduction of themselves in speech. The poet is the person in whom these powers are in balance, the man without impediment, who sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experience, and is representative of man, in virtue of being the largest power to receive and to impart.

For the Universe has three children, born at one time, which reappear, under different names, in every system of thought, whether they be called cause, operation, and effect; or, more poetically, Jove, Pluto, Neptune; or, theologically, the Father, the Spirit, and the Son; but which we will call here, the Knower, the Doer, and the Sayer. These stand respectively for the love of truth, for the love of good,

and for the love of beauty. These three are equal. Each is that which he is essentially, so that he cannot be surmounted or analyzed, and each of these three has the power of the others latent in him, and his own patent.

The poet is the sayer, the namer, and represents beauty. He is a sovereign, and stands on the centre. For the world is not painted, or adorned, but is from the beginning beautiful; and God has not made some beautiful things, but Beauty is the creator of the universe. Therefore the poet is not any permissive potentate, but is emperor in his own right. Criticism is infested with a cant of materialism, which assumes that manual skill and activity is the first merit of all men, and disparages such as say and do not, overlooking the fact that some men, namely, poets, are natural sayers, sent into the world to the end of expression, and confounds them with those whose province is action, but who quit it to imitate the sayers. But Homer's words are as costly and admirable to Homer, as Agamemnon's victories are to Agamemnon. The poet does not wait for the hero or the sage, but, as they act and think primarily, so he writes primarily what will and must be spoken, reckoning the others, though primaries also, yet, in respect to him, secondaries and servants; as sitters

or models in the studio of a painter, or as assistants who bring building materials to an architect.

For poetry was all written before time was, and whenever we are so finely organized that we can penetrate into that region where the air is music, we hear those primal warblings, and attempt to write them down, but we lose ever and anon a word, or a verse, and substitute something of our own, and thus miswrite the poem. The men of more delicate ear write down these cadences more faithfully, and these transcripts, though imperfect, become the songs of the nations. For nature is as truly beautiful as it is good, or as it is reasonable, and must as much appear, as it must be done, or be known. Words and deeds are quite indifferent modes of the divine energy. Words are also actions, and actions are a kind of words.

The sign and credentials of the poet are, that he announces that which no man foretold. He is the true and only doctor; he knows and tells; he is the only teller of news, for he was present and privy to the appearance which he describes. He is a beholder of ideas, and an utterer of the necessary and causal. For we do not speak now of men of poetical talents, or of industry and skill in metre, but of the true poet. I took part in a conversation the other day,

concerning a recent writer of lyrics, a man of subtle mind, whose head appeared to be a music-box of delicate tunes and rhythms, and whose skill, and command of language, we could not sufficiently praise. But when the question arose, whether he was not only a lyrist, but a poet, we were obliged to confess that he is plainly a contemporary, not an eternal man. He does not stand out of our low limitations, like a Chimborazo under the line, running up from the torrid base through all the climates of the globe, with belts of the herbage of every latitude on its high and mottled sides; but this genius is the landscape-garden of a modern house, adorned with fountains and statues, with well-bred men and women standing and sitting in the walks and terraces. We hear, through all the varied music, the ground-tone of conventional life. Our poets are men of talents who sing, and not the children of music. The argument is secondary, the finish of the verses is primary.

For it is not metres, but a metre-making argument, that makes a poem,—a thought so passionate and alive, that, like the spirit of a plant or an animal, it has an architecture of its own, and adorns nature with a new thing. The thought and the form are equal in the order of time, but in the order of genesis

the thought is prior to the form. The poet has a new thought: he has a whole new experience to unfold. he will tell us how it was with him, and all men will be the richer in his fortune. For, the experience of each new age requires a new confession, and the world seems always waiting for its poet. I remember, when I was young, how much I was moved one morning by tidings that genius had appeared in a youth who sat near me at table. He had left his work, and gone rambling none knew whither, and had written hundreds of lines, but could not tell whether that which was in him was therein told: he could tell nothing but that all was changed,—man, beast, heaven, earth, and sea. How gladly we listened! how credulous! Society seemed to be compromised. We sat in the aurora of a sunrise which was to put out all the stars. Boston seemed to be at twice the distance it had the night before, or was much farther than that. Rome,—what was Rome? Plutarch and Shakspeare were in the yellow leaf, and Homer no more should be heard of. It is much to know that poetry has been written this very day, under this very roof, by your side. What! that wonderful spirit has not expired! these stony moments are still sparkling and animated! I had fancied that the oracles were all silent, and nature had spent her fires,

and behold! all night, from every pore, these fine auroras have been streaming. Every one has some interest in the advent of the poet, and no one knows how much it may concern him. We know that the secret of the world is profound, but who or what shall be our interpreter, we know not. A mountain ramble, a new style of face, a new person, may put the key into our hands. Of course, the value of genius to us is in the veracity of its report. Talent may frolic and juggle; genius realizes and adds. Mankind, in good earnest, have availed so far in understanding themselves and their work, that the foremost watchman on the peak announces his news. It is the truest word ever spoken, and the phrase will be the fittest, most musical, and the unerring voice of the world for that time.

Q All that we call sacred history attests that the birth of a poet is the principal event in chronology. Man, never so often deceived, still watches for the arrival of a brother who can hold him steady to a truth, until he has made it his own. With what joy I begin to read a poem, which I confide in as an inspiration! And now my chains are to be broken; I shall mount above these clouds and opaque airs in which I live, —opaque, though they seem transparent,—and from the heaven of truth I shall see and comprehend my

relations. That will reconcile me to life, and renovate nature, to see trifles animated by a tendency, and to know what I am doing. Life will no more be a noise; now I shall see men and women, and know the signs by which they may be discerned from fools and satans. This day shall be better than my birthday: then I became an animal: now I am invited into the science of the real. Such is the hope, but the fruition is postponed. Oftener it falls, that this winged man, who will carry me into the heaven, whirls me into the clouds, then leaps and frisks about with me from cloud to cloud, still affirming that he is bound heavenward; and I, being myself a novice, am slow in perceiving that he does not know the way into the heavens, and is merely bent that I should admire his skill to rise, like a fowl or a flying fish, a little way from the ground or the water; but the all-piercing, all-feeding, and ocular air of heaven, that man shall never inhabit. I tumble down again soon into my old nooks, and lead the life of exaggerations as before, and have lost my faith in the possibility of any guide who can lead me thither where I would be.

✓ But leaving these victims of vanity, let us, with new hope, observe how nature, by worthier impulses, has ensured the poet's fidelity to his office of an-

nouncement and affirming, namely, by the beauty of things, which becomes a new, and higher beauty, when expressed. Nature offers all her creatures to him as a picture-language. Being used as a type, a second wonderful value appears in the object, far better than its old value, as the carpenter's stretched cord, if you hold your ear close enough, is musical in the breeze. "Things more excellent than every image," says Jamblichus, "are expressed through images." Things admit of being used as symbols, because nature is a symbol, in the whole, and in every part. Every line we can draw in the sand, has expression; and there is no body without its spirit or genius. All form is an effect of character; all condition, of the quality of the life; all harmony, of health; (and, for this reason, a perception of beauty should be sympathetic, or proper only to the good.) The beautiful rests on the foundations of the necessary. The soul makes the body, as the wise Spenser teaches:—

"So every spirit, as it is most pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer body doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairly dight,
With cheerful grace and amiable sight.
For, of the soul, the body form doth take,
For soul is form, and doth the body make."

Here we find ourselves, suddenly, not in a critical speculation, but in a holy place, and should go very warily and reverently. We stand before the secret of the world, there where Being passes into Appearance, and Unity into Variety.

The Universe is the externisation of the soul. Wherever the life is, that bursts into appearance around it. Our science is sensual, and therefore superficial. The earth, and the heavenly bodies, physics, and chemistry, we sensually treat, as if they were self-existent; but these are the retinue of that Being we have. "The mighty heaven," said Proclus, "exhibits, in its transfigurations, clear images of the splendor of intellectual perceptions; being moved in conjunction with the unapparent periods of intellectual natures." Therefore, science always goes abreast with the just elevation of the man, keeping step with religion and metaphysics; or, the state of science is an index of our self-knowledge. Since everything in nature answers to a moral power, if any phenomenon remains brute and dark, it is that the corresponding faculty in the observer is not yet active.

No wonder, then, if these waters be so deep, that we hover over them with a religious regard. The beauty of the fable proves the importance of the

sense ; to the poet, and to all others ; or, if you please, every man is so far a poet as to be susceptible of these enchantments of nature : for all men have the thoughts whereof the universe is the celebration. I find that the fascination resides in the symbol. Who loves nature ? Who does not ? Is it only poets, and men of leisure and cultivation, who live with her ? No ; but also hunters, farmers, grooms, and butchers, though they express their affection in their choice of life, and not in their choice of words. The writer wonders what the coachman or the hunter values in riding, in horses, and dogs. It is not superficial qualities. When you talk with him, he holds these at as slight a rate as you. His worship is sympathetic ; he has no definitions, but he is commanded in nature, by the living power which he feels to be there present. No imitation, or playing of these things, would content him ; he loves the earnest of the north-wind, of rain, of stone, and wood, and iron. A beauty not explicable, is dearer than a beauty which we can see to the end of. It is nature the symbol, nature certifying the supernatural, body overflowed by life, which he worships, with coarse, but sincere rites.

N) The inwardness, and mystery, of this attachment, drives men of every class to the use of emblems.

The schools of poets, and philosophers, are not more intoxicated with their symbols, than the populace with theirs. In our political parties, compute the power of badges and emblems. See the great ball which they roll from Baltimore to Bunker hill ! In the political processions, Lowell goes in a loom, and Lynn in a shoe, and Salem in a ship. Witness the cider-barrel, the log-cabin, the hickory-stick, the palmetto, and all the cognizances of party. See the power of national emblems. Some stars, lilies, leopards, a crescent, a lion, an eagle, or other figure, which came into credit God knows how, on an old rag of bunting, blowing in the wind, on a fort, at the ends of the earth, shall make the blood tingle under the rudest, or the most conventional exterior. The people fancy they hate poetry, and they are all poets and mystics !

Beyond this universality of the symbolic language, we are apprised of the divineness of this superior use of things, whereby the world is a temple, whose walls are covered with emblems, pictures, and commandments of the Deity, in this, that there is no fact in nature which does not carry the whole sense of nature ; and the distinctions which we make in events, and in affairs, of low and high, honest and base, disappear when nature is used as a symbol. Thought

makes everything fit for use. The vocabulary of an omniscient man would embrace words and images excluded from polite conversation. What would be base, or even obscene, to the obscene, becomes illustrious, spoken in a new connexion of thought. The piety of the Hebrew prophets purges their grossness. The circumcision is an example of the power of poetry to raise the low and offensive. Small and mean things serve as well as great symbols. The meaner the type by which a law is expressed, the more pungent it is, and the more lasting in the memories of men: just as we choose the smallest box, or case, in which any needful utensil can be carried. Bare lists of words are found suggestive, to an imaginative and excited mind; as it is related of Lord Chatham, that he was accustomed to read in Bailey's Dictionary, when he was preparing to speak in Parliament. The poorest experience is rich enough for all the purposes of expressing thought. Why covet a knowledge of new facts? Day and night, house and garden, a few books, a few actions, serve us as well as would all trades and all spectacles. We are far from having exhausted the significance of the few symbols we use. We can come to use them yet with a terrible simplicity. It does not need that a poem should be long. Every word was

once a poem. Every new relation is a new word. Also, we use defects and deformities to a sacred purpose, so expressing our sense that the evils of the world are such only to the evil eye. In the old mythology, mythologists observe, defects are ascribed to divine natures, as lameness to Vulcan, blindness to Cupid, and the like, to signify exuberances.

For, as it is dislocation and detachment from the life of God, that makes things ugly, the poet, who re-attaches things to nature and the Whole,—re-attaching even artificial things, and violations of nature, to nature, by a deeper insight,—disposes very easily of the most disagreeable facts. Readers of poetry see the factory-village and the railway, and fancy that the poetry of the landscape is broken up by these; for these works of art are not yet consecrated in their reading; but the poet sees them fall within the great Order not less than the bee-hive, or the spider's geometrical web. Nature adopts them very fast into her vital circles, and the gliding train of cars she loves like her own. Besides, in a central mind, it signifies nothing how many mechanical inventions you exhibit. Though you add millions, and never so surprising, the fact of mechanics has not gained a grain's weight. The spiritual fact remains unalterable, by many or by few particulars; as no mountain

is of any appreciable height to break the curve of the sphere. A shrewd country-boy goes to the city for the first time, and the complacent citizen is not satisfied with his little wonder. It is not that he does not see all the fine houses, and know that he never saw such before, but he disposes of them as easily as the poet finds place for the railway. The chief value of the new fact, is to enhance the great and constant fact of Life, which can dwarf any and every circumstance, and to which the belt of wampum, and the commerce of America, are alike. ¶ The world being thus put under the mind for verb and noun, the poet is he who can articulate it. For, though life is great, and fascinates, and absorbs,—and though all men are intelligent of the symbols through which it is named,—yet they cannot originally use them. We are symbols, and inhabit symbols; workman, work, and tools, words and things, birth and death, all are emblems; but we sympathize with the symbols, and, being infatuated with the economical uses of things, we do not know that they are thoughts. The poet, by an ulterior intellectual perception, gives them a power which makes their old use forgotten, and puts eyes, and a tongue, into every dumb and inanimate object. He perceives the independence of the thought on the symbol, the sta-

bility of the thought, the accidentcy and fugacity of the symbol. As the eyes of Lynceus were said to see through the earth, so the poet turns the world to glass, and shows us all things in their right series and procession. For, through that better perception, he stands one step nearer to things, and sees the flowing or metamorphosis; perceives that thought is multiform; that within the form of every creature is a force impelling it to ascend into a higher form; and, following with his eyes the life, uses the forms which express that life, and so his speech flows with the flowing of nature. All the facts of the animal economy, sex, nutriment, gestation, birth, growth, are symbols of the passage of the world into the soul of man, to suffer there a change, and reappear a new and higher fact. He uses forms according to the life, and not according to the form. This is true science. The poet alone knows astronomy, chemistry, vegetation, and animation, for he does not stop at these facts, but employs them as signs. He knows why the plain, or meadow of space, was strown with these flowers we call suns, and moons, and stars; why the great deep is adorned with animals, with men, and gods; for, in every word he speaks he rides on them as the horses of thought.

By virtue of this science the poet is the Namer, or

Language-maker, naming things sometimes after their appearance, sometimes after their essence, and giving to every one its own name and not another's, thereby rejoicing the intellect, which delights in detachment or boundary. The poets made all the words, and therefore language is the archives of history, and, if we must say it, a sort of tomb of the muses. For, though the origin of most of our words is forgotten, each word was at first a stroke of genius, and obtained currency, because for the moment it symbolized the world to the first speaker and to the hearer. The etymologist finds the deadest word to have been once a brilliant picture. Language is fossil poetry. As the limestone of the continent consists of infinite masses of the shells of animalcules, so language is made up of images, or tropes, which now, in their secondary use, have long ceased to remind us of their poetic origin. But the poet names the thing because he sees it, or comes one step nearer to it than any other. This expression, or naming, is not art, but a second nature, grown out of the first, as a leaf out of a tree. What we call nature, is a certain self-regulated motion, or change; and nature does all things by her own hands, and does not leave another to baptise her, but baptises herself; and this through the metamor-

phosis again. I remember that a certain poet described it to me thus :

Genius is the activity which repairs the decays of things, whether wholly or partly of a material and finite kind. Nature, through all her kingdoms, insures herself. Nobody cares for planting the poor fungus : so she shakes down from the gills of one agaric countless spores, any one of which, being preserved, transmits new billions of spores to-morrow or next day. The new agaric of this hour has a chance which the old one had not. This atom of seed is thrown into a new place, not subject to the accidents which destroyed its parent two rods off. She makes a man ; and having brought him to ripe age, she will no longer run the risk of losing this wonder at a blow, but she detaches from him a new self, that the kind may be safe from accidents to which the individual is exposed. So when the soul of the poet has come to ripeness of thought, she detaches and sends away from it its poems or songs,—a fearless, sleepless, deathless progeny, which is not exposed to the accidents of the weary kingdom of time : a fearless, vivacious offspring, clad with wings, (such was the virtue of the soul out of which they came), which carry them fast and far, and infix them irrecoverably

into the hearts of men. These wings are the beauty of the poet's soul. The songs, thus flying immortal from their mortal parent, are pursued by clamorous flights of censures, which swarm in far greater numbers, and threaten to devour them ; but these last are not winged. At the end of a very short leap they fall plump down, and rot, having received from the souls out of which they came no beautiful wings. But the melodies of the poet ascend, and leap, and pierce into the deeps of infinite time.

So far the bard taught me, using his freer speech. But nature has a higher end, in the production of new individuals, than security, namely, *ascension*, or, the passage of the soul into higher forms. I knew, in my younger days, the sculptor who made the statue of the youth which stands in the public garden. He was, as I remember, unable to tell, directly, what made him happy, or unhappy, but by wonderful indirections he could tell. He rose one day, according to his habit, before the dawn, and saw the morning break, grand as the eternity out of which it came, and, for many days after, he strove to express this tranquillity, and, lo ! his chisel had fashioned out of marble the form of a beautiful youth, Phosphorus, whose aspect is such, that, it is said, all

persons who look on it become silent. The poet also resigns himself to his mood, and that thought which agitated him is expressed, but *alter idem*, in a manner totally new. The expression is organic, or, the new type which things themselves take when liberated. As, in the sun, objects paint their images on the retina of the eye, so they, sharing the aspiration of the whole universe, tend to paint a far more delicate copy of their essence in his mind. Like the metamorphosis of things into higher organic forms, is their change into melodies. Over everything stands its dæmon, or soul, and, as the form of the thing is reflected by the eye, so the soul of the thing is reflected by a melody. The sea, the mountain-ridge, Niagara, and every flower-bed, pre-exist, or super-exist, in pre-cantations, which sail like odors in the air, and when any man goes by with an ear sufficiently fine, he overhears them, and endeavors to write down the notes, without diluting or depraving them. And herein is the legitimation of criticism, in the mind's faith, that the poems are a corrupt version of some text in nature, with which they ought to be made to tally. A rhyme in one of our sonnets should not be less pleasing than the iterated nodes of a sea-shell, or the resembling difference of a group of flowers. The pairing of the birds is an idyl, not

tedious as our idyls are ; a tempest is a rough ode without falsehood or rant ; a summer, with its harvest sown, reaped, and stored, is an epic song, subordinating how many admirably executed parts. Why should not the symmetry and truth that modulate these, glide into our spirits, and we participate the invention of nature ?

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 This insight, which expresses itself by what is called Imagination, is a very high sort of seeing, which does not come by study, but by the intellect being where and what it sees, by sharing the path, or circuit of things through forms, and so making them translucid to others. The path of things is silent. Will they suffer a speaker to go with them ? A spy they will not suffer ; a lover, a poet, is the transcendency of their own nature,—him they will suffer. The condition of true naming, on the poet's part, is his resigning himself to the divine *aura* which breathes through forms, and accompanying that.

It is a secret which every intellectual man quickly learns, that, beyond the energy of his possessed and conscious intellect, he is capable of a new energy (as of an intellect doubled on itself), by abandonment to the nature of things ; that, besides his privacy of power as an individual man, there is a great public power, on which he can draw, by unlocking, at all

risks, his human doors, and suffering the ethereal tides to roll and circulate through him ; then he is caught up into the life of the Universe, his speech is thunder, his thought is law, and his words are universally intelligible as the plants and animals. The poet knows that he speaks adequately, then, only when he speaks somewhat wildly, or, "with the flower of the mind ;" not with the intellect, used as an organ, but with the intellect released from all service, and suffered to take its direction from its celestial life ; or, as the ancients were wont to express themselves, not with intellect alone, but with the intellect inebriated by nectar. As the traveller who has lost his way, throws his reins on his horse's neck, and trusts to the instinct of the animal to find his road, so must we do with the divine animal who carries us through this world. For if in any manner we can stimulate this instinct, new passages are opened for us into nature, the mind flows into and through things hardest and highest, and the metamorphosis is possible.

This is the reason why bards love wine, mead, narcotics, coffee, tea, opium, the fumes of sandal-wood and tobacco, or whatever other species of animal exhilaration. All men avail themselves of such means as they can, to add this extraordinary power to their

normal powers; and to this end they prize conversation, music, pictures, sculpture, dancing, theatres, travelling, war, mobs, fires, gaming, politics, or love, or science, or animal intoxication, which are several coarser or finer *quasi*-mechanical substitutes for the true nectar, which is the ravishment of the intellect by coming nearer to the fact. These are auxiliaries to the centrifugal tendency of a man; to his passage out into free space, and they help him to escape the custody of that body in which he is pent up, and of that jail-yard of individual relations in which he is enclosed. Hence a great number of such as were professionally expressors of Beauty, as painters, poets, musicians, and actors, have been more than others wont to lead a life of pleasure and indulgence, all but the few who received the true nectar; and, as it was a spurious mode of attaining freedom, as it was an emancipation not into the heavens, but into the freedom of baser places, they were punished for that advantage they won, by a dissipation and deterioration. But never can any advantage be taken of nature by a trick. The spirit of the world, the great calm presence of the creator, comes not forth to the sorceries of opium or of wine. The sublime vision comes to the pure and simple soul in a clean and chaste body. That is not an inspiration which

we owe to narcotics, but some counterfeit excitement and fury. Milton says, that the lyric poet may drink wine and live generously, but the epic poet, he who shall sing of the gods, and their descent unto men, must drink water out of a wooden bowl. For poetry is not 'Devil's wine,' but God's wine. It is with this as it is with toys. We fill the hands and nurseries of our children with all manner of dolls, drums, and horses, withdrawing their eyes from the plain face and sufficing objects of nature, the sun, and moon, the animals, the water, and stones, which should be their toys. So the poet's habit of living should be set on a key so low and plain, that the common influences should delight him. His cheerfulness should be the gift of the sunlight; the air should suffice for his inspiration, and he should be tipsy with water. That spirit which suffices quiet hearts, which seems to come forth to such from every dry knoll of sere grass, from every pine-stump, and half-inbedded stone, on which the dull March sun shines, comes forth to the poor and hungry, and such as are of simple taste. If thou fill thy brain with Boston and New York, with fashion and covetousness, and wilt stimulate thy jaded senses with wine and French coffee, thou shalt find no radiance of wisdom in the lonely waste of the pinewood.

If the imagination intoxicates the poet, it is not inactive in other men. The metamorphosis excites in the beholder an emotion of joy. The use of symbols has a certain power of emancipation and exhilaration for all men. We seem to be touched by a wand, which makes us dance and run about happily, like children. We are like persons who come out of a cave or cellar into the open air. This is the effect on us of tropes, fables, oracles, and all poetic forms. Poets are thus liberating gods. Men have really got a new sense, and found within their world, another world, or nest of worlds; for, the metamorphosis once seen, we divine that it does not stop. I will not now consider how much this makes the charm of algebra and the mathematics, which also have their tropes, but it is felt in every definition; as, when Aristotle defines *space* to be an immovable vessel, in which things are contained;—or, when Plato defines a *line* to be a flowing point; or, *figure* to be a bound of solid; and many the like. What a joyful sense of freedom we have, when Vitruvius announces the old opinion of artists that no architect can build any house well, who does not know something of anatomy. When Socrates, in Charmides, tells us that the soul is cured of its maladies by certain incantations, and that these incantations are

beautiful reasons, from which temperance is generated in souls ; when Plato calls the world an animal ; and Timæus affirms that the plants also are animals ; or affirms a man to be a heavenly tree, growing with his root, which is his head, upward ; and, as George Chapman, following him, writes,—

“ So in our tree of man, whose nerve root
Spirits in his top ; ”

when Orpheus speaks of hoariness as “ that white flower which marks extreme old age ; ” when Proclus calls the universe the statue of the intellect ; when Chaucer, in his praise of ‘ Gentilesse,’ compares good blood in mean condition to fire, which, though carried to the darkest house betwixt this and the mount of Caucasus, will yet hold its natural office, and burn as bright as if twenty thousand men did it behold ; when John saw, in the apocalypse, the ruin of the world through evil, and the stars fall from heaven, as the figtree casteth her untimely fruit ; when Æsop reports the whole catalogue of common daily relations through the masquerade of birds and beasts ;—we take the cheerful hint of the immortality of our essence, and its versatile habit and escapes, as when the gypsies say, “ it is in vain to hang them, they cannot die.”

7 The poets are thus liberating gods. The ancient British bards had for the title of their order, "Those who are free, throughout the world." They are free, and they make free. An imaginative book renders us much more service at first, by stimulating us through its tropes, than afterward, when we arrive at the precise sense of the author. I think nothing is of any value in books, excepting the transcendental and extraordinary. If a man is inflamed and carried away by his thoughts, to that degree that he forgets the authors and the public, and heeds only this one dream, which holds him like an insanity, let me read his paper, and you may have all the arguments and histories and criticism. All the value which attaches to Pythagoras, ~~Paracelsus~~, Cornelius Agrippa, Cardan, Kepler, Swedenborg, Schelling, Oken, or any other who introduces questionable facts into his cosmogony, as angels, devils, magic, astrology, palmistry, mesmerism, and so on, is the certificate we have of departure from routine, and that here is a new witness. That also is the best success in conversation, the magic of liberty, which puts the world, like a ball, in our hands. How cheap even the liberty then seems; how mean to study, when an emotion communicates to the intellect the power to sap and upheave nature: how

great the perspective! nations, times, systems, enter and disappear, like threads in tapestry of large figure and many colors; dream delivers us to dream, and, while the drunkenness lasts, we will sell our bed, our philosophy, our religion, in our opulence.

There is good reason why we should prize this liberation. The fate of the poor shepherd, who, blinded and lost in the snow-storm, perishes in a drift within a few feet of his cottage door, is an emblem of the state of man. On the brink of the waters of life and truth, we are miserably dying. The inaccessibleness of every thought but that we are in, is wonderful. What if you come near to it,—you are as remote, when you are nearest, as when you are farthest. Every thought is also a prison; every heaven is also a prison. Therefore we love the poet, the inventor, who in any form, whether in an ode, or in an action, or in looks and behavior, has yielded us a new thought. He unlocks our chains, and admits us to a new scene.

This emancipation is dear to all men, and the power to impart it, as it must come from greater depth and scope of thought, is a measure of intellect. Therefore all books of the imagination endure, all which ascend to that truth, that the writer sees nature beneath him, and uses it as his exponent.

Every verse or sentence, possessing this virtue, will take care of its own immortality. The religions of the world are the ejaculations of a few imaginative men. *

But the quality of the imagination is to flow, and not to freeze. The poet did not stop at the color, or the form, but read their meaning; neither may he rest in this meaning, but he makes the same objects exponents of his new thought. Here is the difference betwixt the poet and the mystic, that the last nails a symbol to one sense, which was a true sense for a moment, but soon becomes old and false. For all symbols are fluxional; all language is vehicular and transitive, and is good, as ferries and horses are, for conveyance, not as farms and houses are, for homestead. Mysticism consists in the mistake of an accidental and individual symbol for an universal one. The morning-redness happens to be the favorite meteor to the eyes of Jacob Behmen, and comes to stand to him for truth and faith; and he believes should stand for the same realities to every reader. But the first reader prefers as naturally the symbol of a mother and child, or a gardener and his bulb, or a jeweller polishing a gem. Either of these, or of a myriad more, are equally good to the person to whom they are significant. Only they

must be held lightly, and be very willingly translated into the equivalent terms which others use. And the mystic must be steadily told,—All that you say is just as true without the tedious use of that symbol as with it. Let ~~us~~ have a little algebra, instead of this trite rhetoric,—universal signs, instead of these village symbols,—and we shall both be gainers. The history of hierarchies seems to show, that all religious error consisted in making the symbol too stark and solid, and, at last, nothing but an excess of the organ of language.

Swedenborg, of all men in the recent ages, stands eminently for the translator of nature into thought. I do not know the man in history to whom things stood so uniformly for words. Before him the metamorphosis continually plays. Everything on which his eye rests, obeys the impulses of moral nature. The figs become grapes whilst he eats them. When some of his angels affirmed a truth, the laurel twig which they held blossomed in their hands. The noise which, at a distance, appeared like gnashing and thumping, on coming nearer was found to be the voice of disputants. The men, in one of his visions, seen in heavenly light, appeared like dragons, and seemed in darkness: but, to each other, they appeared as men, and, when the light from heaven shone

into their cabin, they complained of the darkness, and were compelled to shut the window that they might see.

There was this perception in him, which makes the poet or seer, an object of awe and terror, namely, that the same man, or society of men, may wear one aspect to themselves and their companions, and a different aspect to higher intelligences. Certain priests, whom he describes as conversing very learnedly together, appeared to the children, who were at some distance, like dead horses: and many the like misappearances. And instantly the mind inquires, whether these fishes under the bridge, yonder oxen in the pasture, those dogs in the yard, are immutably fishes, oxen, and dogs, or only so appear to me, and perchance to themselves appear unright men; and whether I appear as a man to all eyes. The Bramins and Pythagoras propounded the same question, and if any poet has witnessed the transformation, he doubtless found it in harmony with various experiences. We have all seen changes as considerable in wheat and caterpillars. He is the poet, and shall draw us with love and terror, who sees, through the flowing vest, the firm nature, and can declare it.

I look in vain for the poet whom I describe. We do not, with sufficient plainness, or sufficient pro-

foundness, address ourselves to life, nor dare we chaunt our own times and social circumstances. If we filled the day with bravery, we should not shrink from celebrating it. Time and nature yield us many gifts, but not yet the timely man, the new religion, the reconciler, whom all things await. Dante's praise is, that he dared to write his autobiography in colossal cipher, or into universality. We have yet had no genius in America, with tyrannous eye, which knew the value of our incomparable materials, and saw, in the barbarism and materialism of the times, another carnival of the same gods whose picture he so much admires in Homer; then in the middle age; then in Calvinism. Banks and tariffs, the newspaper and caucus, methodism and unitarianism, are flat and dull to dull people, but rest on the same foundations of wonder as the town of Troy, and the temple of Delphos, and are as swiftly passing away. Our log-rolling, our stumps and their politics, our fisheries, our Negroes, and Indians, our boats, and our repudiations, the wrath of rogues, and the pusillanimity of honest men, the northern trade, the southern planting, the western clearing, Oregon, and Texas, are yet unsung. Yet America is a poem in our eyes; its ample geography dazzles the imagination, and it will not wait long for metres. If I have not found

that excellent combination of gifts in my countrymen which I seek, neither could I aid myself to fix the idea of the poet by reading now and then in Chalmers's collection of five centuries of English poets. These are wits, more than poets, though there have been poets among them. But when we adhere to the ideal of the poet, we have our difficulties even with Milton and Homer. Milton is too literary, and Homer too literal and historical.

But I am not wise enough for a national criticism, and must use the old largeness a little longer, to discharge my errand from the muse to the poet concerning his art.

Art is the path of the creator to his work. The paths, or methods, are ideal and eternal, though few men ever see them, not the artist himself for years, or for a lifetime, unless he come into the conditions. The painter, the sculptor, the composer, the epic rhapsodist, the orator, all partake one desire, namely, to express themselves symmetrically and abundantly not dwarfishly and fragmentarily. They found or put themselves in certain conditions, as, the painter and sculptor before some impressive human figures; the orator, into the assembly of the people; and the others, in such scenes as each has found exciting to his intellect and each presently feels the new desire

He hears a voice, he sees a beckoning. Then he is apprised, with wonder, what herds of dæmons hem him in. He can no more rest; he says, with the old painter, "By God, it is in me, and must go forth of me." He pursues a beauty, half seen, which flies before him. The poet pours out verses in every solitude. Most of the things he says are conventional, no doubt; but by and by he says something which is original and beautiful. That charms him. He would say nothing else but such things. In our way of talking, we say, 'That is yours, this is mine;' but the poet knows well that it is not his; that it is as strange and beautiful to him as to you; he would fain hear the like eloquence at length. Once having tasted this immortal ichor, he cannot have enough of it, and, as an admirable creative power exists in these intellections, it is of the last importance that these things get spoken. What a little of all we know is said! What drops of all the sea of our science are baled up! and by what accident it is that these are exposed, when so many secrets sleep in nature! Hence the necessity of speech and song; hence these throbs and heart-beatings in the orator, at the door of the assembly, to the end, namely, that thought may be ejaculated as Logos, or Word.

¶ Doubt not, O poet, but persist. Say, 'It is in me,

and shall out.' Stand there, baulked and dumb, stuttering and stammering, hissed and hooted, stand and strive, until, at last, rage draw out of thee that *dream*-power which every night shows thee is thine own ; a power transcending all limit and privacy, and by virtue of which a man is the conductor of the whole river of electricity. Nothing walks, or creeps, or grows, or exists, which must not in turn arise and walk before him as exponent of his meaning. Comes he to that power, his genius is no longer exhaustible. All the creatures, by pairs and by tribes, pour into his mind as into a Noah's ark, to come forth again to people a new world. This is like the stock of air for our respiration, or for the combustion of our fire-place, not a measure of gallons, but the entire atmosphere if wanted. And therefore the rich poets, as Homer, Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Raphael, have obviously no limits to their works, except the limits of their lifetime, and resemble a mirror carried through the street, ready to render an image of every created thing.

NO poet ! a new nobility is conferred in groves and pastures, and not in castles, or by the sword-blade, any longer. The conditions are hard, but equal. Thou shalt leave the world, and know the muse only. Thou shalt not know any longer the times, customs,

graces, politics, or opinions of men, but shalt take all from the muse. For the time of towns is tolled from the world by funereal chimes, but in nature the universal hours are counted by succeeding tribes of animals and plants, and by growth of joy on joy. God wills also that thou abdicate a manifold and duplex life, and that thou be content that others speak for thee. Others shall be thy gentlemen, and shall represent all courtesy and worldly life for thee; others shall do the great and resounding actions also. Thou shalt lie close hid with nature, and canst not be afforded to the Capitol or the Exchange. The world is full of renunciations and apprenticeships, and this is thine: thou must pass for a fool and a churl for a long season. This is the screen and sheath in which Pan has protected his well-beloved flower, and thou shalt be known only to thine own, and they shall console thee with tenderest love. ~~And thou shalt not be able to rehearse the names of thy~~ friends in thy verse, for an old shame before the holy ideal. And this is the reward: that the ideal shall be real to thee, and the impressions of the actual world shall fall like summer rain, copious, but not troublesome, to thy invulnerable essence. Thou shalt have the whole land for thy park and manor, the sea for thy bath and navigation, without tax and

without envy; the woods and the rivers thou shalt own; and thou shalt possess that wherein others are only tenants and boarders. Thou true land-lord! sea-lord! air-lord! Wherever snow falls, or water flows, or birds fly, wherever day and night meet in twilight, wherever the blue heaven is hung by clouds, or sown with stars, wherever are forms with transparent boundaries, wherever are outlets into celestial space, wherever is danger, and awe, and love, there is Beauty, plenteous as rain, shed for thee, and though thou shouldest walk the world over, thou shalt not be able to find a condition inopportune or ignoble.

EXPERIENCE.

THE lords of life, the lords of life,
I saw them pass,
In their own guise,
Like and unlike,
Portly and grim,
Use and Surprise,
Surface and Dream,
Succession swift, and spectral Wrong,
Temperament without a tongue,
And the inventor of the game
Omnipresent without name;—
Some to see, some to be guessed,
They marched from east to west:
Little man, least of all,
Among the legs of his guardians tall,
Walked about with puzzled look:—
Him by the hand dear nature took;
Dearest nature, strong and kind,
Whispered, 'Darling, never mind!
To-morrow they will wear another face,
The founder thou! 'these are thy race!'

ESSAY II.

EXPERIENCE.

WHERE do we find ourselves? In a series of which we do not know the extremes, and believe that it has none. We wake and find ourselves on a stair; there are stairs below us, which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one, which go upward and out of sight. But the Genius which, according to the old belief, stands at the door by which we enter, and gives us the lethe to drink, that we may tell no tales, mixed the cup too strongly, and we cannot shake off the lethargy now at noon day. Sleep lingers all our lifetime about our eyes, as night hovers all day in the boughs of a fir-tree. All things swim and glitter. Our life is not so much threatened as our perception. Ghost-like we glide through nature, and should not know our place again. Did our birth fall in some fit of indigence and frugality in nature, that she was so sparing of her fire and so liberal of her earth, that it ap-

pears to us that we lack the affirmative principle, and though we have health and reason, yet we have no superfluity of spirit for new creation? We have enough to live and bring the year about, but not an ounce to impart or to invest. Ah that our Genius were a little more of a genius! We are like millers on the lower levels of a stream, when the factories above them have exhausted the water. We too fancy that the upper people must have raised their dams.

If any of us knew what we are doing, or where we are going, then when we think we best know! We do not know to-day whether we are busy or idle. In times when we thought ourselves indolent, we have afterwards discovered, that much was accomplished, and much was begun in us. All our days are so unprofitable while they pass, that 'tis wonderful where or when we ever got anything of this which we call wisdom, poetry, virtue. We never got it on any dated calendar day. Some heavenly days must have been intercalated somewhere, like those that Hermes won with dice of the Moon, that Osiris might be born. It is said, all martyrdoms looked mean when they were suffered. Every ship is a romantic object, except that we sail in. Embark, and the romance quits our vessel, and hangs on

every other sail in the horizon. Our life looks trivial, and we shun to record it. Men seem to have learned of the horizon the art of perpetual retreating and reference. ‘Yonder uplands are rich pasturage, and my neighbor has fertile meadow, but my field,’ says the querulous farmer, ‘only holds the world together.’ I quote another man’s saying; unluckily, that other withdraws himself in the same way, and quotes me. “’Tis the trick of nature thus to degrade to-day; a good deal of buzz, and somewhere a result slipped magically in. Every roof is agreeable to the eye, until it is lifted; then we find tragedy and moaning women, and hard-eyed husbands, and deluges of lethe, and the men ask, ‘What’s the news?’ as if the old were so bad. How many individuals can we count in society? how many actions? how many opinions? So much of our time is preparation, so much is routine, and so much retrospect, that the pith of each man’s genius contracts itself to a very few hours. The history of literature—take the net result of Tiraboschi, Warton, or Schlegel,—is a sum of very few ideas, and of very few original tales,—all the rest being variation of these. So in this great society wide lying around us, a critical analysis would find very few spontaneous actions. It is almost all custom and gross sense. There are

even few opinions, and these seem organic in the speakers, and do not disturb the universal necessity.

What opium is instilled into all disaster! It shows formidable as we approach it, but there is at last no rough rasping friction, but the most slippery sliding surfaces. We fall soft on a thought. *Ate Dea* is gentle,

“Over men’s heads walking aloft,
With tender feet treading so soft.”

People grieve and bemoan themselves, but it is not half so bad with them as they say. There are moods in which we court suffering, in the hope that here, at least, we shall find reality, sharp peaks and edges of truth. But it turns out to be scene-painting and counterfeit. The only thing grief has taught me, is to know how shallow it is. That, like all the rest, plays about the surface, and never introduces me into the reality, for contact with which, we would even pay the costly price of sons and lovers. Was it Boscovich who found out that bodies never come in contact? Well, souls never touch their objects. An innavigable sea washes with silent waves between us and the things we aim at and converse with. Grief too will make us idealists. In the death of my son, now more than two years ago, I seem to

have lost a beautiful estate,—no more. I cannot get it nearer to me. If to-morrow I should be informed of the bankruptcy of my principal debtors, the loss of my property would be a great inconvenience to me, perhaps, for many years; but it would leave me as it found me,—neither better nor worse. So is it with this calamity; it does not touch me: some thing which I fancied was a part of me, which could not be torn away without tearing me, nor enlarged without enriching me, falls off from me, and leaves no scar. It was caducous. I grieve that grief can teach me nothing, nor carry me one step into real nature. The Indian who was laid under a curse, that the wind should not blow on him, nor water flow to him, nor fire burn him, is a type of us all. The dearest events are summer-rain, and we the Para coats that shed every drop. Nothing is left us now but death. We look to that with a grim satisfaction, saying, there at least is reality that will not dodge us.

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I take this evanescence and lubricity of all objects, which lets them slip through our fingers then when we clutch hardest, to be the most unhandsome part of our condition. Nature does not like to be observed, and likes that we should be her fools and playmates. We may have the sphere for our cricket.

ball, but not a berry for our philosophy. Direct strokes she never gave us power to make ; all our blows glance, all our hits are accidents. Our relations to each other are oblique and casual.

Dream delivers us to dream, and there is no end to illusion. Life is a train of moods like a string of beads, and as we pass through them, they prove to be many-colored lenses which paint the world their own hue, and each shows only what lies in its focus. From the mountain you see the mountain. We animate what we can, and we see only what we animate. Nature and books belong to the eyes that see them. It depends on the mood of the man, whether he shall see the sunset or the fine poem. There are always sunsets, and there is always genius ; but only a few hours so serene that we can relish nature or criticism. The more or less depends on structure or temperament. Temperament is the iron wire on which the beads are strung. Of what use is fortune or talent to a cold and defective nature ? Who cares what sensibility or discrimination a man has at some time shown, if he falls asleep in his chair ? or if he laugh and giggle ? or if he apologize ? or is affected with egotism ? or thinks of his dollar ? or cannot go by food ? or has gotten a child in his boyhood ? Of

what use is genius, if the organ is too convex or too concave, and cannot find a focal distance within the actual horizon of human life? Of what use, if the brain is too cold or too hot, and the man does not care enough for results, to stimulate him to experiment, and hold him up in it? or if the web is too finely woven, too irritable by pleasure and pain, so that life stagnates from too much reception, without due outlet? Of what use to make heroic vows of amendment, if the same old law-breaker is to keep them? What cheer can the religious sentiment yield, when that is suspected to be secretly dependent on the seasons of the year, and the state of the blood? I knew a witty physician who found theology in the biliary duct, and used to affirm that if there was disease in the liver, the man became a Calvinist, and if that organ was sound, he became a Unitarian. Very mortifying is the reluctant experience that some unfriendly excess or imbecility neutralizes the promise of genius. We see young men who owe us a new world, so readily and lavishly they promise, but they never acquit the debt; they die young and dodge the account: or if they live, they lose themselves in the crowd.

Temperament also enters fully into the system of illusions, and shuts us in a prison of glass which we

cannot see. There is an optical illusion about every person we meet. In truth, they are all creatures of given temperament, which will appear in a given character, whose boundaries they will never pass : but we look at them, they seem alive, and we presume there is impulse in them. In the moment it seems impulse ; in the year, in the lifetime, it turns out to be a certain uniform tune which the revolving barrel of the music-box must play. Men resist the conclusion in the morning, but adopt it as the evening wears on, that temper prevails over everything of time, place, and condition, and is inconsumable in the flames of religion. Some modifications the moral sentiment avails to impose, but the individual texture holds its dominion, if not to bias the moral judgments, yet to fix the measure of activity and of enjoyment.

I thus express the law as it is read from the platform of ordinary life, but must not leave it without noticing the capital exception. For temperament is a power which no man willingly hears any one praise but himself. On the platform of physics, we cannot resist the contracting influences of so-called science. Temperament puts all divinity to rout. I know the mental proclivity of physicians. I hear the chuckle of the phrenologists. Theoretic kidnappers and

slave-drivers, they esteem each man the victim of another, who winds him round his finger by knowing the law of his being, and by such cheap signboards as the color of his beard, or the slope of his occiput, reads the inventory of his fortunes and character. The grossest ignorance does not disgust like this impudent knowingness. The physicians say, they are not materialists ; but they are :—Spirit is matter reduced to an extreme thinness : O so thin !—But the definition of *spiritual* should be, *that which is its own evidence*. What notions do they attach to love ! what to religion ! One would not willingly pronounce these words in their hearing, and give them the occasion to profane them. I saw a gracious gentleman who adapts his conversation to the form of the head of the man he talks with ! I had fancied that the value of life lay in its inscrutable possibilities ; in the fact that I never know, in addressing myself to a new individual, what may befall me. I carry the keys of my castle in my hand, ready to throw them at the feet of my lord, whenever and in what disguise soever he shall appear. I know he is in the neighborhood hidden among vagabonds. Shall I preclude my future, by taking a high seat, and kindly adapting my conversation to the shape of heads ? When I come to that, the doctors shall buy

me for a cent.—‘ But, sir, medical history ; the report to the Institute ; the proven facts ! ’—I distrust the facts and the inferences. Temperament is the veto or limitation-power in the constitution, very justly applied to restrain an opposite excess in the constitution, but absurdly offered as a bar to original equity. When virtue is in presence, all subordinate powers sleep. On its own level, or in view of nature, temperament is final. I see not, if one be once caught in this trap of so-called sciences, any escape for the man from the links of the chain of physical necessity. Given such an embryo, such a history must follow. On this platform, one lives in a sty of sensualism, and would soon come to suicide. But it is impossible that the creative power should exclude itself. Into every intelligence there is a door which is never closed, through which the creator passes. The intellect, seeker of absolute truth, or the heart, lover of absolute good, intervenes for our succor, and at one whisper of these high powers, we awake from ineffectual struggles with this nightmare. We hurl it into its own hell, and cannot again contract ourselves to so base a state.

The secret of the illusoriness is in the necessity of a succession of moods or objects. Gladly we

would anchor, but the anchorage is quicksand. This onward trick of nature is too strong for us : *Pero si muove*. When, at night, I look at the moon and stars, I seem stationary, and they to hurry. Our love of the real draws us to permanence, but health of body consists in circulation, and sanity of mind in variety or facility of association. We need change of objects. Dedication to one thought is quickly odious. We house with the insane, and must humor them ; then conversation dies out. Once I took such delight in Montaigne, that I thought I should not need any other book ; before that, in Shakspeare ; then in Plutarch ; then in Plotinus ; at one time in Bacon ; afterwards in Goethe ; even in Bettine ; but now I turn the pages of either of them languidly, whilst I still cherish their genius. So with pictures ; each will bear an emphasis of attention once, which it cannot retain, though we fain would continue to be pleased in that manner. How strongly I have felt of pictures, that when you have seen one well, you must take your leave of it ; you shall never see it again. I have had good lessons from pictures, which I have since seen without emotion or remark. A deduction must be made from the opinion, which even the wise express of a new book or occurrence. Their opinion gives me tidings of their mood, and

some vague guess at the new fact, but is nowise to be trusted as the lasting relation between that intellect and that thing. The child asks, 'Mamma, why don't I like the story as well as when you told it me yesterday?' Alas, child, it is even so with the oldest cherubim of knowledge. But will it answer thy question to say, Because thou wert born to a whole, and this story is a particular? The reason of the pain this discovery causes us (and we make it late in respect to works of art and intellect), is the plaint of tragedy which murmurs from it in regard to persons, to friendship and love.

That immobility and absence of elasticity which we find in the arts, we find with more pain in the artist. There is no power of expansion in men. Our friends early appear to us as representatives of certain ideas, which they never pass or exceed. They stand on the brink of the ocean of thought and power, but they never take the single step that would bring them there. A man is like a bit of Labrador spar, which has no lustre as you turn it in your hand, until you come to a particular angle; then it shows deep and beautiful colors. There is no adaptation or universal applicability in men, but each has his special talent, and the mastery of successful men consists in adroitly keeping themselves

where and when that turn shall be oftenest to be practised. We do what we must, and call it by the best names we can, and would fain have the praise of having intended the result, which ensues. I cannot recall any form of man who is not superfluous sometimes. But is not this pitiful? Life is not worth the taking, to do tricks in.

Of course, it needs the whole society, to give the symmetry we seek. The parti-colored wheel must revolve very fast to appear white. Something is learned too by conversing with so much folly and defect. In fine, whoever loses, we are always of the gaining party. Divinity is behind our failures and follies also. The plays of children are nonsense, but very educated nonsense. So it is with the largest and solemnest things, with commerce, government, church, marriage, and so with the history of every man's bread, and the ways by which he is to come by it. Like a bird which alights nowhere, but hops perpetually from bough to bough, is the Power which abides in no man and in no woman, but for a moment speaks from this one, and for another moment from that one.

But what help from these fineries or pedantries? What help from thought? Life is not dialectics.

We, I think, in these times, have had lessons enough of the futility of criticism. Our young people have thought and written much on labor and reform, and for all that they have written, neither the world nor themselves have got on a step. Intellectual tasting of life will not supersede muscular activity. If a man should consider the nicety of the passage of a piece of bread down his throat, he would starve. At Education-Farm, the noblest theory of life sat on the noblest figures of young men and maidens, quite powerless and melancholy. It would not rake or pitch a ton of hay; it would not rub down a horse; and the men and maidens it left pale and hungry. A political orator wittily compared our party promises to western roads, which opened stately enough, with planted trees on either side, to tempt the traveler, but soon became narrow and narrower, and ended in a squirrel-track, and ran up a tree. So does culture with us; it ends in head-ache. Unspeakably sad and barren does life look to those, who a few months ago were dazzled with the splendor of the promise of the times. "There is now no longer any right course of action, nor any self-devotion left among the Iranis." Objections and criticism we have had our fill of. There are objections to every course of life and action, and the practical wisdom

infers an indifferency, from the omnipresence of objection. The whole frame of things preaches indifferency. Do not craze yourself with thinking, but go about your business anywhere. Life is not intellectual or critical, but sturdy. Its chief good is for well-mixed people who can enjoy what they find, without question. Nature hates peeping, and our mothers speak her very sense when they say, "Children, eat your victuals, and say no more of it." To fill the hour,—that is happiness; to fill the hour, and leave no crevice for a repentance or an approval. We live amid surfaces, and the true art of life is to skate well on them. Under the oldest mouldiest conventions, a man of native force prospers just as well as in the newest world, and that by skill of handling and treatment. He can take hold anywhere. Life itself is a mixture of power and form, and will not bear the least excess of either. To finish the moment, to find the journey's end in every step of the road, to live the greatest number of good hours, is wisdom. It is not the part of men, but of fanatics, or of mathematicians, if you will, to say, that, the shortness of life considered, it is not worth caring whether for so short a duration we were sprawling in want, or sitting high. Since our office is with moments, let us husband them. Five minutes

of to-day are worth as much to me, as five minutes in the next millennium. Let us be poised, and wise, and our own, to-day. Let us treat the men and women well: treat them as if they were real: perhaps they are. Men live in their fancy, like drunkards whose hands are too soft and tremulous for successful labor. It is a tempest of fancies, and the only ballast I know, is a respect to the present hour. Without any shadow of doubt, amidst this vertigo of shows and politics, I settle myself ever the firmer in the creed, that we should not postpone and refer and wish, but do broad justice where we are, by whomsoever we deal with, accepting our actual companions and circumstances, however humble or odious, as the mystic officials to whom the universe has delegated its whole pleasure for us. If these are mean and malignant, their contentment, which is the last victory of justice, is a more satisfying echo to the heart, than the voice of poets and the casual sympathy of admirable persons. I think that however a thoughtful man may suffer from the defects and absurdities of his company, he cannot without affectation deny to any set of men and women, a sensibility to extraordinary merit. The coarse and frivolous have an instinct of superiority, if they have not a sympathy,

and honor it in their blind capricious way with sincere homage.

