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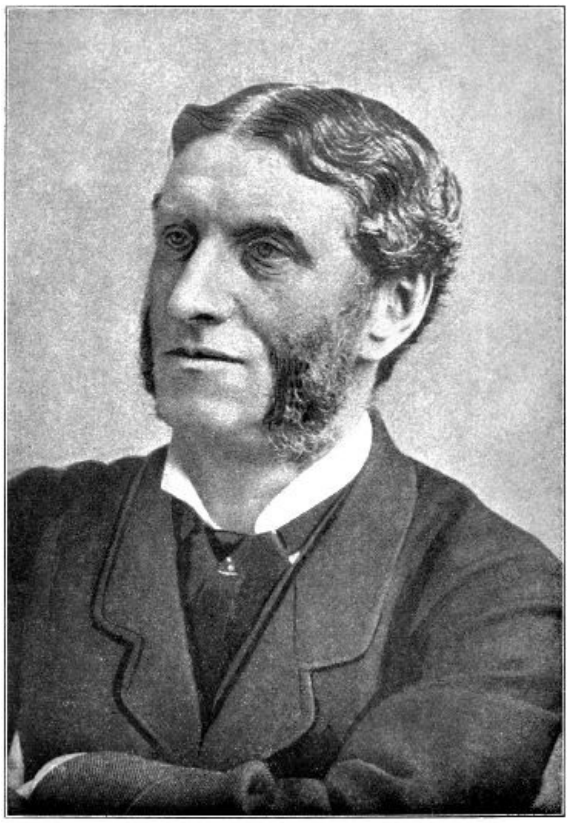
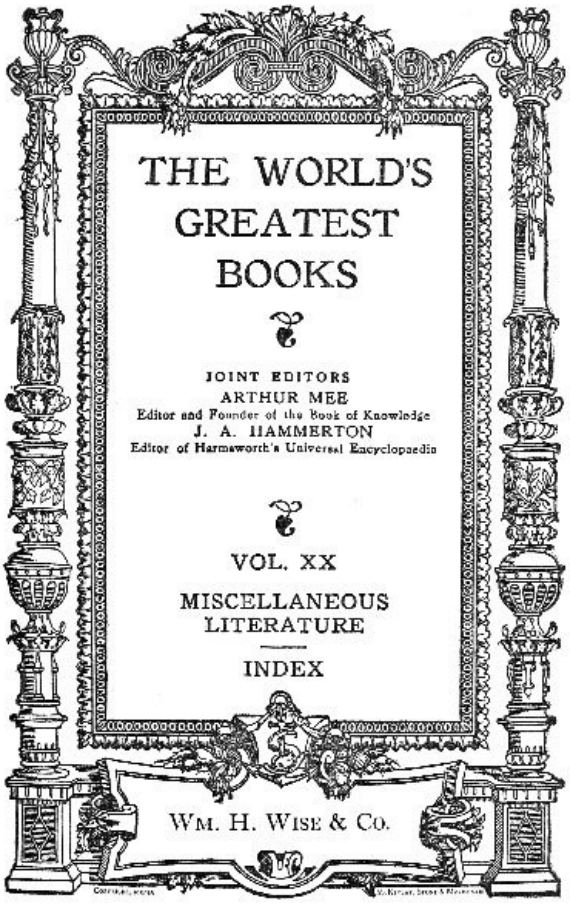


(signed) **Matthew Arnold**



THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS

JOINT EDITORS
ARTHUR MEE
Editor and Founder of the Book of Knowledge
J. A. HAMMERTON
Editor of Harmsworth's Universal Encyclopaedia

VOL. XX

MISCELLANEOUS LITERATURE

INDEX

WM. H. WISE & CO.

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Miscellaneous

JOSEPH ADDISON

The Spectator

"The Spectator," the most popular and elegant miscellany of English literature, appeared on the 1st of March, 1711. With an interruption of two years—1712 to 1714—during part of which time "The Guardian," a similar periodical, took its place, "The Spectator" was continued to the 20th of December, 1714. Addison's fame is inseparably associated with this periodical. He was the animating spirit of the magazine, and by far the most exquisite essays which appear in it are by him. Richard Steele, Addison's friend and coadjutor in "The Spectator," was born in Dublin in March, 1672, and died at Carmarthen on September 1, 1729. (Addison biography, see Vol. XVI, p. 1.)

The Essays and the Essayist

Addison's "Spectator" is one of the most interesting books in the English language. When Dr. Johnson praised Addison's prose, it was specially of "The Spectator" that he was speaking. "His page," he says, "is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected splendour. His sentences have neither studied amplitude nor affected brevity; his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to Addison."

Johnson's verdict has been upheld, for it is chiefly by "The Spectator" that Addison lives. None but scholars know his Latin verse and his voluminous translations now. His "Cato" survives only in some half-dozen occasional quotations. Two or three hymns of his, including "The spacious firmament on high," and "When all 2
Thy mercies, O my God," find a place in church collections; and his simile of the angel who rides upon the whirlwind and directs the storm is used now and again by pressmen and public speakers. But, in the main, when we think of Addison, it is of "The Spectator" that we think.

Recall the time when it was founded. It was in the days of Queen Anne, the Augustan age of the essay. There were no newspapers then, no magazines or reviews, no Parliamentary reports, nothing corresponding to the so-called "light literature" of later days. The only centres of society that existed were the court, with the aristocracy that revolved about it, and the clubs and coffee-houses, in which the commercial and professional classes met to discuss matters of general interest, to crack their jokes, and to exchange small talk about this, that and the other person, man or woman, who might happen to figure, publicly or privately, at the time. "The Spectator" was one of the first organs to give form and consistency to the opinion, the humour and the gossip engendered by this social contact.

One of the first, but not quite the first; for the less famous, though still remembered, "Tatler" preceded it. And these two, "The Tatler" and "The Spectator," have an intimate connection from the circumstance that Richard Steele, who started "The Tatler" in April, 1709, got Addison to write for it, and then joined with Addison in "The Spectator" when his own paper stopped in January, 1711. Addison and Steele had been friends since boyhood. They were contemporaries at the Charterhouse, and Steele often spent his holidays in the parsonage of Addison's father.

The two friends were a little under forty years of age when "The Spectator" began in March, 1711. It was a penny paper, and was published daily, its predecessor having been published three times a week. It began with a circulation of 3,000 copies, and ran up to about 10,000 before it stopped its daily issue in December, 1712. 3
Macaulay, writing in 1843, insists upon the sale as "indicating a popularity quite as great as that of the most successful works of Scott and Dickens in our time." The 555 numbers of the daily issue formed seven volumes; and then there was a final eighth volume, made up of triweekly issues: a total of 635 numbers, of which Addison wrote 274, and Steele 236.

To summarise the contents of these 635 numbers would require a volume. They are so versatile and so varied. As one of Addison's biographers puts it, to-day you have a beautiful meditation, brilliant in imagery and serious as a sermon, or a pious discourse on death, or perhaps an eloquent and scathing protest against the duel; while to-morrow the whole number is perhaps concerned with the wigs, ruffles, and shoe-buckles of the *macaroni*, or the hoops, patches, farthingales and tuckers of the ladies. If you wish to see the plays and actors of the time, "The Spectator" will always show them to you; and, moreover, point out the dress, manners, and mannerisms, affectations, indecorums, plaudits, or otherwise of the frequenters of the theatre.

For here is no newspaper, as we understand the term. "The Spectator" from the first indulged his humours at the expense of the quidnuncs. Says he:

"There is another set of men that I must likewise lay a claim to as being altogether unfurnished with ideas till the business and conversation of the day has supplied them. I have often considered these poor souls with an eye of great commiseration when I have heard them asking the first man they have met with whether there was any news stirring, and by that means gathering together materials for thinking. These needy persons do not know what to talk of till about twelve o'clock in the morning; for by that time they are pretty good judges of the weather, know which way the wind sets, and whether the Dutch mail be come in. As they lie at the mercy of the 4
first man they meet, and are grave or impertinent all the day long, according to the notions which they have imbibed in the morning, I would earnestly entreat them not to stir out of their chambers till they have read this paper; and do promise them that I will daily instil into them such sound and wholesome sentiments as shall have a good effect on their conversation for the ensuing twelve hours."

Now, the essential, or at least the leading feature of "The Spectator" is this: that the entertainment is provided by an imaginary set of characters forming a Spectator Club. The club represents various classes or sections of the community, so that through its members a corresponding variety of interests and opinions is set before the reader, the Spectator himself acting as a sort of final censor or referee. Chief among the Club

members is Sir Roger de Coverley, a simple, kindly, honourable, old-world country gentleman. Here is the description of this celebrated character:

"The first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country dance which is called after him. All who know that shire are very well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong. However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town, he lives in Soho Square. It is said he keeps himself a bachelor by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him. Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had 5
often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked Bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster. But being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it. It is said Sir Roger grew humble in his desires after he had forgot this cruel beauty, insomuch that it is reported he was frequently offended with beggars and gipsies; but this is looked upon by his friends rather as matter of raillery than truth. He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty; keeps a good house both in town and country; a great lover of mankind; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour that he is rather beloved than esteemed."

Then there is Sir Andrew Freeport, "a merchant of great eminence in the City of London; a person of indefatigable industry, strong reason, and great experience." He is "acquainted with commerce in all its parts; and will tell you it is a stupid and barbarous way to extend dominion by arms; for true power is to be got by arts and industry. He will often argue that, if this part of our trade were well cultivated, we should gain from one nation; and if another, from another."

There is Captain Sentry, too, "a gentleman of great courage and understanding, but invincible modesty," who in the club speaks for the army, as the templar does for taste and learning, and the clergyman for theology and philosophy.

And then, that the club may not seem to be unacquainted with "the gallantries and pleasures of the age," 6
there is Will Honeycomb, the elderly man of fashion, who is "very ready at that sort of discourse with which men usually entertain women." Will "knows the history of every mode, and can inform you from which of the French king's wenches our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods; whose frailty was covered by such a sort of petticoat; and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. In a word, all his conversation and knowledge have been in the female world. As other men of his age will take notice to you what such a minister said upon such and such an occasion, he will tell you when the Duke of Monmouth danced at court, such a woman was then smitten, another was taken with him at the head of his troop in the park. This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn; and I find there is not one of the company, but myself, who rarely speak at all, but speaks of him as that sort of man who is usually called a well-bred fine gentleman. To conclude his character, where women are not concerned, he is an honest, worthy man."

Nor must we forget Will Wimble, though he is really an outsider. Will is the younger son of a baronet: a man of no profession, looking after his father's game, training his dogs, shooting, fishing, hunting, making whiplashes for his neighbors, knitting garters for the ladies, and afterwards slyly inquiring how they wear: a welcome guest at every house in the county; beloved by all the lads and the children.

Besides these, and others, there is a fine little gallery of portraits in Sir Roger's country neighbours and tenants. We have, for instance, the yeoman who "knocks down a dinner with his gun twice or thrice a week, and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an estate as himself"; and we have Moll White, the reputed witch, who, if she made a mistake at church and cried "Amen!" in a wrong place, "they never 7
failed to conclude that she was saying her prayers backwards." We have the diverting captain, "young, sound, and impudent"; we have a demure Quaker; we have Tom Touchy, a fellow famous for "taking the law" of everybody; and we have the inn-keeper, who, out of compliment to Sir Roger, "put him up in a sign-post before the door," and then, when Sir Roger objected, changed the figure into the Saracen's Head by "a little aggravation of the features" and the addition of a pair of whiskers!

Best of all is the old chaplain. Sir Roger was "afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table"; so he got a university friend to "find him out a clergyman, rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of backgammon." The genial knight "made him a present of all the good sermons printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit." Thus, if Sir Roger happened to meet his chaplain on a Saturday evening, and asked who was to preach to-morrow, he would perhaps be answered: "The Bishop of St. Asaph in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon." About which arrangement "The Spectator" boldly observes: "I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example; and, instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people."

There is no end to the subjects discussed by "The Spectator." They range from dreams to dress and duelling; from ghosts to gardening and goats' milk; from wigs to wine and widows; from religion to riches and riding; from servants to sign-posts and snuff-boxes; from love to lodgings and lying; from beards to bankruptcy and 8
blank verse; and hundreds of other interesting themes. Correspondents often wrote to emphasise this variety, for letters from the outside public were always welcome. Thus one "Thomas Trusty":

"The variety of your subjects surprises me as much as a box of pictures did formerly, in which there was only

one face, that by pulling some pieces of isinglass over it was changed into a senator or a merry-andrew, a polished lady or a nun, a beau or a blackamoor, a prude or a coquette, a country squire or a conjurer, with many other different representations very entertaining, though still the same at the bottom."

But perhaps, on the whole, woman and her little ways have the predominant attention. Indeed, Addison expressly avowed this object of engaging the special interests of the sex when he started. He says:

"There are none to whom this paper will be more useful than to the female world. I have often thought that there has not been sufficient pains taken in finding out proper employments and diversions for the fair ones. Their amusements seem contrived for them rather as they are women than as they are reasonable creatures; and are more adapted to the sex than to the species. The toilet is their great scene of business, and the right adjustment of their hair the principal employment of their lives. The sorting of a suit of ribands is reckoned a very good morning's work; and if they make an excursion to a mercer's or a toy-shop, so great a fatigue makes them unfit for anything else all the day after. Their more serious occupations are sewing and embroidery, and their greatest drudgery the preparations of jellies and sweetmeats. This, I say, is the state of ordinary women; though I know there are multitudes of those of a more elevated life and conversation, that move in an exalted sphere of knowledge and virtue, that join all the beauties of the mind to the ornaments of dress, and inspire a kind of awe and respect, as well as of love, into their male beholders. I hope to increase the number of these by publishing this daily paper, which I shall always endeavour to make an innocent, if not an improving, entertainment, and by that means, at least, divert the minds of my female readers from greater trifles."

These reflections on the manners of women did not quite please Swift, who wrote to Stella: "I will not meddle with 'The Spectator'; let him *fair sex* it to the world's end." But they pleased most other people, as the main contents of "The Spectator" still please. Here is one typical acknowledgment, signed "Leonora":

> Mr. Spectator,—Your paper is part of my tea-equipage; and my servant knows my humour so well that, calling for my breakfast this morning (it being past my usual hour), she answered, "'the Spectator' was not yet come in, but the tea-kettle boiled, and she expected it every moment."

As an "abstract and brief chronicle of the time," this monumental work of Addison and Steele is without peer. In its pages may be traced the foundations of all that is noble and healthy in modern English thought; and its charming sketches may be made the open sesame to a period and a literature as rich as any our country has seen.

ÆSOP

Fables

It is in the fitness of things that the early biographies of Æsop, the great fabulist, should be entirely fabulous. Macrobius has distinguished between *fabula* and *fabulosa narratio*: "He would have a fable to be absolutely false, and a fabulous narration to be a number of fictions built upon a foundation of truth." The Lives of Æsop belong chiefly to the latter category. In the following pages what is known of the life of Æsop is set forth, together with condensed versions of some of his most characteristic fables, which have long passed into the wisdom of all nations, this being a subject that calls for treatment on somewhat different lines from the majority of the works dealt with in THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS.

Introductory

Pierre Bayle, in his judicious fashion, sums up what is said of Æsop in antiquity, resting chiefly upon Plutarch. "Plutarch affirms: (1) That Crœsus sent Æsop to Periander, the Tyrant of Corinth, and to the Oracle of Delphi; (2) that Socrates found no other expedient to obey the God of Dreams, without injuring his profession, than to turn the Fables of Æsop into verse; (3) that Æsop and Solon were together at the Court of Crœsus, King of Lydia; (4) that those of Delphi, having put Æsop to death cruelly and unjustly, and finding themselves exposed to several calamities on account of this injustice, made a public declaration that they were ready to make satisfaction to the memory of Æsop; (5) that having treated thereupon with a native of Samos, they were delivered from the evil that afflicted them."

To this summary Bayle added a footnote concerning "The Life of Æsop, composed by Meziriac": "It is a little book printed at Bourg-en-Bress, in 1632. It contains only forty pages in 16. It is becoming exceedingly scarce.... 11
This is what I extract from it. It is more probable that Æsop was born at Cotiœum, a town of Phrygia, than that he was born at Sardis, or in the island of Samos, or at Mesembria in Thrace. The first master that he served was one Zemarchus, or Demarchus, surnamed Carasius, a native and inhabitant of Athens. Thus it is probable that it was there he learned the purity of the Greek tongue, as in its spring, and acquired the knowledge of moral philosophy which was then in esteem....

"In process of time he was sold to Xanthus, a native of the Isle of Samos, and afterwards to Idmon, or Iadmnon, the philosopher, who was a Samian also, and who enfranchised him. After he had recovered his liberty, he soon acquired a great reputation among the Greeks; so that the report of his singular wisdom having reached the ears of Crœsus, he sent to inquire after him; and having conceived an affection for him, he obliged him by his favours to engage himself in his service to the end of his life. He travelled through Greece—whether for his own pleasure or for the private affairs of Crœsus is uncertain—and passing by Athens, soon after Pisistratus had usurped the sovereign power there and had abolished the popular state, and seeing that the Athenians bore the yoke very impatiently, he told them the Fable of the Frogs that asked a King of Jupiter. Afterwards he met the Seven Wise Men in the City of Corinth at the Tyrant Periander's. Some relate that, in order to show that the life of man is full of miseries, and that one pleasure is attended with a thousand pains, Æsop used to say that when Prometheus took the clay to form man, he did not temper it with water, but with tears."

Concerning the death of this extraordinary man we read that Æsop went to Delphi, with a great quantity of gold and silver, being ordered by Crœsus to offer a great sacrifice to Apollo, and to give a considerable sum to each inhabitant. The quarrel which arose between the Delphians and him was the occasion, after his sending 12
away the sacrifice, of his sending back the money to Crœsus; for he thought that those for whom this prince designed it had rendered themselves unworthy of it. The inhabitants of Delphi contrived an accusation of sacrilege against him, and, pretending that they had convicted him, cast him down from the top of a rock.

Bayle has a long line of centuries at his back when he says: "Æsop's lectures against the faults of men were the fullest of good sense and wit that can be imagined." He substantiates this affirmation in the following manner: "Can any inventions be more happy than the images Æsop made use of to instruct mankind? They are exceedingly fit for children, and no less proper for grown persons; they are all that is necessary to perfect a precept —I mean the mixture of the useful with the agreeable." He then quotes Aulus Gellius as saying: "Æsop the Phrygian fabulist was not without reason esteemed to be wise, since he did not, after the manner of the philosophers, severely and imperiously command such things as were fit to be advised and persuaded, but by feigning, diverting and entertaining apologues, he insinuates good and wholesome advice into the minds of men with a kind of willing attention."

Bayle continues: "At all times these have been made to succeed the homespun stories of nurses. 'Let them learn to tell the Fables of Æscop, which succeed the stories of the nursery, in pure and easy style, and afterwards endeavour to write in the same familiar manner.' They have never fallen into contempt. Our age, notwithstanding its pride and delicacy, esteems and admires them, and shows them in a hundred different shapes. The inimitable La Fontaine has procured them in our time a great deal of honour and glory; and great commendations are given to the reflections of an English wit, Sir Roger L'Estrange, on these very fables."

Since the period when Pierre Bayle composed his great biographical dictionary, the Fables of Æsop have 13
perhaps suffered something of a relapse in the favour of grown persons; but if one may judge from the number of new editions illustrated for children, they are still the delight of modern nurseries. There is this, however, to be said of contemporary times—that the multitude of books in a nursery prevent children from acquiring the profound and affectionate acquaintance with Æsop which every child would naturally get when his fables were almost the only book provided by the Press for juvenile readers.

It is questionable whether the fables will any longer produce the really deep effect which they certainly have had in the past. But we may be certain that some of them will always play a great part in the wisdom of the common people, and that these particularly true and striking apologues are secure of an eternal place in the

literature of nations. As an example of what we mean, we will tell as simply as possible some of the most characteristic fables.

The Dog and the Shadow

A Dog, with a piece of stolen meat between his teeth, was one day crossing a river by means of a plank, when he caught sight of another dog in the water carrying a far larger piece of meat. He opened his jaws to snap at the greater morsel, when the meat dropped in the stream and was lost even in the reflection.

The Dying Lion

A Lion, brought to the extremity of weakness by old age and disease, lay dying in the sunlight. Those whom he had oppressed in his strength now came round about him to revenge themselves for past injuries. The Boar ripped the flank of the King of Beasts with his tusks. The Bull came and gored the Lion's sides with his horns. 14
Finally, the Ass drew near, and after carefully seeing that there was no danger, let fly with his heels in the Lion's face. Then, with a dying groan, the mighty creature exclaimed: "How much worse it is than a thousand deaths to be spurned by so base a creature!"

The Mountain in Labour

A Mountain was heard to produce dreadful sounds, as though it were labouring to bring forth something enormous. The people came and stood about waiting to see what wonderful thing would be produced from this labour. After they had waited till they were tired, out crept a Mouse.

Hercules and the Waggoner

A Waggoner was driving his team through a muddy lane when the wheels stuck fast in the clay, and the Horses could get no farther. The Man immediately dropped on his knees, and, crying bitterly, besought Hercules to come and help him. "Get up and stir thyself, thou lazy fellow!" replied Hercules. "Whip thy Horses, and put thy shoulder to the wheel. If thou art in need of my help, when thou thyself hast laboured, then shalt thou have it."

The Frogs that Asked for a King

The Frogs, who lived an easy, happy life in the ponds, once prayed to Jupiter that he should give them a King. Jupiter was amused by this prayer, and cast a log into the water, saying: "There, then, is a King for you." The Frogs, frightened by the great splash, regarded their King with alarm, until at last, seeing that he did not stir, some of them jumped upon his back and began to be merry there, amused at such a foolish King. However, King Log did not satisfy their ideas for very long, and so once again they petitioned Jupiter to send them a King, 15
a real King who would rule over them, and not lie helpless in the water. Then Jupiter sent the Frogs a Stork, who caught them by their legs, tossed them in the air, and gobbled them up whenever he was hungry. All in a hurry the Frogs besought Jupiter to take away King Stork and restore them to their former happy condition. "No, no," answered Jupiter; "a King that did you no hurt did not please you; make the best of him you now have, lest a worse come in his place!"

The Gnat and the Lion

A lively and insolent Gnat was bold enough to attack a Lion, which he so maddened by stinging the most sensitive parts of his nose, eyes and ears that the beast roared with anguish and tore himself with his claws. In vain were the Lion's efforts to rid himself of his insignificant tormentor; again and again the insect returned and stung the furious King of Beasts, till at last the Lion fell exhausted on the ground. The triumphant Gnat, sounding his tiny trumpet, hovered over the spot exulting in his victory. But it happened that in his circling flight he got himself caught in the web of a Spider, which, fine and delicate as it was, yet had power enough to hold the tiny insect a prisoner. All the Gnat's efforts to escape only held him the more tightly and firmly a prisoner, and he who had conquered the Lion became in his turn the prey of the Spider.

The Wolf and the Stork

A Wolf ate his food so greedily that a bone stuck in his throat. This caused him such great pain that he ran hither and thither, promising to reward handsomely anyone who would remove the cause of his torture. A Stork, moved with pity by the Wolf's cry of pain, and tempted also by the reward, undertook the dangerous operation. When he had removed the bone, the Wolf moved away, but the Stork called out and reminded him of the 16
promised reward. "Reward!" exclaimed the Wolf. "Pray, you greedy fellow, what reward can you expect? You dared to put your head in my mouth, and instead of biting it off, I let you take it out again unharmed. Get away with you! And do not again place yourself in my power."

The Frog who Wanted to Be as Big as an Ox

A vain Frog, surrounded by her children, looked up and saw an Ox grazing near by. "I can be as big as the Ox," she said, and began to blow herself out. "Am I as big now?" she inquired. "Oh, no; not nearly so big!" said the little frogs. "Now?" she asked, blowing herself out still more. "No, not nearly so big!" answered her children. "But now?" she inquired eagerly, and blew herself out still more. "No, not even now," they said; "and if you try till you burst yourself you will never be so big." But the Frog would not listen, and attempting to make herself

bigger still, burst her skin and died.

The Dog in the Manger

A Dog lay in a manger which was full of hay. An Ox, being hungry, came near, and was about to eat when the Dog started up, and, with angry snarls, would not let the Ox approach. "Surly brute," said the Ox; "you cannot eat the hay yourself, and you will let no one else have any."

The Bundle of Faggots

An honest Man had the unhappiness to have a quarrelsome family of children. One day he called them before him, and bade them try to break a bundle of faggots. All tried, and all failed. "Now," said he, "unbind the bundle and take every stick by itself, and see if you cannot break them." They did his bidding, and snapped all the sticks one by one with the greatest possible ease. "This, my children," said the Father at last, "is a true emblem of your condition. Keep together and you are safe, divide and you are undone."

The Fox Without a Tail

A Fox was once caught in a trap by his tail, and in order to get free was obliged to leave it behind. He knew that his fellows would make fun of his tailless condition, so he made up his mind to induce them all to part with their tails. At the next assemblage of Foxes he made a speech on the uselessness of tails in general, and the inconvenience of a Fox's tail in particular, declaring that never in his whole life had he felt so comfortable as now in his tailless freedom. When he sat down, a sly old Fox rose, and, waving his brush, said, with a sneer, that if he had lost his tail, he would be convinced by the last speaker's arguments, but until such an accident occurred he fully intended to vote in favour of tails.

The Blind Man and the Paralytic

A blind man finding himself stopped in a rough and difficult road, met with a paralytic and begged his assistance. "How can I help you," replied the paralytic, "when I can scarcely move myself along?" But, regarding the blind man, he added: "However, you appear to have good legs and a broad back, and, if you will lift me and carry me, I will guide you safely through this difficulty, which is more than each one can surmount for himself. You shall walk for me, and I will see for you." "With all my heart," rejoined the blind man; and, taking the paralytic on his shoulders, the two went cheerfully forward in a wise partnership which triumphed over all difficulties.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Essays in Criticism

Matthew Arnold, son of Dr. Arnold of Rugby (see Vol. X, p. 260), was born on December 24, 1822, and died on April 15, 1888. He was by everyday calling an inspector of schools and an educational expert, but by nature and grace a poet, a philosopher, a man of piety and of letters. Arnold almost ceased to write verse when he was forty-five, though not without having already produced some of the choicest poetry in the English language. Before that he had developed his theories of literary criticism in his "Essays in Criticism"; and about the time of his withdrawal from Oxford he published "Culture and Anarchy," in which his system of philosophy is broadly outlined. Later, in "St. Paul and Protestantism," "Literature and Dogma" and "God and the Bible," he tried to adjust Christianity according to the light of modern knowledge. In his "Lectures on Translating Homer," he had expressed views on criticism and its importance that were new to, and so were somewhat adversely discussed by the Press. Whereupon, in 1865, with a militant joy, he re-entered the fray and defined the province of criticism in the first of a series of "Essays in Criticism," showing the narrowness of the British conception. "The Literary Influence of Academies" was a subject that enabled him to make a further comparison between the literary genius of the French and of the English people, and a number of individual critiques that followed only enhanced his great and now undisputed position both as a poet and as a critic. The argument of the two general essays is given here.

I.—Creative Power and Critical Power

Many objections have been made to a proposition of mine about criticism: "Of the literature of France and Germany, as of the intellect of Europe in general, the main effort, for now many years, has been a critical effort—the endeavour, in all branches of knowledge, to see the object as in itself it really is." I added that "almost the last thing for which one would come to English literature was just that very thing which now Europe most desired—criticism," and that the power and value of English literature were thereby impaired. More than one 19
rejoinder declared that the importance here again assigned to criticism was excessive, and asserted the inherent superiority of the creative effort of the human spirit over its critical effort. A reporter of Wordsworth's conversation quotes a judgment to the same effect: "Wordsworth holds the critical power very low; indeed, infinitely lower than the inventive."

The critical power is of lower rank than the inventive—true; but, in assenting to this proposition, we must keep in mind that men may have the sense of exercising a free creative activity in other ways than in producing great works of literature or art; and that the exercise of the creative power in the production of great works of literature or art is not at all epochs and under all conditions possible. This creative power works with elements, with materials—what if it has not those materials ready for its use? Now, in literature, the elements with which creative power works are ideas—the best ideas on every matter which literature touches, current at the time. The grand work of literary genius is a work of synthesis and exposition; its gift lies in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain order of ideas, when it finds itself in them; of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in most effective and attractive combinations, making beautiful works with them, in short. But it must have the atmosphere, it must find itself amidst the order of the ideas, in order to work freely; and these it is not so easy to command. This is really why great creative epochs in literature are so rare—because, for the creation of a master-work of literature two powers must concur, the power of the man and the power of the moment; and the man is not enough without the moment.

The creative power has for its happy exercise appointed elements, and those elements are not in its control. Nay, they are more within the control of the critical power. It is the business of the critical power in all 20
branches of knowledge to see the object as in itself it really is. Thus it tends at last to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can avail itself. It tends to establish an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces—to make the best ideas prevail. Presently these new ideas reach society; the touch of truth is the touch of life; and there is a stir and growth everywhere. Out of this stir and growth come the creative epochs of literature.

II.—The Literary "Atmosphere"

It has long seemed to me that the burst of creative activity in our literature through the first quarter of the nineteenth century had about it something premature, and for this cause its productions are doomed to prove hardly more lasting than the productions of far less splendid epochs. And this prematureness comes from its having proceeded without having its proper data, without sufficient materials to work with. In other words, the English poetry of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, with plenty of energy, plenty of creative force, did not know enough. This makes Byron so empty of matter, Shelley so incoherent, Wordsworth, profound as he is, so wanting in completeness and variety.

It was not really books and reading that lacked to our poetry at this epoch. Shelley had plenty of reading, Coleridge had immense reading; Pindar and Sophocles had not many books; Shakespeare was no deep reader. True; but in the Greece of Pindar and Sophocles and the England of Shakespeare the poet lived in a current of ideas in the highest degree animating and nourishing to creative power.

Such an atmosphere the many-sided learning and the long and widely combined critical effort of Germany 21
formed for Goethe when he lived and worked. In the England of the first quarter of the nineteenth century there was neither a national glow of life and thought, such as we had in the age of Elizabeth, nor yet a force of learning and criticism, such as was to be found in Germany. The creative power of poetry wanted, for success in the highest sense, materials and a basis—a thorough interpretation of the world was necessarily denied to it.

At first it seems strange that out of the immense stir of the French Revolution and its age should not have

come a crop of works of genius equal to that which came out of the stir of the great productive time of Greece, or out of that of the Renaissance, with its powerful episode of the Reformation. But the truth is that the stir of the French Revolution took a character which essentially distinguished it from such movements as these. The French Revolution found, undoubtedly, its motive power in the intelligence of men, and not in their practical sense. It appeals to an order of ideas which are universal, certain, permanent. The year 1789 asked of a thing: Is it rational? That a whole nation should have been penetrated with an enthusiasm for pure reason is a very remarkable thing when we consider how little of mind, or anything so worthy or quickening as mind, comes into the motives which in general impel great masses of men. In spite of the crimes and follies in which it lost itself, the French Revolution derives, from the force, truth and universality of the ideas which it took for its law, a unique and still living power; and it is, and will probably long remain, the greatest, the most animating event in history.

But the mania for giving an immediate political and practical application to all these fine ideas of the reason was fatal. Here an Englishman is in his element: on this theme we can all go on for hours. Ideas cannot be too much prized in and for themselves, cannot be too much lived with; but to transport them abruptly into the world 22
of politics and practice, violently to revolutionise this world to their bidding—that is quite another thing. "Force and right are the governors of the world; force till right is ready" Joubert has said. The grand error of the French Revolution was that it set at naught the second great half of that maxim—force till right is ready—and, rushing furiously into the political sphere, created in opposition to itself what I may call an epoch of concentration.

The great force of that epoch of concentration was England, and the great voice of that epoch of concentration was Burke. I will not deny that his writings are often disfigured by the violence and passion of the moment, and that in some directions Burke's view was bounded and his observations therefore at fault; but for those who can make the needful corrections what distinguishes these writings is their profound, permanent, fruitful, philosophical truth—they contain the true philosophy of an epoch of concentration. Now, an epoch of expansion seems to be opening in this country. In spite of the absorbing and brutalising influence of our passionate material progress, this progress is likely to lead in the end to an apparition of intellectual life. It is of the last importance that English criticism should discern what rule it ought to take, to avail itself of the field now opening to it. That rule may be summed up in one word—disinterestedness.

III.—The Virtue of Detachment

How is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from practice; by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. Its business is simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by making this known to create a current of fresh 23
and true ideas. What is at present the bane of criticism in this country? It is that our organs of criticism are organs of men and parties having practical ends to serve, and with them those practical ends are the first thing, and the play of the mind the second—so much play of mind as is compatible with the prosecution of these practical ends is all that is wanted.

An organ like the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, existing as just an organ for a free play of mind, we have not; but we have the "Edinburgh Review," existing as an organ of the old Whigs, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the "Quarterly Review," existing as an organ of the Tories, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have the "British Quarterly Review," existing as an organ of the political Dissenters, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that; we have "The Times," existing as an organ of the common, satisfied, well-to-do Englishman, and for as much play of mind as may suit its being that. And so on through all the various fractions, political and religious, of our society—every fraction has, as such, its organ of criticism, but the notion of combining all fractions in the common pleasure of a free, disinterested play of mind meets with no favour. Yet no other criticism will ever attain any real authority, or make any real way towards its end—the creating of a current of true and fresh ideas.

It will be said that, by embracing in this manner the Indian virtue of detachment, criticism condemns itself to a slow and obscure work; but it is the only proper work of criticism. Whoever sets himself to see things as they are will find himself one of a very small circle; but it is only by this small circle resolutely doing its work that adequate ideas will ever get current at all. For the practical man is not apt for fine distinctions, and yet in these distinctions truth and the highest culture greatly find their account. To act is so easy, as Goethe says, and to think is so hard. Criticism must maintain its independence of the practical spirit and its aims. Even with well 24
meant efforts of the practical spirit it must express dissatisfaction if, in the sphere of the ideal, they seem impoverishing and limiting. It must be apt to study and praise elements that for the fulness of spiritual perfection are wanted, even though they belong to a power which, in the practical sphere, may be maleficent. It must be apt to discern the spiritual shortcomings of powers that in the practical sphere may be beneficent.

By the very nature of things much of the best that is known and thought in the world cannot be of English growth—must be foreign; by the nature of things, again, it is just this that we are least likely to know, while English thought is streaming in upon us from all sides, and takes excellent care that we shall not be ignorant of its existence. The English critic must dwell much on foreign thought, and with particular heed on any part of it, which, while significant and fruitful in itself, is for any reason specially likely to escape him.

Again, judging is often spoken of as the critic's business; and so in some sense it is. But the judgment which almost insensibly forms itself in a fair and clear mind, along with fresh knowledge, is the valuable one; and, therefore, knowledge, and ever fresh knowledge, must be the critic's great concern for himself. And it is by communicating fresh knowledge, and letting his own judgment pass along with it—as a sort of companion and clue—that he will generally do most good to his readers.

To get near the standard of the best that is known and thought in the world, every critic should possess one great literature at least beside his own; and the more unlike his own the better. For the criticism I am concerned with regards Europe as being for intellectual and spiritual purposes one great confederation, bound

to a joint action and working to a common result.

I conclude with what I said at the beginning. To have the sense of creative activity is not denied to criticism; but then criticism must be sincere, simple, flexible, ardent, ever widening its knowledge. Then it may have, in no contemptible measure, a joyful sense of creative activity, a sense which a man of insight and conscience will prefer to that he might derive from a poor, starved, fragmentary, inadequate creation. And at some epochs no other creation is possible. Still, in full measure, the sense of creative activity belongs only to genuine creation; in literature we must never forget that. But what true man of letters ever can forget it? It is no such common matter for a gifted nature to come into possession of a current of true and living ideas, and to produce amidst the inspiration of them, that we are likely to underrate it. The glorious epochs of Æschylus and Shakespeare make us feel their pre-eminence. In an epoch like those is the true life of literature; there is the promised land towards which criticism can only beckon. 25

IV.—Should We Have an Academy?

It is impossible to put down a book like the history of the French Academy by Pellisson and D'Olivet without being led to reflect upon the absence in our own country of any institution like the French Academy, upon the probable causes of this absence, and upon its results. Improvement of the language was the declared grand aim for the operations of that academy. Its statutes of foundation say expressly that "the Academy's principal function shall be to work with all the care and all the diligence possible at giving sure rules to our language, and rendering it pure, eloquent and capable of treating the arts and sciences." It is said that Richelieu had it in his mind that French should succeed Latin in its general ascendancy, as Latin had succeeded Greek. If it were so, even this wish has to some extent been fulfilled. This was not all Richelieu had in his mind, however. The new academy was meant to be a literary tribunal, a high court of letters, and this is what it has really been. 26

Such an effort, to set up a recognised authority, imposing on us a high standard in matters of intellect and taste, has many enemies in human nature. We all of us like to go our own way, and not to be forced out of the atmosphere of commonplace habitual to most of us. We like to be suffered to lie comfortably on the old straw of our habits, especially of our intellectual habits, even though this straw may not be very fine and clean. But if this effort to limit the freedom of our lower nature finds enemies in human nature, it also finds auxiliaries in it. Man alone of living creatures, says Cicero, goes feeling after the discovery of an order, a law of good taste; other creatures submissively fulfil the law of their nature.

Now in France, says M. Sainte-Beuve, "the first consideration for us is not whether we are amused and pleased by a work of art or of mind, or is it whether we are touched by it. What we seek above all to learn is whether we were right in being amused with it, and in applauding it, and in being moved by it." A Frenchman has, to a considerable degree, what one may call a conscience in intellectual matters. Seeing this, we are on the road to see why the French have their Academy and we have nothing of the kind.

What are the essential characteristics of the spirit of our nation? Our greatest admirers would not claim for us an open and clear mind, a quick and flexible intelligence. Rather would they allege as our chief spiritual characteristics energy and honesty—most important and fruitful qualities in the intellectual and spiritual, as in the moral sphere, for, of what we call genius, energy is the most essential part. Now, what that energy, which is the life of genius, above everything demands and insists upon, is freedom—entire independence of authority, prescription and routine, the fullest power to extend as it will. Therefore, a nation whose chief spiritual characteristic is energy will not be very apt to set up in intellectual matters a fixed standard, an authority like an academy. By this it certainly escapes real inconveniences and dangers, and it can, at the same time, reach undeniably splendid heights in poetry and science. We have Shakespeare, and we have Newton. In the intellectual sphere there can be no higher names. 27

On the other hand, some of the requisites of intellectual work are specially the affair of quickness of mind and flexibility of intelligence. In prose literature they are of first-rate importance. These are elements that can, to a certain degree, be appropriated, while the free activity of genius cannot. Academies consecrate and maintain them, and therefore a nation with an eminent turn for them naturally establishes academies.

V.—Our Loss Through Provinciality

How much greater is our nation in poetry than prose! How much better do the productions of its spirit show in the qualities of genius than in the qualities of intelligence! But the question as to the utility of academies to the intellectual life of a nation is not settled when we say that we have never had an academy, yet we have, confessedly, a very great literature. It is by no means sure that either our literature or the general intellectual life of our nation has got already without academies all that academies can give. Our literature, in spite of the genius manifested in it, may fall short in form, method, precision, proportions, arrangement—all things where intelligence proper comes in. It may be weak in prose, full of haphazard, crudeness, provincialism, eccentricity, violence, blundering; and instead of always fixing our thoughts upon the points in which our literature is strong, we should, from time to time, fix them upon those in which it is weak. In France, the Academy serves as a sort of centre and rallying-point to educated opinion, and gives it a force which it has not got here. In the bulk of the intellectual work of a nation which has no centre, no intellectual metropolis like an academy, there is observable a note of provinciality. Great powers of mind will make a man think profoundly, but not even great powers of mind will keep his taste and style perfectly sound and sure if he is left too much to himself with no sovereign organ of opinion near him. 28

Even men like Jeremy Taylor and Burke suffer here. Theirs is too often extravagant prose; prose too much suffered to indulge its caprices; prose at too great a distance from the centre of good taste; prose with the note of provinciality; Asiatic prose, somewhat barbarously rich and overloaded. The note of provinciality in Addison is to be found in the commonplace of his ideas, though his style is classical. Where there is no centre like an academy, if you have genius and powerful ideas, you are apt not to have the best style going; if you have precision of style and not genius, you are apt not to have the best ideas going.

The provincial spirit exaggerates the value of its ideas for want of a high standard at hand by which to try them; it is hurried away by fancies; it likes and dislikes too passionately, too exclusively; its admiration weeps hysterical tears, and its disapprobation foams at the mouth. So we get the eruptive and aggressive manner in literature. Not having the lucidity of a large and centrally-placed intelligence, the provincial spirit has not its graciousness; it does not persuade, it makes war; it has not urbanity, the tone of the city, of the centre, the tone that always aims at a spiritual and intellectual effect. It loves hard-hitting rather than persuading. The newspaper, with its party spirit, its resolute avoidance of shades and distinctions, is its true literature. In England there needs a miracle of genius like Shakespeare to produce balance of mind, and a miracle of intellectual delicacy like Dr. Newman's to produce urbanity of style. 29

The reader will ask for some practical conclusion about the establishment of an academy in this country, and perhaps I shall hardly give him the one he expects. Nations have their own modes of acting, and these modes are not easily changed; they are even consecrated when great things have been done in them. When a literature has produced a Shakespeare and a Milton, when it has even produced a Barrow and a Burke, it cannot well abandon its traditions; it can hardly begin at this late time of day with an institution like the French Academy. An academy quite like the French Academy, a sovereign organ of the highest literary opinion, a recognised authority in matters of intellectual tone and taste, we shall hardly have, and perhaps ought not to wish to have. But then every one amongst us with any turn for literature at all will do well to remember to what shortcomings and excesses, which such an academy tends to correct, we are liable, and the more liable, of course, for not having it. He will do well constantly to try himself in respect of these, steadily to widen his culture, and severely to check in himself the provincial spirit.

VI.—Some Illustrative Criticisms

To try and approach Truth on one side after another, not to strive or cry, not to persist in pressing forward on any one side with violence and self-will—it is only thus that mortals may hope to gain any vision of the mysterious goddess whom we shall never see except in outline.

The grand power of poetry is the power of dealing with things so as to awaken in us a wonderfully full, new and intimate sense of them and of our relation with them, so that we feel ourselves to be in contact with the essential nature of those objects, to have their secret, and be in harmony with them, and this feeling calms and satisfies us as no other can. Maurice de Guérin manifested this magical power of poetry in singular eminence. His passion for perfection disdained all poetical work that was not perfectly adequate and felicitous. 30

His sister Eugénie de Guérin has the same characteristic quality—distinction. Of this quality the world is impatient; it chafes against it, rails at it, insults it, hates it, but ends by receiving its influence and by undergoing its law. This quality at last inexorably corrects the world's blunders, and fixes the world's ideals.

Heine claimed that he was "a brave soldier in the war of the liberation of humanity." That was his significance. He was, if not pre-eminently a brave, yet a brilliant soldier in the war of liberation of humanity. He was not an adequate interpreter of the modern world, but only a brilliant soldier.

Born in 1754, and dying in 1824, Joseph Joubert chose to hide his life; but he was a man of extraordinary ardour in the search for truth and of extraordinary fineness in the perception of it. He was one of those wonderful lovers of light who, when they have an idea to put forth, brood long over it first, and wait patiently till it shines.

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GEORGE BRANDES

Main Currents of the Literature of the Nineteenth Century

George Brandes was born in Copenhagen on February 4, 1842, and was educated at the University of Copenhagen. The appearance of his "Æsthetic Studies" in 1868 established his reputation among men of letters of all lands. His criticism received a philosophic bent from his study of John Stuart Mill, Comte, and Renan. Complaint is often made of the bias exhibited by Brandes in his works, which is somewhat of a blemish on the breadth of his judgment. This bias finds its chief expression in his anti-clericalism. His publications number thirty-three volumes, and include works on history, literature, and criticism. He has written studies of Shakespeare, of Lord Beaconsfield, of Ibsen, and of Ferdinand Lassalle. His greatest work is the "Main Currents of the Literature of the Nineteenth Century." The field covered is so vast that any attempted synopsis of the volume is impossible here, so in this place we merely indicate the scope of Brandes's monumental work, and state his general conclusions.

The Man and the Book

This remarkable essay in literary criticism is limited to the first half of the nineteenth century; it concludes with the historical turning-point of 1848. Within this period the author discovers, first, a reaction against the literature of the eighteenth century; and then, the vanquishment of that reaction. Or, in other words, there is first a fading away and disappearance of the ideas and feelings of the preceding century, and then a return of the ideas of progress in new and higher waves.

"Literary history is, in its profoundest significance, psychology, the study, the history of the soul"; and literary criticism is, with our author, nothing less than the interior history of peoples. Whether we happen to 32
agree or to disagree with his personal sympathies, which lie altogether with liberalism and whether his interpretation of these complex movements be accepted or rejected by future criticism, it is at least unquestionable that his estimate of his science is the right one, and that his method is the right one, and that no one stands beside Brandes as an exponent.

The historical movement of the years 1800 to 1848 is here likened to a drama, of which six different literary groups represent the six acts. The first three acts incorporate the reaction against progress and liberty. They are, first, the French Emigrant Literature, inspired by Rousseau; secondly, the semi-Catholic Romantic school of Germany, wherein the reaction has separated itself more thoroughly from the contemporary struggle for liberty, and has gained considerably in depth and vigour; and, thirdly, the militant and triumphant reaction as shown in Joseph de Maistre, Lamennais, Lamartine and Victor Hugo, standing out for pope and monarch. The drama of reaction has here come to its climax; and the last three acts are to witness its fall, and the revival, in its place, of the ideas of liberty and of progress.

"It is one man, Byron, who produces the revulsion in the great drama." And Byron and his English contemporaries, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Keats and Shelley, hold the stage in the fourth act, "Naturalism in England." The fifth act belongs to the Liberal movement in France, the "French Romantic School," including the names of Lamennais, Lamartine and Hugo in their second phase; and also those of De Musset and George Sand. The movement passes from France into "Young Germany," where the sixth act is played by Heine, Ruge, Feuerbach and others; and the ardent revolutionary writers of France and of Germany together prepare for the great political transformation of 1848.

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I.—The Emigrant Literature

At the beginning of our period, France was subjected to two successive tyrannies: those, namely, of the Convention and of the Empire, both of which suppressed all independent thought and literature. Writers were, perforce, emigrants beyond the frontiers of French power, and were, one and all, in opposition to the Reign of Terror, or to the Napoleonic tyranny, or to both; one and all they were looking forward to the new age which should come.

There was, therefore, a note of expectancy in this emigrant literature, which had also the advantage of real knowledge, gained in long exile, of foreign lands and peoples. Although it reacts against the dry and narrow rationalism of the eighteenth century, it is not as yet a complete reaction against the Liberalism of that period; the writers of the emigrant group are still ardent in the cause of Liberty. They are contrary to the spirit of Voltaire; but they are all profoundly influenced by Rousseau.

Chateaubriand's romances, "Atala" and "René," Rousseau's "The New Héloïse" and Goethe's "Werther" are the subjects of studies which lead our critic to a consideration of that new spiritual condition of which they are the indications. "All the spiritual maladies," he says, "which make their appearance at this time may be regarded as the products of two great events—the emancipation of the individual and the emancipation of thought."

Every career now lies open, potentially, to the individual. His opportunities, and therefore his desires, but not his powers, have become boundless; and "inordinate desire is always accompanied by inordinate melancholy." His release from the old order, which limited his importance, has set him free for self-idolatry; the old laws have broken down, and everything now seems permissible. He no longer feels himself part of a whole; 34
he feels himself to be a little world which reflects the great world. The belief in the saving power of enlightenment had been rudely shaken, and the minds of men were confused like an army which receives contradictory orders in the midst of a battle. Sénancour, Nodier and Benjamin Constant have left us striking romances picturing the human spirit in this dilemma; they show also a new feeling for Nature, new revelations of subjectivity, and new ideas of womanhood and of passion.

But of the emigrant literature Madame de Staël is the chief and central figure. The lawless savagery of the

Revolution did not weaken her fidelity to personal and political freedom. "She wages war with absolutism in the state and hypocrisy in society. She teaches her countrymen to appreciate the characteristics and literature of the neighbouring nations; she breaks down with her own hands the wall of self-sufficiency with which victorious France had surrounded itself. Barante, with his perspective view of eighteenth-century France, only continues and completes her work."

II.—The Romantic School in Germany

German Romanticism continues the growing reaction against the eighteenth century; yet, though it is essentially reaction, it is not mere reaction, but contains the seeds of a new development. It is intellectual, poetical, philosophical and full of real life.

This literary period, marked by the names of Hölderlin, A. W. Schlegel, Tieck, Jean Paul Richter, Schleiermacher, Wackenroder, Novalis, Arnim, Brentano, resulted in little that has endured. It produced no typical forms; the character of its literature is musical rather than plastic; its impulse is not a clear perception or creation, but an infinite and ineffable aspiration.

An intenser spiritual life was at once the impulse and the goal of the Romanticists, in whom wonder and infinite desire are born again. A sympathetic interest in the fairy tale and the legend, in the face of Nature and in her creatures, in history, institutions and law, and a keener emotional sensitiveness in poetry, were the result of this refreshed interior life. In religion, the movement was towards the richly-coloured mystery and child-like faith of Catholicism; and in respect of human love it was towards freedom, spontaneity, intensity, and against the hard bonds of social conventions. 35

But its emotions became increasingly morbid, abnormal and ineffectual. Romanticism tended really, not to the spiritual emancipation that was its avowed aim, but to a refinement of sensuality; an indolent and passive enjoyment is its actual goal; and it repudiates industry and utility as the philistine barriers which exclude us from Paradise. Retrogression, the going back to a fancied Paradise or Golden Age, is the central idea of Romanticism, and is the secret of the practical ineffectiveness of the movement.

Friedrich Schlegel's romance, "Lucinde," is a very typical work of this period. It is based on the Romantic idea that life and poetry are identical, and its aim is to counsel the transformation of our actual life into a poem or work of art. It is a manifesto of self-absorption and of subjectivity; the reasoned defence of idleness, of enjoyment, of lawlessness, of the arbitrary expression of the Self, supreme above all.

The mysticism of Novalis, who preferred sickness to health, night to day, and invested death itself with sensual delights, is described by himself as voluptuousness. It is full of a feverish, morbid desire, which becomes at last the desire for nothingness. The "blue flower," in his story "Heinrich von Ofterdingen," is the ideal, personal happiness, sought for in all Romanticism, but by its very nature never attainable.

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III.—The Reaction in France

Herein we have the culmination of the reactionary movement. Certain authors are grouped together as labouring for the re-establishment of the fallen power of authority; and by the principle of authority is to be understood "the principle which assumes the life of the individual and of the nation to be based upon reverence for inherited tradition." Further, "the principle of authority in general stood or fell with the authority of the Church. When that was undermined, it drew all other authorities with it in its fall."

After a study of the Revolution in its quality as a religious movement, and the story of the Concordat, our author traces the genesis of this extreme phase of the reaction. Its promoters were all of noble birth and bound by close ties to the old royal families; their aim was political rather than religious; "they craved for religion as a panacea for lawlessness." Their ruling idea was the principle of externality, as opposed to that of inward, personal feeling and private investigation; it was the principle of theocracy, as opposed to the sovereignty of the people; it was the principle of power, as opposed to the principles of human rights and liberties.

Chateaubriand's famous book, "Le Génie du Christianisme," devoid of real feeling, attempts to vindicate authority by means of an appeal to sentiment, as if taking for granted that a reasoned faith was now impossible. His point of view is romantic, and therefore, religiously, false; his reasoning is of the "how beautiful!" style.

But the principle was enthroned by Count Joseph de Maistre, a very different man. The minister of the King of Sardinia at the court of Russia, he gained the emperor's confidence by his strong and pure character, his royalist principles, and his talents. His more important works, "Du Pape," "De l'Eglise Gallicane," and "Soirées de St. Pétersbourg," are the most uncompromising defence of political and religious autocracy. The fundamental idea of his works is that "there is no human society without government, no government without sovereignty, and no sovereignty without infallibility." Beside De Maistre stands Bonald, a man of the same views, but without the other's daring and versatile wit. Chateaubriand's prose epic "Les Martyrs," the mystically sensual writings of Madame Krüdener, and the lyric poetry of Lamartine and Victor Hugo further popularised the reaction, which reached its breaking point in Lamennais. 37

It was at this moment, April, 1824, that the news came of Byron's death in Greece. The illusion dissolved; the reaction came to an end. The principle of authority fell, never to rise again; and the Immanuelistic school was succeeded by the Satanic.

IV.—Naturalism in England

The distinguishing character which our author discovers in the English poets is a love of Nature, of the country and the sea, of domestic animals and vegetation. This Naturalism, common to Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, Keats, Moore, Shelley and Byron, becomes, when transferred to social interests, revolutionary; the English poet is a Radical. Literary questions interest him not; he is at heart a politician.

The political background of English intellectual life at this period is painted forcibly and in the darkest tones. It was "dark with terror produced in the middle classes by the excesses of the liberty movement in France, dark with the tyrannic lusts of proud Tories and the Church's oppressions, dark with the spilt blood of Irish Catholics and English artisans." In the midst of all this misery, Wordsworth and Coleridge recalled the English mind to the love of real Nature and to the love of liberty. Wordsworth's conviction was that in town life and its 38
distractions men had forgotten Nature, and had been punished for it; constant social intercourse had dissipated their talents and impaired their susceptibility to simple and pure impressions. His naturalism is antagonistic to all official creeds; it is akin to the old Greek conception of Nature, and is impregnated with pantheism.

The separate studies which follow, dealing with the natural Romanticism of Coleridge, Southey's Oriental Romanticism, the Lake school's conception of Liberty, the Historic Naturalism of Scott, the sensuous poetry of Keats, the poetry of Irish opposition and revolt, Thomas Campbell's poetry of freedom, the Republican Humanism of Landor, Shelley's Radical Naturalism, and like subjects, are of the highest importance to every English reader who would understand the time in which he lives. But Byron's is the heroic figure in this act. "Byron's genius takes possession of him, and makes him great and victorious in his argument, directing his aim with absolute certainty to the vital points." Byron's whole being burned with the profoundest compassion for the immeasurable sufferings of humanity. It was liberty that he worshipped, and he died for liberty.

V.—The Romantic School in France

During the Revolution the national property had been divided into twenty times as many hands as before, and with the fall of Napoleon the industrial period begins. All restrictions had been removed from industry and commerce, and capital became the moving power of society and the object of individual desires. The pursuit of money helps to give to the literature of the day its romantic, idealistic stamp. Balzac alone, however, made money the hero of his epic. Other great writers of the period, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset, George Sand, Beyle, Mérimée, Théophile Gautier, Sainte-Beuve, kept as far as possible from the new reality.

The young Romanticists of 1830 burned with a passion for art and a detestation of drab bourgeoisie. A break 39
with tradition was demanded in all the arts; the original, the unconscious, the popular, were what they aimed at. It was now, as in Hugo's dramas, that the passionate plebeian appeared on the scene as hero; Mérimée, as in "Carmen," painted savage emotions; Nodier's children spoke like real children; George Sand depicted, in woman, not conscious virtue and vice, but the innate nobility and natural goodness of a noble woman's heart. The poet was no longer looked on as a courtier, but as the despised high-priest of humanity.

The French Romantic school is the greatest literary school of the nineteenth century. It displayed three main tendencies—the endeavour to reproduce faithfully some real piece of past history or some phase of modern life; the endeavour after perfection of form; and enthusiasm for great religious or social reformatory ideas. These three tendencies are traced out in the ideals and work of the brilliant authors of the period; in George Sand, for instance, who proclaimed that the mission of art is a mission of sentiment and love; and in Balzac, who views society as the scientist investigates Nature—"he never moralises and condemns; he never allows himself to be led by disgust or enthusiasm to describe otherwise than truthfully; nothing is too small, nothing is too great to be examined and explained."

The impressions which our author gives of Sainte-Beuve, Gautier, George Sand, Balzac and Mérimée are vivid and concrete; they are high achievements in literary portraiture, set in a real historic background.

VI.—Young Germany

The personality, writings, and actions of Byron had an extraordinary influence upon "Young Germany," a movement initiated by Heine and Börne, and characterised by a strong craving for liberty. "Byron, with his 40
contempt for the real negation of liberty that lay concealed beneath the 'wars of liberty' against Napoleon, with his championship of the oppressed, his revolt against social custom, his sensuality and spleen, his passionate love of liberty in every domain, seemed to the men of that day to be an embodiment of all that they understood by the modern spirit, modern poetry."

The literary group known as Young Germany has no creative minds of the highest, and only one of very high rank, namely, Heine. "It denied, it emancipated, it cleared up, it let in fresh air. It is strong through its doubt, its hatred of thraldom, its individualism." The Germany of those days has been succeeded by a quite new Germany, organised to build up and to put forth material strength, and the writers of the first half of the nineteenth century, who were always praising France and condemning the sluggishness of their own country, are but little read.

The literary figures of this period who are painted by our author, are Börne, Heine, Immermann, Menzel, Gutzkow, Laube, Mundt, Rahel Varnhagen von Ense, Bettina von Arnim, Charlotte Stieglitz, and many others, to whose writings, in conjunction with those of the French Romanticists, Brandes ascribes the general revolt of the oppressed peoples of Europe in 1848. Of the men of that date he says: "They had a faith that could remove mountains, and a hope that could shake the earth. Liberty, parliament, national unity, liberty of the Press, republic, were to them magic words, at the very sound of which their hearts leaped like the heart of a youth who suddenly sees his beloved."

ROBERT BURTON

The Anatomy of Melancholy

Robert Burton was born on February 8, 1576, of an old family, at Lindley, Leicestershire, England; was educated at the free school of Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, and at Brasenose College, Oxford, and in 1599 was elected student of Christ Church. In 1616 he was presented with the vicarage of St. Thomas, Oxford, and in 1636 with the rectory of Segrave, in Leicestershire, and kept both these livings until his death. But he lived chiefly in his rooms at Christ Church, Oxford, where, burrowing in the treasures of the Bodleian Library, he elaborated his learned and whimsical book. He died on January 25, 1639, and was buried in Christ Church Cathedral. The "Anatomy of Melancholy" is an enormous compendium of sound sense, sly humour, universal erudition, mediæval science, fantastic conceits, and noble sentiments, arranged in the form of a most methodical treatise, divided, and subdivided again, into sections dealing with every conceivable aspect of this fell disorder. It is an intricate tissue of quotations and allusions, and its interest lies as much in its texture as in its argument. The "Anatomy" consists of an introduction, "Democritus Junior to the Reader," and then of three "Partitions," of which the first treats of the Causes of Melancholy, the second of its Cure, and the third of Love-Melancholy, wherewith is included the Melancholy of Superstition.

