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Voices of the Dead.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

KING'S CHAPEL, BOSTON,

JUNE 2, 1867.

BEING THE SUNDAY FOLLOWING THE DECEASE OF

MR. THOMAS BULFINCH.

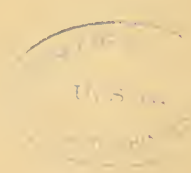
BY

ANDREW P. PEABODY.

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We are too little apt to recognize and confess how much of them there is that remains to us, how much that could not die, how much that will grow even more vivid and precious as the years roll on, and will verify with an ever increasing fulness the words, "He, being dead, yet speaketh."

Let us now consider some of the ways in which we, who lament the absence from our sight of the faithful and excellent, may hope to find these words fulfilled.

In the first place, I think that we understand the characters of our friends better after they have gone from us, than while they were with us, and that they thus speak to us in their examples with greater precision and emphasis. Take the instance of one whom none knew but to praise and love. To praise and love is not to understand. The life may have been one of incessant and various occupation, and the transactions and utterances of every day may have been regarded with warm approval, and have ministered to the growth of the most sincere and fond affection; but they have been beheld in themselves rather than in their motives and principles, and as separate incidents rather than as the expression and outflow

of a nobly framed and consistent character. Thus, as we pass through the streets of a town or city, the eye takes in single objects, but not the site, or plan, or general features. For these we must seek an elevated position, from which minute details will disappear or dwindle, while great outlines and characteristics will be plain and clear. Death gives us this elevation as to human character. We before knew, it may be, that the life was beautiful and lovely; we now see why it was so,—what was its pervading spirit, what its sacred laws of speech and action, what the great lessons of duty that it teaches,—the golden threads which held the whole together, and gave symmetry and unity to the endlessly varied forms of utterance and activity. And how intense the emphasis which death gives to the cardinal virtues of one whom we had tenderly loved, and especially to the one predominant trait, be it conscientiousness, or gentleness, or fortitude, or courage, or benevolence, or spirituality! We now see how that trait branched out in various directions, assumed different phases, gave energy and vividness to the other virtues, at once fostering them, and in turn fostered by them; and a voice comes to us from the yet

recent, and in after years from the still cherished grave, commending to us that special aspect of goodness, urging it upon us as the due tribute of undying human love no less than of piety, and rebuking us for every departure from it.

Nor let it be said that this peculiar sacredness attached to any single trait of excellence is adapted to make one-sided and deficient characters. For, in the first place, the virtues are a sociable sisterhood, and cannot well live apart, so that one of them sedulously wooed, and won, brings in all her sisters with her, she remaining only first among equals. And, secondly, the individuality which distinguishes one good man from another, and among the most excellent makes one star differ from another, when not in the degree, in the kind of glory, consists in the predominance of some single virtue while the others are not wanting, and in the peculiar tone and grouping created by this predominance.

It is, therefore, an infinite gain and benefit, if death has so endeared to us any one form or aspect of goodness, any special cluster of Christian graces, that we cannot contentedly remain in that regard defective or faulty; for while this form, or

aspect, or cluster may determine the order and proportion of our virtues, it will not suffer us in any department of duty to be barren or unfruitful.

In the next place, our friends who have gone before us to Heaven speak especially to us of the need and worth of Christian faith and piety, and no living words can equal in impressiveness the tacit pleading of death. When a life closes, the inquiry which seems to be awakened at once in every heart, even in the irreligious and the reckless, is, "Was the departed prepared to die?" I have been struck with this, when the great men of our land — high officials, renowned orators, accomplished statesmen — have been called away. The first communications that circulate in the public prints are dying words and manifestations as to religion, and whatever incidents in the whole past career can have any bearing on the religious character; and either the due eulogy upon a Christian life and spirit, or the honest, though feeble attempt to piece out a rainbow over the death-flood from shreds and particles of half-luminous-mist, precedes all discussion of public merits and services. I have often been most painfully impressed by this tendency in private circles,

where the departed had manifested no special regard for religion, but friends have tortured into grounds of hope the utterances of weariness of life drawn out by pain, or momentary exclamations, or isolated virtuous acts, or passive admissions of the truth, in fine, everything that did not bear on its face an absolutely irreligious import. But when one, who has indeed lived as a Christian, passes away, what comfort can equal that which flows from the assurance that our friend has found in death the very gate of Heaven? How lovingly do we dwell on the early consecration to the Saviour,—the marks of his lineage and kindred,—the expressions of faith unfeigned and hope anchored within the veil,—the traits of Christian fidelity that made the life luminous,—the path which we can now see reaching on from the death-hour and through the death-shadow to the assembly of the redeemed and the presence of the glorified Redeemer! We then feel and own that religion is indeed the one thing needful for the mortal who is to put on immortality,—that there is nothing in life so precious as that which fits one to die in peace and hope,—that all things are to be accounted as worthless in comparison with that in the

aim and spirit through which one wins Christ, and is found in Him. There is thus impressed upon us a profounder sense than comes to us through any other agency, of the infinite importance of personal piety,—of a soul at peace with God, and sustained by an immortal hope.