The fine young people despise life, but in me, and in such as with me are free from dyspepsia, and to whom a day is a sound and solid good, it is a great excess of politeness to look scornful and to cry for company. I am grown by sympathy a little eager and sentimental, but leave me alone, and I should relish every hour and what it brought me, the pot-luck of the day, as heartily as the oldest gossip in the bar-room. I am thankful for small mercies. I compared notes with one of my friends who expects everything of the universe, and is disappointed when anything is less than the best, and I found that I begin at the other extreme, expecting nothing, and am always full of thanks for moderate goods. I accept the clangor and jangle of contrary tendencies. I find my account in sots and bores also. They give a reality to the circumjacent picture, which such a vanishing meteorous appearance can ill spare. In the morning I awake, and find the old world, wife, babes, and mother, Concord and Boston, the dear old spiritual world, and even the dear old devil not far off. If we will take the good we find, asking no questions, we shall have heaping measures. The great gifts are not got by analysis. Everything good is on

the highway. The middle region of our being is the temperate zone. We may climb into the thin and cold realm of pure geometry and lifeless science, or sink into that of sensation. Between these extremes is the equator of life, of thought, of spirit, of poetry, —a narrow belt. Moreover, in popular experience, everything good is on the highway. A collector peeps into all the picture-shops of Europe, for a landscape of Poussin, a crayon-sketch of Salvator; but the Transfiguration, the Last Judgment, the Communion of St. Jerome, and what are as transcendent as these, are on the walls of the Vatican, the Uffizii, or the Louvre, where every footman may see them; to say nothing of nature's pictures in every street, of sunsets and sunrises every day, and the sculpture of the human body never absent. A collector recently bought at public auction, in London, for one hundred and fifty-seven guineas, an autograph of Shakspeare: but for nothing a school-boy can read Hamlet, and can detect secrets of highest concernment yet unpublished therein. I think I will never read any but the commonest books,—the Bible, Homer, Dante, Shakspeare, and Milton. Then we are impatient of so public a life and planet, and run hither and thither for nooks and secrets. The imagination delights in the woodcraft of Indians, trappers, and bee-hunters.

We fancy that we are strangers, and not so intimately domesticated in the planet as the wild man, and the wild beast and bird. But the exclusion reaches them also; reaches the climbing, flying, gliding, feathered and four-footed man. Fox and woodchuck, hawk and snipe, and bittern, when nearly seen, have no more root in the deep world than man, and are just such superficial tenants of the globe. Then the new molecular philosophy shows astronomical interspaces betwixt atom and atom, shows that the world is all outside: it has no inside.

The mid-world is best. Nature, as we know her, is no saint. The lights of the church, the ascetics, Gentoos and Grahamites, she does not distinguish by any favor. She comes eating and drinking and sinning. Her darlings, the great, the strong, the beautiful, are not children of our law, do not come out of the Sunday School, nor weigh their food, nor punctually keep the commandments. If we will be strong with her strength, we must not harbor such disconsolate consciences, borrowed too from the consciences of other nations. We must set up the strong present tense against all the rumors of wrath, past or to come. So many things are unsettled which it is of the first importance to settle,—and, pending their settlement, we will do as we do. Whilst the debate goes

forward on the equity of commerce, and will not be closed for a century or two, New and Old England may keep shop. Law of copyright and international copyright is to be discussed, and, in the interim, we will sell our books for the most we can. Expediency of literature, reason of literature, lawfulness of writing down a thought, is questioned; much is to say on both sides, and, while the fight waxes hot, thou, dearest scholar, stick to thy foolish task, add a line every hour, and between whiles add a line. Right to hold land, right of property, is disputed, and the conventions convene, and before the vote is taken, dig away in your garden, and spend your earnings as a waif or godsend to all serene and beautiful purposes. Life itself is a bubble and a skepticism, and a sleep within a sleep. Grant it, and as much more as they will,—but thou, God's darling! heed thy private dream: thou wilt not be missed in the scorning and skepticism: there are enough of them: stay there in thy closet, and toil, until the rest are agreed what to do about it. Thy sickness, they say, and thy puny habit, require that thou do this or avoid that, but know that thy life is a flitting state, a tent for a night, and do thou, sick or well, finish that stint. Thou art sick, but shalt not be worse,

and the universe, which holds thee dear, shall be the better.

Human life is made up of the two elements, power and form, and the proportion must be invariably kept, if we would have it sweet and sound. Each of these elements in excess makes a mischief as hurtful as its defect. Everything runs to excess: every good quality is noxious, if unmixed, and, to carry the danger to the edge of ruin, nature causes each man's peculiarity to superabound. Here, among the the farms, we adduce the scholars as examples of this treachery. They are nature's victims of expression. You who see the artist, the orator, the poet, too near, and find their life no more excellent than that of mechanics or farmers, and themselves victims of partiality, very hollow and haggard, and pronounce them failures,—not heroes, but quacks,—conclude very reasonably, that these arts are not for man, but are disease. Yet nature will not bear you out. Irresistible nature made men such, and makes legions more of such, every day. You love the boy reading in a book, gazing at a drawing, or a cast: yet what are these millions who read and behold, but incipient writers and sculptors? Add a little more of that quality which now reads and sees, and they will seize the pen and chisel. And if one remembers

how innocently he began to be an artist, he perceives that nature joined with his enemy. A man is a golden impossibility. The line he must walk is a hair's breadth. The wise through excess of wisdom is made a fool.

How easily, if fate would suffer it, we might keep forever these beautiful limits, and adjust ourselves, once for all, to the perfect calculation of the kingdom of known cause and effect. In the street and in the newspapers, life appears so plain a business, that manly resolution and adherence to the multiplication-table through all weathers, will insure success. But ah! presently comes a day, or is it only a half-hour, with its angel-whispering,—which discomfits the conclusions of nations and of years! Tomorrow again, everything looks real and angular, the habitual standards are reinstated, common sense is as rare as genius,—is the basis of genius, and experience is hands and feet to every enterprise;—and yet, he who should do his business on this understanding, would be quickly bankrupt. Power keeps quite another road than the turnpikes of choice and will, namely, the subterranean and invisible tunnels and channels of life. It is ridiculous that we are diplomatists, and doctors, and considerate people:

there are no dupes like these. Life is a series of surprises, and would not be worth taking or keeping, if it were not. God delights to isolate us every day, and hide from us the past and the future. We would look about us, but with grand politeness he draws down before us an impenetrable screen of purest sky, and another behind us of purest sky. ‘You will not remember,’ he seems to say, ‘and you will not expect.’ All good conversation, manners, and action, come from spontaneity which forgets usages, and makes the moment great. Nature hates calculators; her methods are saltatory and impulsive. Man lives by pulses; our organic movements are such; and the chemical and ethereal agents are undulatory and alternate; and the mind goes antagonizing on, and never prospers but by fits. We thrive by casualties. Our chief experiences have been casual. The most attractive class of people are those who are powerful obliquely, and not by the direct stroke: men of genius, but not yet accredited: one gets the cheer of their light, without paying too great a tax. Theirs is the beauty of the bird, or the morning light, and not of art. In the thought of genius there is always a surprise; and the moral sentiment is well called “the newness,” for it is never other; as new to the oldest intelligence as to the young child,—

“the kingdom that cometh without observation,” In like manner, from practical success, there must not be too much design. A man will not be observed in doing that which he can do best. There is a certain magic about his properest action, which stupefies your powers of observation, so that though it is done before you, you wist not of it. The art of life has a prudency, and will not be exposed. Every man is an impossibility, until he is born; every thing impossible, until we see a success. The ardors of piety agree at last with the coldest skepticism,—that nothing is of us or our works,—that all is of God. Nature will not spare us the smallest leaf of laurel. All writing comes by the grace of God, and all doing and having. I would gladly be moral, and keep due metes and bounds, which I dearly love, and allow the most to the will of man, but I have set my heart on honesty in this chapter, and I can see nothing at last, in success or failure, than more or less of vital force supplied from the Eternal. The results of life are uncalculated and uncalculable. The years teach much which the days never know. The persons who compose our company, converse, and come and go, and design and execute many things, and somewhat comes of it all, but an unlooked for result. The individual is always mistaken. He designed many

things, and drew in other persons as coadjutors, quarrelled with some or all, blundered much, and something is done; all are a little advanced, but the individual is always mistaken. It turns out somewhat new, and very unlike what he promised himself.

The ancients, struck with this irreducibleness of the elements of human life to calculation, exalted Chance into a divinity, but that is to stay too long at the spark,—which glitters truly at one point,—but the universe is warm with the latency of the same fire. The miracle of life which will not be expounded, but will remain a miracle, introduces a new element. In the growth of the embryo, Sir Everard Home, I think, noticed that the evolution was not from one central point, but co-active from three or more points. Life has no memory. That which proceeds in succession might be remembered, but that which is co-existent, or ejaculated from a deeper cause, as yet far from being conscious, knows not its own tendency. So it is with us, now sceptical, or without unity, because immersed in forms and effects all seeming to be of equal yet hostile value, and now religious, whilst in the reception of spiritual law. Bear with these distractions, with this coetaneous growth of the parts: they will one day

be *members*, and obey one will. On that one will, on that secret cause, they nail our attention and hope. Life is hereby melted into an expectation or a religion. Underneath the inharmonious and trivial particulars, is a musical perfection, the Ideal journeying always with us, the heaven without rent or seam. Do but observe the mode of our illumination. When I converse with a profound mind, or if at any time being alone I have good thoughts, I do not at once arrive at satisfactions, as when, being thirsty, I drink water, or go to the fire, being cold: no! but I am at first apprised of my vicinity to a new and excellent region of life. By persisting to read or to think, this region gives further sign of itself, as it were in flashes of light, in sudden discoveries of its profound beauty and repose, as if the clouds that covered it parted at intervals, and showed the approaching traveller the inland mountains, with the tranquil eternal meadows spread at their base, whereon flocks graze, and shepherds pipe and dance. But every insight from this realm of thought is felt as initial, and promises a sequel. I do not make it I arrive there, and behold what was there already. I make! O no! I clap my hands in infantine joy and amazement, before the first opening to me of this august magnificence, old with the love and

homage of innumerable ages, young with the life of life, the sunbright Mecca of the desert. And what a future it opens! I feel a new heart beating with the love of the new beauty. I am ready to die out of nature, and be born again into this new yet unapproachable America I have found in the West.

“Since neither now nor yesterday began
These thoughts, which have been ever, nor yet can
A man be found who their first entrance knew.”

If I have described life as a flux of moods, I must now add, that there is that in us which changes not, and which ranks all sensations and states of mind. The consciousness in each man is a sliding scale, which indentifies him now with the First Cause, and not with the flesh of his body; life above life, in infinite degrees. The sentiment from which it sprung determines the dignity of any deed, and the question ever is, not, what you have done or forborne, but, at whose command you have done or forborne it.

Fortune, Minerva, Muse, Holy Ghost,—these are quaint names, too narrow to cover this unbounded substance. The baffled intellect must still kneel before this cause, which refuses to be named,—ineffable cause, which every fine genius has essayed to represent by some emphatic symbol, as, Thales by water,

Anaximenes by air, Anaxagoras by (*Νοῦς*) thought, Zoroaster by fire, Jesus and the moderns by love: and the metaphor of each has become a national religion. The Chinese Mencius has not been the least successful in his generalization. "I fully understand language," he said, "and nourish well my vast-flowing vigor."—"I beg to ask what you call vast-flowing vigor?"—said his companion. "The explanation," replied Mencius, "is difficult. This vigor is supremely great, and in the highest degree unbending. Nourish it correctly, and do it no injury, and it will fill up the vacancy between heaven and earth. This vigor accords with and assists justice and reason, and leaves no hunger."—In our more correct writing, we give to this generalization the name of Being, and thereby confess that we have arrived as far as we can go. Suffice it for the joy of the universe, that we have not arrived at a wall, but at interminable oceans. Our life seems not present, so much as prospective; not for the affairs on which it is wasted, but as a hint of this vast-flowing vigor. Most of life seems to be mere advertisement of faculty: information is given us not to sell ourselves cheap; that we are very great. So, in particular, our greatness is always in a tendency or direction, not in action. It is for us to believe in the

rule, not in the exception. The noble are thus known from the ignoble. So in accepting the leading of the sentiments, it is not what we believe concerning the immortality of the soul, or the like, but the *universal impulse to believe*, that is the material circumstance, and is the principal fact in the history of the globe. Shall we describe this cause as that which works directly? The spirit is not helpless or needful of mediate organs. It has plentiful powers and direct effects. I am explained without explaining, I am felt without acting, and where I am not. Therefore all just persons are satisfied with their own praise. They refuse to explain themselves, and are content that new actions should do them that office. They believe that we communicate without speech, and above speech, and that no right action of ours is quite un-affecting to our friends, at whatever distance; for the influence of action is not to be measured by miles. Why should I fret myself because a circumstance has occurred, which hinders my presence where I was expected? If I am not at the meeting, my presence where I am, should be as useful to the commonwealth of friendship and wisdom, as would be my presence in that place. I exert the same quality of power in all places. Thus journeys the mighty Ideal before us; it never was known to fall into the

rear. No man ever came to an experience which was satiating, but his good is tidings of a better. Onward and onward! In liberated moments, we know that a new picture of life and duty is already possible; the elements already exist in many minds around you, of a doctrine of life which shall transcend any written record we have. The new statement will comprise the skepticisms, as well as the faiths of a society, and out of unbeliefs a creed shall be formed. For, skepticisms are not gratuitous or lawless, but are limitations of the affirmative statement, and the new philosophy must take them in, and make affirmations outside of them, just as much as it must include the oldest beliefs.

It is very unhappy, but too late to be helped, the discovery we have made, that we exist. That discovery is called the Fall of Man. Ever afterwards, we suspect our instruments. We have learned that we do not see directly, but mediately, and that we have no means of correcting these colored and distorting lenses which we are, or of computing the amount of their errors. Perhaps these subject-lenses have a creative power; perhaps there are no objects. Once we lived in what we saw; now, the rapaciousness of this new power, which threatens to absorb all things, engages us. Nature, art, persons, letters, re-

ligions,—objects, successively tumble in, and God is but one of its ideas. Nature and literature are subjective phenomena; every evil and every good thing is a shadow which we cast. The street is full of humiliations to the proud. As the fop contrived to dress his bailiffs in his livery, and make them wait on his guests at table, so the chagrins which the bad heart gives off as bubbles, at once take form as ladies and gentlemen in the street, shopmen or bar-keepers in hotels, and threaten or insult whatever is threatenable and insultable in us. 'Tis the same with our idolatries. People forget that it is the eye which makes the horizon, and the rounding mind's eye which makes this or that man a type or representative of humanity with the name of hero or saint. Jesus the "providential man," is a good man on whom many people are agreed that these optical laws shall take effect. By love on one part, and by forbearance to press objection on the other part, it is for a time settled, that we will look at him in the centre of the horizon, and ascribe to him the properties that will attach to any man so seen. But the longest love or aversion has a speedy term. The great and crescive self, rooted in absolute nature, supplants all relative existence, and ruins the kingdom of mortal friendship and love. Marriage (in

what is called the spiritual world) is impossible, because of the inequality between every subject and every object. The subject is the receiver of Godhead, and at every comparison must feel his being enhanced by that cryptic might. Though not in energy, yet by presence, this magazine of substance cannot be otherwise than felt: nor can any force of intellect attribute to the object the proper deity which sleeps or wakes forever in every subject. Never can love make consciousness and ascription equal in force. There will be the same gulf between every me and thee, as between the original and the picture. The universe is the bride of the soul. All private sympathy is partial. Two human beings are like globes, which can touch only in a point, and, whilst they remain in contact, all other points of each of the spheres are inert; their turn must also come, and the longer a particular union lasts, the more energy of appetency the parts not in union acquire.

Life will be imaged, but cannot be divided nor doubled. Any invasion of its unity would be chaos. The soul is not twin-born, but the only begotten, and though revealing itself as child in time, child in appearance, is of a fatal and universal power, admitting no co-life. Every day, every act betrays the

ill-concealed deity. We believe in ourselves, as we do not believe in others. We permit all things to ourselves, and that which we call sin in others, is experiment for us. It is an instance of our faith in ourselves, that men never speak of crime as lightly as they think : or, every man thinks a latitude safe for himself, which is nowise to be indulged to another. The act looks very differently on the inside, and on the outside : in its quality, and in its consequences. Murder in the murderer is no such ruinous thought as poets and romancers will have it ; it does not unsettle him, or fright him from his ordinary notice of trifles : it is an act quite easy to be contemplated, but in its sequel, it turns out to be a horrible jangle and confounding of all relations. Especially the crimes that spring from love, seem right and fair from the actor's point of view, but, when acted, are found destructive of society. No man at last believes that he can be lost, nor that the crime in him is as black as in the felon. Because the intellect qualifies in our own case the moral judgments. For there is no crime to the intellect. That is antinomian or hypernomian, and judges law as well as fact. "It is worse than a crime, it is a blunder," said Napoleon, speaking the language of the intellect. To it, the world is a problem in mathematics or the science on

quantity, and it leaves out praise and blame, and all weak emotions. All stealing is comparative. If you come to absolutes, pray who does not steal? Saints are sad, because they behold sin, (even when they speculate,) from the point of view of the conscience, and not of the intellect; a confusion of thought. Sin seen from the thought, is a diminution or *less*: seen from the conscience or will, it is *pravity* or *bad*. The intellect names it shade, absence of light, and no essence. The conscience must feel it as essence, essential evil. This it is not: it has an objective existence, but no subjective.

Thus inevitably does the universe wear our color, and every object fall successively into the subject itself. The subject exists, the subject enlarges; all things sooner or later fall into place. As I am, so I see; use what language we will, we can never say anything but what we are; Hermes, Cadmus, Columbus, Newton, Bonaparte, are the mind's ministers. Instead of feeling a poverty when we encounter a great man, let us treat the new comer like a travelling geologist, who passes through our estate, and shows us good slate, or limestone, or anthracite, in our brush pasture. The partial action of each strong mind in one direction, is a telescope for the objects on which it is pointed. But every other part

of knowledge is to be pushed to the same extravagance, ere the soul attains her due sphericity. Do you see that kitten chasing so prettily her own tail? If you could look with her eyes, you might see her surrounded with hundreds of figures performing complex dramas, with tragic and comic issues, long conversations, many characters, many ups and downs of fate,—and meantime it is only puss and her tail. How long before our masquerade will end its noise of tamborines, laughter, and shouting, and we shall find it was a solitary performance?—A subject and an object,—it takes so much to make the galvanic circuit complete, but magnitude adds nothing. What imports it whether it is Kepler and the sphere; Columbus and America; a reader and his book; or puss with her tail?

It is true that all the muses and love and religion hate these developments, and will find a way to punish the chemist, who publishes in the parlor the secrets of the laboratory. And we cannot say too little of our constitutional necessity of seeing things under private aspects, or saturated with our humors. And yet is the God the native of these bleak rocks. That need makes in morals the capital virtue of self-trust. We must hold hard to this poverty, however scandalous, and by more vigorous self-recoveries,

after the sallies of action, possess our axis more firmly. The life of truth is cold, and so far mournful; but it is not the slave of tears, contritions, and perturbations. It does not attempt another's work, nor adopt another's facts. It is a main lesson of wisdom to know your own from another's. I have learned that I cannot dispose of other people's facts; but I possess such a key to my own, as persuades me against all their denials, that they also have a key to theirs. A sympathetic person is placed in the dilemma of a swimmer among drowning men, who all catch at him, and if he give so much as a leg or a finger, they will drown him. They wish to be saved from the mischiefs of their vices, but not from their vices. Charity would be wasted on this poor waiting on the symptoms. A wise and hardy physician will say, *Come out of that*, as the first condition of advice.

In this our talking America, we are ruined by our good nature and listening on all sides. This compliance takes away the power of being greatly useful. A man should not be able to look other than directly and forthright. A preoccupied attention is the only answer to the importunate frivolity of other people: an attention, and to an aim which makes their wants frivolous. This is a divine answer, and

leaves no appeal, and no hard thoughts. In Flaxman's drawing of the Eumenides of Æschylus, Orestes supplicates Apollo, whilst the Furies sleep on the threshold. The face of the god expresses a shade of regret and compassion, but calm with the conviction of the irreconcilableness of the two spheres. He is born into other politics, into the eternal and beautiful. The man at his feet asks for his interest in turmoils of the earth, into which his nature cannot enter. And the Eumenides there lying express pictorially this disparity. The god is surcharged with his divine destiny.

Illusion, Temperament, Succession, Surface, Surprise, Reality, Subjectiveness,—these are threads on the loom of time, these are the lords of life. I dare not assume to give their order, but I name them as I find them in my way. I know better than to claim any completeness for my picture. I am a fragment, and this is a fragment of me. I can very confidently announce one or another law, which throws itself into relief and form, but I am too young yet by some ages to compile a code. I gossip for my hour concerning the eternal politics. I have seen many fair pictures not in vain. A wonderful time I have lived in. I am not the novice I was fourteen, nor yet

seven years ago. Let who will ask, where is the fruit? I find a private fruit sufficient. This is a fruit,—that I should not ask for a rash effect from meditations, counsels, and the hiving of truths. I should feel it pitiful to demand a result on this town and county, an overt effect on the instant month and year. The effect is deep and secular as the cause. It works on periods in which mortal lifetime is lost. All I know is reception; I am and I have: but I do not get, and when I have fancied I had gotten anything, I found I did not. I worship with wonder the great Fortune. My reception has been so large, that I am not annoyed by receiving this or that superabundantly. I say to the Genius, if he will pardon the proverb, *In for a mill, in for a million*. When I receive a new gift, I do not macerate my body to make the account square, for, if I should die, I could not make the account square. The benefit overran the merit the first day, and has overran the merit ever since. The merit itself, so-called, I reckon part of the receiving.

Also, that hankering after an overt or practical effect seems to me an apostasy. In good earnest, I am willing to spare this most unnecessary deal of doing. Life wears to me a visionary face. Hardest, roughest action is visionary also. It is but a choice

between soft and turbulent dreams. People disparage knowing and the intellectual life, and urge doing. I am very content with knowing, if only I could know. That is an august entertainment, and would suffice me a great while. To know a little, would be worth the expense of this world. I hear always the law Adrastia, "that every soul which had acquired any truth, should be safe from harm until another period."

I know that the world I converse with in the city and in the farms, is not the world I *think*. I observe that difference, and shall observe it. One day, I shall know the value and law of this discrepance. But I have not found that much was gained by manipular attempts to realize the world of thought. Many eager persons successively make an experiment in this way, and make themselves ridiculous. They acquire democratic manners, they foam at the mouth, they hate and deny. Worse, I observe, that, in the history of mankind, there is never a solitary example of success,—taking their own tests of success. I say this polemically, or in reply to the inquiry, why not realize your world? But far be from me the despair which prejudges the law by a paltry empiricism,—since there never was a right endeavor, but it succeeded. Patience and patience, wo

shall win at the last. We must be very suspicious of the deceptions of the element of time. It takes a good deal of time to eat or to sleep, or to earn a hundred dollars, and a very little time to entertain a hope and an insight which becomes the light of our life. We dress our garden, eat our dinners, discuss the household with our wives, and these things make no impression, are forgotten next week; but in the solitude to which every man is always returning, he has a sanity and revelations, which is his passage into new worlds he will carry with him. Never mind the ridicule, never mind the defeat; up again, old heart! —it seems to say,—there is victory yet for all justice; and the true romance which the world exists to realize, will be the transformation of genius into practical power.

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.
He spoke, and words more soft than rain
Brought the Age of Gold again:
His action won such reverence sweet,
As hid all measure of the feat.

Work of his hand
He nor commends nor grieves:
Pleads for itself the fact;
As unrepenting Nature leaves
Her every act.

ESSAY III.

CHARACTER.

I HAVE read that those who listened to Lord Chatham felt that there was something finer in the man, than anything which he said. It has been complained of our brilliant English historian of the French Revolution, that when he has told all his facts about Mirabeau, they do not justify his estimate of his genius. The Gracchi, Agis, Cleomenes, and others of Plutarch's heroes, do not in the record of facts equal their own fame. Sir Philip Sidney, the Earl of Essex, Sir Walter Raleigh, are men of great figure, and of few deeds. We cannot find the smallest part of the personal weight of Washington, in the narrative of his exploits. The authority of the name of Schiller is too great for his books. This inequality of the reputation to the works or the anecdotes, is not accounted for by saying that the reverberation is longer than the thunder-clap ; but somewhat resided in these men which begot an expectation that outran

all their performance. The largest part of their power was latent. This is that which we call Character,—a reserved force which acts directly by presence and without means. It is conceived of as a certain undemonstrable force, a Familiar or Genius, by whose impulses the man is guided, but whose counsels he cannot impart; which is company for him, so that such men are often solitary, or if they chance to be social, do not need society, but can entertain themselves very well alone. The purest literary talent appears at one time great, at another time small, but character is of a stellar and undiminishable greatness. What others effect by talent or by eloquence, this man accomplishes by some magnetism. “Half his strength he put not forth.” His victories are by demonstration of superiority, and not by crossing of bayonets. He conquers, because his arrival alters the face of affairs. “O Iole! how did you know that Hercules was a god?” “Because,” answered Iole, “I was content the moment my eyes fell on him. When I beheld Theseus, I desired that I might see him offer battle, or at least guide his horses in the chariot-race; but Hercules did not wait for a contest; he conquered whether he stood, or walked, or sat, or whatever thing he did.” Man, ordinarily a pendant to events, only half at-

tached, and that awkwardly, to the world he lives in, in these examples appears to share the life of things, and to be an expression of the same laws which control the tides and the sun, numbers and quantities.

But to use a more modest illustration, and nearer home, I observe, that in our political elections, where this element, if it appears at all, can only occur in its coarsest form, we sufficiently understand its incomparable rate. The people know that they need in their representative much more than talent, namely, the power to make his talent trusted. They cannot come at their ends by sending to Congress a learned, acute, and fluent speaker, if he be not one, who, before he was appointed by the people to represent them, was appointed by Almighty God to stand for a fact,—invincibly persuaded of that fact in himself,—so that the most confident and the most violent persons learn that here is resistance on which both impudence and terror are wasted, namely, faith in a fact. The men who carry their points do not need to inquire of their constituents what they should say, but are themselves the country which they represent: nowhere are its emotions or opinions so instant and true as in them; nowhere so pure from a selfish infusion. The constituency at home hearkens to their words, watches the color of their cheek, and therein,

as in a glass, dresses its own. Our public assemblies are pretty good tests of manly force. Our frank countrymen of the west and south have a taste for character, and like to know whether the New Englander is a substantial man, or whether the hand can pass through him.

The same motive force appears in trade. There are geniuses in trade, as well as in war, or the state, or letters; and the reason why this or that man is fortunate, is not to be told. It lies in the man: that is all anybody can tell you about it. See him, and you will know as easily why he succeeds, as, if you see Napoleon, you would comprehend his fortune. In the new object we recognize the old game, the habit of fronting the fact, and not dealing with it at second hand, through the perceptions of somebody else. Nature seems to authorize trade, as soon as you see the natural merchant, who appears not so much a private agent, as her factor and Minister of Commerce. His natural probity combines with his insight into the fabric of society, to put him above tricks, and he communicates to all his own faith, that contracts are of no private interpretation. The habit of his mind is a reference to standards of natural equity and public advantage; and he inspires respect, and the wish to deal with him, both for the quiet spirit of

honor which attends him, and for the intellectual pastime which the spectacle of so much ability affords. This immensely stretched trade, which makes the capes of the Southern Ocean his wharves, and the Atlantic Sea his familiar port, centres in his brain only; and nobody in the universe can make his place good. In his parlor, I see very well that he has been at hard work this morning, with that knitted brow, and that settled humor, which all his desire to be courteous cannot shake off. I see plainly how many firm acts have been done; how many valiant *noes* have this day been spoken, when others would have uttered ruinous *yeas*. I see, with the pride of art, and skill of masterly arithmetic and power of remote combination, the consciousness of being an agent and playfellow of the original laws of the world. He too believes that none can supply him, and that a man must be born to trade, or he cannot learn it.

This virtue draws the mind more, when it appears in action to ends not so mixed. It works with most energy in the smallest companies and in private relations. In all cases, it is an extraordinary and in-computable agent. The excess of physical strength is paralyzed by it. Higher natures overpower lower ones by affecting them with a certain sleep. The

faculties are locked up, and offer no resistance. Perhaps that is the universal law. When the high cannot bring up the low to itself, it benumbs it, as man charms down the resistance of the lower animals. Men exert on each other a similar occult power. How often has the influence of a true master realized all the tales of magic! A river of command seemed to run down from his eyes into all those who beheld him, a torrent of strong sad light, like an Ohio or Danube, which pervaded them with his thoughts, and colored all events with the hue of his mind. "What means did you employ?" was the question asked of the wife of Concini, in regard to her treatment of Mary of Medici; and the answer was, "Only that influence which every strong mind has over a weak one." Cannot Cæsar in irons shuffle off the irons, and transfer them to the person of Hippo or Thraso the turnkey? Is an iron handcuff so immutable a bond? Suppose a slaver on the coast of Guinea should take on board a gang of negroes, which should contain persons of the stamp of Tous-saint L'Ouverture: or, let us fancy, under these swarthy masks he has a gang of Washingtons in chains. When they arrive at Cuba, will the relative order of the ship's company be the same? Is there nothing but rope and iron? Is there no love, no

reverence? Is there never a glimpse of right in a poor slave-captain's mind; and cannot these be supposed available to break, or elude, or in any manner overmatch the tension of an inch or two of iron ring?

This is a natural power, like light and heat, and all nature coöperates with it. The reason why we feel one man's presence, and do not feel another's, is as simple as gravity. Truth is the summit of being; justice is the application of it to affairs. All individual natures stand in a scale, according to the purity of this element in them. The will of the pure runs down from them into other natures, as water runs down from a higher into a lower vessel. This natural force is no more to be withstood, than any other natural force. We can drive a stone upward for a moment into the air, but it is yet true that all stones will forever fall; and whatever instances can be quoted of unpunished theft, or of a lie which somebody credited, justice must prevail, and it is the privilege of truth to make itself believed. Character is this moral order seen through the medium of an individual nature. An individual is an encloser. Time and space, liberty and necessity, truth and thought, are left at large no longer. Now, the universe is a close or pound. All things exist in the man tinged with the manners of his soul. With

what quality is in him, he infuses all nature that he can reach ; nor does he tend to lose himself in vastness, but, at how long a curve soever, all his regards return into his own good at last. He animates all he can, and he sees only what he animates. He encloses the world, as the patriot does his country, as a material basis for his character, and a theatre for action. A healthy soul stands united with the Just and the True, as the magnet arranges itself with the pole, so that he stands to all beholders like a transparent object betwixt them and the sun, and whoso journeys towards the sun, journeys towards that person. He is thus the medium of the highest influence to all who are not on the same level. Thus, men of character are the conscience of the society to which they belong.

The natural measure of this power is the resistance of circumstances. Impure men consider life as it is reflected in opinions, events, and persons. They cannot see the action, until it is done. Yet its moral element pre-existed in the actor, and its quality as right or wrong, it was easy to predict. Everything in nature is bipolar, or has a positive and negative pole. There is a male and a female, a spirit and a fact, a north and a south. Spirit is the positive, the event is the negative. Will is the north, action the

south pole. Character may be ranked as having its natural place in the north. It shares the magnetic currents of the system. The feeble souls are drawn to the south or negative pole. They look at the profit or hurt of the action. They never behold a principle until it is lodged in a person. They do not wish to be lovely, but to be loved. The class of character like to hear of their faults; the other class do not like to hear of faults; they worship events; secure to them a fact, a connexion, a certain chain of circumstances, and they will ask no more. The hero sees that the event is ancillary: it must follow *him*. A given order of events has no power to secure to him the satisfaction which the imagination attaches to it; the soul of goodness escapes from any set of circumstances, whilst prosperity belongs to a certain mind, and will introduce that power and victory which is its natural fruit, into any order of events. No change of circumstances can repair a defect of character. We boast our emancipation from many superstitions; but if we have broken any idols, it is through a transfer of the idolatry. What have I gained, that I no longer immolate a bull to Jove, or to Neptune, or a mouse to Hecate, that I do not tremble before the Eumenides, or the Catholic Purgatory, or the Calvinistic Judgment-day,—if

I quake at opinion, the public opinion, as we call it, or at the threat of assault, or contumely, or bad neighbors, or poverty, or mutilation, or at the rumor of revolution, or of murder? If I quake, what matters it what I quake at? Our proper vice takes form in one or another shape, according to the sex, age, or temperament of the person, and, if we are capable of fear, will readily find terrors. The covetousness or the malignity which saddens me, when I ascribe it to society, is my own. I am always environed by myself. On the other part, rectitude is a perpetual victory, celebrated not by cries of joy, but by serenity, which is joy fixed or habitual. It is disgraceful to fly to events for confirmation of our truth and worth. The capitalist does not run every hour to the broker, to coin his advantages into current money of the realm; he is satisfied to read in the quotations of the market, that his stocks have risen. The same transport which the occurrence of the best events in the best order would occasion me, I must learn to taste purer in the perception that my position is every hour meliorated, and does already command those events I desire. That exultation is only to be checked by the foresight of an order of things so excellent, as to throw all our prosperities into the deepest shade.

The face which character wears to me is self-sufficiency. I revere the person who has riches ; so that I cannot think of him as alone, or poor, or exiled, or unhappy, or a client, but as perpetual patron, benefactor, and beatified man. Character is centrality, the impossibility of being displaced or overset. A man should give us a sense of mass. Society is frivolous, and shreds its day into scraps, its conversation into ceremonies and escapes. But if I go to see an ingenious man, I shall think myself poorly entertained if he give me nimble pieces of benevolence and etiquette ; rather he shall stand stoutly in his place, and let me apprehend, if it were only his resistance ; know that I have encountered a new and positive quality ;—great refreshment for both of us. It is much, that he does not accept the conventional opinions and practices. That nonconformity will remain a goad and remembrancer, and every inquirer will have to dispose of him, in the first place. There is nothing real or useful that is not a seat of war. Our houses ring with laughter and personal and critical gossip, but it helps little. But the uncivil, unavailable man, who is a problem and a threat to society, whom it cannot let pass in silence, but must either worship or hate,—and to whom all parties feel related, both the leaders of opinion, and the obscure

and eccentric,—he helps; he puts America and Europe in the wrong, and destroys the skepticism which says, ‘man is a doll, let us eat and drink, ’tis the best we can do,’ by illuminating the untried and unknown. Acquiescence in the establishment, and appeal to the public, indicate infirm faith, heads which are not clear, and which must see a house built, before they can comprehend the plan of it. The wise man not only leaves out of his thought the many, but leaves out the few. Fountains, fountains, the self-moved, the absorbed, the commander because he is commanded, the assured, the primary,—they are good; for these announce the instant presence of supreme power.

Our action should rest mathematically on our substance. In nature, there are no false valuations. A pound of water in the ocean-tempest has no more gravity than in a mid-summer pond. All things work exactly according to their quality, and according to their quantity; attempt nothing they cannot do, except man only. He has pretension: he wishes and attempts things beyond his force. I read in a book of English memoirs, “Mr. Fox (afterwards Lord Holland) said, he must have the Treasury; he had served up to it, and would have it.”—Xenophon and his Ten Thousand were quite equal to what they

attempted, and did it; so equal, that it was not suspected to be a grand and inimitable exploit. Yet there stands that fact unrepeated, a high-water-mark in military history. Many have attempted it since, and not been equal to it. It is only on reality, that any power of action can be based. No institution will be better than the institutor. I knew an amiable and accomplished person who undertook a practical reform, yet I was never able to find in him the enterprise of love he took in hand. He adopted it by ear and by the understanding from the books he had been reading. All his action was tentative, a piece of the city carried out into the fields, and was the city still, and no new fact, and could not inspire enthusiasm. Had there been something latent in the man, a terrible undemonstrated genius agitating and embarrassing his demeanor, we had watched for its advent. It is not enough that the intellect should see the evils, and their remedy. We shall still postpone our existence, nor take the ground to which we are entitled, whilst it is only a thought, and not a spirit that incites us. We have not yet served up to it.

These are properties of life, and another trait is the notice of incessant growth. Men should be intelligent and earnest. They must also make us feel,

that they have a controlling happy future, opening before them, which sheds a splendor on the passing hour. The hero is misconceived and misreported: he cannot therefore wait to unravel any man's blunders: he is again on his road, adding new powers and honors to his domain, and new claims on your heart, which will bankrupt you, if you have loitered about the old things, and have not kept your relation to him, by adding to your wealth. New actions are the only apologies and explanations of old ones, which the noble can bear to offer or to receive. If your friend has displeased you, you shall not sit down to consider it, for he has already lost all memory of the passage, and has doubled his power to serve you, and, ere you can rise up again, will burden you with blessings.

We have no pleasure in thinking of a benevolence that is only measured by its works. Love is inexhaustible, and if its estate is wasted, its granary emptied, still cheers and enriches, and the man, though he sleep, seems to purify the air, and his house to adorn the landscape and strengthen the laws. People always recognize this difference. We know who is benevolent, by quite other means than the amount of subscription to soup-societies. It is only low merits that can be enumerated. Fear,

when your friends say to you what you have done well, and say it through; but when they stand with uncertain timid looks of respect and half-dislike, and must suspend their judgment for years to come, you may begin to hope. Those who live to the future must always appear selfish to those who live to the present. Therefore it was droll in the good Riemer, who has written memoirs of Goethe, to make out a list of his donations and good deeds, as, so many hundred thalers given to Stilling, to Hegel, to Tischbein: a lucrative place found for Professor Voss, a post under the Grand Duke for Herder, a pension for Meyer, two professors recommended to foreign universities, &c. &c. The longest list of specifications of benefit, would look very short. A man is a poor creature, if he is to be measured so. For, all these, of course, are exceptions; and the rule and hodiernal life of a good man is benefaction. The true charity of Goethe is to be inferred from the account he gave Dr. Eckermann, of the way in which he had spent his fortune. "Each bon-mot of mine has cost a purse of gold. Half a million of my own money, the fortune I inherited, my salary, and the large income derived from my writings for fifty years back, have been expended to instruct me in what I now know. I have besides seen," &c.

I own it is but poor chat and gossip to go to enumerate traits of this simple and rapid power, and we are painting the lightning with charcoal; but in these long nights and vacations, I like to console myself so. Nothing but itself can copy it. A word warm from the heart enriches me. I surrender at discretion. How death-cold is literary genius before this fire of life! These are the touches that reanimate my heavy soul, and give it eyes to pierce the dark of nature. I find, where I thought myself poor, there was I most rich. Thence comes a new intellectual exaltation, to be again rebuked by some new exhibition of character. Strange alternation of attraction and repulsion! Character repudiates intellect, yet excites it; and character passes into thought, is published so, and then is ashamed before new flashes of moral worth.

Character is nature in the highest form. It is of no use to ape it, or to contend with it. Somewhat is possible of resistance, and of persistence, and of creation, to this power, which will foil all emulation.

This masterpiece is best where no hands but nature's have been laid on it. Care is taken that the greatly-destined shall slip up into life in the shade, with no thousand-eyed Athens to watch and

blazon every new thought, every blushing emotion of young genius. Two persons lately,—very young children of the most high God,—have given me occasion for thought. When I explored the source of their sanctity, and charm for the imagination, it seemed as if each answered, ‘From my non-conformity: I never listened to your people’s law, or to what they call their gospel, and wasted my time. I was content with the simple rural poverty of my own: hence this sweetness: my work never reminds you of that;—is pure of that.’ And nature advertises me in such persons, that, in democratic America, she will not be democratized. How cloistered and constitutionally sequestered from the market and from scandal! It was only this morning, that I sent away some wild flowers of these wood-gods. They are a relief from literature,—these fresh draughts from the sources of thought and sentiment; as we read, in an age of polish and criticism, the first lines of written prose and verse of a nation. How captivating is their devotion to their favorite books, whether *Æschylus*, *Dante*, *Shakspeare*, or *Scott*, as feeling that they have a stake in that book: who touches that, touches them;—and especially the total solitude of the critic, the *Patmos* of thought from which he writes, in unconsciousness of any

eyes that shall ever read this writing. Could they dream on still, as angels, and not wake to comparisons, and to be flattered ! Yet some natures are too good to be spoiled by praise, and wherever the vein of thought reaches down into the profound, there is no danger from vanity. Solemn friends will warn them of the danger of the head's being turned by the flourish of trumpets but they can afford to smile. I remember the indignation of an eloquent Methodist at the kind admonitions of a Doctor of Divinity,—‘ My friend a man can neither be praised nor insulted.’ But forgive the counsels ; they are very natural. I remember the thought which occurred to me when some ingenious and spiritual foreigners came to America, was, Have you been victimized in being brought hither?—or, prior to that, answer me this, ‘ Are you victimizable ?’

As I have said, nature keeps these sovereignties in her own hands, and however pertly our sermons and disciplines would divide some share of credit, and teach that the laws fashion the citizen, she goes her own gait, and puts the wisest in the wrong. She makes very light of gospels and prophets, as one who has a great many more to produce, and no excess of time to spare on any one. There is a class of men, individuals of which appear at long intervals, so em-

inently endowed with insight and virtue, that they have been unanimously saluted as *divine*, and who seem to be an accumulation of that power we consider. Divine persons are character born, or, to borrow a phrase from Napoleon, they are victory organized. They are usually received with ill-will, because they are new, and because they set a bound to the exaggeration that has been made of the personality of the last divine person. Nature never rhymes her children, nor makes two men alike. When we see a great man, we fancy a resemblance to some historical person, and predict the sequel of his character and fortune, a result which he is sure to disappoint. None will ever solve the problem of his character according to our prejudice, but only in his own high unprecedented way. Character wants room; must not be crowded on by persons, nor be judged from glimpses got in the press of affairs or on few occasions. It needs perspective, as a great building. It may not, probably does not, form relations rapidly; and we should not require rash explanation, either on the popular ethics, or on our own, of its action.

I look on Sculpture as history. I do not think the Apollo and the Jove impossible in flesh and blood. Every trait which the artist recorded in stone, he

had seen in life, and better than his copy. We have seen many counterfeits, but we are born believers in great men. How easily we read in old books, when men were few, of the smallest action of the patriarchs. We require that a man should be so large and columnar in the landscape, that it should deserve to be recorded, that he arose, and girded up his loins, and departed to such a place. The most credible pictures are those of majestic men who prevailed at their entrance, and convinced the senses; as happened to the eastern magian who was sent to test the merits of Zertusht or Zoroaster. When the Yunani sage arrived at Balkh, the Persians tell us, Gushtasp appointed a day on which the Mobeds of every country should assemble, and a golden chair was placed for the Yunani sage. Then the beloved of Yezdam, the prophet Zertusht, advanced into the midst of the assembly. The Yunani sage, on seeing that chief, said, "This form and this gait cannot lie, and nothing but truth can proceed from them." Plato said, it was impossible not to believe in the children of the gods, "though they should speak without probable or necessary arguments." I should think myself very unhappy in my associates, if I could not credit the best things in history. "John Bradshaw," says Milton, "appears like a consul,

from whom the fasces are not to depart with the year; so that not on the tribunal only, but throughout his life, you would regard him as sitting in judgment upon kings." I find it more credible, since it is anterior information, that one man should *know heaven*, as the Chinese say, than that so many men should know the world. "The virtuous prince confronts the gods, without any misgiving. He waits a hundred ages till a sage comes, and does not doubt. He who confronts the gods, without any misgiving, knows heaven; he who waits a hundred ages until a sage comes, without doubting, knows men. Hence the virtuous prince moves, and for ages shows empire the way." But there is no need to seek remote examples. He is a dull observer whose experience has not taught him the reality and force of magic, as well as of chemistry. The coldest precision cannot go abroad without encountering inexplicable influences. One man fastens an eye on him, and the graves of the memory render up their dead; the secrets that make him wretched either to keep or to betray, must be yielded;—another, and he cannot speak, and the bones of his body seem to lose their cartilages; the entrance of a friend adds grace, boldness, and eloquence to him; and there are persons, he cannot choose but remember, who gave a transcendent ex-

pansion to his thought, and kindled another life in his bosom.

What is so excellent as strict relations of amity, when they spring from this deep root? The sufficient reply to the skeptic, who doubts the power and the furniture of man, is in that possibility of joyful intercourse with persons, which makes the faith and practice of all reasonable men. I know nothing which life has to offer so satisfying as the profound good understanding, which can subsist, after much exchange of good offices, between two virtuous men, each of whom is sure of himself, and sure of his friend. It is a happiness which postpones all other gratifications, and makes politics, and commerce, and churches, cheap. For, when men shall meet as they ought, each a benefactor, a shower of stars, clothed with thoughts, with deeds, with accomplishments, it should be the festival of nature which all things announce. Of such friendship, love in the sexes is the first symbol, as all other things are symbols of love. Those relations to the best men, which, at one time, we reckoned the romances of youth, become, in the progress of the character, the most solid enjoyment.

If it were possible to live in right relations with men!—if we could abstain from asking anything of

them, from asking their praise, or help, or pity, and content us with compelling them through the virtue of the eldest laws! Could we not deal with a few persons,—with one person,—after the unwritten statutes, and make an experiment of their efficacy? Could we not pay our friend the compliment of truth, of silence, of forbearing? Need we be so eager to seek him? If we are related, we shall meet. It was a tradition of the ancient world, that no metamorphosis could hide a god from a god; and there is a Greek verse which runs,

“The Gods are to each other not unknown.”

Friends also follow the laws of divine necessity; they gravitate to each other, and cannot otherwise:—

When each the other shall avoid,
Shall each by each be most enjoyed.

Their relation is not made, but allowed. The gods must seat themselves without seneschal in our Olympus, and as they can instal themselves by seniority divine. Society is spoiled, if pains are taken, if the associates are brought a mile to meet. And if it be not society, it is a mischievous, low, degrading jangle, though made up of the best. All the greatness of

each is kept back, and every foible in painful activity, as if the Olympians should meet to exchange snuff-boxes.

Life goes headlong. We chase some flyingscheme, or we are hunted by some fear or command behind us. But if suddenly we encounter a friend, we pause; our heat and hurry look foolish enough; now pause, now possession, is required, and the power to swell the moment from the resources of the heart. The moment is all, in all noble relations.

A divine person is the prophecy of the mind; a friend is the hope of the heart. Our beatitude waits for the fulfilment of these two in one. The ages are opening this moral force. All force is the shadow or symbol of that. Poetry is joyful and strong, as it draws its inspiration thence. Men write their names on the world, as they are filled with this. History has been mean; our nations have been mob; we have never seen a man: that divine form we do not yet know, but only the dream and prophecy of such: we do not know the majestic manners which belong to him, which appease and exalt the beholder. We shall one day see that the most private is the most public energy, that quality atones for quantity, and grandeur of character acts in the dark, and succors them who never saw it. What greatness has yet appeared, is

beginnings and encouragements to us in this direction. The history of those gods and saints which the world has written, and then worshipped, are documents of character. The ages have exulted in the manners of a youth who owed nothing to fortune, and who was hanged at the Tyburn of his nation, who, by the pure quality of his nature, shed an epic splendor around the facts of his death, which has transfigured every particular into an universal symbol for the eyes of mankind. This great defeat is hitherto our highest fact. But the mind requires a victory to the senses, a force of character which will convert judge, jury, soldier, and king; which will rule animal and mineral virtues, and blend with the courses of sap, of rivers, of winds, of stars, and of moral agents.

If we cannot attain at a bound to these grandeurs, at least, let us do them homage. In society, high advantages are set down to the possessor, as disadvantages. It requires the more wariness in our private estimates. I do not forgive in my friends the failure to know a fine character, and to entertain it with thankful hospitality. When, at last, that which we have always longed for, is arrived, and shines on us with glad rays out of that far celestial land, then to be coarse, then to be critical, and treat such a

visitant with the jabber and suspicion of the streets, argues a vulgarity that seems to shut the doors of heaven. This is confusion, this the right insanity, when the soul no longer knows its own, nor where its allegiance, its religion, are due. Is there any religion but this, to know, that, wherever in the wide desert of being, the holy sentiment we cherish has opened into a flower, it blooms for me? if none sees it, I see it; I am aware, if I alone, of the greatness of the fact. Whilst it blooms, I will keep sabbath or holy time, and suspend my gloom, and my folly and jokes. Nature is indulged by the presence of this guest. There are many eyes that can detect and honor the prudent and household virtues; there are many that can discern Genius on his starry track, though the mob is incapable; but when that love which is all-suffering, all-abstaining, all-aspiring, which has vowed to itself, that it will be a wretch and also a fool in this world, sooner than soil its white hands by any compliances, comes into our streets and houses,—only the pure and aspiring can know its face, and the only compliment they can pay it, is to own it.

MANNERS.

"How near to good is what is fair;
Which we no sooner see,
But with the lines and outward air
Our senses taken be.

Again yourselves compose,
And now put all the aptness on
Of Figure, that Proportion
Or Color can disclose;
That if those silent arts were lost,
Design and Picture, they might boast
From you a newer ground,
Instructed by the heightening sense
Of dignity and reverence
In their true motions found."

BEN JONSON.

ESSAY IV.

MANNERS.

