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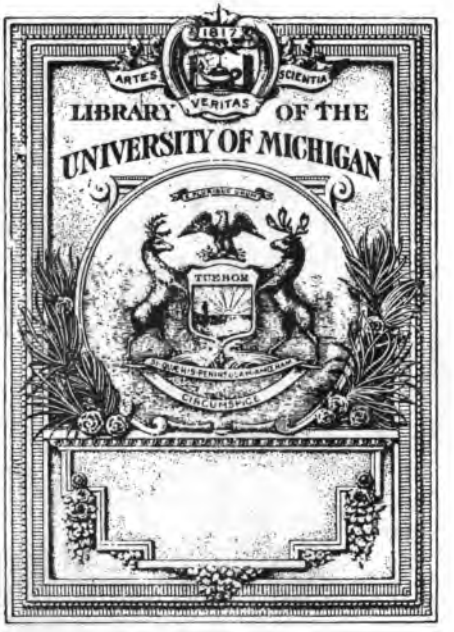

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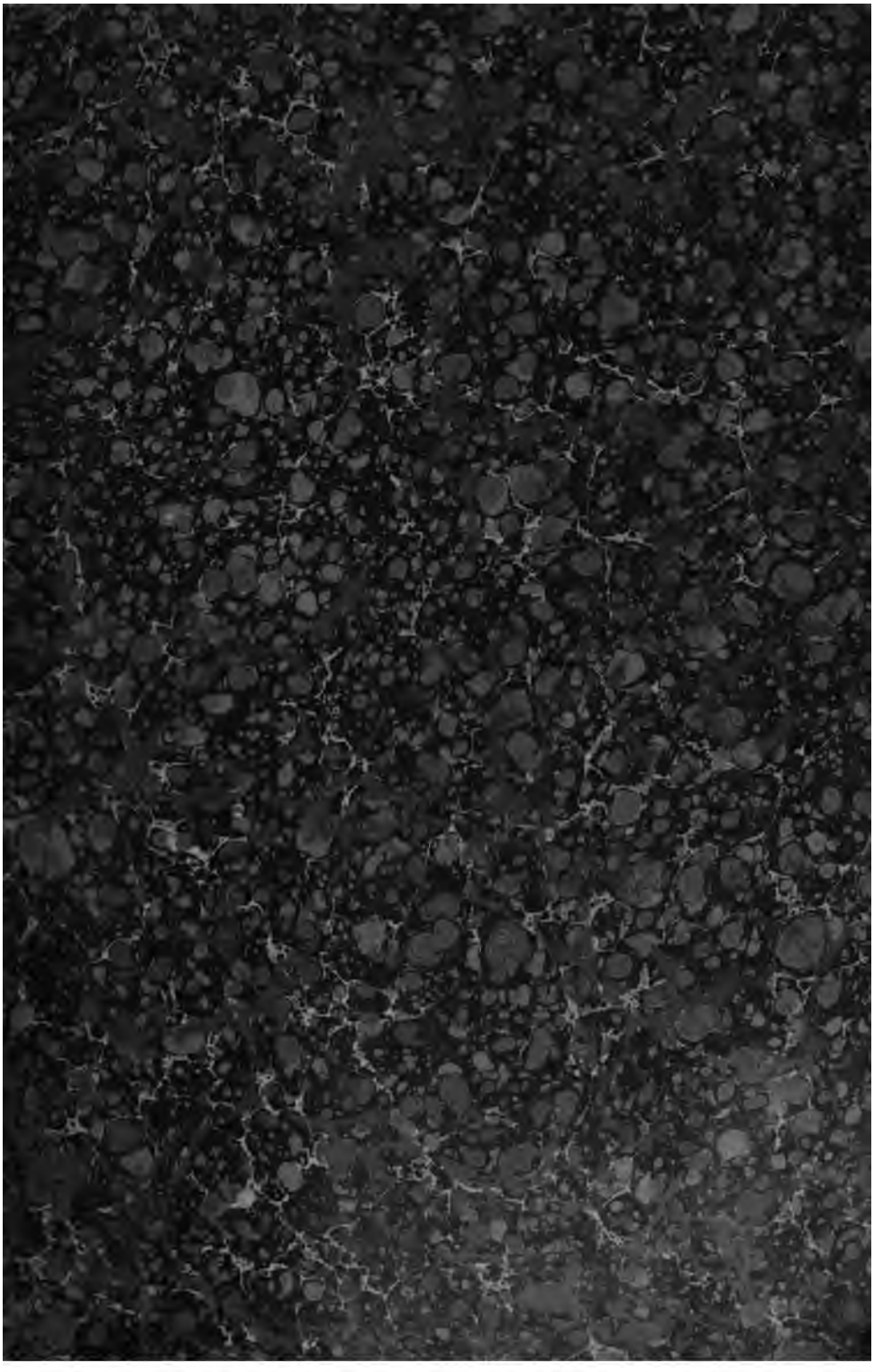

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DEVELOPMENT

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE

AND

LANGUAGE

BY

ALFRED H. WELSH, A.M.

MEMBER OF VICTORIA INSTITUTE, THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

VOLUME II

Books are a real world, both pure and good,
Round which, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness may grow.—WORDSWORTH

SECOND EDITION

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DEVELOPMENT

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE.

FIRST TRANSITION PERIOD.

CHAPTER I.

FEATURES.

The fact that 'constitutions are not made, but grow,'[1] is simply a fragment of the much larger fact, that under all its aspects and through all its ramifications, Society is a growth and not a manufacture.—*Herbert Spencer.*

Politics.—To the love of liberty succeeded the rage of faction. Ministry after ministry failed—the legal, the corrupt, and the national. The king aimed only to emancipate himself from control, and to gratify his private tastes. Ignorant of affairs and averse to toil, without faith in human virtue, believing that every person was to be bought, promising everything to everybody, and addicted beyond measure to sensual indulgence,—he brought the state by maladministration to the brink of ruin. Retribution was speedy. The defeated Roundheads, passing below the surface, began to reappear; and renouncing their republicanism as impracticable, took up the watchword of constitutional reform.

After fifteen years of dissolute revels, Charles was succeeded by his brother James II, who wished to achieve, at the same time, a triumph for pure monarchy and for Romanism. Again, as at the outbreak of the Civil War, there was a political struggle and a religious struggle, and both were directed against the government. The reaction which had prostrated the Whigs was fol-

[1] Mackintosh.

lowed by one far more violent in the opposite direction; and the revolution of eighty-eight, which enthroned William of Orange, brought the grand conflict of the seventeenth century to a final issue — not in the establishment of a wild democracy, but in the transfer of executive supremacy from the Crown to the House of Commons. The ministers, who were chosen henceforth from the majority of its members, became its natural leaders, capable of being easily set aside and replaced whenever the balance of power shifted from one side of the House to the other.[1]

Society.—In the eternal whirl of change, heads were made giddy. Laxity of principle in statesmen became too common to be scandalous. Austerity, too, necessarily produced revulsion. Profligacy became a test of loyalty, and a qualification for office. Devotion and honesty were swept away, and a deep general taint spread through every province of letters. In court circles, it was the fashion to swear, to relate obscene stories, to get drunk, to gamble, to deride Scripture and the preachers. Two nobles, nearly nude, run through the streets after midnight. Another, in open day, stark-naked, harangues a mob from an open window. Another writes poems for the haunts of vice. A duke, blind and eighty, goes to a gambling-house with an attendant to tell him the cards. Charles quarrels with his mistress in public, she calling him an idiot, he calling her a jade. Men and women appear alike depraved. Lords and ladies in festivities smear one another's faces with candle-grease and soot, 'till most of us were like devils.' A duchess disguises herself as an orange-girl, and cries her wares in the street. Another loses in one night twenty-five thousand pounds at play. Says a contemporary:

'Here I first understood by their talk the meaning of company that lately were called *Bullers*: Harris telling how it was by a meeting of some young blades, where he was among them, and my Lady Bennet and her ladies, and their dancing naked, and all the roguish things in the world.'

All this without an attempt to throw even the thinnest veil over the evil everywhere rampant. The regular and decent exterior maintained easily at Versailles, was here troublesome.

[1] Thus terminated in England the contest which even now is raging in Germany. Within a few days of the present writing, Emperor William has asserted his right to dictate the policy of the Prussian government, without regard to the Ministry or the Parliament. A crisis is imminent. Perhaps the time has come for Germany to strike the blow that shall free her from military absolutism. Wise is the ruler who is in sympathy with the prevailing tendency, which, over all Europe, is liberal. The tyrant may disturb or retard, but the industrial organization, in its general course, is beyond his control.

They have, moreover, the violent instincts of barbarians. The republicans were tried with a shamelessness of cruelty. By the side of one was stationed a hangman, in a black dress, with a rope in his hand. While one was being quartered, another was brought up and asked if the work pleased him. Hearts, still beating, were torn out and shown to the people. A speaker in the Commons gives offence to the court, is waylaid by a gang of bullies, and his nose slit to the bone. Bunyan has satirized the mode of conducting state trials — mere forms preliminary to hanging and drawing. *Hategood* is counsel for the prisoner:

'*Judge.* Thou runagate, heretic, and traitor, hast thou heard what these honest gentlemen have witnessed against thee?

Faithful. May I speak a few words in my own defence?

Judge. Sirrah, Sirrah! thou deservest to live no longer, but to be slain immediately upon the place; yet, that all men may see our gentleness to thee, let us hear what thou, vile runagate, hast to say.'

After the rising of Monmouth, gentlemen were admonished to be careful of their ways, by hanging to their park gate the corpse of a rebel. Dynasties of gentry, known by the dreaded names of *Hectors*, *Scourers*, *Mohawks*, were the terror of peaceable citizens. The moral condition at large is fearfully expressed in the fact that in guide-books of the period *gibbets* and *gallows* are referred to as *road-marks*. For example:

'By the *gallows* and three wind-mills enter the suburbs of York.'

'Leaving the forementioned suburbs (Durham), a small ascent, passing between the *gallows* and Crokehill.'

'You pass through Hare street . . . with a *gallows* to the left.'

'You pass by Pen-menis Hall, . . . and ascend a small hill with a *gibbet* on the right.'

'At the end of the city (Wells) you cross a brook, and pass by the *gallows*.'

'At 2·3, leaving the acute way on the right to Towling, Ewel, etc., just at the *gallows*, or place of execution of malefactors, convicted at Southwark. At 8·5 you pass by a *gallows* on the left.' . . .

'A small rill with a bridge over it called Felbridge, separating it from Surrey, whence by the *gallows* you are conveyed to East Grinsted.'

'Leaving Petersborough you pass the *gallows* on the left.'

'You leave Frampton, Wilberton, and Sherbeck, all on the right, and by a *gibbet* on the left, over a stone bridge.'

'Leaving Nottingham you ascend an hill, and pass by a *gallows*.'

'From Bristol . . . you go up a steep ascent, leaving the *gallows* on your right.'

'You cross the River Saint, leaving the *gallows* on your left.'[1]

We must not, however, exaggerate the extent of this reaction. Its more violent forms appear to have been confined to the capi-

[1] Ogilby's *Itinerarium Angliæ*.

tal and the Court. When the frenzy of the Restoration had passed, it was seen that the best portions of the Puritan spirit were never extinguished. The mass of Englishmen, satisfied with getting back their May-poles and mince pies, were essentially unchanged.

Perhaps nothing shows the social state more strikingly than the provisions for locomotion. Often the highway was but a narrow track rising above the quagmire, and that not infrequently blocked up by carriers, neither of whom would yield. In the dusk, it was hardly distinguishable from the open heath and fen on either side. Wheeled carriages were in some districts generally pulled by oxen. On main roads, heavy articles were commonly conveyed, at enormous expense, by stage-wagons, in the straw of which nestled a crowd of passengers who could not afford to travel by coach; on by-roads, by long trains of pack horses. The rich travelled in their own carriages, with from four to six horses. Nor could even six always save the vehicle from being imbedded. Towards the close of the century, 'Flying Coaches' were established — a great and daring innovation. Moving at the rate of thirty to fifty miles a day, many thought it a tempting of Providence to go in them. This spirited undertaking was vehemently applauded — and as vehemently decried. About 1676, a few railways, made of timber, began to appear in the northern coal districts. Wagons were the cars, and horses the engines. But however a journey might be performed, travellers, unless numerous and well-armed, were liable to be stopped and plundered by marauders, many of whom had the manners and appearance of aristocrats. Innumerable inns — for which, since the days of famous Tabard, England had been renowned — gave the wanderer a cheering welcome from the fatigues of travel and the dangers of darkness.

Houses were not numbered. Shops were distinguished by pictorial signs, for the direction of the common people who were unable to read. The streets of the metropolis are thus described:

'The particular style of building in old London was for one story to project over another, with heavy beams and cornices, the streets being paved with pebble stones, and no path for foot passengers but what was common for carriages, scarce a lamp to be seen, and except a few principal streets, they were in general very narrow, and those encumbered with heavy projecting signs, and barber's poles. London must have had a

very gloomy appearance when neighbors in a narrow street might shake hands from the opposite garrets. No wonder the plague was so dreadful in 1665!"[1]

After the great fire, which desolated almost a square mile of the city, the streets were widened, and the architecture was improved. Steps were taken to turn its nocturnal shades into noonday. On moonless nights, lanterns glimmered feebly before one house in ten, from six o'clock till twelve. While the ingenious projector was extolled by some as the greatest of benefactors, by others he was furiously attacked. The most fashionable localities bore what would now be considered a squalid appearance. The finest houses in Bath, a celebrated watering-place, would seem to have resembled the lowest of rag-shops. Visitors slept in rooms hardly as good as the garrets which in the next century were occupied by footmen. We may easily imagine what must have been the homes of the rural population.

Hospitality displayed itself in immoderate eating and drinking. The guest had failed in justice to the occasion unless he had gone under the table. Receptions were no solemn ceremonies. King Charles kept open house daily and all day long, for London society, the extreme Whigs excepted. All who had been properly introduced might go to see him dine, sup, dance.

Rural gentry derived their chief pleasures from field sports and coarse sensuality. Their taste in decoration seldom rose above the litter of a farm-yard; and their opinions were imbibed from current tradition. The yeomanry, a manly and true-hearted race, were an important element of the nation. Not less than a hundred and sixty thousand proprietors, comprising, with their families, more than a seventh of the inhabitants, derived their subsistence from small freehold estates. Four-fifths of the peasants were employed in agriculture. Their ordinary wages without board did not exceed four shillings per week, about one-third what they now are. Their chief food was rye, barley, or oats. No journal pleaded their cause. Only in rude rhymes did their distress find utterance.

When authors lay it down as a rule that virtue is only a pretence, the standard of female excellence will be low. At an earlier period, ladies of rank had studied the masterpieces of Greece and Rome; now they were unable to write an English sentence without errors of orthography and grammar. To libertines,

[1] Smith's *Antiquities of London.*

moral and intellectual attainments were far less attractive than ignorance and frivolity.

The post-office might have moved the admiration of Spenser and his contemporaries, but it was a very imperfect institution. Under the Commonwealth, posts were established for the conveyance of letters *weekly* to all parts of the Kingdom. The bags were carried on horseback, day and night, at the rate of about five miles per hour. In the reign of Charles, a penny-post was set up in the capital for the delivery of letters and parcels from four to eight times a day; but the improvement was strenuously resisted by the long-headed and knowing ones, who denounced it as an insidious 'Popish contrivance.' No part of the mail was more important than the *Newsletters*,— weekly epistles of information and gossip, gathered in the coffee-rooms, and anxiously awaited by the rustic magistrate or the man of fortune in the country. Already, in 1662, a new style of chronicle had appeared,— the *Newspaper*. The Civil War was fruitful in bitter and malicious sheets,— *Scotch Doves*, *Parliament Kites*, *Secret Owls*, the *Weekly Discoverer*, quickly rivalled by the *Weekly Discoverer Stripped Naked*. They multiplied greatly in the succeeding reigns, growing less political and more varied. In 1665 appeared the *London Gazette*, a bi-weekly of meagre contents. None was published oftener, and the largest contained less than is now comprised in a single column of a large daily. It had long ago been discovered that the press was dangerous to monopolists and tyrants; and in the arbitrary days of Charles II it was assumed that printing was not a free trade, but always to remain under regulation,— wholly at the disposal of the sovereign. But from 1649, when restrictions on its freedom were removed, the progress of the press as a reflector of public opinion has been steady and sure. Yet the words of Dr. Johnson are as true at this day as at any former period: 'The danger of unbounded liberty, and the danger of bounding it, have produced a problem in the science of government, which human understanding seems unable to solve.'

Religion.—The old ecclesiastical polity and the old liturgy were revived. Episcopal ordination became the indispensable condition of preferment. Two thousand ministers, rather than conform, resigned their cures in a single day, though they and

their families had all but to starve. Then came a series of odious statutes against non-conformists. It was criminal to attend a dissenting place of worship. A magistrate might convict without a jury; and for a third offence might pass sentence of transportation beyond the sea. If the offender returned before the expiration of his term of exile, he was liable to be executed. A test was imposed on the ejected divines; and all who refused to take it were prohibited from coming within five miles of any borough, or of any town where they had been wont to preach. In twelve years, twelve thousand Quakers — one of the smallest of the separatist bodies — had found their way to the jails. Many of the expelled clergy preached in fields and private houses, till they were seized and cast into prison, where a great number perished. In Scotland, the prisons were soon filled to overflowing, and when they could hold no more, the victims were transported. The savage mountaineers were let loose upon the people, and spared neither age nor sex. Children were torn from their parents, and threatened to be shot. Adults were banished by wholesale, some of the men first losing their ears, and the women being branded on the hand or cheek. The government, in its arbitrary attempt to enforce a religious system, had not profited by the disastrous experiments of preceding reigns.

The tide of intolerance, however, was slowly ebbing. In the struggle against Romanism, Churchmen and Non-conformists rallied together, and made common cause against the common enemy. The danger over, the union of the two abruptly ceased, it is true; but active persecution was no longer possible, and in 1689 the Toleration Act established forever complete freedom of worship.

A large part of the people remained Puritan in life, though they threw aside many of the outer characteristics of that belief. Purged by oppression, purified by patience, Puritanism ended by winning the public esteem. Gradually it approached the world, and the world it. After all, its essential ideal was what the race demanded. Prosperity had developed pride, and power corruption; but in the moment of its defeat, its real victory began. Its fruits compelled admiration. Cromwell's fifty thousand veterans, suddenly disbanded and without resources, brought not a single recruit to the vagabonds and bandits. 'The Royalists

themselves confessed that, in every department of honest industry, the discarded warriors prospered beyond other men, that none was charged with any theft or robbery, that none was heard to ask an alms, and that if a baker, a mason, or a waggoner attracted notice by his diligence and sobriety, he was in all probability one of Oliver's old soldiers."[1]

The return of the Stuarts was followed, among the gayer classes, by an outburst of the most derisive incredulity. From mocking the solemn gait and the nasal twang of the Puritans, they naturally proceeded to ridicule their doctrines. The higher intellectual influences were tending strongly in the same direction among the learned. Hobbes had created in his disciples an indisposition to believe in incorporeal substances, and a similar feeling was produced by the philosophy of Bacon, which had then acquired an immense popularity. From the endless controversies, the social and religious anarchy, of the period; from the cynicism of writers, and the frivolity of courtiers, a new generation was drinking in the spirit of scepticism, of doubt, of free inquiry. 'Four or five in the House of Commons,' said Montesquieu, 'go to mass or to the parliamentary sermon. . . . If any one speaks of religion, everybody begins to laugh. A man happening to say, "I believe this like an article of faith," everybody burst out laughing.'

A sceptical movement shows an alteration in the character of the age, of the same nature as that which now causes the educated majority to regard with indifference disputes which, little more than a century ago, would have inflamed a kingdom. Scepticism and toleration are related as the antecedent and consequent of progress. A profound change was soon effected in the notion of witchcraft. In 1664, two witches were hung, under a sentence of Sir Mathew Hale, who justified it by the affirmations of Scripture and 'the wisdom of all nations'—irresistible reasoning. Three were executed in 1682. But, while in 1660 the belief was common, in 1688 the sense of its improbability was equally general. In Scotland it passed away much more slowly, and, to the last, found its most ardent supporters among the Presbyterian clergy. In 1664, nine women were burned together, and trials were frequent until the close of the century.

[1] Macaulay.

Revolutions had changed completely the position of ecclesiastics. Once they formed the majority of the Upper House, and rivalled in their imperial pomp the greatest of the barons; now they were regarded, on the whole, as a plebeian class. The fact that a man could read, no longer raised a presumption that he was in orders. Laymen had risen who were able to negotiate treaties, and to administer justice. Prelates had ceased to be necessary, or even desirable, in the conduct of civil affairs; and the priestly office, in losing its worldly motives, lost its attraction for the illustrious. Many divines — especially during the domination of the Puritans — attached themselves to households in the relation of menial servants. A cook was considered the most suitable helpmate for a parson. Not one benefice in fifty enabled him to bring up a family comfortably. Often he fed swine or loaded dung-carts to obtain daily bread. Nor, at the Restoration, did the dissenters fare better. Says Baxter, who was one of them:

'Many hundreds of these, with their wives and children, had neither house nor bread. . . . Their congregations had enough to do, besides a small maintenance, to help them out of prison, or to maintain them there. Though they were as frugal as possible, they could hardly live; some lived on little more than brown bread and water, many had but little more than eight or ten pounds a year to maintain a family, so a piece of flesh has not come to one of their tables in six weeks' time, their allowance could scarce afford them bread and cheese. One went to plow six days and preached on the Lord's day. Another was forced to cut tobacco for a livelihood.'

When at length the Church was reinstated, she had suffered a still further loss of her ancient influence. It was observed, with sorrow, that she 'recovered much of her temporal possessions, but not her spiritual rule.' Her cause was never again to be identified with political reaction. The London clergy were always spoken of as a class apart; and it was chiefly they who upheld the fame of their profession for learning and eloquence.

In Scotland, on the contrary, the clergy were supreme. Their very names were sacred. To speak disrespectfully of them was a grievous offence; to differ from them was heresy; to pass them without saluting them was a crime. Their instructions were direct from heaven. When they died, candles were mysteriously extinguished, or stars miraculously appeared in the firmament. Fancy with what rapture each precious word was received! Yet a zealous pastor would discourse for two hours; a vigorous one, five or six. On great occasions, several would be present, in

order that, when one was exhausted, he might be succeeded by another. In 1670, from one pulpit in Edinburgh, thirty sermons were delivered weekly. When sacrament was administered, on Wednesday they fasted, with prayers and preaching for more than eight hours; on Saturday, they listened to two or three sermons; on Sunday, to so many that the congregation remained together more than twelve hours; on Monday, to three or four additional ones by way of *thanksgiving*. Still the people never wearied. Has history any parallel to such eagerness and such endurance?

Meanwhile, dissent had multiplied sects, and the Revolution established them,—Anabaptists, Quakers, Enthusiasts, Seekers, Arians, Socinians, Anti-Trinitarians, Deists,—the list is interminable. No danger henceforward that Protestantism would be only a new edition of Catholicism. Divisions are at once the symptoms and the agents of progress. Uniformity of opinion is the airy good of emperors and popes, whose arguments are edicts, inquisitions, and flames.

Poetry.—It is true, in general, of nations as of individuals, that as the reflective faculties develop, the imaginative are enfeebled. Memory, judgment, wit, supply their place. The mind, disciplined, retraces its steps. Criticism succeeds invention. But criticism is a science, and, like every other, is constantly tending towards perfection. It was now in a very imperfect state. The age of inspired intuition had passed; the age of agreeable imitation had not arrived; and the ascendancy was left to an inferior school of poetry—a school without the powers of the earlier and without the correctness of a later—a school which, blending bombasts and conceits, yet expressed a phase in the revolution of taste that was to issue in the neatness and finish of well-ordered periods, in the truth of sentiment and the harmony of versification. Its absorbing care was not for the foundation, but for the outer shape. The prevailing immorality infected it. Gallantry held the chief rank. The literature and manners of polite France led the fashion. We have seen the change foreshadowed. We see it in the occasional rhymes of the palace and the college; in the lewd and lawless **Earl of Rochester,** who wrote a satire against Mankind, then an epistle on Nothing, and songs numberless, whose titles cannot be copied. Two or three are still to be

found in the expurgated books of extracts. A stanza or two will be a sufficient revelation of him:

'When, wearied with a world of woe,
To thy safe bosom I retire,
Where love and peace and honour flow,
May I contented there expire.'

And:

'My dear mistress has a heart
Soft as those kind looks she gave me;
When, with love's resistless art,
And her eyes, she did enslave me;
But her constancy's so weak,
She's so wild and apt to wander,
That my jealous heart would break
Should we live one day asunder.'

An adept in compliments and salutations. So are the others. **Sedley,** a charming talker, sings thus to Chloris:

'My passion with your beauty grew,
And Cupid at my heart,
Still as his mother favoured you,
Threw a new flaming dart.'

And:

'An hundred thousand oaths your fears
Perhaps would not remove,
And if I gazed a thousand years,
I could no deeper love.'

Dorset, at sea, on the eve of battle, addresses a song to the ladies:

'To all you Ladies now at land
We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
How hard it is to write;
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you.'

Then for the sake of speaking:

'While you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play,—
Perhaps permit some happier man
To kiss your hand or flirt your fan.'

And in the conventional language of the drawing-room:

'Our tears we'll send a speedier way,
The tide shall waft them twice a day.'

There is courtesy here, but a lack of enthusiasm; elegance, but no weight; smoothness, but no depth. It is correct, or nearly so, but external and cold. It is the style, also, of **Waller,** a fashionable wit, in the front rank of worldlings and courtiers. His verses resemble the little events or little sentiments from which they spring:

'Go, lovely rose!
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be. . . .

Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee,
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.'

Most of his verses are addressed to a lady whom he had long wooed. When she had ceased to be beautiful, she asked him if he would write others for her, and he replied, as one accustomed to murmur, with a soft voice, commonplaces which he could not be said to think: 'Yes, madam, when you are as young and as handsome as you were formerly.' A purely mechanical versifier, he survives mainly on the credit of a single couplet:

'The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that Time hath made.'

Unlike the amorous poets around him, **Denham** has left not one copy of their vapid effusions. In the midst of insincerity, he is sincere, preoccupied by moral motives. His best poem, *Cooper's Hill*, is a description of natural scenery, blended with the grave reflections which the scene suggests, and which are fundamental to the English mind:

'My eye, descending from the hill, surveys
Where Thames among the wanton valleys strays;
Thames, the most loved of all the Ocean's sons
By his old sire, to his embraces runs,
Hasting to pay his tribute to the sea,
Like mortal life to meet eternity. . . .
O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
My great example, as it is my theme!
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full. . . .

But his proud head the airy mountain hides
Among the clouds; his shoulders and his sides
A shady mantle clothes; his curled brows
Frown on the gentle stream, which calmly flows,
While winds and storms his lofty forehead beat,
The common fate of all that's high or great.'

The reputation of the piece rests almost entirely upon the famous quatrain in italics. As for the rest, there is little adornment, less ardency, nothing to warm, or melt, or fascinate. It is argument in stately and regular verse, but, as such, is no ordinary perform-

ance, and is nearly the first instance of manly and rhythmical couplets.

It remains for **Dryden** to give to the critical spirit vigorous form, and for Pope to add to it perfection of artifice. Meanwhile, out of season, in penury, pain, and blindness, Milton produces, as we have seen, the greatest of modern epics, himself a benighted traveller on a dreary road. Near him, in sympathy with him, a kind of satellite, is another Puritan, **Marvell,** very unequal, but often melodious, graceful, and impressive. Thus after a badinage of courtesy and compliment to his 'coy mistres,' he adds:

'But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found;
Nor in thy marble vault shall sound
My echoing song.'

Unhappily, in common with the Cowleyan sect of writers, he is eminently afflicted with the gift of ingenuity:

'Maria such and so doth hush
The world, and through the evening rush,
No new-born comet such a train
Draws through the sky, nor star new slain.
For straight those giddy rockets fail
Which from the putrid earth exhale,
But by her flames in heaven tried
Nature is wholly vitrified.'

This is a play of the intellectual fancy, in which an extravagant use of words aims to effect the results that living feeling had heretofore produced. The stamp of the age — critical rather than emotional — is visible in his natural description, where he is most animated:

'Reform the errors of the spring:
Make that the tulips may have share
Of sweetness, seeing they are fair;
And roses of their thorns disarm:
But most procure
That violets may a longer age endure.

But oh, young beauty of the woods,
Whom nature courts with fruits and flowers,
Gather the flowers, but spare the buds;
Lest Flora, angry at thy crime
To kill her infants in their prime,
Should quickly make the example yours;
And, ere we see,
Nip in the blossom all our hopes in thee.'

And, in the *Garden:*

'Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men.
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow;
Society is all but rude
To this delightful solitude.
No white nor red was ever seen
So amorous as this lovely green.'

This way of treating Nature suits the time,—merely to picture what the eye sees and the ear hears, to produce the forms and colors of things, the movements and the sounds which pervade them. It is the calm, unexcited manner of an inventory. For contrast, take an instance from Keats, when once more, across the next century, it is given to see into the life of things, and seeing, to make us share his insight:

'Upon a tranced summer night
Those green-robed senators of mighty woods,
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,
Save from one gradual solitary gust
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,
As if the ebbing air had but one wave.'

No eye can see deeply into the meaning of Nature, nor hence interpret her truly, unless it has also looked deeply into the moral heart, and sadly, sweetly, into the mystery of human life and human history.

Butler's *Hudibras* exhibits, in buffoonery, the style which Donne and Cowley practiced in its more serious form. Sir Hudibras is a Presbyterian knight who, with his squire, goes forth to redress all wrongs, and correct all abuses. He is beaten, set in stocks, pelted with rotten eggs, a ridiculous object from first to last, but serenely unconscious that he is laughed at. The author desires to make sport for a winning side, and the Puritans are caricatured, the terrible saints,—

'Who built their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun,
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery,
And prove their doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks.'

We can imagine that the general hatred secured a hearing. No poem in fact rose at once to greater reputation. But fashions

change; what yesterday was apt may be out of date to-morrow. *Hudibras* at present attracts few readers. There is in it no action, no nature; much triviality, much filth. It is pitiless, splenetic, exaggerated, discursive. Besides, wit, continued long, fatigues. Incessant surprises become wearisome. Enough remains, however, to render it notable. It is a very hoard of robust English and sententious dicta, many of which are like coins effaced and smoothed by currency. Here are some of the less familiar:

> 'He could raise scruples dark and nice,
> And after solve 'em in a trice.'

> 'For most men carry things so even
> Between this world and hell and heaven,
> Without the least offense to either
> They freely deal in all together.'

> 'He that runs may fight again,
> Which he can never do that's slain.'

> 'Fools are known by looking wise,
> As men tell woodcocks by their eyes.'

Drama.—When the Restoration reopened the theatres, they were invested with the externals of French polish — movable decorations, music, lights, comfort. Pepys writes in his diary, January, 1661: 'To the theatre, where was acted Beggar's Bush, it being very well done, and here, the first time that ever I saw women come upon the stage.' In the reaction from Puritan proscription, they were thronged. The public, we have seen, was transformed. The animal, broken loose, abandons itself to excess, and the stage imitates the orgie. Comedy, dropping its serious and tender tones, wallows in vulgarity and lewdness. The new characters, gross and vicious, are in the taste of the day. **Dryden,** who still mingles the tragic and humorous, adopts the fashion of society, though not heartily. One of his gallants says: 'I am none of those unreasonable lovers that propose to themselves the loving to eternity. A month is commonly my stint.' Another: 'We love to get our mistresses, and purr over them, as cats do over mice, and let them get a little away; and all the pleasure is to pat them back again.' And a third:

> 'Is not love love without a priest and altars?
> The temples are inanimate, and know not
> What vows are made in them: the priest stands ready
> For his hire, and cares not what hearts he couples.'

Etherege is the first to depict manners only — the careless pleasures of the human mass. He defines a gentleman to be one who 'ought to dress well, dance well, fence well, have a talent for love-letters, a pleasant voice in a room, to be always very amorous, sufficiently discreet, but not too constant.' But the hero of the libertine outburst is **Wycherley.** His best play is the *Country Wife.* Is it possible that king and nobles, beaux and belles, the *elite* of London, could come and listen to such scenes? What may we extract, that is not at war with beauty and delicacy? Horner, who has returned from France with the cavaliers, is a vile rogue, to whom a lady says: 'Drink, thou representative of a husband. Damn a husband.' Another avows: 'Our virtue is like the statesman's religion, the quaker's word, the gamester's oath, the great man's honour; but to cheat those that trust us.' To a third he declares: 'I cannot be your husband, dearest, since you are married.' And she replies: 'O, would you make me believe that? Don't I see every day at London here, women leave their first husbands, and go and live with other men as their wives? pish, pshaw!' Viola, in *Plain Dealer*, makes an appointment to meet a friend, but unexpectedly meets her husband, who comes in from a journey; kisses him, and says, aside: 'Ha! my husband returned! and have I been throwing away so many kind kisses on my husband, and wronged my lover already?' She sends him off on an improvised errand, and when he is gone, she cries exultingly: 'Go, husband, and come up, friend: just the buckets in the well; the absence of one brings the other. But I hope, like them too, they will not meet in the way, jostle, and clash together.' She had already tired of another, defied him, declaring herself to be married. To his question, 'Did you love him too?' she had answered: 'Most passionately; nay, love him now, though I have married him.' She refused to surrender the diamonds he had given her, and justified the deception she had practised: ''Twas his money: I had a real passion for that. Yet I loved not that so well, as for it to take him; for as soon as I had his money I hastened his departure like a wife, who, when she has made the most of a dying husband's breath, pulls away his pillow.' If this is the Zenith, judge of the Nadir! Need we analyze these dramas — recount their plots? Their chief merit is the liveliness of their dialogue, and their only originality

is their profligacy. Nothing to raise, console, or purify. In the ten selected by Mr. Hunt from the three hundred and eight *Maxims and Reflections*, written by Wycherley in old age, we find but two which seem to us to be in any degree novel, just, and wise:

'*The silence of a wise man is more wrong to mankind than the slanderer's speech.*'

'Our hopes, though they never happen, yet are some kind of happiness; as trees, whilst they are still growing, please in the prospect, though they bear no fruit.'

Congreve is perhaps less natural, but more scholarly, more highly bred, more brilliant, more urbane. Yet French authors are his masters, and experience supplies the colors of his portraits, which display both the innate baseness of primitive instincts, and the refined corruption of worldly habits. In *Love for Love*, Miss Prue is left in the room with a dolt of a sailor, who wants to make love:

'Come, mistress, will you please to sit down? for an you stand astern a that'n, we shall never grapple together. Come, I'll haul a chair; there, an you please to sit I'll sit by you.

Prue. You need not sit so near one; if you have anything to say I can hear you farther off; I an't deaf.

Ben. Why, that's true, as you say; nor I an't dumb; I can be heard as far as another; I'll heave off to please you. . . .

Prue. I don't know what to say to you, nor I don't care to speak with you at all. . . .

Ben. Mayhap you may be shamefaced? some maidens, tho'f they love a man well enough, yet they don't care to tell'n so to's face: if that's the case, why silence gives consent.

Prue. But I am sure it is not so, for I'll speak sooner than you should believe that; and I'll speak truth, though one should always tell a lie to a man; and I don't care, let my father do what he will: I'm too big to be whipped, so I'll tell you plainly I don't like you, nor love you at all, nor never will, that's more: so there's your answer for you; and don't trouble me no more, you ugly thing!

Ben. Flesh! who are you? You heard t'other handsome young woman speak civilly to me of her own accord: whatever you think of yourself, gad I don't think you are any more to compare to her than a can of small beer to a bowl of punch.

Prue. Well, and there's a handsome gentleman, and a fine gentleman, and a sweet gentleman, that was here, that loves me, and I love him; and if he sees you speak to me any more he'll thrash your jacket for you, he will, you great sea-calf!

Ben. What, do you mean that fair-weather spark that was here just now? will he thrash my jacket?—let'n—let'n. But an he comes near me, mayhap I may giv'n a salt eel for's supper, for all that. What does father mean to leave me alone with such a dirty dowdy? Sea-calf! I an't calf enough to lick your chalked face, you cheese-curd you.'

The sweet and handsome man is Tattle, who instructs her, and finds her an apt scholar:

'You must let me speak, miss, you must not speak first; I must ask you questions, and you must answer.

Prue. What, is it like the catechism? Come then, ask me.

Tattle. D'ye think you can love me?

Prue. Yes.

Tattle. Pooh! pox! you must not say yes already; I shan't care a farthing for you then in a twinkling.

Prue. What must I say then?

Tattle. Why, you must say no, or you believe not, or you can't tell.

Prue. Why, must I tell a lie then?

Tattle. Yes, if you'd be well-bred; all well-bred persons lie; besides, you are a woman, you must never speak what you think: your words must contradict your thoughts; but your actions may contradict your words. So, when I ask you, if you can love me, you must say no, but you must love me too. If I tell you you are handsome, you must deny it and say I flatter you. But you must think yourself more charming than I speak you: and like me for the beauty which I say you have, as much as if I had it myself. If I ask you to kiss me you must be angry, but you must not refuse me.

Prue. O Lord, I swear this is pure! I like it better than our old-fashioned country way of speaking one's mind; and must not you lie too?

Tattle. Hum! Yes; but you must believe I speak truth.

Prue. O Gemini! well, I always had a great mind to tell lies; but they frighted me and said it was a sin.

Tattle. Well, my pretty creature; will you make me happy by giving me a kiss?