Has this lesson been sent home to any of our hearts by God's death-angel? Has there gone up, in our grief, fervent gratitude that our friend was one whom the Lord loved, and for whom death was but translation beyond the power of death? Oh let it be our life-lesson,—our directory for all time to come,—our preparation for our own last hour and closing scene. Over our lifeless forms there will be like solemn thought and anxious inquiry. What our surviving friends will most yearn to know will be whether we fall asleep in Jesus. Shall we die, and leave no sign? Oh let it be our life-aim and life-work so to order our conversation here that there shall be only trust and hope for us when we die, and that what is felt for us shall be only the counterpart of the fulness of joy into which we awake from the death-slumber.

Again, our friends who have gone before us to Heaven speak to us of the reality of Heaven. We may believe the promises of God, but never with so realizing a faith as when those who have been unspeakably dear to us have gone from us to inherit the promises. If there were a shade of scepticism before, it now passes away; for we feel assured that so much excellence and loveliness cannot have died,—that one so admirably fitted for life cannot have been stricken from the ranks of the living,—that so true and pure and high an education of the spirit cannot have been matured and perfected for the earth-clods to cover,—that such powers of usefulness cannot have been developed, except for a larger, loftier sphere,—that a stewardship of earthly trusts so faithfully discharged cannot but have been merged in a stewardship of wider scope and for nobler uses. We always think of such a friend as in Heaven; and one such argument can withstand the assault of every doubt and of every form of sophistry. I well knew a very old man of marked acumen and ability, who, from early fanaticism, passed, through a long ordeal of scepticism, to a more rational faith in his declining years, but

who, when he had lost his hold on almost everything else that was sacred, still held unchanged the belief in immortality, sustained by the grave and memory of his devout parents, and was wont through life to repeat and apply to himself the line of Cowper,

“The son of parents passed into the skies.”

Nor is this all. Not only the belief, but the imagination is quickened through the ministry of death. Heaven seems nearer to us, and assumes more lifelike forms to our thought, when it is the home of those who have here been the life and joy of our household-circles. It is no longer the far-away, dimly conceived possibility that it may have been when our affections had little or no special property there; but the veil is at times withdrawn and never wholly replaced; luminous forms, the counterparts of those no longer with us in the body, pass in clear vision before us, and wonted voices cry, “Come up hither.” Our affections will not part with their treasure, but mount where the beloved have passed in, follow where they have gone before, and, in vivid hope, take possession where they had marked the way.

There is, also, a surviving influence of the pure and true, the devout and faithful, which remains with us when they go from us, and which time often only confirms and deepens. At first, the feeling is that they have wholly passed away,—that the voice which has been so blessedly efficient to counsel, comfort and gladden, is forever silent,—that for the presence withdrawn there is only utter and cheerless desolation. But, as we return to the ordinary routine of life, we find that the spirit of the departed is at our side. The accustomed voice pulses upon the inward ear. What the friend separated from us would have said, the well-known tone and style of sentiment, opinion and principle, the earnest preference in this direction, the strong disesteem in that,—all come vividly to our thought, and are, if possible, a more sacred law to us, because impressed by the solemn sanction of death and memory. An even, uniform, thoroughly disciplined character thus makes itself felt years and years after the seal of death has been stamped upon it, and an unseen guidance, restraint, support, help and comfort thus often complete and crown the earthly work of those who seem to have been taken before

their time, and to have left a large part of their work undone.

With these thoughts I cannot help connecting that of a still more intimate conversance between the dead and the living. Heaven may be a place, for aught we know to the contrary; but it is still more a state, and one of its prime elements must needs be an enlarged power of perception, cognizance and activity. It must be Heaven wherever the pure and happy spirit dwells, or moves, or stays. And must not the deathless love of those who go from us to the Lord keep them virtually with us, cognizant of what concerns our true well-being, watchful of our path, our trials and temptations, our success and progress? Were this wanting, would not Heaven be less than Heaven? Can Heaven have a greater joy than this, when surviving kindred remain in sympathy with the departed, and those on either side of the death-river move on with even step, on the same path, toward the same goal,—those on earth assured of the fellowship of their friends who have passed on; those in Heaven blending their prayer and praise with the uttered and the voiceless worship of those who have not yet put off the earthly tabernacle?

