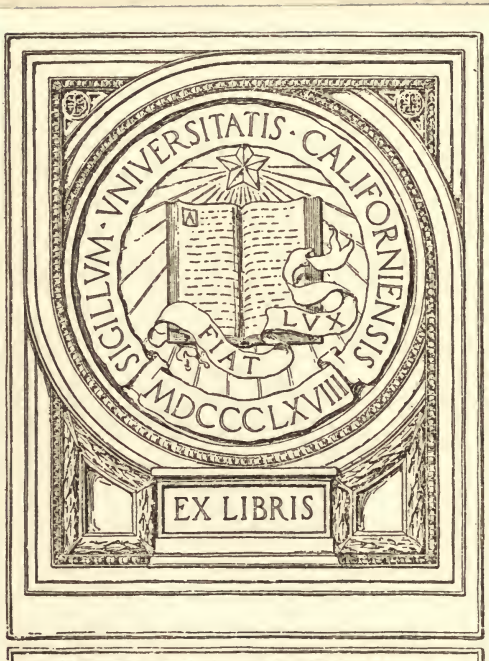
STUDIES

BY

RICHARD MALCOLM JOHNSTON



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STUDIES,

LITERARY AND SOCIAL:

BY

RICHARD MALCOLM JOHNSTON.

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PREFACE:

This volume has been made partly out of selections from a series of Class Lectures at the Peabody Institute, in Baltimore, and partly from articles contributed to several American Reviews during the last twenty years. Written in the intervals of business engrossments, they lay no claim to very earnest thoughtfulness, but are merely running observations upon several subjects of literary and social interest, and are submitted to the public with whatever degree of modesty may be regarded consistent with such submission at all.

Baltimore, September 1891.

CONTENTS.

THE SCHOOLMASTER.

PROFESSIONAL men are generally representative. The priest and the magistrate, born and reared among the people, are like the constituency which has elevated and which sustains them. To this rule the Schoolmaster is an exception.

Not but what there are many—and we could wish there were more, who truly dignify their calling, grace the society in which they move, and worthily represent its love of knowledge, as the priest does its love of virtue, and the magistrate its love of justice. We are not speaking of these, however, but of the general class; and taking them as a class, it were indeed a pity for society if they did represent it. Rather, it is a pity for society that in this case, as in many others, it will not suffer itself to be represented, but is ever taking pains to avert such an odium. Whenever the schoolroom has a new accession from society, the latter for a while regards him with whatever of interest there may be in a sort of kindly regret. Not that it is going to cut his acquaintance; but that it foresees and fore-ordains that, if not at once, at some not

very distant day, he is to take on a new being, different from its own. Dr. Arnold used to say that a man could not teach successfully more than about fifteen years. This seems strange upon the first view; but it seemed to him to be allowing full time for a man of good gifts to become disqualified for the very business which he has been arduously pursuing.

Yet the Schoolmaster is no more independent of society than other men. He is just such an official as society desires him to be, and as it requires him to be. He is the same functionary everywhere, being, in his *class* representation, contemporary with all times, dwelling in all countries. Freemasonry, with all its traditions of antiquity, is young, compared with the Schoolmaster. For, Freemasonry nobody asserts to be older than Solomon's time; while the Schoolmaster, such as we are considering, was already an old man and set in his ways before Solomon was born. Primitive society made him what he was, and its posterity has kept him such ever since. In this ever-changing world, society has always seemed to desire to keep something which does not and cannot change; and they have it by their own creation in the Schoolmaster. He is like the Wandering Jew, who, though ever roaming up and down, and ever weary and forlorn, must continue to be the same old fellow, from the covering on his head down to the very nails in his shoes.

It is too subtle a matter to be determined why society desires in such a case to have itself so misrepresented. There is probably no man living, and no man once living, now dead, who could satisfactorily explain this phenomenon. It is to be regretted that Solomon did not leave us a few droppings of his wisdom upon the subject. As, if the claim of Lodge be good, he had time to set up Freemasonry, one would think that he, or at least he and Hiram together, might have founded one good common school. But, so far as we know, he did not venture upon even an opinion—at least any written opinion. He may have alluded cursorily to the schools of his time in some witching moment of confidence, and lamented with a few friends the uselessness of any attempts at the reformation of such a specimen of the vanities of life. But he put nothing upon paper. Let us not seek to solve what was too difficult for Solomon, and without considering *why* society has made the Schoolmaster what he is, let us contemplate him as he is, and, in as good humor as possible, muse upon the hopelessness of his ever changing, without the consent of society, either his character or his ways. Then we may conclude by asking for this consent, and suggesting that if it is ever to be granted, it is high time, for other sakes besides society's, that it were granted now.

When we consider the length of time for which

our youths are trusted to this class of persons for the development of their intellects, and very often, especially where they reside with their teachers, for the formation of their characters, we ought, it would seem, to conclude that, if such a thing were possible, they should be at least up to the level of ordinary intelligence, honesty and gentility. In the matter of the first of these qualifications, so far as concerns one of the sources of knowledge, there is no occasion for great complaint, if any person should be inclined, even for reasonable cause, to complain at all. The Schoolmaster is not usually without sufficient acquaintance with books; that is, with text-books, in the ordinary *curricula* of schools. He knows them, and he knows them by heart. He can tell you the very page, the very number of the problem, or the section. If he have the gift of imparting, and (what is difficult to avoid) if he do not lose that gift by the very habit of using it, a boy may be carried successfully through these text-books in reasonable time. We must, therefore, not fall out with the Schoolmaster for the want of a sufficient intelligence of books. We must do him justice as we go along, and the more especially because, getting his bad qualities from ourselves, he gets this one good in spite of ourselves. Yes, with his text-books, he is entirely at home. Take him in Arithmetic. He is perfect. He knows from units, tens,

thousands, through and through, past the Men working on the Wall, past the Hare and the Greyhound, past the Horseshoe, and down to the very last page where the hunter is pointing his gun with unerring precision at the squirrel that sits so perpendicularly on the tip-top end of the tip-top leaf of the tree. Take him in grammar. He is familiar with everything from *what is your name?*, and *what is the name of the State in which you live?*, to those remote regions which none but he and the man who made the book have the temerity to explore. Take him in Geography. He has it all from the Capital of the United States, down to the most nasal or the most sneezy of names borne by the most insignificant and squalid of Chinese or Russian villages. A mere man of the world might better not encounter him on Arithmetic, Grammar and Geography. He has been over that ground so many thousands of times that he can go over it by night as well as by day, backwards as well as forwards, walking or running.

But we are to remember that instruction, to be just and complete, must come from other sources besides books, especially text-books. Let us see how this interesting person will appear now. Not to advantage, we fear. After some years of travel on this beaten track, which, though not large, is endless because it is round, he is apt to lose his

way, or move in gyrations whenever he gets upon another. He finds it to be thus full soon: besides, he meets so many persons who obstruct yet further his difficult journeyings by smiles or stares, that, being a modest, not to say a sheepish man, he gets himself speedily back again to the old ring where there are no hindrances to walk or run. In process of time his estrangement from society, and his attachment to his faithful ring increase to such a degree that, in the last stages of dementation, he may be found sometimes, even upon a Saturday morning, gathering entertainment from reading Mr. Smith's English Grammar. Call upon him on such a morning. Suppose you begin a conversation on History. He thinks you mean Mr. Peter Parley, a harmless man in his way, but perhaps somewhat prone (and this is why our friend likes him) to dwell upon such events as the finding of a kettle at a place where some parties had camped over night, or a couple of Plymouth gentlemen passing a night in walking around a forest-tree, embarrassed by apprehensions of being devoured by the wolves, or having their toes bitten by the frost. As conversation *must* take a diversion, let it be to literature. He is acquainted with so much eloquence and poetry as he finds in School Readers, and like Omar, he believes all outside of this Koran to be either irrelevant or merely superabundant. Take him into politics. No, do

not take him *there*. We have all, all but he, in one way and another, had enough of them; and they have so nearly ruined us that we will not take him into them at all. He knows who is President of the United States, perhaps who is Vice President. He probably knows or suspects yet further that there are thousands upon thousands of other persons of various complexions who desire, and who hope to be Presidents hereafter; and if he cannot tell who of all these are to have their desires and hopes fulfilled, no more can we. So we will leave him alone in politics, and remove ourselves to another point of observation. One more look. There he is with his Arithmetic, his Grammar, his Geography, his Parley and his Reader. How thoughtfully his brow contracts as his eye falls upon the first! How serenely those eyes smile upon the second! How widely they dilate over the third! How meaningly they close on the fourth! How they brighten into enthusiasm on the fifth! Ay, these are his treasures, his loves, his household gods. They are all he has. They are all we desire him to have. They are all we allow him to have. There, that will do. Leave him among them. Keep, and caress, and adore them, good man. You are free from molestation, because you are not in the way of envy.

Let us consider next how the Schoolmaster will exhibit himself in the matter of common honesty.

Being a mere man, it would seem that in this regard he ought to come to the average of men in other pursuits. Possibly he should rise a little above that average, considering that he is a sort of exemplar in morals, and considering further the trifling sums there are to tempt him. If we would consent, it is probable that the Schoolmaster might grow to be an uncommonly honest person. But as we will not so consent, let us see how he can endure an investigation.

First, it must be conceded that the Schoolmaster must live:—that is, he has the right to live — if he can. It is a somewhat interesting question whether or not a man has not the right to live at all events until his time come to die, provided he become not guilty of any one of those great crimes for which death comes under sentence of the law. It is certain at least that the Schoolmaster has his needs like other men. There was reason in Shylock's interrogatories, and they may well be put by the Schoolmaster. 'Hath he not eyes? hath he not hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions, fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is?' Such arguments are difficult to refute. We repeat that the Schoolmaster must live, and that he will live — if he

can. If he have made up his mind not to commit suicide outright, he is going to live in spite of all society's attempts to kill him. Not that society wishes to kill: far from it. On the contrary, it desires to keep him for many purposes; possibly one being to have a constant reminder of how far economy may be carried, and upon how little an adult person may learn to subsist and yet look respectable. But the difficulty here is that he believes society *does* wish to kill him; and consequently, still like Shylock, he is disposed to take 'his sufferance by Christian example.'

Now there is no business upon earth, except probably that of a plumber, wherein it is so easy to cheat upon a small scale as that of keeping a school — especially a boarding school. That one word *Incidentals*, for instance. Oh how many little pickings, and artful dodgings and inexplicable items are included in that one word! Broken windows, scratched desks, fuel, brooms, putty, paint, brushes, chalk, nails, andirons, bricks, shovels, brickbats, tongs, scrub-brushes, holes — holes in the floor, holes in the benches, holes all over the house, more bricks, more putty, more brick-bats, more holes! Then there is stationery. Perhaps it is best not to enter upon the subject of stationery. It is so extensive, so ramified, so mysterious, so complicated with other matters, and it so complicates the Schoolmaster

with other persons, that one might get lost in the wanderings of this labyrinth. There is, however, no danger of such a fate to the Schoolmaster. He understands the innumerable meshes of this attenuated net-work of charges and profits as thoroughly as a spider can traverse, without adhesion or entanglement, the web that hangs invisible to the world of winged insects. It is amazing to all but him what a multitude of books a boy may find it necessary to purchase in a comparatively brief period. Three or four studies, pursued at the same time, were quite sufficient, one would suppose, for a pupil, even one of the highest capacity. They are too many for an ordinary man. But your schoolboy will have his six, and his seven, and his eight, and sometimes his nine. Why bless you, he will have within the space of a year three or four different books for every one of these studies. There will be his Primary, his Common School, his First Course, his Second Course, his Third Course. Discoveries will be constantly made that these books are not as good as they might be, and new ones will be brought in. Or new editions of old ones are issued with changes appertaining mostly to the paging. We, the parents of such boys, are so easily persuaded that their powers are prodigious, and the velocity of their development immeasurable, that we think it economy to purchase (from the school-

master or his friend) every year for our boys of fourteen, as many books as are got by an Oxford or a Heidelberg student throughout his whole University course. The profits on these books, being from twenty to forty per cent., a man who is determined to make a living can lay up something which will buy bread and butter for a much longer period than most persons suppose. It is surprising to what an aggregate petty contributions will amount in the lapse of time. The rat, for instance, is but a small beast; but being an industrious, and withal determined to live as long and as comfortably as possible, we all know what an accumulation of things of all sorts he can store away in his hole by his everlasting thefts, day and night, of the small odds and ends. The scamp will build his house in your house, make his bed from the cotton and hair taken from your bed, one thread at a time, and in spite of your traps and dead-falls, arsenic, terriers and cats, will make you furnish him, not only with bread and meat, but with sugar and cake, and all the other luxuries and delicacies that you purchase for yourself.

But incidentals and stationery are not the Schoolmaster's only, or his greatest speculations. Nobody knows better than he, the art both of saving his labor and of spreading it over a wide surface. Society has, somehow, obtained the notion that he does not care much about the amount of work he has to

do,— at least during the time that he is actually engaged in it. In this, society is simply mistaken. The Schoolmaster has this weakness in common with society. He not only does not love his work, but, like all reasonable men who properly understand the original curse, he hates it. And now, this person knows how to dodge his work at least as well as any other person, whatever be his occupation or complexion. The way in which this art is practised, makes it appear to be not only the acme of ingenuity, but — if we might be allowed the term — of paradoxicality. The hard work in the keeping of a school is mainly expended in the efforts to make every pupil perform his own work. This is the Schoolmaster's chiefest and most arduous task. To go along by the side of every one, the gifted and the dullard, the active and the crippled, to lay off the tasks of all according to their several capabilities and aptitudes, and to see that the main work in every task is done by him to whom it has been assigned. Yet, these tasks are usually so small on account of the levity and indocility of boys, and they appear so much smaller to the Schoolmaster who has been over them his thousands of times, and then he so well knows the credulity of parents, their pride and their impatience, that he will take upon himself the labor which the majority of boys will not, without compulsion, themselves perform. While

there are few things that require more labor than to keep a school and see that all the pupils accomplish their own proper tasks, there is nothing that requires so little as to keep a school and perform those tasks one's self.

It is a matter of wonder why so many boys of good talents, the sons of men of talents, after having spent five or six years at school, in which time they have been accustomed to bring away, periodically, flattering reports of progress, have been found at sixteen years of age, upon a close and first investigation by their parents to be disgracefully ignorant. Such a result is owing to this more than to any other reason, that in all this time the labor which should have been done by them has been done by their masters. None know so well as the Schoolmaster the amount of indolence and stupidity there is in youth, especially in boys. None know so well as he the temptations to conceal these infirmities, not only from the eyes of their parents, but from his own. It requires a man to be in daily fear of the very Devil to avoid answering himself the questions which he has propounded so often that it would seem that a fool or even a parrot might know them, and consoling himself with the delusion that after one moment longer they would have been answered by those to whom they were put. Thus it is that after years of flattery and fraud, and when the darkening

down upon the lip warns that manhood is coming on apace, parents find that their credulity has been betrayed and their money expended in the acquisition of the faculty to go through the vain round of answering leading questions. If one of these parents be a man who is addicted to cursing, he will curse. But cursing, at best, gives only momentary relief, and is a most inadequate compensation for wounded pride and disappointed hopes. Besides, even if curses condone for the past, they surely can avail nothing for the future. After cursing his curse, therefore, he can only look out for another schoolmaster, and find possibly that he has jumped from the frying-pan into the fire, where, in good time, all the pride and all the hopes get well consumed.

Such trials befall especially the rich. One might suppose that this individual would endeavor to improve the sons of the rich as faithfully at least as the sons of the poor. That is another mistake. He will not do except upon compulsion of considerations just named the work of the poor man's son. He is not the man to waste his time, and his hardest endeavors upon mere cumberers. They must perform their own tasks; and if they can be fed and clothed the while, they will obtain all the knowledge they seek at the school and which the master is competent to impart; while the sons of the rich must

carry this addition to the burthens which riches impose,—that of being cheated, both out of money and out of education, by as simple, and as innocent-looking a person as a Schoolmaster. Who has not observed how, in most of the schools, the sons of the poor stand or deserve to stand at the heads of classes? There are more reasons for this than society knows. The chiefest is — they have little of which to be cheated.

Let us take another point of observation of the Schoolmaster, and consider how he ranks in the scale of respectability.

One of the highest felicities in personal deportment is to be able to avoid the exhibition of those peculiarities with which all professions are apt to signalize their followers. It is a detraction from any man's claim to our admiration, if in his conversation we can easily determine the nature of his occupation. A thorough breeding tends to remove all such indications, and there is a charm in the very effort to guess what may be the manner of living which is led by a perfectly well-bred man who is a stranger to us. How can the Schoolmaster stand this test? Less satisfactorily we fear than those of intelligence and honesty. Of all men he is the most distinguishable. All generations have not been able to efface the marks that are upon the class; and we recognize him in whatever places and at whatever dis-

tances we observe him; whether he be in the crowded street, on the highway, in the shop, in the salon, or in the woods. There is a combination of boldness and sheepishness, of pluck and timidity, of imperiousness and servility, of conceit and humility, which, in slightly varying relative quantities, distinguishes the individual of the kind I am trying to describe, everywhere, north and south, east and west. Even the varying fashions in the matter of dress, make no difference in him. If you look into his hat of the very latest style, you will see what he is by the very way of his writing his name in it. Yes, we know him by his hat, and even by his umbrella—whenever he has one.

A character made up of so many different elements, can scarcely be interesting except solely upon the sportive side of social life. Since we do not wish to be always laughing, we avoid such a Schoolmaster on all occasions of our serious, which, with us all, are and of right ought to be, our most frequent moods. It must happen rather seldom in our visiting and being visited that we like to be with a man whose memory, while he is in our presence, seems to be away back in the school-room, or endeavoring to find its way there, and who seems to be in a state of most vague uncertainty as to whether or not he ought to repeat upon us the despotism that he is accustomed to employ in the school-room,

or to receive at our hands his long-expected retribution. Or, if he be neither given to great pugnacity nor unusually apprehensive of personal chastisement, we can at least find higher entertainment than in being very often in the society of a man who is all the time carrying on an 'examination' by trying to teach us, or be taught by us, throughout the whole range of the science of platitudes.

We would not go so far as to say that the Schoolmaster is not a person who has a notion of the value of being polite. Of all men, his notions upon this subject are extreme. He is never more serious or consequential than when he is giving lessons in manners, which he does with the same rigor and formality that he employs in teaching Arithmetic or Algebra. But the difficulty in this regard is, that, being so entirely supreme in the school-room, being obeyed and bowed to so everlastingly there, when he comes out of that sphere and into society, he seems at a loss to understand where the bowing ought to be and who is to do it. Apparently, he remembers that he is not in the schoolroom; but he has confused notions of wherever else he is. At one and the same moment his physical deportment is partly that of a man who is bowing, and partly that of a man who is being bowed to. At one instant, we see the frown with which he awes and warns his subjects, and at the next that frown is gone, and

seeming to feel that he has lost his crown and his throne, and been taken captive, he must needs fawn and cajole, and make the best terms possible with defeat and captivity. In these circumstances, such a man never knows how long he ought to remain in our presence. He usually looks as if he preferred to go home, and that he would go home if he were sure of being able to find his hat. But he apparently has a notion that somebody may have hidden it, and that he had better wait until the joke is over, and it is returned. So he lingers and lingers, until when he at last makes a start, he takes abrupt leave and rushes off with surprising velocity. One might suppose this was because he is afraid of the dogs. That is another mistake. He is not more afraid of dogs than other men. It is only his way.

There is no pursuit which, from long persistence in the way in which it is often practised, so disqualifies a man for good society as that of keeping a school. Recurring to the remark of Dr. Arnold, that a man could not teach successfully more than about fifteen years, we must make this one as its corollary:—according to the system of keeping schools, manywheres in vogue—a system which society, for the most incomprehensible reasons, will not consent to have changed—if we turn the Schoolmaster out of his business after that period, there is no place for him in human society. The domination

which for so long time he has been practising in the school-room, the domination which he has been experiencing in the same time from the outer world, have created a duplicity of being, the parts of which, though the most repugnant to each other, are so doubled, and twisted, and plaited among themselves that they become ever afterwards indissoluble by any sort of experience or discipline. He becomes as double as Eng and Chang, and as indivisible. If economy and the public morals did not forbid, he ought, in justice to his amphibious nature, to be allowed, like Eng and Chang, two suits of clothes, two hats, two pairs of shoes, two chairs to sit in, and two wives to live with. But as both economy and the public morals forbid these, he must stick to his profession, and consequently must blunder about more and ever more, with his eyes crossed, doubling all objects of his desire or attention, and missing them in his search by going, sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left, or more frequently still, all around them. For this habit of mind, acquired in the routine of his daily life, makes him move in circles, which, though small, would be as round as the moon, but that those objects not being themselves always stationary, his motions, like those of the moon, are epicycloidal, and as infinite as are his wants. What use has such a man for society, or society for such a man? From the very character

of his living with his pupils, he becomes unfitted for living with anybody. If in the beginning he had any acquaintance with the temper and the disposition, and the general character of youth, he comes at last to lose even that. His experience having been made up of tyranny and espionage on the one hand, and trickery and falsehood on the other, himself never having been the recipient of either love or fidelity, he comes at last to the point of failing to recognize these precious things whenever he sees them in society; and if he could recognize them, he would fail to appreciate them at their just value, because of such recognition coming too late. No. We had better let him stay thenceforth in the schoolhouse. By this time, he is unendurable elsewhere, and by this time, or very soon thereafter, his despotism has relaxed, and though perhaps not yet old in years, he has subsided into the fondness and the twattle of dotage, and will thenceforth make less harm and less trouble within that old and small circumference than outside of it.

Here then is society's favorite Schoolmaster, with his little satchel of text-books, his little supplemental bill of Incidentals and Stationery, and his eternal dodgings, and blunderings, and rotations.

And now, let us reason a little with society. Let us inquire what is its purpose in this creation. Does it prefer to be cheated of its money rather than to

pay it out for a valuable consideration? Is there any special purpose wherefore it chooses to remove its youth, during the most critical years of their being, from beneath its own control, and place them under the absolute domination of a man who is so far inferior to even a reasonable standard of manhood? If society will consider a very little, it will agree with us that a boy whose father is a gentleman, and whose mother is a gentlewoman, has been, up to the time of his leaving home, the recipient of great, even of unspeakable blessings. It might admit further, that when the necessity arrives for leaving home (and an unfortunate necessity that is) to receive instruction in such things as his parents have not the ability or the leisure to teach, it would seem to be desirable that he should be transferred, if possible, to a family the heads of which were as much a gentleman and a gentlewoman as the parents whom he must leave. No one ought to deny that when the discipline at home has been such as a gentleman's son should receive, that discipline ought to be changed as little as possible in the place to which he has been transferred. That, in these forming years, his young eyes should still behold the same fair sights of integrity, and courage, and dignity, and courteousness in the man, and of purity, and gentleness and grace in the woman who are to stand related to him as the parents whom he has left under the roof

tree at home. In fine, that it is most desirable that such a boy should not be made to lose all the good impressions which have been made upon his young and docile mind by constant indoctrination inspired by natural affection and the consciousness of accountability to God.

All this society would admit; though perchance there are some who might contend (for reasons which Heaven alone knows) that such a boy ought to find at a boarding-school as few things as possible to remind him of his home. Indeed, judging from what may be observed in the opinions that generally obtain concerning schools and schoolmasters, most men seem to desire that the whole training around the native hearthstone should be dispensed with, at the boarding school and especially that all which made the boy rejoice in the consciousness of being loved, and trusted, and honored, must be removed out of his reach and out of his sight, and that hostility must now begin between him and the very man who has been selected by his father to perform his own unfinished work in preparing his son for the destinies of his existence. Let us select out of society one of its members, and let him be a good man and a just, but nevertheless one who has such ideas as we have been describing. How do we usually approach the man in whose family we propose to place our sons? It is in a style which shows that we do not regard him as

entitled to the same consideration at our hands which we would expect and exact from him upon his application to us for a service in the line of our occupation: in other words, that we do not regard him as a gentleman. And this proves that we do not feel a solicitude that he should be such. We sometimes dispense with the formality which is always recognized as a most becoming one in the intercourse of gentlemen, that of an introduction by a common acquaintance, even when it is entirely convenient to obtain it. By this conduct we seem to forget that we inflict what, if he were a gentleman, he would consider an insult upon his feelings, in the assurance we thus give that so far from the possibility of his rejecting our application to receive our sons, he must necessarily be delighted by the compliment. And when we have approached him, the inquiries we propound regarding his terms, although we have seen them advertised, our disposition to make our own inspection of the way in which the affairs of his household are ordered by his wife, show that we do not consider him a gentleman to allow such things. But the worst of all our treatment is, that we show that we desire him to be anything else than a gentleman in the government of our sons, by subjecting them to restraints which we never threw around them, not so much because such restraints were troublesome, as because they were

odious. At our own houses, we are never accustomed to play the part of the spy or the hound upon our families. We are accustomed to a general and prudent oversight in which is to be seen some of the confidence which every boy must have extended to him if he be desired to develope what is good and to repress what is evil in his being. Yet we intimate, or we avow, our desire that the Schoolmaster should take upon himself the task of espionage which we should be ashamed for our sons to suspect us of being capable of performing. He must assume all the odium of restraints that bar all sympathy with the griefs and all interest in the enjoyments of youth, and must refuse to extend any of the confidence under which, at the home of his childhood, the boy has learned to despise falsehood and cowardice, and to feel the incipient promptings, and give the joyous promise, of an exalted manhood. The most reasonable and speedy consequence of such a discipline is that our sons come soon to hate the despot to whose heartless sway we have subjected them, and to lose the delicate sense of honor and truth in the fatal mistake that meanness may be met by meanness, or that the assaults of the Devil may be opposed by fire.

It is most wonderful that so many good men seem to think that youth should be rudely treated while it is growing into manhood. 'How

comes on that young nobleman who entered the school last week?' enquired old Dr. Parr of one of his ushers. 'Very well sir,' was the answer; 'he is a boy of fine promise.' 'Is he indeed? Then whip him every morning, sir. Do you hear, sir? Every morning, sir.' That is the way. Youth must be caged and watched, and hounded and herded with vulgarity, and beaten with rods, and wallowed in filth and lies, and all this as a sort of ordeal through which it must pass in order to be able in after years to look back to it with shuddering. Alas! that no better means can be found of lifting it up through these beautiful years to places whence it may see more and more of the value of all that is good in the nature of man, and thus become the more able to comprehend and appreciate the goodness of the Almighty.

Well, there is no service so vile and so meanly paid for that we may not find those who are competent to perform it. Scullions for the kitchen may be had even without advertisement. They will clean our pots for small wages, partly because this is the only service they know, and partly because they understand the value of the perquisites which come out of pilferings from even the skimmings and the leavings. So, Legion is the name of those who, for a pitiful compensation, will receive our sons into their families, and afterwards persistently eradicate

every sentiment of honor and gentility by administering to them the discipline due to felons, and then send them back with a contempt for things that are sacred, with a hatred for all just authority, and with the total loss of that foundation and beginning of all good education — the fear of God. These are the sorts of men whom society in general selects to lead up its young generations. And what a leading is there! The old fellow of Falerii led out his school and would deliver them over to Camillus; but, shocked by the enormity of the crime, the honest Roman sent him back bound and driven with rods by the youths whom he would have betrayed. We suppose, however, that the Falerians loosed him and let him go. Having made him what he was, they had no right, and possibly they had no disposition, to destroy their own creation. Having a mean service to be performed, they selected a mean agent; and though the betrayal of their children to the public enemy was most probably not nominated in the bond of their contracting, yet, as greater rascalities were, he should have been discharged from punishment beyond that which the boys themselves inflicted. But the Personage to whom the youth of this and all other known countries are being led by many of the schoolmasters will not be so abhorrent of crime. That great Enemy fully intends to keep all he gets, both the betrayed and the be-

trayers, and to burn them in fire and brimstone.

Now how can the greater part of this folly and crime and ruin be prevented? All indeed cannot be; for folly and crime are the lot of humanity. It is melancholy to see that the sons of the very best men may, and sometimes do, become ruined even in the houses and under the eyes of their own parents. But the greater part of that ruin which comes to the youth in schools, and which is by far the most abundant source of their demoralization, might be prevented, if society would take the same pains in the selection of teachers as it takes in that of its agents in all the other businesses of life. Society needs but to do one thing. It must allow the schoolmaster to improve himself if he will, as most probably he will do if permission be granted. He must be allowed to give up those old ways. Those old ways have too long already excited the merriment and the derision of the world. They afford a species of fun that is too costly to be indulged in. Men must seek amusement in ways that do not lead so surely to the destruction of their best hopes for those who are in time to take their places and perpetuate their names. It is a serious thing to provide for these hopes, implanted in our hearts by Heaven in the first instant of paternity, never to be eradicated in this world, and in

the next to yield only to perfect realization or to the will of God.

Now does any one of our readers care to inquire what course we think he should pursue, provided the old schoolmaster cannot or will not change his ways? If so, we answer that in our opinion, he should look out for a new man for this business. And there is but one qualification that we should insist upon. That like himself, he be a gentleman. For a gentleman is one who lives justly and considerately among men and humbly before God. Be assured that a gentleman is competent to do what he professes to be competent to do. The mere knowledge of school books any gentleman has who says he has it. The gift of impartation of that knowledge any gentleman has who says he has it. Having then selected a gentleman, inasmuch as we are henceforth to feel secure against theft on his part, we should be willing to pay a fair price for the service he is to render. That service is worth perhaps more than, without reflection, we might suppose. If we all knew the amount of dullness, and indolence, and selfishness, and wastefulness, and indocility, there is even among the sons of gentlemen, and the wearisomeness of the work which they impose upon the hands, and the head, and the heart of a gentleman, we should feel that we are not in great danger of paying too dearly for it. With such a man we may indeed feel secure, and

for this, as much as for any other reason — that he is our equal in all the essentials of manhood; that he can neither be ridiculed with justice, nor insulted with impunity, and consequently that our sons will be as safe with him as his son would be with us. For such a man will no more play the part of spy or hound upon our sons than we would descend to this practise with his. He will endeavor to lift our sons to as high a place as we would endeavor to lift his son, in order to see and understand the whole range of his relations with this world and with the next, with man and with God. All this will be very pleasant. And yet one more pleasure will be added to the list. We shall see that in this relation of teacher and pupil, a relation not dishonored by despotism or servility, by suspicion or falsehood, there is growing a friendship, which, when it is between two persons who trust each other and are worthy to be trusted, is inferior in value to no blessing which Heaven has sent upon the earth. Do we doubt that such a man, in such a relation, may form such a friendship with our sons? If so, let us try sometime to form a friendship with his son, or with the son of such another gentleman. We shall then see how often he will be touched by our kindness and respond to our confidence. We shall find that in many a boy of fourteen there may be found, by diligent search and careful cultivation, sentiments of honor and friend

ship, which sometimes grow even into enthusiasm.