I.—Democritus Junior to the Reader

Gentle reader, I presume thou wilt be very inquisitive to know what antic or personate actor this is that so insolently intrudes upon this common theatre to the world's view, arrogating another man's name; whence he is, why he doth it, and what he hath to say. Seek not after that which is hid; if the contents please thee, suppose the man in the moon, or whom thou wilt, to be the author; I would not willingly be known.

I have masked myself under this visard because, like Democritus, I have lived a silent, sedentary, solitary, 42
private life in the university, penned up most part in my study. Though by my profession a divine, yet, out of a running wit, an unconstant, unsettled mind, I had a great desire to have some smattering in all subjects; which Plato commends as fit to be imprinted in all curious wits, not to be a slave of one science, as most do, but to rove abroad, to have an oar in every man's boat, to taste of every dish, and to sip of every cup; which, saith Montaigne, was well performed by Aristotle.

I have little, I want nothing; all my treasure is in Minerva's tower. Though I lead a monastic life, myself my own theatre, I hear and see what is done abroad, how others run, ride, turmoil, in court and country. Amid the gallantry and misery of the world, jollity, pride, perplexities and cares, simplicity and villainy, subtlety, knavery, candour, and integrity, I rub on in private, left to a solitary life and mine own domestic discontents.

So I call myself Democritus, to assume a little more liberty of speech, or, if you will needs know, for that reason which Hippocrates relates, how, coming to visit him one day, he found Democritus in his garden at Abdera, under a shady bower, with a book on his knees, busy at his study, sometimes writing, sometimes walking. The subject of his book was melancholy and madness. About him lay the carcasses of many several beasts, newly by him cut up and anatomised; not that he did contemn God's creatures, but to find out the seat of this black bile, or melancholy, and how it is engendered in men's bodies, to the intent he might better cure it in himself, and by his writings teach others how to avoid it; which good intent of his Democritus Junior is bold to imitate, and because he left it imperfect and it is now lost, to revive again, prosecute, and finish in this treatise. I seek not applause; I fear good men's censures, and to their favourable acceptance I submit my labours. But as 43
the barking of a dog I contemn those malicious and scurrile obloquies, flouts, calumnies of railers and detractors.

Of the necessity of what I have said, if any man doubt of it, I shall desire him to make a brief survey of the world, as Cyprian adviseth Donate; supposing himself to be transported to the top of some high mountain, and thence to behold the tumults and chances of this wavering world, he cannot choose but either laugh at, or pity it. St. Hierom, out of a strong imagination, being in the wilderness, conceived that he saw them dancing in Rome; and if thou shalt climb to see, thou shalt soon perceive that all the world is mad, that it is melancholy, dotes; that it is a common prison of gulls, cheats, flatterers, etc., and needs to be reformed. Kingdoms and provinces are melancholy; cities and families, all creatures vegetal, sensible and rational, all sorts, sects, ages, conditions, are out of tune; from the highest to the lowest have need of physic. Who is not brain-sick? Oh, giddy-headed age! Mad endeavours! Mad actions!

If Democritus were alive now, and should but see the superstition of our age, our religious madness, so many professed Christians, yet so few imitators of Christ, so much talk and so little conscience, so many preachers and such little practice, such variety of sects—how dost thou think he might have been affected? What would he have said to see, hear, and read so many bloody battles, such streams of blood able to turn mills, to make sport for princes, without any just cause? Men well proportioned, carefully brought up, able in body and mind, led like so many beasts to the slaughter in the flower of their years, without remorse and pity, killed for devils' food, 40,000 at once! At once? That were tolerable; but these wars last always; and for many ages, nothing so familiar as this hacking and hewing, massacres, murders, desolations! Who made creatures, so 44
peaceable, born to love, mercy, meekness, so to rave like beasts and run to their own destruction?

How would our Democritus have been affected to see so many lawyers, advocates, so many tribunals, so little justice; so many laws, yet never more disorders; the tribunal a labyrinth; to see a lamb executed, a wolf pronounce sentence? What's the market but a place wherein they cozen one another, a trap? Nay, what's the world itself but a vast chaos, a theatre of hypocrisy, a shop of knavery, a scene of babbling, the academy of vice? A warfare, in which you must kill or be killed, wherein every man is for himself; no charity, love, friendship, fear of God, alliance, affinity, consanguinity, can contain them. Our goddess is Queen Money, to whom we daily offer sacrifice. It's not worth, virtue, wisdom, valour, learning, honesty, religion, for which we are respected, but money, greatness, office, honour. All these things are easy to be discerned, but how would

Democritus have been moved had he seen the secrets of our hearts! All the world is mad, and every member of it, and I can but wish myself and them a good physician, and all of us a better mind.

II.—The Causes of Melancholy

The impulsive cause of these miseries in man was the sin of our first parent, Adam; and this, belike, is that which our poets have shadowed unto us in the tale of Pandora's Box, which, being opened through her curiosity, filled the world full of all manner of diseases. But as our sins are the principal cause, so the instrumental causes of our infirmities are as diverse as the infirmities themselves. Stars, heavens, elements, and all those creatures which God hath made, are armed against sinners. But the greatest enemy to man is man, his own executioner, a wolf, a devil to himself and others. Again, no man amongst us so sound that hath not some impediment of body 45
or mind. There are diseases acute and chronic, first and secondary, lethal, salutary, errant, fixed, simple, compound, etc. Melancholy is the most eminent of the diseases of the phantasy or imagination; and dotage, phrensy, madness, hydrophobia, lycanthropy, St. Vitus' dance, and ecstasy are forms of it.

Melancholy is either in disposition or habit. In disposition it is that transitory melancholy which comes and goes upon every small occasion of sorrow; we call him melancholy that is dull, sad, sour, lumpish, ill-disposed, and solitary; and from these dispositions no man living is free; none so wise, patient, happy, generous, or godly, that can vindicate himself.

Melancholy is a cold and dry, thick, black, and sour humour, purged from the spleen; it is a bridle to the other two hot humours, blood and choler, preserving them in the blood and nourishing the bones. Such as have the Moon, Saturn, Mercury, misaffected in their genitures; such as live in over-cold or over-hot climates; such as are solitary by nature; great students, given to much contemplation; such as lead a life out of action; all are most subject to melancholy.

Six things are much spoken of amongst physicians as principal causes of this disease; if a man be melancholy, he hath offended in one of the six. They are diet, air, exercise, sleeping, and walking, and perturbations of the mind.

Idleness, the badge of gentry, or want of exercise, the bane of body and mind, the nurse of naughtiness, the chief author of all mischief, one of the seven deadly sins, and a sole cause of this and many other maladies, the devil's cushion and chief reposal, begets melancholy sooner than anything else. Such as live at ease, and have no ordinary employment to busy themselves about, cannot compose themselves to do aught; they cannot abide work, though it be necessary, easy, as to dress themselves, write a letter, or the like. He or she that is idle, be 46
they never so rich, fortunate, happy, let them have all that heart can desire, they shall never be pleased, never well in body and mind, but weary still, sickly still, vexed still, loathing still, weeping, sighing, grieving, suspecting, offended with the world, with every object, wishing themselves gone or dead, or else carried away with some foolish phantasy or other.

Others, giving way to the passions and perturbations of fear, grief, shame, revenge, hatred, malice, etc., are torn in pieces, as Actæon was with his dogs, and crucify their own souls. Every society and private family is full of envy; it takes hold of all sorts of men, from prince to ploughman; scarce three in a company, but there is siding, faction, emulation, between two of them, some jar, private grudge, heart-burning in the midst. Scarce two great scholars in an age, but with bitter invectives they fall foul one on the other. Being that we are so peevish and perverse, insolent and proud, so factious and seditious, malicious and envious, we do maul and vex one another, torture, disquiet, and precipitate ourselves into that gulf of woes and cares, aggravate our misery and melancholy, and heap upon us hell and eternal damnation.

III.—The Cure of Melancholy

"It matters not," saith Paracelsus, "whether it be God or the devil, angels or unclean spirits, cure him, so that he be eased." Some have recourse to witches; but much better were it for patients that are troubled with melancholy to endure a little misery in this life than to hazard their souls' health for ever. All unlawful cures are to be refused, and it remains to treat of those that are admitted.

These are such as God hath appointed, by virtue of stones, herbs, plants, meats, and the like, which are prepared and applied to our use by the art and industry of physicians, God's intermediate ministers. We must 47
begin with prayer and then use physic; not one without the other, but both together.

Diet must be rectified in substance and in quantity; air rectified; for there is much in choice of place and of chamber, in opportune opening and shutting of windows, and in walking abroad at convenient times. Exercise must be rectified of body and mind. Hawking, hunting, fishing are good, especially the last, which is still and quiet, and if so be the angler catch no fish, yet he hath a wholesome walk and pleasant shade by the sweet silver streams. But the most pleasant of all pastimes is to make a merry journey now and then with some good companions, to visit friends, see cities, castles, towns, to walk amongst orchards, gardens, bowers, to disport in some pleasant plain. St. Bernard, in the description of his monastery, is almost ravished with the pleasures of it. "Good God," saith he, "what a company of pleasures hast Thou made for man!" But what is so fit and proper to expel idleness and melancholy as study? What so full of content as to read, and see maps, pictures, statues, jewels, and marbles, so exquisite to be beheld that, as Chrysostom thinketh, "if any man be sickly or troubled in mind, and shall but stand over against one of Phidias's images, he will forget all care in an instant?"

If thou receivest wrong, compose thyself with patience to bear it. Thou shalt find greatest ease to be quiet. I say the same of scoffs, slanders, detractions, which tend to our disgrace; 'tis but opinion; if we would neglect or contemn them, they would reflect disgrace on them that offered them. "Yea, but I am ashamed, disgraced, degraded, exploded; my notorious crimes and villainies are come to light!" Be content; 'tis but a nine days' wonder; 'tis heavy, ghastly, fearful news at first, but thine offence will be forgotten in an instant. Thou art not the first offender, nor shalt thou be the last. If he alone should accuse thee that were faultless, how many 48
executioners, how many accusers, would thou have? Shall every man have his desert, thou wouldst

peradventure be a saint in comparison. Be not dismayed; it is human to err. Be penitent, ask forgiveness, and vex thyself no more. Doth the moon care for the barking of a dog?

IV.—Love-Melancholy

There will not be wanting those who will much discommend this treatise of love-melancholy, and object that it is too light for a divine, too phantastical, and fit only for a wanton poet. So that they may be admired for grave philosophers, and staid carriage, they cannot abide to hear talk of love-toys; in all their outward actions they are averse; and yet, in their cogitations, they are all but as bad, if not worse than others. I am almost afraid to relate the passions which this tyrant love causeth among men; it hath wrought such stupendous and prodigious effects, such foul offences.

As there be divers causes of this heroical love, so there be many good remedies, among which good counsel and persuasion are of great moment, especially if it proceed from a wise, fatherly, discreet person. They will lament and howl for a while; but let him proceed, by foreshewing the miserable dangers that will surely happen, the pains of hell, joys of paradise, and the like; and this is a very good means, for love is learned of itself, but hardly left without a tutor.

In sober sadness, marriage is a bondage, a thraldom, a hindrance to all good enterprises; "he hath married a wife, and therefore cannot come"; a rock on which many are saved, many are cast away. Not that the thing is evil in itself, or troublesome, but full of happiness, and a thing which pleases God; but to indiscreet, sensual persons, it is a feral plague, many times an hell itself. If thy wife be froward, all is in an uproar; if wise and learned, she will be insolent and peevish; if poor, she brings beggary; if young, she is wanton and untaught. Say the best, she is a commanding servant; thou hadst better have taken a good housewifely maid in her smock. Since, then, there is such hazard, keep thyself as thou art; 'tis good to match, much better to be free. Consider withal how free, how happy, how secure, how heavenly, in respect, a single man is.

But when all is said, since some be good, some bad, let's put it to the venture. Marry while thou mayest, and take thy fortune as it falls. Be not so covetous, so distrustful, so curious and nice, but let's all marry; to-morrow is St. Valentine's Day. Since, then, marriage is the last and best cure of heroical love, all doubts are cured and impediments removed; God send us all good wives!

Take this for a corollory and conclusion; as thou tenderest thine own welfare in love-melancholy, in the melancholy of religion, and in all other melancholy; observe this short precept—Be not solitary; be not idle.

THOMAS CARLYLE

On Heroes and Hero-Worship

This is the last of four series of lectures which Carlyle (see Vol. IX, p. 99) delivered in London in successive years, and is the only series which was published. The "Lectures on Heroes" were given in May, 1840, and were published, with emendations and additions, from the reporter's notes in 1841. The preceding series were on "German Literature," 1837; "The Successive Periods of European Culture," 1838; and "The Revolutions of Modern Europe," 1839. Carlyle's profound and impassioned belief in the quasi-divine inspiration of great men, in the authoritative nature of their "message," and in their historical effectiveness, was a reaction against a way of writing history which finds the origin of events in "movements," "currents," and "tendencies" neglecting or minimising the power of personality. For Carlyle, biography was the essential element in history; his view of events was the dramatic view, as opposed to the scientific view. It is idle to inquire which is the better or truer view, where both are necessary. But Carlyle is here specially tilting against a prejudice which has so utterly passed away that it is difficult even to imagine it. This was to the effect that eminent historical figures have been in some sense impostors. This work suffers a good deal from its origin, but, like others of Carlyle's writings, it has had great effect in discrediting a barren and flippant rationalism.

I.—The Hero as Divinity

We have undertaken to discourse on great men, their manner of appearance in our world's business, how they shaped themselves in the world's history, what ideas men formed of them, and what work they did. We are to treat of hero-worship and the heroic in human affairs. The topic is as wide as universal history itself, for the history of what man has accomplished in this world is, at bottom, the history of the great men who have worked here.

It is well said that a man's religion is the chief fact with regard to him. I do not mean the Church creed which he professes, but the thing that he does practically believe, the manner in which he feels himself to be spiritually related to the unseen world. Was it heathenism, a plurality of gods, a mere sensuous representation of the mystery of life, and for chief recognised element therein physical force? Was it Christianism; faith in an Invisible as the only reality; time ever resting on eternity; pagan empire of force displaced by the nobler supremacy of holiness? Was it scepticism, uncertainty, and inquiry whether there was an unseen world at all, or perhaps unbelief and flat denial? The answer to these questions gives us the soul of the history of the man or nation. 51

Odin, the central figure of Scandinavian paganism, shall be our emblem of the hero as divinity. And in the first place I protest against the theory that this paganism or any other religion has consisted of mere quackery, priestcraft, and dupery. Quackery gives birth to nothing; gives death to all. Man everywhere is the born enemy of lies, and paganism, to its followers, was at one time earnestly true. Nor can we admit that other theory, which attributed these mythologies to allegory, or to the play of poetic minds. Pagan religion, like every other, is indeed a symbol of what men felt about the universe, but a practical guiding knowledge of this mysterious life of theirs, and not a perfect poetic symbol of it, has been the want of men. The "Pilgrim's Progress" is a just and beautiful allegory, but it could never have preceded the faith which it symbolises. Men never risked their soul's life on allegories; there was a kind of fact at the heart of paganism.

To the primitive pagan thinker, who was simple as a child, yet had a man's depth and strength, nature had as yet no name. It stood naked, flashing in on him, beautiful, awful, unspeakable; nature was preternatural. The world, which is now divine only to the gifted, was then divine to whosoever would turn his eye upon it. Still more was the body of man, and the mystery of his consciousness, an emblem to them of God, and truly worshipful. 52

How much more, then, was the worship of a hero reasonable—the transcendent admiration of a great man! For great men are still admirable. At bottom there is nothing else admirable. Admiration for one higher than himself is to this hour the vivifying influence in man's life, and is the germ of Christianity itself. The greatest of all heroes is One whom we do not name here.

Without doubt there was a first teacher and captain of these northern peoples, an Odin palpable to the sense, a real hero of flesh and blood. Tradition calls him inventor of the Runes, or Scandinavian alphabet, and again of poetry. To the wild Norse souls this noble-hearted man was hero, prophet, god. That the man Odin, speaking with a hero's voice and heart, as with an impressiveness out of Heaven, told his people the infinite importance of valour, how man thereby became a god; and that his people believed this message of his, and thought it a message out of Heaven, and believed him a divinity for telling it to them—this seems to me the primary seed-grain of the Norse religion. For that religion was a sternly impressive consecration of valour.

II.—The Hero as Prophet

We turn now to Mohammedanism among the Arabs for the second phase of hero-worship, wherein the hero is not now regarded as a god, but as one God-inspired, a prophet. Mohammed is not the most eminent prophet, but is the one of whom we are freest to speak. Nor is he the truest of prophets but I do esteem him a true one. Let us try to understand what he meant with the world; what the world meant and means with him will then be more answerable. 53

Certainly he was no scheming impostor, no falsehood incarnate; theories of that kind are the product of an age of scepticism, and indicate the saddest spiritual paralysis. A false man found a religion? Why, a false man cannot build a brick house! No Mirabeau, Napoleon, Burns, Cromwell, no man adequate to do anything, but is first of all in right earnest about it. Sincerity is the great characteristic of all men in any way heroic.

The Arabs are a notable people; their country itself is notable. Consider that wide, waste horizon of sand, empty, silent like a sea; you are all alone there, left alone with the universe; by day a fierce sun blazing down with intolerable radiance; by night the great deep heaven, with its stars—a fit country for a swift-handed, deep-hearted race of men. The Arab character is agile, active, yet most meditative, enthusiastic. Hospitable, taciturn, earnest, truthful, deeply religious, the Arabs were a people of great qualities, waiting for the day when they should become notable to all the world.

Here, in the year 570 of our era, the man Mohammed was born, and grew up in the bosom of the wilderness, alone with Nature and his own thoughts. From an early age he had been remarked as a thoughtful man, and his companions named him "The Faithful." He was forty before he talked of any mission from Heaven. All this time living a peaceful life, he was looking through the shows of things into things themselves.

Then, having withdrawn to a cavern near Mecca for a month of prayer and meditation, he told his wife Kadijah that, by the unspeakable favour of Heaven, he was in doubt and darkness no longer, but saw it all. That all these idols and formulas were nothing; that there was one God in and over all; that God is great and is the 54
reality. *Allah akbar*, "God is great"; and then *Islam*, "we must submit to Him."

This is yet the only true morality known. A man is right and invincible, while he joins himself to the great deep law of the world, in spite of all superficial laws, temporary appearances, profit-and-loss calculations. This is the soul of Islam, and is properly also the soul of Christianity. We are to receive whatever befalls us as sent from God above. Islam means in its way the denial of self, annihilation of self. This is yet the highest wisdom that Heaven has revealed to our earth. In Mohammed, and in his Koran, I find first of all sincerity, the total freedom from cant. For these twelve centuries his religion has been the guidance of a fifth part of mankind, and, above all, it has been a religion heartily believed.

The Arab nation was a poor shepherd people; a hero-prophet was sent down to them; within one century afterwards Arabia is at Grenada on this hand, at Delhi on that!

III.—The Hero as Poet

The hero as divinity and as prophet are productions of old ages, not to be repeated in the new. We are now to see our hero in the less ambitious, but also less questionable, character of poet. For the hero can be poet, prophet, king, priest, or what you will, according to the kind of world he finds himself born into. I have no notion of a truly great man that could not be all sorts of men.

Indeed, the poet and prophet, participators in the open secret of the universe, are one; though the prophet has seized the sacred mystery rather on its moral side, and the poet on the æsthetic side. Poetry is essentially a song; its thoughts are musical not in word only, but in heart and in substance.

Shakespeare and Dante are our two canonised poets; they dwell apart, none equal, none second to them. 55
Dante's book was written, in banishment, with his heart's blood. His great soul, homeless on earth, made its home more and more in that awful other world. The three kingdoms—*Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, *Paradiso*—are like compartments of a great supernatural world-cathedral, piled up there, stern, solemn, awful; Dante's world of souls. It is the sincerest of all poems. Sincerity here, too, we find to be the measure of worth. Intensity is the prevailing character of his genius; his greatness lies in fiery emphasis and depth; it is seen even in the graphic vividness of his painting. Dante burns as a pure star, fixed in the firmament, at which the great and high of all ages kindle themselves.

As Dante embodies musically the inner life of the Middle Ages, so Shakespeare embodies for us its outer life, its chivalries, courtesies, humours, ambitions. Dante gave us the soul of Europe; Shakespeare gave us its body. Of this Shakespeare of ours, the best judgment of Europe is slowly pointing to the conclusion that he is the chief of all poets, the greatest intellect who has left record of himself in the way of literature.

It is in portrait-painting, the delineation of men, that the greatness of Shakespeare comes out most decisively. His calm, creative perspicacity is unexampled. The word that will describe the thing follows of itself from such clear intense sight of the thing. He takes in all kinds of men—a Falstaff, Othello, Juliet, Coriolanus; sets them all forth to us in their rounded completeness, loving, just, the equal brother of all.

The degree of vision that dwells in a man is a correct measure of the man, and Shakespeare's is the greatest of intellects. Novalis beautifully remarks of him that those dramas of his are products of nature, too, deep as nature herself. Shakespeare's art is not artifice; the noblest worth of it is not there by plan or pre-contrivance. The latest generations of men will find new meanings in Shakespeare, new elucidations of their own human 56
being.

Shakespeare, too, was a prophet, in his way, of an insight analogous to the prophetic, though he took it up in another strain. Nature seemed to this man also divine, unspeakable, deep as Tophet, high as heaven. "We are such stuff as dreams are made of." There rises a kind of universal psalm out of Shakespeare, not unfit to make itself heard among the still more sacred psalms.

England, before long, this island of ours, will hold but a small fraction of the English; east and west to the antipodes there will be a Saxondom covering great spaces of the globe. What is it that can keep all these together into virtually one nation, so that they do not fall out and fight, but live at peace? Here, I say, is an English king whom no time or chance can dethrone! King Shakespeare shines over us all, as the noblest, gentlest, yet strongest of rallying-signs; we can fancy him as radiant aloft over all the nations of Englishmen, a thousand years hence. Truly it is a great thing for a nation that it gets an articulate voice.

IV.—The Hero as Priest

The priest, too, is a kind of prophet. In him, also, there is required to be a light of inspiration. He presides over the worship of the people, and is the uniter of them with the unseen Holy. He is their spiritual captain, as the prophet is their spiritual king with many captains.

Luther and Knox were by express vocation priests, yet it will suit us better here to consider them chiefly in their historical character as reformers. The battling reformer is from time to time a needful and inevitable phenomenon. Obstructions are never wanting; the very things that were once indispensable furtherances become obstructions, and need to be shaken off and left behind us—a business often of enormous difficulty. 57

We are to consider Luther as an idol-breaker, a bringer back of men to reality, for that is the function of great men and teachers. Thus it was that Luther said to the Pope, "This thing of yours that you call a pardon of sins, is a bit of rag-paper with ink. It, and so much like it, is nothing else. God alone can pardon sins. God's Church is not a semblance, Heaven and Hell are not semblances. Standing on this, I, a poor German monk, am stronger than you all."

The most interesting phase which the Reformation anywhere assumes is that of Puritanism, which even got itself established as a Presbyterianism and National Church among the Scotch, and has produced in the world very notable fruit. Knox was the chief priest and founder of that faith which became the faith of Scotland, of New England, of Oliver Cromwell; and that which Knox did for his nation we may really call a resurrection as from death. The people began to live. Scotch literature and thought, Scotch industry, James Watt, David Hume, Walter Scott, Robert Burns—I find Knox and the Reformation acting in the heart's core of every one of these persons and phenomena; I find that without the Reformation they would not have been.

Knox could not live but by fact. He is an instance to us how a man, by sincerity itself, becomes heroic. We find in Knox a good, honest, intellectual talent, no transcendent one; he was a narrow, inconsiderable man as compared with Luther; but in heartfelt, instinctive adherence to truth, in real sincerity, he has no superior. His heart is of the true prophet cast. "He lies there," said the Earl of Morton, at his grave, "who never feared the face of man."

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V.—The Hero as Man of Letters

The hero as man of letters is a new and singular phenomenon. Living in his squalid garret and rusty coat; ruling from his grave after death whole nations and generations; he must be regarded as our most important modern person. Such as he may be, he is the soul of all. Intrinsically it is the same function which the old generations named a prophet, priest, or divinity for doing.

The three great prophets of the eighteenth century, that singular age of scepticism, were Johnson, Rousseau, and Burns; they were not, indeed, heroic bringers of the light, but heroic seekers of it, struggling under mountains of impediment.

As for Johnson, I have always considered him to be, by nature, one of our great English souls. It was in virtue of his sincerity, of his speaking still in some sort from the heart of nature, though in the current artificial dialect, that Johnson was a prophet. The highest gospel he preached was a kind of moral prudence, coupled with this other great gospel, "Clear your mind of cant!" These two things, joined together, were, perhaps, the greatest gospel that was possible at that time.

Of Rousseau and his heroism I cannot say so much. He was not a strong man; but a morbid, excitable, spasmodic man; at best, intense rather than strong. Yet, at least he was heartily in earnest, if ever man was; his ideas possessed him like demons.

The fault and misery of Rousseau was egoism, which is the source and summary of all faults and miseries whatsoever. He had not perfected himself into victory over mere desire; a mean hunger was still his motive principle. He was a very vain man, hungry for the praises of men. The whole nature of the man was poisoned; there was nothing but suspicion, self-isolation, and fierce, moody ways.

And yet this Rousseau, with his celebrations of nature, even of savage life in nature, did once more touch 59
upon reality and struggle towards reality. Strangely through all that defacement, degradation, and almost madness, there is in the inmost heart of poor Rousseau a spark of real heavenly fire. Out of all that withered, mocking philosophism, scepticism, and persiflage of his day there has arisen in this man the ineradicable feeling and knowledge that this life of ours is true, not a theorem, but a fact.

The French Revolution found its evangelist in Rousseau. His semi-delirious speculations on the miseries of civilised life, and such like, helped to produce a delirium in France generally. It is difficult to say what the governors of the world could do with such a man. What he could do with them is clear enough—guillotine a great many of them.

The tragedy of Burns's life is known to all. The largest soul of all the British lands appeared under every disadvantage; uninstructed, poor, born only to hard manual toil; and writing, when it came to that, in a rustic special dialect, known only to a small province of the country he lived in.

We find in Burns a noble, rough genuineness, the true simplicity of strength, and a deep and earnest element of sunshine and joyfulness; yet the chief quality, both of his poetry and of his life, is sincerity—a wild wrestling with the truth of things.

VI.—The Hero as King

The commander over men, to whose will our wills are to be subordinated and loyally surrender themselves, and find their welfare in doing so, may be reckoned the most important of great men. He is called *Rex*, "Regulator"; our own name is still better—king, which means "can-ning," "able-man."

In rebellious ages, when kingship itself seems dead and abolished, Cromwell and Napoleon step forth again 60
as kings. The old ages are brought back to us; the manner in which kings were made, and kingship itself first took rise, is again exhibited in the history of these two.

The war of the Puritans was a section of that universal war which alone makes up the true history of the world—the war of Belief against Unbelief; the struggle of men intent on the real essence of things, against men

intent on the semblances and forms of things. And among these Puritans Cromwell stood supreme, grappling like a giant, face to face, heart to heart, with the naked truth of things. Yet Cromwell alone finds no hearty apologist anywhere. Selfish ambition, dishonesty, duplicity; a fierce, coarse, hypocritical Tartuffe; turning all that noble struggle for constitutional liberty into a sorry farce played for his own benefit. This, and worse, is the character they give him.

From of old, this theory of Cromwell's falsity has been incredible to me. All that we know of him betokens an earnest, hearty sincerity. Everywhere we have to note his decisive, practical eye, how he drives towards the practicable, and has a genuine insight into what is fact. Such an intellect does not belong to a false man; the false man sees false shows, plausibilities, expediences; the true man is needed to discern even practical truth.

Napoleon by no means seems to me so great a man as Cromwell. His enormous victories which reached over all Europe, while Cromwell abode mainly in our little England, are but as the high stilts on which the man is seen standing; the stature of the man is not altered thereby. I find in him no such sincerity as in Cromwell; only a far inferior sort.

"False as a bulletin," became a proverb in Napoleon's time. Yet he had a sincerity, a certain instinctive, ineradicable feeling for reality; and did base himself upon fact, so long as he had any basis. He had an instinct 61
of Nature better than his culture was. His companions, we are told, were one evening busily occupied arguing that there could be no God; they had proved it by all manner of logic. Napoleon, looking up into the stars, answers, "Very ingenious, Messieurs; but who made all that?" The atheistic logic runs off from him like water; the great fact stares him in the face. So, too, in practice; he, as every man that can be great, sees, through all entanglements, the practical heart of the matter, and drives straight towards that.

Accordingly, there was a faith in him, genuine so far as it went. That this new, enormous democracy is an insuppressible fact, which the whole world cannot put down—this was a true insight of his, and took his conscience and enthusiasm along with it. And did he not interpret the dim purport of it well? *La carrière ouverte aux talents*—"the implements to him who can handle them"—this actually is the truth, and even the whole truth; it includes whatever the French Revolution or any revolution could mean. It is a great, true message from our last great man.

Sartor Resartus

"Sartor Resartus," first published in "Frazer's Magazine" in 1833–34, is Thomas Carlyle's most popular work, and is largely autobiographical.

I.—The Philosophy of Clothes

Considering our present advanced state of culture, and how the torch of science has now been brandished and borne about, with more or less effect, for five thousand years and upwards, it is surprising that hitherto little or nothing of a fundamental character, whether in the way of philosophy or history, has been written on the subject of clothes. Every other tissue has been dissected, but the vestural tissue of woollen or other cloth, 62
which man's soul wears as its outmost wrappage, has been quite overlooked. All speculation has tacitly figured man as a clothed animal, whereas he is by nature a naked animal, and only in certain circumstances, by purpose and device, masks himself in clothes.

But here, as in so many other cases, learned, indefatigable, deep-thinking Germany comes to our aid. The editor of these sheets has lately received a new book from Professor Teufelsdröckh, of Weissnichtwo, treating expressly of "Clothes, their Origin and Influence" (1831). This extensive volume, a very sea of thought, discloses to us not only a new branch of philosophy, but also the strange personal character of Professor Teufelsdröckh, which is scarcely less interesting. We were just considering how the extraordinary doctrines of this book might best be imparted to our own English nation, when we received a letter from Herr Hofrath Heuschrecke, our professor's chief associate, offering us the requisite documents for a biography of Teufelsdröckh. This was the origin of our "Sartor Resartus," now presented in the vehicle of "Frazer's Magazine."

Professor Teufelsdröckh, when we knew him at Weissnichtwo, lived a still and self-contained life, devoted to the higher philosophies and to a certain speculative radicalism. The last words that he spoke in our hearing were to propose a toast in the coffee-house—"The cause of the poor, in heaven's name and the devil's." But we looked for nothing moral from him, still less anything didactico-religious.

Brave Teufelsdröckh, who could tell what lurked in thee? In thine eyes, deep under thy shaggy brows, and looking out so still and dreamy, have we not noticed gleams of an ethereal or else a diabolic fire? Our friend's title was that of Professor of Things in General, but he never delivered any course. We used to sit with him in 63
his attic, overlooking the town; he would contemplate that wasp-nest or bee-hive spread out below him, and utter the strangest thoughts. "That living flood, pouring through these streets, is coming from eternity, going onward to eternity. These are apparitions. What else?" Thus he lived and meditated with Heuschrecke as Boswell for his Johnson.

"As Montesquieu wrote a 'Spirit of Laws,'" observes our professor, "so could I write a 'Spirit of Clothes,' for neither in tailoring nor in legislating does man proceed by mere accident, but the hand is ever guided by the mysterious operations of the mind." And so he deals with Paradise and fig-leaves, and proceeds to view the costumes of all mankind, in all countries, in all times.

The first purpose of clothes, he imagines, was not warmth or decency, but ornament. "Yet what have they

not become? Increased security and pleasurable heat soon followed; divine shame or modesty, as yet a stranger to the anthropophagous bosom, arose there mysteriously under clothes, a mystic shrine for the holy in man. Clothes gave us individuality, distinctions, social polity; clothes have made men of us; they are threatening to make clothes-screens of us."

Teufelsdröckh dwells chiefly on the seams, tatters, and unsightly wrong-side of clothes, but he has also a superlative transcendentalism. To him, man is a soul, a spirit, and divine apparition, whose flesh and senses are but a garment. He deals much in the feeling of wonder, insisting that wonder is the only reasonable temper for the denizen of our planet. "Wonder," he says, "is the basis of worship," and that progress of science, which is to destroy wonder and substitute mensuration and numeration, finds small favour with him. "Clothes, despicable as we think them, are unspeakably significant."

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II.—Biography of Teufelsdröckh

So far as we can gather from the disordered papers which have been placed in our hands, the genesis of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh is obscure. We see nothing but an exodus out of invisibility into visibility. In the village of Entepfuhl we find a childless couple, verging on old age. Andreas Futteral, who has been a grenadier sergeant under Frederick the Great, is now cultivating a little orchard. To him and Gretchen his wife there entered one evening a stranger of reverend aspect, who deposited a silk-covered basket, saying, "Good people, here is an invaluable loan; take all heed thereof; with high recompense, or else with heavy penalty, will it one day be required back." Therein they found, as soon as he had departed, a little infant in the softest sleep. Our philosopher tells us that this story, told him in his twelfth year, produced a quite indelible impression. Who was his unknown father, whom he was never able to meet?

We receive glimpses of his childhood, schooldays, and university life, and then meet with him in that difficulty, common to young men, of "getting under way." "Not what I have," he says, "but what I do, is my kingdom; and we should grope throughout our lives from one expectation and disappointment to another were we not saved by one thing—our hunger." He had thrown up his legal profession, and found himself without landmark of outward guidance; whereby his previous want of decided belief, or inward guidance, is frightfully aggravated. So he sets out over an unknown sea; but a certain Calypso Island at the very outset falsifies his whole reckoning.

"Nowhere," he says, "does Heaven so immediately reveal itself to the young man as in the young maiden. The feeling of our young forlorn towards the queens of this earth was, and indeed is, altogether unspeakable. A 65
visible divinity dwelt in them; to our young friend all women were holy, were heavenly. And if, on a soul so circumstanced, some actual air-maiden should cast kind eyes, saying thereby, 'Thou too mayest love and be loved,' and so kindle him—good Heaven, what an all-consuming fire were probably kindled!"

Such a fire of romance did actually burst forth in Herr Diogenes. We know not who "Blumine" was, nor how they met. She was young, hazel-eyed, beautiful, high-born, and of high spirit, but unhappily dependent and insolvent, living perhaps on the bounty of moneyed relatives. "To our friend the hours seemed moments; holy was he and happy; the words from those sweetest lips came over him like dew on thirsty grass. At parting, the Blumine's hand was in his; in the balmy twilight, with the kind stars above them, he spoke something of meeting again, which was not contradicted; he pressed gently those soft, small fingers, and it seemed as if they were not hastily, not angrily withdrawn."

Poor Teufelsdröckh, it is clear to demonstration thou art smit! Flame-clad, thou art scaling the upper Heaven, and verging towards insanity, for prize of a high-souled brunette, as if the earth held but one and not several of these! "One morning, he found his morning-star all dimmed and dusky-red; doomsday had dawned; they were to meet no more!" Their lips were joined for the first time and the last, and Teufelsdröckh was made immortal by a kiss. And then—"thick curtains of night rushed over his soul, and he fell, through the ruins as of a shivered universe, towards the abyss."

He quietly lifts his pilgrim-staff, and begins a perambulation and circumambulation of the terraqueous globe. We find him in Paris, in Vienna, in Tartary, in the Sahara, flying with hunger always parallel to him, and a whole infernal chase in his rear. He traverses mountains and valleys with aimless speed, writing with footprints his sorrows, that his spirit may free herself, and he become a man. Vain truly is the hope of your swiftest runner 66
to escape from his own shadow! We behold him, through these dim years, in a state of crisis, of transition; his aimless pilgrimings are but a mad fermentation, wherefrom, the fiercer it is, the clearer product will one day evolve itself.

Man has no other possession but hope; this world of his is emphatically the "Place of Hope"; yet our professor, for the present, is quite shut out from hope. As he wanders wearisomely through this world he has now lost all tidings of another and higher. "Doubt," says he, "had darkened into unbelief." It is all a grim desert, this once fair world of his; and no pillar of cloud by day, and no pillar of fire by night, any longer guides the pilgrim. "Invisible yet impenetrable walls, as of enchantment, divided me from all living; was there, in the wide world, any true bosom I could press trustfully to mine? O Heaven, no, there was none! To me the universe was all void of life, of purpose, of volition, even of hostility; it was one huge, dead, immeasurable steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb. O, the vast, gloomy, solitary Golgotha, and mill of death!

"Full of such humour, and perhaps the miserablest man in the whole French capital or suburbs, was I, one sultry dog-day, after much perambulation, toiling along the dirty little Rue Saint Thomas de l'Enfer, among civic rubbish enough, in a close atmosphere, and over pavements hot as Nebuchadnezzar's furnace; whereby doubtless my spirits were a little cheered; when, all at once, there rose a thought in me, and I asked myself, 'What *art* thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the devil and man may, will, or can do against thee! Hast thou not a 67
heart; canst thou not suffer whatever it be; and, as a child of freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself

under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!' And, as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base fear away from me for ever. Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed; not fear or whining sorrow was it, but indignation and grim fire-eyed defiance.

"Thus had the *Everlasting No* pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my being, of my *Me*; and then was it that my whole *Me* stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its protest. The Everlasting No had said, 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the universe is mine, the devil's'; to which my whole *Me* now made answer, 'I am not thine, but free, and for ever hate thee!'

"It is from this hour that I incline to date my spiritual new-birth, or Baphometic Fire-baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a man."

Our wanderer's unrest was for a time but increased. "Indignation and defiance are not the most peaceable inmates," yet it was no longer a quite hopeless unrest. He looked away from his own sorrows, over the many-coloured world, and few periods of his life were richer in spiritual culture than this. He had reached the Centre of Indifference wherein he had accepted his own nothingness. "I renounced utterly, I would hope no more and fear no more. To die or to live was to me alike insignificant. Here, then, as I lay in that Centre of Indifference, cast by benignant upper influence into a healing sleep, the heavy dreams rolled gradually away, and I awoke to a new heaven and a new earth. I saw that man can do without happiness and instead thereof find blessedness. Love not pleasure; love God. This is the *Everlasting Yea*, wherein all contradiction is solved; wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him. In this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even 68
now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal; work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free! Produce! produce! Work while it is called to-day."

III.—The Volume on Clothes

In so capricious a work as this of the professor's, our course cannot be straightforward, but only leap by leap, noting significant indications here and there. Thus, "perhaps the most remarkable incident in modern history," he says, "is George Fox's making to himself a suit of leather, when, desiring meditation and devout prayer to God, he took to the woods, chose the hollow of a tree for his lodging and wild berries for his food, and for clothes stitched himself one perennial suit of leather. Then was there in broad Europe one free man, and Fox was he!"

Under the title "Church-Clothes," by which Teufelsdröckh signifies the forms, the vestures, under which men have at various periods embodied and represented for themselves the religious principle, he says, "These are unspeakably the most important of all the vestures and garnitures of human existence. Church-clothes are first spun and woven by society; outward religion originates by society; society becomes possible by religion."

Of "symbols," as means of concealment and yet of revelation, thus uniting in themselves the efficacies at once of speech and of silence, our professor writes, "In the symbol proper there is ever, more or less distinctly and directly, some embodiment and revelation of the Infinite; the Infinite is made to blend itself with the finite; to stand visible, and, as it were, attainable there. Of this sort are all true works of art; in them, if thou know a work of art from a daub of artifice, wilt thou discern eternity looking through time; the God-like rendered visible. But nobler than all in this kind are the lives of heroic God-inspired men, for what other work of art is so 69
divine?" And again, "Of this be certain, wouldst thou plant for eternity, then plant into the deep infinite faculties of man, his fantasy and heart; wouldst thou plant for year and day, then plant into his shallow superficial faculties, his self-love and arithmetical understanding."

As for Helotage, or that lot of the poor wherein no ray of heavenly nor even of earthly knowledge visits him, Teufelsdröckh says, "That there should one man die ignorant who had capacity for knowledge, this I call a tragedy, were it to happen more than twenty times in the minute."

In another place, our professor meditates upon the awful procession of mankind. "Like a God-created, fire-breathing spirit-host, we emerge from the inane; haste stormfully across the astonished earth; then plunge again into the inane. But whence?—O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through mystery to mystery, from God and to God.

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"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep!"

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

Concerning Friendship

The dialogue "Concerning Friendship" was composed immediately after the assassination of Julius Cæsar, and was suggested by the conduct of certain friends of the mighty dead, who were trying, in the name of friendship, to inflame the populace against the cause of the conspirators. (Cicero biography, see Vol. IX, p. 155, and also p. 274 of the present volume.)

A Dialogue

FANNIUS: I agree with you, Lælius; never was man better known for justice or for glory than Scipio Africanus. That is why everyone in Rome is looking to you; everyone is asking me, and Scævola here, how the wise Lælius is bearing the loss of his dead friend. For they call you wise, you know, in the same sense as the oracle called Socrates wise, because you believe that your happiness depends on yourself alone, and that virtue can fortify the soul against every calamity. May we know, then, how you bear your sorrow?

SCÆVOLA: He says truly; many have asked me the same question. I tell them that you are composed and patient, though deeply touched by the death of your dearest friend, and one of the greatest of men.

LÆLIUS: You have answered well. True it is that I sorrow for a friend whose like I shall never see again; but it is also true that I need no consolations, since I believe that no evil has befallen Scipio. Whatever misfortune there is, is my misfortune, and any immoderate distress would show self-love, not love for him. What a man he was! Well, he is in heaven; and I sometimes hope that the friendship of Scipio and Lælius may live in human memory.

FANNIUS: Yes—your friendship: what do you believe about friendship? 71

SCÆVOLA: That's what we want to know.

LÆLIUS: Who am I, to speak on such a subject all on a sudden? You should go to these Greek professionals, who can spin you a discourse on anything at a moment's notice. For my part, I can only advise this—prize friendship above all earthly things. We seem to be made for friendship; it is our great stand-by whether in weal or woe. Yet I can say this too: friendship cannot be except among the good. I don't mean a fantastical and unattainable pitch of goodness such as the philosophers prate about; I mean the genuine, commonplace goodness of flesh and blood, that actually exists. I mean such men as live in honour, justice, and liberality, and are consistent, and are neither covetous nor licentious, nor brazen-faced; such men are good enough for us, because they follow Nature as far as they can.

Friendship consists of a perfect conformity of opinion upon all subjects, divine and human, together with a feeling of kindness and attachment. And though some prefer riches, health, power, honours, or even pleasure, no greater boon than friendship, with the single exception of wisdom, has been given by the gods to man. It is quite true that our highest good depends on virtue; but virtue inevitably begets and nourishes friendship. What a part, for instance, friendship has played in the lives of the good men we have known—the Catos, the Galli, the Scipios, and the like!

How manifold, again, are its benefits! What greater delight is there than to have one with whom you may talk as if with yourself? One who will joy in your good fortune, and bear the heaviest end of your burdens! Other things are good for particular purposes, friendship for all; neither water nor fire has so many uses. But in one respect friendship transcends everything else: it throws a brilliant gleam of hope over the future, and banishes 72 despondency. Whoever has a true friend sees in him a reflection of himself; and each is strong in the strength and rich in the wealth of the other.

If you consider that the principle of harmony and benevolence is necessary to the very existence of families and states, you will understand how high a thing is friendship, in which that harmony and benevolence reach their perfect flower. There was a philosopher of Agrigentum who explained the properties of matter and the movements of bodies in terms of affection and repulsion; and however that may be, everyone knows that these are the real forces in human life. Who does not applaud the friendship that shares in mortal dangers, whether in real life or in the play?

SCÆVOLA: You speak highly of friendship. What are its principles and duties?

LÆLIUS: Do we desire a friend because of our own weakness and deficiency, in order that we may obtain from him what we lack ourselves, repaying him by reciprocal service? Or is all that only an incident of friendship, and does the bond derive from a remoter and more beautiful origin, in the heart of Nature herself? For my part, I take the latter view. Friendship is a natural emotion, and not an arrangement of convenience. Its character may be recognised even in the lower animals, and much more plainly in the love of human parents for their children, and, most of all, in our affection for a congenial friend, whom we see in an atmosphere of virtue and worth.

The other is not an ignoble theory, but it leaves us in the difficulty that if it were true, the weakest, meanest, and poorest of humanity would be the most inclined to friendship. But it is the strong, rich, independent, and self-reliant man, deeply founded in wisdom and dignity, who makes great friendships. What did Africanus need of me, or I of him? Advantages followed, but they did not lead. But there are people who will always be referring 73 everything to the one principle of self-advantage; they have no eyes for anything great and god-like. Let us leave such theorists alone; the plain fact is, that whenever worth is seen, love for it is enkindled. Associations founded upon interest presently dissolve, because interest changes; but Nature never changes, and therefore true friendships are imperishable.

Scipio used to say that it was exceedingly difficult to carry on a friendship to the end of life, because the paths of interest so often diverge. There may be competition for office, or a dishonorable request may be refused, or some other accident may be fatal to the bond. This refusal to join in a nefarious course of action is

often the end of a friendship, and it is worth inquiring how far the claims of affection ought to extend. Tiberius Gracchus, when he troubled the state, was deserted by almost all his friends; one of them who had assisted him told me that he had such high regard for Gracchus that he could refuse him nothing. "But what," said I, "if he had asked you to set fire to the capitol?" "I would have done it!"

What an infamous confession! No degree of friendship can justify a crime; and since virtue is the foundation of friendship, crime must inevitably undermine it. Let this, then, be the rule of friendship—never to make disgraceful requests, and never to grant them when they are made.

Among the perverse, over-subtle ideas of certain Greek philosophers is the maxim that we should be very cool in the matter of friendship. They say that we have enough to do with our own affairs, without taking on other people's affairs too; and that our minds cannot be serenely at leisure if we are liable to be tortured by the sorrows of a friend. They advise, also, that friendships should be sought for the sake of protection, and not for the sake of kindliness. O noble philosophy! They put out the sun in the heavens, and offer us instead a freedom 74
from care that is worse than worthless. Virtue has not a heart of stone, but is gentle and compassionate, rejoicing with the joyful and weeping with those who mourn. True virtue is never unsocial, never haughty.

With regard to the limits of friendship, I have heard three several maxims, but disapprove them all. First, that we ought to feel towards our friend exactly as we feel towards ourselves. That would never do; for we do many things for our friends that we should never think of doing for ourselves. We ask favours and reprehend injuries for a friend, where we would not solicit for, or defend, ourselves. Secondly, that our kindness to a friend should be meted out in precise equipoise to his kindness to us. This is too miserable a theory: friendship is opulent and generous. The third is, that we should take our friend's own estimate of himself, and act upon it. This is the worst principle of the three; for if our friend is over-humble, diffident or despondent, it is the very business of friendship to cheer him and urge him on. But Scipio used to condemn yet another principle that is worse still. Some one—he thought it must have been a bad man—once said that we ought to remember in friendship that some day the friend might be an enemy. How, in that state of mind, could one be a friend at all?

A sound principle, I think, is this. In the friendship of upright men there ought to be an unrestricted communication of every interest, every purpose, every inclination. Then, in any matter of importance to the life or reputation of your friend, you may deviate a little from the strictest line of conduct so long as you do not do anything that is actually infamous. Then, with regard to the choice of friends, Scipio used to say that men were more careful about their sheep and goats than about their friends. Choose men of constancy, solidity, and firmness; and until their trustworthiness has been tested, be moderate in your affection and confidence. Seek 75
first of all for sincerity. Your friend should also have an open, genial, and sociable temper, and his sympathies should be the same as yours. He must not be ready to believe accusations. Lastly, his talk and manner should be debonair; we don't want austerities and solemnities in friendship.

I have heard it suggested that we ought perhaps to prefer new friends to old, as we prefer a young horse to an old one. Satiety should have no place in friendship. Old wines are the best, and so are the friends of many years. Do not despise the acquaintance that promises to ripen into something better; but do not sacrifice for it the deeply rooted intimacy. Even inanimate things take hold of our hearts by long custom; we love the mountains and forests of our youth.

There is often a great disparity in respect of rank or talent between intimate friends. Whenever that is so, let the superior place himself on the level of the inferior; let him share all his advantages with his friend. The best way to reap the full harvest of genius, or of merit, or of any other excellence, is to encourage all one's kindred and associates to enjoy it too. But if the superior ought to condescend to the inferior, so the inferior ought to be free from envy. And let him not make a fuss about such services as he has been able to render.

To pass from the noble friendships of the wise to more commonplace intimacies, we cannot leave out of account the necessity that sometimes arises of breaking off a friendship. A man falls into scandalous courses, his disgrace is reflected on his companions, and their relation must come to an end. Well, the end had best come gradually and gently, unless the offence is so detestable that an abrupt and final cutting of the acquaintance is absolutely inevitable. Disengage, if possible, rather than cut. And let the matter end with estrangement; let it not proceed to active animosity and hostility. It is very unbecoming to engage in public war 76
with a man who has been known as one's friend. On two separate occasions Scipio thought it right to withdraw his confidence from certain friends. In each case he kept his dignity and self-command; he was grieved, but never bitter. Of course, the best way to guard against such unfortunate occurrences is to take the greatest care in forming friendships. All excellence is rare, and that moral excellence which makes fit objects for friendship is as rare as any.

On the other hand, it would be unreasonable and presumptuous in anyone to expect to find a friend of a quality to which he himself can never hope to attain, or to demand from his friend an indulgence which he is not prepared himself to offer. Friendship was given us to be an incentive to virtue, and not as an indulgence to vice or to mediocrity; in order that, since a solitary virtue cannot scale the peaks, it may do so with the loyal help of a comrade. A comradeship of this kind includes within it all that men most desire.

Think nobly of friendship, and conduct yourselves wisely in it, for in one way or another it enters into the life of every man. Even Timon of Athens, whose one impulse was a brutal misanthropy, must needs seek a confidant into whose mind he may instil his detestable venom. I have heard, and I agree with it, that though a man should contemplate from the heavens the universal beauty of creation, he would soon weary of it without a companion for his admiration.

Of course, there are rubs in friendship which a sensible man will learn to avoid, or to ignore, or to bear them cheerfully. Admonitions and reproofs must have their part in true amity, and it is as difficult to utter them tactfully as it is to receive them in good part. Complaisance seems more propitious to friendship than are these naked truths. But though truth may be painful, complaisance is more likely in the long run to prove disastrous. 77
It is no kindness to allow a friend to rush headlong to ruin. Let your remonstrances be free from bitterness and from insult; let your complaisance be affable, but never servile. As for adulation, there are no words bad enough

for it. Even the populace have only contempt for the politician who flatters them. Despise the insinuations of the sycophant, for what is more shameful than to be made a fool of?

I tell you, sirs, that it is virtue that lasts; that begets real friendships and maintains them. Lay, therefore, while you are young, the foundations of a virtuous life.

WILLIAM COBBETT

Advice to Young Men

William Cobbett, the celebrated English political writer, was born in March, 1762, at Farnham in Surrey. He took a dislike to rural occupations, and at an early age went to London, where he was employed for a few months as a copying clerk. This work was distasteful to him, and he enlisted in the army, and went with his regiment to Nova Scotia. On returning to England in 1791, he obtained his discharge, married, and went to America. In Philadelphia he commenced his career as a political writer. Cobbett's "Advice to Young Men" was published in 1830. It has always been the most popular of his books, partly because of its subject, and partly because it illustrates so well the bold and forceful directness of his style. An intensely egotistical and confident man, Cobbett believed that his own strangely inconsistent life was a model for all men. Yet, contrary to what might have been expected, he was a delightful man in the domestic circle, and the story of his marriage—which has been narrated in his "Rural Rides"—is one of the romances of literary life. The original introduction to the "Advice" contained personal reference incredible in anyone except Cobbett. Said he, "Few will be disposed to question my fitness for the task. If such a man be not qualified to give advice, no man is qualified." And he went on to claim for himself "genius and something more." He certainly had a remarkable fund of commonsense, except when his subject was himself. Cobbett died June 18, 1835.

I.—To a Youth

You are arrived, let us suppose, at the age of from fourteen to nearly twenty, and I here offer you my advice towards making you a happy man, useful to all about you, and an honour to those from whom you sprang. Start, I beseech you, with a conviction firmly fixed in your mind that you have no right to live in this world without doing work of some sort or other. To wish to live on the labour of others is to contemplate a fraud. 79

Happiness ought to be your great object, and it is to be found only in independence. Turn your back on what is called interest. Write it on your heart that you will depend solely on your own merit and your own exertions, for that which a man owes to favour or to partiality, that same favour or partiality is constantly liable to take from him.

The great source of independence the French express in three words, "*Vivre de peu*." "To live upon little" is the great security against slavery; and this precept extends to dress and other things besides food and drink. Extravagance in dress arises from the notion that all the people in the street will be looking at you as you walk out; but all the sensible people that happen to see you will think nothing at all about you. Natural beauty of person always will and must have some weight, even with men, and great weight with women; but this does not want to be set off by expensive clothes.

A love of what is called "good eating and drinking," if very unamiable in a grown-up person, is perfectly hateful in a youth. I have never known such a man worthy of respect.

Next, as to amusements. Dancing is at once rational and healthful; it is the natural amusement of young people, and none but the most grovelling and hateful tyranny, or the most stupid and despicable fanaticism, ever raised its voice against it. As to gaming, it is always criminal, either in itself or in its tendency. The basis of it is covetousness; a desire to take from others something for which you have given, and intend to give, no equivalent.

Be careful in choosing your companions; and lay down as a rule never to be departed from that no youth or man ought to be called your friend who is addicted to indecent talk.

In your manners be neither boorish nor blunt, but even these are preferable to simpering and crawling. Be 80
obedient where obedience is due; for it is no act of meanness to yield implicit and ready obedience to those who have a right to demand it at your hands. None are so saucy and disobedient as slaves; and, when you come to read history, you will find that in proportion as nations have been free has been their reverence for the laws.

Let me now turn to the things which you ought to do. And, first of all, the husbanding of your time. Young people require more sleep than those that are grown up, and the number of hours cannot well be, on an average, less than eight. An hour in bed is better than an hours spent over the fire in an idle gossip.

Money is said to be power; but superior sobriety, industry, and activity are still a more certain source of power. Booklearning is not only proper, but highly commendable; and portions of it are absolutely necessary in every case of trade or profession. One of these portions is distinct reading, plain and neat writing, and arithmetic. The next thing is the grammar of your own language, for grammar is the foundation of all literature. Excellence in your own calling is the first thing to be aimed at. After this may come general knowledge. Geography naturally follows grammar; and you should begin with that of this kingdom. When you come to history, begin also with that of your own country; and here it is my bounded duty to put you well on your guard. The works of our historians are, as far as they relate to former times, masses of lies unmatched by any others that the world has ever seen.

II.—To a Young Man

To be poor and independent is very nearly an impossibility; though poverty is, except where there is an 81
actual want of food and raiment, a thing much more imaginary than real. Resolve to set this false shame of being poor at defiance. Nevertheless, men ought to take care of their names, ought to use them prudently and sparingly, and to keep their expenses always within the bounds of their income, be it what it may.

One of the effectual means of doing this is to purchase with ready money. Innumerable things are not bought at all with ready money which would be bought in case of trust; it is so much easier to order a thing than to pay for it. I believe that, generally speaking, you pay for the same article a fourth part more in the case of

trust than you do in the case of ready money. The purchasing with ready money really means that you have more money to purchase with.

A great evil arising from the desire not to be thought poor is the destructive thing honoured by the name of "speculation," but which ought to be called gambling. It is a purchasing of something to be sold again with a great profit at a considerable hazard. Your life, while you are thus engaged, is the life of a gamester: a life of general gloom, enlivened now and then by a gleam of hope or of success.

In all situations of life avoid the trammels of the law. If you win your suit and are poorer than you were before, what do you accomplish? Better to put up with the loss of one pound than with two, with all the loss of time and all the mortification and anxiety attending a law suit.

Unless your business or your profession be duly attended to there can be no real pleasure in any other employment of a portion of your time. Men, however, must have some leisure, some relaxation from business; and in the choice of this relaxation much of your happiness will depend.

Where fields and gardens are at hand, they present the most rational scenes for leisure. Nothing can be 82
more stupid than sitting, sotting over a pot and a glass, sending out smoke from the head, and articulating, at intervals, nonsense about all sorts of things.

Another mode of spending the leisure time is that of books. To come at the true history of a country you must read its laws; you must read books treating of its usages and customs in former times; and you must particularly inform yourselves as to prices of labour and of food. But there is one thing always to be guarded against, and that is not to admire and applaud anything you read merely because it is the fashion to admire and applaud it. Read, consider well what you read, form your own judgments, and stand by that judgment until fact or argument be offered to convince you of your error.

III.—To a Lover

There are two descriptions of lovers on whom all advice would be wasted, namely, those in whose minds passion so wholly overpowers reason as to deprive the party of his sober senses, and those who love according to the rules of arithmetic, or measure their matrimonial expectations by the claim of the land-surveyor.

I address myself to the reader whom I suppose to be a real lover, but not so smitten as to be bereft of reason. You should never forget that marriage is a thing to last for life, and that, generally speaking, it is to make life happy or miserable.

The things which you ought to desire in a wife are chastity, sobriety, industry, frugality, cleanliness, knowledge of domestic affairs, good temper and beauty.

Chastity, perfect modesty, in word, deed, and even thought, is so essential that without it no female is fit to be a wife. If prudery mean false modesty, it is to be despised; but if it mean modesty pushed to the utmost extent, I confess that I like it. The very elements of jealousy ought to be avoided, and the only safeguard is to 83
begin well and so render infidelity and jealousy next to impossible.

By sobriety I mean sobriety of conduct. When girls arrive at that age which turns their thoughts towards the command of a house it is time for them to cast away the levity of a child. Sobriety is a title to trustworthiness, and that is a treasure to prize above all others. But in order to possess this precious trustworthiness you must exercise your reason in the choice of a partner. If she be vain, fond of flattery, given to gadding about, coquettish, she will never be trustworthy, and you will be unjust if you expect it at her hands. But if you find in her that innate sobriety of which I have been speaking, there requires on your part confidence and trust without any limit.

