THE

ESSAYS OF AN OPTIMIST.

BY

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TO THE FRIENDS

WHOSE UNFAILING KINDNESS HAS SUSTAINED THROUGH LIFE

MY FAITH IN MY FELLOW-MEN,

This Little Book

IS GRATEFULLY AND LOVINGLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

THE papers now gathered together in this volume have been composed at intervals during the last ten years, and have been published in the *Cornhill Magazine*. They have been mostly written at times when I have been separated from the materials of my graver work, from books and documents and piles of correspondence; written in country inns, or seaside lodgings, or other strange places far away from home; when I have wished not to be quite idle, but when I could not, if I would, have devoted myself to more substantial labors, and, very truthfully, I may add, when I would not if I could. They have been principally holiday-tasks, written by snatches, and sent off, piece by piece, as they were written—the loose thoughts of a loose thinker, desultory, discursive, pretending only to express in plain colloquial language some of the opinions and experiences of the writer on subjects within the range of our common sympathies.

I had no particular design when I wrote them. I did not purpose that, running on in one groove, they should illustrate any special philosophy. But on reperusing them, I have thought that there is a prevailing unity of sentiment in the Essays, which warrants the descriptive title which I have given to them; and not the less so, because this harmony is the result, not of any foregone intention, but of the spontaneous repetitions of the writer—those involuntary harpings upon the same string, which come from a settled faith in the truths which thus seek utterance in his pages. The doctrine is nothing more than that it is wise to look for good in everything, or, more closely to represent the name which I have chosen, to "make the best of it." There are some natures which recognize this truth unawares—which do not know it, do not think of it, but habitually feel it. To them it is a sentiment, not a doctrine. It expresses itself in the divine incense of thanksgiving to God, mingled with unfailing charity towards Man. It rises up heavenwards in great pæans of praise and love warm from the heart. For readers of this kind there is no need that Essays on Optimism should be written. But there are others to whom it may be profitable thus to be taught

to look ever for the bright side, alike of what comes from God and what comes from Man—to rejoice always in the unceasing goodness of the Almighty, and to discern good, wheresoever they can find it, in the lives of their neighbors. In this Optimism are included Faith, Hope, and Charity —all three. We cannot, therefore, go far wrong in cultivating it; and there is nothing that will add more to our happiness than its cultivation, singing and making melody in our hearts and giving thanks always for all things. It makes sunshine in shady places, and keeps us in an habitual state, not only of resignation, but of cheerfulness. It would be absurd to say that I do not know anything that reconciles us more to the trials and troubles of life than an assured belief that all things work together for our good; for there is nothing else that can reconcile us to them at all. There are few who do not recognize this truth in its general acceptation; but do they practically apply it to the details of life? "It conduces much," says old Jeremy Taylor, "to our content, if we pass by those things which happen to our trouble, and consider that which is pleasing and prosperous, that by the representation of the better the worse may be blotted out." And he

tells us how to do this, amidst all the chances and changes of life. There is a quaintness in some of his recommendations which may raise a smile; but there is not, on that account, less sound philosophy in them; and we may profitably ponder what he says.*

And then with respect to our faith in our fellowmen, it is surely pleasanter to believe than to doubt, even though belief may bring its troubles with it. We may sometimes be mistaken, sometimes deceived. All men are in the course of their lives. But what a balance of good is there on the other side! Let us think of those whom we have found truthful and honorable, tender and generous, who have stood by us through good report and evil report—who have succored us in adversity and made us rejoice in our distresses, because without such trials we should not have proved the strength and genuineness of their affection. And even to those who wrong us, our gratitude is due. For if we had no wrongs to endure we should have nothing to forgive; and the most godlike of all privileges would be denied to us.

But now that I have collected these articles,

* See the chapter on "Contentment" in the *Holy Living*, from which the passage in the text is taken.

read them all over again (mostly after a long interval of time), and revised them for the Press, I do not—though from time to time, as fugitive pieces, they have earned encouraging eulogies both from friends and strangers—feel at all sure that they are worthy of preservation in this volume. Assailed by these misgivings, I must confess that I have a personal feeling to gratify (I do not mind its being called *vanity*) in acknowledging the paternity of these papers, and endeavoring to obtain a few more readers for them. I have written some big books in my time, and I hope, if life be spared, to write some more. I was told, only the other day, by a very accomplished and learned friend, that I had just committed the grave mistake of writing one of the heaviest books ever written. On my expressing a modest regret that he had not been able to read it, he told me at once that he had not tried (and I never expect that he will try), but that it was a prodigious weight in his hands. I have got a fancy, therefore, to publish a little book, which will not be a burden to the flesh, and I hope not to the spirit, and so, perhaps, to find a score or two of readers, who have never ventured to make acquaintance with me in weighty historical volumes — friends, perhaps; perhaps

strangers, who will not turn aside from this light bundle of Essays on everyday topics as from a heavy work on a subject of no personal interest to themselves; whilst some, I hope, who have ventured on my bulkier efforts, will not be disinclined to follow me for a little space along new paths of inquiry. And if I should succeed either in making a new friend, or in pleasing an old one, through the help of this little volume, it will not have been published in vain.

I have appended to each of the Essays the date at which it was originally published; so that, if any acute reader should discern that on some points there are slight divergencies of opinion (I do not say that there are any) scattered over the entire work, he may see in the later utterance the riper experience, the more mature judgment of the writer. I have added a few notes, dated 1870, which refer rather to change of circumstances than to change of opinion, following the first publication of the Essays.

J. W. K.

PENGE, *October*, 1870.

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"He that hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who loses all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down on his little handful of thorns. Such a person is fit to bear Nero company in his funeral sorrow for the loss of one of Poppea's hairs, or help to mourn for Lesbia's sparrow; and because he loves it, he deserves to starve in the midst of plenty, and to want comfort whilst he is encircled with blessings."—*Jeremy Taylor.*

ESSAYS OF AN OPTIMIST.

HOLIDAYS.

IT is a blessed thought, all through the long work-day months of the early part of the year, that, if we only live long enough, we must drift into August. For with August comes to many toil-worn men—would that it came to all!—one of God's best gifts to man, a holiday. There is a lull in the mighty clatter of the machinery of life; the great wheels are still, or they gyrate slowly and noiselessly. How it happens, it is hard to say (and the harder the more you think about it, for man's wants and man's passions, which make work, are never still); but the Autumnal Sabbath comes round as surely as the shorter days and the yellower leaves; and from the great heart of the metropolis we go out in search of a cheerier life and a fresher atmosphere.

There is, doubtless, a special Providence decreeing this, so that even the delirium of kings, out of which come the wrestlings of nations, is for a time sub-

dued;* and thus the Nestors of the State are suffered, like meaner men, to grow young again in the heather and the turnip-field. The High Court of Parliament sets the example, removes itself from the sphere of our weekly prayers, and diffuses itself over vast expanses of country, in quest of new wisdom and new strength, and plentiful amusement, which is both. Then Justice takes the bandage from her eyes, lays down her scales, tucks up her flowing robes, and girds herself for a walking tour half-way over Europe with a pipe in her mouth. The Exchange quickly follows suit. Commerce grows a moustache, assumes the wideawake, goes sketching on the Rhine, and draws pictures of Ehrenbreitstein, instead of bills of exchange. And so we all pour ourselves out into the great reservoir of idleness; and we do our appointed work thereby more surely than if we plodded all the time at our desks.

We are coming to understand this, as a nation, better than we once did; but we have not yet so hearty an appreciation of the truth, but that a few reflections on the subject from an old fellow like

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* A decade has passed since this was written (in 1860), and the whirligig of time has brought in a terrible revenge. There now seems to be only a grim sarcasm in the simple words written ten years ago in such good faith and on what seemed to be the security of historical facts. But who will ever think, after this August of 1870, of the delirium of kings respecting the Holiday season?—(1870.)

myself may have their uses just on the verge of autumn. What I have to say is mainly in praise of holidays. I have a becoming sense of what is called the "dignity of labor," but, more than that, I believe that of all the blessings and benignities of life, work is verily the greatest. The bread which we earn by the sweat of the brow, and brain-sweat is therein included, is the sweetest that is ever eaten. A dull life, and one that I would not care to live, would be a life without labor. So patent, indeed, is this—so often has it been demonstrated—that men not born to work, make work for themselves. Not being harnessed by the iron hand of Necessity into the go-cart of daily labor, they harness themselves into go-carts of their own, and drag the burden after them as lustily as the rest. We envy one another blindly and ignorantly, neither knowing our neighbor's sorenesses and sufferings, nor rightly appreciating beatitudes of our own. We have all our joys and sorrows—God be praised for both!—and more equally dispensed than many care to acknowledge. Toil-worn men, indeed, will not readily believe that their hard, grinding work is foremost in the category of their blessings. They know it is very easy and very pleasant to be idle for a day, or for a week, perhaps for a month; but if they were to try a life of idleness they would find how hard a life it is. The wise physician, who recommended Locuples, as a remedy for all his aches and pains, his causeless

anxieties, his asperities of temper, the gloom and despondency of his whole life, "to live upon a shilling a day and earn it," probed the rich man's ailments to their very depths, and prescribed the only cure for such imaginary distempers. Let Locuples work and be happy. Locuples has, nowadays, some notion of this, and so he works, as I have said, of his own free will, turning legislator, and magistrate, and poor-law guardian, and colonel of volunteers, and lecturing to Mechanics' Institutes, and writing books, and getting profitable place, if he can, in the great omnibus of the State. And what can be wiser? For if there were no work for Locuples, there would be no holidays.

And as there can be no holidays without work, so ought there to be no work without holidays; the one, indeed, is the natural complement of the other. Labor and rest, in fitting proportions, are the conditions of healthy life. This everybody knows and admits. But there is a poor, weak, cowardly feeling often lurking in men's minds, which will not suffer them honestly to believe and to declare that it is as much the *duty* of man to rest as to labor. We are wont, in a sneaking, contemptible sort of way, to apologize for our holidays, as though they were no better than small sins, delinquencies, aberrations, to be compounded for by additional labor and self-denial. But, rightly considered, rest and amusement, or, in a word, holidays, are a substantive part of the "whole duty of

man;" and to neglect that duty, or to suffer others to neglect it, is no less a crime against our common manhood than to suffer our energies to run to waste in indifference and inaction, and to do nothing for ourselves or for mankind. Have we any right to over-eat ourselves, or to over-drink ourselves, or to over-anything-else ourselves? Then what right have we to overwork ourselves? "Moderate passions," says an old writer, "are the best expressions of humanity." Let there be moderation, then, even in the passion for work. We must not wear out this mighty tabernacle of the human frame, and this godlike intellect of man, by an unseemly demand on their resources. A very old proverb is that about the bow which is always bent; but it is not *so* old that men in this generation do not sometimes require to be reminded of it. The Chinese have another proverb to the effect that one day is as good as three, if you will only do the right thing at the right time. The Chinese are a wise people, and I hope that, when we go to war with them, we shall catch some of their wisdom. It is not the time that he bestows upon his work, but the system which he carries to it, and the energy which he infuses into it, that enable the workman to do his appointed business with success.

I carry, to the best of my poor ability, these little fancies of mine into the practice of daily life. I work as hard as I can. My friends are pleased sometimes to say, very kindly, that they wonder I

contrive to get through so much work. My answer, when the remark is made in my own presence, most frequently is, that I do contrive it by playing as much as I can. I am getting on in years, and I speak more of the past than of the present. But man is never too old to play, by himself or by proxy; and the vicarious disportings of advancing age are not the least of the pleasures and privileges of man. If we cannot stand up at Lord's to the catapultian bowling of this generation, mindful as we are of the times when Mr. Budd, not, perhaps, without some pardonable feelings of vanity derived from a consciousness of the perfect anatomy of his lower limbs, kept wicket and "lobbed" at the opposite stumps, in nankeen shorts and pink silk stockings,—if we cannot venture to compete with the athletes of different communities, who now go in for astonishing broad jumps, and high jumps, and hurdle-races, and puttings and pickings-up of stones, at various places of gregarious resort,—we can at all events look on, and let our ashes sparkle up from contact with the fires of younger men; and cry, *Vixi puellis*, etc., and live again in the energies of our boys.

And if I take a holiday myself, whenever I can, without injury to others, I am no less minded to give the young people, who serve under me in the department of her Majesty's government to which I am honored by belonging, a holiday whenever they ask for it. I do not find that they take more

holidays, or that they do less work than others, because I am willing to suit their convenience in such matters, exhorting them, indeed, to go abroad when the sun shines, and to disport themselves in a clear atmosphere. I have one or two famous cricketers among my young gentlemen, of whose exploits I am reasonably proud; and I am more than reconciled for any little inconvenience to which I may be subjected in their absence, if I see a good score opposite to their names in the papers next day. There are new occasions for holidays creeping in from that great volunteer movement which is now energizing the land. And, surely, one would be wanting in a becoming sense of loyalty towards our Sovereign Lady the Queen, to grudge a holiday to a lusty youth desirous of perfecting himself in the rifle-exercise, by which our enemies, if we have any, are to be grievously discomfited and overborne. I have heard it said that it is liable to abuse, and that rifle-practice may be a cover for worse practices, or a pretext for much unprofitable idling. And so is church-going, for the matter of that—and other excellent things, easily to be named—susceptible of this kind of abuse. But the primary reflection which this suggests to my mind is, that no one ought to need an excuse for taking a holiday. If society were rightly constituted, holidays in the abstract would be so respectable and so respected, that they could derive no additional gloss or dignity from any adven-

titious circumstance of rifle movement, or royal birthday, or that famous national institution, the great Derby race. I know no better reason for a holiday than that which we were wont to urge at school, namely, that it was a fine day, sometimes gaining our point by means of a Latin epistle, in prose or verse, to the doctor, with a good deal in it about *Phœbus resplendens*, *aura mitis*, and *pueri jocundi*. I am afraid that such a plea would not be considered admissible in the school which I now attend. But I have often thought, when I have seen from my official windows the bright morning sun burnishing the Victoria Tower and "Big Ben," that, if I were head-master, I should like to summon my boys, and say to them, "Now, then, out into the country, and enjoy yourselves;" and to put a placard on the door, "Gone for a holiday —back to-morrow."

It may be imputed to me, I know, by the enemies of holiday-making—whereof there are, I am afraid, thousands—that I am boasting only of giving holidays to servants not my own,—that I am lavish of other people's property. To this I am not minded to reply further than that I know what is best for her Majesty's service and for my own; and that in my own modest establishment the domestics are never denied a holiday when they ask for one, and often prompted to take one when they do not ask. It is a small matter for me to take my chop in Westminster on that day,

or to carry some sandwiches to the office in my pocket, that I may forego the parade of dinner, and emancipate Mary, Jane, and Martha for a day at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham,—an institution which, as an aid, not to say an incentive, to holiday-making, I hold in the highest esteem. Are they never to breathe the fresh air or to see the green leaves, because I pay them a yearly wage of from twelve to twenty pounds, and have some covenants with them on the score of tea and sugar? Are holidays only for heads of families —masters or mistresses, as the case may be—and for the dumb animals who serve them? There are those, I know, who think them sheer impertinences, and esteem it dire presumption in menials to ask for holidays, even to see their parents and their little brothers and sisters, a few miles off. Is the love of kindred to be denied to them no less than the love of nature? Can any one really hope to get good service out of reasonable beings by stifling their natural instincts and silencing the voice of their hearts? God be praised that there are some who think differently about obligations of this kind! There is my friend Loneyouchter, for example, the kindest of human beings, and one of the cleverest withal, who beat all his contemporaries, of whom I was one, in his younger days, with such facility that it was only to be likened to the case of "Eclipse first, and the rest nowhere;" he told me, the other day, in his pleasant villa, on

the summit of one of the Norwood hills, that he had given his servants "season-tickets" for the Crystal Palace. Whereupon, I honored the man, even more than I had done before. But mentioning the circumstance soon afterwards to a fair young girl, she described it as a "mad freak." It appeared to me to be the sanest thing that had recently been brought to my notice.

The sanest in all respects,—sanity itself, and the cause of sanity in others. For surely the *mens sana in corpore sano* is promoted by harmless entertainment of this kind; and health and cheerfulness are the very foundation-stones of good service. If we think of nothing else but of getting the largest possible amount of yearly work out of a human machine, we must take care not to keep it in motion from morning to night for three hundred and sixty-five days in the year. It has often surprised me that men, who in their dealings with the brute creation have so clear an understanding of this matter, should in their transactions with what horse-doctors somewhat disparagingly call "the human subject" exhibit so great a deficiency of common sense. Happening, a few weeks ago, to be traveling on the top of an omnibus bound for a railway-station in South Wales, I became the highly-interested auditor of an animated conversation between the driver of that public conveyance and two or three decently-dressed men on the seat behind him, who might

have been small farmers or bailiffs. The subject of discourse was primarily the sale and purchase of a certain fast-trotting mare, very celebrated upon the road. The price given and the sums offered at different times for the accomplished animal having been well discussed, and having elicited an amount of private information "on the best possible authority," such as would have done no discredit to the discussion of an important historical question, the properties and qualifications of the mare were brought under review. Hereupon some diversities of opinion arose; but there was wonderful agreement upon one point, namely, that the mare had been overworked, and that she must be turned out for a time to set her right on her legs again. Whether blistering would accomplish a perfect cure, or whether anything short of firing would do it, appeared to be an open question; but it was unanimously agreed that the holiday was the main thing. And from particulars, the company on the coach-top betook themselves to generals, and discoursed feelingly on the cruelty and folly of overworking a good horse, of keeping him always in harness, instead of turning him out sometimes to grass. To all of which I silently assented, for I remembered that I had once been "peccant in this kinde" myself, having ridden, in my younger and more thoughtless days, a willing horse to a remote railway-station and back again, a distance in all of some two-and-twenty miles, so

often without taking account of the strain upon the poor animal's system, that one day she suddenly, when many miles from any help, broke out into a profuse sweat, drooped her head, and never recovered. She fairly broke down in the midst of her work; and I never think of the fact now without shame and humiliation.

But I opine that it did me good,—that it taught me to think more seriously of my obligations to man and beast; for I believe that I never offended after this fashion again. I sympathized from my heart with all that was said on the subject by the travelers on the Welsh omnibus, in the simple quadrupedal sense wherein they were fain to consider it; but I wondered, at the same time, how it happens that, whilst the generality of mankind thoroughly understand the subject in this sense, there are so many able and amiable men unwilling or incompetent to apply the very obvious principle to the larger concerns of human life. It irks me to think that there are legions of excellent persons who would on no account overwork their horses,—who have a lively appreciation of the necessity of occasional weeks or months of rest,—who know that to grudge these periods of inactivity to their equine friends is, in proverbial phrase, "penny-wise and pound-foolish,"—but who have neither the same tender consciences nor the same shrewd sense to aid them in their relations with those who carry them along the highways and byways of

business and domestic life; masters who refuse that to their human dependents, in house or office, which they grant willingly to the "beasts which perish."

I had a friendly disputation on this subject the other day with my neighbor, Mr. Gallicap, a great Italian merchant in the city, a most worthy man, and the father of a very interesting family. I fear that I did not succeed in making him a convert to my views, but I know that I had the sympathies and best wishes of his sons and daughters, to say nothing of his amiable lady; and I was greatly encouraged by the earnest, intelligent face of little Carry Gallicap, who sat by and listened to the discourse with evident approbation of the sentiments I expressed. Indeed, I generally find that my younger auditors are heart and soul on my side. The argument employed upon the other was mainly that of the *laudator temporis acti.* There was not wont to be so much talk about holidays thirty or forty years ago. Young men went to their business early and returned late,—indeed, on foreign post-nights were often kept at their work till close upon midnight. If they were ill, they went home, and the heads of large houses were not wont to be illiberal to them. He had got on well enough in his younger days without holidays; why should he take them in his older? Why should not his sons do as their father had done before them? Why should they have shorter work-days, and fewer of

them, in the course of the year? And how was business to go on if every one went away?

To this I observed, deferentially, that "every one" was a strong word. And I ventured to allude to the system in force at the public offices, which provides for the continual presence of some efficient officer of a department, and yet enables every one to take his holiday at some time or other of the year;—a system which, as enabling juniors to feel their way to higher duties, has its uses in another sense. I alluded laughingly, too, to the famous saying of a certain great statesman, who alleged that he divided his business into three parts:—one part he did; another did itself; and the third was not done at all. But I perceived that public offices and public men were not held of much account by my opponent, and that my argument gained little or nothing by a reference to them. Indeed, he was pleased to observe that if his firm had done business after the manner of the public offices it would have been bankrupt long ago,—a proposition which I did not dispute, but which I could not admit to be convincing against holidays. Indeed, nothing could ever convince me that it is not the duty of every employer, great and small, to give his workmen a reasonable number of holidays in every year.

"And have they not," I may be asked,—"has not every workman in this Christian land fifty-two holidays in every year?" Truly, there is, for most of us, one holiday in every week,—one day, set

apart by God, and given to man to keep it holy. It is the holiest of all holy days,—a blessed day of rest; vouchsafed to us, apart from its spiritual uses, that we may recreate our exhausted energies. But "recreation," as it is popularly understood, is out of the category of orthodox things. Sunday is a day of routine,—the best of all possible routines, it is true,—but still we have our appointed duties; and my idea of a holiday is that we should be emancipated from all routine; that we should have no appointed duties. Besides, who can really enjoy Sunday, when the ghastly image of Monday peers over its quiet shoulder?

We have come now to look upon the word, in its ordinary acceptation, as something distinct altogether from its etymological meaning, and are wont to associate it with ideas rather of a Bohemian or vagabondizing kind of life, than of anything stationary and domestic. The right thing, indeed, is to "go out for a holiday;" to seek change of scene, and change of air, and change of action; to divest one's self of all the environments of work-day life; to enter, as it were, into a new state of being, as does the grub when he eventuates into a butterfly and spreads his wings in the summer air. Grateful, indeed, ought this generation to be for the benignant aid of steam, which affords unfailing facilities to holiday-makers seeking change of scene and air, carrying them to remote places within an hour's space, and suffering them to see hundreds of miles

of country, in a single day, for a few shillings. It is no small thing that in these times a toil-worn artisan may transport himself from the stifling alley or the reeking court in which he lives, to the fresh, breezy coast of Brighton, for half a crown, and be carried home again for nothing. Or if he is not minded to go so far afield, there is the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, or the royal palace at Hampton Court, or the Rye House, famous in history for its plot, to all of which he may make pleasant excursions at a small charge, and travel out of himself as thoroughly as though he were new-born, going back into a past or onward into a future age, and forgetting all the wearing toil and carking anxiety of the present. There is nothing pleasanter than the sight of a railway-train freighted with excursionists outward-bound, all radiant with the expectation of a day's pleasure. And such may be seen nowadays in the outskirts of every large town on summer and autumn mornings; for London has no monopoly of such blessings. If the South has its Brighton, the North has its Scarborough; and, indeed, it is easy everywhere to rush out of the smoke. I hear people who can take their month's holiday when they like, and travel by express-trains, and get up extensive outfits for the occasion, with all sorts of elaborate contrivances suggestive of nothing less than an expedition into Central Africa, sneer at these excursions, as things snobbish; but it seems

to me that the sneerers are the real snobs, and that I have seen, in first-class carriages, extensively got-up holiday-makers of both sexes, far more vulgar, because more pretentious, than the poor little Pippas of the silk-mills treated by their admiring swains to half a crown's worth of fresh air and green leaves in the pleasant country. And a ripe, rich comfort ought it to be to all who get their holidays regularly every year, without let or hinderance, and, perhaps, without injury to themselves and others, that the blessings which they enjoy are now within the reach of millions less favored by fortune than themselves. And I hope, too, that they who look up from the lower strata of society at people sleeker than themselves, in richer purple, and in finer linen, do not grudge them their holidays, and say, "What have they to do with such things? is not life all a holiday to them?" Indeed it is not, my friend. Purple and fine linen do not make holidays, any more than they make happiness. Let us rejoice in the enjoyments of each other. Let us shake hands over the blessed privilege of a few days' rest. Is it rest of body, or rest of mind? What matters! Bodily labor and mental labor both have their privileges, and both have their pains. Let us not envy —let us honor one another. If Hand goes to Rye House, and Head to Wiesbaden, for a holiday, let us hope that each is equally benefited by the change, and equally thankful for it.

If the real want, the need, of a holiday is to be measured by the enjoyment of it when it comes, I am sure that the upper ten thousand need it as much as any mechanics in the land. Belonging myself to the middle classes, I can answer for their appreciation, and I know that there is nothing keener. To dwellers in large towns, especially in this great overgrown Babylon of ours, there is a sense of enjoyment in the simple escape into the country, apart from the cessation of daily labor. How intensely are the first few days at the seaside enjoyed by all the members of a London family! I remember to have heard a dear little boy, some nine years old, on the green hillside of a Welsh watering-place, say to his father, as hand-in-hand they clomb the ascent, "Dear papa! this is so jolly, I can hardly believe it to be true." And papa responded heartily, as though he thought it with as much sincerity as his child. The first pink flush of air and exercise was on the little boy's delicate face, and his father's nose had already had a sunstroke (Why will Phœbus insist on assailing the noses of us Londoners before our cheeks?) such as is incidental to sudden exposure. It was plainly to be gathered, from the wideawake, the loose jacket, and the incipient moustache, that Paterfamilias was out for a month's holiday; but I was concerned to see, soon afterwards, that the month's holiday had like to be brought to a premature close by his injudicious temerity in

attempting to climb a rocky ascent by an insecure route, the surface of which, when midway to the summit, crumbled beneath his feet, and wellnigh precipitated him to the bottom. These are among the common incidents of the first days' holidays; we gain experience and caution as we advance.

I should have been minded, if time and space had permitted, to lay down in this place some rules for holiday-makers; but the circumstances and conditions are so various that it would take rather a small volume than the page or two at my disposal to legislate for such numerous diversities. To one man the best conditions of a holiday are solitary traveling and perfect independence; another is fain to take with him wife and children, and all belongings; a third affects the companionship of a comrade or two, masculine and muscular, who can walk as many miles, smoke as many cigars, and drink as much Bass as himself. Jones takes a moor in Scotland; Johnson a preserve in Norfolk; Brown goes with Mrs. Brown and the little Browns to Scarborough; Robinson is off by himself into Wales, with a sketch-book in his pocket; and Jenkins departs with his young wife to the Rhineland, happy as a king. Much depends upon age, on health, on the bondage of our daily habits. Some eschew the "strenuous idleness" of holiday-making, and let the holiday take quiet possession of them. There are those who consider nothing so enjoyable as to spend a day in slippers,

in their wonted homes, turning over their books, reading old letters and papers, sauntering into the garden, wondering at the flowers, nibbling at the fruit,—in short, resting thoroughly from labor, and never thinking what the next hour or the next day is to produce. For my own part, I——well, no matter; some holidays are better than others, but all holidays are good.

I have had some grievous failures in my day—who has not? But I am not in the least discouraged by them. I went out for a walking tour in the Home Counties, and spent ten days looking out of the windows of bad hotels in fourth-rate towns, gazing at the inexhaustible rain. I shall never forget my visit to Llangollen, and the weather by which it was celebrated. I journeyed to the venerable cathedral-town of Salisbury, on a pilgrimage to my old school-house, and found an insignificant row of ten-pound cottages on its site. It was a sore disappointment to me, but there are always compensations. The march of time had not taken away the playing-field, in which we fought out desperate cricket-matches with the Town, recruited commonly with some of the best blood of the county. Nor had it taken away Keynes's nursery-gardens, now of world-wide reputation for their triumphs at rose-shows, nor the eternal "rings" of old Sarum, with their chalk and flint, their grassy banks, their yew-trees and snakes. Very pleasant to revisit these old haunts, but I

would have given much, after long years spent on alien soil, again to traverse those old school-rooms and eating-halls and dormitories, where I wrote bad verses, and ate good beef, and slept soundly in my boyhood. My experiences are replete with mischances of this kind. Every holiday-maker must be prepared for them. What matter? They are very disappointing whilst they last; but we have our holidays all the same. When bad weather sets steadily in, we are wont to say that we might as well have stayed at home; but we are ignorant and ungrateful when we say so. For, in truth, abstinence from work, liberation from the ordinary environments of daily life, familiarity with new sights and sounds, and the admission of new trains of thought, all confer upon us the benefits of a holiday, though the immediate enjoyment may be scant. We are better for it when we return. We may not be conscious of the gain, but it is no less certain. It finds us out years afterwards, and for every day of relaxation gives us another week or another month of work. Is there nothing in that, my friends? I have seen the strongest frames suddenly shattered,—the brightest intellects suddenly dimmed. And why? We know that God "rested" after his work; and shall human weakness dare to do without it? It is said to be a great and noble thing

"To scorn delights and live laborious days."

But the line, despite its paternity, is altogether the

greatest braggart and impostor that I know. If we would live laborious days, we must *not* scorn delights. It is by taking a full measure of

> "Delight in little things,—
> The buoyant child surviving in the man,"

that we are enabled to do our appointed work. Let us all hold fast to this. Let us have our harmless delights; let us have our rest; let us have our holidays.

Yes: here is dear old August come upon us, with its ripe harvests and its riper holidays; and let us welcome it with grateful hearts. You and I, dear reader, let us hope, have done seven months' good work this year; and shall we not be prepared to do some more good work, by-and-by, when we have played a little?

It is time now to be packing up. Think well about this matter, my friends. Don't start in a hurry. Leave no neglected duties behind to stare at you, with grim spectral aspects, at odd quiet times, when there is a lull in the excitement of travel. Many a holiday has been spoiled by disturbing recollections of something that ought to have been done or provided for before the hour of departure. A day or two may be well spent, therefore, in quiet, thoughtful preparation at home. Take your time about it, and go calmly. If you leave everything to the last moment and start in a fluster, your folly will be sure to find you out.

I have further matter of discourse; but I must lay down the pen, hopeful, however, that I may be heard again upon this or some cognate subject. My last word of advice to holiday-makers is, that they should never fail to remember that it is more blessed to give than to receive. If they would enjoy their own holidays thoroughly, and without any prickings of conscience, they must carry with them the pleasant reflection that, to the best of their ability, they have dispensed, and are prepared to dispense, the same blessed privilege to others. There are few of us, great or small, who have not in some measure the power of emancipating others. The little mouse in the fable, it will be remembered, released the great lion of the forest. The master is scarcely less dependent upon the servant for his holiday than the servant is upon the master. Let us all bear this in mind, and all help one another. A good, healthy feeling of this kind will do much to bridge over the awful chasm that yawns between the rich and the poor. Let us, then, encourage it to the utmost. This is the best advice an old fellow can give; and with it he may well close, reverentially, his plea for Holidays.

August, 1860.

WORK.

HAVING lately discoursed upon Holidays, and, as I have been pleased to find, with good acceptance from some indulgent friends, I am minded, now that November has come round upon us, to take WORK for my theme. Less alluring the present topic may be than its predecessor, but some delights may be gathered from it by those who seek them wisely; and there are few of us whom it does not concern. For, as I said of old, in other words, regard it properly, and Work is the substrate, or basis, of all our daily blessings, upon which lesser joys of divers kinds are built up by the Great Architect and Disposer; and without which there may be brief spasms and convulsions of excitement, which we may call pleasure, but no continuous happiness or content.

Wherefore, thank God, praise God, O my friends,—ye who are born to work, and have work to do. There are few of us who may not find it when they will, and for those few we may weep tears of compassion. Not on those who deceive themselves and would deceive others into the belief that they cannot find work to do, because misguided by a false sense of the true dignity of life

and a false measure of their own capacity,—silly worldlings who would drive the coursers of the Sun,—they strive to soar aloft, when nature has granted to them only to creep;—not on such vain tumors is our pity to be wasted. If they would consent to creep, they might creep nobly. All honest labor, be it the merest hand-work, brainless and mechanical drudgery, dignifies human life. Better is it to break stones or to turn a mangle than to do nothing. Good roads and clean linen are products of human industry which we need not be ashamed of having a hand in creating. Let us do the best we can If it be not permitted to us to do work of one kind, let us brace ourselves up for work of another. And to all of the great guild or brotherhood of workmen let us hold out a hand, —a hand of assistance, if need be; anyhow, a hand of fellowship. If the work be of much account in the world's eye, let us be thankful; if of little, let us be content. "All service ranks the same with God."—Let us rejoice that we are permitted to serve, whether at the council-board of the nation, at the head of a regiment of horse, or only behind a counter.