If society would consent to such a change, how fortunate it would be for all; for itself, for youth and for teachers. Fortunate society, in the elevation of another profession by accessions from its own high ranks, and in the security it would thenceforth give to the future of the rising generations. Fortunate the rising generations, in the possession and the impartation of the blessings that come when the heart gets its education along with the intellect. Fortunate the profession thus exalted, in the enjoyment not only of the common friendships of life, but in the continued renewal of friendships down to its very goal. Lælius, after the death of Scipio, consoled himself with the friendship of the youths Fannius, and Mucius, and Tubero. '*Vicissim*' said he, when now an old man, '*vicissim autem senes in adolescentium caritate acquiescimus.*' *Acquiescimus!* How expressive! *we repose.* A fitting place for the rest of an old man whose best years have been spent in the service of the young,—the love of those among them who are to survive him.

THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

IT is interesting to study the peculiar sentiments with which the members of the Bar are regarded by the rest of mankind. The dullest understanding can perceive and admit the necessity of laws, of judges to expound and of inferior officers to execute them. But when the necessity of practising lawyers is suggested, such admission, even from understandings that have been highly cultivated by study, and observation, and reflection, comes sometimes with reluctance and for the most part with allowance. Even men of letters, even poets, whom we have been taught to regard as our best teachers, are fond to fling their pleasant satires at the lawyers. That seemed to be a most unhappy stress of difficulties upon one of Lord Byron's heroes when

> 'No choice was left his feelings or his pride,
> Save death or Doctors' Commons—so he died.'

We have read of the Gammons and Heeps, the Buzfuzzes and Tulkinghorns, and we smile at the absurdities and shudder at the iniquities of such a class of fools and rascals.

Yet lawyers live and prosper. With the increase

of wealth and the advancement of civilization, they multiply in numbers, they rise to the highest places, and they lead in all the legislation which controls the world. In public they are the framers of laws, international, constitutional, and muncipal: in private they are the counsellors of the people in the ascertainment of their rights of person and property, then they make their last wills and testaments, and settle and distribute their estates after they are dead. We may have our suspicions and apprehensions, and dislikes of lawyers as a class; but every one of us who has anything which he desires to keep for himself or for those who are to come after him, knows one among them who receives his most intimate confidence, and in whom he feels that his surest reliance, in such matters whether he himself be to live or to die, may be placed. Him he consults, in the matters of his business and sometimes the matters of his conscience; and none but lawyers know how much wicked litigation has been avoided, how much meanness has been repressed, how much has justice been wrung for the weak and the innocent out of the hands of the powerful and the guilty—all in the secret counsellings of lawyers' offices.

Let us inquire somewhat into these contrary opinions. Why this suspicion in the general, and this confidence in the particular? Why these universal warnings against the class, and this life-long

resort to the individual in all the most important and secret affairs of life? We cannot undertake to answer these questions fully. A Frenchman once said, that every lover has no doubt of the infidelity of all mistresses except his own. Something of this there may be in the relation of lawyers and clients, and indeed in every relation where confidence must be given, because it renders one unhappy and afraid to withhold it. But the better and more substantial causes are other than such as this. We shall mention one or two.

We must premise what we have to say about the suspicions concerning this class of professional men wherever it exists, by observing that they attach to them *as lawyers*. We have sometimes been intensely amused to notice how many persons have been puzzled by their own conflicting sentiments regarding some of the best men of our acquaintance. While the latter have been known to be perfectly upright in their personal concerns, beloved in their families, and admired by all their neighbors for being kind and liberal, the former have seemed to be touched with an indefinable sort of compassion or regret at being obliged to consider them as unscrupulous in the court-room, mystifiers of the law, perverters of the truth, and the fast friends of knaves of many descriptions.

The principal reasons for these irreconcilable

opinions, are such as grow partly out of the law itself, and partly out of some misapprehensions as to the duties of lawyers: misapprehensions that are not confined to outsiders, but are held by not an inconsiderable number of the profession itself. Especially is this the case with that system of laws by which the people of this country and those in Great Britian are controlled. Our ancestors, so far removed from the ancient seats of European civilization, had the misfortune of failing to obtain the benefits of the Civil Law, that best and noblest monument of genius that was ever erected. Founded upon the teachings of the wise and good of all nations, * it enjoined not only the fullest justice, but it invited to the most delicate and scrupulous honor. It sought to lift mankind out of the fiery struggles, the selfish aims, and the mean desires of life, and present to their view a higher scale, yet fully practicable for this world, on which justice and honor might journey hand in hand, and all men, great and small, might joy in the sight. To live justly, to hurt no man, to give every one his own, were its leading maxims, and whoever followed them strictly attained as close an approximation to perfection as is in the capacity of human nature. What people were those Romans!

* In the year B. C. 452, three Commissioners were sent 'beyond seas' to collect, in Greece especially, such notices of the laws and constitutions of other peoples as might be of service to the wants of Rome.—GRAPEL ON THE CIVIL LAW.

Great in all things; even in those which time and different civilizations have destroyed or modified; but greatest of all in this, that their laws, the work of all their ages, are yet made to control all the countries over which their rule was extended.

But our ancestors, separated from the rest of the world by intervening seas, in a bleak region, where to live was difficult, and poverty was a more common and a harder misfortune than in the South, in the absence of wise men to think and devise for them, could only find laws for their government in the midst of their dealings among themselves. In the failure of positive legislative enactments, their usages became the standards by which the common disputes were to be composed. Out of these usages, some of them absurd, some of them atrocious, sprang up that Common Law which, with what modifications it has undergone in the lapse of centuries, together with such restraints as Equity has been obliged to impose whenever its operation has been grossly unconscionable, is the system under which we live. Less humane than the Civil Law which was founded upon the idea of what mankind ought to be and might be, it has been builded upon the observation of what mankind *are*. Yet it is a great system, and in the main sufficiently regardful of the rights of those who have it to obey. If it seems sometimes to present temptation to bad men

to entrap the unwary, its general provisions are designed to afford abundant protection to the circumspect; and the tendency of recent legislations and recent judicial rulings is, we are gratified to observe, in the direction of that larger and more generous policy which recognizes in humanity the possibilities of things higher than mere common honesty, and persuades to their exercise. Nor can we forbear to admit that among the Romans there were tricksters who were at once the disgrace of the profession, the butt of the satirist's ridicule, and the honorable man's contempt. There were the *Leguleius* * and the Rabula, † the former a mere man of books, and the latter a mean pettifogger. They had their ways in Rome as their likes have them with us, and as all such characters in all vocations will have their ways until the world becomes many times wiser than it is or has been.

Yet every system of laws must necessarily fall short of some of its purposes, and thus create in the minds of men unlearned in its mysteries incorrect views of the duties of those who practise it. The law is founded upon general principles, the very universality of which sometimes must operate dis-

* 'Qui enim leges, quas memoria tenet, non intelligit, Leguleius vocatur a Cicerone.'—HEINECCIUS ELEMENTA JURIS.

† 'Qui ergo nulla accuratione juris notitia imbutus, cruda studia in forum propellit, evertendisque aliorum fortunis quaestum facit, Rabula vocatur ab eodum Cicerone.'—IB.

astrously in particular cases, and give to bad men the opportunity to injure the just with impunity. In vain did the Prætor among the Romans, and in vain do Courts of Equity with us interfere by injunction with its strict enforcements, whenever their execution is unconscionably oppressive. There are frauds and other wrongs which no courts can reach, which spring from the very laws which were intended to prevent them, and which do prevent them in general. Thus, the Statute for the prevention of Frauds, a most wise and beneficient law, offers temptations to the dishonest, of which they too often avail themselves to ensnare the upright. So the maxim, '*ignorantia legis non excusat*,' necessary as it is, operates most injuriously sometimes, and it thus operates most frequently upon those who, being most honest, are least apprehensive of suffering wrong. Neither lawyers nor courts, are responsible for these infirmities, which are but evidences to be added to those furnished by other systems of man's devising, that nothing he does can be made perfect.

Difficulties of the sorts just mentioned, (and we may allude to others as we proceed,) common to all law, and some peculiar to those under which we live, lead to misapprehensions as to what are the duties as well as what are the rights of lawyers. It is worthy of remark, that many men, whose careers,

while at the bar, were not very remarkable, whether in the matter of professional ability, or professional deportment, when they have gone upon the bench, have risen in a comparatively brief period into unexpected and extravagant credit. The people, from having seen such men practise for a long time those little arts which inferior minds are the quickest to learn, seem often to be thankful to see such a man lay all such arts aside, rule vexed questions without embarrassment, and endeavor, with decent magisterial severity, to repress all unbecoming things in the officers of his court. Now it is much easier to decide a case than to argue it. Some men, though feeble lawyers, make respectable judges — not great judges — for these can be made only of great lawyers. Such a judge, if he preside over an able bar, and if with ordinary understanding he have acquired a fair professional education, may decide most cases aright. Besides, the mere exaltation to office carries to the majority of mankind the credit of deserving it. Lord Jeffreys said to Robert Wright, who was notorious both for his ignorance and his knaveries, 'As you seem to be unfit for the bar, or any other honest calling, I see nothing for it but that you should become a judge yourself;' and in spite of the remonstrances of the Prime Minister, he was knighted, and afterwards made Lord Chief Justice of England. This is an extreme case, we admit, but there was

some wisdom (of its kind,) in the magnate who thus elevated him, and who foresaw that much of his unfitness for office would disappear from the eyes of men on the day of his installation.

But what is yet more to be noticed in this connection is this: The duties of a judge are essentially different from those of a lawyer. Upon the former there is the obligation, formed by his oath and the solemn behests of office, to pursue the truth, singly and always. But the truth in judicial causes has many similitudes, and is difficult to be ascertained, and varies with every circumstance of life. Out of the innumerable transactions of mankind, and the multifold and subtle agencies which bring them on and attend and follow them, there must constantly arise, even among the upright, conflicts of opinion regarding the ultimate truth, and the best legal minds will differ as to where it is to be found. The judge himself is often incompetent to its ascertainment until after argumentation between these contending similitudes. It is, therefore, not only the right of the advocate, but it is his duty to present his similitude with whatever ability he can command, to strive for its establishment, provided that he attempt no perversions, either of facts or of laws already ascertained, and feel in his breast throughout the conflict a love for the honor of his profession, and a reverence for the justice, which it

is his mission to conserve, that are superior to the desire for his client's success, and the reward which is to follow it. A rule of morals which would fix his responsibilities higher than this would be unreasonable and impracticable.

It is after, and by means of, the contests of men like this that the judge, whose understanding meanwhile has been oscillating between contending similitudes, decides which is the real truth, and which is only its image. When this decision is rendered in the unimpassioned and decorous terms becoming such a tribunal, although it is frequently rendered with hesitation, it is curious to see how submissively bystanders bow to the judgment, and with what admiration and even reverence they contemplate the calm dignity so unlike the heated combats of the men to whose elaborate endeavors, though unknown to them and too often unacknowledged by the court, he is indebted for the power to decide aright when he does so decide.*

It is thus that many persons while they condemn the advocate, revere the magistrate. With the

*Cicero, whose work on morals is the greatest of all uninspired writings, allows a little more latitude to lawyers. 'Judicis est,' he says, 'semper in causis verum sequi; patroni, nonnunquam veri simile, etramsi minus sit verum, defendere.'—De Officiis, Lib. II, Cap. XIV. But he does so with some hesitation, and only upon the authority of Panaetius. Thus he continues: 'Quod scribere (præsertim cum de philosophia scriberem) non auderem, nisi idem placeret gravissimo stoicorum Panaetio.'

former they suppose the love of truth to be behind the desire of fame and especially of money. The latter, upon that lofty seat, is regarded as freed from the love of praise and pelf, above all prejudice and passion, and taking an almost holy delight in frowning upon the fierce conflicts of the world and its representatives, in establishing justice, and maintaining the peace They seem to regard lawyers as the especial enemies and persecutors of these benign things, justice and peace, and but for that blessed man on the bench they would be lost in the midst of their subtleties, and quillets, and clamorous contentions.

It is remarkable that while we can make allowance for the progress of every other science and every other business of life, we cannot allow for mutations in that which is at once the most variant and profound and important of all. At every session of every court of extensive jurisdiction, there arise disputes which involve new questions, or variations of old questions, which must be settled anew, and that only by long, ardent, and able argumentation. To wonder at this eternal conflict is as unreasonable as to wonder at the various faces, and forms, and dispositions of men. The principles of the law have grown, like the human race, from a few in the beginning up to ever increasing multitudes, generations of the one dying away and generations

of the other becoming obsolete, yet every generation of both inheriting from its predecessors something which must be made to conform to the multiplying necessities of the world. These necessities arise in all places where the hands or the understandings of men are wont to labor in order to increase whatever they may wish to have for any of the purposes of life. They arise day by day, in the field of the farmer, in the shop of the mechanic, in the storehouse of the merchant, in the cloister of the student, everywhere, on the land, upon the waters, in the air, wheresoever God has allowed men to abide, or to explore, in order to find and to gather whatever it is lawful to possess. Thus, with the lapsing years, and the changing and multiplying pursuits of men, new principles have to be established, new punishments must be applied to new offences, and sometimes to old ones, when by the changes of manners and tastes they have grown to be inadequate or oppressive. Inasmuch as the laws are general in their terms, and cases arising under them are special in their own particulars, every judge needs new argumentation, long, and able, and ardent, we repeat it, in order to be enabled to find, in the midst of these accretions from every source, the Truth, which it is his province to dispense.

'What is truth,' said jesting Pilate,' and would not stay for an answer.' Wiser and better men than

Pilate ask the same question after long, and patient, and loving search. That truth is difficult to be ascertained, the thousands of sects, and parties, and wars, both of books and swords, declare. On the question of what is truth, good and wise men differ even as do bad men and fools. In our degenerate estate, truth seems to assume many shapes, and to vary them in different places and before different beholders. It was a beautiful fancy of the poet, in which the followers of truth are likened to the bereaved Isis and her priesthood in their pious search for the mangled and scattered members of the body of the good Osiris. Philosophers and law-givers admit the impossibility of fixing perfectly just principles of truth even in the general. 'We have no solid and express effigy of Law, and of Justice, her sister. We can only employ their shadow and their images.' These are the words of one who, in our opinion, was as complete a man as has lived in any time — Cicero, the lawyer and orator, the consul and philosopher. Yet, in praising even the golden rule of the Civil Law, that all transactions of business ought to correspond with the good conduct of good men with one another, he sighed to be compelled to add these following: 'But who are good men? and what is good conduct? These are great questions.'*

* 'Sed nos veri juris germanæque justitiæ solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus; umbra et imaginibus utimur. Quam illa

In the numberless relations of men, good and bad, among the different views which, from their various positions they have of the right, an approximation to its ascertainment is all that can be hoped for, and while we believe that this approximation to all its intentions is closer in the law than in any other science not based upon mathematical demonstrations, this is due mainly to those same forensic conflicts which men are so wont to criticise and to blame. There is nothing, therefore, in the fancied anomaly of an honest man who is a dishonest lawyer. Whenever such a man comes to the Bar, there comes a mighty blessing to his neighborhood. If, in the ardor of the devotion which he carries to the causes of his clients, he seems sometimes to combat too zealously for his own similitude before the real right has been ascertained, we shall make a great mistake if we suppose that the real right can be ascertained otherwise than by the combats of him with others like him. And we shall make a greater mistake if we suppose that he has lost, or is apt to lose, the heart to love and adore the truth when, after such combats, it is unveiled before his eyes.

But the misapprehensions that are most hurtful to the profession are those which are entertained by a

aurea, UT INTER BONOS BENE AGIER OPORTET ET SINE FRAUDATIONE! Sed, qui sint boni, et quid sit bene agi, magna quæstio est.'—CIC. DE. OFF., LIB. III., CAP. XVII.

considerable number of its own members. For the infirmities of these, in spite of its shining ornaments, it has always suffered and must continue to suffer. A lawyer who is a bad man is the most mischievous and dangerous person with whom one can be confronted. It is sad to contemplate the annoyance and distress which such a man may inflict, during a lifetime, upon even the good men of society. Such a man may become a spy upon other men, and obtain an incredible amount of acquaintance with all their most important concerns. This is especially the case in agricultural communities, where men are less familiar than those in cities and towns with the forms of business which are necessary to its safe and proper conduct. In the intercourse of the citizens of such communities, the omission of such forms with the best and most honest men render their transactions unintelligible to those who, after lapse of time, come to look upon their records. The confidence which they have in one another, so beautiful to behold, and so sweet to feel, induces a neglect much beyond what mere ignorance would create; and the usages of friendship and good neighborhood make them satisfied with settlements which are too often unaccompanied by written memoranda. By and by, some of these good men become alienated from one another. By and by, some of them die. Old frendships seldom descend from one generation

to another. Besides, it is a sad truth that the greatest robberies are those that are committed by the living upon the dead. All thieves, little and great, from the grave-digger and the coffin-maker upward, understand that.

Now this especial bad man, who is worse than all other thieves and robbers, and whose wont it has been to prowl about Probates' offices, and pore over ancient and imperfect records, and pick newsmongers and retailers of old scandals, makes up *his* record, and to the covetous, and prodigal, and bankrupt, he complains how they have been wronged, and insinuates how, through his means, their wrongs may be redressed; and then a small retainer and a great contingent, are the preliminaries to suits upon Administrators' bonds or to Bills in Equity, which charge every form of mismanagement and fraud upon the best men and involve them or their representatives in long and ruinous litigation. We have known very many of such cases, and we have sighed, and could have wept to witness the misery which they have produced. Many a good man, in his abhorrence of courts, though conscious of perfect innocence, and though assured by reliable counsel of eventual release, prefers to buy his peace with a price which enables the mean pettifogger to live in comfort for a long time afterwards. Another, less timid and less averse to strife, elects to fight it out

on the line proposed, indulging himself to an occasional imprecation upon the head captain of his enemies, and in time may have his verdict. But the payment of his own counsel, the charge of sundry items, about which he and all his friends have forgotten, the fees of witnesses, the loss of other interests by his attendance upon courts, all convince him that his more timid neighbor, who bought himself off, was wiser than he who fought himself out; and he is denied even the consolation of feeling that his imprecations have done either harm or good to the man whom he is right in regarding as the worst of all rascals. Cases like these are frequent in some communities, and they sometimes occur in all. How many miseries they produce, how many alienations of friends and families, how many wrongs of all sorts and forms, only God above knows. Perhaps in this we mistake. Perhaps they are all known to the great Spirit of Evil below, and he has his antepast of enjoyment. If not now, they will be known in season; for they are done by his inspiration, and upon him will devolve their settlement at the last.

Much above those who have described is another class whose misapprehensions as to the scope of their duties, are more hurtful to the profession than they are apt to be aware. With this class the standard of professional deportment does fall some-

what below that which they are in the habit of maintaining in the other relations of life. In the eagerness with which many young men desire notoriety, which they suppose to be necessary to speedy success, they are thrown into cases of doubtful right by the aid of injudicious friends, or by their volunteering; and thus they form habits of asseverating unformed opinions and clamoring for doubtful points which must tend to diminish the love, and even obtund the sense of truth. Some of such men come to believe that it it is not wrong to take any case that presents itself, and having appeared in it, that their duty, or at least their right, is to push it along without considering any question except what may appertain to the interests of their clients. With an able and upright judge these are not wont to do a very great amount of mischief to the public; but they hurt both themselves and their better brethren. They hurt themselves by failing, through their own fault, to rise as high as different deportment would elevate them; and they hurt their better brethren by carelessly lowering their profession in the eyes of mankind and subjecting it to unjust reproach. And they assuredly do some harm to society in this, that their too frequent and unfair defense of transactions plainly unjust, makes them often appear to disregard the principles both of law and morality.

It is an unhappy mistake that many lawyers who

are not bad men make, in believing that the *whole* question of conscience resides always with their clients. Every lawyer should feel that it is his duty to be a conservator of those things which the laws enjoin; and while he may rightfully aid a client in obtaining the benefit of any law that is applicable to his case, he ought to counsel against the acceptance of that benefit when it is to operate gross injustice to others. For example: While it is not unprofessional, nor in any degree wrong, to file a plea of usury, a lawyer owes this much to everybody, himself, society, and especially his client, to persuade him, if possible, to refrain from accepting a dishonest release from the fulfilment of his own solemn obligation. The men who refuse to consider such counsel as coming within the intention of their professional duties, may be, and many of them are, upright in their own personal lives, humane, generous, social; but they fall short of conserving, and even of beholding, the great, superior purposes of the law, and they miss that very highest felicity of this lower life, the opportunities of doing good.

But there is a class of lawyers who do well employ these blessed opportunities. Many such there are in many communities. Would that there were more, and that they were in all. To be such men the highest intellectual abilities are not requisite.

While in that middle class just described, there are sometimes found men of intellect enough to rise to any eminence by the persistent love and pursuit of justice, it is most pleasing to find in this upper class men in whom such love and pursuit have lifted understandings that are less than first-rate up to the power to see and to advocate truth, which is superior to the genius that, for the want of these virtues, loses in the lapse of time, both the power to see and the power to advocate. For truth, even in this world, rewards her worshippers, while she punishes her enemies. The latter she sometimes blinds in the knowledge of how to come to her shrine, even when they seek to come with serious devotion, but after having been wont to come too seldom and with too reluctant sacrifice. The former, who never bow the knee elsewhere, become so accustomed to her presence and her inspiration, that they seem to partake even of her divine nature. How many men have we known at the bar who, although they did not seem at first to be qualified for its successful pursuit, yet, by patient labor and the continuous practice of integrity, have attained to fame; while others, apparently more gifted, by failing to learn or to practise the great duties of the profession, have ended their careers without honor.

Now while we are far from claiming for such men perfection, we do think that they attain as close

an approximation to it as any men in any secular vocation; and that in the matter of usefulness they ascend higher than all others. The science of the law embraces every business of life. Those two things, *rights* and *wrongs*, attach themselves every moment of time, to all mankind from the highest to the lowest. They are as interesting to one man as they are to another; the poor as well as the rich. The houseless beggar, the sad lunatic, the raving maniac, the driveling idiot, the infant, the infant not yet escaped from its mother's womb, the outlaw, the felon, yea, the convicted felon who is awaiting in his cell the day of execution, all have their rights and may have their wrongs; and the law irregular, and desultory, and rambling, and self-contradicting as it seems to be, is ever striving to provide for them all. There is nothing more important, indeed, in the merely human business of life, there is nothing *so* important as that these rights and wrongs be well understood, in order that the former be faithfully defended, and the latter be adequately redressed. It is a happy thing for society when a young man of the true generous breed applies himself to this good work. In his early years he gives, and he has to give to it his days and his nights. While he is learning it well, his youth is gone. Before he has learned it all, age comes upon him and he retires to die. Yet, by the full ripening of his manhood, he

has reached a position in which he may safely be trusted by all who need his knowledge and his service. When men come to him for counsel the studies of years enable him, and the habitual practice of honor prompts him, to bestow that counsel wisely and truly. When their rights have been assailed, he defends them against every form of attack. When they are only supposed to be injured, he counsels them to withdraw from the contest, and if he be not hearkened to, he dismisses them to other men who are less scrupulous. When from the peculiar circumstances he be uncertain sometimes whether those rights be assailed or not, then, unless they can be adjusted by compromise, he brings or defends their suits, and maintains his own similitude of the right until judgment is rendered by the courts.

Now it is just here, in courts, that are to be seen those most common misapprehensions of the public in regard to the duties of lawyers. They think it strange that two men, who claim to be considered upright and sincere, should meet from court to court, from day to day, in constant, ardent antagonisms. But the public does not sufficiently consider that these antagonisms have their inception with parties themselves, and that it rarely, if indeed it ever happens, that the most honest client blames the ardor of his patron's advocacy. Then the public

does not reflect that its non-acquaintance with laws, except their most general principles, disqualifies it from recognizing the infinite variety of circumstances which may take, or seem to take, a newly arisen case out of the circle of former precedents, and that judges, notwithstanding their decent deportment and learned looks, are incapable, until after such argumentation, to determine how they ought to adjudicate. Besides, among the different men who have been upon the Bench, rulings, even upon the same points, have been variant according to their capacities, and dispositions, and likings, and prejudices. It makes a vast difference whether Labeo be the magistrate, or Capito; whether Mansfield or Kenyon. While the mind of one leans to liberal constructions, and seeks to bring the laws along with the changing conditions of a nation's civilization, that of another is fond to overrule all innovations, and strives to restore every ancient landmark that, from whatever cause, has been, or he believes to have been, removed.

This reference to the different sorts of judges opens to our view a wide field, if we had the time to speculate upon it. We have said that it was less difficult to adjudicate a case than to argue it. But it must not be understood that we maintain that it is not very difficult to be a good judge. To be a good judge requires a combination of so many gifts

that it ought to be surprising to consider how many men desire that office, and what kinds of men sometimes are nominated to it. One of the most difficult questions for statesmen to determine has been, how it is best for judges to be made, and what should be the duration of their incumbency. Many a man has risen from the Bar whose judicial career has widely differed from that which his professional behavior foretold. It is singular what a temptation there seems always to have been to newly-elected judges to distinguish their administrations by unexpected deflections from the ways of former administrations. From the impossibility, resulting from the infinitude of its subtleties, of fixing perfectly settled principles of law in all cases, a hazardous amount of discretion must he allowed to every judge which he may hurtfully abuse. It was so much abused in the times of our ancestors, that Lord Camden designated it 'the law of tyrants.' In its exercise many a fantastic trick has been played by many a magistrate, small and great. In the bewilderment in which juries, unlearned in the law, are wont to be involved by the strivings of opposing counsel, the magistrate has a fair opportunity to exercise that discretion according to his temper, his constitution, his passion, or the expectations that he may found upon the opinions which men may have of his administration. The histories, and the traditions,

and our own observations tell us how capricious that exercise has been. In the early struggles between liberty and prerogative, it varied little from a decided preponderance in favor of the latter. We shudder to know that the Bench, the most solemn of all places upon earth, except the Pulpit, has been pressed by so ignorant a knave as Wright, so loathsome a mass of moral and physical depravity as Saunders, so bloody-minded a villain as Scroggs, so hideous a devil as Jeffreys. Such men passed away with the despotisms that created them, and there is little danger that their likes will be seen again. Yet, under the rule of upright judges, caprice, or some other infirmity, single among many great virtues sometimes hinders that fair and equable dispensation of justice which all good men desire. In one, there is that disposition before mentioned, to distinguish his administration by rulings which overturn past rulings that are sufficiently good precedents. In another, there is an overweening ambition to reform society in impracticable ways, as by indecent harshness to defendants in criminal prosecutions, and a too speedy suspicion of frauds in some or other sides in civil suits. 'The only shade,' says Lord Campbell, 'in the character of Chancellor Osmond was his great severity to penitents, which was caused by his own immaculate life.' What a commentary on life! on the life of even a good man! Even Sir

Matthew Hale, great and good as he was, was *so* good that he believed it to be a part of his mission to hang poor witches, and, in the nervous apprehension of being suspected of selling justice, sometimes hindered or delayed it. It seems almost to be a requisite in a judge, (at least of a Criminal Court,) that he have some infirmity for which he desires and needs forbearance and forgiveness. A man who leads what is generally styled an 'immaculate life,' when raised to the Bench, is often strangely apt to regard his elevation as a special and blessed interposition of Providence for the good of mankind, and to seek for the culmination of his fame by the attempt of a wholesale clearance of vices as well as crimes. In this country it is especially difficult to obtain able judges, because the salaries are too small to tempt the best lawyers, unless they be already rich, or be ready to retire from the labors of the profession, or they prefer the honors of office to its other rewards.

In the presence of courts presided over by magistrates of so various casts, lawyers, who are as good men as the earth ever produced, are made sometimes to appear at a disadvantage that is undeserved. The court being the standard, both of law and every propriety, and having frequent occasions to overrule even its best and ablest advocates, many men feel surprise mingled with reproach, that such men should

so often maintain, without blushing, such apparent wrongs and absurdities. Such persons, honest themselves, cannot understand how men, who would like to be considered as honest, can appear at the instance of a mean or bad man against the charge of a good one. But let it be not forgotten, what we have said before, that every human being in society has rights, and that they are as sacred and as dear in one as in another. The good man can no more take from the bad what is his due, than the bad can take from him. If a poor knave have a legal right which a good man, as does sometimes occur, cannot for many reasons recognize, it would be a shame upon the law if he could not find an advocate among the best and bravest at the bar to aid him in its vindication. Indeed it often requires the best and bravest to vindicate rights which, to good men, seem sometimes to be so strangely located. Therefore, no rule could be made that would fall further short of attaining a just adjudication of causes, than the rule of deciding according to the relative standing of parties in litigation. As the advocate cannot determine by such a standard, no more can the magistrate. Let us imagine one ruling thus summarily. Let him open his docket and turn to a couple of cases. A *against* B. By the Court. 'Let the defendant have his verdict, since he is a good man and A a bad.' C *against* D. By

the Court. 'In this case, the plaintiff must have judgment, he being the good man.' But, may it please your Honor, who then are good men? Alas! says Cicero, 'That is a great question.' The truth is, unhappy though it be that all men good and bad, sometimes make mistakes concerning the rights of others, when they seem to conflict with their own. More unhappy yet it is, that good men are very often apt to undervalue the rights of the bad. The bad have no friends, and they deserve to have none, save in the laws of the land. These laws cover all. Designed mostly to protect the good from the bad, they must afford also a shelter to the bad whenever they are too rigorously pursued, or whenever the few rights which they have not forfeited, are assailed.

From all the considerations hereinbefore mentioned, the nature of municipal laws in general, and the Common Law in particular, the infinite variableness of its application to the different circumstances of men's lives, the frequent impossibility of its ascertainment except by means of public discussions, the habits of some lawyers, and the characteristics of some magistrates, the large number of shining lights of the profession, among whom are to be found some of the kindest and justest men, are undervalued by the world. Too many of the world regard all lawyers alike as delighting in strifes, as bar-

rators, disturbers of peace, and unscrupulously eager for fame and money. Yet, how many of these greater lights are never found in public offices or in the paths that lead to them. How few of them accumulate fortunes. What becomes of the great fees which look so like, what they are sometimes styled, extortions upon the estates of men living and dead? First, these fees are neither so large nor so frequent as it is believed. Then, they go in humane benefactions, in liberal allowances to their families, in answerings to charitable claims, in purchasings of books, and pictures, and objects of virtu, and in other ways that commend themselves to men of generous minds and cultivated tastes.

Such men as these are the most efficient conservators of social tranquillity. Their profession affords them the most frequent opportunities, and their humanity prompts them ever, to be such. Instead of being the fomenters of useless litigation, their counsel is mainly given in discouraging it. While they are ever ready to defend the good against the assaults of the bad, they are as ready for that other ungracious but necessary duty, the defence of the bad against the assaults of the good. And it is their crowning honor that, through their means, a vaster amount of litigation is withheld from the public than is inflicted upon it.