Prue. No, indeed; I'm angry at you. [*Runs and kisses him.*

Tattle. Hold, hold, that's pretty well; but you should not have given it me, but have suffered me to have taken it.

Prue. Well, we'll do't again.

Tattle. With all my heart. Now then my little angel! [*Kisses her.*

Prue. Pish!

Tattle. That's right—again, my charmer! [*Kisses again.*

Prue. O fy! nay, now I can't abide you.

Tattle. Admirable! that was as well as if you had been born and bred in Covent-garden.'

These are the natural instincts of the town. If we would see them transformed into systematic vices, we must look to the *Way of the World*, the mirror of fine artificial society. The heroes are accomplished scoundrels, the heroines are unchecked gossips, who, in their most amiable aspects, veil the animal under genteel airs. Fainall, who has been lavish of his morals, is asked how he is 'affected' towards his wife, and answers:

'Why, faith, I'm thinking of it. Let me see; I am married already, so that's over: my wife has played the jade with me; well, that's over too. I never loved her, or if I had, why that would have been over too by this time: jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; so there's an end of jealousy: weary of her I am, and shall be; no, there's no end of that; no, no, that were too much to hope.'

She, whose youth has not rusted in her possession, hates him; complains to Mirabell, a trained expert, who appeases her, and gives her advice:

'You should have just so much disgust for your husband, as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.'

Lady Wishfort, expecting Sir Rowland, speaks in the style of high life:

'But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? or will he not fail when he does come? Will he be importunate, Foible, and push? For if he should not be impor-

tunate, I shall never break decorums: I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to advance. Oh no, I can never advance! I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy, neither. I won't give him despair—but a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring.'

Foible. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

Lady Wish. Yes, but tenderness become me best; a sort of dyingness; you see that picture has a sort of a—ha, Foible! a swimmingness in the eye; yes, I'll look so; my niece affects it; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Let my toilet be removed; I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome? Don't answer me. I won't know; I'll be surprised, I'll be taken by surprise.'

But the perfect model of the brilliant world is Mrs. Millamant, haughty and wanton, witty and scornful, with nothing to hope or to fear, superior to all circumstances, caprice her only law:

'*Mrs. Fainall.* You were dressed before I came abroad.

Mrs. Millamant. Ay, that's true. O but then I had; Mincing, what had I? why was I so long?

Mincing. O mem, your laship stayed to peruse a packet of letters.

Mrs. Mil. O ay, letters; I had letters; I am persecuted with letters; I hate letters. Nobody knows how to write letters, and yet one has 'em, one does not know why. They serve one to pin up one's hair.'

Lovers are her creatures, and conquests give her no surprise:

'Beauty the lover's gift! Lord, what is a lover, that it can give? Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases, and then, if one pleases, one makes more.'

Her airs give way at last to tenderness (?), and she enters into matrimony, on conditions:

'I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure. . . . My dear liberty, shall I leave thee! my faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? Ay-h adieu; my morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, all ye *douceurs*, ye *sommeils du matin*, adieu?; I can't do 't, 'tis more than impossible; positively, Mirabell, I'll lie abed in a morning as long as I please.

Mir. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

Mil. Ah! idle creature, get up when you will; and d'ye hear, I won't be called names after I'm married; positively I won't be called names.

Mir. Names!

Mil. Ay, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar; I shall never bear that; good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my lady Fadler, and Sir Francis; nor go to Hyde-park together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers, and then never to be seen together again; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together; but let us be very strange and well-bred: let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while; and as well-bred as if we were not married at all.'

These demands are reasonable—in fact, trifling, compared with others:

'To write and receive letters without interrogatories. . . . Come to dinner when I please; dine in my dressing room . . . without giving a reason; . . . to be sole empress

of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.'

This is the carnival of fashion — its finery, its chatter, its charming repartee, its foolish affectation, the drapery of the world. You are amused, but what thought do you carry away? Yet sensible and striking passages are not wanting, some of which have become proverbial, and whose origin is unknown to many who quote them:

'Music hath charms to soothe a savage breast,
To soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak.'

'Heaven has no rage, like love to hatred turn'd,
Nor hell a fury, like a woman scorned.'

'For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds;
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds.'

'If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
That heart, which others bleed for, bleed for me.'

'Reason, the power
To guess at right and wrong, the twinkling lamp
Of wandering life, that winks and wakes by turns,
Fooling the follower, betwixt shade and shining.'

Vanbrugh is cheerful, confident, robust, easy, natural, various, and, of course, plain-spoken — an impudent dog. Sottishness is still respectable, rakes still scour the streets, ladies are still 'carried off swooning with love from ante-chambers.' Squire Sullen, in *Provoked Wife*, gets drunk, rolls about the room, like a sick passenger in a storm, howls out, 'Damn morality! and damn the watch! and let the constable be married!' Sir John Brute declares there is but one thing he loathes on earth beyond his wife,—'that's fighting.' She would please him, but is tauntingly told that is not her talent. She reflects:

'Perhaps a good part of what I suffer from my husband may be a judgment upon me for my cruelty to my lover. Lord, with what pleasure could I indulge that thought, were there but a possibility of finding arguments to make it good! And how do I know but there may? Let me see. What opposes? My matrimonial vow. Why, what did I vow? I think I promised to be true to my husband. Well; and he promised to be kind to me. But he han't kept his word. Why, then, I am absolved from mine.'

The argument proceeds, but we have to stop. Listen to Lord Toppington in *Relapse*. He is a newly-created pillar of state:

'My life, madam, is a perpetual stream of pleasure, that glides through such a variety of entertainments, I believe the wisest of our ancestors never had the least conception of any of 'em. I rise, madam, about ten a-clack. I don't rise sooner, because it is the worst thing in the world for the complexion; nat that I pretend to be a beau; but a man

must endeavor to looke wholesome, lest he make so nauseous a figure in the side-bax, the ladies should be compelled to turn their eyes upon the play. So at ten a-clack, I say, I rise. Naw, if I find it a good day, I resalve to take a turn in the park, and see the fine women; so huddle on my clothes, and get dressed by one. If it be nasty weather, I take a turn in the chocolate-hause: where as you walk, madam, you have the prettiest prospect in the world; you have looking-glasses all round you.'

He is to be married to a country heiress, 'a plump partridge,' who has never seen him. His brother, simulating him, arrives instead. Miss Hoyden is overjoyed:

'*Nurse.* Oh, but you must have a care of being too fond; for men now-a-days hate a woman that loves 'em.

Hoyd. Love him! why do you think I love him, nurse? ecod I would not care if he were hanged, so I were but once married to him! No; that which pleases me, is to think what work I'll make when I get to London; for when I am a wife and a lady both, nurse, ecod I'll flaunt it with the best of 'em.'

The true lord comes in at the critical moment, as they think, the imposture is discovered, and her father apologizes:

'My lord, I'm struck dumb, I can only beg pardon by signs; but if a sacrifice will appease you, you shall have it. Here, pursue this Tartar, bring him back. Away, I say! A dog! Oons, I'll cut off his ears and his tail, I'll draw out all his teeth, pull his skin over his head—and—and what shall I do more?'

Toppington marries her, learns that he has married his brother's wife, but covers his aching heart with a serene countenance:

'Now, for my part, I think the wisest thing a man can do with an aching heart is to put on a serene countenance; for a philosophical air is the most becoming thing in the world to the face of a person of quality. I will therefore bear my disgrace like a great man, and let the people see I am above an affront. [*Aloud*] Dear Tain, since things are thus fallen aut, prithee give me leave to wish thee jay; I do it *de bon cœur*, strike me dumb! You have married a woman beautiful in her person, charming in her airs, prudent in her canduct, canstant in her inclinations, and of a nice marality, split my windpipe!'

Farquhar is an artist in stage effect, an Irishman, with the Irish sportiveness, and an agreeable diversity. His best comedy is the *Beaux' Stratagem.* Boniface is still a favorite, one of the extinct race of landlords. The London coach suddenly appears: 'Chamberlain! maid! Cherry! daughter Cherry! all asleep? all dead?'—'Here, here! why d'ye bawl so, father? d'ye think we have no ears?' She deserves to have none, he thinks, but she redeems herself by a cheering welcome to the guests who are shown to their chambers. Thereupon enter Aimwell and Archer, gentlemen of broken fortunes, travelling, the one as master, the other as servant:

'*Bon.* This way, this way gentlemen!

Aim. [*To Archer.*] Set down the things; go to the stable, and see my horses well rubbed.

Ar h. I shall, sir.

Aim. You're my landlord, I suppose?

Bon. Yes, sir, I'm old Will Boniface, pretty well known upon this road, as the saying is.

Aim. O Mr. Boniface, your servant!

Bon. O sir! What will your honour please to drink, as the saying is?

Aim. I have heard your town of Litchfield much famed for ale; I think I'll taste that.

Bon. Sir, I have now in my cellar ten tun of the best ale in Staffordshire; 'tis smooth as oil, sweet as milk, clear as amber, and strong as brandy; and will be just fourteen year old the fifth day of next March, old style.

Aim. You're very exact, I find, in the age of your ale.

Bon. As punctual, sir, as I am in the age of my children. I'll show you such ale! Here, tapster, broach number 1706, as the saying is. Sir, you shall taste my *Anno Domini.* I have lived in Litchfield, man and boy, above eight-and-fifty years, and, I believe, have not consumed eight-and-fifty ounces of meat.

Aim. At a meal, you mean, if one may guess your sense by your bulk.

Bon. Not in my life, sir; I have fed purely upon ale, I have eat my ale, drunk my ale, and I always sleep upon ale.

Enter Tapster with a bottle and glass, and exit.

Now, sir, you shall see! [*Pours out a glass.*] Your worship's health! Ha! delicious, delicious! fancy it Burgundy, only fancy it, and 'tis worth ten shillings a quart.

Aim. [*Drinks.*] 'Tis confounded strong!

Bon. Strong! it must be so, or how should we be so that drink it?

Aim. And have you lived so long upon this ale, landlord?

Bon. Eight-and-fifty years, upon my credit, sir; but it killed my wife, poor woman, as the saying is.

Aim. How came that to pass?

Bon. I don't know how, sir; she would not let the ale take its natural course, sir; she was for qualifying it every now and then with a dram, as the saying is; . . . the fourth carried her off. But she's happy, and I'm contented, as the saying is.'

One or two higher spirits reach the passions of the other age,—**Dryden** in tragedy; and by his side a younger contemporary, **Otway,** in whose *Venice Preserved* we encounter the sombre imagination of Webster, Ford, and Shakespeare. Jaffier, a youth of merit and promise, but the sport of chance, rescues from a watery grave a senator's daughter, a genuine woman, who from that hour loves him; three years have passed since their vows were plighted; she is his wife, against the wishes of her proud sire; misfortune comes; he has just now left the presence of the offended aristocrat with his curse and his heart is heavy between love and ruin:

'O Belvidera! Oh! she is my wife—
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.'

She who has been his dependent and ornament in happier hours, proves his stay and solace in calamity:

'My lord, my love, my refuge!
Happy my eyes when they behold thy face!
My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
At sight of thee, and bound with sprightly joys.
Oh, smile as when our loves were in their spring,
And cheer my fainting soul!

Jaf. As when our loves
Were in their spring! Has, then, my fortune changed thee?
Art thou not, Belvidera, still the same,
Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?
If thou art altered, where shall I have harbour?
Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where complain?
Bel. Does this appear like change, or love decaying,
When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,
With all the resolution of strong truth?
I joy more in thee
Than did thy mother, when she hugged thee first,
And blessed the gods for all her travail past.
Jaf. Can there in woman be such glorious faith?
Sure, all ill stories of thy sex are false!
Oh, woman, lovely woman! Nature made thee
To temper man; we had been brutes without you!
Angels are painted fair, to look like you.'

These are but rare notes. For the most part, he moves, like the rest, in the murky waters of the great current. Like them, he is obscene; and from all, we have found it difficult to extract, without revolting decorum, something to suggest the new rhetoric, the sentiments and maxims of polite society, and the abyss from which that society and our literature have since ascended. Even here there were tokens of a more serious and orderly life, signs of a reaction in literary feelings and moral habits. A great reformer arose to accelerate the revolution, Jeremy Collier, a heroic Anglican, who threw down the gauntlet to the champions of the stage, and was victorious.

Prose.—The Restoration may be taken as the era of the formation of our present style. Imagination was tempered, transports diminished, judgment corrected itself, artifice began. Among the most agreeable specimens of the new refinement in form are the conversations of the drama. They foreshadow the *Spectator*. The easy and flowing manner of Cowley is continued by the polished **Temple,** a man of the world, a lover of elegance, who, if he assuages grief, must do it with dignity and facility:

'If you look about you, and consider the lives of others as well as your own; if you think how few are born with honor, and how many die without name or children; how little beauty we see, and how few friends we hear of; how many diseases, and how much poverty there is in the world; you will fall down upon your knees, and instead of repining at one affliction, will admire so many blessings which you have received from the hand of God.'

Observe how the following sentence glides along:

'I have indeed heard of wondrous pretensions and visions of men possessed with notions of the strange advancement of learning and science, on foot in this age, and the

progress they are like to make in the next; as the universal medicine, which will certainly cure all that have it; the philosopher's stone, which will be found out by men that care not for riches; the transfusion of young blood into old men's veins, which will make them as gamesome as the lambs from which 'tis to be derived; a universal language, which may serve all men's turn when they have forgot their own; the knowledge of one another's thoughts without the grievous trouble of speaking; the art of flying, till a man happens to fall down and break his neck; double-bottomed ships, whereof none can ever be cast away besides the first that was made; the admirable virtues of that noble and necessary juice called spittle, which will come to be sold, and very cheap, in the apothecaries' shops; discoveries of new worlds in the planets, and voyages between this and that in the moon to be made as frequently as between York and London.'

Smoothness was the distinguishing quality of the man, as it is of his manner, which sometimes relaxes into prolixity or remissness. **Dryden** has sounder taste, as well as more vigor. The rest are inferior in point of ornament, but, for the most part, have the same fundamental character — ratiocination. **Hobbes** is surprisingly dry, idiomatic, concise, strong. The most celebrated sermons are instruments of edification rather than models of elegance. Barrow is geometrical, revises and re-revises, then revises again, dividing and subdividing, having only one desire — to explain and fully prove what he has to say. Tillotson has no rapture, no vehemence, no warmth. He wishes to convince, nothing more. South, an apostate Puritan, is colloquial, energetic; more popular than these, because he is more anecdotic, abrupt, pointed,— vulgar, having the plain-dealing and coarseness which belong to the stage, and which his insincerity permits.

These sermons, once so famous, are now hardly read at all. They are outlived, in a far humbler sphere, by the little work of a London linen-draper, **Izaak Walton,** whose *Complete Angler* has what they have not,— the touch of nature which makes the whole world kin. Its natural description, as also its lively dialogue, has seldom been surpassed. A single extract can hardly suggest its abundance of quaint but wise thoughts, its redolence of wild flowers and sweet country air:

'Well, scholar, having now taught you to paint your rod, and we having still a mile to Tottenham High Cross, I will, as we walk towards it in the cool shade of this honeysuckle-hedge, mention to you some of the thoughts and joys that have possessed my soul since we two met together. And these thoughts shall be told you, that you also may join with me in thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for our happiness. . . . We have been freed from these and all those many other miseries that threaten human nature: let us therefore rejoice and be thankful. Nay, which is a far greater mercy, we are free from the unsupportable burden of an accusing, tormenting conscience — a misery that none can bear: and therefore let us praise Him for His preventing grace, and say, Every misery that I miss is a new mercy. Nay, let me tell you, there may be many that have forty times our estates, that would give the greatest part

of it to be healthful and cheerful like us, who, with the expense of a little money, have eat and drunk, and laughed, and angled, and sung, and slept securely; and rose next day, and cast away care, and sung, and laughed, and angled again, which are blessings rich men cannot purchase with all their money Let me tell you, scholar, I have a rich neighbour that is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh; the whole business of his life is to get money, and more money, that he may still get more and more money; he is still drudging on, and says that Solomon says, "The hand of the diligent maketh rich"; and it is true indeed: but he considers not that it is not in the power of riches to make a man happy: for it was wisely said by a man of great observation, "that there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them." And yet God deliver us from pinching poverty, and grant that, having a competency, we may be content and thankful! Let us not repine, or so much as think the gifts of God unequally dealt, if we see another abound with riches, when, as God knows, the cares that are the keys that keep those riches hang often so heavily at the rich man's girdle, that they clog him with weary days and restless nights, even when others sleep quietly. We see but the outside of the rich man's happiness; few consider him to be like the silkworm, that, when she seems to play, is at the very same time spinning her own bowels, and consuming herself; and this many rich men do, loading themselves with corroding, to keep what they have probably unconscionably got. Let us therefore be thankful for health and competence, and, above all, for a quiet conscience.

Let me tell you, scholar, that Diogenes walked one day, with his friend, to see a country fair, where he saw ribbons, and looking-glasses, and nut-crackers, and fiddles, and hobby-horses, and many other gimcracks; and having observed them, and all the other finnimbruns that make a complete country fair, he said to his friend: "Lord, how many things are there in this world of which Diogenes hath no need!"'

Evelyn, an amiable cavalier, begins the class of gossiping memoirs, so useful in giving color to history. He writes a *Diary*, with the tone of an educated and reflecting observer. Here is a picture of the court of Charles II:

'I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming, and all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God—it being Sunday evening—which this day se'ennight I was witness of,—the king sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleveland, and Mazarin, etc.; a French boy singing love-songs in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset round a large table, a bank of at least £2000 in gold before them, upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflections with astonishment. Six days after, all was in the dust.'

And a sketch of the Great Fire:

'*2d Sept.*—This fatal night, about ten, began the deplorable fire near Fish Street, London.

3d Sept.—I had public prayers at home. The fire continuing after dinner, I took a coach with my wife and son, and went to the Bankside in Southwark, where we beheld that dismal spectacle, the whole city in dreadful flames near the water side; all the houses from the bridge, all Thames street, and upwards towards Cheapside, were now consumed; and so returned exceedingly astonished what would become of the rest. . . . The conflagration was so universal and the people so astonished, that from the beginning, feeling I know not what despondency or fate, they hardly stirred to quench it, so that there was nothing heard nor seen but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting even to save their goods, such a strange consternation there was upon them, and as it burned in breadth and length, the churches, public halls, exchange, hospital, monuments and ornaments, leaping after a prodigious manner from house to house, and street to street, at great distances one from the other. For the heat, with a long set of fair and warm weather, had even ignited the

air, and prepared the materials to conceive the fire which devoured after an incredible manner, houses, furniture, and everything. Here we saw the Thames covered with goods floating, all the barges and boats ladened with what some had time and courage to save, as, on the other side, the carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewn with movables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. O, the miserable and calamitous spectacle! such as haply the world has not seen since the foundation of it, nor can be out-done till the universal conflagration thereof. All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above forty miles round about for many nights. God grant that mine eyes may never again behold the like; who ever saw above 10,000 houses all in one flame? The noise and crackling and thunder of the impetuous flames; the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses and churches, was like a hideous storm, and the air all about so hot and inflamed that at the last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still and let it burn on, which they did for near ten miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds of smoke also were dismal, and reached upon computation near fifty miles in length. . . . London was, but is no more.'

Readers who take an interest in the progress of civilization, will be more grateful to the garrulous old **Pepys** for his journal, than to professed historians for the military involutions and political intrigues that fill some of their pages. His memoranda, recorded solely for his own eye, include almost every phase of public and social life. Thus:

'*Aug. 19.*— . . . Home to dinner, where my wife had on her new petticoat that she bought yesterday, which indeed is a very fine cloth and a fine lace; but that being of a light colour, and the lace all silver, it makes no great show.'

'*Nov. 29.—Lord's Day.*—This morning I put on my best black cloth suit, trimmed with scarlet ribbons, very neat, with my cloak lined with velvet, and a new beaver, which altogether is very noble, with my black knit silk cannons[1] I bought a month ago.'

'*Dec. 21.*—To Shoe Lane to see a cock-fight at a new pit there, a spot I never was at in my life; but, Lord! to see the strange variety of people, from parliament men, to the poorest 'prentices, bakers, brewers, butchers, draymen and what not, and all these fellows one with another cursing and betting. I soon had enough of it.'

Mr. Pepys at divine service:

'*May 26, 1667.*—My wife and I to church, where several strangers of good condition came to our pew. After dinner, I by water alone to Westminster to the parish church, and there did entertain myself with my perspective glass up and down the church, by which I had the great pleasure of seeing and gazing at a great many very fine women; and what with that, and sleeping, I passed away the time till sermon was done. . . .

'*Aug 18.*— . . . I walked towards Whitehall, but, being wearied, turned into St. Dunstan's Church, where I heard an able sermon of the minister of the place; and stood by a pretty modest maid, whom I did labour to take by the hand; but she would not, but got further and further from me; and, at last, I could perceive her to take pins out of her pocket to prick me if I should touch her again — which, seeing, I did forbear, and was glad I did spy her design. And then I fell to gaze upon another pretty maid, in a pew close to me, and she on me; and I did go about to take her by the hand, which she suffered a little and then withdrew. So the sermon ended.'

Tries to admire *Hudibras:*

'*Nov. 28.*—To Paul's Church-yard, and there looked upon the second part of *Hudibras*, which I buy not, but borrow to read, to see if it be as good as the first, which the world

[1] Ornamental tops to silk stockings.

cried so mightily up, though it hath not a good liking in me, though I had tried by twice or three times reading to bring myself to think it witty.'

At the theatre:

'*October 5.*—To King's house; and there, going in, met with Knipp, and she took us up into the tireing-rooms: and to the woman's shift, where Nell was dressing herself, and was all unready, and is very pretty, prettier than I thought. And into the scene-room, and there sat down, and she gave us fruit: and here I read the questions to Knipp, while she answered me through all her part of *Flora Figarys*, which was acted to-day. But, Lord! to see how they're both painted would make a man mad, and did make me loath them; and what base company of men comes among them, and how lewdly they talk!'

Makes a great speech at the Bar of the House:

'*March 5. 1668.*—All my fellow-officers, and all the world that was within hearing, did congratulate me, and cry up my speech as the best thing they ever heard. . . . My Lord Barkeley did cry me up for what they had heard of it; and others, Parliament-men there, about the King, did say that they never heard such a speech in their lives delivered in that manner. . . . Everybody that saw me almost came to me, as Joseph Williamson and others, with such eulogies as cannot be expressed. From thence I went to Westminster Hall, where I met Mr. G. Montagu, who came to me and kissed me, and told me that he had often heretofore kissed my hands, but now he would kiss my lips; protesting that I was another Cicero, and said, all the world said the same of me.'

This, it is true, is not literature, if we insist on finish, imagery, or sentiment; but we may accept it on other ground. How far above price were so minute and living a picture of the age of Bede, or of earlier and later ages that appear only in the haze of general descriptions, dates, numbers, and results!

Baxter, an eminent dissenter, a great sufferer, yet a voluminous writer, and an indefatigable pastor, is the author of a well-known manual of devotion,—*The Saint's Everlasting Rest.* It is like the Puritan — fervent, masculine, solid, direct, unadorned, unpolished. Rarely has a book, in its day, aided so many souls to rise in spiritual flights, or to keep the heights which they were competent to gain. However, Milton and Bunyan excepted — the glory of Puritanism is not in its literary remains, but in its moral results. Only once, in this period, does it attain eloquence, and beauty, and then by accident, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the work of an inspired tinker, a birth of passionate feeling in a time of self-conscious art.

History.—Turning to the historical field, we find several industrious collectors of materials, the most prominent of whom are Dugdale, Rymer, and Wood. Fuller's well-known *Worthies* contains sketches of about eighteen hundred individuals. Of compositions original, systematic, and dispassionate, there is a

complete dearth. The most deserving are **Clarendon's** *Great Rebellion*, **Burnet's** *Own Times*, and his *Reformation*. The first, a Royalist, is a professed apologist of one side. His style, often prolix, is on the whole manly; with sometimes a majesty and beauty hitherto unknown. The chief merit of the second is liveliness and perspicuity. His style, though careless and familiar, partakes fairly of the improvements of his time.

The advancing spirit of scepticism was purging history of its falsehoods. We have traced its progress from poetic narration; and ere long we shall see it pass into philosophical interpretation, look beneath the surface of events for the springs of action, search under facts for principles, becoming more humane and democratic as it becomes more critical and just. It is important to understand well the significance of this tendency; for if the historical method advances, it is because general knowledge advances; if the way of contemplating the past is different, it is because the way of contemplating the present is different. Each is a phase of the same vast movement.

Theology.—The spirit which Bacon carried into philosophy, Cromwell into politics, and Chillingworth into theology, now culminated in open revolt. Belief in a God, coupled with disbelief in a written revelation, became frequent. **Lord Herbert,** brother of the saintly poet, may be considered the founder of the English school of deists. All religions are by him reduced to one, which is sufficient, he maintains, for all the wants of mankind. This universal system consists of five articles:

1. That there is one supreme God.
2. That He is to be worshipped.
3. That piety and virtue are the principal part of His worship.
4. That man should repent of sin, and that if he does so, God will pardon it.
5. That there are rewards for the good, and punishments for the evil, partly in this life, and partly in the next.

In that political and religious reaction which followed the Cromwellian period, Deism arose in its extreme forms, frequently allied with the democratic, sometimes with the revolutionary, tendencies of the nation. **Hobbes,** however, the greatest living

anti-Christian writer, was a servile advocate of royalty and of the right of the state to coerce individual opinions: 'Thought is free, but when it comes to confession of faith, the private reason must submit to the public, that is to say, to God's lieutenant.' He acknowledges the being of God, but denies that we know any more of Him than that He exists:

'By the visible things of this world and their admirable order, a man may conceive there is a cause of them, which men call God, and yet not have an idea or image of Him in his mind. And they that make little inquiry into the natural causes of things are inclined to feign several kinds of powers invisible, and to stand in awe of their own imaginations. And this *fear* of things invisible is the natural seed of that which every one in himself calleth *religion*.'

He also denies free-will; asserts the materiality of the soul, and teaches that the belief in a future state is merely 'a belief grounded on other men's saying that they knew it supernaturally, or that they knew those, that knew them, that knew others, that knew it supernaturally.' He cuts with remorseless knife at the very heart of the general faith. 'To say God hath spoken to man in a dream, is no more than to say man dreamed that God hath spoken to him.' 'To say one hath seen a vision or heard a voice, is to say he hath dreamed between sleeping and waking.' These statements, one and all, are but applications of his metaphysical theory, which, in connection with its results, will be considered in its proper place.

The common ferment bred an astonishing irruption of deists,—Shaftesbury, Toland, Tindal, Mandeville, Bolingbroke; but, from Hobbes downward, Deism grew more and more materialistic and sensual. As might be expected, its career was transient. Fifty years after the Revolution, it was drowned in forgetfulness. For the system which it proposed to abolish, it could offer, in its highest type, no substitute but lofty and dissolving speculation, impotent — at least in that stage of civilization — to supply motives and means for right conduct.

Free-thinkers roused antagonists: leaders of experimental science, as Boyle and Newton; illustrious scholars, as Bentley and Clarke; popular wits, as Addison and Swift; profound philosophers, as Cudworth and Locke. Apologies, refutations, expositions abounded and multiplied. The character of theological literature, however, had changed. In all this discussion, quotations are comparatively rare. Christians no longer combated by

authority, but by argument. An incessant reference to proof had indisposed the public to receive the traditions that had once enslaved their fathers. It is observable, too, that the progress of Arminianism, as opposed to Calvinism, was changing the face of the English Church. This was displayed among those who, about the epoch of the Restoration, were commonly known as Latitudinarians, distinguished from High Churchmen by their strong aversion to every compromise with Popery,— and from most Puritans as well, by their opposition to dogma, by their insistence upon rightness of life rather than correctness of opinion, by their advocacy of tolerance and comprehension as the basis of Christian unity. The questions most freely discussed or illustrated by divines were 'The Bible the only rule of faith,' and 'Salvation by God's free mercy through Christ.'

In Scotland, the stronghold of Presbyterianism, induction was unknown, bigotry was undiminished, secular interests were neglected, preaching was harsh and gloomy. The misery of man, the anger of the Deity, the power and presence of Satan, the agonies of hell, were still the constant themes of the pulpit. The preacher delighted to freeze the blood of his hearers with hideous imagery. 'Boiling oil, burning brimstone, scalding lead,' says one. 'A river of fire and brimstone broader than the earth,' says another. 'Tongue, lungs, and liver, bones and all, shall boil and fry in a torturing fire,' says a third. There is no end of such language: 'Oh! the screeches and yels that will be in hell.' 'While wormas are sporting with thy bones, the devils shall make pastime of thy paines.' 'There are two thousand of you here to-day, but I am sure fourscore of you will not be saved.'[1] In the absence of scientific knowledge, and of that rationalistic spirit which was liberalizing and enlightening thought elsewhere, all phenomena were referred to the arbitrary will of a passionate and sanguinary God. As long as this continued, as long as religious feelings were chiefly associated with the abnormal and capricious, attention would chiefly concentrate upon disasters, and devotion would be chiefly connected with storm and pestilence, famine and death. These, regarded as penal inflictions, would give a congenial hue to all parts of belief, whose central ideas would be misery, cruelty, and terror. But when habits of

[1] In consequence three persons are said to have dispatched themselves in despair.

investigation acquire the ascendancy, calamities are seen to be the result of general laws, terrorism diminishes, attention is directed chiefly to the evidences of superintending care, the Divine presence is associated with order, and theology wears a more beneficent aspect. This, on the whole, is precisely the change that had been going on in England from the early part of the century. The fact suggests, what must be obvious to every careful student of ideas,—that all theology is progressive: Christianity lives because it is developed. Every age must produce its own doctrines, adapted to its peculiar condition and wants. Those of the present can be retraced to the successive points of time when, one after the other, they reached a definite form. Patristic—Scholastic—Reformative—modern Evangelical—this is the line of advance and the order of growth. The gems alone are unmodified, the eternal verities, the same to-day, yesterday, and forever.

Ethics.—Two classes of tendencies, two complexions or styles of mind, contend for empire in the individual and society,—the one holding of animal force, the other of genius; the one of the understanding, the other of the soul; the one deficient in sympathy, the other warm and expansive; the one all buzz and din, the other all infinitude and paradise; the one hating ideas and clinging to a corporeal civilization, the other looking abroad into universality and suggesting the presence of the invisible gods; the one insisting on sensuous facts as the solid finality, the other on Thought and Will as the primal reality, from which as an unsounded centre flow sensuous facts perpetually outward, and of which they are but a manifold symbol. These are the *Materialists* and the *Idealists* of the world. The former think more of the beast than of the seraph in man. The only interests they appreciate are such as are palpable, and can be touched, measured, and weighed. If they survey the rules of conduct, or seek to discover the principles which underlie them, they make much of a good stomach, of strong limbs, of the five senses, and reach the conclusion that the universal motive of every act is the desire of pleasure. In their analysis of moral phenomena, unable to ascend higher than their own level, they stop at self-love. This is precisely what now took place at the birth of moral science. Nor, under the conditions, is it at all surprising. It was natural that

in the hands of a logician and a positivist, driven into exile by rebellion, into weariness and disgust by sectarian violence, attached to a fallen government, and yearning for repose, ethical philosophy should assume a form pleasing to a generation devoted equally to monarchy and to vice; that, written in the midst of an overthrown society and a religious excess, for an audience whose passions and tastes had been sternly repressed, and who mingled duty and fanaticism in a common reproach, it should wipe out noble sentiment and reduce human nature to its merely animal aspect.

Such a theorist was **Thomas Hobbes,**[1] and such the base tone which saturates his system. He has daily observed — as who has not? — that we continually perform acts, because we see that they will issue in pleasure; on the other hand, that we refuse to perform, because we see that they will issue in pain. Preoccupied with favorite ideas, the sight of revolutionary excess confirms him in his principles and attachments. He accordingly declares that a desire to obtain pleasure and to avoid pain is the *only possible* motive to action. None seek or wish for anything but that which is pleasurable:

> 'I conceive that when a man deliberates whether he shall do a thing or not do it, he does nothing else but consider whether it be better *for himself* to do it or not to do it.'

With him, as with the courtiers around him, 'the greatest good is the preservation of life and limb; the greatest evil is death.' In what, then, does all the good or evil of objects consist? Solely in their property of producing happiness or the opposite. 'Good and evil are names that signify our appetites and aversions.' To determine the quality of an act, you have simply to acquaint yourself with its fitness or unfitness to produce pleasure. *Calculate* well, therefore, and you are moral; calculate ill, and you are immoral. All passions are thus resolved into one — love of self. What is *reverence?* 'The conception we have concerning another that he hath the power to do unto us both good and hurt, but not the will to do us hurt.' What is *love?* A conception of the utility of the person loved. Why are *friendships* good? 'Because they are useful; friends serve for defence and otherwise.'

[1] 'Our Saviour, God-man, had been born one thousand five hundred and eighty years. In Spanish harbors lay anchored the famous hostile fleet soon to perish in our sea. It was early spring-time, and the fifth day of April was dawning. At this time, I, a little worm, was born at Malmesbury.' He died at the age of ninety-two.

Why do we *pity?* 'Because we imagine that a similar misfortune may befall ourselves.' What is *charity?* The expectation of favors reciprocated. 'No man giveth but with the expectation of good to himself.' Or it is a manifestation of the gratified sense of power:

'There can be no greater argument to a man, of his own power, than to find himself able not only to accomplish his own desires, but also to *assist* other men in *theirs:* and this is that conception wherein consisteth *charity.*'

Parental affection is a specific instance of this, but,—

'The affection wherewith men often bestow their benefits on *strangers*, is not to be called charity, but either *contract*, whereby they seek to purchase friendship; or *fear*, which maketh them to purchase peace.'

Why do we weep? From a sense of weakness:

'Men are apt to weep that prosecute revenge, when the revenge is suddenly stopped or frustrated by the repentance of their adversary; *and such are the tears of reconciliation.*'

Wisdom is desirable; but money, being more serviceable, is worth more. 'Not he who is wise is rich, as the Stoics say; but he who is rich is wise.' Whence the purifying emotions which art inspires?

'Music, painting, poetry, are agreeable as imitations which recall the past, because if the past was good, it is agreeable in its imitation as a good thing; but if it was bad, it is agreeable in its imitation as being past.'

To sum up, nothing is in itself either good or evil, but only as it affects us. Our duties are simply to avoid the disagreeable, and seek the agreeable. Virtue is a judicious, and vice an injudicious, pursuit of self-interest. As we cannot be affected otherwise than we are by the agreeable and disagreeable, our volitions or desires are determined by motives external to us, and we are consequently creatures of mechanism. There is no *liberty* but liberty from physical constraint, as that of a chained prisoner set free. It consists in the power, not of forming resolves, but of doing what we will. The true destiny of man is pleasure. He is by nature inclined and instructed to do whatever will promote this end. The better to secure it, he enters into a civil compact, in which he merges some private rights in the public organization. His law of action, however, is still the greatest degree of personal enjoyment; and *might makes right.*

Does human conduct, profoundly analyzed, confirm this view? Self-love is undoubtedly a spring of activity — the main one, if

you will, but is there no other? The principle of interest exists—has a right to exist; but are there not other principles quite as real? Is intelligence fortuitous and forced? Is man a mere nervous machine, whose wheels go blindly, carried away by impulse and weight, internally responsive to external shocks? Does not entire life, private and public, turn on personal freedom? Is it not involved in esteem and contempt, in admiration and indignation, in punishment and reward? Is it not implicitly admitted by every system that contains a rule or a counsel? When Hobbes advises us to sacrifice the agreeable to the useful, does he not assume that we are free to adopt or reject advice? Fontenelle seeing a man led to punishment, remarked, 'There is a man who has calculated badly.' True, but if he had been more adroit and escaped punishment, would his conduct have been laudable? Is the honest only the useful? Is the genius of calculation the highest wisdom? Must a poor calculator be incapable of virtue? When you have acted contrary to an enlightened self-interest, you may lament your feebleness and your failure, but do you feel remorse? Is the love of beauty nothing but desire? Is there no deeper meaning than this in the view or worship of that subdued fairness of countenance, in sweet child or cultured woman, whose holy reference beyond itself glorifies our visions of heaven; in the prospect of the peaceful hills, with their undulations of forests, rearing themselves aslant their slopes, and waves of greensward, dim with early dew, or smooth in evening warmth of barred sunshine; in the walk by silent, scented paths, beside the pacing brooks that ripple and eddy and murmur in infinite seclusion? Is the mute adoration of a mother, over the cradle of her sleeping innocent, only a foresight of the service which that babe, at some future day, may render? What would you think of a lover whose devotion lay resting on the single feeling that a marriage would conduce to his own comforts? or of a professed patriot who served his country for hire? or of a son who should say, 'Father, on whom my fortunes depend, teach me to do what pleases thee, that I, pleasing thee in all things, may obtain the portion which thou hast promised to obedience?'

Enough. Reason and experience attest that human nature has grander parts and a grander destiny. They tell us that

merit and demerit, duty and right, originate in an absolute good — something good, not from the benefit it brings to one or to all, but from the eternal nature of things; that our obligation is to seek and to do the best which we know; and if happiness come, life will be sweet; if it do not come, life will be bitter — yet to be borne in lowliness of heart and nobleness of purpose.

Few writers have been so uniformly depreciated. 'Hobbism,' ere he died, became a synonym for irreligion and immorality; and he has been vilified unsparingly in death. The prejudice has sprung, partly from ignorance, partly from a true sense of his dangerous errors. He is commonly supposed to have been an atheist. On the contrary, he was a theist, though of a modified type. Admitting the existence of spirit, he denied it to be immaterial. Asked what position the Deity occupied in his philosophy, he answered:

'I believe Him to be a most pure, simple, invisible spirit corporeal. By corporeal I mean a substance that has magnitude, and so mean all learned men, divines and others, though perhaps there be some common people so rude as to call nothing body but what they can see and feel.'