This is not novel doctrine; yet it needs to be enforced at odd times, lest the truth of it should pass out of remembrance. Even as I write, a newspaper lies before me, in which there is a passage headed "Romantic Suicide," which relates how "a fine young man, named Arsène, lately

hanged himself in his master's house, near Paris." His only quarrel with the world was that cruel fate had condemned him to be a grocer. He left behind him a memorandum, bewailing his hard lot, and beseeching his parents "to erect a simple tombstone to his memory, and to inscribe upon it these words—'Born to be a man; died a grocer.'" Now, the plain truth is that he was not born to be a man; if he had been, he would have *lived* a grocer. The manliest thing that I know in this world is to do your duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call you; and if you have been called to grocery, why not? There are many callings without which the world could do better than without grocers. Strive, then, to be a good grocer. A good grocer is any day better than a bad poet. This silly Arsène, who hanged himself, wrote, "I remember to have read somewhere that a man should apply his intelligence to be useful to humanity, and as I see I shall never be fit for anything but to weigh cheese and dried plums, I have made up my mind to go to another world, which I have heard of, and see whether there may not be a place for me there." A place, doubtless; according to the faith of the silly grocerling, a "Purgatory of Suicides," in which he will be condemned to ceaseless plum-weighings, and out of which he will in no wise be suffered to escape, until he has subdued his soul to a right sense of the dignity of plum-weighing as an appointed duty,

and of the utility of the calling to the world. "Useful to humanity"! O Arsène! who is not useful, if you are not, Monsieur L'Épicier? On my honor as a gentleman, I could no more write these lines, but for the early cup of coffee wherewith I am refreshing myself in the quiet of the morning ere the house is astir, than I could pen another *Iliad*. And what if, my toilet accomplished, I were to descend to the breakfast-room and find there no tea, and no sugar?—what of my equanimity for the rest of the day? Is it anything to me in this remote country town, in the neighborhood of which I am sojourning for awhile, that there are wise men and erudite scholars in the vicinity? I do not ask, and I do not care. If Solon were to be my next-door neighbor, or Socrates my fellow-lodger, what better should I be for the proximity of all their sapience? But it is everything to me that there is a good grocer in the High Street,—that my daily wants, though they be not many, and plums are not my especial frailty, are adequately supplied. "Not useful to humanity"? I should like to know who *are* useful to humanity, if the grocer who keeps the shop in this little town, the assistant who weighs out the groceries, and the errand-boy who carries them to their several destinations, are *not* useful. Think of the panic in Castleton this morning if there were to be a gap in High Street, and "Figs—No. 9," with all his establishment and his stock-in-trade, were suddenly

to be missing; we should then know how useful he has been to us all.

It is, doubtless, in the remembrance of many, that among other wise things to be found in Mr. John Bunyan's popular volume is a description of *Vain-Hope*, the ferryman, who ferried *Ignorance* across the river. In a little doctrinal note, Mr. Bunyan sagaciously observes, "*Vain-Hope* ever dwells in the bosom of fools, and is ever ready to assist *Ignorance*." Now, what is here said in a spiritual sense is true also in worldly matters. Vain-Hope is ever ready, with the oar in his hand, to ferry Ignorance across the river of life. And what shoals they encounter on the passage! in what depths of mud they flounder on the banks! It has always been so, more or less; but it appears to me sometimes that this is an especial vice and danger of the age. We are, somehow or other, all of us waxed proud, and getting above our work; and what is to become of generations beyond us, if we go on at this rate, it is impossible to conjecture. What is most wanted is a strong ebb-tide to send us back again to the status of our grandsires, and to give us more lowly thoughts. Young men in these times think that they have "a soul beyond the shop;" and old men, I am afraid, are too prone to encourage the mischievous idea, and to turn their sons, who might be good tradesmen, into indifferent members of some "gentlemanly profession." But the gentlemanly professions are now

becoming so crowded and overstocked, and the difficulty of earning bare subsistence in them so increasingly great, that men of family and education are beginning to think whether they may not advantageously pick up for their sons the grocer's apron which young Figs has scornfully thrown aside, or the yard measure which Bombazine junior has broken across his knee.* I know some who would have done wisely had they thus stooped to conquer the great problem of the labor of life,—who, vainly looking for "gentlemanly" employment for their children, and scorning meaner but honorable work, which would have profitably occupied their time and elevated their character, as a sense of honest work and manly independence ever must elevate it, have suffered them to hang about billiard-rooms and stable-yards, until the young "gentlemen" have developed into something not much better than blacklegs and sharpers. Paterfamilias! Paterfamilias! think of this before 'tis too late. When you and I were little boys, our mothers were not too learned to recite to us the versicles of good Doctor Watts. They were of a good, homely, lasting quality, like our puerile corduroys; and as *Christian Years* and *Proverbial Philosophies* were not in those days, we were

* Since this was written, ten years ago, the good sense of the upper classes of English society, of the early developments of which I have here spoken, has more signally asserted itself. I have spoken incidentally of this in the essay on *Toleration*. (1870.)

content with both the poetry and the morality of the doctor's lyrics. Neither you nor I can remember the best passages in Tennyson's charming *Idylls*, delightedly as we read them last year. But our memory still clings, with grateful and affectionate tenacity, to the doctrine-freighted numbers which we lisped on the maternal knee. Many were the impressive truths which we learnt in those days,—truths often rendered doubly imposing to our dawning intelligence, by the striking facts in natural history (from bears and tigers down to busy bees) wherewith the poetical divine was wont to illustrate his metrical precepts; but none more firmly implanted in our minds than the fact that

> "Satan finds some mischief still
> For idle hands to do."

"Give your son a Bible and a calling," said another eminent divine. Write the words in letters of gold! Any calling is better than none: there is nothing surer than that. You would like to see your Harry fairly started for the Woolsack, your little Cecil steaming up to the other bank of the great river where lies the archiepiscopal palace of Lambeth, and your blue-eyed Ernest floating calmly into the viceregal precincts of the Government House at Calcutta. Well, I have my Harry, and my Cecil, and my Ernest; and I should like to see them, too, well ahead in the race for the Chancellor's wig, or the Primate's sleeves, or the

portfolio of the Governor-General; but I would sooner see them cutting planks in a saw-yard, or shouldering heavy luggage at a railway-station, than doing nothing, when they have come to a fitting age to do a good day's work for a good day's wage, and to earn their bread like honest gentlemen.

There is nothing like it in human life,—nothing at the same time so ennobling and so exhilarating. It braces a man like cold water: it invigorates him like iron and quinine. What a poor creature he is who has no work to do!—what a burden to himself and to others! Many a man's happiness has been blasted by the possession of an estate, and, if independence without work be a sore trouble, what must idleness be without independence! For a thoroughly idle man, you must not look in the high places of the earth. Your great lords and landed proprietors have commonly work to do. The management of a great estate, in spite of all intermediate agency of lawyers and stewards and bailiffs, is no light matter to the owner, whatever we, who have neither lands, nor houses, nor fat beeves, and live from hand to mouth by hard brain-work, may think upon the subject. My Lord Duke disappears into his sanctum, like meaner men, every morning after breakfast, when you think that he might be playing billiards, or shooting pheasants, or riding to the hounds. He is as much encumbered with his riches as we are with our poverty. Of both

lots hard work is the condition. Moreover, it is no small thing to be a legislator, whether by birthright or by election. Our laws are made, and our Public Service is presided over, by men of large estate, whether for the national good I know not, but assuredly for their own. And, indeed, when I come to think of the immense amount of harm that might be done by the thousand powerful noblemen and gentlemen whom our two Houses of Parliament gather up and absorb into the mass of laboring men, if they were left all the year round to their own devices, I can almost forgive the legislative errors and the administrative miscarriages to which they are prone. What mischief would Satan find for the idle hands of men with so much money in their pockets! Talk of wasted sessions, of unprofitable debates, of mighty deluges of words leading to nothing, and hint that Parliament is of no use! Of no use! Is there any industrial school in the whole kingdom of half so much use? any reformatory so potential for good? Surely an institution for keeping our great lords and landed gentry out of mischief is not to be made light of by any benevolent mind.

Large estates, in this sense, may be great blessings, as supplying work to the possessors; but small estates are commonly our bane. It is among the middle classes—the upper ranks of the middle classes—that men without work are mostly to be found. Say that a man is born to the possession

of, or that in mature age he inherits, an income of two thousand pounds a year. You wish yourself that man. Well,—I must confess my weakness,—I have wished it scores of times myself. *Cui bono?* Though a goodly sum to earn, it is not much to spend; but it is sufficient to invite idleness. The daily bread being found, there is no necessity to toil for it; so we eschew work if we are young, and we renounce work if we are old; and we live upon our property, gentlemen at ease. "At ease"! It seems to be an easy life to live upon a property that manages itself, and to have nothing to do but to spend your few modest thousands. Ah! but I have known men who have found it a very hard life; men who have envied the bricklayer as he built up anew the chimney blown down by the wind, or the glazier as he repaired the lights of the green-house broken by the last night's hail; men who have looked wistfully at the mortar and the putty, and longed for a job of work on a larger and a manlier scale than their principal daily occupation of mending their children's toys. Well, it is better to have a glue-pot simmering at your study-fire than to have no implement of work within your reach. But who can doubt that the bricklayer and the glazier are happier than the "man of property" for whom they are doing those humble strokes of work? Better that he had been articled to his uncle the lawyer, or that his money were invested in some laborious and anxious business that would

occupy his time and his thoughts; better anything that would give him a calling, than that he should dawdle out life as "a gentleman at large," so called, *lucus a non lucendo*, because he lives in the narrowest possible circle of life and has not a single enlarged idea to bless him.

There are some who may accept these praises of work only in a qualified or conditional sense. Under all circumstances of health or sickness, joy or sorrow, to be compelled to work is often said to be a grievous necessity, and many kind souls are moved to compassion by the thought of it. But there is a *vis medicatrix* in work as there is in nothing else; and most people owe more to it than they acknowledge, or even suspect. To me, it has always appeared to be the hardest necessity of all to work, when good health, and elastic spirits, and a general buoyancy of one's whole being, perpetually suggest play. Let us be up and about! The sun shines. The sky is clear. All nature is jocund. The tingling life within us prompts us to active movement, and we are eager to disport ourselves in the air. We would ride or walk, play at cricket, shoot, fish, pull an oar on the river,—anything that will give freedom to our limbs and freshness to our cheeks. But—the work must be done. Oh, my friends, then it is that the necessity is truly grievous, then it is that the struggle between inclination and duty rends the very soul of the workman. It is a terrible conflict, demanding

all the courage and resistance of a strong man to lead him along the path of victory. I assume that the work is work that ought to be done, and cannot without injury be delayed; else, these external invitations being but few in our ungenial climate, I might almost admit the wisdom of yielding to them. Does not God give us fine days that we, as well as the flowers and the harvest, may sun ourselves in them? Are light, and air, and heaven's warmth, only for the nurslings of the field and the garden? Are they not also for us, cradled inheritors of the world's common blessings? Truly, such obstinate questionings as these, when work would hold us down with an iron hand, are among our sorest temptations. It is hard to be chained to the desk—cabined, cribbed, confined within four dreary walls—when our hearts are throbbing and our limbs are twitching with desire to go far afield, and to "eat the air," as they phrase it in the emphatic language of the East. Sound health and buoyant spirits and the yearning after out-of-doors recreation which they induce, are the real aggravations of work, the disturbing influences which make us sometimes deplore that we are workmen.

But sickness and sorrow—how should we bear them, but for the work which we have to do? Writing of sickness, I shall not be understood to have in mind those mortal ailments which prostrate body and soul, and render work an impossibility, but of the lesser infirmities of our nature.

There are few really sound men among us. Sickness, in its less subduing form, is the common lot of us poor worldlings. But it is tolerable or intolerable just as we concern ourselves little or much about it. If we really knew the processes of derangement and decay which are going on within us,—if we could see all the several parts of our mortal machinery, and the disorders, organic or functional, which are impeding its right action, —verily the lives of many of us would be a long night of suffering and terror. There are pangs, and spasms, and tremors, and faintnesses, greater or less, afflicting us all day long. They all indicate some internal disorganization or disturbance; and if we have nothing to do but to dwell upon them—if we are continually asking ourselves what they mean—we soon shrivel into invalids, and become what we think ourselves. A busy man takes no heed of these slight promptings of infirmity. He tells you, perhaps, when you ask him how he is, that he really does not know,—that he has had no time to consider. So much, indeed, has the mind to do with our merely physical sensations, that many a man will bear witness to the fact, that when some good-natured friend has told him that he "is not looking well," he has begun at once to be conscious of some disturbance of the system of which he had had no knowledge before. I have heard men, too, contend against the expediency of holidays, on the ground that they never feel as well

during the vacation as when they are actively at work. I do not deny the fact; but I altogether dispute the inference. It does not follow that because we are more conscious of our infirmities at such times, therefore the cessation of labor is not profitable both to body and mind. Besides, who knows that the very sensations which oppress us at such seasons are not so many indications of a restorative process going on within us? Irritability is often a sign of a salutary reaction. Nature handles us a little roughly when she is setting us right.

And, only with a slight variation of phraseology, all this might truthfully be said with respect to moral ailments and disturbances. As with the body, so with the mind. We take no account of small troubles when we have much strenuous work in hand; and even great trials are softened down to us by an absorbing occupation. Whether, rightly considered, this, so far as the greater trials are concerned, be on the whole good for us, may be open to doubt.

> "He who lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend.
> Eternity mourns that: 'tis a bad cure
> For life's worst ills to have no time to feel them."*

This may be the higher philosophy. But, after all, we suffer more in the course of our lives from

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* Henry Taylor.

small troubles and disturbances which do us no good, than from the fiery trials which purify the soul. Against such lesser or imaginary grievances Work is verily a coat of mail; and I am not sure that because it gives us strength to bear more grievous afflictions it therefore deprives them of their salutary, chastening effects.

I know that there is such a thing as being "kept up by excitement." We do not know how we have torn and blistered our feet, till the toilsome journey is ended and we unloose the latchets of our shoes. There is a familiar story of a veteran cab-horse, that lived day and night in harness, because it had an awkward habit of dropping on its knees as the shafts were removed. There are men among us who live ever between the shafts, harnessed and braced up literally within an inch of their lives. Take them out of harness, and they drop. This is not a state of things to be tolerated, much less to be advocated. Very different are the conditions of healthy labor. There is no healthy labor without periods of rest. The insensibility to small troubles, which is a result of salutary work, is very different from the obliviousness of overwrought excitement.

It was once, I believe, a popular theory that men who work hard grow prematurely old and die before their time. But, whatsoever the wont may have been when it was the custom of our forefathers to sustain hard work by hard drinking, I

believe that, in this more temperate age, idle men run to seed more rapidly than their more laborious contemporaries. Such, at least, is my observation of life. With a keen perception of the different results wrought upon the *physique* of men by different conditions of life, I still do not find it easy to describe these distinctive differences. I think, however, it may be said, generally, that idle men acquire, as they advance in years, a *flabby* appearance, more indicative of age than the strong lines and the general aspect of tension which we see in those who have lived laborious days. There are men "who rot themselves at ease on Lethe's wharf," whilst their toiling and striving brethren are full of sap and vigor. This, at least, I know, that commerçe with lofty themes, whilst it elevates the mind, gives freshness and juvenility to the countenance and buoyancy to the whole demeanor. All work does not involve such commerce; but the thoughts which arise out of the humblest calling—of honest work honestly done—are nobler than those which are associated only with our personal wants and our personal cares. And though the higher class of work be rare, it is still not to be omitted from such an essay as this, that some of the busiest men whom I know, personally or by fame,—the men who have worked hardest and done most, who have found life to be a battle, and have fought it the most strenuously,—are younger in their appearance, in their manner,

and in their feelings, than their contemporaries who have done nothing all their lives. I never doubt, when I see such men, that they have had wisdom to appreciate the small beatitudes of life; that they have taken their holidays in due season, and never suffered it to pass out of their remembrance that there is a time to work and a time to play.* Half a century ago, as I have said, the pillar of statesmanship was the bottle. As the poor cast-away says, alas! even in these days, "there could be no bearing such a life but for the drink." Our great men drank, and they played, too; but the play was hazard, and the play-room a stifling gambling-house, for which no milder name could be found than that which signifies the unquenchable fire of the doomed. But nowadays hard work in high places is ever suggestive of the wisdom of practically recognizing the advantage of occasional interludes of pleasure. These are the harmless stimulants which keep men fresh and young, gay and joyous, even with the cares of a nation on their shoulders. Ay, these *interludes!* They are the

* Some may, perhaps, here remind me of the well-known *mot* of Sir George Cornewall Lewis, who said that "Life would be endurable, but for its pleasures." In the sense in which he used the last word, there may have been truth in the saying. He was a hard and steady workman, alternating politics and literature in his daily life; but he died early, for he neither played nor rested —and "The pity of it—oh! the pity of it!" Our generation has not seen many such men.—(1870.)

making of us all. What a word it is. *Ludus inter laborem.* Play between work. We do not all like the same games. You may choose rounders, perhaps, and I may vote for prisoner's base. I saw a game at the latter, the other day, on a smooth grassy bit of table-land among rocks on the Welsh coast, which took five-and-thirty years off my life, as with keenest interest I watched the conflict. I don't care what it is. I am catholic in my sympathies. I have not been to the Derby since Bay Middleton's year; I did not quite see the glorious fight which lately agitated all the great wide world in which the English language is spoken,—though I confess that I was within an inch of it. But I am pleased when I hear that there are bets on the "double event" of a noble lord winning "the blue ribbon of the Turf" and gaining a decisive parliamentary majority in the same week; and I did not think much the worse of those legislators who were said to have taken the train to Farnham on that memorable April morning, though, doubtless, it is their business to make laws, and not to break them.

It may be observed, too, of men of this class, who work hard and wear well, that they are commonly fond of society, and not altogether indifferent to the pleasures of the table. And why not? A man is not bound to be an anchorite or an ascetic because he has work to do. To be saturated and sodden, as in old times, with port or any other

wine, is a horrible state of existence; but are we therefore to have no more cakes and ale? Men cannot work, any more than animals, on spare diet. If you have a laborious occupation, whether it be bodily or mental, you must live well. I read sometimes in temperance tracts of careful and thrifty wives, who have persuaded their husbands out of beer, and have bought small cottages with the savings. I have as good a wife as any man, but I am convinced that the last thing in the world to which she would desire to lead me is the water-trough. There is nothing of which I have less doubt than that every kind of labor requires generous support. Some theorists have written or declaimed about animal food clogging or deadening the intellectual faculties. I do not ask you to gormandize, whether you have much or little to do. But you may be sure that intellectual labor demands good physical support even more than bodily work. Nature kindly tells you this. Have you not, I ask you, felt more hungry, after a good spell of work in your library, than after walking a dozen miles in the open air? Should you then feast on a salad? I knew a man—an enthusiast in art—who declared that when he was in the throes of a great work he always lived on roasted apples. He died before his time. I suspect that the Tintorettos of the present day fare better and live longer. Beefsteaks are better than roasted apples; not that, like Fuseli, you may dream horrors, but

that you may do your appointed work with less waste of human life.*

To do your work well too, and to keep your mind fresh, you must diligently cultivate the affections. In the society of women and of children there is more refreshment than in anything in the world. It is bright sunshine, and clear, pure air, lovely sights and pleasant sounds; and if it cannot be said of it, as of nature, it "never did betray the heart that is its own," its betrayals are so few, that we need not take account of them. For my own part, I wonder how any one can work, who has not some one to love and some one to love him—

> "Some one to cast his glory on—to share
> His rapture with."

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* I remember the late Chief Baron Pollock telling me, at a dinner of the Royal Society Club, that when he was leader of the Northern Circuit he made a point of never going through a day in court without making a substantial luncheon. At a given time his steak or chop, with a pint of port, was ready for him at his lodgings or hotel, and if at his luncheon-hour a cause in which he was retained was coming on, he told his junior to occupy the court for a certain time, and at the end of it returned to take up the brief. He attributed not only his good health and his capacity for work, but much also of his professional success, to this habit; and he lived, active and laborious almost to the last, to the ripe age of eighty-six. He must have been almost, if not quite, an octogenarian when he told me this, and yet on that very day he had sat many hours in court before dinner, and after dinner he delivered a lecture before the Royal Society, with all the clearness and vivacity of a man in the prime of his life.—(1870.)

Whether you have finished your great history in six volumes, or only filled the gaps in the squire's hedges, there is unspeakable solace and sustentation in the thought that the loving heart which has encouraged your labor rejoices in its completion. But apart from this wonderful stimulant of sympathy, there is nothing in the world that so takes a man out of himself and diverts his thoughts from the toils and cares of his daily life as the society of women, even though they know nothing and care nothing about his work. This has all been said a thousand times before in prose and poetry, more eloquently and more forcibly than I could hope to say it, if I desired to make the most of the fact. I will only, therefore, observe here that it will commonly be found that men who, in spite of much hard work, wear their years lightly, are men who delight in female society and are popular with the other sex. Very busy men, who can find time for nothing else, beyond the immediate range of their duties and responsibilities, are seldom too busy for recreation of this kind. Some of the most strenuous and most successful workmen of modern times have, I am afraid, been pèrilously given to intrigue. It is the most exciting of all amusements, and, therefore, the one best suited to men whose public life is one of excitement. Bear well in mind, all ye who peruse this in the midst of the pleasant and virtuous family circle, that I merely state the fact, as I believe it to be; I do not justify or palliate

the practice. Happy the man to whom the *domus et placens uxor* are all-sufficient. God be praised that there are such men, and among our brightest and bravest too! We will drop the subject of dangerous and exciting intrigue. It is a hard world, indeed, if it will not admit that there may be innocent friendship and companionship between the two sexes, though the female society, which lightens the burden of toil and smooths down the wrinkles of age, may not in all cases be that of wife and daughters.

And not less necessary than pleasant recreation and cheering society is good sleep. If you are to work well, you must sleep well. If you are to keep your health and strength and youth,—to carry your powers of work with you to the last,—you must sedulously pay court to your pillow. It will commonly be found that the men who carry their years lightly are men who possess the faculty of sleeping at will. If you have much work to do, you must not account time spent in sleep to be time lost. It is time gained. It is an essential part of the duty of the day. I had once an old servant, who used to say, "Well, I have done my work. I have cleaned up; and now I'll *get my sleeping done*." Sleeping was in her philosophy a thing to be done,—not a passive state, but an active part of her duty. And every workman should so consider it. Let him sleep in his bed, if he can, at proper hours of the night; if not,

let him sleep at any odd time, when nature invites him to rest himself. If we do not play tricks with ourselves, if we work hard without overworking ourselves, sleep will rarely be coy to us. As a general rule, it may be said that busy men are better sleepers than idlers, and that mental labor contributes more to sound sleep than bodily fatigue. I believe that only mere novices in work are kept awake by the thought of it. Experienced workmen acquire a habit of shaking off its environments when they will. If there be one thing in life for which I am profoundly thankful to the Giver of all good gifts, it is for the faculty of sleep.

> "I have two friends, who are with me night and day,—
> True friends and constant, ever by my side;
> Than mother more devoted, or young bride—
> Yet when one comes, the other steals away;
> For jealous friends will no joint vigil keep;—
> The one's great name is WORK; the other's SLEEP."

It may be thought to be a condition of good hearty strenuous work, that the business to be done should be such as suits the especial tastes and qualifications of the workman. It is a sorry thing to work against the grain; the wrong way of the stuff, as housewives say; *invitâ Minervâ*, according to the scholars. But there is much to be observed in abatement of this, whereof I shall speak presently; being minded first to say that this evil is one which is very apt to cure or to

neutralize itself. For men are prone, by very force of nature, whatsoever may be their early diversions, to return to the path along which their inclination would lead them, and it will commonly be found that, in the end, they are wedded to the work of their choice. Sometimes, it may fall out that, habit being, as saith the proverb, "a second nature," the workman becomes first reconciled to his work, and afterwards well affected towards it, simply by the force of habit and familiarity, and more than all by a growing competency to perform it with address. For seldom it is that we do not incline kindly towards that which we are conscious of being able to do readily and well. But the instances of the former mode of cure are, I esteem, more frequent: men forsaking the professions or trades to which they have been bound in youth by the will of their elders to follow others to which their natural tastes and appetences incline them. If there be truth in the proverb that "a rolling stone gathers no moss," it may be better philosophy to reconcile one's self to the unloved work; but "Man will break out, despite philosophy," and nature is often too strong for us. Whether it be more worldly wise in such cases of ill-assorted alliance to look the matter boldly in the face, to go into the Court of Divorce, and, making great sacrifice thereby of apprentice-fees, and premia, and education-money, and years of early training and servitude, to make a fresh start in life, or to cling

resolutely to the first uncongenial connection, and work on ill-mated to the last, is a question which may well perplex a philosopher. There is no rule to be derived from experience in such a case; for I have known men who have taken fresh starts, in mature years, make their way triumphantly to the goal of success, and I have known them too to break down, weak of limb and scant of breath, painfully and regretfully, on the way. It might, perhaps, have appeared, on closer inspection of these varying results, that in the one case the workman had been moved by an irrepressible instinct or appetence to embrace the new vocation, and in the other, by the instability and weakness of his nature, to forsake the old. And it is very certain that no such change should be lightly made; that we should examine ourselves carefully before we undertake it, and feel assured that it is not fickleness, or love of change, or want of perseverance that impels us, but a genuine conviction that we have within us the elements of success in the new way of life,—that it is, in fact, our vocation or calling,—that it calls us irresistibly, and that we must go.

Besides, I would have it to be understood, as I before suggested, that even the unwilling Minerva has favors of her own to dispense,—that there is compensation for the pains and penalties of working against the grain. For there is surely no work so worthy, so ennobling, as that which is done by

us painfully and laboriously under a strong sense of an abiding duty. There is a satisfaction in the feeling that we have done, to the best of our poor ability, certain work altogether foreign to our tastes and inclinations,—that we have striven manfully against our natural repugnance, and done the work assigned to us thoroughly and well, in spite of every temptation to half do it, or to leave it altogether undone. There is a satisfaction, I say, in such a feeling, not to be derived from the contemplation of more congenial labor; for there is small merit in doing thoroughly and well what it pleases us to do. Work done without strife, almost, indeed, without labor, is but a shadow or delusion of work. But to see a man sustained by a sense of duty, working painfully and laboriously, with indomitable perseverance, day after day, at that which to him is mere drudgery and task-work, is a sight fit for the gods. What merit is it that I write these pages? Does it not please me to write them? Is not my heart in the sport? But what if I were to have spent this bright autumn day adding up column after column of abhorred figures, solely for duty's sake? Would it not be a meritorious performance? Should I not have reason to stroke my beard approvingly, and say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"? Moreover, the smaller your pleasure in doing your work, the greater your pleasure in having done it. Like Byron's Tasso, I might in one case, my pleasant long-sustaining

task being done, blot its final page with tears; but in the other I should send up a grateful pæan, shouting, "Joy,—joy forever! my task is done!" like Moore's Peri, and rapturously asking myself whether I am not happy.

Whether you like it or not, my friend, go at it cheerfully. I know some men who are always sighing over their work, and over work, too, of their own election. They think they are hardly used in having so much to do, and are continually predicting that they will break down under it. It is a bad sign in a workman when he falls into a habit of predicting failures and disasters. In the course of the recent investigation into the circumstances of that mysterious child-murder* which has struck so deep and tragic an interest into wellnigh every household in the country, one of the witnesses, a small farmer, was asked if he knew the meaning of the word "prediction." Confessing his ignorance, he excused himself on the ground that he had been at work since he was seven years old. He had been too busy all his life to trouble himself about predictions. And I am always inclined to think, I hope not uncharitably, when I hear a man sighing over his work, and predicting that he will break down under it, that he really has not, and never has had, very much work to do. In the

* The once notorious Road Murder—now no longer a mystery. —(1870.)

same way, idle men who really do nothing—who have no calling, and perhaps not even a hobby—are continually pleading want of time. They are perfectly sincere when they tell you that they have "no time" for anything involving intellectual exercise. They have come by force of habit to mistake strenuous idleness for work, and the day is dawdled out, miserably enough, before they have begun to take account of its hours. Busy men *make* time, whilst idle men are killing it, and refrain from urging a plea which, in their case, would be a valid one, and accepted as such almost before it is offered.

It is obvious that this matter of the employment and distribution of time is at the very bottom of the whole question of Work. There are four-and-twenty hours in every day, and the great problem of their distribution is one not easily to be solved. So various in its conditions and requirements is Work, that it is impossible, in a few sentences, to lay down any rules relating to the time that should be appropriated to and absorbed by it. There is hand-work and there is head-work; and in many trades and callings the question of time is settled by Act of Parliament, by official regulation, or even by social compact. Only recently one important section of the working world has been agitated by a question of nine or ten hours of toil to the laboring-man's days. There are some men whose work is never done, either because their calling is one

which forbids limitation of hours, or because their minds are of so active, so restless a nature that they cannot suffer themselves to lie fallow. A medical practitioner, for example, can never call an hour of the day or of the night his own. Literary men, too, work at all hours, early and late: there is no limitation to the labors of the imagination. As long as there is a subject to be found, there is work to be done. But the larger number of workmen go forth every day after breakfast, and return before dinner or before supper, spending from six to ten hours at their apportioned work. From ten to four is the ordinary work-time at the public offices, from nine to five at private mercantile establishments, and from nine to seven, or still later, at shops, where the work to be done is not of a kind to make any serious inroads upon body or on brain. Much has been said recently about the tendency of the age towards overwork. Heaven knows that I would protest against the age, if I believed that such were its tendency. Excessive competition may generate such results. But I do not think that, generally speaking, we are overworked. Perhaps what we want most is a little better distribution of our time. If I had the management of any number of men and women, and the disposal of their time, I would rather give them an extra hour's work every day, so as to afford them a half-holiday in the week, and a week or two's holiday in every year, than that they

should go without their holidays. I am convinced that I should find, on the 31st of December, that I had gained some good work and that they had gained some good health by the arrangement.

About the hour of the day at which head-work can most profitably be done there are varying opinions. The more common voice would seem to incline towards the dictum that "the morning is the best time for work," but I am not disposed to accept this as a general proposition. I speak, of course, of volunteer work, which is bound by no especial laws. The ordinary affairs of life must be transacted in business hours, according to the official chronologies of which I have spoken above; but I cannot help thinking that the work which makes the most noise in the world is *not* done in office-hours. Continual interruptions at that time make sustained head-work difficult, if not impossible. There are few men occupying an important position in an "office," public or private, who do not carry their work home with them, and perform that part of it which demands the most thought in the quietude of their own studies. Others do supplementary work, write books or articles, or solve mighty problems in science. Others again, having no official labors, choose their own time for literary labor or scientific research. To all of these, it must often have been a question whether it is better to work early or late. I have said that the general verdict is in favor of the former,—and,

on the whole, I think, rightly. If a man is blest with a regular occupation, demanding the mid-day period, he is necessitated to take his principal meal in the evening. If he works out of office-hours, he must work before breakfast or after dinner. To work after dinner, he must work late, by candle-light, at a time when he ought to be setting bed-wards. Young men may do this, but few men past forty can work after dinner. If you can work at all at night, one hour at that time may be worth any two in the morning. The house is hushed, the brain is clear, the distracting influences of the day are at an end. You have not to disturb your-self with thoughts of what you are about to do, or what you are about to suffer. You know that there is a gulf between you and the affairs of the outside world, almost like the chasm of death, and that you need not take thought of the morrow until the mor-row has come. I have heard it said that there are few really great thoughts, such as the world will not willingly let die, that have not been conceived under the quiet stars. It may be so. But it can be only mere assumption or conjecture. We do not know at what hour Bacon wrote his best-remembered works, or Shakspeare, or Locke. In those old pre-gaseous days, men rose early and set late. Still, we have from classic ages frequent references to the wasting of the midnight oil; and we know that many recent writers have toiled into the small hours, after midnight, and thus pro-

duced the most brilliant and enduring children of their brains.

Why, then, do I speak in praise of morning-work? It has its inevitable drawbacks. That the brain is clearer then than at other times is the merest theory, propounded by those who have not worked early or late. It is a time, too, of expectation: you feel that you are drifting into the cares and anxieties of the day, and it is difficult to distract your mind from what is to come. Moreover, the before-breakfast period must always be brought to an abrupt close. With the inevitable eight o'clock come the postman and the hot water; and the disturbing business of the day has commenced. But at night you only drift into deeper silence and quicker inspiration. If the right mood is upon you, you write on; if not, your pillow awaits you. Why, then, I say, do I write in favor of early work? Partly, because after-dinner labor is often physically impossible, and, when possible, sometimes detrimental; and, partly, because few men can call their evenings their own. The claims of society and of the family circle are not to be resisted. The evening hours are the social hours, and it is right that we should devote them to intercourse with our fellows. But we can always rely upon our mornings. Nobody disputes with us the possession of them. And if we cannot do so much as at night, we are sure of being able to do something. For steady continuous work, commend me to these morning-

hours. Spasmodic utterances of genius may scintillate best, like fireworks, in the darkness of the night; but the morning is the time for laborious investigation,—for all that is rightly to be called work. And if there were nothing else in favor of morning studies, there would be the paramount consideration that early hours are assuredly conducive to health, and, therefore, to the power of sustained application. The old couplet, learnt by all of us in the nursery,—

> "Early to bed and early to rise
> Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,"

may not be strictly true, in a positive sense, else I should be rich instead of poor at this time, and wise instead of foolish; but in a comparative sense it may be, and, indeed, I feel it is,—for I should, doubtless, have been poorer and a greater fool if I had not been an early riser and an early worker. And as to health, can any one doubt the difference between the night-work and the morning-work? I speak alike of health of body and health of mind. There is not in the morning-work that unnatural excitement of the brain (too often aided by stimulants) which attends night-work; and I am sure that no one who has tried the former will be slow to admit the infinite refreshment of those early hours, in the summer-time, before the sun is high in the heavens and the heats of the day have

come upon us. Even in the winter, there is nothing that is not, under due arrangement, cheerful in the morning hours. In a few minutes, the gas may be all ablaze, and the fire may be bright on the hearth, and the water may be boiling, in an "ætna," for the early tea or coffee that is to start us on our morning's work. But I need not add that early setting bedwards must precede this. We must lay our heads upon our pillows an hour or two before midnight, if we expect on rising to have before us—

> "The morning freshness and the welcome work,
> The aims, the objects, and the interests,
> Which make earth heaven, and man almost a God."