If we could know all that is said and done in the

offices of this class of men during one year, we should be astonished to find how much distress and anguish have been spared to private men, and how much expense and disgust have been turned away from the public. It is impossible to calculate the good that is done by such men, because it is impossible to know its greatest and noblest part. This part, like all the best charities, is done in secret. It is in the secret chambers of offices, that selfish men are warned from the prosecution of their aims. It is there that the thoughtless are admonished of the laxity in business and in conduct which is to be stayed in order to prevent pecuniary and moral ruin. It is there that just and liberal settlements are wrung from hard parents and mean husbands. It is there that bad men, who come to have unjust testaments executed, are made ashamed and afraid to prolong their injustice beyond the grave and into the eternal world. But it is especially to the upright that blessings come from these secret chambers. It is there that they are forefended against the evil plots of the vicious, and that they are aided and guided in their benign endeavors for the good of others. It is there that they are comforted in their anxieties regarding the bestowment of the fruits of their labors upon the objects of their love who are to survive them. And then, it is there, sometimes, that mirrors are held before their eyes,

in which they are made to behold in their own characters things that surprise and pain them; yet, by the sight of which, they are made humbler and better. This is, indeed, the true charity. To our minds this is the very exaltation of charity. The great fees come not from these silent labors. They come from those loud and fierce antagonisms which these silent labors often prevent, and are intended to prevent. This is the charity that is kind. And it is the more beautiful and blessed, in that it doth not behave itself unseemly, but performs its most benign work unnoticed by the world.

BELISARIUS.

IT is no wonder that in the absence of a better inspiration, mankind should deify Fortune and build temples to her worship. The philosopher and the wit, while they might smile at the vain credulities of the multitude, must join in the public ascriptions of praise and the public offices of sacrifice. Horace, the gay and worldly-minded, could have his jest at the splendid entertainments of the prime minister; but when he came to speak to the people of the Roman Legions, and their generals in distant wars, he discoursed in language almost too solemn not to be sincere:—

> 'Te Dacus asper, te profugi Scythæ,
> Urbesque gentesque, et Latium ferox,
> Regum que matres barbarorum et
> Purpurei metuunt tyranni.'

The unaccountable vicissitudes in human affairs might well suggest to all who believed that the destinies of men were shaped or overruled by unseen intelligences, that among these superior beings there was one who loved to confound the calculations of the wise and to be entertained by the absurd displays of the simple.

Yet the temple at Antium, the oldest and most magnificent that had been reared by the Romans to Fortune, had received the worship of many generations before the most devout worshippers came to look among others than those of gentle blood for such as the divinity might select to become kings, or consuls, or senators. The world has never known a state so great as Rome, while her rulers, regal and republican, were taken from those of ancient hereditary rank. The real glory of that celebrated ROMAN PEOPLE was achieved by the genius and under the rule of Patricians. Conservatism and decency fled before the vulgarity of Marius, and a despotism became necessary to avert the ruin that would have ensued from the social wars of such a democracy.

It was not very long after the establishment of the Empire, that Fortune seemed to become more strangely fantastic than ever before. Whoever is wont to be amused by her caprices, in the abasement of the great and the exaltation of the lowly, may find abundant entertainment in the history of the Roman Emperors. What a list of names from Augustus to Palæologus! How various their deeds and destinies! From what variant and distant origins they came to that throne which, though assailed for fifteen hundred years by every hostile agency, by foreign wars, by divisions, and by transfer to one

and another city in Europe and in Asia, was destined to fall at last only before the sword of a successor to the camel-driver of Mecca! On that long roll of monarchs which began with the decline of its prestige and power, it is curious to consider the number who sprang from ignoble sources. Barbarians, not chiefs, nor nobles, but barbarians who were mean, and who were slaves, arose to divide with the descendants of kings the shame of destroying the Empire of Cæsar.

It is the purpose of this article to notice briefly one of these monarchs; but only for the sake of considering the career of a far more interesting man by whose unrewarded services his reign, otherwise insignificant in its foreign policy, was made illustrious, and who seems to have lived but to show how useless are the labors of heroes to a prince or a people who can neither appreciate nor employ them.

When Maximin and Dioclesian had risen to the throne, it needed no necromancer to persuade an ardent youth far away among the wilds of Dacia, that he might make a high career by joining the armies of the Empire. How the peasant boy Justin fled from his home on the banks of the Danube, how he rose in favor with the feeble Anastasius, how by intrigues and murders he obtained the crown and administered the government, and how, at last, he

was compelled to abdicate in favor of his nephew, Justinian, who had waited 'long, too long already,' we can not here recite. We must even pass over the first years of the new reign in which the wars in the East had accomplished nothing except to develop the fact that the Empire had a general of capacity great enough for any achievement which a wise monarch might desire. A provincial, though of noble family, Belisarius had left the hills of Thrace, had risen step by step in military offices and held a conspicuous place in the body-guard of Justinian, when the latter, in the forty-fifth year of his age, put on the Imperial purple. In the Persian war, which the Emperor, from various reasons, was induced to abandon, the Thracian rose to be unquestionably the first general of the Empire. Added to this eminent prestige was the timely service which he had rendered on the occasion of the great insurrection of the *Nika*, when, as Justinian was on the very verge of flight and ruin, he saved him by the instantaneous attack and the terrible massacre of the Hippodrome. The scandal of the times assigned yet another advantage in the beginning of his career to the ardent though inconstant fondness of the Empress for his wife, the beautiful Antonina. If this were true, it was the most praiseworthy conduct that the public could ever find during the long

lives of these illustrious females, whose beauty and wit were the only excuses for innumerable frailties.

And now a richer field than could be found in Asia, lay extended and inviting to the armies of Justinian. The imbecility of the later Emperors, the profligacy of ministers and the decline of military discipline, had reduced the vast Roman Empire to the space included within the present limits of Turkey. Fifty years had elapsed since the dismemberment of the West. In Italy, the genius of Theodoric had established the supremacy of the Ostrogoths, and the jealousies of Aetius and Boniface, generals of Valentinian III, had enabled Genseric, the Vandal, to secure for himself and his family the throne of Carthage and the dominion of Africa. Vanity, aimless ambition, and especially the desire of more provinces to plunder for himself and his minister, the rapacious and profligate John of Cappadocia, suggested to his narrow, but cunning and persistent mind, the possibility of recovering some portion of that splendid inheritance which his predecessors had lost. Superadded to these motives was another a religious intolerance which thought to pacify the Imperial conscience with the design of exterminating by violence, the heresies of the Arians and the Donatists, and restoring the Catholic creed, which, under the reign of the barbarian kings, had been

long languishing in the West. Yet one more motive, a great and generous had it been sincere, was the release and restoration of Hilderic, the rightful king of Carthage, who had been dethroned and imprisoned by the crafty and cruel Gelimer.

A mind less narrow and obstinate would have hesitated long before attempting a project so full of hazard as the reduction of Africa from the power of the Vandals. The obstacles were indeed great. The prestige of Roman arms had long passed away. They had been driven from every province of the West. Rome had been entered and pillaged again and again, and even as the capital city of the barbarians had yielded to Ravenna in the north. The disgraceful failure to extend and even to preserve the ancient conquests in Asia, had been vainly covered by a peace founded upon pecuniary considerations. Besides, this very project had been attempted twice before under the lead, first of Boniface and afterwards of Basiliscus, and the degenerate and oft-beaten armies that had long lost, not only the ardor, but the name of legions, remembered with horror the stories which they had heard of the gigantic Vandals and the savage Moors whose multitudes inhabited the vast and fertile region lying north of the African Desert. It is easy to image the universal shuddering which followed the announcement that war was to be renewed in the West. The men of property

dreaded the increase of taxes already too burthensome under that hated and wicked system, which allowed army officers to supply the rations of the soldiery, and the paymasters to levy the taxes for its maintenance: the minister was appalled at the prospect of the odium and the disasters that must ensue upon failure that seemed inevitable, and the soldiers, yet fatigued by Persian campaigns, scarcely endeavored to conceal their reluctance to make the dangerous navigation of the Ægean, Myrtoan, Ionian and Mediterranean Seas, and encounter, in the seasons of Summer and Autumn, as well the pestilential climate, as the warlike hordes of Africa. But Justinian was crafty and a bigot. Through his emissaries he had ascertained and exacerbated the spirit of rebellion among the various hostile factions, both political and religious, in the Vandalic Kingdom. In the midst of the waverings of his mind how far this spirit might be trusted, the importunate appeals of the Athanasian priesthood, accompanied by recitals of various preternatural visions and admonitions, aroused yet more his pious zeal and his superstitious fears, and the Imperial order went forth stern and irrevocable. One fact, and one alone, could reconcile the nation, citizens and soldiers, to the expedition. That fact was the appointment of Belisarius to the supreme command.

To one who, while reflecting upon the large territory and the great population that yet remained to the Empire, may not have considered the low estate into which its armies had been reduced and the means by which the reduction had been effected, it may be surprising to be told that the forces for this hazardous undertaking consisted of ten thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry; that of these forces, the most efficient was the cavalry; and that, at last, the only fully sure reliance was the body-guard of the commanding general. The heavy arms anciently borne by the foot-soldier had yielded to the bow and quiver; and these, with the decline of patriotism and military ardor, had rendered his retreat more facile than his advance in the face of an enemy. It was evident to all reasoning minds that success required that the leader should possess as high a degree of statesmanship as of military genius. A discretion as unlimited as the power of the Sovereign was granted to him, and, in the last days of the month of June in the year 533, after a brief delay by contrary winds in the passage of the Propontis, his galley with its red banners emerged from the Hellespont followed by the fleet of soldiers and seamen, who, though solemnly bidding adieu to friends and country, were already beginning to share the hopes and heroism of their illustrious general. Safely and rapidly they passed along the nar-

row passages between the Cyclades and Eubœa and Attica, between Cythera and Laconia, around the promontory of Tænarum to Methone in Messina, near to the sandy Pylos of Nestor. Less speedy but not less safe, was the voyage up the western coast of Peloponnesus, by Zacynthus, and thence directly across the Ionian Sea to Sicily.

Fortunate for the Emperor's hopes and that which constituted their most reasonable foundation, were the short-sighted hostilities of the various nations of barbarians among themselves. But for these, the downfall of the Roman Empire, West and East, long ere this period, would have been effected. Alive to the value of co-operation, the wise Theodoric had wedded the sister of Clovis the Frank, and bestowed his own sister Amalafrida upon a Vandal King. A part of the dowry of the latter were the promontory and the strong fortress of Lilybæum on the western coast of Sicily. The inhuman massacre of her Gothic attendants, nobles and soldiery, to the number of six thousand, and the speedy and suspicious death of the Princess herself, aroused in this less savage people a hatred of the Vandals and a desire of revenge, which, after the death of Theodoric, made them commit the fatal mistake of encouraging Justinian in his projects for their conquest. It was to learn how far their promises in this behalf might be trusted, that Belisarius had sailed to Sicily,

and lingered in the harbor of Catana. His prompt genius was quick to perceive that the reports of their sentiments had not been exaggerated. Finding that an army of five thousand Vandals, under the command of Zano, the brother of Gelimer, had gone to suppress a rebellion in Sardinia, and might be recalled upon the news of his invasion, he set sail with alacrity, and as soon as wind and oars could convey him, reached and anchored at the promontory of Caput Vada in Byzacium. A council of war, in apprehension of being cut off from the ships on a seacoast destitute of harbors, and where the towns and cities, in pursuance of the established policy of the Vandals, had been bereft of walls and fortifications, had dissuaded from landing at this point, and advised the sailing to the spacious harbor that lay unguarded six miles from Carthage. Belisarius overruled this advice. Celerity was of utmost importance. Zano was in Sicily, and the Vandal King, not expecting the invasion to be made so soon, was enjoying the summer at the city of Hermione. Besides, he was anxious to place his army to the south of those inferior cities which, unfortified by walls, could be more speedily reduced, and being of less resolute loyalty, might, by adroit diplomacy, be brought to assist, instead of obstructing, his progress to the capital.

And now was seen an invading army of fifteen

thousand on the sea shore of a hostile nation, whose fighting force was scarcely less than one hundred thousand warriors. No other than a hero could contemplate the magnitude of the danger without trembling. Courage beyond all susceptibility of fear, yet with no element of rashness; prudence akin to prophetic inspiration; caution that seemed like timidity, yet directing actions of almost impossible celerity; military discipline that sometimes must approximate cruelty, yet preserve the subordination and even the love of an army composed of many various elements, civilised and barbarian; conciliation of an invaded people, but in ways not inconsistent with the avowed purpose to overthrow their government and established worship; all these, and what was yet more, the control of eleven subaltern generals, all jealous of his superior fame, were demanded of Belisarius, and he had them all at his command. The first disorders of the fierce Heruli, when the fleet had just left the harbor of Constantinople and were lingering at Perinthus, had been suppressed by suspending the leading malefactors upon a gibbet in full view of the army. Yet, when many soldiers had died at Methone from eating the wretched bread that the avaricious John had supplied, the fatherly sympathy and tenderness of the general, and his indignant rebuke of the minister, more than made amends. So when, upon the landing in Africa,

an orchard had been pillaged, a speedy punishment and an address representing as well the danger as the injustice of such action, induced a system of regulated traffic between the army and the citizens, which not only gave the latter security in their estates but created a market in which they were enriched by the products of their labor. Belisarius was great enough and virtuous enough not only to see, but to rejoice in seeing, the justice and the policy of protecting from the violence of the soldiery the peaceful pursuits in an enemy's, as well as his own country. With him, not as with most military men, warfare had refined and exalted his pity for human suffering. In the march of his army to the capital, not only was there not a single outrage committed upon private property, but the people and the very land rejoiced in the sense of full protection. It is almost incredible with what celerity the objects of this expedition were accomplished. The statesmanship of Belisarius made friends for the Emperor with every advancing step. Sullecte received him with open arms; then Leptis; then Hadrumetum. The hostile armies met ten miles to the south of Carthage. Though surprised by the suddenness of the invasion, Gelimer counted upon an easy victory from the vast superiority of his numbers. One column under the lead of his brother Ammatas, whom he had left in command in Carthage, met the enemy's advance;

another under his nephew Gibamund was to assault his left flank, while himself with the heaviest column, in proper time would fall upon his rear. But Gelimer saw that it was not the tardy Basilicus with whom he had to contend, but a general who knew as well as Hannibal or Cæsar, the value of every moment of time in a day of battle. Simultaneous with the death of Ammatas and the defeat of his troops by a desperate charge of cavalry under John the Armenian, the column of Gibamund was scattered by a force of six hundred Huns; and while the Vandal King, who even yet had no expectation of defeat by so inferior forces, was hastily performing the usual rites of his brother's funeral, Belisarius turned upon and overwhelmed him. On the next day, while, in the anguish of grief and shame, he was retreating into Numidia, the Roman army marched through the open gates of Carthage. It was on the day of Cyprian, the holy martyr. Shouts and joyful tears of Catholics welcomed their deliverers, the high festival was celebrated in pious gladness by those who now foresaw the return of their exiled bishops and grew ecstatic in prospect of restoring the creed of Athanasius and revenging the persecutions of a hundred years. But such was the authority of Belisarius that not only was there no spoliation of property, but the business of the citizens suffered no interruption except in those hours in which they

came forth to witness the procession of the army and the solemn festival of the Church.

Another effort must be made for the rescue of the falling dynasty. Zano returned with speed from Sardinia with his forces flushed with recent conquest; great numbers of recruits were obtained among the Moors, and Gelimer, with an army superior to the former and many times more numerous than that of his adversary, advanced to the last struggle for his kingdom. The armies met on the plains of Tricameron, twenty miles west of Carthage. The Vandals, until the death of Zano, fought with a courage of which the most desperate chieftain could find nothing to complain. But the fall of this brave and beloved prince filled his brother with grief and dismay, and when he saw the advancing standards of Belisarius, he fled from the field with the last army he was destined to lead. The victors rushed to the pursuit, joined by the fierce but inconstant Huns, (who had been partially reduced by Gelimer and were awaiting the issue of battle,) and this vast host, with their countless treasures, were slain or captured. Gelimer, with a few attendants, escaped to an inaccessible fastness among the Moors, but only, after suffering inconceivable privations, to be taken at last. What a change in six months! three of which had been spent in reaching the scene of conflict. Within the next three, the power of the

Vandals which a hundred years had helped to confirm, was destroyed. As if all things had conspired to aid the plans of Justinian and bring a success above his expectations, and even above his dreams, the unfortunate Hilderic had been murdered by the orders of Gelimer, and thus Roman supremacy was at once re-established over all the country from the Syrtis Major in the East to the Balearic Islands in the West.

Such stupendous success, attributable, so far as human calculations might extend, almost entirely to the genius of one man, raised Belisarius to an equal rank with the most renowned generals of former times. A monarch who had risen to power by means illegitimate and cruel, and who was perpetuating it by administration inconsistant with even a wish for the happiness of his people, had not need to look elsewhere but into his own heart and his own experiences, in order to see, or to believe that he saw, the prospect of another, and this time, a reasonable caprice of fortune. This was the exaltation of his Thracian subject to the kingdom of Carthage, and perhaps by another and not difficult revolution, to speedy succession to the throne of the Empire. There was much to excite such an apprehension in the mind of such a prince. The victorious general, to gentle birth and a noble person added the manners and mien of a king: —

'His looks were full of peaceful majesty;
His head by nature framed to wear a crown,
His hand to wield a sceptre.'

Justinian and Theodora, the Empress, both of vulgar extraction, had often heard with pain the applause with which he was wont to be saluted by the populace when upon his walks from his residence to the public places of the capital, and their timid minds could never be brought to believe that he could be other than an aspirant for those highest offices, which it seemed he had been born to inherit. As a part of those imposing solemnisations, the value of which with a conquered people he knew how to estimate, he had occupied the palace of Gelimer, and for one day, before applying himself to the business of administration, listened to the prayers of suppliants while seated upon the throne, and held a banquet with his officers in all the state of the Vandal kings. The secret reports of these actions by the subaltern generals, who could not endure to see the star of his fame rise so rapidly, produced in the mind of Justinian a strange conflict between elation and apprehension at these triumphs of his army. The shame of appearing reluctant to honor the hero who had already immortalised his reign, and the indispensable need of the continuance of such a man in the public service for the conduct of other great undertakings, so much embarrassed him in the midst of his fears and jealousies, that his

orders to the general upon the question of his remaining in Africa were intentionally or unavoidably ambiguous.

Sad indeed must have been that great soldier as, from the superior heights to which his genius had exalted him, he looked down upon the rest of mankind and found, even among those who owed him nothing but love and gratitude, no response to the fidelity with which he had devoted his life to their service. To an ordinary man, to any man but Belisarius, there was a great temptation. Nothing was more certain than that with such a master, any service however great, must go unrewarded, except that he could accomplish whatever his ambition might suggest. But not only was he without any unlawful ambition, but a more cruel wound than even the ingratitude of his prince could inflict, was in that manly breast. Obedient to the first and only emotion of love, he had wedded Antonina, a charming widow, of whose many lovers he had been both too busy and too pure to know, but whose irregularities found a patroness and an exemplar in the Empress herself, before she had ascended from the arena of the circus to the bedchamber of Justinian. All men except the husband of Antonina, knew of her criminal intimacy with the youth, who, upon his happy conversion from the heresy of the Eunomians, just at the beginning

of the expedition to Africa, had been adopted into the general's family, as their spiritual son. Although the chaste and pious husband could not wholly distrust the wife whom he so singly loved, yet the boldness and fierceness of her unlawful passion, which kept the youth by her side too closely and constantly for the credulity of the most uxorious, had raised a doubt; and a doubt on such a subject in the breast of such a man must render him indifferent to whatever might promise to come from the smiles or the frowns of even the Emperor of the East. The injured husband, henceforth destitute of ambition, and unassailable by any other grief than the one that filled his heart, may well be believed to have indulged a melancholy smile when, to the surprise of all men, he embarked with his captives and spoils, and led them in the ceremonials of a triumph, in which, contrary to the wont of former heroes who rode in splendid chariots, he walked at the head of his guards, and laid all his trophies at the feet of his royal master and his adulterous consort. 'Vanity of vanities,' continually cried the fallen Gelimer, as the vast procession moved on to the Hippodrome, partly deriding and partly preaching on the mutability of fortune. He knew it not, but he was a happier man than his triumphant captor, because he was going into retirement with his domestic honor unimpeached.

Satisfied as much as a timid monarch could be with such subservient conduct of a spirit that was too great for his comprehension, and in pressing need of his genius in the consummation of plans which he had cunningly laid for the recovery of Italy from Gothic and Arian rule, he graciously allowed his general a small share of the praise of his glorious deeds, and invested him with the obsolete honors of the Consulship. With an army of seven thousand men he sent him to Sicily to begin the conquest of a nation whose military force was two hundred thousand men, and whose monarch was a descendant and had inherited the spirit of Theodoric and Merovæus. But that monarch was a woman. According to the customs and laws of her forefathers, which forbade the sceptre to descend to a female, being compelled to govern, first in the name of her son, and after his death, of a husband whom for his pusillanimity she despised, the accomplished Amalasontha became a prey to the arts of Justinian, and having been imprisoned and murdered, the feeble Theodotus reigned in her stead. The divisions created by this family dispute lessened the task which Belisarius had to perform. Already had the promontory of Lilybæum fallen to the Emperor in right of his conquest of the Vandals, to whom, as before mentioned, it had been yielded by Theodoric. Scarcely had the rest of Sicily been reduced,

when the presence of Belisarius was required in Africa. The judicious administration which, before his recall, he had inaugurated in that country, had been abandoned after his departure. As if the Vandals had been overthrown but to increase the number of Exarchs, whose especial office seemed to be the spoliation of all classes, the people soon groaned under heavier burthens than had ever before been imposed. An insurrection arose, to suppress which powers were required very different from those possessed by the minions who knew only how to levy and extort taxes. Belisarius, arriving with a few of his body guard, soon hushed all murmurs, and then returning to Sicily, prepared for the invasion of Italy. When all was ready, and while the crafty Emperor was delaying Theodotus in vain negotiations, Belisarius precipitated his army into Bruttium, overran the whole southern coast where Gothic influence was the weakest, and halted not until he had reached the centre of Campania and stood before the city of Naples. The commandant of this post, which was believed to be impregnable, viewed with composure the contemptible force of five thousand men that were encamped before the walls, while he heard of the preparations at Ravenna for concentrating the whole Gothic forces and marching to annihilate the army of invasion.

Fortune favored the besiegers. An old and forsaken aqueduct was discovered and found to extend far into the city. The humane general, foreseeing the havoc that must follow from the sudden irruption in the deep of night, of an army hungry and infuriate, forbore to resort to it until he had warned the Neapolitans in terms which risked the discovery of his plans. They gave no heed to his warnings, and felt only the more secure until the advancing trumpets of a band of four hundred who had entered through this hazardous passage, announced to their comrades without and the terrified garrison and citizens within, that Naples had fallen. All that a great and humane general could do in the darkness to mitigate the outrages which could not but ensue, was done. By his entreaties and threats, the carnage was checked at last, and the city was reconciled to its destiny.

Meanwhile the impotent Theodotus, who had been listening to vague promises from Constantinople and was intent upon plans for securing his own personal safety and aggrandisement, was grossly neglecting the public defence. The Goths, mourning for the murdered queen, and indignant against his pusillanimity, were hesitating whether or not they would drag him from his throne and elevate the valiant Vitiges in his stead. They were not long in deciding; and while this tragic expedient was being adopted and the nation was occupied in the solemn

inauguration of the new sovereign, the Catholic garrison of Rome voluntarily evacuated the city, and Roman rule was once more established on the Tiber. There is nothing in the history of sieges which exhibits a greater degree of courage, skill, patience, and humanity, than were displayed by Belisarius in the defence of this immense city, against the attacks of one hundred and fifty thousand Goths, throughout all the perils and sufferings of twelve months of beleaguerment. How he availed himself of the interval of the new inauguration and the mustering of the Gothic troops, in gathering stores of corn from Sicily, and from the adjoining districts in Italy; how he succeeded with a few Moorish cavalry in keeping always open a pass to and from the province of Campania; how he made available the waters of the Tiber, when all the aqueducts were obstructed, and its stream was choked and polluted by the bodies of the dead; how, when the supplies of food and drink were nearly exhausted, he removed the non-combatant population to places of safety without the city; how he pitied the sufferings and suppressed the plots of a dismayed and coward people; how he repulsed the combined and several assaults of that vast and mighty host with skill that has no superior, if it have an equal, in all ancient or modern warfare; and how, after a siege of twelve months, when fifty thousand of the enemy

had perished, and the disheartened monarch, with forces yet twenty times greater than his own, abandoned the siege in dispair; all these are to be found in the histories of his times. These histories relate further, that in the midst of the labors of his defense, his fertile genius invented the means to hasten the retreat of Vitiges by inflaming the spirit of revolt in Liguria, and by a masterly employment of the reinforcements which, after long delays, had been sent from Constantinople. In the interval of a truce which had been artfully managed for the sake of delay until these forces could arrive on the opposite shore of Italy, the Goths, who themselves were watching every opportunity to violate it, were confounded by the intelligence that an army, under John the Sanguinary, with such instructions as only Belisarius knew how to frame, was in Picenum, where were their wives and children, and richest treasures. Raising the siege of Rome, they hastened to the attack of Rimini, into which John had retired at their approach. But such was the celerity of Belisarius in effecting a junction with Narses, who had been sent with an additional force to Picenum, that Vitiges again retreated and shut himself behind his last stronghold, the fortress and morasses of Ravenna.

Jealousies and suspicions were already risen again in the mind of the Emperor, and a man was found

who, with some show of reason, might divide with Belisarius the glory of great achievements. To the invidiousness and cunning ambition of his class, Narses the Eunuch united high military genius. It would be difficult to say what Justinian might not have accomplished by a cordial co-operation of these two generals. But co-operation was impracticable between two such uncongenial spirits. The slyness and the mean sycophancy of the one were in too constant contrast with the open manliness of the other. But the very qualities which rendered him contemptible in the eyes of such a man as Belisarius, endeared him the more to Justinian. The hero ascertained that the Eunuch had come to watch his movements, and to prevent his too great success. No sooner were the Goths humbled and their power in the South destroyed, and when with the forces in Italy, now raised to twenty thousand men, their dominion might have been annihilated, Narses, true to his instincts and the equally unworthy innuendoes of his master, withdrew his command. These, with accessions of the discontented and insubordinate of the regular army, amounted to ten thousand men; and Belisarius was left with a force barely enough to preserve the conquests he had made, and without the power to complete them. While Narses went upon a useless expedition into the Æmilian province, and Beli-

sarius was employed in reducing some inferior towns, many months of precious time elapsed. In this interval a new enemy came into the field. It must have been with irrepressible indignation that the great general, in full view of what might have been but for the silly fears of the Emperor and the petty meanness of his favorite, heard descending from the Alps that avalanche of fresh barbarians under Theodebert the Frank. It is yet mournful to contemplate that terrific invasion in which Milan, the second city in Europe, was destroyed, three hundred thousand of its inhabitants were massacred, and all Liguria was laid waste. But he was the most patient of mankind. Seizing the opportunity when the Franks, satiated with blood and desolation, and now attacked by famine and an epidemical disease, were discontented and murmuring, his powers of diplomacy obtained that which no military genius without an army could enforce, and Theodebert led his hordes away.

Of all the actions of Belisarius, the grandest and the bravest, the crowning of his many glories, was his conduct in the capture of Ravenna and the closing of the war in Italy. Narses, as if it were supposed that he had sufficiently hindered the career of the general-in-chief, had now been recalled to his old place in the intrigues of the court, and the forces were again reunited under one command.

Ravenna, from its inaccessibility in the midst of its morasses, was considered impregnable by any force or artifice. While the mind of Belisarius was meditating upon the means for its reduction, and when he had completely invested it by sea and land, he was astounded by the arrival of messengers with a treaty of peace signed by the Emperor, which allowed the Goths to retain all their possessions to the north of the Po! One can easily perceive in this treaty the hand of the Eunuch, whose mean but limitless ambition had cast out every generous as well as every patriotic emotion. A general less brave, a citizen less patriotic, a subject less loyal, would not have opposed a policy which the sovereign had adopted and which might be approved by the judgments of every other adviser, military and civil, in the Empire. But Belisarius, contrary to the opinion of all his generals who unanimously voted that Ravenna could not be reduced, refused to consider the treaty and thus lose the opportunity of signalising his desire for the good of his country and the glory of his sovereign. The Goths were in dismay at this unexpected resolution. Yet in their boundless admiration for the hero, who, in spite of hindrances, had achieved such successes, and with that strange ardor of the mind when from one fond hope which it has been forced to abandon, it turns to a new one sometimes inconsistent and even hos-

tile to the former, they gave up to him their last fortress, and with tears besought that he would allow them to be the voluntary soldiers of him—BELISARIUS, KING OF ITALY. Ravenna was occupied; the crown was refused; and the vanquished Goths, in their inability to understand, believed that they despised a man, who, gifted with the very highest talents, and with adequate inducements and perfect opportunities, had neither ambition nor resentment. Even Justinian could not withhold the praise that was due to such matchless magnanimity. But his newly awakened apprehensions must be relieved again by the presence and renewed submission of his greatest subject. The order for his return was instantly obeyed, the Emperor was soothed, and Italy, as Africa had been, was delivered over to the rapacity of the Exarchs.

The avowed motive for the recall of Belisarius was the necessity of making a more vigorous resistance than had yet been interposed to the incursions of Nushirvan, the Shah of Persia. The avowal was mainly false. Yet the emergency was greater than Justinian believed. False to the stipulations of the peace which had been solemnly styled the *Eternal*, the Emperor had attempted to seduce one of the dependencies of Nushirvan and to incite the Northern barbarians to invade his dominions. The latter resented this perfidy by an inroad into

the Asiatic provinces of the Empire, and, among, other acts of devastation, the destruction of Antioch, the most important city east of the Bosporus. The incapacity of the Roman generals in the East had emboldened him in another campaign to attempt the occupation of Colchis, which the wicked and foolish exactions of the Emperor had alienated from his alliance. If this project had succeeded, the Euxine would have been opened, and the Persians, with a strong naval armament, could have sailed into the harbor of Constantinople. After a delay of many months in the capital, Belisarius was sent to take command of the forces in Asia. In spite of their great decline both in numbers and discipline, in spite of the insubordination of two of his generals, and the treason and desertion of a third, he managed, by an adroit movement across the Tigris, to divert Nushirvan from the occupation of Colchis at the very moment of its consummation, and thus bring an end to what was called the Lazic war.

Ashamed at having been thwarted in so important a project by the superior generalship of Belisarius, Nushirvan, in the following spring, (A. D. 542,) again sallied forth with the largest army which he had yet brought into the field against the Romans. This time his lust for rapine and his pious zeal induced him to attempt the destruction of Jerusalem, which was yet exceedingly rich in holy offerings.

The Imperial forces were then under the command of Buzes and Justus, a nephew of the Emperor. Upon being again despatched to the East, Belisarius found the army at Hierapolis, and both they and their leaders were in consternation at the immense numbers and the rapid operations of the Persians, and they were unanimously in favor of remaining within that stronghold until Nushirvan, satisfied with plunder, might voluntarily return. 'Such conduct', answered the general, 'would not deserve the mere name of timidity—it would be treason.' He at once issued his orders and marched the army to Europus on the Euphrates, a position which would enable him to prevent all communication between the king and his dominions. This movement, such was its prodigious boldness, was interpreted as a manœuvre to intercept his retreat. The astonished invader, believing himself to have been misinformed as to the strength of his enemy, again retreated quickly, availed himself of what was supposed to be an oversight of Belisarius in leaving unguarded one of the passes, and solaced himself with the vain conceit that he had for once outwitted his adversary. These victories, though bloodless, must be ranked among the best exploits of military genius.