You may call Him incorporeal, if you wish, but,—

'*Incorporeal* shall pass for a middle nature between *infinitely subtle* and *nothing*, and be less subtle than infinitely subtle, and yet more subtle than a thought.'[1]

After all that you have heard, you may be startled to hear him, not merely profess belief in human immortality, but argue its location — that, too, from Scripture:

'Of the *world to come*, St. Peter speaks (*2 Pet. iii, 13*). *Nevertheless we according to His promise look for new heavens and a new earth.* This is that WORLD wherein Christ coming down from heaven in the clouds, with great power and glory, shall send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the uttermost parts of the earth, and thenceforth reign over them, under His Father, everlastingly.'[2]

Undoubtedly the speculations of Hobbes, in their tendency and effect, were harmful. It was the perception of their results, that caused Parliament to condemn his two great works — *De Cive* and *Leviathan.* It was this, also, that raised up strong, high-minded foes, like the Platonic Cudworth, to found the intuitive school of ethics, and to assert with the whole force of conviction and learning, above motives of a personal and selfish

[1] The reader will perceive that this must have been, from his theory of creation, substantially the view of Milton.

[2] This sounds oddly in one whom we have seen assail the very theory of Revelation: 'To say he speaks by supernatural inspiration, is to say he finds an ardent desire to speak, or some strong opinion of himself.'

nature, one which is wholly impersonal, disinterested and *moral*. Let us be liberal enough, however, to acknowledge merit in an adversary. He is original, profound, clear, precise, and weighty. The germs of future systems of thought are in him — metaphysical, philological, political, ethical. In nothing does he deserve greater credit than in having set an example of close observation in speculative inquiries. The very lucidity and boldness with which he exhibits the system of selfishness, make it possible to expose and refute it. We shall see that system reappear in the next century under different forms, all resolvable, however refined or ingenious, into sensual elements. It will be reproduced, in every important era of history, as long as there is a class of thinkers who regard the earth as a stable and its fruit as fodder; who measure all utilities by inches, and denote all profit and loss by dollars and cents. These are they who complacently call themselves 'practical,' worthy of much esteem, indeed, and eminently serviceable, yet least calculated of any, by their habits of mind, to distinguish truth from error, nor altogether friendly to progress by the low views which they are accustomed to take of humanity. The useful, according to them, consists in knowing that we have an animal nature, and in making this our chief care. They place the glory of individuals, as of nations, in the world around us, not in the world within us; in the circumstances of fortune, not in the attributes of the soul. Engrossed with the roar of railways, the click of telegraphs, the sounds of the crowded mart, they think they govern the world because they float on the surface, never dreaming that what they imagine to be under their direction is a mighty force that in its movement sweeps them onward.

Science.—This suddenly became the fashion of the day. Poets and courtiers, wits and fops, crowded to the meetings of the Invisible College, to which, in token of his sympathy, Charles II gave the title of 'The Royal Society.' Almost every ensuing year saw some improvement — some expansion of the circle of knowledge. The Greenwich Observatory was founded. A fresh impulse was given to microscopical research. The careful observation of nature and facts marked an era in the healing art. First light was thrown on the structure of the brain. Boyle, the most eminent of Bacon's early disciples, first directed attention

to chemistry as the science of the atomic constituents of bodies. The discussion of abstract questions of government began. Hobbes declared (1) that all power originated in the people; and (2) that all power was for the common weal. Locke added (1) that the power thus lodged in the ruler could be taken away; (2) that the ruler is responsible to his subjects for the trust reposed in him; and (3) that legislative assemblies, as the voice of the people, are supreme.

All names in purely physical science are lost in the lustre of one. Kepler had reduced planetary motion to a rule. He and others had sought to reduce it to a cause, and some had stood on the verge of success. **Newton** crossed the barrier, and established the doctrine of Universal Gravitation — that every particle of matter attracts every other particle by one common law of action. To pursue the interminable vista of new facts which it pointed out, was to be the employment of the succeeding century. Born in 1642, so tiny that his mother said 'she could put him into a quart mug,' at twenty-two he discovered the Binomial Theorem; at twenty-three, the Method of Fluxions; at twenty-four, the law of planetary motion around the sun; then turning his attention to *Light* and *Color*, laid the foundation of Optics; and in 1687, having resumed his calculations, announced in his famous *Principia* the mutual attraction of celestial bodies. His boyish fondness for constructing little mechanical toys — clocks and mills, carts and dials — as well as the facility with which he mastered Geometry, was the early prelude of his eminence. He possessed in a very high degree the elements of the mathematical talent,— fertility of invention, distinctness of intuition, deliberate concentration, and a strong tendency to generalization. He lived in the trains of thought relating to his character. Complimented on his genius, he replied with modesty that if he had made any discoveries, it was owing to *patient attention* — his ability without fatigue to connect inference with inference in one long series towards a determinate end. 'I keep the subject of my inquiry constantly before me, and wait till the first dawning opens gradually, by little and little, into a full and clear light.'[1] The higher

[1] Descartes arrogated nothing to the force of his intellect. What he had accomplished more than other men, he attributed to the superiority of his method. 'Genius,' says Helvetius, 'is nothing but a continued attention.' The great Mrs. Siddons attributed her unrivalled success to the more intense study which she bestowed upon her parts. A habit of abstraction has been manifested almost akin to disease by some of

we ascend, the wider our field of vision, the deeper will be our humility. This chief of scientists said, at the close of life:

'I know not what the world may think of my labors; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.'

Only false science is lofty in spirit. Only *it* ignores the sphere and limits to which it is confined. Newton did not forget that the discovery of law is no adequate solution of the problem of causes. While he reduced the heavens to the dominion of gravitation, gravitation itself remained an insoluble problem. He could track the course of the comet, and measure the velocity of light, yet was he powerless to explain the existence of the minutest insect or the growth of the humblest plant. Through all his labors he looked reverently up to the great First Cause. Thus ends his *Principia:*

'We know God only by His properties and attributes, by the wise and admirable structure of things around us, and by their final causes; we admire Him on account of His perfections; we venerate and worship Him on account of His government.'

Kepler, too, had thus opened his sublime views:

'I beseech my reader that, not unmindful of the divine goodness bestowed on man, he do with me celebrate and praise the wisdom and greatness of the Creator which I open to him.'

In old age and darkness Galileo wrote:

'Alas! your dear friend and servant has become totally and irreparably blind. These heavens, this earth, this universe, which by wonderful observation I had enlarged a thousand times beyond the belief of past ages, are henceforth shrunk into the narrow space I myself occupy. *So it pleases God*, it shall therefore please me also.'

The piety of Boyle is shown by his literary remains,— *Style of Scripture, Seraphic Love, the Christian Virtuoso*, in which he affirms that 'a man addicted to natural philosophy is rather assisted than indisposed thereby to be a good Christian.' In the present day, when the study of the laws of matter has assumed an extraordinary development, it is gratifying to know that the mountain minds which mark the great steps of scientific progress, and which now throw their lengthening shadows over us, bowed their honored heads before the Jehovah of the Bible.

Philosophy.—Hobbes' ethics were the result of his psy-

the greatest thinkers. Archimedes was so absorbed in meditation that he was first aware of the storming of Syracuse by his own death-wound Plato reports that Socrates, in a military expedition, was seen by the Athenian army to stand for a whole day and a night, until the breaking of the second morning, motionless, with a fixed gaze.

chology. *Good* and *evil* can be nothing else than expressions for pleasure and pain, if *ideas* are nothing else than *sensations.* He says, in general:

'Concerning the thoughts of man, . . . they are every one a *representation* or *appearance* of some quality or other accident of a body without us, which is commonly called an object. *Which object worketh on the eyes, ears, and other parts of a man's body;* and by diversity of working, produceth diversity of appearances. The original of them all is that which we call *Sense*, for there is no conception in a man's mind which hath not at first, totally or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense. The rest are derived from that original.'

To be specific, *thought* is an internal movement caused by an external shock:

'All the qualities called *sensible* are, in the object that causeth them, but so many several *motions* of the matter by which it presseth on our organs diversely. *Neither in us that are pressed, are they anything else but divers motions; for motion produceth nothing but motion.*'

The gradual ceasing of the initial impulse is *imagination*, which he reduces to the power of forming images:

'When a body is once in motion it moveth, unless something hinder it, eternally; and whatsoever hindereth it, can not in an instant, but in time and by degrees, quite extinguish it; and as we see in the water, though the wind cease, the waves give not over rolling for a long time after: so also it happeneth in that *motion* which is made in the internal parts of man; then, when he sees, dreams, etc.'

The cause of this diminution is the impulse of some succeeding and stronger motion, by which the former is obscured, as the *stars* fade when the *sun* rises. If you wish to denote, not the decay itself, but the *character* of it, as something *old* and *past*, you will call it *memory.* If now you would know how one thought suggests another in a continuous and uninterrupted chain, the explanation is:

'All fancies (i.e. images) *are motions within us, relicts of those made in sense;* and those motions that immediately succeed one another in the sense continue also together after the sense; insomuch as the former coming again to take place and be predominant, the latter followeth by coherence of the matter moved, in such manner as water upon a plain table is drawn which way any one part of it is guided by the finger.'

Could anything be more candid, clear, and distinct? Sensations, and their traces, form the elements of all knowledge; the various commixtures of these form the intellectual faculties. What we perceive or think, forms part of the material universe. *Matter is the only reality.*

Hobbes, applying the empirical method of Bacon to the investigation of mental and moral phenomena, is thus the precursor of modern Materialism. One of the names that mark an era in the

advancement of knowledge, by creating fresh resources for the development of coming ages, is that of **John Locke,** an Oxford scholar, so profoundly contemptuous of the University[1] studies that he regretted in after-life the waste of so much time on such profitless pursuits, so deeply convinced of the vicious method of college education that he went to the other extreme of thinking self-education the best; devoted himself to medicine, then to politics; incurred the displeasure of the Court by his liberal opinions, and fled to Holland, where he finished his celebrated *Essay on the Human Understanding;* returned to London, after the Revolution, to find security and welcome; wrote much, did much, to strengthen the government; was appointed to a responsible and lucrative office, but failed in health; passed his remaining years in peaceful retirement at the house of his friend Lady Masham, daughter of Cudworth, where he expired in 1704, aged seventy-two, having created, by his ideas on speculative method, civil rule, value of money, and liberty of the press, a new vein of thought for philosophic delvers and political economists. As a man, upright, amiable, and accomplished; as an author, his fame and influence are European; as a thinker, of a practical cast and cautious habit, forbidding himself lofty questions and inclined to forbid them to us. Like Hobbes, he pronounced Psychology to be a science of observation; like him, he resolved to explore the field of intellect as Bacon had explored the field of nature. What is his philosophy?

Its object is to ascertain the origin, certainty, limits, and uses of our knowledge. Its leading doctrine appears to be, that the ultimate source of this knowledge is experience, which, however, is of two kinds,—*sensation* and *reflection.* The first presents no great difficulty. Of the second he says:

'The other fountain from which experience furnisheth the understanding with ideas, is the *perception of the operations of our own minds within us; as it is employed about the ideas it has got;* which operations, when the soul comes to reflect on and consider, do furnish the understanding with another set of ideas, which could not be had from things without; and such are perception, thinking, doubting, believing, reasoning, knowing, willing, and all the different actings of our own minds, which we, being conscious of, and observing in ourselves, do from these receive into our understandings ideas as distinct as we do from bodies affecting our senses. This *source of ideas every man has wholly in himself, and though it be not sense, as having nothing to do with external objects,* yet it is very like it, and might properly enough be called internal sense. But

[1] Then, as now, attached to the past. To this day, its students are drilled in the philosophy of Aristotle.

as I call the other *sensation* so I call this *reflection*, the ideas it affords being such only as the mind gets by *reflecting* on its own operations within itself.'

No ideas are allowed to be in the mind except those which can be shown to spring from one or other of these inlets:

'When the understanding is once stored with these simple ideas, it has the power to repeat, compare, and unite them, even to an almost infinite variety, and so can make at pleasure new complex ideas. But it is not in the power of the most exalted wit, or enlarged understanding, by any quickness or variety of thought, to invent or frame one new simple idea in the mind not taken in by the ways aforementioned.'

The thing perceived is the idea:

'It is evident that the mind knows not things immediately, but by the intervention of the ideas it has of them. Our knowledge, therefore, is real only so far as there is a conformity between our ideas and the reality of things.'

What assurance have we of such conformity?—The assumption that God would not constitute us with faculties fitted only to deceive:

'Our ideas are not fictions of our fancies, but the natural and regular productions of things without us really operating upon us; and so carry with them all the conformity which is intended, or which our state requires, for they represent things to us under those appearances, which they are fitted to produce in us.'

Whence this idea of God? As a philosopher, he argues that it is not innate, and holds that its absence is a strong presumption against innate ideas generally; as a theologian, he argues that we can prove the existence of God as conclusively as we can prove that the angles of a triangle are together equal to two right angles. The proof upon which he chiefly insists is derived from causation,—that for every effect there must be an efficient cause. *The causal idea he derives from experience.* This would be satisfactory, if by *origin* or *source* were meant, not creation (the sense in which Locke seems to employ either term), but *occasion.* It is allowed that, apart from experience, the mind can have no ideas; still it is not experience which creates or produces our *necessary* ideas, it is merely the occasion of their development. Thus, without the perception of body, there could be no idea of space; but, while the former is chronologically first, the latter is its logical condition, and involves it, since we cannot conceive of body except as in space. Without the observation of an effect, there could be no idea of cause; but, the former being presented, the latter—already potentially in the mind—is ready to spring up. He acknowledges intuition,[1] but over-

[1] 'Sometimes the mind perceives the agreement or disagreement of two ideas immediately by themselves without the intervention of any other, and this I think we may call intuitive knowledge.'

looks its rules or laws — the primitive cognitions and beliefs included in the exercises with which the mind starts. He acknowledges necessary truth, but it does not form a part of his general theory, and sceptics have shown that he cannot reach it in consistency with his system.

On the whole, it will be clear to the most careless observer that Locke, as a theorist, has a rational side; it will be equally clear that he has a strong sensational side. The latter is conspicuous in his account of moral distinctions, and leaves little behind but ruins. Like Hobbes, he declares that 'good and evil are nothing but pleasure and pain, or that which occasions or procures pleasure or pain to us.' The obligations to morality are the Divine rewards and punishments, legal and social penalties; that is, a more or less *far-sighted* love of pleasure, and an aversion to misery. That the beauty of excellence alone should incite us, is the delusion of pagans:

'If a Christian, who has the view of happiness and misery in another life, be asked why a man must keep his word, he will give this as a reason, because God, who has the power of eternal life and death, requires it of us. But if an Hobbist be asked why, he will answer, because the public requires it, and the Leviathan will punish you if you do not. And if one of the old heathen philosophers had been asked, he would have answered, because it was dishonest, below the dignity of man, and opposite to virtue, the highest perfection of human nature, to do otherwise.'[1]

In opposition to the intuitive moralists who affirm a native power of distinguishing between the higher and lower parts of our nature, he insists at great length on the argument derived from uncivilized life, — that the moral standard is variable in different races and ages. This only recalls the distinction already made between innate ideas *independent* of experience and innate faculties *evolved* by experience. The difference between a savage and Angelo is not one of mere acquisition; it is the difference between the acorn and the oak, — the one is *in* the other as the flower in the bud, or as the grain contains the ear that is to wave in the next summer's sun, requiring only favorable conditions for the full expansion of its inherent energy.[2]

[1] Mr. Lewis, in defending Locke's originality against the critics who assert that he only borrowed and popularized the ideas of Hobbes, says that Locke never alludes to Hobbes but twice — then distantly — and adds, like a warm admirer of his *client:* 'His second allusion is simply this: "A Hobbist would probably say." We cannot at present lay our hands on the passage, but it refers to some moral question.'—*History of Philosophy.* The 'passage,' had he found it, could hardly have been serviceable to Mr. Lewis as an advocate. It must appear evident from single references and from doctrinal points of resemblance, that, so far from having never read the writings of Hobbes, Locke was familiar with them.

[2] Professor Sedgwick, in criticism of Locke's notion of the soul being originally like a sheet of white paper, says: 'Naked man comes from his mother's womb, endowed

Nevertheless, Locke speaks of the 'eternal and unalterable nature of right and wrong,' and declares that 'morality is capable of demonstration as well as mathematics.' This vacillation which makes moral truth alternately uncertain and demonstrable, is but another instance of his general inconsistency. His style, again, is lacking in precision. In every page we miss the translucent simplicity of Hobbes and the French psychologists. There has been almost endless controversy about his meaning. From him will be drawn the Utilitarianism of Mandeville, who will make virtue a sham; the Idealism of Berkeley; the Scepticism of Hume; the Materialism of Condillac and his school, who, though not accurately representing the doctrines of their master, represent the *general tendency* of his teaching. He learned as he wrote, and, we are disposed to add, has left passages involving the conclusions of all schools. His *Essay* too often suggests what Pope has said of the Bible, and Hamilton has reiterated of Consciousness:[1]

> 'This is the book where each his dogma *seeks*,
> This is the book where each his dogma *finds*.'

Résumé.—English hereditary forces,—moral instinct and practical aptitude,—now worked out their proper results. The revolution, long in accomplishment, was finally completed, by the abolition of feudal tenures and the institution of Habeas Corpus under Charles II, by the establishment of the Constitution, the act of toleration, and the emancipation of the press, under William III.

Literature still sought in the sunshine of royal and aristocratic favor, where it had chiefly sprung and flourished, the warmth and shelter which popular appreciation was not yet sufficiently extended to give. Its spirit therefore was in the main courtly. In its polite forms, it reflected forcibly the social and political characteristics of the Restoration. Manners were gross and trivial. It stooped to be the pander of every low desire. Tragedy, moulded on the tastes of Paris, went out in declamation. The dignity of blank gave way to the sensual effect of rhyme. Com-

with limbs and senses indeed well fitted to the material world, yet powerless from want of use; and as for knowledge, his soul is one unvaried blank; yet has this blank been already touched by a celestial hand, and when plunged in the colors which surround it, it takes not his tinge from accident but design, and comes forth covered with a glorious pattern.'

[1] Of such as resort thither in confirmation of preconceived opinions. The original of this couplet is in the Latin confession of a Calvinist divine.

edy sank into a repertory of viciousness. As the readiest fashion of serving the appetitive life it fed, it clothed its garbage of vulgarity in prose. Striving to assume the sprightly refinement of the French stage, it acquired new corruption. The abasement of the drama consisted, not merely in licentious expression, but in licentious intrigue. The sentimental enshrinement of occasional virtue served only to show how fearfully and shamelessly men had fallen into vice.

Artificial and frigid images replaced sentiment and beauty. The elegant loved but the varnish of truth — compliments and salutations, tender words and insipidities. Poets wrote like men of the world,— with ease, wit, and spirit, but without noble ardor or moral depth. The lyric, chiefly amatory, was cultivated, though not a favorite. Satire was conspicuous. The *Hudibras* presents the best embodiment, perhaps, of the true spirit of the cavalier,— witty, sensual, disconnected, bitter, exaggerated, and radically false.

The literature of a theological and practical cast was largely Puritan. Amid the classical coldness and the social excess, two minds possessed the imaginative faculty in an eminent degree,— Milton, who lingered from the preceding age, and Bunyan, the hero and martyr of this.

As constructive power failed, style improved, becoming more strictly idiomatic, polished, and fluent. Theory and observation sprang forward with emulous energy. Boyle disengaged chemistry from astrology, and Newton shed lustre upon the age by his brilliant discoveries in astronomy. The Royal Society afforded convenient and ornamental shelter to the gathered fruits of science, and gave an impulse to progress by the spirit it excited and diffused.

The bent which philosophy received from Bacon, though in itself excellent, was physical. In Hobbes it became declared materialism. He denied the spontaneity of mind, relaxed the obligations of morality, reduced religion to an affair of state, and resolved right into the assertion of selfishness. The dissenting tendency was represented by Cudworth. Locke was peculiarly influential in his view of the origin of knowledge. The mind, according to him, is a sheet of white paper; the soul a blank sensorium. Its characters, its ideas, its materials, are traceable

directly or indirectly to the senses,—sensible objects, or the states which sensible objects produce.

On the whole, a rocking, revolutionary age, an age of actions and reactions. The waves rushed forward, broke, and rolled back; but the great tide moved steadily on. That movement, in general, was from faith to scepticism, from enthusiasm to cynicism, from the imagination to the understanding. To the creators succeeded the critics. To the impassioned and intuitive minds succeeded the plodding thinkers and the clear logicians. In polite letters, Dryden is chief of the transition, the central nexus between a period of creativeness and a period of preëminent art.

BUNYAN.

Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style,
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile.—*Cowper.*

'I have been vile myself, but have obtained mercy.'

Biography.—Born near Bedford, in 1628, the son of a despised tinker; sent to a free school for the poor, where he learned to read and write; but, idle and vicious, lost in youth what he had learned in childhood; was bred to his father's trade; enlisted, while yet a boy, in the army of the Parliament; and at nineteen with the advice of friends, married a girl of his own rank, both so poor that they had not a spoon or a dish between them. This was the turning point. She was a pious wife, and had brought to her husband, as her only portion, two volumes bequeathed by a dying parent,—*The Practice of Piety*, and *The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven*. Over these she helped him to recover the art of reading, enticed him to remain at home; persuaded him to attend the Baptist church, of which she was a member; and brought him by words of affection to reflect upon his evil ways. Over wild heath and through haunted bog he wandered in the usual gypsy life of his occupation, alone with his own thoughts; now sunk into monomania by the sense of his unregenerate condition and the fear of hell, now ravished with the trances of joy,

then plunging again into 'sin.' Gradually, not without many spiritual conflicts, he was transformed. He was appointed deacon, and presently, after solemn prayer and fasting, began to preach:

'Though of myself, of all the saints the most unworthy, yet I, but with great fear and trembling at the sight of my own weakness, did set upon the work, and did according to my gift, and the proportion of my faith, preach that blessed Gospel that God had showed me in the holy Word of truth; which, when the country understood, they came in to hear the Word by hundreds, and that from all parts, though upon sundry and divers accounts.'

In connection with his ministerial labors, he began to write, and in 1658 published his second work,—*A Few Sighs from Hell.* Two years later, being a dissenter, he was arrested, and committed to prison. He went cheerfully:

'Verily, as I was going forth of the doors, I had much ado to forbear saying to them, that I carried the peace of God along with me, but I held my peace, and blessed be the Lord, went away to prison, with God's comfort in my poor soul.'

Here he passed the time in making tagged laces for the support of his indigent family, in musing and writing on heavenly themes. With a library of only two books,—the *Bible* and the *Book of Martyrs*,—it was the period of his brilliant authorship. Toward the end of his confinement, rigor was relaxed. He was allowed to visit his family, and often preached to a congregation under the silent stars. Released in 1672, he went forth again to proclaim the Gospel publicly, extending his ministrations over the whole region between Bedford and London, with occasional visits to the metropolis itself. He died, of a fever caused by exposure, in 1688, with these last words to the friends around his bedside:

'Weep not for me, but for yourselves. I go to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will, no doubt, through the mediation of His blessed Son, receive me, though a sinner, where I hope we ere long shall meet to sing the new song, and remain everlastingly happy, world without end. Amen.'

Writings.—We close our eyes to draw a face from memory. In sleep, illusions are perfect. Poesy quenched the vision of Homer and of Milton before she lifted the veil from their glorious spirits. It was in a dungeon, shut out from the external world, that Bunyan had his immortal dream. There he wrote the first and greatest part of his *Pilgrim's Progress*,—a record of his experience; a record of the soul's struggles, battle-agonies, and victories, in its stages from conversion to glory. *Christian*, dwelling in the City of Destruction, against which a voice from

Heaven has proclaimed vengeance, flees to escape the consuming fire. *Evangelist* finds him in distress, and shows him the right road — through yonder wicket-gate, over a wide plain, across a desolate swamp:

'Now he had run far from his own door, but his wife and children perceiving it, began to cry after him to return; but the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on, crying, "Life! life! eternal life!"'

His neighbors jeer and threaten. Some follow, in order to dissuade him. One, *Pliable*, becomes his companion, but sinks in the Slough of Despond, and leaves him. He struggles bravely on, but is met by a treacherous man, *Worldly Wiseman*, who turns him aside:

'He bid me with speed get rid of my burden, and I told him it was ease I sought. And, said I, I am therefore going to yonder gate, to receive further direction how I may get to the place of deliverance. So he said that he would show me a better way, and shorter, not so attended with difficulties as the way, sir, that you set me in; which way, said he, will direct you to a gentleman's house that has skill to take off these burdens; so I believed him, and turned out of that way into this, if haply I might be soon eased of my burden. But when I came to this place, and beheld things as they are, I stopped for fear, as I said, of danger: but I now know not what to do.'

Re-directed and admonished by *Evangelist*, whom he again meets, he reaches the Strait Gate, where *Interpreter* points out the Celestial City and instructs him by a series of visible shows, 'the resemblance of which will stick by me as long as I live'; especially three,— the fire against the wall (the omnipotence of grace), the man in the iron cage (the hopeless excess of sin), and the trembling sleeper rising from his dream (the vision of the Day of Judgment). He passes before a cross, and his burden falls. Slowly, painfully, he climbs the steep Hill of Difficulty, and arrives at a great castle where *Watchful*, the guardian, gives him in charge to his daughters, *Piety* and *Prudence*, who warn and arm him against the foes that imperil his descent into the Valley of Humiliation. He finds his way barred by a demon, *Apollyon*, whom, after a long fight, he puts to flight:

'In this combat no man can imagine, unless he had seen and heard, as I did, what yelling and hideous roaring Apollyon made all the time of the fight: he spake like a dragon: and on the other side, what sighs and groans burst from Christian's heart. I never saw him all the while give so much as one pleasant look till he perceived he had wounded Apollyon with his two-edged sword; then, indeed, he did smile, and look upward: but it was the dreadfullest sight that ever I saw.'

Farther on the valley deepens, the shades thicken, ever and anon sulphurous flames reveal the hideous forms of dragons, chains

rattle, fiends howl, and unseen monsters rush to and fro: it is the Valley of the Shadow of Death. He enters with drawn sword:

'I saw then in my dream, so far as this Valley reached, there was on the right hand, a very deep ditch: that ditch it is, into which the blind have led the blind in all ages, and have both there miserably perished. Again, behold, on the left hand, there was a very dangerous quag, into which, if even a good man falls, he finds no bottom for his foot to stand on. . . .

The pathway was here also exceeding narrow, and therefore good Christian was the more put to it; for, when he sought, in the dark, to shun the ditch on the one hand, he was ready to tip over into the mire on the other: also when he sought to escape the mire, without great carefulness he would be ready to fall into the ditch. Thus he went on, and I heard him here sigh bitterly; for, besides the danger mentioned above, the pathway was here so dark, that ofttimes, when he lifted up his foot to set forward, he knew not where, or upon what, he should set it next.

About the midst of the Valley, I perceived the mouth of hell to be, and it stood also hard by the way-side: Now, thought Christian, what shall I do? And ever and anon the flame and smoke would come out in such abundance, with sparks and hideous noises, . . . that he was forced to put up his sword, and betake himself to another weapon, called All-prayer: so he cried in my hearing, O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul! Thus he went on a great while, yet still the flames would be reaching towards him: also he heard doleful voices, and rushings to and fro, so that sometimes he thought he should be torn to pieces, or trodden down like mire in the streets. This frightful sight was seen, and these dreadful noises were heard, by him for several miles together.'

Ahead,—

'The way was all along set so full of snares, traps, gins, and nets here, and so full of pits, pitfalls, deep holes, and shelvings down there, that had it been dark, as it was when he came the first part of the way, had he had a thousand souls, they had in reason been cast away.'

And at the end 'lay blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of men, even of pilgrims that had gone this way formerly.' He passes it, continues straight on till the towers of a distant town appear; and soon he is in the midst of the buyers and sellers, the loungers and jugglers, of Vanity Fair. He walks by with lowered eyes, not wishing to take part in the festivities and deceits. The people beat him, imprison him, condemn him as a traitor, and burn his companion *Faithful.* Escaped from them, he advances by the little hill of the silver mine, through a meadow of lilies, along the bank of a pleasant river which is bordered on either side by fruit trees. Thinking to have easier going, he takes a by-path, and falls into the hands of *Giant Despair*, the keeper of Doubting Castle, the court-yard of which is paved with skulls of pilgrims. The giant beats him, leaves him in a poisonous dungeon without food, finally gives him daggers and cords and advises him to suicide. But Christian suddenly remembers a key in his bosom, called Promise, which will open any lock in the castle. Once more at liberty, he and Hopeful (who joined him

at Vanity Fair) come at last to the Delectable Mountains, from the summit of which they are shown, through a perspective glass, the desired haven. Thence the way lies through the fogs and briers of the Enchanted Ground, with here and there a bed of ease under an arbor of green. Beyond is the land of Beulah, where flowers bloom perpetually, where the songs of birds never cease, and where the sun never sets:

'Here they were within sight of the city they were going to; also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof: for in this land the shining-ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of Heaven. . . . Here they heard voices from out of the city, loud voices, saying, "Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh!" . . .

Now, as they walked in this land, they had more rejoicing than in parts more remote from the kingdom to which they were bound; and, drawing nearer to the city yet, they had a more perfect view thereof: it was built of pearls and precious stones; also the streets thereof were paved with gold: so that, by reason of the natural glory of the city, and the reflection of the sun-beams upon it, Christian with desire fell sick, Hopeful also had a fit or two of the same disease: wherefore here they lay by it a while crying out, because of their pangs, "If you see my Beloved, tell him that I am sick of love."'

But between them and the golden pavements a bridgeless river rolls its cold, black waters:

'At the sight, therefore, of this river, the pilgrims were much stunned; but the men that went with them said, You must go through, or you cannot come at the gate. . . .

The pilgrims then (especially Christian) began to despond in their minds, and looked this way and that; but no way could be found by them by which they might escape the river. . . .

Then they addressed themselves to the waters, and entering, Christian began to sink, and crying out to his good friend Hopeful, he said, I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head, all the waters go over me.

Then said the other, Be of good cheer, my brother; I feel the bottom, and it is good. Then said Christian, Ah! my friend, the sorrow of death hath compassed me about; I shall not see the land that flows with milk and honey. And with that a great darkness and horror fell upon Christian, so that he could not see before him. Also here in a great measure he lost his senses, so that he could neither remember nor orderly talk of any of those sweet refreshments that he had met with in the way of his pilgrimage.'

Faith sustains them, and they touch the farther shore, divested of their mortal garments:

'They therefore went up here with much agility and speed, though the foundation upon which the city was framed was higher than the clouds; they, therefore, went up through the region of the air, sweetly talking as they went, being comforted, because they had got safely over the river, and had such glorious companions to attend them.

The talk they had with the shining ones was about the glory of the place; who told them that the beauty and the glory of it was inexpressible. There, said they, is "Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect." You are going now, said they, to the Paradise of God, wherein you shall see the tree of life, and eat of the never-fading fruits thereof; and, when you come there, you shall have white robes given you, and your walk and talk shall be every day with the King, even all the days of eternity. . . . There came also out at this time to meet them several of the King's trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, who,

with melodious and loud noises, made even the heavens to echo with their sound. These trumpeters saluted Christian and his fellow with ten thousand welcomes from the world, and this they did with shouting and sound of trumpet.

This done, they compassed them round about on every side; some went before, some behind, and some on the right hand, some on the left (as it were to guard them through the upper regions), continually sounding as they went with melodious noise, in notes on high; so that the very sight was to them that could behold it, as if Heaven itself was come down to meet them. . . . Now were these two men, as it were, in Heaven, before they came at it; being swallowed up with the sight of angels, and with hearing their melodious notes. Here also they had the city itself in view, and thought they heard all the bells therein to ring, to welcome them thereto. But above all, the warm and joyful thoughts that they had about their own dwelling there with such company, and that for ever and ever: Oh! by what tongue or pen can their glorious joy be expressed! . . .

Now I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate; and lo, as they entered, they were transfigured; and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. There were also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave to them the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honour. Then I heard in my dream, that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, "Enter ye into the joy of your Lord." I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, "Blessing, honour, and glory, and power, be to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever."

Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold, the city shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal.

There were also of them that had wings, and they answered one another without intermission, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord." And, after that, they shut up the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them.'[1]

Style.—Simple, ingenuous, idiomatic. Ninety-three per cent of his vocabulary, it is estimated, is Saxon. Revealing, in its diction, an intimate acquaintance with Scripture, and, in its imagery, the fulness of supernatural impressions; often picturesque and poetical, and everywhere, like a nursery tale, level to the meanest capacity. The following is representative:

'Prayer is a sincere, sensible, and an affectionate pouring out of the soul to God. O the heat, strength, life, vigor, and *affection*, that is in right prayer! . . . Alas! the greatest part of men make no conscience at all of the duty; and as for them that do, it is to be feared that many of them are very great strangers to a sincere, sensible, and affectionate pouring out of their hearts or souls to God; but even content themselves with a little lip-labor and bodily exercise, mumbling over a few imaginary prayers. When the affections are indeed engaged in prayer, then the whole man is engaged; and that in such sort, that the soul will spend itself to nothing, as it were, rather than it will go without that good desired, even communion and solace with Christ.'

This is rarely beautiful:

'The doctrine of the Gospel is like the dew and the small rain that distilleth upon the tender grass, wherewith it doth flourish, and is kept green.—*Deut. xxxii, 2.* Chris-

[1] *Parts I* and *II* relate the celestial pilgrimage of Christian's wife and children. *Part III* opens:

'After the two former dreams, . . . I dreamed another dream, and, behold, there appeared unto me a great multitude of people, in several distinct companies and bands, travelling from the city of Destruction, the town of Carnal-policy, the village of Morality, and from the rest of the cities, towns, villages, and hamlets, that belong to the Valley of Destruction.'

tians are like the several flowers in a garden, that have upon each of them the dew of heaven, which being shaken with the wind, they let fall their dew at each other's roots, whereby they are jointly nourished, and become nourishers of one another. For Christians to commune savourly of God's matters one with another, it is as if they opened to each other's nostrils boxes of perfume.'

Rank.—In popular celebrity, the greatest name among the theological writers of the age. He has written the noblest example of allegory in English prose, as Spenser had done in English verse. Other allegories please the understanding or amuse the fancy; his alone touches the heart. Dr. Johnson, who hated to read a book through, wished this one longer; and thousands have loved it who were too simple to discern the significance of the fable.

The secret of this unique success is twofold,—the subject and the execution. Few have been so lucid; fewer still have had such power of representation. His abstractions are life-like. His personifications are men. His imaginary objects are as clear and complete as ordinary perceptions. What he describes he has seen vividly, and has the dramatic faculty of making others see.

We go no further. Although, if we apply the test of *general attraction*, the *Pilgrim's Progress* carries off the palm from the *Fairy Queen* and quite as decidedly from *Paradise Lost*, yet between the power which produced them and the power which produced it, there is a great distinction, not unlike that which exists between *Robin Hood* and *Hamlet*. Invention Bunyan undoubtedly has in a high degree; but his adaptation of Scriptural incident and language has caused him to appear more creative than he really is. We do not insist upon the inconsistencies which it requires no careful scrutiny to detect,—notably those passages in which the disguise is altogether dropped, and figurative history is interrupted by religious disquisitions.

Character.—A visionary and an artist, poor in ideas, but full of images; ignorant, impassioned, inspired. His distinguishing quality was an ingenious, vivid, and shaping imagination, besieged and absorbed by the terrors of eternal fire.

In youth,—

'Amid a round of vain delights he lived,
And took his fill of pleasure; never thought
That life had higher objects, nobler aims,
Than just to eat, and drink, and pass away
The precious hours in revelry and mirth.'

He was so profane that the profane were shocked. A wicked woman heard him, and protested:

'She was made to tremble to hear me; and told me farther that I was the ungodliest fellow for swearing that she ever heard in all her life; and that I, by thus doing, was enough to spoil all the youth in the whole town.'

In the strong terms of pious excitement, he says:

'When it pleased the Lord to begin to instruct my soul, He found me one of the black sinners of the world. He found me making a sport of oaths, and also of lies; and many a soul-poisoning meal did I make out of divers lusts, as drinking, dancing, playing—pleasure with the wicked ones of the world.'

When only a child—but nine or ten years old—he had fearful dreams:

'For often, after I had spent this and the other day in sin, I have in my bed been greatly afflicted, while asleep, with the apprehensions of devils and wicked spirits, who still, as I then thought, labored to draw me away with them, of which I could never be rid.'

In a Sunday pastime, he had thrown his ball, and was about to begin again, when he heard a voice, 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?' One of the favorite sports was bell-ringing. When he had given it up, he would go into the belfry to watch the ringers:

'But quickly after, I began to think, "How if one of the bells should fall?" Then I chose to stand under a main beam, that lay overthwart the steeple, from side to side, thinking here I might stand sure: but then I thought again, should the bell fall with a swing, it might first hit the wall, and then rebounding upon me, might kill me for all this beam. This made me stand in the steeple-door; and now, thought I, I am safe enough, for if a bell should then fall, I can slip out behind these thick walls, and so be preserved notwithstanding. So after this I would yet go to see them ring, but would not go any farther than the steeple-door: but then it came into my head, "How if the steeple itself should fall?" And this thought (it may, for aught I know, when I stood and looked on) did continually so shake my mind that I durst not stand at the steeple-door any longer, but was forced to flee, for fear the steeple should fall upon my head.'