We know not how far God's spiritual administration may be, like his outward Providence, through agents or mediators. But if there be guardian and ministrant angels, hosts of God that encamp around us, messengers from him to the souls of men, who are so likely to stand in that office to us as those who, while they lived on earth, were as angels of God to us,—whose ministries for us were those of heavenly purity, faithfulness, and love? Thus may they, being dead, speak to us in breathings of peace, and strength, and joy,—in influences that energize and guide, comfort and gladden,—in messages from the Father to the souls which he has bound with them in a union too sacred to be suspended even by death.

Among the dead, who, by their faith and piety, still and ever speak, I know that your thoughts, as well as my own, have rested on one whom you have seldom, and I, till now, never missed from his accustomed seat in this sanctuary; in whose life we have seen the beauty of holiness, and whose example of Christian excellence death will, I trust, embalm in enduring life-likeness in the memory of all of us who revered and loved him. Though the eulogy of private merit is seldom becoming in

the pulpit, I know you would be unwilling that he should pass from you without special commemoration. Attached to this Church through an honored ancestry, who, for several successive generations, were worshippers and office-bearers here,—separated from your communion only during a few years of early manhood passed in a distant city,—bearing an important part in the several revisions of your liturgy,—loving your discipline and order of divine service as pre-eminently true to the teachings and spirit of our common Christian faith,—the cherished friend of all your pastors since your separation from the English Church,—he can have left none more intimately conversant, or more closely identified with your history.

I cannot speak at length of his pure taste, his generous culture, his high literary attainments, his skill and success as an author. These won for him distinguished praise and honor; and what he accomplished so admirably in his leisure hours might well awaken the regret that his ambition was not equal to his ability, or that scholarly pursuits had not been his business instead of his recreation.

But, in this sacred presence, I would rather remind you of those things in which we have seen in him the spirit of his Divine Master,—of his tender conscientiousness, his serenity and sweetness of temper, his heart-coined courtesy of mien and manner, his reverent love of God's Word and ordinances, his diffusive benevolence, manifested not only in gifts more than proportioned to his ability, but in look, and word, and deed, in protracted and self-denying endeavor, in every form and way in which he could make those around him happier and better. Faults he may have had; but who can name them? Have we known one who seemed more entirely blameless?—one of whom, as we look back on his finished course, we can say with a richer fulness of meaning, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright?"

Ever on the watch for, or, I would rather say, by the instinct of his religious consciousness ever spontaneously aware of, the opportunities of kindness, he made his daily intercourse a ministry of Christian love. His careful and considerate offices of friendship, in timely counsel and genial sympathy, have been unspeakably precious, not only to those who could proffer the title of kindred or established

intimacy, but to very many whose need was their only claim. There are those who owe all their success in life to his early encouragement, his advice and instruction at forming or critical periods of their career, his helping hand over steep and rough passages of their way. In his modesty, he loved to feel himself a debtor to his friends, that he might seem to be discharging, while conferring an obligation. So entirely had thought for the happiness of others become the pervading habit of his life, that on his death-bed one of his last inquiries was, who among his friends would be most gratified by the gift of some beautiful spring-flowers gathered by loving hands to be laid upon his pillow.

We cannot but recognize in him a rare combination of the amenities and graces which constitute that very highest style of man, the Christian gentleman. I use the word *gentleman*, because to my mind it bears even a sacred significance, and I would that it were employed to designate only that politeness—at once lofty and lowly, self-respecting and deferential, heart-felt and heart-meant, shaping look, word, tone, and manner from the inspiration of an all-embracing charity—which is derived from

communion with Him in whom gentleness in all human relations was the type and token of the incarnate Divinity. This Christian gentleness, this *urbanity* betokening a denizenship of the heavenly city, so characterized our friend, that one could hardly look upon his clear brow and transparent, benignant countenance, still less enter into even transient conversation with him, and not take knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus.

While we mourn his departure in the midst of his usefulness, we yet cannot but be thankful that he was called hence while his removal could be so sadly felt by so many hearts,—before the light of life had begun to grow dim, or its power to become enfeebled. We would not, God willing, that to a volume of life so fairly written, and rounded to so beautiful a close, there should have been a melancholy appendix of decline and infirmity. Above all, we are thankful in the assurance that for one who so made it “Christ to live,” it must have been “gain to die.” Brethren, let us be “followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

IN the death of Thomas Bulfinch ends, for this world, a beautiful, unpretending, consistent Christian life. With talents that might easily have made him distinguished, he was always modest and unambitious. With uncommon capacity for business, seeing clearly the means by which those about him became rich, and, for many years, within reach of a higher salary and opportunities of wealth, he preferred a moderate income, with leisure for thought and reading. Seemingly a solitary bachelor, he was always stretching out a helping paternal hand to young men, who had no claim upon him but that of a common humanity. For many hours of every day, occupied with the details of trade, his real day was given to study, to the highest poetry of the ancients and the moderns, and to the history of the thoughts and deeds of great men and heroes, not as an idle amusement, but that he might gather thence facts and principles for the guidance of the young to the more complete understanding of much of the best of English literature. Living in the world and with those occupied with worldly affairs, his favorite study was the Scriptures.

