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*Yours very cordially,  
Julia Ward Howe.*

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# Is Polite Society Polite? And Other Essays

BY  
MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE



BOSTON & NEW YORK  
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1895

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## Preface

I REMEMBER that, quite late in the fifties, I mentioned to Theodore Parker the desire which I began to feel to give living expression to my thoughts, and to lend to my written words the interpretation of my voice.

Parker, who had taken a friendly interest in the publication of my first volumes, "Passion Flowers" and "Words for the Hour," gave his approval also to this new project of mine. "The great desire of the age," he said, "is for vocal expression. People are scarcely satisfied with the printed page alone: they crave for their instruction the living voice and the living presence."

At the time of which I write, no names of women were found in the lists of lecture courses. Lucy Stone had graduated from Oberlin, and was beginning to be known as an advocate of temperance, and as an antislavery speaker. Lucretia Mott had carried her eloquent pleading outside the limits of her Quaker belonging. Antoinette Brown Blackwell occupied the pulpit of a Congregational church, while Abby Kelly Foster and the Grimke Sisters stood forth as strenuous pleaders for the abolition of slavery. Of these ladies I knew little at the time of which I speak, and my studies and endeavors occupied a field remote from that in which they fought the good fight of faith. My thoughts ran upon the importance of a helpful philosophy of life, and my heart's desire was to assist the efforts of those who sought for this philosophy.

Gradually these wishes took shape in some essays, which I read to companies of invited friends. Somewhat later, I entered the lecture field, and journeyed hither and yon, as I was invited.

The papers collected in the present volume have been heard in many parts of our vast country. As is evident, they have been written for popular audiences, with a sense of the limitations which such audiences necessarily impose. With the burthen of increasing years, the freedom of locomotion naturally tends to diminish, and I must be thankful to be read where I have in other days been heard. I shall be glad indeed if it may be granted to these pages to carry the message which I myself have been glad to bear,—the message of the good hope of humanity, despite the faults and limitations of individuals.

That hope casts its light over the efforts of years that are past, and gilds for me, with ineffaceable glow, the future of our race.

The lecture, "Is Polite Society Polite?" was written for a course of lectures given some years ago by the New England Women's Club of Boston. "Greece Revisited" was first read before the

Town and Country Club of Newport, R.I. "Aristophanes" and "Dante and Beatrice" were written for the Summer School of Philosophy at Concord, Mass. "The Halfness of Nature" was first read before the Boston Radical Club. "The Salon in America" was written for the Contemporary Club in Philadelphia.

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## Is Polite Society Polite?

**W**HY do we ask this question? For reasons which I shall endeavor to make evident.

The life in great cities awakens a multitude of ambitions. Some people are very unscrupulous in following these ambitions, attaining their object either by open force and pushing, or by artful and cunning manœuvres. And so it will happen that in the society which considers itself entitled to rank above all other circles one may meet with people whose behavior is guided by no sincere and sufficient rule of conduct. Observing their shortcomings, we may stand still and ask, Are these people what they should be? Is polite society polite?

For this society, which is supposed to be nothing if not polite, does assume, in every place, to set up the standard of taste and to regulate the tone of manners. It aims to be what Hamlet once was in Ophelia's eyes—"the glass of fashion and the mould of form." Its forms and fashions change, of course, from age to age, and yet it is a steadfast institution in the development of human civilization.

I should be sorry to overstate its shortcomings, but I wish I might help it to feel its obligations and to fulfil them.

What shall we accept in the ordinary sense of men as politeness? Shall we consider it a mere surface polish—an attitude expressive of deference—corresponding to no inward grace of good feeling? Will you like to live with the person who, in the great world, can put on fine manners, but who, in the retirement of home, manifests the vulgarity of a selfish heart and an undisciplined temper?

No, you will say; give me for my daily companions those who always wear the best manners they have. For manners are not like clothes: you can mend them best when you have them on.

We may say at the outset that sincerity is the best foundation upon which to build the structure of a polite life. The affectation of deference does not impose upon people of mature experience. It carries its own contradiction with it. When I hear the soft voice, a little too soft, I look into the face to see whether the two agree. But I need scarcely do that. The voice itself tells the story, is sincere or insincere. Flattery is, in itself, an offence against politeness. It is oftenest administered to people who are already suffering the intoxication of vanity. When I see this, I wish that I could enforce a prohibitory ordinance against it, and prosecute those who use it mostly to serve their own selfish purposes. But people can be trained never to offer nor to receive this dangerous drug of flattery, and I think that, in all society which can be called good, it becomes less and less the mode to flavor one's dishes with it.

Having spoken of flattery, I am naturally led to say a word about its opposite, detraction.

The French have a witty proverb which says that "the absent are always in the wrong," and which means that the blame for what is amiss is usually thrown upon those who are not present to defend themselves. It seems to me that the rules of politeness are to be as carefully observed toward the absent as toward those in whose company we find ourselves. The fact that they cannot speak in their own defence is one which should appeal to our nicest sense of honor. Good breeding, or its reverse, is as much to be recognized in the way in which people speak of others as in the way in which they speak to them.

Have we not all felt the tone of society to be lowered by a low view of the conduct and motives of those who are made the subjects of discussion?

Those unfortunate men and women who delight in talk of this sort always appear to me degraded by it. No matter how clever they may be, I avoid their society, which has in it a moral malaria most unwholesome in character.

I am glad to say that, although frivolous society constantly shows its low estimate of human nature, I yet think that the gay immolation of character which was once considered a legitimate source of amusement has gone somewhat out of fashion. Sheridan's "School for Scandal" gives us some notion of what this may once have been. I do think that the world has grown more merciful in later years, and that even people who meet only for their own amusement are learning to seek it without murdering the reputation of their absent friends.

There is a mean impulse in human nature which leads some people to toss down the reputation of their fellows just as the Wall Street bear tosses down the value of the investments whose purchase he wishes to command at his own price. But in opposition to this, God has set within us a power which reacts against such base estimates of mankind. The utterance of this false tone often calls out the better music, and makes us admire the way in which good springs up in the very footsteps of evil and effaces them as things of nought.

Does intercourse with great society make us more or less polite? Elizabeth Browning says:—

First time he kissed me he but only kissed  
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write,  
Which ever thence did grow more clean and white,  
Slow to world greetings, quick with its "Oh, list,"  
When the angels speak.

This clearly expresses the sanctification of a new and noble interest. How is it with those on whom the great world has set its seal of superior position, which is derived from a variety of sources, among which wealth, recognized talent, and high descent are the most important?

I must say in answer that this social recognition does not affect all people in the same manner. One passes the ordeal unscathed, is as fresh in affection, as genuine in relation and intercourse, as faithful to every fine and true personal obligation in the fiery furnace of wealth and fashion and personal distinction as he or she was in the simple village or domestic life, in which there was no question of greatness or smallness, all being of nearly the same dimensions.

The great world may boast of its jewels which no furnace blast can melt or dim, but they are rare. Madame de Staël and Madame Récamier seem to have been among these undimmed gems; so, also, was Madame de Sévigné, with a heart warm with love for her children and her friends in all the dazzle of a brilliant court. So I have seen a vessel of the finest glass, thin as paper, which a chemist left over his spirit-lamp, full of boiling liquid, and, returning the next day, found uninjured, so perfect was the temper of the glass. But for one such unspoiled world-favorite, I can show you twenty men and women who, at the first lift of fortune, forsake their old friends, neglect their near relations, and utterly ignore their poor ones.

Romance is full of such shameful action; and let me say here, in passing, that in my opinion Romance often wears off our horror of what is wicked and heartless by showing it as a permanent and recognized element of society. This is the reverse of what it should do. But in these days it so exceeds its office in the hunt after the exhausted susceptibilities of a novel-reading public that it really thumps upon our aversion to vice until it wears it out.

De Balzac's novel called "Father Goriot" tells the story of a man of humble origin who grows rich by trade, educates his daughters for fashionable life, marries them to men of condition, portions them abundantly, and is in return kept carefully out of what the world knows of their lives. They seek him only when they want money, which they always do, in spite of the rich dowry settled on them at their marriage. *Father Goriot* sells his last piece of silver to help them, and dies in a low boarding-house, tended by the charity of strangers, tormented to the last by the bickering of his children, but not cheered for one moment by their affection.

I have heard on good authority that people of wealth and position in our large cities sometimes deposit their aged and helpless parents in asylums where they may have all that money can buy for them, but nothing of what gratitude and affection should give them. How detestable such a course is I need not say; my present business is to say that it is far from polite.

Apropos of this suggestion, I remember that I was once invited to read this essay to a village audience in one of the New England States. My theme was probably one quite remote from the general thought of my hearers. As I went on, their indifference began to affect me, and my thought was that I might as well have appealed to a set of wooden tennpins as to those who were present on that occasion.

In this, I afterwards learned that I was mistaken. After the conclusion of the evening's exercise, a young man, well known in the community, was heard to inquire urgently where he could find the lecturer. Friends asked, what did he want of her? He replied: "Well, I did put my brother in the poorhouse, and now that I have heard Mrs. Howe, I suppose that I must take him out."

Need I say that I felt myself amply repaid for the trouble I had taken? On the other hand, this

same theme was once selected from my list by a lecture association in a small town buried in the forests of the far West. As I surveyed my somewhat home-spun audience, I feared that a discussion of the faults of polite society would interest my hearers very little. I was surprised after my reading to hear, from more than one of those present, that this lecture appeared to them the very thing that was most needed in that place.

There is to my mind something hideous in the concealment and disregard of real connections which involve real obligations.

If you are rich, take up your poor relations. Assist them at least to find the way of earning a competence. Use the power you have to bring them within the sphere of all that is refining. You can embellish the world to them and them to the world. Do so, and you will be respected by those whose respect is valuable. On the contrary, repudiate those who really belong to you and the mean world itself will laugh at you and despise you. It is clever and cunning enough to find out your secret, and when it has done so, it will expose you pitilessly.

I have known men and women whose endeavors and successes have all been modelled upon the plane of social ambition. Starting with a good common-school education, which is a very good thing to start with, they have improved opportunities of culture and of desirable association until they stand conspicuous, far away from the sphere of their village or homemates, having money to spend, able to boast of wealthy acquaintances, familiar guests at fashionable entertainments.

Now sometimes these individuals wander so far away from their original belongings that these latter are easily lost sight of. And I assure you that they are left in the dark, in so far as concerns the actions of the friends we are now considering. Many a painstaking mother at a distance, many a plain but honest old father, many a sister working in a factory to help a brother at college, is never spoken of by such persons, and is even thought of with a blush of shame and annoyance.

Oh! shame upon the man or woman of us who is guilty of such behavior as this! These relatives are people to be proud of, as we should know if we had the heart to know what is true, good, and loyal. Even were it not so, were your relative a criminal, never deny the bond of nature. Stand beside him in the dock or at the gallows. You have illustrious precedent for such association in one whom men worship, but forget to imitate.

Let me here relate a little story of my early years. I had a nursery governess when I was a small child. She came from some country town, and probably regarded her position in my father's family as a promotion. One evening, while we little folks gathered about her in our nursery, she wept bitterly. "What is the matter?" we asked; and she took me up in her lap, and said: "My poor old father came here to see me to-day, and I would not see him. I bade them tell him that he had mistaken the house, and he went away, and as he went I saw him looking up at the windows so wistfully!" Poor woman! We wept with her, feeling that this was indeed a tragical event, and not knowing what she could do to make it better.

But could I see that woman now, I would say to her: "If you were serving the king at his table, and held his wine-cup in your hand, and your father stood without, asking for you, you should set down the cup, and go out from the royal presence to honor your father, so much the more if he is poor, so much the more if he is old." And all that is really polite in polite society would say so too.

Now this action which I report of my governess corresponds to something in human nature, and to something which polite society fosters.

For polite society bases itself upon exclusions. In this it partly appeals to that antagonism of our nature through which the desire to possess something is greatly exaggerated by the difficulty of becoming possessed of it. If every one can come to your house, no one, you think, will consider it a great object of desire to go there. Theories of supply and demand come in here. People would gladly destroy things that give pleasure, in order to enhance their value in the hands of the few.

I once heard a lady, herself quite new in society, say of a Parisian dame who had shown her some attention: "Ah! the trouble with Madame— is that she is too good-natured. She entertains everybody." "Indeed," thought I, "if she had been less good-natured, is it certain that she would have entertained you?"

But of course the justifiable side of exclusion is choice, selection of one's associates. No society can confer the absolute right or power to make this selection. Tiresome and unacceptable people are everywhere entangled in relations with wise and agreeable ones. There is no bore nor torment who has not the right to incommode some fireside or assembly with his or her presence. You cannot keep wicked, foolish, tiresome, ugly people out of society, however you and your set may delight in good conduct, grace, and beauty. You cannot keep poor people out of the society of the rich. Those whom you consider your inferiors feed your cherished stomach, and drape your sacred person, and stand behind your chair at your feasts, judging your manners and conversation.

Let us remember Mr. Dickens's story of "Little Dorrit," in which *Mr. Murdle*, a new-rich man, sitting with guests at his own sumptuous table, is described as dreading the disapprobation of his butler. This he might well do, as the butler was an expert, well aware of the difference between a gentleman of breeding and education and a worldling, lifted by the possession of wealth alone.

Very genial in contrast with this picture appears the response of Abraham Lincoln, who, on

being asked by the head waiter at his first state dinner whether he would take white wine or red, replied: "I don't know; which would you?"

Well, what can society do, then? It can decree that those who come of a certain set of families, that those who have a certain education, and above all, a certain income, shall associate together on terms of equality. And with this decree there comes to foolish human nature a certain irrational desire to penetrate the charmed circle so formed.

The attempt to do this encounters resistance; there is pushing in and shoving out,—coaxing and wheedling on the one hand, and cold denial or reluctant assent on the other. So a fight is perpetually going on in the realm of fashion. Those not yet recognized are always crowding in. Those first in occupation are endeavoring to crowd these out. In the end, perseverance usually conquers.

But neither of these processes is polite—neither the crowding in nor the crowding out—and this last especially, as many of those who are in were once out, and are trying to keep other people from doing what they themselves have been very glad to do. In Mr. Thackeray's great romance, "The Newcomes," young *Ethel Newcome* asks her grandmother, *Lady Kew*, "Well then, grandmother, who is of a good family?" And the old lady replies: "Well, my dear, mostly no one." But I would reply: Mostly every one, if people are disposed to make their family good.

There is an obvious advantage in society's possession of a recognized standard of propriety in general deportment; but the law of good breeding should nowhere be merely formal, nor should its application be petty and captious. The externals of respectability are most easily aped when they are of the permanent and stereotyped kind, and may be used to conceal gross depravity; while the constant, fresh, gracious inspiration of a pure, good heart is unmistakable, and cannot be successfully counterfeited.

On the other hand, young persons should be desirous to learn the opinion of older ones as to what should and should not be done on the ground of general decorum and good taste. Youth is in such hot haste to obtain what it desires that it often will not wait to analyze the spirit of an occasion, but classes opposition to its inclinations as prejudice and antiquated superstition. But the very individual who in youth thus scoffs at restraint often pays homage to it in later days, having meanwhile ascertained the weighty reasons which underlie the whole law of reserve upon which the traditions of good society are based.

How much trouble, then, might it save if the young people, as a rule, were to come to the elders and ask at least why this thing or that is regarded as unbecoming or of doubtful propriety. And how much would it assist this good understanding if the elders, to the last, were careful to keep up with the progress of the time, examining tendencies, keeping a vigilant eye upon fashions, books, and personages, and, above all, encouraging the young friends to exercise their own powers of discrimination in following usages and customs, or in departing from them.

This last suggestion marks how far the writer of these pages is behind the progress of the age. In her youth, it was customary for sons and daughters both to seek and to heed the counsel of elders in social matters. In these days, a grandmother must ask her granddaughter whether such or such a thing is considered "good form," to which the latter will often reply, "O dear! no."

It is sad that we should carry all the barbarism of our nature into our views of the divine, and make our form of faith an occasion of ill-will to others, instead of drawing from it the inspiration of a wide and comprehensive charity. The world's Christianity is greatly open to this accusation, in dealing with which we are forced to take account of the slow rate of human progress.

A friend lately told me of a pious American, familiar in Hong Kong, who at the close of his last visit there, took a formal and eternal leave of one of the principal native merchants with whom he had long been acquainted. Mr. C— alluded to his advanced age, and said that it was almost certain he could never return to China. "We shall not meet again in this world," he said, "and as you have never embraced the true religion, I can have no hope of meeting you in a better one."

I ask whether this was polite, from one sinner to another?

A stupid, worldly old woman of fashion in one of our large cities once said of a most exemplary acquaintance, a liberal Christian saint of thirty years or more ago: "I am very fond of Mrs. S— but she is a Unitarian. What a pity we cannot hope to meet in heaven!" The wicked bystanders had their own view of the reason why this meeting would appear very improbable.

What shall we say of the hospitality which in some churches renders each man and woman the savage guardian of a seat or pew? Is this God's house to you, when you turn with fury on a stranger who exercises a stranger's right to its privileges? Whatever may be preached from the pulpit of such a church, there is not much of heaven in the seats so maintained and defended. I remember an Episcopal church in one of our large cities which a modest looking couple entered one Sunday, taking seats in an unoccupied pew near the pulpit. And presently comes in the plumed head of the family, followed by its other members. The strangers are warned to depart, which they do, not without a smile of suppressed amusement. The church-woman afterwards learned that the persons whom she had turned out of her pew were the English ambassador and his wife, the accomplished Lord and Lady Napier.

St. Paul tells us that in an unknown guest we may entertain an angel unawares. But I will say

that in giving way to such evil impulses, people entertain a devil unawares.

Polite religion has to do both with manners and with doctrine. Tolerance is the external condition of this politeness, but charity is its interior source. A doctrine which allows and encourages one set of men to exclude another set from claim to the protection and inspiration of God is in itself impolite. Christ did not reproach the Jews for holding their own tenets, but for applying these tenets in a superficial and narrow spirit, neglecting to practise true devotion and benevolence, and refusing to learn the providential lessons which the course of time should have taught them. At this day of the world, we should all be ready to admit that salvation lies not so much in the prescriptions of any religion as in the spirit in which these are followed.

It is the fashion to-day to decry missions. I believe in them greatly. But a missionary should start with a polite theory concerning the religion which he hopes to supersede by the introduction of one more polite. If he studies rightly, he will see that all religions seek after God, and will imitate the procedure of Paul, who, before instructing the Athenians in the doctrines of the new religion, was careful to recognize the fact that they had a religion of their own.

I wish to speak here of the so-called rudeness of reform; and to say that I think we should call this roughness rather than rudeness. A true reformer honors human nature by recognizing in it a higher power than is shown in its average action. The man or woman who approaches you, urging upon you a more fervent faith, a more impartial justice, a braver resolve than you find in your own mind, comes to you really in reverence, and not in contempt. Such a person sees in you the power and dignity of manhood or womanhood, of which you, perhaps, have an insufficient sense. And he will strike and strike until he finds in you that better nature, that higher sense to which he appeals, and which in the end is almost sure to respond to such appealing.

I remember having thought in my youth that the Presbyterian preacher, John Knox, was probably very impolite in his sermons preached before poor Queen Mary Stuart. But when we reflect upon the follies which, more than aught else, wrecked her unhappy life, we may fancy the stern divine to have seen whither her love of pleasure and ardent temperament would lead her, and to have striven, to the best of his knowledge and power, to pluck her as a brand from the burning, and to bring her within the sober sphere of influence and reflection which might have saved her kingdom and her life.

With all its advances, society still keeps some traces of its original barbarism. I see these traces in the want of respect for labor, where this want exists, and also in the position which mere Fashion is apt to assign to teachers in the community.

That those who must be intellectually looked up to should be socially looked down upon is, to say the least, very inconsistent. That the performance of the helpful offices of the household should be held as degrading to those who perform them is no less so. We must seek the explanation of these anomalies in the distant past. When the handiwork of society was performed by slaves, the world's estimate of labor was naturally lowered. In the feudal and military time, the writer ranked below the fighter, and the skill of learning below the prowess of arms. The mind of to-day has only partially outgrown this very rude standard of judgment. I was asked, some fifteen years ago, in England, by people of education, whether women teachers ranked in America with ladies or with working women. I replied: "With ladies, certainly," which seemed to occasion surprise.

I remember having heard that a relative of Theodore Parker's wife, who disliked him, would occasionally taunt him with having kept school. She said to him one day: "My father always told me to avoid a schoolmaster." Parker replied: "It is evident that you have."

I think that as Americans we should all feel an especial interest in the maintenance of polite feeling in our community. The theory of a government of the people, by the people, and for the people is in itself the most polite of theories. The fact that under such a government no man has a position of absolute inferiority forced upon him for life ought to free us from mean subserviency on the one hand, and from haughty and brutal assumption on the other.

Yet I doubt whether politeness is as much considered in American education as it ought to be. Perhaps our theory of the freedom and equality of all men leads some of us to the mistaken conclusion that all people equally know how to behave themselves, which is far from being the fact.

One result of our not being well instructed in the nature of politeness is that we go to the wrong sources to learn it. People who have been modestly bred think they shall acquire fine manners by consorting with the world's great people, and in this way often unlearn what they already know of good manners, instead of adding to their knowledge.

Rich Americans seem latterly to have taken on a sort of craze about the aristocracies of other countries. One form of this craze is the desire of ambitious parents to marry their daughters to titled individuals abroad. When we consider that these counts, marquises, and barons scarcely disguise the fact that the young lady's fortune is the object of their pursuit, and that the young lady herself is generally aware of this, we shall not consider marriage under such circumstances a very polite relation.

What does make our people polite, then? Partly the inherited blood of men who would not submit to the rude despotism of old England and old Europe, and who thought a better state of society worth a voyage in the *Mayflower* and a tussle with the wild forest and wilder Indian.

Partly, also, the necessity of the case. As we recognize no absolute social superiority, no one of us is entirely at liberty to assume airs of importance which do not belong to him. No matter how selfish we may be, it will not do for us to act upon the supposition that the comfort of other people is of less consequence than our own. If we are rude, our servants will not live with us, our tradespeople will not serve us.

This is good as far as it goes, but I wish that I could oftener see in our young people a desire to know what is perfectly and beautifully polite. And I feel sure that more knowledge in this direction would save us from the vulgarity of worshipping rank and wealth.

Who have been the polite spirits of our day? I can mention two of them, Mr. Longfellow and Mr. Emerson, as persons in whose presence it was impossible to be rude. But our young people of to-day consider the great fortunes rather than the great examples.

In order to be polite, it is important to cultivate polite ways of thinking. Great social troubles and even crimes grow out of rude and selfish habits of mind. Let us take the case of the Anarchists who were executed in Chicago some years ago. Before their actions became wicked, their thoughts became very impolite. They were men who had to work for their living. They wanted to be so rich that they should not be under this necessity. Their mode of reasoning was something like this: "I want money. Who has got it? The capitalist. What protects him in keeping it? The laws. Down with the laws, then!"

He who reasons thus forgets, foolish man, that the laws protect the poor as well as the rich. The laws compel the capitalist to make roads for the use of the poor man, and to build schoolhouses for the education of his children. They make the person of the poor man as sacred as that of the rich man. They secure to both the enjoyment of the greatest benefits of civilization. The Anarchist puts all this behind him, and only reasons that he, being poor, wants to be rich, and will overthrow, if he can, the barriers which keep him from rushing like a wild beast upon the rich man and despoiling him of his possessions.

And this makes me think of that noble man Socrates, whom the Athenians sentenced to death for impiety, because he taught that there was one God, while the people about him worshipped many deities. Some of the friends of this great man made a plan for his escape from prison to a place of safety. But Socrates refused to go, saying that the laws had hitherto protected him as they protected other citizens, and that it would be very ungrateful for him to show them the disrespect of running away to evade their sentence. He said: "It is better for me to die than to set the example of disrespect to the laws." How noble were these sentiments, and how truly polite!