And the place of our daily work is not less important than the time. There are few, perhaps, who can select their own workshops; but those who can I would strongly recommend to choose a room, in country or the suburbs, opening into a garden, or, next thing to it, commanding a view of trees or grass-land, pleasant and refreshing to the sight. It is no small thing to be able to lay down the pen for a few minutes, and to take a rush or saunter in the garden, breathing the fresh air and inhaling the perfume of the flowers;* and it is

* Lord Macaulay told me that he had derived great benefit from his removal from the Albany to Campden Hill, where the library, in which he wrote, opened into a pleasant garden. It appeared to me to be the *ne plus ultra* of a literary workshop, and I have endeavored to imitate it on a very humble scale.

good alike for the eye and the brain to look up from one's books and one's papers, to gaze abroad, even in London, on the beautiful foliage which may be seen there, in summer and autumn, in the parks or in the great squares, such as Lincoln's Inn Fields.

A great deal of work may be done in little odd chinks and crevices of time,—spare half hours, of which many men take no account. I have not much faith in the story of the gentleman who wrote a great work on Jurisprudence at odd times, while he was waiting for his wife to go out with him. Jurisprudence is not exactly the subject to be treated of by snatches in this way. But much useful work, nevertheless, may come out of these little odds and ends, which we are wont to throw idly away. There are few who have not desultory work for desultory hours. Letters may be written, which otherwise would obtrude themselves upon us and break in upon our sustained labor. Notes may be made. Papers may be arranged. I know a man who devotes these fragments of time to the correction of the press, and is seldom without a proof-sheet in his pocket. At all sorts of odd moments the pencil and the proof are produced: at railway-stations, waiting for the train; at hotels, waiting for dinner; on the deck of a steamer; in the waiting-room of a Minister; in all kinds of places, and in all possible circumstances, you may see him with a proof in his hand. It is a wise thing, too,

to carry about a note-book in one's pocket. Every public writer knows that he loses many of his best ideas, because they sprout up, unannounced and unexpected, at strange times, and are not stereotyped on the memory. He should always have the means of writing at hand. I know some men who make copious notes on the backs of letters, on the margins of their Bradshaws, on the fly-leaves of their guide-books,—and forget them almost as soon as they are made. Scattered memoranda of this kind are sure not to turn up when they are wanted. But a recognized memorandum-book is an aide-de-camp never off duty: you may turn to it when you will.

Indeed, small matter though it seem to be, I hold that every workman should look well to the implements of his calling. There is a proverb which saith that "a bad workman complains of his tools." It may be so; but good workmen work better with good tools. To those who work with their hands, they are everything; to those who work with their heads, they are of more account than may be supposed. "What are such gross material aids as these to the subtle agencies of the brain? Is the flow of thought dependent upon the flow of ink from the pen?" I am not ashamed to answer that I think good pens, and good ink, and good paper are "material aids" in more senses than one. When the thick ink cakes in the pen, and the pen only scratches the fluffy paper, and your "fine Roman

hand" is miserably transfigured into ungraceful and unintelligible hieroglyphics, is there no interruption to the flow of your thoughts? Do you never lose an idea whilst you are vainly endeavoring to embody it on paper? Is the fecundity of your imagination never checked by the disturbance of your temper? Is it nothing to work in ease and comfort, with all appliances and means to boot? Is it nothing to have an easy-chair, and a spacious table, and a good expanse of carpet whereon to walk to and fro, between your throes of labor? Let no man despise these things. A good room in itself is no small matter. Work, when you can, with the window open. Let in as much fresh air as this treacherous climate will permit. Do not sit too long at a time. Have a high standing desk whereby you may vary your attitude of labor; and when you are busy, receive visitors standing, if you wish to get rid of them soon.

And now I am reminded that something ought to be said about method in work. To be orderly and methodical is a great thing; but I cannot help thinking that I might as well exhort my friends to be tall, or strong, or handsome, as to be orderly and methodical. Order and method are gifts, as beauty and genius are. I do not underrate their value, but I fear that they are not to be acquired. For thirty years I have been endeavoring to import something like method into my habits of business; but although time after time I have taken a fresh

start, and resolutely determined to reform my old ways, I have ignominiously failed. I have not yet given up my efforts in this direction, but I feel that I might almost as well endeavor to be young again. I was bewailing this failure not long ago to a learned and thoughtful friend, who told me not to lament my deficiency; "for," he said, "if you had this quality, you would not be the man you are: you would be deficient in others, which have been equally or perhaps more serviceable to you." And there is, doubtless, some consolation in this. Perhaps, then, I had better not strive any more to become what Nature has not made me. I may console myself by thinking that there may be a sort of method in the unmethodical. Indeed, it is often a fact, that what appears to another person to be a chaotic mass of papers, is perfectly intelligible to, and manageable by, the owner of them himself. And of all things the most hopelessly embarrassing to untidy men are attempts at tidiness,—their own or others'. I doubt whether such attempts at reformation are ever successful in the long run; and I know that whilst the process is going on, the transition-state is infinitely worse than the old order of things. You may find what you want, in due time, amidst the chaos which masters of method regard with such dismay; but if you put things away, in pursuit of method before you have attained it, the chances are that you never find them. There is no search so tedious—often so

hopeless—as a search after something which you have put in a "safe place."

It comes, then, to this: there are different kinds of workmen,—workmen who create, and workmen who methodize and arrange. I do not here speak of internal arrangement,—the arrangement of the different parts of an intellectual work,—but of external or material order and arrangement. To arrange your ideas is one thing; to arrange your papers is another. Some of the best and most rapid workmen I know are, in respect of order of this kind, hopelessly deficient. That a great deal of valuable time is lost in this way must be admitted. Nothing is in its right place. Papers are not to be found when wanted. Work is done, and then mislaid; and more time is spent in endeavoring to find it than it would take to do it over again. But, after all, I am doubtful whether those who fold, and docket, and arrange, and have everything in such excellent order that they can find it at a moment's notice, do not spend more time in producing this state of things than the more careless workman loses by neglecting it. The men of order are seldom men of much creative genius. What they do, they do slowly; and they are commonly of more use in helping the real workmen than in doing work of their own. It is well for us that there are men of both kinds in the world. Until the One Perfect Workman vouchsafes to His creatures a diversity of qualities, a

comprehensiveness of intelligence more nearly approaching His own, we must help one another, looking to our neighbor, in all humility, to make good our own deficiencies and to do that wherein we fail.*

Yes, O friends and brother-workmen, we must help one another. We are all of one Guild: Full-Brain cannot do without Neat-Hand, any more than Neat-Hand can do without Full-Brain. What poor, weak, miserable creatures we are when we are left to ourselves! We want assistance at every turn of the road; at every quarter of an hour of the day. We think much of our own especial work, but how few, when we consider, are the things that we can do! how many the things that we cannot! Is our own work better than other men's work? Is it more essential to the happiness of mankind? Does it keep the world agoing more than our neighbor's? Not it. That stout fellow who has just brought the heavy luggage from the railway-station—could I do that? Yet there is somebody—perhaps a whole family of somebodies—who cannot go to bed without that box. Is there any one thus dependent upon me for his night's comfort or his morning's cleanli-

* I have been reading lately, but I cannot at this moment recall the passage, that it was said by one distinguished personage of another, "He would have been the greatest man of his age, if he had only known the use of Red Tape."

ness? Perhaps it is my privilege sometimes to be of use in my own way. If I work hard, I have a right to expect that reward, and to trust that I benefit some one. All true workmen are public benefactors. Let us not measure ourselves against others and ask who is greater, who less. The "toppling crags of duty" are before us all. Let us strive "with toil of heart, and knees, and hands" to scale them, so that we may be brought, with His good help,

> "close upon the shining table-lands
> To which our Lord himself is moon and sun."

November, 1860.

SUCCESS.

I HAVE a great opinion of successful men; and I am not ashamed to confess it.

It was the fashion, some years ago, to sneer at Success,—nay, indeed, sometimes to revile it, as though it were an offense, or at best a pretentious humbug. This came out of the sudden inflation of some huge wind-bags, which as suddenly collapsed. To do honor to successful men was held to be arrant flunkeyism; for a successful man was accounted little better than a flatulent impostor. Clever men drew pictures of Success represented by a mighty Juggernaut passing triumphantly over the necks of thousands of prostrate worshipers. Still cleverer men wrote brilliant stories of modern life, illustrating the rise and fall of seemingly successful men; and imitative dramatists transferred these sketches of society to the Stage. The great imposture of Success was the pet subject of the day. But a healthier social philosophy is now enthroned among us. We have begun to think that men who make their way to the front, becoming rich or famous by the force of their personal characters, must, after all, have something in them, though every now and then bubbles may

arise, in which solid realities are reflected, only to burst into thin air. Have we not all been reading lately about "Self-Help"?—and what has charmed us so much? Are not our assembly-rooms, and lecture-halls, and mechanics' institutions, all over the country,—I ask the question after a tolerably wide autumnal circuit of English provincial towns,—are they not thrilling night after night with popular orations on "Self-made Men," or, as I see it phrased at times, "Self-built Men," and all that relates to them? To prostrate one's self before what Success has won, be it power, or riches, or what not, may rightly be called flunkeyism; but to honor what has won success is worthy worship, not to be condemned or restrained. It is veneration for that type of manhood which most nearly approaches the divine, by reason of its creative energy. It is a good sign of the times that we appreciate it at its true worth.

It is not to be expected, however, that envy should die out of the world; and so long as there is envy, people will be found to talk about Luck. But Success does not come by chance; Providence helps those who help themselves. We may fancy that two men adopt the same means towards the attainment of the same end, and because one succeeds and the other fails, we may say that the one is more fortunate than the other. But the one succeeds and the other fails, because they do *not* adopt the same means towards the same end. Of

the two pilgrims who started on their journey each with peas in his shoon, the one was not more fortunate than the other; he was simply more wise. The man who sank by the way, toil-worn and foot-sore, with drops of agony on his forehead, groaning with pain, may have been the better walker of the two. The race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. It is by the right application of your swiftness or your strength to the particular object in view that you make your way to Success. It is not only by doing the right thing, but by doing the right thing in the right way and at the right time, that we achieve the great triumphs of life. All this is to be dwelt on presently. It is only here to be said that the varying results which we discern are not attributable to chance, not to external circumstances of any kind, but to inherent differences within ourselves. Whatsoever Envy or Vanity may say upon the subject, Success is a substantial and enduring reality; luck is a mere vapor that is speedily dissolved. "Wealth gotten by vanity," saith Solomon, "shall diminish; but he that gathereth by labor shall increase."

But what, it may be asked, is Success? and who is the successful man? I have heard it said that "all success is comparative;" but with what is the comparison? Not with the successes of others. In this sense all success is positive. The prime minister is a greater man than his butler, but

he is not, therefore, a more successful one. You must measure the success of a man, not by the relation which his achievements bear to what others have achieved, but by their relation to what he himself has endeavored. If he has kept a certain object steadily before him, and has attained it, —no matter what the object be,—he is a successful man. In another sense, too, Success is positive; for it admits of no drawbacks or abatements beyond the range of the object attained. If I strive to amass wealth, and I amass it, I am not the less successful because my son turns out a dissolute spendthrift and my daughter disgraces herself by a runaway match. Am I less successful as a poet, or a painter, because my wife is unfaithful to me, and I am miserable in spite of my success? Success is one thing; happiness is another. The boy Warren Hastings aimed at the Governor-Generalship of India and the recovery of his ancestral estates; was he less a successful man because, when he had accomplished these objects of his ambition, his life was embittered by the persecution of his enemies? And the boy Charles Metcalfe—he too aimed at the Governor-Generalship, and he attained not solely to that eminence, but to the prouder distinction of ruling "the three greatest dependencies of the British Crown." Was he less successful because, in the fullness of his fame, an excruciating bodily disease ate into his life and destroyed him by slow torture?

Even the disappointments and disquietudes of Success itself do not detract from its completeness. A man may not find the attainment of his object so exhilarating as the pursuit of it; but for all this he does succeed. I knew a man whose desire it was to obtain a certain public situation. There was a particular post in a particular department which he coveted, and he said to himself that he would obtain it. Night after night his way home led him down Whitehall, and as he passed under the shadow of the building which held the department of government which he aspired to enter, he would shake his fist at it, and say, "You grim old pile, you exclude me now, but some day I shall have a home in you, be sure." And he was right. Unlikely as success appeared, he succeeded, and even sooner than he had hoped. It was nothing very great that he had obtained. But the success consisted in this, that what he won was the identical thing which he aspired and endeavored to win. It is nothing to the point that other men had won much higher posts by *their* successful exertions. Nor is it a matter to be considered, when we would determine the measure of his success, whether he was happier than before. There may have been distressing sets-off in other directions, or the thing for which he had striven may not have satisfied him; but the positive success was there. All success, indeed, is self-contained. If it

were not, I am afraid that the catalogue of successful men might be printed on half a page.

We may think about this at leisure. *Vanitas vanitatum!* It is not the subject of discourse which I have chosen for myself. And I would rather, if I digress at all, step aside to ask whether it may not be that we all have our successes, though they be not of a kind of which the world takes any account. I do not think that it would be difficult to show that failures have their compensations, and that oftentimes unsuccessful men profit in ways unknown to those who have achieved victories. There is a tendency to compassionate and to aid those who fall prostrate by the roadside, whilst those who stride on, conquering circumstances, are supposed to want neither pity nor help. Many a man has found the trade of being a "poor fellow" extremely profitable. It is commonly some unsuccessful member of a family that inherits all the odds and ends of property belonging to bachelor uncles and spinster aunts. "Poor fellow!" it is said, "he wants it so much; and he has been so attentive." Having nothing to do, or, at all events, doing nothing, he has abundant leisure to be "attentive," whilst the strider-on is perforce neglectful of those who lie out of his path. Now, this truly is a kind of success, though it be born of Failure, and though such successful men are not of the order of those of whom I said, at starting, that I have a high opinion.

I must keep, however, to the subject of recognized Success, as all men understand it, and inquire how it is attained. I have heard people laugh at the misquotation of that well-known Addisonian platitude,—

> "'Tis not in mortals to command success,
> But I'll do more, Sempronius—I'll deserve it."

But I have thought the *varia lectio* involved in the blunder deserving of the highest consideration; and I have been more disposed to admire than to ridicule the reading,—

> "'Tis not in mortals to deserve success,
> But I'll do more, Sempronius—I'll command it."

More men have commanded success than have deserved it. There is nothing presumptuous in the idea. It is more presumptuous to talk about our deserts. What do the best of us deserve, but complete and disastrous failure?

It has been said that "any man may have any woman." The meaning of which I hold to be, that the persevering pursuit of any object must eventually be crowned with success. *Labor omnia vincit*, as the copy-book text has it, and as the proverbs of wellnigh every country have it in other words. To set your mind resolutely upon the accomplishment of any purpose, is to go half-way to its attainment. Now, it commonly happens, to pursue the

illustration wherewith I commenced this passage, that they who are most successful with women are not the handsomest men. And the reason of this is obvious. Handsome men rely overmuch on their handsomeness. To use a metaphor rather expressive than eloquent, they expect that all the pretty women "will jump down their throats." But pretty women will not jump down their throats. This process of deglutition is not affected by them. They have no notion of being quietly absorbed. They must be won,—bravely, laboriously, and with a becoming sense of what is due to them. Are we to think that we have only to sit quietly in our easy-chairs and to twirl our moustaches? Beauty is a divine gift; let whosoever possesses it be thankful. Madame de Staël, one of the most gifted of mortals, said that she would surrender all that she possessed in exchange for it. But Madame de Staël was a woman; and I am now writing about men. Everybody knows that men care more about personal beauty in the other sex than women do, and for this reason, that pleasant sights and sweet sounds, and everything soft and gentle, are a delight and a refreshment to them. But the ordinary environments of women are soft and gentle. They lead comparatively passive lives; and that which most fascinates them in the other sex is a sense of active power. What is softness and smoothness to them? Bless them, they like the grit. Even the hard lines on a man's

face—the pallor, nay, the less interesting sallowness, of his cheek—are interesting to them, if they denote power. I repeat that personal beauty is a great gift, even to a man. But it is only as an accompaniment to other gifts that it contributes to success. Everybody knows what Wilkes, the ugliest man in England, said to Townshend, the handsomest. And it was not a mere idle boast.

And so it is with intellectual gifts of a high order. The conscious possessor relies too much upon them. Fortune is represented as a woman—do we not call her Dame Fortune?—and she must be laboriously won. Are we to sit down by the wayside, and expect that she will seat herself on our lap? "Any man may have any woman," and any man may have anything, if he only goes about resolutely to attain it. But he must not trust too much to what he is. Genius, like beauty, is a divine gift; let him who possesses it thank God with his whole heart; but it is not by being, but by doing, that we achieve success; and therefore it is that the most gifted, like the handsomest men, are often passed on the road by men of second-rate abilities, or, more correctly, of inferior natural gifts. I would have this distinction kept steadily in view, for people too often use the word "ability" with reference to anything rather than to its true meaning. I am not one of those who have much faith in the general coexistence of inactivity with power. I hold that what men can do they will do; and I

think it will be found that when they do it not, it is because they feel that they cannot do it. There may be great natural gifts resulting only in a dreamy, indolent, unproductive state of life. But this is because the possessor has no special aptitude for any particular thing,—no vocation, so to speak; no consciousness of ability to carry out anything to a conclusion; no resolute will to attempt it. Dress up the idea as we may, cover it with whatsoever gloss of fine and attractive words, talk of the waywardness, the impulsiveness of genius, it is, in its naked reality, no more than this,—that whatsoever the natural gifts may be, their possessor lacks ability to do anything, and feels the inability within him. He does not see his way clearly to any definite result; he does not concentrate his powers on any given object; and he runs to waste, nothing better at the best than a splendid failure.

To concentrate your powers on any given object —to go directly to the point, looking neither to the right nor to the left, and resolutely determining to succeed—is to secure success. If once you begin to *sprawl*, you are lost.* I do not mean by this

* I learnt this lesson very early in life, on the box of the North Devon coach, receiving the rudiments of my education as a Jehu. It was night. I drove from Andover to Blackwater; and three elderly insides were ignorant of the danger to which they were exposed. "Keep them well together. Keep them well together. Don't let them sprawl," was all the advice I received from my instructor. The lesson was worth remembering on the great turnpike-road of life.

that we are to reject collateral aids. On the other hand, I would suffer all tributary streams to flow freely into the great main channel of your action. You may drive a dozen horses in the same chariot, if you can only keep them well together. You must converge to a center, not diverge from it. If I were to give way to the allurements of biographical illustration, I should soon fill a volume, instead of only a few pages; but here are a few lines from Plutarch, which I quote rather in the way of caution than of example: "There was in the whole city but one street in which Pericles was ever seen, the street which led to the market-place, and to the council-house. He declined all invitations to banquets, and all gay assemblies and company. During the whole period of his administration he never dined at the table of a friend." Emerson cites this with commendation in one of his lectures. But I cannot help thinking that it is a mistake. You should never forget the Market-place or the Council-house. But you may expediently dine at the table of a friend, or invite a friend to dine at your table, in the interests of the Market-place or the Council-house. You may often, in this way, make a greater stride on to success than by staying at home to post up a ledger, or to wade through a volume of statistics. Successful men, we may be sure, have not confined themselves to direct action, or looked only to immediate results. More failures are consummated

by want of faith and want of patience than by anything else in the world. We cannot grow rich by sowing mustard-seeds on a damp flannel, though they begin to sprout before our eyes. Concentration is not isolation or self-absorption. "Stick to your business, and your business will stick to you:" an excellent doctrine, doubtless; but what if I stick to my business more closely by smoking a cigar in my back parlor than by serving customers in my front shop? What if I put aside some important work, claiming my attention, to dress for dinner, and to convey myself to the table of an influential friend, on the chance of gaining more by going out than by staying at home? When I was a very young man, I wrote essays in illustration of what I then believed to be the folly of such a course. But as I grow old, every year convinces me more and more that social intercourse, of the right kind, is a material aid to success. Often the gain is palpable to you at once, and you count your advantage as you take off your dress-coat. But, if not, it will find you out after many days: you have sown, and in due season you will reap. If you do nothing more than assert your individuality—make yourself a living presence among men, instead of a myth, a *nominis umbra*—you may be sure that you have done something. Am I more or less likely to read your book, or to buy your picture, or to say a good word for you, if I have a

chance, to some man in authority, for sitting next to you at our friend Robinson's and thinking you a pleasant fellow? At all stages of your journey it will be the same. It is not more incumbent upon you to remember this, that you may gain a high place, than that you may keep it. Our statesmen are wiser in their generation than Pericles. There is Lord Tiverton, the very personification of smiling success. Does he "decline all invitations to banquets, all gay assemblies, all company"?

Now, all this does not in any way militate against the theory of concentration. In a work of art there may be great variety of detail with perfect unity of aim. Every accessory should contribute to the one general result,—should illustrate the one leading idea. Every detail that is foreign to the subject is so much sheer waste of strength. And so it is in the conduct of life. With one object set steadily before us, we may have many varying activities, but they will all assist the main action, and impart strength and consistency to it. Singleness of aim, I repeat it, in nowise demands monotony of action. But if you allow yourself to be diverted from this singleness of object, you are little likely to succeed in life. "Art is long—life is short." Knowing this, there is an universal tendency among us to go in search of specialties. General practitioners seldom get beyond a respectable mediocrity, whilst your specialists attain to

eminence and wealth. If an eye or an ear be affected, we seek out the man who has made that particular organ the study of his life. In the pursuit of that one object, the oculist or the aurist may have studied the mechanism of the whole human frame, and the general physiology of man, but only in their relation to the particular organ to the full understanding of which he is devoting all the energies of his mind. He cannot, indeed, understand his subject without the aid of this contributory knowledge. But all that is not contributory is waste. In the same manner, lawyers succeed by studying special branches of their profession; and literary men are successful in proportion as they stick to their specialties, or rather as they are fortunate in having any. If a man can write well on any one special subject—no matter what that subject may be—he is sure to find profitable occupation for his pen, whilst the general dealer in literary wares, though more highly gifted by nature, may fail to provide himself with bread. The popular appreciation of this general fact expresses itself in the well-known proverb that "a jack-of-all-trades is master of none." The world has no faith in Admirable Crichtons. They may be very pleasant fellows in their way, but mankind in general would rather not do business with them.

A shrewd, intelligent man of the world, and one, too, who had been eminently successful,—for from a small beginning he had risen to the highest place

in the department to which he had been attached, and had made the fortunes of his whole family, brothers, sons, and nephews, as well as his own,—once said to me, "The longer I live, the more convinced I am that over-sensitiveness is a great mistake in a public man." He might have said, in all men who desire to succeed in life. Now, I wish it to be understood that what is expressed here by the word "over-sensitiveness" does not signify over-scrupulousness. Be as scrupulous as you will. Do nothing that can give you a single pang of conscience. Keep your hands clean. If you cannot do this, and succeed, sink into the abysmal depths of failure, unsoiled and unspotted, with skin clear and white as a little child's. But do not be over-sensitive on the score of pride, or vanity, or dominant egotism. Every successful man, you may be sure, has had much to mortify him in the course of his career. He has borne many rebuffs; he has sustained many failures. What if men do not understand you, are not inclined to encourage you, and exercise the privilege of age or superior position?—bear with it all, Juvenis, your time will come; you may take your change out of the world when you are a little older. Bah! how does it hurt you? "Hard words break no bones," saith the proverb. And they break no spirit that is not of the feeblest. The world may laugh at your failures:—what then? Try again, and perhaps they will not laugh. Try once again, and perhaps it

will be your turn to laugh. "He who wins may laugh," saith another proverb. If you have the right stuff in you, you will not be put down. There is a man now among us, a man of genius, who aspired to take a part in public affairs. After much travail, he obtained a seat in Parliament. And the House, knowing he could write, assumed that he could not speak, and when he rose they laughed at and hooted him. He told his assailants that the time would come when they would listen to him; and he was right. He spoke the words of prophecy and of truth. And the time did come when they not only listened, but when the men who had despised came to fear him, or to worship him, and, when he rose, either shrank appalled and dismayed, or looked to him for the salvation of their party and applauded to the echo.

There are various roads to Success, but I am somewhat inclined to think that the surest is gravelly and gritty, with some awkward pitfalls and blinding quicksets in the way. Was that famous nursery rhyme of the Man of Thessaly, think you, written but for the entertainment of babes and sucklings? or was it not rather meant as a lesson to children of a larger growth, to the adolescents of our nurseries of learning, starting on the great journey of life? Every one knows the story,—how the hero of it

> "jumped into a quickset hedge
> And scratched out both his eyes."

Doubtless, the way with most of us,—looking not before we leap; going ahead too rapidly at the outset; not calculating our juvenile strength, and jumping into the midst of what we think we can clear at a bound. Do we not all think ourselves "wondrous wise," and, thinking so, encounter blinding disaster? But are we, therefore, to go darkling all the rest of our lives? It was not to teach us this that the great epic of the Man of Thessaly was written. He had the true heroic stuff in him; and he did not sit down and bewail his loss, helpless and hopeless.

> "And when he saw his eyes were out,
> He had reason to complain;
> But he jumped into the quickset hedge,
> And scratched them in again."*

And such is the right way to fight the battle of life, to grapple with the failures and disasters which

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* I write the words as I learnt them in my childhood; but there are various readings of all (so-called) nursery rhymes, and I am told that more correctly the concluding portion of the legend of the Man of Thessaly runs thus:—

> "But when he saw his eyes were out,
> With all his might and main,
> He jumped into the quickset hedge,
> And scratched them in again."

This reading is more emphatic than the other, and better illustrates my text. It is by going at it again, "with all one's might and main," that we repair our foregone disasters and gather strength from defeat.

beset your career. Go at it again! You may have reason to complain that your good intentions meet with no better results; that the singleness of your aims, the purity of your aspirations, and the high courage of your first grand plunge into life, led to nothing but a torn face, smeared with blood, and a night of painful bewildering blindness. But it is better to strive manfully than to complain weakly; brace yourself up for another plunge; gather strength from defeat; into the quickset hedge again gallantly; and you will recover all that you have lost, scratch your eyes in again, and never lose your clearness of vision for the rest of your life.

Yes, indeed, if we have the right stuff in us, these failures at the outset are grand materials of success. To the feeble they are, of course, stumbling-blocks. The wretched weakling goes no farther; he lags behind, and subsides into a life of failure. And so by this winnowing process the number of the athletes in the great Olympics of life is restricted to a few, and there is clear space in the arena. There is scarcely an old man among us—an old and successful man—who will not willingly admit that he was made by his failures, and that what he once thought his hard fate was in reality his good fortune. And thou, my bright-faced, bright-witted child, who thinkest that thou canst carry Parnassus by storm, learn to possess thyself in patience. Not easy the lesson, I know; not cheering the knowledge that success

is not attainable, *per saltum*, by a hop-step-and-a-jump, but by arduous passages of gallant perseverance, toilsome efforts long sustained, and, most of all, by repeated failures. Hard, I know, is that last word, grating harshly upon the ear of youth. Say, then, that we mollify it a little,—that we strip it of its outer crustaceousness and asperity; and truthfully may we do so, my dear. For these failures are, as I have said, but stepping-stones to success; *gradus ad Parnassum*,—at the worst, non-attainments of the desired end before thy time. If success were to crown thine efforts now, where would be the great success of the hereafter? It is the brave resolution to "do better next time" that lays the substrate of all real greatness. Many a promising reputation has been prematurely destroyed by early success. The good sap runs out from the trunk into feeble offshoots or suckers. The hard discipline of the knife is wanted. I repeat that it is not pleasant; but when thou feelest the sharpness of the edge, think that all who have gone before thee have been lacerated in like manner. At thine age I went through it all. My first great effort was a tragedy upon a grand Elizabethan model. It was submitted by a friend to a competent critic, who pronounced it to be "morally, dramatically, and irremediably bad." I write the words now with a strong sense of gratitude to that critic; but I have not forgotten the keen agony with which they burnt themselves into

my soul, when I first read the crushing verdict in a dingy back bedroom in the Hummums. We have all gone through it, my dear. We! "How we apples swim!" I would speak of men—the real Chivalry of letters—whose bucklers I am not worthy to bear. Ask them about their early struggles with a world incredulous of their genius, and what a history they will have to tell thee! Ay, and what a grand moral! Is there a true knight among them who does not, on the very knees of his heart, thank God for his early failures?

In estimating the sources of Success, account must, doubtless, be taken of constitution. Some of us have constitutional defects by which others are not incapacitated or impeded. Sustained energy is possessed only by those who have powerful digestive organs. Men of a bilious, sanguine, irritable nature are capable of great spasms of energy, which carry them along so far at a time that they can allow for intervals of prostration. But there is nothing like a steady flow of health,—an equable robustness of manhood. It is a blessing which few men possess, and for which the possessor has reason devoutly to be thankful. Most of us are sensible of intervals of feebleness and weariness, when we are incapable of any great exertion, when we feel painfully that we are not doing the work which we had set ourselves to do, that we are falling behind in the

race, and suffering day after day to slip by without our making any impression on the sand. For some time, I doubted much as to the best mode of dealing with Nature in such a case,—whether it were better to make the dominant will assert itself, and to go on in spite of the unwillingness of the natural man, in spite of weakness, and lassitude, and continual entreaties from the frail flesh; or to let Nature have her way at once, and succumb contentedly to her demands. On the one hand, there is the fear of doing your work badly,—perhaps of having it to do all over again,—or of making on the minds of others, whom you wish to influence favorably, an impression of feebleness rather than of strength. There is, moreover, the risk of extending the period of lassitude and incompetency by doing violence to Nature; perhaps, indeed, of permanently enfeebling your powers. On the other hand, there is the danger of making compromises with your active powers, and yielding to the temptations of indolence. We may mistake idleness for inability, and follow our self-indulgent inclinations, rather than be swayed by an honest sense of what is wisest and most befitting the occasion. It is difficult to lay down any precise rules on the subject for the guidance of others. If every man asks himself what is his besetting infirmity, and answers the question conscientiously, he will be able to decide whether he runs greater risk of injuriously forcing Nature, or

of yielding too readily to her suggestions. If you know that you are not indolent,—if you have, for the most part, pleasure in your work, and never need the spur,—you may safely pause, when your energies are flagging and you feel an indescribable something that resists all your efforts to go forward on the road. It is better not to do a thing at all than to do it badly. You may lose time. What then? Men, stripping for the race of life, should account no time or money thrown away that contributes in any way to their physical health,—that imparts tone to the stomach, or strength to the nerves. And we should never forget that we do not sustain our energies best by keeping them always on the stretch. Rest and recreation are no small parts of discipline. The greater the work before us, the more need we have of them both.

I am nearing, not the end of my subject, but the end of my space, and I see before me much which I had purposed to say, but which must be left unsaid, for such a theme is not easily exhausted. But there is one matter to which, before I conclude, I especially desire to invite attention. I have heard it said that if we expect to get on in the world we must be suspicious of our neighbors. "Treat every man as if he were a rogue." Now, if this were a condition of Success, Success would not be worth having,—nay, indeed, it would be wholly intolerable: commend me to a life of failure. But it is not a condition of Success. To

know an honest man from a rogue, and to act accordingly, is doubtless a great thing; but, if we are to treat all mankind on our journey through life as rogues or as honest men, why, I throw up my cap for the latter. We may be cheated, it is true, tricked, cozened, defrauded, and we may throw away that which worthily bestowed might have really contributed to our success. It is a serious matter to waste our strength,—to squander, in this manner, the materials of Success. Successful men, it may be said, do not make blunders of this kind. I am not quite sure of that; besides, who knows but that the strength may not be wasted after all? A good deed done in a good spirit can never be thrown away. The bread cast upon the waters may return to us after many days. This at least I know, that if it be true, as I have said, that Providence helps those who help themselves, it is no less true that Providence helps those who help others. "The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by his liberality shall he stand." It was not meant that we should stand alone in the world. Whatsoever may be our strength, whatsoever our self-reliance, there are times and seasons when we need a helping hand; and how can we expect it to be stretched out to us, if we always keep our own in our pockets? And if we do not trust others, how can we hope to be trusted ourselves? I am not writing now about high motives, but about aids to Success. Still, I would have it borne in remem-

brance that there is a vast difference between looking for an immediate or direct return for every kindness done to a neighbor, and having faith in the assurance of Providence that as we mete to others so shall it be meted to us. The recipient of our bounty may turn his back upon us and go forth into the world only to revile us; but it does not follow therefore that we have wasted our generosity, or that the next shipwrecked brother who comes to us should be sent empty-handed away. Let us only have faith and patience, and we shall find our reward. Doubtless there may be exceptions,—apparent, if not real; but my experience of life teaches me that men who are prone to assist others commonly thrive well themselves. The most successful men of my acquaintance are at the same time the most liberal. Their system is to treat their neighbor as an honest man until their commerce with him has proved that he is a rogue; and I do not think that men are less likely to be honest for finding that they are trusted by their neighbors.