HALF the world, it is said, knows not how the other half live. Our Exploring Expedition saw the Feejee islanders getting their dinner off human bones; and they are said to eat their own wives and children. The husbandry of the modern inhabitants of Gournou (west of old Thebes) is philosophical to a fault. To set up their housekeeping, nothing is requisite but two or three earthen pots, a stone to grind meal, and a mat which is the bed. The house, namely, a tomb, is ready without rent or taxes. No rain can pass through the roof, and there is no door, for there is no want of one, as there is nothing to lose. If the house do not please them, they walk out and enter another, as there are several hundreds at their command. "It is somewhat singular," adds Belzoni, to whom we owe this account, "to talk of happiness among people who live in sepulchres, among the corpses and rags of an ancient nation

which they know nothing of." In the deserts of Borgoo, the rock-Tibboos still dwell in caves, like cliff-swallows, and the language of these negroes is compared by their neighbors to the shrieking of bats, and to the whistling of birds. Again, the Bornoos have no proper names; individuals are called after their height, thickness, or other accidental quality, and have nicknames merely. But the salt, the dates, the ivory, and the gold, for which these horrible regions are visited, find their way into countries, where the purchaser and consumer can hardly be ranked in one race with these cannibals and man-stealers; countries where man serves himself with metals, wood, stone, glass, gum, cotton, silk, and wool; honors himself with architecture; writes laws, and contrives to execute his will through the hands of many nations; and, especially, establishes a select society, running through all the countries of intelligent men, a self-constituted aristocracy, or fraternity of the best, which, without written law or exact usage of any kind, perpetuates itself, colonizes every new-planted island, and adopts and makes its own whatever personal beauty or extraordinary native endowment anywhere appears.

What fact more conspicuous in modern history, than the creation of the gentleman? Chivalry is

that, and loyalty is that, and, in English literature, half the drama, and all the novels, from Sir Philip Sidney to Sir Walter Scott, paint this figure. The word *gentleman*, which, like the word Christian, must hereafter characterize the present and the few preceding centuries, by the importance attached to it, is a homage to personal and incommunicable properties. Frivolous and fantastic additions have got associated with the name, but the steady interest of mankind in it must be attributed to the valuable properties which it designates. An element which unites all the most forcible persons of every country; makes them intelligible and agreeable to each other, and is somewhat so precise, that it is at once felt if an individual lack the masonic sign, cannot be any casual product, but must be an average result of the character and faculties universally found in men. It seems a certain permanent average; as the atmosphere is a permanent composition, whilst so many gases are combined only to be decomposed. *Comme il faut*, is the Frenchman's description of good society, *as we must be*. It is a spontaneous fruit of talents and feelings of precisely that class who have most vigor, who take the lead in the world of this hour, and, though far from pure, far from constituting the gladdest and highest tone of

human feeling, is as good as the whole society permits it to be. It is made of the spirit, more than of the talent of men, and is a compound result, into which every great force enters as an ingredient, namely, virtue, wit, beauty, wealth, and power.

There is something equivocal in all the words in use to express the excellence of manners and social cultivation, because the quantities are fluxional, and the last effect is assumed by the senses as the cause. The word *gentleman* has not any correlative abstract to express the quality. *Gentility* is mean, and *gentillesse* is obsolete. But we must keep alive in the vernacular, the distinction between *fashion*, a word of narrow and often sinister meaning, and the heroic character which the gentleman imports. The usual words, however, must be respected: they will be found to contain the root of the matter. The point of distinction in all this class of names, as courtesy, chivalry, fashion, and the like, is, that the flower and fruit, not the grain of the tree, are contemplated. It is beauty which is the aim this time, and not worth. The result is now in question, although our words intimate well enough the popular feeling, that the appearance supposes a substance. The gentleman is a man of truth, lord of his own actions, and expressing that lordship in his behavior, not in

any manner dependent and servile either on persons, or opinions, or possessions. Beyond this fact of truth and real force, the word denotes good-nature or benevolence : manhood first, and then gentleness. The popular notion certainly adds a condition of ease and fortune ; but that is a natural result of personal force and love, that they should possess and dispense the goods of the world. In times of violence, every eminent person must fall in with many opportunities to approve his stoutness and worth ; therefore every man's name that emerged at all from the mass in the feudal ages, rattles in our ear like a flourish of trumpets. But personal force never goes out of fashion. That is still paramount to-day, and, in the moving crowd of good society, the men of valor and reality are known, and rise to their natural place. The competition is transferred from war to politics and trade, but the personal force appears readily enough in these new arenas.

Power first, or no leading class. In politics and in trade, bruisers and pirates are of better promise than talkers and clerks. God knows that all sorts of gentlemen knock at the door ; but whenever used in strictness, and with any emphasis, the name will be found to point at original energy. It describes a man standing in his own right, and working after

untaught methods. In a good lord, there must first be a good animal, at least to the extent of yielding the incomparable advantage of animal spirits. The ruling class must have more, but they must have these, giving in every company the sense of power, which makes things easy to be done which daunt the wise. The society of the energetic class, in their friendly and festive meetings, is full of courage, and of attempts, which intimidate the pale scholar. The courage which girls exhibit is like a battle of Lundy's Lane, or a sea-fight. The intellect relies on memory to make some supplies to face these extemporaneous squadrons. But memory is a base mendicant with basket and badge, in the presence of these sudden masters. The rulers of society must be up to the work of the world, and equal to their versatile office : men of the right Cæsarian pattern, who have great range of affinity. I am far from believing the timid maxim of Lord Falkland, ("that for ceremony there must go two to it; since a bold fellow will go through the cunningest forms,") and am of opinion that the gentleman is the bold fellow whose forms are not to be broken through; and only that plenteous nature is rightful master, which is the complement of whatever person it converses with. My gentleman gives the law where he is; he will outpray saints in chapel,

outgeneral veterans in the field, and outshine all courtesy in the hall. He is good company for pirates, and good with academicians; so that it is useless to fortify yourself against him; he has the private entrance to all minds, and I could as easily exclude myself, as him. The famous gentlemen of Asia and Europe have been of this strong type: Saladin, Sapor, the Cid, Julius Cæsar, Scipio, Alexander, Pericles, and the lordliest personages. They sat very carelessly in their chairs, and were too excellent themselves, to value any condition at a high rate.

A plentiful fortune is reckoned necessary, in the popular judgment, to the completion of this man of the world: and it is a material deputy which walks through the dance which the first has led. Money is not essential, but this wide affinity is, which transcends the habits of clique and caste, and makes itself felt by men of all classes. If the aristocrat is only valid in fashionable circles, and not with truckmen, he will never be a leader in fashion; and if the man of the people cannot speak on equal terms with the gentleman, so that the gentleman shall perceive that he is already really of his own order, he is not to be feared. Diogenes, Socrates, and Epaminondas, are gentlemen of the best blood, who have chosen the

condition of poverty, when that of wealth was equally open to them. I use these old names, but the men I speak of are my contemporaries. Fortune will not supply to every generation one of these well-appointed knights, but every collection of men furnishes some example of the class : and the politics of this country, and the trade of every town, are controlled by these hardy and irresponsible doers, who have invention to take the lead, and a broad sympathy which puts them in fellowship with crowds, and makes their action popular.

The manners of this class are observed and caught with devotion by men of taste. The association of these masters with each other, and with men intelligent of their merits, is mutually agreeable and stimulating. The good forms, the happiest expressions of each, are repeated and adopted. By swift consent, everything superfluous is dropped, everything graceful is renewed. Fine manners show themselves formidable to the uncultivated man. They are a subtler science of defence to parry and intimidate ; but once matched by the skill of the other party, they drop the point of the sword,—points and fences disappear, and the youth finds himself in a more transparent atmosphere, wherein life is a less troublesome game, and not a misunderstanding.

ing rises between the players. Manners aim to facilitate life, to get rid of impediments, and bring the man pure to energize. They aid our dealing and conversation, as a railway aids traveling, by getting rid of all avoidable obstructions of the road, and leaving nothing to be conquered but pure space. These forms very soon become fixed and a fine sense of propriety is cultivated with the more heed, that it becomes a badge of social and civil distinctions. Thus grows up Fashion, an equivocal semblance, the most puissant, the most fantastic and frivolous, the most feared and followed, and which morals and violence assault in vain.

There exists a strict relation between the class of power, and the exclusive and polished circles. The last are always filled or filling from the first. The strong men usually give some allowance even to the petulances of fashion, for that affinity they find in it. Napoleon, child of the revolution, destroyer of the old noblesse, never ceased to court the Faubourg St. Germain: doubtless with the feeling, that fashion is a homage to men of his stamp. Fashion, though in a strange way, represents all manly virtue. It is virtue gone to seed: it is a kind of posthumous honor. It does not often caress the great, but the children of the great: it is a hall of the Past. **It**

usually sets its face against the great of this hour. Great men are not commonly in its halls : they are absent in the field : they are working, not triumphing. Fashion is made up of their children ; of those, who, through the value and virtue of somebody, have acquired lustre to their name, marks of distinction, means of cultivation and generosity, and, in their physical organization, a certain health and excellence, which secures to them, if not the highest power to work, yet high power to enjoy. The class of power, the working heroes, the Cortez, the Nelson, the Napoleon, see that this is the festivity and permanent celebration of such as they ; that fashion is funded talent ; is Mexico, Marengo, and Trafalgar beaten out thin ; that the brilliant names of fashion run back to just such busy names as their own, fifty or sixty years ago. They are the sowers, their sons shall be the reapers, and *their* sons, in the ordinary course of things, must yield the possession of the harvest to new competitors with keener eyes and stronger frames. The city is recruited from the country. In the year 1805, it is said, every legitimate monarch in Europe was imbecile. The city would have died out, rotted, and exploded, long ago, but that it was reinforced from the fields. It is only

country which came to town day before yesterday, that is city and court to-day.

Aristocracy and fashion are certain inevitable results. These mutual selections are indestructible. If they provoke anger in the least favored class, and the excluded majority revenge themselves on the excluding minority, by the strong hand, and kill them, at once a new class finds itself at the top, as certainly as cream rises in a bowl of milk: and if the people should destroy class after class, until two men only were left, one of these would be the leader and would be involuntarily served and copied by the other. You may keep this minority out of sight and out of mind, but it is tenacious of life, and is one of the estates of the realm. I am the more struck with this tenacity, when I see its work. It respects the administration of such unimportant matters, that we should not look for any durability in its rule. We sometimes meet men under some strong moral influence, as, a patriotic, a literary, a religious movement, and feel that the moral sentiment rules man and nature. We think all other distinctions and ties will be slight and fugitive, this of caste or fashion, for example; yet come from year to year, and see how permanent that is, in this Boston or New York life of man, where, too, it has not the

least countenance from the law of the land. Not in Egypt or in India a firmer or more impassable line. Here are associations whose ties go over, and under, and through it, a meeting of merchants, a military corps, a college-class, a fire-club, a professional association, a political, a religious convention ;—the persons seem to draw inseparably near ; yet, that assembly once dispersed, its members will not in the year meet again. Each returns to his degree in the scale of good society, porcelain remains porcelain, and earthen earthen. The objects of fashion may be frivolous, or fashion may be objectless, but the nature of this union and selection can be neither frivolous nor accidental. Each man's rank in that perfect graduation depends on some symmetry in his structure, or some agreement in his structure to the symmetry of society. Its doors unbar instantaneously to a natural claim of their own kind. A natural gentleman finds his way in, and will keep the oldest patrician out, who has lost his intrinsic rank. Fashion understands itself ; good-breeding and personal superiority of whatever country readily fraternize with those of every other. The chiefs of savage tribes have distinguished themselves in London and Paris, by the purity of their tournure.

To say what good of fashion we can,—it rests on

reality, and hates nothing so much as pretenders;—to exclude and mystify pretenders, and send them into everlasting ‘Coventry,’ is its delight. We condemn, in turn, every other gift of men of the world; but the habit even in little and the least matters, of not appealing to any but our own sense of propriety, constitutes the foundation of all chivalry. There is almost no kind of self-reliance, so it be sane and proportioned, which fashion does not occasionally adopt, and give it the freedom of its saloons. A sainted soul is always elegant, and, if it will, passes unchallenged into the most guarded ring. But so will Jock the teamster pass, in some crisis that brings him thither, and find favor, as long as his head is not giddy with the new circumstance, and the iron shoes do not wish to dance in waltzes and cotillions. For there is nothing settled in manners, but the laws of behavior yield to the energy of the individual. The maiden at her first ball, the countryman at a city dinner, believes that there is a ritual according to which every act and compliment must be performed, or the failing party must be cast out of this presence. Later, they learn that good sense and character make their own forms every moment, and speak or abstain, take wine or refuse it, stay or go, sit in a chair or sprawl with children on the floor, or

stand on their head, or what else soever, in a new and aboriginal way : and that strong will is always in fashion, let who will be unfashionable. All that fashion demands is composure, and self-content. A circle of men perfectly well-bred would be a company of sensible persons, in which every man's native manners and character appeared. If the fashionist have not this quality, he is nothing. We are such lovers of self-reliance, that we excuse in a man many sins, if he will show us a complete satisfaction in his position, which asks no leave to be, of mine, or any man's good opinion. But any deference to some eminent man or woman of the world, forfeits all privilege of nobility. He is an underling : I have nothing to do with him ; I will speak with his master. A man should not go where he cannot carry his whole sphere or society with him,—not bodily the whole circle of his friends, but atmospherically. He should preserve in a new company the same attitude of mind and reality of relation, which his daily associates draw him to, else he is shorn of his best beams, and will be an orphan in the merriest club. “If you could see Vich Ian Vohr with his tail on!——” But Vich Ian Vohr must always carry his belongings in some fashion, if not added as honor, then severed as disgrace.

There will always be in society certain persons who are mercuries of its approbation, and whose glance will at any time determine for the curious their standing in the world. These are the chamberlains of the lesser gods. Accept their coldness as an omen of grace with the loftier deities, and allow them all their privilege. They are clear in their office, nor could they be thus formidable, without their own merits. But do not measure the importance of this class by their pretension, or imagine that a fop can be the dispenser of honor and shame. They pass also at their just rate; for how can they otherwise, in circles which exist as a sort of herald's office for the sifting of character?

As the first thing man requires of man, is reality, so, that appears in all the forms of society. We pointedly, and by name, introduce the parties to each other. Know you before all heaven and earth, that this is Andrew, and this is Gregory;—they look each other in the eye; they grasp each other's hand, to identify and signalize each other. It is a great satisfaction. A gentleman never dodges: his eyes look straight forward, and he assures the other party, first of all, that he has been met. For what is it that we seek, in so many visits and hospitalities? Is it your draperies, pictures, and decorations? Or, do

we not insatiably ask, Was a man in the house? I may easily go into a great household where there is much substance, excellent provision for comfort, luxury, and taste, and yet not encounter there any *Amphitryon*, who shall subordinate these appendages. I may go into a cottage, and find a farmer who feels that he is the man I have come to see, and fronts me accordingly. It was therefore a very natural point of old feudal etiquette, that a gentleman who received a visit, though it were of his sovereign, should not leave his roof, but should wait his arrival at the door of his house. No house, though it were the *Tuilleries*, or the *Escorial*, is good for anything without a master. And yet we are not often gratified by this hospitality. Every body we know surrounds himself with a fine house, fine books, conservatory, gardens, equipage, and all manner of toys, as screens to interpose between himself and his guest. Does it not seem as if a man was of a very sly, elusive nature, and dreaded nothing so much as a full *rencontre* front to front with his fellow? It were unmerciful, I know, quite to abolish the use of these screens, which are of eminent convenience, whether the guest is too great, or too little. We call together many friends who keep each other in play, or, by luxuries and ornaments we amuse the young people, and

guard our retirement. Or if, perchance, a searching realist comes to our gate, before whose eye we have no care to stand, then again we run to our curtain, and hide ourselves as Adam at the voice of the Lord God in the garden. Cardinal Caprara, the Pope's legate at Paris, defended himself from the glances of Napoleon, by an immense pair of green spectacles. Napoleon remarked them, and speedily managed to rally them off: and yet Napoleon, in his turn, was not great enough with eight hundred thousand troops at his back, to face a pair of freeborn eyes, but fenced himself with etiquette, and within triple barriers of reserve: and, as all the world knows from Madame de Stael, was wont, when he found himself observed, to discharge his face of all expression. But emperors and rich men are by no means the most skilful masters of good manners. No rentroll nor army-list can dignify skulking and dissimulation: and the first point of courtesy must always be truth, as really all the forms of good-breeding point that way.

I have just been reading, in Mr. Hazlitt's translation, Montaigne's account of his journey into Italy, and am struck with nothing more agreeably than the self-respecting fashions of the time. His arrival in each place the arrival of a gentleman of France, is an

event of some consequence. Wherever he goes, he pays a visit to whatever prince or gentleman of note resides upon his road, as a duty to himself and to civilization. When he leaves any house in which he has lodged for a few weeks, he causes his arms to be painted and hung up as a perpetual sign to the house as was the custom of gentlemen.

The complement of this graceful self-respect, and that of all the points of good breeding I most require and insist upon, is deference. I like that every chair should be a throne, and hold a king. I prefer a tendency to stateliness, to an excess of fellowship. Let the incommunicable objects of nature and the metaphysical isolation of man teach us independence. Let us not be too much acquainted. I would have a man enter his house through a hall filled with heroic and sacred sculptures, that he might not want the hint of tranquillity and self-poise. We should meet each morning, as from foreign countries, and spending the day together, should depart at night, as into foreign countries. In all things I would have the island of a man inviolate. Let us sit apart as the gods, talking from peak to peak all round Olympus. No degree of affection need invade this religion. This is myrrh and rosemary to keep the other sweet. Lovers should guard their strangeness.

If they forgive too much, all slides into confusion and meanness. It is easy to push this deference to a Chinese etiquette ; but coolness and absence of heat and haste indicate fine qualities. A gentleman makes no noise : a lady is serene. Proportionate is our disgust at those invaders who fill a studious house with blast and running, to secure some paltry convenience. Not less I dislike a low sympathy of each with his neighbor's needs. Must we have a good understanding with one another's palates ? as foolish people who have lived long together, know when each wants salt or sugar. I pray my companion, if he wishes for bread, to ask me for bread, and if he wishes for sassafras or arsenic, to ask me for them, and not to hold out his plate, as if I knew already. Every natural function can be dignified by deliberation and privacy. Let us leave hurry to slaves. The compliments and ceremonies of our breeding should signify, however remotely, the recollection of the grandeur of our destiny.

The flower of courtesy does not very well bide handling, but if we dare to open another leaf, and explore what parts go to its conformation, we shall find also an intellectual quality. To the leaders of men, the brain as well as the flesh and the heart must furnish a proportion. Defect in manners is

usually the defect of fine perceptions. Men are too coarsely made for the delicacy of beautiful carriage and customs. It is not quite sufficient to good-breeding, a union of kindness and independence. We imperatively require a perception of, and a homage to beauty in our companions. Other virtues are in request in the field and workyard, but a certain degree of taste is not to be spared in those we sit with. I could better eat with one who did not respect the truth or the laws, than with a sloven and unpresentable person. Moral qualities rule the world, but at short distances, the senses are despotic. The same discrimination of fit and fair runs out, if with less rigor, into all parts of life. The average spirit of the energetic class is good sense, acting under certain limitations and to certain ends. It entertains every natural gift. Social in its nature, it respects everything which tends to unite men. It delights in measure. The love of beauty is mainly the love of measure or proportion. The person who screams, or uses the superlative degree, or converses with heat, puts whole drawing-rooms to flight. If you wish to be loved, love measure. You must have genius, or a prodigious usefulness, if you will hide the want of measure. This perception comes in to polish and perfect the parts of the social instrument.

Society will pardon much to genius and special gifts, but, being in its nature a convention, it loves what is conventional, or what belongs to coming together. That makes the good and bad of manners, namely, what helps or hinders fellowship. For, fashion is not good sense absolute, but relative; not good sense private, but good sense entertaining company. It hates corners and sharp points of character, hates quarrelsome, egotistical, solitary, and gloomy people; hates whatever can interfere with total blending of parties; whilst it values all peculiarities as in the highest degree refreshing, which can consist with good fellowship. And besides the general infusion of wit to heighten civility, the direct splendor of intellectual power is ever welcome in fine society as the costliest addition to its rule and its credit.

The dry light must shine in to adorn our festival, but it must be tempered and shaded, or that will also offend. Accuracy is essential to beauty, and quick perceptions to politeness, but not too quick perceptions. One may be too punctual and too precise. He must leave the omniscience of business at the door, when he comes into the palace of beauty. Society loves creole natures, and sleepy, languishing manners, so that they cover sense, grace, and goodwill; the air of drowsy strength, which disarms crit-

icism ; perhaps, because such a person seems to reserve himself for the best of the game, and not spend himself on surfaces ; an ignoring eye, which does not see the annoyances, shifts, and inconveniences, that cloud the brow and smother the voice of the sensitive.

Therefore, besides personal force and so much perception as constitutes unerring taste, society demands in its patrician class, another element already intimated, which it significantly terms good-nature, expressing all degrees of generosity, from the lowest willingness and faculty to oblige, up to the heights of magnanimity and love. Insight we must have, or we shall run against one another, and miss the way to our food ; but intellect is selfish and barren. The secret of success in society, is a certain heartiness and sympathy. A man who is not happy in the company, cannot find any word in his memory that will fit the occasion. All his information is a little impertinent. A man who is happy there, finds in every turn of the conversation equally lucky occasions for the introduction of that which he has to say. The favorites of society, and what it calls *whole souls*, are able men, and of more spirit than wit, who have no uncomfortable egotism, but who exactly fill the hour and the company, contented and contenting, at

a marriage or a funeral, a ball or a jury, a water-party or a shooting-match. England, which is rich in gentlemen, furnished, in the beginning of the present century, a good model of that genius which the world loves, in Mr. Fox, who added to his great abilities the most social disposition, and real love of men. Parliamentary history has few better passages than the debate, in which Burke and Fox separated in the House of Commons ; when Fox urged on his old friend the claims of old friendship with such tenderness, that the house was moved to tears. Another anecdote is so close to my matter, that I must hazard the story. A tradesman who had long dunned him for a note of three hundred guineas, found him one day counting gold, and demanded payment : “No,” said Fox, “I owe this money to Sheridan: it is a debt of honor: if an accident should happen to me, he has nothing to show.” “Then,” said the creditor, “I change my debt into a debt of honor,” and tore the note in pieces. Fox thanked the man for his confidence, and paid him, saying, “his debt was of older standing, and Sheridan must wait.” Lover of liberty, friend of the Hindoo, friend of the African slave, he possessed a great personal popularity ; and Napoleon said of him on the occasion of his visit to

Paris, in 1805, "Mr. Fox will always hold the first place in an assembly at the Tuileries."

We may easily seem ridiculous in our eulogy of courtesy, whenever we insist on benevolence as its foundation. The painted phantasm Fashion rises to cast a species of derision on what we say. But I will neither be driven from some allowance to Fashion as a symbolic institution, nor from the belief that love is the basis of courtesy. We must obtain *that*, if we can; but by all means we must affirm *this*. Life owes much of its spirit to these sharp contrasts. Fashion which affects to be honor, is often, in all men's experience, only a ballroom-code. Yet, so long as it is the highest circle, in the imagination of the best heads on the planet, there is something necessary and excellent in it; for it is not to be supposed that men have agreed to be the dupes of anything preposterous; and the respect which these mysteries inspire in the most rude and sylvan characters, and the curiosity with which details of high life are read, betray the universality of the love of cultivated manners. I know that a comic disparity would be felt, if we should enter the acknowledged 'first circles,' and apply these terrific standards of justice, beauty, and benefit, to the individuals actually found there. Monarchs and heroes, sages and lovers,

these gallants are not. Fashion has many classes and many rules of probation and admission ; and not the best alone. There is not only the right of conquest, which genius pretends,—the individual, demonstrating his natural aristocracy best of the best ;—but less claims will pass for the time ; for Fashion loves lions, and points, like Circe, to her horned company. This gentleman is this afternoon arrived from Denmark ; and that is my Lord Ride, who came yesterday from Bagdat ; here is Captain Friese, from Cape Turnagain ; and Captain Symmes, from the interior of the earth ; and Monsieur Jovaire, who came down this morning in a balloon ; Mr. Hobnail, the reformer ; and Reverend Jul Bat, who has converted the whole torrid zone in his Sunday school ; and Signor Torre del Greco, who extinguished Vesuvius by pouring into it the Bay of Naples ; Spahi, the Persian ambassador ; and Tul Wil Shan, the exiled nabob of Nepaul, whose saddle is the new moon.—But these are monsters of one day, and tomorrow will be dismissed to their holes and dens ; for, in these rooms, every chair is waited for. The artist, the scholar, and, in general, the clerisy, wins its way up into these places, and gets represented here, somewhat on this footing of conquest. Another mode is to pass through all the degrees, spending a

year and a day in St. Michael's Square, being steeped in Cologne water, and perfumed, and dined, and introduced, and properly grounded in all the biography, and politics, and anecdotes of the boudoirs.

Yet these fineries may have grace and wit. Let there be grotesque sculpture about the gates and offices of temples. Let the creed and commandments even have the saucy homage of parody. The forms of politeness universally express benevolence in superlative degrees. What if they are in the mouths of selfish men, and used as means of selfishness? What if the false gentleman almost bows the true out of the world? What if the false gentleman contrives so to address his companion, as civilly to exclude all others from his discourse, and also to make them feel excluded? Real service will not lose its nobleness. All generosity is not merely French and sentimental; nor is it to be concealed, that living blood and a passion of kindness does at last distinguish God's gentleman from Fashion's. The epitaph of Sir Jenkin Grout is not wholly unintelligible to the present age. "Here lies Sir Jenkin Grout, who loved his friend, and persuaded his enemy: what his mouth ate, his hand paid for: what his servants robbed, he restored: if a woman gave him pleasure, he supported her in pain: he never forgot his chil-

dren : and whoso touched his finger, drew after it his whole body." Even the line of heroes is not utterly extinct. There is still ever some admirable person in plain clothes, standing on the wharf, who jumps in to rescue a drowning man ; there is still some absurd inventor of charities ; some guide and comforter of runaway slaves ; some friend of Poland ; some Philhellene ; some fanatic who plants shade-trees for the second and third generation, and orchards when he is grown old ; some well-concealed piety ; some just man happy in an ill-fame ; some youth ashamed of the favors of fortune, and impatiently casting them on other shoulders. And these are the centres of society, on which it returns for fresh impulses. These are the creators of Fashion, which is an attempt to organize beauty of behavior. The beautiful and the generous are, in the theory, the doctors and apostles of this church : Scipio, and the Cid, and Sir Philip Sidney, and Washington, and every pure and valiant heart, who worshipped Beauty by word and by deed. The persons who constitute the natural aristocracy, are not found in the actual aristocracy, or, only on its edge ; as the chemical energy of the spectrum is found to be greatest just outside of the spectrum. Yet that is the infirmity of the seneschals, who do not know

their sovereign, when he appears. The theory of society supposes the existence and sovereignty of these. It divines afar off their coming. It says with the elder gods,—

“As Heaven and Earth are fairer far
 Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chiefs;
 And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth,
 In form and shape compact and beautiful;
 So, on our heels a fresh perfection treads;
 A power, more strong in beauty, born of us,
 And fated to excel us, as we pass
 In glory that old Darkness:
 ———— for, 'tis the eternal law,
 That first in beauty shall be first in might.”

Therefore, within the ethnical circle of good society, there is a narrower and higher circle, concentration of its light, and flower of courtesy, to which there is always a tacit appeal of pride and reference, as to its inner and imperial court, the parliament of love and chivalry. And this is constituted of those persons in whom heroic dispositions are native, with the love of beauty, the delight in society, and the power to embellish the passing day. If the individuals who compose the purest circles of aristocracy in Europe, the guarded blood of centuries, should pass in review, in such manner as that we

could, at leisure, and critically inspect their behavior, we might find no gentleman, and no lady ; for, although excellent specimens of courtesy and high-breeding would gratify us in the assemblage, in the particulars, we should detect offence. Because, elegance comes of no breeding, but of birth. There must be romance of character, or the most fastidious exclusion of impertinencies will not avail. It must be genius which takes that direction : it must be not courteous, but courtesy. High behavior is as rare in fiction, as it in fact. Scott is praised for the fidelity with which he painted the demeanor and conversation of the superior classes. Certainly, kings and queens, nobles and great ladies, had some right to complain of the absurdity that had been put in their mouths, before the days of *Waverley* ; but neither does Scott's dialogue bear criticism. His lords brave each other in smart epigrammatic speeches, but the dialogue is in costume, and does not please on the second reading : it is not warm with life. In *Shakspeare* alone, the speakers do not strut and bridle, the dialogue is easily great, and he adds to so many titles that of being the best-bred man in England, and in Christendom. Once or twice in a lifetime we are permitted to enjoy the charm of noble manners, in the presence of a man or woman who have no bar in

their nature, but whose character emanates freely in their word and gesture. A beautiful form is better than a beautiful face ; a beautiful behavior is better than a beautiful form : it gives a higher pleasure than statues or pictures ; it is the finest of the fine arts. A man is but a little thing in the midst of the objects of nature, yet, by the moral quality radiating from his countenance, he may abolish all considerations of magnitude, and in his manners equal the majesty of the world. I have seen an individual, whose manners, though wholly within the conventions of elegant society, were never learned there, but were original and commanding, and held out protection and prosperity ; one who did not need the aid of a court-suit, but carried the holiday in his eye ; who exhilarated the fancy by flinging wide the doors of new modes of existence ; who shook off the captivity of etiquette, with happy, spirited bearing, good-natured and free as Robin Hood ; yet with the port of an emperor,—if need be, calm, serious, and fit to stand the gaze of millions.

The open air and the fields, the street and public chambers, are the places where Man executes his will ; let him yield or divide the sceptre at the door of the house. Woman, with her instinct of behavior, instantly detects in man a love of trifles, any cold-

hess or imbecility, or, in short, any want of that large, flowing, and magnanimous deportment, which is indispensable as an exterior in the hall. Our American institutions have been friendly to her, and at this moment, I esteem it a chief felicity of this country, that it excels in women. A certain awkward consciousness of inferiority in the men, may give rise to the new chivalry in behalf of Woman's Rights. Certainly, let her be as much better placed in the laws and in social forms, as the most zealous reformer can ask, but I confide so entirely in her inspiring and musical nature, that I believe only herself can show us how she shall be served. The wonderful generosity of her sentiments raises her at times into heroical and godlike regions, and verifies the pictures of Minerva, Juno, or Polymnia; and, by the firmness with which she treads her upward path, she convinces the coarsest calculators that another road exists, than that which their feet know. But besides those who make good in our imagination the place of muses and of Delphic Sibyls, are there not women who fill our vase with wine and roses to the brim, so that the wine runs over and fills the house with perfume; who inspire us with courtesy; who unloose our tongues, and we speak; who anoint our eyes, and we see? We say things we never thought

to have said ; for once, our walls of habitual reserve vanished, and left us at large ; we were children playing with children in a wide field of flowers. Steep us, we cried, in these influences, for days, for weeks, and we shall be sunny poets, and will write out in many-colored words the romance that you are. Was it Hafiz or Firdousi that said of his Persian Lilla, She was an elemental force, and astonished me by her amount of life, when I saw her day after day radiating, every instant, redundant joy and grace on all around her. She was a solvent powerful to reconcile all heterogeneous persons into one society : like air or water, an element of such a great range of affinities, that it combines readily with a thousand substances. Where she is present, all others will be more than they are wont. She was a unit and whole, so that whatsoever she did, became her. She had too much sympathy and desire to please, than that you could say, her manners were marked with dignity, yet no princess could surpass her clear and erect demeanor on each occasion. She did not study the Persian grammar, nor the books of the seven poets, but all the poems of the seven seemed to be written upon her. For, though the bias of her nature was not to thought, but to sympathy, yet was she so perfect in her own nature, as to meet intellectual per-

sons by the fulness of her heart, warming them by her sentiments; believing, as she did, that by dealing nobly with all, all would show themselves noble.

I know that this Byzantine pile of chivalry or Fashion, which seems so fair and picturesque to those who look at the contemporary facts for science or for entertainment, is not equally pleasant to all spectators. The constitution of our society makes it a giant's castle to the ambitious youth who have not found their names enrolled in its Golden Book, and whom it has excluded from its coveted honors and privileges. They have yet to learn that its seeming grandeur is shadowy and relative: it is great by their allowance: its proudest gates will fly open at the approach of their courage and virtue. For the present distress, however, of those who are predisposed to suffer from the tyrannies of this caprice, there are easy remedies. To remove your residence a couple of miles, or at most four, will commonly relieve the most extreme susceptibility. For, the advantages which fashion values, are plants which thrive in very confined localities, in a few streets, namely. Out of this precinct, they go for nothing; are of no use in the farm, in the forest, in the market, in war, in the nuptial society, in the literary or scientific circle, at

sea, in friendship, in the heaven of thought or virtue.

But we have lingered long enough in these painted courts. The worth of the thing signified must vindicate our taste for the emblem. Everything that is called fashion and courtesy humbles itself before the cause and fountain of honor, creator of titles and dignities, namely, the heart of love. This is the royal blood, this the fire, which, in all countries and contingencies, will work after its kind, and conquer and expand all that approaches it. This gives new meanings to every fact. This impoverishes the rich, suffering no grandeur but its own. What *is* rich? Are you rich enough to help anybody? to succor the unfashionable and the eccentric? rich enough to make the Canadian in his wagon, the itinerant with his consul's paper which commends him "To the charitable," the swarthy Italian with his few broken words of English, the lame pauper hunted by overseers from town to town, even the poor insane or besotted wreck of man or woman, feel the noble exception of your presence and your house, from the general bleakness and stoniness; to make such feel that they were greeted with a voice which made them both remember and hope? What is vulgar, but to refuse the claim on acute and conclusive reasons? What

is gentle, but to allow it, and give their heart and yours one holiday from the national caution? Without the rich heart, wealth is an ugly beggar. The king of Schiraz could not afford to be so bountiful as the poor Osman who dwelt at his gate. Osman had a humanity so broad and deep, that although his speech was so bold and free with the Koran, as to disgust all the dervishes, yet was there never a poor outcast, eccentric, or insane man, some fool who had cut off his beard, or who had been mutilated under a vow, or had a pet madness in his brain, but fled at once to him,—that great heart lay there so sunny and hospitable in the centre of the country,—that it seemed as if the instinct of all sufferers drew them to his side. And the madness which he harbored, he did not share. Is not this to be rich? this only to be rightly rich?

But I shall hear without pain, that I play the courtier very ill, and talk of that which I do not well understand. It is easy to see, that what is called by distinction society and fashion, has good laws as well as bad, has much that is necessary, and much that is absurd. Too good for banning, and too bad for blessing, it reminds us of a tradition of the pagan mythology, in any attempt to settle its character. ‘I overheard Jove, one day,’ said

Silenus, 'talking of destroying the earth; he said, it had failed; they were all rogues and vixens, who went from bad to worse, as fast as the days succeeded each other. Minerva said, she hoped not; they were only ridiculous little creatures, with this odd circumstance, that they had a blur, or indeterminate aspect, seen far or seen near; if you called them bad, they would appear so; if you called them good, they would appear so; and there was no one person or action among them, which would not puzzle her owl, much more all Olympus, to know whether it was fundamentally bad or good.'

GIFTS.

**Gifts of one who loved me,—
'T was high time they came;
When he ceased to love me,
Time they stopped for shame.**

ESSAY V

GIFTS.

It is said that the world is in a state of bankruptcy, that the world owes the world more than the world can pay, and ought to go into chancery, and be sold. I do not think this general insolvency, which involves in some sort all the population, to be the reason of the difficulty experienced at Christmas and New Year, and other times, in bestowing gifts; since it is always so pleasant to be generous, though very vexatious to pay debts. But the impediment lies in the choosing. If, at any time, it comes into my head, that a present is due from me to somebody, I am puzzled what to give, until the opportunity is gone. Flowers and fruits are always fit presents; flowers, because they are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty outvalues all the utilities of the world. These gay natures contrast with the somewhat stern countenance of ordinary nature: they are like music heard out of a work-house. Nature does not cocker

us: we are children, not pets: she is not fond: everything is dealt to us without fear or favor, after severe universal laws. Yet these delicate flowers look like the frolic and interference of love and beauty. Men use to tell us that we love flattery even though we are not deceived by it, because it shows that we are of importance enough to be courted. Something like that pleasure, the flowers give us: what am I to whom these sweet hints are addressed? Fruits are acceptable gifts, because they are the flower of commodities, and admit of fantastic values being attached to them. If a man should send to me to come a hundred miles to visit him, and should set before me a basket of fine summer-fruit, I should think there was some proportion between the labor and the reward.

For common gifts, necessity makes pertinences and beauty every day, and one is glad when an imperative leaves him no option, since if the man at the door have no shoes, you have not to consider whether you could procure him a paint-box. And as it is always pleasing to see a man eat bread, or drink water, in the house or out of doors, so it is always a great satisfaction to supply these first wants. Necessity does everything well. In our condition of universal dependence, it seems heroic to let the peti-

tioner be the judge of his necessity, and to give all that is asked, though at great inconvenience. If it be a fantastic desire, it is better to leave to others the office of punishing him. I can think of many parts I should prefer playing to that of the Furies. Next to things of necessity, the rule for a gift, which one of my friends prescribed, is, that we might convey to some person that which properly belonged to his character, and was easily associated with him in thought. But our tokens of compliment and love are for the most part barbarous. Rings and other jewels are not gifts, but apologies of gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself. Thou must bleed for me. Therefore the poet brings his poem; the shepherd, his lamb; the farmer, corn; the miner, a gem; the sailor, coral and shells; the painter, his picture; the girl, a handkerchief of her own sewing. This is right and pleasing, for it restores society in so far to its primary basis, when a man's biography is conveyed in his gift, and every man's wealth is an index of his merit. But it is a cold, lifeless business when you go to the shops to buy me something, which does not represent your life and talent, but a goldsmith's. This is fit for kings, and rich men who represent kings, and a false state of property, to make

presents of gold and silver stuffs, as a kind of symbolical sin-offering, or payment of black-mail.

The law of benefits is a difficult channel, which requires careful sailing, or rude boats. It is not the office of a man to receive gifts. How dare you give them? We wish to be self-sustained. We do not quite forgive a giver. The hand that feeds us is in some danger of being bitten. We can receive anything from love, for that is a way of receiving it from ourselves; but not from any one who assumes to bestow. We sometimes hate the meat which we eat, because there seems something of degrading dependence in living by it.

“Brother, if Jove to thee a present make,
Take heed that from his hands thou nothing take.”

We ask the whole. Nothing less will content us. We arraign society, if it do not give us besides earth, and fire, and water, opportunity, love, reverence and objects of veneration.

He is a good man, who can receive a gift well. We are either glad or sorry at a gift, and both emotions are unbecoming. Some violence, I think, is done, some degradation borne, when I rejoice or grieve at a gift. I am sorry when my independence is invaded, or when a gift comes from such as do not

know my spirit, and so the act is not supported ; and if the gift pleases me overmuch, then I should be ashamed that the donor should read my heart, and see that I love his commodity, and not him. The gift, to be true, must be the flowing of the giver unto me, correspondent to my flowing unto him. When the waters are at level, then my goods pass to him, and his to me. All his are mine, all mine his. I say to him, How can you give me this pot of oil, or this flagon of wine, when all your oil and wine is mine, which belief of mine this gift seems to deny? Hence the fitness of beautiful, not useful things for gifts. This giving is flat usurpation, and therefore when the beneficiary is ungrateful, as all beneficiaries hate all Timons, not at all considering the value of the gift, but looking back to the greater store it was taken from, I rather sympathize with the beneficiary, than with the anger of my lord Timon. For, the expectation of gratitude is mean, and is continually punished by the total insensibility of the obliged person. It is a great happiness to get off without injury and heart-burning, from one who has had the ill luck to be served by you. It is a very onerous business, this of being served, and the debtor naturally wishes to give you a slap. A golden text for these gentlemen is that which I so admire in the

Buddhist, who never thanks, and who says, "Do not flatter your benefactors."

The reason of these discords I conceive to be, that there is no commensurability between a man and any gift. You cannot give anything to a magnanimous person. After you have served him, he at once puts you in debt by his magnanimity. The service a man renders his friend is trivial and selfish, compared with the service he knows his friend stood in readiness to yield him, alike before he had begun to serve his friend, and now also. Compared with that goodwill I bear my friend, the benefit it is in my power to render him seems small. Besides, our action on each other, good as well as evil, is so incidental and at random that we can seldom hear the acknowledgments of any person who would thank us for a benefit, without some shame and humiliation. We can rarely strike a direct stroke, but must be content with an oblique one; we seldom have the satisfaction of yielding a direct benefit, which is directly received. But rectitude scatters favors on every side without knowing it, and receives with wonder the thanks of all people.

I fear to breathe any treason against the majesty of love, which is the genius and god of gifts, and to whom we must not affect to prescribe. Let him give

kingdoms or flower-leaves indifferently. There are persons, from whom we always expect fairy tokens; let us not cease to expect them. This is prerogative, and not to be limited by our municipal rules. For the rest, I like to see that we cannot be bought and sold. The best of hospitality and of generosity is also not in the will, but in fate. I find that I am not much to you; you do not need me; you do not feel me; then am I thrust out of doors, though you proffer me house and lands. No services are of any value, but only likeness. When I have attempted to join myself to others by services, it proved an intellectual trick,—no more. They eat your service like apples, and leave you out. But love them, and they feel you, and delight in you all the time.

NATURE.

The rounded world is fair to see,
Nine times folded in mystery :
Though baffled seers cannot impart
The secret of its laboring heart,
Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.
Spirit that lurks each form within
Beckons to spirit of its kin ;
Self-kindled every atom glows,
And hints the future which it owes.

ESSAY VI.

NATURE.

THERE are days which occur in this climate, at almost any season of the year, wherein the world reaches its perfection, when the air, the heavenly bodies, and the earth, make a harmony, as if nature would indulge her offspring ; when, in these bleak upper sides of the planet, nothing is to desire that we have heard of the happiest latitudes, and we bask in the shining hours of Florida and Cuba ; when everything that has life gives sign of satisfaction, and the cattle that lie on the ground seem to have great and tranquil thoughts. These halcyons may be looked for with a little more assurance in that pure October weather, which we distinguish by the name of the Indian Summer. The day, immeasurably long, sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields. To have lived through all its sunny hours, seems longevity enough. The solitary places do not seem quite lonely. At the gates of the forest, the

(surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and small, wise and foolish. The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he makes into these precincts. Here is sanctity which shames our religions, and reality which discredits our heroes. Here we find nature to be the circumstance which dwarfs every other circumstance, and judges like a god all men that come to her. We have crept out of our close and crowded houses into the night and morning, and we see what majestic beauties daily wrap us in their bosom. How willingly we would escape the barriers which render them comparatively impotent, escape the sophistication and second thought, and suffer nature to in-trance us. The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning, and is stimulating and heroic. The anciently reported spells of these places creep on us. The stems of pines, hemlocks, and oaks, almost gleam like iron on the excited eye. The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them, and quit our life of solemn trifles. Here no history, or church, or state, is interpolated on the divine sky and the immortal year. How easily we might walk onward into the opening landscape, absorbed by new pictures, and by thoughts fast succeeding each other, until by degrees the recollection

of home was crowded out of the mind, all memory obliterated by the tyranny of the present, and we were led in triumph by nature.

These enchantments are medicinal, they sober and heal us. These are plain pleasures, kindly and native to us. We come to our own, and make friends with matter, which the ambitious chatter of the schools would persuade us to despise. We never can part with it; the mind loves its old home: as water to our thirst, so is the rock, the ground, to our eyes, and hands, and feet. It is firm water: it is cold flame: what health, what affinity! Ever an old friend, ever like a dear friend and brother, when we chat affectedly with strangers, comes in this honest face, and takes a grave liberty with us, and shames us out of our nonsense. Cities give not the human senses room enough. We go out daily and nightly to feed the eyes on the horizon, and require so much scope, just as we need water for our bath. There are all degrees of natural influence, from these quarantine powers of nature, up to her dearest and gravest ministrations to the imagination and the soul. There is the bucket of cold water from the spring, the wood-fire to which the chilled traveller rushes for safety,—and there is the sublime moral of autumn and of noon. We nestle in nature, and

draw our living as parasites from her roots and grains, and we receive glances from the heavenly bodies, which call us to solitude, and foretell the remotest future. The blue zenith is the point in which romance and reality meet. I think, if we should be rapt away into all that we dream of heaven, and should converse with Gabriel and Uriel, the upper sky would be all that would remain of our furniture.

It seems as if the day was not wholly profane, in which we have given heed to some natural object. The fall of snowflakes in a still air, preserving to each crystal its perfect form; the blowing of sleet over a wide sheet of water, and over plains, the waving rye-field, the mimic waving of acres of houstonia, whose innumerable florets whiten and ripple before the eye; the reflections of trees and flowers in glassy lakes; the musical steaming odorous south wind, which converts all trees to wind-harps; the crackling and spurting of hemlock in the flames; or of pine logs, which yield glory to the walls and faces in the sitting-room,—these are the music and pictures of the most ancient religion.) My house stands in low land, with limited outlook, and on the skirt of the village. But I go with my friend to the shore of our little river, and with one

stroke of the paddle, I leave the village politics and personalities, yes, and the world of villages and personalities behind, and pass into a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight, too bright almost for spotted man to enter without noviciate and probation. We penetrate bodily this incredible beauty: we dip our hands in this painted element: our eyes are bathed in these lights and forms. A holiday, a villeggiatura, a royal revel, the proudest, most heart-rejoicing festival that valor and beauty, power and taste, ever decked and enjoyed, establishes itself on the instant. These sunset clouds, these delicately emerging stars, with their private and ineffable glances, signify it and proffer it. I am taught the poorness of our invention, the ugliness of towns and palaces. Art and luxury have early learned that they must work as enhancement and sequel to this original beauty. I am overinstructed for my return. Henceforth I shall be hard to please. I cannot go back to toys. I am grown expensive and sophisticated. I can no longer live without elegance; but a countryman shall be my master of revels. He who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come to these enchantments, is the rich and royal man. Only as far as the masters of the world

have called in nature to their aid, can they reach the height of magnificence. This is the meaning of their hanging-gardens, villas, garden-houses, islands, parks, and preserves, to back their faulty personality with these strong accessories. I do not wonder that the landed interest should be invincible in the state with these dangerous auxiliaries. These bribe and invite; not kings, not palaces, not men, not women, but these tender and poetic stars, eloquent of secret promises. We heard what the rich man said, we knew of his villa, his grove, his wine, and his company, but the provocation and point of the invitation came out of these beguiling stars. In their soft glances, I see what men strove to realize in some Versailles, or Paphos, or Ctesiphon. Indeed, it is the magical lights of the horizon, and the blue sky for the background, which save all our works of art, which were otherwise bawbles. When the rich tax the poor with servility and obsequiousness, they should consider the effect of men reputed to be the possessors of nature, on imaginative minds. Ah! if the rich were rich as the poor fancy riches! A boy hears a military band play on the field at night, and he has kings and queens, and famous chivalry palpably before him. He hears the echoes of a horn in a hill country, in the Notch Mountains,

for example, which converts the mountains into an Æolian harp, and this supernatural *tiralira* restores to him the Dorian mythology, Apolla, Diana, and all divine hunters and huntresses. Can a musical note be so lofty, so haughtily beautiful! To the poor young poet, thus fabulous is his picture of society; he is loyal; he respects the rich; they are rich for the sake of his imagination; how poor his fancy would be, if they were not rich! That they have some high-fenced grove, which they call a park; that they live in larger and better-garnished saloons than he has visited, and go in coaches, keeping only the society of the elegant, to watering-places, and to distant cities, are the ground-work from which he has delineated estates of romance, compared with which their actual possessions are shanties and padlocks. The muse herself betrays her son, and enhances the gifts of wealth and well-born beauty, by a radiation out of the air, and clouds, and forests that skirt the road,—a certain haughty favor, as if from patrician genii to patricians, a kind of aristocracy in nature, a prince of the power of the air.

The moral sensibility which makes Edens and Tempes so easily, may not be always found, but the material landscape is never far off. We can find these enchantments without visiting the Como Lake,

or the Madeira Islands. We exaggerate the praises of local scenery. In every landscape, the point of astonishment is the meeting of the sky and the earth, and that is seen from the first hillock as well as from the top of the Alleghanies. The stars at night stoop down over the brownest, homeliest common, with all the spiritual magnificence which they shed on the Campagna, or on the marble deserts of Egypt. The uprolled clouds and the colors of morning and evening, will transfigure maples and alders. The difference between landscape and landscape is small, but there is great difference in the beholders. There is nothing so wonderful in any particular landscape, as the necessity of being beautiful under which every landscape lies. Nature cannot be surprised in undress. Beauty breaks everywhere.

But it is very easy to outrun the sympathy of readers on this topic, which schoolmen called *natura naturata*, or nature passive. One can hardly speak directly of it without excess. It is as easy to broach in mixed companies what is called "the subject of religion." A susceptible person does not like to indulge his tastes in this kind, without the apology of some trivial necessity: he goes to see a woodlot, or to look at the crops, or to fetch a plant or a mineral from a remote locality, or he carries a fowling piece,

or a fishing-rod. I suppose this shame must have a good reason. A dilettantism in nature is barren and unworthy. The fop of fields is no better than his brother of Broadway. Men are naturally hunters and inquisitive of wood-craft, and I suppose that such a gazetteer as wood-cutters and Indians should furnish facts for, would take place in the most sumptuous drawing-rooms of all the "Wreaths" and "Flora's chaplets" of the bookshops; yet ordinarily, whether we are too clumsy for so subtle a topic, or from whatever cause, as soon as men begin to write on nature, they fall into euphuism. Frivolity is a most unfit tribute to Pan, who ought to be represented in the mythology as the most continent of gods. I would not be frivolous before the admirable reserve and prudence of time, yet I cannot renounce the right of returning often to this old topic. The multitude of false churches accredits the true religion. Literature, poetry, science, are the homage of man to this unfathomed secret, concerning which no sane man can affect an indifference or incuriosity. Nature is loved by what is best in us. It is loved as the city of God, although, or rather because there is no citizen. The sunset is unlike anything that is underneath it: it wants ~~men~~. And the beauty of nature must always seem unreal and mocking, until

the landscape has human figures, that are as good as itself. If there were good men, there would never be this rapture in nature. If the king is in the palace, nobody looks at the walls. It is when he is gone, and the house is filled with grooms and gazers, that we turn from the people, to find relief in the majestic men that are suggested by the pictures and the architecture. The critics who complain of the sickly separation of the beauty of nature from the thing to be done, must consider that our hunting of the picturesque is inseparable from our protest against false society. Man is fallen; nature is erect, and serves as a differential thermometer, detecting the presence or absence of the divine sentiment in man. By fault of our dulness and selfishness, we are looking up to nature, but when we are convalescent, nature will look up to us. We see the foaming brook with compunction: if our own life flowed with the right energy, we should shame the brook. The stream of zeal sparkles with real fire, and not with reflex rays of sun and moon. Nature may be as selfishly studied as trade. Astronomy to the selfish becomes astrology; psychology, mesmerism (with intent to show where our spoons are gone); and anatomy and physiology, become phrenology and palmistry.