Whoever brings up his children to be sincere, self-respecting, and considerate of others brings them up to good manners. Did you ever see an impolite Quaker? I never did. Yet the Friends are a studiously plain people, no courtiers nor frequenters of great entertainments. What makes them polite? The good education and discipline which are handed down among them from one generation to another.

The eminent men of our own early society were simple in their way of living, but when public duty called them abroad to mingle with the elegant people of the Old World, they did us great credit. Benjamin Franklin was much admired at the court of Louis XVI. Jay and Jefferson and Morris and Adams found their manners good enough to content the highest European society. They were educated men; but besides book-learning, and above it, they had been bred to have the thoughts and, more than all, the feelings of gentlemen.

The assumption of special merit, either by an individual or a class, is not polite. We notice this fault when some dressy young lady puts on airs, and struts in fine clothes, or condescends from an elegant carriage. Elder women show it in hardness and hauteur of countenance, or in unnecessary patronage.

But we allow classes of people to assume special merit on false grounds. It may very easily be shown that it requires more talent and merit to earn money than to spend it. Yet, by almost common consent of the fashionable world, those who inherit or marry money are allowed to place themselves above those who earn it.

If this is the case so far as men are concerned, much more is it the case with women. Good society often feels itself obliged to apologize for a lady who earns money. The fact, however explained, is a badge of discredit. She could not help it, poor thing! Her father failed, or her trustee lost the investments made for her. He usually does. So she has—oh, sad alternative!—to make herself useful.

Now in America the judgment of the Old World in this respect has come to be somewhat reversed. We do not like idle inheritors here; and so the moneyed aristocracy of our country is a tolerably energetic and industrious body. But in the case of womankind, I could wish to see a very different standard adopted from that now existing. I could wish that the fact of an idle and useless life should need apology—not that of a laborious and useful one. Idleness is a pregnant source of demoralization to rich women. The hurry and excitement of fashionable engagements, and the absorbing nature of entirely selfish and useless pursuits, such as dancing, dress, and flirtation, cannot take the place of healthful work. Dr. Watts warns us that

Satan finds some mischief still  
For idle hands to do.



And Tennyson has some noble lines in one of his noblest poems:—

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,  
You pine among your halls and towers;  
The languid light of your proud eyes  
Is wearied of the rolling hours.  
In glowing health, with boundless wealth,  
But sickening of a vague disease,  
You know so ill to deal with time,  
You needs must play such pranks as these.

As I am speaking of England, I will say that some things in the constitution of English society seem to tend to impoliteness.

The English are a most powerful and energetic race, with immense vitality, cruelly divided up in their own country by absolute social conditions, handed down from generation to generation. So a sense of superiority, more or less lofty and exaggerated, characterizes the upper classes, while the lower partly rest in a dogged compliance, partly indulge the blind instinct of reverence, partly detest and despise those whom birth and fate have set over them. In England, people assert their own rank and look down upon that of others all the way from the throne to the peasant's hut. I asked an English visitor, the other day, what inferior the lowest man had,—the man at the bottom of the social pile. I answered him myself: "His wife, of course."

Where worldliness gives the tone to character, it corrupts the source of good manners, and the outward polish is purchased by the inward corruption of the heart. The crucial experiment of character is found in the transition from modest competency to conspicuous wealth and fashion. Most of us may desire this; but I should rather say: Dread it. I have seen such sweetness and beauty impaired by the process, such relinquishment of the genuine, such gradual adoption of the false and meretricious!

Such was a house in which I used to meet all the muses of the earlier time,—in which economy was elegant; frugality, tasteful and thrifty. My heart recalls the golden hours passed there, the genial, home atmosphere, the unaffected music, the easy, brilliant conversation. Time passes. A or B is the head of a great mercantile house now. I meet him after a lapse of years. He is always genial, and pities all who are not so rich as he is. But when I go to his great feast, I pity him. All the tiresome and antiquated furniture of fashionable society fills his rooms. Those empty bores whom I remember in my youth, and many new ones of their kind, float their rich clothing through his rooms. The old good-hearted greeting is replaced by the distant company bow. The moderate banquet, whose special dishes used to have the care of the young hostess, is replaced by a grand confectioner's avalanche, cold, costly, and comfortless. And I sigh, and go home feeling, as Browning says, "chilly and grown old."

This is not one case, but many. And since I have observed this page of human experience, I say to all whom I love and who are in danger of becoming very wealthy: Do not, oh! do not be too fashionable. "Love not the world."

Most of us know the things men really say to us beneath the disguise of the things they seem to say. And So-and-So, taking my hand, expresses to me: "How much more cordial should I be to you if your father's real estate had not been sold off before the rise." And such another would, if he could, say: "I am really surprised to see you at this house, and in such good clothes. Pray have you any income that I don't happen to know about?" The tax-gatherer is not half so vigilant about people's worldly goods as these friends are. No matter how they bow and smile, their real impoliteness everywhere penetrates its thin disguise.

What is this impoliteness? To what is it shown? To God's image,—the true manhood and true womanhood, which you may strip or decorate, but which you cannot destroy. Human values cannot be raised or lowered at will. "Thou canst not, by taking thought, add one cubit to thy stature." I derive impoliteness from two sources,—indifference to the divine, and contempt for the human.

The king of Wall Street, some little time since, was a man who had risen from a humble beginning to the eminence of a successful stock-gambler. He had been fortunate and perhaps skilful in his play, and was supposed to be possessed of immense wealth. Immediately, every door was opened to him. No assemblage was perfect without him. Every designing mother wanted him for her son-in-law. One unlucky throw overturned all this. Down went his fortune; down, his eminence. No more bowing and cringing and smiling now. No more plotting against his celibacy—he was welcome to it. No more burthensome hospitality. He was dropped as coldly and selfishly as he was taken up,—elbowed aside, left out in the cold. When I heard of all this, I said: "Is it ever necessary in these times to preach about the meanness of the great world?"

Let us, in our new world, lay aside altogether the theory of human superiority as conferred by special birth or fortune. Let us recognize in all people human right, capacity, and dignity.

Having adopted this equal human platform, and with it the persuasion that the society of good people is always good society, let us organize our circles by real tastes and sympathies. Those who love art can follow it together; those who love business, and science, and theology, and belles-lettres, can group themselves harmoniously around the object which especially attracts them.

But people shall, in this new order, seek to fill their own place as they find it. No crowding up or down, or in or out. A quiet reference to the standard of education and to the teachings of Nature will show each one where he belongs. Religion shall show the supreme source of power and of wisdom near to all who look for it. And this final unity of the religious sense shall knit together the happy human variety into one great complex interest, one steadfast faith, one harmonious effort.

The present essay, I must say, was written in great part for this very society which, assuming to take the lead in social attainment, often falls lamentably short of its promise. But let us enlarge the ground of our remarks by a more general view of American society.

I have travelled in this country North and South, East and West. I have seen many varieties of our national life. I think that I have seen everywhere the capacity for social enjoyment. In many places, I have found the notion of co-operation for good ends, which is a most important element in any society. What I have seen makes me think that we Americans start from a vantage-ground compared with other nations. As mere social units, we are ranked higher than Britons or continental Europeans.

This higher estimation begins early in life. Every child in this country is considered worth educating. The State will rescue the child of the pauper or criminal from the ignorance which has been a factor in the condition of its parents. Even the idiot has a school provided for him, in which he may receive such training as he can profit by. This general education starts us on a pretty high level. We have, no doubt, all the faults of our human nature, but we know, too, how and why these should be avoided.

Then the great freedom of outlook which our institutions give us is in our favor. We need call no man Master. We can pursue the highest aims, aspire to the noblest distinctions. We have no excuse for contenting ourselves with the paltry objects and illusory ambitions which play so large a part in Old-World society.

The world grows better and not worse, but it does not grow better everywhere all the time. Wherever human effort to a given end is intermitted, society does not attain that end, and is in danger of gradually losing it from view, and thus of suffering an unconscious deterioration which it may become difficult to retrieve. I do not think that the manners of so-called polite society today are quite so polite as they were in my youth. Young women of fashion seem to me to have lost in dignity of character and in general tone and culture. Young men of fashion seem to regard the young ladies with less esteem and deference, and a general cheap and easy standard of manners is the result.

On the other hand, outside this charmed circle of fashion, I find the tone of taste and culture much higher than I remember it to have been in my youth. I find women leading nobler and better lives, filling larger and higher places, enjoying the upper air of thought where they used to rest upon the very soil of domestic care and detail. So the community gains, although one class loses,—and that, remember, the class which assumes to give to the rest the standard of taste.

Instead of dwelling too much upon the faults of our neighbors, let us ask whether we are not, one and all of us, under sacred obligations to carry our race onward toward a nobler social ideal. In Old-World countries, people lack room for new ideas. The individual who would introduce and establish these may be imprisoned, or sent to Siberia, or may suffer, at the least, a social ostracism which is a sort of martyrdom.

Here we have room enough; we cannot excuse ourselves on that ground. And we have strength enough—we, the people. Let us only have the *royal* will which good Mr. Whittier has celebrated in "Barbara Frietchie," and we shall be able, by a resolute and persevering effort, to place our civilization where no lingering trace of barbarism shall deform and disgrace it.

## Paris.

**A**N old woman's tale will always begin with a reminiscence of some period more or less remote.

In accordance with this law of nature, I find that I cannot begin to speak of Paris without going back to the projection which the fashions and manners of that ancient capital were able to cast upon my own native city of New York. My recollections of the latter reach back, let me say, to the year 1826. I was then seven years old; and, beginning to take notice of things around me, I saw the social eminences of the day lit up with the far-off splendors of Parisian taste.

To speak French with ease was, in those days, considered the most desirable of accomplishments. The elegance of French manners was commended in all polite circles. The services of General Lafayette were held up to children as deserving their lifelong remembrance and gratitude.

But the culmination of the *Gallomania* was seen in the millinery of the period; and I must

confess that my earliest views of this were enjoyed within the precincts of a certain Episcopal sanctuary which then stood first upon the dress-list, and, like Jove among the gods, without a second. This establishment retained its pre-eminence of toilet for more than thirty years after the time of which I speak, and perhaps does so still. I have now lived so long in Boston that I should be obliged to consult New York authorities if I wished to be able to say decidedly whether the well-known Grace Church of that city still deserves to be called "The Church of the Holy Milliner." A little child's fancy naturally ran riot in a field of bonnets so splendid and showy, and, however admonished to listen to the minister, I am afraid that a raid upon the flowers and plumes so lavishly displayed before me would have offered more attractions to my tender mind than any itinerary of the celestial journey of which I should have been likely to hear in that place.

The French dancing-master of that period taught us gambols and flourishes long since banished from the domain of social decorum. Being light and alert, I followed his prescriptions with joy, and learned with patience the lessons set me by the French mistress, who, while leading us through Florian's tales and La Fontaine's fables, did not forget to impress upon us her conviction that to be French was to be virtuous, but to be Parisian was to be perfect.

Let me now pass on to the years of my youngladyhood, when New York reflected Paris on a larger scale. The distinguished people of the society to which my youth was related either had been to Paris or expected to go there very shortly. Our circles were sometimes electrified by the appearance of a well-dressed and perfumed stranger, wearing the moustache which was then strictly contraband in the New York business world, and talking of manners and customs widely different from our own.

These elegant gentlemen were sometimes adventurers in pursuit of a rich wife, sometimes intelligent and well-informed travellers, and sometimes the agents of some foreign banking-house, for the drummer was not yet invented. If they were furnished with satisfactory credentials, the fathers of Gotham introduced them into their domestic circle, usually warning their daughters never to think of them as husbands,—a warning which, naturally, would sometimes defeat its own object.

I must here be allowed to say one word concerning the French novel, which, since that time, has here and there affected the tone of our society. In the days of which I speak, brothers who returned from Europe brought with them the romances of Balzac and Victor Hugo, which their sisters surreptitiously read. We heard also with a sort of terror of George Sand, the evil woman, who wrote such somnambulatory books. We pictured to ourselves the wicked delight of reading them; and presently some friend confidentially lent us the forbidden volumes, which our Puritan nurture and habit of life did much to render harmless and not quite clear in meaning.

I should say that the works of Balzac, George Sand, Victor Hugo, and Eugène Sue had each exerted an appreciable influence upon the social atmosphere of this country. Of these four, Balzac was the least popular, having long been known only to readers acquainted with the French language. George Sand first became widely recognized through her "Consuelo." Victor Hugo's popular fame dates from "Les Misérables," and "The Mysteries of Paris" opened the doors to Eugène Sue, and *Rigolette* and *Fleur de Marie*, new types of character to most of us, appeared upon the stage.

Still nearer was Paris brought to us by Carlyle's work on the French Revolution, which, falling like a compact and burning coal upon the American imagination, reddened the sober twilight of our firesides with the burning passion and frenzy of that great drama of enthusiasm and revenge. And here, lest I should entirely reverse the order in which historic things should be spoken of, let me dismiss those early memories, and, having shown you something of the far-reaching influence of the city, let me speak of it from nearer sight and study.

History must come first. I find it written in a certain record that Paris, in the time of Julius Cæsar, was a collection of huts built upon an island in the Seine, and bearing the name of Lutetia. Its inhabitants were called Parisii, which was the name of their tribe, supposed to be an offshoot from the Belgæ. I do not know whether this primitive settlement lay within the bounds of Gallia *Bracchiata*; but, if it did, how natural that to the other indebtedness of polite life, that of the trouser should be added! The city still possesses some interesting remains of the Roman period. The Hotel Cluny is also called "The Hotel of the Baths," and whoever visits it may at the same time explore a massive ruin which is said to have covered beneath its roof the baths of the Emperor Julian, surnamed "The Apostate."

A rapid panoramic retrospect will give us briefly the leading points of the city's many periods of interest. First must be named Paris of the early saints: Saint Genevieve, who saved it from the hands of Attila; Saint Denis, famous for having walked several miles after his head was cut off, carrying that deposed member under his arm.

A well-known French proverb was suggested some time in the last century by the relation of this mediæval miracle. The celebrated Madame Dudeffant, a wit and beauty of Horace Walpole's time, was told one day that the Archbishop of Paris had said that every one knew that Saint Denis had walked some distance after his decapitation, but that few people were aware that he had walked several miles on that occasion. Madame Dudeffant said, in reply: "Indeed, in such a case, it is the first step only that costs,"—"*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.*"

Paris of the sleepy Merovingians,—do-nothing kings, a race made to be kicked out, and fulfilling its destiny,—Paris of Hugh Capet, in whose reign were laid the foundations of the

Cathedral of Notre Dame. Paris of 1176, whereof the old chronicler, John of Salisbury, writes: "When I saw the abundance of provisions, the gaiety of the people, the good condition of the clergy, the majesty and glory of all the church, the diverse occupations of men admitted to the study of philosophy, I seemed to see that Jacob's ladder whose summit reached heaven, and on which the angels ascended and descended. I must confess that truly the Lord was in this place. This passage also of a poet came to my mind: 'Happy is the man whose exile is to this place.'"

This suggests the familiar saying of our own time,—that good Bostonians, when they die, go to Paris.

Paris of Louis XI., he of the strong hand, the stony heart, the superstitious mind. Scott has seized the features of the time and of the man in his novel of "Quentin Durward." His hat, full of leaden images of saints, his cunning and pitiless diplomacy, and the personages of his brilliant court are brought vividly before us by the magician of the North.

Paris of Louis XIII., and its Richelieu live for us in Bulwer's vivid play, in which I have often seen the fine impersonation of Edwin Booth.

Paris of Louis XIV., the handsome young king, the idol, the absolute sovereign, who said: "*L'état, c'est moi*;" the old man before whom Madame de Maintenon is advised to say her prayers, in order to make upon his mind a serious impression; the revoker of the edict of Nantes; he who tried to extinguish Dutch freedom with French blood; a god in his own time, a figure now faded, pompous, self-adoring.

Paris of Louis XV., the reign of license, the *Parc aux cerfs*, the period of the courtesan, Madame de Pompadour, and a host of rivals and successors,—a hateful type of womanhood, justly odious and gladly forgotten.

Paris of Louis XVI., the days of progress and of good intentions; the deficit, the ministry of Neckar, the states general, Mirabeau, Lafayette, Robespierre, the fall of the monarch, the reign of terror; the guillotine in permanence, science, virtue, every distinction supplying its victims.

Paris of Napoleon I.; a whiff of grape-shot that silences the last grumblings of the Revolution; the mighty marches, the strategy of Ulysses, the labors of Hercules, the glory of Jupiter, ending in the fate of Prometheus.

Paris of the returned Bourbons, Charles X., the Duc de Berri, the Duchess d'Angoulême; Paris of the Orleans dynasty, civil, civic, free, witty; wise here, and wicked there; the Mecca of students in all sciences; a region problematic to parents, who fear its vices and expense, but who desire its opportunities and elegance for their sons. This was in the days in which a visit to Paris was the *ne plus ultra* of what parents could do to forward a son's studies, or perfect a daughter's accomplishments.

Having made my connections in this breathless review, I must return to speak of two modern works of art which treat of matters upon which my haste did not allow me, in the first instance, to dwell.

The first of these is Victor Hugo's picture of mediæval Paris, given in his famous romance entitled "Notre Dame de Paris." This remarkable novel preserves valuable details of the architecture of the ancient cathedral from which it takes its name. It paints the society of the time in gloomy colors. The clergy are corrupt, the soldiery licentious, the people forlorn and friendless. Here is a brief outline of the story. The beautiful gipsy, *Esmeralda*, dances and twirls her tambourine in the public streets. Her companion is a little goat, which she has taught to spell her lover's name, by putting together the letters which compose it. This lover is *Phæbus*, captain of the guard. *Claude Frollo*, the cunning, wicked priest of the period, has cast his evil eye upon the girl. He manages to surprise her when alone with her lover, and stabs the latter so as to endanger his life. A hideous dwarf, named *Quasimodo*, also loves *Esmeralda*, with humble, faithful affection. As the story develops, he turns out to have been the changeling laid in the place of the lovely girl-infant whom gipsies stole from her cradle. *Esmeralda* finds her distracted parent, but only to be torn from her arms again. The priest, *Claude Frollo*, foiled in his unlawful passion, stirs up the wrath of the populace against *Esmeralda*, accusing her of sorcery. She is seized by the mob, and hanged in the public street. The narrative is powerful and graphic, but it shows the disease of Victor Hugo's mind,—a morbid imagination which heightens the color of human crimes in order to give a melodramatic brilliancy to the virtue which contrasts with them. According to his view, suffering through the fault of others is necessarily the lot of all good people. French romance has in it much of this despair of the cause of virtue. It springs, however remotely, from the dark days of absolutism, whose bitter secrets were masked over by the frolic fancy of the people who invented the joyous science of minstrelsy.

The other work which I have now in mind is Meyerbeer's opera of "The Huguenots," which I mention here because it brings so vividly to mind the features of another period in the history of Paris. It represents, as an opera may, the frightful days in which a king's hospitality was made a trap for the wholesale butchery of as many Protestants as could be lured within the walls of Paris,—the massacre which bears the name of Saint Bartholomew. Nobles and leaders were shot down in the streets, or murdered in their beds, while the hollow phrases of the royal favor still rang in their ears. I have seen, near the church of St. Germain l'Auxerois, the palace window from which the kerchief of Catherine de Medici gave the signal for the fatal onslaught. "Do you not believe my word?" asked the Queen Mother one day of the English ambassador. "No, by Saint Bartholomew, Madam," was the sturdy reply.

Meyerbeer's opera is truly a Protestant work of art, vigorous and noble. Through all the intensity of its dramatic situations runs the grand choral of Luther:—

A mighty fortress is our God.

So true faith holds its own, and sails its silver boat upon the bloody sea of martyrdom.

Am I obliged to have recourse to a novel and an opera in order to bring before your eyes a vision of Paris in those distant ages? Such are our indebtednesses to art and literature. And here I must again mention, as a great master in both of these, Thomas Carlyle, who has given us so vivid and graphic a picture of the Revolution in France, which followed so nearly upon our own War of Independence.

I, a grandmother of to-day, recall the impression which this great conflict had made upon the grandparents of my childhood. Most wicked and cruel did they esteem it, in all of its aspects. To people of our day, it appears the inevitable crisis of a most malignant state of national disease. Much of political quackery was swept away forever, one may hope, by its virulent outbreak. No half-way nostrums, no outside tinkering, answered for this fiery patient, whose fever set the whole continent of Europe in a blaze. War itself was gentle in comparison with the acts of its savage delirium, in which the vengeance of defrauded ages fell upon victims most of whom were innocent of personal offence. The reign of humanitarian theory led strangely to a period of military predominance which has had no parallel since the days of Alexander of Macedon. Then War itself died of exhaustion. The stupor of reaction quenched the dream of civil and religious liberty. But the patient stirred again in 1830 and 1848, and the dream, scarcely yet realized, became more and more the settled purpose of his heart.

Now the government in 1830 was manifestly in the wrong. The stupid old Bourbon Prince, Charles X., had learned nothing, and forgotten nothing, but the French people had learned and unlearned many things. They had learned the illusion of Monarchy, the corruption of the demagogue, the futility of the sentimentalist. The impotence of the aristocracy was one of the lessons of the day. Was ever a people more rapidly educated? Take the *canaille* of the pre-revolutionary history, and the *peuple* of the Revolution. What a contrast! It is the lion asleep in the toils, and the lion awake, and turning upon his captors in fury. The French people have never gone back to what they were before that great outbreak. The mighty, volcanic heart has made its pulsations felt through all assumptions, through all restraints. Yet the French people are easily tricked. They are easily led to receive pedantry for education, bigotry for religion, constraint for order, and successful pretension for glory.

The Revolution of 1848 was justified in all but its method. And method has often been the weak point in French politics. Methods are handed down more surely than ideas are inherited. The violent measures whose record forms so large a part of French history have left behind them a belief in military, rather than in moral, action. The *coup d'état* would seem by its name to be a French invention; but it is a method abhorred of Justice. Justice recognizes two sides, and gives ear to both. Passion sees but one, and blots out in blood the representatives of the other. The Revolution of 1848 was the rather premature explosion of a wide and subtle conspiracy. But if the conflicting opinions and interests then current could have encountered each other, as in England or America, in open daylight, trusting only in the weapons of reason, a very different result would have been achieved. Do not conspire, is one of the lessons which Paris teaches by her history. Do not say, nor teach others to say: "If we cannot have our way, we will have your life." Say, rather: "Let both sides state their case, and plead their cause, and let the weight of Reason decide which shall prevail."

Paris as I first knew it, half a century ago, was a place imposing for its good taste and good manners. A stranger passing through it with ever so little delay would necessarily have been impressed with the general intelligence, and with the æsthetic invention and nicety which, more than anything else, have given the city its social and commercial prestige.

In those days, Chateaubriand and Madame Récamier were still alive. The traditions of society were polite. The theatres were vivacious schools of morality. The salon was still an institution. This was not what we should call a party, but the habitual meeting of friends in a friend's house,—a good institution, if kept up in a good spirit.

The natural sociability of the French made the salon an easy and natural thing for them. Salons were of all sorts. Some shone in true glory; some disguised evil purposes and passions with artificial graces. I think the institution of the salon indigenous to Paris, although it has by no means stopped there.

The great point in administering a salon is to do it sincerely. Where the children are put out of the way, the old friends neglected, the rich courted, and celebrities impaled and exhibited, the institution is demoralizing, and answers no end of permanent good. A friendly house, that opens its doors as often and as widely as the time and fortune of its inmates can afford, is a boon and blessing to many people.

I suppose that the French salons were of both sorts. Sydney Smith speaks of a certain historical set of Parisian women who dealt very lightly with the Decalogue, but who, on the other hand, gave very pleasant little suppers. French society, no doubt, afforded many occasions of this sort, but far different were the meetings in which the literary world of Paris listened to the

unpublished memoirs of Chateaubriand; far different was the throng that gathered, twice a day, around the hearth of the wise and devout Madame Swetchine.