Once he saw the heavens on fire. Again, in the midst of a banquet, the earth opened, and tossed up figures of men in bloody flames, falling back with shrieks and execrations, whilst intermingled devils laughed; and just as he was himself sinking, one in shining raiment plucked him from the circling flame. From the City of Destruction, through the Slough of Despond and the Valley of the Shadow, he presses to the fruitful and happy region of Beulah.

'About this time, the state and happiness of these poor people at Bedford was thus, in a dream or vision, represented to me. I saw as if they were set on the sunny side of some high mountain, there refreshing themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun, while I was shivering and shrinking in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also, betwixt me and them, I saw a wall that did compass about this

mountain; now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass, concluding that if I could I would go even into the very midst of them, and there also comfort myself with the heat of their sun.

About this wall I thought myself to go again and again, still prying, as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage, by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time. At the last, I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a doorway, in the wall, through which I attempted to pass; but the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain, even until I was well nigh quite beat out, by striving to get in; at last, with strong striving, methought I at first did get in my head, and after that, by a sidling striving, my shoulders, and my whole body; then I was exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.'

We see now how this man could write the *Pilgrim's Progress;* how he should be so solicitous to win souls; what would be his pulpit themes,—death, judgment, eternity, the mission and sufferings of Christ; why, though with trembling, he should preach with power. There could be nothing of modern languor in his exhortations. His heart was in them; he was possessed by them. Hell yawned before him; and the burden of his thought was to snatch from destruction the perishing sinners that slumbered, as he had slept, on its brink. Wrath and salvation are thus the essential facts,—all else is but shadowy and dim. This conviction levels inequalities, renders the inflamed brain eloquent and effective. Charles II is said to have asked Dr. Owen how a man of his erudition could 'sit to hear a tinker prate.' 'May it please your Majesty,' was the reply, 'could I possess that tinker's abilities, I would gladly give in exchange all my learning.'

Influence.—He was universally esteemed for the beauty of his character and the liberality of his views, while the fame of his sufferings and the power of his discourse drew multitudes to hear him preach. In London, let but a day's notice be given, and the house would not contain the half. Says an eye-witness:

'I have seen, by my computation, about twelve hundred persons to hear him at a morning lecture, on a working day in dark working time. I also computed about three thousand that came to hear him at a town's end meeting house; so that half were fain to go back again for want of room; and there himself was fain at a back door to be pulled almost over people to get up stairs to the pulpit.'

But he has a larger audience now. It is by the *Pilgrim* that he affects the minds and hearts of survivors, more and more widely as generations pass away. The historian will value it as an effect,—a record, in part, of contemporary institutions and ideas, and an expression of the new imaginative force that had been given to common English life by the study of the Bible.

The people will treasure it for its artless story of Christian experience,— for its perpetual narrative of their personal recollections. More than a hundred thousand copies circulated in England and America during his life. Since his death, it has been rendered into every language of Europe, and into more other languages than any book save the Scriptures. The Religious Tract Society alone printed it in thirty different tongues. Seven times, at least, it has been turned into verse. A hundred and fifty years ago, by some alterations and omissions, it was adapted to the creed of the Roman Church.

Did never monarch sit upon a throne so royal; was never political empire so vast and so enduring. Wherever thought finds expression or there are hearts to be impressed, this tinker of Bedford will shape character and destiny when the chiselled lines of the granite have crumbled, and the headstone shall claim kindred with the dust it commemorates. '*He, being dead, yet speaketh.*'

DRYDEN.

The only qualities I can find in Dryden, that are essentially poetical, are a certain ardour and impetuosity of mind with an excellent ear. . . . There is not a single image from nature in the whole of his works.—*Wordsworth.*

Biography.—Born in the county of Northampton, in 1631, of good family; studied in Westminster School, and afterwards spent seven years at Cambridge; became secretary to a near relative, a member of the Upper House; turned Royalist, married an earl's daughter, and enjoyed the king's patronage; succeeded Davenant as Poet Laureate, and Howell as Historiographer, with a yearly salary of two hundred pounds; declared himself a Catholic, lost his appointment at the Revolution, and for twelve years, burdened with a family, earned his bread by his pen; long afflicted with gout, then with erysipelas, insulted by publishers whose hireling he was, and persecuted by enemies; died in 1700, of a neglected inflammation in the foot, and was interred in Westminster Abbey, between the tombs of Chaucer and of Cowley.

Writings.—Dryden began in fustian and enormity. The

subject was Lord Hastings, who died of small-pox at the age of nineteen:

> 'His body was an orb, his sublime soul
> Did move on virtue's and on learning's pole.'

The pustules are compared to 'rose-buds thick in the lily skin about'; and,—

> 'Each little pimple had a tear in it
> To wail the fault its rising did commit.'

But he has not yet done his worst:

> 'No comet need foretell his change drew on
> Whose corpse might seem a constellation.'

Such excesses announce a literary revolution. Greedy of glory and pressed for money, he pandered to the tastes of a debauched and frivolous audience—the world of courtiers and the idle, who wanted startling scenes, infamous events, forced sentiments, splendid decorations. 'I confess,' he says, 'my chief endeavors are to delight the age in which I live. If the humour of this be for low comedy, small accidents, and raillery, I will *force* my genius to obey it.' Accordingly, as he writes by calculation, he is only capable of discussions. Of the appropriate excellence of the drama—the power of exhibiting real human beings, he is utterly destitute. His comedies are as false to nature as they are offensive to morality. His tragedies, without depth of feeling or consistency of plot, strive towards superhuman ideals, and attain to bombast.

The *Conquest of Grenada* (1672) owes its celebrity to its extravagance. The *Spanish Friar* (1682) is less exaggerated, but rarely impresses sympathy, and never commands tears. *Sebastian* (1690), though rejecting more of the French alloy, is yet grandiose—more noisy than significant. Lacking the art of dramatic truth, he sought a substitute for illusion sometimes in wit, more frequently in disguises, intrigues, surprising disclosures, smooth versification, and declamatory magnificence. Courtly nerves could best be stirred by shocks, profanity, obscenities, and barbarities—by heroines who were courtesans, indecent, violent, reckless; and by heroes who were drunken savages, or monstrous chimeras, resembling nothing in heaven above or in the earth beneath.

But though bad as wholes, his plays—nearly thirty in number—contain passages which only the great masters have surpassed,

and which no subsequent writer for the stage has equalled. Even in rhyme, which so often forced him to a platitude, and which he so reluctantly abandoned, he is not seldom the genuine poet, a musician and a painter. For example:

> 'No; like his better Fortune I'll appear,
> With open arms, loose veil, and flowing hair,
> *Just flying forward from her rolling sphere.*'[1]

And this happy comparison, which is surely an 'image from nature':

> 'As callow birds,
> Whose mother's killed in seeking of the prey,
> Cry in their nest and think her long away,
> And, at each leaf that stirs, each blast of wind,
> Gape for the food which they must never find.'[2]

Or the following, which is vigorous and striking:

> 'Her rage was love, and its tempestuous flame,
> Like lightning, showed the heaven from whence it came.'[3]

And these verses, which read like maxims, expressed in the finest manner of the new school. They show a reasoner, accustomed to discriminate his ideas:

> 'When I consider life, 'tis all a cheat;
> Yet, fooled wtth hope, men favour the deceit,
> Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay.
> To-morrow's falser than the former day;
> Lies worse; and while it says, "We shall be blest
> With some new joys," cuts off what we possessed.
> Strange cozenage! None would live past years again,
> Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain;
> And from the dregs of life think to receive
> What the first sprightly running could not give.
> I'm tired of waiting for this chemic gold,
> Which fools us young, and beggars us when old.
> 'Tis not for nothing that we life pursue;
> It pays our hopes with something still that's new.'[4]

But Dryden, as he himself tells us,—

> 'Grew weary of his long-loved mistress Rhyme;
> Passion's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
> And Nature flies him like enchanted ground.'

No experiment could be more decisive; for, though he was the best writer of the heroic couplet in our language, yet the plays which, from their first appearance, have been considered finest,

[1] *Conquest of Granada.*
[2] *Indian Emperor.* Wordsworth himself never wrote anything more tenderly pathetic.
[3] *Maiden Queen.* [4] *Aurungzebe.*

are in blank. Here his diction gets wings. The following alone would vindicate his claim as a poet:

'Something like
That voice, methinks I should have somewhere heard;
But floods of woe have hurried it far off
Beyond my ken of soul.'[1]

What image could be more delicately exquisite than this?—

'I feel death rising higher still and higher,
Within my bosom; every breath I fetch
Shuts up my life within a shorter compass,
And, like the vanishing sound of bells, grows less
And less each pulse, till it be lost in air.'[2]

And this:

'A change so swift what heart did ever feel!
It rushed upon me like a mighty stream,
And bore me in a moment far from shore.
I've loved away myself; in one short hour
Already am I gone an age of passion.
Was it his youth, his valour, or success?
These might, perhaps, be found in other men.
'Twas that respect, that awful homage paid me;
That fearful love which trembled in his eyes,
And with a silent earthquake shook his soul.
But when he spoke, what tender words he said!
So softly that like flakes of feathered snow,
They melted as they fell.'[3]

The following is nobly wrought:

'*Berenice.* Now death draws near; a strange perplexity
Creeps coldly on me, like a fear to die;
Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
But who can bear the approach of certain fate?
St. Catherine. The wisest and the best some fear may show,
And wish to stay, though they resolve to go.
Berenice. As some faint pilgrim, standing on the shore,
First views the torrent he would venture o'er,
And then his inn upon the farther ground,
Loath to wade through, and loather to go round:
Then dipping in his staff, does trial make
How deep it is, and, sighing, pulls it back:
Sometimes, resolved to fetch his leap; and then
Runs to the bank, but stops short again.
So I at once
Both heavenly faith and human fear obey;
And feel before me in an unknown way.
For this blest voyage I with joy prepare,
Yet am ashamed to be a stranger there.'[4]

Perhaps the best of his dramatic pieces is the tragedy of *All For Love*—the only one, he informs us, written to please himself. It is in this that he recovers most of the old naturalness and energy. In the preface he says:

[1]*Sebastian.* [2]*Rival Ladies.* [3]*Spanish Friar.* [4]*Royal Martyr.*

'In my style I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare; which that I might perform more freely, I have disincumbered myself from rhyme. . . . Yet, I hope, I may affirm, and without vanity, that, by imitating him, I have excelled myself throughout the play; and particularly, that I prefer the scene betwixt Antony and Ventidius in the first act, to anything which I have written in this kind.'

Accordingly, it is not difficult to find parts that are Shakespearean. For instance:

'Gone so soon!
Is Death no more? He used him carelessly,
With a familiar kindness; ere he knocked,
Ran to the door and took him in his arms,
As who should say, "You're welcome at all hours,
A friend need give no warning."'

These words of Antony are at once noble and natural:

'For I am now so sunk from what I was,
Thou find'st me at my lowest water-mark.
The rivers that ran in and raised my fortunes
Are all dried up, or take another course:
What I have left is from my native spring;
I've a heart still that swells in scorn of Fate,
And lifts me to my banks.'

Seeing him cast down, the veteran Ventidius, who loves his general, weeps:

'*Vent.* Look, emperor; this is no common dew;
I have not wept this forty years; but now
My mother comes afresh into my eyes;
I cannot help her softness.
Ant. By heaven, he weeps! poor, good old man, he weeps!
The big round drops course one another down
The furrows of his cheeks. Stop them, Ventidius,
Or I shall blush to death; they set my shame,
That caused them, full before me.
Vent. I'll do my best.
Ant. Sure there's contagion in the tears of friends;
See, I have caught it too. Believe me, 'tis not
For my own griefs, but thine.'

Octavia, come to reclaim her husband, brings Antony a pardon, and is accused of basely begging it. She answers in a style worthy of a lofty soul:

'Poorly and basely I could never beg,
Nor could my brother grant. . . .
My hard fortune
Subjects me still to your unkind mistakes.
But the conditions I have brought are such,
You need not blush to take: I love your honour,
Because 'tis mine; it never shall be said,
Octavia's husband was her brother's slave.
Sir, you are free; free, even from her you loath:
For though my brother bargains for your love,
Makes me the price and cement of your peace,

I have a soul like yours; I cannot take
Your love as alms, nor beg what I deserve.
I'll tell my brother we are reconciled;
He shall draw back his troops, and you shall march
To rule the east: I may be dropt at Athens;
No matter where. I never will complain,
But only keep the barren name of wife,
And rid you of the trouble.'

The drama was not Dryden's true domain. He was too much of a dialectician and a schoolmaster. His muse was happier in the exercise of the critical faculty,—in methodical discussion, well-delivered retort, eloquence and satire. It is therefore as a satirist and a pleader that he is best known. He gives his own receipt for the first:

'How easy it is to call rogue and villain, and that wittily! but how hard to make a man appear a fool, a blockhead, or a knave, without using any of those opprobrious terms! . . . This is the mystery of that noble trade. . . . Neither is it true that this fineness of raillery is offensive: a witty man is tickled while he is hurt in this manner, and a fool feels it not. . . . There is a vast difference between the slovenly butchering of a man and the fineness of a stroke that separates the head from the body, and leaves it standing in its place.'

When he entered into the strife of political parties, he wrote *Absalom* and *Achitophel* against the Whigs. Under these names he describes the pliant and popular Duke of Monmouth, eldest-born of Charles II, and the treacherous Earl of Shaftesbury, who stirs up the son against the father. The latter, 'the false Achitophel' is the hero of the poem:

'A name to all succeeding ages curst:
For close designs and crooked counsels fit,
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,
Restless, unfixed in principle and place,
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay. . . .
In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolved to ruin or to rule the state.'

Never was portrait of pen sharper than this of the Duke of Buckingham:

'A man so various that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts and nothing long;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon;
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ

With something new to wish or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes,
And both, to shew his judgment, in extremes:
So over-violent, or over-civil,
That every man with him was god or devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;
Nothing went unrewarded but desert:
Beggared by fools, whom still he found too late,
He had his jest, and they had his estate.'

Poignancy atones for its severity, while discretion renders it more cutting. If he falls into virulent ribaldry, it is less the fault of the man than of the age, which spared no invective however libellous, and no allusion however coarse. His coarsest satire is levelled against attacks which were themselves brutal; as in the case of Shadwell, who is represented, in *Mac Flecknoe*, as heir to the throne of stupidity. Flecknoe,[1] the king of nonsense, deliberating on the choice of a worthy successor, cries:

''Tis resolved, for Nature pleads that he
Should only rule who most resembles me.
Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
Mature in dulness from his tender years;
Shadwell alone of all my sons is he
Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.
Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through and make a lucid interval;
But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray;
His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
And seems designed for thoughtless majesty.'

When he became a convert to Romanism, he wrote *The Hind and the Panther* in defence of his new creed. Written in the hey-day of exultation, in the interest of what he dreamed to be the winning side, his argumentative talents nowhere appear to so great advantage. The first lines, descriptive of the Romish Church, are among the most musical in the compass of poetry:

'A milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest ranged;
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She feared no danger, for she knew no sin.'

All the heretical sects, as beasts of prey, worry her. The English Church is—

'The Panther, sure the noblest, next the hind,
And fairest creature of the spotted kind;
Oh, could her inborn stains be washed away,
She were too good to be a beast of prey!'

[1] A scribbler who died in 1678. *Mac*, the Celtic for son.

Then he introduces the bloody Bear, an *Independent;* the quaking Hare, for the *Quakers;* then the bristled *Baptist* Boar. The reader can imagine the bitterness which envenoms the controversy.

Having no personal philosophy to develop, Dryden was soon reduced to the clothing of foreign ideas. He translated Persius, Ovid, Juvenal, Lucretius, Virgil, and Homer; but he could not — perhaps no one can — reproduce their spirit. The dawn of credulous thought can scarcely reappear in the harsh light of a learned and manly age. His version of the *Æneid* was long considered his highest glory. The nation seemed interested in the event. One gave him the different editions, another supplied him with notes, Addison furnished him with the arguments of the several books, great lords vied with one another in offering him hospitality, and, notwithstanding the inherent difficulties of the subject, he produced, says Pope, 'the most noble and spirited translation that I know in any language.' He also modernized several tales of the long-neglected Chaucer. But, as he worked under contract, haste availed only to dilute, and the childlike simplicity of the original is smothered in verbiage. Thus:

> 'The busy larke, messager of day,
> Saluteth in her song the morwe gray;
> And fyry Phebus riseth up so bright
> That al the orient laugheth of the light.'

How artless, yet how expressive! Now compare the modernization, which loses at once the freshness of idea and the felicity of phrase:

> 'The morning lark, the messenger of day,
> Saluted in her song the morning gray;
> And soon the sun arose with beams so bright
> That all the horizon laughed to see the joyous sight.'[1]

He is too reflective and stringent for the delicacies of his master; too cold and solid for his self-abandoning tenderness and his graceful gossip.

Though he never wrote extensively in prose, his prefaces and dedications, which, to increase their value, usher in each of his poems and plays, have made him famous as a critic. Most of his criticism relates to the drama, with which he was very conversant. To afford a glimpse of his exact and simple manner, as well as of the spirit which he carried into art, we briefly quote from the earliest statement of his critical system. It will be seen that he

[1] *Fables*, consisting of stories from Chaucer and Boccaccio.

was more excellent in theory than he has proved in practice, where he alternately ventures and restrains himself, pushed in one direction by his English bias and drawn in the other by his French rules:

'The beauties of the French poesy are the beauties of a statue, but not of a man, because not animated with the soul of poesy, which is imitation of humour and passions. . . . He who will look upon their plays which have been written till these last ten years, or thereabouts, will find it an hard matter to pick out two or three passable humours amongst them. Corneille himself, their arch-poet, what has he produced except the *Liar?* and you know how it was cried up in France; but when it came upon the English stage, though well translated, . . . the most favourable to it would not put it in competition with many of Fletcher's or Ben Jonson's. . . . Their verses are to me the coldest I have ever read, . . . their speeches being so many declamations. When the French stage came to be reformed by Cardinal Richelieu, those long harangues were introduced, to comply with the gravity of a churchman. Look upon the *Cinna* and the *Pompey;* they are not so properly to be called plays as long discourses of reasons of state; and *Polyeucte*, in matters of religion is as solemn as the long stops upon our organs. Since that time it is grown into a custom, and their actors speak by the hour-glass, like our parsons. . . . I deny not but this may suit well enough with the French; for as we, who are a more sullen people, come to be diverted at our plays, so they, who are of an airy and gay temper, come thither to make themselves more serious.'[1]

He who began in empty mouthing, and who had gradually acquired the energy of satire, ended by acquiring the rapture of the lyric. Amidst the infirmities of age and the greatest sadness, he wrote the brilliant ode of *Alexander's Feast*, in honor of St. Cecilia's day. The hero is on his throne, his valiant captains before him, the lovely Thais by his side. Timotheus, placed on high, sings:

'Of Bacchus ever fair, and ever young.
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath; he comes, he comes.
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.'

Moved by the stirring sounds, the monarch fights his battles over, madness rises, he defies heaven and earth. A sad air depresses him, then a tender one dissolves him in sighs, and he sinks upon the breast of the fair. Now strike the golden lyre again:

'A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,

[1] *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy.*

And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head,
As awaked from the dead,
And, amazed, he stares around.
"Revenge, revenge!" Timotheus cries;
"See the Furies arise;
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods."
The princes applaud with a furious joy;
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.'

So did the bard realize the saying of his own Sebastian,—

'A setting sun
Should leave a track of glory in the skies.'

Style.—Harmonious, rapid, and vehement, pointed and condensed, with —

'The varying verse, the full-resounding line,
The long majestic march, and energy divine.'

Symmetrical and precise, as of one who studied rather than felt; yet uneven, as of one who was negligent of parts because confident that the good would overbalance the bad. In prose, airy and animated, easy without being feeble, and careless without being harsh; having that conversational elasticity which comes of familiarity with the drawing-room — companionship with men and women of the world.

Rank.—Though few eminent writers are so little read, few names are more familiar. By the suffrages of his own and succeeding generations, his place is first in the second class of English poets. Perhaps his fame would have suffered little, if he had written not one of his twenty-eight dramas. He could not produce correct representations of human nature, for his was an examining rather than a believing frame of mind; and he

wrought literature more as one apprenticed to the business than as one under the control of inspiration: he attained, however, the excellences that lie on the lower grade of the satirical, didactic, and polemic. Not to be numbered with those who have sounded the depths of soul, he is incomparable as a reasoner in verse. Pope, his imitator and admirer, has outshone him in neatness, in brilliancy, and finish, but has not approached him in flexible vigor, in fervor, or in sweep and variety of versification. 'His faults,' says Cowper, 'are numberless, and so are his beauties. His faults are those of a great man, and his beauties are such (at least sometimes) as Pope with all his touching and retouching could never equal.' Making a trade of his genius, he wrote too much; as a whole, heavy and tedious, never quite equal to his talent. Says Voltaire of him, 'An author who would have had a glory without a blemish, if he had only written the tenth part of his works.'

If he could not depict artless and delicate sentiments or arouse subtle sympathies, he had, beyond most, the gift of the right word, and this in common with the few great masters,—that the winged seeds of his thought embed themselves in the memory, and germinate there. Few have minted so many phrases that are still a part of our daily currency. For example:

'None but the brave deserves the fair.'

'Men are but children of a larger growth.'

'When wild in woods the noble savage ran.'

'Love either finds equality or makes it.'

'Passions in men oppressed are doubly strong.'

'Few know the use of life before 'tis past.'

'Time gives himself and is not valued.'

'That's empire, that which I can give away.'

'The greatest argument for love is love.'

'Why, love does all that's noble here below.'

'That bad thing, gold, buys all good things.'

'Trust in noble natures obliges them the more.'

'Death in itself is nothing; but we fear
To be we know not what, we know not where.'

'The cause of love can never be assigned,
'Tis in no face, but in the lover's mind.'

'The secret pleasure of the generous act
Is the great mind's great bribe.'

He was the literary lion of his day; and no rustic, of any taste for letters, thought his round of sight-seeing complete without a visit to Will's coffee-house, where in a snug arm-chair, carefully placed in winter by the fireside and in summer on the balcony, sat 'glorious John,' pipe in hand, expounding the law on disputed points in literature and in politics. Happy was the young poet or university student who could boast to his admiring friends that he had got in a word, or extracted a pinch of snuff from the great man's box.

He forms the connecting link between the prose writers of the days of James I and those of Queen Anne. He gave a hand to the age before and to that which followed,—the age of solitary imagination and invention, and the age of reasoning and conversation. Pope saw him, Addison drank with him; he visited Milton, and was intimate with those who could tell him of Jonson from personal recollection.

Character.—His manner of life was that of a solid and judicious mind which thinks not of amusing and exciting itself, but of learning, reflecting, and judging. He had no taste for field sports, and felt more pleasure in argument than in landscape, in the rhythm of the epigram than in the melodies of birds. Though he watched the conflict of parties keenly, he did not, as did Milton, mix personally in the turmoil. Without being reserved, he was diffident, and neither would nor could in the circles of fashion cut the brilliant figure which Pope, his great disciple, made. He rose early, spent the morning in writing or reading, dined with his family, and in the afternoon repaired to Will's coffee-house, that common resort of wits, pamphleteers, poets, and critics. Says Congreve, who knew him familiarly:

'He was of a nature exceedingly humane and compassionate, ready to forgive injuries, and capable of a sincere reconciliation with those who had offended him. His friendship, where he professed, went beyond his professions. He was of a very easy, of very pleasing access: but somewhat slow, and, as it were, diffident, in his advances to others; he had that in nature which abhorred intrusion into any society whatever. He was therefore less known, and consequently his character became more liable to misapprehensions and misrepresentations.'

Yet he was conscious of his own value, and 'probably did not offer his conversation because he expected it to be solicited.' His confidence in himself amounted almost to reverence. Of *Alexander's Feast*, he said that an ode of equal merit had never been

produced and never would be. This feeling of easy superiority made him the mark for much jealous vituperation. Of their lampoons and libels, he says: 'I am vindictive enough to have repelled force by force, if I could imagine that any of them had ever reached me.' He was reproached with boasting of his intimacy with the great.

Of himself:

'My conversation is slow and dull, my humour saturnine and reserved: In short, I am none of those who endeavour to break jests in company or make repartees.'

Notwithstanding, he was a rapid composer. He says:

'Thoughts, such as they are, come crowding in so fast upon me, that my only difficulty is to chuse or to reject, to run them into verses, or to give them the other harmony of prose: I have so long studied and practiced both, that they are grown into a habit, and become familiar to me.'

Less fluent, he would have been less slovenly. Fond of splendor, he was indifferent to neatness. Faults of affectation, time in a measure corrected; but faults of negligence, never. To the last, rather than wait for the fittest word, he seized the readiest.

His reading was extensive, and his memory tenacious. Understanding was preponderant. He delighted to talk of liberty and necessity, destiny, and chance.

On the other hand, he was deficient in lofty or intense sensibility. He was a stranger to the transports of the heart. Hence, though he could describe character in the abstract, he could not embody it in the drama.

His genius matured slowly. At thirty-two he had given little, if aught, to warrant an augury of his greatness. But he grew steadily. His imagination quickened as he increased in years, and his intellect was pliable at seventy. Old age yielded, on the whole, the best of him. As every innovator must have, he had many enemies. 'More libels,' he says, 'have been written against me than almost any man now living.' Later:

'What Virgil wrote in the vigour of his age, in plenty and at ease, I have undertaken to translate in my declining years; struggling with wants, oppressed with sickness, curbed in my genius, liable to be misconstrued in all I write; and my judges, if they are not very equitable, already prejudiced against me, by the lying character which has been given them of my morals.'

He would have been less open to attack, had he been less servile to the false taste and corrupt morals of his age. As a writer for the stage, he deliberately adopted the mercantile maxim that

'He who lives to please, must please to live.'

His dedications are nauseous panegyrics. In one, he says to the Duchess of Monmouth:

'To receive the blessings and prayers of mankind, you need only be seen together. We are ready to conclude, that you are a pair of angels, sent below to make virtue amiable in your persons, or to sit to poets, when they would pleasantly instruct the age by drawing goodness in the most perfect and alluring shape of nature. . . . No part of Europe can afford a parallel to your noble Lord in masculine beauty, and in goodliness of shape.'

The rest was good, and the land was pleasant. Elsewhere to her 'noble lord,' he says, doubtless with the vision of a purse of gold before him:

'You have all the advantages of mind and body, and an illustrious birth, conspiring to render you an extraordinary person. The Achilles and the Rinaldo are present in you, even above their originals; you only want a Homer or a Tasso to make you equal to them. Youth, beauty, and courage (all which you possess in the height of their perfection) are the most desirable gifts of Heaven.'

His works afford too many examples not only of abject adulation but of dissolute licentiousness. He studied filth as he studied everything, not as a pleasure but as a trade. He committed his offences with his eyes wide open. He sinned against his better knowledge. For the depravity that deliberately makes merchandise of corruption, there is no excuse. The single consolation is, that the offender shall nobly confess his error, and testify his repentance. Of one who had coarsely reproved him, in the preface to the *Fables* he says:

'I shall say the less of Mr. Collier, because in many things he has taxed me justly; and I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts and expressions of mine which can be truly argued of obscenity, profaneness, or immorality, and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance.'

Elsewhere:

'My thoughtless youth was winged with vain desires,
My manhood, long misled by wandering fires,
Followed false lights; and when their glimpse was gone,
My pride struck out new sparkles of her own.
Such was I, such by nature still I am;
Be Thine the glory, and be mine the shame!'

Conscious that he had been untrue to his finer possibilities, in the end he says:

'I have been myself too much of a libertine in most of my poems, which I should be well contented, if I had time, either to purge or to see them fairly burned.'

He was sceptical, yet superstitious. Like many others, he was a believer in astrology. In a letter to his sons he says:

'Towards the latter end of this month, September, Charles will begin to recover his perfect health, according to his nativity, which, casting it myself, I am sure is true, and all things hitherto have happened accordingly to the very time that I predicted them.'

His fundamental weakness was ethical. He had no unattainable standard of perfection to uplift him. He lacked the central fire of fixed principles and high resolves. Without the firmness and coherence of the moral nature, intellectual powers are as weathercocks. It should be remembered, however, that no man can wholly escape the current of his time.

Influence.—Whoever imprints, apparently, a new character on an age, is himself a creature of that age. Formed first by circumstances, he reacts upon them, paying with interest what society has given. So was it with Bacon, who, if born earlier, might have been a Dominican quibbler; and with Luther, who, had he anticipated, would have been lost. The first, standing on an eminence, caught and reflected the light before it was visible to the many far beneath. There would have been a Reformation, though probably later, without the assistance of the second. 'The sun illuminates the hills while it is still below the horizon; and truth is discovered by the highest minds a little before it becomes manifest to the multitude.'

Under these limitations, Dryden may be set down as the founder of a new school of poetry—a school derived chiefly from the ancient Roman, critical rather than creative, classic rather than romantic. The style peculiar to it had already been cultivated. French taste encouraged it. He, as the first autocrat in English letters, improved it, gave it authority. Pope and Johnson, in the direct line of descent, were to carry it to perfection.

He taught us to think naturally and to express forcibly. He refined our metre, and enriched our language. With a true insight into the conditions under which the maker may extend the domain of speech, he says:

'I will not excuse, but justify myself for one pretended crime for which I am liable to be charged by false critics, not only in this translation, but in many of my original poems,—that I Latinize too much. It is true that when I find an English word significant and sounding, I neither borrow from the Latin or any other language; but when I want at home I must seek abroad. If sounding words are not of our growth and manufacture, who shall hinder me to import them from a foreign country? I carry not out the treasure of the nation which is never to return; but what I bring from Italy I spend in England: here it remains, and here it circulates; for if the coin be good, it will pass from one hand to another. I trade both with the living and the dead. . . . We have enough in England to supply our necessity; but if we will have things of magnificence

and splendor, we must get them by commerce. . . . Therefore, if I find a word in a classic author, I propose it to be naturalized by using it myself, and if the public approve of it the bill passes. But every man cannot distinguish betwixt pedantry and poetry; every man, therefore is not fit to innovate.'

More than any other, he helped to free English prose from the cloister of pedantry, and to give it the conversational suppleness of the modern world.

Finally, he has left no single work which is universally read and approved. That he has not, while he *might* have done so, points a most instructive lesson to men of intellect. Without devotion to something nobler and more abiding than the present, no great or sound literature is possible. Without an unapproachable mirage of excellence, forever receding and forever pursued, no man reaches his full or conceivable stature. A self-reliant independence is the Adam and Eve in the Paradise of duties.

CRITICAL PERIOD: FIRST PHASE.

CHAPTER II.

FEATURES.

The literary importance of the eighteenth century lies mainly in its having wrought out a revolution begun in the seventeenth.—*Matthew Arnold.*

Politics.—Tory and Whig had laid aside the sword, and though party spirit ran high, were conducting the competition for power by a parley of words and measures; the first the conservative, the second the progressive element; one the steadying, the other the propelling force,—both principles essential to the advance of nations.

France had been humbled, Spain had been all but torn from the house of Bourbon in the War of the Spanish Succession, England and Scotland had been united; and, leaving their country at the height of its material prosperity, the Whigs retired in 1710, to resume their ascendancy in 1715, and to continue it without intermission till the accession of George III.

Society.—Authors basked in the sunshine of royal patronage. Literary merit found easy admittance into the most distinguished society and to the highest honors of the state. Servility, however, was less marked than formerly, and the period may be regarded as a transition from the early system of patronage, when books had but few readers, to the later one of professional independence, when the public became the patron.

The Revolution of 1688 had indeed secured to the nation liberty of conscience and the right of property, but public interests were endangered by the low standard of political honor. In politics, weapons were freely employed which we should now regard as in the highest degree dishonorable. The secrecy of the mails was habitually violated. Walpole, writing in 1725, confesses, without scruple, to opening the letters of a political rival.

The rich purchased their seats in Parliament, and Parliament sold its votes to the ministry.

General intelligence was scarcely more than a prophecy. The first daily paper appeared in the reign of Anne. In 1710, the papers, instead of merely communicating news as heretofore, began cautiously to take part in the discussion of political topics.

In the Restoration, the more excellent parts of human nature had disappeared, leaving but the animal; and there still existed a wretched state of public tastes and morals. Steele, who aimed at reform, said that his play of *The Lying Lover* was 'damned for its piety.' The style of speaking and writing on common topics was vitiated by slang and profanity. Literary and scientific attainments were despised as pedantic and vulgar by the fashionable of both sexes. Scandal was almost the sole topic of conversation among the ladies. Three learned words would drive them out of doors for a mouthful of fresh air. Judge of their occupations: 'Young man,' said the wife of Marlborough to Lord Melcombe, 'you come from Italy. They tell me of a new invention there called caricature drawing. Can you find me somebody that will make me a caricature of Lady Masham, describing her covered with running sores and ulcers, that I may send it to the Queen to give her a right idea of her new favorite?

Bull-baiting was a popular amusement. In Queen Anne's time, it was performed in London regularly twice a week. Cock-fighting was the favorite game of the schoolboys, the teachers taking the runaway cocks as their perquisites. Gambling was the bane of the nobility, and among the ladies the passion was quite as strong as among men.

Fashionable hours were becoming steadily later. 'The landmarks of our fathers,' wrote Steele in 1710, 'are removed, and planted farther up in the day. . . . In my own memory, the dinner hour has crept by degrees from twelve o'clock to three. Where it will fix nobody knows.' Coffee-houses were conspicuous centres of news, politics, and fashion. Their number in 1708, fifty years after the first had been established in the metropolis, was estimated at three thousand. Drunkenness and extravagance went hand in hand among the gentry. Officers of state sat up whole nights drinking, then hastened in the morning, without sleep, to their official business. Addison, the foremost

moralist of his day, was not entirely free from this vice. 'Come, Robert,' said Walpole, the minister, to his son, 'you shall drink twice while I drink once; for I will not permit the son in his sober senses to be witness of the intoxication of his father.' In 1724, the passion had spread among all classes with the violence of an epidemic. Retailers of gin hung out painted boards, announcing that their customers could be made drunk for a penny, dead drunk for twopence, and that cellars strewn with straw would be furnished, without cost, into which they might be dragged when they had become insensible.

Punishments were brutal. In 1726, a murderess was burned alive. Prisoners were still slowly pressed to death by weights of stone or iron, or cut down, when half hung, and disembowelled.

Riots were frequent, and robberies were numerous and bold. Addison's 'Sir Roger,' when he goes to the theatre, arms his servants with cudgels. In 1712, a club of young men of the higher classes were accustomed nightly to sally out drunk into the streets, to hunt the passers-by. One of their favorite amusements, called 'tipping the lion,' was to squeeze the nose of their victim flat upon his face, and to bore out his eyes with their fingers. Among them were 'the sweaters,' who encircled their prisoner, and pricked him with swords till he sank exhausted; and 'dancing masters,' who made men caper by thrusting swords into their legs.

Religion.—The belief in witchcraft was still smouldering, but no longer received the sanction of the law. In 1712, the death of a suspected witch, who had been thrown into the water to see whether she would sink or swim, and who perished during the trial, was pronounced murder.

While the town rectors and the great church dignitaries were second to none in Europe in genius and learning, and occupied conspicuous social positions, the rural clergy were cringing, obsequious, and impoverished. While a high conception of duty was not unknown among them, as a whole they were unlettered and coarse, languid in zeal, but using their limited influence chiefly for good.

It was a season of conflict between the High Church party and the Dissenters, who sought to reconstruct and rationalize the theology of the Church. There was also a large amount of formal

scepticism abroad, directed against Christianity itself. But this was not the direction which the highest intellects usually took. The task which occupied them was to lighten the weight of dogma within the Church, to infuse a higher tone into the social and domestic spheres, to make men moderate in pleasure, charitable to the poor, dutiful in the relations of life, and to establish the truth of Christianity upon the basis of evidence — evidence differing in no essential respect from that required in ordinary history or science.

But religious enthusiasm was dying out — I mean that earnest realization which searches the heart and moulds the character of man. The discussion of Christian evidences is generally the sign of defective Christian life. Traces of devotional activity, however, still existed. In 1696 was formed the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge; and in 1701, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Charity schools were established and multiplied rapidly under Anne. 'I have always looked on the institution of charity schools,' writes Addison, 'which of late years has so universally prevailed through the whole nation, as the glory of the age we live in.' Societies were organized to combat the corruption that had been general since the Restoration, dividing themselves into several distinct groups, and becoming a kind of voluntary police to enforce the laws against blasphemers, drunkards, and Sabbath-breakers.

The separation of theology from politics was proceeding rapidly, and the laymen were becoming increasingly prominent in the state. A high-church writer, in 1712, complains of the efforts that were being made to 'thrust the churchmen out of their places of power in the government.'

Poetry.—When a heartless cynicism is fashionable, when brilliancy is preferred to sobriety, when morality tends to a system of abstract rules, when sermons become diagrams, theorems, and corollaries,—what will be the character of poetry? Evidently, it must express the temper of the age, or it will perish still-born. It will satisfy the intellect, but starve the emotional nature. The poet will become an artist of form. Instead of strong passions, elevated motives, and sublime aspirations, he will give us critical accuracy of thought, elegance of phrase, symmetry of parts, and measured harmonies of sound.

Pope was its representative product, and he expresses the peculiarities of his time with singular sharpness and fidelity.

