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THE GENTLEMAN

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THE GENTLEMAN

By GEORGE H. CALVERT

BOSTON
TICKNOR AND FIELDS
1863

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THE GENTLEMAN.

I.

Introductory — Etymological — Prelusive.

THE word gentleman recurs four hundred and fifty-two times in Shakspeare, — an iteration which proves broad acknowledgment in that day of the thing signified. For every ten utterances, through type or speech, of this magnetic word in the sixteenth century, there are ten thousand in the nineteenth. During these three centuries, it has spread over new continents, with the prolific expansive British race, its growth outstripping a hundred-fold even that of population. Whoso should happen to pass through the Five Points in New York, or the Seven Dials in London, at the moment of an auction, would hear the watchful orator of the assemblage offer the appellative, " gentlemen," to his ragged auditors, not more glibly than by them it would be accepted.

Let no bedressed, bescented passer curl his lip at this impudent theft of an epithet claimed as property of his favored few. On the part of the auctioneer there is no theft: on the part of the scornful passer there may be usurpation. The auctioneer necessarily, unconsciously, speaks under sway of the advanced sentiment, which recognizes that within every Christian heart live the germs of that high Ideal, the manifestation of which in moving, incorporate reality receives the choice name of *gentleman*. The universal giving and accepting of this name is a homage to the beauty of what the name represents,—an aspiration, however remote and modest, for the possession of the refined substance.

Among the passages in old English authors, cited by Richardson, to illustrate his definition of gentleman, is the following from Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland:*—"If he can derive himself from any sept, (as most of them can, they are so expert by their bardes,) then he holdeth himself a gentleman, and therefore scorneth to worke, or use any harde laboure, which, he saith, is the life of a peasant or churle; but thenceforth becometh either an horseboy or a stocah (attendant) to some kerne, inuring himself to his weapon, and to the gentlemanly trade of stealing,—as they count it." A little scrutiny discovers in this sentence more than meets the eye, matter apt to our purpose.

In the first place, the need of derivation from a sept or clan, as the foundation of gentlemanhood, wafts us up to the far etymological nest of a brood of well-plumed vocables, namely, to the Latin word *gens*, which primitively meant stem, stock, being more comprehensive than *familia*, family. Thus the *gens Cornelia* embraced several great families, those of the Scipios, the Lentuli, and others. To belong to a *gens* was a high distinction, an ennoblement. So Horace calls *ignobilis*, one who could claim no affinity with these stocks, *homo sine gente*, a man without stem. So significant of rank did the word *gens* become, that not only was it used by the Romans to designate their two classes of Patricians, but likewise their two classes of gods, the one being *Dii majorum gentium*, the other *Dii minorum gentium*. From such remote source spring the melodious modern words, *gentile* and *gentiluomo* in Italian, *gentil* and *gentilhombre* in Spanish, *gentil* and *gentilhomme* in French, *gentle* and *gentleman* in English.

So much for etymology. Let us return to the Spenserian passage. "If he can derive himself from any sept, (which corresponds to the Latin *gens*,) then he holdeth himself a gentleman." With the modern Europeans, and their American off-shoots, as with the ancient Romans, high public service conferring social rank, a man whose preëminence above his contemporaries makes him historically illustrious, sheds part of his lustre, and transmits his well-won position to his descendants; and they hold this position, often for centuries, through the right of inherited possession, through the culture acquired by association from birth with the more privileged and refined, and at times through the exhibition of some of the qualities which elevated the founder, high mental qualities, as well as low, being transmissible through the blood.

But now comes into play the law of compensation,—that law so terrible and so just; and the inheritors, exposed — in addition to the ordinary fallibilities of human nature, — to the temptations peculiar to all advantages that have not been self-earned, become often the victims of good fortune, and lapse languidly back into the undistinguished crowd out of which their original creative progenitor had by native energy lifted himself; so that a Duke of Norfolk who, towards the end of the last century, wished to celebrate with a great family-gathering the third centennial anniversary of the date of his Dukedom, finding not only that he had several thousand poor relations, but that some of them had to be picked out of ditches, and from even lower places, gave up his proud purpose, disgusted at the degeneracy and the numerousness of his kin.

Taking up again the passage from Spenser, the next link we find to be, — "And therefore scorneth to worke or use any harde laboure, which he saith is the life of a peasant or churle." Partly from the freedom implied in the non-necessity of work, dispensing, as that freedom does, leisure for mental husbandry; partly from the fact, that daily agricultural and mechanical labor, as commonly practised, starves the larger faculties, monopolizing for the smaller the brain's activity, and thus tends to keep the mind ignorant and the habits coarse; the notion that gentlemanhood and work are antagonistic is so deeply rooted, that even at the present day, and in our own country, you will hear men talk of leaving off work and turning gentlemen. In Continental Europe, only such work as is required in the higher offices of State and Church is deemed consistent with the dignity of a gentleman; and even in industrious, commercial England, a merchant is not admitted at Court.

In Europe, from the over-worked, stinted, still semi-servile peasantry, up to the sovereign, there is a graduated ascent. The peasant is looked down upon by the journeyman-mechanic; the latter stands similarly lowered in the eyes of a tradesman, who throws an upward regard on the merchant from whom he buys. But we need not wander to Europe; we have the same gradation, notwithstanding that through the priceless possession of political equality we are all lifted to one high common level of manhood. Observe that the principle of this gradation is the comparatively higher intellectuality and the wider comprehensiveness compassed on each ascended step. The field-laborer's work is simple and monotonous and feebly intellectual, and is done under direction. To buy and sell by the yard needs less thought and reach of combination than to buy and sell by the cargo. Some mechanic processes are more subtile than others. What we term the "liberal professions," are so termed on account of the amount and kind of acquirement, the variety of knowledge, and the intellectual discipline that are pre-requisites to entrance into them. The scorn, therefore, of

Spenser's Irish loafer, in addition to the laziness characteristic of a loafer, may be regarded as representing a mingled feeling of distaste to brutalizing servile labor, and of aspiration for the freedom which other conditions promise.

But not only he scorneth to work, "but thenceforth becometh either an horseboy or a stocah (attendant) to some kerne, (Irish foot-soldier,) inuring himself to his weapon, and to the gentlemanly trade of stealing, — as they count it." In those contentious sword-and-buckler days, when roads were few and bad, and constables inadequate, an Irish horseboy had privileges and perquisites not enjoyed by his successors; and that foot-soldiers had attendants seems to imply a light, marauding life, where opportunities were good for dining without earning a dinner. You observe that this *gentleman* founds his vocation upon his blood; for it was only when he, by a fanciful amplification of finest filaments into tough cords, could bind himself to an old family, that he felt entitled to scorn work and betake him "to the gentlemanly trade of stealing."

Nor should we be too hard upon this terraqueous buccaneer, this ancient Hibernian Bedouin, who imagined himself a gentleman. The civilized nineteenth century engenders imaginations not less bewrayed. Nor need we cross the Atlantic to find his present counterpart in higher strata of the social crust, — in individuals who, within the pale of the statute and without violent infraction of the usages of trade, do virtually steal, or suck and grind the poor, or blow attainting breath on female purity, or, under the ægis of legal forms, defraud justice of her dues; and who, nevertheless, are met in the circles of fashion, and pass there for gentlemen. Since Spenser's day, many forward and upward steps have been made; but still palpable in the social as in other provinces of life is the usurpation of form over substance, of appearance over reality, of sight over insight, of seem over be.

In our endeavor to thrust aside some of the veils that obscure our subject, to cleanse it of the cheap varnish that defaces a solid, brilliant ground, let us go back for a few moments more to the learned, invaluable Richardson, who, with his searching exhaustive industry, under the head of *gent* and its derivatives, gives more than eighty citations out of English authors, from Robert of Glocester and Piers Plowman to Gray and Gibbon. Roger Ascham, a generation further from us than Spenser, noted for his acquirements, the valued tutor of Queen Elizabeth, says in his *Schole Master*,—"Some in France, which will needs be jentlemen, whether men will or no, and have more jentleshippe in their hat than their head, be at deadlie feude with both learning and honestie." Haberdashery and patent-leather, in and out of France, are formidable adjuncts to much of modern "jentleshippe;" and a fair relation of the part played by velvet and satin in the social history of Christendom were a sprightly satire. Clothes have ever striven to symbolize gentlemanhood; and how well they have succeeded and continue to succeed, we have a gross example in the triumphant hypocrisy of the costly, super-fashionable dressing of the managers and decoys of luxurious gambling-halls, and of the better class of pickpockets. The chief tailor of Antwerp, — a man zealous and accomplished in his craft, — once said to me, complaining of a wealthy customer, — and he spoke with earnestness and sympathy, —" Mr. —— does not do himself justice; that last froc I made him is threadbare; and you know, sir, a gentleman is known by his clothes." A somewhat hyper-professional magnification of tailorship. But the shrewd, lively man perhaps felt, that the "jentleshippe" of many of his well-born customers did not lie so subterrenely deep, but that it might be largely aided by the virtue there was in the laying on of his proficient hands; and in his pride of calling was ready to declare, with a wider application than Polonius, — "The apparel oft proclaims the man."

One more citation from Richardson, drawn out of still deeper recesses of the past, from the very well-head of English poetry, — a brief sentence, fraught with that homely wisdom which has so much helped to keep the name of Chaucer fresh for five centuries. It is from *The Persone's* (*Parson's*) *Tale*: — "Also to have pride of gentrie is right gret folie; for ofttime the gentrie of the bodie benimeth (taketh away) the gentrie of the soule; and also we ben all of one fader and one moder." I am tempted to add other four lines of Chaucer, from *The Clerke's Tale*, not quoted by Richardson: —

> "For God it wot, that children often ben
> Unlike hir worthy eldres hem before:
> Bountee cometh al of God, not of the stren
> Of which they ben ygendred and ybore."

II.

Bayard — Sidney — Moral Freedom — Æsthetic Element.

BUT now, leaving sententious judgments and the abstract brevities of definition, let us, in our endeavor to comprehend gentlemanhood, confront it concretely, and bring before our minds the two foremost gentlemen of Christendom, — the Chevalier Bayard and Sir Philip Sidney. The lives and characters of these two, — even briefly sketched as they must be here, — by presenting in fullest actuality the moving, speaking gentleman, will help us to deduce what is his interior, essential nature.

And first, as coming first in time, the "Good Knight, without fear and without reproach." Born in the South of France, towards the end of the fifteenth century, when Chivalry still survived in its forms and usages, from which had died out the Christian spirit, when gross [illegible] virtues of a true knight, true [illegible], true honor is loyalty - loyalty to his sovereign to his peers & his lady

living and rapaciousness and perfidy were characteristics of knights and nobles and sovereigns, the Chevalier Bayard, by the splendor and the uninfected purity of his nature, shone amid the corruptions and affectations of decay, an example of loyalty, of self-sacrifice, of generosity, of unclouded honor, of romantic courage, that in the healthiest days of Chivalry would have made him, amid the noblest and most chivalrous, a model of knighthood. So uniquely towering was his fame, that high-spirited adversaries, who in their extremity would have died rather than yield them, were proud to drop the point of their swords, as from behind the opponent's closed vizor they heard the name of Bayard.

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When the French had taken Brescia, in Lombardy, and he lay for several weeks wounded in the house of a wealthy citizen, who had fled, he refused the large customary ransom which the wife brought him, as he was about to depart, and, sending for her two daughters, divided the sum between them. On another occasion, after sternly rebuking a base, impoverished mother, who would have sold him her child, he gave the daughter a portion that enabled her to espouse her lover. Having, by a shrewd, bold movement, captured from the enemy fifteen thousand gold ducats, he bestowed one half of them on his Lieutenant, — thereby enriching him, — and divided the other half among his followers. Nor was this an isolated act of munificence. It was his habit, not only to share his purse with his friends, but to give away the many sums that came to him in presents and prizes. And while he was as affable as he was brave, he was as just as he was liberal. Gifted in rare measure with the sterling qualities for command, he was cheerful in obedience to superiors. Never subject to the ignoble gnawings of envy, he enjoyed as he did his own the triumphs of companions. Many contemporary knights were *sans peur;* he alone was *sans reproche.* So true and great was the soul of Bayard, that the noblest and purest grow nobler and purer in the glow of its perpetual light.

"Un Chevalier sans peur et
sans reproche"

About eighty years later than Bayard, was born his English competitor, Sir Philip Sidney, one of the glories of the resplendent reign of Queen Elizabeth,—a power, although so short-lived, among the potencies that bear the immortal names of Shakspeare, of Bacon, of Raleigh, of Spenser, of Howard, of Drake, of Ben Jonson. Precocious, like Bayard,—who, dying on the field of battle at forty-eight, was thirty-four years a soldier,—Sidney, born in an epoch of general and deep intellectual ferment, at the age when Bayard donned armor, entered, the classmate of Raleigh and Spenser, the University of Oxford, where his young mind, at once quick and capacious, fed on every kind of knowledge, and sought preëminence in whatever is attainable by genius and labor. On quitting Oxford, at eighteen, he set out in a brilliant company on a tour of travel, going first to Paris, where his bearing and conversation fascinated the King, Charles IX., and the young King of Navarre, afterwards Henry IV. From France he journeyed through Germany to Italy, consorting with the most learned and accomplished of those countries. At Padua he made acquaintance with the renowned poet, Tasso; and Scipio Gentilis, a famous scholar of Italy, inscribed to him a Latin translation of Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered.* Later, Hakluyt and the learned Lipsius dedicated works to him in terms of cordial eulogium. On his return to England, he became the delight of the English Court, to which, says Fuller, "He was so essential, that it seemed maimed without his company, being a complete master of matter and language." Queen Elizabeth called him her Philip. The following year, although only twenty-two, he went ambassador to Germany and Poland, acquitting himself so well as to draw high praise even from the severe, exacting Burleigh. Among his friends and admirers was the great Prince of Orange; and Don John of Austria, though hating all heretics, was won by his manners and attainments. For a time he represented his native county in Parliament; and, finally, in 1586, he joined his uncle, the Earl of Leicester, in a campaign in the Netherlands as General of Horse; and here, at the battle of Zutphen, when only thirty-two, he fell, mortally wounded.

For so brief a career, one externally more brilliant was never run by a candidate for fame. When in years not much more than a boy, he had given evidence of the thoughtfulness and address of a statesman; his writings prove him to have been not only a scholar of rare and varied culture, but a poet of genius; and the field of Zutphen showed the budding of a brilliant military renown. At his death, lamentation went up over Europe, as for the loss of one who was among the leaders and ornaments of the world.

The accomplishments and acquirements of Sidney, his manners and conversation, his genius and his personal beauty, are still not sufficient to account for the universal fascination, as well of the purest as of the most accomplished, and for the general so cordial grief at his death. To justify the love and the homage he inspired, he must have been even richer in qualities of heart than in intellectual powers and attainments, richer in graces than in gifts. And that he was so, his last act on the day he received his death-wound testifies, revealing the deep beauty of his nature, and throwing round his whole being a saintly halo. And that renowned act was worthily ushered in by another, which represents the buoyant pulse and generous courage of youthful life, as the final one does the holy loveliness of self-denial while life was fast ebbing. For, as he came upon the field, seeing the veteran Lord Marshal, Sir William Pelham, lightly armed, with a chivalrous shame that he, a young knight, should be so much better protected, he threw off his cuishes; and it was to this, what we may term, generous deference to age, and noble self-regardlessness, that he owed his wound; for, fighting with a gallantry that drew plaudits from the foe, he was hit in the thigh by a musket-ball. As he was borne from the field, he asked for water, to quench the raging thirst caused by such a wound; but, as he lifted the cup to his lips, observing by the road-side a dying soldier, who threw up at it a ghastly, wishful look, he handed the cup back to his attendant to give it to the soldier, saying, "This man's necessity is even greater than mine."