In the days just mentioned, I passed through Paris, returning from my bridal journey, which had carried me to Rome. I was eager to explore every corner of the enchanted region. What I did see, I have never forgotten,—the brilliant shops, the tempting *cafés*, the varied and entertaining theatres. I attended a *séance* of the Chamber of Deputies, a lecture of Edgar de Quinet, and one of Philarete Charles. De Quinet's lecture was given at the Sorbonne. I remember of it only the enthusiasm of the audience,—the faces at once fiery and thoughtful, the occasional cries of "De Quinet," when any passage particularly stirred the feelings of the auditors. Of Philarete Charles, I remember that his theme was "English Literature," and that at the close of his lecture he took occasion to reprobate the whole literary world of America. The *bon homme* Franklin, he said, had outwitted the French Court. The country of Franklin was utterly without interest from an intellectual point of view. "When," said he, "we take into account the late lamentable disorders in New York (some small election riot, in 1844), we shall agree upon the low state of American civilization and the small prospect of good held out by the republic." He was unaware, of course, that Americans were among his hearers; but a certain tidal wave of anger arose in my heart, and had not my graver companion held me down, I should have arisen then, as I certainly should now, to say: "Monsieur Philarete Charles, you are uttering falsehoods."

In those days, I first saw Rachel, then in the full affluence of her genius. The trenchant manner, the statuesque drapery, the chain-lightning effects, were much as they were afterwards seen in this country. But when I saw her, seven years after that first time, in London, I thought that her unrivalled powers had bloomed to a still fuller perfection than before. Of finest clay, thrilled by womanly passion and tempered by womanly tact, we need not remember the faults of the person in the perfection of the artist. Alfred de Musset has left a charming account of a supper at her house. I certainly have never seen on the boards a tragic conception equal to hers. Ristori, able as she was, seemed to me to fall short in Rachel's great parts, if we except the last scene of "Marie Stuart," in which the Christian woman, following the crucifix to her death, showed a sense of its value which the Jewish woman could neither feel nor counterfeit.

The gallery of the Louvre recalls the finest palaces of Italy, and equals, in value and interest, any gallery in the world. Venice is far richer in Titian's pictures, and Rome and Florence keep the greatest works of Raphael and Michael Angelo. To understand Quintin Matsys and Rubens, you must go to Antwerp, where their finest productions remain. But the Louvre has an unsurpassed variety and interest, and exhibits not a few of the chief treasures of ancient and modern art. Among these are some of the masterpieces of Titian, Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci, the Conception of Murillo, Paul Veronese's great picture of the marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the ever-famous Venus of Milo.

In one of the principal galleries of Venice, I was once shown a large picture by the French artist David. I do not remember much about its merits, but, on asking how it came there, I was told that its place had formerly been occupied by a famous picture by Paul Veronese. Napoleon I., it will be remembered, robbed the galleries of Italy of many of their finest pictures. After his downfall, most of these stolen treasures were restored to their rightful owners; but the French never gave up the Paul Veronese picture, which was this very one that now hangs in the Louvre, where its vivid coloring and rich grouping look like a piece of Venice, bright and glorious like herself.

The student of art, returning from Italy, is possessed with the mediæval gloom and glory which there have filled his eyes and his imagination. With a sigh, looking toward our Western world, so rich in action, so poor as yet in art, he pauses here in surprise, to view a cosmopolitan palace of her splendors. It consoles him to think that the Beautiful has made so brave a stand upon the nearer borders of the Seine. Encouraged by the noble record of French achievement, he carries with him across the ocean the traditions of Jerome, of Rosa Bonheur, of Horace Vernet.

In historical monuments, Paris is rich indeed. The oldest of these that I remember was the Temple,—the ancient stronghold of the Knights Templar, who were cruelly extirpated in the year 1307. It was a large, circular building, occupied, when I visited it, as a place for the sale of second-hand commodities. I remember making purchases of lace within its walls which were nearly black with age. You will remember that Louis XVI. and his family were confined here for some time, and that here took place the sad parting between the King and the dear ones he was never to see again. I will subjoin a brief extract from the diary of my grandfather, Col. Samuel Ward, of the Revolutionary War, who was in Paris at the time of the King's execution:—

*January 17, 1792.* The Convention up all night upon the question of the King's sentence. At eleven this night the sentence of death was pronounced,—three hundred and sixty-six for death; three hundred and nineteen for seclusion or banishment; thirty-six various; majority of five absolute. The King desired an appeal to be made to the people, which was not allowed. Thus the Convention have been the accusers, the judges, and will be the executors of their own sentence. This will cause a great degree of astonishment in America, where the departments are so well divided that the judges have power to break all acts of the Legislature interfering with the exercise of their office.

*January 20.* The fate of the King disturbs everybody.

*January 21.* I had engaged to pass this day, which is one of horror, at Versailles, with Mr. Morris. The King was beheaded at eleven o'clock. Guards at an early hour took possession of the Place Louis XV., and were

posted at each avenue. The most profound stillness prevailed. Those who had feeling lamented in secret in their houses, or had left town. Others showed the same levity and barbarous indifference as on former occasions. Hitchborn, Henderson, and Johnson went to see the execution, for which, as an American, I was sorry. The King desired to speak: he had only time to say he was innocent, and forgave his enemies. He behaved with the fortitude of a martyr. Santerre ordered the executioner to dispatch.

Louis Napoleon ordered the destruction of this venerable monument of antiquity, and did much else to efface the landmarks of the ancient Paris, and to give his elegant capital the air of a city entirely modern.

The history of the Bastille has been published in many volumes, some of which I have read. It was the convenient dark closet of the French nursery. Whoever gave trouble to the Government or to any of its creatures was liable to be set away here without trial or resource. One prisoner confined in it escaped by patiently unravelling his shirts and drawers of silk, and twisting them into a thick cord, by means of which he reached the moat, and so passed beyond bounds.

An historical personage, whose name is unknown, passed many years in this sad place, wearing an iron mask, which no official ever saw removed. He is supposed by some to have been a twin brother of the King, Louis XIV.; so we see that, although it might seem a piece of good fortune to be born so near the crown, it might also prove to be the greatest of misfortunes. Think what must have been the life of that captive—how blank, weary, and indignant!

When the Bastille was destroyed, a prisoner was found who had suffered so severely from the cold and damp of its dungeons that his lips had split completely open, leaving his teeth exposed. Carlyle describes the commandant of the fortress carried along in the hands of an infuriated mob, crying out with piteous supplication: "O friends, kill me quick!" The fury was indeed natural, but better resource against tyranny had been the calm, strong will and deliberate judgment. It is little to kill the tyrant and destroy his tools. We must study to find out what qualities in the ruler and the ruled make tyranny possible, and then defeat it, once and forever.

The hospital of the *Invalides* was built by Louis XIV., as a refuge for disabled soldiers. This large edifice forms a hollow square, and is famous for its dome,—one of the four real domes of the world, the others being the dome of St. Sophia, in Constantinople; that of St. Peter's, in Rome; and the grand dome of our own Capitol, in Washington.

I have paid several visits to this interesting establishment, with long intervals between. When I first saw it, fifty years ago, there were many of Napoleon's old soldiers within its walls. On one occasion, one of these old men showed us with some pride the toy fortifications which he had built, guarded by toy soldiers. "There is the bridge of Lodi," he said, and pointing to a little wooden figure, "there stands the Emperor." At this time, the remains of the first Napoleon slumbered in St. Helena.

I saw the monument complete in 1867. It had then been open long to the public. The marble floor and steps around the tomb of the first Napoleon were literally carpeted with wreaths and garlands. The brothers of the great man lay around him, in sarcophagi of costliest marble, their names recorded not as Bonapartes, but as Napoleons. A dreary echo may have penetrated even to these dead ears in 1870, when the column of the Place Vendome fell, with the well-known statue for which it was only a pedestal, and when the third Napoleon took his flight, repudiated and detested.

But to return. In 1851 I again saw Paris. The *coup d'état* had not then fallen. Louis Napoleon was still President, and already unpopular. Murmurs were heard of his inevitable defeat in the election which was already in men's minds. Louis Philippe was an exile in Scotland. While I was yet in Paris, the ex-King died; but the announcement produced little or no sensation in his ancient capital.

A process was then going on of substituting asphaltum pavements for the broad, flat paving-stones which had proved so available in former barricades. The President, perhaps, had coming exigencies in view. The people looked on in rather sullen astonishment. Not long after this, I found myself at Versailles on a day set apart for a visit from the President and his suite. The great fountains were advertised to play in honor of the occasion. From hall to hall of the immense palace we followed, at a self-respecting distance, the sober *cortége* of the President. A middle-sized, middle-aged man, he appeared to us.

The tail of this comet was not then visible, and the star itself exhibited but moderate dimensions. The corrupting influence of absolutism had not yet penetrated the tissues of popular life. The theatres were still loyal to decency and good taste. Manners and dress were modest; intemperance was rarely seen.

A different Paris I saw in 1867. The dragon's teeth had been sown and were ripening. The things which were Cæsar's had made little account of the things which were God's. A blight had fallen upon men and women. The generation seemed to have at once less self-respect and less politeness than those which I had formerly known. The city had been greatly modernized, perhaps embellished, but much of its historic interest had disappeared. The theatres were licentious. Friends said: "Go, but do not take your daughters." The drivers of public carriages were often intoxicated.

The great Exposition of that year had drawn together an immense crowd from all parts of the

world. Among its marvels, my recollection dwells most upon the gallery of French paintings, in which I stood more than once before a full-length portrait of the then Emperor. I looked into the face which seemed to say: "I have succeeded. What has any one to say about it?" And I pondered the slow movements of that heavenly Justice whose infallible decrees are not to be evaded. In this same gallery was that sitting statue of the dying Napoleon which has since become so familiar to the world of art. Crowns of immortelles always lay at the feet of this statue. And I, in my mind, compared the statue and the picture,—the great failure and the great success. But in Bismarck's mind, even then, the despoiling of France was predetermined.

What lessons shall we learn from this imperfect sketch of Paris? What other city has figured so largely in literature? None that I know of, not even Rome and Athens. The young French writers of our time make a sketch of some corner of Parisian life, and it becomes a novel.

French history in modern times is largely the history of Paris. The modern saying has been that Paris was France. But we shall say: It is not. Had Paris given a truer representation to France, she might have avoided many long agonies and acute crises.

It is because Paris has forced her representation upon France that Absolutism and Intelligence, the two deadly foes, have fought out their fiercest battles on the genial soil which seems never to have been allowed to bear its noblest fruits. The tendency to centralization, with which the French have been so justly reproached, may or may not be inveterate in them as a people. If it is so, the tendency of modern times, which is mostly in the contrary direction, would lessen the social and political importance of France as surely, if not as swiftly, as Bismarck's mulcting and mutilation.

The organizations which result from centralization are naturally despotic and, in so far, demoralizing. Individuals, having no recognized representation, and being debarred the natural resource of legitimate association, show their devotion to progress and their zeal for improvement either in passionate and melancholy appeals or in secret manœuvrings. The tendency of these methods is to chronic fear on the one hand and disaffection on the other, and to deep conspiracies and sudden seditions which astonish the world, but which have in them nothing astonishing for the student of human nature.

So those who love France should implore her to lay aside her quick susceptibilities and irritable enthusiasms, and to study out the secret of her own shortcomings. How is it that one of the most intelligent nations of the world was, twenty years ago, one of the least instructed? How is it that a warm-blooded, affectionate race generates such atrocious social heartlessness? How was it that the nation which was the apostle of freedom in 1848 kept Rome for twenty years in bondage? How is it that the Jesuit, after long exile, has been reinstalled in its midst with prestige and power? How is it, in so brilliant and liberal a society, that the successors of Henri IV. and Sully are yet to be found?

Perhaps the reason for some of these things lay in the treason of this same Henri IV. He was a Protestant at heart, and put on the Catholic cloak in order to wear the crown. "The kingdom of France," said he, or one of his admirers, "is well worth hearing a mass or two." "The kingdom of the world," said Christ, "is a small thing for a man to gain in exchange for the kingdom of his own honest soul." Henri IV. made this bad bargain for himself and for France. He did it, doubtless, in view of the good his reign might bring to the distracted country. But he had better have given her the example, sole and illustrious, of the most brilliant man of the time putting by its most brilliant temptation, and taking his seat low on the ground with those whose hard-earned glory it is to perish for conscience's sake.

But the great King is dead, long since, and his true legacy—his wonderful scheme of European liberation and pacification—has only been represented by a little newspaper, edited in Paris, but published in Geneva, and called *The United States of Europe*.

So our word to France is: Try to solve the problem of modern Europe with the great word which Henri IV. said, in a whisper, to his other self, the minister Sully. Learn that social forces are balanced first by being allowed to exist. Mutilation is useless in a world in which God continues to be the Creator. Every babe that he sends into the world brings with it a protest against absolutism. The babe, the nation, may be robbed of its birthright; but God sends the protest still. And France did terrible wrong to the protest of her own humanity when she suffered her Protestant right hand to be cut off, and a great part of her most valuable population to submit to the alternative of exile or apostasy.

So mad an act as this does not stand on the record of modern times. The apostate has no spiritual country; the exile has no geographical country. The men who are faithful to their religious convictions are faithful to their patriotic duties. What a premium was set upon falsehood, what a price upon faith, when all who held the supremacy of conscience a higher fact than the supremacy of Rome were told to renounce this confession or to depart!

If Paris gives to our mind some of the most brilliant pictures imaginable, she also gives us some of the most dismal. While her drawing-rooms were light and elegant, her streets were dark and wicked. Among her hungry and ignorant populace, Crime planted its bitter seeds and ripened its bloody crop. Police annals show us that Eugène Sue has not exaggerated the truth in his portraits of the vicious population of the great city. London has its hideous dens of vice, but Paris has, too, its wicked institutions.



Its greatest offences, upon which I can only touch, regard the relations between men and women. Its police regulations bearing upon this point are dishonoring to any Christian community. Its social tone in this respect is scarcely better. Men who have the dress and appearance of gentlemen will show great insolence to a lady who dares to walk alone, however modestly. Marriage is still a matter of bargain and interest, and the modes of conduct which set its obligations at naught are more open and recognized here than elsewhere. The city would seem, indeed, to be the great market for that host of elegant rebels against virtue who are willing to be admired without being respected, and who, with splendid clothes and poor and mean characteristics, are technically called the *demi-monde*, the half-world of Paris.

The corruption of young men and young women which this state of things at once recognizes and fosters is such as no state can endure without grievous loss of its manhood and womanhood. The Turks knew their power when they could compel from the Greeks the tribute of their children, to be trained as Turks, not as Christians. Must not the Spirit of evil in like manner exult at his hold upon the French nation, when it allows him to enslave its youth so largely, consoling itself for the same with a shrug at the inevitable nature of human folly, or with some witty saying which will be at once acknowledgment of and excuse for what cannot be justified?

Gambling has been one of the crying vices of the French metropolis, and the "hells" of Paris were familiarly spoken of in my youth. These were the gambling-houses, in that day among the most brilliant and ruinous of their kind. Government has since then interfered to abolish them. Still, I suppose that much money is lost and won at play in Paris. From this and other irregularities, many suicides result. One sees in numerous places in Paris, particularly near the river, placards announcing "help to the drowned and asphyxiated," a plunge into the Seine, and a sitting with a pan of charcoal being the favorite methods of self-destruction. All have heard of the Morgue, a building in which, every day, the lifeless bodies found in the river are exposed upon marble slabs, in order that the friends of the dead—if they have any—may recognize and claim them. I believe that this sad place is rarely without its appropriate occupants.

Through the kindness of our minister, I was able, some years since, to attend more than one session of the French Parliament. This body, like our own Congress, consists of two houses. An outsider does not see any difference of demeanor between these two. An American visiting either the French Senate or the Chamber of Deputies will be surprised at the noise and excitement which prevail. The presiding officer agitates his bell again and again, to no purpose. He constantly cries, in a piteous tone: "Gentlemen, a little silence, if you please." In the Senate, one of the ushers with great pride pointed out to me Victor Hugo in his seat.

I have seen this venerable man of letters several times,—once in his own house, and once at a congress of literary people in Paris, where, as president of the congress, he made the opening address. This he read from a manuscript, in a sonorous voice, and with much dignity of manner. He was heard with great interest, and was interrupted by frequent applause.

A number of invitations were given for this first meeting of the literary congress, which was held in one of the largest theatres of the city. I had been fortunate enough to receive one of these cards, but upon seeking for admission to the subsequent sittings of the congress, I was told that no ladies were admitted to them. So you see that Lucy Stone's favorite assertion that "women are people" does not hold good everywhere.

An esteemed Parisian friend had offered me an introduction to Victor Hugo, and the great man had signified his willingness to receive a visit from me. On the evening appointed for this visit, I called at his house, accompanied by my daughter. We were first shown into an anteroom, and presently into a small drawing-room, of which the walls and furniture were covered with a striped satin material, in whose colors red predominated. The venerable viscount kissed my hand and that of my young companion with the courtesy belonging to other times than the present. He was of middle height, reasonably stout. His eyes were dark and expressive, and his hair and beard snow-white. Several guests were present,—among others, the widow of one of his sons, recently married to a second husband.

Victor Hugo seated himself alone upon a sofa, and talked to no one. While the rest of the company kept up a desultory conversation, a servant announced M. Louis Blanc, and our expectations were raised only to be immediately lowered, for at this announcement Victor Hugo arose and withdrew into another room, from which we were able to hear the two voices in earnest conversation, but from which neither gentleman appeared. Was not this disappointment like one of those dreams in which, just as you are about to attain some object of intense desire, the power of sleep deserts you, and you awake to life's plain prose?

The shops of Paris are wonderfully well mounted and well served. The display in the windows is not so large in proportion to the bulk of merchandise as it is apt to be with us. Still, these windows do unfold a catalogue of temptations longer than that of Don Giovanni's sins.

Among them all, the jewellers' shops attract most. The love of human beings for jewelry is a feature almost universal. The savage will give land for beads. The women of Christendom will do the same thing. I have seen fine displays of this kind in London, Rome, and Geneva. But in Paris, these exhibits seem to characterize a certain vivid passion for adornment, which is kindled and kept alive in the minds of French women, and is by them communicated to the feminine world at

large.

The French woman of condition wears nothing which can be called *outré*. She loves costly attire, but her taste, and that of her costumer, are perfect. She wears the most delicate and harmonious shades, and the most graceful forms. She never caricatures the fashion by exaggerating it. English women of the same social position are more inclined to what is tawdry, and have surely a less perfect sense of color and adaptation.

Parisians are very homesick people when obliged to forsake their capital. Madame de Staël, in full view of the beautiful lake of Geneva, said that she would much prefer a view of the gutter in the Rue de Bac, which in her day had not the attractions of the Bon Marché emporium, so powerful to-day.

I should deserve ill of my subject if I failed to say that the great issues of progress are to-day dearly and soberly held to by the intelligence of the French people, and the good faith of their representatives. In the history of the present republic, the solid interests of the nation have slowly and steadfastly gained ground.

The efforts which forward these seem to me to culminate in the measures which are intended at once to establish popular education and to defend it from ecclesiastical interference. The craze for military glory is also yielding before the march of civilization, and the ambitions which build up society are everywhere gaining upon the passions which destroy it.

In the last forty-five years, the social relations of France to the civilized world have undergone much alteration. The magnificent traditions of ancient royalty have become entirely things of the past. The genius of the first Napoleon has passed out of people's minds. The social prestige of France is no longer appealed to, no longer felt.

We read French novels, because French novelists have an admirable style of narrating, but we no longer go to them for powerful ideals of life and character. The modern world has outgrown the Gallic theories of sex. We are tired of hearing about the women whose merit consists in their loving everything better than their husbands. In this light artillery of fashion and fiction, France no longer holds the place which was hers of old.

In losing these advantages, she has, I think, gained better things. The struggle of the French people to establish and maintain a republic in the face of and despite monarchical Europe is a heroic one, worthy of all esteem and sympathy. In science, France has never lost her eminence. In serious literature, in the practical philosophy of history, in criticism of the highest order, the French are still masters in their own way. Notwithstanding their evil legislation regarding women, their medical authorities have been most generous to our women students of medicine. Many of these have crossed the Atlantic to seek in France that clinical study and observation from which they have been in great measure debarred in our own country.

There is still much bigotry and intolerance, much shallow scepticism and false philosophy; but there is also, underneath all this, the germ of great and generous qualities which place the nation high in the scale of humanity.

I should be glad to bind together these scattered statements into some great, instructive lesson for France and for ourselves. Perhaps the best thing that I can do in this direction will be to suggest to Americans the careful study of French history and of French character. The great divisions of the world to-day are invaded by travel, and the iron horse carries civilization far and wide. Many of those who go abroad may, however, be found to have less understanding regarding foreign countries than those who have learned all that may be learned concerning them from history and literature. To many Americans, Paris is little more than the place of shops and of fashions. I have been mortified sometimes at the familiarity which our travellers show with all that may be bought and sold on the other side of the ocean, combined with an arrant and arrogant ignorance concerning the French people and the country in which they live.

Even to the most careful observer, the French are not easy to be understood. The most opposite statements may be made about them. Some call them noble; others, ignoble. To some, they appear turbulent and ferocious; to others, slavish and cowardly. Great thinkers do not judge them in this offhand way, and from such we may learn to make allowances for the fact that monarchic and aristocratic rule create and foster great inequalities of character and intelligence among the nations in which they prevail. Limitations of mind and of opinion are inherited from generations which have been dwarfed by political and spiritual despotism; and in such countries, the success of liberal institutions, even if emphatically assured, is but slowly achieved and established.

A last word of mine shall commend this Paris to those who are yet to visit it. Let me pray such as may have this experience not to suppose that they have read the wonderful riddle of this city's life when they shall have seen a few of its shops, palaces, and picture-galleries. If they wish to understand what the French people are, and why they are what they are, they will have to study history, politics, and human nature pretty deeply.

If they wish to have an idea of what the French may become, they must keep their faith in all that America finds precious and invaluable,—in free institutions, in popular education, and, above all, in the heart of the people. Never let them believe that while freedom ennobles the Anglo-Saxon, it brutalizes the Gaul. Despotism brutalizes for long centuries, and freedom cannot ennoble in a moment. But give it time and room, and it will ennoble. And let Americans who go to

Paris remember that they should there represent republican virtue and intelligence.

How far this is from being the case some of us may know, and others guess. Americans who visit Paris very generally relax their rules of decorum and indulge in practices which they would not venture to introduce at home. Hence they are looked upon with some disfavor by the more serious part of the French people, while the frivolous ridicule them at will. But I could wish that, in visiting a nation to whom we Americans owe so much, we could think of something besides our own amusement and the buying of pretty things to adorn our persons and our houses. I could wish that we might visit schools, prisons, Protestant churches, and hear something of the charities and reforms of the place, and of what the best thinkers are doing and saying. I blush to think of the gold which Americans squander in Paris, and of the bales of merchandise of all sorts which we carry away. Far better would it be if we made friends with the best people, exchanging with them our best thought and experience, helping and being helped by them in the good works which redeem the world. Better than the full trunk and empty purse, which usually mark a return from Paris, will be a full heart and a hand clasping across the water another hand, pure and resolute as itself,—the hand of progress, the hand of order, the hand of brotherly kindness and charity.

## Greece Revisited

I SPEAK of a country to which all civilized countries are deeply indebted.

The common speech of Europe and America shows this. In whatever way the languages of the western world have been woven and got together, they all show here and there some golden gleam which carries us back to the Hellenic tongue. Philosophy, science, and common thought alike borrow their phraseology from this ancient source.

I need scarcely say by what a direct descent all arts may claim to have been recreated by Greek genius, nor can I exaggerate the importance of the Greek poets, philosophers, and historians in the history of literature. Rules of correct thinking and writing, the nice balance of rhetoric, the methods of oratory, the notions of polity, of the correlations of social and national interests,—in all of these departments the Greeks may claim to have been our masters, and may call us their slow and blundering pupils.