The life of such a man ought not to be suffered to be forgotten, or to be remembered by only a few intimate friends. It will be a pleasant duty, and it cannot be unprofitable, to trace some of the influences under which his character was formed; to inquire who were his ancestors, and what were the circumstances in which his earliest years were passed.

The facts of his life are given by himself, with his characteristic modesty, in the Class-book for his College Class of 1814, of which he was Secretary.

Thomas Bulfinch, son of Charles Bulfinch, (H.U. 1781,) was born on the 15th July, 1796, at Newton, Mass., where his parents were temporarily residing, their home being in Boston, in which city they and their progenitors had dwelt from almost the earliest settlement of the colony. He was fitted for College at the Boston Latin School, and at Exeter Academy.

After leaving College he served as Usher at the Boston Public Latin School, of which our brother Gould had been appointed Head Master, a few months before. Here he continued fourteen months, and by the process of teaching, deepened the impression of his College studies.

At this time, (1815,) the war with England came to a close, and the revival of trade in all its branches held out temptations to embark in what seemed to promise a speedy progress to competency and wealth. He yielded to the temptation, and went into the store of his elder brother, where he spent two years. In 1818, his father being appointed Architect of the Capitol, at Washington, he accompanied the family to that city, and there carried on business for six years. In 1825, he returned to Boston and formed a partnership with Joseph Coolidge, (H. U. 1817,) which terminated in 1832. For five years more he pursued the same occupation, but with poor success, and was well contented to accept a clerkship in the Merchants Bank of Boston, in 1837, which place he now holds.

His tastes had always been literary, which may in part account for his ill success in commerce. His occupation in the Bank allowed leisure, which he devoted to congenial pursuits.

He became Secretary of the Boston Society of Natural History, and for six years assiduously kept the records of its proceedings. This led to a certain degree of acquaintance with the Natural Sciences, and to the formation of valuable intimacies.

In 1850, accident led him to a comparison of the version of the Psalms used in the Prayer Book with more modern versions. He pursued the investigation, and, in 1853, published a small volume, entitled "Hebrew Lyrical History,—or Select Psalms, arranged in the order of the events to which they relate, with Introductions and Notes."

This work, though but little noticed by the public, yet, being commended by judicious friends, Mr. Bulfinch was encouraged to the further use of his pen; and in 1855 published "The Age of Fable," a compend of Mythology. This book was popular, and still holds its place in the bookstores.

A third work appeared in 1858. It was called "The Age of Chivalry," and attempted to do for the legends of the middle ages what the former work had done for those of Pagan antiquity. The stories of King Arthur and his knights were re-produced from old English literature, with selections and modifications required by modern taste. The sale of this work was also satisfactory.

The next of Mr. B's publications was entitled "The Boy Inventor," a memoir of Matthew Edwards, a youth

of humble station but of rare endowments, in whose career, arrested by an early death, Mr. B. took a warm interest.

So ends the notice in the Class-book.

“The Boy Inventor” appeared in 1860. The interest which Mr. Bulfinch took in the youth whose story he has here related, may be inferred from the facts that he had Matthew’s body buried in the family lot at Mt. Auburn, and directed that his own grave should be next to that of of this beloved pupil.

Nor was Matthew the only young man whom he aided in the endeavor to obtain an education. Two others are known, to whom his assistance has been scarcely less important, and there were several other less prominent instances.

His “Legends of Charlemagne” appeared in 1863; the beautiful collection called “Poetry of the Age of Fable,” in the same year; “Shakspeare adapted for Reading Classes,” in 1865; and “Oregon and Eldorado, or Romance of the Rivers,” in 1866.

At the time of his decease he had made some progress in the preparation of a work on the Heroes and Sages of Greece and Rome.

Our certain knowledge of the family of Mr. Bulfinch begins with Adino Bulfinch, a sail maker, by trade, and a successful man and an influential citizen. He was chosen Surveyor of Highways in Boston, in 1706, and again in 1708.