By this time the rule of the Exarchs in the West had exhausted all the fruits of conquest. Never was a policy more unlikely to secure the desirable

results of victory than that adopted by the ministers of Justinian in Africa and Italy. We may lament, and it is well we should lament, the sufferings produced by an army of invasion. An infuriate soldier who wars for pay and booty, is an object of just abhorrence. But even he is less to be dreaded than those officials taken from the ranks of the cowards who remain at home until the war is over, and then come to the field of conquest, and slowly, and deliberately, and pitilessly, extort, not only the last savings that remain to the vanquished, but the yearly returns of their hopeless toil. The policy of the Exarchs seemed but to contemplate two ends—the extirpation of heresy and the plunder of all men. The Arians were hindered even in the private baptism of their children, and the most undoubted loyalty and the most unexceptionable religious faith of a Roman could not shield him from open spoliation by the civil officers. Deliverance from such exactions was indeed hopeless, since they were countenanced by the Emperor himself, who could never gather money enough for his two only purposes for its employment,—the enriching of his queen and favorites, and the erection of costly buildings. These cruelties produced rebellions among the Moors and the few remaining Vandals in Africa that resulted in slaughters and desolations from which thirteen centuries have not been able to

rescue that once prosperous country, and at the mere description of which even now the mind is appalled. In Italy, the rule of these viceroys was so different from the tolerant and benign administration of Theodoric, that when Totila, a brave Goth, essayed the deliverance of the remnant of his people from their oppression, he found friends and allies among all classes of citizens, rich and poor, Arians and Catholics, from the Alps to the Gulf of Tarentum. No doubt the surprise and chagrin of the Emperor were as great as they were avowed to be, when his deaf ears heard at last that the exactions which he had sanctioned and encouraged had filled all Italy with horror and hatred, and that Totila, with a large army of Goths and Italians, had marched unmolested from Padua to Naples, had captured the latter and was preparing for another siege of Rome.

Who but Belisarius could be found to cope with the exigencies of this crisis? And yet, we can scarcely credit the recorded truth that the material support by which this new expedition was to be sustained, was less than it was in the preceding. But the maladministration of the Imperial war department had reached a point hardly paralleled in history. His rapacious and unprincipled ministers, being both tax-assessors and paymasters, not only plundered throughout the Empire for the avowed support of the army, but withheld from the latter

their bounties, and even encouraged the reduction of the rolls by desertions and furloughs in order to pocket the surplus supplies which this reduction created. Belisarius, in order to prevent the recurrence of the apprehension which his previous conduct with the Goths had inspired, was deprived of his own guards. Arriving at Ravenna with a handful of men, less than four thousand recruits, whom he had gathered in Illyricum, and seeing at once the impossibility of increasing his force either by forced levies or by voluntary enlistment in a country which had grown to prefer Gothic to Roman domination, he remonstrated in terms that discovered a sadness such as can be felt only by great minds which, like Cassandra, have the unhappy gift to foretell calamities which are fated not to be believed by those who alone have the power to prevent them. After long delays, and not until he had been driven to recross the Adriatic to Dyrrachium, he received a small additional reinforcement. With a force so inadequate, Narses, as was afterwards shown, would have refused at all hazards the conduct of the expedition. Belisarius embarked with it, and fearing the attempt to pass through the country, coasted around the Peninsula and landed at the mouth of the Tiber.

Impossible as it seemed, with such a force, to relieve Rome from the assault of a numerous host led

by an able general who had spent many months in obstructing the channel of the river and guarding its banks, the relief was once on the very verge of being, and would have been, accomplished, but for the baseness of Bessus, the commandant, and the disobedience of one of his subalterns. During the time when the general was confined by illness in his camp, the city was betrayed by the sentinels who guarded the Asinarian gate. Thus Rome once again fell to the possession of the Goths. And this had been the last day of the city which for ages had been boasting the name of the *Eternal,* but for the solemn appeal of Belisarius, who, in the name of all mankind, the dead, the living, and the yet unborn, besought him to spare the remains of those mighty monuments of the genius and glory of the past. The letter conveying this appeal is so replete with eloquent and pathetic warning that we quote it entire:

'The most mighty heroes and the wisest statesmen have always considered it their pride to own a city with newly and stately buildings, while on the other hand to destroy those which already exist, has been reserved for the dull ferocity of savages careless of the sentence which posterity will cast upon them. Of all the cities which the sun beholds in his course, none can vie with Rome in size, splendor and renown. It has not been reared by the genius of one man, by the labor of a single age. The august assembly of the republican Senate, and the long train of magnificent Emperors, by the progressive and accumulated toil of centuries, and by the most lavish expenditure of wealth, have brought this capital to its present high and acknowledged pre-eminence. Every foreign country has furnished architects for its construction, artists for its ornament; and

the slow results of their joint exertions have bequeathed to us the noblest monument of ancient glory. A blow aimed at this venerable fabric will resound equally through past and future ages. It will rob the illustrious dead of the trophies of their fame; it will rob unborn generations of the proud and cheering prospect which these trophies would afford them. Consider also that one of the two events must needs occur. You will in this war obtain a final victory over the Imperial forces, or yourself be subdued. Should your cause prevail, you, by the havoc which you meditate, would overthrow not a hostile city but your own; while your present forbearance would preserve for you the first and fairest possession of your crown. If, on the contrary, fortune should declare against you, your mercy to Rome will be rewarded by the mercy of the conqueror to you; but none could be expected from Justinian after the desolation of his ancient capital. What benefit, therefore, in any case, can accrue to you from so barbarous an outrage? All mankind have now their eyes turned towards you. Your fame is in the balance, and will incline to one scale or the other, according to your conduct on this decisive occasion; for such as are the deeds of princes, such will be their character in history.'

Totila perused this letter many times, and his gloomy mind brooded, and yearned, and hesitated over the demolition of the city that had nurtured and given its name to the worst enemies of his people. This was, at least, perhaps the noblest of all the achievements of that hero of so many wars, when, in the absence of other means of prevention, he pleaded in so touching and solemn language for these sacred trophies, the common property of all generations of mankind, that the barbarian, partly in pity, and partly in awe, forbore to strike.

In tracing the further conduct of Belisarius in this Italian war, and in comparing the support which he received from Constantinople with that which after-

wards was rendered to Narses, one is almost led to doubt whether the Emperor did not desire the humiliation of his General, rather than the triumph of his arms. It is impossible by any other supposition inconsistent with the absence of all military or political sagacity, to account for his treatment. Totila, having exiled the citizens, and imprisoned the Senate, stationed a large force at Mt. Algidus in order to watch and threaten his adversary who was at Porto. While he was gone with the rest of his army to reduce the remaining Imperial forces in the south, nothing could have astounded him more than to hear that Belisarius, by a grand and sudden attack, had overcome the army left for its guard, had recaptured Rome, had removed all his stores from Porto, and was preparing to stand a siege. The furious Goth returned, reunited all his forces, and the defense of the former war was re-enacted by the heroic general. The repeated assaults of the Goths were repulsed with horrible slaughter. After the loss of the flower of their army, they again raised the seige and retired to Tivoli. At this juncture the war could have been ended if any other than Justinian had been at the head of the government. While Belisarius urged with all his zeal the dispatch of re-enforcements which would have enabled him to speedily crush the Gothic power, the Emperor, having been seized by a new ambition, was then en-

gaged in writing a controversial treatise upon theology, and did not even deign to notice his entreaties. And when they came at last, he was ordered with the forces he could safely withdraw from Rome (and these were less than a thousand men) to repair to Apulia, where he was destined to lose much of the prestige of his previous victories by the uselessness of this expedition and the inefficiency and cowardice of his generals. Several campaigns followed, in which nothing decisive was done by either the Imperial or Gothic forces.

It is difficult to imagine a position more disagreeable than that of a great commander, when, in full assurance of complete success to the unmolested operation of his plans, he is continually thwarted by orders from an incompetent government. It can but exasperate the pain in such a case when he feels that such orders are dictated, not less by ignorance, than by malignity and fear. The true patriot thus recognizes in himself the most dangerous citizen of his country and the chief cause of its disasters. Such was the position of Belisarius during all these fruitless campaigns. For the first time in his life he asked to be recalled, and his petition was granted. He had accomplished in his long career full enough for the measure of a greater ambition. No man with similar resources and hindrances had ever accomplished nearly so much. He despaired of

being able to exert sufficient influence with the Emperor to obtain the means of doing more for his country. He was growing old. And now weary from many a toil which had been paid with nothing but ingratitude, suspicion, and persecution, having long borne the heaviest burthen that can ever weigh upon a proud and sensitive spirit, the consciousness or the suspicion of domestic dishonor, Belisarius desired to return home, where he might wait for death, and, according to his faith, make preparation for a higher life.

The neglect that ensued was doubtless not unacceptable to a man who, in his tread through 'all the ways of honor,' had seen full well the vanity of depending upon princes' favors, and mingling among the attendants of courts. Yet we can scarcely believe that he suppressed a pardonable emotion of triumph when, after some years of solitude, upon a sudden incursion of the Bulgarians, which threatened the seizure of the capital, the terrified monarch and his court turned to him once more for protection. Once more the aged general clothed himself in armor, and with fearfully unequal forces went forth to his last battle and won his last victory. Perhaps that emotion fluttered into increased warmth and brightness, when, upon his return and the passing of the danger, the Emperor, hardened in ingratitude, followed by his servile ministers, coldly turned from

their deliverer, and dismissed him to the retirement from which their fears had called him.

But for the names of Belisarius and Tribonian, the reign of Justinian would have been as inglorious as those of most of the sovereigns who ruled during the years of the decline of the Empire. His name has been and must ever be, associated with that grand system of Civil Law which the wise and just men of former times had created, and which Tribonian by his orders compiled. In thus undeservedly usurping the renown of others, his name has a parallel in that of James the First in the Translation of the Bible—a singular coincidence in the lives of two men, who, though living in widely distant ages, were exceedingly alike in many of those characteristics which render a man unfit for the government of a great people. There was in the one as in the other the same religious fervor which, instead of being illustrated in the leading of pious lives and the production of good works, was expended in the composition of petty doctrinal tracts and the persecution of their opponents. They had the same childish fondness for power, and in their ignorance how to employ it, were plagued with the same nervous apprehension of its loss or diminution. Both were fond of notoriety and lacked the ability to obtain any just renown. Both had their favorites, and the English monarch, had he dared, would have

rewarded them as Justinian rewarded his, to the ruin of thousands of his other subjects. The Roman did leave one grand work of architectural beauty; but our admiration for the temple of Saint Sophia must be accompanied by the memory of the means by which the money for its erection was wrung from an oppressed people. In the case of Belisarius, it is both curious and sad to contemplate how long two such men as he and Justinian could live and labor together, the one for the glory of his country, and the other for its disgrace. The noble monuments that were erected by the one, even at the command of the other, were by that other ruthlessly destroyed. While for thirty years, in heat and cold, in hunger and thirst, in absence from home and country, the one fulfilled and surpassed requirements that seemed impossible except by preternatural powers; the other, in the undisturbed security of his capital, grew old in forefending every blessed result, and in exhibiting to the world how easily and how soon the hands of the weak may ruin the elaborate works of the great.

History furnishes no instance of a man who received less of just reward for his conduct in public and domestic life. It was a misfortune that such a book as the *Anecdotes*, which purports to be the secret work of Procopius, was ever composed. The most judicious scholars among the moderns wholly

reject its authenticity, but more because its revealings were in such discord with his avowed histories and his confidential relationship with Belisarius, than from discredit of any of those revealings except such as were too scandalous, or were related with too great circumstantiality to be believed. The career of Theodora was perhaps more variously eventful than that of any woman in history. The daughter of the Master of the Bears, accustomed from infancy to the ribald language and sanguinary spectacles of the Circus, she was both incontinent and cruel. The men of many cities in the East knew that the lowest trull of the capital was not more shamelessly profligate than she had been from her earliest puberty to the day when she conceived the hope that her marvellous beauty might ensnare the adopted son and destined successor of Justin. When this ambition was gratified, and when she had become a joint sovereign with her husband, the love of power probably excluded every other passion that would endanger it. That power she exerted unceasingly for the exaltation of her favorites, and especially for the punishment of her enemies. The gloomy prisons under the palace seldom received an inmate who was destined ever to emerge into the light of day. No lapse of time could abate her malignity. John of Cappadocia, in the pride of that power which his value to the Emperor had

erected, once provoked her displeasure. She smiled and patiently bided her time. Years afterwards the trap was laid, and the minister was caught. He, under whose cruel rapacity every province of the empire had groaned, was hurled from his high estate and scourged into beggary and exile. Antonina, scarcely less fair, was a favorite, partly because she was of similar origin and frailties, and partly because she was found to be a most facile instrument in the execution of her secret plans. Theodora regarded Belisarius with all the hate that a bad woman is capable of feeling for a great and good man of whom she believes she has reason to be afraid; and she intensely enjoyed her revenge in the infidelities of Antonina, to which she even descended to become the procuress. We can not believe all that has been told of Antonina and Theodosius; but we know that there was enough to cast upon the heart of her husband a shadow which neither more splendid success than he had already attained could remove, nor a grosser ingratitude of the Emperor deepen. He was indeed slow to credit what was evident to all the world, and perhaps even a doubt lingered to the last if he ought not to believe the protestations of one so fair and so well beloved, who had followed him in all his wars but one, and shared in every privation and danger except those of the very battle.

The weakness that could entertain such a doubt is not only compatible with the loftiest genius and the noblest sense of personal honor, but it is associated with them oftener and more naturally than with those inferior natures that look for the infirmities which from experience they know to be possible. A great and pure mind is easily deceived in the matter of vices, which, in its own exalted way, it meets no temptation to commit. Aurelius was a philosopher and the best of kings; yet he praised the gods for the gift of Faustina. Belisarius was less fortunate: he was made at least to doubt. And then there was their daughter, beloved of them both, Joannina; and then, perhaps, he could *only* doubt. In this lifelong incertitude, in this eternal shadowing of his heart of hearts, while we can credit even but a small portion of the statements contained in the strange work before mentioned, yet we may feel ourselves competent to account for that extraordinary serenity with which he endured the wrongs of his sovereign, that, without abatement, followed him from an early period in his high career down to the tomb, and even beyond the tomb. The persistent absence of all resentment against ingratitude and persecution, the ready obedience that looked like base servility to the whimsical requirements of a bigoted and malignant despot, lead us, with what we know of his domestic sorrows, to look for other motives to such

conduct beside the promptings of patriotism and the sacred obligation to honor the king. These, doubtless, were ever present with him, but he had been 'greater or less than man,' as the eloquent Gibbon in such unreasonable connexion exclaims, if, in addition to these motives, there were not others which were not only above the fear of death, but which could spring only from an anguish that could admit no other pain.

After the repulse of the Bulgarians, there was nothing further for Belisarius to do. Like the prophet, he had stood in his lot, and was waiting for the end of the days. One more blow, the last, must be inflicted. A petty plot against the Emperor was discovered, and although he was soon fully acquitted of the charge of complicity and released from imprisonment, yet his estate was forfeited, because of the apprehension which he had most innocently raised. A few months more of unmolested contemplation, and all of Belisarius, except his name and memory, passed away. The story of his blindness to which we are indebted for some of the most beautiful creations of music and romance, though with little foundation, has kept its place as a tradition, because of our proneness to believe all the worst that can be told of tyrants. Justinian, as if the purpose of his living had been to show how disastrous is the rule of an incompetent

prince, and how the ingratitude of the human heart may increase with the powers and opportunities and obligations of reward, did not long survive his great captain. Together they had performed distinguished parts in life, and together they left the stage. They were so intimately joined in their lives and in their deaths, that the *Plaudite* which followed the Thracian was abundant to include the Scythian also.

GEORGE ELIOT'S MARRIED PEOPLE.

WORKS of the imagination get their coloring from the lives of their creators. They are concretes formed from individual experiences, particularly so when on the side of the suffering or the mainly earnest. Walter Scott must reproduce in one and another form the legends, mostly sad, which when a child, he learned at Sandy Knowe on the border famous for chivalric deeds enacted long before. Dickens must recall the Marshalsea and others whereamong his poor childhood had been spent. Thackeray, after the loss of his inherited estate and the comrades who had helped him to squander it, could not but lash society for its deceitfulness and other meannesses which were contemptible rather than vicious.

We are now to speculate about a woman, who, in the matter of genius was not inferior to either of these illustrious men, and who, being a woman, and an intensely unhappy one, revealed her interior being in ways to excite painful compassion for the strug-

gles, which without support from any outer source, through a life of three score years, she strove to mitigate and endure. Made motherless when a young child, with a father rude, stern, exacting, who had no suspicion of the gifts which ought to have been apparent to even his dull eyes, she must make her way in some sort between his ignorant, servile obedience to established forms, and the independent fiery zeal of her aunts who had revolted and joined the standard of the Methodists, among whom one of these aunts became a zealous preacher. As she grew older, contemplation of this frigidity on one, and what seemed an immoderate unreasoning fervor on the other side of her family, drove her, when come to womanhood, to suspect that ever-continuing, ever-sustaining religious faith was not to be gotten in either of the forms with which she had become acquainted. In this frame, she went forth into the world to seek, not fame, of which she had never dreamed, but an honorable livelihood.

It is a sore misfortune to a thoughtful earnest mind to lose the form of religious faith in which during childhood it had humbly trusted, and afterwards be unable to find another which satisfies its yearnings. If ever there was a spirit which was in need of an authoritative discipline of religious belief, a discipline adequate to save from distrust of certain moral obligation and from despair from its

violation, it was Marian Evans. For her own happiness, for all the exigencies of her own being, it would have been better if she had been less gifted, or more prone to the tendencies of feebler natures, and with a less ardent charity for the wants of the needy and the losses of the frail. As it was, her aspirations were for the highest attainable good in government, in civil, social, and domestic life; and her charities were so large that they included not only the abject and squalid of the human race, but lesser animals which man sometimes, as if for no other cause but having received the gift of reason, loves either to wantonly destroy, or whimsically maltreat. Marian Evans not only gave what she could spare for the alleviation of human suffering, but she would have stopped a traveller on the highway, and begged to put her handkerchief or her mantle under the collar that galled the shoulder of his jade; and she would have gone to the woods in order to fetch a green bough, and extend it to a worm which, the wind having blown from its native tree, she might have found writhing its moist, frail body in the sand. Such was she when she went to her first work in the town of Coventry.

A girl who is poor and who is without personal attractions of any sort, when cast upon the world, is apt to feel that she must take the first offer for work which comes of a kind for which she knows

herself to be competent. Yet it was not without some reluctance, if not some shuddering, that she undertook to translate into English the *Leben Jesu* of Strauss, who, first having adopted the bold teaching of Hegel and Schleiermacher, went to the audacity of declaring the Gospels no more than myths of superstitious times. The performance of this work led her to the place which for her was next to the worst in all London town, the editorial rooms of the *Westminister Review*. These were rooms wherein a man might exist and seem to thrive; but they were no proper or safe resort for a woman, especially one with the spirit and what had been and what still were the yearnings of Marian Evans. Yet, she was in need of work and it seemed to her the best opportunity to obtain it, and out of the society of the Positivists whom she met there habitually she must get, what must be gotten from some source, the intellectual and moral sustenance without which such a being must lapse into inanity or plunge into despair. Not but that a habit of free thinking had not already begun, coming forth out of her tumultuous strugglings with many forms of doubt. Some time back while reading Charlotte Bronté's novel, *Jane Eyre*, she had dwelt with a bounding heart upon the recital of the misery and shame of the poor governess when she found that the man who had conquered her heart had a wife who, although

hopelessly insane, was yet alive. "They had a right to marry in the circumstances!" exclaimed Marian Evans. These bold words showed how far already she had strayed from the faith of her fathers, and even from respect for the social laws of her own and all Christian communities. If she could believe thus of the obligations of the marriage bond when one party had been rendered by the act of God unfit for conjugal union, it was to be forseen what her decision would be when such unfitness had been produced by dishonorable action.

Among the coterie of Free-thinkers in those rooms was George Henry Lewes. He was gifted with not a single outward charm such as those of *Rochester* in the novel who, from anguishing thoughts of his maniac wife, turned for relief to the petite governess and dreamed and dreamed, and finally trusted that he might get her to supply the place in a being left so destitute. No. George Henry Lewes was the very ugliest man who had ever been in those rooms. He was the very incarnation of ugliness. Men did not say that he had the horn of a rhinoceros, as Milton seemed to fear, from the abuse of Salmasius, might be believed of him; but they did say that he had the face of a dog, and that of a Scotch terrier, the ugliest of all dogs. Yet we know that even the Satyrs, like men in one way and another, could win the love of women, and

George Henry Lewes succeeded in persuading one to be his wife; who, after having borne three children, irretrievably ruined both herself and her husband. Then he spurned from his bosom and his house her whom he ought never to have taken to either, and invited Marian Evans to assume the place in both, and she, being now thirty-five years old, consented. At this union were none of the tumultuous conditions which attended the unhappy Dido when driven by the resistless influences of the goddesses, she fled with the Trojan to the grotto in the forest of Carthage; but its very deliberation made it indeed a "day of death."

Yet, be it remembered that this woman, who fortunately was to bear no offspring of her own, if she could not become warmly attached to the children of her predecessor, made them attached to her with an affection that seemed filial, tended them in health and sickness, and at the dying bed of one of them watched and waited with an assiduity of devotion that the sufferer never had had and never would have had from her who had given him birth. Indeed she seemed to feel as if she was as bound to every behest of wife and mother as those upon whom at the nuptial altar the chain had been laid amid solemnest vows and invocations of Heavenly blessing. Marian Evans believed, rather she imagined that she believed, that the bond with which she had

bound herself to this man was, if possible, of more binding obligation upon her, because it was one which, having neither the sanction of Heaven nor her country's laws had nothing to hold it sacred beyond her own plighted word. Then this companion with all of his ugliness, had the affectionateness of a grateful lover, and, sooner than she did, found out wherein lay the greatest gifts of her who had made such sacrifices to join her being with his own; for he was possessed of extraordinary genius, and it had received the highest culture.

By this time she had strayed, except in instinctive feeling, entirely away from the religious faith of her childhood. Such it must have been, otherwise every moment of her waking existence would have been beset by fears which would have gotten little relief from such union with any man however gifted with the graces which win the love of women. Among the fondest of her recollections was that of a sojourn near lake Geneva, whereat she read over and over again that wonderful book, the *Confessions* of Rousseau. It was bad to have so loved this work of a man, who, next to Voltaire, and in some respects beyond him, was of all men of genius, the most reprobate, not only to religion and morality, but to decency. Not that Marian Evans had a love of foulness; but she drank into her passionate being without painful reluctance all the foul-

ness because it was in the same cup which contained the voluptuous seductive sentimentality which distinguished above all mankind this extraordinary spirit. Such reading had led her, some time before her connection with Lewes, to entertain too independent views of married life, and to the conception that there was a felicity to which, without words of priest and sanction of religious or municipal law, a brave spirit, striving with full integrity of purpose, might aspire. When five and twenty years of age, while discussing the opinions of Madame de Sablé about marriage, she wrote thus:

"Heaven forbid that we should enter on a defence of French morals, most of all in reference to marriage! But it is undeniable that unions formed in the maturity of thought and feeling, and grounded only on inherent fitness and mutual attraction, tended to bring women into more intelligent sympathy with men and to heighten and complicate their share in the political drama. The quiescence and security of the conjugal relation are doubtless favorable to the manifestation of the highest qualities by persons who have already attained a high standard of culture, but rarely foster a passion sufficient to rouse all the faculties to aid in winning or retaining its beloved object, to convert indolence into activity, indifference into ardent partisanship, dullness into perspicuity."

These were prophetic words destined to fulfillment ten years afterwards. The man who had read this article in the *Westminister Review*, knew well enough that if his intended proposal were rejected, it would not be because it was regarded immoral, or even dishonorable.

The *Scenes of Clerical Life*, which, over the

name of *George Eliot*, she wrote for *Blackwood's Magazine*, excited everybody's attention. It appeared full soon that the man (as he was thought to be) who wrote them had little admiration for the mild-mannered country clergyman, neither hot or notably cold, who honorably complied with the written demands of his office, got for himself as comfortable, even luxurious living as possible to the amount of his stipend and the liberality of his parishioners, and in the solitude of his home, whether as a married man or a bachelor, comforted himself with mild harmless dalliance with the flute. One of these clerical gentlemen for a time was taken for the author, and the while upon the strength of such reputation got many a finer dinner than he could have had at home.

But the public heard far different words when in *Adam Bede*, the novelist talked of those spirits who, however fanatical they might be regarded, were believed to be striving for a spiritual life more earnest than that which they saw in their midst. The mind of Marian Evans was passionately serious. The exquisite humor that is found with sufficient frequency in her writings, instead of subtracting from the evidence that the serious predominated over the sportive in her being, as it does in all great humorists, enhanced it. For humor goes hand in hand with sadness, or in continually iterated se-

quence, and such minds are the only ones which are able to create interesting concretes out of the life of mankind. Among the Wesleyans were near relatives, prominent among whom was her aunt, who, out of resentment to the order excluding women from the pulpit, left the society with hope to make herself as pronounced as possible elsewhere. This aunt had suggested the character of *Dinah*, in *Adam Bede*, and thus she wrote to a friend after hearing of the suggestions that those pathetic sermons of *Dinah* had been copied and without feeling:

"You see how my aunt suggested "Dinah;" but it is impossible you should see, as I do, how entirely her individuality differed from "Dinah's." How curious it seems to me that people should think that "Dinah's" sermon, prayers, and speeches were copied, when they were written with hot tears as they surged up in my own mind."

The pathos in the words of *Dinah* had their seal in those of her who had been long searching for rest to her spirit and had not been able to find it.

For the purposes of this article one of the most interesting of George Eliot's novels is *The Mill on the Floss*. According to the Biography of her friend, Mathilde Blind, it contains a history of the author and her family. In *Maggie Tulliver* we read the life of Marian Evans' childhood and young womanhood, and we suspected to foresee that some-

thing out of the usual course was to attend the career of a girl who was wont to keep in an attic with its worm-eaten floors and rafters a "fetisch which she punished for all her misfortunes" and drove nails into the head of a hideous wooden doll in imitation of the vengeance of Jael upon the sleeping Sisera. Maggie Tulliver has been styled "the most adorable of George Eliot's women." True to the author's views of matters appertaining to marriage she gave to her a vulgarian for a lover. Of the adorable woman herself she wrote that, with all her charming qualities she had "more affinity with poets and artists than with saints and martyrs" and that she yielded her heart "to an attraction lying entirely in the magnetism of passion." Strange words for a woman to write about one of her own creation who was to be styled the most adorable of them all! What would have become of Maggie had she not died we can only conjecture by considering the fate of the girl whom she represented, who, unfortunately for herself, did not die in her youth.

As to the married experience of the three Dodson girls, Mrs. Tulliver, Maggie's mother, and her two aunts, Mrs. Pullet, and Mrs. Glegg! In all literature there is nothing more ludicrous, yet more melancholy. In the midst of gushing laughter, it is sad to think on the lesson which we are expected to learn and the moral which we are allowed to de-

duce from these instances of married life. Mrs. Pullet, who all along had been hoping to find a husband whose "inherent fitness" would be the very thing to satisfy a woman of extreme gentility, whose claim to it was founded mainly upon the delicacy of her health, found that she had been married to a person who was not very much more than a little spindling old maid, and who had the meanness to be almost as ailing as herself. In this couple there could not be any decisive amount of domestic misery, as neither could find in the other much upon which it would have imparted very much satisfaction to prey, or even to pick. So of Mrs. Tulliver, a description of whose character is given briefly on the occasion of a remark made to her husband after the quarrel with Sister Glegg, when, troubled by the fear that he would be called upon to pay the debt owed to her, she was affectionately trying to suggest a course more prudent than giving way to resentment:

"Mrs. Tulliver had lived thirteen years with her husband, yet she retained with all of the freshness of her early married life a faculty of saying things which drove him in the opposite direction to the one she desired. Some minds are wonderful in keeping their bloom in this way, as a patriarchal gold-fish apparently retains to the last its youthful illusion that it can swim in a straight line beyond the encircling glass. Mrs. Tulliver was an amiable fish of this kind, and, after running her head against the same resisting medium for thirteen years, would go at it again to-day with undulled alacrity."

But what must we think of Aunt Glegg with her

magisterial ways, her small economies, her anxiety to make, after she was dead many years thereafter, a handsome figure in her will, and her frequent reference to "the way in our family?" Yet, Mr. Glegg was not like his brother-in-law, poor Mr. Pullet. He had a salutary sullenness which served well enough the purposes which aggression would not have helped. When the wife of his bosom at a family dinner party at the Tullivers' had put upon Mr. Tulliver indignities which he was driven at last to resent, she appealed to her husband, not for sympathy, but to have his forces joined with hers in order to crush her little insect of a brother-in-law. Now Mr. Glegg had not the heart for such warfare. One may read (twelfth chapter) in a scene at the breakfast table a choice specimen of the domestic life of that interesting couple, and learn what precedents this young member of the family believed that she owed it to herself not to follow.

If the life of Marian Evans was like that of Maggie Tulliver among these parents and these aunts, it is no wonder that she grew up with the free opinions which led to her subsequent action. As for her courtship by Stephen Guest, it was much like that of the savage for the unprotected maid whom he chances to find straying too far from home—lower indeed, because to the pursued was imparted somewhat of the fierceness of the pursuer which led

her to wish as well as fear to be overtaken. She was saved from ruin by accidental death. Perhaps, indeed we may almost suspect, that she who indited her history sometimes regretted that in her youth she also had not gone down beneath the flood.

As the lovers of George Eliot grow in intelligence, in the opportunities of culture, and the occupancy of higher social positions, they are made to illustrate seriously, as those which I have described illustrate ludicrously, the author's ideas of the insufficiency of marriage to bring the happiness which it always promises. In *Middlemarch* it makes the heart sick to read the disappointment of *Dorothea* in the lofty expectations which she had indulged of the felicity to come from the society of such a man as *Casaubon*, wherein every sweet and every devout aspiration of her heart are made to turn back upon and rend itself. Then the punishment of *Lydgate*, who, a gentleman born and bred, took to wife a woman who had nothing to commend herself except physical beauty whose fascination his lower nature could not resist. It seems like cruelty how this woman understood the methods of driving her husband to the brink of despair by her selfishness, coarseness, and duplicity, and luring him back by presentation in new phases and attitudes the charms which, in spite of his manhood, had won him

in the outset, and which, though ever trifling with and abusing it, held their sway.