A wide interval lies between these glories and the Greece of to-day. Nations, like individuals, have their period of growth and decay, their limit of life, which human devices seem unable to prolong. But while systems of government and social organization change, race perseveres. The Greeks, like the Hebrews, when scattered and powerless at home, have been potent abroad. Deprived for centuries of political and national existence, the spirit of their immortal literature, the power of their subtle and ingenious mind, have leavened and fashioned the mind, not of Europe only, but of the thinking world.

Let us recall the briefest outline of the story. The states of ancient Greece, always divided among themselves, in time invited the protection of the Roman Empire, hoping thereby to attain peace and tranquillity. Rome of to-day shows how her officials of old plundered the temples and galleries of the Greeks, while her literary men admired and imitated the Hellenic authors.

At a later day, the beauty of the Orient seduced the stern heart of Roman patriotism. A second Rome was built on the shores of the Bosphorus,—a city whose beauty of position excelled even the dignity of the seven hills. Greek and Roman, eastern and western, became mingled and blent in a confusion with which the most patient scholar finds it difficult to deal. Then came a political division,—eastern and western empires, eastern and western churches, the Bishop of Rome and the Patriarch of Constantinople. Other great changes follow. The western empire crumbles, takes form again under Charlemagne, finally disappears. The eastern empire follows it. The Turk plants his standard on the shores of the Bosphorus. The sacred city falls into his hands, without contradiction, so far as Europe is concerned. The veil of a dark and bloody barbarism hides the monuments of a most precious civilization. It is the age of blood. The nations of Western Europe have still the faith and the attributes of bandits. The Turkish ataghan is stronger than the Greek pen and chisel. The new race has a military power of which the old could only faintly dream.

And so the last Constantine falls, and Mahmoud sweeps from earth the traces of his reign. In the old Church of St. Sophia, now the Mosque of Omar, men show to-day, far up on one of the columns, the impress of the conqueror's bloody hand, which could only strike so high because the floor beneath was piled fathom-deep with Christian corpses.

Another period follows. The Turk establishes himself in his new domain, and employs the Greek to subjugate the Greek. Upon each Greek family the tribute of a male child is levied; and this child is bred up in Turkish ways, and taught to turn his weapon against the bosom of his mother country. From these babes of Christian descent was formed the corps of the Janissaries, a force so dangerous and deadly that the representative of Turkish rule was forced at a later day to plan and accomplish its destruction.

The name "Greek" in this time no longer suggested a nation. I myself, in my childhood, knew a young Greek, escaped from the massacres of Scio, who told me that when, having learned English, he heard himself spoken of as "the Greek," his first thought was that those who so spoke of him were waiting to cut his throat.

Now follows another epoch. Western Europe is busied in getting a little civilization. Baptized mostly by force, *vi et armis*, she has still to be Christianized: she has America to discover and to settle. She has to go to school to the ghosts of Greece and Arabia, in order to have a grammar and to learn arithmetic. There are some wars of religion, endless wars for territorial aggrandizement. Europe is still a congress of the beasts,—lion, tiger, boar, rhinoceros, all snared together by the tortuous serpent of diplomacy.

I pause, for out of this dark time came your existence and mine. A small barque crosses the sea; a canoe steals toward the issue of a mighty river. Such civilization as Europe has plants itself out in a new country, in a virgin soil; and in the new domain are laid the foundations of an empire whose greatness is destined to reside in her peaceful and beneficent offices. Her task it shall be to feed the starving emigrant, to give land and free citizenship to those dispossessed of both by the greed of the old feudal systems.

In the fulness of this young nation's life, a cry arose from that ancient mother of arts and sciences. The Greek had arisen from his long sleep, had become awake to the fact that civilization is more potent than barbarism. Strong in this faith, Greece had closed in a death struggle with the assassin of her national life. Through the enthusiasm of individuals, not through the policy of governments, the desperate, heroic effort received aid. From the night of ages, from the sea of blood, Greece arose, shorn of her fair proportions, pointing to her ruined temples, her mutilated statues, her dishonored graves.

Americans may be thankful that this strange resurrection was not beheld by our fathers with indifference. From their plenty, a duteous tribute more than once went forth to feed and succor the country to which all owe so much. And so an American, to-day, can look upon the Acropolis without a blush—though scarcely without a tear.

Contenting myself with this brief retrospect, I must turn from the page of history to the record of individual experience.

My first visit to Athens was in the year 1867. The Cretans were at this time engaged in an energetic struggle for their freedom, and my husband was the bearer of certain funds which he and others had collected in America for the relief of the destitute families of the insurgents. A part of this money was employed in sending provisions to the Island of Crete, where the women and children had taken refuge in the fortresses of the mountains, subject to great privations, and in danger of absolute starvation.

With the remainder of the fund, schools were endowed in Athens for the children of the Cretan refugees. My husband's efforts were seconded by an able Greek committee; and when, at the close of his labors, he turned his face homeward, he was followed by the prayers and thanksgivings of those whose miseries he had been enabled to relieve.

Nearly ten years later than the time just spoken of, I again threaded my way between the isles of Greece and arrived at the Piræus, the ancient port of Athens. A railway now connects these two points; but on this occasion, we did not avail ourselves of it, preferring to take a carriage for the short distance.

In approaching Athens for the second time, my first surprise was to find that it had grown to nearly double the size which I remembered ten years before. The cleanly, thrifty, and cheerful aspect of the city presented the greatest contrast to the squalor and filth of Constantinople, which I had just left. The perfect blue of the heavens brought out in fine effect the white marble of the new buildings, some of which are costly and even magnificent. Yet there, in full sight, towering above everything else, stood the unattainable beauty, the unequalled, unrivalled Parthenon.

I made several pilgrimages to the Acropolis, eager to revive my recollection respecting the design and history of its various monuments. I listened again and again to the statements of well-read archæologists concerning the uses of the temples, the positions of the statues and bas-reliefs, the hundred gates, and the triumphal road which led up to the height crowned with glories.

But while I gave ear to what is more easily forgotten than remembered,—the story of the long-vanished past,—my eyes received the impression of a beauty that cannot perish. I did not say to the Parthenon: Thou *wert*, but, Thou *art* so beautiful, in thy perfect proportion, in thy fine workmanship!

What silver chisel turned the tender leaves of this marble foliage? Here is a little bit, a yard or so, which has escaped the gnawing of the elements, lying turned away from the course of the winds and rains! No king of to-day, in building his palace, can order such a piece of work. Artist he can find none to equal it. And I am proud to say that no king nor millionaire to-day can buy this, or any other fragment belonging to this sacred spot. What England took before Greece became a power again, she may keep, because the British Museum is a treasure-house for the world. But she will never repeat the theft: she is too wise to-day. Christendom is too wise, and the Greeks have learned the value of what they still possess.

At the Acropolis, the theatre of Bacchus had been excavated a short time before my previous visit. Near it they have now brought to light the temple of Æsculapius. This temple, with the theatre of Bacchus and that of Herodius Atticus, occupies the base of the Acropolis, on the side that looks toward the sea.

As one stands in the light of the perfect sky, discerning in the distance that perfect sea, something of the cheerfulness of the ancient Greeks makes itself felt, seems to pervade the landscape. Descending to the theatre of Bacchus, the visitor may call up in his mind the vision of the high feast of mirth and hilarity. Here was the stage; here are, still entire, the marble seats occupied by the priests and other high dignitaries, with one or two interesting bas-reliefs of the god.

When I visited Greece in 1867, I found no proper museum containing the precious fragments and works of art still left to the much-plundered country. Some of these were preserved in the Theseion, a fine temple well known to many by engravings. They were, however, very ill-arranged, and could not be seen with comfort. I now found all my old favorites and many others enshrined in the three museums which had been added to the city during my absence.

One of them is called the Barbakion. It contains, among other things, a number of very ancient vases, on one of which the soul is represented by a female figure with wings. Among these vases is a series relating to family events, one showing a funeral, one a nativity, while two others commemorate a bridal occasion. In one of these last, the bride sits holding Eros in her arms, while her attendants present the wedding gifts; in the other, moves the bridal procession, accompanied by music. Here are preserved many small figures in clay, commonly spoken of in Greece as the Tanagra dolls. A fine collection of these has been given to the Boston Art Museum by a well-known patron of all arts, the late Thomas G. Appleton. Here we saw a cremating pot of bronze, containing the charred remains of a human body. I afterwards saw—at the Keramika, an ancient cemetery—the stone vase from which this pot was taken.

Among the objects shown at this museum was a beautiful set of gold jewelry found in the cemetery just mentioned. It consisted of armllets, bracelets, ear-rings, and a number of finger-rings, among which was one of the coiled serpents so much in vogue to-day. I found here some curious flat-bottomed pitchers, with a cocked-hat cover nicely fitted on. This Greek device may have supplied the pattern for the first cocked hat,—Dr. Holmes has told us about the last.

But nothing in this collection impressed me more than did an ancient mask cast from a dead face. This mask had lately been made to serve as a matrix; and a plaster cast, newly taken from it, gave us clearly the features and expression of the countenance, which was removed from us by æons of time.

A second museum is that built at the Acropolis, which contains many fragments of sculpture, among which I recognized a fine bas-relief representing three women carrying water-jars, and a small figure of wingless Victory, both of which I had seen twelve years before, exposed to the elements.

But the principal museum of the city, a fine building of dazzling white marble, is the patriotic gift of a wealthy Greek, who devoted to this object a great part of his large fortune. In this building are arranged a number of the ancient treasures brought to light through the persevering labors of Dr. and Mrs. Schliemann. As the doctor has published a work giving a detailed account of these articles, I will mention only a few of them.

Very curious in form are the gold cups found in the treasury of Agamemnon. They are shaped a little like a flat champagne glass, but do not expand at the base, standing somewhat insecurely upon the termination of their stems. Here, too, are masks of thin beaten gold, which have been laid upon the faces of the dead. Rings, ear-rings, brooches, and necklaces there are in great variety; among the first, two gold signet rings of marked beauty. I remember, also, several sets of ornaments, resembling buttons, in gold and enamel.

From the main building, we passed into a fine gallery filled with sculptures, many of which are monumental in character. I will here introduce two pages from my diary, written almost on the spot:—

Nothing that I have seen in Athens or elsewhere impresses me like the Greek marbles which I saw yesterday in the museum, most of which have been found and gathered since my visit in 1867. A single monumental slab had then been excavated, which, with the help of Pausanias, identified the site of the ancient Keramika, a place of burial. Here have been found many tombs adorned with bas-reliefs, with a number of vases and several statues. How fortunate has been the concealment of these works of art until our time, by which, escaping Roman rapacity and Turkish barbarism, they have survived the wreck of ages, to show us, to-day, the spirit of family life among the ancient Greeks! Italy herself possesses no Greek relics equal in this respect to those which I contemplated yesterday. For any student of art or of history, it is worth crossing the ocean and encountering all fatigues to read this imperishable record of human sentiment and relation; for while the works of ancient art already familiar to the public show us the artistic power and the sense of beauty with which this people were so marvellously endowed, these marbles make evident the feelings with which they regarded their dead.

Perhaps the first lesson one draws from their contemplation is the eternity, so to speak, of the family affections. No words nor work have ever portrayed a regard more tender than is shown in these family groups, in which the person about to depart is represented in a sitting posture, while his nearest friends or relatives stand near, expressing in their countenances and action the sorrow and pathos of the final separation. Here an

aged father gives the last blessing to the son who survives and mourns him. Here a dying mother reclines, surrounded by a group of friends, one of whom bears in her arms the infant whose birth, presumably, cost the mother her life. Two other slabs represent partings between a mother and her child. In one of these the young daughter holds to her bosom a dove, in token of the innocence of her tender age. In the other, the mother is bending over the daughter with a sweet, sad seriousness. Other groups show the parting of husband and wife, friend from friend; and I now recall one of these in which the expression of the clasped hands of two individuals excels in tenderness anything that I have ever seen in paint or marble. The Greeks, usually so reserved in their portrayal of nature, seem in these instances to have laid aside the calm cloak of restraint which elsewhere enwrapped them, in order to give permanent expression to the tender and beautiful associations which hallow death.

#### TWO DRAMAS

In the Bacchus theatre,  
With the wreck of countless years,  
The thought of the ancient jollity  
Moved me almost to tears.

Bacchus, the god who brightens life  
With sudden, rosy gleam,  
Lighting the hoary face of Age  
With Youth's surpassing dream,

The tide that swells the human heart  
With inspiration high,  
Ebbing and sinking at sunset fall  
To dim eternity.

-----  
In the halls where treasured lie  
The monumental stones  
That stood where men no longer leave  
The mockery of their bones,

Why did I smile at the marble griefs  
Who wept for the bygone joy?  
Within that sorrow dwells a good  
That Time can ne'er destroy.

Th' immortal depths of sympathy  
All measurements transcend,  
And in man's living marble seal  
The love he bears his friend.

It would take me long to tell how much Athens has been enriched by the munificence of her wealthy merchants, whose shrewdness and skill in trade are known all over the world. Of some of these, dying abroad, the words may well be quoted: "*Moriens reminiscitur Argos*," as they have bequeathed for the benefit of their beloved city the sums of money which have a permanent representation in the public buildings I have mentioned, and many others. Better still than this, a number of individuals of this class have returned to Greece, to end their days beneath their native skies, and the social resources of the metropolis are enlarged by their presence.

This leads us to what may interest many more than statements concerning buildings and antiquities,—the social aspect of Athens.

The court and high society, or what is called such, asks our first attention. The royal palace, a very fine one, was built by King Otho. The present King and Queen are very simple in their tastes. One meets them walking among the ruins and elsewhere in plain dress, with no other escort than a large dog. The visit which I now describe took place in Carnival time, and we heard, on our arrival, of a court ball, for which we soon received cards. We were admonished by the proper parties to come to the palace before nine o'clock, in order that we might be in the ball-room before the entrance of the King and Queen. We repaired thither accordingly, and, passing through a hall lined with officials and servants in livery, ascended the grand staircase, and were soon in a very elegant ball-room, well filled with a creditable *beau monde*. The servants of the palace all wore Palikari costume,—the white skirt and full-sleeved shirt, with embroidered vest and leggings. The ladies present were attired with a due regard for Paris in general, and for Worth in particular. The gentlemen were either in uniform, or in that inexpressibly sleek and mournful costume which is called "evening dress."

We were presently introduced to the maids of honor, one of whom bore the historic name of Kolokotronis. They were dressed in white, and wore badges on which the crown and the King's initial letter were wrought in small brilliants. Many of the ladies displayed beautiful diamonds.

Presently a hush fell on the rapidly talking assembly. People ranged themselves in a large circle, and the sovereigns entered. The Queen wore a dress of white tulle embroidered with red over white silk, and a garland of flowers in which the same color predominated. Her corsage was adorned with knots of diamonds and rubies, and she wore a complete *parure* of the same costly stones. Their majesties made the round of the circle. We, as strangers, were at once presented to the Queen, who with great affability said to me: "I hear that you have been in Egypt, and that

your daughter ascended the great Pyramid." I made as low a courtesy as was consistent with my dignity as president of a number of clubs. One or two further remarks were interchanged, and the lovely, gracious blonde moved on.

When the presentations and salutations were over, the royal pair proceeded to open the ball, having each some high and mighty partner for the first *contredanse*. The Queen is very fond of dancing, and is happier than some other queens in being allowed to waltz to her heart's content.

There were at the ball three of our fellow-countrymen who could dance. Two of them wore the uniform of our navy, and had kept it very fresh and brilliant. These Terpsichorean gentlemen were matched by three ladies well versed in the tactics of the German. Suddenly a swanlike, circling movement began to distinguish itself from the quick, hopping, German waltz which prevails everywhere in Europe. People looked on with surprise, which soon brightened into admiration. And if any one had said to me: "What is that, mother?" I should have replied: "The Boston, my child."

Lest the Queen's familiarity with my movements should be thought to imply some previous acquaintance between us, I must venture a few words of explanation.

In the first place, I must mention a friend, Mr. Paraskevaïdes, who had been very helpful to Dr. Howe and myself on the occasion of our visit to Athens in 1867. This gentleman was one of the first to greet my daughter and myself, when she, for the first, and I, for the second time, arrived in Athens. It was from him that we heard of the court ball just mentioned, and through him that we received the cards enabling us to attend it. I had given Mr. Paraskevaïdes a copy of the *Woman's Journal*, published in Boston, containing a letter of mine describing a recent visit to Cairo and the Pyramids. Our friend called at the palace to speak of my presence in Athens to the proper authorities, and by chance encountered the Queen as she was stepping into her carriage for a drive. He told her that the widow and daughter of Dr. Howe would attend the evening's ball. She asked what he held in his hand. "A paper, printed in Boston, containing a letter written by Mrs. Howe." "Lend it to me," said the Queen. "I wish to read Mrs. Howe's letter." Thus it was that the Queen was able to greet me with so pleasant a mark of interest.

The King and Queen withdrew just before supper was announced, which was very considerate on their part; for, as royal personages may not eat with others, we could not have had our supper if they had not taken theirs elsewhere. We were then escorted to the banquet hall, where were spread a number of tables, at which the guests stood, and regaled themselves with such customary viands as cold chicken, salad, sandwiches, ices, and fruit. All of the usual wines were served in profusion, with nice black coffee to keep people awake for the German, or, as it is called in Europe, the *cotillon*. And presently we marched back to the ball-room, and the sovereigns re-appeared. The *Germanites* took chairs, the chaperons kept their modest distance, and the thing that hath no end began, the Queen making the first loop in the mazy weaving of the dance. The next thing that I remember was, three o'clock in the morning, a sleepy drive in a carriage, and the talk that you always hear going home from a party. Now, I ask, was not this orthodox?

This being the gay season of the year, we were present at various festivities whose elegance would have done honor to London or Paris. I particularly remember, among these, a fancy ball at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Zyngros. Our hostess was a beautiful woman, and looked every inch a queen, as she stood at the head of her stately marble stairway, in the gold and crimson costume of Catherine de Medici. The ball-room was thronged with Spanish gipsies, Elizabethan nobles, harlequins, Arcadian shepherds, and Greek peasants. I may also mention another ball, at which a band of maskers made their appearance, splendidly attired, and voluble with the squeaking tone which usually accompanies a mask. The master and mistress of the house were prepared for this interruption, which added greatly to the gaiety of the occasion.

I have given a little outline of these gay doings, in order that you may know that the modern Athens is entitled to boast that she possesses all the appliances of civilization. Now let me say a few words of things more interesting to people of thoughtful minds.

I remember with great pleasure an evening passed beneath the roof of Dr. and Mrs. Schliemann. Well known as is Dr. Schliemann by reputation, it is less generally known that his wife, a Greek woman, has had very much to do with both his studies and the success of his excavations. She is considered in Greece a woman of unusual culture, being well versed in the ancient literature of her country. I was present once at a lecture which she gave in London, before the Royal Historical Society. At the close of the lecture, Lord Talbot de Malahide announced that Mrs. Schliemann had been elected a member of the society. The Duke of Argyll was present on this occasion, and among those who commented upon the opinions advanced in the lecture was Mr. Gladstone. Mrs. Schliemann, however, bears her honors very modestly, and is a charming hostess, gracious and friendly, thoroughly liked and esteemed in this her native country, and elsewhere.

The *soirée* at Mrs. Schliemann's was merely a conventional reception, with dancing to the music of a pianoforte. We were informed that our hostess was suffering from the fatigues undergone in assisting her husband's labors, and that the music and dancing were introduced to spare her the strain of overmuch conversation. She was able, however, to receive morning visitors on one day of every week, and I took advantage of this opportunity to see her again. I spoke of her little boy, a child of two years, who had been pointed out to me in the Park, by my friend Paraskevaïdes. He bore the grandiose name of Agamemnon. Presently we heard the voice

of a child below stairs, and Mrs. Schliemann said: "That is my baby; he has just come in with his nurse." I asked that we might see him, and the nurse brought him into the drawing-room. At sight of us, he began to kick and scream. Wishing to soothe him, I said: "Poor little Agamemnon!" Mrs. Schliemann rejoined: "I say, nasty little Agamemnon!"

Is it to be supposed that I entered and left Athens without uttering the cabalistic word "club"? By no means. I found myself one day invited to speak to a number of ladies, at a friend's house, upon a theme of my own choosing; and this theme was, "The Advancement of Women as Promoted by Association." My audience, numbering about forty, was the best that could be gathered in Athens. I found there, as I have found elsewhere in Europe, great need of the new life which association gives, but little courage to take the first step in a new direction. I could only scratch my furrow, drop my seed, and wait, like *Miss Flyte*, in "Bleak House," for a result, if need be, "on the day of judgment."

It is a delight to speak of a deeper furrow which was drawn, ten years earlier, by an abler hand than mine, though several of us gave some help in the work done at that time. I allude to the efforts made by my dear husband in behalf of the suffering Cretans, when they were struggling bravely for the freedom which Europe still denies them. Some of the money raised by his earnest efforts, as I have already said, found its way to the then desolate island, in the shape of provisions and clothing for the wives and children of the combatants. Some of it remained in Athens, and paid for the education of a whole generation of Cretan children exiled from their homes, and rendered able, through the aid thus afforded, to earn their own support.

Some of the money, moreover, went to found an industrial establishment in Athens, which has since been continued and enlarged by funds derived from other sources. This establishment began with two or three looms, the Cretan women being expert weavers, and the object being to enable them to earn their bread in a strange city. And it now has at least a dozen looms, and the Dorian mothers, stately and powerful, sit at them all day long, weaving dainty silken webs, gossamer stuffs, strong cotton fabrics, and serviceable carpets.

In those days I saw Marathon for the first time, and learned the truth of Lord Byron's lines:—

The mountains look on Marathon,  
And Marathon looks on the sea.

This expedition occupied the whole of a winter day. We started from the hotel after early breakfast, and did not regain it until long after dark. Our carriages were accompanied by an escort of dragoons, which the Greek government supplies, not in view of any real danger from brigands, but in order to afford strangers every possible security. A drive of some three hours brought us to the spot.

A level plain, between the mountains and the sea; a mound, raised at its centre, marking the burial-place of those who fell in the famous battle; a sea-beach, washed by blue waves, and basking in the golden Attic sunlight—this is what we saw at Marathon.

Here we gathered pebbles, and I preserved for some days a knot of daisies growing in a grassy clod of earth. But my mind saw in Marathon an earnest of the patriotic spirit which has lifted Greece from such ruin as the Persians were never able to inflict upon her. Worthy descendants of those ancient heroes were the patriots who fought, in our own century, the war of Greek independence. I am glad to think that all heroic deeds have a fatherhood of their own, whose line never becomes extinct.

Those who would institute a comparison between ancient and modern art should first compare the office of art in ancient times with the function assigned it in our own.

The sculptures of classic Greece were primarily the embodiment of its popular theology and the record of its patriotic heroism. They are not, as we might think them, fancy-free. The marble gods of Hellas characterize for us the *morale* of that ancient community. They expressed the religious conviction of the artist, and corresponded to the faith of the multitude. If we recognize the freedom of imagination in their conception, we also feel the reverence which guided the sculptor in their execution. As Emerson has said:—

Himself from God he could not free.

How necessary these marbles were to the devotion of the time, we may infer from the complaint reported in one of Cicero's orations,—that a certain Greek city had been so stripped of its marbles that its people had no god left to pray to.

In the city of the Cæsars, this Greek art became the minister of luxury. The ethics of the Roman people chiefly concerned their relation to the state, to which their church was in great measure subservient. The statues stolen from the worship of the Greeks adorned the baths and palaces of the Emperors. This we must think providential for us, since it is in this way that they have escaped the barbarous destruction which for ages swept over the whole of Greece, and to whose rude force, column, monument, and statue were only raw material for the lime-kiln.