This matter of mutual aid is a point much to be considered. Self-reliance is a great thing, but it may sometimes carry us out of our depths. Successful men are commonly as ready to be helped by, as to help, others. They know how to turn inferior agency to good account. After all, that which any man can do by himself is very little. You must turn the energies of other men to ac-

count in furtherance of your own. The right thing is to identify their interests with yours, and not only to make them believe that by helping you they are helping themselves, but really to insure that it is so. My belief is that selfish men do not succeed in life. Selfishness is essentially suicidal. You know instances to the contrary, you say. Are you sure of it? Appearances are sometimes deceitful. There are men who bear the appearance of selfishness,—who are harsh in manner, stern of purpose, seemingly inaccessible and unyielding,—but there are soft spots under the grit. They do things differently from men of a more genial temperament. But what right have we to expect that every one should wear our colors? Stern men are not necessarily selfish men. There are men who, conscious of the excessive softness of their natures, have felt the necessity of induing a sort of outer crust or armor of asperity, as a covering or protection for themselves, and who thus, in their efforts to counteract a tenderness approaching to weakness, do manifest injustice to the goodness of their hearts. I have known men, too, noted for an almost impenetrable reserve, who were in reality thus reserved only because no one invited their confidences. The injudicious bearing of those with whom they lived had brought them to this pass. The respect and deference of inferiors, whether of the family or only of the household, if in excess, will often produce this result. Reticence begets

reticence. But men of this kind often long for an opportunity of letting loose their pent-up confidences, and, if you only touch the right spring, will raise at once the lid of their reserve, and show you all the inner mechanism of their hearts. Ay, and how grateful they will feel to you for giving them the chance! What a sense of relief is upon them when they have thus unburdened themselves! We little know what a deep wrong we sometimes do to others by suffering this outer crust of reserve to gather about them.

Whether you govern best by a reserved, dignified demeanor, or by an open, cheery manner, may be a question. Each has its advantage, and each is very effective in its occasional deviations into the system of the other. The genialities of stern men, and the asperities of genial ones, are each very impressive in their way. Indeed, the question of manner, in connection with my present topic of discourse, is one of such high importance that I cannot summarily dismiss it. I do not say that it is a thing to be studied. To lay down any rules on the subject is a vain thing. People who shape their outward behavior with elaborate design generally overreach themselves. Nothing but a really natural manner is genuinely successful in the long run. Now the natural manner of some people is good, of others hopelessly bad, though there may be little difference in the good stuff beneath. It is hard that we should be prejudiced by

what is merely superficial; but we are. I have heard it said that this is not prejudice,—for the manner is the outward and visible sign of the man. But there are very excellent people in the world with manners the reverse of pleasant,—people shy and reserved, or brusque and boorish, with whom personal intercourse is by no means a delight. Others, again, there are, with whom half an hour's talk is like an invigorating bath of sunshine. In this last there is an element of success. There is another successful manner, too,—one which impresses every one with a sense of your power. If you have both,—that is, a manner at once gracious and powerful,—you have everything that you can wish as an outward aid to success. A thoroughly good manner will often do much to neutralize the ill effects of an unprepossessing appearance. But an ill-favored countenance may be a stumbling-block at the outset that is never surmounted. It repels at the first start. There are people described as "unpresentable," who have giants to contend against at their first start in life. When they have once made their way in the world, the insignificance or grotesqueness of their appearance is a matter of no moment. Nay, indeed, we may not unfairly assign some additional credit to the man who has forced his way to the front, in spite of all physical defects and personal drawbacks. But it is an awful thing for a young beginner to have to contend against the impediments of a bad face, an insignifi-

cant or an ungainly figure, and a bad manner in the presence of others.

However material to the subject under discussion, these last remarks appear here in the nature of a digression; and I do not know that I can close this essay in any better manner than by returning to what I was saying about mutual help. Great as is self-help, I am disposed to think that mutual help is greater. If we contribute to the success of our neighbors, that is a success in itself. There are few of us who may not do something in this way, assured that we shall not do it in vain. And there are few of us who do not want, or who have not at some time of our lives wanted, a helping hand, and been saved by its timely extension. Liberality is not for nothing.—"The liberal man shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered himself."

And there is this to be said for the success which may attend our efforts to make others successful,—that nothing can ever take it from us. What we do for ourselves is perishable; what we do for others is abiding. There are many drawbacks from our own successes; none from the success attending our contributions to the successes of our neighbors. Ay, indeed, there are seasons in the life of almost every successful man, when he almost wishes that he had not succeeded. My friend Vetus, you can remember, I doubt not, when you were just budding into fame, how all

men spoke well of your doings. And you are doing still better now; but all men do not speak well of what you do. They are as tired as the people were of old of hearing the praises of Aristides, and they would ostracise you with as much pleasure. But have comfort; that is a part of success, sent to teach you the true value of it. No one is successful until he has been well abused. And it is no small thing at the close of life to know how little you have done. It is good that a time should come to all "quando etiam sapientibus cupido gloriæ novissima exuitur,"—when wise men lay aside even "the last infirmity of noble minds," the love of fame, and think that the best that they have done for themselves is but a failure. But what you have done for others is an enduring possession. The bank-note which you gave to Asterisk when at the last gasp of his failing fortune, and which set him on his legs again and gave him a fresh start and a successful course; the appointment which you got for Dash, when a hopeless stripling, and which placed his foot on the ladder, which he ascended to a high place in the public administration of his country; the encouraging review of Blank's book, which revived his drooping spirits just as he was on the brink of despair, and made him a successful author (what matter that he has since driven his critical beak into your heart?); the title which your successful advocacy in high places gained for Quis-quis,—

nothing can ever take these good gifts away from you; so let us think more of them than of what we do for ourselves, for they constitute the only genuine SUCCESS.

December, 1860.

THE WRONG SIDE OF THE STUFF.

WHEN I was very young, I wrote a novel. A friendly publisher placed it, with a kind word or two, in the hands of his literary adviser, who pronounced upon it a verdict singularly adverse, not to say altogether crushing. How I despised the surly critic for it! How assured I was, in my inmost heart, that he was ineffably ignorant and demonstrably wrong, envious, malignant, a hater of his race! But I see him now, at odd times, on public and on private occasions, a bland and benevolent elderly gentleman; and I shake hands with him, knowing that he denounced the first efforts of my Muse, but feeling that instead of my bitter enemy he was my very good friend, and that, in truth, my novel was far more guilty of heinous literary crimes than in his over-lenient verdict.

I do not now remember the words of his judgment,—that judgment which dispersed all my cherished visions of an honored manhood, and sent me back to hobbledehoyism and dependence beneath my father's roof. It is an old story now, and if I could recover a transcript of this first criticism, every word of which, at the time, burnt itself into me like hot iron, I would frame it for the en-

couragement of my children. But there was one particular passage of the Reader's judgment which, after the lapse of a quarter of a century, I have not forgotten. He dwelt upon the singular inconsistencies of the hero of my story, maintaining that the man who did this or that good thing could not have done this or that bad one. I took the hint, called my tale *The Inconsistent Man*, put upon the title-page an appropriate morality from Wordsworth, and published the novel at my own risk. And I have often since thought that if it had had no more serious defect than the inconsistency of its hero, there was no reason why it should not have succeeded. But as it had scarcely anything that a novel ought to have, and almost everything that a novel ought not, it is mere matter of course that it failed. How coolly one writes about these failures now,—fearful and terrible as they were at the time,—almost, indeed, rejoicing in them! And why not? Are not these early failures wounds inflicted upon us in honorable battle? May we not be proud of our scars? There is heroism needed for that conflict; and shall the hoary veteran not recite the audacities of his youth? May there not be deeds done out of uniform worthy of Victoria Crosses? Truly, I have known such. We may not bear about with us an empty sleeve or other outward insignia of our gallantry;* but

* I saw a pleasant sight, the other day, since this sheet was written. Hard by the great palace of Westminste,r there stood at

we may have had wounds less readily healed, agonies less easily borne, and may have gone through it all with equal constancy and courage.

But I have recalled this juvenile experience, only to observe that, after a quarter of a century's adult acquaintance with life, I am even less minded than I was at nineteen to regard men as consistent unities. Consistency is so rare a quality — or, rather, such a rare combination of harmonious qualities—that if statues are not erected in the market-place to consistent men, surely they ought to be, as to the rarities and marvels of the earth. We think that we know our neighbors,—our acquaintances,—our friends; but the chances are that we know them only in one particular aspect, and that, perhaps, the aspect which is least essen-

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a corner, in his neat uniform of green, leaning against a post, and ready to be hired, one of that useful body of men called commissionaires, who do our errands so much more quickly and more cheaply than the old race of ticket-porters,—an old soldier with three medals on his breast. As I neared him, on my way to my daily work, I saw another old soldier approach him,—an older soldier, and of a higher rank, with bronzed cheek, and white moustache, and erect carriage, and a noble presence; one whom there was no mistaking, though dressed in the common garb of an English gentleman. When he saw the medals on the commissionaire's breast, his face brightened up, and he stopped before the man in green, and, with a pleasant word or two, took up the medals, one after another, in his one hand, and then I saw that he had an empty sleeve. And when I looked at the commissionaire, I saw that he also had an empty sleeve. And I wished that I had been an artist, to paint that touching scene.

tially true to the inner nature of the man. We are wont to say that So-and-So is not a likely man to do such-and-such a thing. Broadly, it may be said that we cannot bring ourselves to believe that men whose leanings are evidently towards virtue, who talk and write virtuously, can do things the reverse of virtuous; and when we find that they do such things we are wont to cry out that they are hypocrites. The fact is, that they are not hypocrites. They may love what is good without doing it. Was David a hypocrite? Was Paul a hypocrite? "The evil I would not, that I do." How common a case it is! I knew a man who stood in the felon's dock, who wore the felon's dress, who did the felon's servitude. I knew him when all men respected him. It was not only that he talked good things; he did them; he took pleasure in doing them. He had a hearty relish for good; I am sure that he had none for evil. But he fell; to the astonishment of the world, he fell; and when he lay there, utterly crushed, by reason of the tremendous height from which he had fallen, people with one accord said that he was a hypocrite. I remember well the dark faces that were turned upon me—faces not all masculine, the owners of which were righly honored by the world—when I ventured to say that I could not believe, having known him in his brighter days, that that poor, crushed sinner had artistically assumed a robe of sanctity for the concealment of

his systematic iniquities. I cannot bring myself to believe it even now, after the lapse of years, when his image has faded somewhat from my sight, and his voice has grown dim in my ears. What I do believe is that there is a vast deal more of inconsistency than hypocrisy in the world. Hypocrisy is a laborious trade. The emoluments must be great if they are proportionate to the pains of following it. But every man is not a hypocrite who does not act up to his professions. *Video meliora, proboque; deteriora sequor.*

The Christian confession previously cited is but an unconscious rendering of the heathen. It is worse than folly to assert that a man is not to commend what is good because he is not able to practice it. Am I not to admire and to extol learning because I am unlearned myself? For my own part, I hold that the less harm we do to others, the better; and that "if from the weakness of our natures we cannot always stand upright," it is far better not to sin, as some do, glorying in their sins, confounding good and evil, and leading weak people astray by pernicious example. It has been said, and brilliant is the saying, that "hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue;" but, like other sharp epigrams of the same kind, this must be taken with some qualification. The homage which vice pays to virtue by cloaking itself, is not always hypocrisy. Genuine hypocrisy is, primarily, homage to self.

The hypocrite conceals his vices because he thinks that the revelation of them will be injurious to him. His homage consists only in the practical acknowledgment that vice is less seemly in men's eyes than virtue. But we more frequently pay our homage to virtue, because we really love virtue and would not willingly infect others with the disease which we have not the constitutional power to throw off ourselves.

Another error very frequently committed is this. We learn that a man has done some wrong thing, and straightway we judge him to be altogether wrong. We are loth to give him credit for the possession of any good qualities. It is very true, in one sense, that "morality admits of no sets-off." If a man runs off to America with his neighbor's wife, it is no excuse for his conduct that he paid his tradesmen before he went. But it would be very unjust to assume that because he has eloped with a paramour he has cheated his creditors and violated every moral and social engagement at the same time. A man may break one of the commandments without shivering both tables of the decalogue at a blow. The fact is, that many men who do very wrong things have a great deal of good in them. Indeed, the very wrong that they do is often only a riotous development of some good quality,—something that, although fair and smooth and glossy and beautiful to behold upon one side, is all rough and tangled

and confused and unseemly upon the other. The gusts of circumstance have caught it, and turned it the wrong side uppermost. But it *has* a right side all the same.

If it cannot be said that the father of evil had no originality of conception, and that all he could do was to turn our good qualities to his own profit, I am disposed to think that this notion borders very closely upon the truth. Vices pure and simple—vices wholly vicious in their origin and in their progress—there are, when we come to think of it, very few. Let it be accounted what paradox, what absurdity it may, when any foul crime has been committed, to declare that there was a root of Virtue somewhere beneath that great spreading tree of Vice, it is not, when we dig deep beneath the surface, so preposterous as it seems. Perhaps there is no deadlier sin than revenge; but has not the first of English moralists most happily called it "wild justice"? Is there not at the bottom of it a virtuous hatred of the wrong done,—a holy yearning after that divine attribute of justice? We would fain leave the matter in the hands of God; but divine judgments are for the most part slow, and, lacking faith and patience, we would forestall the sentence of the one perfect Judge, and so our Justice breaks its bonds, runs wild, and in its wildness becomes Revenge. Very unseemly it may be to behold, very grievous to contem-

plate; but it is, after all, only the wrong side of the stuff.

Ah! if we could only draw the line that separates good from evil,—if we could only obey, in our hearts and in our lives, the mandate, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther,"—what a blessed thing it would be! But we go on, little by little, up to the very verge of right, and silently we transgress the boundary, not intending to suffer ourselves on that other side, and not knowing that we are there. If, when we are about to pass the pickets into the enemy's country, some sentry-angel would only warn us of our danger, we might be saved in time; but we pass on in the darkness right up to the advanced guard of the enemy, and are not conscious of our error till we find ourselves in the arch-fiend's camp and all his batteries playing upon us.

You have heard it said a thousand times, "God preserve me from my friends, and I will look after my enemies myself." Apply this to your own humanity, and pray to be preserved from your good qualities in the knowledge that you can look after your bad ones yourself. You are liberal; beware of your liberality. You are loving; beware, above all things, of that "rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind," which leads us into so many snares and pitfalls. You have a strong sense of justice; pray to be able to set a restraint upon it, lest you should become hard, intolerant, exact-

ing. You are firm, resolute, constant; seek better support than your own, or you may degenerate into obstinacy, obduracy, dogged resistance of conviction, and impenetrable pride. I need not run through the catalogue. Every one knows the old couplet,—

> "Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,
> As to be hated needs but to be seen."

It is by that which is not hideous—by that which is not seen—that we are beguiled; by the fair Delilah upon whose lap we lay our trusting heads, unconscious of the depths of treachery which lurk beneath that smooth face and that pleasant smile. It is thus that our temptations assail us, thus that we are lured on to the death. We hear much in the pulpit and read in excellent books about our "besetting sins;" but it is of our besetting, ensnaring virtues, or goodnesses, that we have to beware, both for ourselves and for others. Do we think enough of this? Does it enter into our heads or our hearts as a matter whereof we should take sovereign account in the education of our little ones? Who has not heard that pretty story of the child who, when asked how it was that every one loved her, made answer that she did not know, unless it was because she loved every one? Who would not have been the father of that little girl? Who would not have been prouder of such a jewel than of the *Koh-i-noor?* Would you or I have

saddened over that sweet speech, or dared to soil the pure reflection which it cast by any prophecies of coming evil? And yet, truly, in that dear child's loving nature—and because so loving, therefore so lovable—there is much to deplore, much to dread. Thinking seriously of it, we know that of all temperaments it is the most dangerous,—the one most likely to bring its possessor to much sorrow and much sin. And, truly, it is right, if we can do it, to check this propensity to love overmuch. But how can we do it? Lecture as we may, the head will not understand, and the heart will repudiate, our doctrine. Such a tender plant as this requires very careful handling. Can we snatch the baby-doll from the young arms, and thrust its fair waxen face between the bars of the fire, or send, in her tearful presence, the sportive kitten to the inevitable pond? And if we could, what then? That treatment does not answer in childhood any more than in later life. We try it sometimes with our grown-up boys and girls, and only make a mess of it. No, if we would moderate such a tendency as this, we must above all things avoid violence. At best there is not much to be done; but we may be watchful and considerate, and, above all, we may take care to provide healthy objects of affection, and never to force the inclinations of a loving nature, from any worldly motives,—any mistaken estimate of what we are wont to call "eventual good." Out of such efforts as this come the sad

domestic histories which make the records, now so tersely tragic, of the Divorce Court; a few lines,—just a few lines,—the stories of half a dozen lives in half a newspaper-column.

What is more beautiful than the right side of this stuff, what is more hideous than the wrong? It is all of the same woof, look at it as you may; but, oh, the difference! There is the "new commandment" given to you, broidered on the one side in fair characters, and one of the seven deadly sins glaring out upon you in ghastly letters from the other. Poor lost child, sinful and the cause of sin in others, cast away, unrepentant, smiling at night beneath the gas, what a very wrong side it is! But it was fair and seemly to behold, before you turned that side uppermost. A trusting, loving nature; guileless, unsuspicious; feeling no wrong, and dreaming of none in others; a strong tendency to hero-worship, veneration largely developed; capable of any self-sacrifice so it but please the one-beloved object. How grand in Iphigenia, how noble in Antigone! But in poor Perdita the sacrifice is not for a father or a brother; and it is only a living death.

Let no one say that this is "dangerous doctrine." In truth, there is no doctrine in it. It is merely plain matter of fact. The doctrine, as I have already said, is that we shoud pray to be protected, not against our besetting sins, but against our besetting virtues. And, indeed, do we

not so pray? There is no temptation in sin; it is anything but tempting. We are tempted by what is beautiful and alluring. There is a narrow line, very finely drawn, almost imperceptible, which if you do not cross, you are safe. But the Tempter is continually enticing you to cross that line; and you find yourself in his grip before you know that he is at your elbow. It is natural that when we write of love we should draw our illustrations from woman, but there are men, too, "peccante in this kinde,"—men of gentle, kindly natures, loving hearts, caressing manners,—with something in their faces, when they talk to women, "like a still embrace;" * men who could not willfully do an unkind thing, and who forgive an injury as soon as it is inflicted upon them. But what a deal of mischief these amiable sinners do in this world of ours! They do not mean it. They would stand aghast at the thought of the iniquities into which they are likely to drift, if they were to see them foreshadowed in the magic mirror of the Future. But they see nothing, and on they go, giving free vent to the impulses of their loving natures, untill all at once

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* NOTE.

"There was something in his accents, there was something in his face,
When he spoke that one word to her, which was like a still embrace;
And she felt herself drawn to him,—drawn to him, she knew not how,
With a love she could not stifle, and she kissed him on the brow."

they wake to the knowledge that God's gift of love has blackened into a curse. The world may know it, or the world may not know it. Most likely it is profoundly ignorant; it may be very inquisitive and very censorious: but how often it is grievously at fault! How often even Mrs. Grundy sees only the amiable husband, and the kind father, and the benevolent gentleman, where, if the curtain were raised, if the hidden life were revealed, if the wrong side of the stuff, with its frayed ends, were made clear to the vision, there would be such a cry of respectable indignation, such a shudder of virtuous horror, as would strike even the seared conscience of the sinner with dismay! Men who slide into wrong-doing, conscious that they mean no wrong, soon reconcile themselves to it, and might, without hypocrisy, express surprise when their offenses come to be described by their proper names. All this can be readily understood. And the better we understand it, the more impressed we are with the marvelous truth of the aphorism that "hell is paved with good intentions." Nothing has been written more frequently than that men are worse than they seem,—that, if we could only read men's thoughts . . .

And, if we could, though many a "good man" might be shown to be worse than he appears, many a "bad man" might be revealed to us as something better. On the whole, perhaps, our thoughts are better than our lives. Fatal errors—even

deadly sins—are committed, which have a source of goodness, if we only trace those polluted waters back to their pure fount. There is many a tangled wilderness—many a dark forest, "whose very trees take root in love;" many a cruel act that branches from the stem of a kind heart.* And then as to the omissions,—the good things which we would fain do, but do not,—which we act in thought, but only in thought, yet still with a grave sincerity of purpose,—how manifold they are! Under the single apologetic heading of "want of time," we might most of us tick off omissions of this kind, which, had the will ripened into action, would have set up a dozen men with a capital of good deeds sufficient to qualify them for the calendar of saints. Almost every active-minded man sketches out for himself, in the course of his life, intellectual ex-

* Very many years ago, in the prime of my verdure, happening upon a grave truth by accident, I wrote that "the most unselfish people often do the most selfish things;" and some critics, whose years and experience doubtless exceeded my own twice told, commended the paradox with a warmth that surprised me. But now that I have lived a quarter of a century longer in the world, I see the full force of the words far more clearly than when I wrote them. The cruelties of the kindly are often most grievous. Even in their self-sacrifices at times there is an egotism which gives them pleasure, and practically a total disregard of the sufferings of others. But they are honestly bent on self-negation, and resolute to bear their martyrdom bravely to the last gasp. Do not let us say, then, that they are selfish, and condemn them; rather let us teach them how they may better contribute to others' happiness and to their own.

ploits which it would take at least five centuries to perform. And we believe that there are a vast number of men whose unaccomplished works of charity and love could not be crowded into any smaller space of time. For want of time, we are continually failing in all the offices of friendship; neglecting those who have strong claims upon us; leaving visits unpaid, letters unwritten, hospitalities unrendered, all sorts of neighborly duties unperformed. How many kind letters does the mind write for us, when pen and ink are lacking, in the crowded streets, in the railway-carriage, or abroad in the fields! How many messages of love does the spirit waft to distant friends! How many far-off houses do we visit, carrying with us some token of affection! How many welcome guests do we gather around our own boards—in everything but the solid substantiality of fact! The dramatist who said that he had written all his play *but the acts*, gave expression to that which may be taken literally with reference to the great drama of life. There is friendship, kindliness, charity, hospitality, boundless sympathy,—complete in everything "but the acts." Are we, then, all humbugs? Not a bit of it. We are oftener humbugs in doing than in not doing. But we cannot expect the world to take the will for the deed. We must be content that judgment should be passed upon us for that only which is seen and done. When some stroke of good or of evil fortune befalls my friend, I must

not, being silent, expect him to give me credit for the pleasure or the pain which I have not expressed, though it may have filled my eyes with tears and made me thrill with emotions of joy or sorrow. The letter or the visit of congratulation or condolence has been paid or written only in the spirit, and, though One who reads all hearts can see the untraced words on the sheet, and hear the sound of the unraised knocker on the door, our best of human friends can hardly be expected to think that our silence at such a time is not cold, unkindly, and ungrateful. In these respects, and in others, perhaps, of greater moment, we are most of us better than we seem. But life is short, and the battle thereof is very sharp and absorbing, and we have not always the wax spread upon the wall or the style ready to the hand. And so our brightest thoughts do not find their way into our books, or our best feelings into action. They fall by the wayside, and the birds of the air devour them. What I write now I had in my head last night, as I lay abed in the dark, but with far greater force of words and fertility of illustration. Why, then, it may be asked, did I not spring from my bed, grope my way to a match-box, light a candle, and rush to the library? Why! because I was weary, because I might have broken my shins, because I might have caught cold, and lost the bright thoughts, after all, before I had got the pen in my hand to give them permanent expression.

They are lost forever. It cannot be helped. I do not expect any credit for them. But I say that many of us are cleverer fellows than we are in our books, and, what is more to the point of this essay, better fellows than we are in our actions.

I have said that there is often cruelty to those whom we love best in the sacrifices which we make for their sakes. But it is not in affairs of love only that this prodigal expenditure of self is often very hurtful to others. As there are loving natures, so also there are giving natures. Sometimes we find them both combined. Indeed, a loving nature is commonly a giving nature; but to give is not always to love. I have known some very liberal, open-handed people, who would give away, indeed, the very shirt on their backs, and yet the depths of whose affections are very easily fathomed. And truly this is a dangerous quality,—almost as dangerous as the tendency to love overmuch. But there is something beautiful in it too; and we are loth to check it, though we know that it should be checked. Yes, indeed, when that fine little boy on his way to the pastrycook's, with his right hand in the pocket of his knickerbockers, firmly clinching the small coin wherewith he is about to purchase buns for a nursery feast, is arrested at the very threshold of the palace of dainty delights by the sight of a shivering beggar-woman with three small pinched children, lean-faced and wistful-eyed, on the pavement, and presently returns bunless and

moneyless to the paternal roof, can you or I find it in us to utter word of reproach or even warning? We may try—almost we may begin, when we hear the artless story, to say, "Clement," with a grave face, "I think, perhaps . . . ."—but before the first few words are out, the grave look gives way to a flushing smile, and all you can bring out is, "Clem, my darling, you're a dear, kind boy: here's a shilling; go and buy the buns for me, and remember that the money is mine." And Clem goes, with his hand more tightly clinched in his knickerbockers than ever, and, listening to no allurements on the way, he brings back the buns in safety, for he feels that neither the money nor the buns are his—until he gets fairly home, and then he becomes undisputed proprietor, and he has his feast, with interest, in the nursery.

Now, I do not say that all this is right: morally, indeed, it is very wrong. "Cast your bread upon the waters, and it will return to you after many days." True; and what lessons of faith, hope, and charity—all three—does this teach us? But we must not look for our bread or our buns to come back to us in the next half-hour. Where is the faith, where is the hope, where is the charity, to be exercised under such a dispensation? It would be far better, therefore, if dear Clem had had his lecture and lost his buns. I speak very seriously. I know how hard it is to look disapprovingly upon a kind act. I know, too, that, strictly speak-

ing, we ought to assume that Clem would have been happier without his buns than with them. Little boys used to be so when I was one,—in the story-books at least. But, bless the little knickerbockers, in these degenerate days our boys eat the second bag of buns with all the heartier relish for having given away the first to a beggar. If they are *not* rewarded with a second, they go without, and perhaps are naughty enough sometimes to think regretfully, almost self-reproachfully, of the sacrifice they have made. But even boy nature is weak, and why should we expect these little ones to be stronger than grown men?

But here I am, according to my wont, drifting, drifting farther and farther away from the morality which I ought to teach. That dear little Clem ought really to be cautioned against the snares of liberality. He ought to be told that liberality is not always generosity. He should be cautioned lest, although it is now quite enough to tell him that the money in his pocket is not his, he should some day be liberal with that which is not his own. The man has not always so keen a sense of the sacredness of other people's belongings as the boy. At all events, we should watch well the good and kindly tendencies of our children. It is a common saying with respect to the boys, that their bad qualities will be "knocked out of them at school." If they be proud, their pride will be laughed out of them; if they be quarrelsome, their contentious-

ness will be thrashed out of them; if they be mean, their meanness will be scorned out of them. But all their attractive qualities are sure to be encouraged and developed, and if in time they are not exaggerated, first into weakness, and then into vices, happy indeed is the youth, or wiser and stronger than his comrades. It is, therefore, I say again, the parental duty to warn a child against its kindlier and more attractive qualities, and, if possible, to moderate and control them. If we do not, we may be sure that some day or other we shall see the wrong side of the stuff.

In no respect, perhaps, is it of more sovereign importance to the moral well-being of a man, and to the general welfare of society, that the line which separates good from evil should be jealously observed, than in the manifestations of generosity run riot. Doubtless it is a good thing to give, and to give freely. The Lord "loveth a cheerful giver." But if we do not take heed, our delight in giving may lead us not only to give what we have, but what we have not, and to be generous at other persons' expense. That miserable George Barnwell, who when I was young was preached at the rising generation on Easter Mondays, Boxing-nights, and other solemn occasions, from the great dramatic pulpits of the metropolis, went through prodigality of giving straight on to murder. This, doubtless, is an exceptional manifestation. We do not often, literally and corporeally, slay our bene-

factors in order that we may bestow rich gifts upon some frail friend, but figuratively, metaphorically, we are afraid, we often sin in this fashion, and are generous before we are just and honest. Many grievous shipwrecks have come out of this; and the fairest promises have led straight up to the felon's dock. Do you think that the poor, blasted wretch whom you see quailing and cowering there had any natural tendency towards dishonesty? Had that miserable George of whom I have spoken any taste for blood,—any craving after the excitement of highway-robbery? He did it, not that he loved his uncle less, but that he loved another more, and he would rather have given her trinkets sprinkled with blood than not have given her any trinkets at all.

This is altogether, as I have said, an extreme case. George took what he knew he could never restore. He could not restore life; and he could not restore money to the dead. But a large number of those who are brought to ruin by their heedless liberality have no thought of being dishonest or even unjust. If, directly or indirectly, they take what is not their own, they believe in their hearts that they can make restitution before any one will miss it. Strictly, it is unjust—perhaps dishonest—to give or to lend sixpence, unless you have the means, without that sixpence, of satisfying every rightful claim upon you. Say that the poor old lady who nursed you in your tender childhood

is down in the rheumatics, or that little Barbara, your handmaiden, who kept long and patient vigils beside the bed of your sick wife or your dying boy, has been crying her poor eyes out, because she has bad news from home of rent that cannot be paid, and little brothers and sisters who cannot be fed, or that unhappy Bibulus Boanerges, the man of letters, who has done you, as you know, many a bad turn in his day, now come to drunken grief, seeks a good one at your hands,—what right have you, as an honest man, to give to one or the other, if you cannot pay your tradesmen's bills on demand to the last farthing? None. I know it; I feel it. To give, when you owe, is to give what is not your own. This is a great moral truth to be impressed upon little Knickerbockers; and if you catch him giving a penny to a beggar when he owes sixpence at the lolly-pop shop,—for in these days even little Knickerbockers is prone to contract debts—doubtless it *is* the parental duty to admonish him severely on the spot.

But—stern moralist as I am, after this I cushion myself on a *but*—but, if the wrong side of that fine, rich stuff of generosity be injustice and dishonesty, justice and honesty also have their wrong sides. Just and honest men, whom I wot of, often suffer their virtues to exuberate, so as to overgrow some of the milder graces, which I, for one, cannot help esteeming. It may be our duty to narrow our obligations to the utmost, or, rather, to the

innermost; to recognize only the primary duties; to see no neighborhood beyond our own fireside or the walls of our own counting-house; to provide plentifully for our own offspring; to owe no man anything; and neither to borrow nor to lend. This may be right; at all events, it is safe. I confess that I have not so read the precepts of Christianity,—but, then, my understanding may be a false interpreter of the truth. "What claim has he upon me, that I should do this thing for him? By doing it, I may injure those who *have* claims upon me." What claim? Well, I confess that when we come to talk about claims there is very little to be said. What claims have you and I upon the bounty either of Man or God? It would end at last, I fear, if they came to be tried, in our throwing ourselves upon the mercy of the Court. It is, doubtless, a very grievous thing when men, under the inspiration of a vague feeling of universal brotherhood, forget that they are husbands and fathers. Books, we know, have been written to prove that our kindred have no claim upon us as kindred, but simply as members of the great family of mankind. Such doctrine is to be repudiated utterly. Home first, and the world afterwards. But there are those whose maxim it is, "Home first, and after that the Deluge." And the home of such men often contains a family of which the solitary member is Self. The honesty of such men is not to be questioned. If they were to die to-

morrow, all their worldly affairs would be found in the nicest order; no man would be defrauded of his rights. But, Honestus, you must beware of your besetting virtue. It is possible that somewhat more may be required of you than this strictness of dealing. The unprofitable servant who wrapped up his talent in a napkin was, doubtless, a very honest man,—safe to the extremest point of safety. But he did not satisfy his master. Honesty is a grand thing;—"An honest man's the noblest work of God,"—ay, truly. But may it not be that there are regions in which honesty is measured by a standard differing somewhat from our own,—regions in which account is taken of other debts than those for food and clothing, doctors' stuff and servants' wages? Have you paid those debts, O Honestus? Being human, it cannot be expected of you that you have paid them in full; but have you paid even a reasonable installment of your obligations? or have you remembered the first half only of that most beautiful and most solemn precept, "Owe no man anything, *but to love one another*"?

Yes, justice and honesty may run riot,—the strong even as the weak; but should we not be tolerant also of their excesses? You do not like that cold, stern, reserved, case-hardened man. Geniality is more pleasant; generosity is more alluring. But who knows, after all, that there may not be some soft spots beneath that coat of mail?