Drama.—The drama of the Restoration had been so outrageously immoral that the intellect of the country became ashamed of the stage, and turned its strength to cultivate other branches of literature. **Jeremy Collier, Steele,** and **Addison** had shamed it into something like decency, though ladies of respectability and position still hesitated to appear at the first representation of a new comedy. In style, the dramatic literature, like the general poetry of the period, was polished and artificial. Addison's tragedy of *Cato* was too cold and classical to touch the passions. The prevailing taste called for faithful and witty delineations of manners, slight and coarse comedies, gaudy spectacles of rope dancers and ballets. 'I never heard of any plays,' said Parson Adams in a novel of that day, 'fit for a Christian to read, but *Cato* and the *Conscious Lovers*, and I must own in the latter there are some things almost solemn enough for a sermon.'

Periodical Miscellany. — Internal repose and national wealth occasioned the rise of that middle class of respectable persons, literary idlers, who have leisure to read and money to buy books, but who wish to be entertained, not roused to think, to be gently moved, not deeply excited. This condition developed a new and peculiar kind of literature consisting of essays on the social phenomena of the time, and scraps of public and political intelligence to conciliate the ordinary readers of news. The pioneer in this department was **De Foe,** who in 1704 began a tri-weekly journal called *The Review*, published on post nights,—Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

It was reserved for **Steele** and **Addison,** however, to make the Miscellany a true agent of social improvement. Their object was to popularize and diffuse knowledge, to adapt every question to the capacity of the idlest reader, to characterize men and women humorously, taking minutes of their dress, air, looks, words, thoughts, desires, actions, and thus to hold the mirror up to nature, showing the very age and body of the time. Sermons veiled in pleasantry were preached on every conceivable text, from the brevity of life to the extravagance of female toilets. The end was moral health — the means was sugar-coated pills.

There is evidence that the virtue, decorum, and tone of the patient was much improved.

Light, graceful, and fastidious, as they were required to be, these papers never really probe anything to the bottom, never seek first principles, never contemplate the great darkness of what we are, whence we are, and whither we tend, but aim only to discover moral maxims and motives suitable and sufficient to guide the practical conduct of life, and to enforce those plain duties to God and man which are a pressing anxiety with all strong natures. Perhaps that is better. Metaphysical speculation is empyrean rarity or summer's dust. Devils may dispute of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate.

The Novel.—Legends of saints had amused the middle ages, and the romances of chivalry had been popular in the seventeenth century; but a new social form was now developing, in which people desired to see themselves and to talk of themselves. The world of legend and of romantic grandeur had grown dim and unreal, and a fiction was wanted that, continuing the task of the *Miscellany*, should be domestic and practical, telling the story of common life only. This defines the English *Novel*, as the word is now understood. Its precursor was **De Foe,** who in 1719 led the way with his famous *Robinson Crusoe*, a novel of incident, the never-ceasing delight of children.

Theology.—Scepticism had shown itself in the seventeenth century, and divines had felt the necessity of justifying their faith. Polemic thought, when it did not assume the form of controversy between rival sects of Christians, was a conflict between Christianity and *Deism*, a doctrine which admits the existence of a Deity and the religious convictions of the moral consciousness, but denies the specific revelation which Christianity affirms. It was sought to prove, on the one hand, that natural religion was sufficient; on the other, that revealed religion was little more than this, accredited by historic proofs and sanctioned by a rational system of rewards and punishments. *Christianity not Mysterious, The Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*, indicate the tenor of attack. *Reasonableness* of Christianity, *Evidences* of Christianity, indicate the tenor of defence. The results were an immeasurable overbalance of good.

Science.—The national intellect had been turned to the study of physical science with an intensity hitherto unknown. It is to be observed, however, that infidels were not then permitted to consider scientists their natural allies. Newton had devoted himself to the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy. Boyle, the father of chemistry, had established a course of lectures for the defence of Christianity. Nearly all the early members of the Royal Society were ardent believers in revelation. When Collins, a Deist, ascribed the decay of witchcraft to freethinking, Bentley, a devout scientist, retorted that it was due, not to freethinkers, but to the Royal Society and to the scientific conception of the universe which that society had spread.

Résumé.—In politics, an age of material eminence; in literature, an age of formal correctness. Philosophy leaned to materialism. The public temper was adventurous, uncertain, unbelieving. Pope was the characteristic product of its poetry; Addison, of its general prose,—the artist of manners; Swift, of its satire,—scorning, hating, and hated. Without pathos or 'fine frenzy,' style was neat, clear, epigrammatic. The relative position of prose was never higher than at this date.

The reign of Queen Anne (1702–1714) was long regarded as the *Augustan Age of English Literature*, on account of its supposed resemblance in intellectual wealth to the reign of the Emperor Augustus. It is now accorded a secondary praise, though conceded to be unrivalled perhaps within its own region,—that of clear thinking and accurate expression,—art that is neither inspired by enthusiastic genius nor employed on majestic themes.

STEELE.

In speculation, he was a man of piety and honor; in practice, he was much of the rake, and a little of the swindler.—*Macaulay.*

Biography.—Born in Dublin, in 1675, but of English parentage. Sent to Charter-House School, London, where he found Addison. Between these two was formed an intimacy the most memorable in literature. After studying at Oxford, enlisted in the Guards as a private, and was in consequence disinherited.

Promoted to the rank of captain, he plunged into the vices and follies of the day, dicing himself into a sponging-house or drinking himself into a fever. Wrote, became a popular man of the town, and was employed by the Whig government to write *The Gazette.* Started a periodical miscellany, lost his apppointment by the retirement of his party from office, but continued his character of essayist. Obtained a seat in Parliament, lost it, was knighted by George I, and received a place in the royal household. Always in trouble by his reckless behavior, his pecuniary difficulties increasing, he retired, by the indulgence of the mortgagee, to a seat in Wales left him by his second wife, and there died in 1729.

Writings. — His principles were better than his conduct. Punished by conscience, he made an effort to reform himself, and wrote *The Christian Hero*, which contains some noble sentiments, but exercised little influence on the author.

The Funeral, The Tender Husband, and *The Conscious Lovers* are dramas, all of which were successful. The last is the best, which is far from good, though it brought the author a large sum. These were the first comedies written expressly with a view, not to imitate manners, but to reform them. The characters act less from individual motives than from general rules, and lack the grace of sincerity.

The *Tatler* (1709), suggested by his employment as gazetteer; a tri-weekly sheet devoted in part to foreign intelligence and in part to the manners of the age. The *Spectator* (1711), a daily, and, like the *Tatler*, a news organ, a censor of manners, a teacher of public taste, and an exponent of English feeling; suspended in 1712, and resumed in 1714. The *Guardian*, also a daily, begun in 1712. Of the first, there were two hundred and seventy-one papers; of the second, six hundred and thirty-five; of the third, one hundred and seventy-five. In these enterprises, Steele was very largely assisted by Addison, who furnished for the *Tatler* one-sixth, for the *Spectator* about three-sevenths, and for the *Guardian* one-third, of the whole quantity of matter.

A passage or two will suggest the spirit and manner of these famous papers. From the *Tatler:*

'The first sense of sorrow I ever knew was upon the death of my father, at which time I was not quite five years of age; but was rather amazed at what all the house

meant, than possessed with a real understanding why nobody was willing to play with me. I remember I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sat weeping alone by it. I had my battledoor in my hand, and fell a-beating the coffin, and calling "Papa," for I know not how I had some slight idea that he was locked up there. My mother catched me in her arms, and transported beyond all patience of the silent grief she was before in, she almost smothered me in her imbrace, and told me, in a flood of tears, papa could not hear me, and would play with me no more, for they were going to put him under ground, whence he could never come to me again. She was a very beautiful woman, of a noble spirit, and there was a dignity in her grief amidst all the wildness of her transport, which methought struck me with an instinct of sorrow, which, before I was sensible what it was to grieve, seized my very soul, and has made pity the weakness of my heart ever since. The mind in infancy is, methinks, like the body in embryo, and receives impressions so forcible that they are as hard to be removed by reason as any mark with which a child is born to be taken away by any future application.'

From the *Spectator:*

'M. St. Evremond has concluded one of his essays with affirming that the last sighs of a handsome woman are not so much for the loss of her life as of her beauty. Perhaps this raillery is pursued too far, yet it is turned upon a very obvious remark, that woman's strongest passion is for her own beauty, and that she values it as her favorite distinction. From hence it is that all arts which pretend to improve or preserve it meet with so general a reception among the sex. To say nothing of many false helps and contraband wares of beauty which are daily vended in this great mart, there is not a maiden gentlewoman of a good family in any country of South Britain who has not heard of the virtues of May-dew, or is unfurnished with some receipt or other in favor of her complexion; and I have known a physician of learning and sense, after eight years' study in the University, and a course of travels in most countries in Europe, owe the first raising of his fortunes to a cosmetic wash.

This has given me occasion to consider how so universal a disposition in womankind, which springs from a laudable motive, the desire of pleasing, and proceeds upon an opinion not altogether groundless, that nature may be helped by art, may be turned to their advantage. And, methinks, it would be an acceptable service to take them out of the hands of quacks and pretenders, and to prevent their imposing on themselves, by discovering to them the *true art and secret of preserving beauty.*

In order to do this, before I touch upon it directly, it will be necessary to lay down a few preliminary maxims, viz:

That no woman can be handsome by the force of features alone, any more than she can be witty only by the help of speech.

That pride destroys all symmetry and grace, and affectation is a more terrible enemy to fine faces than the small-pox.

That no woman is capable of being beautiful, who is not incapable of being false.

And, that what would be odious in a friend, is deformity in a mistress.

From these few principles thus laid down, it will be easy to prove that the true art of assisting beauty consists in embellishing the whole person by the proper ornaments of virtue and commendable qualities. By this help alone it is that those who are the favorite works of nature, or, as Mr. Dryden expresses it, the porcelain clay of humankind, become animated, and are in a capacity of exerting their charms, and those who seem to have been neglected by her, like models wrought in haste, are capable in a great measure of finishing what she has left imperfect.

It is, methinks, a low and degrading idea of that sex which was created to refine the joys, and soften the cares of humanity, to consider them merely as objects of sight. This is abridging them of the natural extent of their power, to put them on a level with the pictures at Kneller's. How much nobler is the contemplation of beauty, heightened by virtue, and commanding our esteem and love, while it draws our observation! How faint and spiritless are the charms of a coquette, when compared with the loveliness of Sophronia's innocence, piety, good humor, and truth; virtues which add a new softness

to her sex, and even beautify her beauty! That agreeableness which must otherwise have appeared no longer in the modest virgin is now preserved in the tender mother, the prudent friend, and the faithful wife. Colours artfully spread upon canvas may entertain the eye, but not affect the heart; and she who takes no care to add to the natural graces of her person any excelling qualities, may be allowed to amuse as a picture, but not to triumph as a beauty.'

Estimate the civilization of an individual or a people by the prevailing tone of feeling and opinion with regard to womanhood.

Style.—Like the man himself,—easy, familiar, vivacious, and humane, mingling good sense and earnestness with merriment and burlesque.

Rank.—He excelled as a satirist, a humorist, and a story-teller, who must, like the poet, be born. He had a knowledge of the world, and a dramatic skill by which the serials profited largely. Some of his papers equal anything Addison ever wrote. Occupying a more elevated plane than many of his contemporaries, he is paled in his powers by the overshadowing presence of his illustrious friend. His writings have been compared to those light wines which, though deficient in body and flavor, are yet a pleasant small drink, if not kept too long or carried too far.

Character.—So good-natured that it was impossible to hate him, and difficult to be seriously angry with him; so rollicking and improvident that it was impossible to respect him; of sweet temper, of noble aspiration, but of strong passions and of weak principles; inculcating what was right and doing what was wrong; spending his life in resolving and re-resolving, then dying without carrying into effect his resolution. An irregular thinker, as well an irregular liver.

Influence.—His aim in projecting the *Tatler* does not appear to have been higher than to publish a paper containing the foreign news, notices of theatrical representations, the literary gossip of the clubs, remarks on current topics of fashion, compliments to beauties, satires on noted sharpers, and criticisms on popular preachers. He did much to ennoble the prevalent conceptions of female character. While his purpose (more or less vaguely realized) was reformatory and corrective, his service was chiefly indirect, in calling to the support and development of his enterprises Addison, to whom it was reserved to make the periodical a true revolutionary power in literature and society.

What shall we expect of a man who forever gathers the pleasures that lie on the border-land of evil, tearfully casts them away, then recklessly gathers them again?

ADDISON.

He lived in abundance, activity, and honors, wisely and usefully.—*Taine.*

Biography.—The son of an English dean, born at Milston, in 1672. Learned his rudiments in the schools of his father's neighborhood, and was then sent to Charter-House, London. Entered Oxford at the age of fifteen, where he was distinguished by the delicacy of his feelings, by the shyness of his manners, by the assiduity with which he often prolonged his studies far into the night, by his knowledge of the Latin poets, and by his skill in Latin versification. Leaving the University in the summer of 1699, he travelled long in the two most polished countries in the world,—France and Italy, to prepare himself for the diplomatic service of the Crown, and to perfect his tastes by contact with the elegance and refinements of life and art. His pension stopped by the death of William III, he was obliged to return to England, hard pressed by pecuniary difficulties. But his poem on Blenheim quickly placed him in the first rank of the Whigs, and again started him on a brilliant and prosperous career. Became a member of Parliament, but lacked the ready resource, 'the small change,' as he himself expressed it, of an effective parliamentary orator. Married Lady Warwick in 1716, a beautiful, imperious woman, with more pride of rank than sincerity of character, whom he is said to have first known by becoming tutor to her son. She probably took him on terms like those on which a Turkish princess is espoused, to whom the Sultan is reported to say: 'Daughter, I give thee this man for thy slave.' The marriage neither found nor made them equal, and he was glad to escape from the chilling splendor of Holland House to the more congenial society of the club-room, where he could enjoy a laugh, a smoke, and a bottle of claret. Rose to his highest elevation in 1717, being made Secretary of State,—an elevation due to his popularity, his stainless probity, and his literary fame. Unequal

to the duties of his place by reason of his diffidence and fastidiousness, he was forced to resign, and retired to literary occupations, with a pension of fifteen hundred pounds. In the office, says Pope, he could not issue an order without losing his time in quest of fine expressions. Many years seemed to be before him, and he meditated many works — a tragedy on the death of Socrates, a translation of the Psalms, and a treatise on the evidences of Christianity — but the fatal complaint of asthma, aggravated by dropsy, terminated his life on the 17th of June, 1719. He was buried in the Abbey at dead of night, an eminent Tory leading the procession by torchlight round the shrine of Saint Edward and the graves of the Plantagenets, to the chapel of Henry VII.

Writings.—*Address to Dryden* (1694), his first attempt in English verse. The *Campaign*, or *Victory of Blenheim*, whose chief merit consists in the praise of those qualities which make a general truly great,— energy, sagacity, serene firmness, and military science, a manly rejection of the traditional custom of celebrating, in heroes, strength of muscle and skill in fence. *Cato* (1713), a tragedy, and the noblest production of his genius; a classic play, observing the unities strictly and avoiding all admixture of comedy; applauded by both political parties,— the Whigs cheering the frequent allusions to liberty, as a satire on the Tories; and the Tories echoing the cheer, to show that the satire was unfelt. During a whole month, it was performed to overflowing houses; but its representation was too far removed from any state probable or possible in human life to sustain itself when unsupported by the emulation of factious praise. Exciting neither joy nor sorrow, it is replete with noble sentiments in noble language, such as the reader must wish to impress upon his memory, as in the following lines from Cato's soliloquy:

> 'The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
> Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years;
> But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
> Unhurt amid the war of elements,
> The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.'

His *Hymns* are songs of adoration and prayer, fervent, tender, and calm. The serene rapture of his soul's Sabbath shines in these star-like verses:

> 'Soon as the evening shades prevail,
> The moon takes up the wondrous tale,

And, nightly to the list'ning earth,
Repeats the story of her birth:
While all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.
What though, in solemn silence, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?
What though no real voice, nor sound,
Amid their radiant orbs be found?
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
Forever singing as they shine,
"The hand that made us is divine."'

Essays, being contributions to the *Spectator* chiefly, and in part to the *Tatler*, the *Guardian*, and the *Freeholder* (1715), a political journal. Their aim was primarily to instruct; secondarily, to please. For the literary lounger, there were comic sketches of society, exposures of social follies, in letters or allegories; for the novel-reader, stories, portraits of character woven into interesting narratives; for the sage and serious, essays on the *Immortality of the Soul*, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, critical papers on *Paradise Lost*, etc. All subjects were discussed on which party spirit had produced no diversities of sentiment, the object being to render instruction pleasing, to widen the circle of readers, and to accomplish a social regeneration without inflicting a wound. Addison is the *Spectator*.

For the first time, duty was taught without pretension or effort, and pleasure was made subservient to reason. Take his dissection of a beau's brain as an instance of his mode:

'The *pineal* gland, which many of our modern philosophers suppose to be the seat of the soul, smelt very strong of essence and orange-flower water, and was encompassed with a kind of horny substance, cut into a thousand little faces or mirrors, which were imperceptible to the naked eye, insomuch that the soul, if there had been any here, must have been always taken up in contemplating her own beauties.

We observed a large antrum or cavity in the *sinciput*, that was filled with ribbons, lace, and embroidery. . . . There was a large cavity on each side of the head, which I must not omit. That on the right side was filled with fictions, flatteries, and falsehoods, vows, promises, and protestations: that on the left, with oaths and imprecations. There issued out a duct from each of these cells, which ran into the root of the tongue, where both joined together, and passed forward in one common duct to the tip of it. We discovered several little roads or canals running from the ear into the brain, and took particular care to trace them out through their several passages. One of them extended itself to a bundle of sonnets and little musical instruments. Others ended in several bladders which were filled either with wind or froth. But the large canal entered into a great cavity of the skull, from whence there went another canal into the tongue. This great cavity was filled with a kind of spongy substance, which the French anatomists call gallimatias, and the English nonsense. . . .

We did not find anything very remarkable in the eye, saving only, that the *musculi*

amatorii, or, as we may translate it into English, the *ogling muscles*, were very much worn and decayed with use; whereas, on the contrary, the elevator, or the muscle which turns the eye towards heaven, did not appear to have been used at all.'

Or his instructions on the manipulation of a fan:

'The ladies who carry fans under me are drawn up twice a day in my great hall, where they are instructed in the use of their arms, and exercised by the following words of command: Handle your fans, Unfurl your fans, Discharge your fans, Ground your fans, Recover your fans, Flutter your fans. When my female regiment is drawn up in array, with every one her weapon in her hand, upon my giving the word to Handle their fans, each of them shakes her fan at me with a smile, then gives her right-hand woman a tap upon the shoulder, then presses her lips with the extremity of her fan, then lets her arms fall in easy motion, and stands in readiness to receive the next word of command. All this is done with a close fan, and is generally learned in the first week.

The next motion is that of unfurling the fan, in which are comprehended several little flirts and vibrations, as also gradual and deliberate openings, with many voluntary fallings asunder in the fan itself, that are seldom learned under a month's practice. This part of the exercise pleases the spectators more than any other, as it discovers, on a sudden, an infinite number of cupids, garlands, altars, birds, beasts, rainbows, and the like agreeable figures, that display themselves to view, whilst every one in the regiment holds a picture in her hand.

Upon my giving the word to Discharge their fans, they give one general crack that may be heard at a considerable distance when the wind sits fair. This is one of the most difficult parts of the exercise, but I have several ladies with me, who at their first entrance could not give a pop loud enough to be heard at the farther end of the room, who can now discharge a fan in such a manner, that it shall make a report like a pocket-pistol. I have likewise taken care (in order to hinder young women from letting off their fans in wrong places, or on unsuitable occasions) to show upon what subject the crack of a fan may come in properly: I have likewise invented a fan, with which a girl of sixteen, by the help of a little wind, which is enclosed about one of the largest sticks, can make as loud a crack as a woman of fifty with an ordinary fan.

When the fans are thus discharged, the word of command, in course, is to Ground their fans. This teaches a lady to quit her fan gracefully when she throws it aside in order to take up a pack of cards, adjust a curl of hair, replace a falling pin, or apply herself to any other matter of importance. This part of the exercise, as it only consists in tossing a fan with an air upon a long table (which stands by for that purpose), may be learned in two days' time as well as in a twelvemonth.

When my female regiment is thus disarmed, I generally let them walk about the room for some time; when, on a sudden (like ladies that look upon their watches after a long visit), they all of them hasten to their arms, catch them up in a hurry, and place themselves in their proper stations upon my calling out, Recover your fans. This part of the exercise is not difficult, provided a woman applies her thoughts to it.

The fluttering of the fan is the last, and indeed the master-piece of the whole exercise; but if a lady does not mis-spend her time, she may make herself mistress of it in three months. I generally lay aside the dog-days and the hot time of the summer for the teaching this part of the exercise; for as soon as ever I pronounce, Flutter your fans, the place is filled with so many zephyrs and gentle breezes as are very refreshing in that season of the year, though they might be dangerous to ladies of a tender constitution in any other.

There is an infinite variety of motions to be made use of in the flutter of a fan. There is the angry flutter, the modest flutter, the timorous flutter, the confused flutter, the merry flutter, and the amorous flutter. Not to be tedious, there is scarce any motion in the mind which does not produce a suitable agitation in the fan; insomuch, that if I only see the fan of a disciplined lady, I know very well whether she laughs, frowns, or blushes.'

This gaiety is grave. Addison, who could rail so charmingly,

was penetrated by the presence of the Invisible. He often chose for his promenade gloomy Westminster Abbey, with its many reminders of final dissolution and the dark future:

'I entertained myself with the digging of a grave; and saw in every shovelful of it that was thrown up, the fragment of a bone or skull, intermixt with a kind of fresh mouldering earth, that some time or other had a place in the composition of an human body.

When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow. When I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearance together.'

He had the grand imagination of the Northern races, which can be satisfied only with the sight of what is beyond. The noble *Vision of Mirza* is an epitome of his poetry and his prose:

'On the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always keep holy, after having washed myself and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdat, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, "Surely," said I, "man is but a shadow, and life is a dream." Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him, he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceedingly sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from anything I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius, and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand, directed me to approach the place where he sat. . . .

He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, "Cast thine eyes eastward," said he, "and tell me what thou seest." "I see," said I, "a huge valley, and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it." "The valley that thou seest," said he, "is the vale of misery, and the tide of water that thou seest, is part of the great tide of eternity." "What is the reason," said I, "that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?" "What thou seest," said he, "is that portion of eternity which is called Time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now," said he, "this sea that is bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it." "I see a bridge," said I, "standing in the midst of the tide." "The bridge thou seest," said he, "is Human Life: consider it attentively" Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number to

about a hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches, but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. "But tell me further," said he, "what thou discoverest on it." "I see multitudes of people passing over it," said I, "and a black cloud hanging on each end of it." As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge into the great tide that flowed beneath it; and upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon but they fell through them into the tide and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner toward the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the ends of the arches that were entire.

There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk. . . . My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everything that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and, in the midst of a speculation, stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them; but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed, and down they sank. . . .

I here fetched a deep sigh. "Alas," said I, "man was made in vain!—how is he given away to misery and mortality!—tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!" The genius being moved with compassion towards me, bade me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. "Look no more," said he, "on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity, but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it." I directed my sight as I was ordered, and,—whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate,—I saw the valley opening at the former end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The cloud still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it, but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits, with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers, and could hear a confused harmony of singing-birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle that I might fly away to those happy seats, but the genius told me there was no passage to them except through the Gates of Death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. "The islands," said he, "that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye, or even thine imagination, can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who, according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them. Every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirza! habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity preserved for him." I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length, said I: "Shew me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that be hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant." The genius making me no answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me. I then turned again to the

vision which I had been so long contemplating, but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdat, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it.'

Style.—Luminous, graceful, vivid, elegant, familiar, and even, never blazing into unexpected splendor; the exact words, the clear contrasts, the harmonious periods, of classical refinement and finish, happy inventions threaded by the most amiable irony. His poems — *Cato* and the *Hymns* excepted — regular and frigid, like the rule-and-compass poetry of Pope.

Rank.—A public favorite, an unrivalled satirist. The most charming of talkers, an unsullied statesman, a model of pure and elegant English, a consummate painter of human nature, and the greatest of English essayists, occupying a place in English literature only second to that of its great masters. A polished shaft in the temple of thought, whose workmanship is more striking than the weight supported.

Character.—Without taint of perfidy, of cowardice, of cruelty, of ingratitude, or of envy; satirical without abuse, tempering ridicule with a tender compassion for all that is frail, and a profound reverence for all that is sublime. The greatest and most salutary reform of public morals and tastes ever effected by any satirist, he accomplished without a personal lampoon.

Himself a Whig, he was described by the bitterest Tories as a gentleman of wit and virtue, in whose friendship many persons of both parties were happy, and whose name ought not to be mixed up with factious squabbles.

In the heat of controversy, no outrage could provoke him to a retaliation unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman. With a boundless power of abusing men, he never used it. His modesty amounted to bashfulness. He once rose in debate, in the House of Commons, but could not conquer his diffidence, and ever after remained silent. As an Oxford student, he was gentle and meditative, loving solitary walks under the elms that fringe the banks of the Cherwell. Is it not prophetic — a commentary in itself — that he loved the quietness of nature? May we not hence expect the music of long cadenced and tranquil phrases, the measured harmonies of noble images, and the grave sweetness of moral sentiments?

He stood fast by the altar of worship. God was his loving

friend, who had tenderly watched over his cradle, who had preserved his youth, and richly blessed his manhood. His favorite psalm was that which represents the Deity under the endearing image of a Shepherd. On his death-bed, he called himself to a strict account, sent for Gay, and asked pardon for an injury which it was not even suspected that he had committed; sent for young Warwick, to whom he had been tutor, and whom he had vainly endeavored to reclaim from an irregular life; told him, when he desired to hear his last injunction, 'I have sent for you that you may see how a Christian can die.'

Influence. — Seen best in the purpose which inspired his papers. 'The great and only end of these speculations,' says Addison, in a number of the *Spectator*, 'is to banish vice and ignorance out of the territories of Great Britain.' He was a successful reformer. He made morality fashionable, and it remained in fashion. The Puritans had divorced elegance from virtue — he reconciled them; genius was still thought to have some natural connection with profligacy — he divorced them; pleasure was subservient to passion — he made it subservient to reason:

'It was said of Socrates that he brought Philosophy down from heaven to inhabit among men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought Philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables, and in coffee-houses.'

His essays are, directly or indirectly, moral — rules of propriety, precepts on when to speak, when to be silent, how to refuse, how to comply; reprimands to thoughtless women, raillery against fashionable young men, a portrait of an honest man, attacks against the conceit of rank, epigrams on the frivolity of etiquette, advice to families, consolations to the sorrowing, reflections on God, the future life.

A good and happy man, he scattered freely the blessings of a kind and generous nature. His satire, always directed against every form of social offence, was of that genial kind which, wooing the reader along a sunny path, awakens attention to his faults without friction or irritation. He was the first to make of prose a fine art, and elegant culture has ever since found constant expression in prose.

Human immortality is of three kinds: objective in God — the immortality of conscious existence; subjective in the minds of

men — the immortality of fame; subjective in the life of the world — the immortality of energy, energy that expends itself in good works, and, by the natural transmission of force, lives to perish never. These three were the inheritance of Addison, and are possible to few; the last is the privilege of all. No particles of him will ever be lost. Ever since he died there has been a growth of the Christ-like. The seeds he dropped took root in the soul of man, have grown apace, flowering every spring, fruiting every autumn, spreading in the very air the odor of the bloom and the flavor of the fruit. No good thing is lost. Forty-four years after his death, the Council of Constance ordered the bones of Wycliffe to be dug up and burned. The vultures of the law took what little they could find, burned it, and cast the ashes into the Swift, a little brook running hard by, and thought they had made away with both his bones and his doctrines. How does it turn out? The historian says: 'The brook took them into the Avon, the Avon into the Severn, the Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblems of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over.'[1]

You and I may not have much intellectual power, our thought may never fill the world's soul; but, if we have stimulated a generous wish or a noble aspiration, if we have ever furnished a medium in which handsome things may be projected and performed,— if we have added one leaf to the tree of humanity, one blossom to its wealth of bloom, or aught to its harvest of fruit, we may rely upon the eternal law that neither things present nor things to come can deprive these outgoing particles of their immortality. More fitting and enduring epitaph than this Addison could not have: 'He lived wisely and usefully.'

[1] See Vol. I, p. 203.

DE FOE.

His imagination was that of a man of business, not of an artist, crammed, and as it were jammed down with facts. He tells them as they come to him, without arrangement or style, like a conversation. . . . Never was such a sense of the real before or since.—*Taine.*

Biography.—Born in 1661, the son of a London butcher named Foe. Disliking the family name, he added a prefix to suit his own taste. Studied five years, at a Dissenters' academy, for the Presbyterian ministry. Joined the Monmouth insurrection, and escaped hanging or transportation. Became a hosier, and failed. Became a merchant-adventurer, visiting Spain and Portugal, and absconded from his creditors in 1692. Subsequently paid their entire claims, when legally relieved of the obligation to do so. Became an accountant under William III, but lost his appointment in 1699 by suppression of the Glass Duty. Became a tile-maker, and lost three thousand pounds in the undertaking. Explains in 1705, 'How, with a numerous family and no help but his own industry, he had forced his way with undiscouraged diligence through a sea of misfortunes.' Writes a pamphlet against the High Church party, is misunderstood, fined, pilloried, his ears cut off, imprisoned two years,—charity preventing his wife and six children from dying of hunger during his imprisonment. Caricatured, robbed, and slandered, he withdrew from politics, and at fifty-five, poor and burdened, turned to fiction. Wrote in prose, in verse, on all subjects, in all two hundred and fifty-four works! and, struck down with apoplexy, died in 1731, penniless, insolvent, immortal.

Appearance.—Under order of arrest on the charge of sedition, he was described by the *Gazette* of January, 1702, as 'a middle-sized spare man, about forty years old, of a brown complexion, and dark brown hair, though he wears a wig, having a hook nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth.'

Writings.—*True-born Englishman* (1701), a poetical satire on the foreigners, and a defence of King William and the Dutch. Its sale was almost unexampled; eighty thousand pirated copies were sold on the streets. Tuneless and homely, it shows the

ability of its author to reason forcibly in rhyme. The opening lines are characteristic:

> 'Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
> The devil always builds a chapel there;
> And 'twill be found upon examination,
> The latter has the largest congregation.'

The Shortest Way with the Dissenters (1702), a work wherein he, 'himself a Dissenter,' ironically recommends the stake and the gallows. Neither Whig nor Tory could understand De Foe's irony; it was too subtle or obscure, and the work was voted a libel on the nation. The author was condemned to pay a fine, was set in the pillory, and imprisoned. Confined in Newgate, he commenced the *Review*, designed to treat of news, foreign and domestic; of politics, English and European; of trade, particular and universal. Realizing that the age, naturally averse to anything serious, would not read unless it could be diverted, he skilfully instituted a Scandal Club, which discussed questions in divinity, morals, war, trade, poetry, love, marriage, drunkenness, and gaming. Thus it is easy to see that the *Review* pointed the way to the *Tatler*.

Robinson Crusoe, a novel of adventure. Perhaps the most widely diffused and the most eagerly read of English productions. As long as there are boys and girls, it will continue to find devoted readers. 'Nobody,' observed Johnson, 'ever laid it down without wishing it were longer.'

Journal of the Great Plague in London, a description of sights, incidents, and persons, as observed by an assumed shopkeeper. Dr. Mead, a famous physician, appealed to it for medical purposes, and it has more than once passed for a genuine history.

The Memoirs of a Cavalier, so plausible, so natural, so real, that Lord Chatham was deceived into recommending it as the most authentic account of the Civil War.

True Relation of the Apparition of Mrs. Veal, a narrative of facts seemingly as true and indubitable as any that ever passed before our eyes. It was prefixed to a religious book *On Death*, and not only sold the whole edition of an otherwise unsalable work, but excited extensive inquiries into the alleged facts. One of his works has the curious title of: *Mars stript of his armor; a lashing caricature of the habits and manners of all kinds of*

military men, written on purpose to delight quiet tradespeople, and cure their daughters of their passion for red-coats.

Judge, from two or three examples, of his wonderful gift of 'forging the handwriting of nature,' and how near are we to the present anti-romantic reading of observers and moralists. We quote from the *Journal:*

'As I went along Houndsditch one morning about eight o'clock, there was a great noise. . . . A watchman, it seems, had been employed to keep his post at the door of a house which was infected, or said to be infected, and was shut up. He had been there all night, for two nights together, as he told his story, and the day watchman had been there one day, and was now come to relieve him. All this while no noise had been heard in the house, no light had been seen, they called for nothing, had sent him no errands, which used to be the chief business of the watchman; neither had they given him any disturbance, as he said, from Monday afternoon, when he heard a great crying and screaming in the house, which, as he supposed, was occasioned by some of the family dying just at that time.

It seems, the night before, the dead-cart, as it was called, had been stopped there, and a servant-maid had been brought down to the door dead, and the buriers, or bearers, as they were called, put her into the cart, wrapped only in a green rug, and carried her away.

The watchman had knocked at the door, it seems, when he heard that noise and crying, as above, and nobody answered a great while; but at last one looked out and said, with an angry, quick tone, and yet a kind of crying voice, or a voice of one that was crying, "What d'ye want, that you make such a knocking?"

He answered, "I am the watchman. How do you do? What is the matter?" The person answered, "What is that to you? *Stop the dead-cart.*"'

Again:

'Much about the same time I walked out into the fields towards Bow, for I had a great mind to see how things were managed in the river and among the ships. . . .

Here I saw a poor man walking on the bank, or sea-wall, as they call it, by himself. I walked awhile also about, seeing the houses all shut up; at last I fell into some talk, at a distance, with this poor man. First I asked him how people did thereabouts. "Alas! sir," says he, "almost desolate; all dead or sick. Here are very few families in this part, or in that village,"—pointing at Poplar,—"where half of them are dead already, and the rest sick." Then he, pointing to one house: "There they are all dead," said he, "and the house stands open; nobody dares go into it. A poor thief," says he, "ventured in to steal something, but he paid dear for his theft, for he was carried to the churchyard too, last night." Then he pointed to several other houses. "There," says he, "they are all dead—the man and his wife and five children. There," says he, "They are shut up; you see a watchman at the door; and so of other houses." "Why," says I, "what do you here all alone?" "Why," says he, "I am a poor desolate man: it hath pleased God I am not yet visited, though my family is, and one of my children dead." "How do you mean then," said I, "that you are not visited?" "Why," says he, "that is my house,"—pointing to a very little low-boarded house,—"and there my poor wife and two children live," said he, "if they may be said to live; for my wife and one of the children are visited, but I do not come at them." And with that word I saw the tears run very plentifully down his face; and so they did down mine too, I assure you.

"But," said I, "why do you not come at them? How can you abandon your own flesh and blood?" "O, sir," says he, "the Lord forbid. I do not abandon them; I work for them as much as I am able; and blessed be the Lord, I keep them from want." And with that I observed he lifted up his eyes to heaven with a countenance that presently told me I had happened on a man that was no hypocrite, but a serious, religious, good man: and his ejaculation was an expression of thankfulness, that, in such a condition as he

was in, he should be able to say his family did not want. "Well," says I, "honest man, that is a great mercy, as things go now with the poor. But how do you live then, and how are you kept from the dreadful calamity that is now upon us all?" "Why, sir," says he, "I am a waterman and there is my boat," says he; "and the boat serves me for a house; I work in it in the day, and I sleep in it in the night; and what I get I lay it down upon that stone," says he, shewing me a broad stone on the other side of the street, a good way from his house; "and then," says he, "I halloo and call to them till I make them hear, and they come and fetch it." . . .

"Do you see there," says he, "five ships lie at anchor?"—pointing down the river a good way below the town,—"and do you see," says he, "eight or ten ships lie at the chain there, and at anchor yonder?"—pointing above the town. "All those ships have families on board, of their merchants and owners, and such like, who have locked themselves up, and live on board, close shut in, for fear of the infection; and I tend on them to fetch things for them, carry letters, and do what is absolutely necessary, that they may not be obliged to come on shore; and every night I fasten my boat on board one of the ship's boats, and there I sleep by myself; and blessed be God, I am preserved hitherto." . . .

"Hark thee, friend," said I, "come hither, for I believe thou art in health, that I may venture thee;" so I pulled out my hand, which was in my pocket before. "Here," says I, "go and call thy Rachel once more, and give her a little comfort from me; God will never forsake a family that trust in Him as thou dost": so I gave him four other shillings, and bid him go lay them on the stone, and call his wife. I have not words to express the poor man's thankfulness, neither could he express it himself, but by tears running down his face. He called his wife, and told her God had moved the heart of a stranger, upon hearing their condition, to give them all that money; and a great deal more such as that he said to her. The woman, too, made signs of the like thankfulness, as well to Heaven as to me, and joyfully picked it up; and I parted with no money all that year that I thought better bestowed.'

Crusoe, cast alone on a desert island, is terrified by the discovery of a human footmark:

'It happened one day about noon, going towards my boat, I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man's naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen in the sand: I stood like one thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an apparition: I listened, I looked around me, I could hear nothing, nor see anything; I went up to a rising ground to look farther: I went up the shore, and down the shore, but it was all one, I could see no other impression but that one: I went to it again to see if there were any more, and to observe if it might not be my fancy; but there was no room for that, for there was exactly the very print of a foot, toes, heel, and every part of a foot. How it came thither I knew not, nor could in the least imagine. But after innumerable fluttering thoughts, like a man perfectly confused, and out of myself, I came home to my fortification, not feeling, as we say, the ground I went on, but terrified to the last degree, looking behind me at every two or three steps, mistaking every bush and tree, and fancying every stump at a distance to be a man; nor is it possible to describe how many various shapes an affrighted imagination represented things to me in; how many wild ideas were formed every moment in my fancy, and what strange, unaccountable whimsies came into my thoughts by the way.