These two renowned knights illuminate history, as the representatives of gentlemanhood, — the most approved gentlemen of Christendom; and that high station they hold, through strength and purity of soul and gentleness of bearing. Only from an ever-lively, inward fount of generous ascendant feeling could have flowed in both such simple grandeur of conduct married to such radiance of demeanor.

The power that raised them to preëminence, that gave a daily beauty to their lives, — a beauty that made itself felt, — was, and could be nought other than unselfishness. In both there was an active, despotic self-forgetfulness. In them so large and manly was the soul, that it gave to their keen energies a beneficent drift. Without effort, almost without purpose, they were generous, compassionate, magnanimous, true, and outwardly affable. Such high qualities, so richly mingled, imply obliteration of the *me*, and im-

port that clear moral freedom whose robust atmosphere is the very breath of the highest type of gentlemanhood, — a freedom which, imparting spiritual self-possession, imparts a force greater even than virtuous self-control; for this constrains and sometimes stiffens, while that, conferring easy, buoyant dominion, holds A
the whole being so in poise that all acts have the grace and dignity of unconscious excellence, — a high-born excellence that cannot be counterfeited, and must issue from a deep, central motion, which has an impetus as resistless as that of the subterranean feeders of a copious, transparent spring.

Such men justify, while they illustrate, ideal embodiments. Had they and the like of them never lived, the narrative that is now a veracious biography would to most men seem an unnatural fiction. They are mirrors of humanity, which show man, not as he is daily encountered, but magnified, beautified, transfigured. And yet, being flesh-and-blood mortals, they are practical exemplars, breathing A
proofs, of what moral and mannerly heights men can attain to.

It may seem that I am overstating the moral element, and that the gentleman is rather an æsthetic than an ethic personage. It is this moral element which, in my conception of the gentleman, is pivotal. Dealing now with the highest type, I conceive, that in that type not only are morals primary, but that manners result from them; so that, where there is not a solid substratum of pure, elevated feeling, there will not, there cannot be a clean, high, unaffected demeanor. Had Bayard, with the fifteen thousand captured ducats, bought for himself a chateau and estate, reserving the ransom offered by the Brescian matron as a wherewith to furnish it, Fame would not have blazoned to the latest time a French soldier with the unique eulogium,—"The Good Knight, without fear and without reproach." The heart that was so large and gracious as to command his acts of sublime disinterestedness, shaped, with its profuse, inexhaustible warmth, his outward bearing into kindliness and sympathetic tenderness, as surely as the healthful play of sound, internal organs sends to the skin and to the cheek its glistening glow, its captivating bloom.

But the æsthetic element, if not primary in the gentleman of the highest type, is essential to him, and is of such significance in gentlemanhood, that in that of any type below the highest it becomes predominant, as will hereafter be seen. We learn from their record that both Bayard and Sidney were imbued with its spirit. Sidney was a poet with his pen, and Bayard, had his education been liberal, might have been one, too; for the lives of both were poetry in action. History would not have gloried in them as she does, we should not be busied with them now, had they not carried in their breasts that eager, insatiate longing for the better, which, being a flame that heats the feelings into their widest swing, lifts purity into grandeur, goodness into magnanimity, truth into heroism, faith into martyrdom.

Through a scrutiny of these two protagonists of gentlemanhood, we get an insight which justifies already certain positions, positive and negative. The gentleman is built from within outward: for the thorough building there must lie ready stores of largeness and bounteousness: a man of small soul can only be a gentleman in a superficial sense: whatever station he may inherit, with whatever varnish of manners he may glisten, against one intensely selfish, gentlemanhood is closed: the genuine gentleman must possess a good degree of moral freedom; for only this can furnish the illumination to lead the footsteps up from the dark ways of the petty self: the gentleman robes manliness in courtesy.

Sidney and Bayard, standing emblazoned on high, historic pedestals, are enlarged by the dusk of distance. Champions of an age which the imagination has permanently colored with beauties and grandeurs and marvels, they wear an ideal magnificence, and assume to our eyes heroic stature. For the gold-grasping, steam-driven nineteenth century they may seem not to be available exemplars. But the best there is in life looks always impracticable until performed; and even then its proportions are not completely appropriated by witnessing contemporaries; and only when time has removed it, do later generations acknowledge its dues, investing it at last with entire glory, and sometimes with lineaments mythological. In the great acts that issue freshly out of what is noblest in our nature, there is an infiniteness of good, a boundlessness of power, which need the imaginative vision fully to compass and even to behold. Nor can the imagination, creative as it is, forerun or anticipate them. A moment before the act of handing the cup to the dying soldier, not a by-stander could have predicted it,—it was as yet a latent ideal. The moment after, it was a lesson to humanity for all time, — a sudden flame blazing forth from the divine there is in man, and destined forever to attest and to warm that indwelling divinity.

III.

Charles Lamb — George IV. — Princes.

LET us not be too diffident to believe that, wearing other costumes, wielding other weapons, there are still Bayards and Sidneys around us. To nourish this belief, we will recall the living days of one, who, if not quite of our generation, is, through his contemporaneous biographers, as minutely known as our familiar companions, whose life, in its daily, superficial struggles and labors, was as commonplace and homely as that of the dullest of his plodding neighbors; and in whom there was such rare capacity of heroism and tenderness and beauty, that his character, still more than even his exquisite writings, is an abiding joy and fortification to all, whose souls have any affinity with self-devotion, any susceptivity to refinement.

Charles Lamb, born in London in 1775, was the son of a servant, who, during an almost lifelong service, so won the esteem and affection of his employer, Mr. Salt, a bencher of the Inner Temple, that this gentleman obtained for his son Charles a presentation to Christ's Hospital, — a high, richly-endowed Charity-School, founded by Edward VI. Here, the associate of Coleridge, Lamb remained from his eighth to his fifteenth year. At seventeen he obtained a subordinate clerkship, with slender salary, in the East India House, where he continued, rising in rank and pay, until his fiftieth year, when he was allowed to retire on a liberal pension, which he enjoyed for ten years, and of which, by another act of liberality on the part of the Directors of the East India Company, his sister had the benefit, they according to her after his death the portion that would have been due to a wife.

Literature was the delight of Lamb, and his solace. Reading the best old books and consorting with great new poets, his delicate sensibility and subtle intellect were so cultivated, that, notwithstanding his six daily hours of enchainment to the "dead desk," he made an enduring addition to English Literature in the celebrated *Essays of Elia.* The comrade and correspondent of many of the choice spirits that gave renown, and will give its best immortality, to the brilliant era ushered into England by the nineteenth century, his "Wednesday Evenings" were frequented by Coleridge, Leigh Hunt, Godwin, Charles Kemble, Hazlitt, Wordsworth, De Quincey, Liston, Proctor, Talfourd. Among his intimate personal friends were Wordsworth and Coleridge, Hazlitt and Talfourd.

We have thus two aspects of Lamb's life: the prosaic and the poetic; his daily necessary, — what the Germans would call bread-work, — and his luxurious, intellectual, creative work. The third and deeper life-current, the domestic and moral, in Lamb's case not only mingled with, modifying and modified by, the others, but by its purity and momentum, gave to his being its marked and lofty individuality. From the time of leaving Christ's Hospital he lived with his parents and sister in lodgings near Holborn. When he was twenty-one there fell on him and his a fearful calamity, on which "revolved the wheels of his after-life." I will let the words of De Quincey relate it: —

"In the spring of 1796, Miss Lamb, (having previously shown signs of lunacy,) in a sudden paroxysm of her disease, seized a knife from the dinner-table and stabbed her mother, who died upon the spot. A coroner's inquest easily ascertained the nature of a case which was transparent in all its circumstances, and never for a moment indecisive as regarded the medical symptoms. The poor young lady was transferred to the establishment for lunatics at Hoxton. She soon recovered, we believe; but her relapses were as sudden as her recoveries, and she continued through life to revisit, for periods of uncertain seclusion, this house of woe. This calamity of his fireside, followed soon after by the death of his father, who had for some time been in a state of imbecility, determined the future destiny of Lamb. Apprehending, with the perfect grief of perfect love, that his sister's fate was sealed for life, — viewing her as his own greatest benefactress, which she really *had* been through her advantage of ten years of age, — yielding with impassioned readiness to the depth of his fraternal affection, what, at any rate, he would have yielded to the sanctities of duty as interpreted by his own conscience, — he resolved forever to resign all thoughts of marriage with a young lady whom he loved, forever to abandon all ambitious projects that might have tempted him into uncertainties, humbly to content himself with the *certainties* of his Indian clerkship, to dedicate himself for the future to the care of his desolate and prostrate sister, and to leave the rest to God. These sacrifices he made in no hurry or tumult, but deliberately and in religious tranquillity. These sacrifices were accepted in heaven, — and even on this earth they *had* their reward. She, for whom he gave up all, in turn gave up all for *him*. She devoted herself to his comfort. Many times she returned to the lunatic asylum, but many times she was restored to illuminate the household hearth for *him;* and of the happiness which for forty years or more he had, no hour seemed true that was not derived from *her.*"

The wealth of man's heart consists in its power of giving. He who can make the most and greatest sacrifices is the richest. And his wealth does not support and enrich others only; even more than them it enriches himself; it makes him opulent with spiritual power. Or rather, the spiritual power within him braces him for the sacrifice, — nay, by its easy might, draws out of the deed all sacrificial quality, so that, while witnesses are admiring it, to the doer himself it is an act facile and unstrained. This early one of dutifulness deepened and modulated Lamb's otherwise rich nature. The warmth of an overflowing sympathy it tempered; the colors thrown by a sportful imagination it sobered; to the conceptions of a subtle intellect it gave breadth and substantiality. The large, lively spring whence it flowed fed a stream that, never stagnating, upbore a freight of friendships such as perhaps no other man ever enjoyed. And this was the effect of reaction. Lamb gave himself with a cordiality and fulness that were unexampled. His genial gentleness drew to him companions, whom then his sympathetic homogeneity held in the bonds of admiration and love.

Lamb's courtesy was of the uncourtly, unstudied sort, the fruit of an ever-welling kindliness and fellow-feeling. All who approached felt that they could trust him, his bearing was so frankly modest, his politeness, which knew no distinction of persons, so transparent. I will let De Quincey finish his portrait, in a passage which, if the reader has not seen it, he will thank me for opening to him, and if he has, for bringing again to his view.

"He was a man, in a sense more eminent than would be conceivable by many people, *princely*, — nothing short of that in his beneficence. Many liberal people I have known in this world, many who were charitable in the widest sense, many munificent people, — but never any one upon whom, for bounty, indulgence, and forgiveness, for charitable construction of doubtful or mixed actions, and for regal munificence, you might have thrown yourself with so absolute a reliance as upon this comparatively poor Charles Lamb. Considered as a man of genius, he was not in the very first rank, simply because his range was a contracted one; within that range he was perfect. Of the peculiar powers which he possessed, he has left to the world as exquisite a specimen as this planet is likely to exhibit. But, as a *moral* being, in the total compass of his relations to this world's duties, in the largeness and diffuseness of his charity, in the graciousness of his condescension to inferior intellects, I am disposed, after a deliberate review of my own entire experience, to pronounce him the best man, the nearest in his approaches to an ideal standard of excellence, that I have known or read of. In the mingled purity, — a childlike purity, — and the benignity of his nature, I again express my own deep feeling of the truth, when I say that he recalled to my mind the image and character of St. John the Evangelist, — of him who was at once the beloved apostle, and also, more peculiarly, the apostle of love. Well and truly, therefore, did Wordsworth say, in his beautiful lines upon this man's grave and memory, —

'Oh, he was good, if e'er a good man lived.'"

Such, from the testimony of weightiest witnesses, was Charles Lamb. When England, ever rich in gentlemen, calls the long roll of the strong, glowing men that make her life so illustrious in the first quarter of the present century, — not among the titled and the high-born, nor beneath stars and ribbons, even those the most worthily earned, nor under plumes and epaulets, nor amid the less aspiring ranks of refined inherited culture, — not among these conspicuous, practised classes, abounding in high examples, will she find her best model of the Christian gentleman; him she must seek among the clerks of the India House.

It happened, that a short time before his last illness Lamb had borrowed of the translator of Dante, — the Rev. Henry F. Cary,

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another of his admiring friends, — the *Theatrum Poetarum Anglicanorum* of Philips. The volume was not returned until after his death, when, finding the leaf folded at the account of Sir Philip Sidney, Mr. Cary wrote the following lines: —

"So should it be, my gentle friend;
Thy leaf last closed at Sidney's end.
Thou too, like Sidney, wouldst have given
The water, thirsting and near heaven;
Nay, were it wine, filled to the brim,
Thou hadst looked hard, but given, like him. —
And art thou mingled then among
Those famous sons of ancient song?
And do they gather round, and praise
Thy relish of their nobler lays?
Waxing in mirth to hear thee tell
With what strange mortals thou didst dwell;
At thy quaint sallies more delighted,
Than any's long among them lighted! —
'Tis done: and thou hast joined a crew,
To whom thy soul was justly due;
And yet I think, where'er thou be,
They'll scarcely love thee more than we."

In contrast to Charles Lamb was his highest contemporary. But here I must first disarm a remark of Lamb's, which may look like a reproof of what I am about to do. In an epistolary criticism on a volume of poems, sent him by his friend, Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, he says,—"I do not quite like whipping the Greek Drama upon the back of Genesis. I do not like praise handed in by disparagement; as I objected to a side censure on Byron in your lines on Bloomfield." The objection, while it declares a sound canon of criticism, is otherwise sweetly characteristic of Lamb; and were my main object here the drawing of his portrait, it would be good against me, and should stay my hand. To aim at heightening the Vatican Apollo or the Titian Venus by putting them in juxtaposition with a hunchback or a hag, were surely not more offensive than futile. But as the sketches of Lamb and others are secondary, are introduced as purely auxiliary to the delineation of the Gentleman, I am entirely justified in that beside positive illustrations of gentlemanhood I place others that are negative. To do so is indispensable to the accomplishment of the assumed task.

By some of his subjects George IV. has

been called a "Brummagem gentleman." The epithet is not the exaggerated utterance of reaction in a later, healthier period against the fulsomeness and perverseness of that fevered, earlier one, so vulgarized as to term him the "first gentleman of Europe." It is faithful and discriminative. As Prince of Wales, as Prince Regent, as King, he showed himself to be the commonest metal glaringly plated, gorgeously gilt. He lacked earnestness and moral inwardness. There were no depths in him of evil or of good. Had he not been a Prince, he would not have been the most selfish and the most frivolous man of his day. He was all outside, a daily renewed product of tailors and barbers and perfumers and haberdashers, elaborately "gotten up," to perform the chief part at balls and receptions and dinners, to disport in the shoals of life, to shine in ceremonials and gairish parade and superficialities and wine-foamed word-passages. While England was straining her mighty muscles for self-preservation, and her Nelsons and Wellingtons were wreathing their names with immortality by rescuing the civilized world from the bloody grasp of the Corsican monster, he, an occidental Sardanapalus, was the leader of Fashion in his capital, the competitor of dandies, the rival of Brummels. While his great country was reeling under the weight of her immense outlay, feeding the leagued armies of Europe, he was wasting millions on frippery and perishable nothings, on gaudy ostentations and senile sensualities, — his annual tailor's bill amounting to a sum that were a generous portion for a baronet's daughter.