But taking timely warning, and leaving many things unsaid on this topic, let us not longer omit our homage to the Efficient Nature, *natura naturans*, the quick cause, before which all forms flee as the driven snows, itself secret, its works driven before it in flocks and multitudes, (as the ancient represented nature by Proteus, a shepherd,) and in undescribable variety. It publishes itself in creatures, reaching from particles and spicula, through transformation on transformation to the highest symmetries, arriving at consummate results without a shock or a leap. A little heat, that is, a little motion, is all that differences the bald, dazzling white, and deadly cold poles of the earth from the prolific tropical climates. All changes pass without violence, by reason of the two cardinal conditions of boundless space and boundless time. Geology has initiated us into the secularity of nature, and taught us to disuse our dame-school measures, and exchange our Mosaic and Ptolemaic schemes for her large style. We knew nothing rightly, for want of perspective. Now we learn what patient periods must round themselves before the rock is formed, then before the rock is broken, and the first lichen race has disintegrated the thinnest external plate into soil, and opened the door for the remote Flora, Fauna, Ceres, and Pomona, to

come in. How far off yet is the trilobite ! how far the quadruped ! how inconceivably remote is man ! All duly arrive, and then race after race of men. It is a long way from granite to the oyster ; farther yet to Plato, and the preaching of the immortality of the soul. Yet all must come, as surely as the first atom has two sides.

Motion or change, and identity or rest, are the first and second secrets of nature : Motion and Rest. The whole code of her laws may be written on the thumbnail, or the signet of a ring. [The whirling bubble on the surface of a brook, admits us to the secret of the mechanics of the sky. Every shell on the beach is a key to it. A little water made to rotate in a cup explains the formation of the simpler shells ; the addition of matter from year to year, arrives at last at the most complex forms ; and yet so poor is nature with all her craft, that, from the beginning to the end of the universe, she has but one stuff,—but one stuff with its two ends, to serve up all her dream-like variety. Compound it how she will, star, sand, fire, water, tree, man, it is still one stuff, and betrays the same properties.

Nature is always consistent, though she feigns to contravene her own laws. She keeps her laws, and seems to transcend them. [She arms and equips an

animal to find its place and living in the earth, and, at the same time, she arms and equips another animal to destroy it. Space exists to divide creatures; but by clothing the sides of a bird with a few feathers, she gives him a petty omnipresence. The direction is forever onward, but the artist still goes back for materials, and begins again with the first elements on the most advanced stage: otherwise, all goes to ruin. If we look at her work, we seem to catch a glance of a system in transition. Plants are the young of the world, vessels of health and vigor; but they grope ever upward towards consciousness; the trees are imperfect men, and seem to bemoan their imprisonment, rooted in the ground. The animal is the novice and probationer of a more advanced order. The men, though young, having tasted the first drop from the cup of thought, are already dissipated: the maples and ferns are still uncorrupt; yet no doubt, when they come to consciousness, they too will curse and swear. Flowers so strictly belong to youth, that we adult men soon come to feel, that their beautiful generations concern not us: we have had our day; now let the children have theirs. The flowers jilt us, and we are old bachelors with our ridiculous tenderness.

Things are so strictly related, that according to the

skill of the eye, from any one object the parts and properties of any other may be predicted. If we had eyes to see it, a bit of stone from the city wall would certify us of the necessity that man must exist, as readily as the city. That identity makes us all one, and reduces to nothing great intervals on our customary scale. We talk of deviations from natural life, as if artificial life were not also natural. The smoothest curled courtier in the boudoirs of a palace has an animal nature, rude and aboriginal as a white bear, omnipotent to its own ends, and is directly related, there amid essences and billets-doux, to Himalay mountain chains, and the axis of the globe. If we consider how much we are nature's, we need not be superstitious about towns, as if that terrific or benefic force did not find us there also, and fashion cities. Nature who made the mason, made the house. We may easily hear too much of rural influences. The cool disengaged air of natural objects, makes them enviable to us, chafed and irritable creatures with red faces, and we think we shall be as grand as they, if we camp out and eat roots; but let us be men instead of wood-chucks, and the oak and the elm shall gladly serve us, though we sit in chairs of ivory on carpets of silk.

This guiding identity runs through all the sur-

prises and contrasts of the piece, and characterizes every law. Man carries the world in his head, the whole astronomy and chemistry suspended in a thought. Because the history of nature is characterized in his brain, therefore is he the prophet and discoverer of her secrets. Every known fact in natural science was divined by the presentiment of somebody, before it was actually verified. A man does not tie his shoe without recognising laws which bind the farthest regions of nature: moon, plant, gas, crystal, are concrete geometry and numbers. Common sense knows its own, and recognises the fact at first sight in chemical experiment. The common sense of Franklin, Dalton, Davy, and Black, is the same common sense which made the arrangements which now it discovers.

If the identity expresses organized rest, the counter action runs also into organization. The astronomers said 'Give us matter, and a little motion, and we will construct the universe.' It is not enough that we should have matter, we must also have a single impulse, one shove to launch the mass, and generate the harmony of the centrifugal and centripetal forces. Once heave the ball from the hand, and we can show how all this mighty order grew.'—'A very unreasonable postulate,' said the

metaphysicians, 'and a plain begging of the question. Could you not prevail to know the genesis of projection, as well as the continuation of it?' Nature, meanwhile, had not waited for the discussion, but, right or wrong, bestowed the impulse, and the balls rolled. It was no great affair, a mere push, but the astronomers were right in making much of it, for there is no end to the consequences of the act. That famous aboriginal push propagates itself through all the balls of the system, and through every atom of every ball, through all the races of creatures, and through the history and performances of every individual. Exaggeration is in the course of things. Nature sends no creature, no man into the world, without adding a small excess of his proper quality. Given the planet, it is still necessary to add the impulse; so, to every nature added a little violence of direction in its proper path, a shove to put it on its way; in every instance, a slight generosity, a drop too much. Without electricity the air would rot, and without this violence of direction, which men and women have, without a spice of bigot and fanatic, no excitement, no efficiency. We aim above the mark, to hit the mark. Every act hath some falsehood of exaggeration in it. And when now and then comes along some sad,

sharp-eyed man, who sees how paltry a game is played, and refuses to play, but blabs the secret;—how then? is the bird flown? O no, the wary Nature sends a new troop of fairer forms, of lordlier youths, with a little more excess of direction to hold them fast to their several aim; makes them a little wrongheaded in that direction in which they are rightest, and on goes the game again with new whirl, for a generation or two more. The child with his sweet pranks, the fool of his senses, commanded by every sight and sound, without any power to compare and rank his sensations, abandoned to a whistle or a painted chip, to a lead dragoon, or a gingerbread-dog, individualizing everything, generalizing nothing, delighted with every new thing, lies down at night overpowered by the fatigue, which this day of continual pretty madness has incurred. But Nature has answered her purpose with the curly, dimpled lunatic. She has tasked every faculty, and has secured the symmetrical growth of the bodily frame, by all these attitudes and exertions,—an end of the first importance, which could not be trusted to any care less perfect than her own. This glitter, this opaline lustre plays round the top of every toy to his eye, to ensure his fidelity, and he is deceived to his good. We are made alive and kept alive by the

same arts. Let the stoics say what they please, we do not eat for the good of living, but because the meat is savory and the appetite is keen. The vegetable life does not content itself with casting from the flower or the tree a single seed, but it fills the air and earth with a prodigality of seeds, that, if thousands perish, thousands may plant themselves, that hundreds may come up, that tens may live to maturity, that, at least one may replace the parent. All things betray the same calculated profusion. The excess of fear with which the animal frame is hedged round, shrinking from cold, starting at sight of a snake, or at a sudden noise, protects us, through a multitude of groundless alarms, from some one real danger at last. The lover seeks in marriage his private felicity and perfection, with no prospective end; and nature hides in his happiness her own end, namely, progeny, or the perpetuity of the race.

But the craft with which the world is made, runs also into the mind and character of men. No man is quite sane; each has a vein of folly in his composition, a slight determination of blood to the head, to make sure of holding him hard to some one point which nature had taken to heart. Great causes are never tried on their merits; but the cause is reduced to particulars to suit the size of the partizans, and

the contention is ever hottest on minor matters. Not less remarkable is the overfaith of each man in the importance of what he has to do or say. The poet, the prophet, has a higher value for what he utters than any hearer, and therefore it gets spoken. The strong, self-complacent Luther declares with an emphasis, not to be mistaken, that "God himself cannot do without wise men." Jacob Behman and George Fox betray their egotism in their pertinacity of their controversial tracts, and James Naylor once suffered himself to be worshipped as the Christ. Each prophet comes presently to identify himself with his thought, and to esteem his hat and shoes sacred. However this may discredit such persons with the judicious, it helps them with the people, as it gives heat, pungency, and publicity to their words. A similar experience is not infrequent in private life. Each young and ardent person writes a diary, in which, when the hours of prayer and penitence arrive, he inscribes his soul. The pages thus written are, to him, burning and fragrant: he reads them on his knees by midnight and by the morning star; he wets them with his tears: they are sacred; too good for the world, and hardly yet to be shown to the dearest friend. This is the man-child that is born to the soul, and her life still circulates in the babe.

The umbilical cord has not yet been cut. After some time has elapsed, he begins to wish to admit his friend to this hallowed experience, and with hesitation, yet with firmness, exposes the pages to his eye. Will they not burn his eyes? The friend coldly turns them over, and passes from the writing to conversation, with easy transition, which strikes the other party with astonishment and vexation. He cannot suspect the writing itself. Days and nights of fervid life, of communion with angels of darkness and of light, have engraved their shadowy characters on that tear-stained book. He suspects the intelligence or the heart of his friend. Is there then no friend? He cannot yet credit that one may have impressive experience, and yet may not know how to put his private fact into literature; and perhaps the discovery that wisdom has other tongues and ministers than we, that though we should hold our peace, the truth would not the less be spoken, might check injuriously the flames of our zeal. A man can only speak, so long as he does not feel his speech to be partial and inadequate. It is partial, but he does not see it to be so, whilst he utters it. As soon as he is released from the instinctive and particular, and sees its partiality, he shuts his mouth in disgust. For, no man can write anything, who does not think

that what he writes is for the time the history of the world ; or do anything well, who does not esteem his work to be of importance. My work may be of none, but I must not think it of none, or I shall not do it with impunity.

In like manner, there is throughout nature something mocking, something that leads us on and on, but arrives nowhere, keeps no faith with us. All promise outruns the performance. We live in a system of approximations. Every end is prospective of some other end, which is also temporary ; a round and final success nowhere. We are encamped in nature, not domesticated. Hunger and thirst lead us on to eat and to drink ; but bread and wine, mix and cook them how you will, leave us hungry and thirsty, after the stomach is full. It is the same with all our arts and performances. Our music, our poetry, our language itself are not satisfactions, but suggestions. The hunger for wealth, which reduces the planet to a garden, fools the eager pursuer. What is the end sought ? Plainly to secure the ends of good sense and beauty, from the intrusion of deformity or vulgarity of any kind. But what an operose method ! What a train of means to secure a little conversation ! This palace of brick and stone, these servants, this kitchen, these stables, horses and equipage, this

bank-stock, and file of mortgages; trade to all the world, country-house and cottage by the waterside, all for a little conversation, high, clear, and spiritual! Could it not be had as well by beggars on the highway? No, all these things came from successive efforts of these beggars to remove friction from the wheels of life, and give opportunity. Conversation, character, were the avowed ends; wealth was good as it appeased the animal cravings, cured the smoky chimney, silenced the creaking door, brought friends together in a warm and quiet room, and kept the children and the dinner-table in a different apartment. Thought, virtue, beauty, were the ends; but it was known that men of thought and virtue sometimes had the headache, or wet feet, or could lose good time whilst the room was getting warm in winter days. Unluckily, in the exertions necessary to remove these inconveniences, the main attention has been diverted to this object; the old aims have been lost sight of, and to remove friction has come to be the end. That is the ridicule of rich men, and Boston, London, Vienna, and now the governments generally of the world, are cities and governments of the rich, and the masses are not men, but *poor men*, that is, men who would be rich; this is the ridicule of the class, that they arrive with pains and sweat

and fury nowhere ; when all is done, it is for nothing. They are like one who has interrupted the conversation of a company to make his speech, and now has forgotten what he went to say. The appearance strikes the eye everywhere of an aimless society, of aimless nations. Were the ends of nature so great and cogent, as to exact this immense sacrifice of men ?

Quite analogous to the deceits in life, there is, as might be expected, a similar effect on the eye from the face of external nature. There is in woods and waters a certain enticement and flattery, together with a failure to yield a present satisfaction. This disappointment is felt in every landscape. I have seen the softness and beauty of the summer-clouds floating feathery overhead, enjoying, as it seemed, their height and privilege of motion, whilst yet they appeared not so much the drapery of this place and hour, as forelooking to some pavilions and gardens of festivity beyond. It is an odd jealousy : but the poet finds himself not near enough to his object. The pine-tree, the river, the bank of flowers before him, does not seem to be nature. Nature is still elsewhere. This or this is but outskirt and far-off reflection and echo of the triumph that has passed by, and is now at its glancing splendor and heyday,

perchance in the neighboring fields, or, if you stand in the field, then in the adjacent woods. The present object shall give you this sense of stillness that follows a pageant which has just gone by. What splendid distance, what recesses of ineffable pomp and loveliness in the sunset ! But who can go where they are, or lay his hand or plant his foot thereon ? Off they fall from the round world forever and ever. It is the same among the men and women, as among the silent trees ; always a referred existence, an absence, never a presence and satisfaction. Is it, that beauty can never be grasped ? in persons and in landscape is equally inaccessible ? The accepted and betrothed lover has lost the wildest charm of his maiden in her acceptance of him. She was heaven whilst he pursued her as a star : she cannot be heaven, if she stoops to such a one as he.

What shall we say of this omnipresent appearance of that first projectile impulse, of this flattery and baulking of so many well-meaning creatures ? Must we not suppose somewhere in the universe a slight treachery and derision ? Are we not engaged to a serious resentment of this use that is made of us ? Are we tickled trout, and fools of nature ? One look at the face of heaven and earth lays all petulance at rest, and soothes us to wiser convictions.

To the intelligent, nature converts itself into a vast promise, and will not be rashly explained. Her secret is untold. Many and many an *Œdipus* arrives: he has the whole mystery teeming in his brain. Alas! the same sorcery has spoiled his skill; no syllable can he shape on his lips. Her mighty orbit vaults like the fresh rainbow into the deep, but no archangel's wing was yet strong enough to follow it, and report of the return of the curve. But it also appears, that our actions are seconded and disposed to greater conclusions than we designed. We are escorted on every hand through life by spiritual agents, and a beneficent purpose lies in wait for us. We cannot bandy words with nature, or deal with her as we deal with persons. If we measure our individual forces against hers, we may easily feel as if we were the sport of an insuperable destiny. But if, instead of identifying ourselves with the work, we feel that the soul of the workman streams through us, we shall find the peace of the morning dwelling first in our hearts, and the fathomless powers of gravity and chemistry and, over them, of life, pre-existing within us in their highest form.

The uneasiness which the thought of our helplessness in the chain of causes occasions us, results from looking too much at one condition of nature, namely,

Motion. But the drag is never taken from the wheel. Wherever the impulse exceeds, the Rest or Identity insinuates its compensation. All over the wide fields of earth grows the prunella or self-heal. After every foolish day we sleep off the fumes and furies of its hours; and though we are always engaged with particulars, and often enslaved to them, we bring with us to every experiment the innate universal laws. These, while they exist in the mind as ideas, stand around us in nature forever embodied, a present sanity to expose and cure the insanity of men. Our servitude to particulars betrays into a hundred foolish expectations. We anticipate a new era from the invention of a locomotive, or a balloon; the new engine brings with it the old checks. They say that by electro-magnetism, your salad shall be grown from the seed, whilst your fowl is roasting for dinner: it is a symbol of our modern aims and endeavors,—of our condensation and acceleration of objects: but nothing is gained: nature cannot be cheated: man's life is but seventy salads long, grow they swift or grow they slow. In these checks and impossibilities, however, we find our advantage, not less than in the impulses. Let the victory fall where it will, we are on that side. And the knowledge that we traverse the whole scale of being,

from the centre to the poles of nature, and have some stake in every possibility, lends that sublime lustre to death, which philosophy and religion have too outwardly and literally striven to express in the popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The reality is more excellent than the report. Here is no ruin, no discontinuity, no spent ball. The divine circulations never rest nor linger. Nature is the incarnation of a thought, and turns to a thought again, as ice becomes water and gas. The world is mind precipitated, and the volatile essence is forever escaping again into the state of free thought. Hence the virtue and pungency of the influence on the mind, of natural objects, whether inorganic or organized. Man imprisoned, man crystallized, man vegetative, speaks to man impersonated. That power which does not respect quantity, which makes the whole and the particle its equal channel, delegates its smile to the morning, and distils its essence into every drop of rain. Every moment instructs, and every object: for wisdom is infused into every form. It has been poured into us as blood; it convulsed us as pain; it slid into us as pleasure; it enveloped us in dull, melancholy days, or in days of cheerful labor; we did not guess its essence, until after a long time.

POLITICS.

Gold and iron are good
To buy iron and gold ;
All earth's fleece and food
For their like are sold.
Boded Merlin wise,
Proved Napoleon great,—
Nor kind nor coinage buys
Aught above its rate.
Fear, Craft, and Avarice
Cannot rear a State.
Out of dust to build
What is more than dust,—
Walls Amphion piled
Phœbus stablish must.
When the Muses nine
With the Virtues meet,
Find to their design
An Atlantic seat,
By green orchard boughs
Fended from the heat,
Where the statesman ploughs
Furrow for the wheat ;
When the Church is social worth,
When the state-house is the hearth,
Then the perfect state is come,
The republican at home.

ESSAY VII.

POLITICS.

IN dealing with the State, we ought to remember that its institutions are not aboriginal, though they existed before we were born: that they are not superior to the citizen: that every one of them was once the act of a single man: every law and usage was a man's expedient to meet a particular case: that they all are imitable, all alterable; we may make as good; we may make better. Society is an illusion to the young citizen. It lies before him in rigid repose, with certain names, men, and institutions, rooted like oak-trees to the centre, round which all arrange themselves the best they can. But the old statesman knows that society is fluid; there are no such roots and centres; but any particle may suddenly become the centre of the movement, and compel the system to gyrate round it, as every man of strong will, like Pisistratus, or Cromwell, does for a time, and every man of truth, like Plato, or Paul,

does forever. But politics rest on necessary foundations, and cannot be treated with levity. Republics abound in young civilians, who believe that the laws make the city, that grave modifications of the policy and modes of living, and employments of the population, that commerce, education, and religion, may be voted in or out; and that any measure, though it were absurd, may be imposed on a people, if only you can get sufficient voices to make it a law. But the wise know that foolish legislation is a rope of sand, which perishes in the twisting; that the State must follow, and not lead the character and progress of the citizen; the strongest usurper is quickly got rid of; and they only who build on Ideas, build for eternity; and that the form of government which prevails, is the expression of what cultivation exists in the population which permits it. The law is only a memorandum. We are superstitious, and esteem the statute somewhat: so much life as it has in the character of living men, is its force. The statute stands there to say, yesterday we agreed so and so, but how feel ye this article to-day? Our statute is a currency, which we stamp with our own portrait: it soon becomes unrecognizable, and in process of time will return to the mint. Nature is not democratic, nor limited-monarchical, but despotic, and

will not be fooled or abated of any jot of her authority, by the pertest of her sons: and as fast as the public mind is opened to more intelligence, the code is seen to be brute and stammering. It speaks not articulately, and must be made to. Meantime the education of the general mind never stops. The reveries of the true and simple are prophetic. What the tender poetic youth dreams, and prays, and paints to-day, but shuns the ridicule of saying aloud, shall presently be the resolutions of public bodies, then shall be carried as grievance and bill of rights through conflict and war, and then shall be triumphant law and establishment for a hundred years, until it gives place, in turn, to new prayers and pictures. The history of the State sketches in coarse outline the progress of thought, and follows at a distance the delicacy of culture and of aspiration.

The theory of politics, which has possessed the mind of men, and which they have expressed the best they could in their laws and in their revolutions, considers persons and property as the two objects for whose protection government exists. Of persons, all have equal rights, in virtue of being identical in nature. This interest, of course, with its whole power demands a democracy. Whilst the rights of all as persons are equal, in virtue of their access to

reason, their rights in property are very unequal. One man owns his clothes, and another owns a county. This accident, depending, primarily, on the skill and virtue of the parties, of which there is every degree, and, secondarily, on patrimony, falls unequally, and its rights, of course, are unequal. Personal rights, universally the same, demand a government framed on the ratio of the census: property demands a government framed on the ratio of owners and of owning. Laban, who has flocks and herds, wishes them looked after by an officer on the frontiers, lest the Midianites shall drive them off, and pays a tax to that end. Jacob has no flocks or herds, and no fear of the Midianites, and pays no tax to the officer. It seemed fit that Laban and Jacob should have equal rights to elect the officer, who is to defend their persons, but that Laban, and not Jacob, should elect the officer who is to guard the sheep and cattle. And, if question arise whether additional officers or watch-towers should be provided, must not Laban and Isaac, and those who must sell part of their herds to buy protection for the rest, judge better of this, and with more right, than Jacob, who, because he is a youth and a traveller, eats their bread and not his own.

In the earliest society the proprietors made their

own wealth, and so long as it comes to the owner it is the direct way, no other opinion would arise in any equitable community, than that property should make the law for property, and persons the law for persons.

But property passes through donation or inheritance to those who do not create it. Gift, in one case, makes it as really the new owner's, as labor made it the first owner's : in the other case, of patrimony, the law makes an ownership, which will be valid in each man's view according to the estimate which he sets on the public tranquility.

It was not, however, found easy to embody the readily admitted principle, that property should make law for property, and persons for persons : since persons and property mixed themselves in every transaction. At last it seemed settled, that the rightful distinction was, that the proprietors should have more elective franchise than the non-proprietors, on the Spartan principle of "calling that which is just, equal ; not that which is equal, just."

That principle no longer looks so self-evident as it appeared in former times, partly, because doubts have arisen whether too much weight had not been allowed in the laws, to property, and such a structure given to our usages, as allowed the rich to en-

cross on the poor, and to keep them poor; but mainly, because there is an instinctive sense, however obscure and yet inarticulate, that the whole constitution of property, on its present tenures, is injurious, and its influence on persons deteriorating and degrading; that truly, the only interest for the consideration of the State, is persons: that property will always follow persons; that the highest end of government is the culture of men: and if men can be educated, the institutions will share their improvement, and the moral sentiment will write the law of the land.

If it be not easy to settle the equity of this question, the peril is less when we take note of our natural defences. We are kept by better guards than the vigilance of such magistrates as we commonly elect. Society always consists, in greatest part, of young and foolish persons. The old, who have seen through the hypocrisy of courts and statesmen, die, and leave no wisdom to their sons. They believe their own newspaper, as their fathers did at their age. With such an ignorant and deceivable majority, States would soon run to ruin, but that there are limitations, beyond which the folly and ambition of governors cannot go. Things have their laws, as well as men; and things refuse to be trifled with. Property

will be protected. Corn will not grow, unless it is planted and manured ; but the farmer will not plant or hoe it, unless the chances are a hundred to one, that he will cut and harvest it. Under any forms, persons and property must and will have their just sway. They exert their power, as steadily as matter its attraction. Cover up a pound of earth never so cunningly, divide and subdivide it ; melt it to liquid, convert it to gas ; it will always weigh a pound : it will always attract and resist other matter, by the full virtue of one pound weight ;—and the attributes of a person, his wit and his moral energy, will exercise, under any law or extinguishing tyranny, their proper force,—if not overtly, then covertly ; if not for the law, then against it ; with right, or by might.

The boundaries of personal influence it is impossible to fix, as persons are organs of moral or supernatural force. Under the dominion of an idea, which possesses the minds of multitudes, as civil freedom, or the religious sentiment, the powers of persons are no longer subjects of calculation. A nation of men unanimously bent on freedom, or conquest, can easily confound the arithmetic of statist, and achieve extravagant actions, out of all proportion to their means ; as, the Greeks, the Saracens, the Swiss, the Americans, and the French have done.

In like manner, to every particle of property belongs its own attraction. A cent is the representative of a certain quantity of corn or other commodity. Its value is in the necessities of the animal man. It is so much warmth, so much bread, so much water, so much land. The law may do what it will with the owner of property, its just power will still attach to the cent. The law may in a mad freak say, that all shall have power except the owners of property: they shall have no vote. Nevertheless, by a higher law, the property will, year after year, write every statute that respects property. The non-proprietor will be the scribe of the proprietor. What the owners wish to do, the whole power of property will do, either through the law, or else in defiance of it. Of course, I speak of all the property, not merely of the great estates. When the rich are out-voted, as frequently happens, it is the joint treasury of the poor which exceeds their accumulations. Every man owns something, if it is only a cow, or a wheelbarrow, or his arms, and so has that property to dispose of.

The same necessity which secures the rights of person and property against the malignity or folly of the magistrate, determines the form and methods of governing, which are proper to each nation, and to

its habit of thought, and nowise transferable to other states of society. In this country, we are very vain of our political institutions, which are singular in this, that they sprung, within the memory of living men, from the character and condition of the people, which they still express with sufficient fidelity,—and we ostentatiously prefer them to any other in history. They are not better, but only fitter for us. We may be wise in asserting the advantage in modern times of the democratic form, but to other states of society, in which religion consecrated the monarchical, that and not this was expedient. Democracy is better for us, because the religious sentiment of the present time accords better with it. Born democrats, we are nowise qualified to judge of monarchy, which, to our fathers living in the monarchical idea, was also relatively right. But our institutions, though in coincidence with the spirit of the age, have not any exemption from the practical defects which have discredited other forms. Every actual State is corrupt. Good men must not obey the laws too well. What satire on government can equal the severity of censure conveyed in the word *politic*, which now for ages has signified *cunning*, intimating that the State is a trick?

The same benign necessity and the same practical abuse appear in the parties into which each State

divides itself, of opponents and defenders of the administration of the government. Parties are also founded on instincts, and have better guides to their own humble aims than the sagacity of their leaders. They have nothing perverse in their origin, but rudely mark some real and lasting relation. We might as wisely reprove the east wind, or the frost, as a political party, whose members, for the most part, could give no account of their position, but stand for the defence of those interests in which they find themselves. Our quarrel with them begins, when they quit this deep natural ground at the bidding of some leader, and, obeying personal considerations, throw themselves into the maintenance and defence of points, nowise belonging to their system. A party is perpetually corrupted by personality. Whilst we absolve the association from dishonesty we cannot extend the same charity to their leaders. They reap the rewards of the docility and zeal of the masses which they direct. Ordinarily, our parties are parties of circumstance, and not of principle; as, the planting interest in conflict with the commercial; the party of capitalists, and that of operatives, parties which are identical in their moral character, and which can easily change ground with each other, in the support of many of their measures. Parties

of principle, as, religious sects, or the party of free-trade, of universal suffrage, of abolition of slavery, of abolition of capital punishment, degenerate into personalities, or would inspire enthusiasm. The vice of our leading parties in this country (which may be cited as a fair specimen of these societies of opinion) is, that they do not plant themselves on the deep and necessary grounds to which they are respectively entitled, but lash themselves to fury in the carrying of some local and momentary measure, nowise useful to the commonwealth. Of the two great parties, which, at this hour, almost share the nation between them, I should say, that, one has the best cause, and the other contains the best men. The philosopher, the poet, or the religious man, will, of course, wish to cast his vote with the democrat, for free-trade, for wide suffrage, for the abolition of legal cruelties in the penal code, and for facilitating in every manner the access of the young and the poor to the sources of wealth and power. But he can rarely accept the persons whom the so-called popular party propose to him as representatives of these liberalities. They have not at heart the ends which give to the name of democracy what hope and virtue are in it. The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive and aimless: it is not loving; it has no ulterior and di-

vine ends ; but is destructive only out of hatred and selfishness. On the other side, the conservative party, composed of the most moderate, able, and cultivated part of the population, is timid, and merely defensive of property. It vindicates no right, it aspires to no real good, it brands no crime, it proposes no generous policy, it does not build, nor write, nor cherish the arts, nor foster religion, nor establish schools, nor encourage science, nor emancipate the slave, nor befriend the poor, or the Indian, or the immigrant. From neither party, when in power, has the world any benefit to expect in science, art, or humanity, at all commensurate with the resources of the nation.

I do not for these defects despair of our republic. We are not at the mercy of any waves of chance. In the strife of ferocious parties, human nature always finds itself cherished, as the children of the convicts at Botany Bay are found to have as healthy a moral sentiment as other children. Citizens of feudal states are alarmed at our democratic institutions lapsing into anarchy ; and the older and more cautious among ourselves are learning from Europeans to look with some terror at our turbulent freedom. It is said that in our license of construing the Constitution, and in the despotism of public opinion, we have

no anchor ; and one foreign observer thinks he has found the safe-guard in the sanctity of Marriage among us ; and another thinks he has found it in our Calvinism. Fisher Ames expressed the popular security more wisely, when he compared a monarchy and a republic, saying, “ that a monarchy is a merchantman, which sails well, but will sometimes strike on a rock, and go to the bottom ; whilst a republic is a raft, which would never sink, but then your feet are always in water.” No forms can have any dangerous importance, whilst we are befriended by the laws of things. It makes no difference how many tons weight of atmosphere presses on our heads, so long as the same pressure resists it within the lungs. Augment the mass a thousand fold, it cannot begin to crush us, as long as reaction is equal to action. The fact of two poles, of two forces, centripetal and centrifugal, is universal, and each force by its own activity develops the other. Wild liberty develops iron conscience. Want of liberty, by strengthening law and decorum, stupefies conscience. ‘Lynch-law’ prevails only where there is greater hardihood and self-subsistency in the leaders. A mob cannot be a permanency : everybody’s interest requires that it should not exist, and only justice satisfies all.

We must trust infinitely to the beneficent neces-

sity which shines through all laws. Human nature expresses itself in them as characteristically as in statues, or songs, or railroads, and an abstract of the codes of nations would be a transcript of the common conscience. Governments have their origin in the moral identity of men. Reason for one is seen to be reason for another, and for every other. There is a middle measure which satisfies all parties, be they never so many, or so resolute for their own. Every man finds a sanction for his simplest claims and deeds in decisions of his own mind, which he calls Truth and Holiness. In these decisions all the citizens find a perfect agreement, and only in these ; not in what is good to eat, good to wear, good use of time, or what amount of land, or of public aid, each is entitled to claim. This truth and justice men presently endeavor to make application of, to the measuring of land, the apportionment of service, the protection of life and property. Their first endeavors, no doubt, are very awkward. Yet absolute right is the first governor ; or, every government is an impure theocracy. The idea, after which each community is aiming to make and mend its law, is, the will of the wise man. The wise man, it cannot find in nature, and it makes awkward but earnest efforts to secure his government by contrivance ; as,

by causing the entire people to give their voices on every measure ; or, by a double choice to get the representation of the whole ; or, by a selection of the best citizens ; or, to secure the advantages of efficiency and internal peace, by confiding the government to one, who may himself select his agents. All forms of government symbolize an immortal government, common to all dynasties and independent of numbers, perfect where two men exist, perfect where there is only one man.

Every man's nature is a sufficient advertisement to him of the character of his fellows. My right and my wrong, is their right and their wrong. Whilst I do what is fit for me, and abstain from what is unfit, my neighbor and I shall often agree in our means, and work together for a time to one end. But whenever I find my dominion over myself not sufficient for me, and undertake the direction of him also, I overstep the truth, and come into false relations to him. I may have so much more skill or strength than he, that he cannot express adequately his sense of wrong, but it is a lie, and hurts like a lie both him and me. Love and nature cannot maintain the assumption : it must be executed by a practical lie, namely, by force. This undertaking for another, is the blunder which stands in colossal ugliness in the

governments of the world. It is the same thing in numbers, as in a pair, only not quite so intelligible. I can see well enough a great difference between my setting myself down to a self-control, and my going to make somebody else act after my views: but when a quarter of the human race assume to tell me what I must do, I may be too much disturbed by the circumstances to see so clearly the absurdity of their command. Therefore, all public ends look vague and quixotic beside private ones. For, any laws but those which men make for themselves, are laughable. If I put myself in the place of my child, and we stand in one thought, and see that things are thus or thus, that perception is law for him and me. We are both there, both act. But if, without carrying him into the thought, I look over into his plot, and, guessing how it is with him, ordain this or that, he will never obey me. This is the history of governments,—one man does something which is to bind another. A man who cannot be acquainted with me, taxes me; looking from afar at me, ordains that a part of my labor shall go to this or that whimsical end, not as I, but as he happens to fancy. Behold the consequence. Of all debts, men are least willing to pay the taxes. What a satire is this on govern-

ment! Everywhere they think they get their money's worth, except for these.

Hence, the less government we have, the better,—the fewer laws, and the less confided power. The antidote to this abuse of formal Government, is, the influence of private character, the growth of the Individual; the appearance of the principal to supersede the proxy; the appearance of the wise man, of whom the existing government, is, it must be owned, but a shabby imitation. That which all things tend to educe, which freedom, cultivation, intercourse, revolutions, go to form and deliver, is character; that is the end of nature, to reach unto this coronation of her king. To educate the wise man, the State exists; and with the appearance of the wise man, the State expires. The appearance of character makes the State unnecessary. The wise man is the State. He needs no army, fort, or navy,—he loves men too well; no bribe, or feast, or palace, to draw friends to him; no vantage ground, no favorable circumstance. He needs no library, for he has not done thinking; no church, for he is a prophet; no statute book, for he has the law-giver; no money, for he is value; no road, for he is at home where he is; no experience, for the life of the creator shoots through him, and looks from his eyes. He has no

personal friends, for he who has the spell to draw the prayer and piety of all men unto him, needs not husband and educate a few, to share with him a select and poetic life. His relation to men is angelic; his memory is myrrh to them; his presence, frankincense and flowers.

We think our civilization near its meridian, but we are yet only at the cock-crowing and the morning star. In our barbarous society the influence of character is in its infancy. As a political power, as the rightful lord who is to tumble all rulers from their chairs, its presence is hardly yet suspected. Malthus and Ricardo quite omit it; the Annual Register is silent; in the Conversations' Lexicon, it is not set down; the President's Message, the Queen's Speech, have not mentioned it; and yet it is never nothing. Every thought which genius and piety throw into the world, alters the world. The gladiators in the lists of power feel, through all their frocks of force and simulation, the presence of worth. I think the very strife of trade and ambition are confession of this divinity; and successes in those fields are the poor amends, the fig-leaf with which the shamed soul attempts to hide its nakedness. I find the like unwilling homage in all quarters. It is because we know how much is due from us, that we are impa-

tient to show some petty talent, as a substitute for worth. We are haunted by a conscience of this right to grandeur of character, and are false to it. But each of us has some talent, can do somewhat useful, or graceful, or formidable, or amusing, or lucrative. That we do, as an apology to others and to ourselves, for not reaching the mark of a good and equal life. But it does not satisfy *us*, whilst we thrust it on the notice of our companions. It may throw dust in their eyes, but does not smooth our own brow, or give us the tranquility of the strong when we walk abroad. We do penance as we go. Our talent is a sort of expiation, and we are constrained to reflect on our splendid moment, with a certain humiliation, as somewhat too fine, and not as one act of many acts, a fair expression of our permanent energy. Most persons of ability meet in society with a kind of tacit appeal. Each seems to say, 'I am not all here.' Senators and presidents have climbed so high with pain enough, not because they think the place specially agreeable, but as an apology for real worth, and to vindicate their manhood in our eyes. This conspicuous chair is their compensation to themselves for being of a poor, cold, hard nature. They must do what they can. Like one class of forest animals, they have nothing but a

prehensile tail: climb they must, or crawl. If a man found himself so rich-natured that he could enter into strict relations with the best persons, and make life serene around him by the dignity and sweetness of his behavior, could he afford to circumvent the favor of the caucus and the press, and covet relations so hollow and pompous, as those of a politician? Surely nobody would be a charlatan, who could afford to be sincere.

The tendencies of the times favor the idea of self-government, and leave the individual, for all code, to the rewards and penalties of his own constitution, which work with more energy than we believe, whilst we depend on artificial restraints. The movement in this direction has been very marked in modern history. Much has been blind and discreditable, but the nature of the revolution is not affected by the vices of the revolters; for this is a purely moral force. It was never adopted by any party in history, neither can be. It separates the individual from all party, and unites him, at the same time, to the race. It promises a recognition of higher rights than those of personal freedom, or the security of property. A man has a right to be employed, to be trusted, to be loved, to be revered. The power of love, as the basis of a State, has never been tried. We must

not imagine that all things are lapsing into confusion, if every tender protestant be not compelled to bear his part in certain social conventions: nor doubt that roads can be built, letters carried, and the fruit of labor secured, when the government of force is at an end. Are our methods now so excellent that all competition is hopeless? Could not a nation of friends even devise better ways? On the other hand, let not the most conservative and timid fear anything from a premature surrender of the bayonet, and the system of force. For, according to the order of nature, which is quite superior to our will, it stands thus; there will always be a government of force, where men are selfish; and when they are pure enough to abjure the code of force, they will be wise enough to see how these public ends of the post-office, of the highway, of commerce, and the exchange of property, of museums and libraries, of institutions of art and science, can be answered.

We live in a very low state of the world, and pay unwilling tribute to governments founded on force. There is not, among the most religious and instructed men of the most religious and civil nations, a reliance on the moral sentiment, and a sufficient belief in the unity of things to persuade them that society can be maintained without artificial restraints, as well as the

solar system ; or that the private citizen might be reasonable, and a good neighbor, without the hint of a jail or a confiscation. What is strange too, there never was in any man sufficient faith in the power of rectitude, to inspire him with the broad design of renovating the State on the principle of right and love. All those who have pretended this design, have been partial reformers, and have admitted in some manner the supremacy of the bad State. I do not call to mind a single human being who has steadily denied the authority of the laws, on the simple ground of his own moral nature. Such designs, full of genius and full of fate as they are, are not entertained except avowedly as air-pictures. If the individual who exhibits them, dare to think them practicable, he disgusts scholars and churchmen ; and men of talent, and women of superior sentiments, cannot hide their contempt. Not the less does nature continue to fill the heart of youth with suggestions of this enthusiasm, and there are now men,—if indeed I can speak in the plural number,—more exactly, I will say, I have just been conversing with one man, to whom no weight of adverse experience will make it for a moment appear impossible, that thousands of human beings might exercise towards each other the grandest and simplest sentiments, as well as a knot of friends, or a pair of lovers.

NOMINALIST AND REALIST

In countless upward-striving waves
The moon-drawn tide-wave strives;
In thousand far-transplanted grafts
The parent fruit survives ;
So, in the new-born millions,
The perfect Adam lives.
Not less are summer-mornings dear
To every child they wake,
And each with novel life his sphere
Fills for his proper sake.

ESSAY VIII.

NOMINALIST AND REALIST.

I CANNOT often enough say, that a man is only a relative and representative nature. Each is a hint of the truth, but far enough from being that truth, which yet he quite newly and inevitably suggests to us. If I seek it in him, I shall not find it. Could any man conduct into me the pure stream of that which he pretends to be! Long afterwards, I find that quality elsewhere which he promised me. The genius of the Platonists, is intoxicating to the student, yet how few particulars of it can I detach from all their books. The man momentarily stands for the thought, but will not bear examination; and a society of men will cursorily represent well enough a certain quality and culture, for example, chivalry or beauty of manners, but separate them, and there is no gentleman and no lady in the group. The least hint sets us on the pursuit of a character, which no man realizes. We have such exorbitant eyes, that on

seeing the smallest arc, we complete the curve, and when the curtain is lifted from the diagram which it seemed to veil, we are vexed to find that no more was drawn, than just that fragment of an arc which we first beheld. We are greatly too liberal in our construction of each other's faculty and promise. Exactly what the parties have already done, they shall do again; but that which we inferred from their nature and inception, they will not do. That is in nature, but not in them. That happens in the world, which we often witness in a public debate. Each of the speakers expresses himself imperfectly: no one of them hears much that another says, such is the preoccupation of mind of each; and the audience, who have only to hear and not to speak, judge very wisely and superiorly how wrongheaded and unskilful is each of the debaters to his own affair. Great men or men of great gifts you shall easily find, but symmetrical men never. When I meet a pure intellectual force, or a generosity of affection, I believe, here then is man; and am presently mortified by the discovery, that this individual is no more available to his own or to the general ends, than his companions; because the power which drew my respect, is not supported by the total symphony of his talents. All persons exist to society by some

shining trait of beauty or utility, which they have. We borrow the proportions of the man from that one fine feature, and finish the portrait symmetrically ; which is false ; for the rest of his body is small or deformed. I observe a person who makes a good public appearance, and conclude thence the perfection of his private character, on which this is based ; but he has no private character. He is a graceful cloak or lay-figure for holidays. All our poets, heroes, and saints, fail utterly in some one or in many parts to satisfy our idea, fail to draw our spontaneous interest, and so leave us without any hope of realization but in our own future. Our exaggeration of all fine characters arises from the fact, that we identify each in turn with the soul. But there are no such men as we fable ; no Jesus, nor Pericles, nor Cæsar, nor Angelo, nor Washington, such as we have made. We consecrate a great deal of nonsense, because it was allowed by great men. There is none without his foible. I verily believe if an angel should come to chaunt the chorus of the moral law, he would eat too much gingerbread, or take liberties with private letters, or do some precious atrocity. It is bad enough, that our geniuses cannot do anything useful, but it is worse that no man is fit for society, who has fine traits. He is admired at a distance, but he

cannot come near without appearing a cripple. The men of fine parts protect themselves by solitude, or by courtesy, or by satire, or by an acid worldly manner, each concealing, as he best can, his incapacity for useful association, but they want either love or self-reliance.

Our native love of reality joins with this experience to teach us a little reserve, and to dissuade a too sudden surrender to the brilliant qualities of persons. Young people admire talents or particular excellences; as we grow older, we value total powers and effects, as, the impression, the quality, the spirit of men and things. The genius is all. The man,—it is his system: we do not try a solitary word or act, but his habit. The acts which you praise, I praise not, since they are departures from his faith, and are mere compliances. The magnetism which arranges tribes and races in one polarity, is alone to be respected; the men are steel-filings. Yet we unjustly select a particle, and say, ‘O steel-filing number one! what heart-drawings I feel to thee! what prodigious virtues are these of thine! how constitutional to thee, and incommunicable.’ Whilst we speak, the loadstone is withdrawn; down falls our filing in a heap with the rest, and we continue our mummary to the wretched shaving. Let us go for

universals; for the magnetism, not for the needles. Human life and its persons are poor empirical pretensions. A personal influence in an *ignis fatuus*. If they say, it is great, it is great; if they say, it is small, it is small; you see it, and you see it not, by turns: it borrows all its size from the momentary estimation of the speakers: the Will-of-the-wisp vanishes, if you go too near, vanishes if you go too far, and only blazes at one angle. Who can tell if Washington be a great man, or no? Who can tell if Franklin be? Yes, or any but the twelve, or six, or three great gods of fame? And they, too, loom and fade before the eternal.

We are amphibious creatures, weaponed for two elements, having two sets of faculties, the particular and the catholic. We adjust our instrument of general observation, and sweep the heavens as easily as we pick out a single figure in the terrestrial landscape. We are practically skilful in detecting elements, for which we have no place in our theory, and no name. Thus we are very sensible of an atmospheric influence in men and in bodies of men, not accounted for in an arithmetical addition of all their measurable properties. There is a genius of a nation, which is not to be found in the numerical citizens, but which characterizes the society. England,

strong, punctual, practical, well-spoken England, I should not find, if I should go to the island to seek it. In the parliament, in the playhouse, at dinner-tables, I might see a great number of rich, ignorant, book-read, conventional, proud men,—many old women,—and not anywhere the Englishman who made the good speeches, combined the accurate engines, and did the bold and nervous deeds. It is even worse in America, where, from the intellectual quickness of the race, the genius of the country is more splendid in its promise, and more slight in its performance. Webster cannot do the work of Webster. We conceive distinctly enough the French, the Spanish, the German genius, and it is not the less real, that perhaps we should not meet in either of those nations, a single individual who corresponded with the type. We infer the spirit of the nation in great measure from the language, which is a sort of monument, to which each forcible individual in a course of many hundred years has contributed a stone. And, universally, a good example of this social force, is the veracity of language, which cannot be debauched. In any controversy concerning morals, an appeal may be made with safety to the sentiments, which the language of the people expresses. Proverbs, words, and grammar inflections

convey the public sense with more purity and precision, than the wisest individual.

In the famous dispute with the Nominalists, the Realists had a good deal of reason. General ideas are essences. They are our gods: they round and ennoble the most partial and sordid way of living. Our proclivity to details cannot quite degrade our life, and divest it of poetry. The day-laborer is reckoned as standing at the foot of the social scale, yet he is saturated with the laws of the world. His measures are the hours; morning and night, solstice and equinox, geometry, astronomy, and all the lovely accidents of nature play through his mind. Money, which represents the prose of life, and which is hardly spoken of in parlors without an apology, is, in its effects and laws, as beautiful as roses. Property keeps the accounts of the world, and is always moral. The property will be found where the labor, the wisdom, and the virtue have been in nations, in classes, and (the whole life-time considered, with the compensations) in the individual also. How wise the world appears, when the laws and usages of nations are largely detailed, and the completeness of the municipal system is considered! Nothing is left out. If you go into the markets, and the custom-houses, the insurers' and notaries' offices, the offices of sealers

of weights and measures, of inspection of provisions, —it will appear as if one man had made it all. Wherever you go, a wit like your own has been before you, and has realized its thought. The Eleusinian mysteries, the Egyptian architecture, the Indian astronomy, the Greek sculpture, show that there always were seeing and knowing men in the planet. The world is full of masonic ties, of guilds, of secret and public legions of honor; that of scholars, for example; and that of gentlemen fraternizing with the upper class of every country and every culture.

I am very much struck in literature by the appearance, that one person wrote all the books; as if the editor of a journal planted his body of reporters in different parts of the field of action, and relieved some by others from time to time; but there is such equality and identity both of judgment and point of view in the narrative, that it is plainly the work of one all-seeing, all-hearing gentleman. I looked into Pope's *Odyssey* yesterday: it is as correct and elegant after our canon of to-day, as if it were newly written. The modernness of all good books seems to give me an existence as wide as man. What is well done, I feel as if I did; what is ill-done, I reckon not of. Shakspeare's passages of passion (for example,

in Lear and Hamlet) are in the very dialect of the present year. I am faithful again to the whole over the members in my use of books. I find the most pleasure in reading a book in a manner least flattering to the author. I read Proclus, and sometimes Plato, as I might read a dictionary, for a mechanical help to the fancy and the imagination. I read for the lustres, as if one should use a fine picture in a chromatic experiment, for its rich colors. 'Tis not Proclus, but a piece of nature and fate that I explore. It is a greater joy to see the author's author, than himself. A higher pleasure of the same kind I found lately at a concert, where I went to hear Handel's Messiah. As the master overpowered the littleness and incapableness of the performers, and made them conductors of his electricity, so it was easy to observe what efforts nature was making through so many hoarse, wooden, and imperfect persons, to produce beautiful voices, fluid and soul-guided men and women. The genius of nature was paramount at the oratorio.

This preference of the genius to the parts is the secret of that deification of art, which is found in all superior minds. Art, in the artist, is proportion, or, a habitual respect to the whole by an eye loving beauty in details. And the wonder and charm of it

is the sanity in insanity which it denotes. Proportion is almost impossible to human beings. There is no one who does not exaggerate. In conversation, men are encumbered with personality, and talk too much. In modern sculpture, picture, and poetry, the beauty is miscellaneous; the artist works here and there, and at all points, adding and adding, instead of unfolding the unit of his thought. Beautiful details we must have, or no artist: but they must be means and never other. The eye must not lose sight for a moment of the purpose. Lively boys write to their ear and eye, and the cool reader finds nothing but sweet jingles in it. When they grow older, they respect the argument.

We obey the same intellectual integrity, when we study in exceptions the law of the world. Anomalous facts, as the never quite obsolete rumors of magic and demonology, and the new allegations of phrenologists and neurologists, are of ideal use. They are good indications. Homœopathy is insignificant as an art of healing, but of great value as criticism on the hygeia or medical practice of the time. So with Mesmerism, Swedenborgism, Fourierism, and the Millennial Church; they are poor pretensions enough, but good criticism on the science, philosophy, and preaching of the day. For these ab-

normal insights of the adepts, ought to be normal, and things of course.

All things show us, that on every side we are very near to the best. It seems not worth while to execute with too much pains some one intellectual, or æsthetical, or civil feat, when presently the dream will scatter, and we shall burst into universal power. The reason of idleness and of crime is the deferring of our hopes. Whilst we are waiting, we beguile the time with jokes, with sleep, with eating, and with crimes.

Thus we settle it in our cool libraries, that all the agents with which we deal are subalterns, which we can well afford to let pass, and life will be simpler when we live at the centre, and flout the surfaces. I wish to speak with all respect of persons, but sometimes I must pinch myself to keep awake, and preserve the due decorum. They melt so fast into each other, that they are like grass and trees, and it needs an effort to treat them as individuals. Though the uninspired man certainly finds persons a conveniency in household matters, the divine man does not respect them : he sees them as a rack of clouds, or a fleet of ripples which the wind drives over the surface of the water. But this is flat rebellion. Nature

will not be Buddhist: she resents generalizing, and insults the philosopher in every moment with a million of fresh particulars. It is all idle talking: as much as a man is a whole, so is he also a part; and it were partial not to see it. What you say in your pompous distribution only distributes you into your class and section. You have not got rid of parts by denying them, but are the more partial. You are one thing, but nature is *one thing and the other thing*, in the same moment. She will not remain orb'd in a thought, but rushes into persons; and when each person, inflamed to a fury of personality, would conquer all things to his poor crotchet, she raises up against him another person, and by many persons incarnates again a sort of whole. She will have all. Nick Bottom cannot play all the parts, work it how he may; there will be somebody else, and the world will be round. Everything must have its flower or effort at the beautiful, coarser or finer according to its stuff. They relieve and recommend each other, and the sanity of society is a balance of a thousand insanities. She punishes abstractionists, and will only forgive an induction which is rare and casual. We like to come to a height of land and see the landscape, just as we value a general remark in conversation. But it is not the intention of nature that we

should live by general views. We fetch fire and water, run about all day among the shops and markets, and get our clothes and shoes made and mended, and are the victims of these details, and once in a fortnight we arrive perhaps at a rational moment. If we were not thus infatuated, if we saw the real from hour to hour, we should not be here to write and to read, but should have been burned or frozen long ago. She would never get anything done, if she suffered admirable Crichtons, and universal geniuses. She loves better a wheelwright who dreams all night of wheels, and a groom who is part of his horse: for she is full of work, and these are her hands. As the frugal farmer takes care that his cattle shall eat down the rowan, and swine shall eat the waste of his house, and poultry shall pick the crumbs, so our economical mother despatches a new genius and habit of mind into every district and condition of existence, plants an eye wherever a new ray of light can fall, and gathering up into some man every property in the universe, establishes thousand-fold occult mutual attractions among her offspring, that all this wash and waste of power may be imparted and exchanged.