When I came to my castle, for so I think I called it ever after this, I fled into it like one pursued; whether I went over by the ladder, at first contrived, or went in at the hole in the rock, which I called a door, I cannot remember; for never frighted hare fled to cover, or fox to earth, with more terror of mind than I to this retreat.'

Perhaps the devil left it:

'I considered that the devil might have found out abundance of other ways to have terrified me, . . . that, as I lived quite on the other side of the island, he would never have been so simple to leave a mark in a place where it was ten thousand to one whether

I should ever see it or not, and in the sand too, which the first surge of the sea upon a high wind would have defaced entirely. All this seemed inconsistent with the thing itself, and with all notions we usually entertain of the subtlety of the devil.'

Style.—Pure, simple, clear, vigorous, colloquial, idiomatic.

Rank.—Unrivalled in the invention and relation of incidents. 'Never was such a sense of the real before or since.' The grand secret of his art—if that may be called art which is nature itself—consists in an astonishing minuteness of details and an unequalled power of giving reality to the incidents which he relates. He deceives not the eye, but the mind, and that literally, as we have noticed. The preface to an old edition of *Robinson Crusoe* says:

'The story is told . . . to the instruction of others by this example, and to justify and honor the wisdom of Providence. The editor believes the thing to be a just history of facts; neither is there any appearance of fiction in it.'

He sat in his closet, travelled round the world in idea, saw with the distinctness of natural vision, then narrated so plausibly as to deceive the most intelligent.

His fields of power were: national convulsions, by war, by pestilence, or by tempest; magic, ghost-seeing, witchcraft, and the occult sciences; thieves, rogues, vagabonds, swindlers, buccaneers, and pirates. The courage, the wonderful and romantic adventures, and the hairbreadth escapes of pirates seem to have had for him an infinite charm.

Character.—A poet, a novelist, and a polemic; born a writer, as other men are born generals and statesmen. Without the idea of beauty, he is good and religious, too good and religious to forget the distinctions between virtue and vice. Though his subjects are low, his aims are moral. In this respect, he is entitled to a much higher praise than is generally awarded him. His heroes and incidents are made the frequent occasion of inculcating the fundamental truths of religion, the being of God, the superintendency of Providence, the certainty of Heaven and Hell, the one to reward, the other to punish. *Crusoe* is De Foe,—honest, open, confidential, laying his inmost thoughts and feelings before us; patient and invincible in difficulty, in disappointment, in toil; sanguine, combating, conquering.

Of his habits, little can now be told more than he confessed:

'God, I thank Thee I am not a drunkard, or a swearer, or a busybody, or idle, or revengeful; and though this be true, and I challenge all the world to prove the contrary,

I must own I see small satisfaction in the negatives of the common virtues; for though I have not been guilty of any of these vices, nor of many more, I have nothing to infer from thence but, *Te Deum laudamus.*'

Influence.—His moral teaching, as indicated above, is generally unexceptionable. Good and evil are carefully discriminated. Knowing life better than the soul, the course of the world better than the motives of men, his best drawn characters are less instructive and salutary than greater delicacy and profounder insight would have rendered them.

His writings, though they did not save him from want, gained him a renown that will descend the stream of time to the remotest generation of men.

SWIFT.

The most unhappy man on earth.—*Archbishop King.*

Biography.—Born in Dublin, in 1667, but of English parentage. Instructed by his nurse, at three he could spell, and at five could read any chapter in the Bible. Passed eight years in the school of Kilkenny, and at fifteen, poorly supported by the charity of an uncle, entered Dublin University. Odd, awkward, proud, and friendless, irregular and desultory as a student, he incurred in two years no less than seventy penalties, meditated *An Account of the Kingdom of Absurdities*, to show his disgust for the routine of scholastic training, and provoked the pitying smiles of the professors for his feeble brain. Failed to take his degree, on account of 'dulness and insufficiency' in logic. Presented himself for examination a second time, without having condescended to read logic. Refused to answer the questions propounded, desired to know what he was to learn from 'those books,' and was asked how he could expect to reason well without rules; retorted that he did reason without them, and that, so far as he had observed, rules taught men to wrangle rather than to reason. Obtained his degree at last by *special favor*, a term used in that university to denote want of merit.

At twenty one, left without subsistence, he was received into the house of Sir William Temple as secretary, at twenty pounds

a year and his board; dined at the second table, and smothered his rebellion. Studied eight hours a day to correct his former idleness, and ran up and down a hill every two hours to correct a giddiness he had contracted in Ireland. Wrote bad verses to flatter his master, hoped he was a poet, and perpetually hated Dryden, who said of them, 'Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet.'

Ambitious of preferment, sick of hopes deferred, and galled by his servitude, he attempted independence, and took orders in the Irish church in 1694, at a hundred pounds a year, in a distant, secluded, and half civilized place. Found it a lower deep, to which the hell he had suffered seemed a heaven; was forced to accept Temple's cordial invitation to return, from which time the two appear to have lived in mutual confidence and esteem.

Upon Temple's death (1698), who had left him a legacy and his manuscripts, he edited the works of his patron, dedicated them to William III, to remind him of promised advancement, got nothing, and accepted the post of secretary to a nobleman; was circumvented, then promised the rich Deanery of Derry, saw it bestowed on somebody else, and fell back on the post of prebendary.[1]

Constrained to reside in a country which he detested, and longing for the promotion that would enable him to return to England, near the centre of literary and political activity, he launched into politics, advocated Whig principles, received fine promises from party leaders, and was neglected. In 1710, lured by false hopes till his patience was exhausted, and insulted without redress, he abandoned the Whigs, who were now to be driven from office, joined the Tories, levelled at his former friends the blasting lightning of his satire, was feared as a powerful and unscrupulous pamphleteer, became the familiar associate and adviser of the rich and titled, stretched out his hands for an English bishopric, and received,—what he professed to regard as an honorable exile,—only the Deanery of St. Patrick's, Dublin; for though favored by the ministers of state, by the Queen and High Church dignitaries, whose party he had espoused, he was

[1] In the county of Meath, northwest of Dublin. While here, he appointed the reading of prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays. On the first Wednesday, after the bell had ceased ringing for some time, finding that the congregation consisted only of himself and his clerk, Roger, he began: 'Dearly beloved Roger, the Scripture moveth you and me in sundry places,' etc.; and then proceeded regularly through the whole service.

disliked as an uncertain friend and a doubtful Christian. He had been the author of a religious lampoon (*Tale of a Tub*) that was fatal to his eminence in the church. To Ireland he repaired in bitterness of spirit. There he was exiled by the return of the Whigs to power under George I; and there he was confined, contrary to his expectations, by their continued supremacy under George II. Isolated, even pelted by the populace in the streets, stung by the designations of renegade, traitor, and atheist, conscious of superiority and soured by the feeling of his own impotence, he vented his pent-up rage in torturing, crushing satires against theologians, statesmen, courtiers, society. In 1724, by delivering Ireland from a fraudulent and oppressive measure, from being an object of hatred he became an object of idolatry; and the popularity he thus acquired, he was diligent to keep, by continuing attention to the public, and by various modes of beneficence. But power almost despotic could not reconcile him to himself or his environment, and in 1728 he writes:

'I find myself disposed every year, or rather every month, to be more angry and revengeful; and my rage is so ignoble that it descends even to resent the folly and baseness of the enslaved people among whom I live.'

Sometimes wished to visit England, but the fire was burning low, and he seems to have had a presentiment that he never would. Tells Pope he hopes once more to see him; 'but if not,' he says, 'we must part as all human beings have parted.'

Subject to giddiness from his youth, the attacks grew more frequent with advancing age. He desisted from study. Deafness came on, making conversation difficult. Having vowed never to wear spectacles, he was unable to read.

Memory left him, reason deserted him,[1] and he became first a maniac, then an idiot. After a year of total silence, his housekeeper, on the 30th of November, told him that the usual bonfires and illuminations were preparing to celebrate his birthday. An interval of reason flashed its light across his midnight sky, and he answered, 'It is all folly; they had better let it alone.' Sunk again into a silent idiocy, he expired in the ensuing October, 1744. When his will was opened, it was found that he had left

[1] I remember as I and others were taking with Swift an evening walk, about a mile out of Dublin, he stopped short; we passed on; but perceiving he did not follow us, I went back and found him fixed as a statue; and earnestly gazing upwards at a noble tree, which, in its upper branches, was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, 'I shall be like that tree; I shall die at the top.'—*Dr. Young.*

his fortune to build an asylum for idiots and madmen. His morning rose in clouds, and his evening went down in eclipse.

Loves.—Never was genius more fatal in its influence, nor friendship more blighting, nor unprosperous love more widely famed. While a student in the university, he formed an attachment to Jane Warying, sister of his college companion, and poetically termed 'Varina.' In a letter of April, 1696, Swift complains of her formality and coldness, tells her that he has resolved to die as he has lived—all hers. She signifies, at last, her desire to consummate their union; but the vision that had made the morning and the evening varied enchantments, was passing. A second letter of May, 1700, is written in the altered tone of one who is anxious to escape from a connection which he regrets ever to have formed. Time had perhaps estranged him by its unequal development of their characters, and the superior charms of another had begun to weave their spell around the lover's heart.

In Temple's family, he met a very pretty, dark-eyed, modest young girl of fifteen, a waiting-maid,—Esther Johnson. Seventeen years her senior, he became her instructor; found pleasure in cultivating her talents; became her companion and friend, though he could little have thought how closely and tragically their fortunes and their fame were hereafter to be united. She loved and reverenced him only; and he immortalized her as 'Stella,' or 'Star that dwelt apart.' To reconcile himself to an obscure retirement, he invited her with her friend Mrs. Dingley to reside in Ireland. They lived in the parsonage when he was away, and when he returned, removed to a lodging, or to the house of a near clergyman. From London, during the period of his political struggles (1710–1713), he wrote to her twice a day, a journal of his daily life, familiarly, playfully, and endearingly; records, for her gratification, his slightest actions; tells where he goes, where he dines, whom he meets, what he spends.

His letters are his last occupation at night, and his first in the morning:

> 'I can not go to bed without a word to them (Stella and Mrs. Dingley); I can not put out my candle till I bid them good night.'

He had met in London yet another girl, eighteen, beautiful, rich, lively, graceful, and fond of books, a merchant's daughter,—

Esther Vanhomrigh. Twenty-six years her senior, he offered to direct her in her choice of studies. She esteemed him, thanked him, then loved him, unacquainted with the peculiar situation in which he stood related to another. 'Vanessa'—for so he had poetically named her—avowed her passion, and received in return, first raillery, then the cold proffer of everlasting friendship. Thinking to possess her love without returning it, he had encouraged her feelings, to disappoint her just expectations. With an irrepressible devotion, she followed him to Dublin, hoping, waiting, remonstrating, entreating,—so impassioned, so unhappy, so agonized, when all her offerings had failed, that her letters of love and complaint are sadder than wails above the dead:

'If you continue to treat me as you do, you will not be made uneasy by me long. . . . I am sure I could have borne the rack much better than those killing, killing words of you. The reason I write to you is because I cannot tell it to you, should I see you. For when I begin to complain, then you are angry; and there is something in your looks so awful that it strikes me dumb. Oh, that you may have so much regard for me left, that this complaint may touch your soul with pity! I say as little as ever I can. Did you but know what I thought, I am sure it would move you to forgive me, and believe that I cannot help telling you this and live.'[1]

Discovering the gulf he had incautiously approached, he sought to alleviate the perils he could no longer avert, tried to turn her mind to other objects and interests, but in vain. She refused to mingle in society, rejected two advantageous offers of marriage, and in 1717 withdrew to a country retreat, to nurse in seclusion her melancholy and hopeless attachment. Here she received occasional visits from Swift, each of which she commemorated by planting with her own hand a laurel in the garden where they met.

Meanwhile, the familiar power of pleasing, which Stella had long possessed, suffered a partial eclipse. The altered tone of his London letters betrayed a divided affection, and Vanessa's arrival in Dublin—whose name he had all but suppressed—developed the cause, while it increased the apprehensions of Stella. Sensibility to his late indifference, and jealousy neither unreasonable nor dishonorable, were preying upon her health. The bloom and beauty of youth had faded away in the midst of hopes and wishes unfulfilled, while she was bitterly conscious that her reputation was clouded by her mysterious connection

[1] Letter of Vanessa, Dublin, 1714.

with Swift, though her conduct was irreproachable. She had an undoubted claim, however, over the affections of his heart, and he married her at last from a sense of duty, in 1716, secretly, in the garden of the Deanery, with the understanding that she should be his wife only in name. On his public days, she regulated the table, but appeared at it as a mere guest. Their relations continued as before, and they lived on opposite banks of the Liffey. Tardy, poor, and feeble reparation! Immediately after the ceremony, he was gloomy and agitated. Delany, his biographer, called upon Archbishop King, to mention his apprehensions; met Swift rushing by with a countenance of distraction, found the Archbishop in tears, and inquired the reason: 'Sir,' said the prelate, 'you have just met the most unhappy man upon earth; but on the subject of his wretchedness you must never ask a question.'

The tragedy deepens as it draws to a close. Without explaining his conduct, he continued his visits to Vanessa — with more reserve, let us hope, and with increased anxiety to direct her passion into other channels. Eight years she had cherished that passion in solitude. By the death of her younger sister in 1720, whose failing health she had nursed, yet another sorrow was added. Her affection for Swift redoubled its energy. Driven almost to madness by suspense and suspicion, she wrote at last to Stella to ascertain the nature of her connection with the Dean, and was informed, in reply, of the marriage. Stella gave the letter to Swift for explanation. In a rage he carried it to the unhappy Vanessa. His countenance, as he entered the room, struck terror into her soul, and she could scarcely invite him to a seat. Without a word, he flung a letter on the table before her, and instantly left. Opening the packet, she found only her own communication to Stella,— the death-warrant to her hopes and to her life. She languished a few weeks and died, in 1723, a victim to the cruelty and duplicity of him on whom she had lavished in vain life's warmest and purest affections, who had suffered her to pine and sink in hopeless affliction, because at first he would not, and afterwards dared not, avow his double dealing, and his incapability of accepting the heart she offered. Judge of the rare gift and the costly sacrifice, from the *Ode to Spring*, in which she alludes to her unhappy attachment. Never was harp tuned more touchingly to the pathetic eloquence of woe:

'Hail, blushing goddess! beauteous Spring!
Who in thy jocund train dost bring
Loves and graces—smiling hours—
Balmy breezes—fragrant flowers;
Come with tints of roseate hue,
Nature's faded charms renew!
Yet why should I thy presence hail?
To me no more the breathing gale
Comes fraught with sweets, no more the rose
With such transcendent beauty blows,
As when Cadenus[1] blest the scene,
And shared with me those joys serene,
When unperceived, the lambent fire
Of friendship kindled new desire;
Still listening to his tuneful tongue,
The truths which angels might have sung,
Divine imprest their gentle sway,
And sweetly stole my soul away.
My guide, instructor. lover, friend,
Dear names, in one idea blend;
Oh! still conjoined, your incense rise,
And waft sweet odours to the skies!'

Swift made a tour of two months in the south of Ireland, a prey to remorse; returned to Dublin, and received Stella's forgiveness. Poor Stella, married when on her part all but life had faded away, was twelve years dying. Living desolately on, in hope that he would in time own and receive her, she sank into the grave in 1728, without any public recognition of the tie. It is said that Swift never mentioned her name without a sigh. That he felt distress and contrition, there is no doubt. His misanthropy increased, and his malady grew more malignant. Perhaps, in the case of Vanessa, dreading her grief, and watching for a favorable moment, he had delayed a disagreeable discovery till too late. Aware that insanity lurked in his frame, he may have felt, in the case of Stella, that he had no right to marry. But no plea could efface the blot on his character, that, without any intention of marrying either, he attached to himself two of the loveliest women of his time, encouraged their friendship for his own content, and tortured them by hopes deferred, till the grave closed upon their piteous accents, as despair upon their hearts.

Appearance.—Tall, strong, and well made; of dark complexion, blue eyes, black and bushy eyebrows, hooked nose, and features sour and severe, seldom softened by any appearance of gaiety.

[1] 'Cadenus'=*Decanus*=the Dean.

Writings.—*Tale of a Tub*[1] (1704); a powerful satire, whose object was to ridicule the Romanists and Presbyterians, with the view of defending and exalting the Church of England. A father had three sons,—Peter (Church of Rome), Martin (Church of England), and Jack (Presbyterians, or Protestant Dissenters). Upon his deathbed he bequeathed to each of the lads a coat (Christianity), warning them to wear it plain.

'Sons, because I have purchased no estate nor was born to any, I have long considered of some good legacies to leave you, and at last, with much care, I have provided each of you with a good coat. With good wearing the coats will last you as long as you live, and will grow in the same proportion as your bodies, lengthening and widening of themselves, so as to be always fit.'

They were expressly forbidden to add to or diminish from their coats one thread. After a time, however, they came to a town, adopted its manners, fell in love with some stylish ladies, and, to gain their favors, began to live as gallants. Embarrassed by the extreme simplicity of their clothes, they longed for a more fashionable attire. An adroit interpretation of the will (Bible) admitted shoulder-knots. Silver fringe was soon in fashion:

'Upon which the brothers consulting their father's will, to their great astonishment found these words: "Item, I charge and command my said three sons to wear no sort of silver fringe upon or about their said coats," etc.'

Peter, however, who was a skilful critic, had found in a certain author, which he said should be nameless,—

'That the same word, which in the will is called fringe, does also signify a broomstick; and doubtless ought to have the same interpretation in this paragraph. This another of the brothers disliked, because of that epithet silver, which could not, he humbly conceived, in propriety of speech be reasonably applied to a broomstick; but it was replied upon him that this epithet was understood in a mythological and allegorical sense. However, he objected again, why their father should forbid them to wear a broomstick on their coats, a caution that seemed unnatural and impertinent; upon which he was taken up short, as one who spoke irreverently of a mystery, which doubtless was very useful and significant, but ought not to be over-curiously pried into, or nicely reasoned upon.'

By similar evasions, gold lace, embroidery, and flame-colored satin linings were added to their coats. The will was at length locked up, and utterly disregarded. Peter, claiming the supremacy, styled himself My Lord Peter, and discarded from the house his brothers, who reopened the will and began to understand it. To return to primitive simplicity, Martin tore off ten dozen yards

[1] Explained by Swift to mean, that, as sailors throw out a tub to a whale to keep him amused and prevent him from running foul of their ship, so in this treatise, his object is to divert the freethinkers of the day (who draw their arguments from the *Leviathan* of Hobbes) from injuring the state by their wild theories in politics and religion.

of fringe and a huge quantity of gold lace, but kept a few embroideries, which could not be got away without damaging the cloth; Jack, in his enthusiasm, stripped away everything, reduced himself, in the operation, to tatters, and, envious of Martin, joined the Æolists, or inspired worshippers of the wind:

'First it is generally affirmed or confirmed that learning puffeth men up; and secondly they proved it by the following syllogism: words are but wind; and learning is nothing but words; *ergo* learning is nothing but wind. . . . This, when blown up to its perfection, ought not to be covetously hoarded up, stifled, or hid under a bushel, but freely communicated to mankind. Upon these reasons, and others of equal weight, the wise Æolists affirm the gift of belching to be the noblest act of a rational creature. At certain seasons of the year, you might behold the priests among them in vast numbers, . . . linked together in a circular chain, with every man a pair of bellows applied to his neighbor . . . by which they blew each other to the shape and size of a tun; and for that reason, with great propriety of speech, did usually call their bodies their vessels.'

The work, though admired, was widely condemned. To a later edition was prefixed an apology, in which the author declared that his meaning had been misconceived. Perhaps so. A very peculiar person, like Swift, might so write without any ill intention. But what shall we say of the *spirituality* of him who treats with pompous merriment and witty buffoonery questions that rest with the weight of worlds on the human spirit? Voltaire praised it, recommended his disciples to read it; by many it was thought to be a covert attack upon Christianity. What church or creed does it not profane? Even the High Church, which he seems to defend, is a political cloak:

'Is not religion a cloak; honesty a pair of shoes worn out in the dirt; self-love a surtout; vanity a shirt; and conscience a pair of breeches? . . . If certain ermines and furs be placed in a certain position, we style them a judge; and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin, we entitle a bishop.'

After such ribaldries, what reason had he to be astonished that a Christian princess declined to place him upon a clerical throne?

Drapier Letters (1724). A series of letters against an English patent for supplying the Irish market with copper coinage; inserted in a Dublin newspaper, and signed *M. B. Drapier.* Small change was wanted in Ireland. The English ministers, without consulting the Irish government, granted a patent to coin one hundred and eight thousand pounds of copper money. Swift considered the metal base, and, by stirring appeals to the pride and patriotism of the people, roused them against the measure. The English government bowed to the storm, and withdrew the coin. These letters are distinguished by artful and trenchant argument, vast passion and pride, bitter and terrible

rancor. *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), a satire of man; the most original, most carefully finished, and most characteristic of his works; a production entirely unique in English literature. It is the journal of a voyager, who, like De Foe in *Crusoe*, describes in cool, sensible, and simple faith the events and sights which he has seen. In his first voyage, he is carried to the empire of the Pygmies, where the people are but six inches high, and surrounding objects correspondingly diminutive; in his second, he is carried to the empire of Giants, where the people are sixty feet high or upwards, and other existences proportionately vast; in his third, he is taken to several fantastic countries, of which one, a flying island, is inhabited by philosophers and mathematicians, another by wretches who, without intellects or affections, are doomed to a bodily immortality; in his fourth, he is carried to a region whose people are hardly distinguishable from brutes:

'At last I beheld several animals in a field, and one or two of the same kind sitting in trees. Their shape was very singular and deformed. . . . They climbed high trees as nimbly as a squirrel, for they had strong extended claws before and behind, terminating in a sharp point, and hooked. . . . Upon the whole, I never beheld in all my travels so disagreeable an animal, or one against which I naturally conceived so great an antipathy.'

How ridiculous are human interests and passions when mirrored in the littleness of the Pigmy world! How vain are our desires, how insignificant our pursuits, when tried by the standard of a mightier race! What is a lawyer but a hired liar, who perverts the truth if he is an advocate, and sells it if he is a judge? What is a legislator but a compound of idleness and vice? What is a noble but a diseased rake and rascal? What is sentiment but folly and weakness? What are science, art, and religion, but cloaks which veil the ugliness of human nature? Brutes that tear each other with their talons, that howl, and grin, and chatter, and wallow in the mud,—these are the final abstract of man—of his instincts, of his ambitions, of his hopes. Nay, they are better, for our species 'is the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl on the face of the earth.' This book is the expression of Swift,—the assembly of all his talent and all his passion; so picturesque, so romantic, so melancholy, so mocking and fiendish at last, yet so coolly and simply told, that criticism was for a time lost in wonder.

A Modest Proposal (1731); a scheme to prevent the children of the Irish poor from becoming a burden to their parents or

country, and to make them beneficial to the public. The scheme is, that the children should be sold and eaten as food!

'I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child, well nursed, is, at a year old, a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked or boiled.'

He enters gravely into calculation:

'A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends, and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day. . . . I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat.'

This hideous treatise, so shudderingly calm, seems fit to have been the expiring cry of his genius and his despair.

Thoughts on Various Subjects, of which the following are characteristic and suggestive specimens, models of form and nuggets of wisdom:

'We have just religion enough to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another.'

'When a true genius appeareth in the world, you may know him by this infallible sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against him.'

'The reason why so few marriages are happy, is because young ladies spend their time in making nets, not in making cages.'

'No wise man ever wished to be younger.'

'A *nice* man is a man of nasty ideas.'

'Complaint is the largest tribute Heaven receives, and the sincerest part of our devotion.'

'The stoical scheme of supplying our wants by lopping off our desires, is like cutting off our feet when we want shoes.'

'The common fluency of speech in many men and most women is owing to a scarcity of matter and scarcity of words: for whoever is a master of language, and hath a mind full of ideas, will be apt, in speaking, to hesitate upon the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas, and one set of words to clothe them in, and these are already at the mouth. So people come faster out of a church when it is almost empty, than when a crowd is at the door.'

Style.—Simple, plain, pure, rugged, vigorous, Saxon. Without ornament, it is rich in the variety of its words and phrases. Always understanding himself, he was always understood by others. He illustrates admirably an important principle of composition,—that, when a man has stamped upon his mind all the parts and joints of his subject, and is confident of his cause, he has only to resist the temptation to write finely, in order to write effectively.

Rank.—In originality and strength he has no superior, and in irony no equal. He had the genius of insult, as Shakespeare

of poetry. Unscrupulous sarcasm and vituperation, crushing logic, knowledge of men and life, vehement expression, made him the most formidable pamphleteer that ever lived. He was deficient in refinement of taste and loftiness of imagination, and lacked the nobility of nature to become a true poet, philosopher, or reformer. The grandeurs of the human spirit escaped him. Palpable and familiar objects, common words, common things, were the sources of his inspiration. Several peculiarities contributed to produce his effect,—skilful minuteness of narrative; power to give to fiction the air of truth; the habit of expressing sentiments, the most absurd or atrocious, as sober commonplaces; of relating the most ludicrous and extravagant fancies with an invincible gravity.

As a man, he is the most tragic figure in our literature.

Character.—Haughty and magisterial, with an overwhelming sense of superiority, seeming to consider himself exempt from the necessity of ceremony, and entitled to the homage of all, without distinction of sex, rank, or fame. While a simple journalist, he demanded an apology of the prime minister, received it, and wrote: 'I have taken Mr. Harley into favor again.' Warned the Secretary of State never to appear cold to him, for he wouldn't be treated like a school-boy. Invited to dine with the Earl of Burlington, he said to the mistress of the house: 'Lady Burlington, I hear you can sing; sing me a song.' The lady resented his freedom, and he said she should sing or he would make her. 'Why, madam, I suppose you take me for one of your poor English hedge-parsons; sing when I bid you!' Unable to control her vexation, she burst into tears and retired. Meeting her afterward, he inquired: 'Pray, madam, are you as proud and ill-natured now as when I saw you last?' Writing to the Duchess of Queensbury, he says:

> 'I am glad you know your duty; for it has been a known and established rule about twenty years in England, that the first advances have been constantly made me by all the ladies who aspired to my acquaintance, and the greater their quality, the greater were their advances.'

Tells Stella, with a vengeful joy:

> 'I generally am acquainted with about thirty in the drawing-room, and am so proud that I make all the lords come up to me. One passes half an hour pleasantly enough.'

Possibly he expected this to be received as his peculiar mode

of jocularity. Pope, one of his few friends, has preserved us a specimen of his humor:

"'Tis so odd, that there's no describing it but by facts. I'll tell you one that first comes into my head. One evening Gay and I went to see him; you know how intimately we were all acquainted. On our coming in, "Heyday, gentlemen" (says the Doctor), "what's the meaning of this visit? How came you to leave the great lords that you are so fond of, to come hither to see a poor Dean!" "Because we would rather see you than any of them." "Ay, anyone that did not know you so well as I do might believe you. But since you are come, I must get some supper for you, I suppose." "No, Doctor, we have supped already." "Supped already? that's impossible! why, 'tis not eight o'clock yet. That's very strange; but if you had not supped, I must have got something for you. Let me see, what should I have had? A couple of lobsters; ay, that would have done very well: two shillings—tarts, a shilling: but you will drink a glass of wine with me, though you supped so much before your usual time only to spare my pocket?" "No, we had rather talk with you than drink with you." "But if you had supped with me, as in all reason you ought to have done, you must then have drank with me. A bottle of wine, two shillings—two and two is four, and one is five; just two and sixpence apiece. There, Pope, there's half a crown for you, and there's another for you, sir: for I won't save anything by you, I am determined." This was all said and done with his usual seriousness on such occasions; and in spite of everything we could say to the contrary, he actually obliged us to take the money.'

He was minutely critical and exacting. Once when he dined alone with the Earl of Orrery, he said of a waiter in the room: 'That man has, since we sat to the table, committed fifteen faults.'

He was constitutionally incapable of religion—incapable from a vulgar temperament. Joy is wanting, save the joy of tearing. The idea of the beautiful seldom or never enters.

He delights in images that repel a refined taste. But, though coarse, he is never licentious; his grossness is repulsive, not seductive. He spent his days in discontent, in a rebellion of wounded pride and unsatisfied desire. All suffering seems colorless beside the deep, long agony of his soul.

Influence.—He agitated kingdoms, stirred the laughter and rage of millions, and left to posterity memorials (*Gulliver* and *Tale of a Tub*) that will perish only with the English language. His satire will furnish food for profitable reflection; his romance will continue to amuse, doing the good that mere pleasure can do; but anything beyond? Did he give any impulse to holiness? Did he feel the burden of souls? Do his writings breathe a wish or prayer for personal perfection? In his philosophy of life were two fundamental evils, either of which must, at the outset, prove fatal to the highest order of influence,—a vulgar materialism, and a bitter misanthropy. He never rose above the

mercenary practical—his views were always directed to what was *immediately* beneficial, which is the characteristic of savages; man, to him, was a knave and a fool. Perhaps, therefore, his chief service to us, as his chief legacy to the race, is indirect,—the warning spectacle of his powerful and mournful genius, with its tempest of hopes and hatreds. It is a theme on which the lightest heart might moralize. Over his grave, as in the sigh of the wailing wind, we hear the words: *Knowledge uninspired by universal love, unleavened by religious depth and earnestness, serves only to inflate with an insolent self-sufficiency and to dry up with a sensual pride; knowledge whose paramount or final end is to gratify curiosity, to flatter vanity, to push for precedence, to minister to ambition, is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

POPE.

He was the poet of personality and of polished life.—*Hazlitt.*

Biography.—Born in London, in 1688, the memorable year of the Revolution. His father was a linen-merchant, who, with a moderate fortune, retired in a few years to a small estate in Windsor Forest. He learned very early to read, and by copying from printed books, taught himself to write. Both parents were Papists. For such trivial elements of a schoolboy's learning as he possessed at all, he was therefore indebted to private tuition. At eight, he was instructed by the family priest in the rudiments of Greek and Latin. Was next sent to a Romanist seminary, where he lampooned his teacher, was whipped, and removed by his indignant parents. From the scene of his disgrace, he passed under the tuition of several other masters in rapid succession, but with little profit. Scarcely twelve, he resolved to direct himself, formed a plan of study, and executed it with little other incitement than the desire of excellence. His father, though unable to guide him, proposed subjects, obliged him to correct his performances by frequent revisals, and, when satisfied, would say, 'These are good rhymes.' His early passion was to be a poet; and he used to say that he could not remember the time when he began to make verses.

'Why did I write? What sin to me unknown
Dipp'd me in ink, my parents' or my own?
As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.
I left no calling for this idle trade,
No duty broke, no father disobey'd:
The muse but served to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me through this long disease, my life.'

At this tender age he wrote a tragedy, which he persuaded his schoolmates to act, and an *Ode on Solitude.* From thirteen to fifteen, he composed an epic of four thousand verses. His time was now wholly spent in reading and writing. He studied books of poetry and criticism, English, French, Greek, and Latin authors, with such assiduity that he nearly died. Of all English poets, his favorite was Dryden, whom he held in such veneration that he persuaded some friends to take him to a coffee-house which Dryden frequented, to delight himself with a glimpse of his model and master. Who can bound the possibilities of one that so early feels the power of harmony and the zeal of genius, and who does not regret that the master died before he learned the value of the homage paid him by his admiring pupil?

His life as an author is computed from the age of sixteen. For choice words and exquisite arrangement, his poetry already surpassed Dryden's. At seventeen he was asked to correct the poems of a reputable author of sixty-nine, and corrected them so well that the author was mortified and offended. Wits, courtiers, statesmen, and the brilliant of fashion caressed and honored him. His known devotion to letters and his promise of future excellence had from earliest boyhood won the flattering attentions of the most accomplished men of the world.

In 1715, he persuaded his parents to remove to Chiswick, where two years later his father died suddenly, in the seventy-fifth year of his age. The poet, with his now aged mother, shortly removed to Twickenham, a spot to which his residence afterwards procured such classic celebrity. His grounds (five acres in all) he tastefully embellished with those designs of vine, shrub, and tree, which his verses mention. For convenient admission to a garden across the highway, he cut a subterraneous passage, adorned it with fossil forms, and called it a grotto, into whose silence and retreat care and passion might not enter. 'Vanity produced a grotto where necessity enforced a passage.' Here, in poetic ease,

he continued to live in the smiles of fortune and to bask in the favors of the great. His domestic relations were always the happiest — one placid scene of parental obedience and of gentle filial authority. In spirit and inclination, his parents, we imagine, would have subscribed themselves, 'Yours dutifully.' However petulant and acrimonious his disposition as displayed to others, to them he never intermitted the piety of a respectful tenderness. Aware that his mother lived upon his presence or by his image, he long denied himself all excursions that could not be accomplished within a week; and to the same cause must be ascribed the fact that he never went abroad,—not to Italy, not to Ireland, not even to France. His life was always one of leisure, and, but for his strange mixture of discordant parts, must have been like a dream of pleasure,— a condition more conducive to effeminacy than to strength, more favorable to elegance of thought than to grandeur.

'A tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use.' Pope's increasing pride and irritability, his supercilious contempt of struggling authors, raised around him a swarm of enemies animated by envy or revenge. His later years were agitated by the asperities of personal dispute and the loss of genial companionships. In 1732, he was deprived of Atterbury and Gay, two of his dearest friends. From Addison he had been estranged. Swift, sunk in idiocy, he had virtually lost forever. In 1733 occurred the death of his mother, then ninety-three years old. She had for some time been in her dotage, unable to recognize any face but that of her son. Three days after, writing to a painter, with the view of having her portrait taken before the coffin was closed, he says:

'I thank God her death was as easy as her life was innocent; and as it cost her not a groan nor even a sigh, there is yet upon her countenance such an expression of tranquillity that it would afford the finest image of a saint expired that ever painting drew. Adieu, may you die as happily.'

It is a pleasing reflection that the parents who idolized him, who had fondly watched his spark of genius fanned into flame, lived to see him the idol of the nation. He now complains bitterly that, if he would have friends in the future, he must seek them amongst strangers and another generation. Henceforward he was chiefly engaged in satires,— his satire doubtless rendered

more intense by his sense of desolation,—and was entangled in feuds of various complexions with people of various pretensions. In 1742 he became sensible that his vital powers were rapidly declining. His complaint was a dropsy of the chest, and he knew it to be incurable. With a behavior admirably philosophical, he discontinued original composition, and employed himself in revising and burnishing those former works on which he must rely for his reputation with future ages.

A few days before his death, he was delirious, and afterwards mentioned the fact as a sufficient humiliation of human vanity. In his closing hours he complained of inability to think; saw things as through a curtain, in false colors, and inquired at one time what arm it was that came out from the wall. He dined in company two days before he died; and a few mornings before, during a fit of delirium, he was found very early in his library, writing on the immortality of the soul. Asked whether a priest should not be called, he answered, 'I do not think it essential, but it will be very right and I thank you for putting me in mind of it.' In the morning, after the last sacraments had been given, he said, 'There is nothing that is meritorious but virtue and friendship; and indeed friendship itself is only a part of virtue.' He died on a summer's evening, in the month of flowers, in 1744; so quietly that the attendants could not distinguish the exact moment of his dissolution.

Appearance.—A dwarf, four feet high, hunch-backed, thin, and sickly; so crooked that he was called the 'Interrogation Point'; so weak that he had constantly to wear stays, scarcely able to hold himself erect till they were laced; so sensitive to cold that he had to be wrapped in flannels, furs, and linen, and had his feet encased in three pairs of stockings; so little that he required a high chair at the table; so bald, after the middle of life, that, when he had no company, he dined in a velvet cap. He could neither dress nor undress without help. His vital functions were so much disordered that his life was 'a long disease.' He had a large, fine eye, and a long, handsome nose. His voice, when a child, was so sweet that he was fondly styled 'The little Nightingale.' He was fastidious in his dress, and elegant in his manners. We are willing to believe that his bodily defects were advantageous to him as a writer. 'Whosoever,' says Bacon,

'hath anything fixed in his person that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn.'

Peculiarities.—We are prepared to find him whimsical, fretful, punctilious, and exacting. Persons and occasions were expected to be indulgent of his humor. When he wanted to sleep, he nodded in company; and once dozed while the Prince of Wales was discoursing of poetry. Often invited, he was a troublesome guest. The attentions of the whole family were needed to supply his numerous wants. His errands were so many and frivolous that the footmen were soon disposed to avoid him, and Lord Oxford had to discharge several for their resolute refusal of his messages. The maids were wont to justify a neglect of duty by the plea that they had been attending to the demands of Mr. Pope. He loved highly seasoned dishes, and would eat till his stomach was oppressed. Often, without a word, capriciously, unaccountably, he would quit the house of the Earl of Oxford, and must be courted back. He was sometimes sportive with servants or inferiors, but was himself never known to laugh.

Method.—By his own account, from fourteen to twenty he read for amusement, from twenty to twenty-seven for improvement and instruction: in the first period, desiring only to know; in the second, endeavoring to judge. In his multifarious reading, he was diligently selective; appropriated all poetic ornaments, graceful contrasts, noble images, and stored them away in his memory as his literary wardrobe; combined and classified into a mental dictionary, so as to be ready at his call, the materials which might serve to round his periods or illuminate his ideas. What he heard, he was attentive to retain. If conversation offered anything, he committed it to paper. If a thought or word, happier than usual, occurred to him, he wrote it down. He required his writing-box to be placed upon his bed before he rose. Lord Oxford's domestic is said to have been called from her bed four times, of a winter's night, to supply him with paper lest he should lose a thought.