And yet, so servile to rank and power, so dimmed in moral and æsthetic vision, was the titled crowd whereof he was the centre and summit, and so strong the glare that this crowd threw on its subordinate thousands, the liveried lieges of Fashion, that by his generation of Anglo-Saxons the Prince Regent was admired as a model gentleman. The dynasty of Chesterfield had not yet been supplanted. The Prince Regent was indeed a regal realization of the Chesterfieldian ideal, according to which, hypocrisy was the law of manners, and worldliness a duty, and the shallow flatteries of courtly speech, factitious conventionalities, fraudulent phrases, were cultivated, not as the permissible and profitable externals of a man of fashion, but were offered and accepted as the credentials of a gentleman.

But while thus unsparing towards the false gentleman, let us be charitable towards the man. Kingship is not favorable to manly virtues. King's sons are so sequestered, that the airs most needful to mental health visit them but faintly. The high walls of prerogative shut off the north winds of bracing oppugnancy, the east winds of enkindling derision. Oaks cannot be raised under glass. Their gnarled grandeur they can only gain by tussling with wintry tempests. The qualities, whose activity moulds the character into strength and beauty, prefer a fair field and no favor. They prosper even on buffets. The sons of a king are denied the youthful superlative privilege of being buffeted.

A Prince, especially a Crown-Prince, lacks fulcrums whereon to adjust the lever of his abilities, from which adjustment comes the enlivening power wherewith men, not artificially exalted, swing themselves aloft. Instead of the solid indispensable fulcrum, the Prince meets yielding cushions; so that his movements are more like falls than self-achieved ascensions; until, — unless he be stiffened by rare rugged energy, or winged by genius, — he ceases to make efforts; and forces, that were designed to be toughened by conflict, grow flaccid from the obsequious capitulation of those who to others offer a determined, but at the same time auxiliary, because stimulating, opposition. Self-help is the law of all successful life. Soul and body must earn health, or else not have it. From this law men covet exemption, which is, to covet so much death. There is a town in England, — Bedford I think it is, — where, owing to the number and wealth of charitable foundations, so many mouths are gratuitously fed, that, it is stated, the mass of the laboring population has sunk into apathetic sloth. The pressure of an irregular or extreme prosperity is as unpropitious as that of an extreme poverty. In either case nothing but exceptional individual fire bursts through the incumbent accumulation.

IV.

LEICESTER — HAMPDEN — WASHINGTON — NAPOLEON — ST. PAUL.

ON the other hand, men who do not inherit, but by active ability earn, prominent positions, are apt to be coarse and greedy; and so, the highest gentleman is by no means always found in the highest place. Eminences, civil and ecclesiastical, and even military, are too often the prizes of much more self-seeking and stirring worldliness than are consistent with the best type of gentlemanhood. Bayard was to the end of his long career a subordinate, — he who ought to have been a generalissimo at thirty, and would, had he been more selfish (but then he had not been Bayard), and less modest; for a great power in the world, but one incompatible with the purest gentlemanliness, is impudence, which is a compound of equal parts of self-confidence and unscrupulousness. — Sidney, although young when he fell at Zutphen, was better fitted for command than he under whom he served, his uncle, the unprincipled worldling, Leicester, who, with all his birth and rank and magnificence, was as far from high gentlemanhood as the most abject of his valets. — Hampden was a man and a gentleman of the largest and finest mould, humane and intrepid, wise and refined, always kindly, always resolute, with a broad, far-seeing intellect at the command of feelings as warm as they were pure, as tempered as they were strong, — a man full of dutifulness and heroism, with "a flowing courtesy to all men." — A supreme gentleman was Washington, raised to the front of the world by the grand necessities of a sublime historical epoch. — Napoleon was a sublime snob.

Napoleon's mind was swollen with the virus of vulgar ambition. His moral nature, originally cold and meagre, grew blotched as he advanced, festering with the lust of power and its subservient crimes. His love was ever self-love. He circled himself with dependants, not with friends. Dutifulness was unknown to him; generosity he scorned; tenderness he pitied. Bloated by the perpetual consciousness of his astounding exaltation, he had an enjoyment, that was at once gross and puerile, in the wielding of his super-regal sceptre. He had not in him purity enough to value truthfulness and delicacy in others; and, never letting the rights or feelings of a fellow-man stand in the way of his desires, he was at times as brutal in his bearing as he was selfish in his aims. In the treatment of women he was unmannerly and unmanly. He made his mother stand in his presence! It was not the Cæsarian conqueror, it was the Imperial *parvenu* that kept kings waiting in his antechamber; a gentleman had been eager that their strange subordination were as little felt as might be. The man was maddened: he was possessed with a mania, a vast insatiable greed of dominion, that subdued him to a demon-darkness, and pulled the Emperor from his throne, the gentleman from his beauty and his propriety. — Louis Napoleon, — in intellect immeasurably inferior to his uncle, — is as material in his nature and as mole-eyed as he to the true grandeurs of Imperial rule; but he is capable of generosity, and is at least a gentleman in outward deportment.

Napoleon, enwrapt in self-exhaled gloom, illustrates the suspension of moral freedom, the obscuration of the illuminating spiritual forces before pride, flanked by the blinding material forces. St. Paul illustrates the majesty of moral freedom, the potency of an inward might, with life enough in it to appease the animal insurgents, to calm the mutinous *me*, and subject the whole being to the dominion of feelings that, too high for malice, too clean for personalities, know nor self-seeking nor petty limitations. Within the core of Saul of Tarsus, the prized pupil of Gamaliel, "a blasphemer and persecutor and injurious," lay latent, gigantic moral energies; else had he not been chosen to be assailed by that sun-surpassing glare on the road to Damascus. After beholding that vision, after listening to that voice, he soared at a flight into the serene of almost transterrestrial mastership, whereby he was enabled to trample under foot all the pride and the rancor and the lusts and the narrowness of the Jew, Saul. Thenceforward the staple of his earthly life was a superiority to earthly pains and pleasures. He moved with the springiness of one who has just alighted from upper spheres, and thrids our grovelling crowds with a winged buoyancy. In Paul's nature there was rare breadth as well as vigor. In all circumstances he felt that easy commanding self-possession which, in the ordinary conduct of life, is a characteristic of the gentleman. He was always equal to or above the situation. One of his highest qualifications for his great mission was his belief in an inborn human capacity for goodness and elevation, a belief drawn from the depths of his own consciousness. The lofty, spiritually-minded Frederick W. Robertson, — to whom clings so gracefully the too often unfitting title of Reverend,—in one of those teemful, lucent passages that throng his pages as stars the transparent heaven, says of St. Paul:—"And here you observe, as usual, that the Apostle returns again to the great *Idea* of the Church of God, the invisible Church, Humanity, as it exists in the Divine Mind. This is the standard he ever puts before them. He says, This you *are*. If you fall from this, you contradict your nature. And now consider how opposite this, St. Paul's way, is to the common way of insisting on man's depravity. He insists on man's dignity: he does not say to a man, 'You are fallen, you cannot think a good thought; you are half beast, half devil; sin is alone to be expected of you; it is your nature to sin.' But he says rather, 'It is your nature not to sin; you are not the Child of the Devil, but the Child of God.'"

Such faith in human nobleness yields blooming fruit in daily manners, imparting to the carriage of a man towards his fellow-men, even in moments of reproof, respectfulness and gentleness, qualities so eminently exhibited by St. Paul. To this faith, — rooted in intense fellow-feeling for his brother men, and thriving on the richness of his moral nature, — was in him inseparably united — as the blue to the red in the rainbow — a deep, unwearied sensibility to the beautiful in life, a sympathy with the graceful in word and deed, a joyful recognition of the livelier presence of the divine in all excellence ; by which recognition and sympathy his own deeds were inspirited, to which his words owed much of their marrow and ringing emphasis, and without which his zeal had been maimed, and his eloquence shorn of its golden cadence, and we had not had the pithiness empowered by chasteness, the succinct, elastic beauty we now have in the speeches before Agrippa and the Athenians ; nor had the fourteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the thirteenth of the first Corinthians, been the glowing models of wisdom and terseness, the ever-fresh inexhaustible lessons that they are ; nor, in short, had he himself dilated to that large, symmetrical, impressive grandeur that makes him St. Paul.

In the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians are two verses, the twenty-fifth and thirty-second, which, sympathetically accepted and cordially put into action, would make him who should so accept and act them a gentleman, beside whom many who claim the title were tarnished gilt or shabby pinchbeck: "Speak every man truth with his neighbor: *for we are members one of another.*" "And be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another." In his practice, St. Paul was as thorough and exemplary as in his speech. When he was brought before the Council of the Jews at Jerusalem, the High Priest, Ananias, commanded those that stood by Paul to smite him on the mouth. "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" Here is the outflashing of a violated spirit against what was at once an injustice and a personal affront,—the sudden wrath of a susceptible gentleman, courageously asserting his rights and his dignity. But see the other, more unusual, and the more difficult side of gentlemanliness; for high-spirited gentlemen are apt to be quicker to straighten themselves angrily against an assault than to bend for the due apology. But St. Paul was as prompt to redress an offence committed by his own heat, as to repel an attack. "And they that stood by, said, Revilest thou God's High Priest? Then said St. Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the High Priest: for it is written, thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people."

In that trenchant chapter "of meats offered to Idols," the eighth of first Corinthians, after explaining that idols not being gods, the meats offered to them are not thereby defiled, and therefore, "neither if we eat are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse;" nevertheless, take heed, he adds, lest this liberty which you have to eat or not to eat become a stumbling-block to the weak; for they, not having strength of mind and knowledge to see the matter as it is, may sin against their conscience in eating this meat; and he ends the short chapter with the following verse, resplendent with moral beauty, and embodying much of the very essence of Christian gentlemanhood: "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

One more illustrative passage I must cite from St. Paul, the conclusion of his speech before Agrippa. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am." Here was a fitting close to the most beautiful, the most memorable speech on record. To all orators of whom we know, it had here been finished, and well finished; not so to St. Paul. To him three words were yet wanting to it, words which could only have been spoken by the tongue of one, a gentleman of ripest sensibility, of the most tender regardfulness towards others, and of a high-bred grace, the like of which the king had surely in his many audiences not witnessed before. Figure his great countenance, aglow with the sublime fulness of the occasion, as slightly bending forward and lifting up his manacled hands, he adds, — "except these bonds." This extemporaneous utterance of exquisite yet simple feeling, of subtlest consideration for his hearers, an instantaneous feeling-full thoughtfulness, as far exceeds all famous strokes of oratory as the play of lightning does a pyrotechnic ostentation.

Two titles there are, which, as the duplicate elaborate crowns of culture and of conduct, can neither be earned lightly nor arbitrarily bestowed, and must from their very peerlessness be worn modestly, — titles, to which belong a costlier import, a more gleaming brilliancy, that they were won by St. Paul. They who are so choicely entitled will wear them with proud humility, when they think, that by his nature and his discipline, by his aspirations and his knowledge, by his humanity and his refinement, the great Apostle of the Gentiles was preëminently a Scholar and a Gentleman.

V.

THE ANCIENTS — CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE — ROMAN SENATE — THE DUEL — BANQUET OF PLATO — POSITION OF WOMEN AMONG THE ANCIENTS.

WERE the Gentile contemporaries and predecessors of St. Paul, the high men among the Greeks and the Romans, the men from whose words and deeds we remote moderns have not yet done learning, who were the salt of the Pagan earth, and whose saltness has not yet lost all its savor, — were the Brutuses and Cæsar and Cicero and the Scipios and Sylla and the Catos and Pompey and Paulus Æmilius, — were Pericles and Epaminondas and Miltiades and Plato and Dion and Timoleon and Socrates and Xenophon and Phocion and Alcibiades, — men whose greatness still feeds our thought, — were they gentlemen? It is a fine question, the brief consideration of which will bring us still further into the depths of our theme.

Historically we find man elevated and enlarged under Christianity. He has become gradually imbued with certain great prolific ideas and sentiments: the Oneness and Paternity of God; the innateness of high, unselfish feelings, with a presentiment of their destined predominance in humanity; the sentiment of universal brotherhood; the exaltation of womanhood; the spirituality of man as an eternally living soul;—ideas and sentiments not only not prevalent among the Greeks and Romans, but not all of them apprehended by their highest minds, by Socrates and Plato, by Cicero* and Aurelius. Especially is belief in the spirituality and immortality of man incalculably ennobling. So grand, indeed, is the conception of an endless, ever-brightening life, that no earthly mind has the grasp and innocence to compass it in its entireness. Could any one attain to an absolute, perpetual realization of his own personal everlastingness, he would be as surely purged of all stain as a body that floated on the confines of the Sun's periphery would be of darkness. What the difference is between intellectual impression, or even conviction, and the practical verification, the daily incarnation, of a great idea like this, we may form some notion, by contrasting with a warm, working Pauline faith, the traditional, conventional Sunday Christianity of the listeners in the highest-priced pews in any of the churches of—New York or Philadelphia.

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* What a grand spiritual flash shot through the brain of Cicero, when he had such a sublime insight as to write,—"Your father, Paulus, and others whom we speak of as dead, are still alive, while our present life, as compared to theirs, is death."

More by imperceptible diffusion and infiltration, by slow almost unconscious permeation, than by intensity of action, have these generic feelings and principles, especially that of immortality, wrought upon the modern mind; and a primary effect of them being a recognition of man as man (above his mere citizenship or productive utility), and a consequent respect for and sympathy with mere manhood, they have gradually modified human intercourse and manners. It would be too much to say, that among the Greeks and the Romans there were no gentlemen, — although perhaps, bating a few very exceptional individuals, even that position might be maintained, — but we are justified in affirming that the personal association even of their highest was not controlled by what at this day pervades in some degree all Christendom, namely, the *gentlemanly*, — a calmness and sweetness of spirit, fostered by independent manliness and the dignity of self-respect, made pliable and gracious by respect for others, — a gentle considerate bearing on all sides, that, giving security and tranquillity to each one, generates an atmosphere which, though breathed in its purest condition only by those who are favored both by education and temperament, tints the valleys and plains, as well as the heights of the social world with its delicate hue, and gives to the intercourse of Christendom a tone of more or less kindliness.

In support of the position as to the absence of gentlemanly tone among the Ancients, I will cite two examples, taken from the very top of Pagan society. The first is a scene in the Roman Senate, thus related by Plutarch:—"While Cato was warmly contesting his point with Cæsar, and the eyes of the whole Senate were upon the disputants, it is said that a billet was brought in and delivered to Cæsar. Cato immediately suspected him of some traitorous design; and it was moved in the Senate that the billet should be read aloud. Cæsar delivered it to Cato, who stood near him; and the latter had no sooner cast his eye upon it, than he perceived it to be in the handwriting of his own sister, Servilia, who was passionately in love with Cæsar, and by him had been seduced. He therefore threw it back to Cæsar, saying, '*Take it, you sot,*' and went on with his discourse."