Thomas Bulfinch, his son, studied medicine in Paris, and returned, in 1722, to Boston, where he thenceforth resided

as a Physician. He married Judith Colman, daughter of John Colman, a distinguished merchant. Another of Colman's daughters married Peter Chardon. The houses built by the two bridegrooms stood, side by side, in what is now Bowdoin Square; Dr. Bulfinch's, where the Coolidge House now stands, and Mr. Chardon's, where the Baptist Church is, at the corner of Chardon Street.

Thomas Bulfinch, son of the preceding, studied medicine in Edinburgh, where he was an inmate of the family of Dr. Robertson, afterwards the historian, of about the same age, and his intimate companion. Dr. Bulfinch practiced, like his father, in Boston, and became distinguished as a physician. He married Susan, second daughter of Charles Apthorp, who was born in England, in 1698, came to this country, and was an eminent merchant, and paymaster and commissary of the British forces here. His monument is in King's Chapel. By his wife, Grizzell Eastwicke, he had a family of eighteen children.

Dr. Bulfinch held the office of Justice of the Peace, from the royal government, and afterwards from the republican. He took the liberal side in politics, but remained in Boston during the siege; and from the roof of his house in Bowdoin Square, his son Charles, then a boy, witnessed the battle of Bunker Hill. Dr. Bulfinch was Senior Warden of King's Chapel after the Revolution, and was influential in the settlement of Dr. Freeman, to whom, at his ordination, he delivered a Bible, bidding him make that the guide of his instructions.

Charles Bulfinch, son of Dr. Thomas B., and father of our lamented friend, was born August 8th, 1763. He

graduated at Harvard in 1781, then travelled in Europe, where he developed and cultivated a taste for architecture. On his return, he engaged in business, in partnership with Mr. Joseph Barrell: and they, with some others, organized the expedition of the ships Columbia and Washington to the North-west Coast, which resulted in the discovery of Columbia River, as related in the beginning of "Oregon and Eldorado."

Indulging his architectural taste, Charles Bulfinch gave plans for various buildings in Boston, among which, at an early period, were the State House, the Theatre, long since destroyed, and the Catholic Church in Franklin Street. There are still in the possession of the family, a gold medal, presented to him by the proprietors of the Theatre, and a silver urn, from the congregation of the Catholic Church, in acknowledgment of his plans, which, in these instances, appear to have been gratuitous. Besides his occupation as an architect, he was for many years Chairman of the Selectmen of Boston and Superintendent of Police.

The mother of Thomas Bulfinch was Hannah Apthorp, eldest daughter of John Apthorp and of Hannah Greenleaf Apthorp, who was daughter of Stephen Greenleaf, High Sheriff of Suffolk under the royal government. John Apthorp was son of Charles Apthorp, already spoken of. While Hannah Apthorp was still very young, her parents, intending to spend a winter at the South, for Mr. Apthorp's health, embarked for Charleston, S. C., on board a vessel which was never heard of more.

She and her sister Frances, afterwards Mrs. Charles Vaughan, and her infant brother, the late Colonel John

T. Apthorp, were brought up by their grandfather, Sheriff Greenleaf, a fine old gentleman, with some of the sternness and formality of the old school, but with all its integrity and firm principle too. He had spent his early life in the performance of every social and domestic virtue, and he devoted his old age to the education of his grandchildren. And never, perhaps, was children's education more faithfully attended to. The elevated character and tone of thought, and the pure and finished style both in prose and poetry, as well as the accomplishments, of the two granddaughters, show that nothing had been omitted. They dwelt in his house on Tremont Street, where the United States Court House now stands, and Mrs. Bulfinch remembered, in her old age, how she and the other children were sent, during the siege of Boston, to the North End, as a safer part of the town, for, as the British troops were encamped on the Common, that point was the especial mark of the American artillery.

She married her cousin, Charles Bulfinch, November 20th, 1788, and had eleven children, of whom seven attained maturity.

Mrs. Bulfinch is represented by all who remember her, and none who knew her can forget, as a noble woman, of delicate, native dignity, of the most refined and charming manners, with a sweet low voice which won and captivated all who approached her, especially children, and seemed to say, come, my child, if there is anything to grieve you, tell me, and let me help to remove it. It was impossible to resist her, and she went about as a ministering angel, softening all asperities and reconciling differences, a true peacemaker, persuading those to con-

tinue friends, who, but for her, might have ceased to be so. She was naturally a person of great vivacity and exuberance of spirits; but, before the birth of Thomas, these had been tempered in the discipline of Providence, by the loss of several children and of a large fortune, and only showed themselves in the liveliness, often brilliancy, of her conversation and of her letters. She sang very sweetly, and played upon the piano and upon the guitar with taste and skill. After the loss of her fortune, she went little into general society, but devoted herself, in a circle of dear and admiring friends, to the duties of her home, and especially to the happiness of her husband, and the "temporal and eternal interests of her children."