An ardent-minded young man may fear that sobriety of conduct in a young woman argues a want of warmth; but my observation and experience tell me that levity, not sobriety, is, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, the companion of a want of ardent feeling.

There is no state in life in which industry in the wife is not necessary to the happiness and prosperity of the family. If she be lazy there will always be a heavy arrear of things unperformed, and this, even among the wealthy, is a great curse. But who is to tell whether a girl will make an industrious woman? There are certain outward signs, which, if attended to with care, will serve as pretty sure guides.

If you find the tongue lazy you may be nearly certain that the hands and feet are the same. The pronunciation of an industrious person is generally quick, distinct, and firm. Another mark of industry is a quick step and a tread showing that the foot comes down with a hearty good will.

Early rising is another mark of industry. It is, I should imagine, pretty difficult to keep love alive towards a 84
woman who never sees the dew, never beholds the rising sun.

Frugality. This means the contrary of extravagance. It does not mean stinginess; it means an abstaining from all unnecessary expenditure. The outward and vulgar signs of extravagance are all the hardware which women put upon their persons. The girl who has not the sense to perceive that her person is disfigured, and not beautified by parcels of brass, tin, and other hardware stuck about her body, is too great a fool to be trusted with the purse of any man.

Cleanliness is a capital ingredient. Occasional cleanliness is not the thing that an English or American husband wants; he wants it always. A sloven in one thing is a sloven in all things. Make up your mind to a rope rather than to live with a slip-shod wife.

Knowledge of domestic affairs is so necessary in every wife that the lover ought to have it continually in his eye. A wife must not only know how things ought to be done, but how to do them. I cannot form an idea of a more unfortunate being than a girl with a mere boarding-school education and without a future to enable her to keep a servant when married. Of what use are her accomplishments?

Good temper is a very difficult thing to ascertain beforehand—smiles are so cheap. By "good temper" I do not mean easy temper—a serenity which nothing disturbs is a mark of laziness. Sulkiness, querulousness, cold indifference, pertinacity in having the last word, are bad things in a young woman, but of all the faults of temper your melancholy ladies are the worst. Most wives are at times misery-makers, but the melancholy carry it on as a regular trade.

The great use of female beauty is that it naturally tends to keep the husband in good humour with himself, to make him pleased with his bargain.

As to constancy in lovers, even when marriage has been promised, and that, too, in the most solemn manner, it is better for both parties to break off than to be coupled together with the reluctant assent of either. 85

IV.—To a Husband

It is as a husband that your conduct will have the greatest effect on your happiness. All in a wife, beyond her own natural disposition and education, is, nine times out of ten, the work of her husband.

First convince her of the necessity of moderation in expense; make her clearly see the justice of beginning to act upon the presumption that there are children coming. The great danger of all is beginning with a servant. The wife is young, and why is she not to work as well as her husband? If the wife be not able to do all the work to be done in the house, she ought not to have been able to marry.

The next thing to be attended to is your demeanour towards a young wife. The first frown that she receives from you is a dagger to her heart. Let nothing put you out of humour with her.

Every husband who spends his leisure time in company other than that of his wife and family tells her and them that he takes more delight in other company than in theirs. Resolve from the very first never to spend an hour from home unless business or some necessary and rational purpose demand it. If you are called away your wife ought to be fully apprised of the probable duration of the absence and of the time of return. When we consider what a young woman gives up on her wedding day, how can a just man think anything a trifle that affects her happiness?

Though these considerations may demand from us the kindest possible treatment of a wife, the husband is to expect dutiful deportment at her hands. A husband under command is the most contemptible of God's creatures. 86 Am I recommending tyranny? Am I recommending disregard of the wife's opinions and wishes? By no means. But the very nature of things prescribes that there must be a head of every house, and an undivided authority. The wife ought to be heard, and patiently heard; she ought to be reasoned with, and, if possible, convinced; but if she remain opposed to the husband's opinion, his will must be obeyed.

I now come to that great bane of families—jealousy. One thing every husband can do in the way of prevention, and that is to give no ground for it. Few characters are more despicable than that of a jealous-headed husband, and that, not because he has grounds, but because he has not grounds.

If to be happy in the married state requires these precautions, you may ask: Is it not better to remain single? The cares and troubles of the married life are many, but are those of the single life few? Without wives men are poor, helpless mortals.

As to the expense, I firmly believe that a farmer married at twenty-five, and having ten children during the first ten years, would be able to save more money during these years than a bachelor of the same age would be able to save, on the same farm, in a like space of time. The bachelor has no one on whom he can in all cases rely. To me, no being in this world appears so wretched as he.

V.—To a Father

It is yourself that you see in your children. They are the great and unspeakable delight of your youth, the pride of your prime of life, and the props of your old age. From the very beginning ensure in them, if possible, an ardent love for their mother. Your first duty towards them is resolutely to prevent their drawing the means of 87 life from any breast but hers. That is their own; it is their birthright.

The man who is to gain a living by his labour must be drawn away from home; but this will not, if he be made of good stuff, prevent him from doing his share of the duty due to his children. There ought to be no toils, no watchings, no breakings of rest, imposed by this duty, of which he ought not to perform his full share, and that, too, without grudging. The working man, in whatever line, and whether in town or country, who spends his day of rest away from his wife and children is not worthy of the name of father.

The first thing in the rearing of children who have passed from the baby state is, as to the body, plenty of good food; and, as to the mind, constant good example in the parents. There is no other reason for the people in the American states being generally so much taller and stronger than the people in England are, but that, from their birth, they have an abundance of good food; not only of food, but of rich food. Nor is this, in any point of view, an unimportant matter, for a tall man is worth more than a short man. Good food, and plenty of it, is not more necessary to the forming of a stout and able body than to the forming of an active and enterprising spirit. Children should eat often, and as much as they like at a time. They will never take, of plain food, more than it is good for them to take.

The next thing after good and plentiful and plain food is good air. Besides sweet air, children want exercise. Even when they are babies in arms they want tossing and pulling about, and talking and singing to. They will, when they begin, take, if you let them alone, just as much exercise as nature bids them, and no more.

I am of opinion that it is injurious to the mind to press book-learning upon a child at an early age. I must impress my opinion upon every father that his children's happiness ought to be his first object; that book- 88 learning, if it tend to militate against this, ought to be disregarded. A man may read books for ever and be an ignorant creature at last, and even the more ignorant for his reading.

And with regard to young women, everlasting book-reading is absolutely a vice. When they once get into the habit they neglect all other matters, and, in some cases, even their very dress. Attending to the affairs of the house—to the washing, the baking, the brewing, the cooking of victuals, the management of the poultry and the garden, these are their proper occupations.

VI.—To the Citizen

Having now given my advice to the youth, the man, the lover, the husband, and the father, I shall tender it to the citizen. To act well our part as citizens we ought clearly to understand what our rights are; for on our enjoyment of these depend our duties, rights going before duties, as value received goes before payments. The great right of all is the right of taking a part in the making of the laws by which we are governed.

It is the duty of every man to defend his country against an enemy, a duty imposed by the law of nature as well as by that of civil society. Yet how are you to maintain that this is the duty of every man if you deny to some men the enjoyment of a share in making the laws? The poor man has a body and a soul as well as the rich man; like the latter, he has parents, wife, and children; a bullet or a sword is as deadly to him as to the rich man; yet, notwithstanding this equality, he is to risk all, and, if he escape, he is still to be denied an equality of rights! Why are the poor to risk their lives? To uphold the laws and to protect property—property of which they are said to possess none? What! compel men to come forth and risk their lives for the protection of property, and then in the same breath tell them that they are not allowed to share in the making of the laws, because, and only because, they have no property!

Here, young man of sense and of spirit, here is the point on which you are to take your stand. There are always men enough to plead the cause of the rich, and to echo the woes of the fallen great; but be it your part to show compassion for those who labour, and to maintain their rights.

If the right to have a share in making the laws were merely a feather, if it were a fanciful thing, if it were only a speculative theory, if it were but an abstract principle, it might be considered as of little importance. But it is none of these; it is a practical matter. Who lets another man put his hand into his purse when he pleases? It is the first duty of every man to do all in his power to maintain this right of self-government where it exists, and to restore it where it has been lost. Men are in such a case labouring, not for the present day only, but for ages to come. If life should not allow them time to see their endeavours crowned, their children will see it.

DANIEL DEFOE

A Journal of the Plague Year

"A Journal of the Plague Year" appeared in 1722. In its second edition it received the title of "A History of the Plague." This book was suggested by the public anxiety caused by a fearful visitation of the plague at Marseilles in the two preceding years. As an account of the epidemic in London, it has all the vividness of Defoe's fiction, while it is acknowledged to be historically accurate. (Defoe biography, see Vol. III, p. 26.)

I.—A Stricken City

It was about the beginning of September, 1664, that I, among the rest of my neighbours, heard that the plague was returned again in Holland. We had no such thing as printed newspapers in those days to spread rumours and reports of things; but such things as these were gathered from the letters of merchants, and from them were handed about by word of mouth only. In December, two Frenchmen died of the plague in Long Acre, or, rather, at the upper end of Drury Lane. The secretaries of state got knowledge of it, and two physicians and a surgeon were ordered to go to the house and make inspection. This they did, and, finding evident tokens of the sickness upon both the bodies, they gave their opinions publicly, that they died of the plague; whereupon it was given in to the parish clerk, and he also returned them to the Hall; and it was printed in the weekly bill of mortality in the usual manner, thus:

Plague, 2; Parishes infected, 1.

The distemper spread slowly, and in the beginning of May, the city being healthy, we began to hope that as the infection was chiefly among the people at the other end of the town, it might go no further. We continued in 91
these hopes for a few days, but it was only for a few, for the people were no more to be deceived thus; they searched the houses, and found that the plague was really spread every way, and that many died of it every day; and accordingly, in the weekly bill for the next week, the thing began to show itself. There was, indeed, but fourteen set down of the plague, but this was all knavery and collusion.

Now the weather set in hot, and from the first week in June the infection spread in a dreadful manner, and the bills rose high. Yet all that could conceal their distempers did it to prevent their neighbours shunning them, and also to prevent authority shutting up their houses.

I lived without Aldgate, midway between Aldgate church and Whitechapel Bars, and our neighbourhood continued very easy. But at the other end of the town their consternation was very great, and the richer sort of people, especially the nobility and gentry, from the west part of the city, thronged out of town with their families and servants. In Whitechapel, where I lived, nothing was to be seen but waggons and carts, with goods, women, servants, children, etc., all hurrying away. This was a very terrible and melancholy thing to see, and it filled me with very serious thoughts of the misery that was coming upon the city.

I now began to consider seriously how I should dispose of myself, whether I should resolve to stay in London, or shut up my house and flee. I had two important things before me: the carrying on of my business and shop, and the preservation of my life in so dismal a calamity. My trade was a saddler, and though a single man, I had a family of servants and a house and warehouses filled with goods, and to leave them all without any overseer had been to hazard the loss of all I had in the world.

I had resolved to go; but, one way or other, I always found that to appoint to go away was always crossed by some accident or other, so as to disappoint and put it off again; and I advise every person, in such a case, to 92
keep his eye upon the particular providences which occur at that time, and take them as intimations from Heaven of what is his unquestioned duty to do in such a case. Add to this, that, turning over the Bible which lay before me, I cried out, "Well, I know not what to do; Lord, direct me!" and at that juncture, casting my eye down, I read: "Thou shalt not be afraid for the pestilence that walketh in darkness.... A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." I scarce need tell the reader that from that moment I resolved that I would stay in the town, casting myself entirely upon the protection of the Almighty.

The court removed in the month of June, and went to Oxford, where it pleased God to preserve them; for which I cannot say they showed any great token of thankfulness, and hardly anything of reformation, though they did not want being told that their crying voices might, without breach of charity, have gone far in bringing that terrible judgment upon the whole nation.

A blazing star or comet had appeared for several months before the plague, and there had been universal melancholy apprehensions of some dreadful calamity. The people were at this time more addicted to prophecies, dreams, and old wives' fables, than ever they were before or since. Some ran about the streets with oral predictions, one crying, "Yet forty days, and London shall be destroyed!" Another poor naked creature cried, "Oh, the great and dreadful God!" repeating these words continually, with voice and countenance full of horror, and a swift pace, and nobody could ever find him to stop. Some saw a flaming sword in a hand coming out of a cloud; others, hearses and coffins in the air; others, heaps of dead bodies unburied. But those who were really serious and religious applied themselves in a truly Christian manner to the proper work of repentance and humiliation. Many consciences were awakened, many hard hearts melted into tears. People might be heard 93
in the streets as we passed along, calling upon God for mercy, and saying, "I have been a thief," or "a murderer," and the like; and none dared stop to make the least inquiry into such things, or to comfort the poor creatures that thus cried out. The face of London was now strangely altered; it was all in tears; the shrieks of women and children at the windows and doors, where their dearest relations were dead, were enough to pierce the stoutest heart.

About June, the lord mayor and aldermen began more particularly to concern themselves for the regulation of the city, by the shutting up of houses. Examiners were appointed in every parish to order the house to be

shut up wherever any person sick of the infection was found. A night watchman and a day watchman were appointed to each infected house to prevent any person from coming out or going into the same. Women searchers were appointed in each parish to examine the bodies of such as were dead, to see if they had died of the infection, and over these were appointed physicians and chirurgeons. Other orders were made with regard to giving notice of sickness, sequestration of the sick, airing the goods and bedding of the infected, burial of the dead, cleansing of the streets, forbidding wandering beggars, loose persons, and idle assemblages, and the like. One of these orders was—"That every house visited be marked with a red cross of a foot long, in the middle of the door, with these words, 'LORD HAVE MERCY UPON US,' to be set close over the same cross." Many got out of their houses by stratagem after they were shut up, and thus spread the plague; in one place they blowed up their watchman with gunpowder and burnt the poor fellow dreadfully, and while he made hideous cries, the whole family got out at the windows; others got out by bribing the watchman, and I have seen three watchmen publicly whipped through the streets for suffering people to go out.

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II.—How the Dead Were Buried

I went all the first part of the time freely about the streets, and when they dug the great pit in the churchyard of Aldgate I could not resist going to see it. A terrible pit it was, forty feet long, about sixteen wide, and in one part they dug it to near twenty feet deep, until they could go no deeper for the water. It was filled in just two weeks, when they had thrown into it 1,114 bodies from our own parish.

I got admittance into the churchyard by the sexton, who at first refused me, but at last said: "Name of God, go in; depend upon it, 'twill be a sermon to you, it may be the best that ever you heard. It is a speaking sight," says he; and with that he opened the door and said, "Go, if you will." I stood wavering for a good while, but just at that interval I saw two links come over from the end of the Minories, and heard the bellman, and then appeared a dead-cart coming over the streets, so I went in.

The scene was awful and full of terror. The cart had in it sixteen or seventeen bodies; some were wrapped in sheets or rugs, some little other than naked, or so loose that what covering they had fell from them in the shooting out of the cart, and they fell quite naked among the rest. But the matter was not much to them, seeing they were all dead, and were to be huddled together into the common grave of mankind, as we may call it; for here was no difference made, but poor and rich went together. The cart was turned round, and the bodies shot into the pit promiscuously.

There was following the cart a poor unhappy gentleman who fell down in a swoon when the bodies were shot into the pit. The buriers ran to him and took him up, and after he had come to himself, they led him away to the Pye tavern, over against the end of Houndsditch. His case lay so heavy on my mind that after I had gone home I must go out again into the street and go to the Pye tavern, to inquire what became of him. 95

It was by this time one in the morning, and yet the poor gentleman was there. The people of the house were civil and obliging, but there was a dreadful set of fellows that used their house, and who, in the middle of all this horror, met there every night, and behaved with revelling and roaring extravagances, so that the master and mistress of the house were terrified at them. They sat in a room next the street, and as often as the dead-cart came along, they would open the windows and make impudent mocks and jeers at the sad lamentations of the people, especially if they heard the poor people call upon God to have mercy upon them.

They were at this vile work when I came to the house, ridiculing the unfortunate man, and his sorrow for his wife and children, taunting him with want of courage to leap into the pit and go to Heaven with them, and adding profane and blasphemous expressions.

I gently reproved them, being not unknown to two of them. But I cannot call to mind the abominable raillery which they returned to me, making a jest of my calling the plague the Hand of God. They continued this wretched course three or four days; but they were, every one of them, carried into the great pit before it was quite filled up.

In my walks I had daily many dismal scenes before my eyes, as of persons falling dead in the streets, terrible shrieks and screechings of women, and the like. Passing through Tokenhouse Yard, in Lothbury, of a sudden a casement violently opened just over my head, and a woman gave three frightful screeches, and then cried: "Oh Death! Death! Death!" in a most inimitable tone, which struck me with horror and a chillness in my very blood. There was nobody to be seen in the whole street, neither did any other window open; for people had no curiosity now, nor could anybody help another. I went on into Bell Alley. 96

Just in Bell Alley, at the right hand of the passage, there was a more terrible cry than that, and I could hear women and children run screaming about the rooms distracted. A garret window opened, and somebody from a window on the other side of the alley called and asked, "What is the matter?" upon which, from the first window it was answered: "O Lord, my old master has hanged himself!" The other asked again: "Is he quite dead?" And the first answered, "Ay, ay, quite dead—quite dead and cold."

It is scarce credible what dreadful things happened every day, people in the rage of the distemper, or in the torment of their swellings, which was indeed intolerable, oftentimes laying violent hands on themselves, throwing themselves out at their windows, etc.; mothers murdering their own children in their lunacy; some dying of mere fright, without any infection; others frightened into despair, idiocy, or madness.

There were a great many robberies and wicked practices committed even in this dreadful time. The power of avarice was so strong in some that they would run any hazard to steal and to plunder; and in houses where all the inhabitants had died and been carried out, they would break in without regard to the danger of infection, and take even the bedclothes.

III.—Universal Desolation

For about a month together, I believe there did not die less than 1,500 or 1,700 a day, one day with another;

and in the beginning of September good people began to think that God was resolved to make a full end of the people in this miserable city. Whole families, and, indeed, whole streets of families were swept away together, and the infection was so increased that at length they shut up no houses at all. People gave themselves up to 97
their fears, and thought that nothing was to be hoped for but an universal desolation. It was even in the height of this despair that it pleased God to stay His hand, and to slacken the fury of the contagion.

When the people despaired of life and abandoned themselves, it had a very strange effect for three or four weeks; it made them bold and venturous; they were no more shy of one another, nor restrained within doors, but went anywhere and everywhere, and ran desperately into any company. It brought them to crowd into the churches; looking on themselves as all so many dead corpses, they behaved as if their lives were of no consequence, compared to the work which they came about there.

The conduct of the lord mayor and magistrates was all the time admirable, so that bread was always to be had in plenty, and cheap as usual; provisions were never wanting in the markets; the streets were kept free from all manner of frightful objects—dead bodies, or anything unpleasant; and for a time fires were kept burning in the streets to cleanse the air of infection.

Many remedies were tried; but it is my opinion, and I must leave it as a prescription, that the best physic against the plague is to run away from it. I know people encourage themselves by saying, "God is able to keep us in the midst of danger," and this kept thousands in the town, whose carcasses went into the great pits by cart-loads. Yet of the pious ladies who went about distributing alms to the poor, and visiting infected families, though I will not undertake to say that none of those charitable people were suffered to fall under the calamity, yet I may say this, that I never knew any of them to fall under it.

Such is the precipitant disposition of our people, that no sooner had they observed that the distemper was not so catching as formerly, and that if it was catched it was not so mortal, and that abundance of people who really fell sick recovered again daily, than they made no more of the plague than of an ordinary fever, nor 98
indeed so much. They went into the very chambers where others lay sick. This rash conduct cost a great many their lives, who had been preserved all through the heat of the infection, and the bills of mortality increased again four hundred in the first week of November.

But it pleased God, by the continuing of wintry weather, so to restore the health of the city that by February following we reckoned the distemper quite ceased. The time was not far off when the city was to be purged with fire, for within nine months more I saw it all lying in ashes.

I shall conclude the account of this calamitous year with a stanza of my own:

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A dreadful plague in London was
  In the year sixty-five,
Which swept an hundred thousand souls
  Away; yet I alive!

DEMOSTHENES

The Philippics

Demosthenes, by universal consensus of opinion the greatest orator the world has known, was born at Athens 385 B.C. and died 322 B.C. His birth took place just nineteen years after the conclusion of the Peloponnesian War. Losing his father when he was yet a child, his wealth was frittered away by three faithless guardians, whom he prosecuted when he came of age. This dispute, and some other struggles, led him into public life, and by indomitable perseverance he overcame the difficulty constituted by certain physical disqualifications. Identifying himself for life entirely with the interests of Athens, he became the foremost administrator in the state, as well as its most eloquent orator. His stainless character, his matchless powers of advocacy, his fervent patriotism, and his fine diplomacy, render him altogether one of the noblest figures of antiquity. His fame rests mainly on "The Philippics"; those magnificent orations delivered during a series of several years against the aggressions of Philip of Macedon; though the three "Olynthiacs," and the oration "De Coronâ," and several other speeches are monumental of the genius of Demosthenes, more especially the "De Coronâ." He continued to resist the Macedonian domination during the career of Alexander the Great, and was exiled, dying, it is supposed, by poison administered by himself, at Calauria. (Cf. also p. 273 of this volume.) This epitome has been prepared from the original Greek.

I.—"Men of Athens, Arouse Yourselves!"

The subject under discussion on this occasion, men of Athens, is not new, and there would be no need to speak further on it if other orators deliberated wisely. First, I advise you not to regard the present aspect of affairs, miserable though it truly is, as entirely hopeless. For the primary cause of the failure is your own mismanagement. If any consider it difficult to overcome Philip because of the power that he has attained, and because of our disastrous loss of many fortresses, they should remember how much he has gained by achieving alliances.

If, now, you will emulate his policy, if every citizen will devote himself assiduously to the service of his 100
country, you will assuredly recover all that has been lost, and punish Philip. For he has his enemies, even among his pretended friends. All dread him because your inertia has prevented you from providing any refuge for them. Hence the height of arrogance which he now displays and the constantly expanding area of his conquests.

When, men of Athens, will you realise that your attitude is the cause of this situation? For you idle about, indulging in gossip over circumstances, instead of grappling with the actualities. Were this antagonist to pass away, another enemy like him would speedily be produced by your policy, for Philip is what he is not so much through his own prowess as through your own indifference.

As to the plan of action to be initiated, I say that we must inaugurate it by providing fifty triremes, also the cavalry and transports and boats needed for the fleet. Thus we should be fully prepared to cope with the sudden excursions of Philip to Thermopylæ or any other point. Besides this naval force, you should equip an army of 2,000 foot soldiers, of whom 500 should be Athenians, the remainder mercenaries, together with 250 cavalry, including 50 Athenians. Lastly, we should have an auxiliary naval contingent of ten swift galleys.

We are now conducting affairs farcically. For we act neither as if we were at peace, nor as if we had entered on a war. You enlist your soldiers not for warfare, but for religious pageants, and for parades and processions in the market-place. We must consolidate our resources, embody permanent forces, not temporary levies hastily enlisted, and we must secure winter quarters for our troops in those islands which possess harbours and granaries for the corn.

No longer, men of Athens, must you continue the mere discussion of measures without ever executing any of 101
your projects. Remember that Philip sustains his power by drawing on the resources of your own allies.

But by adopting my plan you will at one and the same time deprive him of his chief sources of supply, and place yourselves out of the reach of danger. The policy he has hitherto pursued will be effectually thwarted. No longer will he be able to capture your citizens, as he did by attacking Lemnos and Imbros, or to seize your Paralus, as he did on his descent at Marathon.

But, men of Athens, you spend far larger sums of money on the splendid Panathenaic and Dionysian festivals than on your naval and military armaments. Moreover, those festivals are always punctually celebrated, while your preparations for war are always behindhand. Then, when a critical juncture arrives, we find our forces are totally inadequate to the emergency.

Having larger resources than any other state, you, Athenians, have never adequately availed yourselves of them. You never anticipate the movements of Philip, but simply drift after him, sending forces to Thermopylæ if you hear he is there, or to any other quarter where he may happen to be. Such policy might formerly be excused, but now it is as disgraceful as it is intolerable. Are we to wait for Philip's aggressiveness to cease? It never will do so unless we resist it. Shall we not assume the offensive and descend on his coast with some of our forces?

Nothing will result from mere oratory and from mutual recrimination among ourselves. My own conviction is that Philip is encouraged by our inertia, and that he is carried away by his own successes, but that he has no fixed plan of action that can be guessed by foolish chatterers. Men of Athens, let us for the future abandon such an attitude, and let us bear in mind that we must depend not on the help of others, but on ourselves alone. Unless we go to attack Philip where he is, Philip will come to attack us where we are.

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II.—Beware the Guile of Philip

Nothing, men of Athens, is done as a sequel to the speeches which are delivered and approved concerning the outrageous proceedings of Philip. You are earnest in discussion; he is earnest in action. If we are to be complacently content because we employ the better arguments, well and good; but if we are successfully to resist this formidable and increasing power, we must be prepared to entertain advice that is salutary, however unpalatable, rather than counsel which is easy and pleasant.

If you give me any credit for clear perception, I beg you to attend to what I plead. After subduing Thermopylæ and the Phocians, Philip quickly apprehended that you could not be induced by any selfish considerations to abandon other Greek states to him. The Thebans, Messenians, and Argives he lured by bribes. But he knew how, in the past, your predecessors scorned the overtures of his ancestor, Alexander of Macedon, sent by Mardonius the Persian to induce the Athenians to betray the rest of the Greeks. It was not so with the Argives and the Thebans, and thus Philip calculates that their successors will care nothing for the interests of the Greeks generally. So he favours them, but not you.

Everything demonstrates Philip's animosity against Athens. He is instinctively aware that you are conscious of his plots against you, and ascribes to you a feeling of hatred against him. Eager to be beforehand with us, he continues to negotiate with Thebans and Peloponnesians, assuming that they may be beguiled with ease.

I call to mind how I addressed the Messenians and the Argives, reminding them how Philip had dishonourably given certain of their territories to the Olynthians. Would the Olynthians then have listened to any disparagements of Philip? Assuredly not. Yet they were soon shamefully betrayed and cheated by him. It is 103
unsafe for commonwealths to place confidence in despots. In like manner were the Thessalians deceived when he had ejected their tyrants and had restored to them Nicasa and Magnesia, for he instituted the new tyranny of the Decemvirate. Philip is equally ready with gifts and promises on the one hand, and with fraud and deceit on the other.

"By Jupiter," said I to those auditors, "the only infallible defence of democracies against despots is the absolute refusal of all confidence in them. Always to mistrust them is the only safeguard. What is it that you seek to secure? Liberty? Then do you not perceive that the very titles worn by Philip prove him to be adverse to this? For every king and tyrant is an enemy to freedom and an opponent to laws."

But though my speeches and those of other emissaries were received with vociferous applause, all the same those who thus manifested profound approbation will never be able to resist the blandishments and overtures of Philip. It may well be so with those other Greeks. But you, O Athenians, surely should understand your own interests better. For otherwise irreparable disaster must ensue.

In justice, men of Athens, you should summon the men who communicated to you the promises which induced you to consent to peace. Their statements misled us; otherwise, neither would I have gone as ambassador, nor would you have ceased hostilities. Also, you should call those who, after my return from my second embassy, contradicted my report. I then protested against the abandonment of Thermopylæ and of the Phocians.

They ridiculed me as a water-drinker, and they persuaded you that Philip would cede to you Oropus and Eubœa in exchange for Amphipolis, and also that he would humble the Thebans and at his own charges cut through the Chersonese. Your anger will be excited in due time when you realise what you have hitherto disregarded, namely, that these projects on the part of Philip are devised against Athens. 104

Though all know it only too well, let me remind you who it was, even Æschines himself, who induced you by his persuasion to abandon Thermopylæ and Phocis. By possessing control over these, Philip now commands also the road to Attica and Peloponnesus.

Hence the present situation is this, that you must now consider, not distant affairs, but the means of defending your homes and of conducting a war in Attica, that war having become inevitable through those events, grievous though it will be to every citizen when it begins. May the gods grant that the worst fears be not fully confirmed!

III.—Athens Must Head the War

Various circumstances, men of Athens, have reduced our affairs to the worst possible state, this lamentable crisis being due mainly to the specious orators who seek rather to please you than wisely to guide you. Flattery has generated perilous complacency, and now the position is one of extreme danger. I am willing either to preserve silence, or to speak frankly, according to your disposition. Yet all may be repaired if you awaken to your duty, for Philip has not conquered you; you have simply made no real effort against him.

Strange to say, while Philip is actually seizing cities and appropriating various portions of our territory, some among us affirm that there is really no war. Thus, caution is needed in speech, for those who suggest defensive measures may afterwards be indicted for causing hostilities. Now, let those who maintain that we are at peace propose a resolution for suitable plans. But if you are invaded by an armed aggressor, who pretends to be at peace with you, what can you do but initiate measures of defence?

Both sides may profess to be at peace, and I do not demur; but it is madness to style that a condition of 105
peace which allows Philip to subjugate all other states and then to assail you last of all. His method of proceeding is to prepare to attack you, while securing immunity from the danger of being attacked by you.

If we wait for him to declare war, we wait in vain. For he will treat us as he did the Olynthians and the Phocians. Professing to be their ally, he appropriated territories belonging to them. Do you imagine he would declare war against you before commencing operations of encroachment? Never, so long as he knows that you are willing to be deceived.

By a series of operations he has been infringing the peace: by his attempt to seize Megara, by his intervention in Eubœa, by his excursion into Thrace. I reckon that the virtual beginnings of hostilities must be dated from the day that he completed the subjugation of the Thracians. From your other orators I differ in

deeming any discussion irrelevant respecting the Chersonese or Byzantium. Aid these, indeed; but let the safety of all Greece alike be the subject of your deliberations.

What I would emphasise is that to Philip have been conceded liberties of encroachment and aggression, by you first of all, such as in former days were always contested by war. He has attacked and enslaved city after city of the Greeks. You Athenians were for seventy-three years the supreme leaders in Hellas, as were the Spartans for twenty-nine years. Then after the battle of Leuctra the Thebans acquired paramount influence. But neither you nor these others ever arrogated the right to act according to your pleasure.

If you appeared to act superciliously towards any state, all the other states sided with that one which was aggrieved. Yet all the errors committed by our predecessors and by those of the Spartans during the whole of that century were trivial compared with the wrongs perpetrated by Philip during these thirteen years. Cruel has 106
been his destruction of Olynthus, of Methone, of Apollonia, and of thirty-two cities on the borders of Thrace, and also the extermination of the Phocians. And now he domineers ruthlessly over Thessaly and Eubœa. Yet all we Greeks of various nationalities are in so abjectly miserable a condition that, instead of arranging embassies and declaring our indignation, we entrench ourselves in isolation in our several cities.

It must be reflected that when wrongs were inflicted by other states, by us or the Spartans, these faults were at any rate committed by genuine sons of Greece. How much more hateful is the offence when perpetrated against a household by a slave or an alien than by a son or other member of the family! But Philip is not only no son of Hellas; he is not even a reputable barbarian, but only a vile fellow of Macedon, a country from which formerly even a respectable slave could not be purchased!

What is lacking to his unspeakable arrogance? Does he not assemble the Pythian games, command Thermopylæ, garrison the passes, secure prior access to the oracle at Delphi, and dictate the form of government for Thessaly? All this the Greeks look upon with toleration; they seem to regard it as they would some tempest, each hoping it will fall on someone else. We are all passive and despondent, mutually distrusting each other instead of the common foe.

How different the noble spirit of former days! How different that old passion for liberty which is now superseded by the love of servitude! Then corruption was so deeply detested that there was no pardon for the guilt of bribery. Now venality is laughed at and bribery goes unpunished. In ships, men, equipment, and revenues our resources are larger than ever before, but corruption neutralises them all.

But preparations for war are not sufficient. You must not only be ready to encounter the foes without, but must punish those who among you are the creatures of Philip, like those who caused the ruin of Olynthus by 107
betraying the cavalry and by securing the banishment of Apollonides. Similar treachery brought about the downfall of other cities. The same fate may befall us. What, then, must be done?

When we have done all that is needful for our own defence, let us next send our emissaries to all the other states with the intelligence that we are ready. If you imagine that others will save Greece while you avoid the conflict, you cherish a fatal delusion. This enterprise devolves on you; you inherit it from your ancestors.

IV.—Exterminate the Traitors!

Men of Athens, your chief misfortune is that, though for the passing moment you heed important news, you speedily scatter and forget what you have just heard. You have become fully acquainted with the doings of Philip, and you well know how great is his ambition; and yet, so profound has been our indifference that we have earned the contempt of several other states, which now prefer to undertake their defence separately rather than in alliance with us.

You must become more deeply convinced than you have been hitherto that our destruction is the supreme anxiety of Philip. The special object of his hatred is your democratic constitution. Our mode of procedure is a mockery, for we are always behind in the execution of our schemes. You must form a permanent army with a regular organisation, and with funds sufficient for its maintenance.

Most of all, money is needed to meet coming requirements. There was a time when money was forthcoming and everything necessary was performed. Why do we now decline to do our duty? In a time of peril to the commonwealth the affluent should freely contribute of their possessions for the welfare of the country; but each 108
class has its obligations to the state and should observe them.

Many and inveterate are the causes of our present difficulties. You, O Athenians, have surrendered the august position which your predecessors bequeathed you, and have indolently permitted a stranger to usurp it. The present crisis involves peril for all the states, but to Athens most of all; and that not so much on account of Philip's schemes of conquest, as of your neglect.

How is it, Athenians, that none affirm concerning Philip that he is guilty of aggression, even while he is seizing cities, while those who advise resistance are indicated as inciting to war? The reason is that those who have been corrupted believe that if you do resist him you will overcome him, and they can no longer secure the reward of treachery.

Remember what you have at stake. Should you fall under the dominion of Philip, he will show you no pity, for his desire is not merely to subdue Athens, but to destroy it. The struggle will be to the death; therefore, those who would sell the country to him you must exterminate without scruple. This is the only city where such treacherous citizens can dare to speak in his favour. Only here may a man safely accept a bribe and openly address the people.

English Traits

In 1847 Emerson (see Vol. XIII, p. 339) made his second visit to England, this time on a lecturing tour. An outcome of the visit was "English Traits," which was first published in 1856. "I leave England," he wrote on his return home, "with an increased respect for the Englishman. His stuff or substance seems to be the best in the world." "English Traits" deals with a series of definite subjects which do not admit of much philosophic digression, and there is, therefore, an absence of the flashes of spiritual and poetic insight which gave Emerson his charm.

I.—The Anchorage of Britain

I did not go very willingly to England. I am not a good traveller, nor have I found that long journeys yield a fair share of reasonable hours. I find a sea-life an acquired taste, like that for tomatoes and olives. The sea is masculine, the type of active strength. Look what egg-shells are drifting all over it, each one filled with men in ecstasies of terror alternating with cockney conceit, as it is rough or smooth. But to the geologist the sea is the only firmament; it is the land that is in perpetual flux and change. It has been said that the King of England would consult his dignity by giving audience to foreign ambassadors in the cabin of a man-of-war; and I think the white path of an Atlantic ship is the right avenue to the palace-front of this seafaring people.

England is a garden. Under an ash-coloured sky, the fields have been combed and rolled till they appear to have been finished with a pencil instead of a plough. Rivers, hills, valleys, the sea itself, feel the hand of a master. The problem of the traveller landing in Liverpool is, Why England is England? What are the elements of that power which the English hold over other nations? If there be one test of national genius universally accepted, it is success; and if there be one successful country in the universe that country is England.

The culture of the day, the thoughts and aims of men, are English thoughts and aims. A nation considerable for a thousand years has in the last centuries obtained the ascendant, and stamped the knowledge, activity, and power of mankind with its impress.

The territory has a singular perfection. Neither hot nor cold, there is no hour in the whole year when one cannot work. The only drawback to industrial conveniency is the darkness of the sky. The night and day are too nearly of a colour.

England resembles a ship in shape, and, if it were one, its best admiral could not have anchored it in a more judicious or effective position. The shop-keeping nation, to use a shop word, has a good stand. It is anchored at the side of Europe, and right in the heart of the modern world.

In variety of surface Britain is a miniature of Europe, as if Nature had given it an artificial completeness. It is as if Nature had held counsel with herself and said: "My Romans are gone. To build my new empire I will choose a rude race, all masculine, with brutish strength. Sharp and temperate northern breezes shall blow to keep them alive and alert. The sea shall disjoin the people from others and knit them by a fierce nationality. Long time will I keep them on their feet, by poverty, border-wars, seafaring, sea-risks, and stimulus of gain." A singular coincidence to this geographic centrality is the spiritual centrality which Emanuel Swedenborg ascribes to the people: "The English nation are in the centre of all Christians, because they have an interior intellectual light. This light they derive from the liberty of speaking and writing, and thereby of thinking."

II.—Racial Characteristics

The British Empire is reckoned to contain a fifth of the population of the globe; but what makes the British census proper important is the quality of the units that compose it. They are free, forcible men in a country where life has reached the greatest value. They have sound bodies and supreme endurance in war and in labour. They have assimilating force, since they are imitated by their foreign subjects; and they are still aggressive and propagandist, enlarging the dominion of their arts and liberty.

The English composite character betrays a mixed origin. Everything English is a fusion of distant and antagonistic elements. The language is mixed; the currents of thought are counter; contemplation and practical skill; active intellect and dead conservatism; world-wide enterprise and devoted use and wont; a country of extremes—nothing in it can be praised without damning exceptions, and nothing denounced without salvos of cordial praise.

The sources from which tradition derives its stock are mainly three: First, the Celtic—a people of hidden and precarious genius; second, the Germans, a people about whom, in the old empire, the rumour ran there was never any that meddled with them that repented it not; and, third, the Norsemen and the children out of France. Twenty thousand thieves landed at Hastings. These founders of the House of Lords were greedy and ferocious dragoons, sons of greedy and ferocious pirates. Such, however, is the illusion of antiquity and wealth that decent and dignified men now existing actually boast their descent from these filthy thieves.

As soon as this land, thus geographically posted, got a hardy people into it, they could not help becoming the sailors and factors of the world. The English, at the present day, have great vigour of body. They are round, ruddy, and handsome, with a tendency to stout and powerful frames. It is the fault of their forms that they grow stocky, but in all ages they are a handsome race, and please by an expression blending good nature, valour, refinement, and an uncorrupt youth in the face of manhood.

The English are rather manly than warlike. They delight in the antagonism which combines in one person the extremes of courage and tenderness. Nelson, dying at Trafalgar, says, "Kiss me, Hardy," and turns to sleep. Even for their highwaymen this virtue is claimed, and Robin Hood is the gentlest thief. But they know where their war-dogs lie, and Cromwell, Blake, Marlborough, Nelson, and Wellington are not to be trifled with.

They have vigorous health and last well into middle and old age. They have more constitutional energy than any other people. They box, run, shoot, ride, row, and sail from Pole to Pole. They are the most voracious people of prey that have ever existed, and they have written the game-books of all countries.

These Saxons are the hands of mankind—the world's wealth-makers. They have that temperament which resists every means employed to make its possessor subservient to others. The English game is main force to main force, the planting of foot to foot, fair play and an open field—a rough tug without trick or dodging till one or both comes to pieces. They hate craft and subtlety; and when they have pounded each other to a poultice they will shake hands and be friends for the remainder of their lives.

Their realistic logic of coupling means to ends has given them the leadership of the modern world. Montesquieu said: "No people have true commonsense but those who are born in England." This commonsense is a perception of laws that cannot be stated, or that are learned only by practice, with allowance for friction. 113
The bias of the nation is a passion for utility. They are heavy at the fine arts, but adroit at the coarse. The Frenchman invented the ruffle, the Englishman added the shirt. They think him the best-dressed man whose dress is so fit for his use that you cannot notice or remember to describe it.

In war the Englishman looks to his means; but, conscious that no better race of men exists, they rely most on the simplest means. They fundamentally believe that the best stratagem in naval war is to bring your ship alongside of the enemy's ship, and bring all your guns to bear on him until you or he go to the bottom. This is the old fashion which never goes out of fashion.

Tacitus said of the Germans: "Powerful only in sudden efforts, they are impatient of toil and labour." This highly destined race, if it had not somewhere added the chamber of patience to its brain, would not have built London. I know not from which of the tribes and temperaments that went to the composition of the people this tenacity was supplied, but they clinch every nail they drive. "To show capacity," a Frenchman described as the end of speech in a debate. "No," said an Englishman, "but to advance the business."

The nation sits in the immense city they have builded—a London extended into every man's mind. The modern world is theirs. They have made and make it day by day. In every path of practical ability they have gone even with the best. There is no department of literature, of science, or of useful art in which they have not produced a first-rate book. It is England whose opinion is waited for. English trade exists to make well everything which is ill-made elsewhere. Steam is almost an Englishman.

One secret of the power of this people is their mutual good understanding. Not only good minds are born among them, but all the people have good minds. An electric touch by any of their national ideas melts them 114
into one family. The chancellor carries England on his mace, the midshipman at the point of his dirk, the smith on his hammer, the cook in the bowl of his spoon, and the sailor times his oars to "God save the King!"

I find the Englishman to be him of all men who stands firmest in his shoes. The one thing the English value is pluck. The word is not beautiful, but on the quality they signify by it the nation is unanimous. The cabmen have it, the merchants have it, the bishops have it, the women have it, the journals have it. They require you to dare to be of your own opinion, and they hate the practical cowards who cannot answer directly Yes or No.

Their vigour appears in the incuriosity and stony neglect each of the other. Each man walks, eats, drinks, shaves, dresses, gesticulates, and in every manner acts and suffers, without reference to the bystanders—he is really occupied with his own affairs, and does not think of them. In short, every one of these islanders is an island himself, safe, tranquil, incommunicable.

Born in a harsh and wet climate, which keeps him indoors whenever he is at rest, and, being of an affectionate and loyal temper, the Englishman dearly loves his home. If he is rich he builds a hall, and brings to it trophies of the adventures and exploits of the family, till it becomes a museum of heirlooms. England produces, under favourable conditions of ease and culture, the finest women in the world. Nothing can be more delicate without being fantastical, than the courtship and mutual carriage of the sexes. Domesticity is the taproot which enables the nation to branch wide and high. In an aristocratical country like England, not the trial by jury, but the dinner is the capital institution. It is the mode of doing honour to a stranger to ask him to eat.

The practical power of the English rests on their sincerity. Alfred, whom the affection of the nation makes the type of their race, is called by a writer at the Norman Conquest, the "truth-speaker." The phrase of the lowest of the people is "honour-bright," and their praise, "his word is as good as his bond." They confide in each 115
other—English believes in English. Madame de Staël says that the English irritated Napoleon mainly because they have found out how to unite success with honesty. The ruling passion of an Englishman is a terror of humbug.

The English race are reputed morose. They have enjoyed a reputation for taciturnity for six or seven hundred years. Cold, repressive manners prevail, and there is a wooden deadness in certain Englishmen which surpasses all other countrymen. In the power of saying rude truth no men rival them. They are proud and private, and even if disposed to recreation will avoid an open garden. They are full of coarse strength, butcher's meat, and sound sleep. They are good lovers, good haters, slow but obstinate admirers, and very much steeped in their temperament, like men hardly awaked from deep sleep which they enjoy.

The English have a mild aspect, and ringing, cheerful voice. Of absolute stoutness of spirit, no nation has more or better examples. They are good at storming redoubts, at boarding frigates, at dying in the last ditch, or any desperate service which has daylight and honour in it. They stoutly carry into every nook and corner of the earth their turbulent sense of inquiry, leaving no lie uncontradicted, no pretension unexamined.

They are very conscious of their advantageous position in history. I suppose that all men of English blood in America, Europe, or Asia, have a secret feeling of joy that they are not Frenchmen. They only are not foreigners. In short, I am afraid that the English nature is so rank and aggressive as to be a little incompatible with any other. The world is not wide enough for two. More intellectual than other races, when they live with other races they do not take their language, but bestow their own. They subsidise other nations, and are not subsidised. 116
They proselytise and are not proselytised. They assimilate other nations to themselves and are not assimilated.

III.—Wealth, Aristocracy, and Religion

There is no country in which so absolute a homage is paid to wealth. There is a mixture of religion in it. The Englishman esteems wealth a final certificate. He believes that every man has himself to thank if he does not mend his condition. To pay their debts is their national point of honour. The British armies are solvent, and pay for what they take. The British empire is solvent. It is their maxim that the weight of taxes must be calculated not by what is taken but by what is left. They say without shame: "I cannot afford it." Such is their enterprise, that there is enough wealth in England to support the entire population in idleness one year. The proudest result of this creation of wealth is that great and refined forces are put at the disposal of the private citizen, and in the social world the Englishman to-day has the best lot. I much prefer the condition of an English gentleman of the better class to that of any potentate in Europe.

The feudal character of the English state, now that it is getting obsolete, glares a little in contrast with democratic tendencies. But the frame of society is aristocratic. Every man who becomes rich buys land, and does what he can to fortify the nobility, into which he hopes to rise. The taste of the people is conservative. They are proud of the castles, language, and symbols of chivalry. English history is aristocracy with the doors open. Who has courage and faculty, let him come in.

All nobility in its beginnings was somebody's natural superiority. The things these English have done were not done without peril of life, nor without wisdom of conduct, and the first hands, it may be presumed, were 117
often challenged to show their right to their honours, or yield them to better men.

Comity, social talent, and fine manners no doubt have had their part also. The lawyer, the farmer, the silk mercer lies *perdu* under the coronet, and winks to the antiquary to say nothing. They were nobody's sons who did some piece of work at a nice moment.

The English names are excellent—they spread an atmosphere of legendary melody over the land. Older than epics and histories, which clothe a nation, this undershirt sits close to the body. What stores of primitive and savage observation it infolds! Cambridge is the bridge of the Cam; Sheffield the field of the river Sheaf; Leicester the camp of Lear; Waltham is Strong Town; Radcliffe is Red Cliff, and so on—a sincerity and use in naming very striking to an American, whose country is whitewashed all over with unmeaning names, the cast-off clothes of the country from which the emigrants came, or named at a pinch from a psalm tune.

In seeing old castles and cathedrals I sometimes say: "This was built by another and a better race than any that now look on it." Their architecture still glows with faith in immortality. Good churches are not built by bad men; at least, there must be probity and enthusiasm somewhere in society.

England felt the full heat of the Christianity which fermented Europe, and, like the chemistry of fire, drew a firm line between barbarism and culture. When the Saxon instinct had secured a service in the vernacular tongue the Church was the tutor and university of the people.

Now the Anglican Church is marked by the grace and good sense of its forms; by the manly grace of its clergy. The gospel it preaches is "By taste are ye saved." The religion of England is part of good breeding. When you see on the Continent the well-dressed Englishman come into his ambassador's chapel and put his face for silent prayer into his well-brushed hat, you cannot help feeling how much national pride prays with him, and the 118
religion of a gentleman.

At this moment the Church is much to be pitied. If a bishop meets an intelligent gentleman and reads fatal interrogation in his eyes, he has no resource but to take wine with him.

But the religion of England—is it the Established Church? No. Is it the sects? No. Where dwells the religion? Tell me first where dwells electricity, or motion, or thought? They do not dwell or stay at all. Electricity is passing, glancing, gesticular; it is a traveller, a newness, a secret. Yet, if religion be the doing of all good, and for its sake the suffering of all evil, that divine secret has existed in England from the days of Alfred to the days of Florence Nightingale, and in thousands who have no fame.

Representative Men

Some of the lectures delivered by Emerson during his lecturing tour in England were published in 1850 under the title of "Representative Men," and the main trend of their thought and opinion is here followed in Emerson's own words. It will be noted that the use of the term "sceptic," as applied to Montaigne, is not the ordinary use of the word, but signifies a person spontaneously given to free inquiry rather than aggressive disbelief. The estimate of Napoleon is original. In "Representative Men" Emerson is much more consecutive in his thought than is customary with him. His pearls are as plentiful here as elsewhere, but they are not scattered disconnectedly.

Plato

Among secular books, Plato only is entitled to Omar's fanatical compliment to the Koran: "Burn all books, for their value is in this book." Out of Plato come all things that are still written and debated among men of 119
thought. Plato is philosophy, and philosophy Plato. No wife, no children had he, but the thinkers of all civilised nations are his posterity, and are tinged with his mind.

Great geniuses have the shortest biographies. They lived in their writings, and so their house and street life is commonplace. Their cousins can tell you nothing about them. Plato, especially, has no external biography.

Plato stands between the truth and every man's mind, and has almost impressed language and the primary forms of thought with his name and seal.

The first period of a nation, as of an individual, is the period of unconscious strength. Children cry, scream, and stamp with fury, unable to express their desires. As soon as they can speak and tell their wants they become gentle. With nations he is as a god to them who can rightly divide and define. This defining is philosophy. Philosophy is the account which the human mind gives to itself of the constitution of the world.

Two cardinal facts lie ever at the base of thought: Unity and Variety—oneness and otherness.

To this partiality the history of nations corresponds. The country of unity, faithful to the idea of a deaf, unimplorable, immense fate, is Asia; on the other side, the genius of Europe is active and creative. If the East loves infinity, the West delights in boundaries. Plato came to join and enhance the energy of each. The excellence of Europe and Asia is in his brain. No man ever more fully acknowledged the Ineffable; but having paid his homage, as for the human race, to the illimitable, he then stood erect, and for the human race affirmed: "And yet things are knowable!" Full of the genius of Europe, he said "Culture," he said "Nature," but he failed not to add, "There is also the divine."

This leads us to the central figure which he has established in his academy. Socrates and Plato are the double-star which the most powerful instrument will not entirely separate. Socrates, in his traits and genius, is the best example of that synthesis which constitutes Plato's extraordinary power. 120

Socrates, a man of humble stem, and a personal homeliness so remarkable as to be a cause of wit in others, was a cool fellow, with a knowledge of his man, be he whom he might whom he talked with, which laid the companion open to certain defeat in debate; and in debate he immoderately delighted. He was what in our country people call "an old one." This hard-headed humorist, whose drollery diverted the young patricians, turns out in the sequel to have a probity as invincible as his logic, and to be, under cover of this play, enthusiastic in his religion. When accused before the judges, he affirmed the immortality of the soul and a future reward and punishment, and, refusing to recant, was condemned to die; he entered the prison and took away all ignominy from the place. The fame of this prison, the fame of the discourses there, and the drinking of the hemlock, are one of the most precious passages in the history of the world.

The rare coincidence in one ugly body of the droll and the martyr, the keen street debater with the sweetest saint known to any history at that time, had forcibly struck the mind of Plato, and the figure of Socrates placed itself in the foreground of the scene as the fittest dispenser of the intellectual treasures he had to communicate.

It remains to say that the defect of Plato is that he is literary, and never otherwise. His writings have not the vital authority which the screams of prophets and the sermons of unlettered Arabs and Jews possess.

And he had not a system. The acutest German, the lovingest disciple could never tell what Platonism was. No power of genius has ever yet had the smallest success in explaining existence. The perfect enigma remains.

121

Montaigne

The philosophers affirm disdainfully the superiority of ideas. To men of this world the man of ideas appears out of his reason. The abstractionist and the materialist thus mutually exasperating each other, there arises a third party to occupy the middle ground between the two, the sceptic. He labours to be the beam of the balance. There is so much to say on all sides. This is the position occupied by Montaigne.

In 1571, on the death of his father, he retired from the practice of the law, at Bordeaux, and settled himself on his estate. Downright and plain dealing, and abhorring to be deceived or to deceive, he was esteemed in the country for his sense and probity. In the civil wars of the League, which converted every house into a fort, Montaigne kept his gates open, and his house without defence. All parties freely came and went, his courage and honor being universally esteemed.

Montaigne is the frankest and honestest of all writers. The essays are an entertaining soliloquy on every random topic that comes into his head, treating everything without ceremony, yet with masculine sense. I know not anywhere the book that seems less written. It is the language of conversation transferred to a book. Montaigne talks with shrewdness, knows the world, and books, and himself; never shrieks, or protests, or prays. He keeps the plain; he rarely mounts or sinks; he likes to feel solid ground and the stones underneath.

We are natural believers. We are persuaded that a thread runs through all things, and all worlds are strung on it as beads. But though we reject a sour, dumpish unbelief, to the sceptical class, which Montaigne represents, every man at some time belongs. The ground occupied by the sceptic is the vestibule of the temple. The interrogation of custom at all points is an inevitable stage in the growth of every superior mind. It stands in 122
the mind of the wise sceptic that our life in this world is not quite so easy of interpretation as churches and school books say. He does not wish to take ground against these benevolences, but he says: "There are doubts. Shall we, because good nature inclines us to virtue's side, say, 'There are no doubts—and lie for the right?' Is not the satisfaction of the doubts essential to all manliness?"

I may play with the miscellany of facts, and take those superficial views which we call scepticism; but I know they will presently appear to me in that order which makes scepticism impossible. For the world is saturated with deity and law. Things seem to tend downward, to justify despondency, to promote rogues, to defeat the just; but by knaves as by martyrs the just cause is carried forward, and general ends are somewhat answered. The world-spirit is a good swimmer, and storms and waves cannot drown him. Through the years and the centuries, through evil agents, through toys and atoms, a great and beneficent tendency irresistibly streams. So let a man learn to look for the permanent in the mutable and fleeting; let him learn to bear the disappearance of things he was wont to reverence without losing his reverence.

Shakespeare

Shakespeare is the only biographer of Shakespeare. So far from Shakespeare being the least known, he is the one person in all modern history known to us. What point of morals, of manners, of economy, of philosophy, of taste, of conduct of life has he not settled? What district of man's work has he not remembered? What king has he not taught statecraft? What maiden has not found him finer than her delicacy? What lover has he not outloved?

123 Some able and appreciating critics think no criticism on Shakespeare valuable that does not rest purely on the dramatic merit; that he is falsely judged as poet and philosopher. I think as highly as these critics of his dramatic merit, but still think it secondary. He was a full man who liked to talk; a brain exhaling thoughts and images, which, seeking vent, found the drama next at hand.

Shakespeare is as much out of the category of eminent authors as he is out of the crowd. He is inconceivably wise; the others, conceivably. With this wisdom of life is the equal endowment of imaginative and lyric power. An omnipresent humanity co-ordinates all his faculties. He has no peculiarity, no importunate topic, but all is duly given. No mannerist is he; he has no discoverable egotism—the great he tells greatly, the small subordinately. He is wise without emphasis or assertion; he is strong as Nature is strong, who lifts the land into mountain slopes without effort, and by the same rule as she floats a bubble in the air, and likes as well to do the one as the other. This power of transferring the inmost truth of things into music and verse makes him the type of the poet.

One royal trait that belongs to Shakespeare is his cheerfulness. He delights in the world, in man, in woman, for the lovely light that sparkles from them. Beauty, the spirit of joy, he sheds over the universe. If he appeared in any company of human souls, who would not march in his troop? He touches nothing that does not borrow health and longevity from his festal style. He was master of the revels to mankind.

Napoleon

Among the eminent persons of the nineteenth century, Bonaparte owes his predominance to the fidelity with which he expresses the aim of the masses of active and cultivated men. If Napoleon was Europe, it was because the people whom he swayed were little Napoleons. He is the representative of the class of industry and skill. 124 "God has granted," says the Koran, "to every people a prophet in its own tongue." Paris, London, and New York, the spirit of commerce, of money, of material power, were also to have their prophet—and Bonaparte was qualified and sent. He was the idol of common men because he, in transcendent degree, had the qualities and powers of common men. He came to his own and they received him.

An Italian proverb declares that if you would succeed you must not be too good. Napoleon renounced, once for all, sentiments and affections, and helped himself with his hands and his head. The art of war was the game in which he exerted his arithmetic. He had a directness of action never before combined with so much comprehension. History is full of the imbecility of kings and governors. They are a class of persons to be much pitied, for they know not what they should do. But Napoleon understood his business. He knew what to do, and he flew to his mark. He put out all his strength; he risked everything; he spared nothing; he went to the edge of his possibilities.

This vigour was guarded and tempered by the coldest prudence and punctuality. His very attack was never the inspiration of courage, but the result of calculation. The necessity of his position required a hospitality to every sort of talent, and his feeling went along with this policy. In fact, every species of merit was sought and advanced under his government. Seventeen men in his time were raised from common soldiers to the rank of king, marshal, duke, or general. I call Napoleon the agent or attorney of the middle class of modern society.

His life was an experiment, under the most favourable conditions, of the powers of intellect without conscience. All passed away, like the smoke of his artillery, and left no trace. He did all that in him lay to live and thrive without moral principle.

125

Goethe

I find a provision in the constitution of the world for the writer or secretary who is to report the doings of the miraculous spirit of life that everywhere throbs and works. Nature will be reported. All things are engaged in writing their history. The planet goes attended by its shadow. The air is full of sounds, the sky of tokens; the ground is all memoranda and signatures.

Society has really no graver interest than the well-being of the literary class. Still, the writer does not stand with us on any commanding ground. I think this to be his own fault. There have been times when he was a sacred person; he wrote Bibles; the first hymns; the codes; the epics; tragic songs; Sibylline verses; Chaldæan oracles. Every word was true, and woke the nations to new life. How can he be honoured when he is a sycophant ducking to the giddy opinion of a reckless public?

Goethe was the philosopher of the nineteenth century multitude, hundred-handed, Argus-eyed, able and happy to cope with the century's rolling miscellany of facts and sciences, and by his own versatility dispose of them with ease; and what he says of religion, of passion, of marriage, of manners, of property, of paper-money, of periods of belief, of omens, of luck, of whatever else, refuses to be forgotten.

What distinguishes Goethe, for French and English readers, is an habitual reference to interior truth. But I dare not say that Goethe ascended to the highest grounds from which genius has spoken. He is incapable of self-surrender to the moral sentiment. Goethe can never be dear to men. His is a devotion to truth for the sake of culture. But the idea of absolute eternal truth, without reference to my own enlargement by it is higher; and the surrender to the torrent of poetic inspiration is higher.

ERASMUS

Familiar Colloquies

Desiderius Erasmus, the most learned ecclesiastic of the fifteenth century, and the friend of Luther and other reformers, was born at Rotterdam on October 28, 1466, and died at Basel on July 12, 1536. He was the son of a Dutchman named Gerard, and, according to the fashion of the age, changed his family name into its respective Latin and Greek equivalents, Desiderius and Erasmus, meaning "desired," or "loved." Entering the priesthood in 1492, he pursued his studies at Paris, and became so renowned a scholar that he was, on visiting England, received with distinction, not only at the universities, but also by the king. For some time Erasmus settled in Italy, brilliant prospects being held out to him at Rome; but his restless temperament impelled him to wander again, and he came again to England, where he associated with the most distinguished scholars, including Dean Colet and Sir Thomas More. Perhaps nothing in the whole range of mediæval literature made a greater sensation immediately on its appearance, in 1521, than the "Colloquia," or "Familiar Colloquies Concerning Men, Manners, and Things," of Erasmus. As its title indicates, it consists of dialogues, and its author intended it to make youths more proficient in Latin, that language being the chief vehicle of intercommunication in the Middle Ages. But Erasmus claims, in his preface, that another purpose of the book is to make better men as well as better Latinists, for he says: "If the ancient teachers of children are commended who allured the young with wafers, I think it ought not to be charged on me that by the like reward I allure youths either to the elegancy of the Latin tongue or to piety." This selection is made from the Latin text.