Now, scenes of rudeness to match this—though not exactly of the same character—occur in Parliaments, Congresses, Cortezes, Chambers; but they pass not unnoticed. Within the walls where gather these assemblages, reigns a paramount law of decency and propriety, the violator of which is called to order, is obliged to apologize to the House, and also to the object of his grossness, or suffer a loss of general esteem, besides having possibly to answer with his life for his language. But the Roman Senate did not feel its dignity offended by the scene; nor had Cæsar any thought of calling Cato to personal account for such coarse, insulting words; nor did it enter into the mind of any witness that, on the adjournment of the Senate, Cæsar would despatch his young friend Anthony with a brief note, which Cato would answer through his friend Hortensius, (the same to whom Cato obligingly lent his wife,) and that the following dawn would find the four, with attendant surgeons, issuing mysteriously out of the Capenian gate to interchange cuts and thrusts, (mankind had not yet the benefit of pistols,) possibly under cover of the Egerian grove. Had such a proceeding been foreshadowed on the brain of Cæsar, it would doubtless — although he of course was "as brave as Julius Cæsar"— have modified his action; so that, instead of indelicately thrusting such a billet, in open Senate, under Cato's nose, he would have privately shown it to a friend of Cato, who would then have whispered in the latter's ear, — "Nothing to do with public affairs: of a very private nature;" and so the matter had ended. And this, the gentlemanly course, Cæsar would have pursued, not for the direct purpose of avoiding a duel, but cordially to conform to the requirements made by personal susceptibility and the reciprocal demand of respectfulness, — feelings, the existence of which would have been proved by the very fact of their being guarded by a penalty so mortal and semi-judicial. But owing to the causes just now adverted to, and which are closely connected with the fact, that in ancient Paganism, the State was all in all, the individual citizen nothing, — Man being, as it were, first consecrated by Christianity, — there scarcely existed, even in the highest class, the sense of individual sanctity, with its bloody symbol, the Duel.

The duel has undoubtedly had, in ruder times, a salutary influence on manners, albeit its growing infrequency in the most cultivated portions of Christendom proves that in the more advanced stages of social development it is not essential to the protection of those personal rights and sensibilities that are unguarded by the law. In acknowledgment of its social services it has been called the cheapest and most effective police-measure ever contrived, protecting, by the occasional sacrifice of life, thousands, especially women and the physically weak, against outrages of word or act, and insults from the brutal and overbearing. Its institution was a token and a fruit of a lively sense of personal honor, of a laudable jealousy,—however at times exaggerated,—of individual dignity, of a manly readiness to hold inviolate, at peril even of life, the sacredness of private sensibilities. In battles and in brawls, the Greeks and the Romans were no less brave than we moderns, and surely they were not more moral or tender, or regardful of life; and that in their higher classes they had not introduced the duel, is evidence of the absence of that susceptibility to personal outrage, of that sense of fine responsibility which characterize gentlemen throughout Christendom, and to secure which they have found deadly weapons the best shield, which weapons are only now getting into disuse, their efficiency being merged in the fuller growth of inward refinement and outward courtesy, to which the consciousness of personal accountability has no doubt contributed.

The sanctity of the individual, the inviolableness of one's personality, lies at the basis of the modern duel, which in its essence means, —whoever invades these does so at the risk of his life. As Christian civilization advances, this sanctity gets to be so recognized, that, to guard it, such liability is no longer needed. Infringement is so visited with general reprobation, that the violator is rebuked as by a universal hiss, which, freighting the violation with consequences even more formidable than under the grosser penalty, checks the impulse to violation, while at the same time, through the elevating influence of moral culture, there takes place a solution of the duelling point of honor in the predominance of general reciprocal respect and reverence, personal sensitiveness being modulated by a freer, purer atmosphere, enfolding social intercourse in the transparent mail of cordial good-breeding.

In the celebrated *Banquet* of Plato will be found another exemplification of the want of gentlemanly delicacy among the Ancients. The evidence furnished by parts of the speeches of the guests, especially that of Alcibiades, is not less cogent, if the scene, instead of being the description of a supper that actually took place at the house of Agathon, be an invention of Plato, to set off one of his elaborate discussions; for in the latter case he would have adhered, even unconsciously, to the verisimilitudes of the occasion, and his recital, though otherwise fanciful, would be a picture of the sentiment and manners of the interlocutors. It is true, Alcibiades, on arriving late, declares himself already drunk; but he not only makes a clear continuous speech, but at the end of it Socrates says, — "You seem to me, Alcibiades, to be sober." Indeed, what the Greeks called drunk, (Shelley in his translation has it "excessively drunk,") must have been very different from the mental dethronement we thus designate, if one in that state could speak so intelligently and consecutively as Alcibiades in this long discourse.

Most significant, well-nigh decisive, as to the non-existence of the gentlemanly among the Ancients, was the position of women. Upon constant, daily, life-long, female social intervention and participation, freely accepted and enjoyed, depends the culture of the finer sensibilities. To the formation of gentlemanly and lady-like habits of feeling, thinking, and demeanor, a free, frequent, trustful interchange of services and sentiments, a steady interplay of powers between the sexes is indispensable. The Ancients seem hardly to have had mothers and sisters and wives and daughters, so completely are these kept in the background, so unparticipant in Greek and Roman converse. There was little of that mental intermarriage between the sexes, which is so profound and beneficent an element of Christian society, — a union fruitful of proprieties and refinements, of purities and elegancies. Among the Ancients the two sexes lived almost in barren, mental isolation. Their men were never inspired or encouraged by the thought of woman's approval. Very slight are the traces of female influence upon conduct. Of no young Grecian or Roman warrior would it have been sung as of Chaucer's Squire, —

"And borne him wel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his ladies grace."

VI.

CÆSAR — BRUTUS — SOCRATES — GRECIAN MYTHOLOGY — HOMERIC HEROES — IDEALS.

CÆSAR, the foremost man of all the Romans, compels the admiration of the world by his easy superiority, by the dazzling brilliancy of his practical genius, by his magnanimity and by the grandeur of his bearing; but he was withal a lofty worldling, a criminal self-seeker. And therefore, notwithstanding the splendor of his intellectual nature, — not having the spiritual buoyancy to rise above the moral level of his time, — he does not shine a premature impersonation of gentlemanhood. This distinction belongs, among the Romans, to Brutus.

However short-sighted, politically, Brutus may have shown himself in slaying Cæsar, neither that nor any other act of his life was prompted by ambition. Had he been a worldly climber, a selfish calculator, he might probably — through Cæsar's partiality for him — have shared and succeeded to Cæsar's power. But, as was said by the contemporary Romans, while Cassius hated the Emperor, the Imperial sway it was that Brutus hated. When appointed by Cæsar Governor of Cisalpine Gaul, for himself by his administration he won esteem and love, and popularity for Cæsar; for he was just, self-denying, humane, in shameless, ravenous times, when it was the custom of governors to be tyrannical and rapacious. A man of lofty but pure aspirations, and wide sympathies, all men trusted Brutus. Of a refined, impressible nature, he was not organized for the tumults, the coarse conflicts of public life, into which he was drawn by his patriotic spirit, by zeal for the general good, and by an innate, active love of justice.

In the character of Brutus as drawn by Shakspeare, there is such warmth of coloring, such fulness and finish, that I have pleased myself with thinking that in it there is discernible — what there is not in any other of his vivid delineations — a personal partiality, an individual fondness, as though he had wrought at the portrait of Brutus with something more than the broad artistic love of the creative Master.

A crowning confirmation of the claim put forward for Brutus, is his relation to Portia, which, in its confidential equality and mental intimacy, approaches much nearer to our modern conjugal relation than was customary among the Romans. And in confirmation of the importance claimed for female influence in the moulding of gentlemen, the first fact I cite in regard to Socrates, — who, living four centuries before our era, was nevertheless an indefeasible Christian gentleman, — is, that this transcendent Greek sought the society of women of talent, avowedly for the culture of his head and heart.

Equally on the battle-field, at the banquet, in talk on the market-place, in philosophic disquisition, in political discussion, Socrates was the easy master of the situation and the company. Always calm, apparently indifferent, while doing or saying better things than any other, he seems hardly to have been liable to anger or passionate outbreak, as though his nature were of a superhuman inexcitability, of a godlike breadth and equipoise. In his bearing there was a sublime nonchalance, in his mind a majestic suppleness. The movement of his logic was that of a resistless mechanism, supplied from inexhaustible, inward fountains. His great intellect worked with as little effort as a water-fall. He suggests so much, that we think of him as of one who quitted the earth without giving forth the half that was in him. After teaching all the highest men of his day, and impregnating the mighty brain of Plato, his mind gave signs of a vast fund of unused power, as though fleshly ears were not deep enough for his wisdom, and he had to pass through the capacious portal of death into wider, wealthier spheres, to find companies that should be fit recipients of the whole beauty and affluence of his soul.

Towards the end of his last day on earth, described in the *Phædo*,—that immortal treatise on immortality, that circumstantial report, invaluable to mankind, of the final words and doings of this wonderful Athenian, — perceiving that the Sun being near its setting, the hour was almost come for him to drink the hemlock, he concluded a description of the various judgments awaiting men in the next world, with these words: "You then, Simias and Cebes and the rest, will each of you depart at some future time; but now destiny summons me, as a tragic writer would say, and it is nearly time for me to betake myself to the bath; for it appears to me to be better to drink the poison after I have bathed myself, *and not to trouble the women with washing my dead body.*" That which is of the inmost essence of gentlemanhood, kindly, anticipative thoughtfulness for others, is here, — considering the occasion and the moment, — carried to the height of the sublime. And although Socrates says, that he would bathe in order that the women — as was the Grecian custom — should not have the trouble of washing his dead body, there doubtless mingled with that beautiful feeling another element, still refining its beauty, namely, a virgin-like modesty, an incomparable manly delicacy. In this little act, which stamps Socrates a rare, chivalrous gentleman, there is a depth of moral tenderness that would have added another circle even to the multiplex crown that glistens above the head of Paul.

Saving the awful martyrdom of that youthful divine life on Calvary, human annals have nothing grander than the death of Socrates, who in the spirituality of his nature stands supreme and alone among the great Greeks.

The poetic creations of a People being a reflex of its character and its aspirations, Homer and the Grecian mythology are quick with the predominant qualities of the Greek mind. The gods of Greece, even more than the Iliad and Odyssey and the tragic Drama, are the poetic outcome, so to speak, of Greek nature. A marvellous company they are, those gods, — the resplendent attestors of the generative potency there was in the Greek mind that it could beget them. From their plastic beauty, their gladsome naturalness, their infinitely discriminated diversity, they challenge the admiration of cultivated Christendom. But nowhere among them do we perceive a Christian spirituality like that of Socrates. They are all of the earth, in their beauty earthy, and their desires. They come down to the earth not merely to take part in its conflicts, — which might be and was the mark of celestial sympathy with terrestrial troubles, — but also to taste directly of its sensual joys. And they have not far to come; for the top of Olympus was less than eight thousand feet above the level of the earth. Sensuous they all are, shaken by mundane passion, conditioned by the circumscriptions of the semi-animal self. They have not their being, like the Christian angels, and even the Hindoo deities, in a plane spiritually elevated and boundless. It may sound like a profane libel on the renowned Olympians, but there was not a gentleman among them. Jupiter, their chief, beat his wife; so his claim is barred at once, without looking further into his way of life, which will not bear looking into.

Apollo, as the God of Poetry and the Arts, ought to have been a gentleman; but he was so under the dominion of self and passion, that, when King Laomedon refused him the promised reward for helping to build the walls of Troy, he raised a pestilence and destroyed the king's subjects. Moreover, the infliction of plagues was one of his functions, — one surely not compatible with the feelings of a gentleman.

Among the Homeric Heroes we discover but one gentleman. It is not Achilles; for no gentleman would have tied the slain body of the enemy's General to his chariot, and then dragged it on the earth round the walls of the besieged city in sight of its wailing people. Nor is it Ulysses; for he, a finished, fascinating man of the world, was the greatest liar of Antiquity. It is Hector, the generous, just, true-hearted Hector, who, by one of those irreversible perversities that immortalize a wrong, (like the immeasurable robbery committed on Columbus in the naming of our continent,) has been made—he among the bravest and most unboastful of warriors — to give a name to the braggart's mouthing, and is thus perennially pursued by a calumny.

From the idealizations of the Greeks we now turn to those of the moderns, for such furtherance as can be had from them in our search of gentlemen. And let no one be alarmed or discouraged by the mention of idealizations and ideals. Nothing is so practical as the ideal, which is ever at work to uphold and to better the real. The ideal is indeed only the real seized at a deeper layer than is yet cognizable to common discernment. It is the catching sight, by the watchers on the foretop, of a real which we have not come up to, and which the crowd on deck cannot yet make out. The obvious, actualized real, taken simply by itself, unlinked to the past, out of which it has sprung, to the future, towards which it ought to tend, were desolate and dead. Were daily life to cease to be exhilarated by hope, — which is the teemful mother of the ideal, — it would grow irremediably base and dull, and the earth would become peopled with Calibans. Men, to be men, must be ever looking beyond the present and actual, even of the earth. If all are not large and bold enough for the building of lofty castles in the air, not one but has tried his imaginative hand on an unambitious mansion, or a still more modest cottage. Was there ever a mother who was not a poet for her child? It is with this superior, dreamt-of, hoped-for existence, with this subtle promise, with these attainable possibilities, that the highest, the creative minds, have ever been busied. The great books of the world are records of strivings after, of partial realizations of, a better than there was when they were conceived. None others survive but those whose authors have intuition and strength to go deeper and higher than present actualities. A French writer has said, "The masses have the sense of the ideal." If they had it not, humanity had never emerged out of savage crudeness. Through this sense it is that improvements and reformations are practicable: to this prophets and poets appeal.

The Poet goes, and must go, — he is no poet if he cannot, — below the surface, and there be able to appreciate and appropriate more or less of the essence that has not manifested itself in phenomena or appearances to the general gaze. He first makes them manifest. Nay more, no one can even depict actual appearances, the visible outward, which is effect, without insight into, and sympathy with, the invisible inward, which is cause. To him who would correctly represent the real, the ideal must be vividly present, and according to the depth and truth of the ideal conception will be the fidelity of the representation of the real. But for the presence of ideals, drawing our regards into the undivulged deeps of human potentialities, far beneath the froth and scum whipped up by endless eddies of selfishness, common life would be, to the finer organizations, unendurable, and many of the best spirits would be driven, like the anchorites of old, to segregate themselves from the daily haunts of men, and shun the din and discords of traffic and ignoble aspiration, to save them selves from an ever-freshened sadness and a never-respited despair.

Turning from the Ancients to the Moderns, from Homer we pass easily to Shakspeare. But before leaving the Ancients, let me add a mitigating word.

The highest forces in man, the moral, are slow to unfold and ripen. The Greeks and the Romans and the Hebrews, although to us ancient, lived in the youth, were the youth, of humanity. How gradual is the growth of the moral power, we learn from our present selves, who, so incalculably beholden to it, show yet such partial allegiance to the exalting rule of charity, justice, and spiritual freedom. Nevertheless there having been, under Christian influences, a steady moral growth, the modern conscience is a finer, stancher thing than the ancient. Saving Socrates and a few exceptionally upstretching natures, no ancient had the depth and stability of moral conviction, the breadth of principles, which millions of moderns have and live by. Only with a Christian development comes a general consciousness of divine help in all good work. To the Heathen the superhuman was counterhuman. He did not feel to the full, that a high conscience has ever an unfailing friend in God.

VII.

SHAKSPEARE'S HISTORICAL PLAYS — PROSPERO — ORLANDO — ANTONIO — THE REAL MARRIED TO THE IDEAL — SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY — MY UNCLE TOBY — DON QUIXOTE — SCOTT — COLERIDGE — SHELLEY — BYRON — HIGH-BRED TONE IN WRITING — BURNS — KEATS — SHAKSPEARE.