Mr. Bulfinch's father was a man of taste and liberal culture. Besides the office of Chairman of the Selectmen of Boston, which he held for twenty-one successive years, he was, for thirteen years, Architect of the Capitol at Washington. He was, in the latter part of his life, of very retired habits, and a great reader, but only of the choicest books.

Thomas Bulfinch entered Harvard College in 1810, and had a respectable rank in the class to which belonged the historian Prescott, Rev. Drs. Greenwood and Lamson, Judge Merrick, and other distinguished men, several of whom are still living. One who knew him well and who is a nice judge of character, says of him, "In college, as ever afterwards, he was one of the gentlest, kindest, purest men I ever knew; indeed, I am inclined to think, absolutely the most so. This was partly owing, I suppose, to his happy natural constitution, which made all excesses

and irregularities as offensive to his taste as to his conscience.

“Such being the character of our friend, you will not need to be informed that he took no part in college dissipations or disorders. His rank in the class as a scholar was very respectable; and would have been higher, if his ingrained modesty had permitted him to assert it. The branches in which he excelled were classical learning and English literature,—branches which he continued to cultivate to the end of his life, and in which he had few superiors.”

The President of the College at that time was Dr. Kirkland. Two of the professors were the fine Latin scholar Levi Frisbie, and the admirable, unsurpassed lecturer John Farrar, the latter of whom always entertained an affection and a high regard for Mr. Bulfinch. These were men of genius; very unlike, but all of enlarged views, of warm and genial feelings, of high and generous character, of courteous manners. Who shall measure the influence of such men upon susceptible natures in the forming period of youth?

Just before the class left College, in 1816, one of their number, Benjamin Apthorp Gould, a most respectable scholar, was chosen Master of the Latin School in Boston. This appointment was an event of great moment, not only to the prosperity of that school, but to the advance of classical learning throughout New England. The standard immediately rose in the school, not only of scholarship, but, what is far more important, of good manners, manliness and moral excellence. To this change Mr. Gould largely contributed by his own pure and

elevated qualities as a man, and his high character as a gentleman.

And he found a fit associate in Mr. Bulfinch, one of whose pupils in that school has still a clear remembrance of his gentleness and fidelity, and of feeling himself drawn towards learning and excellence by his winning manners. Mr. Bulfinch continued to have a remarkable aptness to teach and fondness for teaching, and was, probably always, certainly in the latter part of his life, very successful as a teacher, as he showed in several instances, by aiding gratuitously and most efficiently the efforts of deserving young men. His patience, his skill in the use of language, the consequent clearness of his explanations, his extensive knowledge, and, above all, his sincere and disinterested kindness, never failed to attract and interest his pupils. If he had devoted his life to this vocation, there can be little doubt that he would have had distinguished success.

While Mr. Bulfinch was usher in the Latin School, Edward Everett, who had just been appointed professor of Greek literature at Cambridge, set sail for Europe, on his visit to Greece. On his departure, Mr. Bulfinch addressed to him, in the measures and spirit of Horace, a Latin Ode, which may be taken as a fair specimen of his classical scholarship. The translation, in the note, discloses its parentage by the initials attached to it.

AD E. E. PER GRECIAM ITER FACIENTEM.

O tu, beatæ sortis et ardæ,
 Qui nunc fugaces persequeris choros,
 Per prata, per valles Achivas,
 Pieridum, timidæque Nymphas!

Quo veris errans? Threiciis jugis
 Visas opacis robora frondibus,
 Ornosve, quæ chordæ sequaces
 (Eagrii saluere vatis!

Aut fontis oram Castalii premis,
 Haurire tentans, nec vetitâ manu,
 Undas sacratas; et Camenis
 De proprio velut annæ libans?

Lustrasve Athenis inelyta Palladis
 Delubra, sanctos aut Academiæ
 Lucos pererras, et Platonis
 Grandiloqui venerare sedes?

Quocunque cursum, per tumidum mare
 Per grata Musis litora, per juga,
 Flectas, memento Patriæ, nam
 Te proenl, atque domi, tuctur.*

*TO E. E., TRAVELLING IN GREECE.

O thou of arduous lot and fair,
 Whose step through Grecian vale pursues
 The graceful phantoms wandering there,
 The timid Nymph, the fleeting Muse,—

Where turn'st thou? Seeking to explore
 On Thracian hills the oak trees' shade,
 Or ashén groves, that moved of yore
 As the high strains of Orpheus bade?