Now what is mostly notable among the married people of this author is that they are made to refrain from violation of the letter of the bond which has bound them together, even though its spirit has been so long and repeatedly broken that it has become hopeless of amendment. This fact kept her from being one of the evilest teachers of mankind. She did not mean to be a teacher of evil. She was too charitable, and, according to her ideas of innocence, too innocent for that; and so she made her married people faithful to their bonds. In reading *Middlemarch*, we constantly expect, and are made almost to wish for *Dorothea*, ardent as devout, to leave the pompous autocrat, who, although not bloody-minded like *Bluebeard*, had no more regard than he for a wife's individuality, or *Lydgate* to decide that every prompting of his manhood required him to withdraw from one who had repeatedly dishonored it. No: there was that fatal bond which these obligors, unlike Shylock, construe against themselves, and wait for death or like event to set them free.

One of the most affecting scenes illustrating this characteristic is that wherein is told of the meeting between *Mrs. Bulstrode* and her husband when his early knavery, unsuspected during twenty years of married life, had been detected and the uncovered

felon sat in his study and awaited as a murderer awaits the verdict of a jury, the conduct of his wife, who, in her chamber above, had been reflecting upon the news she had just heard, and upon what sort of bosom her trusting head had been resting so long. It is not easy to read without tears how that proud woman, after putting off the finery in which but yesterday she had been flaunting in arrogance among the lesser women of her acquaintance, and clothing in the plain things which she knew that she was doomed to wear for the rest of her life, descended the stairs, went to her husband bowed down with shame and terror, and, standing over him awhile in silence, at length, calmly said "Nicholas, look up."

Now, what could have been the motive of this strange woman to treat with such solemn respect an institution at which, in her philosophical writings she had sneered, and whose sacred behests her own life had dishonored? Eagerly fond of the *Confessions* of Rousseau, admiring these female writers of France, who had exhibited what she styled "the courage of their sex," yet she could not pass to the length whither the boldest among those had dared and make marriage a covert for the resort of unlawful loves, instead of a clean bower for lawful, or at least a shelter for the sorely tempted. She followed such precedents as far as a mind, which,

though perverted, was yet generous, could follow without doing violence to instincts that were ineradicable, and to traditions of home and country which it was impossible to wholly ignore. Her married lovers are not happy. The most cultured and interesting among them either are miserable, or they have grown to despise themselves for having had so little forethought as to bind themselves irrevocably to those whom they have found to be entirely unfit for the superior purposes for which union had been sought and consummated. Yet they forbear from violation and separation the possible results of which are feared to be yet more unhappy. These husbands and these wives are like the lepers who, while seeing death in return to the city from which they were cast out, feared one more terrific among the enemies who were advancing against their whole nation. Shrinking from gross dishonor of marriage vows, they hate them more fiercely for their inadequacy to fulfill their stipulations. These vows were like the oath by the Styx, the dark, slow moving river of Hell, which only Fate, not men nor gods, could absolve. Men and women may well pause before taking, and hold on to the freedom from which how perilous it is to part George Eliot has told in pictures which make one sometimes shout with laughter, and sometimes shudder with horror to look upon; but when they have taken, they have

gone upon a bourne like that from which no traveller returns. Therefore it is, in spite of her free-thinking principles, and her own eccentric life, that the creations of her imagination, like the curse of the weak, unfaithful prophet, become a blessing in so far as they tend to evince that in the great heart of humanity the feeling is ineradicable that marriage is an institution of God, and that its bonds by human means are indissoluble.

We have often suspected that Marian Evans had such purpose among others, in view while engaged in her wonderful work, as if impelled by the instinctive delicacy of her sex thus to make some compensation for what, in the great deep of her heart, she must sometimes have feared, was a mistake in her own career; and in this view I am confirmed by her marriage after the death of her companion. That such a woman, had she been young, had married would have been most natural. When such a loss occurs, the more anguishing its recollection, the more apt a suffering heart is, to look about for some support against despair, and of all these, the surest, most grateful is the diversion to another love. Of all seasons for a lover, if he be both delicate and artful, to approach the object of his pursuit, that is most favorable when the one who is sought is forlorn with the sense of bereavement of a love which has forever gone.

"*The Lady of Ephesus*" in the *Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter is a satire, but it was founded upon a principle in our being which Heaven implanted there for purposes not less benignant than wise. Man and woman must turn their backs upon graves and their faces to the world. Extravagant as are the things told of the Roman Soldier and the young widow watching by the bier of her husband, yet some therein described are more natural, more common, and more fit than a lifetime yearning for the dead and refusal to be comforted by the living. Seldom indeed is similar haste to be noted among women, especially those already past the period of youth: for, besides that love with them is a greater part of existence than with men, they dread more the appearance of levity, are usually more constant, more religious-minded, more able to endure misfortune, and more capable to find resignation. But how often do we see an old man who has been bereft of the loved companion through all the years of his manhood, after a season of wailing for his overwhelming loss, suddenly rise from his ashes, straighten his bent shoulders, trim himself in youthful garments, and strive to move with easy gayety among women of whom he might have been the grandfather! Such deportment, ludicrous as it seems, is but assertion of the instinct of self preservation common to all periods of human life, and,

instead of indicating disrespect to the memory of the dead, is rather, pitiful as it is, the most convincing proof how dearly they were prized while alive. How mournful are the words of Abraham at the funerals of Sarah. "Then Abraham came to Hebron to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. And Abraham stood up before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying: 'I am a stranger and a sojourner with you. Give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.'" Yet how the note in that very same chapter is changed! How brief and blithe these words! "Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah." This is the life of man. The very best men, more often than the rest, after the loss of those who were beloved more than life, have thus sought to restore, or to simulate a condition all of whose blessedness it is impossible to relinquish.

But what of the marriage of this woman who, at sixty years of age, was left in a widowhood perhaps more desolate than if she had had a right to the man to whom she had surrendered herself? Upon her face, even in youth, had never been a single trace of the beauty that delights men's eyes. Now she was wrinkled with age, and sickness, and sorrow. Can it be believed that thus broken in body, soul, and spirit, she hoped to have her youth re-

newed, and put into a condition which it had never known in its prime, by placing orange blossoms among her gray, withered locks, arraying herself in nuptial veil and vesture, going tottering along the aisle of St. George's Chapel in Hanover Square and having the symbolic ring put upon her wrinkled finger by a man her junior by many years? Had she become so superannuated as not to know that old December can neither impart nor receive the sweet influences of the young May? No. In her case was the desire, when dying, to have a name with which to descend into the grave other than that which she had usurped from one of her sex, who, despite all else that she had forfeited, was entitled to that until death should put an end to the claim.

Therefore we cannot but compassionate, whenever we reflect upon the unhappy career of Marian Evans. Aside from gratitude for her almost matchless creations, we must be touched by the contemplation of what must have been the sadness of a woman who did not believe that happiness was to be had in married life, who had had no experience of happiness without, and who, although without ascertained principles of religious faith, and with an ineffaceable blot upon her own life, yet shrank from imparting precepts which might lead others to ruin. It is pleasing to note her sympathy with every form of

suffering and her constant desire to alleviate it. It was as if she would make all possible amends for whatever were the errors of her own life. Underrating both the blessedness and the sacredness of marriage, it was impossible for her to describe it otherwise than it appeared to her eyes. Yet, even if unwittingly, she paid reverence to that estate in teaching that there was no escape from its miseries on this side of the grave. She made her husbands and wives dispute, wrangle, inflict, suffer and endure until death had put an end both to infliction and suffering. Then, at last, when youth and health were gone and when what had been plainness of feature had lapsed into the wrinkles of eld, when she had laid aside her work, and in the solitude of her spirit looked back upon the past and forth upon the future, it is touching to contemplate how, when aged, tired, alone, she yearned for an honorable name to be written upon her tomb. Louise de Stael concealed from the world the marriage of her old age, both because she was afraid of the ridicule and of any subtraction from the name which she had made so renowned. It was not until her last will and testament was opened that men knew that she had taken to her aged bosom a boy of the French infantry when the ridicule that followed could make no impression upon the "dull, cold ear of death." How unlike the Englishwoman, who

piteously hoped that the blessing she had not sought in life might descend upon her grave! To bind herself in old age with the bond she had desecrated, without hope or expectation of what impels the young to take its obligations seemed to her the only apology she could make for the wrong done to herself and the world.

It was well for Marian Evans that the man who had ruined her life died before her. His death overwhelmed her with grief which showed the singleness of her affection; but it afforded opportunities for self-communings of whose salutary results she was in extremest need. He had never been able to seduce her from all religious conviction, and now, when his voice was no longer heard, and his example was taken away, perhaps her more awakened concern for her own spiritual being was enhanced by regretful memories of the wrongs done by him to which she was party, without condonement of which, even by repentance, he had gone to his last account. The marriage of herself to another man would at least seem to consummate the severance that death had already made. If such things were so, if such was her motive for this last action, in it there is a pathos like that when Œdipus of Thebes, after the suicide of Jocasta, was led to Athens where he was to "turn the goal of wearisome existence," when, seated in the grove hard by

the temples of the gods, lifting his sightless eyes towards Heaven, he prayed for "some accomplishment and end of life."

LOUISE, BARONNE DE STÆL-HOLSTEIN.

AMONG all women of letters perhaps Madame de Stael was the most passionate not to have avowedly or been known certainly to pass beyond the pale of honor. She seemed to have loved to live near the line of licensed and unlicensed existence, with some yearning for the latter that was restrained only by fear of punishment for offending the former's exactions. With her mother, Ma'amselle Curchod, Gibbon the historian fell in love while he was a student at Lausanne. His family not liking the match, he gave up his suit and remained a bachelor. The damsel, whether spiteful or less sentimental, was married to Necker, the banker, who was to become famous at Paris during the period of the *Revolution*. Born in that city (1766) never was one more a Parisian in tastes, habits, and ideas, than Louise Necker. At twelve years she was a grown woman. At least she believed herself so to be, and in the matters of culture, experience, and observation she was. Her girlhood had suf-

fered from the disagreement of her parents regarding the discipline to which she ought to be subjected. The mother was for repressing, the father for indulging her longings for freedom. For a time the former prevailed; but it being, or it appearing that rigor was hurtful to her health, this was relaxed more and more until finally the child was handed over to the fullest paternal indulgence. Ever afterwards, while she seemed to care for her mother not at all, for her father she professed, both while he was living, and after his death, an affection that sometimes seemed rather ridiculous. While she was yet low in her teens, at their *salon* in Paris,

"Were it by accident or destenè,"

was a meeting between the mother and her old lover. Nothing could have exceeded the self-possession of the former as she essayed to exhibit how much better, as she believed, she had married than at one time had been expected. On the contrary Gibbon was much embarrassed. Perhaps it was only the awkwardness wrought by retirement from female society. At all events, so it was said, the daughter, out of romantic compassion, offered, with bestowal of her own hand, to compensate for his disappointment. Whereupon the old bachelor, made yet less at his ease, rose, made some search for his hat, and, as soon as he found it, took himself away to return there never again.

The girl soon learned to love Rousseau, and, if she had been a boy, there is no telling the lengths to which she would have rushed in the indulgence of whatever she saw to be coveted in that city so full of objects of desire. But she was a girl, and when she had come to her twentieth year, she saw fit to marry with a man advanced in life, wealthy and titled, stipulating that she was never to go with him to his native country (Sweden) and with tacit understanding that, while tolerating his caresses, she was to think, speak and do as she pleased.

Marriages avowedly or well understood to be for convenience, at their very start, do not give promise of great conjugal felicity. It may not be very surprising how men can enter into them; but it is always to be wondered at when a woman can dispose of herself in that way. No happiness was to spring from this union along with the children who were engendered by it. Finally a separation took place, and after the decease of the aged husband, the widow, then forty-six and an invalid, contracted with one who was little more than a boy, another marriage of which she was so ashamed that it was kept secret until after her death.

The prevailing elements in the being of this illustrious woman were sentiment and ambition, both of which were so passionate as to keep her in a condi-

tion of ever unsatisfied desire. Living in the midst of the Revolution, she contracted a love for politics, which never could be subdued. Living in an age of fiery passion, there cannot be a doubt that she constantly fretted under constraints which marriage and her sex had imposed upon her action, and that she pined for the freedom of those who had resolved to be free even to licentiousness. Her first literary venture was a foolish eulogium upon Rousseau who, fortunately for mankind, was as disgusting in his manner of living, as the sentiment in his writings was exquisitely sublimated. To what extent were carried the loves which she indulged was not certainly known. But it was an open secret that she loved Talleyrand more than she loved her husband, and that she was overwhelmed with anger and shame when he thrust her aside and in her place substituted the younger and more beautiful Madame Grant.

Yet, in spite of her yieldings, however far these extended, to the consuming passions of her being, her cold regard for her husband, her eager fondness for society and for politics, she was a very great, and in the main, a sincere woman. She believed that she had the right to show, perhaps to avow to others her slight regard for a dotard who had taken her with no acknowledgement or promise of conjugal affection. She let him become father of her chil-

dren, as a mettlesome female of any race, in want of more fit and exalted union, yields reluctant, disgusted assent to the perpetuation of a breed which she foresees that, half despising, she will the other half neglect, and kept herself buffeting amid the stormy billows that were within and around her. Inheriting the democratic sentiments of her father, she made such fierce hostility to the usurpations of Bonaparte that he banished her, first from Paris, then from France. The exile came near breaking her heart. In the midst of her sufferings from this source she wrote *Delphine.*

True to life as this book is, it is not one for the young of either sex to read with profit. The loves described by the author are of a kind to be unhappy. Disappointment and resentment follow the violations of men's vows. *Delphine* was partly an attempt to be like *La Nouvelle Heloise* of Rousseau with the softening that a female hand could impart. Its reception led to the coming of *Corinne.* The author had drank deep of disappointment which she would have liked to believe that she had had, even if she had not. Then she had travelled much in the fairer softer regions of the South. There is wonderful genius in this book. The marvellous gift of improvisation belonging to some of the Italians she possessed to a great degree. Corinne was a woman too sensitive, too spirited, too passionate to

be made content with the licensed honorable love of one man. Such a woman must be made to love in conditions wherein love's lawful fruition is too tame for entire satisfaction; she must spend the prime of her youth in lawless indulgences and longings for the impossible, and rush to premature death consumed by the fiery flames which she could never even wish to subdue. In all literature there is nothing more beautiful than some passages occurring in this novel. Without doubt while some of them were being indited, tears were streaming from the eyes of the author who, though conscious of the power of feeling the most consuming passion, had not one upon whom in its fulness to lavish it. That was a terrific cry uttered by her in one of the periods of her sense of desolation "*Jamais, jamais, je ne serais jamais aimè comme j'aime!*" It was the keynote to the wailings of all her women-lovers. Now when such cries come from the mouth of a married woman, who has married of her own free will, and who has children growing up by her side, what shall be said of her fitness to teach mankind lessons from the novel, the gift to teach wherefrom was bestowed with benign intent by the Creator. Not like the *Nouvelle Heloise* of Rousseau, whose individual coarseness belied the exquisite aspirations which he claimed to have, not like the *Elective Affinities* of Goethe, so openly insulting to the sense

of decency and honest fear, not like the general libertinism of Voltaire, the culmination of whose audacious grossness perhaps was his jeering debate with another man little known to him regarding the paternity of a child whose mother had abandoned herself to both, her writings tend insidiously to make the young of both sexes unsatisfied with the love that is allowed within appointed bounds, and they diminish in their minds things and institutions time-honored and consecrated. Unhappy always, in childhood, girlhood, married life, widowhood, again married life, amid all she was yet more vain than unhappy. It is curious to consider that very exasperation of vanity leading her often into action that made her an object of irrepressible ridicule. Her fame, even while living, went beyond that of any woman in modern times, yet her eagerness kept her from being satisfied with any measure of success or laudation.

But the genius of this woman! and the eloquence! In the eloquence of the pen she is almost without a rival. So in the thoroughness and acuteness of her historical researches. That is a wonderful work "*De la Litterature Considerèe dans les Rapports avec les Institutions Sociales.*" It is almost incredible with what ingenuity she traced the history of Literature from the earliest times of which any record was made through the Greek, the Roman, the

Middle Age, the Italian, the German, the English, the French. The great purpose which she had in view, chimerical as it was, it is most entertaining to see how eloquently she labored to establish. Her theory was the ultimate Perfectibility of mankind by the general diffusion of knowledge. Readers, even those not at all given to enthusiasm, cannot but feel some of the rapture that beamed in her breast while making her great impassioned plea. She came not far from being a great historian. She had a genius for politics. In different conditions she might have been a very great poet. But the enthusiasm that was ever burning in her breast from childhood to death was continually leading her astray in her opinions, her language, and her deportment.

It was not strange that such a spirit would dream of the perfectibility of mankind by human agencies. Reared with indefinite notions of religious obligations, claiming and feeling the right to accept and reject what she pleased among the teachings of the Church, ever yearning for things unattainable, infinite in desires, unteachable by experience, exasperated by disappointments, no wonder that she dreamed and cried out in her dreamings of a state wherein the discordant things in this fallen life which her fancies intensified might be adjusted and a golden age come again upon the world. Of all dream-

ers they are most extravagant and vain who, endowed with extraordinary genius, either are not Christians, or feel themselves to be authorized interpreters of the will of Heaven outside and inside of its revealings. The more eminently gifted are such, the more daring asperations they conceive for the ken of the seer and the voice of the prophet. All except enthusiasts know that the development of virtue has never kept pace with mere culture of the understanding, and only brief reflection is enough to convince a thoughtful mind of the truth of that saying; "far more noble is that learning which flows from above from the divine influence than that which is laboriously acquired by the industry of man." No man nor no woman ever grows better purely by development of the understanding. Some of those most abandoned to evil doing, among women as among men, have been gifted with preeminent genius, and had most elaborate culture in the midst of abundant opportunities. Sodom was less cultured than Capernaum, Gomorrah than Chorazin. The modern cities had been exalted to Heaven, yet for their atrocities, of which the older would have repented in dust and ashes, they were cast into hell. It is not the culture of the understanding alone that is to save from ruin mankind in the aggregate or the individual, that is to put an end to oppression, and war, and ingratitude and dishonor, and neglect, and

contumely, and wrong doing of every sort. It is the cultivation of the spirit under such guidance as Heaven has appointed, and it is a culture within as easy attainment of the simple and weak as of the gifted and powerful. For it comes from God, who sometimes in "an instant elevates the humble mind to comprehend more reasons of the Eternal truth than if any one had studied ten years in the Schools."

Great as are the historical writings of Madame de Stael they have the same infirmity as those of her imagination. Sentiment and passion go in advance of probability and reason. In *Corinne* are some things as beautiful and as powerful as ever came from the impassioned tongue of Sappho, whom the Greeks named The Tenth Muse. Yet, after all the display of resistless passion the work falls far short of the best purposes of fiction. It is an outrage upon conjugal honor, the all consuming passion of Corinne for Oswald, a passion become only more consuming when, false to the behests of manhood, he was married to another. As outrageous was the returned passion of the false lover and false husband. More outrageous than both was making the lawful wife go-between with her husband and the woman whom he had destroyed. None, or little of value is in the lesson of Corinne's end. Only when she saw death standing by her bed-side did she ask for

the image of this lover to be taken from her breast and its place occupied by that of her offended Lord.

Madame de Stael might have been called the greatest of her sex if she had had a sounder judgment and well directed religious principles. Her own career ought to have been enough to convince her that her speculations regarding human perfectibility were illusory. When a girl, of her own free will, she had been married to an old man whom she did not love and whom she grew to despise. Afterwards and when past middle age, she was married to a boy with whom she consorted in secret in fear of the ridicule which discovery as she feared would have brought upon her. It is a sad life to contemplate. She was not a bad woman. Her impulses were high, but she could never learn to control them by the rules of religion or those of reason. Her extremest desires were for things, some unlawful, others impossible to human attainment. With affections most intense, their fruition was such as to her own eyes seemed pitiful and contemptible. Vain as it was, almost childish that cry hereinbefore quoted, it was an index to that interior being which, throughout all its changing conditions, was racked by passions and tumultuous strivings.

It is interesting to compare the life of Louise de Stael with that of Marian Evans; one, the daughter

of wealth, title, power, spoiled in childhood, keeping herself spoiled amid all the phases of good and evil fortune, regardful only of the fine, the influential, the magnificent, despising society except that of the Court and the èlite: the other, child of an obscure father, who, when she was made motherless, understood not her gifts, who, if he had understood, would have set upon them no value beyond the pecuniary gains which their exercise might be calculated to bring; with access to no society except that into which the services which she was found competent to render chanced to throw her, even when illustrious, confined within that made by those who sought her for the sake of acquaintance with the greatest woman of her time, apologizing to themselves for the vanity which led them to desire it. One yearning for the felicity which comes from satisfied love, not content, nay, rather disgusted with that which only wedded life is permitted to impart, because of its having no temptations, risks, and dangers: the other, with yearnings as powerful and painful, without social influence, her face and form having neither beauty nor comeliness, yet, rather than have not love at all, taking the second and unlicensed of one whose first had been betrayed, and showing to this a fidelity of which the French woman knew little of the worth. One regarding Religion as a judge watching and waiting to condemn every

enjoyment beyond its own measured, stale allowances: the other fearing God, and ever trembling while partaking of what she must doubt but could not quite believe to have been forbid. One seeking to advance the high to more exalted heights: the other concerned mostly with the lowly, wishing that she might lift them into better conditions. One elate with praises of the world, yet feeling that they were less than she deserved: the other shrinking from the notoriety which she had attained, and astounded by the impressions which her own creations had made! One when grown old, taking to husband a beardless youth, expecting this new wifehood to compensate for the old which at its very incipiency had palled: the other, more than a widow at the death of the companion, whom she had not the right to keep, yielding saddest assent to him who proposed an honorable name with which the journals of the time might announce her answer to the summons of death known to be near. One ashamed of the name to be put upon her grave: the other looking forward to that upon her own with humble thankfulness.

PRE-AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY.

IT touches a thoughtful Christian mind with some pathos to study the philosophy of the ancients. In want of inspired authoritative teaching, the human intellect, never greater nor more earnest, looked alternately outward and inward, and sought eagerly to find the origin and the ultimate end of man and what were the things most suited to the purposes of his being. We may compassionate but never can condemn the speculations of the physiologists, Thales upon *Water*, Anaximenes upon *Air*, nor of the mathematicians with Pythagoras at their head, whom tradition made to tame with a word the Daunian bear, to be heard lecturing at Metapontum and Tauromenium on the same day and hour, to be saluted by the river-god while crossing his waters, and to hear the harmonies of the spheres. There was modesty and there was melancholy in the spirits of these most gifted men. Those preceding the last-named had been called *Wise Men*. But Pythagoras, greater than all his predecessors, would have an humbler title. There is much modesty in the following words:

"This life may be compared to the Olympic games. For as in this assembly some seek glory and the crowns, some by the purchase or by the sale of merchandise seek gain, and others, more noble than either, go there neither for gain nor for applause, but solely to enjoy this wonderful spectacle and to see and know all that passes; we, in the same manner, quit our country, which is heaven, and come into the world, which is an assembly where many work for profit, many for gain, and where there are but few who, despising avarice and vanity, study nature. It is these last whom I call Philosophers; for as there is nothing more noble than to be a spectator without any personal interest, so in this life the contemplation and knowledge of nature are infinitely more honorable than any other application."

Herein we behold a spirit searching for wisdom, not for its practical uses, but for its own sake. Therefore he called himself a *Lover of Wisdom*, to whom the noblest exercise of the understanding was contemplation.

It is interesting to follow the development of philosophy through the Eleatics. Sadder yet these verses of Xenophanes:

"Certainly no mortal yet knew, and ne'er shall there be one
Knowing both well, the Gods and the All, whose nature we treat of;
For when by chance he at times may utter the true and the perfect,
He wists not unconscious; for error is spread over all things."

Then come the independent speculators, from Heraclitus to Democritus, of whom

"One pitied, one condemned the woful times;
One laughed at follies, and one wept o'er crimes"

—illustrating how "life is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel." To the laughing philosopher succeed the Sophists, who, tired of the problem of human life, acknowledged to be in-

capable of solution, turned away from it and devoted themselves, as if grimly to compensate or revenge for the continued elusion of truth, to the development of the art of disputation.

And then Socrates, who seems to us to have been sent into the world to convince it that the most consummate genius, unaided by Revelation, is incompetent by searching to find out God. What a career was led by this, the wisest, humblest, bravest, best of mankind! How did he yearn for Truth! How did he pursue her ever-eluding form, through heat and cold, in hunger and rags, loving her none the less, believing in her none the less, because he could never find out the exact place of her shrine. His predecessors, because they could not embrace her, had declared her to be a phantom. Not so Socrates. He knew that, though he could not behold her, she was around and near him, that her laws were immutable and eternal, and that to obtain her blessing mankind must pray without ceasing. Mankind could not do what this Silenus (as they named him) told them they must do or be ruined, and so they slew him. Never was a death—a death of a mortal—more inevitable. Hear what his lover says, the brilliant Alcibiades:

"I stop my ears, as from the Sirens, and flee away as fast as possible, that I may not sit down beside him and grow old in listening to his talk; for this man has reduced me to feel the sentiment of shame, which I imagine no one would readily believe was in me; he alone

inspires me with remorse and awe, for I feel in his presence my incapacity of refuting what he says, or of refusing to do that which he directs; but when I depart from him the glory which the multitude confers overwhelms me. I escape, therefore, and hide myself from him, and when I see him I am overwhelmed with humiliation, because I have neglected to do what I have confessed to him ought to be done; and often and often have I wished that he was no longer to be seen among men. But if that were to happen I well know that I should suffer far greater pain; so that where I can turn, or what I can do with this man, I know not. All this have I and many others suffered from the pipings of this satyr."

The career of Socrates showed the highest height to which the human understanding could reach. Sublime indeed was that height. It showed also the highest height of human virtue, and that, too, was sublime. For a man to proclaim the supremacy of virtue over all other rules of human life, to teach that brave, unswerving adherence to justice was not only the most precious but the only happiness, to declare that only those are unhappy who are not just—these of themselves prove the divine origin of mankind. What the Sophists declared to be a phantom he worshipped as an Existence, not less real because invisible to human eyes; and sometimes in solemn argumentation, sometimes in irony that burned like fire, he pursued and put to silence those who refused to pay the worship that was ever pouring from his heart. In this wonderful man the human conscience also performed its most perfect work. Had he been a Sophist he must have gone mad from despair. In moral certitude—that is, in

the certitude that virtue was eternally existent—he found the repose for his soul, that had hungered and thirsted to attain it. Always poor, he never doubted the acceptance of his poor sacrifices, being persuaded that humility, purity and piety were more pleasing to the gods than when, without these, their altars were overspread with costliest gifts. His prayers were not for the things which himself might have chosen, but for whatever the gods knew it was good for him to receive. Nothing in all times can excel those words in his last speech to his judges:

"The difficulty, O Athenians! is not to escape from death, but from guilt; for guilt is swifter than death and runs faster. And now I, being old and slow of foot, have been overtaken by Death, the slower of the two; but my accusers, who are brisk and vehement by wickedness, the swifter. . . . It is now time that we depart, I to die, you to live; but which has the better destiny is unknown to all except the God."

And so they slew him. A people made blind by interest and passion cannot see and cannot endure the excellent greatness of such a man. Had not even Alcibiades expressed the wish that he might no longer be seen amongst men? "Everywhere," says Heine, "that a great soul gives utterance to its thoughts there also is Golgotha." And so they slew him. He had prayed to the gods all during his life, and his last words were a prayer to the gods.

The pupil of Socrates, second only to him in the greatness of renown, Plato, had not the cheerfulness

of his master, though he was equally devoted to Truth and Immortality. How sad, how intensely melancholy he was who has been styled "the inheritor of the wisdom of his age!" How beautiful his theory of the perfect winged chariots of the gods, contrasted with those, variously imperfect, of mankind! How melancholy the repeated failure of men in placing themselves in the train of the gods and ever journeying along with them! Like Socrates, believing that man came from heaven and has it in his power to be restored thither, his pure, solemn soul was ever unhappy at man's persistent obliviousness or disregard of the Real Existences before seen and known in his native country. In Beauty, for instance (τὸ καλὸν) some of his thoughts and words are much like those of the Prophets and Evangelists. What unites the human soul to God is Love, and Love is the longing of the human soul for Beauty.

"But it is not easy for us to call to mind what they saw there" [whilst in Heaven, before their human birth]—"those especially which saw that region for a short time only, and those which, having fallen to the earth, were so unfortunate as to be turned to injustice, and consequent oblivion of the sacred things which were seen by them in their former state. Few, therefore, remain who are adequate to the recollection of those things."

After some observations about temperance, justice, etc., he says:

"But Beauty was not only most splendid when it was seen by us forming part of the heavenly possession or choir, but here also the

likeness of it comes to us through the most acute and clear of our senses, that of sight, and with a splendor which no other of the terrestrial images of super-celestial existences possess. They, then, who are not fresh from heaven, or who have been corrupted, are not vehemently impelled towards that Beauty which is aloft when they see that upon earth which is called by its name; they do not, therefore, venerate and worship it, but give themselves up to physical pleasure after the manner of a quadruped."

Sublime yet touching his doctrine that the Good (τὸ ἀγαθὸν) is GOD, who is invisible, while Beauty, Truth, and others are his attributes. These we may see, but the Good never, but can know it only by its attributes. The great desire of Plato's heart was to see mankind live in a manner like the gods, and his soul grew ever more and more sad because of its continued disappointment.

Aristotle, the most learned of mankind, with little thought of ethics, bestowed himself mainly to physics and metaphysics, and paved the way to the Sceptics and the Epicureans, the former doubting the existence of truth because of its undiscoverable criterion, and the latter endeavoring to solace disappointment with magnifying the good of pleasure and pursuing it. Not that the Epicurean philosophers practised or inculcated either debauchery or intemperance. That was a sincere inscription at the entrance of their garden: "The hospitable keeper of this mansion, where you will find pleasure the highest good, will present you liberally with barley-cakes and water fresh from the spring. The gardens will

not provoke your appetite by artificial dainties, but satisfy it with natural supplies. Will you not be well entertained?"

It is very interesting to study the histories of the Epicureans and their rivals and enemies, the Stoics, by whom they suffered from misrepresentations which by the majority of mankind are believed to this day. The times were favorable to two just such rival sects. The glories of Athens were departing. Greece was fast getting to be

"Living Greece no more."