THOUGH the gentleman be an æsthetic personage, fragrant, like poetry, with the aroma of life, he needs, as we have said, a sound moral pith for his full florescence; and hence the Homeric Gods and Heroes come not up to the highest standard of gentlemanly manhood. Nor in Shakspeare should we look in the historical plays for exemplifications of the gentlemanly; for, through the long dynastic contests, which for several generations kept the soil of England wet with successive showers of native blood, the persistent combatants, kings and princes and nobles, were assuredly as perfidious, conscienceless, ruthless, remorseless, sanguinary a file of practically heathen villains and ruffians as a poet could anywhere find to work with. The times were coarse and cruel, black with plots, assassinations, and executions. Men had not time or opportunity to be gentlemen. A Sidney or a Bayard would hardly have made himself scope. Hotspur, and his rival Prince Hal, though not darkly stained, as so many others, are rude, — gentlemen in *posse* rather than in *esse;* and Hotspur is wilful, — though Heaven forbid that we should wish him other than he is by a tittle; and the great Faulconbridge is coarse, as becomes him to be; nor would we exchange his rough tongue for a score of smoother ones, for such catching vigor is there in his vaulting speech, that the reading of him aloud before breakfast were, to a poetical dyspeptic, an appetizing tonic.

Albeit the tragedy of Lear is not historical, being wrought into its thrilling grandeur out of fable and tradition, we may — knowing what England has since become — invest Kent with historic reality, and behold in him a prevenient representative of all fidelity, loyalty, self-devotion; exhibiting superb proportions, benignant capabilities; carrying within his lordly heart the germs which, beneath the future Sun of Culture, were to be warmed into a breed of bountiful gentlemen. And the same sublime tragedy has a mate to Kent in "France," who eagerly takes for his Queen Lear's disowned and dowerless daughter, with a gush of generous warmth that prefigures Bayard, addressing her, —

> "Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
> Most choice, forsaken; and most loved, despised!"

Prospero, the wrongfully deposed Duke of Milan, is a magnificent gentleman. His Duchy was the first through all the Seignories, —

> "And Prospero the prime Duke, being so reputed
> In dignity, and for the liberal arts
> Without a parrellel, ————
> *Neglecting worldly ends*, all dedicate
> To closeness and the *bettering of my mind*."

His gentleness and sweet parental tenderness, his cordial joy in forgiving his wrongers, his long-nurtured gratitude to Gonzalo, his superregal graciousness, all crowned by a subtle, majestic intellect, make Prospero a peer of the supreme creations of poetry, a master to teach and exalt manhood, a figure whose amplitude and beauty "cannot be measured or confined."

Orlando, in *As You Like It*, whose unnatural brother,—to quote Orlando's own words,—"Keeps me rustically at home, or, to speak more properly, stays me here at home unkept," and "mines my gentility with my education," has in him "a something that Nature gave him," which keeps him fine in spite of coarse nurture, and buoys him up through the beatings of adverse fortune to the high place which was his even more by nobility of disposition than by birth. That Adam, an old family-servant,—

> "In whom so well appears
> The constant service of the antique world
> When service sweat for duty not for meed,"—

who says of himself,—

> "Though I look old, yet am I strong and lusty;
> For in my youth I never did apply
> Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood;
> Nor did not with unbashful forehead woo
> The means of weakness and debility;"—

that *he* should be fervently willing to devote to his young master himself and the hoard he had saved to be the "foster-nurse" of his age, is testimony more absolute for Orlando than even the love of Rosalind; for maidens — princess or shepherdess — will sometimes bestow the whole treasure of a virgin heart upon one whose fairness is chiefly of the outside. But how fully is the inward beauty of Orlando proclaimed by the churlish tribute of his bad brother, and by the spontaneous ejaculations of Adam, prompted by his fears, when he meets Orlando before the house of Oliver; and how distinctly do his words portray the leading features of a gentleman: —

> "What! my young master? O, my gentle master,
> O, my sweet master; O, you memory
> Of old Sir Rowland! Why, what make you here?
> Why are you virtuous? why do people love you?
> And wherefore are you gentle, strong, and valiant?
> Why would you be so fond to overcome
> The bony priser of the humorous Duke?
> Your praise has come too swiftly home before you.
> Know you not, Master, to some kind of men
> Their graces serve them but as enemies?
> No more do yours; your virtues, gentle master
> Are sanctified and holy traitors to you.
> O, what a world is this, when what is comely
> Envenoms him that bears it!"

Not a comedy of Shakspeare so teems with wit and wisdom and poetry as this of *As You Like It*, whose plot and framework are laid with purpose to allow the poet a riotous liberty, freest scope for a joyous, audacious fancy, unrestrained but by its own law. This beautiful, most sparkling, and sunny of comedies is spiced, too, with a flavor of personality; for in its bounding, gleesome, exuberance we think we perceive, poetically mirrored, an individual joy, the gladness of the liberated poet on turning his back, as was his frequent wont, upon London, to go down and revel in Warwickshire. It is a poetic transfiguration of country life and landscape,—one melodious, many-voiced, gurgling song, laden with the poet's rural memories and imaginations; the twofold delight in his work, as poet and man, so inciting him, that not a drama of Shakspeare furnishes so many golden lines and phrases to hearten and rejoice the floating currency of English speech.

I have been lured from my purpose, which is, not to characterize this great comedy, but to mark a short passage in it that is relevant to our general aim, evincing — as I interpret it — more than a dramatic propriety, something that may be termed a gentlemanly justice. In the second scene of the first act, the wrestling scene, when Celia exclaims, — "Here comes Monsieur Le Beau," Rosalind adds, — "With his mouth full of news." Then follows his account of the sport that the ladies have lost, namely, the breaking of three men's ribs by Charles, the wrestler, which brings down a hit from Touchstone. The impression left on the reader, fortified by Le Beau's designation as "A courtier attending on Frederick," the Usurper, is that of a frivolous, heartless court-gossip; and in a play so gladsome in its general march, so gayly fanciful in its combinations and contrasts and solutions, this impression, if unremoved, were a dramatic defect. Accordingly, at the end of the long scene, Le Beau comes back, to warn Orlando of danger, which he does in fine iambics, and with a manner and tone friendly and elevated, proving that the place he fills of an idle talker about the court, is one imposed upon him (as is more or less the position of so many people in a factitious world), by the tyranny of circumstances, and that he is at bottom a man of heart and not without generosity.

Antonio, the Merchant of Venice, wins our sympathy by what he *is* even more than by what he *does;* and what he is we learn in the opening scene, from the genial confidential relation which we see exists between him and the band of his light-hearted comrades, who, treating him with fraternal familiarity, evidently feel him to be their superior, whom they love as much as they esteem. Affectionate towards them all, he moves among them with a natural stateliness, which is the unforced expression of instinctive grace, and healthful, moral sensibility. His readiness with his purse and person, and his "extremest means" to aid Bassanio, — who is already in his debt, — in any way that stands "within the eye of honor;" his untrafficking spirit that "lends out money gratis," and will not let him sink the man in the merchant; his compassionate liberality, that had delivered so many from their forfeitures to Shylock; all this bespeaks a nature of the most dutiful and the noblest. His crowning testimonial is the brief letter written to Bassanio when he believes himself about to die through forfeiture of the bond, — a letter that, in its tender sadness and generous most touchingly disinterested consideration, breathes the purest spirit of Christian gentlemanhood.

We have thus noted, for our purpose, a few of the choicest among the gentlemen that stand immortal models in the pages of Shakspeare, where they appear — as the same class always do in actual life — spontaneously. In no instance had Shakspeare a direct conscious design of depicting a gentleman; but having, as a chief constituent of his prodigal being, a true and rapturous sense of the beautiful in life, the grace of gentlemanhood falls naturally and inevitably upon his nobler and best-balanced characters, which hereby exhibit in compact artistic form that intimate marriage between the ideal and the real which is of the very essence of creative Art. A genuine work of Art always combines generic breadth with throbbing individuality, — that is, an infinite ideal with a finite real. From the ideal comes every trait of beauty. It comes thence, but whither does it go? To the real. If it finds no heart-and-lung-endowed individual, it cannot stop. No earthly lodging being provided, it evaporates. The beautiful is a heavenly birth seeking an earthly home, and Shakspeare stands foremost amongst those who provide it with one, solid and sightly. Let me add, in illustration of the principle, that in Racine there is want of the real element, — in Molière of the ideal.

The incarnation of the beautiful in what we are endeavoring to depict,—a gentleman of the finest type, rare, as we have seen in real life, is rare in the life of fiction. Before quitting this attractive field, we will rest our attention for a few moments on two or three other children of the imagination, one of whom is as vividly present and as firmly moulded as the gentlemen of Shakspeare. But first, a few words about one less distinguished, who towards the close of the last century was a conspicuous personage, and who, if not now so much known and admired, is still esteemed: Sir Roger de Coverley.

The mind of Addison was not rich or intense enough for creativeness. It could not be wrought to a white heat. Its fire was too languid and too stinted in fuel for fervent imaginative action. Sir Roger de Coverley is a benevolent country-gentleman, with innocent patrician eccentricities, — a humorist in the superficial practical sense. He is a provincial gentleman, still further limited by being of the "Old School," in which conventionalities of class, verbal courtesy, hat-in-hand grimacery, assumed too much to themselves, and, under cover of a thin showy costume of manner, made men pass for gentlemen, from whom, if disrobed, you would recoil as from a leper. Sir Roger needed no such disguise, for his was the gentlemanliness of the heart. That the best blood flowed in his veins, he showed by his conduct, — the only test of good blood, — and had a right to be proud of one of his progenitors, Sir Humphrey de Coverley, who "was in his dealings as punctual as a trades man and as generous as a gentleman. He would have thought himself as much undone by breaking his word as if it were to be followed by bankruptcy." — Sir Roger, it was said, died somewhat suddenly, Addison fearing that he would be vulgarized by a less skilful hand than his own. That Steele, or any other of the "Spectators," should have thrust his pen into the pages dedicated to Sir Roger, was so indelicate a disregard of a colleague's artistic rights, a breach of literary propriety so gross, as of itself to prove the writer disqualified for the refined delineation of a gentleman. Such a fear, coupled with displeasure at the intrusion, may have hastened Sir Roger's departure; but nevertheless, his portrait was already finished.

Far broader and deeper, more poetical and more real, is "my Uncle Toby," a man and a gentleman to consort with whom braces one's moral resolution. A character more exquisitely wrought, in its conception more profoundly simple, executed with a more vigilant truthfulness and a subtler delicacy, does not exist in literature. Authors and critics are fond of having a fling at Sterne, and some would take a prude's airs over him for a few blotches raised by an erotic fancy on the unfading pages of *Tristram Shandy*. When those censures happen to be cleverly worded, they draw the public gaze for a moment; but at best they are but verbal rockets, that die the instant after they break into life, while the stars towards which they were flung come out undimmed forever. The whole range of prose-fiction presents no group artistically so fine as that collected in the parlor of Shandy Hall on a full evening. In this delectable assemblage the most captivating figure is that of "my Uncle Toby," in watching whose words and movements, the tears stealing from under the emotion of beauty are at times drowned by a flood from the depths of pathos.

One more example from among the progeny of the brain, to whom genius has given a warmth that makes them companions and friends, only less dear and profitable to the generations of men than the great predominant spirits whom God bestows for our guidance. Of this mental offspring no individual is more widely and cordially cherished than the glory and pride of Spain,—the renowned Knight of La Mancha.

If the reader will review and question the individuals we have cited from life and from fiction, to illustrate our theme, he will discover, that the characteristic common to them all is, the readiness of each one to go out of and beyond himself. The more heartily and gracefully this is done, the finer is the type of gentlemanhood. In every instance, from Bayard to "my Uncle Toby," whether the deed be generous or seemly, substantial or formal, there is in it a substitution of another for the doer, a suspension of his own desires for the fulfilment of the desires of some one else, the making of his enjoyment consist in the imparting of enjoyment to others. And this, examined closely, will prove to be the quality of all the doings peculiar to gentlemen, from the chivalrous offering of one's life, to protect the unprotected, to the offering of a bow, which daily, superficial, transient act is, symbolically viewed, the throwing of one's self dutifully towards another. To do an honorable deed is, to subject the self to justice and truth; to do a dishonorable one is, to subject justice and truth to the self. We are authorized then to assert, that in every gentlemanly act the agent unselfs himself.

And this is the cardinal feature in the life of Don Quixote. Under the momentum of a heated imagination he goes forth to redress the grievances of the world. The unnatural heat swells him to heroic purposes and projects. The eighteenth chapter of the second volume has an enumeration of the virtues and acquirements needed in a Knight Errant, from which we learn what an exalted standard the Don strove to live by. The disproportion between his means and his end, is the measure of his hallucination: the grandeur of the end, and his entire self-dedication to it, give the elevation of his nature. Of his purse or his person he never has a thought. Whilst others eat, he discourses nobly and instructively on high themes; when his companions retire to rest, he takes station outside the Inn-gate to stand sentinel through the chilling night, and guard them from danger. His extravagances are always chivalrous. It is not that like common madmen he is beside himself: he goes beyond and far above the common self. He cannot escape being called a madman, but in his madness there is a moral method. He is bounteously mad, — a madman through the ideal magnificence of his aims. To the stoutest "bulls and bears" on "'Change" a gentleman of fine grain would seem as absurd as the Don does to the multitude. There are more Sanchos in the world than Quixotes. And is not Sancho — who, through the flattery and pressure of his greeds, actually gets to believe in the Don and his promises — as mad as his master? He swallows the monstrosities of the Knight's sublimated fantasy, because they give him hope of the everlasting filling of his belly. And this is precisely the hallucination of all who are dominated by the sensual and the worldly. Cajoled by their lower desires, they live as though they believed in the everlastingness of fat kitchens and of fat dividends, and of the "good things" these can buy, and they believe that through buying are to be had the best things of life; refusing to know, that when they shall have quitted the earth they will get neither hams nor hock, and that the sensuous earth is but their cradle and their nursery. If a man, reputed sane, could bethink him, what and how he will be a hundred years hence, would not much of his present strugglings and wrestlings look like a duel with windmills? But he will not thus wisely bethink him, and as grossly as Don Quixote mistook garlic-breathed wenches for Dulcineas, does he go on mistaking mist for water, and a mirage for a succulent harvest. Granted, that the immortal Knight is mad, we will not stand by and hear the Sanchos upbraid him with his madness. He is sublimely not vulgarly mad.

And what a gentleman he is, our dear delightful madman! Who does not look to have from him, in whatever encounter, courtesy and generosity? Who would not take his word as soon as his bond? Who would not trust wife and daughter and honor and purse to his keeping, and not feel that they were safe.

Cervantes in Don Quixote had no more direct design of drawing a gentleman than Shakspeare had in Prospero. Possibly, even with them, the pre-resolve would, in any such attempt, have frustrated itself and have weakened the execution, just as in real life the livelier colors of gentlemanhood pale before calculation or consciousness. In one of his later novels Scott attempted to embody a gentleman. The way to make one with the pen is the same as to make one out of flesh and blood. Take a warm, strong, true man, with arteries exquisitely red with sensibility, and let his rich instincts have the discipline of sharp self-culture working on outward trials, with so much opportunity for choice intercourse as is necessary for the play of the finer sympathies.