Who knows, indeed, that the armor has not been indued by very reason of those soft spots? Men, ere now, warned in time of their besetting infirmities, have steeled themselves against them, have curbed their errant propensities, rudely and painfully, and in their outward aspects belied their inward natures, bringing themselves to it only by habitual resistance, and that, too, of the most determined, uncompromising kind. It is the tenderest-hearted wayfarer, peradventure, who buttons his coat most securely over his waistcoat-pocket and passes on most rapidly, when the voice of distress reaches him from the shadow of the house, and he feels, rather than sees, a ragged figure pursuing him along the pavement in quest of alms. He hurries on, not to escape the mendicant so much as to escape from his own propensity to give, and by giving to relieve his feelings, at the expense of his principles, and to solace himself to the injury of others. And it may be the most jovial of boon-companions who refuses the proffered glass, who seems to have no good-fellowship in him. Who knows that he may not be only too good a fellow, that it may not be the constant study of his life to hold in due restraint and governance the companionable qualities which, without such a strong hand upon them, might drag him down to destruction?

Besides, even as regards more practical manifestations, we may often be very greatly mistaken.

We may know the act of generosity that was not done, but we may not know the act of greater generosity that was done,—the greater sacrifice that forbade the lesser. I had a lesson of this kind taught me at school, the impression of which thirty years of active life have in nowise weakened. Our senior usher—it was a large private school—was a liberal, open-handed fellow; he dressed well, subscribed handsomely to the cricket-club, and had the reputation—it was a glory, not a reproach, among us—of being "in debt in the town." But the second usher was an intolerable screw. He carried the fact upon his back; it spoke out from all his actions. His conduct was as shabby as his coat. Of course our notion was that he was by nature a skinflint, and that he had hoards of gold "at the bottom of his box." He was a man otherwise of a kindly nature and a harmless way of life, so we despised rather than hated the wretch. But it came out afterwards that he had an aged mother and two sisters, relying solely for their maintenance on his scanty earnings; and the saddest thing of all was—I know nothing sadder in history—that contemplating, at the end of one half-year, a pleasant surprise for these poor people, he walked home, a hundred miles under a June sun, and appeared unexpectedly among them one sultry evening, only to find that all three were helplessly drunk. Next half we had a new usher, and for a little space there was a belief among us that the poor fellow had

saved money enough to start a school of his own; but little by little the truth, as I have told it, oozed out, with this pathetic addition, that he had gone hopelessly mad. We were very much grieved then at the rash judgments that we had passed, and we penitentially recanted by getting up a subscription, the largest ever known in the school, which kept the poor crazy wretch—he was quite harmless—under comfortable restraint, until he died. When the doctor's eldest son married, and we subscribed for a silver tea-equipage to present to the young couple,—and when, that prodigal senior usher, at a later period, retiring upon his debts, and starting, upon that modest capital, a school and a wife of his own, we endowed him with a preposterous plated épergne fit for the dinner-table of a duke,—we had availed ourselves of the opportunity to seek special aid from the parental purse. But in this instance it was a point of honor and of conscience with us all to make solemn sacrifice of self and to deny our appetites for the benefit of the man we had wronged; and I am sure, let alone the satisfaction of such an atonement, that the lesson we had all learned was worth the money ten times told. Many of us, I doubt not, were sadder and wiser boys from that time. We had seen only the wrong side of the stuff of that poor second usher's beautiful generosity, and we had not thought for a moment that it had a right side, smooth to the touch, lovely to the eye, gay with many-colored

flowers and bright with tissue of gold, such as might almost form the tapestry of heaven itself. The angels saw, if we did not; and if we could only see things a little more with *their* eyes, how much less injustice would they have to write down against us!

In the case which I have cited above, the error committed, the wrong done, was of the most absolute, unqualified kind; we judged the poor man to be ungenerous and selfish, when his generosity really was of the most self-sacrificing order. We altogether blundered over the fact. But sometimes, although right in our facts, we are grievously astray in our judgments, looking only at the wrong side of the stuff, and refusing to believe that there is a right. We say that a man is obstinate; that he is stern and inflexible. But we know not, perhaps, what a noble constancy, what a high sense of justice, may lie beneath those more unattractive qualities. Even truth, smooth and beautiful as it is, turns up sometimes a side harsh to the touch and uncomely to the sight. You and I may not sympathize with the Brutuses of the world: we may not have enough of the noble Roman in us to send our sons to the headsman, or to strike down our dearest friends "at the base of Pompey's statue;" but it would be wrong to close our eyes to the fact that there is nobility in such exploits. In these cases we may fairly assume that there is self-negation of the highest order. But in

others, where there is nothing to justify the question, "Had you rather that Cæsar were living and die all slaves?" there may still be something to admire even in the ugliest manifestations of these sterner qualities. I have often thought whether Shakspeare intended utterly to close the hearts of his audience against that poor baffled Shylock. As for myself, I must acknowledge that I never go away altogether satisfied with the result. I have quoted already the Baconian aphorism that revenge is a kind of wild justice. I believe an ingenious essay has been written to prove that the dramatist was aided by his great contemporary in the composition of his plays; and we might, at all events, pleasantly conjecture that these memorable words had been given by the philosopher to the poet as a subject for a drama. That Shylock had a strong sense of justice is not to be doubted. He took a strictly logical view of the matter, and was only beaten at last by a wretched quibble. I have known men who have stood out for their ounce of flesh just as tenaciously as this persecuted Israelite, and with much less excuse. I have known as stern a resolution to exact what is "nominated in the bond" beneath a waistcoat of Christian broadcloth as beneath the Jewish gabardine. Not because such men desire to injure their neighbors, but because they have an immovable conviction of what is due to themselves. What they contend for chiefly is a full acknowledgment of their rights;

and, the acknowledgment once unreservedly made, they will sometimes yield the thing itself, and be generous, when justice is satisfied. I have thought sometimes whether Shylock would have taken the pound of flesh at last, if the judge had placed the knife in his hand. He might have been satisfied with his victory, and have heaped coals of fire on the Christian's head by showing that the dog he had spat upon could forgive. At all events, if I were a Hebrew, I would "adapt" the *Merchant of Venice* after that fashion. And even as a Christian I cannot help thinking that the smug Venetians, being clearly guilty of intolerance and persecution, escaped a little too easily. It may be observed that Shakspeare, even in the delineation of his worst characters, generally contrives to give us a glimpse of the right side of the stuff. Even that truculent Lady Macbeth is redeemed from utter iniquity by the "one touch of nature" which glimmers out in the exclamation,—

> "Had he not resembled
> My father as he slept, I had done it."

When I first addressed myself to write upon this subject, after a colloquy with one to whose suggestions I owe more than his modesty will acknowledge, I was minded to treat it in another fashion. I purposed to show the evil that there is in good, or that emanates from good, rather than "the soul of goodness in things evil." But it has

pleased me better, looking at the wrong side of the stuff, to show that it has a right,—to turn it with its bright smooth surface uppermost,—than to say anything disparaging of it because there are frayed ends and unevennesses beneath. Whether this be the truer philosophy or not, I do not pretend to determine; but I am very certain that it is the pleasanter and the more encouraging. And may we not thus, looking at the matter in this more cheerful aspect, find that from the very mode and manner of our investigation there are special truths to be learnt,—that there are some good practical lessons in it which we should do well not to ignore? Morally, it is right that we should judge people according to their opportunities. Legally, of course, we can take account only of results. Now, the results of being *dragged up* are, doubtless, very lamentable. They are apparent in frequent appeals to the legal tribunals of the country. Under such adverse circumstances, good is very difficult to maintain as good. It is speedily perverted into evil. There stands the prisoner in the dock,—a ruffian and a thief,—with previous convictions written down against him. His has been the education of the gutter. We say it is a "hopeless case." But who knows that still some germ of good may not lurk in the secret places of his nature, to be called forth again, in all its freshness and vitality, under wise treatment and fostering care?

If we look well into it, we may find that we have not to contend with some dominant sin, but with the misdirection of some originally good quality, — that the wrong side of the stuff has turned up very early in life and obstinately remained uppermost. If we are satisfied of this, we may find the work of reformation comparatively easy. I have often thought that we take too much trouble to find out the dark spots, and, having found them, to cut them out with the knife. If we could only chance upon the bright ones, our treatment would be more simple and more pleasant. There may be, we say, beneath them—who knows?—a pure fount of good, from which may flow rivers of living waters. Let us make a channel for the stream, so that it shall pour itself in the right direction, and go rippling over golden sands and clean smooth pebbles, not slushing through mud and garbage. That young Arab cowering under a dry arch,—there has been nothing but the wrong side of the stuff for him all his life. Can we expect him to be any better than he is? But peradventure there is some humanity in him, if we could only find it out. And that seemingly still more hopeless subject,—that hoary sinner, blear-eyed and of Vesuvian aspect, reeling out of the gin-shop, with inarticulate blasphemies in his scorched throat,—he too may have some good in him; and, if we could only find it out, he would not be wholly lost. Men even in that state have been saved, ere now, by an appeal, perchance Heaven-directed, to some

feeling of honor and decency still alive, though long dormant, in their bosoms. "You may not believe it, but I was gentleman once—I was, indeed!"—or words of kindred meaning—said Newman Noggs; and there was pride in the thought which lifted a corner of the tapestry and revealed for a time the right side of the stuff. There is something to work upon when you have found the soft spot. A sweet sound, a pleasant sight, will do more than the chain or the lash to subdue the maniac to quietude; and a succession of sweet sounds and pleasant sights may bring him back to reason, which we may be sure the whip and the strait-waistcoat never will. And this is mainly because these sweet sights, these pleasant sounds, supply, as it were, the long-broken link between the present and the past, and bring back lost remembrances of peace and happiness in the antecedent state. And by the same power of association, men whose moral sense is overcast may be brought back to commune with themselves as they once were,—may see glimmerings of bygone beatitudes, and be purified and humanized by the glimpses they have caught of a holier state of existence once theirs. If we can only succeed in turning up a corner, a very little corner, of the right side of the stuff, there is good hope that we may soon see it lifted by the mild breath of favorable circumstance, rolling over, fold after fold, until we can no longer see anything of the wrong.

July, 1861.

ON GROWING OLD.

I AM growing old.

I do not mean that I am bed-ridden or chair-ridden; that I am blind, or lame, or deaf. I read without spectacles, and I walk my four miles under the hour without fatigue. But, for all that, there are many things which say that age is creeping upon me. I have left off pulling the gray hairs out of my whiskers. I am glad when any one helps me on with my great-coat. I go to sleep at the Play. I have had a sharp touch of gout; and I saw myself described, the other day, in print, not unkindly, as a "literary veteran." So I suppose that I *am* a veteran; and I have been just thinking how I like it.

According to all received opinions, I ought not to like it at all. I ought to feel very sad and serious over my lost youth. It is certain that it will never come back again. Once gone, it is gone forever. I know that;

> "Nothing can bring back the hour
> Of glory to the grass, of splendor to the flower."

The verdant, grassy, flowery state has lapsed into the great limbo of the Past. It has become a

reminiscence. Am I therefore to bewail it? or is it wiser to accept the situation? Accept it! ay, and more than that,—accept and be grateful for it, throwing up my *magnificats* in full faith that, if the glory and the splendor have departed, new glories and new splendors have taken their place.

It is a very pleasant thought that Life is made up of compensations. All Nature teaches this one grand lesson. There is seed-time, and there is summer. There is harvest, and there is winter. When autumn comes upon us,—when the roses have long since gone, and the leaves on the trees are sere and yellow,—are we to regret that it is no longer summer and that the greenery has departed? Have not the rich tints of the autumnal foliage peculiar beauties of their own? As time takes away, so it gives; as it empties, so it replenishes. There is a process of restoration and compensation ever at work in the physical world; and is it not so also in the moral? You have lost a parent, but you have gained a child. Do you not see revived in your daughter the calm, clear brow and the sweet, mild eyes of your mother, as you last saw her, when you were a little child? You must not expect to enjoy at the same time the beatitudes of the Past and of the Present. But I am afraid that there are some whose nature it is rather to deplore what they have lost, than to rejoice in what they have gained. They say that "the beautiful has vanished, and returns not;" instead of believing in the great

truth that it is continually recreating and renewing itself.

And, after all, what is it that we lose by growing old? Is it much more than the fruit loses when it ripens. We lose our greenness—our rawness—our crudeness; and surely maturity is better than these. But maturity, it is said, is the forerunner of decay. Well, O Wiseman! what then? It was one wiser than thou, albeit a heathen teacher, who said, in venerable Sanskrit—

"Weep not! Life the hired nurse is, holding us a little space;
Death, the mother, who does take us back into our proper place."

This from the *Book of Good Counsels*, O Wiseman! —known to Orientalists as the *Hitopadesa*,—written centuries before we had even the glimmer of a literature of our own. But let us look at the matter less seriously, thinking, first of all, what maturity replaces. We all know how fond are the poets and romancers of discoursing upon the joyousness, the insouciance, of youth; but we hear little of its embarrassments, its anxieties, its mortifications. If there be one faith more blindly accepted than all others by the world, it is that freedom from care and trouble is the blissful immunity of childhood and early youth; that these burdens increase in volume and press more heavily upon us as we advance in years, and are grievous only in the maturity and the decay of our lives. If children were to write essays and truth-

fully to record their experiences, I have very little doubt as to what they would say upon this subject. And I believe, too, that the testimony of very many grown-up men, looking back through a vista of thirty or forty years, would be very conclusive against the carelessness and lightheartedness of childhood. In the ordinary commerce of adult life, there is probably nothing half so distressing as the night-fears of the young,—the horrible dread of solitude and darkness, which crushes the childish heart. There are some sensitive and excitable children whose lives are embittered by these vague apprehensions of night dangers, of which ghosts and thieves are the most tremendous, for all the latter part of each day is overclouded by the dreadful shadow of approaching bedtime. A great deal might be said—and, indeed, a great deal has been said, in divers places, very much to the point—about want of care in nurses, and want of judgment in parents; but I am not writing to expose omissions or to suggest remedies, but simply to state facts; and the nursery horrors of which I speak are very grave facts,—grave even in the retrospect. Yet we talk about the cloudless happiness of childhood as though children never knew a care.

And has schoolboy life no cares, no anxieties, no terrors? There is the big bully, or the truculent usher, or the fellow you ought to fight and yet can't quite bring yourself to do it; the debt to the

itinerant pastrycook, of which he reminds you with an indelicacy of which in after-life your tailor is quite incapable; the prize worked for, toiled for, with vast brain-sweat, and mighty sacrifice of self, grand heroic surrender even of the pleasures and privileges of fine weather and the cricket-season, and yet not gained after all. And even that cricket-season, has it not its own peculiar crop of bitterness? A bad innings sends many a fellow unhappy to bed. On grand occasions, such as that half-yearly "match with the town," a disaster of this kind is pure wretchedness for a fortnight; ay, and for longer, if the holidays do not charitably intervene. I doubt whether the fates have anything half so bitter as this in store for our latter days. To be booked, by the general voice of the school, as good at least for thirty runs, and to go out, branded, disgraced, with that terrible round O to your name! The dreadful feeling of descent and humiliation; the knowledge that you have disappointed your friends, and given a triumph to your enemies; the self-reproach, the self-contempt, with which you are burdened, as though you had really been only an impostor: they are truly such tremendous inflictions that the wonder is that you make your crestfallen way to the tent, and do not utterly perish before the next boy has taken your place. Talk of the elasticity of youth! How soon does the schoolboy recover from that round O? How soon does he regain his serenity of mind after

missing that catch at cover-point which would have extinguished the Town's best man and turned the tide of victory in favor of the School? Talk of the generosity of youth! In the agony of his own humiliation, what boy so generous as to desire his successor at the wicket to attach a large score to his name? Does not his heart warm to the fellow who surrenders like himself to the first ball? Well, as we grow older, we doubtless have our failures, our distresses, our envies, and our jealousies; and I am not now saying that in adult life we may be bowled out first ball with perfect composure. Spoken literally, it might not be to the point; metaphorically, it might not be true. All I mean to say is that there are few keener mortifications—few so difficult to bear—as those which beset us in early life, and that this kind of juvenile bankruptcy preys upon the spirits and really wears the heart with an attrition as great as that which far greater failures subject us to in after-life. It is very well to say, "What does it matter?—a boy may be a very good boy, and yet may fail to defend his wicket, and may add nothing to the score." But is his reputation no matter? Is it nothing that the hero-worship which once attended him has gone down with his stumps? In school-boy life there are no set-offs and compensations as there are in after-years, and there is no philosophy to make the most of them if there were. A hundred—perhaps, five hundred—young hearts have

suddenly cooled towards their idol, and come, in a moment, to regard it as an empty and pretentious sham.

We talk of the simplicity, the singleness, the transparent truth of boyhood; but there are no such arrant impostors as boys. They go through all sorts of penances—martyrdoms, almost—just for the sake of appearances. I remember now, with a feeling of wonder, the things which we used to do in mere boastfulness,—things that we would have fain left undone, but that we thought it "fine" to do them. What braggart absurdities we committed in those days, with inward fear and trembling! What would induce us, in later life, to go through such self-incurred punishments? Even those school-feasts of which we talked so much beforehand were terrible inflictions when the time came. We went to bed at eight or nine o'clock, and the feast could not come off until the doctor and his family were in bed. So we kept ourselves awake, struggling against the inroads of sleep, till near midnight (taking it, perhaps, in turns to watch for an hour), weary, hungry, and athirst, wishing heartily that the veal-pies and lobsters, the port-wine, or the ingredients of punch, were anywhere but behind our beds. When the time came for eating, we had generally passed the esurient stage, and the promised enjoyment was flat and feeble. We lived in perpetual fear of being "caught out," and sometimes we *were*. Anyhow, we were ex-

ceedingly sick next morning (and, perhaps, for some days afterwards), and would have been very sorry for what we had done, if it had not been for the pleasure of talking about "such fun." There was an ingenious process of substituting removable screws for the nails which kept the wooden panels of which the walls of our room were constructed,—a process which enabled us to go into the town at night, when we were supposed to be asleep,—a performance which was considered the very height of puerile daring. I remember that the audacity of myself and an adventurous comrade culminated in a visit to the theater, half-price, when we sat in the dress-circle, and witnessed the last act of *Jane Shore* and an after-piece. I was exceedingly glad to find myself in bed again, but I was proud of the feat next morning. It was an immense sacrifice of the Present to the Future. And when I think over it now, I am inclined to think that it is out of such sacrifices as this that our maturer heroism arises. I wonder whether any one who volunteers for a forlorn-hope ever likes it. In the schoolboy freaks of which I have spoken, we had no sustaining sense of duty; what we did was precisely the reverse of our duty; but we were equally eager for the applause of our comrades. If we would rather remain in bed at fourteen, perhaps we would rather remain in camp at two-and-twenty; but we do not. For the love of glory takes us out of our security and impels us to do what is dangerous and distasteful

to us. I do not, therefore, say that even these puerile audacities have not their uses; there are the germs of better things in them. But when we set these things down among the pleasures of youth, and talk of its sincerity and truthfulness, I cannot help thinking that we succumb to a vague tradition. One of the great advantages of age is that we are not wont to disturb ourselves by doing things that we do not like, simply for the look of the thing. When a friend takes me into his stables and, pointing out a spindle-legged, vicious-eyed mare, who sets her ears back at the sight of me, and tells me I shall ride her to-morrow, do I mind saying, "No, thank you!"? But when I was a stripling I would have mounted a flying dragon, had one been offered to me, and professed a liking for that sort of cattle. There are, doubtless, some men who never outlive their vanity. There was my old schoolfellow, C—— S——, a year or two my senior, who never could shake off the boastfulness of his youth. Endeavoring not long ago, in the presence of myself and others, to witch us with his noble horsemanship, he sprang upon the back of his charger with such a show of juvenile agility that, like vaulting ambition, he overleaped himself, and fell on the other side, flat on his face. If one of my boys had done that, I should have been sorry for him; but, in my schoolfellow, I could not help thinking that he was old enough to know better. Such follies and failures, how-

ever, are only the exceptions which prove the rule.

But of all the different seasons of life, I believe that which is most laden with its own peculiar distresses is the season of incipient manhood. The sensitiveness of hobbledehoyism is very afflicting. I have heard it said that all this has passed away,—that times are changed, that youth is changed with them, and that the rising generation are distinguished by an amount of cool assurance to which, a quarter of a century ago, striplinghood was utterly a stranger. I do not undertake to settle this point. Possibly it may be so. Possibly the cool assurance of which we hear so much is but the outward cloak of that real want of self-reliance, of that nervous uncertainty, which is the normal state of those who have not yet secured their position. The very bluster of youth has something of timidity in it. I know, at least, it had in my time, a quarter of a century ago. What agonies I endured in that state of adolescence! What fearful turmoils of the mind there were, what fears, what fightings, on that terrible bridge which unites the opposite banks of boyhood and manhood,—when, to speak without a metaphor, you do not like to be thought a boy, whilst others are scarcely minded to treat you as a man! There are some who may laugh at this. I vow that there is nothing to me laughable in the recollection. The sufferings of hobbledehoyism have been set

forth with pathetic humor, in the persons of David Copperfield and Pip of the Great Expectations, with a fidelity which vividly recalls my own miserable experiences on the bridge. In those days, with an insane ambition, one went in for everything. If one could have limited one's aspirations, it would have been comparatively a light matter to be dragged up into manhood. But, with the unlimited assumptions of youth, what roughnesses have to be encountered! You wish to be accounted handsome, well dressed, well mannered, well informed, active, brave, clever, a fellow who fears nothing, who can do anything, and who knows everything in the world. In after-life, you know that pretentiousness of this kind has its own death-warrant written on its forehead. But very young men never acknowledge ignorance or incapacity. Their struggles to maintain a character for manhood are painful in the extreme. They do not know that the manliest thing of all is to keep quiet. It is their misfortune to be restless and uneasy. The fact is, that, the world being all new and strange to them, they cannot help thinking that they are new and strange in the eyes of the world, and that therefore the world is continually looking at them, instead of treating them with the most sovereign indifference and cold-blooded unconcern. That pimple on your chin, Juvenis, has made you unhappy for a week. You have looked at it every morning on first getting

up. I will not say what you have done to diminish its size and its rubicundity, only increasing the evil by every new effort to remove it; and yet no one has observed that pimple on your chin,—no one certainly has given a thought to it. And that untoward splash on your white neckcloth, dinner-bound, which makes you vow never to travel, *en costume*, in Hansom again,—who sees the spot, and who would concern himself about it if he did? Not men who have got dinners to eat, or girls to flirt with, or anecdotes to ventilate with effect. Take it as a rule, O Juvenis, that we are all of us thinking about ourselves a great deal too much to think about you. You talk: you wish to display your knowledge, and you make a slip. You find it out yourself, and you are unhappy. You have an uneasy conception of the blunder almost as soon as you have made it; you are out in your geography, or your history, or you have given a wrong date; you consult a score of volumes when you get home, find that you really have blundered, and are miserable for a week under the impression that you have irremediably damaged your reputation and henceforth will be accounted an ass. You have found yourself out, my friend; but, take my word for it, no one else has found you out; no one has discovered your blunder or given you and your talk a second thought. But we are not easily taught that, however much we may think about ourselves, other people think very little about us,

and that in most cases we make no more impression on society than a snowflake on a tablet of stone.

This continual struggle about what others will think of you, this incessant inquietude concerning trifles, is, I repeat, one of the main unhappinesses peculiar to youth. We gain our experience, even in the smallest matters, after much perturbation of spirit,—much sore and grievous travail. I remember that when I first began to pay visits by myself, just after leaving school, I was terribly disquited by the agonizing uncertainty as to what I ought to say to the servant who opened the door. The great question, concerning which there were such inward conflicts throughout the journey, was whether I ought to say, "Is Mr. Robinson at home?" or, "Is your master at home?" The only thing I cared to know was which was the most manly, man-about-town form of question to be addressed to the footman or the parlor-maid on opening the door. Of course, I only thought about myself, for the vanity of youth is egregiously selfish. I know, at all events, now, which is the form of question most pleasing to the door-opener; and I am quite content with that knowledge. It may be inquired, why should youth suffer itself to be made wretched by such doubts as these (and I have only cited one of many familiar illustrations that might be adduced), when it is so easy, in any circumstance of life, to ask some one older and more experienced than yourself, what is the right

thing to do? A man who reasons in this wise can never have been young. "Easy"! Why, it is in youth the hardest thing in the world. Does youth ever confess ignorance,—ever ask advice? It would rather die first! You or I may smile to see our boys assume the veteran air, and do things for the first time with an assumption of experience, as though they had been doing the same thing all their lives. But if we look to our own early days the feeling will be rather one of pity than amusement, for we shall remember how we ourselves suffered in this transition-state, when we wore the *toga virilis* with a jaunty air, as though we were used to it, and it was continually tripping us up.

There is absolute misery in pretentiousness of all kinds, and youth is infinitely more pretentious than age. There are some men, I have said, who never outlive their vanity; but, as a general rule, it may be maintained that the longer we live the less we care what others think of us, and the less we strive after effect. I do not mean to say that in these strivings of youth there may not be something good and noble,—"strivings, because our nature is to strive." They are the outward expression of what the same poet* calls "our inborn, uninstructed impulses"—the tentative, experimental action of powers immature and undecided. A young man feels that he has something in him,

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* ROBERT BROWNING, in *Paracelsus*.

and, not knowing in what form Providence designs that it shall come forth, he is continually making outlets for it, first in one direction, then in another, as though the whole circle of human knowledge were not too vast for his intellectual exploration. We are often, therefore, astounded by the ambition of youth; but we ought not to be offended by it. It is sure to bring its own punishment. To sow in vanity is to reap in mortification. We learn, in time, how little we can ever know, and how ridiculous we make ourselves by pretending to know everything. When a man has learnt to say, "I am as ignorant as a child on this or that subject," or, "as powerless as a baby to do this or that thing," he has mastered one of the great difficulties of life; he has entered upon a new stage of his career. If, however, he says it boastingly, scornfully, he is a greater fool than if he pretended to know, and to be able to do, everything. To affect to consider the knowledge or the power which one has not attained, not worth possessing, is simply to write one's self an ass. There is no need, on the other hand, of any great parade of humility. You are a man. Be thankful for it. It is no humiliation that you are not a god. If your neighbor knows what you do not know, and can do what you cannot do, the chances are that you know and can do some things which are out of the circle of his potentiality. You do not know one star from the other, but you can put the *Sakoontala* into Greek

verse. You do not know the principle of the diving-bell, but you could fortify a city in accordance with the system of Cormantagne. You cannot ride across country to hounds, but you can take a round or two with the gloves with Jem Mace and not have a worse appetite for your dinner. Be content, then; turn what you know and what you can do to the best possible account; and be neither elated because you know so much, nor depressed because you know so little.

If contentment of this kind contributes, as I believe it very greatly does, to our happiness, Age has a vast advantage over Youth. The great lesson of life, the one of all others best worth learning, is that which teaches us thoroughly to appreciate the fact of the little that we know. This is a lesson which no young person has ever yet learnt. There is no royal road to it. We come upon it after a long journey and after sore travail, foot-sore, sun-burnt, wind-stained, and bramble-torn. There is infinite satisfaction in it when we acquire it at last. I came upon the great fact the other day, so quaintly and pleasantly put that it made me happy for some time, almost beyond precedent:—"*Man is necessarily so much of a fool, that it would be a species of folly not to be a fool.*" It is Philosopher Pascal who writes this. As soon as ever you have made up your mind that you are a fool, and that it is altogether out of nature not to be a fool, a measureless calm descends upon you. The con-

viction, however, that at the best you are a very poor creature, need not prevent you from diligently striving to make yourself less poor. There are degrees of folly,—different kinds of fools; and though the greatest of all is he who thinketh himself wisè, not far behind him is he who does not strive to make himself as wise as he can. All knowledge is of high worth, let a man but know it well. A "smattering" of this or that is not to be despised. "A little learning"—say, for example, of surgery—*may* be the very reverse of "dangerous." The principle of the tourniquet, applied in the improvised shape of a pocket-handkerchief, has ere now saved a man from bleeding to death. But I believe we are of most use to our fellows by applying our little intellect to the mastery of some one subject. The word mastery must be understood only in a limited sense; for true it is, as Pascal justly philosophizes, that no man can know all that is to be known about any one subject, let him give his whole life to the study.

But still he may, as I have said, know quite enough of his one subject to make him very useful to his fellows, whilst it is the veriest accident if any one of his numerous smatterings is turned to profitable account. If a man devotes his life to the study of pin-making, and makes better pins than all the rest of the world, he by no means lives an unprofitable life. A pin is a very small thing. It is, indeed, a symbol of worthlessness. A "pin's

fee" is held to be next to nothing. But civilized Humanity cannot do without pins; and the inventor of a new pin—say, for example, a pin that will fasten without pricking or scratching—would be fairly entitled to take rank among the benefactors of mankind. A button, too, is another little thing. "Not worth a button" is an expression of contempt. But to invent a really serviceable button would be a great effort of humanity,—a button that will not play at "fast-and-loose," but will hold fast, with an abiding sense of the purpose for which it was invented. What agonies have we all endured for want of such a button! I would gladly send my modest contribution towards a public testimonial in honor of the inventor of a really serviceable button. Any one who does something better than every one else is to be accounted one of the men of the age; whilst your would-be Admirable Crichtons, who squander their strength on many vain things, are condemned to rot on Lethe's wharf, as utterly unprofitable servants.

But we must take care that this concentration of ourselves does not betray us into an error to which, I am afraid, our natural egotism is prone. I have glanced at this above, but it demands more than a passing allusion. We must take care that we do not come in time so to narrow our sympathies, by continually dwelling upon our pins and our buttons, as to believe that the world has nothing else worth living for,—that mankind is

divided into only two races of men, the makers and the consumers of pins and buttons, and that all beyond the great material fact of pindom and buttondom is mere surplusage and refuse. Your calling may be something higher than that of making pins and buttons, or you may think that it is,—still, your egotism is equally absurd. Was the world made only that you should take cities, or discover comets, or put odds and ends of mortality together as the framework of extinct mammalia? You may not quite think that; but you may err after a like fashion, though not in the same degree. It is the commonest thing for men to attach undue importance to their own pursuits, and in like proportion to undervalue, somewhat scornfully perhaps, the pursuits of others. It is a foolish, small-minded thing to do, and the meaner the occupation is, I am inclined to think, the greater the store that is set by it. No honest occupation is in itself mean; but some pursuits are doubtless less ennobling than others; and money-making, for the mere sake of making money, is not, perhaps, the very highest. Now, you will find that the conversation of men whose main object in life it is to make money runs continually upon this one subject, or is interlarded with references to it. I confess that when I ask about this or that man I do not, as a matter of course, wish to be told "what he is worth,"—worth in this case representing the money value of the man and nothing else.

When I was a younger man than I am now, these utterly irrelevant allusions to the length of a man's purse put me sorely out of temper. But this was a mistake upon my part, almost as great as that which so much annoyed me. What right had I to be annoyed? I can hear men talk nowadays about money-making without any feeling of contempt. When I ask about Mr. Brown, or Sir John Jones, wishing to know what sort of neighbor he is, whether he is hospitable and liberal, whether he gives to the poor, whether he is well read, well informed, a scholar, and a gentleman, I confess that I do not much care to be told that he has £12,000 a year landed property, or that he made half a million by railway-contracts. But why should I go fuming and fretting and blustering to myself all the way home, and vowing that I will never dine with Nummosus again, because he will apply the money standard to everything and talk as though there were nothing but £ *s.* *d.* in the world? It is foolish, I say, in him to talk in this strain, but it is more foolish in me to be vexed about it. Nummosus is an excellent fellow,—"warm," too; he knows what he is talking about. And who am I, that I should go gasconading after this fashion, and endeavoring to persuade myself that the money element has nothing to do with it? If there be one thing which we are all sure to learn by growing old, it is that the money element has everything to do with it. I was shocked, when I was a young

man, because the first question asked, in my presence, on the arrival of news of a great fire, was whether the buildings and contents were insured. No thought of human life, of homes made desolate, of wives made widows, or children fatherless, disturbed the hearts of the inquirers. I do not expect now, in such a case, to hear any other question. I have just read, in Beamish's *Life of Isambard Brunel*, that when news was brought to him that his Battersea Sawmills were burnt down, his only question was, "Is any one hurt?" Nummosus will tell you, perhaps, that the works were well insured. I will not so read the anecdote of the great engineer; but I am afraid that it must be regarded as an exceptional manifestation of humanity, and that material property, for the most part, enters into the calculation long before human life.

But I have been led by all this out of the line which I had purposed to follow. I desired to show that one of the great advantages of mature life is, that we cease from those strivings after the mastery of many things which end in disappointment and mortification; that we learn to measure our own powers aright, to know how little we can do, how small the space we occupy in the world. I do not know that there is anything in the delusions of youth which contributes so much to happiness as this power of self-measurement, and the calm self-reliance which attends it.

"Youth is soon gone—but why lament its going?
What we were once we cannot always be.
Change is the law of life; the seasons three,
Each after each, of man's great year, of sowing,
Of reaping, and of gathering into store,
Follow each other quick. Men say we lose,
As we ascend life's green hillside, much more
Than we can ever gain, and oft deplore
'Their youth and their brave hopes all dead and gone.'
Yet would I, were the offer made, refuse,
As one content to reap what he has sown,
To give for youth, with all its hopes and fears,
Its restless yearnings after things unknown,
The self-reliance of maturer years."