Still more secondary is the position of sculpture in the civilization of to-day. Here and there a monument or statue commemorates some great name or some great event. But these are still outside the current of our daily life. Marble is to us a gospel of death, and we grow less and less fond of its cold abstraction. The glitter of *bric-à-brac*, bits of color, an unexpected shimmer here and there—such are the favorite aspects of art with us.



In saying this, I remember that many beautiful works of art have been purchased by wealthy Americans, and that a surprising number of our people know what is worth purchasing in this line. And yet I think that in the houses of these very people, art is rather the servant of luxury than the embodiment of any strong and sincere affection.

We cannot turn back the tide of progress. We cannot make our religion sculpturesque and picturesque. God forbid that we should! But we can look upon the sculptures of ancient Greece with reverent appreciation, and behold in them a record of the naïve and simple faith of a great people.

If we must speak thus of plastic art, what shall we say of the drama?

Sit down with me before this palace of Œdipus, whose façade is the only scenic aid brought to help the illusion of the play. See how the whole secret and story of the hero's fate is wrought out before its doors, which open upon his youthful strength and glory, and close upon his desolate shame and blindness. Follow the majestic tread of the verse, the perfect progress of the action, and learn the deep reverence for the unseen powers which lifts and spiritualizes the agony of the plot.

Where shall we find a parallel to this in the drama of our day? The most striking contrast to it will be furnished by what we call a "realistic" play, which is a play devised upon the supposition that those who will attend its representation are not possessed of any imagination, but must be dazzled through their eyes and deafened through their ears, until the fatigue of the senses shall take the place of intellectual pleasure. The *dénouement* will, no doubt, present, as it can, the familiar moral that virtue is in the end rewarded, and vice punished. But such virtue! and such vice! How shall we be sure which is which?

During this visit, I had an interview which brought me face to face with some of the Cretan chiefs, who were exiles in Athens at the time of my visit, in consequence of their participation in the more recent efforts of the Islanders to free themselves from the Turkish rule.

I received, one day, official notice that a committee, appointed by a number of the Cretan exiles, desired permission to wait upon me, with the view of presenting an address which should recognize the efforts made by Dr. Howe in behalf of their unfortunate country. In accordance with this request, I named an hour on the following day, and at the appointed time my guests made their appearance. The Cretan chiefs were five in number. All of them, but one, were dressed in the picturesque costume of their country. This one was Katzi Michælis, the youngest of the party, and somewhat more like the world's people than the others. Two of these were very old men, one of them numbering eighty-four years, and bearing a calm and serene front, like one of Homer's heroes. This was old Korakas, who had only laid down his arms within two years. The chiefs were accompanied by several gentlemen, residents of Athens. One of these, Mr. Rainieri, opened proceedings by a few remarks in French, setting forth the object of the visit, and introducing the address of the Cretan committee, which he read in their own tongue:—

MADAM,—

We, the undersigned, emigrants from Crete, who await in free Greece the complete emancipation of our country, have learned with pleasure the fact of your presence in Athens. We feel assured that we shall faithfully interpret the sentiments of our fellow-countrymen by saluting your return to this city, and by assuring you, at the same time, that the remembrance of the benefits conferred by your late illustrious husband is always living in our hearts. When the sun of liberty shall arise upon the Island of Crete, the Cretans will, no doubt, decree the erection of a monument which will attest to succeeding generations the gratitude of our country toward her noble benefactor. For the moment, Madam, deign to accept the simple expression of our sentiments, and our prayers for the prosperity of your family and your nation, to which we and our children shall ever be bound by the ties of gratitude.

The substance of my reply to Mr. Rainieri was as follows:—

MY DEAR SIR,—

I beg that you will express to these gentlemen my gratitude for their visit, and for the sentiments communicated in the address to which I have just listened. I am much moved by the mention made of the services which my late illustrious husband was able to render to the cause of Greece in his youth, and to that of Crete in his later life. It is true that his earliest efforts, outside of his native country, were for Greek independence, and that his latest endeavors in Europe were made in aid of the Cretans, who have struggled with so much courage and perseverance to deliver their country from the yoke of Turkish oppression. Pray assure these gentlemen that my children and I will never cease to pray for the welfare of Greece, and especially for the emancipation of Crete. Though myself already in the decline of life, I yet hope that I shall live long enough to see the deliverance of your island, τὴν ἐλευθερίαν τῆς Κρήτης.

A Greek newspaper's report of this occasion remarked:—

The last words of Mrs. Howe's reply, spoken in Greek, brought tears to the eyes of the heroes, most of whom had known the ever-memorable Dr. Howe in the glorious days of the war of 1821, and had fought with him

against the oppressors. Mr. Rainieri interpreted the meaning of Mrs. Howe's words to his fellow-citizens. After this, Mrs. Howe gave orders for refreshments, and began to talk slowly, but distinctly, in Greek, to the great pleasure of all present, who heard directly from her the voice of her heart.

I will only add that all parties stood during the official part of the interview. This being at an end, coffee and cordials were brought, and we sat at ease, and chatted as well as my limited use of the modern Greek tongue allowed. Before we separated, one of the Greeks present invited the chiefs and myself and daughter to a feast which he proposed to give at Phaleron, in honor of the meeting which I have just described.

Some account of this festivity may not be uninteresting to my readers. I must premise that it was to be no banquet of modern fashion, but a feast of the Homeric sort, in which a lamb, roasted whole in the open air, would be the principal dish. Phaleron, where it was appointed to take place, is an ancient port, only three miles distant from Athens. The sea view from this point is admirable. The bay is small, and its surroundings are highly picturesque. Classic as was the occasion, the unclassic railway furnished our conveyance.

The Cretan chiefs came punctually to the station, and presently we all entered a parlor-car, and were whisked off to the scene of action. This was the hotel at Phaleron, where we found a long table handsomely set out, and adorned with fruits and flowers. The company dispersed for a short time,—some to walk by the shore; some to see the lambs roasting on their spit in the courtyard; I, to sit quietly for half an hour, after which interval, dinner was announced.

Mr. Rainieri gave me his arm, and seated me on his right. On my right sat Katzi Michælis. My daughter and a young cousin were twined in like blooming roses between the gray old chieftains. Paraskevaïdes, the giver of the feast, looked all aglow with pleasure and enthusiasm. Our soup was served,—quite a worldly, French soup. But the Greeks insist that the elaborate style of cookery usually known as French originated with them. Then came a Cretan dish consisting of the liver and entrails of the lambs, twisted and toasted on a spit. Some modern *entremets* followed, and then, as *pièce de résistance*, the lambs, with accompanying salad. Each of the elder chiefs, before tasting his first glass of wine, rose and saluted the company, making especial obeisance to the master of the feast.

The Homeric rage of hunger and thirst having been satisfied, it became time for us to make the most of a reunion so rare in its elements, and necessarily so brief. I will here quote partially the report given in one of the Greek papers of the time. The writer says: "During dinner many warm toasts were drunk. Mr. Rainieri drank to the health of Mrs. Howe. Mr. Paraskevaïdes drank to the memory of Dr. Howe and the health of all freedom-loving Americans, giving his toast first in Greek and afterwards in English. To all this, Mrs. Howe made answer in French, with great sympathy and eloquence." So the paper said, but I will only say that I did as well as I was able.

At the mention of Dr. Howe's name, old Korakas rose, and said: "I assure Mrs. Howe that when, with God's will, Crete becomes free, the Cretans will erect a statue to the memory of her ever-memorable husband." At this time, I thought it only right to propose the memory of President Felton, former president of Harvard University, in his day an ardent lover of Greek literature, and of the land which gave it birth. The eldest son of this lamented friend sat with us at the table, and had become so proficient in the language of the country as to be able to acknowledge the compliment in Greek, which the reporter qualifies as excellent. Apropos of this same reporter, let me say that he entered so heartily into the spirit of the feast as to improvise on the spot some lines of poetry, of which the following is a free translation:—

I greet the warriors of brave Crete  
Assembled in this place.  
Each of them represents her mountains,  
Each her heart, each her breath.  
If life may be measured by struggles,  
So great is her life,  
That on the day when she becomes free  
Two worlds will be filled with the joy of her freedom.

The report says truly that the heroes of Crete, with their white beards, resembled gods of Olympus. The three oldest—Korakas, Kriaris, and Syphacus—spoke of the days in which Dr. Howe, while taking part with them in the military operations of the war of Greek independence, at the same time made his medical skill availing to the sick and wounded.

When we had risen from the board, passing into another room, my daughter saw a ball lying on the table, and soon engaged the ancient chiefs in the pastime of throwing and catching it. "See," said one of the company, "Dr. Howe's daughter is playing with the men who, fifty years ago, were her father's companions in arms."

After the simple patriarchal festivity, the return, even to Athens, seemed a return to the commonplace.

A word regarding the Greek church belongs here. Its ritual represents, without doubt, the most ancient form of worship which can have representation in these days. The church calls itself simply orthodox. It classes Christians as orthodox, Romanist, and Protestant, and condemns the two last-named confessions of faith equally as heresies. The Greek church in Greece has little

zeal for the propaganda of its special doctrine, but it has great zeal against the introduction of any other sect within the boundaries of its domain. Protestant and Catholic congregations are tolerated in Greece, but the attempt to educate Greek children in the tenets held by either is not tolerated, is in fact prohibited by government. I found the religious quiet of Athens somewhat disturbed by the presence of several missionaries, supported by funds from America, who persisted in teaching and preaching; one, after the form of the Baptist, another, after that of the Presbyterian body. The schools formerly established in connection with these missions have been forcibly closed, because those in charge of them would not submit them to the religious authority of the Greek priesthood.

The Sunday preaching of the missionaries, on the other hand, still went on, making converts from time to time, and supplying certainly a direct and vivid influence quite other than the extremely formal teaching of the state church. The most prominent of these missionaries are Greeks who have received their education in America, and who combine a fervent love for their mother country with an equally fervent desire for her religious progress. One can easily understand the attachment of the Greeks to their national church. It has been the ark of safety by which their national existence has been preserved.

When the very name of Hellene was almost obliterated from the minds of those entitled to bear it, the Greek priesthood were unwearied in keeping alive the love of the ancient ritual and doctrine, the belief in the Christian religion. This debt of gratitude is warmly remembered by the Greeks of to-day, and their church is still to them the symbol of national, as well as of religious, unity. On the other hand, the progress of religious thought and culture carries inquiring minds beyond the domain of ancient and literal interpretation, and the outward conformity which society demands is counter-balanced by much personal scepticism and indifference. The missionaries, who cannot compete in polite learning with the *élite* of their antagonists, are yet much better informed than the greater part of the secular clergy, and represent, besides, something of American freedom, and the right and duty of doing one's own thinking in religious matters, and of accepting doctrines, if at all, with a living faith and conviction, not with a dead and formal assent. It is one of those battles between the Past and the Future which have to fight themselves out to an issue that outsiders cannot hasten.

Shall I close these somewhat desultory remarks with any attempt at a lesson which may be drawn from them? Yes; to Americans I will say: Love Greece. Be glad of the men who rose up from your midst at the cry of her great anguish, to do battle in her behalf. Be glad of the money which you or your fathers sent to help her. America never spends money better than in this way. Remember what this generation may be in danger of forgetting,—that we can never be so great ourselves as to be absolved from regarding the struggle for freedom, in the remotest corners of the earth, with tender sympathy and interest. And in the great reactions which attend human progress, when self-interest is acknowledged as the supreme god everywhere, and the ideals of justice and honor are set out of sight and derided, let the heart of this country be strong to protest against military usurpation, against barbarous rule. Let America invite to her shores the dethroned heroes of liberal thought and policy, saying to them: "Come and abide with us; we have a country, a hand, a heart, for you."

## The Salon in America

THE word "society" has reached the development of two opposite meanings. The generic term applies to the body politic *en masse*; the specific term is technically used to designate a very limited portion of that body. The use, nowadays, of the slang expression "society" is evidence that we need a word which we do not as yet possess.

It is with this department of the human fellowship that I now propose to occupy myself, and especially with one of its achievements, considered by some a lost art,—the salon.

This prelude of mine is somewhat after the manner of *Polonius*, but, as Shakespeare must have had occasion to observe, the mind of age has ever a retrospective turn. Those of us who are used to philosophizing must always go back from a particular judgment to some governing principle which we have found, or think we have found, in long experience. The question whether salons are possible in America leads my thoughts to other questions which appear to me to lie behind this one, and which primarily concern the well-being of civilized man.

The uses of society, in the sense of an assemblage for social intercourse, may be briefly stated as follows: first of all, such assemblages are needed, in order to make people better friends. Secondly, they are needed to enlarge the individual mind by the interchange of thought and expression with other minds. Thirdly, they are needed for the utilization of certain sorts and degrees of talent which would not be available either for professional, business, or educational work, but which, appropriately combined and used, can forward the severe labors included under these heads, by the instrumentality of sympathy, enjoyment, and good taste.

Any social custom or institution which can accomplish one or more of these ends will be found

of important use in the work of civilization; but here, as well as elsewhere, the ends which the human heart desires are defeated by the poverty of human judgment and the general ignorance concerning the relation of means to ends. Society, thus far, is a sort of lottery, in which there are few prizes and many blanks, and each of these blanks represents some good to which men and women are entitled, and which they should have, and could, if they only knew how to come at it.

Thus, social intercourse is sometimes so ordered that it develops antagonism instead of harmony, and makes one set of people the enemies of another set, dividing not only circles, but friendships and families. This state of things defeats society's first object, which, in my view, is to make people better friends. Secondly, it will happen, and not seldom, that the frequent meeting together of a number of people, necessarily restricted, instead of enlarging the social horizon of the individual, will tend to narrow it more and more, so that sets and cliques will revolve around small centres of interest, and refuse to extend their scope.

In this way, end number two, the enlargement of the individual mind is lost sight of, and, end number three, the interchange of thought and experience does not have room to develop itself.

People say what they think others want to hear: they profess experiences which they have never had. Here, consequently, a sad blank is drawn, where we might well look for the greatest prize; and, end number four, the utilization of secondary or even tertiary talents is defeated by the application of a certain fashion varnish, which effaces all features of individuality, and produces a wondrously dull surface, where we might have hoped for a brilliant variety of form and color.

These defects of administration being easily recognized, the great business of social organizations ought to be to guard against them in such wise that the short space and limited opportunity of individual life should have offered to it the possibility of a fair and generous investment, instead of the uncertain lottery of which I spoke just now.

One of the great needs of society in all times is that its guardians shall take care that rules or institutions devised for some good end shall not become so perverted in the use made of them as to bring about the result most opposed to that which they were intended to secure. This, I take it, is the true meaning of the saying that "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance," no provision to secure this being sure to avail, without the constant direction of personal care to the object.

The institution of the salon might, in some periods of social history, greatly forward the substantial and good ends of human companionship. I can easily fancy that, in other times and under other circumstances, its influence might be detrimental to general humanity and good fellowship. We can, in imagination, follow the two processes which I have here in mind. The strong action of a commanding character, or of a commanding interest, may, in the first instance, draw together those who belong together. Fine spirits, communicative and receptive, will obey the fine electric force which seeks to combine them,—the great wits, and the people who can appreciate them; the poets, and their fit hearers; philosophers, statesmen, economists, and the men and women who will be able and eager to learn from the informal overflow of their wisdom and knowledge.

Here we may have a glimpse of a true republic of intelligence. What should overthrow it? Why should it not last forever, and be handed down from one generation to another?

The salon is an insecure institution; first, because the exclusion of new material, of new men and new ideas, may so girdle such a society that its very perfection shall involve its death. Then, on account of the false ideas and artificial methods which self-limiting society tends to introduce, in time the genuine basis of association disappears from view: the great *name* is wanted for the reputation of the salon, not the great intelligence for its illumination. The moment that you put the name in place of the individual, you introduce an element of insincerity and failure.

There is a sort of homage quite common in society, which amounts to such flattery as this: "Madam, I assure you that I consider you an eminently brilliant and successful sham. Will you tell me your secret, or shall I, a worker in the same line, tell you mine?" Again, the contradictory objects of our desired salon are its weakness. We wish it to exclude the general public, but we dreadfully desire that it shall be talked about and envied by the general public. These two opposite aims—a severe restriction of membership, and an unlimited extension of reputation—are very likely to destroy the social equilibrium of any circle, coterie, or association.

Such contradictions have deep roots; even the general conduct of neighborhood evinces them. People are often concerned lest those who live near them should infringe upon the rights and reserves of their household. In large cities, people sometimes boast with glee that they have no acquaintance with the families dwelling on either side of them. And yet, in some of those very cities, social intercourse is limited by regions, and one street of fine houses will ignore another, which is, to all appearances, as fine and as reputable. Under these circumstances, some may naturally ask: "Who is my neighbor?" In the sense of the good Samaritan, mostly no one.

Dante has given us pictures of the ideal good and the ideal evil association. The company of his demons is distracted by incessant warfare. Weapons are hurled back and forth between them, curses and imprecations, while the solitary souls of great sinners abide in the torture of their own flame. As the great poet has introduced to us a number of his acquaintance in this infernal abode, we may suppose him to have given us his idea of much of the society of his own time. Such appeared to him that part of the World which, with the Flesh and the Devil, completes the trinity of evil. But, in his Paradiso, what glimpses does he give us of the lofty spiritual communion which

then, as now, redeemed humanity from its low discredit, its spite and malice!

Resist as we may, the Christian order is prevailing, and will more and more prevail. At the two opposite poles of popular affection and learned persuasion, it did overcome the world, ages ago. In the intimate details of life, in the spirit of ordinary society, it will penetrate more and more. We may put its features out of sight and out of mind, but they are present in the world about us, and what we may build in ignorance or defiance of them will not stand. Modern society itself is one of the results of this world conquest which was crowned with thorns nearly two thousand years ago. In spite of the selfishness of all classes of men and women, this conquest puts the great goods of life within the reach of all.

I speak of Christianity here, because, as I see it, it stands in direct opposition to the natural desire of privileged classes and circles to keep the best things for their own advantage and enjoyment. "What, then!" will you say, "shall society become an agrarian mob?" By no means. Its great domain is everywhere crossed by boundaries. All of us have our proper limits, and should keep them, when we have once learned them.

But all of us have a share, too, in the good and glory of human destiny. The free course of intelligence and sympathy in our own commonwealth establishes here a social unity which is hard to find elsewhere. Do not let any of us go against this. Animal life itself begins with a cell, and slowly unfolds and expands until it generates the great electric currents which impel the world of sentient beings.

The social and political life of America has passed out of the cell state into the sweep of a wide and brilliant efficiency. Let us not try to imprison this truly cosmopolitan life in cells, going back to the instinctive selfhood of the barbaric state.

Nature starts from cells, but develops by centres. If we want to find the true secret of social discrimination, let us seek it in the study of centres,—central attractions, each subordinated to the governing harmony of the universe, but each working to keep together the social atoms that belong together. There was a time in which the stars in our beautiful heaven were supposed to be kept in their places by solid mechanical contrivances, the heaven itself being an immense body that revolved with the rest. The progress of science has taught us that the luminous orbs which surround us are not held by mechanical bonds, but that natural laws of attraction bind the atom to the globe, and the globe to its orbit.

Even so is it with the social atoms which compose humanity. Each of them has his place, his right, his beauty; and each and all are governed by laws of belonging which are as delicate as the tracery of the frost, and as mighty as the frost itself.

The club is taking the place of the salon to-day, and not without reason. I mean by this the study, culture, and social clubs, not those modern fortresses in which a man rather takes refuge from society than really seeks or finds it. I have just said that mankind are governed by centres of natural attraction, around which their lives come to revolve. In the course of human progress, the higher centres exercise an ever-widening attraction, and the masses of mankind are brought more and more under their influence.

Now, the affection of fraternal sympathy and good-will is as natural to man, though not so immediate in him, as are any of the selfish instincts. Objects of moral and intellectual worth call forth this sympathy in a high and ever-increasing degree, while objects in which self is paramount call forth just the opposite, and foster in one and all the selfish principle, which is always one of emulation, discord, and mutual distrust. While a salon may be administered in a generous and disinterested manner, I should fear that it would often prove an arena in which the most selfish leadings of human nature would assert themselves.

In the club, a sort of public spirit necessarily develops itself. Each of us would like to have his place there,—yes, and his appointed little time of shining,—but a worthy object, such as will hold together men and women on an intellectual basis, gradually wins for itself the place of command in the affections of those who follow it in company. Each of these will find that his unaided efforts are insufficient for the furthering and illustration of a great subject which all have greatly at heart. I have been present at a forge on which the pure gold of thought has been hammered by thinkers into the rounded sphere of an almost perfect harmony. One and another and another gave his hit or his touch, and when the delightful hour was at an end, each of us carried the golden sphere away with him.

The club which I have in mind at this moment had an unfashionable name, and was scarcely, if at all, recognized in the general society of Boston. It was called the Radical Club,—and the really radical feature in it was the fact that the thoughts presented at its meetings had a root, and were, in that sense, radical. These thoughts, entertained by individuals of very various persuasions, often brought forth strong oppositions of opinion. Some of us used to wax warm in the defence of our own conviction; but our wrath was not the wrath of the peacock, enraged to see another peacock unfold its brilliant tail, but the concern of sincere thinkers that a subject worth discussing should not be presented in a partial and one-sided manner, to which end, each marked his point and said his say; and when our meeting was over, we had all had the great instruction of looking into the minds of those to whom truth was as dear as to ourselves, even if her aspect to them was not exactly what it was to us.

Here I have heard Wendell Phillips and Oliver Wendell Holmes; John Weiss and James Freeman Clarke; Athanase Coquerel, the noble French Protestant preacher; William Henry Channing,

worthy nephew of his great uncle; Colonel Higginson, Dr. Bartol, and many others. Extravagant things were sometimes said, no doubt, and the equilibrium of ordinary persuasion was not infrequently disturbed for a time; but the satisfaction of those present when a sound basis of thought was vindicated and established is indeed pleasant in remembrance.

I feel tempted to introduce here one or two magic-lantern views of certain sittings of this renowned club, of which I cherish especial remembrance. Let me say, speaking in general terms, that, albeit the club was more critical than devout, its criticism was rarely other than serious and earnest. I remember that M. Coquerel's discourse there was upon "The Protestantism of Art," and that in it he combated the generally received idea that the church of Rome has always stood first in the patronage and inspiration of art. The great Dutch painters, Holbein, Rembrandt, and their fellows, were not Roman Catholics. Michael Angelo was protestant in spirit; so was Dante. I cannot recall with much particularity the details of things heard so many years ago, but I remember the presence at this meeting of Charles Sumner, George Hillard, and Dr. Hedge. Mr. Sumner declined to take any part in the discussion which followed M. Coquerel's discourse. Colonel Higginson, who was often present at these meetings, maintained his view that Protestantism was simply the decline of the Christian religion. Mr. Hillard quoted St. James's definition of religion, pure and undefiled,—to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. Dr. Hedge, who was about to withdraw, paused for a moment to say: "The word 'religion' is not rightly translated there; it should mean"—I forgot what. The doctor's tone and manner very much impressed a friend, who afterwards said to me: "Did he not go away 'like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him'?"

Or it might be that John Weiss, he whom a lady writer once described as "four parts spirit and one part flesh," gave us his paper on Prometheus, or one on music, or propounded his theory of how the world came into existence. Colonel Higginson would descant upon the Greek goddesses, as representing the feminine ideals of the Greek mythology, which he held to be superior to the Christian ideals of womanhood,—dear Elizabeth Peabody and I meeting him in earnest opposition. David Wasson, powerful in verse and in prose, would speak against woman suffrage. When driven to the wall, he confessed that he did not believe in popular suffrage at all; and when forced to defend this position, he would instance the wicked and ill-governed city of New York as reason enough for his views. I remember his going away after such a discussion very abruptly, not at all in Dr. Hedge's grand style, but rather as if he shook the dust of our opinions from his feet; for no one of the radicals would countenance this doctrine, and though we freely confessed the sins of New York, we believed not a whit the less in the elective franchise, with amendments and extensions.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, one day, if I remember rightly, gave a very succinct and clear statement of the early forms of Calvinistic doctrine as held in this country, and Wendell Phillips lent his eloquent speech to this and to other discussions.