Concerning Men, Manners and Things

Erasmus issued his first edition of the "Colloquies" in 1521. Successive editions appeared with great rapidity. Its popularity wherever Latin was read was immense, but it was condemned by the Sarbonne, prohibited in France, and devoted to the flames publicly in Spain. The reader of its extraordinary chapters will not fail to comprehend that such a fate was inevitable in the case of such a production in those times. For, as the friend of the reformers who were "turning the world upside down," Erasmus in this treatise penned the most audacious, sardonic, and withering onslaught ever delivered by any writer on ecclesiastical corruption of religion. He never attacks religion itself, but extols and defends it; his aim is to launch a series of terrific innuendoes on ecclesiasticism as it had developed and as he saw it. He satirically, and even virulently, attacks monks and many of their habits, the whole system of cloister-life, the festivals and pilgrimages which formed one of the chief features of religious activity, and the grotesque superstitions which his peculiar genius for eloquent irony so well qualified him to caricature.

This great work, one of the epoch-making books of the world, consists of sixty-two "Colloquies," of very varying length. They treat of the most curiously diverse topics, as may be imagined from such titles of the chapters as "The Youth's Piety," "The Lover and the Maiden," "The Shipwreck," "The Epithalamium of Peter Egidius," "The Alchemist," "The Horse Cheat," "The Cyclops, or the Gospel Carrier," "The Assembly or Parliament of Women," "Concerning Early Rising."

A sample of the style of the "Colloquies" in the more serious sections may be taken from the one entitled "The Religious Banquet."

NEPHEW: How unwillingly have I seen many Christians die. Some put their trust in things not to be confided in; others breathe out their souls in desperation, either out of a consciousness of their lewd lives, or by reason of scruples that have been injected into their minds, even in their dying hours, by some indiscreet men, die almost in despair.

CHRYSOGLOTTUS: It is no wonder to find them die so, who have spent their lives in philosophising all their lives about ceremonies.

NEPHEW: What do you mean by ceremonies?

CHRYSOGLOTTUS: I will tell you, but with protestation beforehand, over and over, that I do not find fault with the rites and sacraments of the Church, but rather highly approve of them; but I blame a wicked and superstitious sort of people who teach people to put their confidence in these things, omitting those things that make them truly Christians. If you look into Christians in common, do they not live as if the whole sum of religion consisted in ceremonies? With how much pomp are the ancient rites of the Church set forth in baptism? The infant waits without the church door, the exorcism is performed, the catechism is performed, vows are made, Satan is abjured with all his pomps and pleasures; then the child is anointed, signed, seasoned with salt, dipped, a charge given to its sureties to see it well brought up; and the oblation money being paid, they are discharged, and by this time the child passes for a Christian, and in some sense is so. A little time after it is anointed again, and in time learns to confess, receive the sacrament, is accustomed to rest on holy days, to hear divine service, to fast sometimes, to abstain from flesh; and if he observes all these he passes for an absolute Christian. He marries a wife, and then comes on another sacrament; he enters into holy orders, is anointed again and consecrated, his habit is changed, and then to prayers.

Now, I approve of the doing of all this well enough, but the doing of them more out of custom than conscience I do not approve. But to think that nothing else is requisite for the making of a Christian I absolutely disapprove. For the greater part of the men in the world trust to these things, and think they have nothing else to do but get wealth by right or wrong, to gratify their passions of lust, rage, malice, ambition. And this they do till they come on their death-bed. And then follow more ceremonies—confession upon confession more unction still, the eucharists are administered; tapers, the cross, the holy water are brought in; indulgences are procured, if they are to be had for love or money; and orders are given for a magnificent funeral. Now, although these things may be well enough, as they are done in conformity to ecclesiastical customs, yet there are some more internal impressions which have an efficacy to fortify us against the assaults of death by filling our hearts

with joy, and helping us to go out of the world with a Christian assurance.

EUSEBIUS: When I was in England I saw St. Thomas' tomb all over bedecked with a vast number of jewels of an immense price, besides other rich furniture, even to admiration. I had rather that these superfluities should be applied to charitable uses than to be reserved for princes that shall one time or other make a booty of them. The holy man, I am confident, would have been better pleased to have had his tomb adorned with leaves and flowers.... Rich men, nowadays, will have their monuments in churches, whereas in time past they could hardly get room for their saints there. If I were a priest or a bishop, I would put it into the head of these thick-skulled courtiers or merchants that if they would atone for their sins to Almighty God they should privately bestow their liberality on the relief of the poor.

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A wonderful plea for peace, in shape of an exquisite satire, is the "Colloquy" entitled "Charon." It is a dialogue between Charon, the ghostly boatman on the River Styx, and Genius Alastor. Its style may be gathered from the following excerpt.

CHARON: Whither are you going so brisk, and in such haste, Alastor?

ALASTOR: O Charon, you come in the nick of time; I was coming to you.

CHARON: Well, what news do you bring?

ALASTOR: I bring a message to you and Prosperine that you will be glad to hear. All the Furies have been no 130
less diligent than they have been successful in gaining their point. There is not one foot of ground upon earth that they have not infected with their hellish calamities, seditions, wars, robberies, and plagues. Do you get your boat and your oars ready; you will have such a vast multitude of ghosts come to you anon that I am afraid you will not be able to carry them all over yourself.

CHARON: I could have told you that.

ALASTOR: How came you to know it?

CHARON: Ossa brought me that news about two days ago!

ALASTOR: Nothing is more swift than that goddess. But what makes you loitering here, having left your boat?

CHARON: My business brought me hither. I came hither to provide myself with a good strong three-oared boat, for my boat is so rotten and leaky with age that it will not carry such a burden, if Ossa told me true.

ALASTOR: What was it that Ossa told you?

CHARON: That the three monarchs of the world were bent upon each other's destruction with a mortal hatred, and that no part of Christendom was free from the rage of war; for these three have drawn in all the rest to be engaged in the war with them. They are all so haughty that not one of them will in the least submit to the other. Nor are the Danes, the Poles, the Scots, nor the Turks at quiet, but are preparing to make dreadful havoc. The plague rages everywhere: in Spain, Britain, Italy, France; and, more than all, there is a new fire sprung out of the variety of opinions, which has so corrupted the minds of all men that there is no such thing as sincere friendship anywhere; but brother is at enmity with brother, and husband and wife cannot agree. And it is to be hoped that this distraction will be a glorious destruction of mankind, if these controversies, that are now managed by the tongue and pen, come once to be decided by arms.

ALASTOR: All that fame has told you is true; for I myself, having been a constant companion of the Furies, have 131
with these eyes seen more than all this, and that they never at any time have approved themselves more worthy of their name than now.

CHARON: But there is danger lest some good spirit should start up and of a sudden exhort them to peace. And men's minds are variable, for I have heard that among the living there is one Polygraphus who is continually, by his writing, inveighing against wars, and exhorting to peace.

ALASTOR: Ay, ay, but he has a long time been talking to the deaf. He once wrote a sort of hue and cry after peace, that was banished or driven away; after that an epitaph upon peace defunct. But then, on the other hand, there are others that advance our cause no less than do the Furies themselves. They are a sort of animals in black and white vestments, ash-coloured coats, and various other dresses, that are always hovering about the courts of the princes, and are continually instilling into their ears the love of war, and exhorting the nobility and common people to it, haranguing them in their sermons that it is a just, holy, and religious war. And that which would make you stand in admiration at the confidence of these men is the cry of both parties. In France they preach it up that God is on the French side, and that they can never be overcome that has God for their protector. In England and Spain the cry is, "The war is not the king's, but God's"; therefore, if they do but fight like men, they depend on getting the victory, and if anyone should chance to fall in the battle, he will not die, but fly directly up into heaven, arms and all.

In Praise of Folly 132

"The Praise of Folly" was written in Latin, and the title, "Encomium Moriæ," is a pun on the name of his friend, the Greek word *moria* (folly) curiously corresponding with his host's family name. The purpose of this inimitable satire is to cover every species of foolish men and women with ridicule. Yet through all the biting sarcasm runs an unbroken vein of religious seriousness, the contrast greatly enhancing the

impression produced by this masterpiece.

I.—Stultitia's Declamation

In whatever manner I, the Goddess of Folly, may be generally spoken of by mortals, yet I assert it emphatically that it is from me, Stultitia, and from my influence only, that gods and men derive all mirth and cheerfulness. You laugh, I see. Well, even that is a telling argument in my favour. Actually now, in this most numerous assembly, as soon as ever I have opened my mouth, the countenances of all have instantly brightened up with fresh and unwonted hilarity, whereas but a few moments ago you were all looking demure and woebegone.

On my very brow my name is written. No one would take me, Stultitia, for Minerva. No one would contend that I am the Goddess of Wisdom. The mere expression of my countenance tells its own tale. Not only am I incapable of deceit, but even those who are under my sway are incapable of deceit likewise. From my illustrious sire, Plutus [Wealth], I glory to be sprung, for he, and no other, was the great progenitor of gods and men, and I care not what Hesiod, or Homer, or even Jupiter himself may maintain to the contrary. Everything, I affirm, is subjected to the control of Plutus. War, peace, empires, designs, judicial decisions, weddings, treaties, alliances, laws, arts, things ludicrous and things serious, are all administered in obedience to his sovereign will.

Now notice the admirable foresight which nature exercises, in order to ensure that men shall never be 133
destitute of folly as the principal ingredient in their constitution. Wisdom, as your divines and moralists put it, consists in men being guided by their reason; and folly, in their being actuated by their passions. See then here what Jupiter has done. In order to prevent the life of man from being utterly intolerable, he has endowed him with reason in singularly small proportion to his passions—only, so to speak, as a half-ounce is to a pound. And whereas he has dispersed his passions over every portion of his body, he has confined his reason to a narrow little crevice in his skull.

And yet, of these silly human beings, the male sex is born under the necessity of transacting the business of the world. When Jupiter was taking counsel with me I advised him to add a woman to the man—a creature foolish and frivolous, but full of laughter and sweetness, who would season and sweeten by her folly the sadness of his manly intelligence.

When Plato doubted whether or not he should place women in the class of rational animals, he really only wished to indicate the remarkable silliness of that sex. Yet women will not be so absolutely senseless as to be offended if I, a woman myself, the goddess Stultitia, tell them thus plainly that they are fools. They will, if they look at the matter aright, be flattered by it. For they are by many degrees more favoured creatures than men. They have beauty—and oh, what a gift is that! By its power they rule the rulers of the world.

The supreme wish of women is to win the admiration of men, and they have no more effectual means to this end than folly. Men, no doubt, will contend that it is the pleasure they have in women's society, and not their folly, that attracts them. I answer that their pleasure is folly, and nothing but folly, in which they delight. You
see, then, from what fountain is derived the highest and most exquisite enjoyment that falls to man's lot in life. 134
But there are some men (waning old crones, most of them) who love their glasses better than the lasses, and place their chief delight in tippling. Others love to make fools of themselves to raise a laugh at a feast, and I beg to say that of laughter, fun, and pleasantry, I—Folly—am the sole purveyor.

II.—The Mockery of Wisdom

So much for the notion that wisdom is of any use in the pleasures of life. Well, the next thing that our gods of wisdom will assert is that wisdom is necessary for affairs of state. Says Plato, "Those states will prosper whose rulers are guided by the spirit of philosophy." With this opinion I totally disagree. Consult history, and it will tell you that the two Catos, Brutus, Cassius, the Gracchi, Cicero, and Marcus Antoninus all disturbed the tranquillity of the state and brought down on them by their philosophy the disgust and disfavour of the citizens. And who are the men who are most prone, from weariness of life, to seek to put an end to it? Why, men of reputed wisdom. Not to mention Diogenes, the Catos, the Cassii, and the Bruti, there is the remarkable case of Chiron, who, though he actually had immortality conferred on him, voluntarily preferred death.

You see, then, that if men were universally wise, the world would be depopulated, and there would be need of a new creation. But, since the world generally is under the influence of folly and not of wisdom, the case is, happily, different. I, Folly, by inspiring men with hopes of good things they will never get, so charm away their woes that they are far from wishing to die. Nay, the less cause there is for them to desire to live, the more, nevertheless, do they love life. It is of my bounty that you see everywhere men of Nestorean longevity, mumbling, without brains, without teeth, whose hair is white, whose heads are bald, so enamoured of life, so 135
eager to look youthful, that they use dyes, wigs, and other disguises, and take to wife some frisky heifer of a creature; while aged and cadaverous-looking women are seen caterwauling, and, as the Greeks express it, behaving goatishly, in order to induce some beauteous Phaon to pay court to them.

As to the wisdom of the learned professions, the more empty-headed and the more reckless any member of any one of them is, the more he will be thought of. The physician is always in request, and yet medicine, as it is now frequently practised, is nothing but a system of pure humbug. Next in repute to the physicians stand the pettifogging lawyers, who are, according to the philosophers, a set of asses. And asses, I grant you that, they are. Nevertheless, it is by the will and pleasure of these asses that the business of the world is transacted, and they make fortunes while the poor theologians starve.

By the immortal gods, I solemnly swear to you that the happiest men are those whom the world calls fools, simpletons, and blockheads. For they are entirely devoid of the fear of death. They have no accusing consciences to make them fear it. They are, happily, without the experience of the thousands of cares that lacerate the minds of other men. They feel no shame, no solicitude, no ambition, no envy, no love. And, according to the theologians, they are free from any imputation of the guilt of sin! Ah, ye besotted men of

wisdom, you need no further evidence than the ills you have gone through to convince you from what a mass of calamities I have delivered my idiotic favourites.

To be deceived, people say, is wretched. But I hold that what is most wretched is not to be deceived. They are in great error who imagine that a man's happiness consists in things as they are. No; it consists entirely in his opinion of what they are. Man is so constituted that falsehood is far more agreeable to him than truth.

Does anyone need proof of this? Let him visit the churches, and assuredly he will find it. If solemn truth is 136
dwelt on, the listeners at once become weary, yawn, and sleep; but if the orator begins some silly tale, they are all attention. And the saints they prefer to appeal to are those whose histories are most made up of fable and romance. Though to be deceived adds much more to your happiness than not to be deceived, it yet costs you much less trouble.

And now to pass to another argument in my favour. Among all the praises of Bacchus this is the chief, that he drives away care; but he does it only for a short time, and then all your care comes again. How much more complete are the benefits mankind derive from me! I also afford them intoxication, but an intoxication whose influence is perennial, and all, too, without cost to them. And my favours I deny to nobody. Mars, Apollo, Saturn, Phœbus, and Neptune are more chary of their bounties and dole them out to their favourites only but I confine my favours to none.

III.—Classification of Fools

Of all the men whose doings I have witnessed, the most sordid are men of trade, and appropriately so, for they handle money, a very sordid thing indeed. Yet, though they lie, pilfer, cheat, and impose on everybody, as soon as they grow rich they are looked up to as princes. But as I look round among the various classes of men, I specially note those who are esteemed to possess more than ordinary sagacity. Among these a foremost place is occupied by the schoolmasters. How miserable would these be were it not that I, Folly, of my benevolence, ameliorate their wretchedness and render them insanely happy in the midst of their drudgery! Their lot is one
of semi-starvation and of debasing slavery. In the schools, those bridewells of uproar and confusion, they grow 137
prematurely old and broken down, Yet, thanks to my good services, they know not their own misery. For in their own estimation they are mighty fine fellows, strutting about and striking terror into the hearts of trembling urchins, half scarifying the little wretches with straps, canes, and birches. They are, apparently, quite unconscious of the dust and dirt with which their schoolrooms are polluted. In fact, their own most wretched servitude is to them a kingdom of felicity.

The poets owe less to me. Yet they, too, are enthusiastic devotees of mine, for their entire business consists in tickling the ears of fools with silly ditties and ridiculously romantic tales. Of the services of my attendants, Philautia [Self-approbation] and Kolakia [Flattery], they never fail to avail themselves, and really I do not know that there is any other class of men in the world amongst whom I should find more devoted and constant followers.

Moreover, there are the rhetoricians. Quintilian, the prince of them all, has written an immense chapter on no more serious subject than how to excite a laugh. Those, again, who hunt after immortal fame in the domain of literature unquestionably belong to my fraternity. Poor fellows! They pass a wretched existence poring over their manuscripts, and for what reward? For the praise of the very, very limited few who are capable of appreciating their erudition.

Very naturally, the barristers merit our attention next. Talk of female garrulity! Why, I would back any one of them to win a prize for chattering against any twenty of the most talkative women that you could pick out. And well indeed would it be if they had no worse fault than that. I am bound to say that they are not only loquacious, but pugnacious. Their quarrelsomeness is astounding.

After these come the bearded and gowned philosophers. Their insane self-deception as to their sagacity and 138
learning is very delightful. They beguile their time with computing the magnitude of the sun, moon, and stars, and they assign causes for all the phenomena of the universe, as if nature had initiated them into all her secrets. In reality they know nothing, but profess to know everything.

IV.—On Princes and Pontiffs

It is high time that I should say a few words to you about kings and the royal princes belonging to their courts. Very different are they from those whom I have just been describing, who pretend to be wise when they are the reverse, for these high personages frankly and openly live a life of folly, and it is just that I should give them their due, and frankly and openly tell them so. They seem to regard it to be the duty of a king to addict himself to the chase; to keep up a grand stud of horses; to extract as much money as possible from the people; to caress by every means in his power the vulgar populace, in order to win their good graces, and so make them the subservient tools of his tyrannical behests.

As for the grandees of the court, a more servile, insipid, empty-headed set than the generality of them you will fail to find anywhere. Yet they wish to be regarded as the greatest personalities on earth. Not a very modest wish, and yet, in one respect, they are modest enough. For instance, they wish to be bedecked with gold and gems and purple, and other external symbols of worth and wisdom, but nothing further do they require.

These courtiers, however, are superlatively happy in the belief that they are perfectly virtuous. They lie in
bed till noon. Then they summon their chaplain to their bedside to offer up the sacrifice of the mass, and as the 139
hireling priest goes through his solemn farce with perfunctory rapidity, they, meanwhile, have all but dropped off again into a comfortable condition of slumber. After this they betake themselves to breakfast; and that is scarcely over when dinner supervenes. And then come their pastimes—their dice, their cards, and their gambling—their merriment with jesters and buffoons, and their gallantries with court favourites.

Next let us turn our attention to popes, cardinals, and bishops, who have long rivalled, if they do not

surpass, the state and magnificence of princes. If bishops did but bear in mind that a pastoral staff is an emblem of pastoral duties, and that the cross solemnly carried before them is a reminder of the earnestness with which they should strive to crucify the flesh, their lot would be one replete with sadness and solicitude. As things are, a right bonny time do they spend, providing abundant pasturage for themselves, and leaving their flocks to the negligent charge of so-called friars and vicars.

Fortune favours the fool. We colloquially speak of him and such as him as "lucky birds," while, when we speak of a wise man, we proverbially describe him as one who has been "born under an evil star," and as one whose "horse will never carry him to the front." If you wish to get a wife, mind, above all things, that you beware of wisdom; for the girls, without exception, are heart and soul so devoted to fools, that you may rely on it a man who has any wisdom in him they will shun as they would a vampire.

And now, to sum up much in a few words, go among what classes of men you will, go among popes, princes, cardinals, judges, magistrates, friends, foes, great men, little men, and you will not fail to find that a man with plenty of money at his command has it in his power to obtain everything that he sets his heart upon. A wise man, however, despises money. And what is the consequence? Everyone despises him!

GESTA ROMANORUM

A Story-Book of the Middle Ages

The "Gesta Romanorum," or "Deeds of the Romans," a quaint collection of moral tales compiled by the monks, was used in the Middle Ages for pulpit instruction. Hence the curious "Applications" to the stories, two of which are here given as examples. Wynkyn de Worde was the first to print the "Gesta" in English, about 1510. His version is based on Latin manuscripts of English origin, and differs from the first edition, and from the Latin text printed abroad about 1473. The stories have little to do with authentic Roman history, and abound in amusing confusions, contradictions, and anachronisms. But their interest is undeniable, and they form the source of many famous pieces of English literature. In the English "Gesta" occur the originals of the bond and casket incidents in "The Merchant of Venice."

I.—Of Love

Pompey was a wise and powerful king. He had one well-beloved daughter, who was very beautiful. Her he committed to the care of five soldiers, who were to guard her night and day. Before the door of the princess's chamber they hung a burning lamp, and, moreover, they kept a loud-barking dog to rouse them from sleep. But the lady panted for the pleasures of the world, and one day, looking abroad, she was espied by a certain amorous duke, who made her many fair promises.

Hoping much from these, the princess slew the dog, put out the light, and fled by night with the duke. Now, there was in the palace a certain doughty champion, who pursued the fugitives and beheaded the duke. He brought the lady home again; but her father would not see her, and thenceforward she passed her time bewailing her misdeeds.

Now, at court there was a wise and skilful mediator, who, being moved with compassion, reconciled the lady 141
with her father and betrothed her to a powerful nobleman. The king then gave his daughter diverse gifts. These were a rich, flowing tunic inscribed with the words, "Forgiven. Sin no more"; and a golden coronet with the legend, "Thy dignity is from me." Her champion gave her a ring, engraved, "I have loved thee; learn thou to love." Likewise the mediator bestowed a ring, saying, "What have I done? How much? Why?" A third ring was given by the king's son, with the words: "Despise not thy nobility." A fourth ring, from her brother, bore the motto: "Approach! Fear not. I am thy brother." Her husband gave a golden coronet, confirming his wife in the inheritance of his possessions, and superscribed: "Now thou are espoused, sin no more."

The lady kept these gifts as long as she lived. She regained the affections of those whom her folly had estranged, and closed her days in peace.

APPLICATION

My beloved, the king is our Heavenly Father; the daughter is the soul; the guardian soldiers are the five senses; the lamp is the will; the dog is conscience; the duke is the Evil One. The mediator is Christ. The cloak is our Lord's wounded body. The champion and the brother are likewise Christ; the coronet is His crown of thorns; the rings are the wounds in His hands and feet. He is also the Spouse. Let us study to keep these gifts uninjured.

II.—Of Fidelity

The subject of a certain king, being captured by pirates, wrote to his father for ransom; but the father refused, and the youth was left wasting in prison. Now, his captor had a beautiful and virtuous daughter, who came to comfort the prisoner. At first he was too disconsolate to listen to her, but at length he begged her to try 142
to set him free. The lady feared her father's wrath, but at last, on promise of marriage, she freed the young man, and fled with him to his own country. His father said, "Son, I am overjoyed at thy return, but who is the lady under thy escort?"

When his son told him, he charged him, on pain of losing his inheritance, not to marry her.

"But she released me from deadly peril," said the youth.

The father answered, "Son, thou mayest not confide in her, for she hath deceived her own father; and, furthermore, although she indeed set thee free, it was but to oblige thee to marry her. And since it was an unworthy passion that was the source of thy liberty, I think that she ought not to be thy wife."

When the lady heard these reasons, she answered thus, "I have not deceived my parent. He that deceives diminishes a certain good. But my father is so rich that he needs not any addition. Wherefore, your son's ransom would have left him but little richer, while you it would have utterly impoverished. I have thus served you, and done my father no injury. As for unworthy passion, that arises from wealth, honours, or a handsome appearance, none of which your son possessed, for he had not even enough to procure his ransom, and imprisonment had destroyed his beauty. Therefore, I freed him out of compassion."

When the father heard this, he could object nothing more. So the son married the lady with great pomp, and closed his life in peace.

APPLICATION

My beloved, the son is the human race, led captive by the devil. The father is the world, that will not redeem the sinner, but loves to detain him. The daughter is Christ.

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III.—O Venial Sin

Julian, a noble soldier, fond of the chase, was one day pursuing a stag, which turned and addressed him thus, "Thou who pursuest me so fiercely shalt one day destroy thy parents."

In great alarm, Julian sought a far country, where he enlisted with a certain chieftain. For his renowned services in war and peace he was made a knight, and wedded to the widow of a castellan, with her castle as a dowry.

Meanwhile, his parents sought him sorrowing, and coming at length to Julian's castle in his absence, they told his wife their story. The lady, for the love she bore her husband, put them into her own bed, and early in the morning went forth to her devotions. Julian returned, and softly entering his wife's apartment, saw two persons therein, and was filled with terrible alarm for his lady's fealty.

Without pause, he slew both, and hurried out. Meeting his wife in the church porch, he fell into amazement, and asked who they might be. Hearing the truth, he was shaken with an agony of tears, and cried, "Accursed that I am! Dearest wife, forgive, and receive my last farewell!"

"Nay," she replied. "Wilt thou abandon me, beloved, and leave me widowed? I, that have shared thy happiness will now share thy grief!"

Together they departed to a great and dangerous river, where many had perished. There they built a hospital, where they abode in contrition, ferrying over such as wished to cross the river, and cherishing the poor. After many years, Julian was aroused at midnight by a dolorous voice calling his name. He found and ferried over a leper, perishing with cold. Failing to warm the wretch by other means, Julian placed him in his 144
own bed, and strove by the heat of his own body to restore him. After a while he who seemed sick and cold and leprous appeared robed in immortal splendour, and, waving his light wings, seemed ready to mount up into heaven. Turning upon his wondering host a look of the utmost benignity, the visitant exclaimed, "Julian, the Lord hath sent me to thee to announce the acceptance of thy contrition. Ere long thou and thy partner will sleep in Him."

So saying, the angelic messenger disappeared, and Julian and his wife, after a short time occupied in good works, died in peace.

IV.—Of the End of Sinners

Dionysius records that Perillus, wishing to become the artificer of Phalaris, the cruel tyrant of Agrigentum, presented him with a brazen bull. In its side was a secret door, for the entry of those who should be burned to death within. The idea was that the agonised cries of the victim, resembling the roaring of a bull and nothing human, should arouse no feeling of mercy. The king, highly applauding the invention, said, "Friend, the value of thy industry is still untried; more cruel even than the people account me, thou thyself shalt be the first victim."

There is no law more equitable than that "the artificer of death should perish by his own devices," as Ovid hath observed.

V.—Of Too Much Pride

As the Emperor Jovinian lay abed, reflecting on his power and possessions, he impiously asked, "Is there any other god than I?"

Amid such thoughts he fell asleep.

Now, on the morrow, as he followed the chase, he separated himself from his followers in order to bathe in a 145
stream. And as he bathed, one like him in all respects took the emperor's dress, and arraying himself in them, mounted the monarch's horse, and joined the royal retinue, who knew him not from their master. Jovinian, horseless and naked, was vexed beyond measure.

"Miserable that I am," he exclaimed, "I will to a knight who lives hard by. Him have I promoted; haply he will befriend me." But when he declared himself to be Jovinian, the knight ordered him to be flogged. "Oh, my God!" exclaimed the emperor, "is it possible that one whom I have loaded with honours should use me thus?"

Next he sought out a certain duke, one of his privy counsellors, and told his tale.

"Poor, mad wretch," said the duke. "I am but newly returned from the palace, where I left the emperor."

He therefore had Jovinian flogged, and imprisoned. Contriving to escape, he went to the palace. "Surely," he reflected, "my servants will know me." But his own porter denied him. Nevertheless, he persuaded the man to take a secret sign to the empress, and to demand his imperial robes. The empress, sitting at table with the feigned emperor, was much disturbed, and said, "Oh, my lord, there is a vile fellow at the gate who declares the most hidden passages of our life, and says he is my husband."

Being condemned to be dragged by a horse's tail, Jovinian, in despair, sought his confessor's cell. But the holy man would not open to him, although at last, being adjured by the name of the Crucified, he gave him shrift at the window. Thereupon he knew the emperor, and giving him some clothes, bade him show himself again at the palace. This he did, and was received with due obeisance. Still, none knew which was the emperor, and 146
which the impostor, until the feigned emperor spake.

"I," said he, "am the guardian angel of the king's soul. He has now purged his pride by penance; let your obedience wait on him."

So saying, he disappeared. The emperor gave thanks to God, lived happily after, and finished his days in peace.

VI.—Of Avarice

A covetous and wicked carpenter placed all his riches in a log, which he hid by his fireside. Now, the sea swept away that part of his house, and drifted the log to a city where lived a generous man. He found the log, cleft it, and laid the gold in a secure place until he should discover the owner.

Now, the carpenter, seeking his wealth with lamentations, came by chance to the house of him that had found it. Mentioning his loss, his host said to himself, "I will prove if God will that I return his money to him." He then made three cakes, one filled with earth, the second with dead men's bones, and the third with some of the lost gold. The carpenter, being invited to choose, weighed the cakes in his hand, and finding that with earth heaviest, took it.

"And if I want more, my worthy host," said he, "I will choose that," laying his hand on the cake containing the bones. "The third you may keep for yourself."

"Thou miserable varlet," cried the host. "It is thine own gold, which plainly the Lord wills not that I return to thee."

So saying, he distributed all the treasure among the poor, and drove the carpenter away from his house in great tribulation.

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VII.—Of Temporary Tribulation

Antiochus, king of Antioch, had one lovely daughter, who was much courted. But her father, seeking to withhold her from marriage, proposed a riddle to every suitor, and each one who failed to guess the answer was put to death. Among the suitors came Apollonius, the young Prince of Tyre, who guessed the riddle, the answer to which revealed a shameful secret of the king's life. Antiochus, loudly denying that the young man had hit upon the truth, sent him away for thirty days, and bade him try again, on pain of death. So Apollonius departed.

Now, Antiochus sent his steward, Taliarchus, to Tyre, with orders to destroy Apollonius; but by the time the steward arrived the prince had put to sea in a fleet laden with treasure, corn, and many changes of raiment. Hearing this, Antiochus set a price on the head of Apollonius, and pursued him with a great armament. The prince, arriving at Tharsus, saved that city from famine by the supplies he brought, and a statue was raised in his honour. Then, by the advice of one Stranguilio and his wife, Dionysias, he sailed to Pentapolis. On the way he suffered shipwreck, and reached that city on a plank. There, by his skill in athletics and music, he won the favour of Altistrates, the king, who gave him his daughter to wife.

Some time after, hearing that the wicked Antiochus and his daughter had been killed by lightning, Apollonius and his wife set sail to take up the sovereignty of Antioch, which had fallen to him. On the way the lady died, leaving a new-born daughter. The prince placed his wife's body in a coffin smeared with pitch, and committed it to the deep. In the coffin he put money and a tablet, instructing anyone who found the body to bury it sumptuously. Apollonius returned to Pentapolis and gave his infant daughter into the care of Stranguilio 148
and Dionysias. Then he himself sailed away and wandered the world in deep grief. In the meantime, his wife's body was cast up at Ephesus, and was found by the physician Cerimon, one of whose pupils revived the lady, who became a vestal of Diana.

Years passed, and the child, who was called Tharsia, incurred the jealousy of Dionysias, because she was fairer than her own child Philomatia. Dionysias sought to kill Tharsia, who, at the critical moment, was carried away by pirates, and sold into slavery at Machylena. There her beauty and goodness protected her, so that none who came to her master's evil house would do her wrong. She persuaded her owner to let her earn her bread by her accomplishments in music and the unravelling of hard sayings. Thus she won the love of the prince of that place, Athanagoras, who protected her.

Some time afterwards a strange fleet came to Machylena. Athanagoras, struck by the beauty of one of the ships, went on board, and asked to see the owner. He found a rugged and melancholy man, who was none other than Apollonius. In due time that prince was joyfully reunited with his child, who was given in marriage to her perserver. Speedy vengeance overtook Tharsia's cruel owner, and later Stranguilio and Dionysias suffered for their misdeeds. Being warned by a dream to return to Ephesus, Apollonius found his wife in the precinct of the vestals, and, together with her, he reigned long and happily over Antioch and Tyre. After death he went into everlasting life. To which may God, of His infinite mercy, lead us all.

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OLIVER GOLDSMITH

The Citizen of the World

"The Citizen of the World," after appearing in the "Public Ledger" newspaper in 1760–61, was published in two volumes in 1762, with the sub-title, "Letters from a Chinese Philosopher, Residing in London, to his Friends in the East." It established Goldsmith's literary reputation (see Vol. IV, p. 275). The author's main purpose was to indulge in a keen, but not ill-natured, satire upon Western, and especially upon English, civilisation; but sometimes the satiric manner yields place to the philosophical.

The Troubles of the Great

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI TO FUM HOAM, FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE CEREMONIAL ACADEMY AT PEKIN

The princes of Europe have found out a manner of rewarding their subjects who have behaved well, by presenting them with about two yards of blue ribbon, which is worn over the shoulder. They who are honoured with this mark of distinction are called knights, and the king himself is always the head of the order. This is a very frugal method of recompensing the most important services, and it is very fortunate for kings that their subjects are satisfied with such trifling rewards. Should a nobleman happen to lose his leg in battle, the king presents him with two yards of ribbon, and he is paid for the loss of his limb. Should an ambassador spend all his paternal fortunes in supporting the honour of his country abroad, the king presents him with two yards of ribbon, which is to be considered as an equivalent to his estate. In short, while a European king has a yard of blue or green ribbon left, he need be under no apprehension of wanting statesmen, generals, and soldiers.

I cannot sufficiently admire those kingdoms in which men with large patrimonial estates are willing thus to 150
undergo real hardships for empty favours. A person, already possessed of a competent fortune, who undertakes to enter the career of ambition feels many real inconveniences from his station, while it procures him no real happiness that he was not possessed of before. He could eat, drink, and sleep before he became a courtier, as well, perhaps better, than when invested with his authority.

What real good, then, does an addition to a fortune already sufficient procure? Not any. Could the great man, by having his fortune increased, increase also his appetite, then precedence might be attended with real amusement. But, on the contrary, he finds his desire for pleasure often lessen as he takes pains to be able to improve it; and his capacity of enjoyment diminishes as his fortune happens to increase.

Instead, therefore, of regarding the great with envy, I generally consider them with some share of compassion. I look upon them as a set of good-natured, misguided people, who are indebted to us, and not to themselves, for all the happiness they enjoy. For our pleasure, and not their own, they sweat under a cumbrous heap of finery; for our pleasure, the hackneyed train, the slow-parading pageant, with all the gravity of grandeur, moves in review; a single coat, or a single footman, answers all the purposes of the most indolent refinement as well; and those who have twenty may be said to keep one for their own pleasure, and the other nineteen for ours. So true is the observation of Confucius, "That we take greater pains to persuade others that we are happy than in endeavouring to think so ourselves."

But though this desire of being seen, of being made the subject of discourse, and of supporting the dignities of an exalted station, be troublesome to the ambitious, yet it is well that there are men thus willing to exchange ease and safety for danger and a ribbon. We lose nothing by their vanity, and it would be unkind to endeavour 151
to deprive a child of its rattle.... Adieu.

The Folly of the Recluse

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI TO HINGPO, HIS SON

Books, my son, while they teach us to respect the interests of others, often make us unmindful of our own; while they instruct the youthful reader to grasp at social happiness, he grows miserable in detail. I dislike, therefore, the philosopher, who describes the inconveniences of life in such pleasing colours that the pupil grows enamoured of distress, longs to try the charms of poverty, meets it without dread, nor fears its inconveniences till he severely feels them.

A youth who has thus spent his life among books, new to the world, and unacquainted with man but by philosophic information, may be considered as a being whose mind is filled with the vulgar errors of the wise. He first has learned from books, and then lays it down as a maxim that all mankind are virtuous or vicious in excess; warm, therefore, in attachments, and steadfast in enmity, he treats every creature as a friend or foe. Upon a closer inspection of human nature he perceives that he should have moderated his friendship, and softened his severity; he finds no character so sanctified that has not its failings, none so infamous but has somewhat to attract our esteem; he beholds impiety in lawn, and fidelity in fetters.

He now, therefore, but too late, perceives that his regards should have been more cool, and his hatred less violent; that the truly wise seldom court romantic friendships with the good, and avoid, if possible, the resentment even of the wicked; every movement gives him fresh instances that the bonds of friendship are broken if drawn too closely, and that those whom he has treated with disrespect more than retaliate the injury; at length, therefore, he is obliged to confess that he has declared war upon the vicious half of mankind, without 152
being able to form an alliance among the virtuous to espouse his quarrel.

Our book-taught philosopher, however, is now too far advanced to recede; and though poverty be the just consequence of the many enemies his conduct has created, yet he is resolved to meet it without shrinking. "Come, then, O Poverty! for what is there in thee dreadful to the Wise? Temperance, Health, and Frugality walk in thy train; Cheerfulness and Liberty are ever thy companions. Come, then, O Poverty, while kings stand by, and gaze with admiration at the true philosopher's resignation!"

The goddess appears, for Poverty ever comes at the call; but, alas! he finds her by no means the charming figure books and his warm imagination had painted. All the fabric of enthusiasm is at once demolished, and a thousand miseries rise upon its ruins, while Contempt, with pointing finger, is foremost in the hideous procession.

The poor man now finds that he can get no kings to look at him while he is eating; he finds that, in proportion as he grows poor, the world turns its back upon him, and gives him leave to act the philosopher in all the majesty of solitude. Spleen now begins to take up the man; not distinguishing in his resentments, he regards all mankind with detestation, and commencing man-hater, seeks solitude to be at liberty to rail.

It has been said that he who retires to solitude is either a beast or an angel. The censure is too severe, and the praise unmerited; the discontented being who retires from society is generally some good-natured man, who has begun life without experience, and knew not how to gain it in his intercourse with mankind. Adieu.

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On Mad Dogs

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI TO FUM HOAM

Indulgent Nature seems to have exempted this island from many of those epidemic evils which are so fatal in other parts of the world. But though the nation be exempt from real evils, think not, my friend, that it is more happy on this account than others. They are afflicted, it is true, with neither famine nor pestilence, but then there is a disorder peculiar to the country, which every season makes strange ravages among them; it spreads with pestilential rapidity, and infects almost every rank of people; what is still more strange, the natives have no name for this peculiar malady, though well enough known to foreign physicians by the name of epidemic terror.

A season is never known to pass in which the people are not visited by this cruel calamity in one shape or another, seemingly different, though ever the same. The people, when once infected, lose their relish for happiness, saunter about with looks of despondence, ask after the calamities of the day, and receive no comfort but in heightening each other's distress. A dread of mad dogs is the epidemic terror which now prevails, and the whole nation is at present actually groaning under the malignity of its influence.

It is pleasant enough for a neutral being like me, who have no share in these ideal calamities, to mark the stages of this national disease. The terror at first feebly enters with a little dog that had gone through a neighbouring village, that was thought to be mad by several who had seen him. The next account comes that a mastiff ran through a certain town, and had bit five geese, which immediately ran mad, foamed at the bill, and died in great agonies soon after. Then comes an affecting history of a little boy bit in the leg, and gone down to be dipped in the salt water; when the people have sufficiently shuddered at that, they are next congealed with a 154
frightful account of a man who was said lately to have died from a bite he had received some years before.

My landlady, a good-natured woman, but a little credulous, waked me some mornings ago, before the usual hour, with horror and astonishment in her looks; she desired me, if I had any regard for my safety, to keep within, for a few days ago so dismal an accident had happened as to put all the world upon their guard. A mad dog down in the country, she assured me, had bit a farmer who, soon becoming mad, ran into his own yard, and bit a fine brindled cow; the cow quickly became as mad as the man, began to foam at the mouth, and raising herself up, walked about on her hind legs, sometimes barking like a dog, and sometimes attempting to talk like the farmer.

Were most stories of this nature thoroughly examined, it would be found that numbers of such as have been said to suffer were in no way injured; and that of those who have been actually bitten, not one in a hundred was bit by a mad dog. Such accounts in general, therefore, only serve to make the people miserable by false terrors.

Of all the beasts that graze the lawn or hunt the forest, a dog is the only animal that, leaving his fellows, attempts to cultivate the friendship of man; no injuries can abate his fidelity; no distress induce him to forsake his benefactor; studious to please and fearing to offend, he is still an humble, steadfast dependent, and in him alone fawning is not flattery. How unkind, then, to torture this faithful creature who has left the forest to claim the protection of man! How ungrateful a return to the trusty animal for all his services! Adieu.

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On Elections

FROM LIEN CHI ALTANGI TO FUM HOAM

The English are at present employed in celebrating a feast, which becomes general every seventh year: the parliament of the nation being then dissolved, and another appointed to be chosen. This solemnity falls infinitely short of our Feast of the Lanterns in magnificence and splendour; it is also surpassed by others of the East in unanimity and pure devotion; but no festival in the world can compare with it for eating.

To say the truth, eating seems to make a grand ingredient in all English parties of zeal, business, or amusement. When a church is to be built, or an hospital endowed, the directors assemble, and instead of consulting upon it, they eat upon it, by which means the business goes forward with success. When the poor are to be relieved, the officers appointed to dole out public charity assemble and eat upon it. Nor has it ever been known that they filled the bellies of the poor till they had satisfied their own. But in the election of magistrates the people seem to exceed all bounds.

What amazes me is that all this good living no way contributes to improve their good humour. On the contrary, they seem to lose their temper as they lose their appetites; every morsel they swallow, and every glass they pour down, serves to increase their animosity. Upon one of these occasions I have actually seen a bloody-minded man-milliner sally forth at the head of a mob, to face a desperate pastrycook, who was general of the opposite party.

I lately made an excursion to a neighbouring village, in order to be a spectator of the ceremonies practised. Mixing with the crowd, I was conducted to the hall where the magistrates are chosen; but what tongue can describe this scene of confusion! The whole crowd seemed equally inspired with anger, jealousy, politics, 156

patriotism, and punch. I remarked one figure that was carried up by two men upon this occasion. I at first began to pity his infirmities as natural, but soon found the fellow so drunk that he could not stand; another made his appearance to give his vote, but though he could stand, he actually lost the use of his tongue, and remained silent; a third, who, though excessively drunk, could both stand and speak, being asked the candidate's name for whom he voted, could be prevailed upon to make no other answer but "Tobacco and brandy!" In short, an election-hall seems to be a theatre, where every passion is seen without disguise; a school where fools may readily become worse, and where philosophers may gather wisdom. Adieu.

Opinions and Anecdotes

The most ignorant nations have always been found to think most highly of themselves.

It may sound fine in the mouth of a declaimer, when he talks of subduing our appetites, of teaching every sense to be content with a bare sufficiency, and of supplying only the wants of nature; but is there not more satisfaction in indulging these appetites, if with innocence and safety, than in restraining them? Am I not better pleased in enjoyment, than in the sullen satisfaction of thinking that I can live without enjoyment?

When five brethren had set upon the great Emperor Guisong, alone with his sabre he slew four of them; he was struggling with the fifth, when his guards, coming up, were going to cut the conspirator into a thousand pieces. "No, no!" cried the emperor, with a placid countenance. "Of all his brothers he is the only one remaining; at least let one of the family be suffered to live, that his aged parents may have somebody left to feed and comfort them."

It was a fine saying of Nangfu the emperor, who, being told that his enemies had raised an insurrection in one of the distant provinces, said: "Come, then, my friends, follow me, and I promise you that we shall quickly destroy them." He marched forward, and the rebels submitted upon his approach. All now thought that he would take the most signal revenge, but were surprised to see the captives treated with mildness and humanity. "How!" cries his first minister, "is this the manner in which you fulfil your promise? Your royal word was given that your enemies should be destroyed, and behold, you have pardoned all, and even caressed some!" "I promised," replied the emperor, with a generous air, "to destroy my *enemies*; I have fulfilled my word, for see, they are enemies no longer; I have made *friends* of them."

Well it were if rewards and mercy alone could regulate the commonwealth; but since punishments are sometimes necessary, let them at least be rendered terrible, by being executed but seldom; and let justice lift her sword rather to terrify than revenge.

HENRY HALLAM

Introduction to the Literature of Europe

The full volume of this work, "Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries," was published about 1837, and is a vast accumulation of facts, but is lacking in organic unity, in vigour, and vitality. Hallam's spelling of proper names has been followed throughout this epitome. (Henry Hallam, biography; see Vol. XI, p. 255.)

I.—Before the Fifteenth Century

The establishment of the barbarian nations on the ruins of the Roman Empire in the West was followed by an almost universal loss of classical learning. The last of the ancients, and one who forms a link with the Middle Ages, is Boëthius, whose "Consolation of Philosophy" mingles a Christian sanctity with the lessons of Greek and Roman sages. But after his death, in 524, the downfall of learning and eloquence was inconceivably rapid, and a state of general ignorance, except here and there within the ecclesiastical hierarchy, lasted for five centuries.

The British islands led the way in the slow restoration of knowledge. The Irish monasteries, in the seventh century, were the first to send out men of comparative eminence, and the Venerable Bede, in the eighth century, was probably superior to any other man whom the world at that time possessed. Then came the days when Charlemagne laid in his vast dominions the foundations of learning.

In the tenth century, when England and Italy alike were in the most deplorable darkness, France enjoyed an age of illumination, and a generation or two later we find many learned and virtuous churchmen in Germany. 159
But it is not until the twelfth century that we enter on a new epoch in European literary history, when universities were founded, modern languages were cultivated, the study of Roman law was systematically taken up, and a return was made to a purer Latinity.

Next, we observe the rise of the scholastic theology and philosophy, with their strenuous attempt at an alliance between faith and reason. The dry and technical style of these enquiries, their minute subdivisions of questions, and their imposing parade of accuracy, served indeed to stimulate subtlety of mind, but also hindered the revival of polite literature and the free expansion of the intellect.

Dante and Petrarch are the morning stars of the modern age. They lie outside our period, and we must pass them over with a word. It is sufficient to notice that, largely by their influence, we find, in the year 1400, a national literature existing in no less than seven European languages—three in the Spanish peninsula, the French, the Italian, the German, and the English.

II.—The Fifteenth Century

We now come to a very important event—the resuscitation of the study of Greek in Italy. In 1423, Giovanni Aurispa, of Sicily, brought over two hundred manuscripts from Greece, including Plato, Plotinus, Diodorus, Pindar, and many other classics. Manuel Chrysoloras, teacher of Greek in Florence, had trained a school of Hellenists; and copyists, translators, and commentators set to work upon the masterpieces of the ancient world. We have good reason to doubt whether, without the Italians of those times, the revival of classical learning would ever have occurred. The movement was powerfully aided by Nicolas V., pope in 1447, who founded the Vatican library, supported scholars, and encouraged authors.

Soon after 1450, the art of printing began to be applied to the purposes of useful learning, and Bibles, classical texts, collections of fables; and other works were rapidly given to the world. The accession to power of 160
Lorenzo de Medici in 1464 marks the revival of native Italian genius in poetry, and under his influence the Platonic academy, founded by his grandfather Cosmo, promoted a variety of studies. But we still look in vain to England for either learning or native genius. The reign of Edward IV. is one of the lowest points in our literary annals.

In France, the "Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles," 1486, and the poems of Villon, 1489, show a marked advance in style. Many French "mysteries," or religious dramas, belong to this period, and this early form of the dramatic art had also much popularity in Germany and in Italy. Literary activity, in France and in Germany, had become regularly progressive by the end of the century.

Two men, Erasmus and Budæus, were now devoting incessant labour, in Paris, to the study of Greek; and a gleam of light broke out even in England, where William Grocyn began, in 1491, to teach that language in Oxford. On his visit to England, in 1497, Erasmus was delighted with everything he found, and gave unbounded praise to the scholarship of Grocyn, Colet, Linacre, and the young Thomas More.

The fifteenth century was a period of awakening and of strenuous effort. But if we ask what monuments of its genius and erudition still receive homage, we can give no very triumphant answer. Of the books then written, how few are read now!

III.—The Sixteenth Century (1500-1550)

In the early years of this century the press of Aldus Manutius, who had settled in Venice in 1489, was publishing many texts of the classics, Greek as well as Latin.

It was at this time that the regular drama was first introduced into Europe. "Calandra," the earliest modern comedy, was presented at Venice in 1508, and about the same time the Spanish tragi-comedy of "Calisto and 161
Melibœa" was printed. The pastoral romance, also, made its appearance in Portugal; and the "Arcadia," 1502, by the Italian Sannazaro, a work of this class, did much to restore the correctness and elegance of Italian prose. Peter Bembo's "Asolani," 1505, a dialogue on love, has also been thought to mark an epoch in Italian literature.

At the same time, William Dunbar, with his "Thistle and Rose," 1503, and his allegorical "Golden Targe," was leading the van of British poetry.

The records of voyages of discovery begin to take a prominent place. The old travels of Marco Polo, as well as those of Sir John Mandeville, and the "Cosmography" of Ptolemy, had been printed in the previous century; but the stupendous discoveries of the close of that age now fell to be told. The voyages of Cadamosto, a Venetian, in Western Africa, appeared in 1507; and those of Amerigo Vespucci, entitled "Mondo Nuovo," in the same year. An epistle of Columbus himself had been printed in Germany about 1493.

Leo X., who became pope in 1513, placed men of letters in the most honourable stations of his court, and was the munificent patron of poets, scholars, and printers. Rucellai's "Rosmunda," a tragedy played before Leo in 1515, was the earliest known trial of blank verse. The "Sophonisba" of Trissino, published in 1524, a play written strictly on the Greek model, had been acted some years before. Two comedies by Ariosto were presented about 1512.

Meanwhile, the printing press became very active in Paris, Basle, and Germany, chiefly in preparing works for the use of students in universities. But in respect of learning, we have the testimony of Erasmus that neither France, nor Germany, stood so high as England. In Scotland, boys were being taught Latin in school; and the translation of the Æneid by Gawin Douglas, completed about 1513, shows, by its spirit and fidelity, the degree 162
of scholarship in the north. The only work of real genius which England can claim in this age is the "Utopia" of Sir Thomas More, first printed in 1516.

Erasmus diffuses a lustre over his age, which no other name among the learned supplies. About 1517, he published an enlarged edition of his "Adages," which displays a surprising intimacy with Greek and Roman literature. The most remarkable of them, in every sense, are those which reflect with excessive bitterness on kings and priests. Erasmus knew that the regular clergy were not to be conciliated, and resolved to throw away the scabbard; and his invectives against kings proceeded from a just sense of the oppression of Europe in that age by ambitious and selfish rulers.

We are now brought by necessary steps to the great religious revolution known as the Reformation, with which we are only concerned in so far as it modified the history of literature. In all his dispute, Luther was sustained by a prodigious force of popular opinion; and the German nation was so fully awakened to the abuses of the Church that, if neither Luther nor Zwingli had ever been born, a great religious schism was still at hand. Erasmus, who had so manifestly prepared the way for the new reformers, continued, beyond the year 1520, favourable to their cause. But some of Luther's tenets he did not and could not approve; and he was already disgusted by that intemperance of language which soon led him to secede entirely from the Protestant side.

The laws of synchronism bring strange partners together, and we may pass at once from Luther to Ariosto, whose "Orlando Furioso" was printed at Ferrara in 1516. Ariosto has been, after Homer, the favourite poet of Europe. His grace and facility, his clear and rapid stream of language, his variety of invention, left him no rival.

No edition of "Amadis de Gaul" has been proved to exist before that printed at Seville in 1519. This famous 163
romance was translated into French between 1540 and 1557, and into English by Munday in 1619.

A curious dramatic performance was represented in Paris in 1511, and published in 1516. It is entitled "Le Prince des Sots et la Mère sotte," by Peter Gringore; its chief aim was to ridicule the Pope and the court of Rome. Hans Sachs, a shoemaker of Nuremberg, produced his first carnival play in 1517. The English poets Hawes and Skelton fall within this period.

From 1520 to 1550, Italy, where the literature of antiquity had been first cultivated, still retained her superiority in the fine perception of its beauties, but the study was proceeding also elsewhere in Europe. Few books of that age give us more insight into its literary history and the public taste than the "Circeronianus" of Erasmus, against which Scaliger wrote with unmannerly invective. The same period of thirty years is rich with poets, among whom are the Spanish Mendoza, the Portuguese Ribero, Marot in France, many hymn-writers in Germany; and in England, Wyatt and Surrey. At this time also, Spain was forming its national theatre, chiefly under the influence of Lope de Rueda and of Torres Naharro, the inventor of Spanish comedy. The most celebrated writer of fiction in this age is Rabelais, than whom few have greater fertility of language and imagination.

IV.—The Sixteenth Century (1550–1600)

Montaigne's "Essays," which first appeared at Bordeaux in 1580, make an epoch in literature, being the first appeal from the academy to the haunts of busy and idle men; and this delightful writer had a vast influence on English and French literature in the succeeding age.

Turning now to the Italian poets of our period, we find that most of them are feeble copyists of Petrarch, whose style Bembo had rendered so popular. Casa, Costanzo, Baldi, Celio Magno, Bernardino Rota, Gaspara 164
Stampa, Bernado Tasso, father of the great Tasso, Peter Aretin, and Firenzuola, flourished at this time. The "Jerusalem" of Torquato Tasso is the great epic of modern times; it is read with pleasure in almost every canto, though the native melancholy of Tasso tinges all his poem. It was no sooner published than it was weighed against the "Orlando Furioso," and Europe has not yet agreed which scale inclines.

Spanish poetry is adorned by Luis Ponce de Leon, born in 1527, a religious and mystical lyric poet. The odes of Herrera have a lyric elevation and richness of phrase, derived from the study of Pindar and of the Old Testament. Castillejo, playful and witty, attempted to revive the popular poetry, and ridiculed the imitators of Petrarch.

The great Camoens had now arisen in Portugal; his "Lusiad," written in praise of the Lusitanian people, is the mirror of his loving, courageous, generous, and patriotic heart. Camoens is the chief Portuguese poet in this age, and possibly in every other.

This was an age of verse in France. Pierre Ronsard, Amadis Jamyn his pupil, Du Bartas, Pibrac, Desportes,

and many others, were gradually establishing the rules of metre, and the Alexandrine was displacing the old verse of ten syllables.

Of German poetry there is little to say; but England had Lord Vaux's short pieces in "The Paradise of Dainty Devices"; Sackville, with his "Induction" to the "Mirrour of Magistrates," 1559; George Gascoyne, whose "Steel Glass," 1576, is the earliest English satire; and, above all, Spenser, whose "Shepherd's Kalendar" appeared in 1579. This work was far more natural and more pleasing than the other pastorals of the age. Shakespeare's "Venus and Adonis," and his "Rape of Lucrece," were published in 1593–94. Sir Philip Sidney, Raleigh, Lodge, Breton, Marlowe, Green, Watson, Davison, Daniel, and Michael Drayton were now writing poems, and Drake has a list of more than two hundred English poets of this time. 165

The great work of the period is, however, the "Faëry Queen," the first three books of which were published in 1590, and the last three in 1596. Spenser excels Ariosto in originality, force, and variety of character, and in depth of reflection, but especially in the poetical cast of feeling.

Of dramatic literature, between 1550 and 1600, we have many Italian plays by Groto, Decio da Orto, and Tasso. The pastoral drama originating with Agostino Beccari in 1554, reached its highest perfection in Tasso's "Aminta," which was followed by Guarini's "Pastor Fido."

Lope de Vega is the great Spanish dramatist of this time. His astonishing facility produced over two thousand original dramas, of which three hundred have been preserved. Jodelle, the father of the French theatre, presented his "Cléopatre" in 1552. In 1598 the foundations were laid of the Comédie Française.

In England, Sackville led the way with his tragedy of "Gorboduc," played at Whitehall before Elizabeth in 1562. In 1576, the first public theatre was erected in Blackfriars. Several young men of talent appeared, Marlowe, Peele, Greene, Kyd, and Nash, as the precursors of Shakespeare; and in 1587, being then twenty-three years old, the greatest of dramatists settled in London, and several of his plays had been acted before the close of the century.

Among English prose writings of this time may be mentioned Ascham's "Schoolmaster," 1570, Puttenham's "Art of English Poesie," 1586, and, as a curiosity of affectation, Lilly's "Euphues." But the first good prose-writer is Sir Philip Sidney, whose "Arcadia" appeared in 1590; and the finest master of prose in the Elizabethan period is Hooker. The first book of the "Ecclesiastical Polity" is one of the masterpieces of English eloquence.

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V.—The Seventeenth Century (1600–1650)

The two great figures in philosophy of this period are Bacon and Descartes. At its beginning the higher philosophy had been little benefited by the labours of any modern enquirer. It was become, indeed, no strange thing to question the authority of Aristotle, but his disciples could point with scorn at the endeavours made to supplant it.

In the great field of natural jurisprudence, the most eminent name in this period is that of Hugo Grotius, whose famous work "De Jure Belli et Pacis" was published in Paris in 1625. This treatise made an epoch in the philosophical, and, we might almost say, in the political history of Europe.

In the history of poetry, between 1600 and 1650, we have the Italians Marini, Tassoni, and Chiabrera, the last being the founder of a school of lyric poetry known as "Pindaric." Among Spanish poets are Villegas and Gongora; in France, Malherbe, Regnier, Racan, Maynard, Voiture, and Sarrazin; Opitz, in Germany, was the founder of German poetic literature; and this, the golden age of Dutch literature, included the poets Spiegel, Hooft, Cats, and Vondel. The English poets of these fifty years are very numerous, but for the most part not well known. Spenser was imitated by Phineas and Giles Fletcher. Sir John Denham, Donne, Crashaw, Cowley, Daniel, Michael Drayton, William Browne, and Sir William Davenant wrote at this time, to which also belong the sonnets of Shakespeare. Drummond of Hawthornden, Carew, Ben Jonson, Wither, Habington, Suckling, and Herrick, were all in the first half of the seventeenth century. John Milton was born in 1609, and in 1634 wrote "Comus," which was published in 1637; "Lycidas," the "Allegro" and "Penseroso," the "Ode on the Nativity," and Milton's sonnets followed.

The Italian drama was weak at this period, but in Spain Lope de Vega and Calderon were at the height of their glory. In France, Corneille's "Mélite," his first play, was produced in 1629, and was followed by "Clitandre," "La Veuve," "Medea," "Cid," and others. The English drama was exceedingly popular, and the reigns of James and Charles were the glory of our theatre. Shakespeare—the greatest name in all literature—Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Shirley, Heywood, Webster, and many other dramatists contributed to its fame. 167

In prose writings, Italian and Spanish works of this time show a great decline in taste; but in France, the letters of the moralist Balzac and of Voiture, from 1625, have ingenuity and sprightliness. English prose writings of the period include the works of Knolles, Raleigh, Daniel, Bacon, Milton, Clarendon; Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," Earle's "Microcosmographia" and Overbury's "Characters."