I cannot say how thoroughly my own heart echoes all this. When you know what you can do and what you cannot do,—what you are and what you are not,—the voyage of life is comparatively smooth sailing. You cease to be disturbed by vain anxieties and restless discontents. You may have failed, or you may have succeeded; but, anyhow, be it success or be it failure, it is a *fait accompli;* you accept your position, and you are, at all events, tranquil. It is with life in the aggregate as with the separate incidents of life. You may get rid of a disturbing impression—of a painful anxiety with respect to something of a vague and uncertain issue—by passing over all the intermediate lesser stages of evil and looking the worst possible contingency in the face. The inspired writer, in that grand old epic known as the Book of Job, wishing to describe a vision of the night supremely

terrible and awe-inspiring, makes the patriarch to say that he "could not discern the shape thereof." The spectral horror culminated in the indistinctness of the thing. So is it in the ordinary affairs of life. It is the formless and conjectural that disturb us. Failure itself is far better than the fear of failure. We can reconcile ourselves to it when it comes. But the common lot of life is neither to succeed nor to fail, but to hit the line of mediocrity, half-way between success and failure. Whatever it may be, the only real wisdom and the only real happiness consist in reconciling yourself to it, with boundless faith that it is all right. As long as, having the third or fourth place, you believe that you ought to have the first or second, you are a wretch, and there is no peace for you. But men who have lived forty or fifty years in the world have generally had this sort of nonsense knocked out of them. They have, for the most part, learnt to believe, what young men are very prone to deny, that the world is, on the whole, tolerably just to its inmates, and that most men get pretty well what they deserve. Neglected merit is, in reality, a much rarer thing than at the outset of life we believe. At five-and-twenty, a man often thinks that all the world is in a conspiracy against him. At five-and-forty, he acknowledges that the only conspirators have been his indolence and his incapacity,—or, perhaps, his presumption and self-conceit. He ceases then to

give way to vain repinings, and humbly, thankfully acknowledges that his slender merits have met with ample reward.

I heard it said, not long ago, by a man whose opinion I very much respect, that in the maturity of our years we are much more impressionable, much more easily stabbed and lacerated by external circumstances, and that our wounds much less readily heal, than in the elastic season of youth. I cannot say how heartily I dissent from this as a general proposition. It is not to be denied that if a man of fifty is fairly knocked down on the road of life, he does not pick himself up so readily as a man of five-and-twenty. But these knock-down blows are very rarely delivered. Life is made up of small joys and small sorrows; and the longer we live the better we learn not to disturb ourselves about trifles. A man who has fought the battle of life—who has encountered some stern realities in the course of his career—is not very likely to suffer himself to be made wretched by imaginary evils. Above all, as I have before said, he is not, as inexperience is, continually fretted by the thought of what others are thinking of him. He is assured of his position. He knows what it is, and whence it is derived, and he does not disturb himself about circumstances which do not really affect it. And so with regard to the real evils of life; with an increase of years comes an increase of faith: we have somehow or other, even when our troubles

are at the worst, an assured conviction that we shall surmount them. The past gives us confidence in the future. We have lived down other troubles, and shall we not live down these? So I think that whilst in advanced years we are much less prone than in youth to disturb ourselves about imaginary evils, we have far more strength to contend with real ones, and far more faith to live them down. It will be suggested, perhaps, that over and above all this, there is the fact that we grow case-hardened,—that the continual attrition of trouble renders us less sensitive, less alive to its influence. But I would fain take a higher view of the matter than this, and believe that the large and sustaining patience of maturer years proceeds from an increased knowledge of ourselves and an increased faith in the goodness of God.

And it is this knowledge, this faith, which leads us to cease from all vague repinings and regrets. It is hard to say how much misery men make for themselves by lamenting either that circumstances had not worked differently for their good, or that they themselves had not done differently. But, in all probability, the circumstances which we deplore are just those which have most contributed to our advancement, and the way in which we have gone about our work is the only one in which we could have done it at all. To take the illustration that comes most readily,—a mean and familiar one, perhaps, but sufficiently suggestive,—am I, when

I have finished this essay, to regret that I did not write it in a different way,—that I did not apply myself more steadily and perseveringly to it,—never once turning aside or suffering myself to be distracted from my work, instead of getting up every five minutes, going to the window, strolling into another room, drawing faces on the blotting-paper, reading the newspaper, and deviating into other irregularities? Of what use is it to say that I should have written the essay sooner, and that it would have been much better when written, if I had done none of these things? I have the profoundest possible conviction that I could not have done it in any other way.

> "I am broken and trained
> To my old habits. They are part of me."

So, too, in the larger concerns of life, we may be sure that our way of doing our work is a part of ourselves, that we could not have done otherwise, any more than we could have *been* otherwise—taller, stronger, or cleverer than we are.

And then as to repinings,—vain, idle complaints that circumstances have not been favorable to us,—that if this or that thing had not happened, how different it would have been! Ay, different! But let it not be assumed that to be different is to be better. One of the lessons which we learn by growing old is that all things work together, not for evil, but for good. Let us think calmly and

quietly over the reverses which we have sustained at different periods of our lives; of the disappointments which we have encountered; of accidents which, at the time of their occurrence, we considered to be gigantic calamities. How small they appear even in themselves, looking at them as we approach the summit of the hill of life! But think of them in connection with later events and with our present position, and the chances are that we shall come to recognize them as "blessings in disguise." I heard only last night of a man who owed everything to a heavy blow in early life. He wished, when he married, to insure his life, but the Offices rejected him. This made him careful and thrifty; and the end was that he died at the age of eighty-five, worth a quarter of a million. It will be often thus. By some grand reverse of fortune, in our boyhood, perhaps, we were left to struggle broad-breasted against the stream of life, instead of quietly floating down with the current; we were cast upon our own resources, compelled to put forth our own strength, with nothing to aid us but our God-given manhood, and lo! the result. Are we not wiser, greater, perhaps richer, for the reverse which in early youth we so often lamented? I speak only in the plain, sober, demonstrable language of truth, when I say that I owe everything, humanly speaking, that makes life dear to me, to a reverse of fortune in my boyhood. Hard work has been my heritage. I shudder to think what

I might have been if existence had gone more smoothly with me,—if action had not encountered passion in the great battle of life,—in a word, if I had had more leisure to be wicked. It is a common case. Our very misfortunes save us. It may seem very hard at the time. Some one has got our heritage, as far as money makes heritages, and we bewail our miserable lot; but there is one heritage to which no man can play the part of Jacob, and be even once a supplanter,—the heritage of our own strong arm or our own strong brain. To be "lord of ourselves" is not to have "a heritage of woe." The real heritage of woe is *not* to be lord of ourselves, but to be lorded over by wealth, by luxury, or by pride. If a man is really lord of himself, there is very little woe in his portion. Almost all the real evils of life come to us from a want of self-domination. As a general rule, it may be said that the more a man has to do, the more he is master of himself. The best heritage, therefore, that a man can have is *Work*. He who laments that hard fate has compelled him to work is little better than a fool.

I began this trick of essay-writing very early in life; and, whilst I have been correcting this paper for the press, accident has brought before me a passage in an essay which I wrote before I was twenty years old. The paper, which was one of many, was published in an Indian periodical at the time. I refer to it now because it discourses—

risum teneatis!—on one of the advantages of growing old,—indirectly, or rather inversely, for the subject is memory; and I humbly think that now I should not wish to alter it. "One of the most manifest advantages of Memory over Hope"—this I wrote in 1834—"is, that as we grow older, the former increases, while the latter diminishes. Every day gives us less to desire, more to remember. Memory moves with the past; Hope with the future. I put little faith in anything that grows smaller every hour of the day. . . . Memory is like a magnifying-glass: the farther we remove it from the object we are inspecting, the larger that object will appear. Every day, whilst it gives us fresh food for remembrance, renders our recollections more beautiful and bright. . . . Thus we go on daily increasing in happiness, until old age steals upon us with gradual advances, and we have gained the summit of the mountain of life . . ." There is more in the same strain; but I have quoted enough. Such utterances as these are among the audacities of youth, of which I have before spoken. But they are not the less true. I was told by a local critic,—one of the kindest and best of men,—from whose criticism I have taken the words quoted, that I was wrong. "Chateaubriand observes," he said, "'that the pleasures of youth reproduced by memory are ruins viewed by torchlight.' We think Chateaubriand is right, and we are in a better position to form a judgment on

that point than Mr. Kaye can be for twenty years to come." And now I have the advantage, in respect of years, over my friendly critic, who has long since passed away to his rest; and I still abide by the belief that the blessings of memory are greater than the blessings of hope. "We know in part, and we prophesy in part." It was wellnigh all prophecy when I wrote, and now it is wellnigh all knowledge. And I cling to the old faith, and for the old reason: that memory increases whilst hope diminishes—on this side of the grave. What have we old fellows to look for but the eternal rest? It is much,—very much,—everything. But I wrote as a worldling, and I write now as a worldling, and I am not fit to discuss graver questions. Men think in their younger days that it would be a fine thing to be a husband; a fine thing to be a father; a fine thing to be a grandfather; a fine thing to write a book, to be praised in the newspapers, to be quoted in Parliament, to become a member of the House, perhaps a member of the Government; and when all this is done, what is earthly hope to them? But the delights of memory are inexhaustible. Our first friendship, our first love (perhaps our last), our first success,—we can live them all over again when we please, and the older we are, the more vivid is the remembrance. "*Juvat, oh! meminisse beati temporis!*" These reminiscences may be "ruins seen by torchlight." But ruins, seen by torchlight or by moonlight, are

beautifully picturesque. I have seen Melrose and Furness by these lights; and day took away half their beauties.

Again, it is to be observed that as we grow old we arrive at a just conception of the great truth that the pains and pleasures of life are pretty equally distributed over the world. We come to learn that if in some one respect Providence has been more chary of her favors to us than to our friends, in others we have had our full share, or more than our full share,—good measure, perhaps, pressed down and running over. If money has been scanty, we have enjoyed a large measure of health. If we have been disappointed in our pursuit of fame, we have been compensated by a rich portion of love. We are sure to find our compensation somewhere. And looking at the lives of our neighbors, shall we not perceive that, if they have escaped some peculiar sufferings which we have been compelled to bear, they have some sorrows of their own from which we ourselves are exempt? My brother has a better house than I have; he has more servants to minister to him; he has more money in the funds;—but my children are healthier than his: thanks be to God, the doctor seldom darkens my doors. Why, then, should I complain? We all suffer,—high and low, man and brute. I take up, as I write, a little red book about *Garibaldi at Caprera*,—not in any hope of finding a thought or an illustration to aid me, but

in the indulgence of a desultory habit of which I have spoken above,—and I come upon a passage about the great liberator and his cows. The "cows," we are told by Colonel Vecchi, were sick, nigh unto death, from eating a poisonous herb called the *ferola*, and Garibaldi administered to them lumps of sugar and sage precepts at the same time. "Poor things!" he said, "you also have your sufferings: dreadful bodily pains instead of heartaches! Have not I also my *ferola*, in the bad treatment of my comrades in arms, and in the sufferings of the people in Rome and Venetia?"* No doubt. We all have our own particular *ferola*. We all have some subtle poison or other working into our blood. But I am not sure that, if I had been Garibaldi's Boswell, I should have told this story. Real wisdom consists not in seeking occasions to convince ourselves, or to convince others, that we have suffered like our neighbors of the human or of the brute family, but in consoling ourselves with the reflection that we have enjoyments like unto theirs. If Garibaldi had one day seen his cows ruminating in the sun, and had apostrophized them, saying, "Happy creatures! you have your delights! And have not I too basked in the sun? Has it not been mine to chew the cud of sweet fancies? Have

* I observe, whilst I am correcting this sheet for the press, that a recent essayist, writing on "Cynicism," has placed Garibaldi among the "non-cynics." Perhaps the writer may think differently should he ever read the passage in the text.—(1870.)

I not ruminated—humbly, but thankfully—over the applause of a free people, the love of noble natures, the liberty God has suffered me, weak instrument as I am, to achieve for a great and a grateful nation?" Would it not be pleasanter, I say, to look at this side of the stuff, than at the frayed ends suggesting that poisonous *ferola?* Let us all think of the beatitudes that are continually hovering above us. Let us so believe in them—

> "That neither evil tongues,
> Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
> Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
> The dreary intercourse of daily life,
> Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
> Our settled faith, that all which we behold
> Is full of blessings."

The poet, as all men know, writes of the great solace of external nature. I too have pondered these same things, and on the same spot. But it is not permitted to working men, save in blessed autumnal holidays, to throw up praises and thanksgivings skywards from the dear banks of the "sylvan Wye." Still, may not we carry the same philosophy into our offices and counting-houses, or something even still better? For I hold that even in this Wordsworthian passage there is something of paradox and contradiction, arising from the incompleteness of the poet's faith in the doctrine which he professes. Why, in a world so full of blessings, is the intercourse of daily life to be

accounted dreary? In the commonest things and in the most commonplace people, there is something to interest, if we do not willfully close our eyes against it. It is our own fault if we do not see it. It is our own egotism that blinds us. If we could be successfully couched for that moral cataract, we should see plainly that it is not a dreary desert, but a cheerful garden, that stretches out before us, even in the most beaten paths of unexciting town life. Those "thoroughly uninteresting," "slow fellows" whom we meet every day, and whom Adolescens so despises, have all their own little romances; their hearts throb as quickly as our own; there is tenderness of feeling, chivalry of sentiment, beneath the outer crust; and perhaps the most where you least look to find it.

And through this fuller recognition of the deep human interest that underlies the great expanse of Commonplace, increase of years brings us increase of happiness. We enlarge our sympathies as we grow old. The scales of egotism fall from our eyes, and we see an inner life of beauty and benignity beneath what is outwardly unattractive and unpromising. I know nothing in the blundering, puppy-blind, self-importance of youth, for which I would give this deeper insight into life,—this enlarged love of humanity. Of course, there is another love greater still, of which this human love is but a part; and it must not be thought

that I ignore it if I do not speak of it here. If it does not grow broader, and strike deeper, as we advance in life, we grow old to very little purpose. But it is not for me, as I have said, to write of these things: and my space is exhausted. I have but thrown up a few chance thoughts, looking at the subject in its worldly aspects; and even in that light there is far more to say of it than I have attempted to say in this humble essay. What I have said, I have at least said gratefully and reverently; and I hope that it may bring comfort and contentment to the minds of others, who, like myself, have just awakened to the thought that they are Growing Old.

April, 1862.

ON TOLERATION.

SOME years ago, under the same good auspices, I wrote an essay *On Growing Old.* Since that time I have *grown* old; and I have been thinking what I have gained by it. Perhaps the sum-total is much; perhaps little. I am not now going to inquire. I would merely discourse upon one of my gains. I trust that I may use the first person plural and say that it is great gain that as We grow older We grow more *tolerant.* We are less frequently disappointed,—we are less querulous and censorious,—because we have dropped some of the egotism of our youth, and have ceased to look for the same manifestations from others as we know to be habitual in ourselves. And it is not only that with advancing age we come to understand more clearly that the same inward qualities or feelings speak out from different persons after different outward fashions, just as different men go by different roads to the same bourn, or do the same business in different ways, but that we learn how to take account of the influence of circumstances in moulding character and shaping conduct, and are more gentle and moderate in our judgments.

I can remember that, when I was young, I sat in a sort of "bloody assize" not only upon the doings but on the characters of my neighbors; and I pursued with a remorseless egotism all who happened to differ from me in action, in opinion, or in sentiment. I may be worse in many other respects, but in this I trust that I am better; and I would fain hope that many old or elderly people have profited in like manner by the attrition of years.

I am afraid, nevertheless, that there is still a large amount of intolerance in the world, even among those who have lived long enough to be kinder and wiser. For eighteen centuries, ever since the Great Exemplar of the Christian world stooped down and wrote with his hand on the dust, mankind has been open to the same rebuke; and we have been inclined to cast the first stone, if we only dare to do it with a knowledge of our own innocence. I purpose, therefore, to write something on the subject of Toleration, though with a full knowledge that I shall leave unsaid much that ought to be said about it. It is not, however, my design to discourse upon political or religious intolerance; although, having lived much in the great principality of Wales, Heaven knows that of both I have seen more than enough. Frightful things in the way of dispossessions and evictions—cruel pressure of orthodox landlords on dissenting tenants not disposed to vote for church-rates—have often been done, bringing honest men and families

to the dust of ruin.* Of course, this intolerance of the rich begets counter-irritations of intolerance among the poor. You may hear it said, "They have passed a church-rate, and Mrs. ——" (naming the rector's wife) "has got a new bonnet." Of course the notion that the parsoness's new head-gear was bought out of the parochial money was simply preposterous. But the belief was widely accepted among the Poor. It was simply the intolerance of extreme ignorance, which cannot understand that anything can be done by others without a view to personal gain.

It is this ignorance, indeed,—partly want of knowledge, and partly want of imagination,—by no means confined to the Poor, which is the source of nearly all the intolerance with which the world is afflicted. We know the full extent of the temptations and inducements by which we are beset, and we judge others with reference to the circumstances which surround ourselves. But it is no merit in a blind man that he is free from "lust of

* I ought to state that I wrote this passage some months ago,—long before Mr. Richard brought the intolerance of Welsh landlords to the notice of the House of Commons. I see it stated in a conservative journal that Welsh evictions are pure myths. I feel tolerably certain that if the writer had ever lived in Wales he would not have written anything so notoriously at variance with the truth. I wish that I could believe the story to be a fiction. My own experience teaches me that the landlord-screw has been put on very tightly, not merely with reference to votes at elections, but in respect also to votes at vestry-meetings.

the eye," or in a dumb man that he is not given to "evil speaking." Men and women, in all conditions of life, have their special temptations and their special exemptions from temptation; and there is a moral law, at least, by which we may sometimes move for an arrest of judgment, when we learn that some poor sinner has been tempted beyond what he could bear. Rich and Poor, old and young, men and women, are subject, equally or unequally, to various internal and external influences, all more or less adverse to purity of life and integrity of conduct; and it would be far better for us all, in the long run, if we would pray for power to resist our own inducements to evil, instead of thanking God that we do not yield to the beguilements that allure our neighbors. Every one knows this; it is the merest commonplace. But nothing so generally admitted in words is in practice so uniformly denied. It may be strange, but it is most true, that near the end, as we are, of the nineteenth century of the Christian era, no teaching is more wanted than this; ay, it would seem that even the teachers need to be taught: else why have I read, whilst I have been writing this paper at odd times, of an English clergyman bringing his dairywoman to the judgment-seat for taking a pennyworth of milk from the can without the permission of her reverend master, and of a bench of justices who sent her to prison for a week upon such a charge?

Above all things, I think that we should be more tolerant towards the Poor. We should endeavor to understand thoroughly what are the temptations which beset them, before we condemn them for doing what is not done by people who live easy lives, and, comparatively at least, "fare sumptuously every day." The morning dram and the evening visit to the alehouse are, doubtless, abominable things; but if Dives had to turn out in all weathers at five o'clock in the morning, perhaps earlier, would he abstain from fortifying himself by a matutinal stimulant of some kind or other? And if he had to go home in the evening to a close and untidy room, a slatternly wife and fractious children, would he not fain take refuge in some comfortable place of social resort, whether a club-house or a tap-room? Indeed, without these provocations, does he not often comport himself in this manner? The morning stimulant may be of a more aristocratic character than a noggin of gin,—it may, perhaps, be sanctimoniously disguised as a "tonic,"—but in effect it is the same thing. And the smoking-room of a West-End club is only a better kind of tap-room. I dare say that poor Opifex would as soon have a tumbler of soda-and-brandy, or a spoonful of bitter tonic in a glass of sherry, as the cheaper fluid to which he is compelled in the morning, and that he would not object to solace himself at sundown with choice regalia in the smoking-room of the Regimentum.

For my own part, I wonder less at the amount of self-indulgence of this kind, than at the extent of the forbearance that is exercised. I observed a man, one evening, who had been at work since six in the morning, at the building of some suburban villas over against my cottage, shoulder his basket of tools and prepare to march homewards. Just as he started, a workman from another job, also homeward-bound, met him, and said, "How far for you, Bill?" "Five mile," was the answer,—and it was said cheerily enough,—as he strode on towards another county. I could not help thinking that I hoped he would have a pint of beer at some half-way house. For my own part, I am afraid that if I had to work some twelve hours at house-building, with a supplement of a five-mile walk, morning and evening, on a hot summer's day, I should require a good number of refreshers of this kind between my uprising and my downsitting. No one can forget the heat of last summer,* or how rich people lived in a continual state of iced claret-cup. There was a horrible report in the autumn that nearly all the workmen, of whom my friend with the five-mile walk was one, engaged on the buildings opposite to me, had gone away largely in debt to the proprietor of a contiguous tavern. Very strong opinions were of course expressed on the "rascality" of the proceeding; and I grieved

* The summer of 1868.

over it, because the tavern-keeper was a poor man; but I felt that, if I had been a rich one, I would fain have wiped out the score, in consideration of those fiery days and the hours of hard toil at substantial house-building, at a time when it was a laborious process even to lie upon a sofa and build castles in the air.

But there are worse things than beer-drinking —worse things than not paying for it—with which the Poor are often charged in no tolerant spirit by their more fortunate brethren. There is foul language, blasphemous, obscene, sickening the very soul of the more refined passer-by,—terrible often in its unmeant significance. The extreme inappropriateness of the expletives in common use among the "lower orders" proves that those who use the offensive words attach no particular idea to them,—perhaps do not even know that they are offensive words that could shock the most sensitive hearer. And, after all, so far as perfect incongruity is concerned, the "awfully jolly" or "awfully nice" of the young gentlemen and gentlewomen of the period cannot possibly be outmatched in inappropriateness, even by the application of the epithet which Protestants apply to Queen Mary to such things as a good tap of beer or a good screw of tobacco. Those who use this and other expletives so freely as to send a shudder through us as they pass on the highroad, have been habituated to the words since they were children—words that issued

freely from the paternal lips,—and they are no more than "very" is to us graybeards or "awfully" to our children. It must be in the memory of many that less than half a century ago the boys at the most aristocratic public schools swore even more terribly than "our troops in Flanders," and that the most obscene language flowed freely from the rosy lips of little fellows of twelve or thirteen. There is nothing so readily transfusible as contagion of this kind. If we could learn French and Italian, German and Romaic, as easily, we should all be great linguists in our boyhood. And perhaps it might be well, therefore, with our shudders to combine a thrill of thankfulness that neither the examples of our youth nor the tendencies of the age have been or are such as to make the dreadful words that so revolt us as familiar to our lips as to our ears.

Again, we hear a great deal about outrages on women among the Poor. I remember writing, a dozen years ago or more, an article on this subject in a quarterly review. But I am afraid that I did not make the required allowances for the aggravations which bristle up so continuously in the poor man's domestic life. It may be assumed that men in good houses, with establishments of servants, do not beat their wives—with fists, or sticks, or pokers, or the legs of broken chairs. In a more refined state of society the cruelties to which women are subjected in the married state are not commonly

physical cruelties. But perhaps they are quite as unendurable. And it is not improbable that those who now go home every day, when they like it, to a spacious well-furnished residence, with a servant to open the door to them and to bring them a glass of iced sherry, to be quietly sipped whilst they are reading the evening papers in their library, and who thus cool and console themselves, if need be, before entering the family circle, and who are sure to see at dinner a well-ordered table and a well-dressed wife and to be regaled with viands more or less choice, might not be in a much better frame of mind or hand than the ill-educated working-man, if they were to go home weary, worn, foot-sore, irritated, to a wretched house, with all the aggravations, perhaps, of an untidy wife, a bare table, and a bevy of noisy children. If under these evil influences

> "Ruder words will soon rush in,
> To spread the breach that words begin,"

and words after a little space develop into blows, we cannot be so greatly surprised. We may be sorry, but we ought not to be shocked. At all events, we ought not to pass in our hearts severe censures on the "brutal offenders." There is other brutality than that of the fist and the bludgeon,—quite as cruel, perhaps, and less excusable. But it does not bring the culprit before a police magistrate, and, perhaps, is beyond the reach of the

Divorce Court. The difference is only in the outward and visible sign; and the blow which produces a black eye, which disappears in a fortnight, may be infinitely less painful than the stab which inflicts a heart-wound never to be healed till God wipes away all tears from our eyes.

It is commonly said that all these evils—violence of word and violence of act—are the results of hard drinking. And there is no single word into which so much bitterness of reprobation is infused as that which closes the last sentence. "That detestable habit of much-drinking!" And yet I know nothing towards which we ought to be more tolerant. No one, indeed, rich or poor, is more to be pitied than he who feels a craving for such help as this, and yet, from some constitutional peculiarity, cannot find the solace which he seeks without lowering himself as a reasonable being in the estimation of his fellows. It is a fact, in the knowledge of us all, that a certain quantity of "strong drink," which will freshen and strengthen one man and render him more fit to perform his appointed work, will wholly unhinge and incapacitate another. There may be seen sometimes a man of noble nature and glorious intellectual faculties, whom much trouble has driven thus to solace himself, and who has utterly degraded himself to the level of the beasts that perish,—and that, too, by not drinking more than would have given other men strength to bear their crosses and to do their work with higher

courage and clearer brains. One of the finest scholars whom I have known in a lifetime of more than half a century,—a man altogether of a refined mind and a most kindly heart,—utterly crushed by the long illness and subsequent death of a dearly-loved wife, lived for years in a chronic state of intoxication; and yet my impression is that he did not drink in the course of the day as much as many, perhaps most, men could have drunk without the least perceptible change. But he could not "carry his liquor discreetly;" and so he passed for a sot. Poor J. B.!—I never compassionated any one so much. Of course he was condemned, and perhaps deservedly,—for in respect of drink, whether you take a thimbleful or a bucketful, it is all the same: the right measure is just that which you know will do you good. If you feel that you are "putting an enemy into your mouth to steal away your brains," you know that even the one glass, which gives to another only strength and cheerfulness and increased intelligence, and is as a tonic medicine to him, body and mind, is to you the vilest of poisons. But, even looking at it from the worst point of view, there should be infinite toleration in such cases for those who are driven by much anguish, whether of mind or of body, to stimulants or narcotics; and truly it behoves us to think sometimes

"That what to us seems vice may be but woe."

There are few who have not read that touching passage in one of Coleridge's letters, in which he narrates briefly, but with a graphic force almost terrible in its earnestness, the evil influences which drove him to have recourse to opium. But I may still call it to remembrance. "My conscience," he wrote to a friend, "indeed bears me witness that, from the time I quitted Cambridge, no human being was more indifferent to the pleasures of the table than myself, or less needed any stimulation to my spirits; and that by a most unhappy quackery, after having been almost bedrid for six months with swollen knees and other distressing symptoms of disordered digestive functions, and through that most pernicious form of ignorance, medical half-knowledge, I was seduced into the use of narcotics, not secretly, but (such was my ignorance) openly and exultingly, as one who had discovered, and was never weary of recommending, a grand panacea, and saw not the truth till my body had contracted a habit and a necessity; and that, even to the latest, my responsibility is for cowardice and defect of fortitude, not for the least craving after gratification or pleasurable sensation of any sort, but for yielding to pain, terror, and haunting bewilderment. But this I say to man only, who knows only what has been yielded, not what has been resisted. Before God I have but one voice, 'Mercy! mercy! woe is me.'" And in these words we see what is very often the whole

inner history of the degrading practices which we are so prone to condemn with all the vituperative rhetoric at our command. There are very few, I believe, who drink immoderately for the sake of drinking. I mean by this that they derive no sensual pleasure from such potations,—that there is no activity of delight in this self-abandonment,—but that the object sought is an escape from positive pain. An active misery of some sort, physical or mental, is to be stupefied,—deadened; and if the same result could be produced by periodical doses of assafetida, valerian, or any other nauseous medicine, with less injury to mind and body, many, perhaps most, would resort to it instead of to alcoholic drinks. It is commonly some inscrutable physical derangement which lays the foundation of an evil habit of this kind, and we should not, therefore, condemn too remorselessly that which we are simply unable to understand because we have not in like manner been tempted. To what extent the physical, for which we cannot be responsible, underlies, in this and other human frailties, the moral, for which we are responsible, can never be known; nor shall we know, upon this side of eternity, how far it may be taken into account in the final reckoning.

And then of that other matter whereof I have spoken with reference to the temptations of the Poor,—what is commonly called stealing,—the infraction of the eighth commandment. The steal-

ing of a loaf of bread from a baker's counter or a turnip from a farmer's field, or the knocking down of a stray rabbit in the squire's warren, though each offense be the result of the cravings of hunger, is vile and unpardonable to the last degree, and society would, of course, be disorganized altogether, if the necessities of nature were thus to be recognized. But is there no other kind of thieving,—no other kind of poaching? What answer would the law esteem it to be if a poor man charged with stealing a sheep, one of a flock of two hundred, the property of a neighboring squire, were to answer, "Please your worship, he stole my only daughter"? The criminal law can take no cognizance of the latter offense, but the stolen sheep may send a man to penal servitude for a number of years, and not very long ago would have sent him to the gallows. I make no complaint against the law: I am only pleading for toleration. And I would suggest that there may be some among us who could not hear unmoved those solemn words, "*Thou art the man.*"

But, much as we are wont to err in this respect, it must in all truth be added that we do not keep all our intolerance for those beneath us. We often go grievously wrong in our judgment of the offenses of those whom high station surrounds with its own peculiar chain of temptations. A friend once said to me, "I believe that I should have been one of the worst men that ever lived, if I had been an idle one." I have felt the same myself at

times, and many may echo the misgiving. From how many follies, how many wickednesses, are we preserved merely by want of money and want of time! If we have not ruined ourselves by horse-racing or degraded ourselves by immoralities of a kind not so publicly canvassed, we may be thankful that we have not had the opportunities which are present to those who have time to be killed and money to be spent; but we have clearly no right to rejoice vaingloriously in our immunity from such evils. A man who is occupied from morning to night with honest labor cannot do very much harm in the course of the day. But let him be exempted from the necessity of work, and place thousands to his account at Coutts's, and see whether he will be a more self-denying honest gentleman than any of our young dukes and marquises who have gone headlong to ruin. Perhaps these young dukes and marquises are not less to be compassionated than the toil-worn day-laborers whose besetting temptations and infirmities lie in such opposite directions and are of such a different kind. I do not know anything worse for a young man than to come into a great estate on first attaining that great heritage of woe, the lordship of himself. He thinks the wealth, of which he suddenly becomes the possessor, so boundless; and there are so many tempters lying in wait with honeyed words to lure to his destruction the voyager in that frail bark where sit "Youth at the prow and

Pleasure at the helm," and all the gay company lounge, lauging and singing, whilst the boat is sinking in smooth water.

> "Oh, different temptations lurk for all!
> The rich have idleness and luxury,
> The poor are tempted onward to their fall
> By the oppression of their poverty.
> Hard is the struggle, deep the agony,
> When from the demon watch that lies in wait,
> The soul with shuddering terror strives to flee,
> And idleness, or want, or love, or hate,
> Lure us to various crimes for one condemning fate."

And, therefore, I say, recognizing this truth, it becomes us to be tender and forbearing in our judgments, when the sirens are too powerful for the young lords of the Castle of Indolence, as they put out to sea in their gilded barks. And all the more should we rejoice and admire when, as sometimes happens, all temptations are wrestled down, and the will to do good is equal to the power. Truly says the accomplished writer of the above lines, after dwelling on "the victory in a battle mutely fought," achieved by others,*—

> "Yet doubly beautiful it is to see
> One set in the temptation of High Class,

* There are many of my readers whom I need not remind that these lines are taken from Caroline Norton's *Child of the Islands*, which, from first to last, is a beautiful poetical plea for toleration,—very tender, compassionate, and charitable in all its utterances. The value of such a book must long outlive the occasion which called it forth. I have but one, which I more treasure, in my library.

Keep the inherent deep nobility
Of a great nature, strong to over-pass
The check of circumstance, and choking mass
Of vicious faults, which youthful leisure woo,—
Mirror each thought in honor's stainless glass,
And by all kindly deeds that power can do,
Prove that the brave good heart hath come of lineage true."

A quarter of a century has passed since this was written, and England has rejoiced, during that time, in noble exemplars of that true nobility, to the splendor of which native worth has contributed more than rank and wealth and all the outer crust of the blue blood. And second to none among these is one whom the gifted writer has seen grow up among the nearest and dearest of her kindred,—that sister's son, whom to know is to admire and love. We are all now grieving, as I write, over some sad decadences of noble houses, and many shallow-brained, sensational writers are drawing inferences from them not favorable to our aristocracy; but these instances are, after all, only the exceptions,—indeed, the rare exceptions,—and I could cite against every single example of lost opportunities many of such opportunities turned to the best account. And I am glad to see that the highest among us are appreciating the true dignity of honest labor. When we are told that the head of a great ducal house (and he is not alone in this) is apprenticing his younger sons to commerce, and wishing them to become in time

merchant princes, we may well have greater faith than ever in the nobility of the land.