Or by the fount of Castaly,
 With hand whose right the Muses gave,
 Drinking and pouring gratefully
 Libations from their own bright wave?

Or wandering where Ilissus' stream
 Murmurs by Pallas' shrine of fame,
 Kneel'st thou in bowers of Academe,
 Invoking Plato's mighty name?

In valleys to the Muses dear,
 On mountain height or swelling sea,
 Think of thy land, for, far or near,
 With looks of love she follows thee!

[Translated by S. G. B.]

Of the occupations of his leisure hours, through his many years of mercantile life in Boston and Washington, we know only from conjecture. The familiarity he shows, in his published works, with history and with Latin, Italian, and English literature, indicates clearly enough what they must often have been.

We know that he was always devoted to his friends; and an affectionate, faithful, and dutiful son. During the declining years of his parents, he resided constantly with them, refused offers of emolument which would have separated him from them, and in his tender reverence, almost filled to them the place of the daughter they had lost. He was a loving brother, unwearied in his attentions to any one of his family in distress or laboring under disease, and constantly and in every way thoughtful and kind. He was always mindful of the poor, and most liberal in his charities, both of time and money.

Indeed his peculiar and distinguishing virtue was a gentle benevolence, an affectionate interest in others—friends or strangers, especially in such as he could effectually aid. Hence his life was never unfruitful; when he was living most for himself it was when preparing to live better for others. He had a most catholic spirit; though strongly attached, by education and by habit, to the orthodoxy of a Church Liturgy, he had unbounded charity for those who differed from him, either in believing more or in holding to less.

One of those who knew him most intimately, says—
“The generous feelings of Mr. Bulfinch and his warm sympathy with the oppressed, made him deeply interested in the Anti-slavery movement, in its early period of diffi-

culty and discouragement. Afterwards, his gentle spirit turned gradually from the discussions that ensued, to the quiet literary pursuits that he loved so well. Not long since, when a friend asked him why he did not join in the triumphs of the party of which he was an early member, he replied, 'I stood by Mr. Garrison when it was dangerous to a man's social position to be seen in his company. Now, he has friends enough, and does not need me.'"

The manners of Mr. Bulfinch were natural and unassuming, uniting the urbanity which comes from daily intercourse with men of the world, from all countries and of all pursuits, with the refinement which belongs to those of gentle birth, and the delicacy which, even in the roughest natures, springs from high and pure thoughts and elevating studies, and especially from a familiarity with the best literature of ancient and modern nations. Whoever has carefully observed young men gathered together in large numbers from all walks of life, and all parts of a great country, and living in intimate intercourse with each other and with the gentlemen and scholars who sometimes have, and always should have, charge of their discipline and instruction, will recognize this truth,—will remember the beautiful change which shows itself in their language, and which gradually comes over their countenance, their movements, their manners, and their whole bearing. This is the most important effect of a public education; and a most essential element in the agencies which produce it is the character and manners of the teachers, showing that it is even more important that they should be gentlemen than that they should be distinguished scholars. How

many young men, who fail of attaining scholarship, are elevated, refined and made gentlemen by these influences of a truly liberal education.

In reference to Mr. Bulfinch's first printed work, "Hebrew Lyrical History," he says, in a letter to a friend, "In order to do justice to the investigation, I studied German, and imported several volumes of the critics of that language, that I might have the benefit of their aid. I was careful to keep my learning out of sight, and not one word of any foreign language deforms my page."

Mr. Bulfinch seems to have taken his first idea of his works upon Mythology from a sentence of Burke, which he liked to quote: "The Grecian Mythology is so intimately connected with the works of the greatest poets, that it will continue to be interesting as long as classical poetry exists, and must form an indispensable part of the education of the man of literature and of the gentleman." The plan which came from this suggestion was enlarged so as to include the poetic fables of the Middle Ages, for Italy, France, the British Islands, and the North of Europe. His object shall be stated in his own words.

In the preface to the *Age of Fable*, he says—

"If that which tends to make us happier and better can be called useful, then we claim that epithet for our subject. For Mythology is the handmaid to literature; and literature is one of the best allies of virtue and promoters of happiness. * * * * *

"Without a knowledge of mythology much of the elegant literature of our own language cannot be understood and appreciated. * * *

"But how is mythology to be taught to one who does not learn it through the medium of the languages of Greece and Rome?

“Our book is an attempt to solve this problem, by telling the stories of mythology in such a manner as to make them a source of amusement. We have endeavored to tell them correctly, according to the ancient authorities, so that when the reader finds them referred to he may not be at a loss to recognize the reference. Thus we hope to teach mythology not as a study, but as a relaxation from study; to give our work the charm of a story-book, yet, by means of it, to impart a knowledge of an important branch of education. * * * * *

“It is not for the learned, nor for the theologian, nor for the philosopher, but for the reader of English literature, of either sex, who wishes to comprehend the allusions so frequently made by public speakers, lecturers, essayists, and poets, and those which occur in polite conversation.”