Fiction was represented by "Don Quixote," of which the first part was published in 1605—almost the only Spanish book which is popularly read in every country; by the French heroic romance, and by the English Godwin's "Man in the Moon."

VI.—The Seventeenth Century (1650–1700)

Among the greatest writers of this period are Bossuet and Pascal, in theology; Gassendi, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Locke, in philosophy; and Cumberland, Puffendorf, La Rochefoucauld, and La Bruyère, in morals. Leibnitz wrote on jurisprudence before he passed on to philosophy, and the same subject was treated also by Godefroy, Domat, and Noodt.

Italian poetry had now improved in tone. Filicaja, a man of serious and noble spirit, wrote odes of deep

patriotic and religious feeling. Guidi, a native of Pavia, raised himself to the highest point that any lyric poet of Italy has attained. Spain and Portugal were destitute of poets; but in France La Fontaine, Boileau, Benserade, Chaulieu, Segrais, Deshoulières, and Fontenelle, were famous. In England at this time there were Waller, Milton, Butler, and Dryden, as well as Marvell and other minor poets. 168

Neither Italy nor Spain was now producing dramatic works of any importance, but it was very different in France. Corneille continued to write for the stage, and Racine's first play, the "Andromaque," was presented in 1667. This was followed by "Britannicus," "Bérénice," "Mithridate," "Iphigénie," and others. Racine's style is exquisite; he is second only to Virgil among all poets. Molière, the French writer whom his country has most uniformly admired, began with "L'Étourdi" in 1653, and his pieces followed rapidly until his death, in 1673. The English Restoration stage was held by Dryden, Otway, Southern, Lee, Congreve, Wycherley, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh.

In prose literature Italy is deficient; but this period includes the most distinguished portion of the great age in France, the reign of Louis XIV. Bossuet, Malebranche, Arnauld, and Pascal are among the greatest of French writers.

English writing now became easier and more idiomatic, sometimes even to the point of vulgarity. The best masters of prose were Cowley, Evelyn, Dryden, and Walton in the "Complete Angler."

Among novels of the period may be named those of Quevedo in Spain; of Scarron, Bergerac, Perrault, and Hamilton, in France; and the "Pilgrim's Progress"—for John Bunyan may pass for the father of our novelists—in England. Swift's "Tale of a Tub," than which Rabelais has nothing superior, was indeed not published till 1704, but was written within the seventeenth century.

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WILLIAM HAZLITT

Lectures on the English Poets

William Hazlitt, critic and essayist, was born on April 10, 1778, and was educated in London for the Unitarian ministry. But his talents for painting and for writing diverted him from that career, and soon, though he showed great promise as a painter, he devoted himself to authorship, contributing largely to the "Morning Chronicle," the "Examiner," and the "Edinburgh Review." His wide, genial interests, his ardent temperament, and his admirable style, have given Hazlitt a high place among English critics. He is no pedant or bookworm; he is always human, always a man of the world. His "Characters of Shakespeare's Plays," 1817, gave him a reputation which was confirmed by his "Lectures on the English Poets," delivered next year at the Surrey Institute. Further lectures, on the English comic writers and on the Elizabethan dramatists, followed. His essays, on all kinds of subjects, are collected in volumes under various titles. All are the best of reading. Hazlitt's later works include "Liber Amoris," 1823; "Spirit of the Age," 1825, consisting of character studies; and the "Life of Napoleon" (Hazlitt's hero), 1828–30. The essayist was twice married, and died on September 18, 1830.

What Is Poetry?

The best general notion which I can give of poetry is that it is the natural impression of any object or event by its vividness exciting an involuntary movement of imagination and passion, and producing, by sympathy, a certain modulation of the voice or sounds expressing it. Poetry is the universal language which the heart holds with Nature and itself. He who has a contempt for poetry cannot have much respect for himself or for anything else. It is not a mere frivolous accomplishment; it has been the study and delight of mankind in all ages.

Nor is it found only in books; wherever there is a sense of beauty, or power, or harmony, as in a wave of the sea, or in the growth of a flower, there is poetry in its birth. It is not a branch of authorship; it is the "stuff of which our life is made." The rest is "mere oblivion," for all that is worth remembering in life is the poetry of it. If poetry is a dream, the business of life is much the same. If it is a fiction, made up of what we wish things to be, and fancy that they are because we wish them so, there is no other or better reality. 170

The light of poetry is not only a direct, but also a reflected light, that, while it shows us the object, throws a sparkling radiance on all around it; the flame of the passions communicated to the imagination reveals to us, as with a flash of lightning, the inmost recesses of thought, and penetrates our whole being. Poetry represents forms chiefly as they suggest other forms; feelings, as they suggest forms, or other feelings. Poetry puts a spirit of life and motion into the universe. It describes the flowing, not the fixed. The poetical impression of any object is that uneasy, exquisite sense of beauty or power that cannot be contained within itself, that is impatient of all limit; that—as flame bends to flame—strives to link itself to some other image of kindred beauty or grandeur, to enshrine itself, as it were, in the highest forms of fancy, and to relieve the aching sense of pleasure by expressing it in the boldest manner, and by the most striking examples of the same quality in other instances.

As in describing natural objects poetry impregnates sensible impressions with the forms of fancy, so it describes the feelings of pleasure or pain by blending them with the strongest movements of passion and the most striking forms of Nature. Tragic poetry, which is the most impassioned species of it, strives to carry on the feeling to the utmost point of sublimity or pathos by all the force of comparison or contrast, loses the sense of present suffering in the imaginary exaggeration of it, exhausts the terror or pity by an unlimited indulgence of it, and lifts us from the depths of woe to the highest contemplations of human life. 171

The use and end of poetry, "both at the first and now, was and is to hold the mirror up to Nature," seen through the medium of passion and imagination, not divested of that medium by means of literal truth or abstract reason. Those who would dispel the illusions of imagination, to give us their drab-coloured creation in their stead, are not very wise. It cannot be concealed, however, that the progress of knowledge and refinement has a tendency to clip the wings of poetry. The province of the imagination is principally visionary, the unknown and undefined; we can only fancy what we do not know. There can never be another Jacob's dream. Since that time the heavens have gone farther off, and grown astronomical.

Poetry combines the ordinary use of language with musical expression. As there are certain sounds that excite certain movements, and the song and dance go together, so there are, no doubt, certain thoughts that lead to certain tones of voice, or modulations of sound. The jerks, the breaks, the inequalities and harshnesses of prose are fatal to the flow of a poetical imagination, as a jolting road disturbs the reverie of an absent-minded man. But poetry makes these odds all even. The musical in sound is the sustained and continuous; the musical in thought is the sustained and continuous also. An excuse may be made for rhyme in the same manner.

Chaucer and Spenser

These are two out of the four greatest English poets; but they were both much indebted to the early poets of Italy, and may be considered as belonging, in some degree, to that school. Spenser delighted in luxurious enjoyment; Chaucer in severe activity of mind. Spenser was the most romantic and visionary of all great poets; Chaucer the most practical, the most a man of business and the world. 172

Chaucer does not affect to show his power over the reader's mind, but the power which his subject has over his own. The readers of Chaucer's poetry feel more nearly what the persons he describes must have felt, than perhaps those of any other poet. There is no artificial, pompous display; but a strict parsimony of the poet's materials, like the rude simplicity of the age in which he lived. His words point as an index to the objects, like the eye or finger. There were none of the commonplaces of poetic diction in his time, no reflected lights of fancy, no borrowed roseate tints; he was obliged to inspect things narrowly for himself, so that his descriptions produce the effect of sculpture.

His descriptions of natural scenery possess a characteristic excellence which may be termed gusto. They have a local truth and freshness which give the very feeling of the air, the coolness or moisture of the ground. Inanimate objects are thus made to have a fellow-feeling in the interest of the story, and render the sentiment of the speaker's mind.

It was the same trust in Nature and reliance on his subject which enabled Chaucer to describe the grief and patience of Griselda and the faith of Constance. Chaucer has more of this deep, internal, sustained sentiment than any other writer, except Boccaccio. In depth of simple pathos and intensity of conception, never swerving from his subject, I think no other writer comes near him, not even the Greek tragedians.

The poetry of Chaucer has a religious sanctity about it, connected with the manners and superstitions of the age. It has all the spirit of martyrdom. It has also all the extravagance and the utmost licentiousness of comic humour, equally arising out of the manners of the time. He excelled in both styles, and could pass at will from 173
the one to the other; but he never confounded the two styles together.

Of all the poets, Spenser is the most poetical. There is an originality, richness, and variety in his allegorical personages and fictions which almost vie with the splendours of the ancient mythology. His poetry is all fairyland; he paints Nature not as we find it, but as we expected to find it, and fulfils the delightful promise of our youth. His ideas, indeed, seem more distinct than his perceptions. The love of beauty, however, and not of truth, is the moving principle of his mind; and he is guided in his fantastic delineations by no rule but the impulse of an inexhaustible imagination.

Some people will say that Spenser's poetry may be very fine, but that they cannot understand it, on account of the allegory. They are afraid of the allegory. This is very idle. If they do not meddle with the allegory, the allegory will not meddle with them. Without minding it at all, the whole is as plain as a pikestaff.

Spenser is the poet of our waking dreams, and he has invented not only a language, but a music of his own for them. The undulations are infinite, like those of the waves of the sea; but the effect is still the same, lulling the senses into a deep oblivion of the jarring noises of the world, from which we have no wish ever to be recalled.

Shakespeare and Milton

Those arts which depend on individual genius and incommunicable power have always leaped at once from infancy to manhood, from the first rude dawn of invention to their meridian height and dazzling lustre, and have in general declined ever after. Homer, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Dante, and Ariosto—Milton alone was of a later age, and not the worse for it—Raphael, Titian, Michael Angelo, Correggio, Cervantes, and Boccaccio, the Greek sculptors and tragedians, all lived near the beginning of their arts, perfected, and all but created them. 174
They rose by clusters, never so to rise again.

The four greatest names in English poetry are almost the four first we come to—Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton. There are no others that can really be put into competition with these. Of these four, Chaucer excels as the poet of manners, or of real life; Spenser as the poet of romance; Shakespeare as the poet of Nature, in the largest use of the term; and Milton as the poet of morality. Chaucer describes things as they are; Spenser, as we wish them to be; Shakespeare, as they would be; and Milton, as they ought to be. The characteristic of Chaucer is intensity; of Spenser, remoteness; of Milton, elevation; of Shakespeare, everything.

The peculiarity of Shakespeare's mind was its generic quality; its power of communication with all other minds, so that it contained a universe of thought and feeling within itself. He was just like any other man, but he was like all other men. He was the least of an egotist that it was possible to be. He was nothing in himself; but he was all that others were, or that they could become. His genius shone equally on the evil and on the good, on the wise and the foolish, the monarch and the beggar. The world of spirits lay open to him, like the world of real men and women; and there is the same truth in his delineations of the one as of the other. Each of his characters is as much itself, and as absolutely independent of the rest, as well as of the author, as if they were living persons, not fictions of the mind. His plays alone are properly expressions of the passions, not descriptions of them.

Chaucer's characters are narrative; Shakespeare's, dramatic; Milton's, epic. In Chaucer we perceive a fixed essence of character. In Shakespeare there is a continual composition and decomposition of its elements, a fermentation of every particle in the whole mass, by its alternate affinity or antipathy to other principles which 175
are brought in contact with it. Milton took only a few simple principles of character, and raised them to the utmost conceivable grandeur.

The passion in Shakespeare is full of dramatic fluctuation. In Chaucer it is like the course of a river—strong, full, and increasing; but in Shakespeare it is like the sea, agitated this way and that, and loud-lashed by furious storms. Milton, on the other hand, takes only the imaginative part of passion, that which remains after the event, and abstracts it from the world of action to that of contemplation.

The great fault of a modern school of poetry [the Lake poets] is that it would reduce poetry to a mere effusion of natural sensibility; or, what is worse, would divest it both of imaginary splendour and human passion, to surround the meanest objects with the morbid feelings and devouring egotism of the writers' own minds. Milton and Shakespeare did not so understand poetry. They gave a more liberal interpretation both to Nature and art. They did not do all they could to get rid of the one and the other, to fill up the dreary void with the moods of their own minds.

Shakespeare's imagination is of the same plastic kind as his conception of character or passion. Its movement is rapid and devious, and unites the most opposite extremes. He seems always hurrying from his subject, even while describing it; but the stroke, like the lightning's, is as sure as it is sudden. His language and versification are like the rest of him. He has a magic power over words; they come winged at his bidding, and seem to know their places. His language is hieroglyphical. It translates thoughts into visible images. He had an equal genius for comedy and tragedy; and his tragedies are better than his comedies, because tragedy is better

than comedy. His female characters are the finest in the world. Lastly, Shakespeare was the least of a coxcomb of anyone that ever lived, and much of a gentleman.

Shakespeare discovers in his writings little religious enthusiasm, and an indifference to personal reputation; 176
in these respects, as in every other, he formed a direct contrast to Milton. Milton's works are a perpetual invocation to the muses, a hymn to Fame. He had his thoughts constantly fixed on the contemplation of the Hebrew theocracy, and of a perfect commonwealth; and he seized the pen with a hand warm from the touch of the ark of faith. The spirit of the poet, the patriot, and the prophet vied with each other in his breast. He thought of nobler forms and nobler things than those he found about him. He strives hard to say the finest things in the world, and he does say them. In Milton there is always an appearance of effort; in Shakespeare, scarcely any.

Milton has borrowed more than any other writer, and exhausted every source of imitation; yet he is perfectly distinct from every other writer. The power of his mind is stamped on every line. He describes objects of which he could only have read in books with the vividness of actual observation.

Milton's blank verse is the only blank verse in the language, except Shakespeare's, that deserves the name of verse. The sound of his lines is moulded into the expression of the sentiment, almost of the very image.

Dryden and Pope

These are the great masters of the artificial style of poetry, as the four poets of whom I have already treated were of the natural, and they have produced a kind and degree of excellence which existed equally nowhere else.

Pope was a man of exquisite faculties and of the most refined taste; he was a wit and critic, a man of sense, of observation, and the world. He was the poet not of Nature, but of art. He saw Nature only dressed by art; he judged of beauty by fashion; he sought for truth in the opinions of the world; he judged of the feelings of others 177
by his own. His muse never wandered with safety but from his library to his grotto, or from his grotto into his library back again. That which was the nearest to him was the greatest; the fashion of the day bore sway in his mind over the immutable laws of Nature. He had none of the enthusiasm of poetry; he was in poetry what the sceptic is in religion. Yet within this narrow circle how much, and that how exquisite, was contained! The wrong end of the magnifier is held to everything, but still the exhibition is highly curious. If I had to choose, there are one or two persons—and but one or two—that I should like to have been better than Pope!

Dryden was a bolder and more various versifier than Pope; he had greater strength of mind, but he had not the same delicacy of feeling. Pope describes the thing, and goes on describing his own descriptions, till he loses himself in verbal repetitions; Dryden recurs to the object often, and gives us new strokes of character as well as of his pencil.

Thomson and Cowper

Thomson is the best of our descriptive poets; the colours with which he paints still seem wet. Nature in his descriptions is seen growing around us, fresh and lusty as in itself. He puts his heart into his subject, and it is for this reason that he is the most popular of all our poets. But his verse is heavy and monotonous; it seems always labouring uphill.

Cowper had some advantages over Thomson, particularly in simplicity of style, in a certain precision of graphical description, and in a more careful choice of topics. But there is an effeminacy about him which shrinks from and repels common and hearty sympathy. He shakes hands with Nature with a pair of fashionable gloves on; he is delicate to fastidiousness, and glad to get back to the drawing-room and the ladies, the sofa, 178
and the tea-urn. He was a nervous man; but to be a coward is not the way to succeed either in poetry, in war, or in love. Still, he is a genuine poet, and deserves his reputation.

Robert Burns

Burns was not like Shakespeare in the range of his genius; but there is something of the same magnanimity, directness, and unaffected character about him. He was as much of a man, not a twentieth part as much of a poet, as Shakespeare. He had an eye to see, a heart to feel—no more. His pictures of good fellowship, of social glee, of quaint humour, are equal to anything; they come up to Nature, and they cannot go beyond it. His strength is not greater than his weakness; his virtues were greater than his vices. His virtues belonged to his genius; his vices to his situation.

Nothing could surpass Burns's love-songs in beauty of expression and in true pathos, except some of the old Scottish ballads themselves. There is in these a still more original cast of thought, a more romantic imagery; a closer intimacy with Nature, a more infantine simplicity of manners, a greater strength of affection, "thoughts that often lie too deep for tears." The old English ballads are of a gayer turn. They are adventurous and romantic; but they relate chiefly to good living and good fellowship, to drinking and hunting scenes.

Some Contemporary Poets

Tom Moore is heedless, gay, and prodigal of his poetical wealth. Everything lives, moves, and sparkles in his poetry, while, over all, love waves his purple light. His levity at last oppresses; his variety cloys, his rapidity dazzles and distracts the sight.

Lord Byron's poetry is as morbid as Moore's is careless and dissipated. His passion is always of the same 179
unaccountable character, at once violent and sullen, fierce and gloomy. It is the passion of a mind preying upon itself, and disgusted with, or indifferent to, all other things. There is nothing less poetical or more repulsive. But still there is power; and power forces admiration. In vigour of style and force of conception he surpasses every

writer of the present day.

Walter Scott is deservedly the most popular of living poets. He differs from his readers only in a greater range of knowledge and facility of expression. The force of his mind is picturesque rather than moral. He is to the great poet what an excellent mimic is to a great actor.

Mr. Wordsworth is the most original poet now living. His poetry is not external, but internal; he furnishes it from his own mind, and is his own subject. He is the poet of mere sentiment. Many of the "Lyrical Ballads" are of inconceivable beauty, of perfect originality and pathos. But his powers have been mistaken by the age. He cannot form a whole. He has not the constructive faculty. His "Excursion" is a proof of this; the line labours, the sentiment moves slowly, but the poem stands stock-still.

The Lake school of poetry had its origin in the French Revolution, or rather in the sentiments and opinions which produced that event. The world was to be turned topsy-turvy, and poetry was to share its fate. The paradox they set out with was that all things are by Nature equally fit subjects for poetry, or rather, that the meanest and most unpromising are best. They aimed at exciting attention by reversing the established standards of estimation in the world. An adept in this school of poetry is jealous of all excellence but his own. He is slow to admire anything admirable, feels no interest in what is most interesting to others, no grandeur in anything grand. He sees nothing but himself and the universe. His egotism is, in some respects, a madness. The effect of this has been perceived as something odd; but the cause or principle has never been traced to its source before. The proofs are to be found throughout many of the poems of Mr. Southey, Mr. Coleridge, and Mr. Wordsworth.

I may say of Mr. Coleridge that he is the only person I ever knew who answered to the idea of a man of genius. But his "Ancient Mariner" is the only work that gives an adequate idea of his natural powers. In it, however, he seems to "conceive of poetry but as a drunken dream, reckless, careless, and heedless of past, present, and to come."

I have thus gone through my task. I have felt my subject sinking from under me as I advanced, and have been afraid of ending in nothing. The interest has unavoidably decreased at almost every step of the progress, like a play that has its catastrophe in the first or second act. This, however, I could not help.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table

In 1857 Oliver Wendell Holmes (see Vol. V, p. 87) leapt into fame by his "Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table" papers in the "Atlantic Monthly," then edited by Lowell. His "Professor" and "Poet" series of papers followed, with hardly less success. In these writings a robust idealism, humour, fancy, and tenderness are so gently mixed as to amount to genius.

Every Man His Own Boswell

"All generous minds have a horror of what are commonly called 'facts.' They are the brute beasts of the intellectual domain. Who does not know fellows that always have an ill-conditioned fact or two that they lead after them into decent company like so many bulldogs, ready to let them slip at every ingenious suggestion, or convenient generalisation, or pleasant fancy? I allow no 'facts' at this table."

I continued, for I was in the talking vein, "This business of conversation is a very serious matter. There are men that it weakens one to talk with an hour more than a day's fasting would do. They are the talkers that have what may be called jerky minds. After a jolting half-hour with one of these jerky companions talking with a dull friend affords great relief. It is like taking the cat in your lap after holding a squirrel."

"Do not dull people bore you?" said one of the lady boarders.

"Madam," said I, "all men are bores except when we want them. Talking is like playing on the harp; there is as much in laying the hand on the strings to stop the vibrations as in twanging them to bring out the music. There is this, too, about talking," I continued; "it shapes our thoughts for us; the waves of conversation roll them 182
as the surf rolls the pebbles on the shore. Writing or printing is like shooting with a rifle; you may hit your reader's mind, or miss it, but talking is like playing at a mark with the pipe of an engine—if it is within reach, and you have time enough, you can't help hitting it."

The company agreed that this last illustration was of superior excellence.

The Ageing of Ideas

"I want to make a literary confession now, which I believe nobody has made before me. I never wrote a 'good' line in my life, but the moment after it was written it seemed a hundred years old. The rapidity with which ideas grow old in our memories is in a direct ratio to the squares of their importance. A great calamity, for instance, is as old as the trilobites an hour after it has happened. It stains backward through all the leaves we have turned over in the book of life, before its blot of tears or of blood is dry on the page we are turning."

I wish I had not said all this then and there. The pale schoolmistress, in her mourning dress, was looking at me with a wild sort of expression; and all at once she melted away from her seat like an image of snow; a sling shot could not have brought her down better. God forgive me!

The Confusion of Personality

"We must remember that talking is one of the fine arts—the noblest, the most important, and the most difficult. It is not easy at the best for two persons talking together to make the most of each other's thoughts, there are so many of them."

The company looked as if they wanted an explanation.

"When John and Thomas, for instance, are talking together," I continued, "it is natural that among the six 183
there should be more or less confusion and misapprehension."

Our landlady turned pale. No doubt she thought there was a screw loose in my intellect, and that it involved the probable loss of a boarder. Everybody looked up, and the old gentleman opposite slid the carving-knife to one side, as it were, carelessly.

"I think," I said, "I can make it plain that there are at least six personalities distinctly to be recognised as taking part in that dialogue between John and Thomas.

THREE JOHNS

1. The real John; known only to his Maker.
2. John's ideal John; never the real one, and often very unlike him.
3. Thomas's ideal John; never the real John, nor John's John, but often very unlike either.

THREE THOMASES

1. The real Thomas.
2. Thomas's ideal Thomas.
3. John's ideal Thomas.

"It follows that until a man can be found who knows himself as his Maker knows him, or who sees himself as others see him, there must be at least six persons engaged in every dialogue between two. No wonder two disputants often get angry when there are six of them talking and listening all at the same time."

A very unphilosophical application of the above remarks was made by a young fellow, answering to the name

of John, who sits near me at table. A certain basket of peaches, a rare vegetable, little known to boarding-houses, was on its way to me *viâ* this unlettered Johannes. He appropriated the three that remained in the basket, remarking that there was just one apiece for him. I convinced him that his practical inference was hasty and illogical—but in the meantime he had eaten the peaches. 184

More on Books

"Some of you boarders ask me why I don't write a novel, or something of that kind. Well, there are several reasons against it. In the first place I should tell all my secrets, and I maintain that verse is the proper medium for such revelations. Again, I am terribly afraid I should show up all my friends, and I am afraid all my friends would not bear showing up very well. And sometimes I have thought I might be too dull to write such a story as I should wish to write. And, finally, I think it is very likely I *shall* write a story one of these days.

"I saw you smiled when I spoke about the possibility of my being too dull to write a good story. When one arrives at the full and final conclusion that he or she is really dull, it is one of the most tranquillising and blessed convictions that can enter a mortal's mind.

"How sweetly and honestly one said to me the other day, 'I hate books!' I did not recognise in him inferiority of literary taste half so distinctly as I did simplicity of character, and fearless acknowledgment of his inaptitude for scholarship. In fact, I think there are a great many who read, with a mark to keep their place, that really 'hate books,' but never had the wit to find it out, or the manliness to own it."

Dual Consciousness

I am so pleased with my boarding-house that I intend to remain here, perhaps for years.

"Do thoughts have regular cycles? Take this: All at once a conviction flashes through us that we have been in the same precise circumstances as at the present instant once or many times before." 185

When I mentioned this the Schoolmistress said she knew the feeling well, and didn't like to experience it; it made her think she was a ghost, sometimes.

The young fellow whom they call John said he knew all about it. He had just lighted a cheroot the other day when a tremendous conviction came over him that he had done just that same thing ever so many times before.

"How do I account for it? Well, some think that one of the hemispheres of the brain hangs fire, and the small interval between the perceptions of the nimble and the sluggish half seems an indefinitely long period, and therefore the second perception appears to be the copy of another, ever so old."

The Race of Life

"Nothing strikes one more in the race of life than to see how many give out in the first half of the course. 'Commencement day' always reminds me of the start of the 'Derby.' Here we are at Cambridge and a class is first 'graduating.' Poor Harry! he was to have been there, but he has paid forfeit.

"*Ten years gone.* First turn in the race. A few broken down; two or three bolted. 'Cassock,' a black colt, seems to be ahead of the rest. 'Meteor' has pulled up.

"*Twenty years.* Second corner turned. 'Cassock' has dropped from the front, and 'Judex,' an iron-grey, has the lead. But look! how they have thinned out! Down flat—five—six—how many? They will not get up again in this race be very sure!

"*Thirty years.* Third corner turned. 'Dives,' bright sorrel, ridden by the fellow in a yellow jacket, begins to make play fast—is getting to be the favourite with many. But who is that other one that now shows close up to the front? Don't you remember the quiet brown colt 'Asteroid,' with the star in his forehead? That is he; he is one of the sort that lasts. 'Cassock' is now taking it easily in a gentle trot. 186

"*Forty years.* More dropping off, but places much as before.

"*Fifty years.* Race over. All that are on the course are coming in at a walk; no more running. Who is ahead? Ahead? What! and the winning-post a slab of white or gray stone standing out from that turf where there is no more jockeying, or straining for victory! Well, the world marks their places in its betting-book; but be sure that these matter very little, if they have run as well as they knew how!

"I will read you a few lines, if you do not object, suggested by looking at a section of one of those chambered shells to which is given the name of Pearly Nautilus.

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim, dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

Sensibility and Scholarship

"Every person's feelings have a front-door and a side-door by which they may be entered. The front-door is on the street. The side-door opens at once into the sacred chambers. There is almost always at least one key to this side-door. This is carried for years hidden in a mother's bosom. Be very careful to whom you entrust one of these keys of the side-door. Some of those who come in at the side-door have a scale of your whole nervous system, and can play on all the gamut of your sensibilities in semi-tones. Married life is the school in which the most accomplished artists in this department are found. Be very careful to whom you give the side-door key.

"The world's great men have not commonly been great scholars, nor its great scholars great men. The Hebrew patriarchs had small libraries, if any; yet they represent to our imaginations a very complete idea of manhood, and I think if we could ask Abraham to dine with us men of letters next Saturday we should feel honoured by his company."

A Growing Romance

"I should like to make a few intimate revelations relating especially to my early life, if I thought you would like to hear them."

The schoolmistress turned in her chair and said, "If we should *like* to hear them—we should *love* to."

So I drew my chair a shade nearer her, and went on to speak of voices that had bewitched me.

"I wish you could hear my sister's voice," said the schoolmistress.

"If it is like yours it must be a pleasant one," said I.

Lately she has been walking early and has brought back roses in her cheeks. I love the damask rose best of all flowers.

Our talk had been of trees, and I had been comparing the American and the English elms in the walk we call the Mall. "Will you walk out and look at those elms with me after breakfast?" I said to the schoolmistress.

I am not going to tell lies about it, and say that she blushed. On the contrary, she turned a little bit pale, but smiled brightly, and said, "Yes, with pleasure." So she went to fetch her bonnet, and the old gentleman opposite followed her with his eyes, and said he wished he was a young fellow.

"This is the shortest way," she said, as we came to the corner.

"Then we won't take it," said I.

When we reached the school-room door the damask roses were so much heightened in colour by exercise that I felt sure it would be useful to her to take a stroll like this every morning.

I have been low-spirited and listless lately. It is coffee, I think. I notice that I tell my secrets too easily when I am downhearted. There are inscriptions on our hearts never seen except at dead low-tide. And there is a woman's footstep on the sand at the side of my deepest ocean-buried inscription.

I am not going to say which I like best, the seashore or the mountains. The one where your place is, is the best for you; but this difference there is—you can domesticate mountains. The sea is feline. It licks your feet, its huge flanks purr very pleasantly for you; but it will crack your bones and eat you for all that, and wipe the crimsoned foam from its jaws as if nothing had happened. The mountains have a grand, stupid, lovable tranquillity; the sea has a fascinating, treacherous intelligence.

"If I thought I should ever see the Alps!" said the schoolmistress.

"Perhaps you might some time or other," I said.

"It is not very likely," she answered.

Tableau. Chamouni. Mont Blanc in full view. Figures in the foreground, two of them standing apart; one of them a gentleman—oh—ah—yes!—the other a lady, leaning on his shoulder. (The reader will understand this was an internal, private, subjective diorama, seen for one instant on the background of my own consciousness.)

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I can't say just how many walks she and I had taken together. I found the effect of going out every morning was decidedly favourable on her health. I am afraid I did the greater part of the talking. Better too few words 190
from the woman we love than too many; while she is silent, Nature is working for her; while she talks she works for herself. Love is sparingly soluble in the words of men, therefore they speak much of it; but one syllable of woman's speech can dissolve more of it than a man's heart can hold.

Nature's Patient Advance

I don't know anything sweeter than the leaking in of Nature through all the cracks in the walls and floors of cities. You heap a million tons of hewn rocks on a square mile or so of earth which was green once. The trees look down from the hill-tops and ask each other, as they stand on tiptoe, "What are these people about?" And the small herbs look up and whisper back, "We will go and see." So the small herbs pack themselves up in the least possible bundles, and wait until the night wind steals to them and whispers, "Come with me." Then they go softly with it into the great city—one to a cleft in the pavement, one to a spout on the roof, one to a seam in the marble over a rich gentleman's bones, and one to the grave without a stone, where nothing but a man is buried—and there they grow, looking down on the generations of men from mouldy roofs, looking up from between the less-trodden pavements, looking out through iron cemetery railings.

Listen to them when there is only a light breath stirring, and you will hear them saying to each other, "Wait awhile." The words run along the telegraph of those narrow green lines that border the roads leading from the city, until they reach the slope of the hills, and the trees repeat in low murmurs, "Wait awhile." By and by the flow of life in the streets ebbs, and the old leafy inhabitants—the smaller tribes always in front—saunter in, one by one, very careless seemingly, but very tenacious, until they swarm so that the great stones gape from each 191
other with the crowding of their roots, and the feldspar begins to be picked out of the granite to find them food. At last the trees take up their solemn line of march, and never rest until they have camped in the market-place. Wait long enough, and you will find an old doting oak hugging in its yellow underground arms a huge worn block that was the cornerstone of the State-house. Oh, so patient she is, this imperturbable Nature!

The Long Path

It was in talking of life that the schoolmistress and I came nearest together. I thought I knew something about that. The schoolmistress had tried life, too. Once in a while one meets with a single soul greater than all the living pageant that passes before it. This was one of them. Fortune had left her, sorrow had baptised her. Yet as I looked upon her tranquil face, gradually regaining a cheerfulness that was often sprightly, as she became interested in the various matters we talked about and places we visited, I saw that eye and lip and every shifting lineament were made for love.

I never addressed a word of love to the schoolmistress in the course of these pleasant walks. It seemed as if we talked of everything but love on that particular morning. There was, perhaps, a little more timidity and hesitancy on my part than I have commonly shown among our people at the boarding-house. In fact, I considered myself the master at the breakfast-table; but somehow I could not command myself just then so well as usual. The truth is, I had secured a passage to Liverpool in the steamer which was to leave at noon—with the condition of being released if circumstances occurred to detain me. The schoolmistress knew nothing about this, of course, as yet.

It was on the Common that we were walking. The boulevard of the Common, you know, has various branches 192
leading from it in different directions. One of these runs across the whole length of the Common. We called it the "long path," and were fond of it.

I felt very weak indeed—though of a tolerably robust habit—as we came opposite to the head of this path on that morning. I think I tried to speak twice, without making myself distinctly audible. At last I got out the question, "Will you take the long path with me?" "Certainly," said the schoolmistress, "with much pleasure." "Think," I said, "before you answer. If you take the long path with me now, I shall interpret it that we are to part no more."

The schoolmistress stepped back with a sudden movement, as if an arrow had struck her. One of the long

granite blocks used as seats was hard by—the one you may still see close by the gingko-tree. "Pray sit down," I said.

"No, no," she answered softly; "I will walk the *long path* with you!"

The old gentleman who sits opposite met us walking, arm-in-arm, about the middle of the long path, and said very charmingly to us, "Good-morning, my dears!"

LA BRUYÈRE

Characters

Jean de la Bruyère was born in Paris, in August, 1645. He studied law and became a barrister, but at the age of twenty-eight gave up that profession, which did not agree with his tendencies to meditation and his scrupulous mind. In 1673, he bought the office of Treasurer of the Finances, and led an independent and studious life. In 1684, he became a tutor to the Duc de Bourbon, grandson of the great Condé, and continued to reside in the Condé household until his death in 1696. In the "Caractères," which first appeared in 1688, La Bruyère has recorded his impressions of men. In 1687 the manuscript was handed to Michallet, a publisher in whose shop La Bruyère spent many hours every week. "Will you print this?" asked the author. "I don't know whether it will be to your advantage; but should it prove a success, the money will be for my dear friend, your little daughter." The sale of the book produced over $40,000. When La Bruyère was elected a member of the French Academy, his enemies declared that the "Characters" consisted of satirical portraits of leading personalities, and "keys" to the portraits were widely circulated. The pen sketches, however, are not only applicable to that period, but to every age.

I.—On Men and Books

All has been said, and one comes too late after the seven thousand years during which men have existed—and thought. All that one can do is to think and speak rightly, without attempting to force one's tastes and feelings upon others.

Mediocrity in poetry, music, painting, and oratory is unbearable.

There is in art a certain degree of perfection, as there is in Nature an ideal point of matureness. To go beyond, or to remain below that degree is faulty.

The ability of a writer consists mainly in giving good definitions and apt descriptions. The superiority of 194
Moses, Homer, Plato, Virgil, and Horace resides in the beauty of their expressions and images. One has to express the truth to write in a natural, powerful, and refined manner.

It has taken centuries for men to return to the ideal of the ancients and to all that is simple and natural.

We feed on the classics and the able, modern authors. Then, when we become authors ourselves, we ill-use our masters, like those children who, strengthened by the milk they have suckled, beat their nurses.

Read your works to those who are able to criticise and appreciate them. A good and careful writer often finds that the expression he had so long looked for was most simple and natural, and one which ought to have occurred to him at once and without effort.

The pleasure there is in criticising takes from us the joy of being moved by that which is really beautiful.

Arsène, from the top of his mind, looks down upon humanity; and, owing to the distance from which he sees men, is almost frightened at their smallness. He is so filled with his own sublime thoughts that he hardly finds time to deliver a few precious oracles.

Théocrine knows things which are rather useless; his ideas are always strange, his memory always at work. He is a supercilious dreamer, and always seems to laugh at those whom he considers as his inferiors. I read my book to him; he listens. Afterwards, he speaks to me about his own book. What does he think of mine? I told you so before: he speaks to me of his own work!

What an amazing difference there is between a beautiful book and a perfect book!

When a book elevates your mind, and inspires you with noble thoughts, you require nothing else to judge it; it is a good and masterly work.

The fools do not understand what they read. The mediocre think they understand thoroughly. Great minds 195
do not always understand every page of a book; they think obscure that which is obscure, and clear that which is clear. The pedantic find obscure that which is not, and refuse to understand that which is perfectly clear.

Molière would have been a perfect writer had he only avoided jargon and barbarisms, and written more purely.

Ronsard had in him enough good and bad to form great disciples in prose and verse.

Corneille, at his best, is original and inimitable, but he is uneven. He had a sublime mind, and has written a few verses which are among the best ever written.

Racine is more human. He has imitated the Greek classics, and in his tragedies there is simplicity, clearness, and pathos.

Corneille paints men as they ought to be; Racine paints them as they are. Corneille is more moral; Racine is more natural. The former, it seems, owes much to Sophocles; the latter, to Euripides.

How is it that people at the theatre laugh so freely, and yet are ashamed to weep? Is it less natural to be moved by all that is worthy of pity than to burst out laughing at all that is ridiculous? Is it that we consider it weak to cry, especially when the cause of our emotion is an artificial one? But the cause of our laughter at the theatre is also artificial. Some persons think it is as childish to laugh excessively as to sob.

Not only should plays not be immoral; they should be elevating.

Logic is the art of convincing oneself of some truth. Eloquence is a gift of the soul which makes one capable of conquering the hearts and minds of the listeners and of making them believe anything one pleases.

He who pays attention only to the taste of his own century thinks more of himself than of his writings. One

should always aim at perfection. If our contemporaries fail to do us justice, posterity may do so.

Horace and Boileau have said all this before. I take your word for it; but may I not, after them, "think a true thought," which others will think after me? 196

There are more tools than workers, and among the latter, more bad than good ones.

There is, in this world, no task more painful than that of making a name for oneself; we die before having even sketched our work. It takes, in France, much firmness of purpose and much broadmindedness to be indifferent to public functions and offices, and to consent to remain at home and do nothing.

Hardly anyone has enough merit to assume that part in a dignified manner, or enough brains to fill the gap of time without what is generally called business.

All that is required is a better name for idleness; and that meditation, conversation, reading, and repose should be called work.

You tell me that there is gold sparkling on Philémon's clothes. So there is on the clothes at the draper's. He is covered with the most gorgeous fabrics. I can see those fabrics in the shops. But the embroidery and ornaments on Philémon's clothes further increase their magnificence. If so, I praise the embroiderer's workmanship. If someone asks him the time, he takes from his pocket a jewelled watch; the hilt of his sword is made of onyx; he displays a dazzling diamond on his finger and wears all the curious and pretty trifles of fashion and vanity. You arouse my interest at last. I ought to see those precious things. Send me the clothes and jewels of Philémon; I don't require to see *him*.

It is difficult to tell the hero from the great man at war. Both have military virtues. However, the former is generally young, enterprising, gifted, self-controlled even in danger, and courageous; the latter has much judgment, foresees events, and is endowed with much ability and experience. Perhaps one might say that Alexander was only a hero and that Cæsar was a great man.

Ménippe is a bird adorned with feathers which are not his own. He has nothing to say; he has no feelings, no thoughts. He repeats what others have said, and uses their ideas so instinctively that he deceives himself, and is his first victim. He often believes that he is expressing his own thoughts, while he is only an echo of someone whom he has just left. He believes childishly that the amount of wit he possesses is all that man ever possessed. He therefore looks like a man who has nothing to desire. 197

II.—On Women and Wealth

From the age of thirteen to the age of twenty-one, a girl wishes she were beautiful; afterwards she wishes she were a man.

An unfaithful woman is a woman who has ceased to love.

A light-hearted woman is a woman who already loves another.

A fickle woman is a woman who does not know whether she loves or not, and who does not know what or whom she loves.

An indifferent woman is a woman who loves nothing.

There is a false modesty which is vanity; a false glory which is light-mindedness; a false greatness which is smallness; a false virtue which is hypocrisy; a false wisdom which is prudishness.

Why make men responsible for the fact that women are ignorant? Have any laws or decrees been issued forbidding them to open their eyes, to read, to remember what they have read, and to show that they understood it in their conversations and their works? Have they not themselves decided to know little or nothing, because of their physical weakness, or the sluggishness of their minds; because of the time their beauty requires; because of their light-mindedness which prevents them from studying; because they have only talent and genius for needlework or house-managing; or because they instinctively dislike all that is earnest and demands some effort? 198

Women go to extremes. They are better or worse than men.

Women go farther than men in love; but men make better friends.

It is because of men that women dislike one another.

It is nothing for a woman to say what she does not mean; it is easier still for a man to say all what he thinks.

Time strengthens the ties of friendship and loosens those of love.

There is less distance between hatred and love than between dislike and love.

One can no more decide to love for ever than decide never to love at all.

One comes across men who irritate one by their ridiculous expressions, the strangeness and unfitness of the words they use. Their weird jargon becomes to them a natural language. They are delighted with themselves and their wit. True, they have some wit, but one pities them for having so little of it; and, what is more, one suffers from it.

Arrias has read and seen everything, and he wants people to know it. He is a universal man; he prefers to lie rather than keep silent or appear ignorant about something. The subject of the conversation is the court of a certain northern country. He at once starts talking, and speaks of it as if he had been born in that country; he gives details on the manners and customs, the women and the laws: he tells anecdotes and laughs loudly at his own wit. Someone ventures to contradict him and proves to him that he is not accurate in his statements. Arrias turns to the interrupter: "I am telling nothing that is not exact," he says. "I heard all those details from Sethon, ambassador of France to that court. Sethon returned recently; I know him well, and had a long conversation with him on this matter." Arrias was resuming his story with more confidence than ever, when one of the guests 199

said to him: "I am Sethon, and have just returned from my mission."

Cléante is a most honest man. His wife is the most reasonable person in the world. Both make everybody happy wherever they go, and it were impossible to find a more delightful and refined couple. Yet they separate to-morrow!

At thirty you think about making your fortune; at fifty you have not made it; when you are old, you start building, and you die while the painters are still at work.

Numberless persons ruin themselves by gambling, and tell you coolly they cannot live without gambling. What nonsense! Would it be allowed to say that one cannot live without stealing, murdering, or leading a riotous existence?

Giton has a fresh complexion, and an aggressive expression. He is broad-shouldered and corpulent. He speaks with confidence. He blows his nose noisily, spits to a great distance, and sneezes loudly. He sleeps a great deal, and snores whenever he pleases. When he takes a walk with his equals he occupies the centre; when he stops, they stop; when he advances again, they do the same. No one ever interrupts him. He is jovial, impatient, haughty, irritable, independent. He believes himself witty and gifted. He is rich.

Phédon has sunken eyes. He is thin, and his cheeks are hollow. He sleeps very little. He is a dreamer, and, although witty, looks stupid. He forgets to say what he knows, and when he does speak, speaks badly. He shares the opinion of others; he runs, he flies to oblige anyone; he is kind and flattering. He is superstitious, scrupulous, and bashful. He walks stealthily, speaks in a low voice, and takes no room. He can glide through the densest crowd without effort. He coughs, and blows his nose inside his hat, and waits to sneeze until he is alone. He is poor.

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III.—On Men and Manners

Paris is divided into a number of small societies which are like so many republics. They have their own customs, laws, language, and even their own jokes.

One grows up, in towns, in a gross ignorance of all that concerns the country. City-bred men are unable to tell hemp from flax, and wheat from rye. We are satisfied as long as we can feed and dress.

When we speak well of a man at court, we invariably do so for two reasons: firstly, in order that he may hear that we spoke well of him; secondly, in order that he may speak well of us in his turn.

To be successful and to secure high offices there are two ways: the high-road, on which most people pass; and the cross-road, which is the shorter.

The youth of a prince is the origin of many fortunes.

Court is where joys are evident, but artificial; where sorrows are concealed, but real.

A slave has one master; an ambitious man has as many as there are persons who may be useful to him in his career.

With five or six art terms, people give themselves out as experts in music, painting, and architecture.

The high opinions people have of the great and mighty is so blind, and their interest in their gestures, features, and manners so general, that if the mighty were only good, the devotion of the people to them would amount to worship.

Lucile prefers to waste his life as the protégé of a few aristocrats than to live on familiar terms with his peers.

It is advisable to say nothing of the mighty. If you speak well of them, it is flattery. It is dangerous to speak ill of them during their lifetime, and it is cowardly to do so after they are dead.

Life is short and annoying. We spend life wishing.

When life is wretched, it is hard to bear; when it is happy, it is dreadful to lose it. The one alternative is as bad as the other. 201

Death occurs only once, but makes itself felt at every moment of our life. It is more painful to fear it than to suffer it.

There are but three events for man: birth, life, and death. He does not realise his birth, he suffers when he dies, and he forgets to live.

We seek our happiness outside ourselves. We seek it in the opinions of men whom we know are flatterers, and who lack sincerity. What folly! Most men spend half their lives making the other half miserable.

It is easier for many men to acquire one thousand virtues than to get rid of one defect.

It is as difficult to find a conceited man who believes himself really happy as to discover a modest man who thinks himself too unhappy.

The birch is necessary to children. Grown-up men need a crown, a sceptre, velvet caps and fur-lined robes. Reason and justice devoid of ornaments would not be imposing or convincing. Man, who is a mind, is led by his eyes and his ears!

IV.—On Customs and Religion

Fashion in matters of food, health, taste and conscience is utterly foolish. Game is at present out of fashion, and condemned as a food. It is to-day a sin against fashion to be cured of the ague by blood-letting.

The conceited man thinks every day of the way in which he will be able to attract attention on the following

day. The philosopher leaves the matter of his clothes to his tailor. It is just as childish to avoid fashion as to follow its decrees too closely.

Fashion exists in the domain of religion.

There have been young ladies who were virtuous, healthy and pious, who wished to enter a convent, but who were not rich enough to take in a wealthy abbey the vows of poverty. 202

How many men one sees who are strong and righteous, who would never listen to the entreaties of their friends, but who are easily influenced and corrupted by women.

I would like to hear a sober, moderate, chaste, righteous man declare that there is no God. At least he would be speaking in a disinterested manner. But there is no such man to be found.

The fact that I am unable to prove that God does not exist establishes for me the fact that God does exist.

Atheism does not exist. If there were real atheists, it would merely prove that there are monsters in this world.

Forty years ago I didn't exist, and it was not within my power to be born. It does not depend upon me who now exist to be no more. Consequently, I began being and am going on being, thanks to something which is beyond me, which will last after me, which is mightier than I am. If that something is not God, pray tell me what it is.

Everything is great and worthy of admiration in Nature.

O you vain and conceited man, make one of these worms which you despise! You loathe toads; make a toad if you can!

Kings, monarchs, potentates, sacred majesties, have I given you all your supreme names? We, mere men, require some rain for our crops or even some dew; make some dew, send to the earth a drop of water!

A certain inequality in the destinies of men, which maintains order and obedience, is the work of God. It suggests a divine law.

If the reader does not care for these "characters," it will surprise me; if he does care for them, it will also surprise me.

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WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Imaginary Conversations

Walter Savage Landor, writer, scholar, poet, and, it might almost be said, quarreller, said of his own fame, "I shall dine late, but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select." A powerful, turbulent spirit, he attracted great men. Emerson, Browning, Dickens, and Swinburne travelled to sit at his feet, and he knew Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, Lamb, and Southey. Born at Warwick, on January 30, 1775, he was dismissed from Rugby School at the age of fifteen, and from Oxford at the age of nineteen; was estranged from his father; several times left the wife whom he had married for her golden hair, and spent the last years of his life, lonely but lionised, at Florence. To the last—which came on September 17, 1864—he wrote both prose and verse. Landor appears, to the average appreciator of English literature, an interesting personality rather than a great writer, though his epic, "Gebir" (1798), and his tragedy, "Count Julian" (1812), like some of his minor verse, contain passages of great beauty. But it was in the "Imaginary Conversations," written between 1821 and 1829, and first sampled by the public in review form in 1823, that he endowed the English language with his most permanent achievement. Nearly 150 of these "Conversations" were written in all, and we epitomise here five of the best-known.

I.—Peter the Great and Alexis

PETER: And so, after flying from thy father's house, thou hast returned again from Vienna. After this affront in the face of Europe, thou darest to appear before me?

ALEXIS: My emperor and father! I am brought before your majesty not at my own desire.

PETER: I believe it well. What hope hast thou, rebel, in thy flight to Vienna?

ALEXIS: The hope of peace and privacy; the hope of security, and, above all things, of never more offending you.

PETER: Didst thou take money?

ALEXIS: A few gold pieces. Hitherto your liberality, my father, hath supplied my wants of every kind. 204

PETER: Not of wisdom, not of duty, not of spirit, not of courage, not of ambition. I have educated thee among my guards and horses, among my drums and trumpets, among my flags and masts. I have rolled cannon balls before thee over iron plates; I have shown thee bright new arms, bayonets, and sabres. I have myself led thee forth to the window when fellows were hanged and shot; and I have made thee, in spite of thee, look steadfastly upon them, incorrigible coward! Thy intention, I know, is to subvert the institutions it has been the labour of my lifetime to establish. Thou hast never rejoiced at my victories.

ALEXIS: I have rejoiced at your happiness and your safety.

PETER: Liar! Coward! Traitor! When the Polanders and the Swedes fell before me, didst thou congratulate me? Didst thou praise the Lord of Hosts? Wert thou not silent and civil and low-spirited?

ALEXIS: I lamented the irretrievable loss of human life, I lamented that the bravest and noblest were swept away the first, that order was succeeded by confusion, and that your majesty was destroying the glorious plans you alone were capable of devising.

PETER: Of what plans art thou speaking?

ALEXIS: Of civilising the Muscovites. The Polanders in parts were civilised; the Swedes more than any other nation.

PETER: Civilised, forsooth? Why the robes of the metropolitan, him at Upsal, are not worth three ducats. But I am wasting my words. Thine are tenets that strike at the root of politeness and sound government.

ALEXIS: When I hear the God of Mercy invoked to massacres, and thanked for furthering what He reprobates and condemns—I look back in vain on any barbarous people for worse barbarism.

PETER: Malignant atheist! Am I Czar of Muscovy, and hear discourse on reason and religion—from my own son, too? No, by the Holy Trinity! thou art no son of mine. Unnatural brute, I have no more to do with thee. Ho there! Chancellor! What! Come at last! Wert napping, or counting thy ducats? 205

CHANCELLOR: Your majesty's will, and pleasure!

PETER: Is the senate assembled?

CHANCELLOR: Every member, sire.

PETER: Conduct this youth with thee, and let them judge him; thou understandest?

CHANCELLOR: Your majesty's commands are the breath of our nostrils.

PETER: If these rascals are amiss, I will try my new cargo of Livonian hemp upon 'em.

CHANCELLOR (*returning*): Sire! Sire!

PETER: Speak, fellow! Surely they have not condemned him to death without giving themselves time to read the accusation, that thou comest back so quickly.

CHANCELLOR: No, sire! Nor has either been done.

PETER: Then thy head quits thy shoulders.

CHANCELLOR: O sire! he fell.

PETER: Tie him up to thy chair, then. Cowardly beast! What made him fall?

CHANCELLOR: The hand of death.

PETER: Prythee speak plainlier.

CHANCELLOR: He said calmly, but not without sighing twice or thrice, "Lead me to the scaffold; I am weary of life. My father says, too truly, I am not courageous, but the death that leads me to my God shall never terrify me." When he heard your majesty's name accusing him of treason and attempts at parricide, he fell speechless. We raised him up: he was dead!

PETER: Inconsiderate and barbarous varlet as thou art, dost thou recite this ill accident to a father—and to one who has not dined? Bring me a glass of brandy. Away and bring it: scamper! Hark ye! bring the bottle with 206
it: and—hark ye! a rasher of bacon on thy life! and some pickled sturgeon, and some krout and caviar.

II.—Joseph Scaliger and Montaigne

MONTAIGNE: What could have brought you, M. de l'Escale, other than a good heart? You rise early, I see; you must have risen with the sun, to be here at this hour. I have capital white wine, and the best cheese in Auvergne. Pierre, thou hast done well; set it upon the table, and tell Master Matthew to split a couple of chickens and broil them.

SCALIGER: This, I perceive, is the ante-chamber to your library; here are your every-day books.

MONTAIGNE: Faith! I have no other. These are plenty, methinks.

SCALIGER: You have great resources within yourself, and therefore can do with fewer.

MONTAIGNE: Why, how many now do you think here may be?

SCALIGER: I did not believe at first that there could be above fourscore.

MONTAIGNE: Well! are fourscore few? Are we talking of peas and beans?

SCALIGER: I and my father (put together) have written well-nigh as many.

MONTAIGNE: Ah! to write them is quite another thing. How do you like my wine? If you prefer your own country wine, only say it. I have several bottles in my cellar. I do not know, M. de l'Escale, whether you are particular in these matters?

SCALIGER: I know three things—wine, poetry, and the world.

MONTAIGNE: You know one too many, then. I hardly know whether I know anything about poetry; for I like Clem Marot better than Ronsard.

SCALIGER: It pleases me greatly that you like Marot. His version of the Psalms is lately set to music, and added 207
to the New Testament of Geneva.

MONTAIGNE: It is putting a slice of honeycomb into a barrel of vinegar, which will never grow the sweeter for it.

SCALIGER: Surely, you do not think in this fashion of the New Testament?

MONTAIGNE: Who supposes it? Whatever is mild and kindly is there. But Jack Calvin has thrown bird-lime and vitriol upon it, and whoever but touches the cover dirties his fingers or burns them.

SCALIGER: Calvin is a very great man.

MONTAIGNE: I do not like your great men who beckon me to them, call me their begotten, their dear child, and their entrails; and, if I happen to say on any occasion, "I beg leave, sir, to dissent a little from you," stamp and cry, "The devil you do!" and whistle to the executioner.

SCALIGER: John Calvin is a grave man, orderly, and reasonable.

MONTAIGNE: In my opinion he has not the order nor the reason of my cook. Mat never twitched God by the sleeve and swore He should not have his own way.

SCALIGER: M. de Montaigne, have you ever studied the doctrine of predestination?

MONTAIGNE: I should not understand it if I had; and I would not break through an old fence merely to get into a cavern. Would it make me honester or happier, or, in other things, wiser?

SCALIGER: I do not know whether it would materially.

MONTAIGNE: I should be an egregious fool, then, to care about it. Come, walk about with me; after a ride you can do nothing better to take off fatigue. I can show you nothing but my house and my dairy.

SCALIGER: Permit me to look a little at those banners. They remind me of my own family, we being descended from the great Cane della Scala, Prince of Verona, and from the House of Hapsburg, as you must have heard from my father.

MONTAIGNE: What signifies it to the world whether the great Cane was tied to his grandmother or not? As for 208
the House of Hapsburg, if you could put together as many such houses as would make up a city larger than Cairo, they would not be worth his study, or a sheet of paper on the table of it.

III.—Bossuet and the Duchesse de Fontanges

BOSSUET: Mademoiselle, it is the king's desire that I compliment you on the elevation you have attained.

FONTANGES: O monseigneur, I know very well what you mean. His majesty is kind and polite to everybody. The last thing he said to me was, "Angélique! do not forget to compliment monseigneur the bishop on the dignity I have conferred upon him, of almoner to the dauphiness. I desired the appointment for him only that he might be

of rank sufficient to confess you, now you are duchess." You are so agreeable a man, monseigneur, I will confess to you, directly.

BOSSUET: Have you brought yourself to a proper frame of mind, young lady?

FONTANGES: What is that?

BOSSUET: Do you hate sin?

FONTANGES: Very much.

BOSSUET: Do you hate the world?

FONTANGES: A good deal of it; all Picardy, for example, and all Sologne; nothing is uglier—and, oh my life! what frightful men and women!

BOSSUET: I would say in plain language, do you hate the flesh and the devil?

FONTANGES: Who does not hate the devil? If you will hold my hand the while, I will tell him so—"I hate you, beast!" There now. As for flesh, I never could bear a fat man. Such people can neither dance nor hunt, nor do anything that I know of.

BOSSUET: Mademoiselle Marie Angélique de Scoraille de Rousille, Duchesse de Fontanges! Do you hate titles, 209
and dignities, and yourself?

FONTANGES: Myself! Does anyone hate me? Why should I be the first? Hatred is the worst thing in the world; it makes one so very ugly.

BOSSUET: We must detest our bodies if we would save our souls.

FONTANGES: That is hard. How can I do it? I see nothing so detestable in mine. Do you? As God hath not hated me, why should I? As for titles and dignities, I am glad to be a duchess. Would not you rather be a duchess than a waiting-maid if the king gave you your choice?

BOSSUET: Pardon me, mademoiselle. I am confounded at the levity of your question. If you really have anything to confess, and desire that I should have the honour of absolving you, it would be better to proceed.

FONTANGES: You must first direct me, monseigneur. I have nothing particular. What was it that dropped on the floor as you were speaking?

BOSSUET: Leave it there!

FONTANGES: Your ring fell from your hand, my lord bishop! How quick you are! Could not you have trusted me to pick it up?

BOSSUET: Madame is too condescending. My hand is shrivelled; the ring has ceased to fit it. A pebble has moved you more than my words.

FONTANGES: It pleases me vastly. I admire rubies. I will ask the king for one exactly like it. This is the time he usually comes from the chase. I am sorry you cannot be present to hear how prettily I shall ask him. I am sure he will order the ring for me, and I will confess to you with it upon my finger. But, first, I must be cautious and particular to know of him how much it is his royal will that I should say.

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IV.—The Empress Catharine and Princess Dashkof

CATHARINE: Into his heart! Into his heart! If he escapes, we perish! Do you think, Dashkof, they can hear me through the double door? Yes, hark! they heard me. They have done it! What bubbling and gurgling! He groaned but once. Listen! His blood is busier now than it ever was before. I should not have thought it could have splashed so loud upon the floor. Put you ear against the lock.

DASHKOF: I hear nothing.

CATHARINE: My ears are quicker than yours, and know these notes better. Let me come. There! There again! The drops are now like lead. How now? Which of these fools has brought his dog with him? What trampling and lapping! The creature will carry the marks all about the palace with his feet! You turn pale, and tremble. You should have supported me, in case I had required it.

DASHKOF: I thought only of the tyrant. Neither in life nor in death could any one of these miscreants make me tremble. But the husband slain by his wife! What will Russia—what will Europe say?

CATHARINE: Russia has no more voice than a whale. She may toss about in her turbulence, but my artillery (for now, indeed, I can safely call it mine) shall stun and quiet her.

DASHKOF: I fear for your renown.

CATHARINE: Europe shall be informed of my reasons, if she should ever find out that I countenanced the conspiracy. She shall be persuaded that her repose made the step necessary; that my own life was in danger; that I fell upon my knees to soften the conspirators; that only when I had fainted, the horrible deed was done.

DASHKOF: Europe may be more easily subjugated than duped.

CATHARINE: She shall be both, God willing! Is the rouge off my face? 211

DASHKOF: It is rather in streaks and mottles, excepting just under the eyes, where it sits as it should do.