To work after this fashion with the pen requires high forgetive resources. Scott, genial and humane, fell short of this imaginative supremacy. Coleridge, with his feminine refinement and superb endowments, could have done it, had he not lacked will to execute a conception requiring sustained minute labor; or Shelley, except that in his mind there was a taint of morbidness; and the gentleman must be as healthy as a fir-tipt mountain-top. Wordsworth, with all his visionary percipience and thoughtful sensibility, wanted the concreting gift, and somewhat, too, the Christian glow; and thence he does not succeed at impersonation. Byron's nature was too animal and unnoble; and however in his higher moods he could have appreciated the disinterestedness of the gentlemanly essence, his thoughts could not have been kept of that pure hue, but would inevitably have become streaked with his native insuperable selfishness.

Aside from the creation of characters, which implies felicitous poetic power, the pages of some writers are pervaded by a chaste and generous spirit. This high-bred tone, the fruit evidently of unworldliness and superior truthfulness and sanctity, is especially noticeable, I think, in Spenser, in Coleridge, in Jeremy Taylor, in De Quincey, in Shelley. Its presence presupposes fineness in the texture of the brain, with cordiality and spontaneity of mind and modesty of nature. In others, equal in force and even truthfulness, it is not so observable; and is still less in the class of clever ambitious writers, in whom there is a restless aim at effect and immediate sensation, as in several of the popular living novelists, who are thence more or less tainted with vulgarity.

The genuine poet is *ex officio* a gentleman. In the proudest drawing-rooms of Europe the peasant Burns would have moved with untaught ease and propriety, the accepted mate of the highest born and the highest bred. Cowden Clarke, the friend of Keats, has a right to say of that superlative genius, that "had he been born in squalor he would have emerged a gentleman." And Shakspeare! what a genial, fascinating, graceful, radiant gentleman he must have been. His gallery of women proclaims him such as absolutely as the works of Raphael proclaim him a poet. Were ladyhood to be struck by some spiritual plague, and so vanish from the earth, it would find a sanctuary in the pages of Shakspeare, whence could be restored its most distinguished type. As rainbow and lightning in the sunny morning vapor, within the young abounding brain of Shakspeare lay tenderly unconsciously coiled the beauty and power of manhood and of womanhood, to unwind and shape themselves in his broadened, deepened years, permeating and vivifying the peopled Paradise he evoked, to be for his race a joy and a nourishment forever.

VIII.

THE MORAL AND THE POETICAL — THEIR ALLIANCE IN GENTLEMANHOOD — THE GENERIC — THE "LIBERAL" PROFESSIONS — IMPARTIALITY OF NATURE — MANNERS — LORD CHESTERFIELD.

WE will now descend from these altitudes, up to which we have been drawn by the necessities not less than by the attractions of our subject. The descent will not be sudden; for the æsthetic, or poetic, being a cardinal element in gentlemanhood, when the moral power, to which it and all else yields the chief place, ceases to act in its fullest force — as it does act in the transcendent few whom we have cited — the æsthetic, which in those few even was essential to their brilliancy, becomes more notable, and, among men of not predominant moral strength, gives superiority according to the measure of its presence. As the lives of Sidney and Bayard were poetry in action, so every gentleman is, according to his degree, a practical poet, the poetical manifesting itself, not in the beauty of verses, but in the beauty of conduct. In the poetic emanation there is a cleansing virtue which confers on him from whom it flows interior tone as well as outward lustre. An inward font of poetry keeps the mind agitated by its current, and thus purged of dross. If the font gets fouled by the neighborhood of base qualities, its flow slackens, (as has been strikingly shown in some poets), and the man slips from his height of gentlemanhood.

The alliance in gentlemanhood between the moral and the poetical is not accidental or temporary or superficial; it is essential and permanent — a union of absolute interdependence, an indissoluble intimacy, reciprocally grateful and indispensable. The moral needs the poetical for its full vivification and enlargement: the poetical, lacking the moral, is scanted in its best juices, and soon shrivels, and runs to coxcombry and affectation, if not into paralyzing vice and impoverishing selfishness. In short, gentlemanhood needs what all concomitants and constituents of civilization need, — a moral basis; without which basis civilization bears neither flowers nor fruit — nay, without which, civilization were not, and could not be.

In the majority of men the moral power is regulative not motive. Few are the Oberlins and Howards and Pauls. Men of sound natures are not all, like these ethical geniuses, impelled by the moral element, they are restrained by it; not driven, like them, into virtuous excesses, but withheld from vicious. Descended then from the heights where we have tarried so long, we find ourselves on an expansive level, — not by any means a dead level or a low, but a live level and a high, animated by numberless inequalities, and ranging above the flats of multitudinous humanity, — a broad plateau, in sight of and enclosed by the breezy, luminous heights already described, and large enough to give free movement to the eliminated crowd, who — claiming, and more or less possessing, the superiorities which, resting on a moral basis, are built up by æsthetic culture — constitute by general, tacit, and not always willing consent, the class of gentlemen, a class, the boundaries of which are not very definitely marked.

The gentlemanly always involves poetic culture, or — as in its lowest aspects — conformity to the results thereof, even if the culture show itself but superficially and outwardly. Faint or orient the spirit of beauty shines through the gentleman; and beauty always implies something that is neither circumscribed nor petty. Aristotle says, "Poetry is more philosophic, and more deserving of attention than history; for poetry speaks more of universals, history of particulars." And poetry, it may be added, deals with universals because its staple is feeling, which it illustrates and ennobles by a refined fidelity, a truthful exaltation. The gentleman (who never would have been were there not in the heart of humanity a craving for the beautiful, what we may term the poetic instinct) asserts his claim by signs of breadth — a breadth which is the result of susceptibility to the beautiful, wrought upon by commerce with the world; like a pebble on the beach, which gives evidence of having been rounded and smoothed by attrition with thousands of others, all mingled and shaken and rolled together by the heave of the limitless world of waters. As there are stones of so loose a substance as to be crumbled by the waves of the sea, or so rugged as to be incapable of smoothness, some men are crushed instead of being polished by the world's pressure, and some refuse to be polished; and the smoothed and rounded, unless in addition to evenness of texture they have a lasting preciousness of quality, will not be lifted up to sparkle in the crowns that begem the forehead of humanity, but will remain in the pile of shapely pebbles.

The generic being demanded in the gentlemanly character, the specific is a detraction therefrom. Thence, whatever is local or personal, provincial or professional, is inconsistent therewith, and, if not countervailed by a more than common individual breadth and æsthetic generosity of nature, will be fatal to one's pretension. The smell of the shop is not fragrant in the nostrils of gentlemanhood. The more petty and circumscribing the occupation, the more obstructive it is to the growth of gentlemanhood. Thence, the "liberal" professions and wholesale counting-rooms feed its ranks, which get little sustenance from the retail counter or the journeyman workshop, the limited routine of the latter implying contraction and belittling confinement of the faculties and aspirations. So, on the Continent of Europe — where feudal prescriptions have been invaded and disrupted, but by no means subdued — even the liberal professions and upper commerce are excluded from the highest circles; and that, not on account of blood, — for many of the socially best born drop, through weakness, out of these circles, — but because mercenary occupations are presumed to attaint the freedom and largeness and independence, which are the conditions of a high gentlemanhood. And this they surely do, unless their temptations are counteracted by individual nobleness and purity. The habit of acquisitive eagerness, of buying as cheap and selling as dear as possible, eats into the marrow of manliness; and overreaching and crafty trafficking are as incompatible with gentleman hood as perjury is with piety.

But what is best in humanity proceeding from an inward motion, and Nature not being partial, the gentleman springs up spontaneously in all circles, and at times with such an inborn equipment as to resist the crush of adverse circumstances. On the other hand, the righteous impartiality of Nature exhibits many of the externally most favored as impotent to profit by their privilege, the oldest escutcheons being tarnished at times with the stains of faithlessness and sycophancy, and now that gold is more than ever a necessary support to rank, the high-born showing themselves enthralled by its lusts, and drooping with the meannesses and falsehoods that attend an ignoble devotion to its possession; while behind the aprons of coarse labor we meet occasionally with traits of nobleness and refinement, that were lessons for him who has improved good opportunities, and that put to shame many an accidental gentleman.

I am casting too deep a line, peering too searchingly below the surface, it will be urged: manner and air go for so much in the gentleman. But manner and air — except in the counterfeit gentleman, who is soon detected — are due to what is inward. Habits of carriage are the fruit of habits of feeling. A man of low sentiments will betray ignobility, however tutored he may have been in polished schools; nor will the proudest pedigree insure the wearer of a ducal coronet against coarseness and foulness of nature and their infallible outward manifestation.

Good manners are so much a passport, that worldlings — especially those whose way has not been made for them, but who have to make it for themselves — cultivate them assiduously, school themselves with laborious watchfulness, and make themselves — the most tractable of them — so superficially proficient, as to climb by means of a fair outside with cat-like quietness and agility. Such men are not masters in manners: they are masters of the art of manners. They use manners to seem to be what they are not: they act manners. One of the best touchstones of the genuineness of gentlemanhood is the bearing of a man with inferiors. Turn one of these well-mannered, self-seekers into a hovel, and his silken speech and pliant guise drop from him as suddenly as his regal port does behind the scenes from the buskined king, or his cloak from the muffled villain; and the smiling, climbing time-server stands unkinged in ungentlemanly harshness and heartlessness. No man need or ought to comport himself to all persons at all times with one uniform style; but a true gentleman, (though not necessarily bounteous,) is never harsh and unfeeling, and has it for a law of conduct, to be uncivil to no one.

There is an easy self-possessed carriage, acquired (by the capable) through hereditary or habitual association with the well-bred, a supple conformity to, or rather, a genial concordance with, the demands of good-breeding, an unobtrusive polish, which denotes the man of the world, and is the armor of the gentleman, and is as much expected in refined drawing-rooms as washed hands and clean linen. And among men of a certain range of social commerce there exists a free-masonry, without compact or outward badge, whereby through subtle indications — lost upon the uninitiated — they at once accredit each other, and instantly feeling at ease, unbend, are communicative, and even, trivially, confidential. This subtle *rapport*, created by a life of familiarity with the higher social circles, consisting in a nameless tone, an indefinable presence, an indescribable, imponderable, æsthetic aura, is nevertheless a mere bond of outward rank, and binds so little intrinsically, that should two strangers, meeting on a journey, interchange silent mutual recognition of each other as members of this ancient, unmystical order, and thereupon establish harmonious conversational relations; and should one be a father and the other a bachelor of thirty, the father would no more intrust his daughter to the safe-keeping of his congenial new acquaintance than he would indorse his note, being well aware, that command of the *bienséances* and colloquial tone of good company, carrying though it does membership of a choice exclusive confraternity, and the select result of long social education, is yet so external, that it is no guarantee of honorable conduct or even of a persistent private good behavior; and that his velvety, well-mannered companion may possibly be a fugitive from deluded creditors, or a seducer of his friend's wife, who, moreover, should you cast a doubt upon his honor, would pistol you at ten paces.

We will prize good manners at their real worth, which is high, *when they are truthful*, when they faithfully represent what the heart is and wills. Good manners promise much: let the promise be fulfilled. If it is not, they are false manners, however good they may look. There is nothing hypocritical about the genuine gentleman, and the heartiest would rather have his outward mien below than above his interior self, and under no circumstances other than simple.

There needs no wide experience to learn, that a man, malleable and clever, with histrionic gifts, can put on good manners, and wear them with an air so original, that others than the dull-witted will be taken captive, not perceiving that they are imitative and cuticular. A man of this stamp plays his part well; but he is a social actor, not a gentleman. Nay more; in so far as through mannerliness he deceives, and compasses selfish ends, that are at times to others injurious or ruinous, he is more hateful than the ruder knave, who has not the art to get currency for his gilded brass. It is true, the gentleman is known by his manners, and this recognition is a homage; for it implies, that in his bearing there is neither effort nor artifice, and that his manners are but the polish of a fine grain, not a varnish to make the grain seem finer than it is, or to disguise a coarse. The gentleman is an æsthetic fruit on an ethic stem: if the stem be not ethic, the fruit, however sightly, bears no handling, and if eaten, proves to be bitter or poisonous.

Moreover, all men nowadays, even the most rustic, are by general civilization constrained to civility, and manners being oil to the wheels of worldly progress, a polished outside is almost as universal as are coats of fine broadcloth ; so that many a man is externally urbane who is not a gentleman, — wanting as well his subtle seemliness as his deeper trustworthiness,— though entitled to recognition for gentlemanlike deportment. And so much has to be accorded even to some who are base and slavish. But the gentleman has fresh impulses and original promptings, under which, guided by an æsthetic sense, he will strike through forms tougher than those of outward demeanor, and, not fearing responsibility, flash into acts of startling but captivating boldness. The gentleman feels his inward life with such fulness and vivacity, that he careers upon the furrowed sea of performance with triumphant power of resistance and self-direction. Your worldling may be a gentleman, but not of the first degrees: he is too much under outside dominion, and when most the gentleman is least the worldling.

Lord Chesterfield was a worldling-gentleman; and how surely the gentleman sinks when the worldling is in the ascendent his doings and counsel teach. Enforcing advice to his son by his own example, he tells him that on entering life, "my great object was, to make every man I met with like me and every woman love me;" that is, he abased the gentleman to satisfy the worldling. In any and every man it is of course commendable to desire the good-will of all other men; but to set about through art and outside to make himself liked — which does not even imply a grounded good will — by every one he talks to, is to be weak in that masculine self-respect which is a preponderating element in gentlemanhood. It is daily to practise the fraudulence of the demagogue in private intercourse, to become a bowing beggar of all passers for the small change of approbation. Look at another sample of paternal advice, bearing in mind that he to whom it is given was a boy of seventeen. "Make your court particularly, and show distinguished attention, to such men and women as are best at Court, highest in the fashion, and in the opinion of the public; speak advantageously of them behind their backs in companies who you have reason to believe will tell them again."

A man not of principles but of expedients, Lord Chesterfield strove to cultivate manners in his son as a means of worldly success, especially as an invaluable aid in the diplomatic career. "Even polished brass," he tells him, "will pass upon more people than rough gold." Add to this the following sentence, and we have the texts upon which were written most of *Chesterfield's Letters to his Son;* "The pleasures of low life are all of this mistaken, merely sensual and disgraceful nature; whereas those of high life and in good company (though possibly in themselves not more moral) are more delicate, more refined, less dangerous and less disgraceful; and in the common course of things, not reckoned disgraceful at all."

Chesterfield found the standard of gentlemanhood low, and he left it lower. His once famous Letters are now historical, constituting an instructive document on one province of English life, towards the end of the last century; but, fifty and forty years ago they were practical, and even in our country were put into the hands of young men by moral fathers, who had not read, but adopted them from their English fame; and gentlemanhood, which has since revised and rejected them as canon, is not yet entirely purged of the virus wherewith they poisoned it.

The failure of Lord Chesterfield in his cherished aim was even comical. The son grew up to be curiously deficient in what the father set so much store by. He was a man of sense and acquirement with common manners, and could not take a polish; and possibly for this he deserves respect, as besides æsthetic incapacity it may have indicated a native honesty of core. He was more the gentleman for his very plainness. At all events, not being born to be a graceful, winning man of the world, all his father's discipline and persevering pains could not make him one. An ancient king of Scotland, being under weighty obligation to an humble woman, offered to grant any favor she would ask. "Make my son a gentleman," exclaimed her true maternal heart. "I can make your son a nobleman: I cannot make him a gentleman," rejoined the king, uttering a deeper truth than he knew; for a man must be born a gentleman in a finer sense than the word commonly imports.

IX.