Great dangers undoubtedly accrue from this incarnation and distribution of the godhead, and hence

nature has her maligners, as if she were Circe ; and Alphonso of Castille fancied he could have given useful advice. But she does not go unprovided ; she has hellebore at the bottom of the cup. Solitude would ripen a plentiful crop of despots. The recluse thinks of men as having his manner, or as not having his manner ; and as having degrees of it, more and less. But when he comes into a public assembly, he sees that men have very different manners from his own, and in their way admirable. In his childhood and youth, he has had many checks and censures, and thinks modestly enough of his own endowment. When afterwards he comes to unfold it in propitious circumstance, it seems the only talent : he is delighted with his success, and accounts himself already the fellow of the great. But he goes into a mob, into a banking-house, into a mechanic's shop, into a mill, into a laboratory, into a ship, into a camp, and in each new place he is no better than an idiot : other talents take place, and rule the hour. The rotation which whirls every leaf and pebble to the meridian, reaches to every gift of man, and we all take turns at the top.

For nature, who abhors mannerism, has set her heart on breaking up all styles and tricks, and it is so much easier to do what one has done before, than

to do a new thing, that there is a perpetual tendency to a set mode. In every conversation, even the highest, there is a certain trick, which may be soon learned by an acute person, and then that particular style continued indefinitely. Each man, too, is a tyrant in tendency, because he would impose his idea on others; and their trick is their natural defence. Jesus would absorb the race; but Tom Paine or the coarsest blasphemer helps humanity by resisting this exuberance of power. Hence the immense benefit of party in politics, as it reveals faults of character in a chief, which the intellectual force of the persons, with ordinary opportunity, and not hurled into aphelion by hatred, could not have seen. Since we are all so stupid, what benefit that there should be two stupidities! It is like that brute advantage so essential to astronomy, of having the diameter of the earth's orbit for a base of its triangles. Democracy is morose, and runs to anarchy, but in the state, and in the schools, it is indispensable to resist the consolidation of all men into a few men. If John was perfect, why are you and I alive? As long as any man exists, there is some need of him; let him fight for his own. A new poet has appeared: a new character approached us; why should we refuse to eat bread, until we have found his regiment

and section in our old army-files? Why not a new man? Here is a new enterprise of Brook Farm, of Skeneateles, of Northampton: why so impatient to baptise them Essenes, or Port-Royalists, or Shakers, or by any known and effete name? Let it be a new way of living. Why have only two or three ways of life, and not thousands? Every man is wanted, and no man is wanted much. We came this time for condiments, not for corn. We want the great genius only for joy; for one star more in our constellation, for one tree more in our grove. But he thinks we wish to belong to him, as he wishes to occupy us. He greatly mistakes us. I think I have done well, if I have acquired a new word from a good author; and my business with him is to find my own, though it were only to melt him down into an epithet or an image for daily use.

“ Into paint will I grind thee, my bride ! ”

To embroil the confusion, and make it impossible to arrive at any general statement, when we have insisted on the imperfection of individuals, our affections and our experience urge that every individual is entitled to honor, and a very generous treatment is sure to be repaid. A recluse sees only two or three persons, and allows them all their room;

they spread themselves at large. The man of state looks at many, and compares the few habitually with others, and these look less. Yet are they not entitled to this generosity of reception? and is not munificence the means of insight? For though gamesters say, that the cards beat all the players, though they were never so skilful, yet in the contest we are now considering, the players are also the game, and share the power of the cards. If you criticise a fine genius, the odds are that you are out of your reckoning, and, instead of the poet, are censuring your own caricature of him. For there is somewhat spherul and infinite in every man, especially in every genius, which, if you can come very near him, sports with all your limitations. For, rightly every man is a channel through which heaven floweth, and, whilst I fancied I was criticising him, I was censuring or rather terminating my own soul. After taxing Goethe as a courtier, artificial, unbelieving, worldly,—I took up this book of Helena, and found him an Indian of the wilderness, a piece of pure nature like an apple or an oak, large as morning or night, and virtuous as a briar-rose.

But care is taken that the whole tune shall be played. If we were not kept among surfaces, every thing would be large and universal: now the excluded *et*

tributes burst in on us with the more brightness, that they have been excluded. "Your turn now, my turn next," is the rule of the game. The universality being hindered in its primary form, comes in the secondary form of *all sides*: the points come in succession to the meridian, and by the speed of rotation, a new whole is formed. Nature keeps herself whole, and her representation complete in the experience of each mind. She suffers no seat to be vacant in her college. It is the secret of the world that all things subsist, and do not die, but only retire a little from sight, and afterwards return again. Whatever does not concern us, is concealed from us. As soon as a person is no longer related to our present well-being, he is concealed, or *dies*, as we say. Really, all things and persons are related to us, but according to our nature, they act on us not at once, but in succession, and we are made aware of their presence one at a time. All persons, all things which we have known, are here present, and many more than we see; the world is full. As the ancient said, the world is a *plenum* or solid; and if we saw all things that really surround us, we should be imprisoned and unable to move. For, though nothing is impassable to the soul, but all things are pervious to it, and like highways, yet this

is only whilst the soul does not see them. As soon as the soul sees any object, it stops before that object. Therefore, the divine Providence, which keeps the universe open in every direction to the soul, conceals all the furniture and all the persons that do not concern a particular soul, from the senses of that individual. Through solidest eternal things, the man finds his road, as if they did not subsist, and does not once suspect their being. As soon as he needs a new object, suddenly he beholds it, and no longer attempts to pass through it, but takes another way. When he has exhausted for the time the nourishment to be drawn from any one person or thing, that object is withdrawn from his observation, and though still in his immediate neighborhood, he does not suspect its presence.

Nothing is dead: men feign themselves dead, and endure mock funerals and mournful obituaries, and there they stand looking out of the window, sound and well, in some new and strange disguise. Jesus is not dead: he is very well alive: nor John, nor Paul, nor Mahomet, nor Aristotle; at times we believe we have seen them all, and could easily tell the names under which they go.

If we cannot make voluntary and conscious steps in the admirable science of universals, let us see the

parts wisely, and infer the genius of nature from the best particulars with a becoming charity. What is best in each kind is an index of what should be the average of that thing. Love shows me the opulence of nature, by disclosing to me in my friend a hidden wealth, and I infer an equal depth of good in every other direction. It is commonly said by farmers, that a good pear or apple costs no more time or pains to rear, than a poor one ; so I would have no work of art, no speech, or action, or thought, or friend, but the best.

The end and the means, the gamester and the game,—life is made up of the intermixture and reaction of these two amicable powers, whose marriage appears beforehand monstrous, as each denies and tends to abolish the other. We must reconcile the contradictions as we can, but their discord and their concord introduce wild absurdities into our thinking and speech. No sentence will hold the whole truth, and the only way in which we can be just, is by giving ourselves the lie ; Speech is better than silence ; silence is better than speech ;—All things are in contact ; every atom has a sphere of repulsion ;—Things are, and are not, at the same time ;—and the like. All the universe over, there is but one thing, this old Two-Face, creator-creature,

mind-matter, right-wrong, of which any proposition may be affirmed or denied. Very fitly, therefore, I assert, that every man is a partialist, that nature secures him as an instrument by self-conceit, preventing the tendencies to religion and science; and now further assert, that, each man's genius being nearly and affectionately explored, he is justified in his individuality, as his nature is found to be immense; and now I add, that every man is a universalist also, and, as our earth, whilst it spins on its own axis, spins all the time around the sun through the celestial spaces, so the least of its rational children, the most dedicated to his private affair, works out, though as it were under a disguise, the universal problem. We fancy men are individuals; so are pumpkins; but every pumpkin in the field, goes through every point of pumpkin history. The rabid democrat, as soon as he is senator and rich man, has ripened beyond possibility of sincere radicalism, and unless he can resist the sun, he must be conservative the remainder of his days. Lord Eldon said in his old age, "that if he were to begin life again, he would be damned but he would begin as agitator."

We hide this universality, if we can, but it appears at all points. We are as ungrateful as chil-

dren. There is nothing we cherish and strive to draw to us, but in some hour we turn and rend it. We keep a running fire of sarcasm at ignorance and the life of the senses; then goes by, perchance, a fair girl, a piece of life, gay and happy, and making the commonest offices beautiful, by the energy and heart with which she does them, and seeing this, we admire and love her and them, and say, "Lo! a genuine creature of the fair earth, not dissipated, or too early ripened by books, philosophy, religion, society, or care!" insinuating a treachery and contempt for all we had so long loved and wrought in ourselves and others.

If we could have any security against moods! If the profoundest prophet could be holden to his words, and the hearer who is ready to sell all and join the crusade, could have any certificate that tomorrow his prophet shall not unsay his testimony! But the Truth sits veiled there on the Bench, and never interposes an adamantyne syllable; and the most sincere and revolutionary doctrine, put as if the ark of God were carried forward some furlongs, and planted there for the succor of the world, shall in a few weeks be coldly set aside by the same speaker, as morbid; "I thought I was right, but I was not,"—and the same immeasurable credulity demanded

for new audacities. If we were not of all opinions! if we did not in any moment shift the platform on which we stand, and look and speak from another! if there could be any regulation, any 'one-hour-rule,' that a man should never leave his point of view, without sound of trumpet. I am always insincere, as always knowing there are other moods.

How sincere and confidential we can be, saying all that lies in the mind, and yet go away feeling that all is yet unsaid, from the incapacity of the parties to know each other, although they use the same words! My companion assumes to know my mood and habit of thought, and we go on from explanation to explanation, until all is said which words can, and we leave matters just as they were at first, because of that vicious assumption. Is it that every man believes every other to be an incurable partialist, and himself an universalist? I talked yesterday with a pair of philosophers: I endeavored to show my good men that I love everything by turns, and nothing long; that I loved the centre, but doated on the superficies; that I loved man, if men seemed to me mice and rats; that I revered saints, but woke up glad that the old pagan world stood its ground, and died hard; that I was glad of men of every gift and nobility, but would not live in their arms. Could

they but once understand, that I loved to know that they existed, and heartily wished them Godspeed, yet, out of my poverty of life and thought, had no word or welcome for them when they came to see me, and could well consent to their living in Oregon, for any claim I felt on them, it would be a great satisfaction.

NEW ENGLAND REFORMERS.

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NEW ENGLAND REFORMERS.

A LECTURE READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY IN AMORY
HALL, ON SUNDAY, 3 MARCH, 1844.

WHOEVER has had opportunity of acquaintance with society in New England, during the last twenty-five years, with those middle and with those leading sections that may constitute any just representation of the character and aim of the community, will have been struck with the great activity of thought and experimenting. His attention must be commanded by the signs that the Church, or religious party, is falling from the church nominal, and is appearing in temperance and non-resistance societies, in movements of abolitionists and of socialists, and in very significant assemblies, called Sabbath and Bible Conventions,—composed of ultraists, of seekers, of all the soul of the soldiery of dissent, and meeting to call in question the authority of the Sabbath, of the priesthood, and of the church. In these movements, nothing was more remarkable than the

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discontent they begot in the nerves. The spirit of protest and of detachment, drove the members of these Conventions to bear testimony against the church, and immediately afterward, to declare their discontent with these Conventions, their independence of their colleagues, and their impatience of the methods whereby they were working. They defied each other, like a congress of kings, each of whom had a realm to rule, and a way of his own that made concert unprofitable. What a fertility of projects for the salvation of the world ! One apostle thought all men should go to farming ; and another, that no man should buy or sell : that the use of money was the cardinal evil ; another, that the mischief was in our diet, that we eat and drink damnation. These made unleavened bread, and were foes to the death to fermentation. It was in vain urged by the housewife, that God made yeast, as well as dough, and loves fermentation just as dearly as he loves vegetation ; that fermentation develops the saccharine element in the grain, and makes it more palatable and more digestible. No ; they wish the pure wheat, and will die but it shall not ferment. Stop, dear nature, these incessant advances of thine ; let us scotch these ever-rolling wheels ! Others attacked the system of agriculture, the use of animal manures in farming ;

and the tyranny of man over brute nature ; these abuses polluted his food. The ox must be taken from the plough, and the horse from the cart, the hundred acres of the farm must be spaded, and the man must walk wherever boats and locomotives will not carry him. Even the insect world was to be defended,—that had been too long neglected, and a society for the protection of ground-worms, slugs, and mosquitos was to be incorporated without delay. With these appeared the adepts of homœopathy, of hydropathy, of mesmerism, of phrenology, and their wonderful theories of the Christian miracles ! Others assailed particular vocations, as that of the lawyer, that of the merchant, of the manufacturer, of the clergyman, of the scholar. Others attacked the institution of marriage, as the fountain of social evils. Others devoted themselves to the worrying of churches and meetings for public worship ; and the fertile forms of antinomianism among the elder puritans, seemed to have their match in the plenty of the new harvest of reform.

With this din of opinion and debate, there was a keener scrutiny of institutions and domestic life than any we had known, there was sincere protesting against existing evils, and there were changes of employment dictated by conscience. No doubt, there

was plentiful vamping, and cases of backsliding might occur. But in each of these movements emerged a good result, a tendency to the adoption of simpler methods, and an assertion of the sufficiency of the private man. Thus it was directly in the spirit and genius of the age, what happened in one instance, when a church censured and threatened to excommunicate one of its members, on account of the somewhat hostile part to the church, which his conscience led him to take in the anti-slavery business; the threatened individual immediately excommunicated the church in a public and formal process. This has been several times repeated: it was excellent when it was done the first time, but, of course, loses all value when it is copied. Every project in the history of reform, no matter how violent and surprising, is good, when it is the dictate of a man's genius and constitution, but very dull and suspicious when adopted from another. It is right and beautiful in any man to say, 'I will take this coat, or this book, or this measure of corn of yours,'—in whom we see the act to be original, and to flow from the whole spirit and faith of him; for then that taking will have a giving as free and divine: but we are very easily disposed to resist the same generosity of speech, when we miss originality and truth to character **in it.**

There was in all the practical activities of New England, for the last quarter of a century, a gradual withdrawal of tender consciences from the social organizations. There is observable throughout, the contest between mechanical and spiritual methods, but with a steady tendency of the thoughtful and virtuous to a deeper belief and reliance on spiritual facts.

In politics, for example, it is easy to see the progress of dissent. The country is full of rebellion; the country is full of kings. Hands off! let there be no control and no interference in the administration of the affairs of this kingdom of me. Hence the growth of the doctrine and the party of Free Trade, and the willingness to try that experiment, in the face of what appear incontestable facts. I confess, the motto of the *Globe* newspaper is so attractive to me, that I can seldom find much appetite to read what is below in its columns, "The world is governed too much." So the country is frequently affording solitary examples of resistance to the government, solitary nullifiers, who throw themselves on their reserved rights; nay, who have reserved all their rights; who reply to the assessor, and to the clerk of court, that they do not know the State; and embarrass the courts of law, by non-juring, and the com-

mander-in-chief of the militia, by non-resistance.

The same disposition to scrutiny and dissent appeared in civil, festive, neighborly, and domestic society. A restless, prying, conscientious criticism broke out in unexpected quarters. Who gave me the money with which I bought my coat? Why should professional labor and that of the counting-house be paid so disproportionately to the labor of the porter, and wood-sawyer? This whole business of Trade gives me to pause and think, as it constitutes false relations between men; inasmuch as I am prone to count myself relieved of any responsibility to behave well and nobly to that person whom I pay with money, whereas if I had not that commodity, I should be put on my good behavior in all companies, and man would be a benefactor to man, as being himself his only certificate that he had a right to those aids and services which each asked of the other. Am I not too protected a person? is there not a wide disparity between the lot of me and the lot of thee, my poor brother, my poor sister? Am I not defrauded of my best culture in the loss of those gymnastics which manual labor and the emergencies of poverty constitute? I find nothing healthful or exalting in the smooth conventions of society; I do not like the close air of saloons. I begin to suspect myself to be

a prisoner, though treated with all this courtesy and luxury. I pay a destructive tax in my conformity.

The same insatiable criticism may be traced in the efforts for the reform of Education. The popular education has been taxed with a want of truth and nature. It was complained that an education to things was not given. We are students of words : we are shut up in schools, and colleges, and recitation-rooms, for ten or fifteen years, and come out at last with a bag of wind, a memory of words, and do not know a thing. We cannot use our hands, or our legs, or our eyes, or our arms. We do not know an edible root in the woods, we cannot tell our course by the stars, nor the hour of the day by the sun. It is well if we can swim and skate. We are afraid of a horse, of a cow, of a dog, of a snake, of a spider. The Roman rule was, to teach a boy nothing that he could not learn standing. The old English rule was, 'All summer in the field, and all winter in the study.' And it seems as if a man should learn to plant, or to fish, or to hunt, that he might secure his subsistence at all events, and not be painful to his friends and fellow men. The lessons of science should be experimental also. The sight of the planet through a telescope, is worth all the course on astronomy : the shock of the electric spark in the elbow,

out-values all the theories ; the taste of the nitrous oxide, the firing of an artificial volcano, are better than volumes of chemistry.

One of the traits of the new spirit, is the inquisition it fixed on our scholastic devotion to the dead languages. The ancient languages, with great beauty of structure, contain wonderful remains of genius, which draw, and always will draw, certain likeminded men,—Greek men, and Roman men, in all countries, to their study ; but by a wonderful drowsiness of usage, they had exacted the study of *all* men. Once (say two centuries ago), Latin and Greek had a strict relation to all the science and culture there was in Europe, and the Mathematics had a momentary importance at some era of activity in physical science. These things became stereotyped as *education*, as the manner of men is. But the Good Spirit never cared for the colleges, and though all men and boys were now drilled in Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, it had quite left these shells high and dry on the beach, and was now creating and feeding other matters at other ends of the world. But in a hundred high school and colleges, this warfare against common sense still goes on. Four, or six, or ten years, the pupil is parsing Greek and Latin, and as soon as he leaves the University, as it is ludicrously

called, he shuts those books for the last time. Some thousands of young men are graduated at our colleges in this country every year, and the persons who, at forty years, still read Greek, can all be counted on your hand. I never met with ten. Four or five persons I have seen who read Plato.

But is not this absurd, that the whole liberal talent of this country should be directed in its best years on studies which lead to nothing? What was the consequence? Some intelligent person said or thought: 'Is that Greek and Latin some spell to conjure with, and not words of reason? If the physician, the lawyer, the divine, never use it to come at their ends, I need never learn it to come at mine. Conjuring is gone out of fashion, and I will omit this conjugating, and go straight to affairs.' So they jumped the Greek and Latin, and read law, medicine, or sermons, without it. To the astonishment of all, the self-made men took even ground at once with the oldest of the regular graduates, and in a few months the most conservative circles of Boston and New York had quite forgotten who of their gownsmen was college-bred, and who was not.

One tendency appears alike in the philosophical speculation, and in the rudest democratical movements, through all the petulance and all the pueril-

ity, the wish, namely, to cast aside the superfluous, and arrive at short methods, urged, as I suppose, by an intuition that the human spirit is equal to all emergencies, alone, and that man is more often injured than helped by the means he uses.

I conceive this gradual casting off of material aids, and the indication of growing trust in the private, self-supplied powers of the individual, to be the affirmative principle of the recent philosophy: and that it is feeling its own profound truth, and is reaching forward at this very hour to the happiest conclusions. I readily concede that in this, as in every period of intellectual activity, there has been a noise of denial and protest; much was to be resisted, much was to be got rid of by those who were reared in the old, before they could begin to affirm and to construct. Many a reformer perishes in his removal of rubbish,—and that makes the offensiveness of the class. They are partial; they are not equal to the work they pretend. They lose their way; in the assault on the kingdom of darkness, they expend all their energy on some accidental evil, and lose their sanity and power of benefit. It is of little moment that one or two, or twenty errors of our social system be corrected, but of much that the man be in his senses.

The criticism and attack on institutions which we have witnessed, has made one thing plain, that society gains nothing whilst a man, not himself renovated, attempts to renovate things around him : he has become tediously good in some particular, but negligent or narrow in the rest ; and hypocrisy and vanity are often the disgusting result.

It is handsomer to remain in the establishment better than the establishment, and conduct that in the best manner, than to make a sally against evil by some single improvement, without supporting it by a total regeneration. Do not be so vain of your one objection. Do you think there is only one? Alas! my good friend, there is no part of society or of life better than any other part. All our things are right and wrong together. The wave of evil washes all our institutions alike. Do you complain of our Marriage? Our marriage is no worse than our education, our diet, our trade, our social customs. Do you complain of the laws of Property? It is a pedantry to give such importance to them. Can we not play the game of life with these counters, as well as with those ; in the institution of property, as well as out of it. Let into it the new and renewing principle of love, and property will be universality. No one gives the impression of superiority to the institution, which

he must give who will reform it. It makes no difference what you say : you must make me feel that you are aloof from it; by your natural and supernatural advantages, do easily see to the end of it,—do see how man can do without it. Now all men are on one side. No man deserves to be heard against property. Only Love, only an Idea, is against property, as we hold it.

I cannot afford to be irritable and captious, nor to waste all my time in attacks. If I should go out of church whenever I hear a false sentiment, I could never stay there five minutes. But why come out? the street is as false as the church, and when I get to my house, or to my manners, or to my speech, I have not got away from the lie. When we see an eager assailant of one of these wrongs, a special reformer, we feel like asking him, What right have you, sir, to your one virtue? Is virtue piecemeal? This is a jewel amidst the rags of a beggar.

In another way the right will be vindicated. In the midst of abuses, in the heart of cities, in the aisles of false churches, alike in one place and in another,—wherever, namely, a just and heroic soul finds itself, there it will do what is next at hand, and by the new quality of character it shall put forth, it

shall abrogate that old condition, law or school in which it stands, before the law of its own mind.

If partiality was one fault of the movement party, the other defect was their reliance on Association. Doubts such as those I have intimated, drove many good persons to agitate the questions of social reform. But the revolt against the spirit of commerce, the spirit of aristocracy, and the inveterate abuses of cities, did not appear possible to individuals: and to do battle against numbers, they armed themselves with numbers, and against concert, they relied on new concert.

Following, or advancing beyond the ideas of St. Simon, of Fourier, and of Owen, three communities have already been formed in Massachusetts on kindred plans, and many more in the country at large. They aim to give every member a share in the manual labor, to give an equal reward to labor and to talent, and to unite a liberal culture with an education to labor. The scheme offers, by the economies of associated labor and expense, to make every member rich, on the same amount of property, that, in separate families, would leave every member poor. These new associations are composed of men and women of superior talents and sentiments: yet it may easily be questioned, whether such a community

will draw, except in its beginnings, the able and the good ; whether those who have energy, will not prefer their chance of superiority and power in the world, to the humble certainties of the Association ; whether such a retreat does not promise to become an asylum to those who have tried and failed, rather than a field to the strong ; and whether the members will not necessarily be fractions of men, because each finds that he cannot enter it, without some compromise. Friendship and association are very fine things, and a grand phalanx of the best of the human race, banded for some catholic object : yes, excellent ; but remember that no society can ever be so large as one man. He in his friendship, in his natural and momentary associations, doubles or multiplies himself ; but in the hour in which he mortgages himself to two or ten or twenty, he dwarfs himself below the stature of one.

But the men of less faith could not thus believe, and to such, concert appears the sole specific of strength. I have failed, and you have failed, but perhaps together we shall not fail. Our housekeeping is not satisfactory to us, but perhaps a phalanx, a community, might be. Many of us have differed in opinion, and we could find no man who could make the truth plain, but possibly a college, or an

ecclesiastical council might. I have not been able either to persuade my brother or to prevail on myself, to disuse the traffic or the potation of brandy, but perhaps a pledge of total abstinence might effectually restrain us. The candidate my party votes for is not to be trusted with a dollar, but he will be honest in the Senate, for we can bring public opinion to bear on him. Thus concert was the specific in all cases. But concert is neither better nor worse, neither more nor less potent than individual force. All the men in the world cannot make a statue walk and speak, cannot make a drop of blood, or a blade of grass, any more than one man can. But let there be one man, let there be truth in two men, in ten men, then is concert for the first time possible, because the force which moves the world is a new quality, and can never be furnished by adding whatever quantities of a different kind. What is the use of the concert of the false and the disunited? There can be no concert in two, where there is no concert in one. When the individual is not *individual*, but is dual; when his thoughts look one way, and his actions another; when his faith is traversed by his habits; when his will, enlightened by reason, is warped by his sense; when with one hand he rows, and with the other backs water, what concert can be?

I do not wonder at the interest these projects inspire. The world is awaking to the idea of union and these experiments show what it is thinking of. It is and will be magic. Men will live and communicate, and plough, and reap, and govern, as by added ethereal power, when once they are united; as in a celebrated experiment, by expiration and respiration exactly together, four persons lift a heavy man from the ground by the little finger only, and without sense of weight. But this union must be inward, and not one of covenants, and is to be reached by a reverse of the methods they use. The union is only perfect, when all the uniters are isolated. It is the union of friends who live in different streets or towns. Each man, if he attempts to join himself to others, is on all sides cramped and diminished of his proportion; and the stricter the union, the smaller and the more pitiful he is. But leave him alone, to recognize in every hour and place the secret soul, he will go up and down doing the works of a true member, and, to the astonishment of all, the work will be done with concert, though no man spoke. Government will be adamantine without any governor. The union must be ideal in actual individualism.

I pass to the indication in some particulars of that

faith in man, which the heart is preaching to us in these days, and which engages the more regard, from the consideration, that the speculations of one generation are the history of the next following.

In alluding just now to our system of education, I spoke of the deadness of its details. But it is open to graver criticism than the palsy of its members: it is a system of despair. The disease with which the human mind now labors, is want of faith. Men do not believe in a power of education. We do not think we can speak to divine sentiments in man, and we do not try. We renounce all high aims. We believe that the defects of so many perverse and so many frivolous people, who make up society, are organic, and society is a hospital of incurables. A man of good sense but of little faith, whose compassion seemed to lead him to church as often as he went there, said to me; "that he liked to have concerts, and fairs, and churches, and other public amusements go on." I am afraid the remark is too honest, and comes from the same origin as the maxim of the tyrant, "If you would rule the world quietly, you must keep it amused." I notice too, that the ground on which eminent public servants urge the claims of popular education is fear: 'This country is filling up with thousands and millions of voters,

and you must educate them to keep them from our throats.' We do not believe that any education, any system of philosophy, any influence of genius, will ever give depth of insight to a superficial mind. Having settled ourselves into this infidelity, our skill is expended to procure alleviations, diversion, opiates. We adorn the victim with manual skill, his tongue with languages, his body with inoffensive and comely manners. So have we cunningly hid the tragedy of limitation and inner death we cannot avert. Is it strange that society should be devoured by a secret melancholy, which breaks through all its smiles, and all its gayety and games?

But even one step farther our infidelity has gone. It appears that some doubt is felt by good and wise men, whether really the happiness and probity of men is increased by the culture of the mind in those disciplines to which we give the name of education. Unhappily, too, the doubt comes from scholars, from persons who have tried these methods. In their experience, the scholar was not raised by the sacred thoughts amongst which he dwelt, but used them to selfish ends. He was a profane person, and became a showman, turning his gifts to a marketable use and not to his own sustenance and growth. It was found that the intellect could be independently de-

veloped, that is, in separation from the man, as any single organ can be invigorated, and the result was monstrous. A canine appetite for knowledge was generated, which must still be fed, but was never satisfied, and this knowledge not being directed on action, never took the character of substantial, humane truth, blessing those whom it entered. It gave the scholar certain powers of expression, the power of speech, the power of poetry, of literary art, but it did not bring him to peace, or to beneficence.

When the literary class betray a destitution of faith, it is not strange that society should be disheartened and sensualized by unbelief. What remedy? Life must be lived on a higher plane. We must go up to a higher platform, to which we are always invited to ascend; there, the whole aspect of things changes. I resist the skepticism of our education, and of our educated men. I do not believe that the differences of opinion and character in men are organic. I do not recognize, beside the class of the good and the wise, a permanent class of skeptics, or a class of conservatives, or of malignants, or of materialists. I do not believe in two classes. You remember the story of the poor woman who importuned King Philip of Macedon to grant her justice, which Philip refused: the woman exclaimed, "I ap-

peal": the king, astonished, asked to whom she appealed: the woman replied, "from Philip drunk to Philip sober." The text will suit me very well. I believe not in two classes of men, but in man in two moods, in Philip drunk and Philip sober. I think, according to the good-hearted word of Plato, "Unwillingly the soul is deprived of truth." Iron conservative, miser, or thief, no man is, but by a supposed necessity, which he tolerates by shortness or torpidity of sight. The soul lets no man go without some visitations and holy-days of a diviner presence. It would be easy to show, by a narrow scanning of any man's biography, that we are not so wedded to our paltry performances of every kind, but that every man has at intervals the grace to scorn his performances, in comparing them with his belief of what he should do, that he puts himself on the side of his enemies, listening gladly to what they say of him, and accusing himself of the same things.

What is it men love in Genius, but its infinite hope, which degrades all it has done? Genius counts all its miracles poor and short. Its own idea it never executed. The *Iliad*, the *Hamlet*, the Doric column, the Roman arch, the Gothic minster, the German anthem, when they are ended, the master casts behind him. How sinks the song in the waves

of melody which the universe pours over his soul ! Before that gracious Infinite, out of which he drew these few strokes, how mean they look, though the praises of the world attend them. From the triumphs of his art, he turns with desire to this greater defeat. Let those admire who will. With silent joy he sees himself to be capable of a beauty that eclipses all which his hands have done, all which human hands have ever done.

Well, we are all the children of genius, the children of virtue,—and feel their inspirations in our happier hours. Is not every man sometimes a radical in politics? Men are conservatives when they are least vigorous, or when they are most luxurious. They are conservatives after dinner, or before taking their rest; when they are sick, or aged: in the morning, or when their intellect or their conscience have been aroused, when they hear music, or when they read poetry, they are radicals. In the circle of the rankest tories that could be collected in England, Old or New, let a powerful and stimulating intellect, a man of great heart and mind, act on them, and very quickly these frozen conservators will yield to the friendly influence, these hopeless will begin to hope, these haters will begin to love, these immovable statues will begin to spin and revolve. I cannot

help recalling the fine anecdote which Wharton relates of Bishop Berkeley, when he was preparing to leave England, with his plan of planting the gospel among the American savages. "Lord Bathurst told me, that the members of the Scriblerus club, being met at his house at dinner, they agreed to rally Berkeley, who was also his guest, on his scheme at Bermudas. Berkeley, having listened to the many lively things they had to say, begged to be heard in his turn, and displayed his plan with such an astonishing and animating force of eloquence and enthusiasm, that they were struck dumb, and, after some pause, rose up all together with earnestness, exclaiming, 'Let us set out with him immediately.' " Men in all ways are better than they seem. They like flattery for the moment, but they know the truth for their own. It is a foolish cowardice which keeps us from trusting them, and speaking to them rude truth. They resent your honesty for an instant, they will thank you for it always. What is it we heartily wish of each other? Is it to be pleased and flattered? No, but to be convicted and exposed, to be shamed out of our nonsense of all kinds, and made men of, instead of ghosts and phantoms. We are weary of gliding ghostlike through the world, which is itself so slight and unreal. We crave a sense of reality,

though it come in strokes of pain. I explain so,—by this manlike love of truth,—those excesses and errors into which souls of great vigor, but not equal insight, often fall. They feel the poverty at the bottom of all the seeming affluence of the world. They know the speed with which they come straight through the thin masquerade, and conceive a disgust at the indigence of nature : Rousseau, Mirabeau, Charles Fox, Napoleon, Byron,—and I could easily add names nearer home, of raging riders, who drive their steeds so hard, in the violence of living to forget its illusion : they would know the worst, and tread the floors of hell. The heroes of ancient and modern fame, Cimon, Themistocles, Alcibiades, Alexander, Cæsar, have treated life and fortune as a game to be well and skilfully played, but the stake not to be so valued, but that any time, it could be held as a trifle light as air, and thrown up. Cæsar, just before the battle of Pharsalia, discourses with the Egyptian priest, concerning the fountains of the Nile, and offers to quit the army, the empire, and Cleopatra, if he will show him those mysterious sources.

The same magnanimity shows itself in our social relations, in the preference, namely, which each man gives to the society of superiors over that of his equals. All that a man has, will he give for right

relations with his mates. All that he has, will he give for an erect demeanor in every company and on each occasion. He aims at such things as his neighbors prize, and gives his days and nights, his talents and his heart, to strike a good stroke, to acquit himself in all men's sight as a man. The consideration of an eminent citizen, of a noted merchant, of a man of mark in his profession; naval and military honor, a general's commission, a marshal's baton, a ducal coronet, the laurel of poets, and anyhow procured, the acknowledgment of eminent merit, have this lustre for each candidate, that they enable him to walk erect and unashamed, in the presence of some persons, before whom he felt himself inferior. Having raised himself to this rank, having established his equality with class after class, of those with whom he would live well, he still finds certain others, before whom he cannot possess himself, because they have somewhat fairer, somewhat grander, somewhat purer, which extorts homage of him. Is his ambition pure? then, will his laurels and his possessions seem worthless: instead of avoiding these men who make his fine gold dim, he will cast all behind him, and seek their society only, woo and embrace this his humiliation and mortification, until he shall know why his eye sinks, his voice is husky,

and his brilliant talents are paralyzed in this presence. He is sure that the soul which gives the lie to all things, will tell none. His constitution will not mislead him. If it cannot carry itself as it ought, high and unmatched in the presence of any man, if the secret oracles whose whisper makes the sweetness and dignity of his life, do here withdraw and accompany him no longer, it is time to undervalue what he has valued, to dispossess himself of what he has acquired, and with Cæsar to take in his hand the army, the empire, and Cleopatra, and say, 'All these will I relinquish, if you will show me the fountains of the Nile.' Dear to us are those who love us, the swift moments we spend with them are a compensation for a great deal of misery; they enlarge our life;—but dearer are those who reject us as unworthy, for they add another life: they build a heaven before us, whereof we had not dreamed, and thereby supply to us new powers out of the recesses of the spirit, and urge us to new and unattempted performances.

As every man at heart wishes the best and not inferior society, wishes to be convicted of his error, and to come to himself, so he wishes that the same healing should not stop in his thought, but should penetrate his will or active power. The

selfish man suffers more from his selfishness, than he from whom that selfishness withholds some important benefit. What he most wishes is to be lifted to some higher platform, that he may see beyond his present fear the transalpine good, so that his fear, his coldness, his custom may be broken up like fragments of ice, melted and carried away in the great stream of good will. Do you ask my aid? I also wish to be a benefactor. I wish more to be a benefactor and servant, than you wish to be served by me, and surely the greatest good fortune that could befall me, is precisely to be so moved by you that I should say, 'Take me and all mine, and use me and mine freely to your ends'! for, I could not say it, otherwise than because a great enlargement had come to my heart and mind, which made me superior to my fortunes. Here we are paralyzed with fear; we hold on to our little properties, house and land, office and money, for the bread which they have in our experience yielded us, although we confess, that our being does not flow through them. We desire to be made great, we desire to be touched with that fire which shall command this ice to stream, and make our existence a benefit. If therefore we start objections to your project, O friend of the slave, or friend of the poor, or of the race, understand well,

that it is because we wish to drive you to drive us into your measures. We wish to hear ourselves confuted. We are haunted with a belief that you have a secret, which it would highest advantage us to learn, and we would force you to impart it to us, though it should bring us to prison, or to worse extremity.

Nothing shall warp me from the belief, that every man is a lover of truth. There is no pure lie, no pure malignity in nature. The entertainment of the proposition of depravity is the last profligacy and profanation. There is no skepticism, no atheism but that. Could it be received into common belief, suicide would unpeople the planet. It has had a name to live in some dogmatic theology, but each man's innocence and his real liking of his neighbor, have kept it a dead letter. I remember standing at the polls one day, when the anger of the political contest gave a certain grimness to the faces of the independent electors, and a good man at my side looking on the people, remarked, "I am satisfied that the largest part of these men, on either side, mean to vote right." I suppose, considerate observers looking at the masses of men, in their blameless, and in their equivocal actions, will assent, that in spite of selfishness and frivolity, the general purpose in the

great number of persons is fidelity. The reason why any one refuses his assent to your opinion, or his aid to your benevolent design, is in you : he refuses to accept you as a bringer of truth, because, though you think you have it, he feels that you have it not. You have not given him the authentic sign.

If it were worth while to run into details this general doctrine of the latent but ever soliciting Spirit, it would be easy to adduce illustration in particulars of a man's equality to the church, of his equality to the state, and of his equality to every other man. It is yet in all men's memory, that, a few years ago, the liberal churches complained, that the Calvinistic church denied to them the name of Christian. I think the complaint was confession : a religious church would not complain. A religious man like Behmen, Fox, or Swedenborg, is not irritated by wanting the sanction of the church, but the church feels the accusation of his presence and belief.

It only needs, that a just man should walk in our streets, to make it appear how pitiful and inartificial a contrivance is our legislation. The man whose part is taken, and who does not wait for society in anything, has a power which society cannot choose but feel. The familiar experiment, called the hydrostatic paradox, in which a capillary column of

water balances the ocean, is a symbol of the relation of one man to the whole family of men. The wise Dandini, on hearing the lives of Socrates, Pythagoras, and Diogenes read, "judged them to be great men every way, excepting, that they were too much subjected to the reverence of the laws, which to second and authorize, true virtue must abate very much of its original vigor."

And as a man is equal to the church, and equal to the state, so he is equal to every other man. The disparities of power in men are superficial; and all frank and searching conversation, in which a man lays himself open to his brother, apprizes each of their radical unity. When two persons sit and converse in a thoroughly good understanding, the remark is sure to be made, See how we have disputed about words! Let a clear, apprehensive mind, such as every man knows among his friends, converse with the most commanding poetic genius, I think, it would appear that there was no inequality such as men fancy between them; that a perfect understanding, a like receiving, a like perceiving, abolished differences, and the poet would confess, that his creative imagination gave him no deep advantage, but only the superficial one, that he could express himself, and the other could not; that his advantage was a knack,

which might impose on indolent men, but could **not** impose on lovers of truth; for they know the tax of talent, or, what a price of greatness the power of expression too often pays. I believe it is the conviction of the purest men, that the net amount of man and man does not much vary. Each is incomparably superior to his companion in some faculty. His want of skill in other directions, has added to his fitness for his own work. Each seems to have some compensation yielded to him by his infirmity, and every hindrance operates as a concentration of his force.

These and the like experiences intimate, that man stands in strict connexion with a higher fact never yet manifested. There is power over and behind us, and we are the channels of its communications. We seek to say thus and so, and over our head some spirit sits, which contradicts what we say. We would persuade our fellow to this or that; another self within our eyes dissuades him. That which we keep back, this reveals. In vain we compose our faces and our words; it holds uncontrollable communication with the enemy, and he answers civilly to us, but believes the spirit. We exclaim, 'There's a traitor in the house!' but at last it appears that he is the true man, and I am the traitor. This open channel to the highest life is the first and last reality.

so subtle, so quiet, yet so tenacious, that although I have never expressed the truth, and although I have never heard the expression of it from any other, I know that the whole truth is here for me. What if I cannot answer your questions? I am not pained that I cannot frame a reply to the question, What is the operation we call Providence? There lies the unspoken thing, present, omnipresent. Every time we converse, we seek to translate it into speech, but whether we hit, or whether we miss, we have the fact. Every discourse is an approximate answer: but it is of small consequence, that we do not get it into verbs and nouns, whilst it abides for contemplation forever.

If the auguries of the prophesying heart shall make themselves good in time, the man who shall be born, whose advent men and events prepare and foreshow, is one who shall enjoy his connexion with a higher life, with the man within man; shall destroy distrust by his trust, shall use his native but forgotten methods, shall not take counsel of flesh and blood, but shall rely on the Law alive and beautiful, which works over our heads and under our feet. Pitiless, it avails itself of our success, when we obey it, and of our ruin, when we contravene it. Men are all secret believers in it, else, the word justice would

have no meaning: they believe that the best is the true; that right is done at last; or chaos would come. It rewards actions after their nature, and not after the design of the agent. 'Work,' it saith to man, 'in every hour, paid or unpaid, see only that thou work, and thou canst not escape the reward: whether thy work be fine or coarse, planting corn, or writing epics, so only it be honest work, done to thine own approbation, it shall earn a reward to the senses as well as to the thought: no matter, how often defeated, you are born to victory. The reward of a thing well done, is to have done it.'

As soon as a man is wonted to look beyond surfaces, and to see how this high will prevails without an exception or an interval, he settles himself into serenity. He can already rely on the laws of gravity, that every stone will fall where it is due; the good globe is faithful, and carries us securely through the celestial spaces, anxious or resigned: we need not interfere to help it on, and he will learn, one day, the mild lesson they teach, that our own orbit is all our task, and we need not assist the administration of the universe. Do not be so impatient to set the town right concerning the unfounded pretensions and the false reputation of certain men of standing. They are laboring harder to set the town

right concerning themselves, and will certainly succeed. Suppress for a few days your criticism on the insufficiency of this or that teacher or experimenter, and he will have demonstrated his insufficiency to all men's eyes. In like manner let a man fall into the divine circuits, and he is enlarged. Obedience to his genius is the only liberating influence. We wish to escape from subjection, and a sense of inferiority,—and we make self-denying ordinances, we drink water, we eat grass, we refuse the laws, we go to jail: it is all in vain; only by obedience to his genius; only by the freest activity is the way constitutional to him, does an angel seem to arise before a man, and lead him by the hand out of all the wards of the prison.

That which befits us, embosomed in beauty and wonder as we are, is cheerfulness and courage, and the endeavor to realize our aspirations. The life of man is the true romance, which, when it is valiantly conducted, will yield the imagination a higher joy than any fiction. All around us, what powers are wrapped up under the coarse mattings of custom, and all wonder prevented. It is so wonderful to our neurologists that a man can see without his eyes, that it does not occur to them, that it is just as wonderful, that he should see with them; and that is ever

the difference between the wise and the unwise : the latter wonders at what is unusual, the wise man wonders at the usual. Shall not the heart which has received so much, trust the Power by which it lives ? May it not quit other leadings, and listen to the Soul that has guided it so gently, and taught it so much, secure that the future will be worthy of the past ?

LIFE OF RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON, the fourth child and third son of William Emerson, Minister of the first church in Boston, was born May 25, 1803. His mother was Ruth Haskins of Boston, who married William Emerson in June 1796. The latter had been ordained in 1792 and settled over a small congregation at Harvard twelve miles from Concord. He was called to the first church in Boston and settled there Sept. 22, 1799.

Such animal spirits as Ralph Waldo Emerson could boast were derived from his father: the higher and rarer elements of character from a mother "whose mind had set its stamp upon manners of peculiar softness and natural grace and quiet dignity." The father was indeed a clergyman, and not too obviously deficient in the staidness becoming the clerical character; but, genial and social, more of a moralist than a divine, rather a man of letters than a man of learning, he represented a character notably modified since the time that its prototypes had crossed the Atlantic.

Emerson's father died May 12th, 1811. The mother and her young family were left with scant means, but the blessings of this condition, Ralph Waldo recognized afterwards, when, after a beautiful description of eager, blushing boys comparing the intellectual treasures amassed in hours snatched from a life of stern duty and unflinching task-work, Emerson adds:

NOTE BY AMERICAN EDITOR:—This admiring eulogy of Emerson and masterly analysis of his writings, is mostly compiled from his "Life" by RICHARD GARNETT L. L. D. an Englishman.

It was first published in 1888 by Walter Scott, London.

"What is the hoop that holds them staunch? It is the iron band of poverty, of necessity, of austerity, which, excluding them from the sensual enjoyments which make other boys too early old, has directed their activity into safe and right channels, and made them, despite themselves, reverers of the grand and beautiful, and the good. Ah, short-sighted students of books, of nature, and of man! too happy could they know their advantages, they pine for freedom from that mild parental yoke; they sigh for fine clothes, for riches, for the theatre, and premature freedom and dissipation which others possess. Woe to them if their wishes were crowned! The angels that dwelt with them, and are weaving laurels of life for their youthful brows, are Toil and Want, and Truth and Mutual Faith."

The chronicle of Emerson's schooldays, complete as regards his instruction and the routine of study, affords but little material for constructing a living image of the scholar himself. Some who have recorded their reminiscences in late life, evidently speak less of what they saw than of what they wish they had seen; others candidly admit that they saw nothing. One fact, however, is both clear in itself, and a clear proof how entirely in Emerson's as in most other cases, the child fathered the man. Always among his school-mates, he was never of them. There was a certain aloofness which never allowed them to consider him quite one of themselves; he was not a schoolboy, but a boy at school. This peculiar distinction he preserved through his life; without stiffness or churlishness, affectation or assumption, he always put and kept a distance between himself and others, which rendered his personal influence, apart from his writing and his oratory, smaller than that of almost any other great teacher. It is noteworthy that his intimates always call him *Mr. Emerson*. Enthusiasm never got beyond the hem of his garment; and this though the man was as simple, transparent, and unaffected as if he had been a great naturalist, instead of a cultivator of moral science. His isolation was simply the effect of an unlikeness to others not necessarily indicative of mental superiority,

and so far disadvantageous that in later life it prevented his exercising that moral control over his congregation which might have been easily exerted by an inferior man. The few definite notices that we possess of him at this early period are mostly indicative of this involuntary spiritual exclusiveness. "He had then," said an old schoolfellow to Dr. Holmes, "the same manner and courtly hesitation in addressing you that you have known in him since." "He seemed," says the youth he taught at college, "to dwell apart, as if in a tower, from which he looked upon everything from a loophole of his own." Taxed on one occasion with assuming an air of superiority, he replied with veracious simplicity, "I did not know it, sir." Such a pretension, had it indeed been advanced, would have seemed the less justifiable, as he was by no means a brilliant scholar, or remarkably prominent in his class. He was indeed, on one occasion, selected to deliver a poem of his own composition, but only after the task had been declined by seven of his reputed betters. "Attended a dissertation of Emerson's in the morning, on the subject of Ethical Philosophy," writes Josiah Quincy: "I found it long and dry." And again, "Emerson's valedictory exercise rather poor and did but little honor to the class." It was not known that his boyhood had been fascinated by one of the writers least likely to interest and average youth, Montaigne; and that he habitually carried a translation of Pascal's *Pensées* to church with him. It is a curious instance of the meeting of extremes that the most believing of men should have been thus early attracted to these two great and in different ways typical sceptics.

Emerson's schooling had commenced before he was three, and a week ere he attained that ripe age his father seems half disappointed that "Ralph does not read very well yet." After another spell of learning under Lawson Lyon, "a severe teacher," at the age of ten he entered the Boston Latin School, then or shortly afterwards under an excellent master, Mr. Apthorp Gould. Here he showed a talent for speech-making and rhyming which gained his master's good will, but the only incident of any interest recorded is the

whole school turning out to aid in throwing up defenses on Noddle Island against an expected visit from the British—then, to the shame of both nations, a hostile fleet. Emerson distinctly remembered the holiday, but could never recollect that the young engineers had done any work. In 1817 he entered Harvard College, under favor of an arrangement resembling a Cambridge sizarship. He was made “President’s freshman,” or messenger to summon delinquents and announce orders and regulations, which insured him free lodging; and waiter at Commons, which saved him three-fourths of his board. He also participated in several minor benefactions for poor scholars, and after a while eked out his means still further by giving supplementary lessons to a youth less educated than himself, whose character of him has already been cited, and who, when a distinguished clergyman in after years, gratefully acknowledged his obligation to him—rather as Mentor, however, than as instructor. Emerson’s backwardness in mathematics almost brought him into disgrace, and he seems to have evinced no special proficiency except in Greek. The Greek professor, the eloquent Edward Everett, inspired him with enthusiastic admiration; and the Hellenic bent of his mind was further disclosed by a successful prize essay on Socrates. “Why not Locke, Paley, or Stewart?” asked the President, to whom Cæsar and Pompey were evidently much alike. Emerson himself could not have told, but he held serenely on his own course, resolute alike in his acceptance of the mental food he found wholesome and his avoidance of that which did not commend itself to his instinct. Like many another active-minded youth in similar circumstances, he indemnified himself for the distastefulness of a large portion of the college course by a wide ranging over general literature. There seems no trace of his study in any modern continental language; but he was deeply versed in Shakespeare and the early English dramatists; and Swift, Addison, and Stern are named among the authors he introduced to the more intellectual among his classmates. Next to his reserve and the faultless propriety of his conduct, his contemporaries at

Harvard seem chiefly impressed with his unusual maturity and such an equipoise of intelligence as might have become a youthful Spinoza, but rarely accompanies the gift of poetry in verse or prose. Nothing about him seemed to indicate the future poet or mystic. There is no trace of the revolt of a Shelley, the suicidal tendencies of a Goethe, or Carlyle's warfare with the Everlasting No: nor did genius ever make its *début* in the world with less passion and crudity, or, it must be added, with less apparent promise. By so much as Emerson was before most men in the balance and discipline of the ordinary faculties of his mind, by so much was he behind most inspired men in the development of the exceptional.

The first indication of deep thought in Emerson's mind is found in a reminiscence of his own, perhaps not wholly accurate in point of date. It professedly relates to the period immediately succeeding his graduation at Harvard in 1821, when he was assisting his brother William in a school for ladies which the latter had established in Boston. In a speech delivered many years afterwards, he laments his inability to impart to his pupils what was chiefly precious to himself. "My teaching," he says, "was partial and external. I was at the very time already writing every night, in my chamber, my first thoughts on morals and the beautiful laws of compensation and of individual genius, which to observe and illustrate have given sweetness to many hours of my life. I am afraid no hint of this ever came into the school, where we clung to the safe and cold details of languages, geography, arithmetic, and chemistry." Wordsworth in one of his meditative poems hints his apprehension lest he should unawares "confound the present feelings with the past," and it must be owned that there is little in Emerson's correspondence of this period to intimate the existence of the Essay on Compensation, even in embryo. His letters, however, though extant, have not been fully published; and a remarkable passage in one of them (June 19, 1823) shows that he even then regarded himself as a poet and a worshipper of Nature.