CATHARINE: I am heated and thirsty. I cannot imagine how. I think we have not yet taken our coffee. I could eat only a slice of melon at breakfast—my duty urged me *then*—and dinner is yet to come. Remember, I am to faint at the midst of it, when the intelligence comes in, or, rather, when, in despite of every effort to conceal it from me, the awful truth has flashed upon my mind. Remember, too, you are to catch me, and to cry for help, and to tear those fine flaxen hairs which we laid up together on the toilet; and we are both to be as inconsolable as we can be for the life of us.

Come, sing. I know not how to fill up the interval. Two long hours yet! How stupid and tiresome! I wish all things of the sort could be done and be over in a day. They are mightily disagreeable when by nature one is not cruel. People little know my character. I have the tenderest heart upon earth. Ivan must follow next; he is heir to the throne. But not now. Another time. Two such scenes together, and without some interlude, would perplex people.

I thought we spoke of singing. Do not make me wait. Cannot you sing as usual, without smoothing your dove's throat with your handkerchief, and taking off your necklace? Sing, sing! I am quite impatient!

V.—Bacon and Richard Hooker

Bacon: Hearing much of your worthiness and wisdom, Master Richard Hooker, I have besought your comfort and consolation in this my too heavy affliction, for we often do stand in need of hearing what we know full well, and our own balsams must be poured into our breasts by another's hand. Withdrawn, as you live, from court and 212
courtly men, and having ears occupied by better reports than such as are flying about me, yet haply so hard a case as mine, befalling a man heretofore not averse from the studies in which you take delight, may have touched you with some concern.

Hooker: I do think, my lord of Verulam, that the day which in his wisdom he appointed for your trial was the very day on which the king's majesty gave unto your ward and custody the great seal of his English realm. And —let me utter it without offence—your features and stature were from that day forward no longer what they were before. Such an effect do rank and power and office produce even on prudent and religious men. You, my lord, as befits you, are smitten and contrite; but I know that there is always a balm which lies uppermost in these afflictions.

Bacon: Master Richard, it is surely no small matter to lose the respect of those who looked up to us for countenance; and the favour of a right learned king, and, O Master Hooker, such a power of money! But money is mere dross. I should always hold it so, if it possessed not two qualities—that of making men treat us reverently, and that of enabling us to help the needy.

Hooker: The respect, I think, of those who respect us for what a fool can give and a rogue can take away, may easily be dispensed with; but it is indeed a high prerogative to help the needy, and when it pleases the Almighty to deprive us of it, he hath removed a most fearful responsibility.

Bacon: Methinks it beginneth to rain, Master Richard. What if we comfort our bodies with a small cup of wine, against the ill-temper of the air. Pledge me; hither comes our wine.(*To the servant*) Dolt! Is not this the beverage I reserve for myself?

Bear with me, good Master Hooker, but verily I have little of this wine, and I keep it as a medicine for my many and growing infirmities. You are healthy at present: God, in His infinite mercy, long maintain you so! 213
Weaker drink is more wholesome for you. But this Malmsey, this Malmsey, flies from centre to circumference, and makes youthful blood boil.

Hooker: Of a truth, my knowledge in such matters is but sparse. My lord of Canterbury once ordered part of a goblet, containing some strong Spanish wine, to be taken to me from his table when I dined by sufferance with his chaplains, and, although a most discreet, prudent man, as befitteth his high station, was not so chary of my health as your lordship. Wine is little to be trifled with; physic less. The Cretans, the brewers of this Malmsey, have many aromatic and powerful herbs among them. On their mountains, and notably on Ida, grows that dittany which works such marvels, and which perhaps may give activity to this hot medicinal drink of theirs. I would not touch it knowingly; an unregarded leaf dropped into it above the ordinary might add such puissance to the concoction as almost to break the buckles in my shoes.

Bacon: When I read of such things I doubt them: but if I could procure a plant of dittany I would persuade my apothecary and my gamekeeper to make experiments.

Hooker: I dare not distrust what grave writers have declared in matters beyond my knowledge.

Bacon: Good Master Hooker, I have read many of your reasonings, and they are admirably well sustained. Yet forgive me, in God's name my worthy master, if you descried in me some expression of wonder at your simplicity. You would define to a hair's breadth the qualities, states, and dependencies of principalities, dominations, and powers; you would be unerring about the apostles and the churches, and 'tis marvellous how you wander about a pot-herb!

Hooker: I know my poor, weak intellects, most noble lord, and how scantily they have profited by my hard painstaking. Wisdom consisteth not in knowing many things, nor even in knowing them thoroughly, but in 214
choosing and in following what conduces the most certainly to our lasting happiness and true glory.

Bacon: I have observed among the well-informed and the ill-informed nearly the same quantity of infirmities and follies; those who are rather the wiser keep them separate, and those who are wisest of all keep them better out of sight. I have persuaded men, and shall persuade them for ages, that I possess a wide range of thought unexplored by others, and first thrown open by me, with many fair enclosures of choice and abstruse knowledge. One subject, however, hath almost escaped me, and surely one worth the trouble.

Hooker: Pray, my lord, if I am guilty of no indiscretion, what may it be?

Bacon: Francis Bacon.

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD

Reflections and Moral Maxims

Rochefoucauld's "Reflections, or Sentences and Moral Maxims," were published in 1665. In them his philosophy of life is expressed with a perfection of form which still remains unrivalled and unequalled. The original work contains only 314 short sentences; the last edition he published contains 541; but when one examines the exquisite workmanship of his style, one does not wonder that it represents the labour of twenty years. La Rochefoucauld (see Vol. X, p. 203) is one of the greatest masters of French prose, as well as one of the great masters of cynicism. He has exerted a deep influence both on English and French literature, and Swift and Byron were among his disciples.

I.—Of Love and of Women

To judge love by most of its effects, it seems more like hatred than kindness.

In love we often doubt of what we most believe.

As long as we love, we forgive.

Love is like fire, it cannot be without continual motion; as soon as it ceases to hope or fear it ceases to exist.

Many persons would never have been in love had they never heard talk of it.

Agreeable and pleasant as love is, it pleases more by the manners in which it shows itself than by itself alone.

We pass on from love to ambition; we seldom return from ambition to love.

Those who have had a great love affair find themselves all their life happy and unhappy at being cured of it.

In love the one who is first cured is best cured.

The reason why lovers are never weary of talking of each other is that they are always talking of themselves.

Constancy in love is a perpetual inconstancy which makes our heart attach itself in succession to all the qualities of our beloved, and prefer, now this trait and now that; so that this constancy is only a kind of inconstancy fixed and enclosed in a single object.

If there is a love pure and exempt from all mixture with our other passions, it is that which is hidden in the depth of our heart and unknown to ourselves.

The pleasure of love consists in loving, and our own passion gives us more happiness than the feelings which our beloved has for us.

The grace of novelty is to love like the fine bloom on fruit; it gives it a lustre which is easily effaced and never recovered.

We are nearer loving those who hate us than those who love us more than we desire.

Women often fancy themselves to be in love when they are not. Their natural passion for being beloved, their unwillingness to give a denial, the excitement of mind produced by an affair of gallantry, all these make them imagine they are in love when they are in fact only coquetting.

All women are flirts. Some are restrained by timidity and some by reason.

The greatest miracle of love is the reformation of a coquette.

A coquette pretends to be jealous of her lover, in order to conceal her envy of other women.

Most women yield more from weakness than from passion, hence an enterprising man usually succeeds with them better than an amiable man.

It is harder for women to overcome their coquetry than their love. No woman knows how much of a coquette she is.

Women who are in love more readily forgive great indiscretions than small infidelities.

Some people are so full of themselves that even when they become lovers they find a way of being occupied with their passion without being interested in the person whom they love.

It is useless to be young without being beautiful, or beautiful without being young.

In their first love affairs women love their lover; in all others they love love.

In the old age of love, as in the old age of life, we continue to live to pain long after we have ceased to live to pleasure.

There is no passion in which self-love reigns so powerfully as in love; we are always more ready to sacrifice the repose of a person we love than to lose our own.

There is a certain kind of love which, as it grows excessive, leaves no room for jealousy.

Jealousy is born with love, but it does not always die with it.

Jealousy is the greatest of all afflictions, and that which least excites pity in the persons that cause it.

In love and in friendship we are often happier by reason of the things that we do not know than by those that we do.

There are few women whose merit lasts longer than their beauty.

The reason why most women are little touched by friendship is that friendship is insipid to those who have felt what love is.

II.—Friendship

In the misfortunes of our best friends we always find something that does not displease us.

Rare as true love is, it is less rare than true friendship.

What makes us so changing in our friendships is that it is difficult to discern the qualities of the soul, and easy to recognize the qualities of the mind.

It is equally difficult to have a friendship for those whom we do not esteem as for those we esteem more than ourselves. 218

We love those who admire us, not those whom we admire.

Most of the friendships of the world ill deserve the name of friendship; still, a man may make occasional use of them, as in a business where the profits are uncertain and it is usual to be cheated.

It is more dishonourable to mistrust a friend than to be deceived by him.

We are fond of exaggerating the love our friends bear us, but it is less from a feeling of gratitude than from a desire to advertise our own merits.

What usually hinders us from revealing the depths of our hearts to our friends is not so much the distrust which we have of them as the distrust that we have of ourselves.

We confess our little defects merely to persuade our friends that we have no great failings.

The greatest effort of friendship is not to show our defects to a friend, but to make him see his own.

Sincerity is an opening of the heart. It is found in exceedingly few people, and what passes for it is only a subtle dissimulation used to attract confidence.

We can love nothing except in relation to ourselves, and we merely follow our own bent and pleasure when we prefer our friends to ourselves; yet it is only by this preference that friendship can be made true and perfect.

It seems as if self-love is the dupe of kindness and that it is forgotten while we are working for the benefit of other men. In this case, however, our self-love is merely taking the safest road to arrive at its ends; it is lending at usury under the pretext of giving, it is aiming at winning all the world by subtle and delicate means.

The first impulses of joy excited in us by the good fortune of our friends proceed neither from our good nature nor from the friendship we have for them; it is an effect of self-love that flatters us with the hope either of being fortunate in our turn or of drawing some advantage from their prosperity. 219

What makes us so eager to form new acquaintances is not the mere pleasure of change or a weariness of old friendships, so much as a disgust at not being enough admired by those who know us too well, and a hope of winning more admiration from persons who do not know much about us.

III.—Things of the Mind

The mind is always the dupe of the heart. Those who are acquainted with their own mind are not acquainted with their own heart.

The mind is more indolent than the body.

It is the mark of fine intellects to explain many things in a few words; little minds have the gift of speaking much and saying nothing.

We speak but little when vanity does not make us speak.

A spirit of confidence helps on conversation more than brilliance of mind does.

True eloquence consists of saying all that is necessary, and nothing more.

A man may be witty and still be a fool; judgment is the source of wisdom.

A man does not please for very long when he has but one kind of wit.

It is a mistake to imagine that wit and judgment are two distinct things; judgment is only the perfection of wit, which pierces into the recesses of things and there perceives what from the outside seems to be imperceptible.

A man of intelligence would often be at a loss were it not for the company of fools.

It is not so much fertility of mind that leads us to discover many expedients in regard to a single matter, as a defect of intelligence, that makes us stop at everything presented to our imagination, and hinders us from discerning at once which is the best course. 220

Some old men like to give good advice to console themselves for being no longer in a state to give a bad example.

No man of sound good sense strikes us as such unless he is of our way of thinking.

Stiffness of opinion comes from pettiness of mind; we do not easily believe in anything that is beyond our range of vision.

Good taste is based on judgment rather than on intelligence.

It is more often through pride than through any want of enlightenment that men set themselves stubbornly to oppose the most current opinions; finding all the best places taken on the popular side, they do not want

those in the rear.

In order to understand things well one must know the detail of them; and as this is almost infinite, our knowledge is always superficial and imperfect.

It is never so difficult to talk well as when we are ashamed of our silence.

The excessive pleasure we feel in talking about ourselves ought to make us apprehensive that we afford little to our listeners.

Truth has not done so much good in the world as the false appearances of it have done harm.

Man's chief wisdom consists in being sensible of his follies.

IV.—Human Life and Human Nature

Youth is a continual intoxication; it is the fever of reason.

The passions of youth are scarcely more opposed to salvation than the lukewarmness of old persons. 221

There is not enough material in a fool to make a good man out of him.

We have more strength than will, and it is often to excuse ourselves to ourselves that we imagine things are impossible.

There are few things impossible in themselves; it is the application to achieve them that we lack more than the means.

It is a mistake to imagine that only the more violent passions, such as ambition and love, can triumph over the rest. Idleness often masters them all. It indeed influences all our designs and actions, and insensibly destroys both our vices and our virtues.

Idleness is of all our passions that which is most unknown to ourselves. It is the most ardent and the most malign of all, though we do not feel its working, and the harm which it does is hidden. If we consider its power attentively, we shall see that in every struggle it triumphs over our feelings, our interests, and our pleasures. To give a true idea of this passion it is necessary to add that idleness is like a beatitude of the soul which consoles it for all its losses and serves in place of all its wealth.

The gratitude of most men is only a secret desire to receive greater favours.

We like better to see those on whom we confer benefits than those from whom we receive them.

It is less dangerous to do harm to most men than to do them too much good.

If we had no defects ourselves we should not take so much pleasure in observing the failings of others.

One man may be more cunning than another man, but he cannot be more cunning than all the world.

Mankind has made a virtue of moderation in order to limit the ambition of great men and to console mediocre people for their scanty fortune and their scanty merit. 222

We should often be ashamed of our finest actions if the world saw all the motives that produced them.

Our desire to speak of ourselves, and to reveal our defects in the best light in which we can show them, constitutes a great part of our sincerity.

The shame that arises from undeserved praise often leads us to do things which we should not otherwise have attempted.

The labours of the body free us from the pains of the mind. It is this that constitutes the happiness of the poor.

It is more necessary to study men than to study books.

The truly honest man is he who sets no value on himself.

Censorious as the world is, it is oftener favourable to false merit than unjust to true.

It is not enough to possess great qualities; we must know how to use them.

He who lives without folly is not so wise as he fancies.

Good manners are the least of all laws and the most strictly observed.

Everybody complains of a lack of memory, nobody of a lack of judgment.

The love of justice is nothing more than a fear of injustice.

Passion often makes a fool of a man of sense, and sometimes it makes a fool a man of sense.

Nature seems to have hidden in the depth of our minds a skill and a talent of which we are ignorant; only our passions are able to bring them out and to give us sometimes surer and more complete views than we could arrive at by thought and study.

Our passions are the only orators with an unfailing power of persuasion. They are an art of nature with infallible rules, and the simplest man who is possessed by passion is far more persuasive than the most eloquent 223 speaker who is not moved by feeling.

As we grow old we grow foolish as well as wise.

Few people know how to grow old.

Death and the sun are things one cannot look at steadily.

Hypocrisy is a homage that vice pays to virtue.

Our vices are commonly disguised virtues.

Virtue would not go far if vanity did not go with her.

Prosperity is a stronger test of virtue than misfortune is.

Men blame vice and praise virtue only through self-interest.

Great souls are not those which have less passions and more virtues than common souls, but those which have larger ambitions.

Of all our virtues one might say what an Italian poet has said of the honesty of women, "that it is often nothing but an art of pretending to be honest."

Virtues are lost in self-interest, as rivers are in the sea.

To the honour of virtue it must be acknowledged that the greatest misfortunes befall men from their vices.

When our vices leave us, we flatter ourselves that we have left them.

Feebleness is more opposed to vice than virtue is.

What makes the pangs of shame and jealousy so sharp is that our vanity cannot help us to support them.

What makes the vanity of other persons so intolerable is that it hurts our own.

We have not the courage to say in general that we have no defects, and that our enemies have no good qualities; but in matters of detail we are not very far from believing it.

If we never flattered ourselves the flattery of others Would not injure us. 224

We sometimes think we dislike flattery; we only dislike the way in which we are flattered.

Flattery is a kind of bad money to which our vanity gives currency.

Self-love, as it happens to be well or ill-conducted, constitutes virtue and vice.

We are so prepossessed in our own favour that we often mistake for virtues those vices that bear some resemblance to them, and are artfully disguised by self-love.

Nothing is so capable of lessening our self-love as the observation that we disapprove at one time what we approve at another.

Self-love is the love of self, and of everything for the sake of self. When fortune gives the means, self-love makes men idolise themselves and tyrannise over others. It never rests or fixes itself anywhere outside its home. If it settle on external things, it is only as the bee does on flowers, to extract what may be serviceable. Nothing is so impetuous as its desires, nothing so secret as its designs, nothing so adroit as its conduct. We can neither fathom the depth, nor penetrate the obscurity of its abyss. There, concealed from the most piercing eye, it makes numberless turnings and windings; there is it often invisible even to itself; there it conceives, breeds, and cherishes, without being aware of it, an infinity of likings and hatreds; some of which are so monstrous that, having given birth to them, self-love either does not recognize them, or cannot bear to own them. From the darkness which covers self-love spring the ridiculous notions which it entertains of itself; thence its errors, ignorance, and silly mistakes; thence it imagines that its feelings are dead when they are but asleep; and thinks that it has lost all appetite when it is for the moment sated.

But the thick mist which hides it from itself does not hinder it from seeing perfectly whatever is without; and 225
thus it resembles the eye, that sees all things except itself. In great concerns and important affairs, where the violence of its desire excites its whole attention, it sees, perceives, understands, invents, suspects, penetrates, and divines all things; so that one is tempted to believe that each of its passions has its peculiar magic.

Its desires are inflamed by itself rather than by the beauty and merit of the objects; its own taste heightens and embellishes them; itself is the game it pursues, and its own inclination is what is followed rather than the things which seem to be the objects of its inclination. Composed of contrarieties, it is imperious and obedient, sincere and hypocritical, merciful and cruel, timid and bold. Its desires tend, according to the diverse moods that direct it, sometimes to glory, sometimes to wealth, sometimes to pleasure. These are changed as age and experience alter; and whether it has many inclinations or only one is a matter of indifference, because it can split itself into many or collect itself into one just as is convenient or agreeable.

It is inconstant; and numberless are the changes, besides those which happen from external causes, which proceed from its own nature. Inconstant through levity, through love, through novelty, through satiety, through disgust, through inconstancy itself. Capricious; and sometimes labouring with eagerness and incredible pains to obtain things that are in no way advantageous, nay, even hurtful, but which are pursued merely as a passion. Whimsical, and often exerting intense application in the most trifling employments; taking delight in the most insipid things, and preserving all its haughtiness in the most contemptible pursuits. Attendant on all ages and conditions; living everywhere; living on everything; living on nothing. Easy in either the enjoyment, or privation
of things. Going over to those who are at variance with it; even entering into their schemes; and, wonderful! 226
joining with them, it hates itself; conspires its own destruction; labours to be undone; desires only to exist; and, that granted, consents to be its own enemy.

We are not therefore to be surprised if sometimes, uniting with the most rigid austerity, it enters boldly into a combination against itself; because what is lost in one respect is regained in another. When we think it relinquishes pleasures, it only suspends or changes them; and even when discomforted, and we seem to be rid of it, we find it triumphant in its own defeat. Such is self-love!—of which man's whole life is only a strong, a continued agitation. The sea is a striking image of it, and in the flux and reflux of the waves, self-love may find a lively expression of the turbulent succession of its thoughts, and of its eternal agitation.

LEONARDO DA VINCI

Treatise on Painting

Leonardo Da Vinci was born in 1452 at Anchiano, near Vinci, in Tuscany, the son of a Florentine notary. Trained in the workshop of Andrea Verrocchio, he became one of the greatest and most versatile artists of the Renaissance. Indeed, he must be considered one of the master-minds of all times, for there was scarcely a sphere of human knowledge in which he did not excel and surpass his contemporaries. He was not only preeminent as painter, sculptor, and architect, but was an accomplished musician, poet, and improvisatore, an engineer—able to construct canals, roads, fortifications, ships, and war-engines of every description—an inventor of rare musical instruments, and a great organiser of fêtes and pageants. Few of his artistic creations have come down to us; but his profound knowledge of art and science, and the wide range of his intellect are fully revealed in the scattered leaves of his notebooks, which are now preserved in the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Ambrosiani in Milan, and other collections. The first edition of the "Treatise on Painting" was a compilation from these original notes, published at Paris in 1651. Leonardo died at Cloux on May 2, 1519.

From Da Vinci's Notebooks

The eye, which is called the window of the soul, is the principal means whereby our intelligence may most fully and splendidly comprehend the infinite works of nature; and the ear comes next, by gaining importance through hearing the things that have been perceived by the eye. If you historians or poets, or mathematicians, had not seen things with your eyes, badly would you describe them in your writings. If you, O poet, call painting dumb poetry, the painter might say of the poet's writing blind painting. Now consider, which taunt is more mordant—to be called blind or dumb?

If the poet is as free in invention as the painter, yet his fiction is not as satisfying to mankind as is painting, 228
for whereas poetry endeavours with words to represent forms, actions, and scenes, the painter's business is to imitate forms with the images of these very forms. Take the case of a poet, describing the beauties of a woman to her lover, and that of a painter depicting her; you will soon see whither nature will attract the enamoured judge. And should not the proof of things be the verdict of experience?

If you say that poetry is more enduring, I may reply that the works of a coppersmith are more enduring still, since time has preserved them longer than your works or ours; yet they are less imaginative, and painting, if done with enamels on copper, can be made far more enduring. We, in our art, may be said to be grandsons unto God. If you despise painting, which is the sole imitator of all the visible works of nature, then you certainly despise a subtle invention which, with philosophical and ingenious reflection, considers all the properties of forms, airs, and scenes, trees, animals, grasses and flowers, which are surrounded by light and shade.

And this is a science and the true-born daughter of nature, since painting is born of this self-same nature. But, in order to speak more correctly, let us call it the grandchild of nature, because all visible things are produced by nature, and from these same things is born painting. Wherefore we may rightly call it the grandchild of nature, related to God Himself.

How Sculpture is Less Intellectual

Being sculptor no less than painter, and practising both arts in the same degree, it seems to me that I may without arrogance pronounce how one of them is more intellectual, difficult, and perfect than the other.

Firstly, sculpture is subject to a certain light—namely, from above—and painting carries everywhere with it
light and shade. Light and shade are, therefore, the essentials in sculpture. In this respect the sculptor is aided 229
by the nature of the relief, which produces these of its own accord; the painter introduces them by his art where nature would reasonably place them. The sculptor cannot reproduce the varying nature of the colours of objects; painting lacks nothing in this respect. The sculptor's perspectives never seem true, but the painter's lead the eye hundreds of miles into the work. Aerial perspective is alien to their work. They can neither represent transparent nor luminous bodies, neither reflected rays nor shiny surfaces like mirrors and similar glittering bodies; no mist, no dull sky, nor countless other things, which I refrain from mentioning to avoid getting wearisome. It has the advantage that it offers greater resistance to time, although enamels on copper fused in fire have equal power of resistance. Thus painting surpasses sculpture even in durability.

Were you to speak only of painting on panels, I should be content to give the verdict against sculpture by saying: Whilst painting is more beautiful, more imaginative, and more resourceful, sculpture is more durable; and this is all that can be said for it. It reveals with little effort what it is. Painting seems a miraculous thing, making things intangible appear tangible, presenting flat objects in relief, and distant near at hand. Indeed, painting is adorned with endless possibilities that are not used by sculpture.

Painters fight and compete with nature.

Of the Ten Offices of the Eye

Painting extends over all the ten offices of the eye—namely, darkness, light, body and colour, figure and scenery, distance and nearness, movement and repose—all of which offices will be woven through this little
work of mine. For I will remind the painter by what rule and in what manner he shall use his art to imitate all 230
these things, the work of nature and the ornament of the world.

Rule for Beginners in Painting

We know clearly that sight is one of the swiftest actions in existence, perceiving in one moment countless forms. Nevertheless, it cannot comprehend more than one thing at a time. Suppose, for instance, you, reader, were to cast a single glance upon this entire written page and were to decide at once that it is full of different letters; but you will not be able to recognize in this space of time either what letters they are or what they purport to say. Therefore, you must take word by word, verse by verse, in order to gain knowledge from these letters. Again, if you want to reach the summit of a building, you must submit to climbing step by step, else it would be impossible for you to reach the top. And so I say to you, whom nature inclines to this art, if you would have a true knowledge of the form of things, begin with their details, and don't pass on to the second before the first is well fixed in your memory, else you will waste your time.

Perspective is the rein and rudder of painting.

I say whatever is forced within a border is more difficult than what is free. Shadows have in certain degrees their borders, and he who ignores them cannot obtain roundness, which roundness is the essence and soul of painting. Drawing is free, since, if you see countless faces, they will all be different—the one has a long, the other a short nose. Thus the painter may take this liberty, and where is liberty, is no rule.

Precepts for Painting

The painter should endeavour to be universal, because he is lacking in dignity if he do one thing well and another thing badly, like so many who only study the well-proportionate nude and not its variations, because a 231
man may be proportionate and yet be short and stout, or long and thin. And he who does not bear in mind these variations will get his figures stereotyped, so that they all seem to be brothers and sisters, which deserves to be censured severely.

Let the sketching of histories be swift and the articulation not too perfect. Be satisfied with suggesting the position of the limbs, which you may afterwards carry to completion at your leisure and as you please.

Methinks it is no small grace in a painter if he give a pleasing air to his figures, a grace which, if it be not one's own by nature, may be acquired by study, as follows. Try to take the best parts from many beautiful faces, whose beauty is affirmed by public fame rather than by your own judgment, for you may deceive yourself by taking faces which resemble your own. For it would often seem that such similarities please us; and if you were ugly you would not select beautiful faces, and you would make ugly ones, like many painters whose types often resemble their master. Therefore, take beautiful features, as I tell you, and commit them to your memory.

Monstrous is he who has a very large head and short legs, and monstrous he who with rich garments has great poverty; therefore we shall call him well proportioned whose every part corresponds with his whole.

On the Choice of Light

If you had a courtyard, which you could cover at will with a canvas awning, this light would be good; or when you wish to paint somebody, paint him in bad weather, or at the hour of dusk, placing the sitter with his back to one of the walls of this courtyard.

Observe in the streets at the fall of the evening the faces of men and women when it is bad weather, what 232
grace and sweetness then appear to be theirs.

Therefore, you should have a courtyard, prepared with walls painted in black, and with the roof projecting a little over the said wall. And it should be ten *braccia* [ten fathoms] in width, and twenty in length and ten in height; and when the sun shines you should cover it over with the awning, or you should paint an hour before evening, when it is cloudy or misty. For this is the most perfect light.

Of the Gesture of Figures

You should give your figures such movement as will suffice to show what is passing in the mind of the figure; else your art would not be praiseworthy. A figure is not worthy of praise if it do not express by some gesture the passion of the soul. That figure is most worthy of praise which best expresses by its gesture the passion of its nature.

If you have to represent an honest man talking, see that his action be companion to his good words; and again, if you have to depict a bestial man, give him wild movements—his arms thrown towards the spectator, and his head pressed towards his chest, his legs apart.

The Judgment of Painting

We know well that mistakes are more easily detected in the works of others than in one's own, and often, while censuring the small faults of others, you do not recognise your own great faults. In order to escape such ignorance, have a care that you be, above all, sure of your perspective; then acquire full knowledge of the proportions of man and other animals. And, moreover, be a good architect; that is, in so far as it is necessary for the form of the buildings and other things that are upon the earth, and that are infinitely varied in form. 233

The more knowledge you have of these, the more worthy of praise will be your work. And for those things in which you have no practice, do not disdain to copy from nature. When you are painting, you should take a flat mirror and often look at your work within it. It will be seen in reverse, and will appear to be by some other master, and you will be better able to judge of its faults than in any other way. It is also a good plan every now and then to go away and have a little relaxation, for then, when you come back to the work, your judgment will be surer, since to remain constantly at work will cause you to lose the power of judgment.

Surely, while one paints one should not reject any man's judgment; for we know very well that a man, even if he be no painter, has knowledge of the forms of another man, and will judge aright whether he is hump-backed,

or has one shoulder too high or too low, or whether he has too large a mouth or nose, or other faults; and if we are able rightly to judge the work of nature in men, how much more is it fit to admit that they are able to judge our mistakes.

You know how much man may be deceived about his own works, and if you do not know it of yourself, observe it in others, and you will derive benefit from other people's mistakes. Therefore, you should be eager to listen patiently to the views of other men and consider and reflect carefully whether he who finds fault is right or not in blaming you. If you find that he is right, correct your work; but if not, pretend not to have understood him; or show him, if he be a man whom you respect, by sound argument, why it is that he is mistaken in finding fault.

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Do Not Disdain to Work from Nature

A master who let it be understood that his mind could retain all the forms and effects of nature, I should certainly hold to be endowed with great ignorance, since the said effects are infinite, and our memory is not of such capacity as to suffice thereto. Therefore, O painter, see that the greed for gain do not outweigh within you the honour of art, for to gain in honour is a far greater thing than to be honoured for wealth.

For these and other reasons that might be adduced, you should endeavour first to demonstrate to the eye, by means of drawing, a suggestion of the intention and of the invention originated first by your imagination. Then proceed, taking from it or adding to it, until you are satisfied with it. Then have men arranged as models, draped or nude, in the manner in which they are disposed in your work, and make the proportions and size in accordance with perspective, so that no part of the work remains that is not counselled by reason as well as by nature.

And this will be the way to make you honoured through your art. First of all, copy drawings by a good master made by his art from nature, and not as exercises; then from a relief, keeping by you a drawing done from the same relief; then from a good model, and of this you ought to make a general practice.

Of the Painter's Life in His Study

The painter or draughtsman should be solitary, so that physical comfort may not injure the thriving of the mind, especially when he is occupied with the observations and considerations which ever offer themselves to his eye and provide material to be treasured up by the memory. If you are alone, you belong wholly to yourself; 235
and if you are accompanied even by one companion, you belong only half to yourself; and if you are with several of them, you will be even more subject to such inconveniences.

And if you should say, "I shall take my own course, I shall keep apart, so that I may be the better able to contemplate the forms of natural objects," then I reply, this cannot well be, because you cannot help frequently lending your ear to their gossip; and since nobody can serve two masters at once, you will badly fulfil your duties as companion, and you will have worse success in artistic contemplation. And if you should say, "I shall keep so far apart that their words cannot reach me or disturb me," then I reply in this case that you will be looked upon as mad. And do you not perceive that, in acting thus, you would really be solitary?

Of Ways to Represent Various Scenes

A man in despair you should make turning his knife against himself. He should have rent his garments, and he should be in the act of tearing open his wound with one hand. And you should make him with his feet apart and his legs somewhat bent, and the whole figure likewise bending to the ground, with dishevelled and untidy hair.

As a rule, he whom you wish to represent talking to many people will consider the subject of which he has to treat, and will fit his gestures to this subject—that is to say, if the subject is persuasion, the gestures should serve this intention; if the subject is explanation by various reasons, he who speaks should take a finger of his left hand between two fingers of his right, keeping the two smaller ones pressed together; his face should be animated and turned towards the people, his mouth slightly opened, so that he seems to be talking. And if he is seated, let him seem to be in the act of slightly raising himself, with his head forward; and if he is standing, 236
make him lean forward a little, with his head towards the people, whom you should represent silent and attentive, all watching, with gestures of admiration, the orator's face. Some old men should have their mouths drawn down at the corners in astonishment at what they hear, drawing back the cheeks in many furrows, and raising their eyebrows where they meet, so as to produce many wrinkles on their foreheads. Some who are seated should hold their tired knees between the interlaced fingers of their hands, and others should cross one knee over the other, and place upon it one hand, so that its hollow supports the other elbow, whose hand again supports the bearded chin.

Whatever is wholly deprived of light is complete darkness. Night being in this condition, if you wish to represent a scene therein, you must contrive to have a great fire in this night, and everything that is in closer proximity to this fire will assume more of its colour, because the nearer a thing is to another object, the more it partakes of its nature. And since you will make the fire incline towards a red colour, you will have to give a reddish tinge to all things lighted by it, and those which are farther away from the fire will have to hold more of the black colour of night. The figures which are between you and the fire appear dark against the brightness of the flame, for that part of the object which you perceive is coloured by the darkness of night, and not by the brightness of the fire; and those which flank the fire will be half dark and half reddish. Those which are behind the flames will be altogether illuminated by a reddish light against the black background.

If you wish to represent a tempest properly, observe and set down the effects of the wind blowing over the face of the sea and of the land, raising and carrying away everything that is not firmly rooted in the general mass. And in order properly to represent this tempest, you should first of all show the riven and torn clouds

swept along by the wind, together with the sandy dust blown up from the seashore, and with branches and leaves caught up and scattered through the air, together with many other light objects, by the power of the furious wind. The trees and shrubs, bent to the ground, seem to desire to follow the direction of the wind, with branches twisted out of their natural growth, and their foliage tossed and inverted. 237

Of the men who are present, some who are thrown down and entangled with their garments and covered with dust should be almost unrecognisable; and those who are left standing may be behind some tree which they embrace, so that the storm should not carry them off. Others, bent down, their garments and hair streaming in the wind, should hold their hands before their eyes because of the dust.

Let the turbulent and tempestuous sea be covered with eddying foam between the rising waves, and let the wind carry fine spray into the stormy air to resemble a thick and all-enveloping mist. Of the ships that are there, show some with rent sails, whose shreds should flap in the air, together with some broken halyards; masts splintered, tumbled, with the ship itself broken by the fury of the waves; some human beings, shrieking, and clinging to the wreckage of the vessel. You should show the clouds, chased by the impetuous wind, hurled against the high tops of the mountains, wreathing and eddying like waves that beat against the cliffs. The air should strike terror through the murky darkness caused by the dust, the mist, and the heavy clouds.

To Learn to Work from Memory

If you want properly to commit to your memory something that you have learnt, proceed in this manner—namely, when you have drawn one object so often that you believe you can remember it, try to draw it without 238 the model, after having traced your model on a thin sheet of glass. This glass you will then lay upon the drawing which you have made without model. Observe well where the tracing does not tally with your drawing, and wherever you find that you have gone wrong, you must remember not to go wrong again. You should even return to the model, in order again to draw the wrong passage until it shall be fixed in your memory. And if you have no level sheet of glass for tracing, take a very thin sheet of goat-parchment, well oiled, and then dried. And after the tracing has done service for your drawing, you can efface it with a sponge and use it again for another tracing.

On Studying in Bed

I have experienced upon myself that it is of no small benefit if, when you are in bed, you apply your imagination to repeating the superficial lines of the forms which you have been studying, or to other remarkable things which are comprehensible to a fine intellect. This is a praiseworthy and useful action which will help you to fix things in your memory.

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GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING

Laocoon

In 1766, while acting as secretary to the governor of Breslau, Lessing wrote his celebrated "Laocoon," a critical treatise defining the limits of poetry and the plastic arts. The epitome given here has been prepared from the German text. A short biographical sketch of Lessing appears in the introduction to his play, "Nathan the Wise," appearing in Volume XVII of THE WORLD'S GREATEST BOOKS.

I.—On the Limits of Painting and Poetry

Winkelman has pronounced a noble simplicity and quiet grandeur, displayed in the posture no less than in the expression, to be the characteristic feature common to all the Greek masterpieces of painting and sculpture. "As," says he, "the depths of the sea always remain calm, however violently the surface may rage, so the expression in the figures of the Greeks, under every form of passion, shows a great and self-collected soul.

"This spirit is portrayed in the countenance of Laocoon, but not in the countenance alone. Even under the most violent suffering the pain discovers itself in every muscle and sinew of his body, and the beholder, while looking at the agonised conditions of the stomach, without viewing the face and other parts, believes that he almost feels the pain himself. The pain expresses itself without any violence, both in the features and in the whole posture. Laocoon suffers, but he suffers as the Philoctetes of Sophocles. His misery pierces us to the very soul, but inspires us with a wish that we could endure misery like that great man.

"The expressing of so great a soul is far higher than the painting of beautiful nature. The artist must feel 240
within himself that strength of spirit which he would imprint on his marble. Greece had philosophers and artists in one person. Philosophy gave her hand to art, and inspired its figures with no ordinary souls."

The above remarks are founded on the argument that "the pain in the face of Laocoon does not show itself with that force which its intensity would have led us to expect." This is correct. But I confess I differ from Winkelman as to what, in his opinion, is the basis of this wisdom, and as to the universality of the rule which he deduces from it. I acknowledge I was startled, first by the glances of disapproval which he casts on Virgil, and, secondly, by the comparison with Philoctetes. From this point I shall begin, writing down my thoughts as they were developed in me.

"Laocoon suffers as does the Philoctetes of Sophocles." But how does this last suffer? It is curious that his sufferings should leave such a different impression behind them. The cries and mild imprecations with which he filled the camp and interrupted the sacrifices echoed through the desolate island. The same sounds of despair fill the theatre in the poet's imitation.

A cry is the natural expression of bodily pain. Homer's wounded heroes frequently fall to the ground with cries. They are in their actions beings of higher order; in their feelings, true men.

We more civilised and refined Europeans of a wiser and later age are forbidden to cry and weep, and even our ancestors were taught to suppress lamentation at loss, and to die laughing under the bites of adders. Not so the Greeks. They felt and feared, and gave utterance to pain and sorrow, only nothing must hold them back from duty.

Now for my inference. If it be true that, a cry at the sensation of bodily pain, according to the old Greek way 241
of thinking, is quite compatible with greatness of soul, it cannot have been for the sake of expressing such greatness that the artist avoided imitating his shriek in marble. Another reason must be found for his deviation from his rival, the poet, who has expressed it with the happiest results.

Be it fable or history, it is love that made the first essay in the plastic arts, and never wearied of guiding the hands of the masters of old. Painting now may be defined generally as "the imitation of bodies of matter on a level surface"; but the wise Greek allotted for it narrower limits, and confined it to imitations of the beautiful only; his artists painted nothing else. It was the perfection of their work that absorbed them. Among the ancients beauty was the highest law of the plastic arts. To beauty everything was subordinated. There are passions by which all beautiful physical lines are lost through the distortion of the body, but from all such emotions the ancient masters abstained entirely. Rage and despair disgrace none of their productions, and I dare maintain that they never painted a fury.

Indignation was softened down to seriousness. Grief was lessened into mournfulness. All know how Timanthes in his painting of the sacrifice of Iphigenia shows the sorrow of the bystanders, but has concealed the face of the father, who should show it more than all. He left to conjecture what he might not paint. This concealment is a sacrifice to beauty by the artist, and it shows how art's first law is the law of beauty.

Now apply this to Laocoon. The master aimed at the highest beauty compatible with the adopted circumstances of bodily pain. He must soften shrieks into sighs. For only imagine the mouth of Laocoon to be forced open, and then judge.

But art in modern times has been allowed a far wider sphere. It has been affirmed that its limitations extend over the whole of visible nature, of which the beautiful is but a small part. And as nature is ever ready to sacrifice beauty to higher aims, so should the artist render it subordinate to his general design. But are there 242
not other considerations which compel the artist to put certain limits to expression, and prevent him from ever drawing it at its highest intensity?

I believe that the fact that it is to a single moment that the material limits of art confine all its limitations, will lead us to similar views.

If the artist out of ever-varying nature can only make use of a single moment, while his works are meant to stand the test not only of a passing glance, but of a long and repeated contemplation, it is clear that this

moment cannot be chosen too happily. Now that only is a happy choice which allows the imagination free scope. In the whole course of a feeling there is no moment which possesses this advantage so little as its highest stage. There is nothing beyond this, and the presentation of extremes to the eye clips the wings of fancy, prevents her from soaring beyond the impression of the senses, and compels her to occupy herself with weaker images. Thus if Laocoon sighs, the imagination can hear him shriek; but if he shrieks, it can neither rise above nor descend below this representation without seeing him in a condition which, as it will be more endurable, becomes less interesting. It either hears him merely moaning, or sees him already dead.

Of the frenzied Ajax of Timomachus we can form some judgment from the account of Philoctetes. Ajax does not appear raging among herds and slaughtering cattle instead of men; but the master exhibits him sitting wearied with these deeds of insanity, and that is really the raging Ajax. We can form the most lively idea of the extremity of his frenzy from the shame and despair which he himself feels at the thought of it. We see the storm in the wrecks and corpses which it had strewn on the beach.

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II.—The Poet

Perhaps hardly any of the above remarks concerning the necessary limits of the artist would be found equally applicable to poetry. It is undeniable that the whole realm of the perfectly excellent lies open to the imitation of the poet, that excellence of outward form which we call beauty being only one of the least of the means by which he can interest us in his characters.

Moreover, the poet is not compelled to concentrate his picture into a single moment. He can take up every action of his hero at its source, and pursue it to its issue through all possible variations. Each of these, which would cost the artist a separate work, costs the poet but a single trait. What wonderful skill has Sophocles shown in strengthening and enlarging, in his tragedy of Philoctetes, the idea of bodily pain! He chose a wound, and not an internal malady, because the former admits of a more lively representation than the latter. This wound was, moreover, a punishment divinely decreed. But to the Greeks a wound from a poisoned arrow was but an ordinary incident. Why, then, in the case of Philoctetes only was it followed by such dreadful consequences?

Sophocles felt full well that, however great he made the bodily pain to his hero, it would not have sufficed of itself to excite any remarkable degree of sympathy. He therefore combined it with other evils—the complete lack of society, hunger, and all the hardships to which such a man under terrible privations is exposed when cast on a wild, deserted isle of the Cyclades.

Imagine, now, a man in these conditions, but give him health and strength and industry, and he becomes a Crusoe, whose lot, though not indifferent to us, has no great claim on our sympathy. On the other hand, imagine a man afflicted by a painful and incurable disease, but at the same time surrounded by kind friends. For him we 244
should feel sympathy, yet this would not endure throughout. Only when both cases are combined do we see nothing but despair, which excites our amazement and horror. Typical beauty arises from the harmonious effect of numerous parts, all of which the sight is capable of comprehending at the same time. It requires, therefore, that these parts should lie near each other; and since things whose parts lie near each other are the peculiar objects of plastic beauty, these it is, and these only, which can imitate typical beauty. The poet, since he can only exhibit in succession its component parts, entirely abstains from the description of typical beauty. He feels that these parts, ranged one after the other, cannot possibly have the effect they produce when closely arranged together.

In this respect Homer is a pattern of patterns. He says Nireus was beautiful, Achilles still more so, Helen was endowed with divine beauty. But nowhere does he enter on a detailed sketch of these beauties, and yet the whole Iliad is based on the loveliness of Helen.

In this point, in which he can imitate Homer by merely doing nothing, Virgil is also tolerably happy. His heroine Dido, too, is never anything more than *pulcherrima* Dido (loveliest Dido). When he wishes to be more circumstantial, he is so in the description of her rich dress and apparel.

Lucian, also, was too acute to convey any idea of the body of Panthea otherwise than by reference to the most lovely female statues of the old artists.

Yet what is this but the acknowledgment that language by itself is here without power; that poetry falters and eloquence grows speechless unless art in some measure serve them as an interpreter?

But, it will be said, does not poetry lose too much if we deprive her of all objects of typical beauty? Who would deprive her of them? Because we would debar her from wandering among the footsteps of her sister art, 245
without ever reaching the same goal as she, do we exclude her from every other, where art in her turn must gaze after her steps with fruitless longings?

Even Homer, who so pointedly abstains from all detailed descriptions of typical beauties, from whom we but just learn that Helen had white arms and lovely hair, even he, with all this, knew how to convey to us an idea of her beauty which far exceeds anything that art is able to accomplish.

III.—Beauty and Charm

Again, another means which poetry possesses of rivalling art in the description of typical beauty is the change of beauty into charm. Charm is beauty in motion, and is for this very reason less suitable to the painter than to the poet. The painter can only leave motion to conjecture, while in fact his figures are motionless. Consequently, with him charm becomes grimace.

But in poetry it remains what it is, a transitory beauty which we would gladly see repeated. It comes and goes, and since we can generally recall to our minds a movement more easily and vividly than forms or colours, charm necessarily in the same circumstances produces a stronger effect than beauty.

Zeuxis painted a Helen, and had the courage to write below the picture those renowned lines of Homer in which the enraptured elders confess their sensations. Never had painting and poetry been engaged in such contest. The contest remained undecided, and both deserved the crown.

For just as a wise poet showed us the beauty which he felt he could not paint according to its constituent parts, but merely in its effect, so the no less wise painter showed us that beauty by nothing but those parts, deeming it unbecoming for his art to resort to any other means for aid. His picture consisted of a single figure, 246
undraped, of Helen, probably the one painted for the people of Crotona.

In beauty a single unbecoming part may disturb the harmonious effect of many, without the object necessarily becoming ugly. For ugliness, too, requires several unbecoming parts, all of which we must be able to comprehend at the same view before we experience sensations the opposite of those which beauty produces.

According to this, therefore, ugliness in its essence could be no subject of poetry; yet Homer has painted extreme ugliness in Thersites, and this ugliness is described according to its parts near each other. Why in the case of ugliness did he allow himself the license from which he had abstained in that of beauty? A successive enumeration of the elements of beauty will annihilate its effects. Will not a similar cause produce a similar effect in the case of ugliness?

Undoubtedly it will; but it is in this very fact that the justification of Homer lies. The poet can only take advantage of ugliness so far as it is reduced in his description into the less repugnant appearance of bodily imperfection, and ceases, as it were, in point of effect, to be ugliness. Thus, what he cannot make use of by itself he can use as the ingredient for the purpose of producing and strengthening certain mixed sensations.

These mixed feelings are the ridiculous and the horrible. Homer makes Thersites ugly in order to make him ridiculous. He is not made so, however, merely by his ugliness, for ugliness is an imperfection, and the contrast of perfection with imperfections is required to produce the ridiculous. To this I may add that the contrast must not be too sharp and glaring, and that the contrasts must blend into each other.

The wise and virtuous Æsop does not become ridiculous because of ugliness attributed to him. For his misshapen body and beautiful mind are as oil and vinegar; however much you shake them together, they always 247
remain distinct to the taste. They will not amalgamate to produce a third quality. The body produces annoyance; the soul, pleasure; each has its own effect.

It is only when the deformed body is also fragile and, sickly, when it impedes the soul, that the annoyance and pleasure melt into each other.

For, let us suppose that the instigations of the malicious and snarling Thersites had resulted in mutiny, that the people had forsaken their leaders and departed in the ships, and that these leaders had been massacred by a revengeful foe. How would the ugliness of Thersites appear then? If ugliness, when harmless, may be ridiculous, when hurtful it is always horrible. In Shakespeare's "King Lear," Edmund, the bastard Count of Gloucester, is no less a villain than Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in "King Richard III." How is it, then, that the first excites our loathing so much less than the second? It is because when I hear the former, I listen to a devil, but see him as an angel of light; but in listening to Richard I hear a devil and see a devil.

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JOHN STUART MILL

Essay on Liberty

Ten years elapsed between the publication of "Political Economy" (see Vol. XIV, p. 294) and the "Essay on Liberty," Mill in the meantime (1851) having married Mrs. John Taylor, a lady who exercised no small influence on his philosophical position. The seven years of his married life saw little or nothing from his pen. The "Essay on Liberty," in many respects the most carefully prepared of all his books, appeared in 1859, the year following the death of his wife, in collaboration with whom it was thought out and partly written. The treatise goes naturally with that on "Utilitarianism." Both are succinct and incisive in their reasoning, and both are grounded on similar sociological principles. Perhaps the primary problem of politics in all ages has been the reconciliation of individual and social interests; and at the present day, when the problem appears to be particularly troublesome, Mill's view of the situation is of especial value. In recent time, legislation has certainly tended to become more socialistic, and the doctrine of individual liberty promulgated in this "Essay" has a most interesting relevancy to modern social movements.

I.—Liberty of Thought and Discussion

Protection against popular government is as indispensable as protection against political despotism. The people may desire to oppress a part of their number, and precautions are needed against this as against any other abuse of power. So much will be readily granted by most, and yet no attempt has been made to find the fitting adjustment between individual independence and social control.

The object of this essay is to assert the simple principle that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection—that the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against 249
his will, is to prevent harm to others, either by his action or inaction. The only part of the conduct of anyone for which he is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.

This principle requires, firstly, liberty of conscience in the most comprehensive sense, liberty of thought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects, practical or speculative, scientific, moral, or theological—the liberty even of publishing and expressing opinions. Secondly, the principle requires liberty of tastes and pursuits; of framing the plan of our life to suit our own character; of doing as we like, so long as we do not harm our fellow-creatures. Thirdly, the principle requires liberty of combination among individuals for any purpose not involving harm to others, provided the persons are of full age and not forced or deceived.

The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. Mankind gains more by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest.

Coercion in matters of thought and discussion must always be illegitimate. If all mankind save one were of one opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing the solitary individual than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind. The peculiar evil of silencing the expression of opinion is that it is robbing the whole human race, present and future—those who dissent from the opinion even more than those who hold it. For if the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; and if 250
wrong, they lose the clear and livelier impression of truth produced by its collision with error.

All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility, and, as all history teaches, neither communities nor individuals are infallible. Men cannot be too often reminded of the condemnation of Socrates and of Christ, and of the persecution of the Christians by the noble-minded Marcus Aurelius.

Enemies of religious freedom maintain that persecution is a good thing, for, even though it makes mistakes, it will root out error while it cannot extirpate truth. But history shows that even if truth cannot be finally extirpated, it may at least be put back centuries.

We no longer put heretics to death; but we punish heresies with a social stigma almost as effective, since it may debar men from earning their bread. Social intolerance does not actually eradicate heresies, but it induces men to hide unpopular opinions. The result is that new and heretical opinions smoulder in the narrow circles of thinking and studious persons who originate them, and never light up the general affairs of mankind with either a true or deceptive light. The price paid for intellectual pacification is the sacrifice of the entire moral courage of the human race. Who can compute what the world loses in the multitude of promising intellects too timid to follow out any bold, independent train of thought lest it might be considered irreligious or immoral? No one can be a great thinker who does not follow his intellect to whatever conclusions it may lead. In a general atmosphere of mental slavery a few great thinkers may survive, but in such an atmosphere there never has been, and never will be, an intellectually active people; and all progress in the human mind and in human institutions may be traced to periods of mental emancipation.

Even if an opinion be indubitably true and undoubtingly believed, it will be a dead dogma, and not a living 251
truth, if it be not fully, frequently, and fearlessly discussed. If the cultivation of the understanding consists of one thing more than another, it is surely in learning the grounds of one's own opinions, and these can only be fully learned by facing the arguments that favour the opposite opinions. He who knows only his own side of the case knows little of that. Unless he knows the difficulties which his truth has to encounter and conquer, he knows little of the force of his truth. Not only are the grounds of an opinion unformed or forgotten in the absence of discussion, but too often the very meaning of the opinion. When the mind is not compelled to exercise its powers on the questions which its belief presents to it, there is a progressive tendency to forget all of the belief except the formularies, until it almost ceases to connect itself at all with the inner life of the human being. In such cases a creed merely stands sentinel at the entrance of the mind and heart to keep them empty, as is so often seen in the case of the Christian creed as at present professed.

So far we have considered only two possibilities—that the received opinion may be false and some other opinion consequently true, or that, the received opinion being true, a conflict with the opposite error is essential to a clear apprehension and deep feeling of the truth. But there is a commoner case still, when conflicting doctrines share the truth, and when the heretical doctrine completes the orthodox. Every opinion which embodies somewhat of the portion of the truth which the common opinion omits, ought to be considered precious with whatever amount of error and confusion it may be conjoined. In politics, again, it is almost a commonplace that a party of order or stability, and a party of progress or reform, are both necessary factors in a healthy political life. Unless opinions favourable to democracy and to aristocracy, to property, and to equality, to co-operation and to competition, to sociality and to individuality, to liberty and to discipline, and all the other 252
standing antagonisms of practical life are expressed with equal freedom, and enforced and defended with equal talent and energy, there is no chance of both elements obtaining their due. Truth is usually reached only by the rough process of a struggle between combatants fighting under hostile banners.

It may be objected, "But *some* received principles, especially on the highest and most vital subjects, are more than half-truths." This objection is not sound. Even the Christian morality is, in many important points, incomplete and one-sided, and unless ideas and feelings not sanctioned by it had constituted to the formation of European life and character, human affairs would have been in a worse condition than they now are.

II.—Individuality as One of the Elements of Well-Being

We have seen that opinions should be freely formed and freely expressed. How about *actions*? If a man refrains from molesting others in what concerns him, and merely acts according to his own inclination and judgment in things which concern himself, the same reasons which show that opinion should be free prove also that he should be allowed to carry his opinions into action. As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so it is useful that there should be different experiments of living, that free scope should be given to varieties of character short of injury to others, and that the worth of different modes of life should be proved practically. It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself. When, not the person's own character, but the traditions or customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness and quite 253
the chief ingredient of individual and social progress.

No one's idea of excellence in conduct is that people should do absolutely nothing but copy one another. On the other hand, it would be absurd to pretend that people ought to live as if experience had as yet done nothing towards showing that one mode of existence or of conduct is preferable to another. No one denies that people should be so taught and trained in youth as to know and benefit by the results of human experience. But it is the privilege of a mature man to use and interpret experience in his own way. He who lets the world, or his own portion of it, choose his plan of life for him has no need of any other faculty than the ape-like one of imitation. He, on the other hand, who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties—reasoning, foresight, activity, discrimination, resolution, self-control. We wish not automatons, but living, originating men and women.

So much will be readily conceded, but nevertheless it may be maintained that strong desires and passions are a peril and a snare. Yet it is desires and impulses which constitute character, and one with no desires and impulses of his own has no more character than a steam-engine. An energetic character implies strong, spontaneous impulses under the control of a strong will; and such characters are desirable, since the danger which threatens modern society is not excess but deficiency of personal impulses and preferences. Everyone nowadays asks: what is usually done by persons of my station and pecuniary circumstances, or (worse still) what is usually done by persons of a station and circumstances superior to mine? The consequence is that, through failure to follow their own nature, they have no nature to follow; their human capacities are withered and starved, and are incapable of any strong pleasures or opinions properly their own.

It is not by pruning away the individual but by cultivating it wisely that human beings become valuable to 254
themselves and to others, and that human life becomes rich, diversified, and interesting. Individuality is equivalent to development, and in proportion to the latitude given to individuality an age becomes noteworthy or the reverse.

Unfortunately, the general tendency of things is to render mediocrity the ascendant power. At present, individuals are lost in the crowd, and it is almost a triviality to say that public opinion now rules the world. And public opinion is the opinion of collective mediocrity, and is expressed by mediocre men. The initiation of all wise and noble opinions must come from individuals, and the individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought is necessary to correct the tendency that makes mankind acquiesce in customary and popular opinions.

III.—The Limits of the Authority of Society Over the Individual

Where, then, does the authority of society begin? How much of human life should be assigned to individuality, and how much to society?

To individuality should belong that part of life in which it is chiefly the individual that is interested; to society, the part which chiefly interests society.

Society, in return for the protection it affords its members, and as a condition of its existence, demands, firstly, that its members respect the rights of one another; and, secondly, that each person bear his share of the labours and sacrifices incurred in defending society for its members. Further, society may punish acts of an individual hurtful to others, even if not a violation of rights, by the force of public opinion.

But in all cases where a person's conduct affects or need only affect himself, society may not interfere. 255
Society may help individuals in their personal affairs, but neither one person, nor any number of persons, is warranted in saying to any human creature that he may not use his own life, so far as it concerns himself, as he pleases. He himself is the final judge of his own concerns, and the inconveniences which are strictly inseparable

from the unfavourable judgment of others are the only ones to which a person should ever be subjected for that portion of his conduct and character which affects his own good, but which does not affect the interests of others.

But how, it may be asked, can any part of the conduct of a member of society be a matter of indifference to the other members?

I fully confess that the mischief which a person does to himself may seriously affect those nearly connected with him, and even society at large. But such contingent and indirect injury should be endured by society for the sake of the greater good of human freedom, and because any attempt at coercion in private conduct will merely produce rebellion on the part of the individual coerced. Moreover, when society interferes with purely personal conduct, the odds are that it interferes wrongly, and in the wrong places, as the pages of history and the records of legislation abundantly demonstrate.

Closely connected with the question of the limitations of the authority of society over the individual is the question of government participation in industrial and other enterprises generally undertaken by individuals.

There are three main objections to the interference of the state in such matters. In the first place, the matter may be better managed by individuals than by the government. In the second place, though individuals may not do it so well as government might, yet it is desirable that they should do it, as a means of their own mental education. In the third place, it is undesirable to add to the power of the government. If roads, railways, banks, 256
insurance offices, great joint-stock companies, universities, public charities, municipal corporations, and local boards were all in the government service, and if the employees in these look to the government for promotion, not all the freedom of the Press and the popular constitution of the legislature would make this or any other country free otherwise than in name. And, for various reasons, the better qualified the heads and hands of the government officials, the more detrimental would the rule of the government be. Such a government would inevitably degenerate into a pedantocracy monopolising all the occupations which form and cultivate the faculties required for the government of mankind.

To find the best compromise between individuals and the state is difficult, but I believe the ideal must combine the greatest possible dissemination of power consistent with efficiency, and the greatest possible centralisation and diffusion of information.

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JOHN MILTON

Areopagitica

It has been said of "Areopagitica, a Speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing to the Parliament of England," that it is "the piece that lies more surely than any other at the very heart of our prose literature." In 1637 the Star Chamber issued a decree regulating the printing, circulation, and importation of books, and on June 14, 1643, the Long Parliament published an order in the same spirit. Milton (see Vol. XVII) felt that what had been done in the days of repression and tyranny was being continued under the reign of liberty, and that the time for protest had arrived. Liberty was the central principle of Milton's faith. He regarded it as the most potent, beneficent, and sacred factor in human progress; and he applied it all round—to literature, religion, marriage, and civic life. His "Areopagitica," published in November, 1644, was an application of the principle to literature that has remained unanswered. The word "Areopagitica" is derived from Areopagus, the celebrated open-air court in Athens, whose decision in matters of public importance was regarded as final.

I.—The Right of Appeal

It is not a liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the Commonwealth—that let no man in this world expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty attained that wise men look for. To which we are already in good part arrived; and this will be attributed first to the strong assistance of God our Deliverer, next to your faithful guidance and undaunted wisdom, Lords and Commons of England.

If I should thus far presume upon the meek demeanour of your civil and gentle greatness, Lords and Commons, as to gainsay what your published Order hath directly said, I might defend myself with ease out of those ages to whose polite wisdom and letters we owe that we are not yet Goths and Jutlanders. Such honour 258
was done in those days to men who professed the study of wisdom and eloquence that cities and signiories heard them gladly, and with great respect, if they had aught in public to admonish the state.