When I think of it, I believe that I had a salon once upon a time. I did not call it so, nor even think of it as such; yet within it were gathered people who represented many and various aspects of life. They were real people, not lay figures distinguished by names and clothes. The earnest humanitarian interests of my husband brought to our home a number of persons interested in reform, education, and progress. It was my part to mix in with this graver element as much of social grace and geniality as I was able to gather about me. I was never afraid to bring together persons who rarely met elsewhere than at my house, confronting Theodore Parker with some archpriest of the old orthodoxy, or William Lloyd Garrison with a decade, perhaps, of Beacon Street dames. A friend said, on one of these occasions: "Our hostess delights in contrasts." I confess that I did; but I think that my greatest pleasure was in the lessons of human compatibility which I learned on this wise. I started, indeed, with the conviction that thought and character are the foremost values in society, and was not afraid nor ashamed to offer these to my guests, with or without the stamp of fashion and position. The result amply justified my belief.

Some periods in our own history are more favorable to such intercourse than others. The agony and enthusiasm of the civil war, and the long period of ferment and disturbance which preceded and followed that great crisis,—these social agitations penetrated the very fossils of the body politic. People were glad to meet together, glad to find strength and comfort among those who lived and walked by solid convictions. We cannot go back to that time; we would not, if we could; but it was a grand time to live and to work in.

I am sorry when I see people build palaces in America. We do not need them. Why should we bury fortune and life in the dead state of rooms which are not lived in? Why should we double and triple for ourselves the dangers of insufficient drainage or defective sanitation? Let us have such houses as we need,—comfortable, well aired, well lighted, adorned with such art as we can appreciate, enlivened by such company as we can enjoy. Similarly, I believe that we should, individually, come much nearer to the real purpose of a salon by restricting the number of our guests and enlarging their variety.

If we are to have a salon, do not let us think too much about its appearance to the outside world,—how it will be reported, and extolled, and envied. Mr. Emerson withdrew from the Boston Radical Club because newspaper reports of its meetings were allowed. We live too much in public to-day, and desire too much the seal of public notice.

There is not room in our short human life for both shams and realities. We can neither pursue nor possess both. I think of this now entirely with application to the theme under consideration. Let us not exercise sham hospitality to sham friends. Let the heart of our household be sincere;

let our home affections expand to a wider human brotherhood and sisterhood. Let us be willing to take trouble to gather our friends together, and to offer them such entertainment as we can, remembering that the best entertainment is mutual.

But do not let us offend ourselves or our friends with the glare of lights, the noise of numbers, in order that all may suffer a tedious and joyless being together, and part as those who have contributed to each other's *ennui*, all sincere and reasonable intercourse having been wanting in the general encounter.

We should not feel bound, either, to the literal imitation of any facts or features of European life which may not fit well upon our own. In many countries, the currents of human life have become so deepened and strengthened by habit and custom as to render change very difficult, and growth almost impossible. In our own, on the contrary, life is fresh and fluent. Its boundaries should be elastic, capable even of indefinite expansion.

In the older countries of which I speak, political power and social recognition are supposed to emanate from some autocratic source, and the effort and ambition of all naturally look toward that source, and, knowing none other, feel a personal interest in maintaining its ascendancy, the *statu quo*. In our own broad land, power and light have no such inevitable abiding-place, but may emanate from an endless variety of points and personalities.

The other mode of living may have much to recommend it for those to whom it is native and inherited, but it is not for us. And when we apologize for our needs and deficiencies, it should not be on the ground of our youth and inexperience. If the settlement of our country is recent, we have behind us all the experience of the human race, and are bound to represent its fuller and riper manhood. Our seriousness is sometimes complained of, usually by people whose jests and pleasantries fail to amuse us. Let us not apologize for this, nor envy any nation its power of trifling and of *persiflage*. We have mighty problems to solve; great questions to answer. The fate of the world's future is concerned in what we shall do or leave undone.

We are a people of workers, and we love work—shame on him who is ashamed of it! When we are found, on our own or other shores, idling our life away, careless of vital issues, ignorant of true principles, then may we apologize, then let us make haste to amend.

## Aristophanes

WHEN I learned, last season, that the attention of the school<sup>[A]</sup> this year would be in a good degree given to the dramatists of ancient Greece, I was seized with a desire to speak of one of these, to whom I owe a debt of gratitude. This is the great Aristophanes, the first, and the most illustrious, of comic writers for the stage,—first and best, at least, of those known to Western literature.

[A] Read before the Concord School of Philosophy.

In the chance talk of people of culture, one hears of him all one's life long, as exceedingly amusing. From my brothers in college, I learned the "Frog Chorus" before I knew even a letter of the Greek alphabet. Many a decade after this, I walked in the theatre of Bacchus at Athens, and seeing the beauty of the marble seats, still ranged in perfect order, and feeling the glory and dignity of the whole surrounding, I seemed to guess that the comedies represented there were not desired to amuse idle clowns nor to provoke vulgar laughter.

At the foot of the Acropolis, with the Parthenon in sight and the colossal statue of Minerva towering above the glittering temples, the poet and his audience surely had need to bethink themselves of the wisdom which lies in laughter, of the ethics of the humorous,—a topic well worth the consideration of students of philosophy. The ethics of the humorous, the laughter of the gods! "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn." Did not even the gentle Christ intend satire when, after recognizing the zeal with which an ox or an ass would be drawn out of a pit on the sacred day, he asked: "And shall not this woman, whom Satan hath bound, lo! these eighteen years, be loosed from her infirmity on the sabbath day?"

When a Greek tragedy is performed before us, we are amazed at its force, its coherence, and its simplicity. What profound study and quick sense of the heroic in nature must have characterized the man who, across the great gulf of centuries, can so sweep our heart-strings, and draw from them such responsive music! Our praise of these great works almost sounds conceited. It would be more fitting for us to sit in silence and bewail our own smallness. Comedy, too, has her grandeur; and when she walks the stage in robe and buskins, she, too, is to receive the highest crown, and her lessons are to be laid to heart.

I will venture a word here concerning the subjective side of comedy. Is it the very depth and quick of our self-love which is reached by the subtle sting which calls up a blush where no sermonizing would have that effect? Deep satire touches the heroic within us. "Miserable sinners are ye all," says the preacher, "vanity of vanities!" and we sit contentedly, and say Amen. But

here comes some one who sets up our meannesses and incongruities before us so that they topple over and tumble down. And then, strange to say, we feel in ourselves this same power; and considering our follies in the same light, we are compelled to deride, and also to forsake them.

The miseries of war and the desirableness of peace were impressed strongly on the mind of Aristophanes. The Peloponnesian War dragged on from year to year with varying fortune; and though victory often crowned the arms of the Athenians, its glory was dearly paid for by the devastation which the Lacedæmonians inflicted upon the territory of Attica. "The Acharnians," "The Knights," and "Peace" deal with this topic in various forms. In the first of these is introduced, as the chief character, Dikæopolis, a country gentleman who, in consequence of the Spartan invasion, has been forced to forsake his estates, and to take shelter in the city. He naturally desires the speedy conclusion of hostilities, and to this end attends the assembly, determined, as he says:

To bawl, to abuse, to interrupt the speakers  
Whenever I hear a word of any kind,  
Except for an immediate peace.

This method reminds us of the obstructionists in the British Parliament. One man speaks of himself as loathing the city and longing to return

To my poor village and my farm  
That never used to cry: "Come buy my charcoal,"  
Nor "buy my oil," nor "buy my anything,"  
But gave me what I wanted, freely and fairly,  
Clear of all cost, with never a word of buying.

After various laughable adventures, Dikæopolis finds it possible to conclude a truce with the invaders on his own account, in which his neighbors, the Acharnians, are not included. He returns to his farm, and goes forth with wife and daughter to perform the sacrifice fitting for the occasion.

DIKÆOPOLIS

Silence! Move forward, the Canephora.  
You, Xanthias, follow close behind her there  
In a proper manner, with your pole and emblem.

WIFE

Set down the basket, daughter, and begin  
The ceremony.

DAUGHTER

Give me the cruets, mother,  
And let me pour it on the holy cake.

DIKÆOPOLIS

O blessed Bacchus, what a joy it is  
To go thus unmolested, undisturbed,  
My wife, my children, and my family,  
With our accustomed joyful ceremony,  
To celebrate thy festival in my farm.  
Well, here's success to the truce of thirty years.

WIFE

Mind your behavior, child. Carry the basket  
In a modest, proper manner; look demure;  
Mind your gold trinkets, they'll be stolen else.

Dikæopolis now intones a hymn to Bacchus, but is interrupted by the violent threats of his war-loving neighbors, the Acharnians, who break out in injurious language, and threaten the life of the miscreant who has made peace with the enemies of his country solely for his own interests. With a good deal of difficulty, he persuades the enraged crowd to allow him to argue his case before them, and this fact makes us acquainted with another leading trait in Aristophanes; viz., his polemic opposition to the poet Euripides. Dikæopolis, wishing to make a favorable impression upon the rustics, hies to the house of Euripides, whose servant parleys with him in true transcendental language.

DIKÆOPOLIS

Euripides within?

SERVANT

Within, and not within. You comprehend me?



DIKÆOPOLIS

Within and not within! What do you mean?

SERVANT

His outward man  
Is in the garret writing tragedy;  
While his essential being is abroad  
Pursuing whimsies in the world of fancy.

The visitor now calls aloud upon the poet:

Euripides, Euripides, come down,  
If ever you came down in all your life!  
'Tis I, Dikæopolis, from Chollidæ.

This Chollidæ probably corresponded to the Pea Ridge often quoted in our day. Euripides declines to come down, but is presently made visible by some device of the scene-shifter. In the dialogue that follows, Aristophanes ridicules the personages and the costumes brought upon the stage by Euripides, and reflects unhandsomely upon the poet's mother, who was said to have been a vender of vegetables. Dikæopolis does not seek to borrow poetry or eloquence from Euripides, but prays him to lend him "a suit of tatters from a worn-out tragedy."

For mercy's sake, for I'm obliged to make  
A speech in my own defence before the chorus,  
A long pathetic speech, this very day,  
And if it fails, the doom of death betides me.

Euripides now asks what especial costume would suit the need of Dikæopolis, and calls over the most pitiful names in his tragedies: "Do you want the dress of Oineos?"—"Oh, no! something much more wretched."—"Phœnix?"—"No; much worse than Phœnix."—"Philocletes?"—"No."—"Lame Bellerophon?" Dikæopolis says:

'Twas not Bellerophon, but very like him,  
A kind of smooth, fine-spoken character;  
A beggar into the bargain, and a cripple  
With a grand command of words, bothering and begging.

Euripides by this description recognizes the personage intended, *viz.*, Telephus, the physician, and orders his servant to go and fetch the ragged suit, which he will find "next to the tatters of Thyestes, just over Ino's." Dikæopolis exclaims, on seeing the mass of holes and patches, but asks, further, a little Mysian bonnet for his head, a beggar's staff, a dirty little basket, a broken pipkin; all of which Euripides grants, to be rid of him. All this insolence the visitor sums up in the following lines:—

I wish I may be hanged, my dear Euripides,  
If ever I trouble you for anything,  
Except one little, little, little boon,  
A single lettuce from your mother's stall.

This is more than Euripides can bear, and the gates are now shut upon the intruder.

Later in the play, Dikæopolis appears in company with the General Lamachus. A sudden call summons this last to muster his men and march forth to repel a party of marauders. Almost at the same moment, Dikæopolis is summoned to attend the feast of Bacchus, and to bring his best cookery with him. In the dialogue that follows, the valiant soldier and the valiant trencherman appear in humorous contrast.

LAMACHUS

Boy, boy, bring out here my haversack.

DIKÆOPOLIS

Boy, boy, hither bring my dinner service.

LAMACHUS

Bring salt flavored with thyme, boy, and onions.

DIKÆOPOLIS

Bring me a cutlet. Onions make me ill.

LAMACHUS

Bring hither pickled fish, stale.

DIKÆOPOLIS

And to me a fat pudding. I will cook it yonder.

LAMACHUS

Bring me my plumes and my helmet.

DIKÆOPOLIS

Bring me doves and thrushes.

LAMACHUS

Fair and white is the plume of the ostrich.

DIKÆOPOLIS

Fair and yellow is the flesh of the dove.

LAMACHUS

O man! leave off laughing at my weapons.

DIKÆOPOLIS

O man! don't you look at my thrushes.

LAMACHUS

Bring the case that holds my plumes.

DIKÆOPOLIS

And bring me a dish of hare.

LAMACHUS

But the moths have eaten my crest.

Dikæopolis makes some insolent rejoinder, at which the general takes fire. He calls for his lance; Dikæopolis, for the spit, which he frees from the roast meat. Lamachus raises his Gorgon-orbed shield; Dikæopolis lifts a full-orbed pancake. Lamachus then performs a mock act of divination:—

Pour oil upon the shield. What do I trace  
In the divining mirror? 'Tis the face  
Of an old coward, fortified with fear,  
That sees his trial for desertion near.

DIKÆOPOLIS

Pour honey on the pancake. What appears?  
A comely personage, advanced in years,  
Firmly resolved to laugh at and defy  
Both Lamachus and the Gorgon family.

In "The Frogs," god and demigod, Bacchus and Hercules, are put upon the stage with audacious humor. The first has borrowed the costume of the second, in which unfitting garb he knocks at Hercules' door on his way to Hades, his errand being to find and bring back Euripides. The dearth of clever poets is the reason alleged for this undertaking. Hercules suggests to him various poets who are still on earth. Bacchus condemns them as "warblers of the grove; poor, puny wretches!" He now asks Hercules for introductions to his friends in the lower regions, and for

Any communication about the country,  
The roads, the streets, the bridges, public houses  
And lodgings, free from bugs and fleas, if possible.

Hercules mentions various ways of arriving at the infernal regions: "The hanging road,—rope and noose?"—"That's too stifling."—"The pestle and mortar, then,—the beaten road?"—"No; that gives one cold feet."—"Go, then, to the tower of the Keramicus, and throw yourself headlong." No; Bacchus does not wish to have his brains dashed out. He would go by the road which Hercules took. Of this, Hercules gives an alarming account, beginning with the bottomless lake and the boat of Charon. Bacchus determines to set forth, but is detained by the recalcitrance of his servant, Xanthias, who refuses to carry his bundle any further.

A funeral now comes across the stage. Bacchus asks the dead man if he is willing to carry some bundles to Hell for him. The dead man demands two drachmas for the service. Bacchus offers him ninepence, which he angrily refuses, and is carried out of sight. Charon presently appears, and makes known, like a good ferryman, the points at which he will deliver passengers.

Who wants the ferryman?  
Anybody waiting to remove from the sorrows of life?

A passage to Lethe's wharf? to Cerberus' Beach?  
To Tartarus? to Tenaros? to Perdition?

Just so, in my youth, sailing on the Hudson, one heard all night the sound of Peekskill landing! Fishkill landing! Rhinebeck landing!—with darkness and swish of steam quite infernal enough.

Charon takes Bacchus on board, but compels him to do his part of the rowing, promising him: "As soon as you begin you shall have music that will teach you to keep time."

This music is the famous "Chorus of the Frogs," beginning, "Brokekekesh, koash, koash," and running through many lines, with this occasional refrain, of which Bacchus soon tires, as he does of the oar. His servant Xanthias is obliged to make the journey by land and on foot, Charon bidding him wait for his master at the Stone of Repentance, by the Slough of Despond, beyond the Tribulations. After encountering the Empousa, a nursery hobgoblin, they meet the spirits of the initiated, singing hymns to Bacchus—whom they invoke as Jacchus—and to Ceres. This part of the play, intended, Frere says, to ridicule the Eleusinian mysteries, is curiously human in its incongruity,—a jumble of the beautiful and the trivial. I must quote from it the closing strophe:—

Let us hasten, let us fly  
Where the lovely meadows lie,  
Where the living waters flow,  
Where the roses bloom and blow.  
Heirs of immortality,  
Segregated safe and pure,  
Easy, sorrowless, secure,  
Since our earthly course is run,  
We behold a brighter sun.

Such sweet words we to-day could expect to hear from the lips of our own dear ones, gone before.

Very incongruous is certainly this picture of Bacchus, in a cowardly and ribald state of mind, listening to the hymn which celebrates his divine aspect. Jacchus, whom the spirits invoke, is the glorified Bacchus, the highest ideal of what was vital religion in those days. But the god himself is not professionally, only personally, present, and, wearing the disguise of Hercules, in no way notices or responds to the strophes which invoke him. He asks the band indeed to direct him to Pluto's house, which turns out to be near at hand.

Before its door, Bacchus is seized with such a fit of timidity that, instead of knocking, he asks his servant to tell him how the native inhabitants of the region knock at doors. Reproved by the servant, he knocks, and announces himself as the valiant Hercules. Æacus, the porter, now rushes out upon him with violent abuse, reviling him for having stolen, or attempted to steal, the watch-dog, Cerberus, and threatening him with every horror which Hell can inflict. Æacus departs, and Bacchus persuades his servant to don the borrowed garb of Hercules, while he loads himself with the baggage which the other was carrying. Proserpine, however, sends her maid to invite the supposed Hercules to a feast of dainties. Xanthias now assumes the manners befitting the hero, at which Bacchus orders him to change dresses with him once more, and assume his own costume, which he does. Hardly have they done this, when Bacchus is again set upon by two frantic women, who shriek in his ears the deeds of gluttony committed by Hercules in Hades, and not paid for.

There; that's he  
That came to our house, ate those nineteen loaves.  
Aye; sure enough. That's he, the very man;  
And a dozen and a half of cutlets and fried chops,  
At a penny ha' penny apiece. And all the garlic,  
And the good green cheese that he gorged at once.  
And then, when I called for payment, he looked fierce  
And stared me in the face, and grinned and roared.

The women threaten the false Hercules with the pains and penalties of swindling. He now pretends to soliloquize: "I love poor Xanthias dearly; that I do."

"Yes," says Xanthias, "I know why; but it's of no use. I won't act Hercules." Xanthias, however, allows himself to be persuaded, and when Æacus, appearing with a force, cries: "Arrest me there that fellow that stole the dog," Xanthias contrives to make an effectual resistance. Having thus gained time, he assures Æacus that he never stole so much as a hair of his dog's tail; but gives him leave to put Bacchus, his supposed slave, to the torture, in order to elicit from him the truth. Æacus, softened by this proposal, asks in which way the master would prefer to have his slave tortured. Xanthias replies:

In your own way, with the lash, with knots and screws,  
With the common, usual, customary tortures,  
With the rack, with the water torture, any sort of way,  
With fire and vinegar—all sorts of ways.

Bacchus, thus driven to the wall, proclaims his divinity, and claims Xanthias as his slave. The

latter suggests that if Bacchus is a divinity, he may be beaten without injury, as he will not feel it. Bacchus retorts, "If you are Hercules, so may you." Æacus, to ascertain the truth, impartially belabors them both. Each, in turn, cries out, and pretends to have quoted from the poets. Æacus, unable to decide which is the god and which the impostor, brings them both before Proserpine and Pluto.

In the course of a delicious dialogue between the two servants, Æacus and Xanthias, it is mentioned that Euripides, on coming to the shades, had driven Æschylus from the seat of honor at Pluto's board, holding himself to be the worthier poet. Æschylus has objected to this, and the matter is now to be settled by a trial of skill in which Bacchus is to be the umpire.

The shades of Euripides and Æschylus appear in the next scene, with Bacchus between them. Æschylus wishes the trial had taken place elsewhere. Why? Because while his tragedies live on earth, those of Euripides are dead, and have descended with him to bear him company in Hell. The encounter of wits between the two is of the grandiose comic, each taunting the other with his faults of composition. Euripides says of Æschylus:

He never used a simple word  
But bulwarks and scamanders and hippogriffs and Gorgons,  
Bloody, remorseless phrases.

Æschylus rejoins:

Well, then, thou paltry wretch, explain  
What were your own devices?

Euripides says that he found the Muse

Puffed and pampered  
With pompous sentences, a cumbrous huge virago.

In order to bring her to a more genteel figure:

I fed her with plain household phrase and cool familiar salad,  
With water gruel episode, with sentimental jelly,  
With moral mince-meat, till at length I brought her into compass.  
I kept my plots distinct and clear to prevent confusion.  
My leading characters rehearsed their pedigrees for prologues.

"For all this," says Æschylus, "you ought to have been hanged." Æschylus now speaks of the grand old days, of the great themes and works of early poetry:

Such is the duty, the task of a poet,  
Fulfilling in honor his duty and trust.  
Look to traditional history, look;  
See what a blessing illustrious poets  
Conferred on mankind in the centuries past.  
Orpheus instructed mankind in religion,  
Reclaimed them from bloodshed and barbarous rites.  
Musæus delivered the doctrine of medicine,  
And warnings prophetic for ages to come.  
Next came old Hesiod, teaching us husbandry,  
Rural economy, rural astronomy,  
Homely morality, labor and thrift.  
Homer himself, our adorable Homer,  
What was his title to praise and renown?  
What but the worth of the lessons he taught us,  
Discipline, arms, and equipment of war.

And here the poet comes to speak of a question which is surely prominent to-day in the minds of thoughtful people. Æschylus, in his argument against Euripides, speaks of the noble examples which he himself has brought upon the stage, reproaches his adversary with the objectionable stories of Sthenobæus and Phædra, with which he, Euripides has corrupted the public taste.

Euripides alleges in his own defence that he did not invent those stories. "Phædra's affair was a matter of fact." Æschylus rejoins:

A fact with a vengeance, but horrible facts  
Should be buried in silence, not bruited abroad,  
Nor brought forth on the stage, nor emblazoned in poetry.  
Children and boys have a teacher assigned them;  
The bard is a master for manhood and youth,  
Bound to instruct them in virtue and truth  
Beholden and bound.

I do not know which of the plays of Aristophanes is considered the best by those who are

competent to speak authoritatively upon their merits; but of those that I know, this drama of "The Frogs" seems to me to exhibit most fully the scope and extent of his comic power. Condescending in parts to what is called low comedy,—*i.e.*, the farcical, based upon the sense of what all know and experience,—it rises elsewhere to the highest domain of literary criticism and expression.

The action between Bacchus and his slave forcibly reminds us of Cervantes, though master and man alike have in them more of Sancho Panza than of Quixote. In the journey to the palace of Pluto, I see the prototype of what the great mediæval poet called "The Divine Comedy." I find in both the same weird imagination, the same curious interbraiding of the ridiculous and the grandiose. This, of course, with the difference that the Greek poet affords us only a brief view of Hell, while Dante detains us long enough to give us a realizing sense of what it is, or might be. This same mingling of the awful and the grotesque suggests to me passages in our own Hawthorne, similarly at home with the supernatural, which underlies the story of "The Scarlet Letter," and flashes out in "The Celestial Railroad." But I must come back to Dante, who can amuse us with the tricks of demons, and can lift us to the music of the spheres. So Aristophanes can show us, on the one hand, the humorous relations of a coward and a clown; and, on the other, can put into the mouth of the great Æschylus such words as he might fitly have spoken.

Perhaps the very extravagance of fun is carried even further in the drama of "The Birds" than in those already quoted from. Its conceits are, at any rate, most original, and, so far as I know, it is without prototype or parallel in its matter and manner.

The argument of the play can be briefly stated. Peisthetairus, an Athenian citizen, dissatisfied with the state of things in his own country, visits the Hoopœ with the intention of securing his assistance in founding a new state, the dominion of the birds. He takes with him a good-natured simpleton of a friend, Well-hoping, by name. Now the Hoopœ in question, according to the old legend, had been known in a previous state of being as Tereus, King of Thrace, and the metamorphosis which changed him to a bird had changed his subjects also into representatives of the various feathered tribes. These, however, far from sharing the polite and hospitable character of their master, become enraged at the intrusion of the strangers, and propose to attack them in military style. The visitors seize a spit, the lid of a pot, and various other culinary articles, and prepare to make what defence they may, while the birds "present beaks," and prepare to charge. The Hoopœ here interposes, and claims their attention for the project which Peisthetairus has to unfold.