HONOR — PERSONALITY — PRIDE AND VANITY — FASHION — VULGARITY

INTO the texture of gentlemanhood the sentiment of honor enters integrally as a bracing constituent. In its healthy condition honor is the accompaniment and complement of noble individuality. The single man is vivified and straightened by a warm sense of independent self-subsistence, whereof honor is at once the offspring and the guardian, — a guardian as sleepless as the anxious maternal eye, as tender to every approaching breath as an aspen-leaf in June. Honor is not a virtue in itself, it is the mail behind which the virtues fight more securely. A man without honor is as maimed in his equipment as an accoutred knight without helmet. Honor is not simple truthfulness: it is truthfulness sparkling with the fire of a susceptive personality. It is something more than an ornament even to the loftiest; and Alfred and Washington had been incomplete without it. Originating in self-estimation, it yet gives no countenance to the pretensions of egotism, and differs as much from an inflated pride as a dignified self-respect does from the stiffness and cold-pokerism of self-conceit. One who deserves that it be fully said of him, that he is a man of honor, is one in whom uprightness is fortified by a keen sense of personal responsibility, and honesty is made graceful and stately by a spirited self-reliance.

The honor that Hotspur would "pluck from the pale-faced moon — or bottom of the deep," and that is the subject of Falstaff's catechism, is a synonyme of reputation — a something to be conferred by others, the creation of an outside opinion, in which sense the word is mostly used by Shakspeare, in the singular as well as the plural. That which can neither be conferred nor taken away, which is interior, and inviolate except by the owner, the refined essence of the noblest self hood, we now express by the word honor, which at the same time retains in certain relations the more external meaning.

As some of the best things become by perversion the worst,—their very virtues giving a virulent potency to poisons, the life-sustaining air itself carrying when foul the largest freight of death,—so honor, whose name is a promise of purity and elevation, is liable to such warp and debasement, as to be turned into a shield of vice and be forced to entwine itself defensively even around dishonor. The sovereignty of self, not duly tempered, grows despotic from narrowness and blind from despotism, and, mistaking its own will for light, decrees brown to be white and foul fair, half-believing its own decree. Men who have betrayed weighty trusts, and made shipwreck of honesty, cling with a wild, semi-dubious defiance to honor, or rather to the name, and challenge its protection, with the same right as a pirate would that of a great nation's flag that he had flung out from his topmast in the agony of defeat. Even the blackleg and the libertine strive by help of it to piece out their rags into a dress-suit, and boldly wielding the remnant of self-respect — which is divinely left, as a nest-egg of regeneration, even to the most abandoned — impose on many people with what Coleridge calls "the ghost of virtue deceased."

The point of honor is a shifting point, varying in fervor and changing its place, according to age and country. In the darker, less stable times it is most vivid, and has been especially sparkling and active among the "proud Spaniards," thus revealing, that it is hatched in the beetling eyries of pride. If too long and closely it haunts the rocky region of its birth, it grows fantastical and tyrannical and impracticable, and will lead him, who follows it too far, into ugly falls. Like the pharos-flame, it may help you through a night-tempest on a dangerous coast; but its sole function is, to apprise you where you are, leaving to your inward resources to work out a safety. If reason and principle are weak or overruled, not only will it have no power to save you, but a jack-o'-lantern will be taken for a beacon, and even honorable men — misled by the partialities and sinuosities of self — may be betrayed, by the very point of honor, into wrongfulness and crime.

Longer and more numerous than were the roads out of Imperial Rome, are the lines whereof a cultivated Christian is the centre, — lines that connect him with his neighbors and those mentally akin, and then, running to all corners of the civilized world, lose themselves in the infinite and eternal. He is a fixed centre, without definite circumference, but with radii innumerable, that are the chords whereon play the magnetic currents of life; and according to the messages which they carry or bring, are a man's gains or losses, joys or sorrows, improvement or declension, exaltation or humiliation.

His personality is the pivot of each man's life. By the qualities that have become associated with and the individuals who have most illustrated it, the term *gentleman* implies an elevated, purified personality, and therewith a constancy and manliness which, whether or not they be exhibited in government of others, import a steadfast command over one's self. The motions of a gentleman should be self-ruled with a smooth regality of will. These magnetic currents therefore should, on arriving to or issuing from him, be commingled with and controlled by a virile, individual virtue, which at once beautifies and intensifies their life. A healthy gentlemanhood makes of the heart a centre so vivid, that it throws off or consumes all hurtful influences.

We have called honor the essence of noble selfhood, a central feeling, sterling and subtle, that has its birth in self-regard, that looks solely to itself for worth and preservation. On the other hand, the word *honors*, in the plural, means a something that comes from abroad, that depends upon outward opinion and decision. A man of honor may not be a man of honors; though true to his best self, he may not be, nor desire to be, the object of conspicuous public consideration. His neighbor, though not a man of honor, has honors heaped upon him, achieving and valuing an outward reputation and its fruits. Well is it and significant, that one word expresses such diverse, even opposite, things, their union being needed to the consummation of character; for, a due regard for general opinion, a susceptibility to censure or approval, if inwoven with a full self-estimation, enlarges and supplies without weakening the individuality. Equilibrium between them produces a graceful strength, and the man is more comfortable to himself as well as to others of whom it is not said that he is proud or he is vain.

Pride isolates: vanity diffuses. Pride is self-satisfied: vanity reaches self-satisfaction through extraneous satisfaction. Pride is direct: vanity is circuitous. Pride can array itself in the dark: vanity must have a looking-glass. Pride gives his stately gait to the Arab: vanity puts paint on the tawny skin of the Sioux warrior, — and on the fair, feminine skin of tribes that live on the Hudson River. A product of vanity is Fashion, which is indeed a conglomerate of vanities, wherein is sparsely intermingled the grit and more often the scoria of pride.

Fashion, as the child of vanity, is fed on the transitive and showy, on superficialities and externalities. Fashion is a usurpation of the temporary over the enduring. It is idleness putting on the airs of occupation. It busies itself with the cut and color of clothes and furniture, with wrappages and teguments and redundancies, ever seeking, like its mother, to catch the eye with novelty and material glare. It is thus at points with beauty, which is modest and psychical, as it is with the true, which is unchangeable. It is often a rebel against grace and a distorter of nature, but for whose impregnable might and sleepless, restringent, unavoidable authority, it would break into intolerable aberrations and illegalities. Fashion and worldliness are inseparable twins; or perhaps it were more logical to regard their relation as voluntary, and call them a married couple,—the dashing adventurer, Worldliness, having, for a faster success, taken to wife the capricious, cajoling widow, Fashion, (relict of deceased Earnestness,) who submits to the yoke for the sake of the rule. At all events, the alliance between the two is so intimate and effective, that the worldly are the most watchful observers of and conformists to fashion, designing thereby to gain for themselves protection and consideration as the cheerfully submissive subjects of a powerful despot.

Fashion is sensuous, and so is doomed to an endless search of new stimulants, which leads to weariness and satiation, as these do to callousness and cynicism. A sexagenary of fashion is, from inherent sequence, hard and *blasé*. His best years have been sucked of their sweetest juices by the petulant fevers of levity and ostentation: the ingots of his manhood he has beaten into shallow gilding and fantastic trinkets. His look into old age is like that of a traveller, who, with his back to the green and growing fields, peers over a precipice into an extinct volcano; except that the traveller can turn round to enjoy again the freshness and flavor of life, while *he* has forfeited such liberty, and can only regain it through a heart-shaking, individual, moral revulsion, which shall rekindle in him the long-smothered flames of sympathy and faith.

The tyranny of fashion disheartens and perverts the best ladyhood and gentlemanhood: its predominance is a sign of spiritual weakness. For gentlemen to give way to it unto subjection, is a partial abdication of the social throne. Their part is, to rule, not to be ruled, — to rule quietly, imperceptibly, but not the less potently, over modes and socialities and æsthetic secularities, — to rule through inward, rightful empire, whereof demeanor is but a partial outward expression. Do they cease to be initiators and foremen, their rank is forfeited, and gentlemanhood, shaken in its uprightness and its independence, loses its prestige, and the social tone is lowered.

The good there is in things evil may be discovered to lie here in the drawing together, the feeling together, the acting together of a large multitude not otherwise in harmony. In the vast extension, in latter times, of the dominion of fashion, the thoughtful and hopeful may discern a wide, lively power of coöperation, preluding, as it were, in a superficial exhibition, for a deep beneficent display of associative virtue ; and even see a significant symbol in a monstrosity of apparel, interpreting the circumvestment of the globe with crinoline into a prefigurement of world-encircling intellectual and moral bonds.

The gentleman being genuine through inborn qualities well cultivated, is not imitable except in his surfaces, life not being imitable but only life's integuments ; and fashion dealing with perishable outsides, striving ever with a restless multitudinous effort to make appearance do the work of substance, becomes the parent of vulgarities. A gentleman may be disagreeable, he may be coarse on occasion, he may be rough, rude, even for the moment ungentlemanly, — so fallible are men, — but he cannot be vulgar. What is vulgar, — what is vulgarity ?

The opposite of beauty is ugliness ; but neither is ugliness of itself vulgar, nor he who is content with it. But when to a deficient sense of the beautiful is joined the pretension to possess it, there is a beginning of vulgarity, which blows out into full grossness when there follows a self-sufficient vainglorious display of the pretension. A man is vulgar, not because he has no sense of beauty in conduct or bearing, but because, not having any, he wishes ambitiously or ostentatiously to *seem* to have. Vulgarity thus consists in a pretentious, obtuse conceit: it is an attempt to be what from æsthetic deficiency one cannot be, accompanied by unconsciousness of the impotency, — a sort of open-eyed blindness that leads to the commission of numberless petty enormities. A man will spend half a million on pictures, and have a gallery of daubs. He is vulgar, not because he has bought bad pictures, — which he might do from indifference or misplaced benevolence, to assist incapable artists, — but because, not having a sense, and a cultivated sense, of beauty, from obtuseness he believes that he has, impelled by vanity to affect a sensibility which he has not.

There is no necessary connection between vulgarity and humbleness of birth. Day-laborers are even less liable to exhibit vulgarity than other classes, who, from their better worldly position are tempted to affect to be still higher than they are. The hard-working masses are too much straitened for affectation. Humbleness of station is, in choice natures, compensated by an elevating humility. Nature, moreover, has no more respect for our emblazoned dignities than a conflagration has for the title-deeds of a Barony. Out of a room full of Dukes and Earls, Charles Lamb would have been picked as the man of the whole company whose physiognomy, carriage, and speech most strongly illustrated the opposite of vulgarity. The intellectual sparkle of his countenance, clarified, transfigured, by a light ever flaming outward from the beautiful, was tempered by an expression drawn from moral depths, that told of tragic trials heroically withstood. The vulgar man's face is no tablet for recording aspirations and trials. His desires are gross, his ambitions worldly, his disappointments earthy.

Vulgarity implies shallowness of nature and therewith crudeness of performance, its chief domain being the more exposed phenomena of social life, which afford a field for the display of minor vanities and pretensions and impudences. The vulgar man is not civil, he is officious, and, from doltish indelicacy, is prone to meddling, and thus becomes at times offensive as well as ridiculous. Moderation, modesty, unobtrusiveness being characteristics of gentlemanhood, vulgarity shows itself in the contraries of over-doing and excess.

Over-dressing is vulgar, especially in women, for the glare of the sun-lit and eye-lit street. Toilets, even when tasteful as to color and style, denote, if habitually rich and showy, mental vulgarity, their transparent design being by superficial material means to impress the beholder. The refined beholder is unfavorably impressed, suspecting such outward richness (except on grand gala-days) to be the mask of inward poverty; and regarding simplicity of dress in the wealthy as a promise of wealth in resources of heart and head. In individual instances he may err on either side, but a prevalent fashion of costly dressing is a sign of general vulgarity. The finest type of ladyhood would recoil offended from her mirror at seeing herself besilked and befeathered and bejewelled for a morning walk or drive. *She* will be as simply elegant in her attire, in doors or out, as in her manners; will not exhibit, either in the one or the other, the slightest effort to outvie her neighbors; will show her mind, and will charm, by the tasteful selection and combination of refined materials, and weakens not her native dignity and personal attractiveness, by the costliness or showiness of her raiment. In her apparel will be expressed the modesty and chasteness of her nature, and she will blush to be obliged, (which no lady should allow herself to be,) to conform to the fashion of very "low dressing,"—an exposure, the immodest purport of which "jumps into the eyes" of the spectator at a Paris *Bal Mabile.*

Natures there are so gross and egotistic and unspiritual, that even a sense of beauty (shown, however, in the material and fugitive) cannot save them from vulgarity; as if to bear witness — and the more emphatically because exceptionally — that the foundations of all best manhood rest on the moral.

A large proportion of vulgarity is negative; that is, in the demeanor there is no ambitious effort, which makes conspicuous the æsthetic obtuseness, but this obtuseness and want of social culture become transparent through juxtaposition with refinement. The individuals do not actively, eagerly affect to be what they are not; but yet, being where, from obvious deficiency, they are out of place, there is, by their mere presence, a *seeming* to be what they are not, and thus is fulfilled the chief condition of vulgarity. Some people may be said to be modestly vulgar.

In language vulgarity shows itself, not so much in the use of coarse or inappropriate words or of low or uneducated phrases, as of such as denote a falling from the refined standard through æsthetic incapacity. Vocally to add an *h* to monosyllables or polysyllables beginning with a vowel, or to interchange *w* and *v*, is a grievous lapse from the elocution of the English tongue, betokening lack of sensibility to the beauty and proprieties of speech. Persons guilty of these oral crimes are unconscious of having committed any breach of law; but this unconsciousness, evincing æsthetic hebetude, is the essence of the vulgarity. These and similar vices in phrase or elocution are endurable in Fleet Street or Smithfield Market, where the mind's verbal utterances are curtailed and despoiled by the gross simplicity of its needs and the maiming routine of its work; but when in a drawing-room of Mayfair or Belgravia they assail the ears of a scholarly gentleman, he experiences a distressful shock, and his first motion is to treat the culprit as the "conductor" treats a passenger without a ticket. Luminous atmosphere brings out vulgarity, as varnish the lights and shadows of a picture.

X.

VARIOUS KINDS OF GENTLEMEN — FRAGMENTS — LADYHOOD — CONCLUSION.

WHAT is so deep and so alive with principle and power as gentlemanhood will, in the multiplicity of its combinations with action, exhibit itself in a vast variety of personal and social phenomena, modified endlessly by individualities. A brief characterization of some of the embodiments thus thrown up on the social surface will help to illustrate the principle — illustrations which are partial and limited, and must by no means be taken for an attempt at a full classification of gentlemen, — an attempt, the success whereof were very problematical, and which is altogether too ambitious for our present purpose.

First then we will name the *conservative* gentleman, — but the crowd of gentlemen "who" dress "with ease" are conservative, jealous of encroachment, suspicious of change.

The gentleman has not necessarily a big brain, and we once read an apt description of an individual, as having a smallish, well-shaped, gentlemanly head. Were there not now and then a big brain amongst them, the whole company would shrivel; while, on the other hand, some who are not of the largest intellectual calibre are lifted into the advocacy of great causes and great changes by generosity and courage of nature, like Mathieu de Montmorenci and Lafayette, two shining examples of gentlemanhood, — select compatriots of Coligny and Bayard.