“I am seeking to put myself on a footing of old acquaintance with nature, as a poet should ; but the fair divinity is somewhat shy of my advances, and I confess I cannot find myself quite as perfectly at home on the rock and in the wood as my ancient, and I might say infant, aspirations led me to expect. My aunt (of whom I think you have heard before, and who is alone among women) has spent a great part of her life in the country, is an idolater of nature, and counts but a small number who merit the privilege of dwelling among the mountains—the coarse thrifty cit profanes the grove by his presence—and she was anxious that her nephew might hold high and reverential notions regarding it, as the temple where God and the mind are to be studied and adored, and when the fiery soul can begin a premature communication with the other world. When I took my book, therefore, to the woods, I found nature not half poetical, not half visionary enough. There was nothing which the most froward imagination could construe for a moment into a satyr or dryad. No Greek or Roman or even English fantasy could deceive me one instant into the belief of more than met the eye. In short, I found that I had only transplanted into the new place my entire personal identity, and was grievously disappointed. Since I was cured of my air-castles I have fared somewhat better ; and a pair of moonlight evenings have screwed up my esteem several pegs higher, by supplying my brain with several bright fragments of thought, and making me dream that mind as well as body respired more freely here.”

It is to be observed that the country retreat to which Emerson had repaired when he penned the above lines was by no means a lodge in a vast wilderness, but a wooded corner of the suburban district of Roxbury, picturesque enough, but so near Boston as to have been in our time absorbed by the enlargement of the city. Mrs. Emerson had there taken up her abode in Canterbury Lane, known also as Light Lane, from the gloom of the overshadowing trees, and Featherbed Lane, in compliment to the ruggedness of the roadway. “Poets succeed better in fiction than in truth.” While Emerson disparaged his sylvan retirement in prose,

he was by no means backward in his claims for it in the following lines, the first of any importance that he seems to have composed :

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

Oh when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome ;
And when I am stretched beneath the pines
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,
At the sophist schools and the learned clan ;
For what are they all in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet ? ”

By 1825 Waldo’s three years of school-keeping had put from two to three thousand dollars into his pocket, and he felt enabled to terminate the parenthesis in his own education by entering the Divinity School at Cambridge, to prepare himself to follow the profession of all those among his ancestors who had been born upon American soil.

The time when the young schoolmaster thus for a season retrograded into the pupilar condition was one of repose and yet of expectation, pregnant with the germs of great things to come. It was for long afterwards looked back upon with regret as “ the era of good feeling.” The last prominent statesman of America’s heroic age was President ; two, more illustrious still, were descending towards the grave in the sight of all ; the atmosphere seemed suffused with their departing brightness, and faction stood for the moment abashed by the solemn euthanasia of an age of giants.

In choosing the Church as his profession, Emerson followed the path which seemed marked for one in whose veins ran so much clerical blood, but at the same time he obeyed his own conviction of what was best. He had formed a sound estimate of his powers, and believed that in the course he was following he should do them justice. He fancied, indeed, that "his abilities were below his ambition;" but this might well be, since his aspiration, though unambitious of worldly distinction, contemplated great results in the intellectual world; *inmensum infinitumque aliquid*. He fully recognized that his logical faculty compared unfavorably with his imagination, but he remarked with justice that this was no reason why he should abstain from theology, "for the highest species of reasoning upon divine subjects is rather the fruit of a sort of moral imagination than of the reasoning machines, such as Locke and Clarke and David Hume," He proceeds to instance Channing's Dudleian lecture as his model, and his admiration did not misguide him. There is not, perhaps, in the whole arena of theological literature such another instance of clear calm sense exalted to the highest eloquence by devoutness of spirit and moral enthusiasm as is afforded by the discourses of Channing. Whatever is best in the seventeenth and the eighteenth century pulpit seems united in this ornament of the nineteenth: but out of the pulpit the charm of Channing's eloquence, if not dispelled, lost much of its fascination. The fervent, faultless man of God whose heroic attitude and serene eloquence could fire multitudes and quell mobs seemed to have little faculty for dealing with his fellow men face to face. An atmosphere of reserve environed him; he gave forth more light than heat. Emerson's personal resort to him ended in disappointment; he was hardly capable, the younger man thought, of taking another person's point of view, or of communicating himself freely in private conversation. "He does not converse," said George Combe, "but delivers an essay, and waits patiently to hear an essay in return." His peculiar secret of exalting morality into religion by enthusiasm for the right and good was Emerson's already by natural endowment; so that the latter could not

feel that he had much to learn from him, nor did he find another guide. After all, his difficulties were no more than must naturally occur to every thoughtful person. He was not blind to the strong points of the old Puritan theology. "Presbyterianism and Calvinism make Christianity a more real and tangible system, and give it some novelties which were worth unfolding to the ignorance of men." But he felt no disposition to accept the assumptions on which it was based. "That the administration of eternity is fickle, that the God of revelation hath seen cause to repent and botch up the ordinances of the God of Nature, I hold it not irreverent but impious in us to assume." He was not too well satisfied with the average standard of devotional fervor in the Unitarian Church; but many had transcended it, and why not he? "I know that there are in my vicinity clergymen who are not merely literary or philosophical."

Seldom has neophyte been more buffeted by accident and fatality than Emerson. He had scarcely been a month at the Cambridge Divinity School ere his overtaken eyes failed him, and general debility drove him to the country, "to try the experiment of hard work for the benefit of health." It profited him, but more than a year elapsed ere he returned to Cambridge. In the interim he had for a short time taken charge of a school at Chelmsford, and afterwards of that established at Roxbury by his brother Edward, the genius, it was then deemed, of the family, who had overtaken his strength, and been driven to try a voyage to the Mediterranean. A pupil of Emerson's at the Chelmsford School remembers his grave and quiet, yet engaging demeanor, the subjection in which he could keep the boys by a look or a tone, a peculiar expression in his eyes, as if he saw things invisible to others. Mr. John Holmes, the brother of Oliver Wendell Holmes, records his undoubted calmness of manners, the sternness of his very infrequent rebukes, his kindness in explaining or advising. "Every inch a king in his dominion. Looking back, he seems to me rather like a captive philosopher set to tending flocks." "He was not," says another witness, "especially successful as a teacher. He was studying for the ministry,

and his heart was centured in his studies. Still, everything went along with the utmost smoothness." While he was at Chelmsford an incident occurred which must have strengthened his resolution to be a minister, had it needed strengthening. This was the aberration of his brother William, who had gone to study theology in Germany, and there imbibed doubts which withheld him from the Church. Foreseeing the pain which this would occasion his mother, he had sought counsel from Goethe, who received him sympathetically, and, true to his own preference for the concrete over the abstract, recommended him rather to conceal his scruples than grieve his kindred. Conscience, however, had the mastery in William's mind, and he forsook theology for law, rising ultimately to the judicial bench. Some congregation lost something, for, according to his cousin George, William Emerson had the sweetest voice ever heard. Upon his return he visited Waldo at Chelmsford to discuss the matter with him. "I was very sad," says Emerson, "for I knew how it would grieve my mother, and it did." The more reason, then, that he himself should adhere to the path she had wished, and he had chosen.

Though unable to join the regular class at Cambridge, Emerson had occasionally attended lectures, and the authorities, convinced of his worth and seriousness, and perhaps recognizing his hereditary claim to ordination, were content to dispense with any considerable acquaintance with technical divinity. If they had examined him, he said afterwards, his licence would assuredly have been refused. "Approbated to preach" by the Middlesex Association of Ministers on October 10, 1826, he delivered his first discourse at Waltham five days afterwards. The subject was suggested by the remark of a laborer with whom he had worked when striving to fortify his constitution by rustic toil in the preceeding year—"a Methodist, who, though ignorant and rude, had some deep thoughts. He said to me that men were always praying, and that all prayers were granted. I meditated much on this saying, and wrote my first sermon therefrom; of which the divisions were (1) Men are always praying; (2) All their prayers are granted;

(3) We must beware, then, what we ask." Emerson could hardly have begun his career as a public teacher more characteristically than by the unfolding of so deep a truth so sheathed in apparent paradox: nor was it less like himself to waive at the very outset his own academical claims in favor of the simple wisdom of one "taught of the Spirit."

A month later Emerson was driven south by a recurrence of his chest complaint. After a short stay at Charleston, he journeyed on to St. Augustine, in Florida, but recently acquired by the United States, and still far more Spanish than Anglo-American. "An ancient, fortified, dilapidated sand-bank of a town," whose population of twelve hundred was unequally divided between Americans fulfilling their manifest destiny as office-holders, and Spanish families with retinues of blacks. "The Americans live on their offices; the Spaniards keep billard tables; or, if not, they send their negroes to the mud to bring oysters, or to the shore to bring fish, and the rest of the time fiddle, mask, and dance. It was reported in the morning that a man was at work in the public square, and all our family turned out to see him. I stroll on the sea-beach, and drive a green orange over the sand with a stick." He could not have been better employed. Health came back gradually in the mild air, and his mental development was assisted by some practical insight into the system of slavery, and by acquaintance with the first foreigner he had known intimately, a man of different type to any he had yet encountered. This was no other than Achille Murat, son of King Joachim and nephew of Napoleon, at that time a planter at Tallahassee. "A philosopher, a scholar, a man of the world; very sceptical, but very candid, and an ardent lover of truth." Emerson accompanied him to his plantation, and they were fellow passengers on ship-board back to Charleston. He reached home in June, stopping and preaching on the way at Charleston, Washington, Philadelphia, and New York. The abstraction from purely professional duties and interests had certainly benefited him. His aspirations had become more varied, his tastes more versatile; he felt at times, he

tells his aunt, as though he might become a novelist or a poet; he even experienced spasmodic yearnings to be a painter. These growth-pains of genius did not perturb his demeanor; he was still regarded as a staid young man, rather pedantically exact in keeping his diary, and far less promising than his brilliant brother Edward. His originality was mainly manifested in the decision of his ethics. He preached independence. "Owe no conformity to custom," he said, "against your private judgment." "Have no regard to the influence of your example, but act always from the simplest motive." But while thus asserting his right to disregard social conventions if he saw fit, he apparently felt no call to quarrel with them. His one eccentricity could be indulged without attracting attention. "It is a peculiarity of humor in me, my strong propensity for strolling. I deliberately shut up my books in a cloudy July noon, put on my old clothes and old hat, and slink away to the whortleberry bushes, and slip with the greatest satisfaction into a little cow-path, where I am sure I can defy observation. This point gained, I solace myself for hours with picking blueberries and other trash of the woods, far from fame behind the birch trees. I seldom enjoy hours as I do these. I remember them in winter; I expect them in spring. I do not know a creature that I think has the same humor, or would think it respectable." The impressions thus imbibed were to be given back in due season. Emerson's best writings are the breathings of a soul saturated with sylvan influences.

For nearly a year Emerson continued a student at Divinity Hall, "his health the same stupid riddle that it always had been," "treading on eggs to strengthen his constitution," "lingering on system, writing something less than a sermon a month." The happy consequence was that in April, 1828, he reports himself as "looking less like a monument and more like a man." In what may be termed his moral regimen, he seems, as in most things, to have been a model. He had nothing of the peevishness of the invalid. "I court laughing persons, and after a merry or only a gossiping hour, when the talk has been mere soap-bubbles, I

have lost all sense of the mouse in my chest, am at ease, and can take my pen or book."

The easy stream of his life was soon to be ruffled by a painful, almost a tragic event. Waldo, the dutiful youth who followed the career desired by his mother, who had never been overtaken in a fault or had given a moment's uneasiness to those who loved him, save from the weakness of his health, was in that day regarded rather as the example than the hope of his family. He had not, like William, strayed even beyond the ample limits of Unitarian orthodoxy; nor had he exhibited the versatility, nigh akin to instability, of his brilliant brother Edward. But the family pride and hope were concentrated on the latter. "Born for success," writes Waldo,

"He seemed,
With grace to win, with heart to hold,
With shining gifts that took all eyes,
With budding power in college halls,
As pledged in coming days to forge
Weapons to guard the State, or scourge
Tyrants despite their guards or walls."

This glowing estimate was confirmed by the judgment of impartial observers. "There was no presage," writes Dr. Hedge, "of Emerson's future greatness." "Refinement of thought and selectness in the use of language," were indeed notable in Waldo, but only so far as "to give promise of an interesting preacher to cultivated hearers."

Early in 1829 Emerson was elected a colleague of Henry Ware, pastor of the Second Church in Boston. Within a few weeks Ware found it necessary to seek health in Europe, and Emerson became sole incumbent. On December 24, 1828, he became engaged to Ellen Tucker, a young lady of seventeen, daughter of a deceased Boston merchant, living at Concord with her mother and stepfather. He had been smitten with her a year before, but "thought I had got over my blushes and my wishes." "I saw Ellen at once," he wrote

afterwards, "in all her beauty, and she never disappointed me except in her death." Ellen Emerson, as she became in September, 1829, faded so quickly out of life and all memories but her husband's, that little seems to be known of her beyond her remarkable beauty, her fatal delicacy of constitution, and her buoyant spirit. Within a month of her engagement she made Emerson miserable by spitting blood. The deceptive malady, as usual, left much apparent ground for hope. We have seen that it did not prevent their union eight months afterwards. In February he wrote: "Ellen is mending day by day. 'Twould take more time than I can spare to tell how excellent a piece of work she is. She trifles so much with all her ails, and loses no jot of spirits, that we talk gravely only when asunder." She died in February, 1831.

Emerson's pulpit style is recalled by the reminiscence of a hearer who heard him preach on "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The main emphasis was on the word "own," and the general theme was that to every man the great end of existence was the preservation and culture of his individual mind and character. One can understand from this the remark of another hearer: "In looking back on his preaching I find he has impressed truths to which I always assented, in such a manner as to make them appear new, like a clearer revelation." His popularity, if not showy, was substantial; he belonged to public bodies and took part in public affairs; though no politician, he opened his church to the first movers in the anti-slavery agitation; and seemed in a fair way to prove what to many so-called liberals seems doubtful, that there is no incompatibility between independent thought and the public ministrations of religion. If his discourse could not impress the world like Carlyle's, as a sudden vent for impassionate feelings, the silent accumulation of many years of fierce inward conflict, he could hold religion up to men as a serene lamp lit at the tranquil but intense flame which burned in his own bosom. He could and did avoid the great stumbling-block of the teacher by the touch of genius which redeems familiar truth from platitude and common-

place, and, according to a happy definition, presents religion not merely as morality, but as morality touched with emotion. In the duties of pastoral visitation he seems to have been less efficient; and here indeed it is easy to conceive that nice refinement and respect for the sacredness of other men's convictions may sometimes prove a disqualification, and that obtrusiveness may be a condition of success. "Young man," said a spiritual patient, scandalized at not being treated *secundum artem*, "if you don't know your business, you had better go home." It is characteristic of his deep humanity, and his aversion to fuss and commonplace, that he appeared to least advantage at a funeral. A professional observer, a sexton, remarked that on such occasions "he did not seem to be at ease at all. To tell the truth, in my opinion, that young man was not born to be a minister." Emerson was soon to feel the need of such qualifications as ministers of less refined but stronger mould bring to bear upon their congregations.

He resigned his pastorate in September, 1832. It was not a divorce on account of incompatibility. There is nothing to show that he felt the least uneasiness in the clerical habit, of which indeed he did not divest himself for some time afterwards. But it was a necessary condition of his ministry that he should be at liberty to follow his own highest conceptions; if these clashed with the requirements of his congregation, their connection could no longer endure. The cause of difference was characteristic of his independence: it related to a rite which nine-tenths of those who felt with him would have tolerated as harmless. Religious persons may from one point of view be distinguished according as they do or do not feel the need of external ceremonies in worship. To some, painting, music, gorgeous vestments, seem the appropriate apparel of religion; to others, they are an impertinence, almost an offence. Which temper represents the higher conception need not be discussed here; but as a matter of fact it is certain that while the ancient religions blazed with ritual splendor, the founders of more spiritual creeds have always striven to reduce this to a minimum, and none more so than the Founder

of Christianity. The only two rites to which he gave his sanction might be deemed to represent the *ne plus ultra* of ceremonial simplicity; but a germ remained, prolific in strange growths. No church, probably, was less obnoxious to sacramentalism than Emerson's; but he could not be content so long as the pure simplicity of worship was, in his view, desecrated by any material contact. He persuaded himself that the Lord's supper had not been designed as a permanent institution. He protested that he was not "so foolish as to declaim against forms. Forms are as essential as bodies; but to exalt particular forms is unreasonable, and is alien to the spirit of Christ." Here was the question in a nut-shell, as respected Emerson's connection with his congregation. He had outgrown the form, or thought he had, but had they? It quickly appeared that his scruples were unintelligible to them. It was equally apparent that they no more wished him to go than he wished to be gone. Compromises were suggested, but proved impracticable. He would have remained if the material elements could have been dispensed with, and the service made purely commemorative. They would have let him deal with the symbols as he pleased, provided that they were retained. He retreated into the country to ponder over the matter, while rumors of his mental derangement went abroad. These he did not condescend to refute: but to his friends, urging him not to stickle over-much for points of form, he replied that his punctiliousness was rather for his people than himself. "I cannot go habitually to an institution which they esteem holiest with indifference or dislike." "It is my desire to do nothing which I cannot do with my whole heart. Having said this, I have said all. I have no hostility to this institution; I am only stating my want of sympathy with it. I am content that it stand to the end of the world, if it please men and please Heaven, and I shall rejoice in all the good it produces." The dignity of this farewell is not exempt from a certain soreness. Emerson was, indeed, pained and mortified; he had hoped to have carried his people with him, and though still considering himself as a clergyman, felt thenceforward something of "a grudge against preach-

ing." He could not conceal from himself that the pastoral career to which everything had seemed to invite him had been a failure: nor could it then be seen what a necessary and invaluable stage it had been in his own development. "I look back," he said in his farewell letter of Dec. 22nd, "with a painful sense of weakness to the little service I have been able to render after so much expectation on my part." But the springs of hope and energy were not destroyed. Emerson's vitality was at the time low; he had never got over his domestic sorrow; he could not himself quite resist a feeling of discouragement, and seemed to those about him to have mistaken his vocation. He wrote a final letter of affectionate farewell to his people, and in a fortunate hour, December 25, 1832, embarked in the brig *Jasper*, bound with a cargo of West Indian produce for Malta, where she arrived on the 2nd of February.

The hero, unless also a martyr, generally appears upon the scene at the right time. Europe was just in the state in which an intellectually inquisitive visitor would have desired to find her. Experiments were being tried everywhere, including the experiment of standing still. Peace reigned in every European land, save for one local civil war, but the existing political order was undermined everywhere except in England and Russia, and hostile tendencies had never clashed more fiercely in the world of thought. Liberalism was the ruling creed in theory, even among the statesmen who resisted it in practice; but a formidable re-action was already visible in the intellectual sphere. Newman was striving to reconcile the old Church with Anglicanism, Lamennais with socialism. Mediæval architecture was coming into fashion; the artistic and literary ideals of the preceding century were falling into disrepute. The Goths of the Romantic school had for the time overwhelmed the traditional classicalism of the Latin nations. Scott reigned in all European literatures; Byron was still a great power; the seed sown by Shelley and Keats was beginning to come up, though their names, like those of Wordsworth and Coleridge, were as yet only heard in England and America. Hegel had just repeated the feat and the failure of Jona-

than Edwards in constructing a system which none could refute and few could receive. Goethe had done more for European thought by impregnating it with those germs of an evolutionary doctrine which afforded a battle-ground to the savants of Paris, while Lyell gave the idea of geological uniformity scientific shape in England, and Darwin yet geologized in South America. Steam was just above the horizon, and electricity just below it. On the whole, till the leadings of Providence became more evident, the intellectual condition of society must have appeared splendidly anarchical; an impression which could be confirmed by the extraordinary mortality which had recently taken place among the sovereigns of thought. "*Les dieux s'en vont,*" said Heine. Within a year death had removed Goethe, Scott, Hegel, Bentham, and Cuvier. Chateaubriand had retired from active life, and Coleridge was shortly to retire from the world. A great void was thus made for the Titanic Hugos and Carlyles of the age, and its as yet obscure Comtes and Emersons.

In the first letter he wrote home from Europe, Emerson described the purpose of his journey as being "to find new affinities between me and my fellow men." Art and scenery were subordinate objects. "I collected," he said afterwards, "neither cameo, nor painting, nor medallion; but I valued much, as I went on, the growing pictures which the ages had painted and I reverently surveyed." When, having crossed from Malta into Sicily, he finds himself at Syracuse, he is disappointed that "there was scarce anything that speaks of Hiero, or Timoleon, or Dion. Yet I am glad to be where they have been, and to hear the bees, and pick beautiful wild flowers only three or four miles from the fountain Cyane." "How evanescent and superficial," he exclaims when in Rome, "is most of that emotion which names and places, which art or magnificence, can awaken! It yields in me to the interest which the most ordinary companion inspires." Yet he admired works of art, though reversing the traveler's ordinary practice by displaying more discrimination than enthusiasm. The churches struck him particularly, and he was impressed with the value of the

æsthetic element in religion, of which he had had no previous experience. He was equally surprised that the Americans who had entered European churches should submit to such mean edifices at home; and that Italians on their side should be unable to "devise ceremonies in as good and manly taste as their churches and pictures and music." The sum total of his impressions, however, came to much the same as he afterwards delivered in his suggestive but defective Essay on Art: "Painting seems to be to the eye what dancing is to the limbs. When that has educated the frame to self-possession, to nimbleness, to grace, the steps of the dancing-master are better forgotten." The one thing he really valued abroad was to be able "to recognize the same man under a thousand masks, and to hear the same commandment spoken to me in Italian I was wont to hear in English. My greatest want is that I never meet with men who are great or interesting." The first exception he mentions is Landor, whom he sought out with an instinct not granted to many Englishmen of that day. Emerson found him "living in a cloud of pictures at his Villa Gherardesca," and though he could not deem Landor's real conversation equal to his imaginary ones, he was able to say "He has a wonderful brain, despotic, violent, inexhaustible, meant for a soldier, by chance converted to letters." He afterwards, before reaching England, pronounces Landor one of the two men in Europe to whom he had been able to say something in earnest. This was written in Paris, where he had arrived on June 20th, after a flying visit to Venice, "a city for beavers," and Geneva, where he only visited Voltaire's château under protest. New England thought had traveled a long way since Franklin brought his grandson to be blessed by the Patriarch of Ferney. Paris was pronounced by Emerson "a loud modern New York of a place," but, at the same time, "the most hospitable of cities." He was in London by July 21st, meeting Mill, whom he does not seem to have appreciated, and Bowring, who showed him over the house of Jeremy Bentham. A more memorable interview, "though rather a spectacle than a conversation" ("I was glad," says Sir Henry Taylor, "to show him to Stephen"),

was that with Coleridge, "a short, thick old man, with bright blue eyes and fine clear complexion, leaning upon his cane." Coleridge's conversation was so far that of a poet that its course obeyed the impulse of any casual incident or allusion. The sight of a militiaman is recorded to have brought him to the fall of Napoleon by way of the Peninsular War, and now the aspect of a Unitarian minister led him to declaim against Unitarianism. One of his remarks, however, was worthy to have found its way into "Table-Talk." "I have known ten persons who loved the good for one person who loved the true; but it is a far greater virtue to love the true for itself alone, than to love the good for itself alone."

Immediately after his interview with Coleridge Emerson repaired to Scotland, passing, as an allusion in "Nature" shows, by way of York. He was now to meet one who fully complied with Coleridge's standard, if indeed Emerson was right, as assuredly he was, in finding the secret of Carlyle's superiority "in his commanding sense of justice, and incessant demand for sincerity." When (Aug. 26th) he alighted at Craigenputtock and met Carlyle, whose address he had the greatest difficulty in discovering, he "found him one of the most simple and frank of men, and became acquainted with him at once. We walked over several miles of hills, and talked upon all the great questions that interest us most." "That man," Carlyle said to Lord Houghton, "came to see me; I don't know what brought him, and we kept him one night, and then he left us. I saw him go up the hill. I didn't go with him to see him descend. I preferred to watch him mount and vanish like an angel." Most fortunate it was for them both that their meeting lasted so long and no longer, that there was time to disclose the general unity of spirit and identity of aspiration, and not time enough for the discovery of the utter antithesis of temperament, and the innumerable discrepancies in points of detail. They parted, each believing the other intellectually much nearer than he really was: and this belief fostered a sympathy which, by the time that their differences became undeniably manifest, had grown too strong and habitual to be

seriously disturbed by them. Carlyle's genius, in fact, had not then fully received its epic and dramatic bent ; and he was still much under the influence of metaphysical ideas borrowed from Germany. The full report of their conversation is not preserved, but if in comparing notes they began with their fundamental beliefs, they would travel far before they arrived at their points of disagreement. Each was a Pantheist, seeing in the universe a living organism, not something made by an external craftsman. Each was a Transcendentalist, believing in necessary ideas independent of experience. Each passionately asserted a Law of Right, independent of utility or expediency. By the time that these points of contact had been thoroughly established, it may have been in every sense time for Emerson to go. Some genuine Carlyleana came out notwithstanding. Mirabeau *should* be a hero. Gibbon was the splendid bridge from the old world to the new. The great booksellers had paid such incredible sums for puffery that they were all on the verge of bankruptcy. Carlyle had matched his wits against his pig's, with humiliating results. An unfinished bit of road was "the grave of the last sixpence." Not the least remarkable feature in the interview was the perfectly equal footing of him whose genius was acknowledged at least by his visitor, and the thinker as yet entirely unknown to fame. Emerson had made a long pilgrimage to see Carlyle. Carlyle could not have been expected to go a step out of his way to see Emerson. It might have seemed inevitable that they should meet as disciple and master, but it was not so. They associated without embarrassment on the one side, or assumption on the other, each feeling the essential point to be not what a man achieved, but what he was.

Emerson's impressions of Carlyle were first communicated to a young Scotchman, destined to eminence as a journalist and a man of letters, but who will perhaps be even longer remembered as the first European who recognized a light of the age in the American stranger. Emerson had come to Edinburgh with an introduction from Bowring to Dr. John Gairdner, a friend of Mr. Alexander Ireland, "who, luckily for me," says Mr. Ireland, "was so much engaged in pro-

fessional duties that he was unable to spare a few hours to do the honors of the Scottish metropolis," so his bishopric was taken by another, "and thus I became," says Mr. Ireland, "an entertainer of angels unawares." Never before had Mr. Ireland "met with any one of so fine and varied a culture, and with such frank sincerity of speech. A refined and delicate courtesy, a kind of mental hospitality, so to speak—the like of which, or anything approaching to which, I have never encountered—seemed to be a part of his very nature, and inseparable from his daily walk and conversation." The impression was deepened when, on August 18th, Mr. Ireland heard him preach in the Unitarian church, and remarked the effect produced notwithstanding the absence of all oratorical effort. "Not long before this I had listened to a wonderful sermon by Dr. Chalmers, whose force and energy and vehement eloquence carried for the moment all before them. But I must confess that the pregnant thoughts and serene self-possession of the young Boston minister had a greater charm for me than all the rhetorical splendors of Chalmers." In the intervals of sight-seeing Emerson discoursed of life and literature, of Coleridge and Goethe, Landor and Channing and Montaigne; and Mr. Ireland's enthusiasm found vent in memoranda, less of what he had heard than of the anticipations for Emerson's future with which Emerson's discourse had inspired him. "They might at that time have sounded unduly inflated, but his subsequent career may be said to have rendered them almost tame and inadequate." Emerson on his part was so interested in his new friend as to send him accounts—most interesting from their freshness and unpremeditation—of his visits to Carlyle and Wordsworth, both of whom he sought on his way to Liverpool. Of Wordsworth, whom he saw on August 25th, he says with gentle sarcasm: "He was so benevolently anxious to impress upon me my social duties as an American citizen, that he accompanied me near a mile from his house, talking vehemently, and ever and anon stopping short to imprint his words." It appears, however, from the fuller report in "English Traits," that Wordsworth said many wise things about

America, one among others which long seemed a paradox, that Americans needed a civil war to teach the necessity of knitting the social ties stronger. He solemnized Goethe's birthday by vituperating "Wilhelm Meister": his criticism is one of the most curious examples extant of the inability of the merely ethical temper to enter into the artist's sympathetic observation of life. He had relieved his mind by throwing the book across the room, and, notwithstanding his promise to Emerson, it may be doubted whether he ever picked it up again. The moment was certainly unpropitious for a return to the charge. Wordsworth's eyes were grievously inflamed, and his physiognomy was disfigured by green goggles. Carlyle he thought sometimes insane, but this was probably merely a second-hand opinion. He preferred Lueretius to Virgil; and yet Virgil was almost the only poet to whom he paid the compliment of translation. That Wordsworth should recite his own poetry was inevitable, and at first Emerson was "near to laugh. But recollecting that I had come thus far to see a poet, and that he was chanting poems to me, I saw that he was right and I was wrong, and gladly gave myself up to hear." On the whole Wordsworth "made the impression of a narrow and very English mind; of one who paid for his rare elevation by general tameness and conformity. Off his own beat, his opinions were of no value." But on his beat he was profound and inspiring, as when he told his visitor that "whatever was didactic might perish quickly, but whatever combined a truth with an affection was *κτῆμα ἐξ ἀεί*, good to-day and good for ever."

At Liverpool, Emerson spent nine days weather bound, but solaced by the company of Jacob Perkins, the inventor of the steam gun, who prophesied that the ocean would be navigated by merchant steamers, "but there is a great deal to be done first." Within five years, however, the first steam-ship crossed the Atlantic. Emerson's voyage in a sailing packet occupied one month and five days. He had time to sum up the results of his visit to Europe, and question himself what manner of man he was taking back to America. His travel had been of the highest value to him,

more than he quite knew. Not only had his views expanded and his mind imbibed new ideas, but he had profited by detachment from the concerns of a limited community and an isolated church. Though crude in form, his thoughts committed to paper on shipboard have a largeness and liberty not attained by him before. He also began to feel dimly that he might have a message to deliver to Europe as well as to America. The wise man, coming to teach, often remains to learn; but sometimes the case is reversed, and so in a certain degree it was with Emerson. "The great men of England," he wrote, "are singularly ignorant of religion." This dictum would have astonished Wordsworth and Coleridge. Swedenborg met in the other world with certain individuals who seemed to themselves comely men, "but to the angels they appeared like dead horses."

Upon arriving in America, Emerson went to live with his mother at Newton, near Boston, and immediately found himself largely in request, both as preacher and lecturer. Disencumbered of every special tie, the independence of his position corresponded to the enlargement of his views; he could speak to his former flock like one emancipated.

"Man begins to hear a voice that fills the heavens and the earth, saying that God is within him; that there is the celestial host. I find this amazing revelation of my immediate relation to God, a solution of all the doubts that oppressed me. I recognize the distinction of the outer and the inner self; the double consciousness that within this erring, passionate, mortal self sits a supreme, calm, immortal mind, whose powers I do not know; but it is stronger than I; it is wiser than I; it never approved me in any wrong; I seek counsel of it in my doubts; I repair to it in my dangers; I pray to it in my undertakings. It seems to me the face which the Creator uncovers to his child."

He concluded that this "increased clearness of the spiritual sight" must put an end to all that was "technical, allegorical, parabolical" in religious teaching, thus raising up fresh obstacles to his return to the regular groove of his profession. These were increased when the Quakers of New

Bedford, with whose spirituality he felt the deepest sympathy, imbued him with a dislike, not merely to set forms of prayer, but to public prayer of any kind without prompting from on high. His views have been much misrepresented, but he himself said, "As well might a child live without its mother's milk as a soul without prayer." His position, however, was evidently inconsistent with a stated ministerial charge, and, after the offer of a pastorate at New Bedford had struck upon this rock, Emerson, though still not refusing to preach, and, in fact, preaching regularly for some years to a small congregation, seems to have esteemed himself a layman. He was now beginning to find his proper field in the lyceum and lecture-hall. His first lectures were scientific. Without any profound acquaintance with science, he knew enough to impart elementary information to an average audience. In dealing with higher matters he showed how immensely the man of science gains by being also a man of thought. The deeper a man's insight into the spiritual laws, the more intense will be his love of the works of nature. It is the wonderful charm of external nature that man stands in a central connection with it all." This fitted well with the doctrine of evolution, which, without endeavoring to explain the process, he assumed to be sufficiently established by the anatomical evidence of gradual development. "Man is no upstart in the creation. His limbs are only a more exquisite organization—say rather the finish—of the rudimental forms that have been already sweeping the sea and creeping in the mud. The brother of his hand is even now cleaving the Arctic Sea in the fin of the whale, and innumerable ages since was pawing the marsh in the flipper of the saurian." A view afterwards condensed into his memorable couplet—

"Striving to be man, the worm
Mounts through all the spires of form."

But he was far from regarding the progress of development as the result of a chance collision of atoms, or a blind struggle for existence. With clear good sense he pointed

out the indications of self-conscious forethought in the universe—"the preparation made for a man in the slow and secular changes and melioration of the surface of the planet; his house built, the grounds laid out, the cellar stocked."

Emerson soon became engaged, and it was necessary to look out for a house of his own. He "dodged the doom of building, and bought the Coolidge house in Concord. It is a mean place." It does not appear mean in the view published by Mr. Sanborn, in *Scribner's Monthly*, which justifies his description of it "as a modest, homelike, comfortable residence"—not unlike, it may be added, except for its wooden material, the half-marine, half-rustic villa that may be espied hiding itself in a plantation near many a quiet English watering-place. The scenery of the neighborhood, though not striking, sufficed a poet of Wordsworthian sympathies who had sat down in the shadow of Etna without ecstasy, and mainly sought to glean from Nature "the harvest of a quiet eye." "It might seem," he said, "to bright eyes a dull rabbit-warren," but it gave him what he wanted. Hawthorne, coming afterwards to dwell in the old manse of Dr. Ripley where Emerson had dwelt before him, has depicted the landscape from several different points of views and notwithstanding his wrath at the muddiness of the slow river, "too lazy to keep itself clean," the general impression is eminently pleasing. He paints the semicircular sweep of the stream, looking under certain aspects, for all its impurity, like a strip of sky let into the earth; the broad, peaceful meadows, of which it was the central line, the bordering ridges swelling forward or sloping gradually back, with a white village here and there embowered in its wood-lands—Dutch nature spiritualized by Western influences. Not far away was Walden Pond, the sylvan lake more indissolubly associated with Thoreau's name than even with Emerson's, often as he

"Smote the lake to please his eye
With the beryl beam of the broken wave,
And flung in pebbles, well to hear
The moment's music which they gave."

It was natural, too, that he should feel as a patriot towards Concord, remembering his descent from its founder, and that his fellow-townsmen (who also conferred upon him the dignity of leg-reeve) should call upon him for an address on their second centennial anniversary, September, 1835. With simple but striking eloquence he discoursed of the heroic passages of the history of Concord, especially the hardships and renunciations of the original settlers. "Many were their wants, but more their privileges. The light struggled in through windows of oiled paper, but they read the Word of God by it. They were fain to make use of their knees for a table, but their limbs were their own. Their religion was sweetness and peace amidst toil and tears." Coming down to later times, he could tell his audience how "the first organized resistance to the British arms was made about half a mile from this spot;" how he himself had found within the last few days a narrative of the fight in the handwriting of his grandfather, then pastor, and himself a martyr to the cause of independence, and an entry in an almanac in that ancestor's handwriting: "This month remarkable for the greatest events of the present age." Speaking of his researches among the town records, "which must ever be the fountains of all just information respecting your character and customs," he could say: "They exhibit a pleasing picture of a community almost exclusively agricultural, where no man has much time for words in his search after things, of a community of great simplicity of manners, and of a manifest love of justice. These soiled and musty books are luminous and electric within. The old town-clerks did not spell very correctly, but they contrive to make pretty intelligible the will of a free and just community."

On the next anniversary of the Battle of Lexington, April 19, 1836, the monument erected to commemorate the birth of American independence was inaugurated by verses from the pen of Emerson, destined, like the shot he celebrates, to be "heard round the world"—

“ By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
 Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
 Here once the embattled farmers stood,
 And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept ;
 Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
 And Time the ruined bridge has swept
 Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
 We set to-day a votive stone ;
 That memory may their deed redeem,
 When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
 To die, and leave their children free,
 Bid Time and Nature gently spare,
 The shaft we raise to them and thee.”

Two days after Emerson's Concord oration, he “drove over to Plymouth, and was married.” His wife—Lydia, or as he chose to call her Lidian, Jackson, sister to Dr. Charles Jackson, of anæsthetic fame—has made his renown her obscurity. Her modest figure occasionally flits across the background of his public career, and the few letters from him to her which have found their way into print reveal both affection and the assurance of sympathy. “The soul of faith,” was the character he gave her. Emerson's main intellectual occupation was the slow composition of his epoch-making tract on Nature ; but he also found time for public discourse. He gave five biographical lectures at Boston on Michael Angelo, Luther, Milton, George Fox, and Burke. Those on Michael Angelo and Milton are extant in *The North American Review*. Emerson himself thought them unworthy of preservation, and he was right. They were well adapted for their immediate purpose, but have no special originality or force. Ten lectures on English literature delivered in the Masonic Temple, Boston, have not

been printed, but are fully analyzed by Mr. Cabot. Emerson's connection with the pulpit was resumed for a time: for three years he preached regularly to a small flock at East Lexington—a work of necessity on the showing of one of the sheep, who declared that the simple people labored under a positive incapacity of understanding any one but Mr. Emerson. And, in fact, the charge of obscurity so frequently brought against Emerson is exceedingly unjust as respects individual sentences. His thought is transparent and almost chillingly clear, “he casts forth his ice like morsels.” The obscurity, when there is any, arises from the want of logical sequence in his argument, and of tone and keeping amid the mass of glittering beauties, not duly subordinate to the general impression.

Emerson was now called upon to deal editorially with a Prophet. Admiration for Carlyle had made him subscribe to *Fraser* as long as “Sartor Resartus” appeared in it, and his critical faculty was thus subjected to the severest test to which such faculty can be exposed in the summons to recognize an entirely new order of excellence. To this he failed to respond. It is a remarkable phenomenon, continually verified, that minds of unusual subtlety and penetration seem to labor under an incapacity for appreciating the sublime. The instrument of such minds often seems rather the spectroscope which “dissects a single beam in a darkened room than the telescope which ranges infinite space from the summit of the mountain. The intellect which finds thoughts too deep for tears in the flower responds with no thrill of agitation to the tempest; the perception which detects the microscopic though real beauties of a Clough cannot see the splendor which invests heaven and earth in the verse of a Shelley. Emerson's was such a mind: the sublimity of “Sartor” was lost upon him; and that other defect in his mental constitution, which, while allowing him a vein of epigrammatic humor, left him insensible to the glorious mirth of an Aristophanes or a Dickens, abolished for him the second element of greatness in “Sartor,” its humor. Its philosophical truth remained, and this Emerson appreciated, but the form and style were sore trials

to him. "O Carlyle!" he exclaims in his diary, "the merit of glass is not to be seen, but to be seen through; but every crystal and lamina of the Carlyle glass shows." A sound criticism, if the purpose of "Sartor" had been to make things plain to the meanest capacity. Men of poetical gifts like Emerson and Carlyle are on safer ground when they admire than when they blame: as with Swedenborg's angels, it is only when they affirm a truth that their wands blossom in their hands. As the importer of the only copy in America, he nevertheless stood towards the book *in loco parentis*; and when Dr. Le Baron Russell defrayed the cost of the first transatlantic edition, Emerson contributed the preface. His introduction was deemed by the enthusiastic timid and superfluously apologetic; but he felt that he was breaking his own rule "to do nothing which I cannot do with my whole heart." Soon *The North American Review* came to the rescue, and Emerson could report to Carlyle, "I have quite lost my plume as your harbinger."

After editing "Sartor" Emerson turned seriously to the publication of his own gospel. His tract on "Nature," the most intense and quintessential of his writings, and the first in which he came forward teaching as one having authority, seems to have been commenced even before he took up his residence at Concord, but was not completed till August, 1836. It was published in the following month, without at first attracting much attention. It proved, however, a seed implanted in a fissure of the crumbling New England theology, whose unnoticed expansion had force enough to shatter the whole fabric. By its conception—not of course original with Emerson or peculiar to him—of external Nature as an incarnation of the Divine Mind, it utterly abolished most of the controversies which had agitated the intellect of America, and in particular caught up the philosophy of Jonathan Edwards, that masterpiece of earthly reasoning, into a heaven of which Edwards had never dreamed. The rigid despotism of an extra-mundane ruler now appeared the free agency of an indwelling power: and similarly, without infringing a single moral rule, the stiff morality of the Unitarians was transfigured and glorified

until it hardly knew itself. At the same time God and Nature were by no means confounded ; the former was recognized as the infinite cause, the latter as the infinite effect : and though a cause without an effect is certainly inconceivable, the formal duality is made not less clear than the substantial unity. Man was represented as the intermediate phase of being, tending upwards or downwards, according as he inclines to Divine freedom or natural necessity. To quote Mr. Cabot's analysis, " regarded as part of nature, he is the victim of his environment : of race, temperament, sex, climate, organization. But man is not simply a part of nature, not mere effect, but, potentially, shares the cause. When he submits his will to the Divine inspiration, he becomes a creator in the finite. If he is disobedient, if he would be something in himself, he finds all things hostile and incomprehensible. As a man is, so he sees and so he does. When we persist in disobedience, the inward ruin is reflected in the world about us. When we yield to the remedial force of spirit, then evil is no more seen." Evil, then, may be regarded as the price man pays for being above Nature ; and as Emerson could not deem this as by any means too high, he was necessarily an optimist to the extent, at least, of maintaining that, much as we suffer from moral evil, we should be worse off without it. Without it we should be but a part of the machinery of Nature ; its existence is a proof of our liberty, which involves the liberty to rise superior to it. " As when the summer comes from the south, the snowbanks melt, and the face of the earth becomes green before it, so shall the advancing spirit create its ornaments along its path, and carry with it the beauty it visits, and the song which enchants it ; it shall draw beautiful faces, and warm hearts, and wise discourses, and heroic acts around its way, until evil is no more seen." This prophecy was confirmed by cogent though highly poetical reasoning, an appeal to admitted facts showing that Nature and Man actually were in sympathy. " When a noble act is done—perchance in a scene of great natural beauty ; when Leonidas and his three hundred martyrs consume one day in dying, and the sun and the moon come

each and look at them once in the steep defile of Thermopylæ ; when Arnold Winkelried, in the high Alps, under the shadow of the avalanche, gathers in his side a sheaf of Austrian spears to break the line for his comrades : are not these heroes entitled to add the beauty of the scene to the beauty of the deed ? When the bark of Columbus nears the shore of America ; before it, the beach lined with savages fleeing out of all their huts of cane ; the sea behind, and the purple mountains of the Indian Archipelago around, can we separate the man from the living picture ? . . . In private places, among sordid objects, an act of truth or heroism seems at once to draw to itself the sky as its temple, the sun as its candle. Nature stretcheth out her arms to embrace man, only let his thoughts be of equal greatness. Willingly does she follow his steps with the rose and the violet, and bend her lines of grandeur and grace to the decoration of her darling child. Only let his thoughts be of equal scope, and the frame will suit the picture. A virtuous man is in unison with her works, and makes the central figure of the visible sphere." Man, then, had but to place himself in a right relation with God and Nature, and the inextricable puzzles of liberty and necessity would be solved of themselves. If the logical connection of the treatise was not always very close, it is to be remembered that it was the work of a poet, and that the ideas it embodied were for the most part so exquisite and ennobling as to be their own best credentials. The most fascinating part of the little book was the alluring delineation of natural beauty ; the most substantially valuable, the resolute assertion of the identity of natural and spiritual law ; the convertibility of natural and spiritual forces ; every existence in nature the counterpart of an existence in the world of mind ; every natural truth a truth also in human life. In the pregnant phrase of George Herbert, quoted by the writer—

" Man is one world, and hath
Another to attend him."

NOTE BY AMERICAN EDITOR. "Drummonds" Natural Law in the Spiritual World inculcates practically and with characteris-

A certain boisterous zone of ocean is known to the seamen as "the roaring forties." The future historian of this century may dwell on "the still thirties," as a decade more pregnant with intellectual than with political revolution. In 1830 occurred the great debate on fixity of type between Cuvier and Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, which Goethe thought infinitely more important than the Revolution of July. In 1831 Darwin departed on his eventful voyage, "Sartor Resartus" was written, and the British Association founded. In 1835 appeared the epoch-making works of Strauss and Tocqueville; statistics first assumed the dignity of a science; and the names of Copernicus and Galileo vanished from the Index Expurgatorius. In March of the same year Emerson speaks to Carlyle of a projected journal to be called the Transcendentalist. The christening nevertheless, Hibernically, perhaps mystically, preceded the berth, for it was not until September, 1836—the month which the publication of "Nature" would alone have sealed as an epoch—that Emerson, Dr. Hedge, George Ripley, and an unnamed companion, meeting on occasion of the second centennial anniversary of Harvard College, "chanced to confer on the state of current opinion in theology and philosophy, which we agreed in thinking very unsatisfactory." The upshot was a larger meeting of some dozen "like-minded seekers," at George Ripley's house in Boston, followed by a somewhat larger gathering at Emerson's own, to which others succeeded, and by and by the participants got the name of Transcendentalists. How they came by it, Dr. Hedge, our witness, does not know; not, he apprehends, on the ground of any special acquaintance with Kant's transcendental

tic illustrations the same idea. Who can tell where the seed of a thought was first sown. Often the most striking and apparently original modern thoughts may be traced to Socrates or to some writer of ancient renown. Did Emerson originate this idea of the identity of Natural and Spiritual laws or forces, or did he imbibe it from the Bible; from the ancient philosophers, or the German savants whom he read with keen enjoyment, and consequent appropriation of their thought.

philosophy, seeing that no one knew anything about it except himself, and he will not affirm that he knew enough for a dozen. But Kant's name must have been heard in New England, for in 1833 Emerson told Wordsworth that all Boston was talking about Victor Cousin, which brilliant Frenchman had undoubtedly profited by his opportunities of studying the philosophy of Germany when he happened to be imprisoned in that country. Mr. Freeman Clarke gives another name, and another reason. "We called ourselves the club of the like-minded. I suppose because no two of us thought alike." "Or rather, we may say," adds Mr. Cabot with justice, "because, in spite of all differences of opinion, they were united by a common impatience of routine thinking." In any case, the designation of transcendentalist was not one to be ashamed of. "The transcendental philosophy," says Frothingham, "is the philosophy that is built on these necessary and universal principles, the primary laws of mind, which are the ground of absolute truth." Since these meetings began and ceased the special dogma of Transcendentalism proper, the assertion of knowledge, independent of experience, has been, one may say, both proved and disproved. Observation, more fruitful of result than speculation, has, by the study of the phenomena of heredity, triumphantly vindicated the doctrine of innate ideas as respects the individual, while overthrowing it as respects the race. It is certain that the human mind at birth is by no means a sheet of blank paper; it is equally certain that the impressions which it brings into the world are the result of the accumulated experiences of its progenitors. But though the discovery might have silenced the controversialists on both sides in Emerson's time, it would not have quelled the controversy. The dispute was only one item among large issues. Was utility the measure of right? Could truth be apprehended by intuition? Could religion be identified with the letter of a book, or proved by a miracle? The affirmative and negative of any of these propositions seemed *à priori*, equally rational; if Emerson and his followers speedily got a bad name with sober people, it was not that their side of

the question was intrinsically unreasonable, but because it was naturally congenial to the more imaginative, and therefore the more impulsive and refractory. "Your accomplished friend," said a denizen of Brook Farm, "would hoe corn all Sunday if I would let him, but all Massachusetts could not make him do it on Monday." Hence no school of thought was less sympathetic with Emersonianism than that in whose bosom it had been developed into a creed—the Unitarian. "The Unitarians of New England," says Frothingham, "good scholars, careful reasoners, clear and exact thinkers, accomplished men of letters, humane in sentiment, sincere in moral intention, belonged, of course, with individual exceptions [such as Channing], to the class which looked without for knowledge, rather than within for inspiration." It was to this habit of mind, and not to any theological differences, that Channing referred when he said, "I am little of a Unitarian." Unitarianism, in fact, had worked itself out, as Romanism and Calvinism had done before it. It had brought Christianity to such perfection that, as an admirer of Paley said, "it could be written out at examinations." And now the restless spirit of man, discontented with even this great result, was protesting that here it could find no abiding tabernacle.