Then again, perhaps, we are not always very tolerant to the Young. Much has been written lately, and with great severity, against the rising generation, as though the young men of the present day were infinitely worse than their fathers. And in some respects, perhaps they are. But ought not we graybeards to consider that, after all, it may be our own fault? It may not be an axiom of universal truth that "good fathers make good sons." Indeed, I have known many cases in which industry, self-denial, and other kindred virtues have shown a tendency to "skip a generation," like the gout. But there is enough in the saying for us to ponder over very gravely when we are disappointed and grieved by the conduct of our children. I do not think that, in the recent discussions upon this subject, sufficient stress was laid upon the fact that the age is emphatically one of excessive competition, and that men devote more time than they did of old to affairs of business, and less to the performance of their domestic duties. It is a hard, grinding, money-making age. Men toil early and late for their wives and children, and think that they have done well. The man who said that he had never seen his children by daylight except on Sundays, expressed, with only a very little exaggeration, what is a common state of things. And I say that such fathers do well in their generation

as "bread-finders;" but might they not do better if they lived less in the counting-house and a little more in the nursery and the schoolroom? One cannot but respect the man who "scorns delights and lives laborious days" for the sake of those who "are to come after him;" but there is better wealth than money to be stored up for his children. We may speak tenderly of the error, but it is none the less an error, for our tenderness. Of small benefit is it to make money for our children, if we do not teach them how to spend it wisely. I have, whilst writing this, opened a book, in my desultory way, —a volume of Mazzini's *Essays*,—in which I find it written, "Compelled by your position to constant toil, you are less able to bestow upon your children a fitting education. Nevertheless, even you can in part fulfill your arduous mission, both by word and example. You can do it by example. 'Your children will resemble you, and become corrupt or virtuous in proportion as you are yourself corrupt or virtuous. How shall they become honest, charitable, and humane if you are without charity for your brothers? How shall they restrain their grosser appetite if they see you given up to intemperance? How shall they preserve their native innocence if you shrink not from offending their modesty by indecent act or obscene word? You are the living model by which their pliant nature is fashioned. It depends on you whether your children be men or brutes.' (Lamennais: *Words*

of a Believer.) And you may educate your children by your words. . . . Let them learn from your lips, and the calm approval of their mother, how lovely is the path of virtue; how noble it is to become apostles of the truth; how holy to sacrifice themselves, if need be, for their fellows."

It is well that we elders should ponder these words of a great teacher—or, rather, of two great teachers—when we press heavily upon the shortcomings of the young. Let us ask ourselves, Have we done all that we could do

> "To teach high thoughts and amiable words,
> And courtliness and the desire of fame,
> And love of truth and all that makes a man?"

before we complain, as it is much the fashion now to complain, that the present generation of young men are more selfish and corrupt than the past. Self-questionings of this kind are of the very essence of toleration. But there are other questions than those which so often result in self-reproach—other excuses for the young than the errors of the old. Chiefly there are what are called "the tendencies of the age." If our sons, in the adolescent state, are not as domestic as we ourselves were at that dangerous period of life, is it not true that we had fewer temptations,—that there were fewer snares to entrap us,—that it was not then, as it is now, the business in life of large numbers of people to provide, on a great scale but at a small charge,

intoxicating and demoralizing amusements, after dark, for the residents in large towns? It would be simply asinine for a man of fifty to say to his son, "I did not go to music-halls when I was of your age." The son would answer silently, if not vociferously,—for the sons of the period are not very forbearing and respectful in their addresses to parents,—"But you would, if there had been any." It may be so. I cannot say that I am at all clear on the subject. I should be sorry to put in a very distinct negative. I think that we had our "larks" in those days; but they were few and far between, and we went home very regularly to the paternal dinner. The respected gentleman, who would in these days be called my "governor" (there was a generation between us), though he had a thriving business in the City, by which he made more than a quarter of a million out of half a crown, was at home to dinner on Wandsworth Common every day at half-past five; and I well remember the agony of mind that I suffered if by any unhappy chance I seemed to be at such a distance from home as to be likely not to be full dressed, in complete suit of black, white neckcloth, black silk stockings and pumps, to appear in the drawing-room in response to the "second bell." I am afraid that the young men of the period are very irregular in this respect,—that their place at the dinner-table is often vacant without any explanation, or that they dribble into it with the second

course. We never ventured to appear late in those days, and were fain, in case of default, to make interest with the butler to get something cold in the odd room, which was called "the study." But then the "governor" of those days was more regular than he is in these. Clubs were only in their infancy. Those family compacts, which are anything but infrequent nowadays, for a paternal dinner at the club, that wife and daughters may have more time to dress for opera or ball, were unknown when I was a boy, for dinners were early. Men drop in at their clubs on their way homewards, and appear about eight o'clock. Of course this kind of irregularity affects the younger members of the family. The absence of the parental red tape begets looseness of conduct; and the ubiquitous attractions of the music-halls in such circumstances are not to be resisted. I wonder what is the amount of capital sunk in these institutions, and what the statistics of the female population engaged to appear nightly in the scantiest possible attire? It is true that we had the "Cider Cellars" and the "Coal Hole" in my young days, but the coarseness there was all masculine, and our attendances were rare. I do not remember that they had much effect upon the lives of our generation. Perhaps they rather disgusted us.

That continual pest of much smoking had not grown up in those days. It was feebly struggling into English existence, and was not recognized as

a legitimate custom. Such was the repugnance of most elderly people to the habit, when I was a stripling, that when I occasionally indulged, on the top of a coach or during a pull up the river, in a cigar (to smoke a pipe was in those days an unfailing mark of the *canaille*), I never dared to present myself in the family circle without an entire change of clothes, and at least an hour of ablution and deodorization by means of lavender-water or eau-de-Cologne. And yet such was the keenness of the olfactory nerves of the period that I was generally detected after all. Smoking has now become a habit among us; and it would be intolerant on our part to condemn our sons because they bring their pipes out of their pockets after breakfast, and, after an unknown number of applications to the weed during the daytime, finish up with a smoke before going to bed. Of course they do not hesitate to appear before their parents reeking with tobacco, or to light their pipes (to put the case mildly) in the hall. But the age—not the boys—dear fellows!—is to be blamed for this. We should have done the same when we were youngsters, if the customs of the period had been in our favor.

Again, I think that we men are not very tolerant of what we call the weaknesses of women,—but in which, after all, lies much of their strength. The commonest complaint of all is, that they are "fond of dress." For my own part, I would not give much for a woman who is not fond of dress. Nor

would I care much to know a man indisposed to encourage this feminine fondness.* The true knightly instinct is to feel towards the chosen one an unfailing desire

> "To compass her with sweet observances,
> To dress her beautifully, and keep her true."

I can hardly conceive any greater delight for an honest, loving gentleman than to do these good works and to mark their results. And it is to be said that in many, if not in most, instances, the desire to dress well is only a desire to please. As between husband and wife, carelessness in dress is one of the first indications of declining affection. And even if, as sometimes happens, the love of dress is, for the most part, a desire to outshine other women, it is a natural, indeed a harmless, emulation. If women have no nobler ambitions, it is mainly the fault of the men. If they cannot speak each other down in debate, they may dress each other down in society. It may be said that victory depends in such a case upon the husband's purse or the dressmaker's art, not upon the genius of the competitor. But this is true only in a limited sense. No amount of money to buy clothes, and no skill in the artiste who makes them, can compensate for a want of taste in the wearer. Taste in dress commonly indicates a

* See note at the end of this Essay.

general sense of the becoming in all domestic concerns. The Frenchman who wrote a treatise on *The Duty of a Pretty Woman to Look Pretty*, did not address himself to the discussion of a mere frivolity. There was an under-current of philosophy beneath it. And surely there is something like ingratitude to the Giver of all good gifts not to treasure and to cherish, even to rejoice in, the divinest of them all.

I think, too, that we are somewhat prone to misunderstand and to misjudge women, because their ways are so different from the manifestations of our masculine natures. It is common, for example, to attribute want of affection to others, merely because it is not in their nature to be affectionate after our own external pattern. We break our hearts over the thought, "I should not have done this or that," and, with the marvelously false logic of self-torture, we say, "If there were any true love, this thing could not be." But love is not one, but many. Its angel-wings are of varied plumage. I had a very dear friend who married, as men the wisest among us often do, a woman younger than and much unlike himself,—in all ways charming, but in all ways provoking too, as only very pretty women can be,—saucily, coquettishly, petulantly provoking, often rainy and stormy, but with marvelous gleams of tender sunshine,—beautiful and bewitching and irresistible always; treading down reason, judgment, all things

with her small foot, and snapping all the boundaries that lie between right and wrong with her queenly hand. Some men would have resented this: my friend saddened under it. Like Shakspeare's Moor, he was "not easily jealous," but, in time, he came to be "perplexed in the extreme." So he spoke to her one day, very gravely and sorrowfully, saying that he was afraid that she did not love him,—that she would have been happier with some one else. And what did she do? She turned upon him a face radiant with happiness, and said, "You dear old goose, not love you!—'happier with some one else'! Why, if I had married any one else but my silly old darling, I should have worried him into his grave in a month. But you must take me as I am, you know, and let me love you in my own way." And from that time a great contentment came upon him. With his tenderness, which was unfailing, there went forth towards her an infinite toleration; and in time it came to pass that he would not have changed the love which she gave him "in her own way" for any love shaped in accordance with the standard of his egotism. What she gave him was all herself, as he found, not as once he wished to fashion, her; and it was far better than anything he could have made. Sickness fell upon him, and she was the gentlest of nurses. Poverty—I mean what was poverty to them—descended upon him, and she was the most self-denying of helpmates. She

who had been wont to have every wish gratified, and to pout, perhaps to murmur, if it were not, now subdued herself to all the wishes of another. She who had once exacted, now yielded everything; and she lovingly confessed, "I am happier now, dear, than when I was your spoilt child." And I believe that this is anything but an uncommon story. We blame others, and we worry ourselves, mainly because, lacking the necessary amount of imagination, we cannot go out of ourselves,—we cannot eat our way out of the hard shell of our egotism and look abroad upon the manysidedness of human nature.

I do not mean to imply that all the injustice, as between men and women, is committed by the former and endured by the latter. I am afraid that women are sometimes a little intolerant and unjust, simply from a want of right understanding of masculine irritations and provocations, and the general environments, indeed, of the bread-finder. The commonest thing of all is to think that men are "cross,"—ill-tempered, saturnine,—when they are only serious and silent, perhaps weary and careworn. They may have had many crosses out-of-doors, but they have no crossness at home, and at the very bottom, perhaps, of their solemnity is an infinitude of tenderness and love. I do not know how I can put my meaning better than in the words of a valued friend, to whom years had, indeed, brought the toleration for which I am con-

tending. One of his young daughters had said to him,—as young girls are somewhat prone to say,—"I wish I were a man!"—and he had not answered her at once, save with a word or two of dissent, but had waited till she was a little older; and, one day, the opportunity having arisen, he spoke to her after this fashion:

"You remember, darling, when you told me that you wished you were a man, and I replied that you would soon revoke the wish, if you were tried? I did not then answer your 'Why?' but I will tell you now that you are better able to understand me. You say that when I come home from my daily official work in London, I sometimes 'look so cross.' I take a candle, perhaps, and go straight to my dressing-room, and when we are seated all together at the dinner-table I am silent and thoughtful; and then you think that I am cross, and you are all silent because I am. But I am only wearied and worried. I have had, perhaps, not only much to do, but much to endure. You have all of you spent your day very differently, and, therefore, feel very differently at the close of it. If I am careworn, my cares are not selfish cares. You have, all of you, not only a place in them severally, but together you absorb them all. If, at times, my losses are heavy and prospects appear to be bad, is the anxiety which will not suffer me to wear a cheerful countenance anxiety for myself alone? There is so little

selfishness in it, that sometimes, cowardly as it might have been, I have longed to strike my colors and to desist from this great battle of life. A very little suffices for a man of my years, who has outgrown the passions and ambitions of life and longs for nothing more than rest. And if I am grave sometimes when you would wish to see me cheerful, it is only because I love you much and am thinking of your happiness. The ignorance which is bliss is denied to us men. I dare say you all of you often think that I am ungenerous, perhaps 'stingy.' You think that I have more money than I have got,—that it is more easily earned and less speedily spent. You know nothing of such things as bad times and high prices, and necessary increase of expenditure, as you all grow older, without any corresponding increase of income; and you think that I am growing meaner every day, when I am only growing older, and thinking more than I did of what would become of you if I were taken away. You think, all of you, that I do not 'live up to my income.' But if I did live up to my income, which all comes from my professional exertions, what would there be for you when I die? Do you think that, as a matter of mere selfishness, I should pinch and hoard? Does not Self say, 'Let us live right royally? The annual hundreds that go to the Insurance Offices had better be spent on carriages and horses, and women's dress, and

autumnal visits to the German Baths. Your daughters, when you are dead, may go out as governesses, or canvass for admission to some Benevolent Society. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die!'—No language can be more intelligible than this language of the ogre Self. Do you wish me to be persuaded by it?

"This charge of the ways and means, dear, is no small matter, I assure you. It is enough to make any one grave. When we are traveling, for example, in the holidays, it is all holiday to you. It goes so easily, that you might almost think, if you thought at all about it, that some good fairy were administering to all our wants, and ordering and arranging everything for us. But you women never think anything about it so long as all goes well. The railway and steamboat tickets are taken and paid for; the hotel accommodation is provided and hotel bills are 'settled,' and you have nothing in the world to do but to enjoy yourself. All this is quite right, and quite as I would wish it to be. But if I look grave sometimes when you are all merry, or if I do not fall in very kindly with all your plans and projects, you should not think me a disagreeable traveling companion. I remember that when we were at Wiesbaden last year you thought it very unkind that I would not go for a week to Homburg. But I had to consider whether in that case I should have had money enough to carry us all home

again, and whether, had I been justified in spending more money on amusement, I could have obtained in sufficient time the necessary remittances from London. It is well for you all that these financial cares will haunt the paternal traveler in foreign countries, or some day you might all find yourselves stranded very inconveniently on a strange coast. Women, who have never been thrown upon their own resources, who have never had to fight the battle of life for themselves, can hardly conceive how largely this money element enters into all the thoughts of the masculine manager when he is away from home. One cannot travel upon credit, you know, dear. Even in much smaller matters, men are continually brought face to face very painfully with the commonplace fact that there is a great difference between having money in one's bank and having it in one's pocket. I have known times, my darling, when some of you have thought me nothing better than an old curmudgeon, grudging even a small coin, when I had no thought of grudging you anything. Among the minor miseries of life, there is none greater than that of *change*. I see you don't quite know what I mean. It is money change, 'small change,' coin, currency, sovereigns, half-sovereigns, half-crowns, shillings, sixpences. In any dilemma of this kind, I have invariably found that no womanly member of the family can ever help me. Going out with

the 'governor,' every one leaves her purse behind. And you have, I know, often thought me very stingy because I have not given a shilling here or a sixpence there, simply because I had no shillings or sixpences in my purse. These are very trifling matters, but human life is made up of trifles, and it is in respect of trivialities of this kind that we are most prone to misjudge each other. And wishing, as you do, to be a man, I think it right to remind you that in the smaller as in the greater affairs of life we men have to think for you women, to provide our sixpences as well as our thousands of pounds, and that you ought to be tolerant to us if we have not always got them ready.

"And when your brother Walter was coming home from Australia, how pleased you all were!—how 'jolly' you all thought it! There was not, in the estimation of any of you, the least shadow to mar the prospect. Some of you then thought it unkind, almost unnatural in me that I did not look upon his return with the same unqualified satisfaction. But was it less delight to me than to any of you to see the dear boy again? I could not help, however, seeing something else. I saw loss of money, loss of prospects, much injury to him, to you, to me, to the whole family. It threw him back years in the march of life,—the pursuit of independence; and my old brains saw all this very clearly, whilst you only saw the dear fellow himself. I do not know how it would have been

if I had called upon each of you to forego a moiety of your allowances, or to do without your annual 'outing,' that you might all contribute towards the expenses of Walter's visit to England. But, as it was, each had your full share of the pleasure, and to the lot of the governor fell all the cost.

"And there are other ways in which you misjudge us. You remember, too bitterly,"—here his voice faltered,—"that wretched day when poor Lilian died. You came in to me at night, and found me writing,—doing my accustomed work amidst books and papers,—just—just, it must have seemed to you, as if nothing had happened. It was natural that you should think so, my darling. For you could not know what it cost me, nor why I did it. There are things in the world of great importance, perhaps to thousands and tens of thousands, which depend for their due and regular performance upon some humble instrument like myself. It was necessary that the work I was then doing should be done and delivered at a certain place before noon next morning. There was no one who could do it for me. However repugnant to my nature, it was necessary that I should do it, even though I should be thought hard and unfeeling for doing it at such a time. And this is another of the penalties of manhood.

"But of this I do not complain. The great and good God, even of his infinite mercy, sends these burdens and distractions to us men in the midst of

our sorrow. The necessity of exertion is, doubtless, salutary to us. Even out of the very causes of our grief there proceeds much to be done. 'Men must work and women must weep;' and it is good for us to work, though we weep at our work hot tears from the heart. We must order and arrange everything even for the mournful accessories of death; and there are many among us, and not only those who are bread-finders by the sweat of their brow, who, in periods of great sorrow, are constrained to toil the more, because the earnings of toil must be greater to meet the larger demands of the season of tribulation. You think that we suffer less, because we must be up and doing. It will never fall to your lot, my dear, to know what that conflict is. But you, who have not to work, when great tribulation is upon you, must think kindly of us who have, and not fancy that we do not sorrow bitterly, because we sorrow differently from you. Only the Father 'who seeth in secret' can tell how often in anguish of spirit we are compelled to cease from our work,—how often, though the pen be in the hand, there is a mist of tears before the paper so that nothing can be traced. We men try to 'keep up' before you, darling; but you must not think us heartless because we do,—because we try even to lead your thoughts sometimes away from the one great subject of your sorrows. It is the most painful part of our duties, but, perhaps, also the most essential. And even the gross

necessity of eating and drinking at such times seems to be heartless in its fulfillment. But those who have work to do must be strong to do it. And, believe me, there are few among us who in times of great sorrow would not rather lay ourselves down and turn our faces to the wall and 'indulge the luxury of grief' and refuse to be comforted. Men do not complain that they cannot do this, but those who can do it must not wrong us by thinking that we do not suffer. We only ask for a little Toleration. . . . ."

Thus spoke the father to his daughter. And it seems to me that there is much in what he said that women may take to their hearts, especially when they are prone to think that men are stern and unfeeling—"heartless," perhaps, is the favorite word—simply because the outward expressions are so different. I knew a great statesman who, when sorely smitten by tidings of the death of his absent wife, cried in despair to those who would fain have stood aloof in silent sympathy and respect for his heavy sorrow, "Work; bring me work; you cannot bring me too much!" And, immersed in the affairs of a great empire, he strove to find in high intellectual efforts that opiate for the heart which men of lower natures might have sought—*elsewhere*. Every reader knows the meaning of that last word; and there are few who cannot instance, as I have instanced above, some examples of men whom grief of this same kind has driven to the "drowning

in the cup," until reason has been drowned with the sorrow, and only the brute has remained. "Give strong drink unto him who is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more." No man need be ashamed to confess that in seasons of trouble he has derived strength and endurance from wine,—or from what, among poorer people, is the representative of wine. I have heard a resort to such stimulants, or sedatives, or whatever they may be, stigmatized, in general language, as degrading; and so it is, assuredly, in excess. But it is not the only one of God's good gifts to man that is sometimes fearfully abused.

But this has expanded into a digression; and I purposed to say something more about the feminine idea of the relation between man and woman, in respect of financial concerns. I do not know very precisely what are the provisions of the Married Women's Property Bill, but I have talked the matter over with women, at odd times, and I have gathered a notion of the view which is taken by some amiable casuists. It seems to be the idea that they are to have uncontrolled authority over their own money, and to leave their husbands to pay their debts. They say in effect to the bread-finder, "What is yours is mine—what's mine is my own." Indeed, the general feminine idea of what is called "an allowance" includes the assumption

that the person granting it is to pay just the same for everything for which the said allowance is disbursed, as if no independent arrangement existed. I heard a charming story of husband and wife the other day, so illustrative of this that I am minded to repeat it. The wife had said laughingly to the husband—they were young people and sufficiently "well-to-do"—that he spent much more pocket-money than she did, and that he was altogether an extravagant fellow: so in the evening, when he came home, he brought a purseful of sovereigns, and, taking what remained to each from their last supplies, equalized the two little piles to a shilling, and said, "Now we'll start fair, darling, and see who is bankrupt first." At the end of a week, they agreed playfully to compare notes; and it was found that the wife had a few shillings more than the husband, upon which she was very jubilant and triumphant, and told him that she had always known him to be an extravagant fellow. "But, my child," he said, deprecatingly, "remember that when we have gone out together I have paid the expenses of *both* out of *my* money. There were the railway fares to——, and the flys and cabs, and the little dinner we had at Richmond, and the stalls at the Haymarket, and the Crystal Palace on Saturday—all have been paid for out of my money; and there is that pretty new bonnet on your head, in which you look so charming." Upon which she lifted up her hands and made a mouth at him (it was a

very pretty one), and cried out, "Oh, I am ashamed of you! You, indeed, to talk of chivalry, and to think for a moment of taking a poor little woman out with you, and expecting her to pay her share of the expenses! What will the men of the period come to next?" Of course there was no appeal against this. He could only put his arms round her and kiss her, and confess that he *was* an "extravagant fellow."

There is one more point of view from which I would regard this great question of Toleration before I lay aside the pen. I have said that I would eschew politics and religion, and I shall not depart from my promise, though I may approach nearly the forbidden ground, if I say that among us there is a great want of *National* Toleration. As a nation, perhaps, we English are the most intolerant people in the world. We go about everywhere in a spirit of egotism, which clings to us like the poisoned robe of the centaur and strikes the venom to our very marrow. We visit foreign countries, and, so far from doing at Rome what is done at Rome, we think that every Roman should do exactly like ourselves. Now, I do not mean to say that we should accommodate ourselves too readily to foreign habits and usages. Of course there must be a limit to such adaptations. For example, an Englishman in New Zealand is not bound "to dine on cold man." But that is no

reason why we should be very severe even on the New Zealander, who, having an instinct for flesh-eating, was originally driven, by want of mutton and beef, to dish up his fellow-men as savory food. We are wont to call all who differ from us in their way of life, savages and barbarians, forgetting that the time was when we painted our bodies, and did other very preposterous things, which, although conventionally out of date, are not intrinsically any greater absurdities than some of those which we encourage and foster in the present day. And why do we not take account of the conditions of men's birth and training, of the terrible drawbacks and hinderances, almost the impossibilities, which beset some men before we describe them as vile and degraded? Can we expect an Asiatic prince, reared in the zenana, to resemble one brought up amidst all the ennobling influences of Christian life? Can we expect his Highness the —— of —— to be in all things like unto "Albert the Good"? If he be no worse than others of his kind, we should tolerate him. If he be better, we should respect him. But do we? No. He is unlike ourselves; and, therefore, we denounce him.

And we do this, on a large scale, concerning affairs of government and modes of administration, not less than, on a small scale, in respect of social habits and fashions, and personal vagaries, and the vanities of life. I chanced not long ago, in the

house of a friend who holds an official appointment, to take up some blue-books relating to India, which I found less dreary reading than I expected, and from them I learnt that our "goody" government had been lecturing, if not threatening, some of the neighboring states, for the monstrous offense of bolstering up their revenues by means of government monopolies.* A great fervor of Free-trade seemed to be upon our government functionaries, who were eager, as shown in the correspondence I was reading, to teach true principles of commercial policy to native potentates on the outskirts of civilization, as in Burmah and Ladakh, and to sweep away all such abominations as protective duties. With the characteristic intolerance of new proselytes, we were condemning with fiery zeal all who happened to be a few lessons behind ourselves. Indeed, it seemed, to my limited comprehension of the matter, that our want of toleration went even further than this, inasmuch as that we were censuring heathen governments for doing that which we Christians had not only recently done, but which we actually then were and are now doing in a more lamentable and injurious manner. And I thought, perhaps, that an Indian *Punch* might not unfitly represent the Viceroy sitting on a well-padded chair, inscribed "Opium Revenue" and

* There are, doubtless, some readers whom I need not tell that this "friend" was a poetical license.—(1870.)

"Salt Revenue," and teaching, birch in hand, a class of native princes to decline the noun-substantive *Monopoly*. One might have a wallet inscribed "Oil," another "Timber," a third "Shawl-wool," and the like, but none equal in bulk to the cushions of the chair on which the pedagogue sits to insist upon the duty of free-trade in all these articles of commerce. And on the walls of the schoolroom might hang a historical picture of good Mr. John Company building up our Anglo-Indian empire on a broad basis of Monopoly.* Somehow or other we always do forget our own weaknesses and infirmities of past days, and are intolerant in the extreme towards the very errors which we have scarcely yet abandoned. I have often heard it said—and, indeed, having once held a military commission, I have some experience of the fact—that no military officer is so intolerant of the offenses of the privates under him, as the man who has himself risen from the ranks. And so

* I observe, whilst writing this, that a Member of the House of Commons has given notice of his intention to bring before Parliament next session the subject of the large amount of revenue derived from the sale of opium by the Indian government. But this is only another instance of want of Toleration. Governments, like individuals, "must live;" and we must not scan too nicely the manner in which revenue is raised. It is not very long since, in our own country, light and air were heavily taxed, under the name of "windows." Taxation in any shape is an evil, but it is an inevitable one, and we ought not to be over-severe on others who put it into shapes different from our own.

it is both in personal and in national affairs. States and individuals are alike intolerant of a condition of things out of which they have only recently emerged.

And this brings me back to the point from which I started, and, therefore, warns me that it is time to conclude. This propensity to condemn others is commonly strongest in those who have a sense of their own infirmities. It is the inherent disposition to

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

But "if, instead of blaming men"—and here I quote another, the ever-tolerant editor of *Coleridge's Letters*,—"for what they are, and are made to be, we occupied and interested ourselves with earnest inquiries into the causes of the evils we deplore, with a view to their removal, it cannot be doubted that this real labor of love, if carried on with and through the spirit of love, would in its very endeavor include much of the good sought to be obtained. To me, it seems that the greatest amount of benefit will result from the labors or the exertions of those who unite the good to others with that which is—has been made—pleasurable to themselves; from those who seek to make what is genial and joyous to themselves more genial and more joyous to others. This is a labor in which not merely some favorite

crotchet, some abstract opinion, or even sincere and honest convictions, are engaged: it is one in which the best, the purest, the highest sympathies of our nature are enlisted in the service and in the promotion of those enjoyments and of those practical occupations from which our own well-being has resulted, or with which it has been associated." There can be no better teaching than this. To a certain extent we know what is, but we do not know why it is. We see the effect, but are blind to the cause. Only the sufferer himself can compute the daily, the hourly temptations and provocations which lead some men—and women—astray, whilst others are not assailed. I remember, some years ago, to have read in a novel, doubtless now forgotten, that a certain stiff, wizened old maid, who could scarcely have been even good-looking in her youth, exclaimed, when some reference to the subject was made in conversation, "Oh! virtue is very easy,"—upon which a poor little woman (it was on board a Rhine boat) whose whole life had been one of temptation, hearing the remark, walked away, with her sweet, though careworn face, her charming petite rounded figure and elastic step, and, heaving a deep sigh, said to herself, "Oh, but virtue is *not* easy!" And so it is; and so it ever will be!

> "What's done we partly may compute,
> But know not what's resisted."

August—September, 1869.

NOTE.—I have said in this essay (p. 197) that "I would not give much for a woman who is not fond of dress," and more to the same effect laudatory of this supposed "woman's weakness." It is suggested that this passage might be regarded as a plea for *extravagance* in dress, which, doubtless, is among the besetting evils of the time. But to be fond of dress and to be extravagant in dress are two very different things. Women who are extravagant in dress are often very careless and wasteful; they show that they are not really fond of dress by the manner in which they treat it, casting aside or destroying their dresses, one after another, as the whim seizes them; whilst others, uniformly careful and neat, spend only half the money, and make twice as good an appearance. This is the comeliness of which I have spoken in the text, which is only another name for carefulness, and which bespeaks, as I have said, in women, orderly habits and a desire to please. But it is shocking to think of the amount of money wasted by others on *fine* dresses, without the attainment, after all, of the great object of being *well* dressed. The best-dressed woman is the one who dresses most according to her station, and who evinces her fondness for dress by taking the best care of it.—(1870.)

REST.

I HAD a long illness at the end of last year,—not dangerous, not very painful, but compelling me, as an indispensable aid to recovery, to keep steadfastly to my bed. Such a mischance had not befallen me for twenty-five years. I am habitually an early riser, spending little time abed, and it seemed strange to me at first, with a strangeness not unmingled with self-reproach, to hear the cry of the milkman from between the sheets; but this soon wore away, and there came over me a calm satisfaction with my lot,—something more than mere patience. And now I look back to the time with a feeling almost of regret, as though I should not much deplore the necessity of spending it all over again. It is true that all the conditions were in my favor. I had physicians as wise as they were kind, the best and brightest of nurses, and the sympathy of a few loving friends. And I had what I had not known for many years, something nearly approaching to—REST.

I had a fanciful notion at the time—and I have not ceased yet from the indulgence of the thought—that the "good Fairy" which watches over me,

seeing that I would not of my own motion cease from labor, had purposely prostrated me, that I might rest mind and body from the ceaseless work of years, and rescue what little good might still be left in me for use in a later day. Not long ago, some papers were written, in a popular periodical, on "Enforced Pauses in Life." I could not, at the time, make a pause in life to read them; but I was much struck by the title, and I often feel an extreme amount of thankfulness for the occurrence and recurrence of these enforced pauses. They may last for only five minutes, or they may last for an hour, a day, a week, a month. It is impossible to calculate the good that they do. In the midst of a hard bout of writing-work, just as I am, perhaps, getting into a state of congestion, I miss a certain paper, or I cannot find a certain book. I am compelled to rise from my chair, to change my position, to go into another room, to spend a quarter of an hour, perhaps, in an active search, which may, after all, be unsuccessful. But the labor has not been labor lost; I am all the better for it; there has been some rest of the brain. Then again, there is a stoppage on my line of railway: I am detained for an hour on my way to business. I spend the time between looking out of window and reading the advertisements in my newspaper; I take in a succession of entirely new ideas, not one of which may be of much value: but I have rested for awhile; perhaps, I have slept a little in the

course of my detention. I have been ordered to halt and to stand at ease; I have been compelled to pause, whether I would or not; and, however much I have chafed at the commencement, I have always acknowledged, at last, that the hour has been well spent. For rest is a thing to be *done*, as well as work; and if we are disinclined to do it, we should be thankful that the "Providence which shapes our ends" sometimes compels us thereto, in spite of ourselves. But for these occasional compulsions, I might, long ere this, have been in a churchyard or a mad-house. At least, I am convinced—and the conviction brings a strong feeling of gratitude in its train—that, if I had always had my own way, I should not now be writing this essay, enjoying the soft summer air, and the sweet odor of the roses in my garden. What we are wont to call mischances are commonly blessings in disguise. And so I thought that, as these small pauses had not been enough for me, it had been beneficently ordained that I should be laid in my bed for six weeks and ordered to take my rest.

So I took it, not merely uncomplainingly, but in the main gratefully. And I have been thinking that perhaps nothing but a decided attack of illness, placing me under the strict discipline of the faculty, would have had the same beneficial effect. We are wont to coquet with slight ailments. Admonitions of the gentler kind are too often unheeded.

Nature benignantly indicates the time to pause; but man, stiff-necked and presumptuous, too often disregards these warnings, and, instead of ceasing to work, works badly against the grain. Then, again, as to voluntary cessation from labor, there are conditions to be observed with respect to the perfect realization of the idea of a holiday, which some men, by reason partly of their natural dispositions, partly of their adventitious surroundings, can rarely fulfill. The nominal holiday often brings with it anything but genuine rest. Too frequently a man's business pursues him into the country, haunts him at the seaside, crosses the Channel with him, sits upon his back wheresoever he goes. "This is his own fault," it may be said. Nay, rather it is his misfortune. It is the result commonly of a conscientious feeling that what a man can do he ought to do with all the power that is in him,—and that he has no right, for the sake of personal ease and enjoyment, to lose sight of his appointed work, unless he be perfectly assured in his own mind that it can be done equally well by others in his absence. I have heard much of the "happy faculty" of getting thoroughly rid of the burden of work, "shaking it off" is the favorite expression; I do not doubt that it is a very happy faculty to the possessor, but the happiness may be confined to himself. I do not wish to be misunderstood, and, therefore, I must discriminate a little in this place. There are times and seasons when it

would be a mere waste of self not to get rid of all cares of business, all thoughts of one's work. If one can do nothing, it is needless self-torture to kick against the pricks of the inevitable. There can be no self-reproach where there is no power to do otherwise.