Epicurus and Zeno, both good men, revering the name of Socrates, looked upon the decay of civilization with different eyes. The former would console himself with the search and attainment of whatever pleasures were attainable, but always with the purpose of temperate use. To him there was no good, not even pleasure, either in evil indulgences or in the intemperate use of those that were good. See how often Horace, a disciple, commends economy, temperance, and other virtues. How in that most touching of his odes,

"Eheu fugaces Posthume, Posthume,"

he commends to his opulent friend thoughts of the tomb, over which, alone of all the trees in his garden, the cypress neglected in life, will stand. Pleasure, but pleasure not too eagerly pursued, and

especially not intemperately indulged, was the rule of Epicurus. Yet when the pursuit of pleasure is the rule of life, effeminacy and intemperance must ensue among the most. It was, therefore, a noble purpose when Zeno, the father of the Stoics, with sorrow for the general decay of Grecian manhood, and indignant with the men of culture who merely counselled every possible avoidance of pain, undertook to restore that manhood which he saw departing from his countrymen and taking its abode with the barbarians who had built their city upon the banks of the Tiber. Zeno was as earnest and solemn a preacher as Socrates or Plato. Yet, though he derided the softness of the Epicureans, he could not endure the railings, the rags, the indecencies of the Cynics. So he formulated his own doctrine, "Live harmoniously with Nature." Contemning effeminacy, inactivity, and mere silent, moody speculation, he urged to untiring activity, in whose career, if perils and pains appeared, as they must, to meet them with courage and ignore them by endurance. He taught that the intellect, which was divine, should despise whatever interfered with its legitimate work, whether that was pleasing or painful; that corporeal senses should be and could be held under control by the intellect, and thus it could and would march onward along the highway of freedom and virtue.

But manhood was passing away from the Greeks. The disciples of Zeno among his own people were to be few: the many rose among the Romans. A great man and a good was Zeno; but what a mournful commentary on the doctrines he taught, to read that, when at ninety-eight years of age he was writhing under the pain of a fractured limb, disgusted, he strangled himself with a rope!—a mournful example, destined to be imitated many times in both nations, especially in the one which, though foreign to the great teacher, was most studious and fond of his teachings. For the Greeks were gentle as they were brave, and their greatest heroes had wept as freely as they had fought with the courage of the gods. Tenderness found little place with the rude people across the Adriatic, and so the *Stoa* was removed from Athens and had its most numerous discipleship in Rome. An anecdote is told of the behavior of the elder Cato when Carneades, the leader of the New Academy, came to Rome. On his first appearance before the Stoic censor the latter's convictions were shaken; on the next day, when the Greek, in ridicule of the Stoic's great doctrine of *common sense*, refuted his own arguments of the previous interview, the auditor persuaded the senate to send back Carneades to his native country. Not that great teachers were to arise in Rome; for Rome, having conquered Greece in arms,

was taken captive by Greece in arts, among which the Stoic creed was best suited to the energetic activities of the victor. But men who were actors, not thinkers merely, who were statesmen, not philosophers, learning from Athens, learned mostly the Stoic creed and practised its precepts, from Cato to Marcus Antoninus.

It is pleasing to contemplate the lingering that philosophy made around the fallen capital of Greece. It must in time depart. Its first new resting-place was at Alexandria, where Philo the Jew—reason alone having been found insufficient for man's intellectual and spiritual wants—brought in the alliance of Oriental mysticism, and, more important yet, that of faith. He was the first to announce that science, in its most important being, was the gift of God. The name he imparted to it was Faith, and the faithful performance of its behests was called Piety. Then came on the controversy between the Jew and the teachers of the Neo-Platonic school, which also was domiciled at Alexandria. These men sought to revive whatever was possible of the ideas of the founder of the Academy. He had, indeed, seemed almost to approximate the faith announced by Philo, if not as to reason, at least as to virtue, which he maintained was not a thing for the intellect of man to discover, but a gift of the Creator. The Jew applied this definition to science

as well, and so in his hands philosophy became theology. Henceforth the combat is between Reason and Faith. In the fulness of time Christianity was born.

And now the victory, humanly speaking, was the more speedily certain when we contrast the benignity and the universality of the Christian faith with the exclusiveness and the frequent inhumanity of philosophy, as well as its incertitude and its contradictions. What had been left of philosophy that was not sceptical professed to hold in contempt the body of man with its capacities for pleasure and for pain. Some of the later philosophers had gone to the length of expressing their disgust that they had bodies that were necessary to be fed, clothed, and housed. Christianity appeared, and from the mouths of unlettered fishermen doctrine claimed to be infallible came forth—that God himself had become incarnate in the womb of an Immaculate Virgin, and had made himself known, and had been tempted to evil even as mankind, though without yeilding; that he had suffered like mankind in the human body which he had assumed, and groaned in anguish from this suffering; that he had wept tears of blood, and in his human being had died, but that afterwards he, his body as well as his spirit, had risen from the tomb, and both had gone to his native heaven. Then these same fishermen an-

nounced that not only is the spirit of man immortal, but the body also; that the latter is destined to resurrection similar to that of the Incarnate God, and both, under conditions, live for ever with him in such felicity as the mind of man has never conceived.

Behold now what dignity was attached to the human body, which so many of the philosophers had despised. It was even styled a temple wherein was wont to dwell the Most High. Not that its evil wants were less to be condemned, but more; yet that they must be restrained, power to accomplish which endeavor could be obtained by fervent requests to the risen God to impart it; further, that yielding to them in periods of incapacity to resist might be condoned by penance; that while compunction for wrong-doing was ever becoming and salutary, remorse such as led to despair was regarded by Heaven as one of the greatest injuries that man could inflict upon himself. Henceforth the body was to have recognized all of its importance in the being of man—all; no more, no less. We were not taught that pain was no evil. Pain was an evil, at least a misfortune, inherited by man from ancestors who had violated well recognized laws. Yet pain could be lessened by submitting with all possible endurance to its infliction, in the confidence that deliverance was to come, even as it had come to the In-

carnate when he had risen from the tomb; that such endurance would cause the evil to be remembered with pleasure in good time, even during this mortal existence.

That such doctrines must be received by the multitudes reasoning minds, even unaided by religious faith, must perceive. Philosophy, in its department of ethics, must go down. It made a feeble struggle. Its last great one was when Julian, persecuted by his kinsmen while they sat upon the throne—Christians in name but heretical in opinions—was driven to seek consolation for the wrongs he had suffered to the melancholy Plato. Among the careers of princes none seems more to be compassionated than that of this, the last and greatest of the Flavian line. What he might have done and what he might have become but for his early death are known only to God. Other things besides admission of defeat may have been meant in those last mournful words: "O Galilean, thou hast triumphed!"

We said that there was a pathos in that philosophy of the ancients—its various discoursings after the certitude which was to bring tranquillity to the upright, thoughtful mind; its ever-repeating disappointments; its alternatings between the pursuit of pleasure and the contempt of pain, between the dogmatic assertions of the existence of gods and the doubts thereupon which overwhelmed with sad-

ness and sometimes drove to despair. What sadness in the words of Cicero to Brutus in explanation of what the world wondered at—his resort to philosophy: "Another inducement to it was a melancholy disposition of mind, and the great and heavy oppression of fortune that was upon me; from which, if I could have found any surer remedy, I would not have sought relief in this pursuit." Scarcely less sad the concluding words of that treatise on *The Nature of the Gods*, when, after the dispute between Cotta, a disciple of the Academy, and Balbus, of the Stoics, Velleius, whom the Epicureans loved to style the most gifted of the Romans, could thus decide: "Velleius judged that the arguments of Cotta were truest, but those of Balbus seemed to have the greater probability." The great orator, like the last of the Greeks, tired of strife and turmoil, of the weight of years, of the sight of the decay of liberty and patriotism, turned again to the scene of the studies of his youth,

> "The olive-grove of Academe—
> Plato's retirement—where the Attic-bird
> Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long,"

and dreamed, but only dreamed, of things than the present

> "Far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns."

The thoughtful Christian mind sees in all these

struggles what both to compassionate and what to admire—the earnestness of purpose searching for the truth with anguishing anxiety, believing in immortality although dreading annihilation, yet, during all these struggles, loyal to friendship, and love, and honor, and justice, and patriotism. Ah! how good is God to have bestowed upon the old world such exemplars both to the heathen and to the Christian who was to come after with the Word in his hands and authorized interpreters of all its intentions! No wonder that even Christians styled Plato in particular *The Divine.* Says the Abbé Bougaud in *Histoire de Sainte Monique:* "Il a laissée les Pères de l'Eglise incertains du nom qu'il fallait lui donner; ceux-ci voyant en lui le génie humain élevé à sa plus haute puissance; ceux-la l'appellant un Moïse païen, un prophète inspiré de Dieu, un préparateur évangélique envoyé aux nations assises à l'ombre de la mort; tous d'accord à saluer ce doux et merveilleux étranger du nom de Divin." These words were becoming to use while referring to the mother of Augustine, whose mind lingered so fondly with the sage of the Academy, and whose teachings received from that exalted source carried him at length to the highest.

What if such a man had lived to meet the Baptist clothed in camel's hair in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming that the kingdom of heaven was at

hand? Were there not Philo and the rabbis? Were there not the Neo-Platonists? Alas! the former were deaf to the voice, because they had mistaken the nature of the royalty in which their King was to come in triumph, while the latter could not endure to listen to the "foolishness of preaching" in the unlettered poor. From the former, because, being his own, they received him not, he turned away to the Gentiles, and the very wisdom of the latter, now polluted by the decays of many kinds, "knew not God."

Such is a brief, partial view of ancient philosophy. Its ethics were overthrown by those of Christianity. Its last teachers went out of Christendom to linger out their lives in the kingdoms of the East, while Christians like Thomas of Aquin engrafted its methods upon the new faith, reconciling, never to be disunited, the subtlest reason with the humblest belief. Truth, called at one time a *phantom*, at another a *phantasm*, was found to exist only in the church of Christ. Happiness, for which the wise of all ages had sought, was found in the grace God extended in equal abundance to the innocent and the penitent. The best lovers and the best-loved of Christ were the virgin, John and Magdalen, the repentant sinner. Since that time the very greatest intellects, the higher have they been exalted in genius, culture, and earn-

estness, have been let down into the lowest depths of humble thankfulness.

It is less interesting to pursue philosophy in its feeble attempts since to recover what Christianity wrested from its hands. Yet there is interest in contemplating the career of that greatest of modern philosophers, Bacon, who wisely left to Christianity the field which was peculiarly its own, and enlarged that wherein philosophy might work for the attainment of its lawful ends. The greatest of the philosophers of modern times, he was a Christian. As in the careers of the men of Greece, so in him, after his fall, there is profound pathos, mingled with gratification that he turned for relief to the only source whence it could come to the guilty and the fallen. We can never read without emotion the following portions of one of his prayers:

"Most gracious Lord God, my merciful Father from my youth up! my Creator, my Redeemer, my Comforter! thou, O Lord, soundest and searchest the depths and secrets of all hearts; thou acknowledgest the upright of heart; thou judgest the hypocrite; thou ponderest men's thoughts and doings in a balance; thou measurest their intentions as with a line; vanity and crooked ways cannot be hid from thee . . . O Lord, my strength! I have since my youth met with thee in all my ways, by thy fatherly compassions, by thy comfortable chastisements, and by thy most visible providence. As thy favors have increased upon me, so have thy corrections; so as thou hast been always near me, O Lord, and ever as my worldly blessings were exalted, so secret darts from thee have pierced me; and when I have ascended before men I have descended in humiliation before thee. And now, when I thought most of peace and honor, thy hand is heavy upon me, and hath humbled me according to thy former loving kindness, keeping me still in thy fatherly school, not as a bastard,

but as a child. Just are thy judgments upon me for my sins, which are more in number than the sands of the sea, but have no proportion to thy mercies; for what are the sands of the sea? Earth, heavens, and all these are nothing to thy mercies. Besides my innumerable sins, I confess before thee that I am debtor to thee for the greatest talent of thy gifts and graces, which I have neither put into a napkin nor put it, as I ought, to exchangers, where it might have made best profit, but misspent it in things for which I was least fit; so I may truly say my soul hath been a stranger in the course of my pilgrimage. Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for my Saviour's sake, and receive me unto thy bosom, or guide me in thy ways."

When philosophy can thus humble itself before God, confess its errors, and pray for pardon and guidance in the pursuit of things beyond its ken, we may bid it God-speed in inquiries within the range of its possibilities. Philosophy may provide for the material wants of mankind, but religion alone can be counted on to satisfy the spiritual. Its simplicity and its exactions keep away many, especially of the prosperous and the proud; but what healing have not the stricken and the humble found in its sweet influences! Did some of the philosophers call pain an evil, and others not? What would both sets of disputants have said if they could have foreseen Francis Xavier first in his labors and then in his repose? "*Amplius, O Domine! amplius!*" he said when his sufferings in the East were foretold to him. Afterwards, when resting in the gardens of St. Goa, and his spirit could not support the flood of happiness that poured within it, he could only cry out in the anguish of ecstasy, "*Satis, O Domi-*

ne! satis est!" The men whom we have mentioned would have rejoiced for the coming of such a day, although knowing that they must die without the sight.

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY.

AMERICA has been in the possession of civilized man for three hundred years. Among its numerous varied products is one philosopher. His influence upon the generation that was contemporary with him and with some that succeeded was very great. Of his life, private and public, the world knows more than of those of any of his predecessors. His public belongs to the history of his times; his private has been recorded by himself with a circumstantiality that shows how important he regarded it that the world should see to what vast heights a man can rise from lowest beginning with no other helps than his own energy, thrift, and sagacity. One who has read his *Autobiography*, might regard this curious work as a record of confessions but for the evidence of the pride that he took in inditing it.

In the article named "Pre-American Philosophy" we noted the modesty, the earnestness, and the sometimes sadness, which for the most part characterized the wise men of old. We saw that, however various were their speculations upon human

happiness, they believed it to be made mainly of intellectual and moral elements that were noble and pure. Some of them went to the length of despising the pleasures that result from the possession of material benefits; others, not despising, disregarded them; while others yet pursued them with moderate quest and indulged only in their temperate use. Even the gay Horace, favorite at the greatest court of the world, wrote to the opulent Pompeius Grosphus:

> "He who enjoys nor covets more
> Than lands his father held before
> Is of true bliss possessed:
> Let but his mind unfettered tread
> Far as the paths of knowledge lead,
> And wise as well as blessed."

The acrimonies among the various sects were often pronounced. By the Stoics the garden of Epicurus was called a *pig-sty*, while by many Diogenes and his associates were saluted *Cynics*. Nevertheless all of them had aims and counsel for the noble and pure, and not one of them taught that the way to happiness lay through prosperity that comes from the mere possession of wealth. This precept had been reserved for the philosopher of the New World.

It was said of Diogenes that while but a youth, having been suspected of complicity in the crime of his father, a banker of Sinope, who had been con-

victed of debasing the coin, he fled to Athens, where Antisthenes was teaching the virtue of poverty, and thereupon became his disciple. Franklin began his philosophic career much younger, even at the age of ten years. The question was argued between himself and his father whether the utility of a "wharff" which had been constructed by himself, at the head of a band of urchins, on the edge of a quagmire at the margin of a mill-pond in which they were wont to angle for minnows, was greater or less than the crime of stealing the stones for its construction. The old gentleman got the best of the argument with the help of a rod of sufficient firmness. The concession then made, that "nothing was useful which was not honest," had to be deviated from some time afterwards in the case of what he admitted to be one of the *errata* of his life—his availing himself of a fraudulent change in the indentures by which he had been bound to a brutal elder brother, and running away from him.

One of Franklin's ancestors had been a poet, a specimen of whose verse here follows (written in behalf of liberty of conscience):

"I am for peace and not for war,
And that's the reason why
I write more plain than some men do
That used to daub and lie.
But I shall cease, and set my name
To what I here insert,
Because to be a libeller

I hate it with my heart.
From Sherburne town, where now I dwell,
My name I do put here;
Without offence your real friend,
It is Peter Folgier."

While apprenticed to his brother, who was a printer, he bestowed temporary attention to the cultivation of the hereditary vein, at the instance of his brother, who sent him around hawking (in Boston, their native place) his *Lighthouse Tragedy* and a sailor's song on the capture of Teach, the pirate. But his father again diverted him by telling him that "verse-makers were generally beggars."

It is curious to follow the youthful philosopher along his career of endeavors after what were the best things; his eagerness for the knowledge to be gotten from books; his debating with himself about whether or not he ought to spare the time he had for reading on Sundays by going to church, and deciding for the negative; his adopting a vegetable diet in order to save both time and money, and other employments judged likely to be useful after a while. Let us hear some of his comments on disputation:

"There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another, which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extreamly disagreeable in company by the contradiction that is necessary to bring it into practice; and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, is productive of disgusts, and perhaps enmities where you may have occasion

for friendship. I had caught it by reading my father's books of dispute about religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinborough."

The harm of disputatious reasoning appeared to him quite early, as we notice in the following:

"And being then" (after studying Greenwood's English Grammar and Xenophon's "Memorable Things of Socrates,") "from reading Shaftesbury and Collins, become a real doubter in many points of our religious doctrine, I found this method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it; therefore I took a delight in it, practised it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people, even of superior knowledge, into concessions the consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved. I continued this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence, never using, when I advanced anything that may be possibly disputed, the words "certainly," "undoubtedly," or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion; but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; It appears to me, or I imagine it to be so, if I am not mistaken. This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions and persuade men into measures that I have been, from time to time, engaged in promoting," etc.

The escape from his brother by means of the false indentures troubled him little to remember, especially since that brother by his representations concerning the fraud, hindered him from getting other business in that community:

"It was not fair for me to take this advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first errata of my life; but the unfairness of it weighed little with me, when under impressions of resentment for the blows his passion too often urged him to bestow upon me, though he was otherwise not an ill-natured man; perhaps I was too saucy and provoking."

The fugitive, now a boy of seventeen, was landed in Philadelphia with a cash capital of a Dutch dollar and about a shilling in copper. The philosopher develops. "The shilling," he says, "I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refused it on account of my rowing; but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps thro' fear of being thought to have but little."

We cannot but feel much of some sort of respect for a philosopher of seventeen years who, with his Dutch dollar—less three pennyworth spent for bread—confident and cool, strolled along Market Street, gnawing away at one of the huge loaves, while the other two were tucked beneath his arms, looking about him leisurely for the living that he was sure would come, not minding the while the smiles of Miss Read at his awkward and ridiculous appearance, who was to think so much better of him ere long. Employment with one Keimer, one of the pretended prophets from the Cevennes who "could act their enthusiastic agitations," but was very ignorant of the world, gave opportunities to the thrift and cunning he possessed. That was an eventful day when Governor Keith called at the printing-office, and, instead of stopping with the French prophet, who ran down to meet the distin-

guished visitor, asked for the workman, whose master "started like a pig poisoned;" and it was a day of triumph of its kind when, six months afterwards, full of promises from the governor, whose letter he bore to his father bespeaking the latter's help to set up his son in business so that he could realize these promises, "having a genteel new suit from head to foot, a watch, and my pockets lined with near five pounds in silver," the brother from whom he had run away "received me not very frankly, looked me all over, and turned to his work again." It did seem hard, however, when, the brother "still grum and sullen," he spread a handful of silver before the wondering eyes of the printing boys, and, going to the length of giving them "a piece of eight to drink," thereby "insulted him in such a manner before his people that he could never forget or forgive it." Yet from the fond parent he could get nothing but a promise to help him when he should reach the age of twenty-one years, and advice to "endeavor to obtain the general esteem, and avoid lampooning and libelling, to which he thought I had too much inclination."

It reads like a moderately good novel when the philosopher tells of how, on the voyage back to Philadelphia, he soothed the qualms of conscience for the "unprovoked murder of taking fish," when a cod came "hot out of the frying-pan, smelling

admirably well;" of how he rose in Keimer's estimation by his adroit use of the Socratic method, and

"Trepanned him so often by questions apparently so distant from any point we had in hand, and yet by degrees lead to the point and brought him into difficulties and contradictions, that at last he grew ridiculously cautious, and would hardly answer me the most common question without asking first, 'What do you intend to infer from that?' However, it gave him so high an opinion of my abilities in the confuting way that he seriously proposed my being his colleague in a project he had of setting up a new sect. He was to preach the doctrines, and I was to confound all opponents. When he came to explain with me upon the doctrines I found several conundrums which I objected to, unless I might have my way a little too, and introduce some of mine."

It is proper to note here that the philosopher was not yet fully prepared to originate and propound theological doctrines. They must remain in abeyance until those more important for the government of this mere mortal existence were sufficiently ascertained and settled. For the present he would content himself with a temporary quasi-coalescence with the prophet from the Cevennes, destined to be snapped suddenly by the latter's violation of one article of their creed (the abstaining from animal food) by eating the whole of a roast pig at his own table before the time of dinner, to which his colleague and "two women-friends" had been invited. Yet he admits to have unsettled the faith of Charles Osborne and James Ralph,* two young men of his

*Ralph went back to England and became somewhat noted as a

acquaintance, "for which they both made me suffer" —in his pocket. As for Ralph, who was destined to be kept from oblivion by the *Dunciad* of Pope, the philosopher's advice to him reminds one of the chiding of Xenophanes upon Homer, and Plato's exclusion of poets from his Republic: "I approved the amusing one's self with poetry now and then, so far as to improve one's language, but no farther." The recollection of his father's criticism upon the *Lighthouse Tragedy*, and his name for the followers of the *gai science*, doubtless assured him of the wholesomeness of this counsel.

All varieties of philosophers, excepting probably the Cynics, and certainly those bound by celibate obligations, have not been insensible to the goods, real and imaginary, of married life. Even Socrates must have a wife, selecting, as some said, the most shrewish he could find, not with the hope of taming her, like Petrucchio, but of subjecting his patience and endurance to perennial tests. But for the printed words from his own manuscript it would be incredible that Franklin, then old, rich, and renowned, should have written with such shocking indelicacy regarding the woman whom he was to marry, and some of the incentives that drove him

political pamphleteer. Pope silenced him as a poet with the following in the "Dunciad:"

"And see! the very Gazetteers give o'er,
Ev'n Ralph repents, and Henley writes no more."

thereto. Some love-passages had been between him and the Miss Read before mentioned, with whose parents he took his first board, but on his sailing for England these (though he was confident of her reciprocation of his feeling) were suspended. Stung by her lover's long neglect, she had married a potter, whom, having found him to be a worthless fellow and reputed to have another wife, she had forsaken. He confesses to the shame he felt, upon his return from England, on meeting the forlorn woman, his treatment of whom he names another of his *errata* —one, however, which several conditions (some not to be repeated by us) rendered capable of correction. We can afford to give the following specimen:

"I pitied poor Miss Read's unfortunate situation, who was generally dejected, seldom cheerful, and avoided company. I considered my giddiness and inconstancy when in London as in a great degree the cause of her unhappiness, tho' the mother was good enough to think the fault more her own than mine, as she had prevented our marrying before I went thither, and persuaded the other match in my absence. Our mutual affection was revived, but there were now great objections to our union. The match was indeed looked upon as invalid, a preceding wife being said to be still living in England; but this could not easily be proved because of the distance; and tho' there was a report of his death, it was not certain. Then, tho' it should be true, he had left many debts, which his successor might be called upon to pay. We ventured, however, over all these difficulties, and I took her to wife September 1st, 1730. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended; she proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending the shop; we throve together, and have ever mutually endeavored to make each other happy. Thus I corrected that great erratum as well as I could."

The principal element in the being of Franklin as a man and as a philosopher was selfishness. It was his cool imperturbabrlity, it was his never-sleeping watchfulness towards what would gratify this selfishness that carried him to such a height. His great doctrine was that the road to human virtue and happiness was wealth. This doctrine was already in his mind when he was a child in his father's house, grown stronger when he went about the streets of Boston hawking his own ballads, and living upon vegetables in order to have money with which to purchase books. Whatever came within view of that spirit, the most watchful and persistent of mankind, was appropriated or rejected according as it was found or believed to be a help or a hindrance in the way of the kind of happiness that he sought. The disputes which he had had with his father about the need of the wharf, which he held with himself a little later upon the question of attending religious services or staying home with his books on Sundays, were prophetic. It was utility, personal utility, that he was to study and to take wherever he could. The consequences of the wharf business convinced him that dishonesty was not useful. Therefore he will practise it no more, at least after just such a style as pilfering another's goods. But the world must not expect from him delicate balancings along the border-line between

the questionable and the unquestionable things in human conduct. Some of the things that he tells us exhibit an audacity of vanity that none except a very great man could feel or dare to avow. One had learned to rather pity the poor crazy prophet, so unthrifty, so friendless, so unapt in hiding his poverty and his numerous infirmities—in fine, so much of a child, an orphan-child at that. Yet for years the employee had been foreseeing the end of a sure decline and silently counting upon rising upon his fall. It was at the time of beginning the famous *The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences, and Pennsylvania Gazette*, the intention of whose establishment, long concealed, was made known to Keimer by another workman, one Webb, that the failing printer tried to improve his own sheet so that it might compete with the one now projected. The friends whom Franklin had made had assured him often that it was only a question of time, ever rapidly diminishing, when the thriftless creature must get out of his way. Now, this last spasmodic effort was too much for the man who had been waiting "long, too long already." Let us listen to what he says:

"I resented this, and to counteract them, as I could not yet begin our paper, I wrote several pieces of entertainment for Bradford's paper, under the title of Busy Body, which Breintnal continued some months. By this means the attention of the publick was fixed on

that paper, and Keimer's proposals, which were burlesqued and ridiculed, were disregarded. He began his paper, however, and, after carrying it on three-quarters of a year, he offered it to me for a trifle; and I, having been ready some time to go on with it, took it in hand directly, and it proved in a few years 'extreamly' profitable to me."

The poor insolvent got away somehow and emigrated to the Barbadoes. Now Franklin, taught by the results of the quagmire "wharff" and other experiences, doubtless would have regarded it very unwise to have practised on the "novice," as he sometimes named him, actions bold as the stealing of a builder's stones; for such conduct had been proven at least not useful. We may not reach forth and pluck with our hands the fruit, though overripe, that hang upon another's tree; but we may eagerly watch the bough upon which it hangs leaning over our side of the wall, and receive it when fallen into thankful laps. The useful, is that for which we must seek in order for the obtainment of the happiness we desire. Dishonesty is bad policy, honesty is good. Let us consider how the argument was carried into religion. After telling of how he once became a deist he thus proceeds:

"My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but each of them having afterwards wronged me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me* (who was another free-thinker) and my own towards Vernon† and Miss Read, which at times gave me great trouble, I

*Keith had broken his promise of letters of introduction to persons in London.

†He had collected some money for Vernon, used it, and been tardy

began to suspect that this doctrine, tho' it might be true, was not very useful."

That conclusion must settle the business with deism. Deism had to go out of his creed, and it went.

But a religion of some sort was necessary to man in the long run, and in emergencies it must even be pronounced and clamorous, and sometimes, for a desired purpose of utility, put on sack-cloth and sit amid ashes! There is an undertone of humor in his account of the fast—"the first ever thought of in the province"—whose proclamation he had advised. As no precedent could be found, the mover had to draw up the document.

"My education in New England, where a fast is proclaimed every year, was here of some advantage. I drew it in the accustomed stile; it was translated into German, printed in both languages, and divulged through the province. This gave the clergy of the different sects an opportunity of influencing their congregations to join in the association, and it would probably have been general among all but Quakers if the peace had not soon intervened."

But the vanity of Franklin becomes gigantic when we see him, after becoming illustrious throughout the world, meditating the foundation of a new sect. In his old age he indulged in charitable regret that his other engagements kept putting off and finally

in its payment. "Mr. Vernon about this time put me in mind of the debt I owed him, but did not press me. I wrote him an ingenuous letter of acknowledgment, craved his forbearance a little longer, which he allowed me, and as soon as I was able I paid the principal with interest and many thanks; so that erratum was in some degree corrected."

hindered so benign an intention. In the history of mankind we believe that there is nothing to be found in its kind equal to the following:

"My ideas at that time were that the sect should be begun and spread at first among young and single men only; that each person to be initiated should not only declare his assent to such a creed, but should have exercised himself with the thirteen weeks' examination and practice of the virtues, as in the forementioned model; that the existence of such a society should be kept secret till it was become considerable, to prevent solicitations for the admission of improper persons, but that the members should each of them search among his acquaintance for ingenuous, well-disposed youths, to whom, with prudent caution, the scheme should be gradually communicated; that the members should engage to afford their advice, assistance, and support to each other in promoting one another's interests, business, and advancement in life; that for distinction we should be called 'The Society of the Free and Easy,'" etc., etc.

Herein have we put down a few things in the career of the one philosopher whom the New World has produced thus far. They are taken from his own writing, recorded when he had become old and the world was filled with his fame. Other things are in this curious book which could not be reproduced without offending others as well as ourselves, and others yet were decently suppressed by the editor from the author's manuscript.

That Franklin was, in some respects, what is usually known in the name of a great man is undeniable. His confidence in his own powers, his patient biding of his times, his sagacity in the pursuit and compassing of the ends which he proposed, his ready perception and self-satisfactory corrections of

the mistakes he had made from time to time, his steady endeavors for the possible, his keeping his eyes away from the visionary, his calm lead of mankind, his freedom from temptation for the quest or indulgence of whatever would injure his health or his name, or would retard the projects he had extended—all these show him to have been what is generally understood in the name of a great man. But remembering of what sort of men were the wise of ancient Greece, can we justly style a *philosopher* such a man as Franklin? The wise men of ancient Greece, heathen though they were, made their aim for the highest good that was possible to human nature. That highest good was virtue. Whatever else that word might include within its meaning, neither wealth nor mere utility was among them, but the fear of God and kindness to mankind were, chiefest constitutents. Some despised, many disregarded, but none ever sought riches as the chiefest means of leading to happiness, and especially to virtue. The wisest among them did not withhold becoming respect for those who had become rich by industry or inheritance, whenever these did not magnify the importance of their possessions in the sum of human existence. Industry, frugality, temperance they counselled, because they were promoters, to the extent of their importance, of virtue by the health of body and the peace of mind which

they induced, not by the mere accumulation of lands and goods. Franklin was the first to exalt Plutus among the superior gods—indeed, to put his throne at the summit. With him wealth was both virtue *and* happiness. In the pursuit of wealth a man's constant aim must be to search for the things that will be useful for his purpose, and evade everything that will not. He must not steal, nor lie (that is, on a very great scale), nor be debauched, nor gluttonous, nor intemperate, nor be a deist. Why? Because these and their likes will be found useless in the matter he has in hand. For the first time in lexicography *honesty* is defined or made synonymous with *policy*; rather, *good policy*. As for religion, that is a harmless thing in general, of which a leader of men, on occasions of great perturbation of the public mind, may avail for the end of inducing the clergy of all sects (except Quakers, who are comparatively weak) to incite their congregations to co-operation in action necessary to the common weal. But a distinct, definite, reasonable, true, unerring creed the philosopher, in the multifold engrossments with public and private business, could never obtain leisure to propound. In the retirement of age he kindly, yet without pain, regrets that a scheme so generously conceived was hindered in its execution because of so many matters of more importance having devolved upon him. It would have been

curious to see the poor, the weary, and the heavy-laden knocking at the door of that church to which were specially to be denied admittance all who owed money. Such as these could not be expected to keep themselves in view of that standard of virtue which in the "*Almanac by Richard Saunders, Philomat,* printed and sold by B. Franklin," was exalted even above the Labarum of Constantine.

"I therefore filled," he says in the fulness of the sweetness of remembering Richard's prodigious success in his venture—"I therefore filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality as the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, 'it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.'"

It would have been curious, we repeat, to see the result of a poor man's application for membership in a church whose founder's preaching was such "as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction." We imagine the applicant to be dismissed with some such words as Iago employed with the rejected Roderigo:

"Put money in thy purse: . . . I say, put money in thy purse. Defeat thy favor with a usurped beard. Put but money in thy purse. . . . Fill thy purse with money. . . . Traverse! go; provide thy money."