In the preface to the *Age of Chivalry*, the author says,

“It is believed that this presentation of a literature which held unrivalled sway over the imaginations of our ancestors, for many centuries, will not be without benefit to the reader, in addition to the amusement it may afford. The tales, though not to be trusted for their facts, are worthy of all credit as pictures of manners; and it is beginning to be held that the manners and modes of thinking of an age are a more important part of its history than the conflicts of its peoples, generally leading to no result. Besides this, the literature of romance is a treasure-house of poetical material, to which modern poets frequently resort.”

In the *Legends of Charlemagne*, he adds,—

“Besides the education which schools and colleges impart, there is still another kind necessary to completeness. It is that which has for its object a knowledge of polite literature. In the intercourse of polished society a young person will more frequently need an acquaintance with the creations of fancy than with the discoveries of science or the speculations of philosophy.

“In an age when intellectual darkness enveloped Western Europe, a constellation of brilliant writers arose in Italy. Of these, Pulci, Boiardo, and Ariosto took for their subjects the romantic fables which had for many ages been transmitted in the lays of bards and the legends of monkish chroniclers. These fables they arranged in order, adorned with the embellishments of fancy, amplified from their own invention, and stamped with immortality. It may safely be asserted, that as long as civilization shall endure, these productions will retain their place among the most cherished creations of human genius.

“This volume is intended to carry out the same design as the two preceding works. Like them it aspires to a higher character than that of a work of mere amusement. It claims to be useful, in acquainting its readers with the subjects of the works of the great poets of Italy. Some knowledge of these is expected of every well-educated young person.”

The design of the author is very faithfully and very successfully carried out. In the introductions and prefaces he gives enough of the true history to prevent the reader from mistaking the fancies of the poets for the literal truth of facts. With the highest purpose and the purest and most delicate taste he instructs and amuses without for a moment misleading. And he writes in a style true to his own character, and in clear, transparent, beautiful English.

These books have deservedly become classics, and every library for young persons would be very deficient without them. In the *Age of Fable*, particularly, the author has done a thing which has often been attempted, and never before so satisfactorily performed. He has gathered from the dangerous mythology of the Greeks and Romans, with discriminate and tasteful selection, that and that only which every well educated person ought to know.

Mr. Bulfinch kept on his laborious, useful course to the end. He sometimes talked of resigning his place in the bank, not from indolence or weariness, but that he might have more time for his friends and for study, and lest he should be found doing ill the work he was scrupulously resolved to do faithfully.

Looking back upon the events which preceded his birth, we may learn one of the lessons that Heaven is still teaching us. The loss of their wealth seemed to his parents a misfortune, and was felt as such. But, without that loss, would his mother have become so single-hearted and saint-like? Would Thomas have been, in mind and

in spirit, so well and so highly educated? Would he have become the patient, diligent, thoughtful student that he was, so full of feeling for the trials and hardships of others, so sympathetic, so ready to aid and so capable of aiding?

It was happy for him, it is happy for us that he continued, to the last, in the entire and cheerful possession of all his faculties; with no wandering, no weakness, no melancholy, no estrangement, no forgetfulness; genial to his friends, kind and gracious to all.

Our last remembrance of him is as pleasant as the pleasantest. To us, and to all, he was, to the end, a true man, a Christian gentleman.

The following touching lines are by a member of Mr. Bulfinch's class, at the "Christian Union," of which their writer has a grateful remembrance. He attended the funeral and conveys in these verses his impressions of the scene.

THOMAS BULFINCH.

A TRIBUTE.

BY CHARLES WILLIAM BUTLER.

This is not death. 'Tis pleasant sleep.
O why should we who love him weep?
This frame may sink back to the sod,
The soul has risen to its God!

How beautiful these features are!
And radiant as some morning star,
That from the east its light has shed
To tell the gloom of night has fled!

How beautiful his life has been,—
So free from touch and deed of sin;
How beautiful the soul-lit smile
That lingers on these lips the while!

How beautiful his presence seemed,
The true ideal we have dreamed
A human life perchance might be,
Though tossed on Time's tempestuous sea.

How fitting are these hymns and prayers,
That speak his rest from mortal cares;
For he has passed the valley dim,
And sung, ere this, the triumph hymn.

One look,—the last we give him here;
Yet in the spirits' gathering sphere,
In worlds where not one dear life dies,
Our risen friend shall meet our eyes!

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