In the winter of 1836 Emerson followed up his discourse on Nature by a course of twelve lectures on "The Philosophy of History," a considerable portion of which eventually became embodied in his Essays. From the abstract preserved by Mr. Cabot, the connection with history would seem to have been but remote; nor is the connection of the lectures among themselves very apparent. The most important was that on Religion, which dwelt forcibly on "the great fact of the unity of the mind in all individual men." This, said Emerson, we learn from the sense of duty. "I seek my satisfaction at my neighbor's cost, and I find that he has an advocate in my own breast, interfering with my private action, and persuading me to act, not for his advantage or for that of all others, for it has no reference to persons, but in obedience to the dictate of the general mind. Virtue is this obedience, and religion is the accompanying

emotion, the thrill at the presence of the universal soul." He went on to say that the attempt to embody this emotion in an outward form made the Church, but as "the truest state of thought rested in becomes false," the Church was continually lapsing into unbelief, and as continually being recovered from it by "the light rekindling in some obscure heart." "Only a new Church is alive." A man who thus taught need not have wondered that his "one doctrine, the infinity of the private man," was only accepted "as long as I call the lecture Art, or Politics, or Literature, or the Household. The moment I call it Religion people are shocked, though it be only the application of the same truth which they receive everywhere else." Every Church is sufficiently alive to resent being told that it is dead; and the less the vitality the greater the resentment. In June, 1837, he tried the experiment of preaching in the pulpit of his friend, Dr. Farley, "a sermon precisely like one of his lectures in style." "After returning home," says Dr. Farley, "I found Emerson with his head bowed in his hands, which were resting on his knees. He looked up and said, 'Now tell me honestly, plainly, just what you think of that service.' I replied that before he was half through I had made up my mind that it was the last time he should have that pulpit. 'You are right,' he rejoined, 'and I thank you. On my part before I was half through I felt out of place.'" He did not mean, as Mr. Cabot remarks, that he was out of place in the pulpit when he could find a sympathising congregation, for ten years had yet to pass ere he should preach his last sermon. But the pulpit was no longer to be his platform, the Lyceum had definitely gained what the Church had lost; and it must be added that in this particular aspect the whole spiritual tendency of the age was for the moment incarnated in Emerson. Different indeed was the reception which Literature, as impersonated in the Phi Beta Kappa Society, gave him on his next public appearance, the delivery of his oration on "Man Thinking, or the American Scholar," August 31, 1837. "It was," says Mr. Lowell, "an event without any former parallel in our literary annals, a scene to be always treasured

in the memory for its picturesqueness and its inspiration. What crowded and breathless aisles, what windows clustering with eager heads, what enthusiasm of approval, what grim silence of foregone dissent!" This great effect was no doubt partly due to the Fourth of July quality pervading the oration, which Dr. Holmes calls "our intellectual Declaration of Independence." "We were," says Mr. Lowell, "still socially and intellectually moored to English thought till Emerson cut the cable and gave us a chance at the dangers and glories of blue water." Americans felt inspirited and flattered by the assurance the discourse breathed that their literature need no longer be imitative; that they need but rise to the level of their opportunities and duties as a free people, and their literature would rise along with them. The excellent counsel to the individual student, bursting forth in epigrammatic flashes which seemed paradoxes until reflection proved them aphorisms, also told for much. ("Books are for the scholar's idle times." "Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential." "The scholar is one who raises himself from private considerations." "He, and he only, knows the world.") But these things were only subsidiary to the main purpose of the discourse, the proclamation of the oneness of mankind, and the omnipresence of God. "The near explains the far. The drop is a small ocean. A man is related to all nature. This perception of the worth of the vulgar is fruitful in discoveries. Let me see every trifle bristling with the polarity that ranges it instantly as an eternal law; and the shop, the plough, and the ledger referred to the like cause by which light undulates and poets sing; and the world lies no longer a dull miscellany and lumber-room, but has form and order; there is no trifle, there is no puzzle; but one design unites and animates the farthest pinnacle and the lowest trench. . . . The dread of man and the love of man shall be a wall of defence and a wreath of joy around all. A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men."

In addressing his fellow-students, Emerson spoke *urbi*: but when his speech was directed *orbi*, he proved that this

faith in the inspiration of all men by the Divine Soul was no idle figure of speech with him. He deemed that Idealism might be preached with good hope of acceptance even to bankers. In a passage from a subsequent lecture entitled "Transcendentalism," recalling and rivaling the finest pages of "Sartor Resartus," he says :

"How easy it is to show the materialist that he also is a phantom walking and working amid phantoms, and that he need only ask a question or two beyond his daily questions to find his solid universe proving dim and impalpable before his sense! The sturdy capitalist, no matter how deep and square on blocks of Quincy granite he lays his foundations of his banking house or Exchange, must set it at last not on a cube corresponding to the angles of his storehouse, but on a mass of unknown materials and solidity, red-hot or white-hot, perhaps, at the core ; which rounds off to an almost perfect sphericity, and lies floating in soft air, and goes spinning away, dragging bank and banker with it at the rate of thousands of miles an hour, he knows not whither,—a bit of bullet now glimmering now darkling through a small cubic space on the edge of an unimaginable pit of emptiness. And this wild balloon, in which his whole venture is embarked, is just an emblem of his whole state and faculty. Ask him why he believes that an uniform experience will continue uniform, or on what grounds he founds his faith in his figures, and he will perceive that his mental fabric is built up on just as strange and quaking foundations as his proud edifice of stone."

The course on Human Culture delivered in the following winter appears from Mr. Cabot's analysis to have been an expansion of a passage in "Man Thinking." "The main enterprise of the world for splendor, for extent, is the up-building of a man." Thus, inverting the obvious truth that the individual exists by and for the universe, he showed that there was also a sense in which it might be said that the universe existed by and for the individual. In his next important public appearance he ventured on no such daring inversion, but by merely following out a tendency of thought

already widely diffused, involved himself in what would have proved a sharp controversy for one controversially given. The graduating Divinity class of Cambridge invited him to deliver the customary discourse upon their entering on the ministry. On July 15, 1838, he appeared before them, his breast a mine of perilous stuff. His lonely meditations had been much exercised with the questions of the infallibility of Christ and the reality of miracles, and on both points he had been more orthodox than he then was. To the former he had alluded significantly in a passage in "Man Thinking." "The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side to this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily; and now, out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which illuminates all men." Of the miracles attributed to Christ he had, in 1834, expressed himself doubtfully. "I suppose he wrought them. It has not yet been shown that the account is only the addition of credulous and mistaking love." This was to be expected: no mind was ever less competent than Emerson's to appreciate the weight of historical evidence for or against any alleged fact, or more indifferent to the test, or more impatient of the office. But in his own sphere of the spiritual, his opinion was sufficiently decided. "I should be well content to lose them. Indeed I should be glad. No person capable of perceiving the force of spiritual truth but must see the the doctrines of the teacher lose no more by this than the law of gravity would lose if certain facts alleged to have taken place did not take place." "Do not degrade the life and dialogues of Christ by insulation and peculiarity. Let them lie as they befell, alive and warm, part of the landscape and of the cheerful day."

The Divinity School address might have passed with slight notice if it had been delivered anywhere else; but the Shepherds of Harvard could hardly be expected to allow the

wolf to carry off the lambs in their very presence even at the invitation of the innocents themselves.*

Henry Ware, his former colleague in the Second Church, feared that his doctrine of the universal soul tended to merge Deity in humanity. To his gentle remonstrance Emerson characteristically replied :

“I could not give an account of myself, if challenged. I could not possibly give you one of the arguments you covertly hint at, on which any doctrine of mine stands ; for I do not know what arguments are in reference to any expression of a thought. I delight in telling what I think, but if you ask me how I dare say so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of mortal men. I do not even see that either of these questions admits of an answer. So that in the present droll posture of my affairs, when I see myself suddenly raised to the importance of a heretic, I am very uneasy when I advert to the supposed duties of such a personage, who is to make good his thesis against all comers. I certainly shall do no such thing. I shall read what you and other good men write, as I have always done, glad when you speak my thoughts, and skipping the page that has nothing for me.”

These lines show that Emerson had formed a just idea of his strength and his weakness. He could see, but he could not prove ; he could announce, but he could not argue. His

*NOTE BY AMERICAN EDITOR:—This may be said of the discourses of Dr. Briggs, now exciting so much commotion in the Presbyterian Church. They would not be remarked if delivered any where else than to divinity students, whose profession is to preach the gospel of the Bible and not the discrepancies of Old Testament writers. It cannot be appropriate to teach these non-interesting details in the pulpit, where the minister is commanded to preach “Christ and Him Crucified.” How many thousand tomes of dry theology and so-called learned discourses, like Dr. Briggs’ have sunk deeper than plummet ever sounded, never to be read again with interest even by the antiquarian !

Intuitions were his sole guide ; what they revealed appeared to him self-evident ; the ordinary paths by which men arrive at conclusions were closed to him. To those in spiritual sympathy with himself he is not only fascinating, but authoritative ; his words authenticate themselves by the response they awake in the breast. But the reader who will have reasons gets none, save reason to believe that the oracle is an imposition. "He is not a philosopher," said one who conversed with him at this time, "he is a seer. If you see truth as he does, you will recognize him for a gifted teacher ; if not, there is little or nothing to be said." "If it be true," he wrote at this time in his diary, "that the scholar is merely an observer, a dispassionate reporter, no partisan, his position is one of perfect immunity. To him no disputes can attach, he is invulnerable. The vulgar think he would found a sect and be installed and made much of. He knows better, and much prefers his melons and his woods." He once said : "I am more of a Quaker than anything else. I believe in the still, small voice, and that voice is Christ within us."

The expansion of Emerson's intellectual horizon, and the prominent position which, would he, would he not, he was driven to assume as a leader of thought, inevitably widened the sphere of his intimacies, and made Concord the resort of thinkers more or less exceptional or eccentric, "wearing their rue with a difference." Among them the most remarkable was Margaret Fuller, one of those Sibyls or Alruna women who really and truly do appear, although for one genuine instance there are a hundred and fifty pretenders. Margaret, however, was a true counterpart to the Rahels and Bettinas of Germany ; unlike the first, intelligible, though oracular ; unlike the second, neither capricious nor insincere. When Emerson first knew her, her character was in the fulness both of its force and its angularity, qualities greatly tempered in her latter years. Not one of the contributors to her patchwork biography has succeeded in conveying a living resemblance of her ; Emerson does not even attempt a portrait. Indeed he must have entertained something of the feeling towards her with which

Goethe and Schiller regarded Madame de Staël, save that the New England meteor "came to stay." "It is to be said," he bravely admits, "that Margaret made a disagreeable first impression upon most persons;" and when we learn in addition that "the problems that chiefly attracted her were Mythology and Demonology," the thought will arise that she must have been formidable as well as disagreeable. Yet, though Emerson paints no portrait, he does contrive to make us understand how much more Margaret was really interested in her fellow creatures than in these mystic fancies, which served to exercise a powerful imagination, while the real business of her life was intellectual comradeship and spiritual sympathy. With her imperious disposition this sympathy must needs be measured by the degree in which she could charm the recipient into her own circle, and as Emerson's serene star never

"Shot madly from its sphere
To list this sea-maid's music:"

their mutual bond was less close than her ambition would have desired. "He seemed to her," says Mrs. Howe, borrowing Margaret's own figure, "the palm-tree in the desert, graceful and admirable, bearing aloft a waving crest, but spreading no sheltering and embracing branches." Their acquaintance nevertheless became, if not a spiritual, an intimate literary alliance, which neither had any reason to regret.

Another ally of the period, with whom Emerson sympathized more heartily, was "the innocent charlatan," Amos Bronson Alcott, who repaid the confidence accorded him with the fondest reverence. It is well for Alcott that he never fell into the hands of Dickens, to whom he would have been irresistible, but encountered nobody worse than Carlyle, who has photographed him for all time as "the good Alcott, with his long lean face and figure, with his grey worn temples and mild radiant eyes; all bent on saving the world by a return to acorns and the golden age." Emerson found in the self-taught, self-sustained, "peacefully irre-

fragable " Alcott, an authentic inlet of pure light from the universal soul ; which rebuked the involuntary scepticism of depressed moods by demonstrating that spirituality was no figment of the imagination. " I might have learned to treat the Platonic world as cloudland had I not known Alcott, who is a native of that country." William Henry Channing was also a member of Emerson's circle, and has left a picture of him in his home. " I do confess myself fascinated. He had been before to me an icy pinnacle only, away in the ether, but as I came nearer I found there was verdure of sweet affections and the beauteous blossoms of lowly thoughts and common herbs around the base. His family delighted me ; his fondness for his little boy, his tenderness toward his wife, the unaffected politeness and courtesy and the merry cheerfulness of the man did more to win me than all his lofty contemplations."

Among these figures, radiant with sincere, if sometimes ill-directed aspiration, moved at intervals a dark silent figure of spiritual nature too, but much more of a gnome than of a sylph. Nathaniel Hawthorne half-consciously contributed an element of tragedy to the Concord society (" I suppose he died of his painful solitude," Emerson afterwards wrote), and, quite unconsciously, an element of comedy. Wifely devotion should be too sacred for a smile, yet it is hard to resist something broader than a smile in contrasting the fascination which Mrs. Hawthorne supposes her husband to have exerted upon Emerson with Emerson's own frank avowal that he talked continually to Hawthorne in the hope that, for very shame's sake, Hawthorne would one day say something himself, which he never did. Evidently he had been insufficiently impressed by Emerson's maxim—" It is the one base thing to receive and not to give." They lived on neighborly terms, but there could be no true sympathy between authors who so greatly underrated each other's work. Emerson, whose literary judgments when not absolutely right are apt to be absurdly wrong, calls work which might embody the accumulated experience of several lives, too young. Hawthorne, on his part, had too much imagination not to be sensitive to " the pure intellectual gleam"

with which Emerson lit up the woodland paths around Walden Pond. "Like the garment of a shining one," he says; nor did the "austere beauty" of Emerson's poetry repel him. But several passages in his notebooks reveal impatience at Emerson's intellectual aloofness, and in one suppressed at first, but injudiciously restored by his son, he describes Emerson as "stretching his hand out of cloudland in the vain search for something real." The Civil War was to show which of the two men more firmly grasped reality, but that time of fiery trial was not yet, and meanwhile Hawthorne sat by Emerson's hearth and drew the guests in charcoal. "Young visionaries," he says, "to whom just so much of insight had been imparted as to make life all a labyrinth around them, came to seek the clue that should lead them out of their self-involved bewilderment. Grey-headed theorists—whose systems, at first air, had imprisoned them in an iron framework—travelled painfully to his door, not to ask deliverance, but to invite his free spirit into their own thralldom. People that had lighted on a new thought, or a thought that they fancied new, came to Emerson, as the finder of a glittering gem hastens to a lapidary to ascertain its value."

Where Hawthorne saw fit *dramatis personæ* for his "Twice Told Tales," Emerson discerned the heirs of all the ages, the children of the kingdom.

"No one can converse much with different classes of society in New England without remarking the progress of a revolution. Those who share in it have no external organization, no badge, no creed, no name. They do not vote, or print, or even meet together. They do not know each other's faces or names. They are united only in a common love of truth and love of its work. They are of all conditions and constitutions. Of these acolytes, if some are happily born and well bred, many are no doubt ill-dressed, ill-placed, ill-made, with as many scars of hereditary vice as other men. Without pomp, without trumpet, in lonely and obscure places, in solitude, in servitude, in compunctions and privations, trudging beside the team in the dusty road, or drudging

as hirelings in other men's cornfields, schoolmasters who teach a few children rudiments for a pittance, ministers of small parishes of the obscure sects, lone women in dependent condition, matrons and young maidens, rich and poor, beautiful and hard-favored, without concert or proclamation of any kind, they have silently given in their several adherence to a new hope, and in all companies do signify a greater trust in the nature and resources of man than the laws or the popular opinions will well allow."

This fine passage is from the confession of faith prefixed by Emerson to "The Dial," which, under the editorship of Margaret Fuller, appeared as the organ of New England Transcendentalism, in July, 1840. The reality of the phenomena thus eloquently described was universally admitted, but others saw in them "the Pentecost of Shinar." And, unquestionably, a Babylonish dialect was not unfrequently heard, and Mrs. Hominy was no mere creation of the novelist's brain. Margaret Fuller bore the burden of "The Dial" as long as she could, and in 1842 Emerson assumed it, though foreseeing that he should "rue the day of accepting such an intruder on my peace, such a consumer of my time. But you have played martyr a little too long alone; let there be rotation in martyrdom."

"We are a little wild here," wrote Emerson to Carlyle, on October 30, 1840, "with numberless projects of social reform. Not a reading man but has his draft of a new community in his waistcoat pocket. I am gently mad myself." Socialism was indeed in the air of the time, and not wholly without reason. Even the staid George Combe, visiting America in 1839, was induced by the difficulties which he perceived to attach to the management of American households, to conjecture that the richer Americans might in time agree to solve them by coöperation. The practical outcome of this unrest was the establishment of Alcott's little and luckless community at Fruitlands, and the more famed experiment at Brook Farm, immortalized in Hawthorne's "Blithedale Romance." It was inevitable that Emerson should be pressed to cast in his lot with the projectors, and, conscious of a certain responsibility toward

professed followers, he felt compunction at hanging back. But he was an individual of individuals ; a crystal isolated, infrangible, infusible ; the last of mankind to be merged in a joint-stock association. He wisely determined that his service must consist for the present in standing still and waiting, and that he must needs "submit to the degradation of owning bank stock and seeing poor men suffer." By way of atonement he himself tried some experiments on a small scale. Feeling that he would be happier if his house sheltered more fellow-creatures, he offered the Alcotts free hospitality for a year, a scheme which fortunately came to nothing. He had always been remarkable for considerateness to his servants, and now tried to revive the patriarchal, feudal, and in a simple state of society most seemly institution of a common family board. But Louisa the maid would not sit down without Lydia the cook, and Lydia held that a cook, unlike her dishes, was never fit to come to table. He theorized upon the advantage of combining manual labor with literary composition, but experience soon convinced him that his fine speeches must be unsaid. All these things he regarded as, at most, counsels of perfection for the individual: he perceived that the impossible expectations of the rank and file must force the leaders into charlatanism, and touched the extravagances of Fourierism with playful satire. But he saw more deeply into it than those for whom it was quite enough that Fourier proposed to turn the seas into lemonade. "I regard these philanthropists as themselves the effects of the age in which we live, and, in common with so many other good facts, the efflorescence of the period, and predicting a good fruit that ripens. They were not the creators they believed themselves, but they were unconscious prophets of a true state of society: they were describers of that which is really being done. The large cities are phalansteries, and the theorists drew all their arguments from facts already taking place in our experience."

The Brook Farm adventure has been much misapprehended. Though inspired by Fourier's ideas, it was hardly a socialistic experiment. The freedom of the individual

member was jealously guarded by its constitution. Members were not required to impoverish themselves, or resign the fruits of their earnings. It was especially Fourieristic in the stress laid upon culture and refinement, and one of the leading features was an excellent school. It hence attracted many considerably in need of such humanizing influences, and such profited largely by the opportunity ; but, as Emerson shrewdly remarks, they came rather to learn than to work, "and were charged by the heads of the departments with a certain indolence and selfishness." It may be added that others came less to work than to play, and, what was worse, could not discover that their work, when they performed any, was attended by those ennobling effects on the character which theoretically ought to have accrued. "They scratched their heads sometimes, to see, was the hair turned wool?" On the other hand, the art of letter-writing was immensely cultivated, and plain people saw with astonishment that he who ploughed all day earned no more than he who looked out of the window. The scheme had a beautiful side, but it wanted reality. "What I am doing," says Emerson, most wisely, "may not be the highest thing to do in all the world, but while I am doing it I must think that it is, or I shall not do it with impunity." Brook Farm was little more than a highly intellectual picnic, and though it might have prolonged its existence indefinitely if it had not involved itself in industrial competition, its existence could have demonstrated nothing more than the agreeableness of association with agreeable company, and, which was certainly more important, the possibility of frank equality among different orders of society. To this, Emerson, a sharp observer and no indiscriminate panegyrist, may be accepted as a sufficient witness : "What knowledge of themselves and of each other, what various practical wisdom, what personal power, what studies of character, what accumulated culture, many of the members owed to it ! What mutual measure they took of each other ! It was a close union, like that in a ship's cabin, of clergymen, young collegians, merchants, mechanics, farmers' sons and daughters, with men and women of rare opportunities and delicate cul-

ture, yet assembled there by a sentiment which all shared—some of them hotly shared—of the honesty of a life of labor, and the beauty of a life of humanity. The yeoman saw refined manners in persons who were his friends, and the lady or the romantic scholar saw the continuous strength and faculty in people who would have disgusted them but that these powers were now spent in the direction of their own theory of life.”

Even if Emerson had not been too much of an individualist to be deeply fascinated by coöperative schemes, he had long taken root in Concord. “When I bought my farm,” he says, “I did not know what a bargain I had in the bluebirds, bobolinks, and thrushes, which were not charged in the bill. As little did I guess what sublime mornings and sunsets I was buying, what reaches of landscape, and what fields and lanes for a tramp. Still less did I know what good and true neighbors I was buying, men of strength and virtue, some of them now known the country through, but whom I had the pleasure of knowing long before the country did.” Other neighbors of homelier note had an equal share of his esteem; “not doctors of laws, but doctors of land, skilled in turning a swamp or a sandbank into a fruitful field.” Hawthorne shows us the type of such an one: “A short and stalwart and sturdy personage, of middle age, with a face of shrewd and kind expression, and manners of natural courtesy. He had a very free flow of talk, and not much diffidence about his own opinions; for, with a little induction from Mr. Emerson, he began to discourse about the state of the nation, agriculture, and business in general, uttering thoughts that had come to him at the plough, and which had a sort of flavor of the fresh earth about them.” Such were the men by whose homely wisdom Emerson loved to profit. “He is a thinker,” wrote Miss Martineau, who visited him in his home, “without being solitary, abstracted, and unfitted for the time. He is ready at every call of action. He lectures to the factory people at Lowell when they ask. He preaches when the opportunity is presented. He is known at every house along the road he travels to and from home by the words he has

dropped, and the deeds he has done." He attended the town-meetings with the punctuality of a good citizen, though never participating in the proceedings otherwise than by his vote. The tall, slender, somewhat stooping figure, with narrow and aquiline mould of countenance, brow not high but finely modelled, deep-set eyes of such intense blue as has been said to be only found in sea-captains, firm but sensitive mouth, expression compounded of enthusiasm and kindly shrewdness, as of a spirit entrusted with earthly interests, mingled habitually with the twenty-five "soldest men" who made up the Concord Social Club. "Much the best society I have ever known," says Emerson; who adds that he never liked to be away from Concord on Tuesdays, when the club met. He probably found it a welcome relief to the strain of lonely thought, for the nature of his intellectual labor condemned him to solitude while it lasted; and meditation, if not actual composition, was his daily habit. He worked partly in his study, partly in the woods. He went out early, he said, to hunt a thought, as a boy might hunt a butterfly, and, when successful, pinned the prize in his cabinet by entering it in his "Thought Book." Down the capture went, without any order, but when the need for essay or lecture arose, inquisition was made, and, by the aid of an index, the thoughts which fitted the subject were unearthed, polished, and linked together, like beads on a thread, Emerson said. "I write," he tells Carlyle, "with very little system, and, as far as regards composition, with most fragmentary result—paragraphs incomprehensible, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle." Yet his "Method of Nature" was "written in the heat and happiness of a real inspiration:" and he speaks in "Circles" of "days when he was full of thoughts, and could write as he pleased." His peculiar genius rendered him more independent of books than any other great writer of his age. Depending so exclusively on his own intuitions, his attitude toward other men was necessarily somewhat that of the Caliph Omar toward the Alexandria Library. He would deeply venerate them only when he felt them to have gone beyond himself on some line of his own, like Swedenborg or Mon-

taigne. On the whole, the chief use of books to him was the same as the chief use he drew from his neighbors: to provide himself with intellectual stimulus ("make my top spin," he called it), and keep his faculties from rusting. "They inspire," he said, "or they are nothing." No author seems at any time to have exercised a controlling influence over him. He would have been the same Platonist if Plato had never lived. He pleased himself as well as Carlyle by reading through the whole of Goethe at Carlyle's instance, but the traces of his study would have been faint if Goethe had not figured among his "Representative Men." Next to poetry and mystic wisdom his favorite reading was biography—"Plutarch," he says, "is the Doctor and historian of heroism"—and he delighted in anecdote. His literary taste, on the whole, was in one sense very exclusive, rejecting Scott and Shelley as well as Aristophanes and Cervantes; in another very catholic, ranging from the Bhagavat Ghita to Martial. In literature, as in life, his aim was spiritual manhood, and he valued books and men mainly as he found or deemed them to conduce to it. Thus he wrote, "Our resources are not so much the pens of practised writers as the discourse of the living, and the portfolios which friendship has opened to us."

It is a testimony at once of Heaven's kindness to Emerson, and of his own kindliness, that the only misfortunes of his life which he felt as cruel wounds, were the untimely deaths of those near and dear to him. He had lost the first choice of his heart and his two marvelous brothers; and now, at the beginning of 1842, he was to be more heavily afflicted still. If he was more exemplary in any one relation of life than another it was in the father's. The recollections of his surviving children depict the ideal of wisdom, thoughtfulness, and gentleness. It seemed as though the best of fathers had been rewarded by the best of sons. Whether the remarkable promise of his first-born would have been fulfilled, it is of course impossible to say; but much might reasonably be augured of a boy of five so affectionate as to be his father's constant companion, and so considerate as to spend hours in his study without one

noisy outbreak. "A domesticated sunbeam," says a friend of the house, "with his father's voice, but softened, and beautiful dark blue eyes with long lashes." Emerson himself names no family likeness; like the lover in his own essay he "sees no resemblance except to summer evenings and diamond mornings, to rainbows and the song of birds,"—

"The wonderful child,
Whose silver warble wild
Outvalued every pulsing sound
Within the air's cerulean round,—
The hyacinthine boy, for whom
Morn well might break and April bloom,—
The gracious boy, who did adorn
The world whereinto he was born,
And by his countenance repay
The favor of the loving Day."

Waldo Emerson was born October 30, 1836, and died January 27, 1842, after a few days' illness, from scarlet fever. Emerson's grief was the grief depicted on a Greek funeral monument, beautiful in its subdued intensity. He dissembled nothing from himself, not even his gratitude for every anodyne. "The innocent and beautiful," he wrote, "should not be sourly and gloomily lamented, but with music and fragrant thoughts and sportive recollections. . . . Life wears on, and ministers its undelaying and grand lessons, its uncontainable endless poetry, its stern dry prose of scepticism—like veins of cold air in the evening woods, quickly swallowed by the wide warmth of June—its steady correction of the rashness and short-sight of youthful judgments, and its pure repairs of all the rents and seeming ruin it operates in what it gave; although we love the first gift so well that we cling long to the ruin, and think we will be cold to the new if new shall come. But the new steals on us like a star which rises behind our back as we walk, and we are borrowing gladly its light before we know the benefactor." In the thrilling threnody already quoted, after

the stricken heart has long afflicted itself with the agonizing pictures traced by Memory and Fancy, Philosophy and Religion bring it consolation at last—

“Fair the soul’s recess and shrine,
Magic-built to last a season,
Masterpiece of love benign :
Fairer that expansive Reason
Whose omen ’tis, and sign.
Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know
What rainbows teach, and sunsets show ?
Revere the Maker, fetch thine eye
Up to his style, and manners of the sky.
Not of adamant and gold
Built he heaven, stark and cold.
No, but a nest of bending reeds,
Flowering grass, and scented weeds ;
Or like a traveller’s fleeing tent,
Or bow above the tempest bent ;
Built of tears and sacred flames,
And virtue reaching to its aims ;
Built of furtherance and pursuing,
Not of spent deeds, but of doing.
House and tenant go to ground,
Lost in God, in Godhead found.”

It would be difficult to find a single action in Emerson’s life not disinterested, and none were more beautifully inspired by unselfishness than his effort to assure Carlyle’s works their due publicity in this country and Carlyle his due reward. Carlyle’s gratitude was warm, but it would have been warmer still if he had known the extent of his indebtedness. On August 3, 1839, Emerson wrote in his diary, “Carlyle’s accounts have required what were for me very considerable advances, and so have impoverished me in the current months very much.” Small remittances for Carlyle still crossed the Atlantic for some time longer, and he on his part could send Emerson twenty-four pounds on account

of the English reprint of his Essays, notwithstanding the competition of "a scoundrel interloper, who prints on grey paper." The first series of his Essays appeared in 1841. Up to this date he had been chiefly known as a lecturer, and although the imputation of heresy had helped his discourse before the Divinity class to a sale of a thousand copies, his reputation was still mainly local, and confined to the inner circles even of New England culture. But the Essays went wherever the English language was spoken, and the revelation of his name was also the revelation of his ripest power. They were not, like "Nature," too mystic and dithyrambic for the reader who valued himself on his common sense; nor, like the addresses on public occasions, were they in some measure of local and limited application. A considerable portion, indeed, had been originally delivered in the shape of lectures. "Love," "Friendship," "Prudence," "The Over-Soul," "Spiritual Laws," for instance, had been largely treated of in the courses for 1836 and 1837; and much material for a second series existed in these and in other courses. But in this shape they had been blended with matter of less value, and lacked the polish of perfect literary expression which, as regarded the finish of individual sentences, they now received to a degree rarely surpassed by intellectual craftsmanship. The threefold test of lustre, of durability, and of uniqueness, ranks them definitively among the diamonds of literature. Diamonds, however, are no material for statues; and Emerson's writings, some short poems excepted, prefer no claim to the yet higher grace of logical unity and symmetrical completeness. His usual method of literary work, already described, precluded the composition of an essay in the proper sense of the term. The thought that came to him to-day generally bore slight affinity to the thought of yesterday or to-morrow. There is just enough unity of purpose and endeavor after artistic construction in each several Essay to raise it from the category of Table-Talks, the desultory record of the wisdom of an Epictetus, a Luther, a Coleridge, and to inscribe the collection upon the roll of great unsystematic books, along with Marcus

Aurelius and Thomas à Kempis, Pascal and Montaigne. It differs from their monumental writings as the nineteenth century differs from the Roman period, or the middle age. It is less massive, but it is far more opulent. Emerson is rarely sublime like Marcus Aurelius, but he disposes of a wealth of varied illustration of which Marcus Aurelius knew nothing; and he has turned every page of the book of Nature, which, until these latter ages, it has been the fault of ethical writers to neglect.

Were we to look for the conductor of the Emerson orchestra, we should perhaps find it in the essay entitled "The Over-Soul." It seems to set the music to which the others march. It enforces the ideas which draw all else after them—that the universe is one existence by virtue of its interpenetration by a single divine essence, and that one soul animates all mankind. "We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul. . . . From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things, and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all. What we commonly call man, the eating, drinking, planting, calculating man, does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love. . . . All reform aims, in some one particular, to let the great soul have its way through us." Starting from this postulate, the writer works his way through a number of beautiful illustrations to Carlyle's conclusion, "All history is sacred." The possible exaggeration of this pantheistic optimism into absolute apathy is warded off by a supplementary discourse on Compensation, pointing out the "inevitable dualism that bisects nature," and which is reproduced in every separate existence, and every fact of the spiritual and intellectual life. "If the good is there, so is the evil; if the affinity, so the repulsion; if the forces, so the limitation." The world is not, there-

fore, a monotonous effluence of Divinity; but it is an effluence nevertheless: and by nothing is the fact proved more clearly than by the nice adjustment and absolute balance of compensation throughout the whole of it. It is an utter fallacy to imagine that the bad are successful, that justice is not done now.

“Hast not thy share? On winged feet,
Lo! it rushes thee to meet:
And all that Nature made thine own,
Floating in air or pent in stone,
Will rive the hills and swim the sea,
And, like thy shadow, follow thee.”

The object of the fine essay quaintly entitled “Circles” is to reconcile this rigidity of unalterable law with the fact of human progress. Compensation illustrates one property of a circle, which always returns to the point where it began. But it is no less true that around every circle another can be drawn. “The life of man is a self-evolving circle, which, from a ring imperceptibly small, rushes on all sides outwards to new and larger circles, and that without end. Hence all forms of culture, however relatively perfect, become in time obsolete. For the genius that created them creates now something else.” Hence there is no security but in infinite progress. “As soon as you once come up with a man’s limitations, it is all over with him. Infinitely alluring and attractive was he to you yesterday, a great hope, a sea to swim in; now you have found its shores, found it a pond; and you care not if you never see it again.”

Emerson followed his own counsel; he always keeps a reserve of power. His theory of “Circles” reappears without the least verbal indebtedness to himself, in the splendid essay on Love. Here, having painted as hardly any other has painted, the beauty of personal relations and the “mighty ravishment” of the passion of love, he rebukes his own raptures by treating it as after all something rudimentary, ancillary and preparatory to the liberal use and

the perfect knowledge of life, Nature's lure to a higher end, "only one scene in our play." "At last they discover that all which at first drew them together—these once sacred features, that magical play of charms—was deciduous, had a prospective end, like the scaffolding by which the house was built; and the purification of the intellect and the heart, from year to year, is the real marriage, foreseen and prepared from the first, and wholly above their consciousness." Notwithstanding the assurance that "we need not fear to lose anything by the progress of the soul," this deliverance can hardly act otherwise than as a drench of cold water to the "fine madman" whom the writer, himself performing the part which he attributes to Nature, has allured to this sober conclusion by the bait of gorgeous and impassioned speech. It is, therefore, with all its poetry, rather for the mature than the young.

"The gay enchantment is undone:
A gentle wife, but fairy none."

The austere stoicism of the companion essay on Friendship may affect even the mature reader with something of a similar jar. Here, however, it is the general drift that wounds, and the conclusion that redeems. "These things may hardly be said without a sort of treachery to the relation. The essence of friendship is entireness, a total magnanimity and trust. It must not surmise or provide for infirmity. It treats its object as a god, that it may deify both." "Self-Reliance" and "Heroism" are another pair of essays, the former of which must have had especial influence in shaping the social type then growing up in New England. We must pass by these, as well as "Prudence," "Intellect," and "Spiritual Laws," to devote a word to "History" and "Art." These illustrate what an abstract principle, if just in itself, will do for the elucidation of a given subject, and how far it fails in the absence of special study. In the essay on History we feel that Emerson's view of human nature as an incarnation of the Divine Spirit binds all the ages together, and makes them all equally

living and real to the man of to-day, in so far as his knowledge of them supplies color for the mental picture. But we also feel that Emerson does not personally get much beyond his grand generalization, and that he is indifferent to the archæological research which is needed for a just realization of the past, which would have saved him from many fanciful extravagances. In the essay on Art the fundamental conception of Art as an educational process, elevating the soul to the perception of beauty, is valuable if not exhaustive; but in concluding that the perception, once attained, would supersede the educational process and render art obsolete, Emerson overlooked the fact that many men are born with physical and mental aptitudes impelling them to artistic employment, and which can find no other exercise. Man must continue to paint and carve, and cultivate music, or the finer endowments of his sense will become as atrophied as the naturalist's relish for Milton and Shakespeare.

Carlyle repaid his obligations to Emerson by a preface to the English edition of the Essays, which secured it immediate recognition in this country. He was evidently not entirely in sympathy with Emerson's literary manner, which he criticizes with justice as abrupt and fitful, nor does he repeat the verdict of his private correspondence on its characteristic merits. These he had already defined with inimitable felicity as "brevity, simplicity, softness, homely grace, with such a penetrating meaning, soft enough, but irresistible, going down to the depths and up to the heights, as silent electricity goes." The public expression of his admiration is mainly reserved for the moralist, the man of sure intuition. "One man more who knows and believes of very certainty that Man's Soul is still alive, that God's universe is still godlike, that of all Ages of Miracles ever seen, or dreamt of, by far the most miraculous is this age in this hour." He had said to like effect in a private letter: "Once more the voice of a man! Ah me! I feel as if in the wide world there were still but this one voice that responded intelligently to my own: as if the rest were all hearsays, melodious or unmelodious echoes. My blessing on

you, good Ralph Waldo!" The book's sale in England was at first slow, but its reception in intellectual circles was never doubtful. Milnes, wrote Carlyle, was warm, and Harriet Martineau enthusiastic. John Sterling, he added, scolding and kissed, as the manner of the man was, and concluded by asking whether it was possible to obtain the author's likeness. By and by lovers began to buy the volume in duplicate, and, having marked the favorite passages in one copy, to lend the other to the beloved one in hopes that she would mark the same; but it was never found to make much difference what she marked. An anonymous critic in *Fraser* classed Emerson among heresiarchs—rightly in the judgment of Carlyle, who described the reviewer as "emphatic, earnest, not without a kind of splay-footed thought and sincerity," and opined that he had enough in him to warrant his holding his peace for the next five years.

The consideration of some of the most important of his discourses at this period will be best reserved for a review of his relation to national politics. In one of a course on "The Present Age" he put the religious tendencies of the age into a sentence: "Religion does not seem now to tend to a *cultus*, but to a heroic life." In another he dwelt on the narrowness of temperance reformers, and all such as would regenerate society by special nostrums; which he exhibited with even more terseness in a passage in his diary written about this time. "You take away, but what do you give? Mr. Jefts has been preached into tipping up his barrel of rum into the brook; but day after to-morrow, when he wakes up cold and poor, will he feel that he has somewhat for somewhat? If I could lift him up by happy violence into a religious beatitude, or im-paradise him in ideas, then I should have greatly more than indemnified him for what I have taken." "The Method of Nature" (1841) was composed, he says, in the heat and happiness of what he thought a real inspiration, as it certainly was. It is one of the most eloquent and most pregnant of his productions, a glowing rapture of idealistic Pantheism, a paraphrase of Goethe's pithy text:

“Natur hat weder Kern noch Schaale :
Alles ist Sie mit einem Male.”

“The method of Nature cannot be analyzed. The new book” (hear this, ye ultra-Darwinians!) “says, ‘I will give you the key to Nature,’ and we expect to go like a thunder-bolt to the centre. But the thunder is a surface phenomenon, makes a skin-deep cut, and so does the sage. The rushing stream will not stop to be observed: it is the characteristic of insanity to hold fast to one thought, and not flow with the course of Nature. Nature can only be conceived as existing to a universal and not a particular end, to a universe of ends, and not to one. She knows neither palm nor oak, but only vegetable life. We can point nowhere to anything final; but tendency appears on all hands; planet, system, constellation, total nature is growing like a field of maize in July.” Possessed for the time by the divine ecstasy he describes, Emerson recommends Nature’s method as a model for frail man in language of unsurpassed splendor, and with arguments and illustrations appropriate to a state of inspiration, but which might well seem extravagant in colder moods. Notwithstanding some golden sayings fit for any time and place, such as “Do what you know, and perception is converted into character,” the discourse should as a whole only be read as it was spoken, in the choicest hour. One is not much surprised that the worthy Baptist minister who presided on occasion of its delivery prayed that the audience might be preserved from ever again hearing such transcendental nonsense. Emerson asked his name, and remarked: “He seems a very conscientious, plain-spoken man.”

The second series of Emerson’s essays appeared in 1844. It may be described as generally dealing with matters of more immediate practical concern than the first had done, as more ethical in spirit, and less rich in imagination. There is, notwithstanding, no lack of poetry in it, any more than of ethic in its forerunner. “Character” is a discourse on the text, “Character is nature in the highest form.” It shows that the recluse of Concord had a sound knowledge of

life, and of the conditions necessary for enduring success and true greatness. The essay on "Experience" seems at first a singular discourse for a preacher of righteousness. It must be regarded as an endeavor to atone for previous over-statements by a frank recognition of the unmoral aspects of the universe. "Nature, as we know her, is no saint. The lights of the church, the ascetics, Gentoos, and Grahamites, she does not distinguish by any favor. She comes eating and drinking and sinning. Her darlings, the great, the strong, the beautiful, are not children of our law, do not come out of the Sunday School, never weigh their food, nor punctually keep the commandments. If we would be strong with her strength, we must not harbor such disconsolate consciences." The essay is full of the apparent contradictions established by experience, but concludes that experience indefinitely protracted will reconcile all. "Manners" insists on self-reliance and self-respect as the first requisites of good manners, and eloquently describes the function of woman in promoting them. "Our American institutions have been friendly to her, and at this moment I esteem it a chief felicity of this country, that she excels in women. Let her be as much better placed in the laws and social forms as the most zealous reformer can ask, but I confide so entirely in her aspiring and musical nature, that I believe only herself can show us how she shall be served. The wonderful generosity of her sentiments raises her at times into heroical and godlike regions, and verifies the pictures of Minerva, Juno, or Polyhymnia; and by the firmness with which she treads her upward path, she convinces the coarsest calculators that another road exists than that which their feet know. But besides those who make good in our imagination the place of muses and of Delphic Sibyls, are there not women who fill our vase with wine and roses to the brim, so that the wine runs over and fills the house with perfume; who inspire us with courtesy; who loose our tongues, and we speak; who anoint our eyes, and we see? We say things we never thought to have said; for once our walls of habitual reserve vanish, and leave us at large; we are children playing with children in a wide field

of flowers. 'Keep us,' we cry, 'in these influences, for days, for weeks, and we shall be sunny poets, and will write out in many colored words the romance that you are.' "

As might be expected from a poet, the essay on "Poetry" is of special beauty and significance. The conception of the poet and his mission is of the highest. "Poetry was all written before time was, and whenever we are so finely organized that we can penetrate into that region where the air is music, we hear those primal warblings, and attempt to write them down; but we lose ever and anon a word, or a verse, and substitute something of our own, and thus miswrite the poem." The sign and credentials of the poet are that he announces "that which no man foretold." "He is the Namer, or Language-maker. Each word was at first a stroke of genius. Language is fossil poetry." "He re-attaches things to nature and the whole." "Readers of poetry see the factory-village and the railway, and fancy that the poetry of the landscape is broken up by them—for these works of art are not yet consecrated in their reading; but the poet sees them fall within the great order not less than the beehive or the spider's geometrical web. Nature adopts them very fast into her vital circles, and the gliding train of cars she loves like her own." * Hence the true American poet, when he arrives, will make poetry of the most unpromising subjects:—"our log-rolling, our stumps and their politics, our repudiations,

* "Just then the train, with shock on shock,
Swift rush and birth-scream dire,
Grew from the bosom of the rock,
And passed in noise and fire.

With brazen throb, with vital stroke,
It went, far heard, far seen,
Setting a track of shining smoke
Against the pastoral green."

COVENTRY PATMORE.

banks, and tariffs, newspaper and caucus, Methodism and Unitarianism ;" no less than the northern trade, the southern planting, Oregon and Texas. "Thou true land-lord ! sea-lord ! air-lord. Wherever sun falls, or water flows, or birds fly, wherever day and night meet in twilight, wherever the blue heaven is hung by clouds or sown with stars, wherever are forms with transparent boundaries, wherever are outlets into celestial space, wherever is danger and awe and love, there is beauty, plenteous as rain, shed for thee, and though thou shouldst walk the world over, thou shalt not be able to find a condition inopportune or ignoble."

Emerson's second series of essays also appeared with a preface from Carlyle, treating this time of the book merely in its aspect of literary property, perhaps because Emerson had apprehended that the former preface might be "too splendid for my occasion. I fancy my readers to be a very quiet, plain, even obscure class—men and women of some religious culture and aspirations—young, or else mystical, and by no means including the great literary and fashionable army who now read your books." Carlyle assured him that his public was truly aristocratic ; being of the bravest inquiring minds that England had. Among these was George Eliot, who wrote of Carlyle's first preface : "This is a world worth abiding in while one man can thus venerate and love another." Emerson's correspondence with Carlyle had been maintained since their first acquaintance, though with occasional fluctuations. Seldom have two men conceived a more genuine and abiding regard for each other on the strength of a single meeting. Thanks, to Emerson in great measure, Carlyle had become an intellectual force in America ; and it was natural for New England to pit her seer against her mother's. The contrast between them was exhibited with equal wit and penetration in Mr. Russell Lowell's "Fable for Critics" (1848).

"There are persons, mole-blind to the soul's make and style,
Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and Carlyle
To compare him with Plato would be vastly fairer,
Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the rarer ;

He sees fewer objects, but clearer, trulier—
 If C's. an original, E's. more peculiar ;
 That he's more of a man you might say of the one,
 Of the other he's more of an Emerson ;
 C's. the Titan, as shaggy of mind as of limb ;
 E's. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim.
 The one's two-thirds Norseman, the other's half Greek,
 Where one's most abounding, the other's to seek ;
 C's. generals require to be seen in the mass,—
 E's. specialities gain if enlarged by the glass ;
 C. gives nature and God his own fits of the blues,
 And rims common-sense things with mystical hues—
 E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,
 And looks coolly around him with sharp common-sense ;
 C. shows you how every-day matters unite
 With the dim transdiurnal recesses of night,—
 While E. in a plain preternatural way
 Makes mysteries matters of mere every day.
 E. is rather like Flaxman, lines straight and severe,
 And a colorless outline, but full, round, and clear ;
 To the men he thinks worthy he frankly accords
 The design of a white marble statue in words.
 C. labors to get at the centre, and then
 Take a reckoning from there of his actions and men.
 E. calmly assumes the said centre as granted,
 And, given himself, has whatever is wanted."

This may be a suitable place to introduce a notice of Emerson's own poetry, as, although "uncertain whether he had one true spark of that fire which burns in verse," he was at this period contributing poems freely to "The Dial," and even entertaining proposals from publishers for a collected edition. The genius of his verse is best characterized by a happy phrase of Dr. Holmes's—it is elemental. It stands in a closer relation to Nature than that of almost any other poet. He has an unique power of making us participate in the life of Nature as it is in Nature herself, not as Wordsworth gives it, blended with the feelings or at least

colored by the contemplations of humanity. Such intimacy with Nature has sometimes all the effect of magic ; there are moments and moods in which Emerson seems to have as far outflown Wordsworth as he outflew Thomson and Collins. But the inspiration is in the highest degree fitful and fragmentary, and is but seldom found allied with beautiful and dignified Art. The poems offend continually by lame unscannable lines, and clumsinesses and obscurities of expression. Sometimes the poet seems to struggle with more meaning than he knows how to convey ; at other times the meaning bears no proportion to the labored intricacy of the diction. When, however, he is fortunate enough to find the precise fitting for his idea, the result is a diamond of the purest water.

“Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias wrought ;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle.”

“The silent organ loudest chants
The master’s requiem.”

“No ray is dimmed, no atom worn,
My oldest force is good as new ;
And the fresh rose on yonder thorn
Gives back the bending heavens in dew.”

“There is no god dare wrong a worm.”

“As the wave breaks to foam on shelves,
Then runs into a wave again ;
So lovers melt their sundered selves,
Yet melted would be twain.”

“The musing peasant lowly great
Beside the forest water sate ;
The rope-like pine-roots crosswise grown
Composed the network of his throne ;

The wide lake, edged with sand and grass,
Was burnished to a floor of glass,
Painted with shadows green and proud
Of the tree and of the cloud."

ART.

IN the vaunted works of Art
The master-stroke is Nature's part.

GIPSIES.

THE wild air bloweth in our lungs,
The keen stars twinkle in our eyes,
The birds gave us our wily tongues,
The panther in our dances flies.

You doubt we read the stars on high,
Nathless we read your fortunes true;
The stars may hide in the upper sky,
But without glass we fathom you.

TO EVA.

O FAIR and stately maid, whose eyes
Were kindled in the upper skies
At the same torch that lighted mine;
For so I must interpret still
Thy sweet dominion o'er my will,
A sympathy divine.

Ah ! let me blameless gaze upon
Features that seem at heart my own ;
Nor fear those watchful sentinels,
Who charm the more their glance forbids,
Chaste-glowing, underneath their lids,
With fire that draws while it repels.

On the whole, Emerson the poet presents a singular contrast to Emerson the thinker and orator. As the latter he is potent, epoch-making, the morning star of a new era, both literary and intellectual. As a poet he is the lovely, way-

ward child of the American Parnassus, more fascinating and captivating than his elders and betters, and nearer by many degrees to the central source of inspiration; but beautiful rather than strong, and ever in need of allowance and excuse. Could he have always written with the mastery he shows in detached passages, he would have stood in a class by himself. Some few of his poems are actual models of perfection, as, for instance, the lines in the dedication of the Concord monument; but here, as Dr. Holmes remarks, his originality of style has forsaken him, and he writes in the manner of Campbell. Another noble poem quoted by Dr. Holmes—"Days"—would certainly have been given to Landor if it had not been signed by Emerson. There are, however, pieces of faultless perfection entirely in the Emersonian style. Such a piece is the "Rhodora," worthy of the Greek Anthology:

"In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew,
But in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you."

Almost equally finished, and gushing from a yet deeper well-spring of feeling, is the mystic yet transparent allegory entitled "Two Rivers":

“Thy summer voice, Musketaquit,
Repeats the music of the rain ;
But sweeter rivers pulsing flit
Through thee, as thou through Concord Plain.

Thou in thy narrow banks are pent ;
The stream I love unbounded goes :
Through flood and sea and firmament,
Through light, through life, it forward flows.

I see the inundation sweet,
I hear the spending of the stream
Through years, through men, through Nature fleet,
Through passing thought, through power and dream.

Musketaquit, a goblin strong,
Of shard and flint makes jewels gay ;
They lose their grief who hear his song,
And where he winds is the day of day.

So forth and brighter fares my stream,—
Who drinks it shall not thirst again ;
No darkness stains its equal gleam,
And ages drop in it like rain.’

Such music and such power of spiritualizing material Nature would have vindicated a high place for a more faulty poet than Emerson : but his claims rest by no means solely even on these high gifts. The Runic, Orphic, mystic, and aphoristic element in his poetry, though there is too much of it, is still an original and valuable element. He always means something, and his meaning is always worth trying to penetrate. Better still, he always sings something : his verse, good or bad, is poetry ; he does not, like some greater poets, chequer his inspired moods with commonplace or mere literary elegances. But after all it is his greatest glory as a poet to have been the harbinger of distinctively American poetry to America :

“He was the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.”

Emerson hesitated over the publication of his poems for four years. He had come, as he said himself, "to a solstice of the stars of his intellectual firmament," and though he retained freshness enough to write "Representative Men" to be noticed subsequently, felt the need not only for change, but for a more thorough change than he could find in America. He had pretty well gone through all the fermentations and combinations of which American intellectual life was then susceptible, and began to think that he needed the stimulus of an English audience. He was dimly conscious of something provincial in his reputation. The very enthusiasm he had excited half-frightened him. "In the acceptance that my papers find among my thoughtful countrymen in these days, I cannot help seeing how limited is their reading. If they read only the books that I do, they would not exaggerate so wildly." With his usual delicacy, he breathed no hint of his inclination to Carlyle, fearing that an audience might be artificially collected for him. But when, in 1846, invitations came from various English Mechanics' Institutes, he accepted them with hope and pleasure. The prime mover was his old friend Mr. Alexander Ireland, "infinitely well affected towards the man Emerson." Feeling himself safe in strong, sure hands, Emerson sailed for Liverpool in the *Washington Irving* (name of fair omen!) October 5, 1847.

Emerson as has been seen, believed in the inward light. He thought a man needed but to keep himself open to the Divine influences to have his life happily moulded for him, and his creed appeared justified by his experience.

"Early or late, the falling rain
Arrived in time to swell the grain ;
Stream could not so perversely wind,
But corn of Guy's there was to grind."

The Divine blessing, indeed, rarely took in his case the form of money, but intellectual events came as they were wanted, and, unless when in the fulfilment of an obligation of courtesy or conscience he took upon himself some ex-

traneous task like the editorship of "The Dial," everything happened at the right moment for the furtherance of the inner soul and the external end. His well-timed visit to England was a case in point. His celebrity was just in the stage to render him an object of interest, without rendering him an object of adulation. There was enough curiosity respecting him to warrant the best efforts of his devoted friend Mr. Ireland to gain him a hearing, and not enough to tempt a contractor to vulgarize him by "running" him. He came simply and modestly to proffer his thoughts to those who cared for them, and to take in return the impressions derived from the study of a polished society and a social order venerable and stable, yet in process of transformation. England, on her part, was in a more congenial humor towards a man of optimistic faith than she had ever been before, or has ever been since.