How fallen such a creed below not only the behests of Christianity, but of the very ancientest and crudest philosophies! To say nothing of what Franklin thought of Christ, how he must have imag-

ined himself to compassionate all others who had preceded him in quest of the true paths of wisdom! How useless to him must have seemed their solemn meditations on God and the best good of mankind, their yearnings for immortality, their despondent searchings for truth, destined never certainly to be known not to be a phantom until her hiding-place should be discovered by the great philosopher of the West! That a man with such views and maxims, with extraordinary powers for their enforcement, should have exerted an immense influence upon a heterogeneous people in their formation of society in a country so new and so vast, may not be wondered at, but only deplored. No other philosopher ever had so numerous a following. With *Poor Richard's Almanac* in his hand, and with his own persistent, tireless, endless commentings, he made himself an apostle to the multitudes whose minds he led away from concern for spiritual things and directed to the pursuit of the one important material. The dullest understanding comprehended his doctrine as well as the brightest. Reduced to logical form it would read thus:

All virtuous men are happy;

But, none but the rich are virtuous:

Therefore, none but the rich are happy.

In such a discipline how many thousands upon thousands in our country have spent lives of varying

lengths in that search for happiness! What contrivances have been invented for that end! What simulations of justifiable means that were often but the "index and obscure prologue to the history of foul thoughts!" Alas! how many have been led away from Christianity, and even from the development of manhood! How many have been destroyed whilst endeavoring to reconcile those two proverbs so vastly apart, *Honesty is the best policy* and *It is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

Of all the great teachers whom the world has produced, Franklin, seems least like Christ. Christ ennobled poverty by being born into its estate. In it he chose his mother, his brethren, his friends. In it he lived and died. He had said, "Blessed are the poor." Franklin rejecting this, elected some others of his precepts, and cunningly diverted them from the chiefest purposes for which they had been propounded. Yet he hesitated not to advise the weaker in his school and those outside to call upon Christ on occasions of public emergency, in order to obtain universal co-operation in endeavors of pressing public importance. In his old age, while retrospecting his long career, the full gratification of his mind must express itself in the words of that *Autobiography*, a thing unique in its kind. Too wise to lament in vain the dwindling of strength and desires, he yet professed his willingness, if such

could be, to live over his life, even including the *errata*, all of which he had moderately regretted, and of some of which he had been rather ashamed.

Had Franklin been a Christian, or had he not sought to meddle with and pervert Christian ethics, but kept his speculations within the fields of legitimate philosophical inquiry, the greatness of his career would have been far more excellent, and all might endorse the praise of Jeffrey: "He was the most rational, perhaps, of all philosophers. No individual perhaps ever possessed a juster understanding, or was so seldom obstructed in the use of it by indolence, enthusiasm, and authority.'

DELICACY OF SHAKESPEARE.

"SORROW is better than laughter," said the Preacher. Yet he said again, "There is a time to laugh." What a support to the heart of man is in the tears which come to his eyes, both when they come from grief and when they come from joy! The subtile influences which console for one and subdue the exuberance of the other are closely blended in the depths of our being. So it is that sorrow is often followed by smiles, and laughter ends with sighing. The writer, therefore, who undertakes to represent the life of man must study these elements with equal care. Plato tells us of a discussion that took place in Athens between Socrates and Aristophanes, in which the former maintained that a good writer of tragedies ought to be able to write comedies also. Yet it was two thousand years before the full force of the argument was illustrated.

Greek tragedy, originating in religion, designed to inculcate fear of the gods, especially of fate, had no place for scenes except of the solemn, the awful, and the terrific. A brave man struggles with Fate,

bravest of all because he knows that he must struggle in vain, but struggling on in obedience to his native impulsions of courage, honor and sense of justice, and, when vanquished, leaving behind the name of one whom nothing except Fate could have overthrown. Such was the burden of Greek tragedy. Its achievements were indescribably great, and they stimulated the very highest endeavor. Greek comedy also, in its very first intentions, had elements of the religious. Curious as it may be, yet such were many of the scenes in honor of Bacchus. But among the refined Greeks comedy seemed to have had for its object to make a contrast, more or less pleasing, with the solemnities of tragedy. If it had been the habit of the tragic muse to employ for its heroes, even sometimes, other than the most illustrious, perhaps the genial and generous humor which was unknown to Greek dramatic writing might have come in earlier. But neither the tragic nor the comic poets seemed to care much for the multitude. It is interesting to consider what has been the tendency of the sentiment of pity. Love travels mainly on a level or downward. Pity, like worship, tends upwards. Tragedy dealt with demigods and legendary heroes—with Œdipus and Orestes, with Alcestis and Medea, with Andromache and Antigone. How have the multitude, forgetting their own and one another's sorrows, wept at those of the great!

Now, to relieve men's minds from such painful solemnities the comic poets, in an age less religious, less heroic, less fond of individual greatness, or with contempt because the latter had passed and without expectation of its return, began to select from among contemporary characters those who would but could not, be heroes, and contrast them with the mighty who had lived. Such comedy was merely satire. It railed at contemporary life in comparing it with that of purer times. It laid bare not only the weaknesses but the meannesses of the human heart, for the purpose of burlesquing the noble virtues which tragedy represented. It seemed at last almost avowedly depreciatory of those virtues. "As tragedy," says Schlegel, "by painful emotions, elevates us to the most dignified views of humanity, comedy, on the other hand, by its jocose and depreciatory view of all things, calls forth the most petulant hilarity." What words! For a "petulant hilarity" is a hilarity in which there is no enjoyment and from which can proceed no profit. In such representations there was abundance of wit. Attic salt, flung mercilessly upon the excoriated flesh of the upstart and the braggart, would make them writhe in agony, and while the spectators would shout they would also curse with laughter. Humor—humor, which is so much broader and kinder than wit—seems not to have been known.

Instead of being intended for the production of the innocent indulgence in careless pastime while contemplating such absurd and ludicrous conjunctures as, with little or no evil, occur in ordinary life, comedy seemed to have been intended, though in a most doubtful way, to be ancillary to the serious purposes of tragedy. In one of the theatres last night Sophocles had excited to weeping the men and women of Athens by recitals of the sufferings of Œdipus and his children. To-night Aristophanes will lead them into a house in another street and exhibit his play of *The Birds*, in which the mannikins of the time are put in contrast with the great of Grecian story. They have become so contemptible that the birds of the air have supplanted them in the conduct of sublunary affairs. Even the fair Iris with heavenly wings, though bearing divine messages, is chided for passing beyond the aerial conclave. The loud laugh will arise, but it will be a "petulant hilarity," with none of the healthfulness that comes from genuine comic feeling.

This difference between tragic and comic writing, rather this resemblance between them, continued almost until the coming of Shakespeare. In "the Sacred Comedy" following the Miracle Plays of the middle age the character that made the fun was the Devil himself. Our ancestors laughed as well as they could. For man cannot always be serious.

He *must* laugh sometimes, if it can be for nothing more ridiculous, at a pleasant conceit of seeing the great enemy fall into his own pit, and beaten, and pinched, and made to roar with pain and discomfiture. When the time came in England for another sort of fun upon the stage—and it seems wonderful how slow it was in coming—it broke forth abruptly and about as broadly as any who were fond of the broadest might ever care to see. When an ecclesiastic of a former age sometimes, as in the opinion of Bishop Bonner, verged upon too great liberties with the Devil and the Vice in the sacred comedies, a check was placed upon such performances, and finally their suspension was ordered. But by the middle of the sixteenth century such salutary restraint had ceased to be in vogue, and it seems almost incredible that a play so unmixedly coarse as "*Gammer Gurton's Nedle*" to open the ball of modern English comedy should have been composed by a Doctor of Divinity, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, prebend of Westminster, Master of St. John's and Trinity Colleges, Cambridge, Archdeacon of Sudbury, Bishop of Bath and Wells. But bishops in the line of Parker were not what they used to be in the old line. This one fell into a humorous vein and, for a preacher, showed extraordinary familiarity with the lowly and the gross in English society, and as hearty an appreciation of them as any who

could ever have aspired to a gown, not mentioning lawn sleeves and the mitre. There was some frolic for the boys of Eton College when their head-master, Nicholas Udall(he a preacher, too, in the Parker succession), let them present his *Ralph Royster Doyster*; but how must the bigger boys at Christ Church, Cambridge (where it was first put upon the stage), have roared at the hair-pulling of Dame Chat and Gammer Gurton, and the more than coarse scurrilities of Dickon and Hodge! Yet such as these were not only the best but the only. Such a people would not have listened half an hour to such as the *Captivi* of Plautus or the *Andria* of Terentius. They were not the people to pick out the fun, what there was, from beneath Greek or Latin roots, but must have it pouring forth fresh, if muddy and most foul, in homely vernacular for portraying scenes in contemporary English life. What that life was under Tudor rule it fills a delicate, modest mind with painful astonishment to contemplate. Both the tragic and the comic went to their highest heights and their lowest depths, and the pieces which came upon the stage, in order to be waited upon for their close by an English audience, must be made to have no stint of blood from murders of every kind, and, in the after-piece, no sparing of nastiness. Let us see how that consummate

young genius Marlowe whetted keener the hatred for the Jew:

> "I walk abroad a-nights,
> And kill sick people groaning under walls:
> Sometimes I go about and poison wells. . . .
> Being young I studied physic, and began
> To practise first upon the Italian;
> There I enriched the priests with burials,
> And always kept the sexton's arms in use
> With digging graves and ringing dead men's knells.
> I filled the jails with bankrouts in a year,
> And with young orphans planted hospitals;
> And every moon made some or other mad,
> And now and then one hang himself for grief,
> Pinning upon his breast a long great scroll
> How I with interest tormented him."

In this terrible piece there is neither pity from Christian to Jew nor from Jew to Christian. War to the last blood, anguish in extreme, that can neither be increased nor diminished—these were what our ancestors three hundred years ago wished to see when war and anguish were to be mimicked upon the stage. Not that they were without compassion for

> "Hem that stode in gret prosperite
> And been fallen out of her high degree,"

but they insisted upon seeing the blood and hearing the shriek. They preferred witnessing the murderous combat to hearing it recited. The counsel of Horace to the Pisos would have been wasted upon them. He who wondered how the Romans of the

*Barabbas in "The Jew of Malta."

foretime had endured the rudeness of Plautus, and were not shocked at the unnatural murder *coram populo* of the children of Jason, would never have been seen, had he lived in that time, at the Globe or Blackfriars. For that public relished such as these beyond all else. If Progne is to be changed into a bird and Cadmus into a snake, if Clytemnestra is to be slain at the bath and the parricide to be pursued by the Furies, that English public demanded to see how these interesting things were done. And then they were ready, having had enough of horrors, for the jest; and the broader was this, the shouts were louder and heartier. They must have both. "An action," says Mr. Hallam, "passing visibly on the stage, instead of a frigid narrative, a copious intermixture of comic buffoonery with the gravest story, were requisites with which no English audience would dispense." Illogical, unreasonable as such demands seemed, they were the foundation of the greatest dramatic literature of the world. The wits who sought fame or livelihood must conform to them. Fond as it was to shed tears of pity, it was needful to wipe them away in time and afford a channel for those of hilarity. These two great wants of the human heart, so nearly connected, so necessary to each other, this English people, rough and unstudying as they were, first asserted upon the stage in the alternate

sequence in which they prevail in daily life. He was but half a philosopher who did nothing but weep; less than half was he who only laughed.

It is interesting to study the development of this dramatic literature, and see how it made ready the way for the coming of Shakespeare. Dreadful indeed were the things in tragedy, and revolting the obscenities in comedy. Some of the latter are the more extravagant, but the more venial, because they were brought out, as in the case of poor Massinger, with reluctant hands and only for the purpose of obtaining food and raiment for the hungry and ragged, and shelter for the houseless. Others, like those of Beaumont and Fletcher—both gentlemen born, and sufficiently prosperous—were congenial to the minds which applauded the tastes and habits of the age. The greater genius of the two died young. The other, son of the dean of Peterborough, who was rewarded with a bishopric for his insults to Mary Stuart in the very article of her death, survived long and worked up a vast amount of filth that was most cordially relished for too long a time.

Added to the rudeness of the times, that made such coarseness endurable and even preferred, were the contemporary rise of Puritanism and the extremes to which hostile parties will sometimes urge their principles and conduct. The playgoers laughed

the heartier at the *Four Ps*, of Heywood, and the *Mother Bombie*, of Lyly, thinking of the not inconsiderable public outside who believed it to be a sin to laugh at all. The satyr that these merry spirits brought out from the woods, instead of being exhibited in his best attitudes according to the precept of the Roman critic, was exhibited in his worst, because there were those to maintain that the satyr should never have been taken from his native wilds. Yet that same Heywood could excite to weeping in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, while Lyly could rise to delicate humor in *Midas*, *Endymion*, and *Campaspe*.

More decent than those aforementioned was Ben Jonson, more serious, more brave; but, lacking the pathos of the tragic muse and having to turn to the comic in order to be allowed to live at all, it is sad to see how his saturnine nature struggled between the classicism which he reverenced and the modern broadness of humor which he despised, and for which he could not forbear to substitute the satire of Menander and Plautus. He could rouse to laughter, but it was such as brought no relief to the heart. In *Volpone*, for instance, the characters intended to excite laughter, instead of being ludicrous, are villanous to a degree that is shocking to humanity. The laugh that arises from beholding them has the bitterness of disgust and the eagerness

of revenge. When the great rascal is caught and is writhing with the pain of punishment the audience scream with laughter; but it is such laughter as we might indulge withal if perchance we should see a brute of a man insult a woman upon the streets, and immediately thereafter assaulted by a true man, and beaten, and kicked, and cowhided, and set on by the dogs. Yet the witness of such scenes does not good to the heart wherein it most needs good. Thus, Ben Jonson, though rising to the full dignity of the Romans, both in his tragedies and his comedies, yet, in want of pathos for the former and humor for the latter, went behind those whom he should have preceded.

Interesting struggles those were in the modern English drama. The buskin beginning with solemn, stately *Gorboduc*, the sock with *Ralph Royster Doyster*, and *Gammer Gurton's Nedle*—how wide apart were these, apparently how irreconcilable! Writers like Sackville might be disgusted to think how a reasonable public could gather pleasure from the talks of Hodge and Doctor Rat, and yet desire to hear tell the sufferings of the great of all times. But that people intended to have all their wants gratified. They meant to laugh with the gay and weep with them that wept; and inasmuch as prim pietists, becoming more numerous and more prim, found fault with comic scenes of even delicate

kinds, and public opinion excluded women from theatres, not only as actors but as spectators, they made their fun the coarser and their laugh the more uproarious.

The theatre is the repertory of the best literature of the ages. From Sackville, from Still and Udall, the playwrights must study the temper of the pits and learn both when it is the time to weep and when the time to laugh. Tragedy, having so noble precedents, easily led the way. Comedy—comedy such as it was and ought to become, generous as gay, sympathizing as ludicrous, comedy that was to lead to laughter that brought neither pain nor anger—had to work its way and be developed with the tastes and manners of society. In ancient times it had made men laugh the laugh of contempt, scorn, hatred, and satisfied revenge. Its newest laughs were for the actions and sayings of the lowly and the vulgar. The time was not yet, but it was coming fast, when it could invite gentlemen and ladies to come together to its recitals, in listening to which they could laugh without pain and without blushing.

In the lives of the playwrights what blending of the serious with the sportive will one see who studies them closely! How often will he find cheerfulness among the serious, and—especially—seriousness among the sportive! Charles Reade, in *Peg Woffington*, makes Mrs. Triplett, on retiring from the

stage at night, take from her person the finery, lay it upon the table with disgust, and then regard with affection a cold sausage that she has taken from her pocket. We smile at the drollery, but simultaneously we feel the tenderness and the sweetness of pity. Many a time has the London comic dramatist, standing in the street in rags, almost hatless and shoeless, certainly dinnerless, or sitting in prison hard by, heard a thousand voices roaring to the fun himself had created. Fortunately for mankind, it requires not a habitually gay temper nor felicitous circumstances to promote humorous compositions. On the contrary, it is he who has the profoundest knowledge of the sadness of the human heart who can most skillfully touch the chords that vibrate to humorous impulsions. Before Shakespeare the drama was made up mostly of tragedy the bloodiest and farce the broadest. It was reserved for him to unite pathos and humor as they are conjoined in human life, and lift each as high as human language could exalt. These observations we have made preliminary to the consideration of what we propose to style the comparative delicacy of Shakespeare. Of his sadness, and of the predominance of the serious over the sportive in his character and writings, we shall speak in another article.

When Shakespeare came to London, English comedy knew little more than the farce. The del i

cate humor which springs out of the pleasant phantasies of persons in polite society had been introduced rarely and with timidity. Men who had wept at a tale of grief desired for the after-piece or the interlude the relief which was to come from a great, broad joke. Whatever contributions were made to the enjoyment of the playgoers by the young actor who, having married too early and not well, had left his native Stratford, little of them has been transmitted beyond the fact that he preferred and sufficiently well sustained the parts of old men. His heart already, it seems, had learned to find its best sympathy among those who, having tried this life, found it unable to fulfil its early promises. He went to the stage as another man goes to another business—to make money for present uses and to lay up for those of his advanced age. Finding that there was more money in running the theatre than acting upon its boards, he took that business. Examining the plays that were offered, whenever he bought, his experienced sagacity detected what should be subtracted, what added. When, for want of those sufficiently suited to his purposes, he undertook to write them throughout, his genius, so all-sided, found soon how to intermingle the serious with the gay as he had seen them intermingled in the habitual intercourse of daily life. Like all great minds, he had, what Goethe properly styles *reverence* for man-

kind, for superiors, for equals, for inferiors. He respected men sufficiently to know that they could be raised by discreet means to appreciate humor that was delicate as well as what was rough and broad. The world was a stage: let the stage be the world. Not all who go to festive scenes are gay, nor all at funerals subdued with sadness. On the contrary, such is the constitution of the human heart that some seriousness renders more enjoyable a season of gayety, while often on solemn occasions irresistible is the impulse to smile at the sudden occurence of ludicrous accidents. How inexpressibly sad the death of *Ophelia*; yet who but kindred and lovers can forbear to laugh at the chattings of the diggers of her grave? Just as men are most fond to do what is forbidden, so are they most prone to seek, as relief from a surfeit of grief, something that comes from the sportive. Wise, therefore, and benignant is he who provides such relief, and of a kind that will elevate instead of degrading.

To such a mind as Shakespeare, we do not doubt, such as *Gammer Gurton's Nedle* were unmixedly disgusting. All remember the touching melancholy of that complaint, in one of his sonnets, against

> "The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
> That did not better for my life provide
> Than public means which public manners breeds."

The rougher things in his plays are doubtless attributable to the exactions of an age behind his own aspirations—exactions more powerful because of the examples in the houses of kings and courtiers. The manager of a theatre, he must provide whatever is demanded; but, if only occasionally and by degrees, he will lead his audiences to something higher than they have seen, and educate them to its appreciation by making it ineffably beautiful. He will give the rude jest when he must; but whenever it is possible he will substitute the delicate mirth of genteelness, and thus give tone to a reasonable mean between the tragic and the farcical. How merely fanciful are most of his comedies! For as yet the comedy of intrigue was little developed. It was plain to see that it was a serious, even a sad, mind that, in spite of all this exquisite sportiveness, saw beyond it into the melancholy that was yet more exquisite, and felt that that was the role in which was to be done its greatest work.

Let us look at *Twelfth Night*. How fanciful this play! Yet for this we have an apology in its first words, the sweetness of which none but the very coarsest could fail to enjoy:

> "If music be the food of love, play on;
> Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
> The appetite may sicken, and so die.
> That strain again! it had a dying fall:
> O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,

That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor. Enough; no more:
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before;
O spirit of love! how great and fresh art thou,
That, notwithstanding thy capacity
Receiveth as the sea, naught enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soe'er,
But falls into abatement and low price,
Even in a minute: so full of shapes is fancy
That it alone is high-fantastical."

These are the words of the duke, who, for the time, is in love with *Olivia*, who will not hear of love until her mourning be over for the death of her brother. What contrast between such words and thoughts and those when *Cesario*, his confidant, proves to be *Viola* in disguise! Imperiously, but with sweetest airiness, does fancy play amid the affections of all the leading characters. *Viola* takes the disguise of a boy. *Olivia* becomes enraptured with this boy and will not listen to the duke. *Viola* finds herself in love with the duke, who, when he ascertains her sex, retires from *Olivia* and thinks he has never loved before. The reappearance of *Sebastian*, *Viola's* brother, more than compensates *Olivia* for her disappointment, and the endings seem like the realization of those fond dreams in which the young of both sexes indulge on the dreamy season of *Twelfth Night*.

Amidst all this play and interplaying of the serious and the gently sportive what glorious fun there is in the talks of Sir *Toby Belch* and *Aguecheek*, the

clown, *Maria* and *Malvolio!* Entertainment there for all—boxes, dress-circle, pit and gallery—polite ears and vulgar. Some of the words for all are to become immortal, some for the poet to dream about and seek in vain to imitate, and some for the costermonger to recall over his pipe and mug of ale, and roar at the recital.

The thoughts we are presenting are well illustrated again in *As You Like It.* There is genuine grief in the exile of the banished duke, and genuine remorse in the tyrant, his brother. Between them and the lowest characters comes in *Jaques*, in whom the elements of seriousness and sport are so blended as to leave us in doubt what manner of man the author meant he should be regarded. When we hear him moralizing on the seven stages of human life we feel that Socrates nor Plato could have talked more wisely. When we hear his reflections

"Under an oak whose antique root peeps out."

and his "smiles" upon a wounded stag, we are touched with tenderness. When we see his ambition for a "motley fool," and hear him say,

"I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation, nor the musician's, which is fantastical, nor the courtier's, which is proud, nor the soldier's, which is ambitous, nor the lawyer's, which is politic, nor the lady's, which is nice, nor the lover's, which is all these: but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness,"

we feel, what exquisite characterization! How immense the gap between this and the classical drama! Subtle, yet natural; like many a man of culture who, partly in imagination, partly in reality, wearied with superabundance of books and courts and travel, indulges in thoughts ever shifting between the earnest and the jocose, claiming to sadness, but a sadness all his own. In reading this play it is most pleasing to notice the stream of melancholy pervading it; losing itself here and there among such as *Touchstone* and *Aubrey*, and reappearing among the gifted, giving tone and adding sweetness to the abounding humor that allows a mind tired of business, or seeking relief from the pain of recent witness of tragic scenes, to sport as it pleases, to laugh aloud or smile archly, and sometimes, if so disposed, to sigh, yet not with pain.

Whenever we read *Midsummer Night's Dream* we wonder anew that one, at the very time of the creation of such as *Bottom*, and *Snug*, and *Flute*, and their likes, could have created such as *Oberon* and *Titania*. In this most poetical of human productions, Shakespeare, persistent to his purpose to let the stage picture human life, represented it not only as it is when we are awake, but while we sleep and are dreaming of things impossible. A midsummer night's dream when the night is brief, the

woods and meadows serene and silent, inviting not only to sleep but to dreams!

Wise, benignant is the king, *Theseus*, a royal lover, on the eve of marriage with the queen of the Amazons: noble words to his espoused, to *Hermia* and the rest of his court; wise words as he discusses the lunatic, the lover, and the poet.* But what we notice more especially at this time is the interlude of the Dream, the waywardness of the fairies in sporting with these high-born men and women and among themselves. It is a poor, dull mind that does not sometimes dream beautiful dreams. Who has not sometimes dreamed of having been endowed with gifts of most excellent greatness; of being admitted within the inner places of all that is most fair and lovely, and discoursing as with the tongue of an angel? Yet if one could reproduce such a vision it might not surpass this in which we hear language, such as no other human tongue could have uttered, sounding upon the ear as if in very deed it had been whispered to the poet by the gentle spirits which he had invoked.

And then to awake and find it has all been a dream! What shall we do next? Shut our eyes and bring back the airy, sweet visions? Ah! no. They will not come again to-night; perhaps, in such ineffable beauty, never more. What shall we do, then,

*Act v. Scene 1.

after having been to the highest heights? Why, we must even see what fancy may have put into the heads of clowns. The courtiers tell the monarch what these poor fellows have prepared to contribute to the celebration of the approaching nuptials, and and they advise him that it

"It is nothing, nothing in the world."

Even the gracious *Hippolyta* begs

"Not to see wretchedness o'ercharged."

But a wise king values too much the faithful service of his lowest subjects to find fault with the rude terms in which it is expressed. Thus he speaks to his bride:

"I will hear that play;
For never anything can be amiss
When simpleness and duty tender it.
* * * * * * * *
The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Our sport shall be to take what they mistake:
And what poor duty cannot do,
Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.
Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,
And in conclusion dumbly have broke off,
Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome;
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much as from the ratling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity
In least speak most, to my capacity."

We are glad the good king did not refuse the rendition of *Pyramus and Thisbe*. Irresistibly funny as it is, when it threatens to become tiresome he has the discretion to limit the players to a Bergomask dance, omitting the epilogue.

Such was the device, a great, broad joke, full of absurdities and incongruities, with which this wisest, most generous, most humane of poets let down from the contemplation of the fanciful and the impossible.

But it is *The Merchant of Venice* wherein is to be seen the most delicate intermingling of the earnest with the different shades of humor, from the broadest upward and upward, refining and refining until it grows into sadness and even approximates the tragic.

Already had the Hebrew been made famous in the drama by Marlowe. But *Barabbas* had been drawn, in accordance with legends of too credulous times, reciting enormities practised in secret by the Jews upon Christian peoples. *Barabbas*, therefore, was a monster. Now, it comported not with the nature of Shakespeare to represent a character so monstrously, incredibly cruel and vindictive. For the purposes of his comedy he sought to represent the Jew what ages of various fortune had made him. In *Shylock* we see something of what has been wrought through immemorial persecution. But Shakespeare, who was too great to despise anything

which God has made in his image, while he allows the thoughtless to laugh, leads the thoughtful to pity this man not only for his misfortunes, but for his wish for revenge, attributing this in part to influence of generations of outrages, and in part to the causeless insultings of the merchant-prince who was known to have especial hate for the "sacred nation," and, who

"There where merchants most do congregate,"

had often railed upon this especial Jew. Even in the act of borrowing the money upon the fatal bond there are insults that a man with the blood of a true man would find difficult to endure:

"SHY. Signor Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well, then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say,
'Shylock, we would have moneys:' you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say
'Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this:
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurned me such a day; another time
You call me dog; and for these courtesies,

I'd lend you thus much moneys?'
"ANT. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends (for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?)
But lend it rather to thine enemy."

Now, when a man has to take such as this, we expect him, whether Jew or Gentile, to try to find something adequate to give in return. The poet most adroitly throws in other things to subdue the ruthless insistence of the penalty of the forfeited bond. The Jew loses from his house, his heart, the faith of his fathers, his only child, *Jessica*, only pledge of the beloved, departed *Leah*. The groundlings shout at the exploit of the bold *Lorenzo*, and hoot at the dog of a Jew as he curses in vain, and all, except *Launcelot Gobbo*, rejoice that another is added to the true faith. But the generous consider how piteous is the desolation of the parent's heart when his only loved, his fully trusted, has robbed him, fled from him, and been joined with the persecutors of his race. Yet we are spared the pain of resentment against this filial impiety partly by her conversion to Christianity, but mostly by the childish simplicity which keeps her from comprehending the depth of the sorrow into which the father has been plunged by her elopement. The most stringent adherent for the claims of parental control might relent to some degree while listening to

her childlike talks with *Gobbo*, and seeing her afterwards yielding to the sweet influences of song when she, so newly married, says:

"I am never merry when I hear sweet music."

These preliminary things help to subdue our scorn for the creditor's claim. The most indignant hearer may attempt, but will attempt in vain, to answer quite successfully his arguments drawn from the analogies of the treatment of his own nation of what should be a Christian's sufferance by Christian example. It is such as these that, while the dramatist approximated the pathos of tragedy, served to keep him on the hither side, and thus create that delicious, delicate enjoyment when, being upon the verge of weeping, one experiences the sudden relief of gentle laughter. Here was the subtlest essence of high comedy.

But the groundlings must have the unmixed. Though they have laughed at the tortures of the Jew, yet it was not the laugh of heartiness and of health. For this the author provided the good *Gobbo*, or good *Launcelot*, or good *Launcelot Gobbo*. What an invention! Unique in the history of comic literature this compound of earnestness and fun, of conscientiousness and knavery. He cannot be convinced that *Jessica's* conversion is a matter for congratulation, not even on moral grounds:

"Yes, truly," says he to her after the marriage—"yes, truly; for,

look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are damn'd."

Nor on economical:

"JESSICA. I shall be saved by my husband: he hath made me a Christian.

"LAUN. The more to blame he. We were Christians enow before; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money."

Here is the most ludicrous of all those curious characters who, having

> "Planted in their memory
> An army of good words,"
>
> "for a tricksy word
> Defy the matter."

This is the extreme of the humor of this play. As for the means, it is pleasing to study how they play between, lifting from *Gobbo* to *Nerissa*, and thence to *Jessica* and *Lorenzo*, and thence to *Portia* and *Bassanio*. Shakespeare has been often praised for the compliment he paid to the female sex in the creation of *Portia*. A rich orphan, to whom, perhaps of all women, the choice of a husband is most difficult and dangerous, her conduct in the midst of the suits that are paid to her is the very perfection of high-born ladyship. What wit and what wisdom have come to this beautiful heiress! How well she understands, and how playfully, talking with her maid, she cuts into pieces the *Neapolitan prince*, the

County Palatine, Monsieur Le Bon, Falconbridge, the *Scottish* lord, the *Duke of Saxony's* nephew! (Act i. scene ii.) In the treatment of the princes of *Arragon and Morocco*, men of real worth and serious, honorable purpose, her deportment is our best ideal of that which a true gentlewoman employs in the presence of a gentleman upon whom, though not unworthy of her love, it is not possible to bestow it. When *Bassanio* appears and wins the prize we may search through all romance in vain for a subdual so complete, so frank, so delicate, so ineffably sweet.

> "You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
> Such as I am: though for myself alone
> I would not be ambitious in my wish,
> To wish myself much better; yet, for you
> I would be trebled twenty times myself;
> A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich;
> That only to stand high in your account,
> I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
> Exceed account; but the full sum of me
> Is sum of nothing; which, to term in gross,
> Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised;
> Happy in this, she is not yet so old
> But she may learn; happier than this,
> She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
> Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
> Commits itself to yours to be directed,
> As from her lord, her governor, her king.
> Myself and what is mine to you and yours
> Is now converted; but now I was the lord
> Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
> Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
> This house, these servants, and this same myself
> Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring."

Amid the first transports of the accepted lover news comes of the forfeiture of the bond of *Antonio*. At once is seen how orphanage, leaving her to the care of herself, has developed beyond the time her discretion, her sense of gratitude and justice and honor. Not a moment's delay will she allow to *Bassanio*, whom she urges to fly to the comfort and rescue of the friend who suffers in his behalf—a fitting preparation for the difficult part which is to be happy in its ending. Such is the felicitous blending of the numerous colorings and shadings of sportiveness which have made *The Merchant of Venice* the greatest of the comedies.