The wily Athenian begins his address with prodigious flattery, calling the feathered folk "a people of sovereigns," more ancient of origin than man, his deities, or his world. In support of this last clause, he quotes a fable of Æsop, who narrates that the lark was embarrassed to bury his father, because the earth did not exist at the time of his death. Sovereignty, of old, belonged to the birds. The stride of the cock sufficiently shows his royal origin, and his authority is still made evident by the alacrity with which the whole slumbering world responds to his morning reveille. The kite once reigned in Greece; the cuckoo in Sidon and Egypt. Jupiter has usurped the eagle's command, but dares not appear without him, while

Each of the gods had his separate fowl,—  
Apollo the hawk and Minerva the owl.

Peisthetairus proposes that, in order to recover their lost sovereignty, the birds shall build in the air a strongly fortified city. This done, they shall send a herald to Jove to demand his immediate abdication. If the celestials refuse to govern themselves accordingly, they are to be blockaded. This blockade seems presently to obtain, and heavenly Iris, flying across the sky on a message from the gods, is caught, arraigned, and declared worthy of death,—the penalty of non-observance. The prospective city receives the name of "Nephelococcagia," and this is scarcely decided upon before a poet arrives to celebrate in an ode the mighty Nephelococcagia state.

Then comes a soothsayer to order the appropriate sacrifices; then an astronomer, with instruments to measure the due proportions of the city; then a would-be parricide, who announces himself as a lover of the bird empire, and especially of that law which allows a man to beat his father. Peisthetairus confesses that, in the bird domain, the chicken is sometimes applauded for clapper-clawing the old cock. When, however, his visitor expresses a wish to throttle his parent and seize upon his estate, Peisthetairus refers him to the law of the storks, by which the son is under obligation to feed and maintain the parent. This law, he says, prevails in Nephelococcagia, and the parricide accordingly betakes himself elsewhere.

All this admirable fooling ends in the complete success of the birds. Jupiter sends an embassy to treat for peace, and by a curious juggle, imitating, no doubt, the political processes of those days, Peisthetairus becomes recognized as the lawful sovereign of Nephelococcagia, and receives, on his demand, the hand of Jupiter's favorite queen in marriage.

I have given my time too fully to the Greek poet to be able to make any extended comparison between his works and those of the Elizabethan dramatists. But from the plays which trifle so with the grim facts of nature, I can fly to the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and alight for a moment on one of its golden branches. Shakespeare's Athenian clowns are rather Aristophanic in color. The play of "Pyramus and Thisbe" might have formed one interlude on that very stage which had in sight the glories of the Parthenon. The exquisite poetry which redeems their nonsense has its parallel in the lovely "Chorus of the Clouds," the ode to Peace, and other glimpses of the serious Aristophanes, which here and there look out from behind the mask of the comedian.

I am very doubtful whether good Greek scholars will think my selections given here at all the best that could be made. I will remind them of an Eastern tale in which a party of travellers were led, in the dark, through an enchanted region in which showers of some unknown substance fell around them, while a voice cried: "They that do not gather any will grieve, and they who do gather will grieve that they did not gather more, for these that fall are diamonds." So, of these bright diamonds of matchless Greek wit, I have tried to gather some, but may well say I grieve that I have not gathered more, and more wisely.

These works are to us exquisite pieces of humoristic extravagance, but to the people of the time they were far more than this; *viz.*, the lesson of ridicule for what was tasteless and ridiculous in Athenian society, and the punishment of scathing satire for what was unworthy. Annotators tell us that the plays are full of allusions to prominent characters of the day. Some of these, as is well known, the poet sets upon the stage in masquerades which reveal, more than they conceal, their true personality. For the demagogue Cleon, and for the playwright Euripides, he has no mercy.

The patient student of Aristophanes and his commentators will acquire a very competent knowledge of the politics of the wise little city at the time of which he treats, also of its literary personages, pedants or sophists. The works give us, I think, a very favorable impression of the public to whose apprehension they were presented,—a quick-witted people, surely, able to follow the sudden turns and doublings of the poet's fancy; not to be surprised into stupidity by any ambush sprung upon them out of obscurity.

Compare with this the difficulty of commending anything worth thinking of to the attention of a modern theatre audience. It is true that much of this Greek wit must needs have been *caviare* to the multitude, but its seasoning, no doubt, penetrated the body politic. I remember, a score or more of years ago, that a friend said that it was good and useful to have some public characters Beecherized, alluding to the broad and bold presentation of them given from time to time by our great clerical humorist, Henry Ward Beecher. Very efficacious, one thinks, must have been this scourge which the Greek comic muse wielded so merrily, but so unmercifully.

Although Aristophanes is very severe upon individuals, he does not, I think, foster any class enmities, except, perhaps, against the sophists. Although a city man, he treats the rustic population with great tenderness, and the glimpses he gives us of country life are sweet and genial. In this, he contrasts with the French playwrights of our time, to whom city life is everything, and the province synonymous with all that is dull and empty of interest.

How can I dismiss the comedy of that day without one word concerning its immortal tragedy,—Socrates, the divine man, compared and comparable to Christ, chained in his dungeon and condemned to die? The most blameless life could not save that sacred head. Its illumination, in which we sit here to-day, drew to it the shafts of superstition, malice, and wickedness. The comic poet might present on the stage such pictures of the popular deities as would make the welkin ring with the roar of laughter. This was not impiety. But Socrates, showing no disrespect to these idols of the current persuasion, only daring to discern beyond them God in his divineness, truth in her awful beauty,—*he* must die the death of the profane.

It is a bitter story, surely, but "it must needs be that offences come." Where should we be to-day if no one in human history had loved high doctrine well enough to die for it? At such cost were these great lessons given us. How can we thank God or man enough for them?

The athletics of human thought are the true Olympian games. Human error is wise and logical in its way. It confronts its antagonist with terrific weapons; it seizes and sways him with a Titanic will force. It knows where to attack, and how. It knows the spirit that would be death to it, could that spirit prevail. It closes in the death grapple; the arena is red with the blood of its victim, but from that blood immortal springs a new world, a new society.

One word, in conclusion, about the Greek language. Valuable as translations are, they can never, to the student, take the place of originals. I have stumbled through these works with the lamest knowledge of Greek, and with no one to help me. I have quoted from admirable renderings of them into English. Yet, even in such delicate handling as that of Frere, the racy quality of the Greek phrase evaporates, like some subtle perfume; while the music of the grand rhythm, which the ear seems able to get through the eye, is lost.

The Greek tongue belongs to the history of thought. The language that gives us such distinctions as *nous* and *logos*, as *gy* and *kosmos*, has been the great pedagogue of our race, has laid the foundations of modern thought. Let us, by all means, help ourselves with Frere, with Jowett, and a multitude of other literary benefactors. But let us all get a little Greek on our own account, for the sake of our Socrates and of our Christ. And as the great but intolerant Agassiz had it for his motto that "species do not transmute," let this school have among its mottoes this one: "True learning does not de-Hellenize."

THE great office of ethics and æsthetics is the reconciliation of God and man; that is, of the divine and disinterested part of human nature with its selfish and animal opposite.

This opposition exists, primarily, in the individual; secondarily, in the society formed out of individuals. Human institutions typify the two, with their mutual influence and contradictions. The church represents the one; the market, the other. The battle-field and the hospital, the school and the forum, are further terms of the same antithesis. Nature does so much for the man, and the material she furnishes is so indispensable to all the constructions which we found upon it, that the last thing a teacher can afford to do is to undervalue her gifts. When critical agencies go so far as to do this, revolution is imminent: Nature reasserts herself.

Equally impotent is Nature where institutions do not supply the help of Art. When this state of things perseveres, she dwindles instead of growing. She becomes meagre, not grandiose. Men hunt, but do not cultivate. Women drudge and bear offspring, but neither comfort nor inspire.

Let us examine a little into what Nature gives, and into what she does not give. In the domain of thought and religion, people dispute much on this head, and are mostly ranged in two parties, of which one claims for her everything, while the other allows her nothing.

In this controversy, we can begin with one point beyond dispute. Nature gives the man, but she certainly does not give the clothes. Having received his own body, he has to go far and work hard in order to cover it.

Nature again scarcely gives human food. Roots, berries, wild fruit, and raw flesh would not make a very luxurious diet for the king of creation. Even this last staple Nature does not supply gratis, and the art of killing is man's earliest discovery in the lesson of self-sustenance. So Death becomes the succursal of life. The sense of this originates, first, the art of hunting; secondly, the art of war.

Nature gives the religious impulse, originating in the further pole of primal thought. The alternation of night and day may first suggest the opposition of things seen and not seen. The world exists while the man sleeps—exists independently of him. Sleep and its dreams are mysterious to the waking man. His first theology is borrowed from this conjunction of invisible might and irrational intellection.

But Nature does not afford the church. Art does this, laboring long and finishing never,—coming to a platform of rest, but coming at the same time to a higher view, inciting to higher effort. Temple after temple is raised. Juggernaut, Jove, Jesus! India does not get beyond Juggernaut. Rome could not get beyond Jove. Christendom is far behind Jesus. In all religions, Art founds on Nature, and aspires to super-nature. In all, Art asserts the superiority of thought over unthought, of measure over excess, of conscience over confidence. The latest evangel alone supplies a method of popularizing thought, of beautifying measure, of harmonizing conscience, and is, therefore, the religion that uses most largely from the race, and returns most largely to it.

Time permits me only a partial review of this great system of gifts and deficiencies. The secret of progress seems an infinitesimal seed, dropped in some bosoms to bear harvest for all. Seed and soil together give the product which is called genius. But genius is only half of the great man. No one works so hard as he does to obtain the result corresponding to his natural dimensions and obligations. The gift and the capacity to employ it are simply boons of Nature. The resolution to do so, the patience and perseverance, the long tasks bravely undertaken and painfully carried through—these come of the individual action of the moral man, and constitute his moral life. The wonderfully clever people we all know, who fill the society toy-shop with what is needed in the society workshop, are people who have not consummated this resolution, who have not had this bravery, this perseverance. Death does not waste more of immature life than Indolence wastes of immature genius. The law of labor in ethics and æsthetics corresponds to the energetic necessities of hygiene, and is the most precious and indispensable gift of one generation to its successors.

In ethics, Nature supplies the first half, but Religion, or the law of duty, supplies the other. Nature gives the enthusiasm of love, but not the tender and persevering culture of friendship, which carries the light of that tropical summer into the winter of age, the icy recesses of death.

Art has no need to intervene in order to bring together those whom passion inspires, whom inclination couples. But in crude Nature, passion itself remains selfish, brutal, and short-lived.

The tender and grateful recollection of transient raptures, the culture and growth of generous sympathies, resulting in noble co-operation—Art brings these out of Nature by the second birth, of which Christ knew, and at which Nicodemus marvelled.

Nature gives the love of offspring. Human parents share the passionate attachment of other animals for their young. With the regulation of this attachment Art has much to do. You love the child when it delights you by day; you must also love it when it torments you at night. This latter love is not against Nature, but Conscience has to apply the whip and spur a little, or the mother will take such amusement as the child can afford, and depute to others the fatigues which are its price.

A graver omission yet Nature makes. She does not teach children to reverence and cherish their parents when the relation between them reverses itself in the progress of time, and those

who once had all to give have all to ask. Moses was not obliged to say: "Parents, love your children." But he was obliged to say: "Honor thy father and thy mother," in all the thunder of the Decalogue. The gentler and finer spirits value the old for their useful council and inestimable experience.

You know to-day; but your father can show you yesterday, bright with living traditions which history neglects and which posterity loses. We do not profit as we might by this source of knowledge. Elders question the young for their instruction. Young people, in turn, should question elders on their own account, not allowing the personal values of experience to go down to the grave unrealized. But Youth is cruel and remorseless. The young, in their fulness of energy, in their desire for scope and freedom, are often in unseemly haste to see the old depart.

Here Religion comes in with strong hands to moderate the tyrannous impulse, the controversy of the green with the ripe fruit. All religions agree in this intervention. The worship of ancestors in the Confucian ethics shows this consciousness and intention. The aristocratic traditions of rank and race are an invention to the same end. Vanity, too, will often lead a man to glorify himself in the past and future, as well as in the present.

Still, the instinct to get rid of elders is a feature in unreclaimed nature. It shows the point at which the imperative suggestions of personal feeling stop,—the spot where Nature leaves a desert in order that Art may plant a garden. "Why don't you give me a carriage, now?" said an elderly wife to an elderly husband. "When we married, you would scarcely let me touch the ground with my feet. I need a conveyance now far more than I did then." "That was the period of my young enthusiasm," replied the husband. The statement is one of unusual candor, but the fact is one of not unusual occurrence.

I think that in the present study I have come upon the true and simple sense of the parable of the talents. Of every human good, the initial half is bestowed by Nature. But the value of this half is not realized until Labor shall have acquired the other half. Talents are one thing: the use of them is another. The first depend on natural conditions; the second, on moral processes. The greatest native facilities are useless to mankind without the discipline of Art. So in an undisciplined life, the good that is born with a man dwindles and decays. The sketch of childhood, never filled out, fades in the objectless vacancy of manhood; and from the man is "taken away even that which he seemeth to have." Not judicial vengeance this, but inevitable consequence.

Education should clearly formulate this problem: Given half of a man or woman, to make a whole one. This, I need not say, is to be done by development, not by addition. Kant says that knowledge grows *per intus susceptionem*, and not *per appositionem*. The knowledges that you adjoin to memory do not fill out the man unless you reach, in his own mind, the faculty that generates thought. A single reason perceived by him either in numbers or in speech will outweigh in importance all the rules which memory can be taught to supply. With little skill and much perseverance, Education hammers upon the man until somewhere she strikes a nerve, and the awakened interest leads him to think out something for himself. Otherwise, she leaves the man a polite muddle, who makes his best haste to forget facts in forms, and who cancels the enforced production of his years of pedagogy by a lifelong non-production.

What Nature is able to give, she does give with a wealth and persistence almost pathetic. The good gifts afloat in the world which never take form under the appropriate influence, the good material which does not build itself into the structures of society,—you and I grieve over these sometimes. And here I come upon a doctrine which Fourier, I think, does not state correctly. He maintains that inclinations which appear vicious and destructive in society as at present constituted would become highly useful in his ideal society. I should prefer to state the matter thus: The given talent, not receiving its appropriate education, becomes a negative instead of a positive, an evil instead of a good. Here we might paraphrase the Scripture saying, and affirm that the stone which is not built into the corner becomes a stumbling-block for the wayfarer to fall over. So great mischief lies in those uneducated, unconsecrated talents! This cordial companion becomes a sot. This could-be knight remains a prize-fighter. This incipient mathematician does not get beyond cards or billiards. This clever mechanic picks locks and robs a bank, instead of endowing one.

Modern theories of education do certainly point toward the study, by the party educating, of the party appointed to undergo education. But this education of others is a very complex matter, not to be accomplished unless the educator educates himself in the light afforded him by his pupils. The boys or girls committed to you may study what you will: be sure, first of all, that you study them to your best ability. Education in this respect is forced to a continual rectification of her processes. The greatest power and resource are needed to awaken and direct the energies of the young. No speech in Congress is so important as are the lessons in the primary school; no pulpit has so great a field of labor as the Sunday school. The Turkish government showed a cruel wisdom of instinct when it levied upon Greece the tribute of Christian children to form its corps of Janissaries. It recognized alike the Greek superiority of race, and the invaluable opportunity of training afforded by childhood.

The work, then, of education demands an investigation of the elements which Nature has granted to the individual, with the view of matching that in which he is wanting with that which he has. I have heard of lovers who, in plighting their faith, broke a coin in halves, whose matching could only take place with their meeting. In true education as in the love, these halves should correspond.



"What hast thou?" is, then, the first question of the educator. His second is, "What hast thou not?" The third is, "How can I help thee to this last?"

To my view, the man remains incomplete his whole life long. Most incomplete is he, however, in the isolations of selfishness and of solitude. Study is not necessarily solitude, but ideal society in the highest grade in which human beings can enjoy it. It is, nevertheless, dangerous to suffer the ideal to distance the real too largely. Desk-dreamers end by being mental cripples. Divorce of this sort is not wholesome, nor holy. Life is a perpetual marriage of real and ideal, of endeavor and result. The solitary departure of physical death is hateful, as putting asunder what God has joined together.

Must I go hence as lonely as I was born? My mother brought me into the infinite society: I go into the absolute dissociation. I go many steps further back than I came,—to the *ur* mother, the common matrix which bears plants, animals, and human creatures. Where, oh where, shall I find that infinite companionship which my life should have earned for me? My friendship has been hundred-handed. My love has consumed the cities of the plain, and built the heavenly Jerusalem. And I go, without lover or friend, in a box, into an earth vault, from which I cannot even turn into violets and primroses in any recognizable and conscious way.

The completeness of our severance or deficiency may be, after all, the determining circumstance of our achievement. What I would have is cut so clean off from what I have as to leave no sense of wholeness in my continuing as I am. Something of mine is mislaid or lost. It is more mine than anything that I have, but where to find it? Who has it? I reach for it under this bundle and under that. After my life's trial, I find that I have pursued, but not possessed it. What I have gained of it in the pursuit, others must realize. I bequeath, and cannot take it with me. Did Dante regard the parchments of his "*Divina Commedia*" with a sigh, foreseeing the long future of commentators and booksellers, he himself absolving them beforehand by the quitclaim of death? You and I may also grieve to part from certain unsold volumes, from certain manuscripts of doubtful fate and eventuality. Oh! out of this pang of death has come the scheme and achievement of immortality. "*Non omnis moriar.*" "I am the resurrection and the life." "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

This tremendous leap and feat of the human soul across the bridge of dark negativity would never have been made without the sharp spur and bitter pang of death. "My life food for worms? No; never. I will build and bestow it in arts and charities, spin it in roads and replicate it in systems; but to be lopped from the great body of humanity, and decay like a black, amputated limb? My manhood refuses. The infinite hope within me generates another life, realizable in every moment of my natural existence, whose moments are not in time, whose perfect joys are not measured by variable duration. Thus every day can be to me full of immortality, and the matter of my corporeal decease full of indifference, as sure to be unconscious."

I think this attainment the first, fundamental to all the others. We console the child with a simple word about heaven. He is satisfied, and feels its truth. How to attain this deathlessness is the next problem whose solution he will ask of us. We point him to the plane on which he will roll; for our life is a series of revolutions,—no straight-forward sledding, but an acceleration by ideal weight and propulsion, through which our line becomes a circle, and our circle itself a living wheel of action, creating out of its mobile necessity a past and a future.

The halfness of the individual is literally shown in the division of sex. The Platonic fancy runs into an anterior process, by which what was originally one has been made two. We will say that the two halves were never historically, though always ideally, one. Here Art comes to the assistance of Nature. The mere contrast of sex does not lift society out of what is animal and slavish. The integrity of sex relation is not to be found in a succession or simultaneity of mates, easily taken and as easily discarded. This great value of a perfected life is to be had only through an abiding and complete investment,—the relations of sex lifted up to the communion of the divine, unified by the good faith of a lifetime, enriched by a true sharing of all experience. This august partnership is Marriage, one of the most difficult and delicate achievements of society. Too sadly does its mockery afflict us in these and other days. Either party, striving to dwarf the other, dwarfs itself. This mystic selfhood, inexpressible in literal phrases, is at once the supreme of Nature and the sublime of institutions. The ideal human being is man and woman united on the ideal plane. The church long presented and represented this plane. The state is hereafter to second and carry out its suggestions. The ideal assembly, which we figure by the communion of the saints, is a coming together of men and women in the highest aims and views to which Humanity can be a party.

Passing from immediate to projected consciousness, I can imagine expression itself to spring from want. The sense of the incompleteness of life in itself and in each of its acts calls for this effort to show, at least, what life should be,—to vindicate the shortcoming of action out of the fulness of speech. This that eats and sleeps is so little of the man! These processes are so little what he understands by life! Listen; let him tell you what life means to him.

And so sound is differentiated into speech, and hammered into grammar, and built up into literature—all of whose creations are acoustic palaces of imagination. For the eye in reading is only the secondary sense: the written images the spoken word.

How the rhythm of the blood comes to be embodied in verse is more difficult to trace. But the justification of Poetry is obvious. When you have told the thing in prose, you have made it false by making it literal. Poesy lies a little to complete the truth which Honesty lacks skill to embody. Her

artifices are subtle and wonderful. You glance sideways at the image, and you see it. You look it full in the face, and it disappears.

The plastic arts, too. This beautiful face commands me to paint from it a picture twice as beautiful. Its charm of Nature I cannot attain. My painting must not try for the edge of its flesh and blood forms, the evanescence of its color, the light and shadow of its play of feature. But something which the beautiful face could not know of itself the artist knows of it. That deep interpretation of its ideal significance marks the true master, who is never a Chinese copyist. Some of the portraits that look down upon you from the walls of Rome and of Florence calmly explain to you a whole eternity. Their eyes seem to have seized it all, and to hold it beyond decay. This is what Art gives in the picture,—not simply what appears and disappears, but that which, being interpreted, abides with us.

Who shall say by what responsive depths the heights of architecture measure themselves? The uplifted arches mirror the introspective soul. So profoundly did I think, and plot, and contrive! So loftily must my stone climax balance my cogitations! To such an amount of prayer allow so many aisles and altars. The pillars of cloisters image the brotherhood who walked in the narrow passages; straight, slender, paired in steadfastness and beauty, there they stand, fair records of amity. Columns of retrospect, let us hope that the souls they image did not look back with longing upon the scenes which they were called upon to forsake.

Critical belief asks roomy enclosures and windows unmasked by artificial impediments. It comes also to desire limits within which the voice of the speaker can reach all present. Men must look each other in the face, and construct prayer or sermon with the human alphabet. We are glad to see the noble structures of older times maintained and renewed; but we regret to see them imitated in our later day. (St. Peter's is, in all save dimension, a church of Protestant architecture—so is St. Paul's, of London.) The present has its own trials and agonies, its martyrdoms and deliverances. With it, the old litanies must sink to sleep; the more Christian of to-day efface the most Christian of yesterday. The very attitude of saintship is changed. The practical piety of our time looks neither up nor down, but straight before it, at the men and women to be relieved, at the work to be done. Religion to-day is not "height nor depth nor any other creature," but God with us.

There is a mystic birth and Providence in the succession of the Arts; yet are they designed to dwell together, each needing the aid of all. People often speak of sculpture as of an art purely and distinctively Grecian. But the Greeks possessed all the Arts, and more, too,—the substratum of democracy and the sublime of philosophy. No natural jealousy prevails in this happy household. The Arts are not wives, of whom one must die before another has proper place. They are sisters, whose close communion heightens the charm of all by the excellence of each. The Christian unanimity is as favorable to Art as to human society.

We may say that the Greeks attained a great perfection in sculpture, and have continued in this art to offer the models of the world.

When the great period of Italian art attained its full splendor, it seemed as if the frozen crystals of Greek sculpture had melted before the fire of Christian inspiration. But this transformation, like the transfiguration of Hindoo deities, did not destroy the anterior in its issue.

The soul of sculpture ripened into painting, but Sculpture, the beautiful mother, still lived and smiled upon her glowing daughter. See Michael Angelo studying the torso! See the silent galleries of the Vatican, where Form holds you in one room, Color presently detaining you in another! And what are our Raphaels, Angelos, making to-day? Be sure they are in the world, for the divine spirit of Art never leaves itself without a witness. But what is their noble task? They are moulding character, embodying the divine in human culture and in human institutions. The Greek sculptures indicate and continue a fitting reverence for the dignity and beauty of the human form; but the reverence for the human soul which fills the world to-day is a holier and happier basis of Art. From it must come records in comparison with which obelisk and pyramid, triumphal arch and ghostly cathedral, shall seem the toys and school appliances of the childhood of the race.