On landing at Liverpool on October 22nd, Emerson found an invitation from Carlyle. He proceeded to London, and found the Carlyles very little changed in appearance from their old selves of fourteen years before. Spiritual progress there had been, not change, for Carlyle had travelled as steadily on his own line as Emerson had, and their progress had been in different directions. They might be compared to two streams which, rising on the same mountain crest, gush down opposite steep, and diverge the more the further they wend their way. The central idea of each was alike—the Divine Immanence in all things; but, to employ Heine's convenient generalization, one presented it like a Hebrew, the other like a Greek. His aversion to Emersonianism equalled his love of Emerson; it is a proof of his sincerity of his love that it survived such estrangement. "We had immense talking with him here," he writes, "but find that he did not give us much to chew the cud upon. He is a pure, high-minded man, but I think his talent is not quite as high as I had anticipated." At another time he says, "Good of him I could get none, except from his friendly looks and elevated, exotic, polite ways." Emerson could not be expected to shine in conversation with the first talker of his age; even if, which is

improbable, he was allowed the chance. His was not an exuberant mind. The habit of nicely fitting his thought with the one right word in his public utterances made him hesitate in ordinary conversation, and grew upon him until "to hear him talk," says Dr. Holmes, "was like watching one crossing a brook on stepping-stones." He the more admired the affluent discourse of the apostle of Silence, which he classed as one of the four things that had most impressed him in Europe. "You will never discover," he told Mrs. Emerson, "his real vigor and range, or how much more he might do than he has ever done, without seeing him."

Invitations to lecture crowded on Emerson, until he felt ashamed to read yet again "the musty old discourses so often reported." But managers and audiences would have no other. Making Manchester his headquarters, he ranged over all the northern and midland counties, acquainting himself in the most agreeable manner possible with the flower of English middle class culture, and rejoicing in the proof thus afforded that here, as at home, he had beguiled young people into better hopes than he could realize for them. He had formed his conception of De Quincey from the "voluminous music" of his writings, and expected a presence and an elocution "like the organ of York Minster." He saw and heard "a small old man of seventy years (De Quincey was sixty-two), with a very handsome face, expressing the highest refinement; a very gentle old man, speaking with the greatest deliberation and softness, and so refined in speech and manners as to make quite indifferent his extremely plain and poor dress." He afterwards dined at De Quincey's cottage with him and his three admirable daughters, and laments, as we do, that time failed to record the conversation. Jeffrey he found very French and rather affected; and Professor Wilson's lectures to his class seemed to him to call into exercise more strength of body than of mind. He seems to have been especially impressed by Leigh Hunt, whom, along with De Quincey, he thought the finest mannered man of letters in England; by Macaulay, in whom he rightly discerned the nearest approximation among them all to the typical Englishman,

incarnating the *differentia* of the race ; and by Owen, whom he with equal justice pronounced "one of the best heads in England." "Richard Owen," he says in the "Traits," "adds sometimes the divination of the old masters to the unbroken power of labor in the English mind." Emerson started for a trip to Paris, where he arrived just in time for the abortive revolution of May 15th. The terrible days of June were preparing, but in the meantime Paris showed bravely, crowded with sashes and helmets and men bearded like goats or lions ; full too of living fire, and, as Emerson thought, of genuine passion for justice and humanity. He afterwards said that the French had best discussed what other nations had best done. He had just been inspecting a very different place—Oxford, where seeds of thought were quietly germinating, destined perhaps to produce greater results than the brilliant demonstrativeness of Paris. The new Liberalism was for the moment represented for Emerson by two young men whose fellowships even then hung by a hair—Clough, whom his writings had deeply impressed, and Froude, "a noble youth, to whom my heart warms." Froude was greatly struck by his resemblance to Newman, which is indeed undeniable, and goes deeper than the physical likeness. It is a curious speculation what would have happened if the two could have changed places. Could Newman have found his way to Rome from Massachusetts? What tints would Emerson's spiritualism have imbibed from the painted windows of Oxford? Somewhat later he made a pilgrimage to Stratford-on-Avon with a party from Coventry, among them a very plain young woman who told him that she liked Rousseau's "Confessions" best of all books. He started ; then said, "So do I ;" and the plain young woman wrote next day that the American stranger was the one real man she had seen. He had had his first and last meeting with George Eliot.

Emerson had all but decided not to lecture in London, but "came to have a feeling that not to do it would be a kind of skulking." He seems to have felt instinctively that, while in the provinces he was heard with serious, almost reverential interest, in London he was only regarded as the

last sensation, and the more so the more aristocratic his audience. He nevertheless paid the intellectual capital the compliment of preparing three new discourses on "The Natural History of the Intellect," which, with two old ones and that composed for Edinburgh, made up a course under the title of "Mind and Manners of the Nineteenth Century." Carlyle took a lively interest in the course, and Emerson was pleased to observe how much he was looked at. The London reporters fell far behind their Manchester brethren in fulness and accuracy, and though Emerson writes, "Our little company grows larger each day," the lectures seem to have produced no great effect beyond the walls of the Marylebone Institute. Men's minds, besides, were abundantly occupied with more exciting themes: and the net pecuniary product was only £80 instead of the promised £200. In "English Traits" published in 1856, Emerson has matched himself with the English people, and both are upon their trial. Could an idealist display true insight in dealing with so practical a nation? Could so material a civilization stand the criticism of an idealist? England and Emerson both came well out of the ordeal. He cannot help setting down the English intelligence as somewhat beefy and obtuse, for such is the fact. But he does not, like Hawthorne, resent the phenomenon as an affront to the foreign observer: he finds in this stiff soil the substratum of fine qualities, and boldly declares that the intellect of England owes more to Plato than to Aristotle. The solidity of the English is no doubt the great primal fact with him. "I find the Englishman to be him of all men who stands firmest in his shoes." Practicality, veracity, conservatism, all the traits too plain to be missed, are fully recognized. But when he comes to literature he pronounces that the two nations in England of whom so much has been written are not the Norman and the Saxon, nor the Poor and the Rich, but "the perceptive class and the practical finality class, ever in counterpoise, interacting mutually: these two nations, of genius and of animal force, though the first consist only of a dozen souls, and the second of twenty millions, for ever by discord and their accord yield the

power of the English state." "Even what is called philosophy and letters is mechanical in its structure, as if inspiration had ceased, as if no vast hope, no religion, no song of joy, no wisdom, no analogy, existed any more." "English science is false by not being poetic. It isolates the reptile or the mollusc it strives to explain; whilst reptile or mollusc only exists in system, in relation."

Emerson's book sparkles with epigrams such as these:—"There should be temperance in making cloth, as well as in eating. A man should not be a silkworm, nor a nation a tent of caterpillars." "The lawyer lies *perdu* under the coronet, and winks to the antiquary to say nothing." "The upper classes have only birth, say the people here, and not thoughts. Yes, but they have manners." "Loyalty is in the English a sub-religion." "When the Englishman wishes for amusement he goes to work." "There is in an Englishman's brain a valve that can be closed at pleasure, as an engineer shuts off steam. The most sensible and well-informed men possess the power of thinking just so far as the bishop in religious matters." Carlyle said that "English Traits" was worth all the books ever written by New England upon the Old; and in it England assuredly imported from her descendants much better ware than anything of its class that she had exported to them, except Sir Charles Lyell's. Emerson's discourses on "Representative Men," first delivered in 1845, though not published till 1850, exhibit a greater tendency to the oracular than anything written before or afterwards. The first lecture, "The Uses of Great Men," is obscure in the only sense in which obscurity is justly imputable to Emerson. It is a succession of sayings, for the most part individually comprehensible and sometimes of stimulating freshness, but so abrupt and discontinuous that we find ourselves landed at last in Emerson's favorite conclusion with but slight idea how we have arrived at it. Genius "appears as an exponent of a vaster mind and will. The opaque self becomes transparent with the light of a First Cause." It is the purpose of the remaining lectures to resolve this pure ray of primal intellect into the sixfold spectrum of philosopher, mystic, sceptic,

poet, man of the world, and writer ; respectively personified by Plato, Swedenborg, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Napoleon, and Goethe. Here we find Emerson's success to be proportioned to his hold on concrete fact. The figure of Plato, of whose personality so little is known, is, as Carlyle complains, vague and indefinite. "Can you tell me," asked an auditor of his neighbor, "what connection all this has with Plato?" "None, my friend, save in God!" But the other figures are visible if not palpable. Nothing can be more generous than his trampling down of prejudice in recognizing the true inspiration of Swedenborg, or more crushing than his criticism of the merely mechanical element in that seer. "When he mounts into the heaven I do not hear its language. A man should not tell me that he has walked among the angels; his proof is that his eloquence makes me one." The lecture on Montaigne teaches that a wise scepticism leads to the same result as a large faith. "The lesson of life is to believe what the years and the centuries say against the hours. Things seem to tend downward, to justify despondency, to promote rogues, to defeat the just; and by knaves, as by martyrs, the just cause is carried forward. Let a man learn to look for the permanent in the mutable and fleeting; let him learn to bear the disappearance of things he was wont to reverence without losing his reverence; let him learn that he is here, not to work, but to be worked upon; and that though abyss open under abyss, and opinion displace opinion, all are at last contained in the Eternal Cause." The discussion on Napoleon shows Emerson at his best as a connoisseur of men, and would alone prove that he did not addict himself to speculation out of incapacity or contempt for the affairs of the world. The ideologist judges the man of action more shrewdly and justly than the man of action would have judged the ideologist; and after having most brilliantly painted Napoleon's perfect sufficiency in all things for which virtue is not needful, puts him on his right footing with, "Bonaparte is the idol of common men, because he had in transcendent degree the qualities and the powers of common men." On Goethe and Shakespeare Emerson says many

excellent things, but the former's activity is too multifarious to be condensed into a lecture, though the man himself is got into a sentence: "The old Eternal Genius who built the world has confided himself more to this man than to any other"—and of Shakespeare he wrote: "The greatest mind values him the most."

Theodore Parker was at that time Editor of the "Massachusetts Quarterly." The main function of the great radical preacher is thus defined by Emerson, with no less truth than eloquence: "His commanding merit as a reformer is this, that he insisted beyond all men in pulpits that the essence of Christianity is its practical morals: it is there for use, or it is nothing; and if you combine it with sharp trading, or with ordinary city ambitions to gloss over municipal corruptions, or private intemperance, or successful fraud, or immoral politics, or unjust wars, or the cheating of Indians, or the robbery of frontier nations, or leaving your principles at home to show on the high seas or in Europe a supple complaisance to tyrants, it is an hypocrisy, and the truth is not in you; and no love of religious music, or of dreams of Swedenborg, or praise of John Wesley or of Jeremy Taylor, can save you from the Satan which you are."

In his only contribution to the "Quarterly" (Dec. 1847) Emerson says he will not believe that so stupendous a phenomenon as the American Republic can have been called into being for nothing. "Moral and material values are always commensurate. Every material organization exists to a moral end, which makes the reason of its existence. Here are no books, but who can see the continent with its inland and surrounding waters, its temperate climates, its west wind breathing vigor through all the year, its confluence of races so favorable to the highest energy, and the infinite glut of their production, without putting new questions to Destiny as to the purpose for which this muster of nations and this sudden creation of enormous values is made?" The questions with which a journal aspiring to leadership must deal are indicated with admirable exactness, among them slavery, "in some sort the special enigma of the time,

as it has provoked against it a sort of inspiration and enthusiasm singular in modern history."

Another ally of those days, much nearer than Parker, was Henry Thoreau, in whom Emerson took half-paternal, half-fraternal interest. Without him Thoreau might never have existed as the hermit-poet of Walden.

In Emerson's funeral tribute to Thoreau, he says: "It seems a kind of indignity to so noble a soul that it should depart out of Nature before yet he has been really shown to his peers for what he is. But he, at least, is content. His soul was made for the noblest society; he had in a short life exhausted the capabilities of this world; wherever there is knowledge, wherever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will find a home."

On July 16, 1850, Margaret Fuller Ossoli was drowned, with her husband and child, on her return from Italy, after sitting for twelve hours on the stranded wreck amid driving rain, in sight of the coast and of sundry persons too diligently picking up whatever came ashore to busy themselves in procuring a lifeboat. To find such another contrast of dying or dead genius in presence of dull, soulless inhumanity, we must go to memoirs of the "realistic" school of biography. Emerson exclaimed, "I have lost my audience!" He could not honestly say more, for his nature and Margaret's, though by no means antipathetic, were hardly congenial. Her part had been that of the ardent mistress, and his the cold beauty's. Failing in her attempts to gain his confidence by storm, she cried, "Why do I write thus to one who must ever regard the deepest tones of my nature as those of childish fancy or worldly discontent?" Emerson could never feel at home outside his own sphere whether of thought or affection: it was impossible, therefore, that there should not be something of constraint in his portion of the biography which, two years after Margaret's death, appeared as the joint production of her most intimate friends. Yet, having helped himself, by reminiscences of conversation and quotations from correspondence, over the intellectual region of Margaret's nature, into which he entered but imperfectly, he kindles up when at last he

comes to the generous helpful woman, who went straight from a wedding to attend a relative undergoing a surgical operation, and who, when in after years she found scope for the exercise of all her love and devotion in Italy, "came to it as if it had been her habit and her natural sphere."

It is a shrewd remark of Arbuthnot's, that all political parties die at last of swallowing their own lies. The slaveholders had gone on asserting the divinity of slavery until they believed it. Their growing insolence and brutality, culminating in the attempt to strangle free suffrage in Kansas, and the ruffianly assault on Charles Sumner in the Senate House as he sat writing at his desk, made Emerson an Abolitionist. He had clung to conservatism as long as possible. The annexation of Texas (1845) had not perturbed him; he saw it to be inevitable, and was content if his own State held fast her integrity. Even in resisting the Fugitive Slave Law (1850) he had said, "We will never intermeddle with your slavery, but you can in no wise be suffered to bring it to Cape Cod or Berkshire." The South had now made this attitude impossible, but her truculence seemed to Emerson pardonable in comparison with the moral torpor of his own beloved Massachusetts. He was himself twice hissed at public meetings by descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers. Smarting with grief and shame, he, for a time, forgot his accustomed moderation, lauded John Brown's incendiarism, and appeared to blame the judges for not assuming the functions of legislators. At last, however, the attack on Fort Sumter made everything right. Upholders and antagonists of slavery shook hands over the Union; the logic of events converted every loyal citizen to emancipation as at least a sound military measure; and, as Emerson said, "The wish that never had legs long enough to cross the Potomac can do so now." He himself, now as good a civic patriot as anybody, was ever ready with speech and song. "Voluntaries," pieces written to encourage the young to enlist for the war, contain this noble stanza—

“So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
The youth replies, *I can*.”

Emerson's elocution has been frequently described, and most hearers attest its magical effect. It was, or seemed, the purest natural endowment; if it owed anything to art, it was the *ars celare*. It gave the impression of utter absorption in the theme, and indifference to all rhetoric and all oratorical stratagem. Composed and undemonstrative as any listener, almost motionless, except for a slight vibration of the body, seldom even adapting his voice to his matter, he seemed to confide entirely in the justness of his thought, the felicity of his language, and the singular music of his voice. “He somehow,” Mr. Lowell says, “managed to combine the charm of unpremeditated discourse with the visible existence of carefully written manuscript lying before him on the desk; and while reciting an oration strictly committed to memory, he had the air of fetching inspiration from the clouds.” If these were artifices, they did not seem so. A shrewd judge, Anthony Trollope, was particularly struck with the note of sincerity in Emerson when he heard him address a large meeting during the Civil War. Not only was the speaker terse, perspicuous, and practical to a degree amazing to Mr. Trollope's preconceived notions, but he commanded his hearers' respect by the frankness of his dealing with them. “You make much of the American eagle,” he said, “you do well. But beware of the American peacock.” When shortly afterwards Mr. Trollope heard the consummate rhetorician, Edward Everett, he discerned at once that oratory was an end with him, instead of, as with Emerson, a means. “He was neither bold nor honest, as Emerson had been,” and the people knew that while pretending to lead them he was led by them.

Emerson was a connoisseur in style, and said there never had been a time when he would have refused the offer of a professorship of rhetoric at his Alma Mater. The secret of his own method is incommunicable; for it is even truer in

his case than in Carlyle's that the style is the man. To write as Emerson, one must be an Emerson. His precepts, nevertheless, may be studied by artists in all literary manners. They seem especially aimed at the crying sin of nineteenth-century authorship, its diffuseness. He insisted on the importance of "the science of omitting, which exalts every syllable." A good writer must convey the feeling of "chemic selection" as well as of "flamboyant richness." One practical counsel is to read aloud what you have written to discover what sentences drag. "Blot them out and read again, and you will find what words drag. If you use a word for a fraction of its meaning, it must drag. It is like a pebble inserted in a mosaic. Blot out the superlatives, the negatives, the dismals, the adjectives, and *very*. And, finally, see that you have not omitted the word which the piece was written to state." In the controversy between classic and romantic art, he took the side of the former, which seemed to him organic, while romanticism appeared capricious. But he did not regard this as a question between ancients and moderns; the antique was always with us.

The discourses of these later years form three volumes, "Conduct of Life" (1860); "Society and Solitude" (1870); "Letters and Social Aims" (1875); the latter collection pieced together in Emerson's old age with Mr. Cabot's aid, by combining passages selected from different lectures, so slight was the logical connection of Emerson's thought. These writings indicate a period of diminished mental activity, but not of decay. They may be compared in this respect to the later works of Wordsworth. The author is not mechanically repeating the inspirations of happier hours, still less endeavoring to simulate originality by extravagance; he has simply, finding his voice less dominant from the summit than of old, compensated for its diminished resonance by a closer approach to his audience. He has not, as he says Shakespeare or Franklin would have done (and Lincoln did), given his wisdom a comic form to attract his Western audiences, but he has descended from the shining heights, and discourses from an ordinary platform with

even more calmness and self-possession, if with less of mystic rapture and oracular depth. The burden of his message is ever the same, the all-pervading Deity, the one human soul in every breast, the universality of spiritual laws, the exact correspondence of the moral and material worlds, the inexorable impartiality of Nature, the impossibility of stealing a march on eternal justice, the duty of man to yield up his egotism to the universal Soul, and walk by the inward light. But the joy of discovery is over ; instead of the seer, we have the man of practical experience vouching for him. Emerson the old beholds the work of Emerson the young, and finds it very good. Not a precept of the latter but has stood the test. If Emerson had written nothing else than these discourses, his reputation would never have existed ; if he had not written them, it would have lacked one pledge of stability.

The father of the Samnite general who had taken the Roman legions in a trap, advised him either to kill them all or to dismiss them without conditions. This seems the world's alternative, the former method for choice. But if the genius will not be killed he suddenly finds himself adored for work often far inferior to that of his neglected prime. As it befell Carlyle, Browning, Mill, so it befell Emerson. It had taken years to exhaust a small edition of "Nature" ; "The Dial" had been given away or destroyed ; he had written in 1859, "I have not now one disciple" ; but in 1860 not a copy of the "Conduct of Life" could be had within two days after the publication of the book. So rapid a sale precluded any deliberate verdict on its merits, and was in fact not a tribute to the book, but to the author, who might in a sense be said to have lived and written only for these forty-eight hours. Fame had at last overtaken desert, and even outrun her ; for, excellent as Emerson's later works still are, they want inspiration. The tersest of writers shows some symptoms of garrulity, and unconsciously evades the trouble of original composition by a free recourse to anecdote. It is also significant that, with great occasional exceptions, like "The Sovereignty of Ethics," and "The Preacher," he has least to say upon the loftiest themes. He

writes better on wealth, culture, eloquence ; than on poetry, imagination, immortality. When, as is sometimes the case, grandeur is attained in these later writings, it is not the sublime of poetry, but of ethic. "Every man takes care that his neighbor shall not cheat him. But a day comes when he begins to care that he do not cheat his neighbor. Then all goes well. He has changed his market-cart into a chariot of the sun." A thought still more pithily embodied in the precept : "Hitch your waggon to a star."

In 1867 Emerson published "May Day," the most elaborate of his longer poems. In essentials it resembles "Wood Notes," "Monadnoc," and the other earlier pieces in which he had striven to merge his own individuality in Nature's, and to identify himself with the life that "sleeps in the stone, dreams in the plant, wakes in the animal." It exhibits a decided advance on these effusions, being nearly free from harshnesses and obscurities, while the poet's absorption into the general life of Nature is even more complete. Nothing can more perfectly express the intoxication of fine spring weather hurrying the minstrel, sometimes dropping a rhyme in his speed, along in the general frolic of dithyrambic joy:

"Where shall we keep the holiday ;
And duly greet the entering May ?
For strait and low our cottage doors,
And all unmeet our carpet floors ;
Nor spacious court nor monarch's hall
Suffice to hold the festival.
Up and away ! where haughty woods
Front the liberated floods :
We will climb the broad-backed hills,
Hear the uproar of their joy ;
We will mark the leap and gleams
Of the new-delivered streams,
And the murmuring rivers of sap
Mount in the pipes of the treen,
Giddy with day, to the topmost spire

Which for a spike of tender green
Bartered its powdery cap ;
And the colors of joy in the bird,
And the love in its carol heard ;
Frog and lizard in holiday coats,
And turtle brave in his golden spots.
We will hear the tiny roar
Of the insects evermore,
While cheerful cries of crag and plain
Reply to the thunder of river and main."

From the sensuous revel of teeming life and reckless energy the poet ascends by many passages of beautiful natural description to the spiritual conception of Spring as the earthly type of the renovation of the soul :

" Under gentle types, my Spring
Masks the might of Nature's King,
An energy that searches thorough,
From Chaos to the dawning morrow,
Into all our human plight,
The soul's pilgrimage and flight ;
In city or in solitude,
Step by step, lifts bad to good ;
Without halting, without rest,
Lifting Better up to Best ;
Planting seeds of knowledge pure,
Through earth to ripen, through heaven endure."

The chief defect of this rapturous and most melodious poem, after its occasional looseness of metrical and grammatical construction, is Emerson's usual fault of want of symmetry and coherence, obscuring the development of the thought, which, without this abruptness, would appear apt and natural.

We must travel far back to record the decease of Emerson's venerable mother, who, beautiful in her death as in her life, softly faded out of the world in November, 1853. We

have ourselves spoken with those who lovingly remember her gentleness and gentlewomanliness, her sweetness of manner and of voice. No other domestic event is recorded until the marriage of Emerson's youngest daughter, Edith, in 1865, to Colonel William N. Forbes—an auspicious union, which in time placed Emerson above pecuniary anxiety, through the prudent management of his son-in-law. Public honors, meanwhile, were falling fast upon him. In 1863 he was appointed one of the visitors to the Military Academy at West Point, where he attracted attention by his eager curiosity. In 1866 he received the degree of LL.D. from his university, and in 1867 he was chosen orator on Phi Beta Kappa day, “as he had been thirty years before,” Mr. Cabot reminds us, “but not now as a promising young beginner, from whom a fair poetical speech might be expected, but as the foremost man of letters of New England. He served from 1867 to 1879 on the Board of Overseers of the University, basking contentedly in the grateful academical environment, but taking little active part in the administration. Once he is recorded to have interfered decidedly, when his casting vote defeated a proposal for exempting the students from compulsory attendance at morning prayers. He would not, he said, deny the young men the opportunity of assuming once a day the noblest attitude man is capable of, that of prayer. In 1870 he delivered a course of sixteen lectures at the University on “The Natural History of the Intellect,” “which I know the experts in philosophy will not praise; but I have the fancy that a realist is a good corrector of formalism.” His mind, it is probable, had always been too unsystematic for such a task, and he was by this time incapable of any sustained intellectual effort. He fell back on old material, the most recent being the lectures on “Philosophy for the People,” delivered in 1866, and summarized in Mr. Cabot's biography. These seem to have teemed with acute and penetrating remarks, but to have been at most a very modest contribution to so great a theme as the natural history of the intellect. Young in heart as ever, Emerson perceived that he had grown old in faculty,

and yielded a cheerful submission to the inevitable dispensation in his swan-song, "Terminus":

"It is time to be old,
To take in sail :—
The god of bounds
Who sets to sea a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said : 'No more!
No father spread
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.
Fancy departs : no more invent,
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent.
There's not enough for this and that,
Make thy option which of two;
Economise the failing river,
Not the less revere the Giver,
Leave the many and hold the few.
Timely wise accept the terms,
Soften the fall with wary foot;

A little while
Still plan and smile,
And, fault of novel germs,
Mature the unfallen fruit.'

As a birds 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."

Emerson might now say, "Good-by, proud world, I'm going home," in another sense than when in his youth he

played hide-and-seek with the world in the whortleberry bushes. A repetition of the 1870 course of lectures in 1871 had greatly tried him. Sixty-four miles travel weekly, with intellectual mischief, as he nervously fancied, at the end of it. "I have," he tells Carlyle, "abundance of good reading, and some honest writing on the leading topics, but in haste and confusion they are misplaced and spoiled. I hope the ruin of no young man's soul will here or hereafter be charged to me as having wasted his time or confounded his reason." A kind friend, John M. Forbes, the father of his son-in-law, came to the rescue by carrying him off, April, 1871, as one of a party of twelve bound on a trip to California. Mr. Thayer, one of the travelers, has recorded the incidents of the excursion, and preserved morsels of Emerson's conversation. Emerson had brought with him the manuscript of "Parnassus," a selection of poetry he was then preparing for the press; and the circumstance made his talk run much upon the poets. "'Faust' was a destructive poem, it lacked affirmation, he did not like it." The second part he knew but imperfectly. He had observed the peculiarity of the versification of Shakespeare's "Henry the Eighth," and wished for more light on the problem of its authorship. The coarseness, as he severely called it, of the Decameron was made tolerable, not only by the grace and purity of the language, but by its being steeped in Italian nature, physical and moral. Machiavelli, he said, wrote like the Devil, uttering his infernal sentiments with as much sweetness and coolness as if they were summer air. Wordsworth and Tennyson were quoted with high praise: he admired the quality of William Morris's verse, but deplored its quantity. He spoke highly of Byron as an efficient poet, observing "there is a sort of scenic and general luck about him." Imagination was the solemn act of the soul in believing that things have a spiritual significance. People had been to him with scruples about the name of Christian, which he did not share. He was as willing to be called Christian as Platonist or Republican. "It did not bind him to what he did not like. What was the use of going about and setting up a flag of negation?" There was

never, deposes Mr. Thayer, a more agreeable travelling companion; he was always accessible, cheerful, sympathetic, considerate, tolerant; and there was always that same respectful interest in those with whom he talked, even the humblest, which raised them in their own estimation. The incidents of the trip, indeed, were nowise trying to the temper. The almanac, Emerson told Carlyle, said April, but the day said June; the country was covered with greenhouse flowers, and every New England bird had a gayer counterpart. All California's lions roared for Emerson—the Yosemite cataract, the Sequoia grove, the sea-lions of San Francisco, and Brigham Young, now not again to roar for any one. But the crown of the journey was perhaps the “Alta California's” character of Emerson's discourse on immortality, repeated in San Francisco:—“All left the church feeling that an elegant tribute had been paid to the creative genius of the Great First Cause, and that a masterly use of the English language had contributed to that end.”

On the morning of July 24, 1872, Emerson was waked by the crackling of fire, and saw a light in the closet, which was next the chimney. Unable to reach the fire, he ran down partly dressed to the front gate, and called for help. His cries were heard, the neighbors came running from all sides, but the wooden tenement could not be saved. Books, manuscripts, and furniture were almost entirely rescued by the clever promptitude of the townsmen. They were removed to the Court House, where a study was fitted up for Emerson; the houseless family found a refuge at the Manse, where he had lived before his marriage. He had taken cold, suffered for some days from an attack of low fever, and, attention being naturally drawn to the failure of memory from which he had already begun to suffer, this was commonly attributed to the shock, incorrectly in Mr. Cabot's opinion.

Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera. The glory of the United States is public spirit: a feeling as finely displayed towards men of whom the country is proud as in the case of municipal improvements or charitable foundations. Americans set to work to repair Emerson's misfortune as they

would have addressed themselves to restore the Capitol. Mr. Francis Cabot Lowell called, chatted, and went away, leaving behind him a letter which was found to enclose a check for five thousand dollars, the gift of himself and a few others. Between eleven and twelve thousand dollars more were subscribed, conveyed to Emerson with perfect delicacy, and acknowledged by him with perfect grace. "The list of my benefactors," he said, "cannot be read with dry eyes or pronounced with articulate voice. I ought to be in high health to meet such a call on heart and mind, and not the thoughtless invalid I happen to be at present." He was indeed terribly shaken: his friends deemed a thorough change to the Old World desirable, and in October a thousand and twenty dollars more were presented to him for that purpose. "I am a lover of men," said Emerson, "but this recent wonderful experience of their tenderness surprises." Accompanied by his daughter Ellen, he sailed on October 28th—

"To see, before he died
The palms and temples of the South."

Egypt was his goal, but he passed through England, France, and Italy. In London he saw Carlyle, "who opened his arms and embraced me. We had a steady outpouring for two hours and more on persons, events, and opinions." "It's a happiness to see Emerson once more," said Carlyle. "But there's a great contrast between him and me. He seems very content with life, and takes much satisfaction in the world. It's a very striking and curious spectacle to behold a man in these days so confidently cheerful as Emerson." Though Emerson came from the land of Rip Van Winkle, he eulogized the good, strong sleep he got in England, and in general took things most easily throughout his tour, enjoying all the fine scenery that came in his way, and not going a step out of his way for anything. Egypt he found "good and gentle, if a little soporific. These colossal temples, scattered over hundreds of miles, say, like the Greek and like the Gothic piles, 'O ye men of the nine-

teenth century, here is something you cannot do, and must respect.' ” On his return he spent a pleasant fortnight with Mr. Russell Lowell in Paris ; and the list of new acquaintances he made in England includes Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Browning, and Mr. Ruskin. He thought Mr. Ruskin the model lecturer, but his pessimism worse than Carlyle's, for there was no laugh to clear the air. He went to Milton's grave, and inquired, “Do many come here?” “Yes, sir, Americans!” After visiting friends at Oxford, Stratford-on-Avon, and Durham, he fitly concluded his travel by two days spent under the roof of the oldest and staunchest of his English intimates, Mr. Alexander Ireland. Returning to Concord, a surprise awaited him. As the engine approached the station it sent forth a note of triumph, peals of bells responded from the town, and Emerson, escorted with music between files of smiling school-children, found his house rebuilt, and every book and every picture in its wonted place.

Emerson had long been a queened pawn ; he had advanced from a humble pulpit to a rostrum whence he could speak *urbi et orbi*. He was now something more, a public institution. All took a pride in him ; and wherever he went in his own part of the country he was tended by an invisible body-guard, vigilant lest the forgetful old man should take hurt in boat or car. He was deeply touched by the kindness of apparent strangers. “Perhaps there should not be the word stranger in any language,” he said. Englishmen had wished to assist in rebuilding his house, but he declined, feeling that his own countrymen had done enough. Scotch admirers nominated him for the Lord Rectorate of the University of Glasgow, where he was opposed by no less a competitor than Disraeli, and succumbed to the purer Caucasian. Carlyle had beaten Disraeli on a like occasion, but Carlyle was at hand to deliver a speech. He still occasionally wrote, or gave a public reading : in 1876 he went as far as Richmond to speak before the University of Virginia, unwilling to refuse an invitation which seemed like an overture of reconciliation to the North. His last books were “Parnassus,” an extensive selection of poems, published in

1874, including, it was thought, many pieces better adapted for recitation than for perusal; and the compilation from his later writings entitled "Letters and Social Aims." It had been promised to a London publisher when his powers were more equal to the tasks of selection, excision, and combination; for hardly any lecture appeared as originally delivered. His inability to fulfil his engagement was for long a sore trouble, of which he was relieved by the assistance of his future biographer, Mr. J. Elliot Cabot, whose self-denying spirit he had celebrated in the lines entitled "Forbearance":

"Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?
And loved so well a high behavior
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
Nobility more nobly to repay?
O be my friend, and teach me to be thine!"

After the completion of his task, Mr. Cabot would go up at intervals, so long as Emerson continued to read lectures, "for the purpose of getting ready new selections from his manuscripts, excerpting and compounding them as he had been in the habit of doing himself. There was no danger of disturbing the original order, for this was already gone past recovery." When thus engaged, Emerson would take him out for afternoon walks, or bring him into his study for a nocturnal chat—a bright ghost, the shadow of his former self, but sound in body, and retaining perfect clearness of ideas, only afflicted with failure of memory and a frequent inability to fit his speech to his thought. His conversation ran on happy themes, the progress and wonderful discoveries of the age, the admirable persons he had known from Channing downwards, the surprising virtue of the people of Concord, great and small. In one of his latest letters to Carlyle he says: "A number of young men are growing up here of high promise, and I compare gladly the social

poverty of my youth with the power on which these draw.' As late as 1878 he traversed the western part of the State of New York in a fruitless search for a young mechanic, who had written him a grateful letter, but had questioned his optimism. His last public appearance of importance was at the fiftieth anniversary of the Unitarian Church at Concord, New Hampshire, which was within one day of the same anniversary of his first marriage at that very church. He went to see the house in which his bride had lived, but could not find it. No wonder; it had, American fashion, been moved bodily, but existed still,—emblem of the speaker's faculty. He shared in the commemoration proceedings by reading a hymn, undisturbed by the difficulty he found in following the printed text.

Even in 1881 Emerson spoke on Carlyle's death before the Massachusetts Historical Society, and on "Aristocracy" before the Concord School of Philosophy. In this last year of his life we obtain a glimpse of him from Walt Whitman, who, on a visit to Mr. Sanborn, and afterwards at Emerson's own house, noted him as a silent but apparently attentive listener to conversation, "a good color in his face, eyes clear, with the well-known expression of sweetness, and the old, clear-peering aspect quite the same. A word or short phrase only when needed, and then almost always with a smile."

In February, 1882, Longfellow died, and Emerson, a friend of fifty years' standing, went to the funeral. "The gentleman who lies here was a beautiful soul," he said, "but I have forgotten his name." A few months before he had said to a visitor: "When one's wits begin to fail, it is time for the heavens to open and take him away." This aspiration was fulfilled on April 27, 1882, after a few days' illness from pneumonia. "In these last days in his study his thoughts often lost their connection, and he puzzled over familiar objects. But when his eyes fell on a portrait of Carlyle that was hanging on the wall, he said, with a smile of affection, "*That* is the man, my man." When confined to his bed, "he desired to see all who came. To his wife he spoke tenderly of their life together and her loving care

of him; they must now part, to meet again and part no more. Then he smiled and said, "Oh, that beautiful boy!"

Seldom had "the reaper whose name is Death" gathered such illustrious harvest as between December, 1880, and April, 1882. In the first month of this period George Eliot passed away, in the ensuing February Carlyle followed; in April Lord Beaconsfield died, deplored by his party, nor unregretted by his country; in February of the following year Longfellow was carried to the tomb; in April Rossetti was laid to rest by the sea, and the pavement of Westminster Abbey was disturbed to receive the dust of Darwin. And now Emerson lay down in death beside the painter of man and the searcher of Nature, the English-Oriental statesman, the poet of the plain man and the poet of the artist, and the prophet whose name is indissolubly linked with his own. All these men passed into Eternity laden with the spoils of Time, but of none of them could it be said, as of Emerson, that the most shining intellectual glory and the most potent intellectual force of a continent had departed along with him.

The man in Emerson is easily portrayed, not so the author. Other thinkers on his level have usually been more or less systematic. They have, in Emersonian phrase, "hitched their wagons," not to a star, but to a formula, to which their thoughts converge, and around which these may be grouped. But Emerson's want of system is the despair of the natural historian of philosophy, and if we place him rather upon the roll of poets, we are still unable to remove him from the roll of anomalies. Nor can the chronological method be applied to him. A literary activity extending over the third of a century usually implies development, modification, restatement and recantation, an earlier and a later manner. Emerson never sang a palinode, never made a new departure, took no old ideas back, and put no new ideas forward. He did indeed apply his principles more freely to politics and ordinary affairs; "chemic selection," moreover, gains more and more the upper hand of "flamboyant richness" in his later style. But with these abatements, and apart from the evidence of date occasionally af-

forded by historical allusions, he has left little that he might not have written at any time of his life.

Renouncing, therefore, the endeavor to give a connected view of Emerson's writings, we will briefly enumerate some of the respects in which he is most original and remarkable.

More than any of the other great writers of the age, he is a Voice. He is almost impersonal. He is pure from the taint of sect, clique, or party. He does not argue, but announces ; he speaks when the Spirit moves him, and not longer. Better than any contemporary, he exhibits the might of the spoken word. He helps us to understand the enigma how Confucius and Buddha and Socrates and greater teachers still should have produced such marvellous effects by mere oral utterance. Our modern instructors, for the most part, seem happily born in an age of print, and labor under singular obligations to Dr. Faustus. With Emerson the printing press seems an accident : he uses it because he finds it in his way, but he does not need it. He would have been a light of the age of Buddha or of Solon, as well as of ours.

He is a characteristically American voice. He precisely realizes the idea which the American scholar ought to set before him. American literature must not be feeble and imitative. But neither must it be conceited and defiant, a rebel against rules founded in the eternal fitness of things. Emerson's attitude is perfect, manly and independent, slightly assertive, as becomes the spokesman of a literature on its trial. "Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have given ; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon, were only young men in libraries when they wrote those books." He puts the Old World under contribution ; he is full of verbal indebtedness to its philosophers and poets ; but what he borrows, that he can repay. His thoughts continually repeat Plato and Goethe ; but every competent reader perceives that it is a case of affinity, not of appropriation. Poetical and religious minds will think alike : it would nevertheless have made little real difference to Emerson if Plato and Goethe had never lived. But it would have made a great difference to this American

if Washington had never lived. He was thoroughly possessed with the ideas of the Declaration of Independence, and when some one sneered at them as "glittering generalities"—"Glittering generalities!" cried Emerson indignantly, "they are blazing ubiquities!"

Further, Emerson is an important figure in American literature, as continuing, supplementing, and combining two of the principal among American thinkers, parted but for him by an immeasurable abyss. It will have sufficiently appeared from the citations already made that Emerson's thought rests upon two sure pillars—God and man—God, "re-appearing with all his parts in every moss and cobweb;" Man's soul "calling the light its own, and feeling that the grass grows and the stone falls by a law inferior to and dependent on its nature." The first is the idea of the greatest of New England reasoners, Jonathan Edwards, the Spinoza of Calvinism. "God and real existence," said Edwards, "are the same." "God is, and there is none else." As, however, he retained all the tenets of Calvinism, "he is," says Mr. Leslie Stephen, "in the singular position of a Pantheist who yet regards all nature as alienated from God. Clearing away the crust of ancient superstition, we may still find in Edwards writings a system of morality as ennobling, and a theory of the universe as elevating, as can be discovered in any theology." This "clearing away" was the very operation which Emerson, whose study may have been but little in Jonathan Edwards, did nevertheless virtually perform on his system :

"He threw away the worser part of it,
And lived the purer with the other half."

His connection with Channing on the side of humanity is as intimate as his connection with Edwards on the side of Divinity, and his obligation is far more direct and personal. The special distinction of Channing is his enthusiastic assertion of the dignity of man, a mean animal in the estimation of most theologians. Emerson, as we have seen, thought that he owed little to Channing's conversation, but he im-

bibed the speaker's spirit at every pore. His magnificent claims for man as the organ of the Universal Soul are but Channing's humanitarianism quickened and sublimed by alliance with Edward's Pantheism. When Channing told George Combe that "he did not think much intellect was necessary to discover truth; all that was wanted was an earnest love of it; seek for it, and it comes of itself somehow," he gave Emerson a text to "write large." "The soul is in her native realm, and it is wider than space, older than time, wider than hope, rich as love. Pusillanimity and fear she refuses with a beautiful scorn; they are not for her who putteth on her coronation robes, and goes out through universal love to universal power."

Next to religion, morals. Here Emerson's special characteristics are manifold. The most important are summed up in Matthew Arnold's brief and exquisite character of him as "The friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit." Arnold compares him to Marcus Aurelius, to whom the same character is equally applicable. Mr. Thayer, nevertheless, is right in observing that Emerson is Aurelius and something more. "Marcus Aurelius was not a man possessed. Emerson was. His morals are not merely morals, they are morals on fire." Add to this that Aurelius is not an optimist: or at most his optimism is that of acquiescence and resignation; while Emerson's is that of the morning stars singing together, and the sons of God shouting for joy. His faith (for, after all, optimism is a plain inference from the existence of God) has brought upon him more objugation than all his heresies. Mr. Morley, to whom death is "a terrifying phantom" and life "a piteous part in a vast drama," naturally finds "his eyes sealed to at least one-half of the actualities of nature and the gruesome possibilities of things." As regards the "possibilities," Emerson would perhaps have replied by his own stanza:

"Some of your ills you have cured,
And the sharpest you still have survived;
But what torments of pain you endured
From the evils that never arrived!"

As respects the "actualities," the case is stronger, but Emerson never said that all existing things were the best, but that they were for the best. He insists that all things gravitate towards the good, and that this progression is infinite ; which, if we look back only as far as the time when the worm first essayed " to mount the spires of form," seems an irrefragable conclusion. From the moral indifference often justly chargeable upon optimists of Oriental type, Emerson is protected by the Marcus Aurelius element in his constitution. He cannot be accused of making the ways of virtue too easy. His writings are full of the loftiest lessons of renunciation. He it was who wrote :

" Though love repine and reason chafe,
 There came a voice without reply :—
 'Tis man's perdition to be safe,
 When for the truth he ought to die."

" It is in vain," he says, " to make a paradise, but for good men. The resources of America and its future will be immense only to wise and virtuous men." " When you shall say," he warns the scholar, " as others do, so will I ; I renounce, I am sorry for it, my early visions ; I must eat the good of the land, and let learning and romantic expectations go until a more convenient season : then dies the man in you ; then once more perish the buds of art, and poetry, and science, as they have done already in a thousand thousand men." " The man," he says elsewhere, " who renounces himself, comes to himself."

Politics, being but applied morals, come next under review : and here too Emerson was original and significant. Like Carlyle, he was in this department very weak as well as very strong : and even his strength was chiefly as a protest against certain evil tendencies of his day. Carlyle's paradoxical glorification of despotism had the merit of forcing into strong relief the most pernicious features of the time, the cowardice of rulers, the weakness of authority, the general disposition to make words do duty for deeds. Emerson's extreme assertion of individual right, which

would have logically resulted in the dissolution of the State, was still valuable as a counteractive of one of the most mischievous features of American politics, the tendency to swamp all individuality in party organization, controlled in the last resort by the cunning and the base. Emerson himself came to see that "easy good-nature had been the dangerous foible of the Republic." This admission is from his oration on the death of President Lincoln: the peroration of which is one of the best instances of the grandeur he attains when, rising above the local and temporary in politics, he deals with the essential and eternal:—

"The ancients believed in a serene and beautiful Genius which ruled in the affairs of nations, which, with a slow but stern justice, carried forward the fortunes of certain chosen houses, weeding out sinful offenders or offending families, and securing at last the firm prosperity of the favorites of heaven. It was too narrow a view of the eternal Nemesis. There is a serene providence which rules the fate of nations, which makes little account of time, little of one generation or race, makes no account of disasters, conquers alike by what is called defeat or what is called victory, thrusts aside enemy and obstruction, crushes everything immoral as inhuman, and obtains the ultimate triumph of the best race by the sacrifice of everything which resists the moral laws of the world. It makes its own instruments, creates the man of the time, trains him in poverty, inspires his genius, and arms him for his task. It has given every race its own talent, and ordains that only that race which combines perfectly with the virtues of all shall endure."

This maxim of the one special faculty of each race and each man was a favorite one with Emerson. "A man," he says, "is like a bit of Labrador spar, which has no lustre as you turn it in your hand until you come to a particular angle, then it shows deep and beautiful colors." The illustration conducts us to the field of science, where Emerson's position is again exceptional, and this time of the very strongest. He fills the place which Goethe's death had left

void, of a poet divining the secrets of nature by his instincts of beauty and religion. The gates of the temple of modern science turn upon the two main hinges of his thought—real unity in seeming multiplicity; immanent, not external power. Of unity he says, "Each animal or vegetable form remembers the next inferior and predicts the next higher. There is one animal, one plant, one matter, and one force." Of Divine immanence:—"There is a kind of latent omniscience not only in every man, but in every particle. That convertibility we so admire in plants and animal structures, whereby the repairs and the ulterior uses are subserved, when one part is wounded, or deficient, by another; this self-help and self-creation proceed from the same original power which works remotely in grandest or meanest structures by the same design, works in lobster or mite, even as a wise man would if imprisoned in that poor form. 'Tis the effort of God, of the Supreme Intellect, in the extreme frontier of his universe." This is from one of his latest writings: in the earliest he had said: "The noblest ministry of Nature is to stand as the apparition of God. It is the organ through which the universal Spirit speaks to the individual, and strives to lead back the individual to it." No wonder that a natural philosopher who is also a poet—Professor Tyndall—should have written in his copy of "Nature," "Purchased by inspiration."

Nature glides into art by the pathway of beauty, by which art travels back to her. Emerson, as a writer, stands in this middle ground; he is rather a votary of the beautiful than an artist. From his preference for the classical over the romantic school, one would have expected to have found the sentiment of form strongly developed in him. On the contrary, few have been so incapable of fashioning a symmetrical whole. He does achieve it now and then in a short poem, but only by a sort of casual inspiration or mental miracle. His single thoughts are commonly beautifully moulded and exquisitely polished, but they are miniature wholes, not members of a great whole. He rarely tests his constructive faculty by the delineation of a character or the narrative of a sequence of events. What is peculiar to him,

and ample recompense for all his defects, is the atmosphere of diffused beauty in which his works lie bathed. They glimmer with a magical light, like twilight air, or the waters of the Concord river in his own beautiful description : "As the flowing silver reached the clump of trees it darkened, and yet every wave celebrated its passage through the shade by one sparkle." This fluid, living, fluctuating beauty, by enveloping the entire composition, makes amends for the want of linked continuity of thought. An essay of his is like a piece of lustrous silk, it changes as the light falls upon it ; now one piece chiefly charming, now another ; in a flat mind the whole disappoints ; in a genial mood one would say to Emerson, with Emerson :

"Thou can'st 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."

This general investiture of loveliness is unfavorable to sustained eloquence. When Emerson essays high-wrought passages they are apt to die away, or rather to melt into a lower strain by such gentle gradations that you must look up to see how far you have come down. His isolated fine sayings may be counted and rated like gems : but the pervading beauty of his work has the character which he too absolutely attributes to all beauty ; it is "like opaline doves'-neck lustres, hovering and evanescent." "There is nothing so wonderful in any particular landscape as the necessity of being beautiful under which every landscape lies." This peculiarity makes it difficult to assay and appraise him by quotation ; the water in the vase never seems quite the same as the water in the spring. So far as the charm of his style is communicable, it seems to reside in his instinct for selecting the words which wear the most witching aspect, call up the fairest associations, and most adorn the matter in hand. There could not be a happier instance of "proper words in proper places," than the first two sentences of the address at the Cambridge Divinity School,

delivered, be it observed, in June: "In this refulgent summer it has been a luxury to draw the breath of life. The grass grows, the buds burst, the meadow is spotted with fire and gold in the tint of flowers." Any other epithet than *refulgent* would have been a misfit. What effect, too, is conferred upon a simple catalogue of natural phenomena by perfect propriety of diction, every word beautiful, and every word right!

"It seems as if the day was not wholly profane in which we have given heed to some natural object. The fall of snowflakes in a still air, preserving to each crystal its perfect form; the blowing of sleet over a wide sheet of water, and over plains; the waving ryefield; the mimic waving of acres of houstonia, whose innumerable florets whiten and ripple before the eye; the reflections of trees and flowers in glassy lakes; the musical, steaming, odorous south wind, which converts all trees to wind-harps; the crackling and spurting of hemlock in the flames; or of pine logs, which yield glory to the walls and faces in the sitting room—these are the music and pictures of the most ancient religion."

The subjective writer who imparts his own being freely to his reader—like Burns, or Shelley, or Carlyle, or Emerson—has this advantage over even greater writers—Homer, Shakespeare, Milton—whose themes lie outside themselves, that he can arouse personal affection, and a fond concern for the perpetuity of his fame. "Love," says Emerson, "prays. It makes covenants with Eternal Power in behalf of this dear mate." Throughout Emerson's writings there is not a hint of his subjection to "the last infirmity of noble minds," but it is an infirmity which his lovers and friends must take upon themselves. One reflection occurs immediately: he can never get beyond the English language. He has been excellently translated into German, and even into Italian: it is, perhaps, within the resources of French prose to provide a better translation still. But no merely French, or German, or Italian reader will have the least notion of the magic of his diction: hardly even will the foreigner well versed in English enjoy him to the full. As regards the

durability of his reputation with the English race, Emerson, like most of the great moderns who have written much and lived long, stands in his own light. No more than Goethe, than Wordsworth, than Hugo, has he given us only of his best. The tribunal of letters looks grave, in the persons of Mr. John Morley and of Matthew Arnold. "There are pages," says the former quite truly, "which remain mere abracadabra, incomprehensible and worthless." And even the good is faulty, observes Arnold, with equal truth. Emerson's diction wants "the requisite wholeness of good tissue." Yet even these accusing angels became compurgators, and dismiss Emerson with a passport to posterity. Another kind of immortality, perhaps the only kind which he greatly valued, is his already. He is incorporated with the moral consciousness of his nation. "His essential teaching," says Professor Norton, in a letter to the writer, "has become part of the unconsciously acquired creed of every young American of good and gracious nature." If more is to be claimed for Emerson, as it well may, we should rest the claim, apart from his literary worth, on his impersonation of one of the main tendencies of his time, and his rebuke of another. This is an age of science, and science has found no such literary interpreter as Emerson. Not only, says Professor Tyndall, is Emerson's religious sense entirely undaunted by the discoveries of science; but all such discoveries he comprehends and assimilates. "By Emerson scientific conceptions are continually transmuted into the finer forms and warmer hues of an ideal world." While thus in sympathy with his age where it is right, he is against it where it is wrong. It has, as a whole, made the capital mistake of putting happiness before righteousness. Utilitarianism has begotten effeminacy, and effeminacy discontent, and discontent despair. Posterity will see in Emerson one man valiant and manly in a repining age. A lesser man might earn greatness thus. The story is told of shipwrecked mariners on a rock relieved from fear when the lightning-flash revealed a humble tuft of samphire, for the samphire is never covered by sea-water. Welcome in such a plight the obscure weed, much more the brilliant flower.

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