A few words about *Sir John Falstaff* will end this article. In the view we have been taking of Shakespeare we can find apt and touching illustration even in old Sir John, in the thread of seriousness which, beginning though late, runs along in that great web of humor, and finally absorbs the end that, all tangled, is torn from the loom of his life. Amidst all the fun in Act i. Scene ii., ("King Henry IV.," Part II.) there is a touching sadness in the talk with the little page whom, out of the drollery of a contrast with his gigantic stature, the prince has assigned to him:

"FAL. Sirrah, you giant, what says the doctor to my case?

"PAGE. He said, sir, the party that owed it might have more diseases than he knew for.

"FAL. Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me. The brain of

this compounded clay, man, is not able to invent anything that tends to laughter, more than I invent or is invented on me," etc.

This sense of humiliation and approaching friendlessness and abandonment exhibits itself at sundry times. The bold words he employs, the rude jests, show occasionally that he understands that his wit and humor are his only capital, and that he supects that they will not last him to the end. It is really melancholy to witness his last attempt to hold to the prince who is now king, and hear his talk with *Shallow*, his creditor, after the heartless repulse, avowing his assurance that His Majesty has snubbed him in public merely for the sake of appearances, and that he will surely send for him in private. All the things occurring henceforth in rapid succession draw us with genuine pity to him who has been so ruthlessly and shamelessly forsaken. The sudden reformation of the youngster of a king with the new-born, intemperate zeal of fresh reformers generally; the poor spite of the chief-justice, who, when he has an opportunity, returns and inflicts a punishment greater than was required, and all because *Sir John* had been witness of his own humiliation—all these lead us to feel, for the time being, that the old knight, so ill-treated, is worth more than the king and the chief-justice put together. These last words to the latter, "My lord, my lord," are piteous in the extreme. But the dignitary passed on, and the appeal was

not uttered or was unheard. The career of the knight was over. A mere jester, a man without heart, might have lived on. Yet even to those more vulgar companions, *Hostess* and *Pistol*, *Nym* and *Bardolph*, when they hear that he is sick, they know that he is sick unto death.

"NYM. The king hath run bad humors on the knight; that's the even of it.

"PISTOL. Nym, thou hast spoke the right; his heart is fracted and corroborate.

"NYM. The king is a good king; but it must be as it may; he passes some humors and careers."

And the *Hostess* tells of his playing with flowers, and babbling of green fields, and calling upon the name of God; and *Bardolph* wishes he might be with him in Arthur's bosom, whither the good woman has consigned him "an it had been any Christom child;" and *Pistol's* manly heart, yearning the while, exhorts *Bardolph* to be blithe, and *Nym* to rouse his vaunting veins, and they all know that the matter with *Sir John* was, "the king killed his heart." We may make our pocket-handkerchiefs wet with laughter over such condolence of these droll "lambkins." And so we laugh sometimes at the poor verses of "his aunty" or "his grandma," following announcements in the morning papers of the death of "a child." But both are the best evidences that such uncultured hearts believe they can give of the sadness they feel, and their most fitting tribute to the dead.

SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGIC LOVERS.

THOSE who are familiar with Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* remember the prophecy which, while writhing with anguish at the death of her lover from the tusk of the wild boar, the goddess pronounced upon human loves. Beginning thus:

> "Since thou art dead, lo here I prophesy,"

it ends with the curse:

> "Sith in his prime death doth my love destroy,
> They that love best their loves shall not enjoy."

Let us consider how, mindful of these words, the poet through whose mouth they were uttered, treated of this passion in its extremest misfortune during the periods of youth, middle-life, and old age, the ardent unthoughtful loves of *Romeo and Juliet*, the conjugal of *Othello*, and last of all, the parental of *King Lear*.

Shakespeare was now past his own youth, and his native seriousness, deepened by accidents whose nature and influence have never been made well known, was bound to predominate in the representations which thenceforth he was to make of human life. What had been in his boyhood, and

what now was in his married experience to intensify the melancholy of his being, if any of his contemporaries knew, they did not transmit. Yet whoever has reflected upon what little is known of his personal history, if he has ever been in that yet respectable looking house on a prominent street of Strattord-on-Avon, and afterwards wandered across the fields to the village of Shottery, and gone inside the low-roof, thatched cottage wherein, when a lad of eighteen, he was married to a girl his senior by many years, must again speculate upon those Sonnets whose complainings, never understood, are the saddest, most piteous to be found in all uninspired writing.

Heretofore in his business as a manager of theatres he had worked mainly on the sportive side of his profession and had excited merriment of every degree from the jestings of clowns and wenches to the sallies of the highborn and cultured. Yet, with a humanity above all former comic writers and a delicacy far beyond the age in which he lived, he had paid respect to human nature in every condition of its existence. And now when, though but seven-and-twenty, he had been a married man ten years, he essayed to let the world witness the fulfillment of the prophecy, learn what was meant by the budding and the blasting of love, its unjust suspectings, its foolish trustings, its wretched inequali-

ties, all those elements which pitilessly tend to dissensions and discontents of every sort that

"Make the young old, the old become a child"

and eventuate in inevitable ruin.

The circumstances attending the inception of the loves of Romeo and Juliet were such as to render them eager, rapid, absorbing, irresistible, and therefore doomed inevitably to result in disaster. We are not told of the causes which led to the hostility between their families. For the purposes of the poet it was sufficient that they existed, and that they were old, so old indeed that by this time the wrongs and the revenges of both might be regarded as about equal. In accordance with the demands of destiny, the time came for these to have an end, and that by the sacrifice of innocent blood. This boy of the Montagues, and this girl of the Capulets, too young to have any of the hereditary hatred of their houses, each fashioned in perfect kind for the spring of sudden, passionate love, become involved the more quickly and inextricably because of the difficulties and the dangers. It was consummate art to make Romeo fall in love first with Rosaline. For in the manners of a boy suffering with his first passion there is something ridiculous; but such experience sometimes leads to a refinement that is captivating. This brief adventure was fitly preliminary to the instantaneous recognition of the

superior charms of another maid, and a learning of the courtly arts by which to make it known and sue for reciprocation of the feeling which it had inspired. The same art was exhibited in representing Juliet until now without love's experience, and therefore without strength to resist its first assault.

Yet, young as both are, they recognize the peril. Even before the masquerade which Romeo consented to attend with Benvolio and Mercutio, his

> "Mind misgives
> Some consequence yet hanging in the stars
> Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
> With this night's revels, and expire the term
> Of a despised life."

So, Juliet, appalled to find her lover to be a Montague, instantaneously springs into womanhood, and muses thus:

> "My only love sprung from my only hate!
> Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
> Prodigious birth it is of love to me,
> That I must love a loathed enemy."

Yet such a love finds not an end in such discouraging circumstances. There is no courage greater than that of love when it is young and innocent. The hereditary hatred in their families had served only to intensify their infatuation. The ardor of the boy, his recklessness of danger, his mad pursuit of this girl of fourteen years, into whose mind, on the morning of that very day, thoughts of marriage for the first time have been put by her own parents,

these were as irresistible as any thing in the careers of Oedipus or Orestes. The poet took both at the spring of the want that attracts to each other man and woman, and in a situation of extremest peril, and in order to exhibit the recklessness of youth when the prospect of possession by each of the other, though unlicensed, seems to them to make nugatory all preliminary dangers and compensate for all possible future disasters. What a courtship was on that starry night, as the girl with the first consciousness of the love of a man, stood in the window of her chamber, while her lover, unseen, stood in the garden below.

On the side of his mother, Mary Arden, Shakespeare had gentle blood, and his inheritance of gentility had been made manifest in several of his creations. So it appears in the exquisite delicacy of this young girl's behavior in the midst of her uncontrollable feeling. The struggle between the frank avowal of a love that could not be repressed nor concealed, with the fear of being regarded too soon and too easily won, makes a case which not only the young, but those who have long outlived the times of similar experiences are ever fond to contemplate.

> "Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,
> Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek
> For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
> Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny

What I have spoke; but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say, "Ay,"
And I will take thy word; yet, if thou swear'st,
Thou may'st prove false; at lovers perjuries
They say, Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay.
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,
And therefore thou may'st think my 'havior light:
But, trust me, gentlemen, I'll prove more true
Than those that have more cunning to be strange:
I should have been more strange, I must confess,
But that thou o'erheard'st ere I was ware
My true love's passion; therefore pardon me,
And not impute this yielding to light love
Which the dark night hath so discovered."

How touching in these words, the maidenly remonstrance and the pleading in hindering a judgment which, in the exquisite bashfulness of virtue, she fears that she may have deserved! After protesting against all oaths, except "by thy gracious self" and briefly, solemnly dwelling upon the suddenness of their mutual feeling, she dismissed him with this prayer:

"Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart as that within my breast."

Then we know that consuming as the passion is in that young breast, it is kept subordinate to what every woman, if a gentlewoman, feels that she must recognize as entitled to a more earnest devotion and a more faithful service. For no man, more clearly than Shakespeare ever understood that the

joys of love, even those of briefest, most passionate continunance, were not worth the having unless licensed by the laws of God and of men.

Such a union, coming in such conditions, must have a brief season. Swiftly, tumultuously it came on, and as tumultuously came the end. Yet in that brief season the feuds of those two great families, in accordance with the silent pronouncement of Nemesis, were obliterated by the coalescence and the sacrifice of these innocent young spirits. The Muse of Tragedy must have her costly sacrifice, and the young bridegroom and his bride, like the children of the Argive mother, meet their happiest destiny in lying down to sleep to wake no more. The grief, the agonizing anguish were with the survivors.

In the deaths of Romeo and Juliet it is made appear that the justice which is infinite was satisfied for the wrong-doings of those of whom they were the last and only innocent representatives. It is pitiful, but it is instructive, to see those old men, hereditary enemies, take each other by the hand across these graves, and wail and endeavor to console each for his own and the other's dead. Montague raises a statue of pure gold to the daughter of Capulet, and Capulet a similar to the son of Montague. Costly as they are they seem to them both, and are admitted to be,

"Poor sacrifices of our enmity."

The lesson is the blessedness to the innocent in being allowed to expiate the wrong-doings of the guilty, leaving the guilty to reflect upon what a thing it is to them, when for those wrong-doings, the innocent are sacrificed.

More widely different could not be the loves just considered from those of Othello and Desdemona. It is difficult to fix a limit to our admiration for the artist who represented in such varying phases "first and passionate love," and that of mature manhood. Not like the instantaneous infatuation of *Romeo* and *Juliet*, the loves of *Othello* and *Desdemona* were of deliberate, almost studied development. An inmate of the house of *Brabantio*, entertained therein partly from admiration of his brilliant achievements, perhaps mostly from thoughts of the interest which such condescension on the part of a powerful lord excited among the common people, the Moor was wont to speak, after invitation thereto, of his adventures on land and sea, without suspicion on anybody's part that any uncommon sentiment was to spring between him and the daughter of his host. Unlike Juliet, who, at the first consciousness of sex, was made captive of manly beauty and gracefulness, *Desdemona*, after some lapse of time, found that her heart's affections were following in the train of admiration for

this middle-aged hero, and then, herself yet young, without experience of any sort except home existence, became his wife. An alliance apparently so unnatural, the father, supported by the common sentiment of Venice, attributed to magic until his daughter's disavowal when, overwhelmed with disgust as well as disappointment, he withdrew his prosecution, surrendered her to the fortune which she had selected, and turned his back upon her forever. It was an ill-starred marriage. Although a hero, the Moor was of a despised race. In such a case, no degree of individual merit can satisfy old family pride or the demands of aristocratic society. Amidst all of the admiration for this especial Moor, it had never been dreamed that he would aspire to ally himself with a leading family of this fairest of Italian cities, the Bride of the Sea. The woman was yet too young to have imbibed very much of this pride of family and society, and doubtless she had become disgusted with the manikins who abounded in the circle to which she had been accustomed. Therefore, unconsciously and irresistibly she was drawn to this barbarian, who, despite his advanced age and tawny color, seemed to the eyes of a thoughtful young woman of more worth than all of those whose only merits were that they were of the best blood of Venice, and could show the images of ancestors, rich and illustrious.

Now it is not allowed to appear that Desdemona had been won solely by recitals of great deeds; but it is shown that in and about Othello were some things besides the record of heroic actions and sufferings which had power to attract from woman however highly born and connected, not only admiration, but love. He was not only a scarred warrior, but, after his kind, a gentleman. It does not appear that he had so informed Desdemona: for your true gentleman does not talk of his ancestry, especially while in pursuit of ends that are as delicate as desirable. Yet, he was of the best blood of his race, and therefore he could not have been without some of those graces which in one form and another accompany the walk and conversation of the well-born of every race. It was not, therefore, a love like that of Pasiphae for the bull, or of Leda for the Swan, that won this fair Christian girl to a descendant of Ishmael, but it was such a love as a brave, gallant man may excite in a woman who has been looking out for better examples than she had been able to find among her set in social life. That was a touching evidence of the dignity becoming gentlemen everywhere, when, in discoursing with Iago on the opposition to his alliance, he said

> "'Tis yet to know—
> Which, when I know that boasting is an honor,
> I shall promulgate—I fetch my life and being
> From men of royal siege, and my demerits

> May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
> As this that I have reached; for know, Iago,
> But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
> I would not my unhoused free condition
> Put into circumscription and confine
> For the Sea's worth."

It is the modestest, and the saddest, yet it is also the manfulest assertion of self-respect that is to be found in literature. It ought not to surprise very much that a man who could speak thus on such a theme would draw to him a young woman like Desdemona, who, as he felt, in consenting to become his wife had made no social or family condescension, nor had lifted him to a connection higher than that in which he had been born. Yet, to the Venetians this warrior with the record of a thousand exploits such as the young men of Venice, even of the best families, were incapable of performing was, at last, only a Moor. If this girl had been older and more addicted to society, doubtless she might have been influenced by prejudices regarded by society salutary to the preservation of its exclusiveness; for such society assumes to feel that it is better to be destroyed utterly than admit willingly one drop of contamination. As it was, because she could not do otherwise, she yielded to the charm which came with such natural, generous, lordly approach, and bestowed her whole self upon the brave, weather-beaten, almost aged warrior. It was a marriage, I repeat, not under propitious stars.

It was without parental blessing which it is always dangerous to forego. The poet, with delicate foresight of tragic results took away this auspice so benign to nuptial solemnization. The young virgin went forth from her father's house without his benison, and was joined with a man of a foreign race.

> "Declined
> Into the vale of years,"

of a race not only regarded by her own as its inferior, but one prone to jealousy of its women, which of all the enemies of conjugal prosperity, is the most malignant and dangerous.

Yet, if no disturber come between, with such loftiness of soul in one, and such single devotedness in the other, their wedded life may be safe in its felicity, and friends of both might hope to see how the softening influences of the accomplished Venetian woman will subdue in time whatever is too barbaric in the being of this descendant of the Kings of the Desert.

One of the most consummate of the creatures of the imagination is *Iago*. Drawing a man the most abjectly evil of his kind, the artist, at an early stage in his work, seemed to feel that he must apologize for human nature in the person of this, its worst representative, by a semblance of something tending to show that villany so diabolic could not have been perpetrated without at least some suspicion of

provocation. *Iago*, a married man himself, husband of a woman of a levity unbecoming a wife, had already learned to hate the Moor with the hatred that a mean spirit feels for the good and the gifted. Yet we are spared the greatest rudeness of the shock, and we are permitted to retain our incredulity in the absolute diabolism of any human being by finding that this wretch has persuaded himself that, as a husband, he has against the Moor, some occasion of resentment, or of possible resentment, a possibility springing mainly from the consciousness of his own limitless inferiority, but which, with a spirit so abjectly vile, is as effectual as proof most positive in raising and fomenting the spirit of revenge.

And now if ever "the guilty goddess of harmful deeds" followed a course of conjugal life with a pursuit insatiate in pitilessness, it was this. For the extremest demands of tragedy there must be in the beginning the existence or the appearance of perfect fidelity. On the part of the wife, added to an all absorbing love of her husband, a love won by the manfulness of his spirit without help from adventitious accidents, as youth, beauty, and social connections, there was the innocence which in its own pure sweet atmosphere, knew not and believed not either of enmity or other form of evil elsewhere. One a hundred times over may read the

talk between her and Emilia on the night of the murder, and he will admire more and more the artist who thus could paint a mortal woman, and while keeping her mortal to the last, make her so like the celestial. Surely conjugal purity was never set forth in such excellent beauty. Her very ignorance and unbelief of evil are what have made her so liable to be betrayed and destroyed.

> "Dost thou in conscience think—tell me Emilia—
> That there be women do abuse their husbands
> In such gross kind?"

The lower woman, the woman of the world, has to admit that there are exceptional instances, that all women are not like the spotless who thus interrogates. Yet she would not believe such things to be possible with any. This innocence, this ignorance, this incredulity hindered her, until too late, from discovering what has so perplexed and estranged her husband; and when she has discovered, instead of indulging in resentment for the wrong done to her, a wrong, in her imagination, so foul, that the poorest and most abject of women are incapable of deserving it—she only utters one sorrowful appeal in behalf of all her sex, and makes them partners and companions in her grief when she cries,

> "Oh these men, these men!"

In this cry there is piteous utterance of the belief that but for the overpowering seducings of man

there is no woman who would not be clean.

Yet the outrage subtracts not from her conjugal affection. She who might have cursed, kneeled to beseech.

> "Alas, Iago!
> Good friend, go to him.
> Here I kneel:
> If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
> Either in discourse of thought or actual deed,
> Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense
> Delighted them in any other form,
> Or that I do not and ever did,
> And ever will—though he do shake me off
> To beggarly divorcement—love him dearly,
> Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much:
> And his unkindness may defeat my life,
> But never taint my love."

So, true to the honorable behests of her last condition she gave instructions that her body shall be wrapped, not in her virgin, but her bridal robes, so that such witness, fragile, unsubstantial, mute though it be, of the loyalty that was unrecognized and outraged in life, may accompany her into the grave.

Yet the deepest compassion in this drama is not for the sufferings of Desdemona. In the death of the innocent, even when wrought by violence, the sorrow we feel is subdued, I might almost say, sweetened by recollection of what was its most excellent beauty, and by our thoughts, that instead of being destroyed, it has been translated to an estate more fit for its abode. The tenderest wish which we can make for sinlessness when persecuted, is that

its sufferings may be not long protracted, but that it may be allowed soon to fly away to its native Heaven. There is something we know not what, in the quick death of the innocent, which, instead of repelling, attracts us, we know not how. Our minds associate them with those who attained martyrdom which we are taught to regard the supremest of earthly felicities. So we thought of Virginia, whom her father's knife saved from the Decemvir's outrage. So of Agnes, with Thecla sharing, after the Virgin Immaculate, the chiefest distinction of purity: so of Cecilia, the blind custodian of the Catacombs: so of Philomena, martyr of the Tiber, whose turbid waves bore up her fair chaste body, as, with a light above its forehead, it glided along down to the sea. The very silence and apparent painlessness in the deaths of the young and harmless will not admit the anguishing sympathy which we feel when the experienced, the strong, the valiant, the violent are overcome. The birdling opens its tiny beak, and chirrups before the robber as blithe and as pleading as when its parent has returned to the nest, and it dies without a quaver and without even a fluttering of its young wings. Not so the eagle, experienced in warfare, rapine, and slaughter, who, when met with his conqueror, battles to the last, both when aloft and when prostrate, and death finds him rolling his fiery, unvanquished eyes, and thrusting with

his talons. Such an ending we witness with tumultuous sympathy, and our very hair stands on an end before the last, heroic, desperate struggle of one so brave.

So in silence and not in overpowering grief we take the clean body of this young bride, and lay it in the tomb. Then we turn to contemplate the survivor! The poet, who well understood these varying influences, claimed our deepest sympathy for the greatest sufferer; and herein he surpassed not only all other artists, but himself, and then, going back to Stratford, he wrote no more.

Let us briefly study the situation of Othello. He had not formally wooed Desdemona. A foreigner, of a despised race, no longer young, never having studied nor desired to learn the arts that specially please women, he found himself, unexpectedly to himself, beloved of a young woman of one of the first families in Venice, and soon thereafter became her husband. If she had been wise as she was virtuous and fond, she would have been able to understand and thwart the machinations of her own and her husband's enemy. In the absence of all prudential preventives, the inequalities of that union inevitably recurring to his own mind, aided by exterior insidious suggestion, began to frighten him. To a great, brave spirit fear is the most anguishing of emotions because most incompatible with what has

made such a spirit what it is, and hitherto has been its most animating incentive. It thrills us to witness the struggles of a generous and naturally unsuspecting man with a subtle enemy on a field whereon it has had no experience yet on which are things to fight for that are a thousand fold more dear than all those for which the battles of a score of years have been fought and won elsewhere. How that grand spirit writhed with the sense of incompetency for the exigencies of this new warfare, when it must condescend to appeal from the injustice of their having been devolved upon him! How unlike a brave man, how pitiful these words,

> "Haply, for I am black,
> And have not those soft parts of conversation
> That chamberers have, or for I am declined
> Into the vale of years."

Herein was a momentary humiliation, a shame-faced self-contemning like that of a lion when involved in the toils that came invisible as they were innumerable. Yet how noble the struggle for recovery, when, his native courage recovering its poise, he sought to console himself by comparing his own with the misfortunes common to the great

> "Yet, 'tis the plague of great ones;
> Prerogatived are they less than the base:
> 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death!"

Pathetic almost beyond degree it is to see this struggle in the bosom of a hero, and his conscious

loss of manhood with the loss of domestic honor. When he has bidden farewell to

> "The plumed troop and the big wars,
> The neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
> The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
> The royal banner and all quality,
> Praise, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,"

we know that he feels that this last defeat has undone all the achievements of a career unrivalled in glory, and has remanded him to the lowest of the barbarians among whom he sprang. Henceforth the strife was most feeble and most vain. The vanquished hero shorn of his glory, descended to the level of the basest, most cowardly. Yet, to my thinking, in all dramatic literature there is nothing more pathetic than that last effort to rebound once more and undo whatever was possible, when, after one brief humble appeal for commutations of men's opinions by recital, not of the vast historic services which he had rendered to the commerce of the merchant princes of Europe, he told of a single private action:

> "In Aleppo once
> When a malignant and a turban'd Turk
> Beat a Venetian and traduced the State,
> I took by the throat the circumcised dog
> And smote him—thus."

And now let us contemplate briefly in *King Lear*, that last stage when, having survived most of the passions which were contemporary with youth, man-

hood, and middle age, an old man leaned for support upon the young, whose dependence upon him had developed what perhaps is the most powerful of human loves. King Lear was the most notable exemplar of that class of aged men who in the overweening and always impossible desire to receive from their children as much affection as they bestow upon them, do violence to that tender relationship and become involved inextricably in mistakes and disasters. This is most natural and the most to be pitied of all the infirmities of old age. Whenever, as in the case of Lear, such wish becomes active, and a father seeks among his children for the purpose specially and avowedly of rewarding those who seem to him to satisfy that impossible standard, he is certain, from the very nature of things to make the most unfortunate choice. It was therefore not a mere fancy of Shakespeare nor of the old legend-gatherer from whom he borrowed the theme for his drama, that this father should reject from his heart and from share in his power such as *Cordelia* who, among his children, was the one who responded most dutifully to his affection. With such a man, who, as afterwards *Regan* said of him, had

"Ever but slenderly known himself,"

now lapsed into dotage, making the usual mistake of senility in conceiting that he is wiser than ever before, unless all of his children are true to him, one an-

other, and themselves, he is sure to become the victim of those who are not. The parent who makes such a choice, if it be accepted and ratified by the chosen, has made the worst choice possible because choosing at all in such conditions is wicked and unnatural.

If such things be true in ordinary families, how much more striking their truth in the houses of mighty kings when the prize of such a contest is investment with

> "Power,
> Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
> That troop with majesty."

For such a prize, when inheritance is not to devolve according to ascertained fixed order, rivalries for succession begin before the father has grown old. The ambitious who are evil-minded already have been studying the arts to be employed in possible contingencies, and parted from the filial piety which the aged value more than all earthly possessions, even though these be kingly crowns. Even in kingdoms that are hereditary, the reigning monarch is not often well loved by the heir-apparent, particularly when the former is thought to be living too long. Mournful it is in the lives of the aged, especially if the places which they fill are much to be desired, that those who are expecting to occupy sometimes, if only in secret, complain, that they

linger in them so long. Few things upon this earth are more to be compassionated than the fond vain yearnings of an old man for continuance in full of the loves which were inspired in his former time. It rends the heart to read, in that terrific satire of Swift, of the neglect, the friendlessness, the contemptibility of those few upon whom had been conferred the gift of earthly immortality. Ludicrous as was the fate of Tithonus, the lover of Aurora, to whom in her fondness she granted the request that he might not see death, yet to a thoughtful mind it is sad to contemplate him when, grown old, having survived all the contemporaries of his youth, lost in beauty, and strength, and capacity to love the things of earth, he prayed for the boon to be taken back, and the goddess, who could not comply, gave him in derision the metamorphose of a grasshopper. Poor old Wycherley, who had been in his youth a charmer of men and women by his graces and his powers in the comic drama, used to stand before his mirror, and shed tears for the decay of the beauty which had been the chiefest source of his pride. On the other hand, Zeno, founder of the Stoic School, hanged himself because, at the age of ninety-eight, his strength was insufficient to endure the pain, which, for sixty years he had taught to be no evil. It is interesting to read, in Cicero's *De Senectute*, of the domestic rule of Appius Claudius; but more

touching of the dread of Old Cato that, having survived Marcus, his best beloved, the time of his own departure to the blessed fields whither this son had gone, would be too late prolonged. He is the most blest representative of advanced age, in whom Heaven in its mercy, subdues love of the world, but tempers both the wish to remain and the longing to depart, whom, in the words of Goethe, it allows to be "unresting, unhasting, like a star." The saddest of all things in the lives of the superannuated, saddest for them *and* for the young, is that the poor remnant of what was once abundant sometimes has to be sold and purchased, and for a consideration more than the little all which the buyer has to give, but with which it is impossible for the seller to be satisfied.

These thoughts, it seems to me, and others far more profound, were in Shakespeare's mind while constructing this drama. The fond King Lear, weary, or imagining himself to be weary of empire, meaning to dispose his great Estate so that he may

"Unburden'd crawl toward death."

vainly hoping that he may avoid the general lot of kings, and be able to repose, during the remainder of his life upon the love and gratitude of at least some of his children, made his choice. Employing a standard, of all the one most illusory, he chose wrong. What followed the poet told in words which

make even the young grow pale to think what may befall the last days of the careers of even the greatest among mankind. None but a seer who was most profound in the knowledge of the human heart could thus have presented the various phases in that wretched decline. Yet, as in the case of Iago, whom he was both too humane and too wise to let be without some excuse for atrocities which otherwise would have appeared diabolical, and therefore incredible, so with these two daughters, *Regan* and *Goneril*, "the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them" was such as to be wholly inconsistent with their changed relations, thus making some foundation, insufficient as it was, for conduct not wholly inexcusable in its inception.

Goneril—"Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?"
Oswald—"Yes, madam."
Goneril—"By day and night he wrongs me; every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it:
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle."

The monarch had not considered that these daughters must have inherited some of the spirit which had made their father a ruler of mankind. Then, when he had laid aside the burdens of empire, he had not believed that therewith he was parting from control of all who were about him; for it had been stipulated that he was to retain,

"The name and all the additions of a king."

Vain as were such expectations, they were natural to a superannuated monarch, upon whom the ambitions of absolute autocracy had palled. The poet set down subsequent things in careful sequence in order to prepare for the fearful catastrophe of disappointment. What these were I need not recall first astonishment at the insults of Goneril, his indignant turning from her to Regan, his answer to the latter when she counselled him coldly to return to Goneril and acknowledge that he had wronged her, the sense of humiliation in entreating from his children the consideration due to his age and relationship; his prayer, instead of fighting with "women's weapons", to be "touched with noble anger"; his pitiful deprecation of madness, and that threat of vengeance that becomes the veriest embitterment of terror when his own instincts make sure that he will have power to fulfill it. Appalling is the energy with which the outraged father prosecuted his threat; his going forth into the pelting storm, baring his aged head to the blast, suffering of cold and hunger, all for the purpose of heaping up wrath upon the children who had dishonored him! Surely to no other man not inspired came in such measure as to this poet the gift to employ the language of grief and imprecation. Burning indeed were the words of Prometheus when to all the elements

he complained of the remorseless infliction of unmerited suffering. But even this passion consumed not as that of old Lear when his age was outraged by the chosen ones of his heart. When we heard his curses, we shrank aghast, because we know that heaven, next to disobedience to itself abhors the dishonor put upon a parent's head and we could foresee all the horror of the retribution.

The brief season of softness when he and the cast-out Cordelia have met in misfortune and reconciliation is as natural as it is exceeding sweet.

Cordelia—"Shall we not see these daughters, and these sisters?"
Lear— "No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage;
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: So we'll live,
And pray and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of Court news: and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;
And take upon's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies: and we'd wear out
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon."

In this ignoring of the very existence of his ingrates, is a terror yet more fearful than while the imprecations were pouring from his burning tongue. A brief season of sweetness, vain as an old man's dream of the returning of his youth, then, one more agony,—the death of Cordelia—and one more act of vengeful strength—the slaying of her assassin. It is grand to see in this revulsion momentary revi-

val of the mighty power which he had been wont to exert in the day of his prime. It was like the last act of Samson, who, when subdued and captive, summoned the remains of his giant strength, and, in his own ruin, overwhelmed his enemies.

Perhaps the most delicate and subtle tenderness in this drama is in that portion wherein are told the relations of Lear with his Fool. The Fool was an indispensable minister in ancient unlimited monarchies. He was needed to impart occasional relief from the surfeit that came from the constant servilities of the rest of mankind, and give temporary relaxation from the cares and the sense of unquestioned, secure domination. A despotic king, if only from caprice, must have sometimes a mimicry of the feeling of independence in a subject, yet, tolerating no earnest sort, he must adopt a fool and put upon him the cap and bells. Whenever such a king abdicates his crown, it is most natural for him to retain this appendage, which, of all, had least to do with the cares that made him weary. With what art the poet leads to the changes in the relations of these two! As the King declines, the Fool is exalted. A sort of wisdom, paroxysmal though it be, comes to the fool in the midst of this sudden, vast degradation. How do the jestings grow into petulant complainings, into semi-serious remonstration, into serious rebuking, into apt quoting of old

wise saws, until he becomes silent, and, like a dog, faithful to the last, is willing to die, and dies for his master. We could not have foreseen these changes. But when we saw, we recognized them as true to that strange companionship, and yet once again wonder at the universality of the genius which so well understood, and so faithfully portrayed these extremes in human conditions.

Sad histories these of human loves. From no period in man's life, youth, middle age, or old the unrelenting Queen will lift her malediction,

"They that love best, their loves shall not enjoy."