To return to our original problem,—how shall we attain the proper human stature, how add the wanting half to the half which is given?

I answer: By labor and by faith, in which there is nothing accidental or arbitrary. The very world in which we live is but a form, whose spirit, breathing through Nature and Experience, slowly creates its own interpretation, adding a new testament to an old testament, lifting the veil between Truth and Mercy, clasping the mailed hand of Righteousness in the velvet glove of Peace.

The spirit of Religion is the immanence of the divine in the human, the image of the eternal in the transitory, of things infinite in things limited. I have heard endless discussions and vexed statements of how the world came out of chaos. From the Mosaic version to the last rationalistic theory, I have been willing to give ear to these. It is a subject upon which human ingenuity may exercise itself in its allowable leisure. One thing concerns all of us much more; *viz.*, how to get heaven out of earth, good out of evil, instruction out of opportunity.

This is our true life work. When we have done all in this that life allows us, we have not done more than half, the other half lying beyond the pale struggle and the silent rest. Oh! when we shall reach that bound, whatever may be wanting, let not courage and hope forsake us.

## Dante and Beatrice

DANTE and Beatrice—names linked together by holy affection and high art. Ary Scheffer has shown them to us as in a beatific vision,—the stern spirit which did not fear to confront the horrors of Hell held in a silken leash of meekness by the gracious one through whose intervention he passed unscathed through fire and torment, bequeathing to posterity a record unique in the annals alike of literature and of humanity.

My first studies of the great poet are in the time long past, antedating even that middle term of life which was for him the starting-point of a new inspiration. Yet it seems to me that no part of my life, since that reading, has been without some echo of the "Divine Comedy" in my mind. In the walk through Hell, I strangely believe. Its warnings still admonish me. I see the boat of Charon, with its mournful freight. I pass before the judgment seat of Midas. I see the souls tormented in hopeless flame. I feel the weight of the leaden cloaks. I shrink from the jar of the flying rocks, hurled as weapons. For me, dark Ugolino still feeds upon his enemy. Francesca still mates with her sad lover.

From this hopeless abyss, I emerge to the kindlier pain of Purgatory, whose end is almost Heaven. And of that blessed realm, my soul still holds remembrance—of its solemn joy, of its unfolding revelation. The vision of that mighty cross in which all the stars of the highest heaven range themselves is before me, on each fair cluster the word "Cristo" outshining all besides.

Among my dearest recollections is that of an Easter sermon devised by me for an ignorant black congregation in a far-off West Indian isle, in which I told of this vision of the cross, and tried to make it present to them. But this grateful remembrance which I have carried through so many years does not regard the poet alone. In the world's great goods, as in its great evils, a woman has her part. And this poem, which has been such a boon to humanity, has for its central inspiration the memory of a woman.

In the prologue, already we hear of her. It is she who sends her poet his poet-guide. When he shrinks from the painful progress which lies before him, and deems the companionship even of Virgil an insufficient pledge of safety, the words of his lady, repeated to him by his guide, restore his sinking courage, and give him strength for his immortal journey.

Here are those words of Beatrice, spoken to Virgil, and by him brought to Dante:—

O courteous shade of Mantua! thou whose fame  
Yet lives and shall live long as Nature lasts!  
A friend, not of my fortune, but myself,  
On the wide desert in his road has met  
Hindrance so great that he through fear has turned.  
Assist him: so to me will comfort spring.  
I who now bid thee on this errand forth  
Am Beatrice.

Who and what was Beatrice, whose message gave Dante strength to explore the fearful depths of evil and its punishment? This we may learn elsewhere.

Dante, passionate poet in his youth, has left to posterity a work unique of its sort,—the romance of a childish love which grew with the growth of the lover. In his adolescence, its intensity at times overpowers his bodily senses. The years that built up his towering manhood built up along with it this ideal womanhood, which, whether realized or realizable, or neither, was the highest and holiest essence which his imagination could infuse into a human form. The sweet shyness of that first peep at the Beautiful, of that first thrill of the master chord of being, is rendered immortal for us by the candor of this great master. We can see the shamefaced boy, taken captive by the dazzling vision of Beatrice, veiling the features of his unreasonable passion, and retiring to his own closet, there to hide his joy at having found on earth a thing so beautiful.

Dante's love for Beatrice dates from the completion of his own ninth year, and the beginning of hers. He first sees her at a May party, at the house of her father, Folco Polinari. Her apparel, he says, "was of a most noble tincture, a subdued and becoming crimson; and she wore a girdle and ornaments becoming her childish years." At the sight of her, his heart began to beat with painful violence. A master thought had taken possession of him, and that master's name was well known to him, as how should it not have been in that day when, if ever in this world, Love was crowned lord of all? Urged by this tyrant, from time to time, to go in search of Beatrice, he beheld in her, he says, a demeanor so praiseworthy and so noble as to remind him of a line of Homer, regarding Helen of Troy:—

"From heaven she had her birth, and not from mortal clay."

These glimpses of her must have been transient ones, for the poet tells us that his second meeting, face to face, with Beatrice occurred nine years after their first encounter. Her childish charm had now ripened into maidenly loveliness. He beholds her arrayed in purest white, walking between two noble ladies older than herself. "As she passed along the street, she turned her eyes toward the spot where I, thrilled through and through with awe, was standing; and in her ineffable courtesy, which now hath its guerdon in everlasting life, she saluted me in such gracious wise that I seemed in that moment to behold the utmost bounds of bliss."

He now begins to dream of her in his sleeping moments, and to rhyme of her in his waking hours. In his first vision, Love appears with Beatrice in his arms. In one hand he holds Dante's flaming heart, upon which he constrains her to feed; after which, weeping, he gathers up his fair burthen and ascends with her to Heaven. This dream seemed to Dante fit to be communicated to the many famous poets of the time. He embodies it in a sonnet, which opens thus:—

To every captive soul and gentle heart  
Into whose sight shall come this song of mine,  
That they to me its matter may divine,  
Be greeting in Love's name, our master's, sent.

And now begins for him a season of love-lorn pining and heart-sickness. The intensity of the attraction paralyzes in him the power of approaching its object. His friends notice his altered looks, and ask the cause of this great change in him. He confesses that it is the master passion, but so misleads them as to the person beloved, as to bring upon another a scandal by his feigning. For this he is punished by the displeasure of Beatrice, who, passing him in the street, refuses him that salutation the very hope of which, he says, kindled such a flame of charity within him as to make him forget and forgive every offence and injury.

Love now visits him in his sleep, in the guise of a youth arrayed in garments of exceeding whiteness, and desires him to indite certain words in rhyme, which, though not openly addressed to Beatrice, shall yet assure her of what she partly knows,—that the poet's heart has been hers from boyhood. The ballad which he composes in obedience to his love's command is not a very literal rendering of his story.

He now begins to have many conflicting thoughts about Love, two of which constitute a very respectable antinomy. One of these tells him that the empire of Love is good, because it turns the inclinations of its vassal from all that is base. The opposite thought is: "The empire of Love is not good, since the more absolute the allegiance of his vassal, the more severe and woful are the straits through which he must perforce pass."

These conflicting thoughts sought expression in a sonnet, of which I will quote a part:—

Of Love, Love only, speaks my every thought;  
And all so various they be that one  
Bids me bow down to his dominion,  
Another counsels me his power is naught.  
One, flushed with hopes, is all with sweetness fraught;  
Another makes full oft my tears to run.

.....

Where, then, to turn, what think, I cannot tell.  
Fain would I speak, yet know not what to say.

While these uncertainties still possess him, Dante is persuaded by a friend to attend a bridal festivity, where it is hoped that the sight of much beauty may give him great pleasure.

"Why have you brought me among these ladies?" he asks. "In order that they may be properly attended," is the answer.

Small attendance can Dante give upon these noble beauties. A fatal tremor seizes him; he looks up and, beholding Beatrice, can see nothing else. Nay, even of her his vision is marred by the intensity of his feeling. The ladies first wonder at his agitation, and then make merry over it, Beatrice apparently joining in their merriment. His friend, chagrined at his embarrassment, now asks the cause of it; to which question Dante replies: "I have set my foot in that part of life to pass beyond which, with purpose to return, is impossible."

With these words the poet departs, and in his chamber of tears persuades himself that Beatrice would not have joined in the laughter of her friends if she had really known his state of mind. Then follows, naturally, a sonnet:—

With other ladies thou dost flaunt at me,  
Nor thinkest, lady, whence doth come the change,  
What fills mine aspect with a trouble strange  
When I the wonder of thy beauty see.  
If thou didst know, thou must, for charity,  
Forswear the wonted rigor of thine eye.

With this poetic utterance comes the plain prose question: "Seeing thou dost present an aspect so ridiculous whenever thou art near this lady, wherefore dost thou seek to come into her presence?"

It takes two sonnets to answer this question. He is not the only person who asks it. Meeting with some merry dames, he is thus questioned by her of them who seems "most gay and pleasant of discourse:" "Unto what end lovest thou this lady, seeing that her near presence overwhelms thee?" In reply, he professes himself happy in having words wherewith to speak the praises of his lady, and going thence, determines in his heart to devote his powers of expression to that high theme. He leaves the cramping sonnet now, and expands his thought in the *canzone*, of which I

need only repeat the first line:—

Ladies who have the intellect of Love.

Why the course of this true love never did run smooth, we know not. Beatrice, at the proper age, was given in marriage to Messer Simone dei Bardi. It is thought that she was wedded to him before the occasion on which Dante's love-lorn appearance moved her to a mirth which may have been feigned. Still, the thought of her continues to be his greatest possession, and he and his master, Love, hold many arguments together concerning the bliss and bane of this high fancy. He has great comfort in the general esteem in which his lady is held, and is proud and glad when those who see her passing in the street hasten to get a better view of her. He sees the controlling power of her loveliness in its influence on those around her, who are not thrown into the shade, but brightened, by her radiance.

Such virtue rare her beauty hath, in sooth  
No envy stirs in other ladies' breast;  
But in its light they walk beside her, dressed  
In gentleness, and love, and noble truth.  
Her looks whate'er they light on seem to bless;  
Nor her alone make lovely to the view,  
But all her peers through her have honor, too.

Dante was still engaged in interpreting the merits of Beatrice to the world when that most gentle being met the final conflict, and received the crown of immortality. His first feeling is that Florence is made desolate by her loss. He can think of no words but those with which the prophet Jeremiah bewailed the spoiling of Jerusalem: "How doth the city sit desolate!" The princes of the earth, he thinks, should learn the loss of this more than princess. He speaks of her in sonnet and *canzone*.

The passing of a band of pilgrims in the street suggests to him the thought that they do not know of his sweet saint, nor of her death, and that if they did, they would perforce stop to weep with him:—

Tell me, ye pilgrims, who so thoughtful go,  
Musing, mayhap, on what is far away,  
Come ye from climes so far, as your array  
And look of foreign nurture seem to shew,  
That from your eyes no tears of pity flow,  
As ye along our mourning city stray,  
Serene of countenance and free, as they  
Who of her deep disaster nothing know?  
Oh! she hath lost her Beatrice, her saint,  
And what of her her co-mates can reveal  
Must drown with tears even strangers' hearts, perforce.

On the first anniversary of his lady's death, as he sits absorbed in thoughts of her, he sketches the figure of an angel upon his tablets. Turning presently from his work, he sees near him some gentlemen of his acquaintance, who are watching the movements of his pencil. He answers the interruption thus:

Into my lonely thoughts that noble dame  
Whom Love bewails, had entered in the hour  
When you, my friends, attracted by his power,  
To see the task that did employ me came.

Many a sigh of dole escapes his heart, he says,

But they which came with sharpest pang were those  
Which said: "O intellect of noble mould,  
A year to-day it is since thou didst seek the skies."

We may find, perhaps, a more wonderful proof of his constancy in his stout-hearted resistance to the charms of a beautiful lady who regards him with that intense pity which is akin to love. To her he says:

Never was Pity's semblance, or Love's hue  
So wondrously in face of lady shown,  
That tenderly gave ear to Sorrow's moan  
Or looked on woful eyes, as shows in you.

To this new attraction he is on the point of surrendering, when the vision of Beatrice rises before him, as he first saw her,—robed in crimson, and bright with the angelic beauty of childhood. All other thoughts are put to flight by this, and with renewed faith he devotes himself to the memory of Beatrice, hoping to say of her some day "that which hath never yet been said of any lady."

All who have been lovers—and who has not?—must feel, I think, that the "Vita Nuova" is the

romance of a true love. The Beatrice of the "Divina Commedia" is this love, and much more. Dante has had a deep and availing experience of life. Statesman and scholar, he has laid his fiery soul upon the world's great anvil, where Fate, with heavy hammering and fiery blowing, has wrought out of him a stern, sad man, so hunted and exiled that the ways of Imagination alone are open to him. In its domain, he calls around him the majestic shadows of those with whom his life has made him familiar. For him, the way to Heaven lies through Hell and Purgatory. Into these regions, the blessed Beatrice cannot come. She sends, however, the poet shade, who seems to her most fit to be his guide. The classic refinement makes evident to him the vulgarity of sin and the logic of its consequences. He surveys the eternal, hopeless punishment, and passes through the cleansing fires of Purgatory, at whose outer verge, a fair vision comes to bless him. Beatrice, in a mystical car, her beauty at first concealed by a veil of flowers which drop from the hands of attendant angels, speaks to him in tones which move his penitential grief.

The high love of his youth thus appears to him as accusing Conscience, which stands to question him with the offended majesty of a loving mother. Through her rebukes, precious in their bitterness, he attains to that view of his own errors without which it would have been impossible for him to forsake them. It is a real orthodox "repentance and conviction of sin" with which the religious renewal of his life begins. Tormented by this cruel retrospect, the poet is mercifully bathed in the waters of forgetfulness, and then, being made a new creature, regains the society of Beatrice.

Seated at the root of the great Tree of Humanity, she bids him take note of the prophetic vision which symbolizes the history of the church. Of the sanctity of the tree, she thus admonishes him:

This whoso robs,  
This whoso plucks, with blasphemy of deed  
Sins against God, who for His use alone  
Creating, hallowed it.

Dante drinks now of a stream whose sweetness can never satiate, and from that holy wave returns,

Regenerate,  
Pure, and made apt for mounting to the stars.

It appears to me quite simple and natural that the image of the poet's earthly love, long lost from physical sense, should prompt the awakening of his higher nature, which, obscured, as he confesses, by the disorders of his mortal life, asserts itself with availing authority when Beatrice, the beloved, becomes present to his mind. All progress, all heavenly learning, is thenceforth associated with her. High as he may climb, she always leads him. Where he passes as a stranger, she is at home. Where he poorly guesses, she wholly knows. Nor does he part from her until he has attained the highest point of spiritual vision, where he sees her throned and crowned in immortal glory, and above her, the lovely one of Heaven,—the Virgin Mother of Christ. What he sees after this, he says, cannot be told with mortal tongue.

Here vigor failed the towering fantasy,  
But yet the will rolled onward, like a wheel,  
In even motion, by the love impelled  
That moves the sun in heaven and all the stars.

Two opposite points in great authors give us pleasure; *viz.*, the originality of their talent or genius, and the catholicity of their sentiments and interest,—in other words, their likeness and their unlikeness to the average of humanity. We are delighted to find Plato at once so modern and so ancient, his prevision and prophecy needing so little adaptation to make them germane to the wants of our own or of any other time, his grasp of apprehension and comparison so peculiar to himself, so unrivalled by any thinker of any time. In like manner, the mediæval pictures drawn by Dante delight us, and the bold daring of his imagination. At the same time, the perfectly sound and rational common sense of many of his utterances seems familiar from its accordance with the soundest criticism of our own time:—

Florence within her ancient circle set,  
Remained in sober, modest quietness.  
Nor chains had she, nor crowns, nor women decked  
In gay attire, with splendid cincture bound,  
More to be gazed at than the form itself.  
Not yet the daughter to the father brought  
Fear from her birth, the marriage time and dower  
Not yet departing from their fitting measure.  
Nor houses had she, void of household life.  
Sardanapalus had not haply shown  
The deeds which may be hid by chamber walls.  
I saw Bellincion Berti go his way  
With bone and leather belted. From the glass  
His lady moved, no paint upon her face.  
I saw the Lords of Nortti and del Vecchio content,

Their household dames engaged with spool and spindle.

The theory of the good old time, we see, is not a modern invention.

Dante inherits the great heart of chivalry, wise before its time in the uplifting of Woman. The wonderful worship of the Virgin Mother, in which are united the two poles of womanhood, completed the ideal of the Divine Human, and cast a new glory upon the sex. Can we doubt that knight and minstrel found a true inspiration in the lady of their heart? A mere pretence or affection is a poor thing to fight for or to sing for. Men will not imperil their lives for what they know to be a lie.

This newly awakened reverence for woman—shall we call it a race characteristic? It was a golden gift to any race. Plato's deep doctrine that all learning is a reminiscence may avail us in questioning this. The human race does not carry the bulk of its knowledge in its hand. Busy with its tools and toys, it forgets its ancestral heirlooms, and leaves unexplored the legacy of the past. But in some mystical way, the treasures lost from remembrance turn up and come to sight again. In the far Caucasus, from which we came, there were glimpses of this ideal wife and mother.

This history, whether real or imaginary, or both, suggests to me the question whether the love which brings together and binds together men and women can in any way typify the supreme affections of the soul? That it was supposed to do so in mediæval times is certain. The sentimental agonies of troubadours and minstrels make it evident. Even the latest seedy sprout of chivalry, Don Quixote, shows us this. Wishing to start upon a noble errand, the succor of oppressed humanity, his almost first requisite is a "lady of his heart," who, in his case, is a mere lay figure upon which he drapes the fantastic weaving of his imagination.

Another question, like unto the first, is this,—whether the heroic mode of loving is or is not a lost art in our days.

That Plato and Socrates should busy themselves with it, that mystics and philosophers should find such a depth of interest in the attraction which one nature exerts upon another, and that, *per contra*, in our time, this mystical attraction should flatten, or, as singers say, flat out into a decorous observance of rules, assisting a mutual endurance—what does it mean? Is Pan dead, and are the other gods dead with him?

In an age widely, if not deeply, critical, we lose sight of the primitive affections and temperament of our race. Affection's self becomes merged in opinion. We contemplate, we compare, we are not able to covet any but surface distinctions, surface attractions. Even the poets who give us the expression of a lively participation in human instincts are disowned by us. Wordsworth is chosen, and Byron is discarded. We are not too rich with both of them. Inspired Browning—for the man who wrote "Pippa" and "Saul" was inspired—loses himself and his music in the dismal swamp of metaphysical speculation. Just at present, it seems to me that the world has lost one of its noblest leadings; *viz.*, the desire for true companionship. Arid love of pleasure, more arid worship of wealth, paralyze those higher powers of the soul which take hold on friendship and on love. To know those only who can advance your personal objects, be these amusement or ambition; to marry at auction, going, going, for so much,—how can we who have but one human life to live so cheat ourselves out of its real rights and privileges?

Is this a pathological symptom in the body social, produced by a surfeit in the direction of inclination? One might think so, since asceticism has no joylessness comparable to that of the blasted *roué* or utter worldling. In France, where the bent of romantic literature has been the following of inclination,—from George Sand, who consecrates it, down to the latest scrofulous scribbler, who outrages it,—on the banks of this turbid stream of literature, one constantly meets with the apples of Sodom. "There is no other fruit," say the venders. "You cultivate none other," is the fitting reply.

The world of thought is ever full of problems as contradictory of each other as the antinomies of which I just now made a passing mention. The right interpretation of these riddles is of great moment in our spiritual and intellectual life. The ages and æons of human experience tend, on the whole, to a gradual unification of persuasion and conviction on the part of thinking beings, and much that a prophet breathes into a hopeless blank acquires meaning in the light of succeeding centuries.

This great problem of love continues to be full of contradictory aspects to those who would explore it. We distinguish between divine love and human love, but have yet to decide whether Love absolute is divine or human; for this deity is known to us from all time in two opposite shapes,—as a destructive and as a constructive god. He unmakes the man, he unmakes the woman, sucks up precious years of human life like a sponge, sets Troy ablaze, maddens harmless Io with a stinging gad-fly.

On the other hand, where Love is not, nothing is. Luxurious Solomon praises a dinner of herbs enriched by his presence. All poetry, all doctrine, is founded upon human affection assumed as essential to life, nay, as life itself; for when love of life and its objects exists not, the vital flame flickers feebly, and expires early. In ethics, social and religious, what contradictions do we encounter under this head! From all inordinate and sinful affections, good Lord, deliver us! is a good prayer. But how shall we treat the case when there are no affections at all? We might add a clause to our litany,—From lovelessness and all manner of indifference, good Lord, deliver us! What more direful sentence than to say that a person has no heart? What sin more severely punished than any extravagant action of this same heart?

These wonders of lofty sentiment and high imagination are precious subjects of study. The construction of a great poem, of which the interest is at once intense, various, and sustained, seems to us a work more appropriate to other days than to our own. I remember in my youth a fluent critic who was fond of saying that if Milton had lived in this day of the world, he would not have thought of writing an epic poem. To which another of the same stripe would reply: "If he did write such a poem in these days, nobody would read it." I wonder how long the frisky impatience of our youth will think it worth while to follow even Homer in his long narratives.

More than this sustained power of the imagination, does the heroic in sentiment seem to decrease and to be wanting among us. Those lofty views of human affection and relation which we find in the great poets seem almost foreign to the civilization of to-day. I find in modern scepticism this same impatience of weighty thoughts. He who believes only in the phenomenal universe does not follow a conviction. A fatal indolence of mind prevents him from following any lead which threatens fatigue and difficult labor. Instead of a temple for the Divine, our man of to-day builds a commodious house for himself,—at best, a club-house for his set or circle. And the worst of it is, that he teaches his son to do the same thing.

The social change which I notice to-day as a decline in attachments simply personal is partly the result of a political change which I, for one, cannot deplore. The idea of the state and of society as bodies in which each individual has a direct interest gives to men and women of to-day an enlarged sphere of action and of instruction. The absolutely universal coincidence of the real advantage of the individual with that of the community, always true in itself, and neither now nor at any time fully comprehended, gives the fundamental tone to thought and education to-day. The result is a tendency to generality, to publicity, and a neglect of those relations into which external power and influence do not enter. The action of mind upon mind, of character upon character, outside of public life, is intense, intimate, insensible. Temperament is most valued nowadays for its effect upon multitudes. We wish to be recognized as moving in a wide and exalted sphere. The belle in the ball-room is glad to have it reported that the Prince of Wales admires her. The lady who should grace a lady's sphere pines for the stage and the footlights. Actions and appearances are calculated to be seen of men.

I say no harm of this tendency, which has enfranchised me and many others from the cruel fetters of a narrow and personal judgment. It is safe and happy to have the public for a final court of appeal, and to be able, when an issue is misjudged or distorted, to call upon its great heart to say where the right is, and where the wrong. But let us, in our panorama of wide activities, keep with all the more care these pictures of spirits that have been so finely touched within the limits of Nature's deepest reserve and modesty. This mediæval did not go to dancing-school nor to Harvard College. He could not talk of the fellows and the girls. But from his early childhood, he holds fast the tender remembrance of a beautiful and gracious face. The thought of it, and of the high type of woman which it images, is to him more fruitful of joy and satisfaction than the amusements of youth or the gaieties of the great world. Death removes this beloved object from his sight, but not from his thoughts. Years pass. His genius reaches its sublime maturity. He becomes acquainted with camps and courts, with the learning and the world of his day. But when, with all his powers, he would build a perfect monument to Truth, he takes her perfect measure from the hand of his child-love. The world keeps that work, and will keep it while literature shall last. It has many a subtle passage, many a wonderful picture, but at its height, crowned with all names divine, he has written, as worthy to be remembered with these, the name of Beatrice.

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