What I mean is best shown by a familiar illustration. Whatever may be the business to be done, whatever the difficulties to be surmounted, whatever the cares and anxieties attending them, when business hours are over on Saturday evening, when the last post has come in and gone out, a man feels that he can do nothing more till Monday morning. It is out of his own hands. God's law and man's law alike decree his quiescence. To endeavor to cast out, during that blessed interval, all corroding thoughts, is surely the duty of all of us, as it is a privilege to be suffered to accomplish it. And I am disposed to think that there are few to whom this privilege is not mercifully vouchsafed. I have heard men, upon whom the burden of the world has sat by no means lightly, declare that they always sleep better on Saturday night and wake later on Sunday morning than at any other time of the week, and that although Monday morning amply revenges itself, the sabbatical repose of the *dies non* strengthens them for the struggles of the coming week and keeps them from breaking down. I shall speak of this more fully in another place. I desire

here only to illustrate the difference between enforced and willful quiescence. Thus to "shake off business," when no business can be done, is a privilege if it come naturally to us, and wisdom if it be attained by discipline of the mind. I can see no use in opening letters of business on Saturday night, that cannot be answered and acted upon until Monday morning. To do so may give one a troubled Sunday, without helping the matter in hand. But when the banks and the marts and the exchanges are open, when men are buying and selling, borrowing and lending, when the public offices are in full departmental activity, when statesmen are meeting and legislators are babbling, and judges are sitting on the judgment-seat, it may be neither a privilege to be able to shake off business, nor wisdom to encourage the faculty. To lose a single post, to be half an hour late at a certain place, may make all the difference between success and failure. That which brings ease of mind is the knowledge that we have done our best,—that it is not in our power to do anything more than we have done, or differently from what we have done. But there is the bitterness of self-reproach in the thought that if we had not yielded to some infirmity or some temptation, some self-indulgence of the moment, causing us to lose a train or to miss a post,—or, on a larger scale of pleasure-seeking, to be at a distance from the seat of business, when we might be close at hand,—

everything might have turned out differently, to our contentment instead of to our despair.

We cannot, unfortunately, get over the fact that all the tendencies of the age are the very reverse of favorable to Rest. I should be a mere Goth, an outer barbarian of the worst kind, if I did not thankfully acknowledge the benefits which the present generation derives from the almost magical rapidity with which both thought and matter are conveyed from one spot to another. Communication by post has been wonderfully improved, and the electric telegraph is a great institution. But posts and telegraphs are among the disturbing accessories of life; and a man connected with business of any kind, official, professional, or commercial, can hardly expect to enjoy anything like genuine rest, so long as he is within reach of the post or the telegraph. The telegraph now, under post-office development, is invading the remotest districts. Happening some weeks ago to visit an obscure village or townlet in South Wales, I was surprised to see the posts and wires following the rural road, miles away from the station, and thus bringing London within a few minutes' distance of my retreat. In a little time, I suppose that there will be no place in which the telegraph cannot find you out. I have thought sometimes, in my search after rest, whether I would not, on leaving London for an autumnal holiday, leave directions behind me to forward no letters or telegrams, or, as a cer-

tain preventive to the dispatch of all unwelcome missives, to leave no address behind me. I envy, if I do not applaud, those who can do such things, —who can thus cut themselves off from the outside world altogether, and feel no misgivings of danger. Of the faculty of abstraction I have spoken above. I am now writing of the permissive or preventive circumstances. And it unfortunately happens that the very men to whom perfect repose is most essential are those whom hostile circumstances rarely suffer to enjoy it. They may go to distant places in the holidays, but they cannot deny the approaches of the post and the telegraph; and if they did, their apprehensions and anxieties and self-reproaches would give them as little genuine rest as their letters and their messages and the office-boxes which are sent down to them. It is best, therefore, I am disposed to think, as most contributing to rest in such circumstances, cheerfully to face your business, to do such work, or to issue such orders for its doing, as will keep the wheels going without accidents; to get over it every day as expeditiously as possible; and then to give yourself up to recreation and amusement. Change of air and change of scene may do much for a man, and it is no small thing to be able to work by an open window, with the fresh air of the departing summer breathing upon him, and fair fields and smiling flowers to meet his eyes, when he lifts them from his papers. Besides, there is

a blessed immunity from the distracting, at times almost maddening, interruptions to which, at the headquarters of your business, you are always subject,—legitimate interruptions from clerks and clients, and illegitimate incursions and intrusions from the idle world, barbarians regardless of the value of time, coming on their own private business or on no business at all, impervious to hints of all kinds, from covert appeals to ill-disguised reproaches. There is gain in the direction of rest from the absence of these disturbing influences, which is sufficient answer to those who thanklessly exclaim, "I might as well have remained at office." Better, again I say, under these happier conditions, to do one's work, than to be accessible to continually recurring apprehensions of disaster and the stingings of a lively conscience.

It is the absence, I am inclined to think, of these sharp twinges of self-reproach, which, to a man encumbered with the affairs of the world, makes a period of sickness the nearest approach to a period of rest to which he is ever likely to attain, until he has rid himself of all fleshly encumbrances. There is something very comforting in utter helplessness. It is God's will that you should for awhile be inactive—and there's an end of it. Satisfied that all that comes from the Almighty disposer of events is for the best, you resign yourself to his bidding, as a child; and with this childlike confidence come childlike tastes and inclinations, and something like

a childlike state of intelligence,—the mind, like the body, eschewing strong diet and delighting in the mildest nutriment. I am one of those who, in seasons of health and strength, live upon meat and wine. I eschew delicate cates and meek beverages. I have a horror of slops. I thrive best upon heroic aliment. But there are pauses in men's lives when the heroic is at a discount. Mind and body are alike in this. At such times I have found solace in the perusal of books of the milder sort, which in full health I should have regarded as the most insipid of all possible reading,—books of the humdrum order, such as meek domestic stories about goody people, who neither do nor suffer anything that is not done or suffered by people of one's own acquaintance every day of the year. I would not class among these books such a work as Miss Martineau's *Deerbrook*, which is good reading at all times. I read it once, for the second or third time, during a severe attack of the gout, under a continual sense of gratitude to the writer. It is, indeed, a great book, with as much meaning in it as Bulwer's *Rienzi*, to which in my mind I have frequently compared it. Dr. Hope is a sort of Rienzi of middle-class life in England. Widely different as are the costumes, the scenic effects, all the external accessories, there is in both the same moral groundwork,—the same truth wrought out by different means. The variableness of popular favor is finely illustrated by each writer. But I

could read one when I could not read the other. Indeed, I tried, on my sick-bed, last year, to read the *Last of the Barons*, and I found that the food was too strong for me. But I read with pleasure, at the time, some mild stories of everyday life at home, of which I do not now remember a word,—stories that take a man placidly just a very little way out of the environs of self, and awaken a calm, genial, sympathetic interest, which is gently stimulating to the system, without disturbing one's rest. Even children's books are sometimes pleasant reading at such times,—especially schoolboy stories,—such, for instance, as Charles Dickens's *Old Cheeseman;* for, in truth, a sick man is little more than a child. At such periods, indeed, there is much pleasure in going back some forty years to one's schoolboy days, and wondering what has become of one's old schoolfellows,—what they have done in the world, what they are like. Some, of course, have turned up at odd times and in odd places, with friendly recognitions; and what delight has there been in the *renovata juventus!*—what wonderful Rest in the interchange of old reminiscences,—the revivification of boyish jokes between the Dean, the Queen's Counsel, and the Chief of an Official Department, fondly remembered by each other, with pleasant memories of fair young faces and light agile figures, and buoyant spirits that nothing could check! Such reunions are worth many a hard and toilsome

passage in life, and the more so that they commonly come upon us unawares. But I was minded to speak of these blessed reunions in the spirit, not in the flesh,—wishing to say that, when necessitated to cease from labor, and to find some pleasant occupation for the mind, I have often derived, from reminiscences of old times, especially of those embraced by the academic period, infinite solace and repose. At such times, in the life-pauses of illness, or in intervals of broken rest (which, as we grow older, become unfortunately more frequent), I have lived over again and again those blessed periods of

> "Youth,
> When life was luxury, and friendship truth,"

and have never become weary of the retrospect. Strange it is that these memories of our early days grow more vivid as we advance in life. Perhaps it is that, as the fiercer excitements of the heyday of manhood subside under the influence of age and infirmity, we live less in the present, and give ourselves more leisure to review the past. Our first affections, out of the family circle, are commonly given to some school-friend; and though, in after-years, our paths may be far apart, and we may lose sight altogether of the first objects of our love, an enduring impression is made upon the heart, which Time cannot efface. Perhaps, on the whole, pleasant as are the meetings of which I

have spoken, it is best for such school-friends (speaking of them as something distinct from mere school-*fellows*) not to meet as adults,—not to have anything to mar the mind-picture of the bright-faced, supple-limbed boy, all aglow with healthful exercise and innocent excitement, shouldering his bat and walking down to the scorer to learn how many runs he has made. He may have gone the right way, or he may have gone the wrong way. He may have developed into a bishop, or he may have sunk into a sot. In either case, he is not our little Bright-face; and it is a pity that the reminiscence should be spoiled by any disfigurements of mature reality.

It may appear to some, and not unreasonably, that this notion of mine, that for a man, in the full swing of business, to realize anything like an approximation to rest, he must be prostrated on a bed of sickness, is not unlike the idea of Elia's Chinaman, that it was necessary to burn down a house to obtain the luxury of roast-pig. Perhaps it is. But there is nothing of which I am more assured, in my own mind, than that, in the midst of an active, perhaps an over-active, career (I speak of cerebral, not muscular, activities), to be laid aside by no will of your own, but by the ruling of One who better knows what is good for you, may be in your case, as it has been in thousands of other cases, the salvation both of your body and of your mind. If I were

the ruling principle of a life-assurance society, I should put the question to the would-be assurer, "When did you have your last illness?" with a view to ascertain the danger rather of unbroken health (or the *simulacrum* of it) than the supposed warnings of occasional attacks of sickness. I should be always suspicious of men who are "never ill." I have seen such men *snap* suddenly, for want of that relief from incessant tension which, to some natures, can only come unbidden. The unbending of the bow is forced upon us when we are really sick; and it is bountifully provided in such genuine disorderments that with the debility of the body engendered at such times should come also a corresponding debility of mind, or rather a certain obtuseness thereof, an absence of that sensitiveness to external influences which is inseparable from perfect, or even slightly impaired, health; and from this absence of the *vivida vis* of other times comes the nearest approach to Rest which active men are capable of enjoying. And next to this, in their salutary effects on overworked man, are the conditions of the Sabbath.

I have spoken incidentally of the Christian's day of rest, and promised to return to the subject. I think with a shudder, sometimes, of what life would be without Sunday,—if day after day the great wheel of the world went round with its ceaseless clatter, never a rest in motion, never a pause in sound. These are mere secular essays;

they do not aspire even to the dignity of lay-sermons. What am I that I should dare to write otherwise than as a worlding? I speak of the Sabbath only in its original meaning, as a word that signifies *Rest.* And in this sense it is by most men, and ought to be by all, esteemed as the very greatest of all the blessings which the Almighty benevolence has bestowed upon man. The worst Sabbath-breaker of all is the ingrate who is not thankful when the Sabbath comes round. He may go to church three times a day, and be austere in all outward observances, but he breaks the Sabbath in his heart if he rejoices when it is over. There are many kinds of worship, and I am humbly disposed to think that the giving of thanks is not the least acceptable of them. If it be true that *laborare est orare*, we are praying during six days of the week, and may devote the seventh to praise. He who thoroughly enjoys his day of rest lives from morning to night in a state of thankfulness to the Almighty; the incense of praise is continually rising from his heart. I do not envy the man who does not hail the advent of Sunday, and rejoice in the Rest which it vouchsafes.

I am not forgetful that among those who have professed this want of appreciation of the great weekly restorative, for which I am so devoutly thankful, once lived and loved one, of whom to write at all is to write tenderly and affectionately,

—that gentle hero, that Titanic weakling, Charles Lamb. It was not well of him to write, in one of the most delightful of his *Essays*, "I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the worst adapted for days of unbending and recreation. In particular there is a gloom for me attendant upon city Sundays, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music and the ballad-singers, the buzz and stirring music of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously-displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a weekday saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful, are shut out. No bookstalls deliciously to idle over. No busy faces to recreate the idle man, who contemplates them ever passing by,—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances, or half-happy at best,—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolk, with here and there a servant-maid who has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour, and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day look anything but comfortable." Half serious, half sportive, and

wholly wrong! It appears to me, too, that there is something of an anachronism in it. Written in the character of the "Superannuated Man," it relates to a past period of existence, when the writer had "a desk in Mincing Lane,"—otherwise in Leadenhall Street,—and yet it seems to be imbued with the spirit of superannuation, and to express rather the sentiments of the "idle man" than of the busy one. Perhaps he would not have written in this strain whilst he was harnessed to the go-cart of the Accounts' Office of the East India Company, and had only his Sundays for holidays. It is surely abundant compensation for the closed bookstalls and the silent hurdygurdies, that you can rise in the morning with the delightful sense that there is nothing that you are compelled to do. If it be any luxury to you to lie late abed, you may do it. You need not look at your watch every ten minutes, lest you should miss the train (in Mr. Lamb's day it was the coach). You need not grudge yourself an extra quarter of an hour over your breakfast. You need not be disquieted by the thought that you have got your slippers on instead of your boots (in Mr. Lamb's time the disquieting thought was connected with the buttoning of the gaiters). In a word, you need not be in a hurry. Is this no small thing in itself? Is it not rest,—rest from that unceasing battle with Time that we are waging all through the weekdays? For my own part, it is the quietude of Sunday that I so much enjoy,—

the cessation of the postman's rap, of the tradesman's call, of the street-cries, of the references to *Bradshaw*. I can sit still when I like, I can sleep when I like, and I have time to be thankful.

It is true that I commonly spend my Sundays a little way in the country, or, rather, a little out of town, for in these days of perpetual ædification the country is not easily reached. If you pitch your tent where there is a pleasant prospect of green fields and orchards, and you can see the cows grazing from your windows at all times and the apple-blossoms whitening the ground beneath them in the spring and early summer, the speculative builder soon plants opposite to you a steam-engine and a sawing-machine, exorcises houses, with demoniacal rapidity, from the bowels of the earth, and blocks out all of nature but the skies. There is some good, be it said, even in this; for it is a blessing, bountifully tending to rest, to be suffered to know the worst. When all is done that can be done to your despite, there is nothing more for you to fear or fidget about; and it is better, perhaps, to know that you can never see those fields and apple-blossoms again from your windows, than to live haunted by continual apprehensions of losing them. We soon get reconciled, as I have before said, to the inevitable. I purpose to say something presently about the rest that comes from knowing the worst. I am now, when not hindered by my digressional infirmity, writing of

the blessed Rest of Sundays. And I was proceeding to say that though now, in spite of the builder, I can sit on Sundays under my vine and saunter among flowers, it has not been always so; and that I have spent years of Sundays in town, under nearly every residential condition known to our middle-class humanity,—in comfortable family dwelling-houses, in lodging-house "drawing-room floors," in chambers of Inns of Court, ay, and in the city proper, hard by that so-called "Mincing Lane" whereof Mr. Lamb discourses; and yet I protest that I have never failed to rise from my bed lighter and happier on Sundays than on any one of the six weekdays. Not that I make wry faces at my work. We are upon the very best of terms with each other. Indeed, I might in this case adapt to my own uses the fine old chivalrous sentiment, and say,—

> I should not love thee, *Work*, so well,
> Loved I not *Sunday* more.

My selfish delight in Sunday is, that I am not compelled to do any work on that day, if I do not wish it, and that I ought not if I would; but there is a joy beyond this in seeing others going out for their Sunday holidays, in their best clothes, looking clean and bright and fresh, and, whatever Mr. Lamb may say to the contrary, with a keen sense of the coming enjoyment written on their faces. I like to speculate on what they are going to do, as I see

them starting when the morning air is fresh and the sun not very high above the house-tops, wondering whether they are going to see their old parents in the country (mayhap in the Workhouse) or a daughter in service, or only to get a little fresh air away from the smoke of London. And there were other pleasant and suggestive sights as seen from my chamber-windows, not the least of which was this:—I was wont to see on Sunday mornings, in the bright summer-time, a little stream of people flowing, under an archway, from Lincoln's Inn Fields towards Covent Garden, and returning by the same channel. They went empty-handed and they returned full; each one, man or woman, carrying—I might almost write *hugging*—a pot of flowers; a geranium, a fuchsia, a verbena, or some other freely-blossoming plant. It mystified me for some time; but I learned afterwards that there was an early sale of flowers on Sunday mornings in Covent Garden, and that purchases were to be made more cheaply at that hour than at any other. And it pleased me to think that a part of the wages paid on Saturday evening had been put aside for these Sunday-morning purchases; and though this buying and selling might, in the eyes of rigid Sabbatarians, be held, in some sort, as a violation of the Fourth Commandment, I could not help thinking that the Recording Angel might well drop a tear upon the page that registered the offense. For the love of flowers,

especially in sorely-tried Londoners, is a virtue in itself; and it greatly engenders Rest.

I would recommend every man, in the autumn of his life, to take to gardening, if he has not already experienced its pleasures. Of all occupations in the world it is the one which best combines repose and activity. It is rest-in-work or work-in-rest. It is not idleness; it is not stagnation; and yet it is perfect quietude. Like all things mortal, it has its failures and its disappointments, and there are some things hard to understand. But it is never without its rewards. And, perhaps, if there were nothing but successful cultivation, the aggregate enjoyment would be less. It is better for the occasional shadows that come over the scene. The discipline, too, is most salutary. It tries one's patience and it tries one's faith. The perpetual warfare, that seems ever to be going on between the animal and the vegetable world, is something strange and perplexing. It is hard to understand why the beautiful tender blossoms and the delicate fresh leaflets of my rose-trees should be covered with green flies and destroyed as soon as they are born. It is a mystery which I cannot solve; but I know that there is a meaning in it, and that it is all decreed for good, only that I am too ignorant to fathom it. And even in the worst of seasons there is far more to reward and encourage than to dishearten and to disappoint. There is no day of the year without something to afford tranquil pleasure

to the cultivator of flowers, something on which the mind may rest (using the word in its double sense) with profit and delight. If there is no new surprise, no fresh discovery for you, there is always something to be done. "The garden is a constant source of amusement to us both," wrote Dr. Arnold in one of his delightful letters,—he was writing of himself and wife; "there are always some little alterations to be made, some few spots where an additional shrub or two would be ornamental, something coming into blossom; so that I can always delight to go round and see how things are going on." In the spring and summer there is some pleasure-giving change visible every morning, something to fulfill and something to excite expectation. And even in the winter, flower-culture has its delights. If you have a green-house or conservatory, no matter how small, you have an indoors garden, in which you may watch the same changes and enjoy the same delights. And if you have not, you may still do something to preserve your nurslings during the rigors of the hybernal season. Indeed, there are few states of life in which floriculture is not an available enjoyment. To rich and to poor it is a blessing equally accessible. "As gardening," it was observed by Sir William Temple, who has had a new lease of life in one of the best of Macaulay's *Essays*, "has been the inclination of kings and the choice of philosophers, so it has been the common favorite of public and private

men, a pleasure of the greatest and the care of the meanest; and indeed an employment and a possession for which no man is too high or too low." I am disposed, indeed, to think that to men of low estate it yields greater joys than to those who hail from high places. I have got a little garden about the size of a rich man's dining-table. I am as fond of it, and, when the roses are in bloom, as proud of it, too, as the Duke can be of his world-renowned Chatsworth. I do not suppose that if I could bring as many acres as I please under floral cultivation, and have as many gardeners as I choose to hire, with another Paxton at the head of them, I should derive from them all a tenth part of the enjoyment that is now vouchsafed to me by my little strip of suburban soil. Indeed, in that ducal case, I should not be suffered to garden; I must be gardened for: they would be the gardener's roses, not mine; I should have merely the privilege of looking at them. And it is essential to any real enjoyment of a garden that you should be an autocrat in it, that you should do much of the work yourself, and have a particular knowledge of almost each individual flower.

But there are lowlier gardeners even than I; there are gardens to which my diminutive domain is a Chatsworth,—gardens limited to the capacity of a window-sill. I honor those window-gardeners, especially those who dwell in towns, in narrow

streets or murky alleys, and whose homes are made beautiful by the smiles of the flowers in their windows,—gardeners such as I have spoken of above, as seen from my windows in Lincoln's Inn, carrying their gardens in their hands, beautiful offshoots of the great garden which ever flourishes between Long Acre and the Strand. And even of this window-gardening there are many degrees,—descending even down to one delicate plant, reared perhaps from a slip beneficently given by a neighbor, in a fragment of a broken water-jug. There seems to be something of the old Paradisiacal beatitude in these modest cultivations. I saw yesterday, as I journeyed homeward-bound, after my day's work, to the station, whence I take train to my suburb, a woman at a second-floor window in Westminster (it is a house ancient and decrepit, doubtless doomed to speedy deletion) amidst a perfect Eden of many-colored and many-shaped flowers and creepers, picking off the dead leaves here and there. Neither youth nor beauty physically belonged to her; but the picture was not without a suggestiveness of youth and beauty; for the love of flowers keeps the heart young, and the greater the difficulty of indulging that love the greater the moral beauty of success in the cultivation of a purifying taste. I could readily associate with it the idea of a background, behind that festooned window, in which, notwithstanding all the ordinary troubles and disturbances of metro-

politan work, there is, at appointed times, a fine air of repose,—a soothing benignity of Rest.*

But I am minded, having thus spoken of these lower strata of floriculture, to return for a little space to the higher. If I were to give way to the inclination to discourse upon this subject, and to illustrate it by examples drawn from ancient and modern history, showing how the greatest men of all ages have sought and found Rest in the contemplation of fields and flowers,—the inexhaustible works of that benignant Nature, which "never doth betray the heart that is her own,"—I should require more sheets than I can find pages for my commentary. But I have been recently reading Lord Russell's *Life of Charles Fox*, and do not know any more beautiful illustration of the love of Rest than is to be found in the story of the great statesman's retirement and the correspondence which accompanies it:—"At a period," writes Lord Russell, "when the prospects of office nearly vanished from his sight, when calumny loved to paint him as a man of disordered ambition and criminal designs, he was busy in the study of Homer, or lounging carelessly through his garden

* Since this was written, I have found a charming illustration of window-gardening in that unfinished work of Charles Dickens, which it so saddens one to read,—the window-garden cultivated by the retired naval lieutenant in Staple Inn, who "thought he'd feel his way to the command of a limited estate by beginning in boxes."

and expressing to his beloved nephew the full sense of his happiness and content. The trees and the flowers, the birds and the fresh breezes, gave him an intense enjoyment, which those who knew his former life of politics and pleasure could hardly have imagined. To the capacious benevolence which longed to strike the chain from the African slave, he joined a daily practice of all the charities of life and a perception of the beautiful in nature, in literature and in art, which was a source of constant enjoyment. With a simplicity of manners rare in great statesmen, he united views the most profound, and a feeling heart which calumny could not embitter, nor years make cold, nor the world harden." The enjoyment of rest, which he derived from the sights and sounds of nature, from the beauty of the flowers and the songs of the birds, was intense; and with this went hand-in-hand the cultivation of literature, especially in its less laborious forms. He was writing history, but he turned aside to revel in poetry; and from his poetical studies he was diverted, at times, by his inquiries as to the season of nightingale-singing in different parts of the country. But, in the midst of all this, he had his misgivings. He could not help those qualms of conscience which rose up at odd times, and suggested that he ought to be at work again.

Take the following from one of his letters in 1795, as illustrative of the great struggle within

between the sense of duty and the longing for Rest:—"As to myself, I grow every day to think less of public affairs; possibly your coming home and taking a part in them might make me again more alive about them, but I doubt even that. The bills of this year appear to me to be a finishing stroke to everything like a spirit of liberty; and though the country did show some spirit whilst they were depending, yet I fear it is only a temporary feeling which they have quite forgotten. I wish I could be persuaded that it is right to quit public business, for I should like it to a degree that I cannot express; but I cannot yet think that it is not a duty to persevere. One may be of opinion that persevering is of no use; but ought a man who has engaged himself to the public to trust so entirely to a speculation of this sort as to go out of the common road, and to desert (for so it would be called) the public service? . . . . I think it can scarcely be right. But as for wishes, no one ever wished anything more. I am perfectly happy in the country. I have quite resources enough to employ my mind, and the great resource of all, literature. I am fonder of literature every day."—[*April* 12, 1795.] And again, some years later:—"My feeling is this,—that notwithstanding nightingales, flowers, literature, history, etc., all which, however, I conceive to be good and substantial reasons for staying here, I would nevertheless go to town if I saw

any chance of my going being serviceable to the public, or (which, in my view of the case, is the same thing) to the party; which I love both as a party, and on account of many of the principal individuals who compose it. I feel myself quite sure that this is not now the case; and that if I were to go the best I could hope for would be that I should do no mischief."—[*April* 19, 1801.] The love of repose, of flowers and singing-birds, had grown upon him in the interval, but still ever and anon came goadings of self-reproach, and the much-coveted rest seemed to be continually slipping away from him. Thus, three years afterwards, he wrote, "I am going up to town to-morrow, to stay I know not how many weeks. I dislike it to a degree you can hardly conceive, but I feel it is right, and resolve to do it handsomely. . . . . Nightingales not come yet, and it will be well, if I do not quite miss hearing them this spring; but I will do it so handsomely that I hope you will hear from your other correspondents that I have quite turned my mind to politics again, and am as eager as in former days. Pray remember to inquire at what time nightingales usually appear and sing where you are."—[*April* 9, 1804.]

There is something very pleasant in this last touch of nature. The nightingales again! What a change from those soft songsters to the obstreperousness of the House of Commons! There are many, doubtless, whom we are wont, in these days,

to think self-seeking and ambitious, because they continue to take part in the strife of public affairs, even when health and strength are failing and the voice is growing weak. We seldom take account of the sacrifices which they make. How many would give up place and power if they did not feel within them a strong sense of duty, compelling them to listen to the calls of their country! No one, who has tried both, doubts for a moment that Literature is more delightful than Politics. What Rest our two great party-leaders must have found in their Homeric studies and translations! What repose must have been the lot of that other statesman who wrote the Life of Fox above quoted, and that other life, in which he passed from politics to poetry, and manifested as keen an appreciation of the one as of the other! And who can fathom the depths of that intense amusement and recreation which another party-leader, *sui generis*, must have experienced, when he hoaxed and hocussed the world by publishing a fashionable novel, intended to satirize the perverted literary taste and to gauge the literary flunkyism of the age? I think it must have added half a dozen good working-years to his life. He has achieved many successes, but none equal to this last. I do not say that I applaud it. He had before laid bare the rottenness of party politics, and it was still less pleasant to see the literary criticism of the nineteenth century thus shown to be a pretentious sham. But it

will have its uses. My roses are not less sweet because the soil from which they grow is manured with the vilest offal. If this stupendous hoax, which must have shaken the sides of Beaconsfield right merrily, should, as we apprehend it will, teach criticism a little more caution and conscientiousness, it will not have been played out in vain.

I have spoken incidentally, above, of the Rest which comes from knowing or suffering the worst, —the quiet that follows an explosion. It is like the stillness now succeeding the thunderstorm, amidst which some of these lines have been written in the early morning. Almost every one, in some shape or other, has experienced, after a long period of painful doubt and suspense and anxiety,—of those fears which cling to you in the day, which haunt your sleep, and oppress you with deadly sickness at the "shuddering dawn,"—the infinite relief of the dreaded IT having actually come upon you. There is an end, then, of all your strugglings to escape your doom,—all your writhings and wrestlings,—all the miserable turmoil and excitement of battle with an impending fate. I have heard that men whose business affairs have been in an embarrassed state for months and years, have felt, when the "smash" came at last, a quietude of spirit, a repose of mind, such as they had not felt for a long and weary time. The worst had come; and bankruptcy itself was not so bad as the fear of bankruptcy. I have seen, indeed, with my own

eyes, men who had shrunk and shriveled into an extreme state of tenuity, who had grown pale and wrinkled and careworn, hollow-eyed and dragged-mouthed, under the pressure of their difficulties, make their appearance, after a little space in the Fleet Prison or some kindred institution, quite sleek and rosy and bright-faced, jaunty and debonnaire in their manner, ten years younger every way, as though the worst had come upon them and there was nothing now to be feared. Of course, this indicates a certain obtuseness of conscience and want of sympathy with others, in favor of which I have nothing to say. I am only speaking of the Rest that ensues from the IT having come upon us. I can easily imagine, too, that an offender against the laws of God and man, endeavoring to escape from the pursuing hand of justice, might feel infinite relief when the hand has been laid on him and he can no longer evade its grasp. I think that wretched Falkland,—rare product of the genius of William Godwin,—that typical man, vain fugitive from a remorseless and untiring Nemesis, must have rejoiced when the terrible pursuit was at an end. Even death itself has less terror than the perpetual uplooking at the Damoclean sword impending above one's head. It is related in cotemporary annals of the Great Indian rebellion, that on more than one occasion there was a sense of infinite relief after the storm had burst, and that when the mutinous sepoys were everywhere surg-

ing around our Christian people, there was less misery in the knowledge of the actual present, than in the vague apprehension of the impending evil.

It was in some mood of this kind that a dear friend, who, with the best intentions in the world, was always in trouble,—one of those men who believe every one and everything, who are never to be convinced by any failures or misfortunes, who can never profit by experience or grow wise by suffering, but go on to the end with unfailing trust in humanity,—once wrote, on what he thought the eve of a crisis, which never came after all,—for though some friends misled, it cannot be said betrayed him, others were stanch to the last; and his faith in his fellow-men was not found to be ill bestowed,—

> "Rest!—Yes; a prison, it may be. 'Tis well!
> I have fought the battle long, and I have lost—
> Trusted my friends, and counted not the cost
> Of this blind faith in others. So I fell.
> And now that I have long been tempest-tost,
> I find my haven gladly in a cell.
> Water and bread, and just a little light,
> And air it may be, and full leave to pray,
> And I shall not much care for man's despite,
> Waiting, in God's good time, a better day—
> Better to lay one's arms down and to wait,
> Than to fight on, sore-spent, all gashed and gory;
> For the time cometh, be it soon or late,
> When perfect Rest is link'd with perfect Glory."

I have a few words more to say in conclusion. There is something very soothing and solacing,

amidst the cares and distractions, the ceaseless goings-to-and-fro of active life, in the thought of some day being able to lay down one's burdens and to cease from the strenuous business to which one has been harnessed for long years,—to make over the traces and the collar and the reins, which one has worn so long, and the bit one has champed for nearly half a century, to a younger and stronger horse, and to go out quietly to grass. And yet there are some men who shrink from the thought, —who have a vague presentiment that if the harness cease to brace them up any longer they will fall down by the wayside and die. I think it is a miserable mistake. Every man should listen to the warnings which benignant Nature is continually uttering to him. Whether in the autumn of life we are cautioned now and then to pause,* or

* Whilst I am correcting the proofs of this essay, I read in one of the daily papers this gratifying intelligence:—"The Prime Minister is not ill, still less has he suffered what can be called 'a relapse,' however 'slight.' He has simply been conscious that those were right who advised a little rest after recent hard labors, if he wished actually to avoid any return of indisposition which has before been induced by overwork. And so successful has been the resort to repose, that he will probably be in his place again to-day, or at the latest to-morrow, in the full enjoyment of that excellent health which all have noticed recently." Here, indeed, is an example to lesser men. "A stitch in time saves nine," in your constitution as well as in your coat. It is true wisdom to take heed of these slight warnings. The hardest worker in high place that I ever knew, having rejected some timely admonitions of this kind, was mercifully laid aside by a broken head in the hunting-

whether in the winter of life we are told that the time has come for us to cease altogether from work, we should never reject those promptings. The time must come when younger men will do our work better, and, if we remain still at the grindstone, we shall be little more than cumberers of the earth. Nay, we may be something worse,—miserable spectacles of decay, not even stately ruins. Shall we cling thus to a mere mockery and make-belief of work,—sorry "drivelers and shows,"—with dim eyes, and palsied hands, and vagrant memories? Let us take our pensions thankfully in good time; let us be content to be superannuated; let us go cheerfully into retirement before people say that we ought to be kicked into it. At the close of life we ought to be left to our repose,—to have time to take account of eternity. To work after we have ceased to be good workmen is only to take away so much from the good work already done. We may then reverse the words of the aphorism above cited, and say, "*Orare est laborare.*" We are never too old to pray. Let us be thankful that we have time and repose to do it, and hopefully wait until the summons comes:—"Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into thy rest."

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field, and compelled to cease from the labor of years. And now he has gone back to the councils of the nation, all the better for that disaster in the field.

It is only through the gates of death that we can grope our way to the fullness of repose. Let us then pause and make our houses ready, while there is time still left. It is not good to be stricken down in the midst of the great battle, as was he of whom erst I wrote:—

His life was one grand battle with old Time.
From morn till noon, from noon to weary night,
Ever he fought as only strong men fight;
And so he passed out of his golden prime
Into grim hoary manhood; and he knew
No rest from that great conflict, till he grew
Feeble and old, ere years could make him so.
Then on a bed of pain he laid his head,
As one sore-spent with labor and with woe;
"Rest comes at last; I thank thee, God," he said.
Death came; upon his brow laid chilly hands,
And whispered, "Vanquished!" But he gasped out, "No,
I am the Victor now; for unto lands
Where Time's dark shadow cannot fall, I go."

Ay, but whither? It is ill thus to die with the harness on one's back and the battle-axe in one's hand. Better to lay them down ere the dark shadow falls, and, resting as best we may upon earth, pass away into the Perfect Rest.

August, 1870.

THE END.

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