Having written, he examined and polished long; amplifying, adorning, and refining. When he had completed a manuscript—his first thoughts in his first words—he kept it two years under

his inspection; invited the criticism of his friends, took counsel of his enemies; retouched, line by line, with a diligence that never wearied; sometimes recast till the original could not be recognized in the final revision. The only pieces which he wrote with an appearance of haste, were written, almost every line, twice over. 'I gave him a clean transcript,' says the publisher, 'which he sent some time afterwards to me for the press, with almost every line written twice over a second time.' A work, when once it had passed the press, continued to receive improvements in new editions.

We need not inquire what will be the distinctive character of the product. Method, leisure, independence of fortune, freedom from turmoil, consecration that makes poetry the lodestar of life, — this is the school of training for brilliant and perfect art.

Writings. — *Essay on Criticism* (1711); a judicious selection of precepts from Horace, Shakespeare, and other critics of the poetic art. Composed two years before publication, when Pope was only twenty-one. The first poem that fixed his reputation, and commonly regarded as one of his greatest, though one of his earliest, efforts. In arrangement, novel; in illustration, happy; in principle, just; in expression, terse and vigorous; in thought, for so young a man, marvellous; in harmony, uniform; in rhyme, defective. One of the most remarkable of its particular beauties is the comparison of a student's progress in science with the journey of a traveller in the Alps,— a simile that at once aids the understanding and elevates the fancy.

Rape of the Lock (1712); the finest, most brilliant, mock-heroic poem in the world. Lord Petre cut a lock of hair from the head of a fashionable beauty. A quarrel ensues. To laugh the estranged lovers together again, Pope writes an epic in gauze and silver spangles. Invocations, apostrophes, councils, fatal catastrophes, fearful combats between beaux and belles, spirits of the air — sylphs, gnomes, nymphs, and salamanders, form the poetic mechanism and action. The loftiness of style contrasts with the frivolous nature of the events. The history of a trifle is given with the pomp of heraldry, and the meanest things are set off with stately phrase and profuse ornament. A game at cards is a mimic Waterloo, whose hosts are marshalled by the king and queen of hearts:

'Behold four kings, in majesty revered,
With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
And four fair queens whose hands sustain a flow'r,
Th' expressive emblem of their softer power;
Four knaves in garb succinct, a trusty band;
Caps on their heads, and halberds in their hand;
And parti-colored troops, a shining train,
Drawn forth to combat on the velvet plain.'

We confess to a feeling of impatience at this abuse of talent, this triumph of utter insignificance, and seek for some worthier employment of the artist's skill, as in the exquisite description of the guardian sylphs which flutter around his heroine:

'But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sunbeams trembling on the floating tides·
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And softened sounds along the waters die;
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play, . . .
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:
Soft o'er the shrouds the aërial whispers breathe,
That seemed but zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze or sink in clouds of gold;
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glitt'ring textures of the filmy dew,
Dipped in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where life disports in ever mingling dyes:
While ev'ry beam new transient colors flings,
Colors that change whene'er they wave their wings.'

The new race of supernatural agents,—first given a poetical existence by Pope,—were a happy substitute for the classic deities of ancient writers, and the personified abstractions of the romantic school. Though unsuccessful in its office of mediation, the poem added greatly to the fame of the author, and probably deserved well of the public for its humorous satire of current foppery and folly.

Windsor Forest (1713); a descriptive poem of much variety and elegance, in which the picturesque, however, is made subservient to sketches of life and morals. Composed in his earlier years, when the heart is more keenly receptive of natural influences, it shows a warmer sympathy with the sights of earth and sky than any of his other productions. In diction, neat, often rich; in versification, smooth and harmonious. Fragments of it are admirable. The features are given in phrase so exact, so

copious, that the imagination, as in the flight of the dying pheasant, must see the reality in the painting:

> 'See from the brake the whirring pheasant springs,
> And mounts exulting on triumphant wings;
> Short is his joy; he feels the fiery wound,
> Flutters in blood and panting beats the ground.
> Ah! what avail his glossy varying dyes,
> His purple crest and scarlet-circled eyes;
> The vivid green his shining plumes unfold,
> His painted wings, and breast that flames with gold?'

But Pope is never so much a child in the presence of nature, that he forgets his business; never so riveted by the vision of beauty, that he forgets to count his syllables, to round his periods, to finish his picture; and so the lily of the field becomes, in his hand, a hot-house plant, and the living rose is transformed into a flower of diamonds.

The Dunciad (1728), or *Iliad* of the dunces; written to avenge himself on his literary enemies. Public games are instituted, and the authors of the time contend for the palm of stupidity. Theobald, Pope's successful rival in editing Shakespeare, wins, mounts the throne of Dulness, but is subsequently deposed from his preëminence to make room for Cibber, an actor and dramatic scribbler, whose chief distinction is, that he has been thus embalmed in the lava of Pope's volcanic wrath. This savage satire had the desired effect,— it blasted the characters it touched. Some were in danger of starving, as the booksellers had no longer any confidence in their capacity. On the day the book was first put upon the market, a crowd of writers besieged the shop, endeavoring by entreaties and threats to suppress the sale. Pope was executed in effigy.

The 'Dunces,'— as they were now known,— held weekly clubs to determine plans of retaliation. A surreptitious edition was printed, with an owl in the frontispiece. For distinction, the true one adopted, instead, an ass laden with authors.

The work displays fertility of invention, variety of illustration, force of diction; but is often indelicate, oftener unjust, and without general interest. Insipid and heavy as a whole, it is splendid in parts, as in the closing sketch of the decline and eclipse of learning and taste before the darkening empire of advancing Dulness:

> 'She comes! she comes! the sable throne behold
> Of night primeval, and of Chaos old!

Before her Fancy's gilded clouds decay,
And all its varying rainbows die away.
Wit shoots in vain its momentary fires,
The meteor drops, and in a flash expires.
As one by one, at dread Medea's strain,
The sick'ning stars fade off th' ethereal plain;
As Argus' eyes, by Hermes' wand oppressed,
Closed one by one to everlasting rest;
Thus, at her felt approach and secret might,
Art after art goes out, and all is night.'

Essay on Man (1733), the noblest of his works, the most influential, and the surest guarantee of his immortality. The essay consists of four 'Epistles.' The first considers man in his relation to the universe; the second, his relation to himself; the third, his relation to society; the fourth, his relation to happiness. The design is to reconcile, on principles of human reason, the contradictions of human life; to vindicate the ways of God to man, by representing evil, moral and physical, to be a part of the Divine scheme for the government of the world. But what is more ridiculous than a musician in the chair of wisdom? For once, Pope was not master of his subject, and undertook to teach what he had not learned, and could not comprehend. He aspired to harmonize conflicting systems of thought, and succeeded in making a chaos. Why approve or condemn at every step, if,—

'One truth is clear: *Whatever is, is right*'!

What becomes of moral responsibility, if,—

'Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms,
Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind'?

What becomes of Godward aspirations, if God, withdrawn into the far depths of an eternal silence, never touches the circle of human interests? Go ask the pestilence to excuse your frailties, and the earthquake to forgive your sins! Eat, drink, and be merry, for you are shut up in the prison-house of Fate!

Bolingbroke, whom Pope apostrophized as his genius, guide, and friend, privately ridiculed him, as having adopted and applied principles of which he did not perceive the consequence, and as blindly propagating opinions contrary to his own. The principles of the *Essay* were not immediately examined, and so little was any evil tendency at first discovered, that by many it was read as a manual of piety. We do not look for vipers in a bouquet of flowers. Criticism, however, soon revealed that its provisions, for the most part, terminated fatally to the highest hopes and

interests of mankind, and Pope was under the ban of rejecting Revelation and favoring Atheism. He begins to distrust himself, to doubt the tendency of his teachings, shrinks back from his conclusions appalled, and writes his gratitude to the man who has sought to give to the obnoxious parts an innocent and consistent interpretation:

'You have made my system as clear as I ought to have done, and could not. It is indeed the same system as mine, but illustrated with a ray of your own, as they say our natural body is the same still when it is glorified. I am sure I like it better than I did before, and so will every man else. I know I meant just what you explain, but I did not explain my own meaning so well as you. You understand me as well as I do myself, but you express me better than I could express myself.'

Aware of his weakness, brought face to face with the inscrutable enigma, he turns his back upon the infinite, abandons the problem, and writes *The Universal Prayer*, as a compendious exposition of the meaning which he desired to be attached to the *Essay*,— the forgetful, genuine cry of a soul that once, if never again, feels the sadness of the universe, and sinks in a sense of divine mystery:

'FATHER of all! in every age,
In ev'ry clime ador'd,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou great First Cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confin'd
To know but this, that Thou art God,
And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done
Or warns me not to do,—
This teach me more than hell to shun;
That more than heaven pursue.'

Again it is to be observed, here as elsewhere, that, while the whole is unsatisfactory, the details are admirable,— less admirable, indeed, for the ideas, than for the art of expressing them. That we see but little; that God is wise, though we are fools; that self-interest, well understood, will produce social concord; that mutual benefits are a mutual gain; that our true honor is, not to have a great part, but to act it well; that evil is made subservient to good; that happiness lies in virtue and in submission to the Divine Will; — these, though salutary truths, are common property: but splendor of imagery, inimitable workmanship, give to these commonplaces a potent charm, and secure for them an abiding place in the gallery where beauty garners immortally her own. What gives to the *Essay on Man* the perpetuity of its thought is the marvellous expression. Never was familiar knowledge expressed in words more effective, in style more condensed,

melody more sweet, in contrasts more striking, in embellish-
ents more blazing. Mark the multiplied treasures in the follow-
g,— nearly every line an antithesis and an abstract:

'Know then thyself, presume not God to scan.
The proper study of mankind is man.
Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise, and rudely great;
With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act, or rest,
In doubt to deem himself a God, or beast,
In doubt his mind or body to prefer,
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little or too much;
Chaos of thought and passion, all confused;
Still he himself abus'd or disabus'd;
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd,
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world.'

With what luxuriance and care he amplifies his thought in the
ble but vain attempt to define the Deity without subjecting
m to the limitations of matter:

'All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;
That, chang'd through all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:
To Him no high, no low, no great, no small,
He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all.'

In lines like the following, he speaks with a dignity which
rhaps has never been exceeded among the sons of men:

'Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears Him in the wind;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Yet simple nature to his hope has given,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heaven:
Some safer world, in depth of woods embrac'd,
Some happier island in the watery waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To be, contents his natural desire;
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;

But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.'

Superior excellence of form explains why no English poet—Shakespeare excepted—has supplied to our current literature and conversation a larger number of apt and happy quotations. His maxims, as the following from the *Essay*, have become proverbs:

'An honest man's the noblest work of God.'

'Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, health, peace, and competence.'

'Hope springs eternal in the human breast:
Man never is, but always to be blest,
The soul, uneasy and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.'

'For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate'er is best administered, is best.
For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.
In faith and hope mankind may disagree,
But all the world's concern is charity.'

Style.—Refined, ornate, antithetical, pointed, terse, regular, graceful, musical.

Rank.—In every literary work there are two constituents,—the substance and the form. These two, while they exist in and by each other, may be given different degrees of prominence. If the attention is bent chiefly to thought and feeling, the result is preëminently substantial or creative merit; if to expression, the result is preëminently formal or critical merit. Corresponding to these two attitudes of the mind, there are two classes of poets,—the creative, and the critical; the sublime, and the beautiful; the powerful and free, and the painstaking and constrained;—the natural and the artificial. The first charm more by their massive grandeur of thought, the second by their careful finish of detail; the first please rather the earnest, the second the elegant; the first view nature and man through telescopes, the second through microscopes; the first give us, for our field of vision, a natural landscape, with its diversities of mountain and valley, of forest and meadow,—the second 'a velvet lawn, shaven by the scythe, and levelled by the roller.'

In the age of Pope, the critical spirit was uppermost, and he was its best embodiment. His rank, therefore, is not in the first order of poets, but in the second; and here he is the equal of Dryden.

He proposed at the start to make correctness the basis of his fame. A friend had told him that only one way of excelling was left. 'We had several great poets,' said Walsh, 'but we never had one great poet that was correct; and he advised me to make that my study and aim.' Correct poetry, then, was a business from which he was never diverted. His first study was to make verses — his last, to mend and adorn them. With what nice regard he fabricates his verse! 'The fourth and fifth syllables,' he says, 'and the last but two, are chiefly to be minded; and one must tune each line over in one's head, to try whether they go right or not.' Far and wide he searched, not for passions, but for style; not for great ideas, but for colors. To this career of cold, outside scrutiny he was born. Of the fine frenzy in which we lose thought of words, he was by nature incapable. In him were no sovereign sympathies, no impetuous images, no tormenting convictions, no internal tempests, no sombre madness, which urge forward a Shakespeare, a Milton, a Bunyan, a Byron, and move them to write from an overcharged soul; but the calm reasonings, the self-command, which box up a subject in a regular plan, divide it by rule and compass, and dispose the ideas in files mathematically exact. In religion, he was lukewarm; in politics, indifferent; in everything, studious of his own tranquillity:

'In my politics, I think no further than how to prefer the peace of my life, in any government under which I live; nor in my religion, than to preserve the peace of my conscience in any church with which I communicate. I hope all churches and governments are so far of God, as they are rightly understood and rightly administered: And where they err, or may be wrong, I leave it to God alone to mend or reform them.'

His emotion is always slight, his fancy usually sportive; he shuns the heroic and the tragic; they could take no abiding root in a hothouse regulated by a thermometer. To a heroine floating in her boat on a shoreless sea, he prefers one,—

'Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.'

A ravished lock of hair is a more fitting subject for his poetry than the real loss that makes the heart with sleepless sorrow ache. He sees in the moon, not the pageant of the universe, but the chandelier of the drawing-room. A gewgaw in a lady's head-dress inspires his muse more than the one white flower among the rocks. Occasional gleams there are, as we have seen, from the deeps of feeling and the heights of thought, but they are meteoric. We read, and are instructed — if we read slowly, and are

not dazed by the shower of sparkles or entranced by the wonder-working sounds that roll so nimbly and brilliantly along; but he touches no chord of the heart, lifts us into no region of high aspiration, wraps us in no dream of the infinite. He moved and felt within a retired and narrow circle. The men and women of fashion, their opinions and customs, their oddities and vanities, his own loves and hatreds, were his favorite themes, which he treats without the enthusiasm or depth of greatness. It is said that he never tried to be pathetic but twice. He has somewhere given a receipt for making an epic. It would be a phenomenal cook whose pudding should give us a deep insight into the workings of the heart, or inspire us with cravings after the ideal! He was a sceptic in poetry, as Hume in religion. The age required it. He wrote for a finical society, which preferred raillery, compliments, and epigrams, to the beautiful, the grand, and the impassioned. In all things he displayed the same critical taste and exactness,—in his letters, in his dress, in his surroundings. As a landscape gardener, he was famous. From him the Prince of Wales took the design of his garden. From him, Kent, the improver and embellisher of pleasure grounds, received his best lessons.

Without the universality of Shakespeare or the sublimity of Milton, he is, among the poets of artificial life and manners, the most brilliant and accomplished.

Character.—A collection of contradictions. Professing contempt of the world, he lived upon its pleasure. Pretending to neglect fame, he courted it. Affecting to ignore the critics, he writhed under their attacks. Scorning the great, he loved to enumerate the men of high rank with whom he was acquainted. Tells his friends that 'he has a heart for all, a house for all, and, whatever they may think, a fortune for all,' yet entertained scantily; as when he would set a single pint upon the table, and, having himself drunk two small glasses, would retire, and say, 'Gentlemen, I leave you to your wine.' Avowing benevolence, he was guilty of meanness which it is impossible to defend. Secretly or openly, he pursued, with an implacable vengeance, all who questioned or slighted his poetical supremacy; and still he could write:

'Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the faults I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.'[1]

Dennis, who had been wantonly assailed, speaks of him as a 'little affected hypocrite, who had nothing in his mouth at the same time but truth, candour, friendship, good-nature, humanity, and magnanimity.' In social intercourse he delighted in artifice, and was always an actor. If he wanted a favor, he contrived to obtain it indirectly, by unsuspected hints at its general convenience. It is said that he hardly drank tea without a stratagem, and used to play the politician about cabbages and turnips. He resembles a coquette, who,—

'In hopes of contradiction oft will say,
"Methinks I look most horrible to-day."'

He has left us an account of a rehearsal before Lord Halifax, which, if it be not duplicity, lies on the border-land, and is characteristic:

'The famous Lord Halifax was rather a pretender to taste than really possessed of it. When I had finished the two or three first books of my translation of the "*Iliad*," that Lord desired to have the pleasure of hearing them read at his house. Addison, Congreve, and Garth, were there at the reading. In four or five places, Lord Halifax stopped me very civilly, and with a speech each time of much the same kind, "I beg your pardon, Mr. Pope; but there is something in that passage that does not quite please me. Be so good as to mark the place, and consider it a little at your leisure. I am sure you can give it a little turn." I returned from Lord Halifax' with Dr. Garth, in his chariot; and as we were going along, was saying to the Doctor, that my lord had laid me under a great deal of difficulty by such loose and general observations; that I had been thinking over the passages almost ever since, and could not guess at what it was that offended his lordship in either of them. Garth laughed heartily at my embarrassment: said, I had not been long enough acquainted with Lord Halifax to know his way yet; that I need not puzzle myself about looking those places over and over when I got home. "All you need do (says he) is to leave them just as they are; call on Lord Halifax two or three months hence, thank him for his kind observations on those passages, and then read them to him as altered. I have known him much longer than you have, and will be answerable for the event." I followed his advice; waited on Lord Halifax some time after; said I hoped he would find his objections to those passages removed; read them to him exactly as they were at first; and his lordship was extremely pleased with them, and cried out, "Ay, now they are perfectly right; nothing can do better."'

In religion, as we have seen, he was a man of easy, somewhat elastic, piety. A worldly poet must be such. Like Swift, but with less excuse, he found pleasure in filthy images. His verse is often the receptacle of dirt. Some of his passages Swift alone might have seemed capable of writing.

With all his literary vanity, he is said never to have flattered,

[1] *Universal Prayer.*

in print, those whom he did not love, nor to have praised those whom he did not esteem. Certainly, his independence secured him from the servile drudgery of offering praise and congratulations for sale. He was a fond and faithful friend to the chosen few. 'I never in my life,' said Bolingbroke, 'knew a man that had so tender a heart for his particular friends, or a more general friendship for mankind.' It may be remembered, against many faults, that, while resentful and irritable to others, he was uniformly gentle and reverential to his venerable parents:

> 'Me let the tender office long engage,
> To rock the cradle of reposing age;
> With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
> Make languor smile and soothe the bed of death;
> Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,
> And keep at least one parent from the sky.'

His generous sentiments would seem to have been the colors of his better and present moments. He had the feeling and the admiration of moral excellence, and has described it admirably; but the wingless brute was stronger than the winged seraph, and was constantly dragging him down.

Influence.—To Pope the English language will always be indebted. He, more than any other before or since, discovered its power of melody, enriched it with poetical elegances, with happy combinations of words, and developed its capacities for terse and brilliant expression. In the *form* of his verse,—the rhymed decasyllabic line, which he made for a time supreme,—his influence is no longer felt; but in the taste he created for correct diction and polished versification, his influence will never cease.

By his satires, he was a public benefactor. The poet may influence the mind by virtue directly, by warnings and exhortations; or indirectly, by scourging vice and exposing folly. The latter is the method of the satirist, who is the Judge Lynch of civilized society. The case-hardened, with whom serious admonition is vain, he exposes to the public gaze for the public sport, not to effect any improvement in *them*, but, by showing their example to be intrinsically contemptible, to prevent the communication of their disease to others. Thus Pope was serviceable to his generation by satirizing its false taste, false virtue, false happiness, false life; and, in the character of satirist, may claim a moral purpose:

'Hear this and tremble, *you who escape the laws;*
Yes, while I live, no rich or noble knave
Shall walk the world in credit to his grave.'[1]

We must acknowledge his service to us in reflecting, with curious completeness, the thoughts of his day. He resembles a plastic material, which has taken, with singular sharpness and fidelity, the main peculiarities of the time. A semi-Deist, without well knowing what Deism meant, he exhibits in the *Essay on Man* the religious creed of the age,—a creed which, by refining the Deity into an abstraction, leaves religion soulless,—a bare skeleton of logic. In his translation of *Homer's Iliad*, he exemplifies in its utmost excellence the theory of artificial poetry. His various satires are significant of the social structure.

In spiritual interests, his influence will ever be one of mixed good and evil. The reason is simple,—he had not spiritual healthfulness. No man can inspire and sustain his fellow-beings with high and happy emotions, who has not religious realization, and a just sense of the dignity of human nature. Here is his characteristic view of human life:

'Behold the child, by nature's kindly law,
Pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw:
Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,
A little louder, but as empty quite;
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper age,
And beads and prayer-books are the toys of age;
Pleased with this bauble still, as that before,
Till tired he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.'

The 'rattle,' the 'straw,' the 'beads,' and the 'prayer-books' are equally baubles, and end alike in weariness and death. This is deliberate and final,—the sum of 'life's poor play'! The greatest men have indeed had a sense of the pettiness of our lives; no great soul could ever be without it; but mark the difference: life is a brief dream, vanishing into the vast abyss of ever-present mystery,—be humble; it is a shifting scene, but Heaven is behind the veil of phenomena,—be of good cheer amid your frailties; you are gifted with an immortal spirit, but you stand in the shadow of the great darkness,—be lowly wise. We would have it considered well, that he who would give enduring and efficient utterance to those echoing sentiments which search the heart, and in virtue of which poetry fulfils its

[1] Pope's *Imitations of Horace.*

truest mission of soothing and elevating the soul; he who would gain the orbit of the high, the holy, and the real, see them in their eternal beauty, feel them in their universal interest, and exert the measure of their power on the minds of his readers,— must have first a profound reverence for the divine, and a profound sympathy for the human,— its hopes and its sorrows, its infirmities and its aspirations.

What we would commend to the student's careful remembrance, as of practical moment, is Pope's admirable unity of method. He searched the pages of Dryden for the best fabric of verse, and, having found it, used it habitually. He read, first to know, then to judge,— always with reference to a fixed object. As he read, he possessed himself of the beauties of speech, gleaned what he thought to be brilliant or useful, and preserved it all in a regular collection. His intelligence was perpetually on the wing. Not content with well-done, he endeavored to do better. In his highest flights, he wished to go higher. Having written, he revised often, retouched every part with an unsparing hand and an attentive eye. Here is a specimen indicative of his continual corrections and critical erasures:

'The wrath of Peleus' son, the direful spring
Of all the Grecian woes, O Goddess, sing;
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain.'[1]

'The stern Pelides' *rage*, O Goddess, sing,
wrath
Of all the woes of *Greece* the fatal spring,
Grecian
That strewed with *warriors* dead the Phrygian plain,
heroes
And *peopled the dark hell with heroes* slain.'[2]
fill'd the shady hell with chiefs untimely

Milton, Addison, Tasso, Balzac, Pascal, felt similar anxieties. The first was solicitous after correct punctuation, the second after the minutiæ of the press. The manuscripts of the third, still preserved, are illegible from the vast number of corrections. Balzac, dissatisfied with his first thoughts, would expend a week on a single page, and Pascal frequently occupied twenty days on one

[1] *Iliad*,—as printed.
[2] Corresponding lines of the original manuscript, the words in italics being erased, and those under them adopted instead. Between this copy and the printed page, was, of course, an intermediate manuscript.

of his *Provincial Letters.* They realized that posterity will respect only those who—

> 'File off the mortal part
> Of glowing thought with Attic art.'

'A little thing gives perfection,' said an ancient philosopher, 'but perfection is not a little thing.'

CRITICAL PERIOD: SECOND PHASE.

CHAPTER III.

FEATURES.

What do we look for in studying the history of a past age? Is it to learn the political transactions and characters of the leading public men? Is it to make ourselves acquainted with the life and being of the time? . . . I take up a volume of Dr. Smollet, or a volume of the 'Spectator,' and say the fiction carries a greater amount of truth in solution, than the volume which purports to be all true. Out of the fictitious book I get the expression of the life of the time; of the manners; of the movement, the dress, the pleasures, the ridicules of society; the old times live again, and I travel in the old country of England. Can the heaviest historian do more for me?—*Thackeray.*

Politics.—A period of Whig supremacy. Pressed by the people and abandoned by the crown, the Tories were unable to take any share in the government. Strong in numbers and in property, they had scarcely a single man of distinguished talents in business or debate. The preponderance of intellect was Whig.

Internally—with the exception of one or two ineffectual attempts to disturb the tranquillity—a time of political torpor. Faction had sunk into repose.

Two ministers give lustre to the administrative policy, Robert Walpole and William Pitt. The first loved peace, and made his country prosperous; the second loved war, and made her glorious.

Society.—For literary merit, a dark night between two sunny days. The age of princely patronage had passed; that of general intelligence had not arrived. A poet was a wild ass wedded to his desolate freedom; a ragged, squalid fellow who lodged in a garret up four flights of stairs, dined in a cellar on musty pudding among footmen out of place, wore dirty linen and a greasy coat, stood at restaurant windows snuffing the scent of what he could not afford to taste; slept, like Savage, amid the ashes of a glass-house in December, died in a hospital, and was buried, not in Westminster Abbey, but in a parish vault. Such was the fate of many a writer who, had he lived thirty years earlier, might have sat in Parliament; and, had he written in our day, would

have lived in comfort by the mere sale of his writings. A few eminent authors were more fortunate. Pope, raised above want by his legacy, and the patronage which, in his youth, both parties extended to his *Iliad*, lived calm and admired in his villa. Upon Young, Walpole had bestowed his only pension as the reward of literary excellence. Thomson, by attaching himself to the opposition, had obtained, after much severe suffering, the means of subsistence. Richardson depended less upon his novels than upon his shop. Johnson and Fielding, two of the ablest men of the period, were hunted by bailiffs, and arrested for debt.

The change in the position of writers was injurious to society, as well as to literature. The government, by helping only those who would employ their talent in the lowest forms of political libel, gave society a frivolous and material tone which it has never wholly lost.

Moral revolutions are slow. As in the preceding period, we see corruption in high places, and brutality in low. In the House of Commons, members were notoriously at the command of the highest bidder, formed combinations, and extorted large wages by threatening to strike. Here is a man of the world doing business: 'He (Walpole) wanted to carry a question . . . to which he knew there would be great opposition. . . . As he was passing through the Court of Requests, he met a member of the contrary party, whose avarice, he imagined, would not reject a large bribe. He took him aside, and said, "Such a question comes on this day; give me your vote, and here is a bank-bill of two thousand pounds," which he put into his hands. The member made him this answer: "Sir Robert, you have lately served some of my particular friends; and when my wife was last at court, the king was very gracious to her, which must have happened at your instance. I should therefore think myself very ungrateful (putting the bank-bill into his pocket) if I were to refuse the favor you are now pleased to ask me."'

Private manners were not more estimable than public. 'Money,' wrote Montesquieu, 'is here esteemed above everything, honor and virtue not much.' The coarseness of fashionable life, prevailing in the first years of the century, was but little mitigated. The novels of Richardson, attaining at once an extraordinary popularity, did something to refine the tone of

society, but there was no very perceptible improvement till the reign of George III. The professor of whist and quadrille was a regular attendant at the levees of fashionable ladies. Wrote Chesterfield to his son: 'It seems ridiculous to tell you, but it is most certainly true, that your dancing-master is at this time the man in all Europe of the greatest importance to you.' Among the entertainments in London, in 1730, we find 'a mad bull to be dressed up with fire-works and turned loose in the game place, a dog to be dressed up with fire-works over him, a bear to be let loose at the same time, and a cat to be tied to the bull's tail, a mad bull dressed up with fire-works to be baited.' Such amusements were mingled with prize-fighting, and boxing-matches between women.

Gin had been discovered in 1684; in 1742, England consumed annually seven millions of gallons. Nine years later it was declared to be 'the principal sustenance (if it may so be called) of more than one hundred thousand people in the metropolis,' and that, 'should the drinking of this poison be continued at its present height during the next twenty years, there will, by that time, be very few of the common people left to drink it.'[1] A tax was imposed to stop the madness, but the minister, finding himself threatened with a riot, repealed it, declaring that 'in the present inflamed temper of the people, the Act could not be carried into execution without an armed force.'

The general level of humanity was little, if any, higher than that of the preceding generation. Executions, if not a public amusement, were at least a favorite public spectacle. In 1745, a ghastly row of rebel heads lined the top of Temple Bar. When Blackstone wrote, one hundred and sixty offences were punishable with death, and not infrequently ten or twelve culprits were hung on a single occasion. In every important quarter of the city were gallows, and on many of them corpses were left rotting in chains. Often the criminals were led to their doom intoxicated, and some of the most distinguished were first exhibited by the turnkeys at a shilling a head. Women convicted of murdering their husbands were publicly burned. Both men and women were still whipped at the tail of a cart through the streets.

[1] Fielding: *On the Late Increase of Robbers.*

The impunity with which outrages were yet committed in London, it is difficult now to realize. Thieves organized with officers, a treasury, a commander-in-chief, and multiplied, though every six weeks they were carried to the gallows by the cart-load. 'One is forced to travel,' it was said in 1751, 'even at noon, as if one were going to battle.' Perhaps no portion of English history has contributed so much to the romance of crime.

Religion.—Among the educated classes the main thing was to imitate the French,—their grace and dexterity, their sustained elegance, their glitter, their fine drawing-room polish. English literature has no sadder sentence than that in which Butler, in 1736, declares: 'It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.' In 1751, he speaks of the general decay of religion 'in this nation, which is now observed by every one, and has been for some time the complaint of all serious persons'; and adds that 'the deplorable distinction of our age is an avowed scorn of religion in some, and a growing disregard of it in the generality.' Warburton mourned that he had 'lived to see the fatal crisis when religion had lost its hold on the minds of the people.' Religion, like literature, was cold and unspiritual. Preachers were more eager to denounce an absent adversary than to save the souls of those who heard them. Not enthusiasm and extravagance, but sobriety and good sense were the qualities most valued in the pulpit. 'Discourses,' said Voltaire, 'aiming at the pathetic and accompanied with violent gestures, would excite laughter in an English congregation. . . . A sermon in France is a long declamation, scrupulously divided into three parts, and delivered with enthusiasm. In England, a sermon is a solid but sometimes dry dissertation, which a man reads to the people without gesture and without any particular exaltation of the voice.' We remember that Tillotson, the most authoritative of divines in his time, talked

like a demonstrator of anatomy. Mark the style of his first sermon,—*The Wisdom of being Religious:*

'These words consist of two propositions, which are not distinct in sense; . . . So that they differ only as cause and effect, which by a metonymy, used in all sorts of authors, are frequently put one for another. . . . Having thus explained the words, I come now to consider the proposition contained in them, which is this: That religion is the best knowledge and wisdom. This I shall endeavor to make good these three ways:

1st. By a direct proof of it.

2d. By showing on the contrary the folly and ignorance of irreligion and wickedness.

3d. By vindicating religion from those common imputations which seem to charge it with ignorance or imprudence. I begin with the direct proof of this.'

Expositions, apologies, moral essays, while they supply rational motives to virtue, rarely kindle a living piety, and are utterly unable to reclaim the depraved. The heart is not touched by the dust that settles on the countenance. But between the dregs at the bottom and the foam at the top quietly coursed the genuine sap of the national life. Under the smoke, burning in silence, glowed the simple faith that never dies, soon to give evidence of its powerful vitality. The revival began with a small knot of Oxford students, whose master spirit was **John Wesley.** Their methodical regularity of life gained them the nick-name of *Methodists.* Breaking away from the settled habits of the clerical profession, they avoided all polemical and abstract reasoning, and preached, as they were moved by the spirit, the lost condition of every man born into the world; the eternal tortures which are the doom of the unconverted; justification by faith; free salvation by Christ; the necessity of personal regeneration; the imminence of death — doctrines which were now seldom heard from a Church of England pulpit. These they regarded as the cardinal tenets of the Christian religion, and taught them with a vehemence and fire that started the smouldering piety of the nation into flame. Their unstudied eloquence and their complete disregard of conventionalities contrasted with the polished and fastidious sermons that were the prevailing fashion of the time. Wesley, relying upon the Divine guidance, frequently opened the Bible at random for a text. He believed in the devil, saw God in the commonest events, heard supernatural noises. His father had been thrice pushed by a ghost. He declared that 'a string of opinions is no more Christian faith than a string of beads is Christian holiness.' Such convictions are able to turn emotion into madness, and render the madness contagious. At

his death, he had eighty thousand disciples; now he has a million. The oratory of **Whitefield,** another of the Oxford society, was so impassioned that at times he was overcome by his tears, while half his audience were convulsed with sobs. His first sermon, as a bishop complained, 'drove fifteen people mad.' He instituted itinerant preaching, became a roving evangelist, sought the haunts of ignorance and vice, to deal out to their half-savage populations the 'bread of life.' His rude auditors, numbering five, ten, fifteen, or even twenty thousand, were electrified. A few incidents will exemplify his peculiarities, and at the same time illustrate the characteristics of this reaction against the colorless, marble polish of the age. On one occasion, seeing the actor Shuter, who was then attracting much attention in the part of Ramble in the *Rambler*, seated in a front pew of the gallery, he turned suddenly towards him, and exclaimed: 'And thou, too, poor Ramble, who hast rambled so far from Him, oh! cease thy ramblings and come to Jesus.' 'God always makes use of strong passions,' he was accustomed to say, 'for a great work,' and it was his object to rouse such passions to the highest point. Sometimes he would reproduce the condemnation scene as he had witnessed it in a court of justice. With tearful eyes and a trembling voice, he would begin, after a momentary pause: 'I am now going to put on the condemning cap. Sinner, I must do it. I must pronounce sentence upon you.' Then, with a dramatic change of tone, he thundered over his awe-struck hearers the solemn words: 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!' On another occasion, to illustrate the peril of sinners, he described an old blind man deserted by his dog, tottering feebly over the desolate moor, vainly endeavoring to feel his way with the staff, drawing nearer and nearer to the verge of an awful precipice; and drew the picture so vividly that the urbane Chesterfield lost all self-possession, and was heard to exclaim, 'Good God! he is gone.' Preaching before seamen at New York, he adopted the familiar symbols of their occupation: 'Well, my boys, we have a clear sky, and are making fine headway over a smooth sea before a light breeze, and we shall soon lose sight of land. But what means this sudden lowering of the heavens, and that dark cloud arising from beneath the western horizon? Hark! don't you hear distant thunder? Don't you see those flashes of lightning?

There is a storm gathering. Every man to his duty! How the waves arise and dash against the ship! The air is dark! the tempest rages! Our masts are gone! The ship is on her beam-ends! What next?' 'The long boat! take to the long boat!' shouted the excited crowd. His favorite maxim was, that 'a preacher, when he entered the pulpit, should look upon it as the last time he might preach, and the last time his people might hear.'

In this burning fervor of realization, began the revival of popular religion,—a revolt against the frigid and formal teaching, the easy-going indifference of the dominant church; and this reactionary movement, communicating its impulse to contemporary thought, is premonitory of the general return to rapture and imagination, the grand and the tragic.

Poetry.—To arrange words in decasyllabic couplets so that the accents may fall correctly, that the rhymes may strike the ear strongly, that the lines may flow in unbroken cadence, is an art as mechanical as that of mending a shoe, and may be learned by any dunce who will never blunder on one happy thought or expression. Dryden suggested the art; Pope mastered it, and his brilliant success produced a host of dull imitators. His well chosen sounds and symmetrical rhythms were adopted as fashion and fine manners, wherein the point of excellence was not to alter the pattern, but to vary its details of color. Without his powers, they affected his livery, till it became trite, then offensive. In their devotion to form, they forgot the spirit that warms it. Sense was—

> 'Sacrificed to sound,
> And truth cut short to make the period round.'

Poetry, impoverished, soulless, and hollow, was waiting for a new development.

A few assert their freedom, strike the key-note of a higher strain, and seem to give signs that the human mind is turning on its hinges,—that externals are not the true concern of the poet, that a pink doll is not a woman, that gallantry is not love, that amusement is not happiness, that—

> 'Kind hearts are more than coronets,
> And simple faith than Norman blood.'

Four poems mark the change,—Thomson's *Seasons*, Young's

Night Thoughts, Akenside's *Pleasures of the Imagination*, and Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.* Their main current runs in the direction of sentimental reflection.

Thomson was contemplative, affectionate, sympathetic, and artless. He loved nature with those fresh feelings and glad impulses which all would wish to cherish, and he painted his love, in its smallest details, without being ashamed. His lines on the robin in *Winter* are in his best vein:

> 'The fowls of heaven,
> Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
> The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
> Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
> The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,
> Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
> In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
> His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
> His annual visit. Half afraid, he first
> Against the window beats; then, brisk, alights
> On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
> Eyes all the smiling family askance,
> And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is;
> Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
> Attract his slender feet.'

A passage at the end of *Spring* contains a well-known line, and is characteristic:

> 'Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
> *To teach the young idea how to shoot,*
> To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
> To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
> The generous purpose in the glowing breast.'

In his mode of thinking and of expressing his thought, he was original.

Young was a clergyman and a courtier, who had aspired in vain to a seat in Parliament, then to a bishopric in the Church; married, lost his wife and children, but made use of his disappointments and sufferings to write meditations on *Life*, *Death*, *Immortality*, *Time*, *Friendship*, and similar themes. He was a lover of gloom, of the imagery of the grave, of the awful mysteries of life. When he was writing a tragedy, Grafton sent him a human skull, with a candle in it, as a lamp; and he used it. His poem is a wilderness of reflection, through which his fertile fancy scatters flowers of every hue and odor. Its strength is in the vast number of noble and sublime passages, maxims of the highest practical value, everlasting truths,—

'The glorious fragments of a fire immortal,
With rubbish mixed, and glittering in the dust.'