When your prudent spirit acknowledges and obeys the voice of reason from what quarter soever it be heard speaking, I know not what should withhold me from presenting ye with a fit instance wherein to show, both that love of truth which ye eminently profess, and that uprightness of your judgment which is not wont to be partial to yourselves, by judging over again that Order which ye have ordained to regulate printing: that no book, pamphlet, or paper shall be henceforth printed unless the same be first approved and licensed by such, or at least one of such, as shall be thereto appointed.

I shall lay before ye, first, that the inventors of licensing books be those whom ye will be loth to own; next, what is to be thought in general of reading, whatever sort the books be; last, that it will be primely to the discouragement of all learning and the stop of truth. I deny not that it is of greatest concernment in the Church and commonwealth to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves, as well as men. For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are.

Nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively and as vigorously productive as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and, being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to life beyond life. 'Tis true, no age can 259
restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse.

We should be wary, therefore, how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books, since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, that strikes at that ethereal essence, the breath of reason itself, and slays an immortality rather than a life.

II.—The History of Repression

In Athens, where books and wits were ever busier than in any other part of Greece, I find but only two sorts of writings which the magistrate cared to take notice of—those either blasphemous and atheistical, or libellous. The Romans, for many ages trained up only to a military roughness, knew of learning little. There libellous authors were quickly cast into prison, and the like severity was used if aught were impiously written. Except in these two points, how the world went in books the magistrate kept no reckoning.

By the time the emperors were become Christians, the books of those whom they took to be grand heretics were examined, refuted, and condemned in the general councils, and not till then were prohibited.

As for the writings of heathen authors, unless they were plain invectives against Christianity, they met with no interdict that can be cited till about the year 400. The primitive councils and bishops were wont only to declare what books were not commendable, passing no further till after the year 800, after which time the popes of Rome extended their dominion over men's eyes, as they had before over their judgments, burning and prohibiting to be read what they fancied not, till Martin V. by his Bull not only prohibited, but was the first that excommunicated the reading of heretical books; for about that time Wickliffe and Huss, growing terrible, drove 260
the papal court to a stricter policy of prohibiting. To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the press also out of Paradise), unless it were approved and licensed under the hands of two or three glutton friars.

Not from any ancient state or polity or church, nor by any statute left us by our ancestors, but from the most tyrannous Inquisition have ye this book-licensing. Till then books were as freely admitted into the world as any other birth. No envious Juno sat cross-legged over the nativity of any man's intellectual offspring. That ye like not now these most certain authors of this licensing Order, all men who know the integrity of your actions will clear ye readily.

III.—The Futility of Prohibition

But some will say, "What though the inventors were bad, the thing, for all that, may be good?" It may be so, yet I am of those who believe it will be a harder alchemy than Lullius ever knew to sublimate any good use out of such an invention.

Good and evil in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably. As the state of man now is, what wisdom can there be to choose, what continence to forbear, without the knowledge of evil? I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. That which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. And how can we more safely, and with less danger scout into the regions of sin and falsity than by reading all manner of tractates and hearing all manner of reason? And this 261
is the benefit which may be had of books promiscuously read.

'Tis next alleged we must not expose ourselves to temptations without necessity, and next to that, not employ our time in vain things. To both these objections one answer will serve—that to all men such books are not temptations, nor vanities, but useful drugs and materials wherewith to temper and compose effective and strong medicines. The rest, as children and childish men, who have not the art to qualify and prepare these working minerals, well may be exhorted to forbear, but hindered forcibly they cannot be by all the licensing that sainted Inquisition could ever yet contrive.

This Order of licensing conduces nothing to the end for which it was framed. If we think to regulate printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man. No music must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and Doric. There must be licensing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our youth but what by their allowance shall be thought honest. Our garments, also, should be referred to the licensing of some more sober workmasters to see them cut into a less wanton garb. Who shall regulate all the mixed conversation of our youth? Who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no further? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort, all evil company? If every action which is good or evil in man at ripe years were to be under pittance and prescription and compulsion, what were virtue but a name?

When God gave Adam reason, he gave him reason to choose, for reason is but choosing. Wherefore did he create passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these rightly tempered are the very ingredients of virtue?

Why should we then affect a rigour contrary to the manner of God and of nature, by abridging or scanting 262
those means which books freely permitted are both to the trial of virtue and the exercise of truth?

IV.—An Indignity to Learning

I lastly proceed from the no good it can do to the manifest hurt it causes in being, first, the greatest discouragement and affront that can be offered to learning and to learned men. If ye be loth to dishearten utterly and discontent the free and ingenuous sort of such as were born to study, and love learning for itself, not for lucre or any other end but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose published labours advance the good of mankind, then know that so far to distrust the judgment and the honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning, and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind without a tutor and examiner, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon him.

When a man writes to the world he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him; he searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends. If in this, the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities can bring him to that state of maturity as not to be still mistrusted and suspected, unless he carry all his considerate diligence to the hasty view of an unleisured licenser, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferior in judgment, perhaps one who never knew the labour of book-writing, and if he be not repulsed or slighted, must appear in print with his censor's hand on the back of his title, to be his bail and surety that he is no idiot or seducer, it cannot be but a dishonour and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of learning.

And, further, to me it seems an undervaluing and vilifying of the whole nation. I cannot set so light by all the 263
invention, the art, the wit, the grave and solid judgment which is in England, as that it can be comprehended in any twenty capacities how good soever, much less that it should not pass except their superintendence be over it, except it be sifted and strained with their strainers, that it should be uncurrent without their manual stamp. Truth and understanding are not such wares as to be monopolised and traded in by tickets and statutes and standards.

Lords and Commons of England, consider what nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governors—a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. Is it for nothing that the grave and frugal Transylvanian sends out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia, and beyond the Hercynian wilderness, not their youth, but their staid men, to learn our language and our theologic arts? By all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in His Church, even to the reforming of Reformation itself. What does He, then, but reveal Himself to His servants, and as His manner is, first to His Englishmen?

Behold now this vast city—a city of refuge, the mansion house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with His protection. The shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching Reformation; others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement. What could a man require more from a nation so pliant and so prone to seek 264
after knowledge? Where there is much desire to learn, there, of necessity, will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity might win all these diligencies to join and unite in one general search after truth, could we but forego this prelatical tradition of crowding free consciences and Christian liberties into canons and precepts of men.

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unsealing her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

What should ye do then? Should ye suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light? Should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers over it, to bring a famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel? Believe it, Lords and Commons, they who counsel ye to such a suppressing do as good as bid ye suppress yourselves. If it be desired to know the immediate cause of all this free writing and free speaking, there cannot be assigned a truer than your own mild, and free, and humane government. It is the liberty, Lords and Commons, which our own valorous and happy counsels have purchased us, liberty, which is the nurse of all great wits. Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience above all liberties. And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the 265
earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously, by licensing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple. Whoever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter? For who knows not that Truth is strong, next to the Almighty? She needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensing to make her victorious. Those are the shifts and defences that error uses against her power. Give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps.

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PLUTARCH

Parallel Lives

Little is known of the life of Plutarch, greatest of biographers. He was born about 50 A.D., at Chæronea, in Bœotia, Greece, the son of a learned and virtuous father. He studied philosophy under Ammonius at Delphi, and on his return to his native city became a priest of Apollo, and archon, or chief magistrate. Plutarch wrote many philosophical works, which are enumerated by his son Lamprias, but are no longer extant. We have about fifty biographies, which are called "parallel" because of the method by which Plutarch, after giving separately the lives of two or more people, proceeds to compare them with one another. The "Lives" were translated into French in Henry II.'s reign, and into English in the time of Elizabeth. They have been exceedingly popular at every period, and many authors, including Shakespeare, have owed much to them. Plutarch died about 120 A.D.

I.—Lycurgus and Numa

According to the best authors, Lycurgus, the law-giver, reigned only for eight months as king of Sparta, until the widow of the late king, his brother, had given birth to a son, whom he named Charilaus. He then travelled for some years in Crete, Asia, and possibly also in Egypt, Libya, Spain, and India, studying governments and manners; and returning to Sparta, he set himself to alter the whole constitution of that kingdom, with the encouragement of the oracles and the favour of Charilaus.

The first institution was a senate of twenty-eight members, whose place it was to strengthen the throne when the people encroached too far, and to support the people when the king should attempt to become absolute. Occasional popular assemblies, in the open air, were to be called, not to propose any subject of debate, but only to ratify or reject the proposals of the senate and the two kings.

His second political enterprise was a new division of the lands, for he found a prodigious inequality, wealth 267
being centred in the hands of a few; and by this reform Laconia became like an estate newly divided among many brothers. Each plot of land was sufficient to maintain a family in health, and they wanted nothing more.

Then, desiring also to equalise property in movable objects, he resorted to the device of doing away with gold and silver currency, and establishing an iron coinage, of which great bulk and weight went to but little value. He excluded all unprofitable and superfluous arts; and the Spartans soon had no means of purchasing foreign wares, nor did any merchant ship unlade in their harbours. Luxury died away of itself, and the workmanship of their necessary and useful furniture rose to great excellence.

Public tables were now established, where all must eat in common of the same frugal meal; whereby hardiness and health of body and mutual benevolence of mind were alike promoted. There were about fifteen to a table, to which each contributed in provisions or in money; the conversation was liberal and well-informed, and salted with pleasant raillery.

Lycurgus left no law in writing; he depended on principles pervading the customs of the people; and he reduced the whole business of legislation into the bringing up of the young. And in this matter he began truly at the beginning, by regulating marriages. The man unmarried after the prescribed age was prosecuted and disgraced; and the father of four children was immune from taxation.

Lycurgus considered the children as the property of the state rather than of the parents, and derided the vanity of other nations, who studied to have horses of the finest breed, yet had their children begotten by ordinary persons rather than by the best and healthiest men. At birth, the children were carried to be examined by the oldest men in council, who had the weaklings thrown away into a cavern, and gave orders for the 268
education of the sturdy.

As for learning, they had just what was necessary and no more, their education being directed chiefly to making them obedient, laborious, and warlike. They went barefoot, and for the most part naked. They were trained to steal with astuteness, to suffer pain and hunger, and to express themselves without an unnecessary word. Dignified poetry and music were encouraged. To the end of his life, the Spartan was kept ever in mind that he was born, not for himself, but for his country; the city was like one great camp, where each had his stated allowance and his stated public charge.

Let us turn now to Numa Pompilius, the great law-giver of the Romans. A Sabine of illustrious virtue and great simplicity of life, he was elected to be king after the interregnum which followed on the disappearance of Romulus. He had spent much time in solitary wanderings in the sacred groves and other retired places; and there, it is reported, the goddess Egeria communicated to him a happiness and knowledge more than mortal.

Numa was in his fortieth year, and was not easily persuaded to undertake the Roman kingdom. But his disinclination was overcome, and he was received with loud acclamations as the most pious of men and most beloved of the gods. His first act was to discharge the body-guard provided for him, and to appoint a priest for the cult of Romulus. But his great task was to soften the Romans, as iron is softened by fire, and to bring them from a violent and warlike disposition to a juster and more gentle temper. For Rome was composed at first of most hardy and resolute men, inveterate warriors.

To reduce this people to mildness and peace, he called in the assistance of religion. By sacrifices, solemn dances, and processions, wherein he himself officiated, he mixed the charms of festal pleasure with holy ritual.

He founded the hierarchy of priests, the vestal virgins, and several other sacred orders; and passed most of 269
his time in performing some religious function or in conversing with the priests on some divine subject. And by all this discipline the people became so tractable, and were so impressed with Numa's power, that they would believe the most fabulous tales, and thought nothing impossible which he undertook. Numa further introduced agriculture, and fostered it as an incentive to peace; he distributed the citizens of Rome into guilds, or

companies, according to their several arts and trades; he reformed the calendar, and did many other services to his people.

Comparing, now, Lycurgus and Numa, we find that their resemblances are obvious—their wisdom, piety, talent for government, and their deriving their laws from a divine source. Of their distinctions, the chief is that Numa accepted, but Lycurgus relinquished, a crown; and as it was an honour to the former to attain royal dignity by his justice, so it was an honour to the latter to prefer justice to that dignity. Again, Lycurgus tuned up the strings of Sparta, which he found relaxed with luxury, to a keener pitch; Numa, on the contrary, softened the high and harsh tone of Rome. Both were equally studious to lead their people to sobriety, but Lycurgus was more attached to fortitude and Numa to justice.

Though Numa put an end to the gain of rapine, he made no provision against the accumulation of great fortunes, nor against poverty, which then began to spread within the city. He ought rather to have watched against these dangers, for they gave birth to the many troubles that befell the Roman state.

II.—Aristides and Cato

Aristides had a close friendship with Clisthenes, who established popular government in Athens after the expulsion of the tyrants; yet he had at the same time a great veneration for Lycurgus of Sparta, whom he 270
regarded as supreme among law-givers; and this led him to be a supporter of aristocracy, in which he was always opposed by Themistocles, the democrat. The latter was insinuating, daring, artful, and impetuous, but Aristides was solid and steady, inflexibly just, and incapable of flattery or deceit.

Neither elated by honour nor disheartened by ill success, Aristides became deeply founded in the estimation of the best citizens. He was appointed public treasurer, and showed up the peculations of Themistocles and of others who had preceded him. When the fleet of Darius was at Marathon, with a view to subjugating Greece, Miltiades and Aristides were the Greek generals, who by custom were to command by turns, day about; and Aristides freely gave up his command to the other, to promote unity of discipline, and to give example of military obedience. The next year he became archon. Though a poor man and a commoner, Aristides won the royal and divine title of "the Just." At first loved and respected for his surname "the Just," Aristides came to be envied and dreaded for so extraordinary an honour, and the citizens assembled from all the towns in Attica and banished him by ostracism, cloaking their envy of his character under the pretence of guarding against tyranny. Three years later they reversed this decree, fearing lest Aristides should join the cause of Xerxes. They little knew the man; even before his recall he had been inciting the Greeks to defend their liberty.

In the great battle of Platæa, Aristides was in command of the Athenians; Pausanias, commander-in-chief of all the confederates, joined him there with the Spartans. The opposing Persian army covered an immense area. In the engagements which took place the Greeks behaved with the utmost firmness, and at last stormed the Persian camp, with a prodigious slaughter of the enemy. When, later, Aristides was entrusted with the task of 271
assessing the cities of the allies for a tax towards the war, and was thus clothed with an authority which made him master of Greece, though he set out poor he returned yet poorer, having arranged the burden with equal justice and humanity. In fact, he esteemed his poverty no less a glory than all the laurels he had won.

The Roman counterpart of Aristides was Cato; which name he received for his wisdom, for Romans call wise men Catos. Marcus Cato, the censor, came of an obscure family, yet his father and grandfather were excellent soldiers. He lived on an estate which his father left him near the Sabine country. With red hair and grey eyes, his appearance was such, says an epigram, as to scare the spirits of the departed. Inured to labour and temperance, he had the sound constitution of one brought up in camps; and he had practised eloquence as a necessary instrument for one who would mix with affairs. While still a lad he had fought in so many battles that his breast was covered with scars; and all who spoke with him noted a gravity of behaviour and a dignity of sentiment such as to fit him for high responsibilities.

A powerful nobleman, Valerius Flaccus, whose estate was near Cato's home, heard his servants praise their neighbour's laborious life. He sent for Cato, and, charmed with his sweet temper and ready wit, persuaded him to go to Rome and apply himself to political affairs. His rise was rapid; he became tribune of the soldiers, then quæstor, and at last was the colleague of Valerius both as consul and as censor.

Cato's eloquence brought him the epithet of the Roman Demosthenes, but he was even more celebrated for his manner of living. Few were willing to imitate him in the ancient custom of tilling the ground with his own hands, in eating a dinner prepared without fire, and a spare, frugal supper; few thought it more honourable not to want superfluities than to possess them. By reason of its vast dominions, the commonwealth had lost its 272
pristine purity and integrity; the citizens were frightened at labour and enervated by pleasure. But Cato never wore a costly garment nor partook of an elaborate meal; even when consul he drank the same wine as his servants. He thought nothing cheap that is superfluous. Some called him mean and narrow, others thought that he was setting an object-lesson to the growing luxury of the age. For my part, I think that his custom of using his servants like beasts of burden, and of turning them off or selling them when grown old, was the mark of an ungenerous spirit, which thinks that the sole tie between man and man is interest or necessity. For my own part, I would not sell even an old ox that had laboured for me.

However that may be, his temperance was wonderful. When governor of Sardinia, where his predecessors had put the province to great expense, he did not even use a carriage, but walked from town to town with one attendant. He was inexorable in everything that concerned public justice. He proved himself a brave general in the field; and when he became censor, which was the highest dignity of the republic, he waged an uncompromising campaign against luxury, by means of an almost prohibitive tax on the expenditure of ostentatious superfluity. His style in speaking was at once humorous, familiar, and forcible, and many of his wise and pregnant sayings are remembered.

When we compare Aristides and Cato, we are at once struck by many resemblances; and examining the several parts of their lives distinctly, as we examine a poem or a picture, we find that they both rose to great honour without the help of family connections, and merely by their own virtue and abilities. Both of them were

equally victorious in war; but in politics Aristides was less successful, being banished by the faction of Themistocles; while Cato, though his antagonists were the most powerful men in Rome, kept his footing to the end like a skilled wrestler.

Again, Cato was no less attentive to the management of his domestic affairs than he was to affairs of state, 273
and not only increased his own fortune, but became a guide to others in finance and in agriculture. But Aristides, by his indigence, brought disgrace upon justice itself, as if it were the ruin and impoverishment of families; it is even said that he left not enough for the portions of his daughters nor for the expenses of his own funeral. So Cato's family produced prætors and consuls to the fourth generation; but of the descendants of Aristides some were conjurors and paupers, and not one of them had a sentiment worthy of his illustrious ancestor.

III.—Demosthenes and Cicero

That these two great orators were originally formed by nature in the same mould is shown by the similarity of their dispositions. They had the same ambition, the same love of liberty, and the same timidity in war and danger. Their fortunes also were similar; both raised themselves from obscure beginnings to authority and power; both opposed kings and tyrants; both of them were banished, then returned with honour, were forced to fly again, and were taken by their enemies; and with both of them expired the liberties of their countries.

Demosthenes, while a weakly child of seven years, lost his father, and his fortune was dissipated by unworthy guardians. But his ambition was fired in early years by hearing the pleadings of the orator Callistratus, and by noting the honours which attended success in that profession. He at once applied himself to the practice of declamation, and studied rhetoric under Isæus; and as soon as he came of age he appeared at the Bar in the prosecution of his guardians for their embezzlements. Though successful in this claim, Demosthenes had much to learn, and his earlier speeches provoked the amusement of his audience. His manner
was at once violent and confused, his voice weak and stammering, and his delivery breathless; but these faults 274
were overcome by an arduous and protracted course of exercise in the subterraneous study which he had built, where he would remain for two or three months together. He corrected the stammering by speaking with pebbles in his mouth; strengthened his voice by running uphill and declaiming while still unbreathed; and his attitude and gestures were studied before a mirror.

Demosthenes was rarely heard to speak extempore, and though the people called upon him in the assembly, he would sit silent unless he had come prepared. He wrote a great part, if not the whole, of each oration beforehand, so that it was objected that his arguments "smelled of the lamp"; yet, on exceptional occasions, he would speak unprepared, and then as if from a supernatural impulse.

His nature was vindictive and his resentment implacable. He was never a time-server in word or in action, and he maintained to the end the political standpoint with which he had begun. The glorious object of his ambition was the defence of the cause of Greece against Philip; and most of his orations, including these Philippics, are written upon the principle that the right and worthy course is to be chosen for its own sake. He does not exhort his countrymen to that which is most agreeable, or easy, or advantageous, but to that which is most honourable. If, besides this noble ambition of his and the lofty tone of his orations, he had been gifted also with warlike courage and had kept his hands clean from bribes, Demosthenes would have deserved to be numbered with Cimon, Thucydides, and Pericles.

Cicero's wonderful genius came to light even in his school-days; he had the capacity and inclination to learn all the arts, but was most inclined to poetry, and the time came when he was reputed the best poet as well as
the greatest orator in Rome. After a training in law and some experience of the wars, he retired to a life of 275
philosophic study, but being persuaded to appear in the courts for Roscius, who was unjustly charged with the murder of his father, Cicero immediately made his reputation as an orator.

His health was weak; he could eat but little, and that only late in the day; his voice was harsh, loud, and ill regulated; but, like Demosthenes, he was able by assiduous practice to modulate his enunciation to a full, sonorous, and sweet tone, and his studies under the leading rhetoricians of Greece and Asia perfected his eloquence.

His diligence, justice, and moderation were evidenced by his conduct in public offices, as quæstor, prætor, and then as consul. In his attack on Catiline's conspiracy, he showed the Romans what charms eloquence can add to truth, and that justice is invincible when properly supported. But his immoderate love of praise interrupted his best designs, and he made himself obnoxious to many by continually magnifying himself.

Demosthenes, by concentrating all his powers on the single art of speaking, became unrivalled in the power, grandeur, and accuracy of his eloquence. Cicero's studies had a wider range; he strove to excel not only as an orator, but as a philosopher and a scholar also. Their difference of temperament is reflected in their styles. Demosthenes is always grave and serious, an austere man of thought; Cicero, on the other hand, loves his jest, and is sometimes playful to the point of buffoonery. The Greek orator never touches upon his own praise except with some great point in view, and then does it modestly and without offence; the Roman does not seek to hide his intemperate vanity.

Both of these men had high political abilities; but while the former held no public office, and lies under the suspicion of having at times sold his talent to the highest bidder, the latter ruled provinces as a pro-consul at a time when avarice reigned unbridled, and became known only for his humanity and his contempt of money.

MADAME DE STAËL

On Germany

Madame de Staël's book "On Germany" (De l'Allemagne) was finished in 1810. The manuscript was passed by the censor, and partly printed, when the whole impression was seized by the order of the Emperor and destroyed. Madame de Staël herself escaped secretly, and came eventually to London, where, in 1813, the work was published. She did not long survive the fall of her tremendous enemy, Napoleon, but died in her beloved Paris on July 14, 1817. When it is considered that "On Germany" was written by other than an inhabitant of the country, and that Madame de Staël did not travel far beyond her own residences at Mainz, Frankfort, Berlin, and Vienna, the work may be reckoned the most remarkable performance of its kind in literature or biography (Mme. de Staël, biography: see Vol. VIII, p. 89).

I.—Germany, Its People and Customs

The multitude and extent of the forests indicate a still new civilisation. Germany still shows traces of uninhabited nature. It is a sad country, and time is needed to discover what there is to love in it. The ruined castles on the hills, the narrow windows of the houses, the long stretches of snow in winter, the silence of nature and men, all contribute towards the sadness. Yet the country and its inhabitants are interesting and poetical. You feel that human souls and imagination have embellished this land.

The only remarkable monuments in Germany are the Gothic ones which recall the age of chivalry. Modern German architecture is not worth mentioning, but the towns are well built, and the people try to make their houses look as cheerful and pleasing as possible. The gardens in some parts of Germany are almost as beautiful as in England, which denotes love of nature. Often, in the midst of the superb gardens of the German princes, 277
æolian harps are placed; the breezes waft sound and scent at once. Thus northern imagination tries to construct Italian nature.

The Germans are generally sincere and faithful; they scarcely ever break their word and are strangers to deception. Power of work and thought is another of their national traits. They are naturally literary and philosophical, but their pride of class affects in some ways their *esprit* adversely. The nobles are lacking in ideas, and the men of letters know too little about business. The Germans have imagination rather than *esprit*.

The town dwellers and the country folk, the soldiers and the workmen, nearly all have some knowledge of music. I have been to some poor houses, blackened with tobacco smoke, and not only the mistress, but also the master of the house, improvise on the piano, just as the Italians improvise in verse. Instrumental music is as generally fostered in Germany as vocal music is in Italy. Italy has the advantage, because instrumental music requires work, whilst the southern sky suffices to produce beautiful voices.

Peasant women and servants, who are too poor to put on finery, decorate their hair with a few flowers, so that imagination may at least enter into their attire.

One is constantly struck in Germany with the contrast between sentiment and custom, between talent and taste; civilisation and nature do not seem to have properly amalgamated yet. Enthusiasm for art and poetry goes with very vulgar habits in social life. Nothing could be more bizarre than the combination of the warlike aspect of Germany, where soldiers are met at every step, with the indoor life led by the people. There is a dread of fatigue and change of air, as if the nation were composed only of shopkeepers and men of letters; and yet all the institutions tend towards giving the nation military habits.

Stoves, beer, and tobacco-smoke crate around the German people a kind of heavy and hot atmosphere which 278
they do not like to leave. This atmosphere is injurious to activity, which is at least as necessary in war as in courage; resolutions are slow, discouragement is easy, because a generally sad existence does not engender much confidence in fortune.

Three motive powers lead men to fight: love of the fatherland and of liberty, love of glory, and religious fanaticism. There is not much love of the fatherland in an Empire that has been divided for centuries, where Germans fought against Germans; love of glory is not very lively where there is no centre, no capital, no society. The Germans are much more apt to get roused by abstract ideas than by the interests of life.

The love of liberty is not developed with the Germans; they have learnt neither by enjoyment, nor by privation, the prize that may be attached to it. The very independence enjoyed by Germany in all respects made the Germans indifferent to liberty; independence is a possession, liberty a guarantee, and just because nobody was crossed in Germany either in his rights or in his pleasures, nobody felt the need for an order of things that would maintain this happiness.

The Germans, with few exceptions, are scarcely capable of succeeding in anything that requires cleverness and skill; everything troubles them, makes them nervous, and they need method in action as well as independence in thought.

German women have a charm of their own, a touching quality of voice, fair hair, and brilliant complexion; they are modest, but not as shy as the English. One can see that they have often met men who were superior to them, and that they have less cause to fear the severity of public judgment. They try to please by their sensibility, and to arouse interest by the imagination. The language of poetry and of the fine arts is known to them; they flirt with enthusiasm, just as one flirts in France with *esprit* and wit.

Love is a religion in Germany, but a poetic religion, which willingly tolerates all that may be excused by 279
sensibility. The facility of divorce in the Protestant provinces certainly affects the sanctity of marriage. Husbands are changed as peacefully as if it were merely a question of arranging the incidents of a play. The good-nature of men and women prevents any bitterness entering these easy ruptures.

Some German women are ever in a state of exaltation that amounts to affectation, and the sweet expressions

of which efface whatever there may be piquant or pronounced in their mind and character. They are not frank, and yet not false either; but they see and judge nothing with truth, and the real events pass before their eyes like phantasmagoria.

But these women are the exception. Many German women have true sentiment and simple manners. Their careful education and natural purity of soul renders their dominion gentle and moderate; every day they inspire you with increased interest for all that is great and noble, with increased confidence in every kind of hope. What is rare among German women is real *esprit* and quick repartee. Conversation, as a talent, exists only in France; in other countries it only serves for polite intercourse, for discussion and for friendship; in France it is an art.

II.—On Southern Germany and Austria

Franconia, Suabia, and Bavaria were, before the foundation of the Munich Academy, strangely heavy and monotonous countries; no arts except music, little literature; an accent that did not lend itself well to the pronunciation of the Latin languages, no society; great parties that resembled ceremonies rather than amusement; obsequious politeness towards an unelegant aristocracy; kindness and loyalty in all classes, but a certain smiling stiffness which is neither ease nor dignity. In a country where society counts for nothing, and 280
nature for little, only the literary towns can be really interesting.

A temperate climate is not favourable for poetry. Where the climate is neither severe nor beautiful, one lives without fearing or hoping anything from heaven, and one only takes interest in the positive facts of existence. Southern Germany, temperate in every respect, keeps up a state of monotonous well-being which is as bad for business activity as it is for the activity of the mind. The keenest wish of the inhabitants of that peaceful and fertile country is to continue the same existence. And what can one do with that one desire? It is not even enough to preserve that with which one is contented.

There are many excellent things in Austria, but few really superior men, because in that country it is not much use to excel one's neighbour; one is not envied for it, but forgotten, which is still more discouraging. Ambition turns in the direction of obtaining good posts.

Austria, embracing so many different peoples, Bohemians, Hungarians, etc., has not the unity necessary for a monarchy. Yet the great moderation of the heads of the state has for a long time constituted a strong link.

Industry, good living and domestic pleasures are Austria's principal interests. In spite of the glory she gained by the perseverance and valour of her troops, the military spirit has really never got hold of all classes of the nation.

In a country where every movement is difficult, and where everything inspires tranquility, the slightest obstacle is an excuse for complete idleness of action and thought. One might say that this is real happiness; but does happiness consist of the faculties which one develops, or of those which one chokes?

Vienna is situated in a plain amid picturesque hills. It is an old town, very small, but surrounded by very spacious suburbs. It is said that the city proper within the fortifications is no larger than it was when Richard 281
Cœur-de-Lion was put into prison not far from its gates. The streets are as narrow as in Italy; the palaces recall a little those of Florence; in fine, nothing here resembles the rest of Germany except a few Gothic buildings, which bring back the Middle Ages to the imagination. First among these is the tower of St. Stephen's, around which somehow centres the whole history of Austria. No building can be as patriotic as a church—the only one in which all classes of the population meet, the only one which recalls not only the public events, but also the secret thoughts, the intimate affections which the rulers and the citizens have brought within its precincts.

Every great city has some building, or promenade, some work of art or nature, to which the recollections of childhood are attached. It seems to me that the *Prater* should have this charm for the Viennese. No other city can match this splendid promenade through woods and deer-stocked meadows. The daily promenade at a fixed hour is an Italian custom. Such regularity would be impossible in a country where the pleasures are as varied as in Paris; but the Viennese could never do without it. Society folk in their carriages and the people on their feet assemble here every evening. It is in the Prater that one is most struck with the easy life and the prosperity of the Viennese. Vienna has the uncontested reputation of consuming more food than any other equally populous city. You can see whole families of citizens and artisans starting for the Prater at five o'clock for a rustic meal as substantial as dinner in any other country, and the money they are able to spend on it proves their industry and kindly rule.

At night thousands of people return, without disorder, without quarrel. You can scarcely hear a voice, so silently do they take their pleasures. It is not due to sadness, but to laziness and physical well-being. Society is here with magnificent horses and carriages. Their whole amusement is to recognise in a Prater avenue the 282
friends they have just left in a drawing-room. The emperor and his brothers take their place in the long row of carriages, and prefer to be considered just as ordinary private people. They only use their rights when they are performing their duties. You never see a beggar: the charity institutions are admirably managed. And there are very few mortal crimes in Austria. Everything in this country bears the impress of a paternal, wise, and religious government.

III.—On the German Language

Germany is better suited for prose than for poetry, and the prose is better written than spoken; it is an excellent instrument if you wish to describe or to say everything; but you cannot playfully pass from subject to subject as you can in French. If you would adapt the German words to the French style of conversation you would rob them altogether of grace and dignity. The merit of the Germans is to fill their time well; the talent of the French is to make us forget time.

Although the sense of German sentences is frequently only revealed at the very end, the construction does not always permit to close a phrase with the most piquant expression, which is one of the great means to make

conversation effective. You rarely hear among the Germans what is known as a *bon-mot*; you have to admire the thought and not the brilliant way in which it is expressed.

Brilliant expression is considered a kind of charlatanism by the Germans, who take to abstract expression because it is more conscientious and approaches more closely to the very essence of truth. But conversation ought not to cause any trouble either to the listener or to the speaker. As soon as conversation in Germany departs from the ordinary interests of life it becomes too metaphysical; there is nothing between the common 283
and the sublime; and it is just this intermediate region that is the proper sphere for the art of conversation.

WEIMAR

Of all the German principalities, Weimar makes one best realise the advantages of a small country, if the ruler is a man of fine intellect who may try to please his subjects without losing their obedience. The Duchess Louise of Saxe-Weimar is the true model of a woman destined for high rank. The duke's military talents are highly esteemed; his conversation is pointed and well considered; his intellect and his mother's have attracted the most distinguished men of letters to Weimar. Germany had for the first time a literary capital.

Herder had just died when I arrived at Weimar, but Wieland, Goethe, and Schiller were still there. They can be judged from their works, for their books bear a striking resemblance to their character and conversation.

Life in small towns has never appealed to me. Man's intellect seems to become narrow and woman's heart cold. One feels oppressed by the close proximity of one's equals. All the actions of your life are minutely examined in detail, until the ensemble of your character is no longer understood. And the more your spirit is independent and elevated, the less you can breathe within the narrow confines. This disagreeable discomfort did not exist at Weimar, which was not a little town, but a large castle. A chosen circle took a lively interest in every new art production. Imagination, constantly stimulated by the conversation of the poets, felt less need for those outside distractions which lighten the burden of existence but often dissipates its forces. Weimar has been called the Athens of Germany, and rightly so. It was the only place where interest in the fine arts was, so to 284
speak, rational and served as fraternal link between the different ranks.

IV.—Prussia

To know Prussia, one has to study the character of Frederick II. A man has created this empire which had not been favoured by nature, and which has only become a power because a soldier has been its master. There are two distinct men in Frederick II.: a German by nature, and a Frenchman by education. All that the German did in a German kingdom has left lasting traces; all that the Frenchman tried has been fruitless.

Frederick's great misfortune was that he had not enough respect for religion and customs. His tastes were cynical. Frederick, in liberating his subjects of what he called prejudices, stifled in them their patriotism, for in order to get attached to a naturally sombre and sterile country one must be ruled by very stern opinions and principles. Frederick's predilection for war may be excused on political grounds. His realm, as he took it over from his father, could not exist, and aggrandisement was necessary for its preservation. He had two and a half million subjects when he ascended the throne, and he left six millions on his death.

One of his greatest wrongs was his share in the division of Poland. Silesia was acquired by force of arms. Poland by Macchiavellian conquest, "and one could never hope that subjects thus robbed should be faithful to the juggler who called himself their sovereign."

Frederick II. wanted French literature to rule alone in his country, and had no consideration for German literature, which, no doubt, was then not as remarkable as it is to-day; but a German prince should encourage all that is German. Frederick wanted to make Berlin resemble Paris, and he flattered himself to have found 285
among the French refugees some writers of sufficient distinction to have a French literature. Such hope was bound to be deceptive. Artificial culture never prospers; a few individuals may fight against the natural difficulties, but the masses will always follow their natural leaning. Frederick did a real wrong to his country when he professed to despise German genius.

BERLIN

Berlin is a large town, with wide, long, straight streets, beautiful houses, and an orderly aspect; but as it has only recently been rebuilt, it contains nothing to recall the past. No Gothic monument exists among the modern dwellings, and this newly-formed country is in no way interfered with by the past. But modern Berlin, with all its beauty, does not impress me seriously. It tells nothing of the history of the country or the character of its inhabitants; and these beautiful new houses seem to be destined only for the comfortable gatherings of business or industry. The most beautiful palaces of Berlin are built of brick. Prussia's capital resembles Prussia herself; its buildings and institutions have the age of one generation, and no more, because one man alone is their creator.

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THE "GERMANIA" OF TACITUS

Customs and Peoples of Germany

"Germania," the full title of which is "Concerning the Geography, the Manners and Customs, and the Peoples of Germany," consists of forty-six sections, the first twenty-seven describing the characteristics of the peoples, their customs, beliefs, and institutions; the remaining nineteen dealing with the individual peculiarities of each separate tribe. As a record of the Teutonic tribes, written purely from an ethical and rhetorical standpoint, the work is of the utmost importance, and, on the whole, is regarded as trustworthy. Its weak point is its geography, details of which Tacitus (see Vol. XI, p. 156) no doubt gathered from hearsay. The main object of the work was not so much to compose a history of Germany, as to draw a comparison between the independence of the Northern peoples and the corrupt civilisation of contemporary Roman life. Possibly, also, Tacitus intended to sound a note of alarm.

I.—Germany and the German Tribes

The whole of Germany is thus bounded. It is separated from Gaul, Rhætia, and Pannonia by the rivers Rhine and Danube; from Sarmatia and Dacia by mutual fear, or by high mountains; the rest is encompassed by the ocean, which forms vast bays and contains many large islands. The Rhine, rising from a rocky summit in the Rhætian Alps, winds westward, and is lost in the northern ocean. The Danube, issuing from Mount Abnoba, traverses several countries and finally falls into the Euxine.

I believe that the population is indigenous to Germany, and that the nation is free from foreign admixture. They affirm Germany to be a recent word, lately bestowed on those who first passed the Rhine and repulsed the Gauls. From one tribe the whole nation has thus been named. They cherish a tradition that Hercules had been in their country, and him they extol in their battle songs. Some are of opinion that Ulysses also, during his long 287
wanderings, was carried into this ocean and entered Germany, and that he founded the city Asciburgium, which stands at this day upon the bank of the Rhine. Such traditions I purpose myself neither to confirm nor to refute; but I agree with those who maintain that the Germans have never intermingled by marriages with other nations, but have remained a pure, independent people, resembling none but themselves.

With whatever differences in various districts, their territory mainly consists of gloomy forests or insalubrious marshes, lower and more humid towards Gaul, more hilly and bleak towards Noricum and Pannonia. The soil is suited to the production of grain, but less so for the cultivation of fruits. Flocks and herds abound, but the cattle are somewhat small. Their herds are their most valued possessions. Silver and gold the gods have denied them, whether in mercy or in wrath I cannot determine. Nor is iron plentiful with them, as may be judged from their weapons. Swords or long spears they rarely use, for they fight chiefly with javelins and shields. Their strength lies mainly in their foot, and such is the swiftness of the infantry that it can suit and match the motions and engagements of the cavalry.

Generals are chosen for their courage, kings are elected through distinction of race. The power of the rulers is not unlimited or arbitrary, and the generals secure obedience mainly by force of the example of their own enterprise and bravery.

Therefore, when going on a campaign, they carry with them sacred images taken from the sacred groves. It is their custom also to flock to the field of war not merely in battalions, but with whole families and tribes of relations. Thus, close to the scene of conflict are lodged the most cherished pledges of nature, and the cries of wives and infants are heard mingling with the echoes of battle. Their wounds and injuries they carry to their 288
mothers and wives, and the women administer food and encouragement to their husbands and sons even while these are engaged in fighting.

II.—Customs of Government and War

Mercury is the god most generally worshipped. To him at certain times it is lawful to offer even human sacrifices. Hercules, Mars, and Isis are also recognised as deities. From the majesty of celestial beings, the Germans judge it to be unsuitable to hold their shrines within walls, or to represent them under any human likeness. They therefore consecrate whole woods and groves, and on these sylvan retreats they bestow the names of the deities, thus beholding the divinities only in contemplation and mental reverence.

Although the chiefs regulate affairs of minor import, the whole nation deliberates concerning matters of higher consequence, the chiefs afterwards discussing the public decision. The assemblies gather leisurely, for sometimes many do not arrive for two or three days. The priests enjoin silence, and on them is devolved the prerogative of correction. The chiefs are heard according to precedence, or age, or nobility, or warlike celebrity, or eloquence. Ability to persuade has more influence than authority to command. Inarticulate murmurs express displeasure at a proposition, pleasure is indicated by the brandishing of javelins and the clashing of arms.

Punishments vary with the character of crime. Traitors and deserters are hanged on trees; cowards, sluggards, and vicious women are smothered in bogs. Fines, to be paid in horses or cattle, are exacted for lighter offences, part of the mulct being awarded to the party wronged, part to the chief.

The Germans transact no business without carrying arms, but no man thus bears weapons till the community 289
has tested his capacity to wield them. When the public approval has been signified, the youth is invested in the midst of the assembly by his father or other relative with a shield and javelin.

Their chief distinction is to be constantly surrounded by a great band of select young men, for their honour in peace and their help in warfare.

In battle it is disgraceful to a chief to be surpassed in feats of bravery, and it is an indelible reproach to his followers to return alive from a conflict in which their prince has been slain. The chief fights for victory, his

followers fight for him. The Germans are so restless that they cannot endure repose, and thus many of the young men of rank, if their own tribe is tranquil, quit it for a community which happens to be engaged in war. In place of pay the retainers are supplied with daily repasts, grossly prepared, but always profuse.

III.—Domestic Customs of the Germans

Intervals of peace are not much devoted to the chase by the Germans, but rather to indolence, to sleep, and to feasting. Many surrender themselves entirely to sloth and gluttony, the cares of house, lands, and possessions being left to the wives. It is an astonishing paradox that in the same men should co-exist so much delight in idleness and so great a repugnance to tranquil life.

The Germans do not dwell in cities, and endure no contiguity in their abodes, inhabiting spots distinct and apart, just as they fancy, a fountain, a grove, or a field. Their villages consist of houses arranged in opposite rows, not joined together as are ours. Each is detached, with space around, and mortar and tiles are unknown. Many, in winter, retreat to holes dug in the ground, to which they convey their grain.

The laws of matrimony are strictly observed, and polygamy is rarely practised among the Germans. The 290
dowry is not brought by the wife, but by the husband. Conjugal infidelity is exceedingly rare, and is instantly punished. In all families the children are reared without clothing, and thus grow into those physical proportions which are so wonderful to look upon. They are invariably suckled by their mothers, never being entrusted to nursemaids. The young people do not hasten to marry, and thus the robust vigour of the parents is inherited by their offspring.

No nation was ever more noted for hospitality. It is esteemed inhuman to refuse to admit to the home any stranger whatever. Every comer is willingly received and generously feasted. Hosts and guests delight in exchanging gifts. To continue drinking night and day is no reproach to any man. Quarrels through inebriety are very frequent, and these often result in injuries and in fatalities. But likewise, in these convivial feasts they usually deliberate about effecting reconciliation between those who are at enmity, and also about forming affinities, the election of chiefs, and peace and war.

Slaves gained in gambling with dice are exchanged in commerce to remove the shame of such victories. Of their other slaves each has a dwelling of his own, his lord treating him like a tenant, exacting from him an amount of grain, or cattle, or cloth. Thus their slaves are not subservient as are ours. For they do not perform services in the households of their masters, these duties falling to the wives and children of the family. Slaves are rarely seen in chains or punished with stripes, though in the heat of passion they may sometimes be killed.

Usury and borrowing at interest are unknown. The families every year shift on the spacious plains, cultivating fresh allotments of the soil. Only corn is grown, for there is no inclination to expend toil proportionate to the capacity of the lands by planting orchards, or enclosing meadows, or watering gardens.

Their funerals are not ostentatious, neither apparel nor perfumes being accumulated on the pile, though the 291
arms of the deceased are thrown into the fire. Little demonstration is made in weeping or wailing, but the grief endures long. So much concerning the customs of the whole German nation.

IV.—Tribes of the West and North

I shall now describe the institutions of the several tribes, as they differ from one another, giving also an account of those who from thence removed, migrating to Gaul. That the Gauls were more powerful in former times is shown by that prince of authors, the deified Julius Cæsar. Hence it is probable that they have passed into Germany.

The region between the Hercynian forest and the rivers Maine and Rhine was occupied by the Helvetians, as was that beyond it by the Boians, both Gallic tribes. The Treveri and Nervii fervently aspire to the reputation of descent from the Germans, and the Vangiones, Triboci, and Nemetes, all dwelling by the Rhine, are certainly all Germans. The Ubii are ashamed of their origin and delight to be called Agrippinenses, after the name of the founder of the Roman colony which they were judged worthy of being constituted.

The Batavi are the bravest of all these nations. They inhabit a little territory by the Rhine, but possess an island on it. Becoming willingly part of the Roman empire, they are free from all impositions and pay no tribute, but are reserved wholly for wars, precisely like a magazine of weapons and armour. In the same position are the Mattiaci, living on the opposite banks and enjoying a settlement and limits of their own, while they are in spirit and inclination attached to us.

Beginning at the Hercynian forest are the Catti, a robust and vigorous people, possessed also of much sense 292
and ability. They are not only singularly brave, but are more skilled in the true art of war than other Germans.

Near the Catti were formerly dwelling the Bructeri, in whose stead are now settled the Chamani and the Angrivarii, by whom the Bructeri were expelled and almost exterminated, to the benefit of us Romans. May the gods perpetuate among these nations their mutual hatred, since fortune befriends our empire by sowing strife amongst our foes!

The country of the Frisii, facing that of the Angrivarii and the Chamani, is divided into two sections, called the greater and the lesser, which both extend along the Rhine to the ocean.

Hitherto I have been describing Germany towards the west. Northward it stretches with an immense compass. The great tribe of the Chauci occupy the whole region between the districts of the Frisii and of the Catti. These Chauci are the noblest people of all the Germans. They prefer to maintain their greatness by justice rather than by violence, seeking to live in tranquillity, and to avoid quarrels with others.

By the side of the Chauci and the Catti dwell the Cherusci, a people who have degenerated in both influence and character. Finding no enemy to stimulate them, they were enfeebled by too lasting a peace, and whereas they were formerly styled good and upright, they are now called cowards and fools, having been subdued by the

Catti. In the same winding tract live the Cimbri, close to the sea, a tribe now small in numbers but great in fame for many monuments of their old renown. It was in the 610th year of Rome, Cæcilius Metellus and Papirius Carbo being consuls, that the first mention was made of the arms of the Cimbri. From that date to the second consulship of the Emperor Trajan comprehends an interval of nearly 210 years; so long a period has our conquest of Germany occupied. In so great an interval many have been the disasters on both sides.

Indeed, not from the Samnites, or from the Carthaginians, or from the people of Spain, or from all the tribes of Gaul, or even from the Parthians, have we received more checks or encountered more alarms. For the passion of the Germans for liberty is more indomitable than that of the Arsacidæ. What has the power of the East to lay to our dishonour? But the overthrow and abasement of Crassus, and the loss by the Romans of five great armies, all commanded by consuls, have to be laid to the account of the Germans. By the Germans, also, even the Emperor Augustus was deprived of Varus and three legions.

Only with great difficulty and the loss of many men were the Germans defeated by Caius Marius in Italy, or by the deified Julius Cæsar in Gaul, or by Drusus, or Tiberius, or Germanicus in their native territories. And next, the strenuous menaces of Caligula against these foes ended in mockery and ridicule. Afterwards, for a season they were quiet, till, tempted to take advantage of our domestic schisms and civil wars, they stormed and seized the winter entrenchments of our legions, and attempted the conquest of Gaul. Though they were once more repulsed, our success was rather a triumph than an overwhelming victory.

V.—The Great Nation of the Suevi

Next I must refer to the Suevi, who are not, like the Catti, a homogeneous people, but are divided into several tribes, all bearing distinct names, although they likewise are called by the generic title of Suevi. They occupy the larger part of Germany. From other Germans they are distinguished by their peculiar fashion of twisting their hair into a knot, this also marking the difference between the freemen and their slaves. Of all the tribes of the Suevi, the Semnones esteem themselves to be the most ancient and the noblest, their faith in their antiquity being confirmed by the mysteries of their religion. Annually in a sacred grove the deputies of each family clan assemble to repeat the rites practised by their ancestors. The horrible ceremonies commence with the sacrifice of a man. Their tradition is that at this spot the nation originated, and that here the supreme deity resides. The Semnones inhabit a hundred towns, and by their superior numbers and authority dominate the rest of the Suevi.

On the contrary, the Langobardi are ennobled by the paucity of their number, for, though surrounded by powerful tribes, they assert their superiority by their valour and skill instead of displaying obsequiousness. Next come the Reudigni, the Aviones, the Angli, the Varini, the Eudoses, the Suardones and the Nuithones, all defended by rivers or forests.

These are marked by no special characteristics, excepting the common worship of the goddess Nerthum, or Mother Earth, of whom they believe that she not only intervenes in human affairs, but also visits the nations. In a certain island of the sea is a wood called Castum. Here is kept a chariot sacred to the goddess, covered with a curtain, and permitted to be touched only by her priest, who perceives her whenever she enters the holy vehicle, and with deepest veneration attends the motion of the chariot, which is always drawn by yoked cows. Till the same priests re-conducts the goddess to her shrine, after she has grown weary of intercourse with mortals, feasts and games are held with great rejoicings, no arms are touched, and none go to war. Slaves wash the chariot and curtains in a sacred lake, and, if you will believe it, the goddess herself; and forthwith these unfortunate beings are doomed to be swallowed up in the same lake.

This portion of the Suevian territory stretches to the centre of Germany. Next adjoining is the district of the Hermunduri (I am now following the course of the Danube as I previously did that of the Rhine), a tribe faithful to the Romans. To them, accordingly, alone of all the Germans, is commerce permitted. They travel everywhere at their own discretion. When to others we show nothing more than our arms and our encampments, to this people we open our houses, as to men who are not longing to possess them. The Elbe rises in the territory of the Hermunduri.

VI.—The Tribes of the Frontier

Near the Hermunduri reside the Narisci, and next the Marcomanni and the Quadi, the former being the more famed for strength and bravery, for it was by force that they acquired their location, expelling from it the Boii. Now, here is, as it were, the frontier of Germany, as far as it is washed by the Danube. Not less powerful are several tribes whose territories enclose the lands of those just named—the Marsigni, the Gothini, the Osi, and the Burii. The Marsigni in speech and dress resemble the Suevi; but as the Gothini speak Gallic, and the Osi the Pannonian language, and as they endure the imposition of tribute, it is manifest that neither of these peoples are Germans.

Upon them, as aliens, tribute is imposed, partly by the Sarmatæ, partly by the Quadi, and, to deepen their disgrace, the Gothini are forced to labour in the iron mines. Little level country is possessed by all these several tribes, for they are located among mountainous forest regions, Suevia being parted by a continuous range of mountains, beyond which live many nations. Of these, the most numerous and widely spread are the Lygii. Among others, the most powerful are the Arii, the Helveconæ, the Manimi, the Elysii, and the Naharvali.

The Arii are the most numerous, and also the fiercest of the tribes just enumerated. They carry black shields, paint their bodies black, and choose dark nights for engaging in battle. The ghastly aspect of their army strikes terror into their foes, for in all battles the eyes are vanquished first. Beyond the Lygii dwell the Gothones, ruled by a king, and thus held in stricter subjection than the other German tribes, yet not so that their liberties are extinguished. Immediately adjacent are the Rugii and the Lemovii, dwelling by the coast. The characteristic of both is the use of a round shield and a short sword.

Next are the Suiones, a seafaring community with very powerful fleets. The ships differ in form from ours in

possessing prows at each end, so as to be always ready to row to shore without turning. They are not propelled by sails, and have no benches of oars at the sides. The rowers ply in all parts of the ship alike, and change their oars from place to place according as the course is shifted hither and thither. Great homage is paid among them to wealth; they are governed by a single chief, who exacts implicit obedience. Arms are not used by these people indiscriminately, as by other German tribes. Weapons are shut up under the care of a slave. The reason is that the ocean always protects the Suiones from their foes, and also that armed bands, when not employed, grow easily demoralised.

Beyond the Suiones is another sea, dense and calm. It is thought that by this the whole globe is bounded, for the reflection of the sun, after his setting, continues till he rises, and that so radiantly as to obscure the stars. Popular opinion even adds that the tumult is heard of his emerging from the ocean, and that at sunrise forms divine are seen, and also the rays about his head. Only thus far extend the limits of Nature, if what fame reports be true.

The Æstii reside on the right of the Suevian Sea. Their dress and customs resemble those of the Suevi, but the language is akin to that of Britain. They worship the Mother of gods, and wear images of boars, without any weapons, superstitiously trusting the goddess and the images to safeguard them. But they cultivate the soil with 297
much greater zeal than is usual with Germans, and they even search the ocean, and are the only people who gather amber, which they find in the shallows and along the shore. It lay long neglected till it gained value from our luxury.

Bordering on the Suiones are the Sitones, agreeing with them in all things excepting that they are governed by a woman. So emphatically have they degenerated, not merely from liberty, but even below a condition of bondage. Here end the territories of the Suevi. Whether I ought to include the Peucini, the Venedi, and the Fenni among the Sarmatæ or the Germani I cannot determine, although the Peucini speak the same language with the Germani, dress, build, and live like them, and resemble them in dirt and sloth.

What further accounts we have are fabulous, and these I leave untouched.

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HIPPOLYTE ADOLPHE TAINE

History of English Literature

Two years before the appearance of his "Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise" Taine had aroused a lively interest in England by his "Notes sur l'Angleterre," a work showing much wayward sympathy for the English character, and an irregular understanding of English institutions. The same mixed impression was produced by the laboriously conceived and brilliantly written "History of English Literature." Taine (see Vol. XXIV, p. 177) wrote to a theory that often worked out into curious contradictions. His method was to show how men have been shaped by the environments and tendencies of their age. Unfortunately, having formed an idea of the kind of literature our age should produce according to his theory, he had eyes for nothing except what he expected to find. He went to literature for his confirmations of his reading of history. Taine's criticism, in consequence, is often incomplete, and more piquant than trustworthy. The failure to appreciate some of the great English writers—notably Shakespeare and Milton—is patent. Still, the critic always had the will to be just, and no foreigner has devoted such complimentary labour to the formation of a complete estimate of English literature. The book was published in 1863–4.

Saxon and Norman

History has been revolutionised by the study of literatures. A work of literature is now perceived, not to be a solitary caprice, but a transcript of contemporary manners, from which we may read the style of man's feelings for centuries back. By the study of a literature, one may construct a moral history, the psychology of a people. To find a complete literature is rare. Only ancient Greece, and modern France and England offer a complete series of great literary monuments. I have chosen England because it is alive, and one can see it with more detachment than one can see France.

Huge white bodies, cool-blooded, with fierce blue eyes, reddish flaxen hair; ravenous stomachs filled with meat and cheese and heated by strong drinks; a cold temperament, slow to love, home-staying, prone to drunkenness—these are to this day the features which descent and climate preserve to the English race. The heavy human brute gluts himself with sensations and noise, and this appetite finds a grazing-ground in blows and battle. Strife for strife's sake such is their pleasure. A race so constituted was predisposed to Christianity by its gloom, and beyond Christianity foreign culture could not graft any fruitful branch on this barbarous stock. The Norman conquerors of France had by intermarriage become a Latin race, and nimbly educated themselves from the Gauls, who boasted of "talking with ease." When they crossed to England, they introduced new manners and a new spirit. They taught the Saxon how ideas fall in order, and which ideas are agreeable; they taught him how to be clear, amusing, and pungent. At length, after long impotence of Norman literature, which was content to copy, and of Saxon literature, which bore no fruit, a definite language was attained, and there was room for a great writer. 299

Chaucer

Then Geoffrey Chaucer appeared, inventive though a disciple, original though a translator, and by his genius, education, and life was enabled to know and depict a whole world, but above all to satisfy the chivalric world and the splendid courts which shone upon the heights. He belonged to it, and took such part in it that his life from end to end was that of a man of the world and a man of action.

Two motives raised the middle age above the chaos of barbarism, one religious, which fashioned the gigantic cathedrals, the other secular, which built the feudal fortresses. The one produced the adventurous hero, the other the mystical monk. These master-passions gave way at last to monotony of habit and taste for worldliness. 300 Something was then needed to make the evening hours flow sweetly. The lords at table have finished dinner; the poet arrives; they ask him for his subject, and he answers "Love."

There is something more pleasant than a fine narrative, and that is a collection of fine narratives, especially when the narratives are all of different colouring. This collection Chaucer gave us, and more. If over-excited, he is always graceful, polished, full of light banter, half-mockeries, somewhat gossipy. An elegant speaker, facile, every ready to smile, he makes of love not a passion but a gay feast. But if he was romantic and gay after the fashion of his age, he also had a fashion of his own. He observes characters, notes their differences, studies the coherence of their parts, brings forward living and distinct persons—a thing unheard of in his time. It is the English positive good sense and aptitude for seeing the inside of things beginning to appear. Chaucer ceases to gossip, and thinks. Each tale is suited to the teller. Instead of surrendering himself to the facility of glowing improvisation, he plans. All his tales are bound together by veritable incidents which spring from the characters of the personages, and are such as we light upon in our travels. He advanced beyond the threshold of his art, but he paused in the vestibule. He half-opens the door of the temple, but does not take his seat there; at most he sat down at intervals. His voice is like that of a boy breaking into manhood. He sets out as if to quit the middle ages; but in the end he is still there.

The Renaissance

For seventeen centuries a deep and sad thought had weighed upon the spirit of man—the idea of his impotence and decadence. Greek corruption, Roman oppression, and the dissolution of the old world had given it birth; it, in its turn, had produced a stoical resignation, an epicurean indifference, Alexandrian mysticism, and 301 the Christian hope in the Kingdom of God. At last invention makes another start. All was renewed, America and the Indies were added to the map. The system of the universe was propounded, the experimental sciences were set on foot, art and literature shot forth like a harvest, and religion was transformed. It seems as though men had suddenly opened their eyes and seen. They attained a new and superior kind of intelligence which produced

extraordinary warmth of soul, a super-abundant and splendid imagination, reveries, visions, artists, believers, founders, creators. This was Europe's grand age, and the most notable epoch of human growth. To this day we live from its sap. To vent the feelings, to set free boldly on all the roads of existence the pack of appetites and instincts, this was the craving which the manners of the time betrayed. It was "merry England," as they called it then. It was not yet stern and constrained. It extended widely, freely, and rejoiced to find itself so expanded. A few sectarians, chiefly in the towns, clung gloomily to the Bible; but the Court, and the men of the world sought their teachers and their heroes from Pagan Greece and Rome. Nearer still was another Paganism, that of Italy, and civilisation was drawn thence as from a spring. Transplanted into different races and climates, this paganism received from each a distinct character—in England it becomes English. Here Surrey—the English Petrarch—introduced a new style, a manly style, which marks a great transformation of the mind. He looks forward to the last line while writing the first, and keeps the strongest word for the last. He collects his phrases in harmonious periods, and by his inversions adds force to his ideas. Every epithet contains an idea, every metaphor a sentiment. Those who have ideas now possess in the new-born art an instrument capable of expressing them. In half a century English writers had introduced every artifice of language, period, and style. 302

Luxuriance and irregularity were the two features of the new literature. Sir Philip Sydney may be selected as exhibiting the greatness and the folly of the prevailing taste. How can his pastoral epic, "The Arcadia," be described? It is but a recreation, a poetical romance written in the country for the amusement of a sister, a work of fashion, a relic, but it shows the best of the general spirit, the jargon of the world of culture, fantastic imagination, excessive sentiment, a medley of events which suited men scarcely recovered from barbarism. At his period men's heads were full of tragical images, and Sydney's "Arcadia" contains enough of them to supply half a dozen epics. And Sydney was only a soldier in an army; there is a multitude about him, a multitude of poets. How happens it that when this generation was exhausted true poetry ended in England as true painting in Italy and Flanders? It was because an epoch of the mind came and passed away. These men had new ideas and no theories in their heads. Their emotions were not the same as ours. For them all things had a soul, and though they had no more beauty then than now, men found them more beautiful.