The *conventional* gentleman, a stickler for forms and conformity, somewhat stiff and set, is apt to be timorous, and thence overrates the past and distrusts the future. He magnifies the quiet deeds of the drawing-room, together with the whole social apparatus of visiting, small talk and various dressing; thinks punctilios terrestrial pivots; prefers the superficial to the profound, not being adventurous enough to learn, that it is as easy to swim in deep water as shallow, — nay, easier.

The *excitable* gentleman is a variety uncomfortable at times to himself and to others, his irrepressible, nervous vivacity running over, like the steam that noisily escapes from the lid of a teapot. An essential, almost a condition, of gentlemanliness being self-possession, he finds himself frequently on the edge of a momentary forfeiture of his rank.

A variety more to be pitied is the *dyspeptic* gentleman, he being subject to constant self-reproaches and contritions from minor breaches of the *convenances*, through petulance and crossness caused by bodily *malaise.*

The *idle* gentleman, not having within himself wherewith to feed his mind, comes upon the town (your gentleman about town) and has to be mentally supported by the community.

The *retrospective* gentleman is a subvariety of the conservative; or, we might say, a supervariety, seeing that, in the tenacity of his conservatism, he becomes a scoffer and denier of the present. Each new day steals upon him like a thief, who comes to purloin something of the precious past. As the waves of time roll in from the menacing future, he ever dreads an inundation; and standing with his back scornfully turned towards the encroachment, and his eyes half-closed, the better to hold the mental images of the irrecoverable past, and his ears untuned, except to the songs of bygone joys, he is liable to get individually swamped by the surges that bring refreshment and vigor to all around him. Striving to draw fragrance and nourishment out of memories and preterperfect imaginations, he walks through the present as a fine lady through a malodorous alley.

The *eccentric* gentleman, when not a man of wit or genius, must at least be of more than common cleverness. An eccentric fool or mediocrity will not be tolerated. The eccentricity of a gentleman is the humorous enjoyment of the freedom which is the privilege of spiritual superiority. Were all men as free as he, there would be no eccentricity, each pursuing his individual path without disturbance of other orbits, all being concentric about a remote predominant power.

The *courteous* gentleman sounds like a pleonasm. But all gentlemen are not courteous, nor is courtesy a profound quality of gentlemanhood. Courtesy, originating at courts, implies a dignified, respectful, high-bred manner, acquired in an atmosphere of ceremony; and is thus rather self-regardful and self-protective than kindly, — stately and proud, rather than gentle and winning. The high-bred man is not necessarily the best-bred man, and a genial gentleman is a finer type than a courteous. Indeed courtesy is comparatively conventional and superficial.

The type of the *superfine* gentleman is given by Hotspur in his description of "a certain lord, neat, trimly dressed, fresh as a bridegroom," who questioned him, smarting from wounds, with "holiday and lady terms." He looks as though he had just been rubbed all over with pumice. You would say that for his toilet the milliner had been called in to help the tailor. His laugh is only an audible smile; his breath is too precious for speech much louder than a whisper; and a strong epithet grates on his nerves like profanity on the ears of a pious woman.

To speak of the *pushing* gentleman is a semi-solecism; but in treating of gentlemen, it becomes us to use liberally the gentlemanly virtues of tolerance and forbearance. Having the essentials, we can put up with aberrations that do not deaden them, inconsistencies that are not so trenchant as to be chaotic, and partial infringements. Let not, therefore, a gentleman be cashiered for being on unfrequent occasions a *little* pushing.

The evil in men is so neighbored by good, — and often by a kind and degree of good least looked for, — that, learning charity from a discriminative experience, we find the judgment will miscarry, even in what is such a product of beauty practically cultivated as the gentleman, if we judge without a considerate tolerance; while with this, we shall sometimes have the pleasant surprise of detecting a gentleman in a man who blows his nose with his fingers, or wills his fortune to his wife during widowhood.

In the evolution of a strong, rich subject, fragments will be thrown off that exhibit its inmost grain, and thus serve, as well as what has been smoothly incorporated, to elucidate it; and, having issued from the mind of the writer when in warm vibration, help that of the reader to give clearness and completeness to the image he draws out of the pages before him. Some such fragments, that seem best fitted for this end, we here insert.

The polish of a gentleman is a refined effect from within, as different from the servile accommodations of fashion, or the unctious lubrications of worldliness, as the gloss on the cheek of healthful innocence is from the cosmetics of vanity. The word polish does not rightly characterize the condition, which is an effluence, a perpetually renewed freshness and fragrance, whereof the subject is as unconscious as the pine-tree of its perfume.

Manners should be more felt than seen: they depend for their excellence as much on what is not done or said as on what is. The man of the best manners has no thought of his manners, nor do you perceive that he ever has had, so perfect in him is the marriage between nature and discipline. His manners are not put on with his dress-coat: they are ingrained, and are spontaneous, like his talk.

A gentleman is cleanly and comely, all his outward, of dress, bearing, and speech, betokening simplicity and inward cleanliness. Gaudy or flashy apparel suggests, if it does not denote, interior flimsiness or meretriciousness, which is a deduction from gentlemanhood. The artificial becomes not the gentleman, who, if he wears a wig, wears it for use, not for show, as Washington wore false teeth.

In a hearty gentleman there are no littlenesses. The minor details of his life are not mean: they are petty, not pitiful. In order that he seem large, distance and ceremony are not needed. He *is* a hero to his *valet de chambre*, if he happens to have one. Nay, he is a gentleman to himself.

The gentleman is not too subjective: he is able, and likes, to go out of himself, and see things as they are, unrefracted by his particular desires or prepossessions, surveying them with indulgence. The man who forever hugs his own conclusions, is but a beggarly gentleman.

The gentleman is, above all things, free. A slave, therefore, he must not be to things any more than to persons, not to conventionalities or fashions any more than to kings or patrons. He is first of all a man, and to be a man he must be a freeman, above voluntary subservience. Through involuntary servitude the gentleman shines undimmed, as did Cervantes through his Algerine chains. In presence of the grandeurs of the world he is as unmoved as a Mohawk, and dines from dishes of gold or talks to a king without constraint.

Every gentleman will not always be above selfishness, and, from their aggregate qualifications, men may bear unchallenged the choice appellation, who will at times use their opportunities for their own advantage. But a gentleman will be negatively rather than positively selfish. He may dine oftener than one with disinterested digestion would on capon and Burgundy; but he will not rob a hen-roost.

A gentleman may brush his own shoes or clothes, or mend or make them, or roughen his hands with the helve, or foul them with dye-work or iron-work; but he may not foul his mouth with a lie, — he must not lie, he need not lie, even in the year 186–.

There is no sinister or even wayward shifting in the true gentleman. You know where to have him. He is sensitive to the pressure of responsibilities. The sense of dutifulness elevates his conduct into serious activity.

Although not demanded for his qualification, generosity amplifies the gentleman. But men wanting in spiritual liberality, who are not ready with acknowledgment of merit, who make of envy a bosom-companion, whose approbation is centred in themselves, are but halting, laggart, niggardly gentlemen. Admiration and reverence are uplifting elements in gentlemanhood.

His gentlemanhood is finally judged, not by what a man has by possession or inheritance or opportunity, but by what he *is*.

The gentleman is fine in his delicacy, wounds no one's sensibilities, asks neither intrusive nor unfeeling questions, is never over-curious or interrogative, carries unselfishness into small, daily things, giving kindliness to common acts and sincerity to politeness.

A gentleman of the best type is habitually accommodating and considerate, prompt for petty service as well as capable of large. In his heart there is a central tenderness which is ever percolating in lively streams to the surface, making his demeanor sympathetic and welcome. The refined generosity, the spontaneous unselfishness, that characterize the gentleman of the purest type, were illustrated with beautiful originality in the practice of an eminent Frenchman, who forty years ago was Minister from France to the United States, and who afterwards filled high official posts at home under the elder Bourbons, — M. Hyde de Neuville. In the streets of Paris he had the habit of offering his umbrella to the first woman he met without one in the rain. His name and address, distinctly printed on the edge of the silk, he pointed out to the surprised grateful recipient. M. de Neuville said that, often as he had thus lent his umbrella to strangers, in no single instance had there been a failure to return it, — another proof how trust will beget honesty.

The gentleman will have an educated face; not that we are to see on his forehead the sprouting of Greek roots or the shooting of mathematical lines, but from his countenance will beam a tranquil light, kindled from a long inward interplay of thought with refined feelings, and fanned by breaths from without that have passed over fields well set with the finer fruits and flowers of life. His visage is a mirror which, having the capacity to reflect gentle and beautiful forms and images, shows that it has often fronted them.

The gentleman, being a product of emotional refinement, must breathe, in order to keep his freshness, an atmosphere not entirely uncongenial to him. Sir Philip Sidney could not have preserved all his gentlemanly lustre, if, on returning from his travels, he had been obliged to consort daily and intimately with the frequenters of Lombard Street.

So free should be the gentleman's thought, so authoritative his inward over his outward, that he should possess all things as not possessing any. He claims to be better than the crowd about him. To approve his claim, he must strive upward ever, must keep bettering himself, like Prospero; and thus he may attain to something of Prospero's magical power.

What a classic is among books a thorough gentleman is among men, — precious metal finely wrought. Between his mind and his manners, — the inward and outward, the spirit and form, — there is a graceful consonance, the result of proportion and discipline, the texture being of that high quality which admits of and invites delicate manipulation.

A community or people that cannot produce and maintain gentlemen, is doomed to a sapless mediocrity.

The gentleman is grounded on a Christian basis of manly individualism, irradiated by susceptibility to the beautiful in feeling and conduct, which susceptibility has the virtue to draw him out of himself, stimulating those powers in him which lift a man into the broad and universal.

Deep are the conditions, slow the preparations for the planting and maturing of the most precious things. Hundreds of centuries were silently consumed ere the gases of the seething earth could be purged and rarefied to be fit to feed the life of a being so subtly organized as man. Centuries of Christian culture precede the permanent production of a class of gentlemen, whose existence presupposes the transmitted discipline of many generations. The gentleman has a long line of ancestors, — not necessarily his bodily, but his mental progenitors. From all classes spring individuals with such delicate affinities, that without family affiliations they grow quickly into membership and even leadership of the choice class, having in their temperament a capacity to absorb and assimilate the emanations of gentlemanhood.

In these latter "fast" days, especially in confident hurrying America, men are all eager to *be* something, everything, without going through the process of *becoming* it; as though they could overleap the universal law of growth, — as though we could know much without having learnt much. I once heard an eminent American say, that our country is full of people who wish to be gentlemen; — a most creditable ambition assuredly. But for the most part they set about compassing their wish by easy, gross, and most barren monetary means, instead of striking into the only path that leads to its attainment, — a patient cultivation of the finer and better sensibilities and a severe, unremitting self-culture.

We have said little of ladyhood, because it runs side by side with gentlemanhood. But ladyhood is a something of still finer quality, woman's sensibilities being more tender, her aspirations more generous, her whole nature more diffusely and delicately dyed with beauty. Her being is spiritualized by the holiness of the maternal function. The bride's love and the mother's love sweeten and elevate her needs and occupations. From her greater mobility, impressibility, pliability, she has more tact and gracefulness, and takes a polish more quickly, her demeanor being further burnished by her readiness to please and to be pleased. Sensitiveness and susceptivity, which are such rapid educators, are more native and necessary to her than to her companion; while on the other hand, being so impressible and suscipient, she is even more exposed than he to be influenced, and so it may be, to be defiled or discolored, by the circumstances and agencies immediately around her. Her purity and modesty — without which she is a distempered joy, a flavorless fruit, a leafless paradise, a baffled expectation — are a treasure upon whose security depends that of all the best possessions of social life, and among these, ladyhood, with its inculpable spells, its profitable attractions, its sanatory fascinations.

From the greater ductility, the livelier æsthetic educability of women; from the comparative seclusion of their walks of life, their only partial participation in the general coarse money-scramble, they spending the gold which their fathers and husbands have gathered, — in exchange often for their souls, — ladies are in any given community more numerous than gentlemen. In Europe American women are socially much more successful than American men, bringing into the circles into which they may be admitted, sensibilities better cultivated, as well as quicker to appropriate the finer usages of an old traditional society. From the same causes, of that prosperous class, comically called "Beggars on horseback," a minority will be found to ride on side-saddles.

A few compendious paragraphs, and our essay is ended.

The gentleman is never unduly familiar; takes no liberties; is chary of questions; is neither artificial nor affected; is as little obtrusive upon the mind or feelings of others as on their persons; bears himself tenderly towards the weak and unprotected; is not arrogant, cannot be supercilious; can be self-denying without struggle; is not vain of his advantages, extrinsic or personal; habitually subordinates his lower to his higher self; is, in his best condition, electric with truth, buoyant with veracity.

Gentlemanhood is not compassed by imitation, because inward life is not imitable; nor is it purchasable, because refinement cannot be bought; nor, but partially inheritable, because nature discountenances monopolies. It is not superficial, its externals being the tokens of internal needs, its embellishments part and parcel of its substance. Akin to architecture and poetry, as having its source in use and truth sublimated by beauty, its adornments, like those of a chaste cathedral or a high epic, are congenital with its essence, out-flowings from its inmost, captivating symmetries, that are captivating and symmetrical because they are the exuberant utterance of an inward grace, — a living effluence, not the superadditions of effort and calculation and vanity. The gentleman makes manliness attractive by seemliness: he exemplifies, in the words of

Sidney, "high thoughts seated in a heart of courtesy."

In all intercourse no armor is so becoming and so protective as a gentlemanly demeanor; and when we think, how intimate, diversified, unavoidable, indispensable, how daily and hourly are our relations with our fellow-men, we cannot but become aware, how much it concerns us, for our pleasure and our profit, and for a deeper satisfaction, to be affable and gentlemanly, and arm ourselves with a bearing that shall be the expression of self-respect, purified by respect for others.

Stripped of all that is adventitious and conventional, there is in the word gentleman, a lofty ideal, which may be, and is, more or less realized in the conduct and carriage of individuals; and which finds expression, not through mere shallow civility and verbal politeness, but through a gentle, kindly bearing in all intercourse, the outward mark of inward fellow-feeling. From this cordial sentiment spring blossoms and flowers of spiritual beauty, that are captivating ornaments to the person, and exhale an atmosphere of refinement and tenderness, wherein the harsher self is soothed into disinterestedness and devotion.

At the root of gentlemanhood, in a soil of deep, moral inwardness, lies a high self-respect, — not the pert spoiled child of individual self-estimation, — but a growth from the consciousness of illimitable claims as an independent, infinite soul. The gentleman is a Christian product.

His high exemplar is He, who delivered the precept, as fresh as, since him, we know it to be vast and deep and true, — *whosoever would reign, let him serve,* — proving its sublime force, by establishing, through such service as has never elsewhere been seen, a reign, to which the sway of all the kings that have been crowned on the earth is empty and theatrical; who from the deeps of one heart poured a love so warm and divine, that it became for mankind a consecration; who up to his resplendent solitary summit, far above all thrones and principalities, carried a humility so noble, a sympathy so fraternal, that he looked down upon no man, not even a malefactor; who rebuked the arrogant and upraised the lowly; by the spiritual splendor of whose being the ages are lighted upward forever; who in his manly tenderness, his celestial justice, stretched forth a hand that lifted woman to her equal place; who to his disciples, and by them through all time to all other men that shall be truly his disciples, gave his peace, *that peace which the world cannot give;* in whose look and word and action were supreme dignity and beauty and charity, and infinite consolation; of whom "old honest Deckar" says, —

> "The best of men
> That ere wore earth about him was a sufferer,
> A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
> The first true gentleman that ever breathed."

THE END.

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