Spenser

Among all the poems of this time there is one truly divine—Spenser's "Faërie Queene." Everything in his life was calculated to lead Spenser to ideal poetry; but the heart within is the true poet. Before all, his was a soul captivated by sublime and chaste beauty. Philosophy and landscapes, ceremonies and ornaments, splendours of the country and the court, on all which he painted or thought he impressed his inward nobleness. Spenser remains calm in the fervour of invention. He is epic, that is, a narrator. No modern is more like Homer. Like 303
Homer, he is always simple and clear; he makes no leap, he omits no argument, he preserves the natural sequence of ideas while presenting noble classical images. Like Homer, again, he is redundant, ingenuous: even childish. He says everything, and repeats without limit his ornamental epithets.

To expand in epic faculties in the region where his soul is naturally borne, he requires an ideal stage, situated beyond the bounds of reality, in a world which could never be. His most genuine sentiments are fairy-like. Magic is the mould of his mind. He carries everything that he looks upon into an enchanted land. Only the world of chivalry could have furnished materials for so elevated a fancy. It is the beauty in the poet's heart which his whole works try to express, a noble yet laughing beauty, English in sentiment, Italian in externals, chivalric in subject, representing a unique epoch, the appearance of Paganism in a Christian race, and the worship of form by an imagination of the North.

Among the prose writers of the Pagan renaissance, two may be singled out as characteristic, namely, Robert Burton—an ecclesiastic and university recluse who dabbled in all the sciences, was gifted with enthusiasm and spasmodically gay, but as a rule sad and morose, and according to circumstances a poet, an eccentric, a humorist, a madman, or a Puritan—and Francis Bacon, the most comprehensive, sensible, originative mind of the age; a great and luminous intellect. After more than two centuries it is still to Bacon that we go to discover the theory of what we are attempting and doing.

The Theatre

The theatre was a special product of the English Renaissance. If ever there was a living and natural work, it is here. There were already seven theatres in Shakespeare's time, so great and universal was the taste for 304
representations. The inborn instincts of the people had not been tamed, nor muzzled, nor diminished. We hear from the stage as from the history of the times, the fierce murmur of all the passions. Not one of them was lacking. The poets who established the drama, carried in themselves the sentiments which the drama represents. Greene, Marlowe, and the rest, were ill-regulated, passionate, outrageously vehement and audacious. The drama is found in Marlowe as the plant in the seed, and Marlowe was a primitive man, the slave of his passions, the sport of his dreams. Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Jonson, Webster, Massinger, Ford, appear close upon each other, a new and favoured generation, flourishing in the soil fertilised by the efforts of the generation which preceded them. The characters they produced were such as either excite terror by their violence, or pity by their grace. Passion ravages all around when their tragic figures are on the stage; and contrasted with them is a troop of sweet and timid figures, tender before everything, and the most loveworthy it has been given to man to depict. The men are warlike, imperious, unpolished; the women have sweetness, devotion, patience, inextinguishable affection—a thing unknown in distant lands, and in France especially. With these women love becomes almost a holy thing. They aim not at pleasure but at devotion. When a new civilisation brings a new art to light there are about a dozen men of talent who express the general idea surrounding one or two men of genius who express it thoroughly. The first constitute the chorus, the others the leaders. The leaders in this movement are Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

Ben Jonson was a genuine Englishman, big and coarsely framed, combative, proud, often morose, prone to strain splenitic imaginations. His knowledge was vast. In an age of great scholars he is one of the best classics of his time. Other poets for the most part are visionaries; Jonson is all but a logician. Whatever he undertakes, 305

whatever be his faults, haughtiness, rough-handling, predilection for morality and the past, he is never little or commonplace. Nearly all his work consists of comedies, not sentimental and fanciful as Shakespeare's, but satirical, written to represent and correct follies and vices. Even when he grew old his imagination remained abundant and fresh. He is the brother of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare

Only this great age could have cradled such a child as Shakespeare. What soul! What extent of action, and what sovereignty of an unique faculty! What diverse creations, and what persistence of the same impress! Look now. Do you not see the poet behind the crowd of his creations? They have all shown somewhat of him. Ready, impetuous, impassioned, delicate, his genius is pure imagination, touched more vividly and by slighter things than ours. Hence, his style, blooming with exuberant images, loaded with exaggerated metaphors. An extraordinary species of mind, all-powerful, excessive, equally master of the sublime and the base, the most creative that ever engaged in the exact copy of the details of actual existence, in the dazzling caprice of fancy, in the profound complications of superhuman passions; a nature inspired, superior to reason, extreme in joy and pain, abrupt of gait, stormy and impetuous in its transports!

Shakespeare images with copiousness and excess; he spreads metaphors profusely over all he writes; it is a series of painting which is unfolded in his mind, picture on picture, image on image, he is forever copying the strange and splendid visions which are heaped up within him. Such an imagination must needs be vehement. Every metaphor is a convulsion. Shakespeare's style is a compound of curious impressions. He never sees things 306
tranquilly. Like a fiery and powerful horse, he bounds but cannot run. He flies, we creep. He is obscure and original beyond all the poets of his or any other age—the most immoderate of all violaters of language, the most marvellous of all creators of souls. The critic is lost in Shakespeare as in an immense town. He can only describe a few monuments and entreat the reader to imagine the city.

The Christian Renaissance

Following the pagan came the Christian Renaissance born of the Reformation, a new birth in harmony with the genius of the Germanic peoples. It must be admitted that the Reformation entered England by a side door. It was established when Henry VIII. permitted the English Bible to be published. England had her book. Hence have sprung much of the English language and half of the English manners; to this day the country is Biblical. After the Bible the book most widely-read in England is the Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan. It is a manual of devotion for the use of simple folk. In it we hear a man of the people speaking to the people, who would render intelligible to all the terrible doctrine of damnation and salvation. Allegory is natural to Bunyan. He employs it from necessity. He only grasps truth when it is made simple by images. His work is allegorical, that it may be intelligible. Bunyan is a poet because he is a child. He has the freedom, the tone, the ease, the clearness of Homer; he is as close to Homer as an Anabaptist tinker could be to a heroic singer. He and Milton survived as the two last poets of the Reformation, oppressed and insulted, but their work continues without noise, for the ideal they raised was, after all, that which the time suggested and the race demanded.

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Milton

John Milton was not one of those fevered souls whose rapture takes them by fits, and whose inquietude condemns them to paint the contradictions of passion. His mind was lucid, his imagination limited. He does not create souls but constructs arguments. Emotions and arguments are arranged beneath a unique sentiment, that of the sublime, and the broad river of lyric poetry streams from him with even flow, splendid as a cloth of gold.

Against external fluctuations he found a refuge in himself; and the ideal city which he had built in his soul endured impregnable to all assaults. He believed in the sublime with the whole force of his nature, and the whole authority of his logic. When after a generous education he returned from his travels he threw himself into the strife of the times heartily, armed with logic, indignation and learning, and protected by conviction and conscience. I have before me the formidable volume in which his prose works were collected. What a book! The chairs creak when you place it upon them. How we cannot fix our attention on the same point for a page at a time. We require manageable ideas; we have disused the big two-handed sword of our forefathers. If Michael Angelo's prophets could speak, it would be in Milton's style. Overloaded with ornaments, infinitely prolonged, these periods are triumphant choruses of angelic Alleluias sung by deep voices to the accompaniment of ten thousand harps of gold. But is he truly a prose-writer? Entangled dialectics, a heavy and awkward mind, fanatical and ferocious provincialism, the blast and temerities of implacable passion, the sublimity of religious and lyric exaltation—we do not recognize in these features a man born to explain, persuade, and prove.

As a poet Milton wrote not by impulse but like a man of letters with the assistance of books, seeing objects 308
as much through previous writings as in themselves, adding to his images the images of others, borrowing and recasting their inventions. He made thus for himself a composite and brilliant style, less natural than that of his precursors, less fit for effusions, less akin to the lively first glow of sensation, but more solid, more regular, more capable of concentrating in one large patch of light all their sparklings and splendours. He compacted and ennobled the poets' domain.

When, however, after seventeen years of fighting and misfortune had steeped his soul in religious ideas, mythology yielded to theology, the habit of discussion subdued the lyric light. The poet no longer sings sublime verse, he harangues in grave verse, he gives us correct solemn discourses. Adam and Eve the first pair! I listen and hear two reasoners of the period—Colonel Hutchinson and his wife. Heavens! dress them at once. Folks so cultivated should have invented before all a pair of trousers and modesty. This Adam enters Paradise via England. There he learnt respectability and moral speechifying. Adam was your true *pater familias* with a vote, an old Oxford man, consulted at need by his wife, and dealing out to her with prudent measure the scientific explanations which she requires. The flow of dissertations never pauses. From Paradise it gets into Heaven.

Milton's Jehovah is a grave king who maintains a suitable state something like Charles I. The finest thing in connection with Paradise is Hell; and in this history of God, the chief part is taken by the devil. No poetic creation equals in horror and grandeur the spectacle that greeted Satan on leaving his dungeon.

But what a heaven! One would rather enter Charles I's troops of lackeys, or Cromwell's Ironsides. What a gap between this monarchical frippery and the visions of Dante! To the poet of the Apocalypse the voice of the deity was "as the sound of many waters; and he had in his right hand seven stars; and his countenance was as 309
the sun shining in his strength; and when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead." When Milton arranged his celestial show, he did not fall at his feet as dead.

When we take in, in one view, the vast literary region of England, extending from the restoration of the Stuarts to the French Revolution, we perceive that all the productions bear a classical impress, such as is met with neither in the preceding nor in the succeeding time. This classical art finds its centre in the labours of Pope, and above all in Pope, whose favourite author is Dryden, of all English poets the least inspired and the most classical. Pope gave himself up to versification. He did not write because he thought, but he thought in order to write. I wish I could admire his works of imagination, but I cannot. I know the machinery. There is, however, a poet in Pope, and to discover him we have only to read him in fragments. Each verse in Pope is a masterpiece if taken alone. There is a classical architecture of ideas, and of all the masters who have practised it in England Pope is the most skilled.

The Modern Spirit

The spirit of the modern revolution broke out first in a Scotch peasant, Robert Burns. Scarcely ever was seen together more of misery and talent. Burns cries out in favour of instinct and joy. Love was his main business. In him for the first time a poet spoke as men speak, or, rather, as they think, without premeditation, with a mixture of all styles. Burns was much in advance of his age, and the life of men in advance of their age is not wholesome. He died worn out at 37. In him old narrow moralities give place to the wide sympathy of the modern man.

Now appeared the English romantic school. Among the multitude of its writers we may distinguish Southey, 310
a clever man, a producer of decorative poems to suit the fashion; Coleridge, a poor fellow who had steeped himself in mystical theories; Thomas More, a witty railer; and Walter Scott, the favourite of his age, who was read over the whole of Europe, was almost equal to Shakespeare, had more popularity than Voltaire, earned about £200,000, and taught us all history. Scott gave to Scotland a citizenship of literature. Scott loves men from the bottom of his heart. By his fundamental honesty and wide humanity he was the Homer of modern life.

When the philosophical spirit passed from Germany to England, transformed itself and became Anglican, deformed itself and became revolutionary, it produced a Wordsworth, a Byron, a Shelley. Wordsworth, a new Cowper, with less talent and more ideas, was essentially an interior man, engrossed by the concerns of the soul. To such men life becomes a grave business on which we must incessantly and scrupulously reflect. Wordsworth was a wise and happy man, a thinker and dreamer, who read and walked and listened in deep calm to his own thoughts. The peace was so great within him and around him that he could perceive the imperceptible. He saw grandeur and beauty in the trivial events which weave the woof of our most commonplace days. His "Excursion" is like a Protestant temple—august though bare and monstrous.

Shelley, one of the greatest poets of the age, beautiful as an angel, of extraordinary precocity, sweet, generous, tender, overflowing with gifts of heart, mind, birth, and fortune, marred his life by introducing into his conduct the enthusiastic imagination he should have kept for his verse. His world is beyond our own. We move in it between heaven and earth, in abstraction, dreamland, symbolism. Shelley loved desert and solitary places, where man enjoys the pleasure of believing infinite what he sees—infinite as his soul. Verily there is a soul in everything; in the universe is a soul; even beyond the sensible form shines a secret essence and 311
something divine which we catch sight of by sublime illuminations, never reaching or penetrating it. The poets hear the great heart of nature beat; they would reach it. One alone, Byron, succeeds.

I have reserved for the last the greatest and most English artist, from whom we may learn more truths of his country and of his age than from all the rest. All styles appear dull, and all souls sluggish by the side of Byron's. No such great poet has had so narrow an imagination. They are his own sorrows, his own revolts, his own travels, which, hardly transformed and modified, he introduces into his verses. He never could make a poem save of his own heart. If Goethe was the poet of the universe, Byron was the poet of the individual; and if the German genius found its interpretation in the one, the English genius found its interpretation in the other.

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HENRY DAVID THOREAU

"Walden"

Henry David Thoreau, America's poet-naturalist, as he might be called, was born at Concord, Mass., on July 12, 1817. His great-grandparents were natives of the Channel Islands, whence his grandfather emigrated. Thoreau was educated at Hartford, and began work as a teacher, but under the influence of Emerson, in whose house he lived at intervals, made writing his hobby and a study of the outdoor world his occupation. In 1845, as related in "Walden," he built himself a shanty near Walden Pond, on land belonging to Emerson. There he busied himself with writing his "Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers," and in recording his observations in the woods. After the Walden experiment he mingled the pursuit of literature and the doing of odd jobs for a living. His books, "The Maine Woods," "A Yankee in Canada," "Excursions in Field and Wood," were mostly published after his death. He died on May 6, 1862, from consumption. Emerson, Hawthorne, and Alcott were his warm friends in life, and helped the world to appreciate his genius. A poet in heart, Thoreau was only successful in giving his poetry a prose setting, but that setting is harmonised with the utmost delicacy. No one has produced more beautiful effects in English prose with simpler words.

The Simple Life

When I wrote the following pages, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbour, in a house I had built for myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labour of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again.

Men labour under a mistake. By a seeming fate, commonly called necessity, they are employed laying up treasures which moth and rust will corrupt. It is a fool's life, as they will find when they get to the end of it if not before. 313

But it is never too late to give up our prejudices. What old people say you cannot do, you try and find that you can. I have lived some thirty years and I have yet to hear the first syllable of valuable advice from my seniors.

To many creatures, there is but one necessity of life—food. None of the brute creation require more than food and shelter. The necessaries of life for man in this climate may be distributed under the several heads of food, shelter, clothing, and fuel. I find by my own experience a few implements, a knife, an axe, a spade, a wheelbarrow, etc., and for the studious, lamplight, stationery, and access to a few books, rank next to necessaries, and can all be obtained at a trifling cost. Most of the luxuries, and many of the so-called comforts of life, are positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind. None can be an impartial or wise observer of human life but from the vantage ground of voluntary poverty.

Ideals

If I should attempt to tell how I have desired to spend my life in years past it would probably astonish those who know nothing about it.

I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken, concerning them, describing their tracks and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud, and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves.

How many mornings, summer and winter, before any neighbour was stirring about his business, have I been about mine! So many autumn, aye, and winter days, spent outside the town trying to hear what was in the wind, 314 to hear and carry it. At other times waiting at evening on the hill-tops for the sky to fall that I might catch something, though I never caught much, and that, manna-wise, would dissolve again in the sun.

For many years I was self-appointed inspector of snow storms and rain storms, and did my duty faithfully; surveyor, if not of highways, then of forest paths. I looked after the wild stock of the town. I have watered the red huckleberry, the sand cherry and the nettle tree, the red pine and the black ash, the white grape and the yellow violet, which might have withered else in dry seasons.

My purpose in going to Walden Pond was not to live cheaply nor to live dearly there, but to transact some private business with the fewest obstacles.

House Building

When I consider my neighbours, the farmers of Concord, I find that for the most part they have been toiling twenty, thirty, or forty years, that they may become the real owners of their farms; and we may regard one-third of that toil as the cost of their houses. And when the farmer has got his house he may not be the richer but the poorer for it, and it be the house that has got him. The very simplicity and nakedness of men's life in the primitive ages imply that they left him still a sojourner in nature. When he was refreshed with food and sleep he contemplated his journey again. He dwelt as it were in the tent of this world. We now no longer camp as for a night, but have settled down on earth and forgotten Heaven.

Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond, nearest to where I intended to build my house, and began to cut down some tall, arrowy, white pines, still in their youth, 315 for timber. It was a pleasant hillside where I worked, covered with pine woods, through which I looked out on the pond, and a small open field in the woods where pines and hickories were springing up. Before I had done I was more the friend than the foe of the pine tree, having become better acquainted with it.

By the middle of April my house was framed and ready for raising. At length, in the beginning of May, with the help of some of my acquaintances, rather to improve so good an occasion for neighbourliness than from any necessity, I set up the frame of my house. I began to occupy it on the 4th of July, as soon as it was boarded and roofed, for the boards were carefully feather-edged and lapped, so that it was perfectly impervious to rain, but before boarding I laid the foundation of a chimney. I built the chimney after my hoeing in the fall, before a fire became necessary for warmth, doing my cooking in the meantime out of doors on the ground, early in the morning. When it stormed before my bread was baked I fixed a few boards over the fire, and sat under them to watch my loaf, and passed some pleasant hours in that way.

The exact cost of my house, not counting the work, all of which was done by myself, was just over twenty-eight dollars. I thus found that the student who wishes for a shelter can obtain one for a lifetime at an expense not greater than the rent which he now pays annually.

Farming

Before I finished my house, wishing to earn ten or twelve dollars by some honest and agreeable method, in order to meet my unusual expenses, I planted about two acres and a half of light and sandy soil near it, chiefly with beans, but also a small part with potatoes, corn, peas, and turnips. I was obliged to hire a team and a man for the ploughing, though I held the plough myself. My farm outgoes for the first season were, for employment, 316
seed, work, etc., 14 dollars 72½ cents. I got twelve bushels of beans and eighteen bushels of potatoes, besides some peas and sweet corn. My whole income from the farm was 23 dollars 43 cents, a profit of 8 dollars 71½ cents, besides produce consumed.

The next year I did better still, for I spaded up all the land that I required, about a third of an acre, and I learned from the experience of both years, not being in the least awed by many celebrated works on husbandry, that if one would live simply and eat only the crop which he raised, he would need to cultivate only a few rods of ground, and that it would be cheaper to spade up that than to use oxen to plough it, and he could do all his necessary farm work, as it were, with his left hand at odd hours in the summer.

My food for nearly two years was rye and Indian meal without yeast, potatoes, rice, a very little salt pork, molasses and salt, and my drink water. I learned from my two years' experience that it would cost incredibly little trouble to obtain one's necessary food even in this latitude, and that a man may use as simple a diet as the animals and yet retain health and strength.

Bread I at first made of pure Indian meal and salt, genuine hoe-cakes, which I baked before my fire out of doors, but at last I found a mixture of rye and Indian meal most convenient and agreeable. I made a study of the ancient and indispensable art of bread-making, going back to the primitive days. Leaven, which some deem to be the soul of bread, I discovered was not indispensable.

Thus I found I could avoid all trade and barter, so far as my food was concerned, and having a shelter already, it would only remain to get clothing and fuel. My furniture, part of which I made myself, consisted of a bed, a table, a desk, three chairs, a looking-glass, three inches in diameter, a pair of tongs and andirons, a kettle, a skillet, and a frying pan, a dipper, a wash bowl, two knives and forks, three plates, one cup, one spoon, 317
a jug for oil, a jug for molasses, and a japanned lamp. When I have met an immigrant tottering under a bundle which contained his all, I have pitied him, not because it was his all, but because he had all that to carry.

Earning a Living

For more than five years I maintained myself solely by the labour of my hands, and I found that by working for about six weeks in the year I could meet all the expenses of living. The whole of my winters, as well as most of my summers, I had free and clear for study. I have thoroughly tried school-keeping, and found that my expenses were out of proportion to my income, for I was obliged to dress and train, not to say think and believe accordingly; and I lost my time into the bargain. I have tried trade; but I have learned that trade curses everything it handles; and though you trade in messages from Heaven, the whole curse of trade attaches to the business. I found that the occupation of day-labourer was the most independent of any, especially as it required only thirty or forty days in the year to support me. The labourer's day ends with the going down of the sun, and he is then free to devote himself to his chosen pursuit, independent of his labour; but his employer, who speculates from month to month, has no respite from one end of the year to the other.

But all this is very selfish, I have heard some of my townsmen say. I confess that I have hitherto indulged very little in philanthropic enterprises. However, when I thought to indulge myself in this respect by maintaining certain poor persons as comfortably as I maintain myself, and even ventured so far as to make them the offer, they one and all unhesitatingly preferred to remain poor.

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The Life with Nature

When I took up my abode in the woods I found myself suddenly neighbour to the birds, not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager.

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say, innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshipper of Aurora as the Greeks. Morning brings back the heroic ages. Then, for an hour at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night.

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? As for work, we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. Hardly a man takes a half hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks: "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. "Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe." And he

reads over his coffee and rolls that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River, never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark, unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

Let us spend our day as deliberately as Nature. Let us rise early and fast, or break fast, gently and without perturbation. Let us not be upset and overwhelmed in that terrible rapid and whirlpool called a dinner situated in the meridian shadows.

Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it, but while I drink I see the sandy bottom, and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current glides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper, fish in the sky, whose 319
bottom is pebbly with stars.

Reading

My residence was more favourable, not only to thought but to serious reading, than a university; and though I was beyond the range of the morning circulating library I had more than ever come within the influence of those books which circulate round the world. I kept Homer's "Iliad" on my table through the summer, though I looked at his pages only now and then. To read well—that is to read true books in a true spirit—is a noble exercise and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. Books must be read as deliberately and reservedly as they were written. No wonder that Alexander carried the "Iliad" with him on his expeditions in a precious casket. A written word is the choicest of relics.

In the Sun

I did not read books the first summer; I hoed beans. Nay, I often did better than this. There were times when I could not afford to sacrifice the bloom of the present moment to any work, whether of the head or hands. I love a broad margin to my life. Sometimes on a summer morning, having taken my accustomed bath, I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, rapt in a reverie, amidst the pines and hickories and sumachs in undisturbed solitude and stillness, while the birds sang around or flitted noiseless through the house, until by the sun falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveller's waggon on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time. I grew in those seasons like corn in the night, and they were far better than any work of the hands would have been. They were not time subtracted from my life, but so much over and above 320
my usual allowance. I realised what the Orientals mean by contemplation and the forsaking of works. Instead of singing like the birds I silently smiled at my incessant good fortune. This was sheer idleness to my fellow townsmen, no doubt, but if the birds and flowers had tried me by their standard I should not have been found wanting.

Night Sounds

Regularly at half past seven, in one part of the summer, the whip-poor-wills chanted their vespers for half an hour, sitting on a stump by my door, or upon the ridge pole of the house. When other birds were still the screech owls took up the strain, like mourning women their ancient u-lu-lu. Wise midnight hags! I love to hear their wailing, their doleful responses, trilled along the woodside. They give me a new sense of the variety and capacity of that nature which is our common dwelling. *Oh-o-o-o-o that I had never been bor-r-r-r-n*! sighs one on this side of the pond, and circles, with the restlessness of despair to some new perch on the gray oaks. Then: *That I had never been bor-r-r-r-n*! echoes another on the further side with tremulous sincerity, and *bor-r-r-r-n*! comes faintly from far in the Lincoln woods. I require that there are owls. They represent the stark twilight and unsatisfied thoughts which all have.

I am not sure that ever I heard the sound of cock crowing from my clearing, and I thought that it might be worth the while to keep a cockerel for his music merely, as a singing bird. The note of this once wild Indian pheasant is certainly the most remarkable of any bird's, and if they could be naturalised without being domesticated it would soon become the most famous sound in our woods.

I kept neither dog, cat, cow, pig, nor hens, so that you would have said there was a deficiency of domestic 321
sounds, neither the churn nor the spinning wheel, nor even the singing of the kettle, nor the hissing of the urn, nor children crying, to comfort me; only squirrels on the roof, a whip-poor-will on the ridge pole, a bluejay screaming beneath the window, a woodchuck under the house, a laughing loon on the pond, and a fox to bark in the night.

This is a delicious evening, when the whole body is one sense and imbibes delight through every pore. I go and come with a strange liberty in Nature, a part of herself. Sympathy with the fluttering alder and poplar leaves almost takes away my breath; yet, like the lake, my serenity is rippled, but not ruffled. Though it is now dark the wind still blows and roars in the woods, the waves still dash, and some creatures lull the rest with their notes. The repose is never complete. The wildest animals do not repose but seek their prey now. They are Nature's watchmen—links which connect the days of animated life.

I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time. I never found the companion that was never so companionable as solitude. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will. I am no more lonely than the loon in the pond that laughs so loud. God is alone, but the devil, he is far from being alone; he sees a great deal of company; he is legion. I am no more lonely than a single dandelion in a pasture, or a humble bee, or the North Star, or the first spider in a new house.

Visitors

In my house I have three chairs: one for solitude, two for friendship, three for society. My best room, however—my withdrawing room—always ready for company, was the pine wood behind my house. Thither in

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Summer days, when distinguished guests came, I took them, and a priceless domestic swept the floor and kept the things in order.

I could not but notice some of the peculiarities of my visitors. Girls and boys, and young women generally, seemed glad to be in the woods. They looked in the pond and at the flowers, and improved their time. Men of business, even farmers, thought only of solitude and employment, and of the great distance at which I dwelt from something or other; and though they said that they loved a ramble in the woods occasionally, it was obvious that they did not. Restless, committed men, whose time was all taken up in getting a living, or keeping it, ministers, who spoke of God as if they enjoyed a monopoly of the subject, and who could not bear all kinds of opinions, doctors, lawyers, and uneasy housekeepers, who pried into my cupboard and bed when I was out, young men who had ceased to be young, and had concluded that it was safest to follow the beaten track of the professions—all these generally said that it was not possible to do as much good in my position.

Interference

After hoeing, or perhaps reading and writing in the forenoon, I usually bathed again in the pond, washed the dust of labour from my person, and for the afternoon was absolutely free. Every day or two I strolled to the village. As I walked in the woods to see the birds and the squirrels, so I walked in the village to see the men and the boys. Instead of the wind among the pines I heard the carts rattle.

One afternoon near the end of the first summer, when I went to the village to get a shoe from the cobbler's, I was seized and put into jail, because I did not pay a tax to, or recognise the authority of, the State. I had gone down to the woods for other purposes. But wherever a man goes men will pursue and paw him with their dirty 323
institutions, and, if they can, constrain him to belong to their desperate Odd Fellows society. However, I was released the next day, obtained my mended shoe, and returned to the woods in season to get my dinner of huckleberries on Fair Haven Hill. I was never molested by any person but those who represented the State. I had no lock nor bolt but for the desk which held my papers, not even a nail to put over my latch or window. I never fastened my door night or day, and though I was absent several days my house was more respected than if it had been surrounded by a file of soldiers.

Exhausted Experience

I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond side, and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. So with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty then must be the highways of the world—how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity. I learned this, at least by my experiment, that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavours to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. In proportion as he simplifies his life the laws of the Universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness.

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE

Democracy in America

Alexis de Tocqueville (see Vol. XII, p. 117), being commissioned at the age of twenty-six to investigate and report on American prisons, made use of his residence in the United States to gain a thorough insight into the political institutions and social conditions of the great Republic. The results of his observations and reflections were given to the world in 1835, in the two famous volumes *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, which were followed in 1840 by a third and fourth volume under the same title. As an analysis of American political institutions De Tocqueville's work has been superseded by Mr. Bryce's admirable study of the same subject; but as one of the great classics of political philosophy it can never be superseded, and has rarely been rivalled. With all a Frenchman's simplicity and lucidity he traces the manifold results of the democratic spirit; though sometimes an excessive ingenuity, which is also French, leads him to over-speculative conclusions. The work was received with universal applause.

I.—Equality

The most striking impression which I received during my residence in the United States was that of the equality which reigns there. This equality gives a peculiar character to public opinion and to the laws of that country, and influences the entire structure of society in the most profound degree. Realising that equality, or democracy, was rapidly advancing in the Old World also, I determined to make a thorough study of democratic principles and of their consequences, as they are revealed in the western continent.

We have only to review the history of European countries from the days of feudalism, to understand that the development of equality is one of the great designs of Providence; inasmuch as it is universal, inevitable, and 325
lasting, and that every event and every individual contributes to its advancement.

It is impossible to believe that a social movement which has proceeded so far as this movement towards equality has done, can be arrested by human efforts, or that the democracy which has bearded kings and barons can be successfully resisted by a wealthy bourgeoisie. We know not whither we are moving; we only know that greater equality is found to-day among Christian populations than has been known before in any age or in any country.

I confess to a kind of religious terror in the presence of this irresistible revolution, which has defied every obstacle for the last ten centuries. A new political science is awaited by a world which is wholly new; but the most immediate duties of the statesman are to instruct the democracy, if possible to revive its beliefs, to purify its morals, to enlighten its inexperience by some knowledge of political principles, and to substitute for the blind instincts which sway it, the consciousness of its true interests.

In the Old World, and in France especially, the more powerful, intelligent, and moralised classes have held themselves apart from democracy, and the latter has, therefore, been abandoned to its own savage instincts. The democratic revolution has permeated the whole substance of society, without those concomitant changes in laws, ideas, habits, and manners which ought to have embodied and clothed it. So it is that we indeed have democracy, but without those features which should have mitigated its vices and liberated its advantages. The prestige of royal power is gone, without being replaced by the majesty of law, and our people despise authority as much as they fear it. Our poor have the prejudices of their fathers without their beliefs, their ignorance, without their virtues; they have taken self-interest for a principle without knowing what their interests are. Our society is tranquil, not in the consciousness of strength and of well-being, but a sense of decrepitude and 326
despair. That is why I have studied America, in order that we may ourselves profit by her example. I have no intention of writing a panegyric on the United States. I have seen more in America than America herself; I have sought a revelation of Democracy, with all its characters and tendencies, its prejudices and its passions.

II.—Religion and Liberty

Our first consideration is of great importance, and must never be lost sight of. The Anglo-American civilisation which we find in the United States is the product of two perfectly distinct elements, which elsewhere are often at war with one another, but have here been merged and combined in the most wonderful way; I mean the spirit of religion and the spirit of liberty. The founders of New England were at the same time ardent secretaries and enthusiastic radicals; they were bound by the narrowest religious beliefs, but were free from all political prejudice.

Thus arose two tendencies which we may trace everywhere in American manners, as well as in their lives. All political principles, laws, and human institutions seem to have become plastic in the hands of the early colonists. The bonds which fettered the society in which they had been born fell from their limbs; ancient opinions which had dominated the world for ages simply disappeared; a new career opened for the human race; a world without horizons was before them, and they exulted in liberty. But outside the limits of the political world, they made no ventures of this kind. They abjured doubt, renounced their desire for innovation, left untouched the veil of the sanctuary, and knelt with awe before the truths of religion.

So, in their world of morals, everything was already classed, arranged, foreseen, and determined; but in 327
their world of politics, everything was agitated, debated, and uncertain. In the former they were ruled by a voluntary obedience, but in all political affairs they were inspired by independence, contempt for experience, and jealous of every authority.

Far from impeding one another, these two tendencies, which appear so radically opposed, actually harmonise and seem even to support each other. Religion sees in civil liberty a noble field for the exercise of human faculties. Free and powerful in her own sphere, and satisfied with the part reserved for her, she knows that her sovereignty is all the more securely established when she depends only on her own strength and is

founded in the hearts of men. And liberty, on the other hand, recognises in religion the comrade of its struggles and triumphs, the cradle of its rights. It knows that religion is the safeguard of morals, and that morals are the safeguard of the laws, and the judge of the continuance of liberty itself.

III.—Omnipotence of the Majority

The greatest danger to liberty in America lies in the omnipotence of the majority. A democratic power is never likely to perish for lack of strength or of resources, but it may very well fall because of the misdirection of its strength and the abuse of its resources. If ever liberty is lost in America, it will be due to an oppression of minorities which may drive them to an appeal to arms. The anarchy which must then result will be due only to despotism.

This danger has not escaped the notice of American statesmen. Thus, President James Madison said, "It is of great importance to republics, not only that society should be defended from the oppression of those who govern it, but also that one section of society should be protected against the injustice of another section; for 328
justice is the end towards which all government must be directed." Again, Jefferson said that "The tyranny of legislators is at present, and will be for many years, our most formidable danger. The tyranny of the executive will arise in its turn, but at a more distant period." Jefferson's words are of great importance, for I consider him to have been the most powerful apostle that democracy has ever had.

But there are certain factors in the United States which moderate this tyranny of the majority. Chief among these is the absence of any administrative centralisation; so that the majority, which has often the tastes and instincts of a despot, lacks the instruments and the means of tyranny. The local administrative bodies constitute so many reefs and breakwaters to retard or divide the stream of the popular will.

Not less important, as a counterpoise to the danger of democracy, is the strong legal spirit which pervades the United States. Lawyers have great influence and authority in matters of government. But lawyers are strongly imbued with the tasks and habits of mind which are most characteristic of aristocracy; they have an instinctive liking for forms and for order, a native distaste for the will of the multitude, and a secret contempt for popular government. Of course, their own personal interest may and often does over-ride this professional bias. But lawyers will always be, on the whole, friends of order and of precedent, and enemies of change. And in America, where there are neither nobles nor able political writers, and where the people are suspicious of the wealthy, the lawyers do, in fact, form the most powerful order in politics, and the most intellectual class of society. They therefore stand to lose by any innovation, and their conservative tendency is reinforced by their interests as a class.

A third safeguard against the tyranny of the majority is to be found in the institution of a jury. Almost 329
everyone is called at one time or another to sit on a jury, and thus learns at least something of the judicial spirit. The civil jury has saved English freedom in past times, and may be expected to maintain American liberties also. It is true that there are many cases, and those often the most important, in which the American judge pronounces sentence without a jury. Under those circumstances, his position is similar to that of a French judge, but his moral power is far greater; for the memory and the influence of juries are all about him, and he speaks with the authority of one who habitually rests upon the jury system. In no other countries are the judges so powerful as in those where the people are called in to share judicial privileges and responsibilities.

IV.—Equality of Men and Women

Inasmuch as democracy destroys or modifies the various inequalities which social traditions have made, it is natural to ask whether it has had any effect on that great inequality between men and women which is elsewhere so conspicuous. We are driven to the conclusion that the social movement which places son and father, servant and master, and in general, the inferior and superior, more nearly on the same level, must raise woman more and more to an equality with man.

Let us guard, however, against misconceptions. There are people in Europe who confuse the natural qualities of the two sexes, and desire that men and women should be, not only equal, but also similar to one another. That would give them both the same functions, the same duties and the same rights, and would have them mingle in everything, in work, in pleasures, and in business. But the attempt to secure this kind of equality between the two sexes, only degrades them both, and must result in unmanly men, and unwomanly women.

The Americans have not thus mistaken the kind of democratic equality which ought to hold between man 330
and woman. They know that progress does not consist in forcing these dissimilar temperaments and faculties into the same mould, but in securing that each shall fulfil his or her task in the best possible way. They have most carefully separated the functions of man and woman, in order that the great work of social life may be most prosperously carried on.

In America, far more than elsewhere, the lines of action of the two sexes have been clearly divided. You do not find American women directing the external affairs of the family, or entering into business or into politics; but neither do you find them obliged to undertake the rough labours of the field, or any other work requiring physical strength. There are no families so poor as to form an exception to this rule.

So it is that American women often unite a masculine intelligence and a virile energy with an appearance of great refinement and altogether womanly manners.

One has often noticed in Europe a certain tinge of contempt even in the flatteries which men lavish on women; and although the European often makes himself a slave of a woman, it is easy to see that he never really regards her as his equal. But in the United States men rarely praise women, though they show their esteem for them every day.

Americans show, in fact, a full confidence in woman's reason, and a profound respect for her liberty. They realise that her mind is just as capable as that of man to discover truth, and that her heart is just as courageous

in following it; and they have never tried to shelter or to guide her by means of prejudice, ignorance, or fear.

For my part I do not hesitate to say that the singular prosperity and the evergrowing power of the American people is due to the superiority of American women.

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V.—The Perfectibility of Man

Equality suggests many ideas which would never have arisen without it, and among others the notion that humanity can reach perfection—a theory which has practical consequences of great interest.

In countries where the population is classed according to rank, profession, and birth, and everyone has to follow the career to which he happens to be born, each is conscious of limits to his power, and does not attempt to struggle against an inevitable destiny. Aristocratic peoples do not deny that man may be improved, but they think of this as an amelioration of the individual, and not as a change in social circumstances, and while they admit that humanity has made great progress, they believe in certain limits which it cannot pass. They do not think, for instance, that we shall arrive at sovereign good or at absolute truth.

But in proportion as caste and class-distinction disappear, the vision of an ideal perfection arises before the human mind. Continual changes are ever taking place, some of them to his disadvantage, but the majority to his advantage, and the democrat concludes that man in general is capable of arriving at perfection. His reverses teach him that no one has yet discovered absolute good, and his frequent successes excite him to pursue it. Always seeking, falling, and rising again, often deceived, but never discouraged, he hastens towards an immense grandeur which he dimly conceives as the goal of humanity. This theory of perfectibility exercises prodigious influence even on those who have never thought of it. For instance, I ask an American sailor why the ships of his country are built to last only a few years; and he tells me without hesitation that the art of shipbuilding makes such rapid progress every day, that the finest ship constructed to-day must be useless after a very short time. From these words, spoken at random by an uneducated man, I can perceive the general and 332
systematic idea which guides this great people in every matter.

VI.—American Vanity

All free people are proud of themselves, but national pride takes different forms. The Americans, in their relations with strangers, are impatient of the least criticism, and absolutely insatiable for praise. The slightest congratulation pleases them, but the most extravagant eulogium is not enough to satisfy them; they are all the time touting for your praise, and if you are slow to give it they begin praising themselves. It is as if they were doubtful of their own merit. Their vanity is not only hungry, but anxious and envious. It gives nothing, and asks insistently. It is both supplicant and pugnacious. If I tell an American that his country is a fine one, he replies, "It is the finest in the world." If I admire the liberty which it enjoys, he answers, "There are few people worthy of such liberty." I remark on the purity of manners in the United States, and he says, "Yes, a stranger who knows the corruption of other nations must indeed be astonished at us." At length I leave him to the contemplation of his country and of himself, but he presently runs after me, and will not go away until I have repeated it all over again. It is a kind of patriotism that worries even those who honour it.

The Englishman, on the contrary, tranquilly enjoys the real or imaginary advantages which his country affords. He cares nothing for the blame nor for the praise of strangers. His attitude towards the whole world is one of disdainful and ignorant reserve. His pride seeks no nourishment; it lives on itself. It is very remarkable that the two people who have arisen from the same stock should differ so radically in their way of feeling and speaking.

In aristocratic countries, great families possess enormous privileges, on which their pride rests. They 333
consider these privileges as a natural right inherent in their person, and their feeling of superiority is therefore a peaceful one. They have no reason to boast of the prerogatives which everyone concedes to them without question. So, when public affairs are directed by an aristocracy, the national pride tends to take this reserved, haughty, and independent form.

Under democratic conditions, on the contrary, the least advantage which anyone gains has great importance in his eyes; for everyone is surrounded by millions very nearly his equal. His pride therefore becomes anxious and insatiable; he founds it on miserable trifles and defends it obstinately. Again, most Americans have recently acquired the advantages which they possess, and therefore have inordinate pleasure in contemplating these advantages, and in showing them to others; and as these advantages may escape at any moment, they are always uneasy about them, and look at them again and again to see that they still have them. Men who live in democracies love their country as they love themselves, and model their national vanity upon their private vanity. The close dependence of this anxious and insatiable vanity of democratic peoples upon the equality and fragility of their conditions is seen from the fact that the members of the proudest nobility show exactly the same passionate jealousy for the most trifling circumstances of their life when these become unstable or are contested.

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IZAAK WALTON

The Compleat Angler

Izaak Walton, English author and angler, was born at Stafford on August 9, 1593, and until about his fiftieth year lived as a linen-draper in London. He then retired from business and lived at Stafford for a few years; but returned to London in 1650, and spent his closing years at Winchester, where he died on December 15, 1683, and was buried in the cathedral there. Walton was thrice married, his second wife being sister of the future Bishop Ken. He had a large acquaintance with eminent clergymen, and among his literary friends were Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton. He was author of several charming biographies, including those of the poet Donne, 1640, of Sir Henry Wotton, 1651, of Richard Hooker, 1652, and of George Herbert, 1670. But by far his most famous work is "The Compleat Angler; or, the Contemplative Man's Recreation," published in 1653. There were earlier books on the subject in English, such as Dame Juliana Berner's "Treatise pertaining to Hawking, Hunting, and Fishing with an Angle," 1486; the "Book of Fishing with Hook and Line," 1590; a poem, "The Secrets of Angling," by John Denny, 1613; and several others. The new thing in Walton's book, and the secret of its unfading popularity, is the charm of temperament. Charles Lamb well said that it "breathes the very spirit of innocence, purity, and simplicity of heart." A sequel to the book, entitled the "Second Part of the Compleat Angler," was written by Charles Cotton, and published in 1676.

The Virtues of Angling

PISCATOR, VENATOR, AND AUCEPS

Piscator. You are well overtaken, gentlemen! A good morning to you both! I have stretched my legs up Tottenham Hill to overtake you, hoping your business may occasion you towards Ware, whither I am going this fine fresh May morning.

Venator. Sir, I, for my part, shall almost answer your hopes, for my purpose is to drink my morning's draught 335
at the Thatched House. And, sir, as we are all so happy to have a fine morning, I hope we shall each be the happier in each other's company.

Auceps. Sir, I shall, by your favour, bear you company as far as Theobald's, for then I turn up to a friend's house, who mews a hawk for me. And as the Italians say, good company in a journey maketh the way to seem the shorter, I, for my part, promise you that I shall be as free and open-hearted as discretion will allow with strangers.

Piscator. I am right glad to hear your answers. I shall put on a boldness to ask you, sir, whether business or pleasure caused you to be up so early, for this other gentleman hath declared he is going to see a hawk that a friend mews for him.

Venator. Sir, I intend to go hunting the otter.

Piscator. Those villainous vermin, for I hate them perfectly, because they love fish so well, or rather destroy so much. For I, sir, am a brother of the angle.

Auceps. And I profess myself a falconer, and have heard many grave, serious men scoff at anglers and pity them, as it is a heavy, contemptible, dull recreation.

Piscator. You know, gentlemen, it is an easy thing to scoff at any art or recreation; a little wit mixed with all nature, confidence, and malice will do it; but though they often venture boldly, yet they are often caught, even in their own trap.

There be many men that are by others taken to be serious, and grave men, which we contemn and pity: men that are taken to be grave because nature hath made them of a sour complexion—money-getting men, men that are condemned to be rich; for these poor, rich men, we anglers pity them most perfectly. No, sir! We enjoy a contentedness above the reach of such dispositions.

Venator. Sir, you have almost amazed me; for though I am no scoffer, yet I have—I pray let me speak it 336
without offence—always looked upon anglers as more patient and simple men than, I fear, I shall find you to be.

Piscator. Sir, I hope you will not judge my earnestness to be impatience! As for my simplicity, if by that you mean a harmlessness which was usually found in the primitive Christians, who were, as most anglers are, followers of peace—then myself and men of my profession will be glad to be so understood. But if, by simplicity, you mean to express a general defect, I hope in time to disabuse you.

But, gentlemen, I am not so unmannerly as to engross all the discourse to myself; I shall be most glad to hear what you can say in the commendation of your several recreations.

Auceps. The element I use to trade in, the air, is an element of more worth than weight; an element that doubtless exceeds both the earth and water; in it my noble falcon ascends to such a height as the dull eye of man is not able to reach to; my troop of hawks soars up on high, so that they converse with the gods.

And more, the worth of this element of air is such that all creatures whatsoever stand in need of it. The waters cannot preserve their fish without air; witness the not breaking of ice and the result thereof.

Venator. Well, sir, I will now take my turn. The earth, that solid, settled element, is the one on which I drive my pleasant, wholesome, hungry trade. What pleasure doth man take in hunting the stately stag, the cunning otter! The earth breeds and nourishes the mighty elephant, and also the least of creatures! It puts limits to the proud and raging seas, and so preserves both man and beast; daily we see those that are shipwrecked and left to feed haddocks; but, Mr. Piscator, I will not be so uncivil as not to allow you time for the commendation of angling; I doubt we shall hear a watery discourse—and I hope not a long one.

Piscator. Gentlemen, my discourse is likely to prove suitable to my recreation—calm and quiet. 337

Water is the eldest daughter of the creation, the element upon which the spirit of God did first move. There be those that profess to believe that all bodies are water, and may be reduced back into water only.

The water is more productive than the earth. The increase of creatures that are bred in the water is not only more miraculous, but more advantageous to man for the preventing of sickness. It is observed that the casting of Lent and other fish days hath doubtless been the cause of these many putrid, shaking agues, to which this country of ours is now more subject.

To pass by the miraculous cures of our known baths the Romans have made fish the mistress of all their entertainments; and have had music to usher in their sturgeons, lampreys, and mullets.

Auceps. Sir, it is with such sadness that I must part with you here, for I see Theobald's house. And so I part full of good thoughts. God keep you both.

Venator. Sir, you said angling was of great antiquity, and a perfect art, not easily attained to. I am desirous to hear further concerning those particulars.

Piscator. Is it not an art to deceive a trout with an artificial fly? A trout! more sharp-sighted than any hawk! Doubt not, angling is an art worth your learning. The question is rather, whether you be capable of learning it? Angling is like poetry—men are to be born so. Some say it is as ancient as Deucalion's flood, and Moses makes mention of fish-hooks, which must imply anglers.

But as I would rather prove myself a gentleman by being learned, and humble, valiant, and inoffensive, virtuous, and communicable, than by any fond ostentation of riches, or, wanting those virtues, boast these were in my ancestors, so if this antiquity of angling shall be an honour to this art, I shall be glad I made mention of it.

I shall tell you that in ancient times a debate hath arisen, whether the happiness of man doth consist more in 338
contemplation or action?

Some have endeavoured to maintain their opinion of the first by saying that the nearer we mortals approach to God by way of imitation, the more happy we are. And they say God enjoys Himself only by a contemplation of His own infiniteness, eternity, power, goodness and the like.

On the contrary, there want not men of equal authority that prefer action to be the more excellent, such as experiments in physics for the ease and prolongation of man's life. Concerning which two opinions I shall forbear to add a third, and tell you, my worthy friend, that both these meet together and do most properly belong to the most honest, quiet, and harmless art of angling.

An ingenious Spaniard says that "rivers and the inhabitants thereof were made for wise men to contemplate, and fools to pass by without consideration."

There be many wonders reported of rivers, as of a river in Epirus, that puts out any lighted torch, and kindles any torch that was not lighted; the river Selarus, that in a few hours turns a rod to stone, and mention is made of the like in England, and many others on historical faith.

But to tell you something of the monsters, or fish, call them what you will, Pliny says the fish called the Balæna is so long and so broad as to take up more length and breadth than two acres of ground; and in the river Ganges there be eels thirty feet long.

I know we islanders are averse to the belief of these wonders, but there are many strange creatures to be now seen. Did not the Prophet David say, "They that occupy themselves in deep water see the wonderful works of God"; and the apostles of our Saviour, were not they four simple fishermen; He found that the hearts of such 339
men, by nature, were fitted for contemplation and quietness—men of sweet and peaceable spirits, as indeed most anglers are.

Venator. Sir, you have angled me on with much pleasure to the Thatched House, for I thought we had three miles of it. Let us drink a civil cup to all lovers of angling, of which number I am now willing to count myself, and if you will but meet me to-morrow at the time and place appointed, we two will do nothing but talk of fish and fishing.

Piscator. 'Tis a match, sir; I will not fail you, God willing, to be at Amwell Hill to-morrow before sun-rising.

Master and Pupil

Piscator. Sir, I am right glad to meet you. Come, honest Venator, let us be gone; I long to be doing.

Venator. Well, let's to your sport of angling.

Piscator. With all my heart. But we are not yet come to a likely place. Let us walk on. But let us first to an honest alehouse, where my hostess can give us a cup of her best drink.

Seneca says that the ancients were so curious in the newness of their fish, that they usually did keep them living in glass-bottles in their dining-rooms, and did glory much in the entertaining of their friends, to have the fish taken from under their tables alive that was instantly to be fed upon. Our hostess shall dress us a trout, that we shall presently catch, and we, with brother Peter and Goridon, will sup on him here this same evening.

Venator. And now to our sport.

Piscator. This is not a likely place for a trout; the sun is too high. But there lie upon the top of the water twenty Chub. Sir, here is a trial of my skill! I'll catch only one, and he shall be the big one, that has some bruise upon his tail.

Venator. I'll sit down and hope well; because you seem so confident. 340

Piscator. Look you, sir! The very one! Oh, 'tis a great logger-headed Chub! I'll warrant he will make a good dish of meat.

Under that broad beech tree yonder, I sat down when I was last a-fishing; and the birds in the adjoining grove seemed to have a friendly contention with the echo that lives in a hollow near the brow of that primrose-hill. There I sat viewing the silver stream slide away, and the lambs sporting harmlessly. And as I sat, these sights so possessed my soul, that I thought as the poet hath it:

"I was for that time lifted above earth;
And possess'd joys not promised at my birth."

But, let us further on; and we will try for a Trout. 'Tis now past five of the clock.

Venator. I have a bite! Oh me! He has broke all; and a good hook lost! But I have no fortune! Sure yours is a better rod and tackling.

Piscator. Nay, then, take mine, and I will fish with yours. Look you, scholar, I have another. I pray, put that net under him, but touch not my line. Well done, scholar, I thank you.

And now, having three brace of Trouts, I will tell you a tale as we walk back to our hostess.

A preacher that was to procure the approbation of a parish got from a fellow preacher the copy of a sermon that was preached with great commendation by him that composed it; and though the borrower preached it, word for word, yet it was utterly disliked; and on complaining to the lender of it, was thus answered: "I lent you indeed my fiddle, but not my fiddlestick; for you are to know, everyone cannot make music with my words, which are fitted for my own mouth." And though I lend you my very rod and tacklings, yet you have not my fiddlestick, that is, the skill wherewith I guide it.

Venator. Master, you spoke very true. Yonder comes mine hostess to call us to supper; and when we have 341
supped we will sing songs which shall give some addition of mirth to the company.

Piscator. And so say I; for to-morrow we meet again up the water towards Waltham.

Fish of English Streams

Piscator. Indeed, my good scholar, we may say of angling, as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries, "Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did"; and so, God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling.

And when I see how pleasantly that meadow looks; and the earth smells so sweetly too; I think of them as Charles the Emperor did of the City of Florence; "that they were too pleasant to be looked on, but on holidays."

To speak of fishes; the Salmon is accounted the king of fresh-water fish. He breeds in the rivers in the month of August, and then hastes to the sea before winter; where he recovers his strength and comes the next summer to the same river; for like persons of riches, he has his summer and winter house, to spend his life in, which is, as Sir Francis Bacon hath observed, not above ten years.

The Pike, the tyrant of the fresh-waters, is said to be the longest-lived of any fresh-water fish, but not usually above forty years. Gesner relates of a man watering his mule in a pond, where the Pike had devoured all the fish, had the Pike bite his mule's lips; to which he hung so fast, the mule did draw him out of the water. And this same Gesner observes, that a maid in Poland washing clothes in a pond, had a Pike bite her by the foot. I have told you who relate these things; and shall conclude by telling you, what a wise-man hath observed: "It is a hard 342
thing to persuade the belly, because it has no ears."

Besides being an eater of great voracity, the Pike is observed to be a solitary, melancholy and a bold fish. When he is dressed with a goodly, rich sauce, and oysters, this dish of meat is too good for any man, but an angler, or a very honest man.

The Carp, that hath only lately been naturalised in England, is said to be the queen of rivers, and will grow to a very great bigness; I have heard, much above a yard long.

The stately Bream, and the Tench, that physician of fishes, love best to live in ponds. In every Tench's head are two little stones which physicians make great use of. Rondeletius says, at his being in Rome, he saw a great cure done by applying a Tench to the feet of a sick man.

But I will not meddle more with that; there are too many meddlers in physic and divinity that think fit to meddle with hidden secrets and so bring destruction to their followers.

The Perch is a bold, biting fish, and carries his teeth in his mouth; and to affright the Pike and save himself he will set up his fins, like as a turkey-cock will set up his tail. If there be twenty or forty in a hole, they may be catched one after the other, at one standing; they being, like the wicked of this world, not afraid, though their fellows and companions perish in their sight.

And now I think best to rest myself, for I have almost spent my spirits with talking.

Venator. Nay, good master, one fish more! For it rains yet; you know our angles are like money put to usury; they may thrive, though we sit still. Come, the other fish, good master!

Piscator. But shall I nothing from you, that seem to have both a good memory and a cheerful spirit?

Venator. Yes, master; I will speak you a copy of verses that allude to rivers and fishing:

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Come, live with me, and be my love,
And we will some new pleasures prove;
Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,
With silken lines, and silver hooks.

When thou wilt swim in that live bath,
Each fish, which every channel hath,
Most amorously to thee will swim,
Gladder to catch thee, than thou him.

Let others freeze with angling reeds,
And cut their legs with shells and weeds,
Or treacherously poor fish beget
With trangling snare or windowy net;

For thee, thou need'st no such deceit,
For thou, thyself, art thine own bait,
That fish, that is not catched thereby
Is wiser far, alas, than I!

Piscator. I thank you for these choice verses. And I will now tell you of the Eel, which is a most dainty fish. The Romans have esteemed her the Helena of their feasts. Sir Francis Bacon will allow the Eel to live but ten years; but he mentions a Lamprey, belonging to the Roman Emperor, that was made tame and kept for three-score years; so that when she died, Crassus, the orator, lamented her death.

I will tell you next how to make the Eel a most excellent dish of meat.

First, wash him in water and salt, then pull off his skin and clean him; then give him three or four scotches with a knife; and then put into him sweet herbs, an anchovy and a little nutmeg. Then pull his skin over him, and tie him with pack-thread; and baste him with butter, and what he drips, be his sauce. And when I dress an Eel thus, I wish he were a yard and three-quarters long. But they are not so proper to be talked of by me because they make us anglers no sport.

The Barbel, so called by reason of his barb or wattles, and the Gudgeon, are both fine fish of excellent shape.

My further purpose was to give you directions concerning Roach and Dace, but I will forbear. I see yonder, 344
brother Peter. But I promise you, to-morrow as we walk towards London, if I have forgotten anything now I will not then keep it from you.

Venator. Come, we will all join together and drink a cup to our jovial host, and so to bed. I say good-night to everybody.

Piscator. And so say I.

Walking Homewards

Piscator. I will tell you, my honest scholar, I once heard one say, "I envy not him that eats better meat, or wears better clothes than I do; I envy him only that catches more fish than I do."

And there be other little fish that I had almost forgot, such as the Minnow or Penk; the dainty Loach; the Miller's-Thumb, of no pleasing shape; the Stickle-bag, good only to make sport for boys and women anglers.

Well, scholar, I could tell you many things of the rivers of this nation, the chief of which is the Thamisis; of fish-ponds, and how to breed fish within them, and how to order your lines and baits for the several fishes; but, I will tell you some of the thoughts that have possessed my soul since we met together. And you shall join with me in thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for our happiness; which may appear the greater when we consider how many, even at this very time, lie under the torment, and the stone, the gout, and tooth-ache; and all these we are free from.

Since we met, others have met disasters, some have been blasted, and we have been free from these. What is a far greater mercy, we are free from the insupportable burden of an accusing conscience.

Let me tell you, there be many that have forty times our estates, that would give the greatest part of it to be 345
healthful and cheerful like us; who have eat, and drank, and laughed, and angled, and sung, and slept; and rose next day, and cast away care, and sung, and laughed, and angled again.

I have a rich neighbour that is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh. He says that Solomon says, "The diligent man makest rich"; but, he considers not what was wisely said by a man of great observation, "That there be as many miseries beyond riches, as on this side them."

Let me tell you, scholar, Diogenes walked one day through a country fair, where he saw ribbons, and looking-glasses, and nut-crackers, and fiddles, and many other gimcracks; and said to his friend, "Lord, how many things are there in this world Diogenes hath no need!"

All this is told you to incline you to thankfulness: though the prophet David was guilty of murder and many other of the most deadly sins, yet he was said to be a man after God's own heart, because he abounded with thankfulness.

Well, scholar, I have almost tired myself, and I fear, more than tired you.

But, I now see Tottenham High Cross, which puts a period to our too long discourse, in which my meaning was to plant that in your mind with which I labour to possess my own soul—that is, a meek and thankful heart. And, to that end, I have showed you that riches without them do not make a man happy. But riches with them

remove many fears and cares. Therefore, my advice is, that you endeavour to be honestly rich, or contentedly poor; but be sure your riches be justly got; for it is well said by Caussin, "He that loses his conscience, has nothing left that is worth the keeping." So look to that. And in the next place, look to your health, for health is a blessing that money cannot buy. As for money, neglect it not, and, if you have a competence, enjoy it with a cheerful, thankful heart.

Venator. Well, master, I thank you for all your good directions, and especially for this last, of thankfulness. 346
And now being at Tottenham High Cross, I will requite a part of your courtesies with a drink composed of sack, milk, oranges, and sugar, which, all put together, make a drink like nectar indeed; and too good for anybody, but us anglers. So, here is a full glass to you.

Piscator. And I to you, sir.

Venator. Sir, your company and discourse have been so pleasant that I truly say, that I have only lived since I enjoyed it an turned angler, and not before.

I will not forget the doctrines Socrates taught his scholars, that they should not think to be honoured for being philosophers, so much as to honour philosophy by the virtue of their lives. You advised me to the like concerning angling, and to live like those same worthy men. And this is my firm resolution.

And when I would beget content, I will walk the meadows, by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the lilies that take no care. That is my purpose; and so, "let the blessing of St. Peter's Master be with mine."

Piscator. And upon all that are lovers of virtue, and be quiet, and go a-angling.

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Transcriber's Notes

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Punctuation and spelling were made consistent when a predominant preference was found for the same author in this book; otherwise they were not changed.

Simple typographical errors were corrected; occasional unbalanced quotation marks corrected in simple situations, otherwise unchanged.

Ambiguous hyphens at the ends of lines were retained.

Editor's comments at the beginning of each Chapter originally were printed at the bottom of the page, but have been repositioned here to appear just below the Chapter titles.

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Page 49: "corollory" was printed that way.

Page 80: "than an hours spent" was printed that way.

Page 148: "perserver" may be a misprint for "preserver".

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Page 346: "I enjoyed it an turned" probably is a misprint for "and".

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