The following may suggest its general complexion:

'Too low they build, who build beneath the stars.'

'Procrastination is the thief of time.'

'In human hearts what bolder thought can rise
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?'

'Shall man be proud to wear his livery,
And souls in ermine scorn a soul without?
Can place or lessen us, or aggrandize?
Pygmies are pygmies still, though perched on Alps,
And pyramids are pyramids in vales.'

'Look nature through, 'tis revolution all!
All change, no death; day follows night, and night
The dying day; stars rise and set, and set and rise;
Earth takes the example. See, the Summer gay,
With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,
Droops into pallid autumn: Winter gray,
Horrid with frost and turbulent with storm,
Blows Autumn and his golden fruits away,
Then melts into the Spring: soft Spring, with breath
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,
Recalls the first. All, to reflourish, fades;
As in a wheel, all sinks to reascend;
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.'

Akenside, earnest and severe, believed he had a message to deliver to mankind, and wrote in blank verse a philosophical poem on the pleasures of the purified intellect, as it contemplates flourishing groves, murmuring streams, calm seas under moonlight, autumn mists slumbering on the gray sky, noble architecture, music, sculpture, painting. We look, if not for a vision, for something that suggests an element of progress,—at least, a disposition to cease chiselling, and to quarry the living rock:

'Say, why was man so eminently raised
Amid the vast creation; why ordained
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
But that the Omnipotent might send him forth
In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
As on a boundless theatre, to run
The great career of justice; to exalt
His generous aim to all diviner deeds? . . .
Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
Through mountains, plains, through empires black with shade,
And continents of sand, will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet? . . .

For from the birth
Of mortal man, the sovereign Maker said,
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of Renown,
Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find enjoyment; but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all the ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene.'

Gray, a man of vast and varied acquirements, felt, with a melancholy sweetness, the mystery of the world in its relation to universal humanity, and gave voice to his musings in verse whose audience-chamber is capacious as the soul of man; for it reflects, as in peaceful stream, images in which every mind has an interest, and expresses sentiments which find in every bosom an echo. On the eve of a decisive battle, silently gliding along the St. Lawrence, in view of the hostile heights pencilled upon the midnight sky, Wolf repeated the *Elegy*, in low tones, to the other officers in his boat. 'Now, gentlemen,' said he, at the close of the recitation, 'I would rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec!' One stanza, one noble line, must have been fraught with a mournful meaning:

'The boast of Heraldry, the pomp of Power,
And all that Beauty, all that Wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.'

All four, however, while they denote a transition era, show the influence of the artificial school. The intellect triumphs over the emotions; their emotion is formal, their tears are academical. Thomson's muse is often dainty, formal, cold. He saw correctly what was before him, the outward show of things, but had no glimpse of —

'The light that never *was* on sea or land,
The inspiration, and the poet's dream.'

Young lashes himself into a never-ending series of antitheses, strikes attitudes, and assumes theatricals. Akenside is stiffly classical in manner, and gives us too much foliage for the fruit. He helps on his age chiefly by his subject. Gray cannot shake off the classical drapery. He is fastidious, scrupulously delicate and exact, rather than fiery, tender, or inventive.

Before any aspect of nature or fact of life is capable of poetic treatment, it must have passed inward,— out of the mere region

of intellect into the warmer atmosphere of imaginative feeling,— there have flushed into glowing color, and kindled the soul to 'a white heat.'

Drama.— Of slight literary importance. In 1732, **Gay** brought society upon the stage, held up the mirror of nature, in which men and women could see themselves as others saw them,— see vice made vulgar,— see their most striking peculiarities and defects pass in gay review before them, then learn either to avoid or to conceal them. The *Beggar's Opera* was acted in London without interruption for sixty-three days. The characters are highwaymen, who wear,— such was the similitude between high and low,— the manners and morality of fine gentlemen. Hear people of quality converse:

> '"If any of the ladies chuse gin, I hope they will be so free as to call for it." "Indeed, sir, I never drink strong waters but when I have the colic." "Just the excuse of the fine ladies! Why, a lady of quality is never without the colic."'

Tragedy was marked rather by cold correctness and turgid declamation than by the freedom and warmth which lead captive the feelings and the imagination. As a reflection of the movement in literature, Shakespeare, who had been banished from the stage, began slowly to reappear. In 1741, the *Merchant of Venice* was produced in its original form, after an eclipse of one hundred years. In October of this year, **Garrick** appeared, for the first time on the London stage, in *Richard III.* It is worthy of notice that this great actor produced a revolution in the art of acting. He displaced the habit of slow, monotonous declamation, of unnatural pomp, by a more various and rapid intonation, and a more careful regard for the truth of nature and history. 'If,' said Quin, 'the young fellow is right, I and the rest of the players have been all wrong'; and he added, 'Garrick is a new religion,— Whitefield was followed for a time,— but they will all come to church again.' Garrick replied in a happy epigram, 'that it was not heresy but reformation.'

Periodical.—The daily miscellany, which Addison's singular humor had made so popular, passed into inferior hands, and fell into disrepute. Johnson, in 1750, and again in 1760, vainly attempted to revive it.

The period is remarkable as the era of the commencement of

magazines and reviews. In 1731, appeared the *Gentleman's Magazine;* and in 1749, the *Monthly Review*, devoted to criticism. These periodicals are evidence of the large increase of readers, and they show, by their contents, that authors had begun to 'intermeddle with all knowledge,'—criticism, politics, philosophy, poetry, fiction.

The press was now, for the first time in the history of the world, the exponent of public opinion. Said a member of Parliament in 1738:

> 'The people of Great Britain are governed by a power that never was heard of as a supreme authority in any age or country before. . . . It is the government of the press. The stuff which our weekly newspapers are filled with, is received with greater reverence than Acts of Parliament, and the sentiments of one of these scribblers have more weight with the multitude than the opinion of the best politician in the kingdom.'

Said Johnson in 1758:

> 'No species of literary men has lately been so much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago the nation was content with one Gazette, but now we have not only in the metropolis, papers of every morning and every evening, but almost every large town has its weekly historian.'

Novel.—Prose fiction, we first observe, is not a wandering maze of fancy, but a tale with more or less loftiness of style, fulness of detail, and unity of action. If the interest turns on supernatural, improbable, or marvellous incidents, the story is called a *romance;* if on pictures of life, showing the web and texture of society as it really exists, or has existed, it is called a *novel.* If the novel recreates the events and characters of history, putting us into living contact with a given phase of national life, it is *historical;* if it paints human nature and facts, with a moral effect or design, it is *ethical.* The ethical novel may convey its lesson in two principal ways,—it may inflict morality, or insinuate it; it may wall up the heart with discipline, subjecting its impulses uniformly to a severe ideal, or, less exacting, may adopt expansive and liberal measures, allowing a generous supply of air and sunshine. The first was the method of **Richardson,** the second, of **Fielding.** The one represents noble dreams, enthusiastic elevation; the other, noisy hilarity and frank benevolence. The heroine of the one is studious, loving, and pious; of the other, modest, loving, and—an excellent cook. Each is the complement of the other, and both are artists. In a literary, artistic view, the novels of Richardson and Fielding are the freshest feature of the period, and the most interesting. Few works yield richer profit

uniformity of noon, so the poetical legend and the simple chronicle, with their mingled truth and fiction, advance to the dignity of genuine history, whose aim is to paint the past as it really was; to reconstruct the external picture of objects and the internal picture of soul; to reveal the living man, in his voice, gesture, and dress, eating, feeling, suffering, fighting, toiling; to verify tradition, to rectify dates and texts, to reproduce the unity and drift of events by the motion and chain of ideas. This is history proper, as distinguished from mere annals on the one hand and philosophical history on the other — a linking together of causes and effects. It had its beginning nobly signalized by Raleigh's *History of the World* (1641). Though full of that uncritical sort of learning which now provokes only an incredulous smile, the eloquent strain of reflection to which it sometimes rises, is prophetic of the coming master:

'"I have considered," saith Solomon, "all the works that are under the sun, and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit"; but who believes it till Death tells it us? . . . O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and, whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet!*'

But the first work to acquire literary preëminence in this department was **Hume's** *History of England.* In the charm of its narrative, in its endeavor to construct an organic whole, it is an enduring monument. Increased attention to history, under improved methods, is a most important characteristic of the period.

Theology. — Theological composition was the continuous, central current of prose literature. The Baconian method, an appeal to observation and experience, had unsettled received opinions in matters of physical science. Locke, applying this method to the science of mind, had led men with increasing zeal to examine the principles of ethics and of religion, and to exalt reason against authority — the reason of later inquirers against that of earlier. Like the preceding, it was a rationalizing age. In the two previous centuries, the anti-Christian attacks had been met on grounds more or less arbitrary. The obligation of religious belief had been based, to a large extent, upon the dictum of the Church; but, it was replied, if that principle were admitted, it would be impossible to justify the separation from Rome. The

monotonous dryness gather up and take note of the great visible events:

'A.D. 788. This year there was a synod assembled at Fingal in Northumberland, on the fourth day before the nones of September; and Abbot Albert departed this life.

A.D. 788. Here Elwald, King of the Northumbrians, was slain by Siga, on the 11th day before the calends of October; and a heavenly light was often seen there, where he was slain. He was buried in the church of Hexam; and Osred, the son of Alred, who was his nephew, succeeded to him in the government. This year there was synod assembled at Acley.

A.D. 790. Here Archbishop Eanbert died, and Abbot Ethelherd was chosen archbishop the same year, and Osred, King of the Northumbrians, was betrayed, and banished from his kingdom, and Ethelred, the son of Ethelwald, succeeded him.'

We have heard the dull babbling of Robert Mannyng, as he turns the fabulous history of England into prosaic rhymes.[1]

These are the infant attempts at regular narrative — mere pegs without tapestry to cover them. The narrator, however, in telling his story of the present or past, has thus far no choice of materials. Like the society for which he has written, he has a natural appetite for the marvellous, sharpened by the mystery which hangs over what is distant. Nothing is too absurd for his or the general belief. The legends of the bard and the superstitions of the monastic — omens, prodigies, apparitions, monstrous appearances in the heavens — are recounted with grave minuteness of detail, and copied from book to book as if they were the choicest treasures of human wisdom. Thus in 1483, the pedigree of the London bishops was traced back to the migration of Brutus from Troy, even to Noah and Adam. The *History of the Britons*, composed in 1147, and professing to take a comprehensive view of the subject, relates how Brutus, having slain the giants who peopled England, built London; how, during a succeeding government, it rained blood three consecutive days; how the coasts were infested by a horrid sea-monster, which, having devoured multitudes, swallowed the reigning king; how a giant, more terrible than the others, clothed himself in furs made entirely from the beards of kings he had killed, but fell himself a victim to the prowess of Arthur. The reputation of this work procured for its author a bishopric, and for several centuries but two or three critics ventured to question its accuracy.

As the bounding boyhood of fancy merges into the sober manhood of reason, as the roseate hues of morning fade into the calm

[1] See Vol. I, p. 181.

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'"I have considered," saith Solomon, "all the works that are under the sun, and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit"; but who believes it till Death tells it us? . . . O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and, whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet!*'

But the first work to acquire literary preëminence in this department was **Hume's** *History of England.* In the charm of its narrative, in its endeavor to construct an organic whole, it is an enduring monument. Increased attention to history, under improved methods, is a most important characteristic of the period.

Theology. — Theological composition was the continuous, central current of prose literature. The Baconian method, an appeal to observation and experience, had unsettled received opinions in matters of physical science. Locke, applying this method to the science of mind, had led men with increasing zeal to examine the principles of ethics and of religion, and to exalt reason against authority — the reason of later inquirers against that of earlier. Like the preceding, it was a rationalizing age. In the two previous centuries, the anti-Christian attacks had been met on grounds more or less arbitrary. The obligation of religious belief had been based, to a large extent, upon the dictum of the Church; but, it was replied, if that principle were admitted, it would be impossible to justify the separation from Rome. The

old-school Puritans had made the Scriptures themselves the final court of appeal, but this was discredited by the interminable differences of interpretation. Others imagined they had found an infallible oracle in a certain inward light residing in the souls of believers; but this expedient — too mystical and extravagant to be of any force in argument — had also to be abandoned. The orthodox party were thus forced to defend themselves by logic. Is the Bible a forgery, or the word of the living God? Is Christianity an imposture, or the light which alone can lighten the world? Such were the questions that broadly define the struggle. The Deists urged that the Christian doctrines were irrational, and proposed to substitute for revealed religion the religion of nature. The divines replied that a revelation was an antecedent probability, and was supported by evidence, internal and external, so weighty and conclusive that prudence and common sense compelled its acceptance.

The series of Deistical writings in this age closed with the posthumous publications of **Bolingbroke,** in 1752. Admitting the existence of God, he denies His providence; admitting the possibility of a revelation, he denies the fact; admitting that miracles, if wrought, prove a Divine revelation, he maintains that the canonical books belong to a later age than the events they describe.

Middleton, a most insidious and powerful assailant, first opened out the whole question of the historical evidence of miracles by his attacks, in 1748, on the miraculous narratives of the Fathers.

The complete development of the scepticism of this period, however, is represented by **Hume,** whose teachings and influence will be considered hereafter.

The orthodox position was given most fully and philosophically by **Bishop Butler** — incomparably the greatest of Christian advocates. In 1736, appeared his *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature.* Its aim was to present the leading points in the controversy; to show that every objection urged against the Christian faith may be urged equally against the economy of the natural world, and is equally valid for the disproof of truths which are universally believed; to find in outward and visible things the type and

evidence of those within the veil; to explain that the difficulties of revealed religion have their likeness in that part of the Divine proceedings which comes under our view in the daily business of life. Thus, as the rose suspends its vital current but dies not, losing its grace and loveliness but springing forth afresh; as the insect languishes, withdraws into its silken shroud, motionless and powerless, yet bursts its tomb and enters into a new world, rejoicing in the possession of new and enlarged powers,— so the spirit of man may be renewed through the dust and ashes of his dissolution, though our straining eyes may not follow it into the dark beyond. True, we may not reach demonstration. Here we see through a glass darkly — let probability be our guide. This is the principle on which he retires, sensible to the sad discords of the universe. Who that has gone deep enough into the conditions of knowledge to feel the weary burden of 'this unintelligible world' is not inclined to consider this a wise conclusion? The *Analogy*, in spite of its faulty style, is destined, by its very solidity and moral earnestness, to be the eternal heritage of mankind.

About the middle of the century, Deism, as a creed or constructive system to live and die by, vanquished and languishing from internal decay, fell into disrepute.

Amid this dust of debate, we may hear now and then the voice of ecstatic meditation, 'sore sick' of the long din, convinced of its futility to arrest religious decadence or quicken the ordinary soul, and calling men to the birth of a heavenly life. Perhaps the writer who exercised the deepest influence in the revival of the eighteenth century was **William Law,** who, almost alone among his contemporaries, might stand for a primitive Christian come to revisit a strangely altered scene. To his rapt contemplation, we are pilgrims filing swiftly across the stage of action, tarrying an instant, yet in that instant on the road for eternity. 'The whole race of mankind are a race of fallen spirits that pass through this world as an arrow passes through the air.' With such convictions, he was a fit messenger sent to Vanity Fair, to order its inhabitants to put on sackcloth and ashes. Religion, from being historical and rational, becomes subjective and emotional. The appeal is to the heart. The Christian must separate himself altogether in life and feelings from the world that is about him:

'All worldly attainments, whether of greatness, wisdom, or bravery, are but empty sounds. . . . There is nothing wise or great or noble in a human spirit but rightly to know, and heartily to worship and adore the great God who is the support and life of all spirits, whether in heaven or earth.'

Christianity is reduced to a single point,— redemption from the earthly to the divine; and the proof, as against the infidel, lies in each man's consciousness:

'I had frequently a consciousness rising up within me that the debate was equally vain on both sides, doing no more real good to the one than to the other; not being able to imagine that a set of scholastic, logical opinions about history, facts, doctrines of the Church, or a set of logical objections against them, were of any significancy toward making the soul of man either an eternal angel of heaven or an eternal devil of hell.'

His *Serious Call* is one of the most solemn and powerful works of its kind in any literature. Wesley even dates the rise of Methodism from its appearance in 1730.

Science.—The history of optics and astronomical observation is marked in this age by the important correction of the Newtonian views as to the dispersion of refracted light, and by the invention of the achromatic telescope. Franklin, by his famous experiment of 1752, discovered the identity of electricity and lightning, which was followed by his invention of lightning-rods. In general chemistry were announced many new and valuable facts illustrative of the phenomena of respiration and combustion. But the literature of Physical Science is valued more for its content than for its literary character, and the subject is here noticed only as it indicated and assisted that critical tone of thought which was setting at jar the two elements of creation, the natural and the supernatural.

Ethics.—This, in common with theology, was showing the spirit fostered by the *Organum*. Bacon, directing attention to facts rather than to established opinions, had produced a feeling of scepticism in the study of matter. His disciples, it has been seen, naturally applied this method to the study of morals, and the controversy which they sprung has continued down to our own day. We possess the idea of *right* and of its opposite, *wrong*. What is the origin of these ideas? We feel that we ought to do the right as known, and to avoid the wrong as known. Whence this feeling of obligation? The answers as before explained may be reduced to two rival theories,— the intuitive and the utilitarian. By the first, the moral idea is a part of

our native intelligence, a portion of the mind's original furniture, in the light of which it sees and understands; by the second, it is derived from experience,— from an observation of the course of life which is conducive to our own and the general interest. The first teaches that we must do right for the sake of right, 'in scorn of consequence'; the second, that we must do it because it tends to promote the good of others, and hence our own. In the view of the utilitarian, 'ought' and 'ought not' mean the prospect of gaining or losing pleasure. Ask him why you should be benevolent.—Because others will reciprocate your kindness. Why keep your promise?—Because it is useful. Why be charitable?—To secure the esteem of those around us, and a return of favors bestowed. Whence the pleasure of being loved?—The prospective services we anticipate from those who love us. Whence the pleasure of piety?—The expectation of the favor of God in this life and another. Of these antagonistic schools, the first may in this age be represented by **Butler,** the second by **Hartley.**

Philosophy.—Here we find theories of a similar kind. The source of knowledge was taken as the central idea. For example, I have the idea of *space:*—the idea of a real, though invisible, fact. I know that it denotes a reality independent of myself,—that it would exist if I were otherwise constituted,—exist though the Omnipotent were not,—uncreated, for it is no object of creation,— indestructible, for it is no object of destruction. I am equally sure that every effect must have a cause; that the whole is greater than a part; that if equals be added to equals, the sums will be equal. Such ideas are distinguished as necessary truths, axioms, necessary laws of thought,—born with us, not derived from observation. Observed events are only the occasion of their being evoked. I also have the idea of *bitter;* but, on reflection, I discover that this idea represents, not an independent reality, but something relative to my present constitution, and hence contingent. Differently constituted, I should have a different sensation, and therefore a different idea; and the supposed bitterness would cease to be. To admit the existence of these two classes of ideas, together with their correspondent external objects, is *Realism;* to reject the first and retain the second, is *Materialism;* to deny the physical facts which corre-

spond to our sensations, or to affirm that the sensation is no proof of anything without, is *Idealism.* The first divides the mental from the physical, and believes that the mind has proof of both; the second resolves the mental into the physical; the third resolves the physical into the mental. The first is the underlying philosophy of religion and daily life; the second is the prevailing drift of English speculation; the third is a reaction against the second,—a noble but mistaken endeavor to rescue the hopes and beliefs of men.

Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, and **Hume** make up the line of materialistic succession. The first made seeing and hearing the conditions of thinking, and thus gave English thought a material bent. The second made this tendency excessive and one-sided. The third was peculiarly influential at one point,—the origin of ideas. He asserted that the sole ground of knowledge was experience. The mind contributed nothing,—it was simply paper, on which the images of outward things, and the states they occasioned, were received. The fourth carried the views of his predecessor to startling consequences.

Résumé.—A new form of landscape gardening was introduced. Symmetry of design, so popular in the reign of Anne, was discarded for the variety and freedom of nature. Hogarth cultivated the taste for portrait-painting, as yet 'the only flourishing branch of the high tree of British art.' He translated the inward into the outward, exhibiting manners, with deep and various meaning, in color and form. The impulse given to sacred music, and the origin of the English opera, are the capital events in musical history. These facts indicate the tendencies of taste.

Both literature and government were given a more popular turn. Instead of the vices, miseries, and frivolities of the great, the people now saw, in what they read, an account of themselves.

The critical spirit of the age was at once formal and substantial,—increasingly the latter.

Prose was preëminent, and spread far and wide into many realms. History was a favorite study. No literary labor was more remunerative, nor did any other so readily raise to distinction those who excelled in it.

The prevailing style was still classical; but to the nimble move-

ment of Pope and the graceful pace of Addison, was now added the ponderous and stately gait of Johnson.

Poetry, open to petty and superficial criticism, conformed to the rules and proprieties, but was divorced from living nature.

Formalism and rationalism provoked reactionary efforts, disclosing far-off forces at work, promises of the coming spontaneity in which poetry should flow as lava from volcanoes, light from stars, or perfume from flowers.

RICHARDSON.

His power was his own in the strictest sense; not borrowed from books, little aided even by experience of life, derived almost solely from introspection of himself and communion with his own heart.—*Craik.*

Biography.—Born in Derbyshire, in 1689, son of a poor carpenter. Received a common-school education, and at the age of sixteen was apprenticed to a printer in London—a calling to which he was determined by its prospective opportunities for reading. Advanced rapidly by industry and good conduct, was taken into partnership, and ultimately became the head of an extensive business. At fifty, became an author, writing during his leisure moments in his shop parlor. Delicate, nervous, often ill, his disorders terminated fatally on the 4th of July, 1761.

Writings.—Known from his youth as a fluent letter-writer, he had been engaged to prepare a manual of familiar letters on useful subjects, and it occurred to him, while executing the task, that the work would be greatly enlivened if the letters were made to tell a connected story. The result was *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740); published in order to cultivate the principles of virtue and religion in the minds of the young.

Pamela is an artless and lovely child of fifteen, half servant and half favorite, who finds herself exposed to the wickedness of a rich and aristocratic young master, a justice of the peace, a sort of divinity to her. He insults her, but she is always timid and humble:

'It is for you, sir, to say what you please, and for me only to say, God bless your honor!'

Again he is kind, and she is confused:

'To be sure I did think nothing but curt'sy and cry, and was all confusion at his goodness.'

He confines her for several months with a 'wicked creature'; threatens her, tries money, then gentleness. Everything is against her—even her own heart, for she loves him secretly. The toils close around her, and she seems lost; but a grand sentiment saves her. Distinctions of soul are the only ones that will live in Heaven:

'My soul is of equal importance to the soul of a princess, though my quality is inferior to that of the meanest slave.'

He learns to respect her, wishes now to marry her, and she answers him in a timid, troubled way:

'I fear not, sir, the grace of God supporting me, that any acts of kindness would make me forget what I owe to my virtue; but . . . my nature is too frank and open to make me wish to be ungrateful; and if I should be taught a lesson I never yet learnt, with what regret should I descend to the grave, to think that I could not hate my undoer; and that at the last great day, I must stand up as an accuser of the poor unhappy soul that I could wish it in my power to save.'

She is happy now, for she may trust him; and day by day her letters joyously and gratefully record the preparations for their marriage. For her wedding present, she obtains the pardon of those who have ill-treated her. As a wife, she prays to God that she may be enabled to discharge her duty; hopes her husband will be indulgent to the overflowings of her grateful heart; resolves to read in his absence, that she may polish her mind, and make herself worthier of his company and conversation.

Clarissa Harlowe (1748), his masterpiece. Like the other, a novel of conflict, but in which virtue, subjected to a severer test, is given its greatest prominence. The heroine is of noble mind, saintly purity, and never-failing sweetness of temper. A despotic father, with an ambition to found a house, wishes to marry her to a coarse and heartless fool; she rebels, is importuned by her mother, urged by a furious brother, stung by a venomous sister, growled at by two uncles, hounded by the whole family—aunt and nurse included. She offers to give up her property, never to marry at all, concedes, begs, implores, weeps, faints, but in vain. True, they are afraid of her tears, but the torture is obstinate, incessant. It is the sort of parental tyranny and stupidity that drives the victim to madness, dishonor, or death. When, at the last moment, she thinks to escape them, she is chased by another

more dangerous, a splendid and accomplished, a gay and smiling villain, who desires to possess her, only because she is hard to conquer: 'I always considered opposition and resistance as a challenge to do my worst.'

He spares no expense, scruples at no treachery, invents stories, forges letters, even gives the Harlowes servants of his own. Duty, humanity, prayers, entreaties, his own remorse, stay not the hand of the cruel executioner. She is vigilant, lives in the shadow of present and final judgment. Her life has been entrenched by precepts and principles. She reasons upon them, examines herself, and is conscientious where others are enthusiastic. With philosophic composure, she takes an inventory of character:

> 'That such a husband might unsettle me in all my own principles, and hazard my future hopes. That he has a very immoral character to women. That, knowing this, it is a high degree of impurity to think of joining in wedlock with such a man.'

Though gentle, she has pride; defends every inch of ground, renews the struggle each day and loses,—breaks, but bends not. Pamela had too little dignity, Clarissa has too much; the former was too submissive, the latter is too sublime.

Sir Charles Grandison (1753), designed to represent the ideal of a perfect man, in whom the elegance of fashion combines with the virtues of piety. The hero is courteous, gallant, generous, delicate, good, irreproachable—through a thousand pages. His mild and gracious wife, whose tears are the 'dew-drops of heaven,' says so:

> 'But could he be otherwise than the best of husbands, who was the most dutiful of sons, who is the most affectionate of brothers, the most faithful of friends; who is good upon principle in every relation of life?'

Style.—Epistolary, prolix, realistic, plain, business-like. He seems to have written utterly without artifice, using, on all occasions, the first words and the first incidents.

Rank.—De Foe had painted adventures rather than manners. To Richardson belongs the honor of having constructed the first epic of real life—the novel of character. Yet he was not of the world. He drew his inspiration less from observation than from introspection. Given the idea of a simple country girl, her ordinary situation, a fact or two from nature, he makes out all the rest by the mere force of reasoning imagination, as if nothing existed beyond the little room in which he writes. He describes

objects and events with the literal minuteness of a common diary, spinning the web and texture of his story from a myriad gossamer threads; yet never distracted, never forgetful of the single end; twining and linking the innumerable fibres to bring out a figure, an action, a lesson. While he twines, he colors. Unlike De Foe, who sees only the plain literal truth of things, he sees through an atmosphere of ideal light, sees things beautified, elevated above nature. His best paintings are pictures of the heart, expressions of the motives and feelings that make fellowship between man and man. Hence, apart from the story, a large element of the interest is in the sentiments uttered, in motives of action rather than modes.

We could wish that his characters were less circumspect, less calculating, less conscious. They preach too much. Pamela is a little too tame, Clarissa almost too heavenly. Sir Charles is proper as a wax figure — he never did a mean thing, nor made a wrong gesture. But we must not forget that idealization was Richardson's real excellence, as it was his necessity.

Character.—As a writer he possessed original genius. He held in his hand almost all the moving strings of humanity, and made them vibrate in harmony. In the duties of morality and piety, regular and exemplary. Conscience, with its auxiliaries, religion, law, education, proprieties, was an armed sentinel guarding the way of life. Gentle, benevolent, and — vain. His vanity grew by what it fed upon,— the flattery of female friends. He was always partial to female society. At thirteen he was the confidant of three young women; conducted their love correspondence, without betraying to one the fact that he was secretary and adviser to the others.

'As a bashful and not forward boy, I was an early favorite with all young women of taste and reading in the neighborhood. Half a dozen of them, when met to work with their needles, used, when they got a book they liked, and thought I should, to borrow me to read to them; their mothers sometimes with them; and both mothers and daughters used to be pleased with the observations they put me upon making.'

He has portrayed himself in his novels. The following sentences are characteristic:

'The power of doing good to worthy objects is the only enviable circumstance in the lives of people of fortune.'

'Nothing in human nature is so God-like as the disposition to do good to our fellow-creatures.'

'A good person will rather choose to be censured for doing his duty than for a defect in it.'

'Neither a learned nor a fine education is of any other value than as it tends to improve the morals of men, and to make them wise and good.'

'The most durable ties of friendship are those which result from a union of minds formed upon religious principles.'

'All our pursuits, from childhood to manhood, are only trifles of different sorts and sizes, proportioned to our years and views.'[1]

'A good woman is one of the greatest glories of the creation.'

'It is a most improving exercise, as well with regard to style as to morals, to accustom ourselves early to write down everything of moment that befalls us.'

'There is a docile season, a learning-time in youth, which, suffered to elapse, and no foundation laid, seldom returns.'

Influence.—When a man of ideas is a good man, and uses his strength for a noble purpose, he carries out the great thought of God; idealizes and beautifies life; multiplies humanity, justice, love, piety; increases the desire for excellence of manhood, of womanhood; and the powers of goodness which he sets afloat go on with the irresistible gravitation of the universe, for the Infinite is behind them. The ethical novelist is such a benefactor. He unfolds the soul of things to our eye, translates morality from the language of theory into that of practice, brings the higher and lower principles of action into striking antithesis, and prompts our affection to the good, sharpens our antipathy to the bad. Hence Pope praised the *Pamela* as likely to do more good than twenty volumes of sermons, and an eminent divine recommended it from the pulpit. When we consider how readers had yawned themselves to sleep over the old school of chivalric fable, with what delight they turned to this first 'romance of real life,' how fashionable circles made it the theme of their enthusiasm, we cannot doubt that Richardson opened up a spring of moral health,—a fountain which, beginning to flow, should never dry. Men and women looked in, became acquainted with the best things in them, saw the unsummed gold which slept unseen, saw of what manner of spirit they were, and this new light changed them. Thus old Grecian story relates how Narcissus went about among the rude, ill-mannered swains of Attica, and thought himself but one of them, till one day by accident he saw in the water a face more beautiful than Aphrodite's or Apollo's, and was astonished to learn that it was his own, and that he too belonged to the handsome kindred of the gods. Henceforth he went another

[1] What great man, looking upon the everlasting ebb and flow of mortal things, snatching a kind of solemn joy from the giddiness which follows his gaze into the infinite, has not felt the same sense of pettiness—that the world, at best, is but a melancholy place, full of wasted purposes and fading images?

man, driving the swine a-field as if he were himself a god, scorning all unseemly and all ungodly conduct.

Perhaps the vice which Richardson chose to delineate does not admit, under modern taste, the slow anatomizing with which he exposes it. Owing, also, to their prolixity and poverty of style, his works have continually decreased in popularity. So essential is excellence of form to permanence of interest.

FIELDING.

Truth to English nature, and sympathy with manly quality, perform in Fielding, to a degree, the work of morality.—*Bascom.*

Biography.—Born in Somersetshire, in 1707; educated at Eton; studied law at Leyden, but quit 'money-bound' before completing his course; returned to England, and at twenty commenced writing for the comic stage; had abundance of health, plunged into jovial excess, took mischances easily; married at twenty-eight, adored his wife, retired to a small estate left him by his mother, feasted, gave dinners, kept fine horses, a pack of hounds, a magnificent retinue of servants in yellow livery, and in three years spent his inheritance and his wife's fortune; speculated in the Haymarket Theatre, and failed; finished his law studies, was admitted to the Bar in 1740, but was unsuccessful; continued to write for the support of his family, engaged actively in political controversy, always maintaining liberal principles; became a magistrate, destroyed bands of robbers, and earned the 'dirtiest money on earth'; lost his wife while they were struggling on in their worldly difficulties, was almost broken-hearted, and found no relief but in weeping, in concert with her maid-servant, 'for the angel they mutually regretted'; naturally ended by marrying the maid; departed for Lisbon in the summer of 1754,[1] to restore his failing health, and there died on the 8th of the ensuing October. He had sown to the wind, and he reaped to the whirlwind.

[1] *Wednesday, June 23, 1754.*—On this day the most melancholy sun I had ever beheld arose, and found me awake at my house at Fordhook. By the light of this sun I was, in my own opinion, last to behold and take leave of some of those creatures on whom I doted with a mother-like fondness, guided by nature and passion, and uncured and unhardened by all the doctrine of that philosophical school where I had learned to bear pains and to despise death.—*A Voyage to Lisbon.*

Writings.—*Joseph Andrews* (1742), conceived with the design of turning *Pamela* into ridicule. Joseph is Pamela's brother, and resists the advances of his mistress, as Pamela had resisted those of her master. Pamela herself is degraded from her moral elevation, and is represented as Lady Booby, whom the parson is compelled to reprove for laughing in church. The strength of the novel is Parson Adams, who is learned, amiable, innocent. He is unsuspectingly simple, absent-minded; declares that he would willingly walk ten miles to fetch his sermon on vanity, merely to convince Wilson of his thorough contempt for the vice; consoles himself for the loss of a Greek author by suddenly recollecting that he could not read it if he had it, because it is dark. He drinks beer, smokes pipes, moralizes, and, when necessary, uses his fists with effect and relish. He is Joseph's friend, and both are models of virtue and excellence. They give and receive many cuffs, have basins flung at their heads, their clothes rent by dogs, their horse stolen, never have any money, are threatened with imprisonment; yet they go merrily on, with thick skins, keen appetites, and potent stomachs. Rude jests, tavern brawls, ludicrous situations, combine to turn the tragic of Richardson into the grotesque.

Jonathan Wild (1743), an account of a famous thief, who turns thief-catcher, and ends his career at the gallows. Its best character is the prison chaplain, who exhorts the condemned man to repent, accepts from him a bowl of punch, because 'it is nowhere spoken against in Scripture,' then resumes his ghostly admonitions.

Tom Jones (1749), the history of a foundling; his masterpiece. It was written during the first year of his magistrate life, and contains a vast variety of lifelike characters (most of whose faces are red), drawn chiefly from the daily experience of the police-bench. Western is a country squire, rich, fond of drink, ignorant, boorish, impatient of contradiction, and given up to every gust of passion; yet he has tenderness and tears, and when the wind changes, can be led like a child. Tom dares to fall in love with his daughter Sophy, who is 'the joy of my heart, and all the hope and comfort of my age.' Immediately Tom must be thrashed, and Sophy shall be turned out to 'starve and rot in the streets.' She reasons, he storms; she changes her tactics to

obedience and prayer, he is conquered, but would conceal his submission by blustering:

'I am determined upon this match, and ha him you shall, damn me, if shat unt.'

Now he cannot rest till they are married:

'To her, boy, to her, go to her. That's it, little honeys, that's it. Well, what, is it all over? Hath she appointed the day, boy? What, shall it be to-morrow, or next day? I shan't be put off a minute longer than next day, I am resolved. . . . Zoodikers! she'd have the wedding to-night with all her heart. Would'st not, Sophy?'

The novel abounds in incidents and situations that are used only to bring out character. Thus, when Tom's arm is broken, Square, the philosopher, tries to console him with the stoical doctrine that 'pain was the most contemptible thing in the world,' but, in doing so, bites his tongue, and lets slip an oath. Again, the profound Square becomes the lover of Molly Seagrim, discovers that he was preceded by Tom Jones, who finds that he himself had succeeded to the accomplished Will Barnes, who still holds the first claim on her affections. The elder Blifil is grateful to his brother for assisting him to obtain the fortune of Miss Alworthy by marriage. A highwayman robs Western's sister of her jewels, while he compliments her beauty. That lady appeals to her niece in pride of remembered charms, that have glided into the abyss and rearward of Time:

'I was never so handsome as you, Sophy; yet I had something of you formerly. I was called the cruel Parthenissa. Kingdoms and states, as Tully Cicero says, undergo alteration, and so must the human form!'

Partridge, of proverbial humor, engages in Latin dialogues with his maid, and during one of these is assaulted by his wife. He is Tom's faithful attendant, half barber, half schoolmaster, shrewd, yet simple as a child. He goes to the theatre for the first time, to witness the representation of Hamlet. In the account of his impressions, mark the accurate observer of human nature, and see the flesh and blood of other days:

'In the first row, then, of the first gallery, did Mr. Jones, Mrs. Miller, her youngest daughter, and Partridge, take their places. Partridge immediately declared it was the finest place he had ever been in. When the first music was played, he said: "It was a wonder how so many fiddlers could play at one time without putting one another out." While the fellow was lighting the upper candles, he cried out to Mrs. Miller: "Look, look, madam; the very picture of the man in the end of the common prayer book, before the gunpowder treason service." Nor could he help observing, with a sigh, when all the candles were lighted: "That here were candles enough burnt in one night to keep an honest poor family for a whole twelvemonth."

As soon as the play, which was *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, began, Partridge was all attention, nor did he break silence till the entrance of the ghost; upon which he asked Jones: "What man that was in the strange dress; something," he said, "like what I

have seen in a picture. Sure it is not armour, is it?" Jones answered: "That is the ghost." To which Partridge replied, with a smile: "Persuade me to that, sir, if you can. Though I can't say I ever exactly saw a ghost in my life, yet I am certain I should know one, if I saw him, better than that comes to. No, no, sir; ghosts don't appear in such dresses as that neither." In this mistake, which caused much laughter in the neighbourhood of Partridge, he was suffered to continue till the scene between the ghost and Hamlet, when Partridge gave that credit to Mr. Garrick which he had denied to Jones, and fell into so violent a trembling that his knees knocked against each other. Jones asked him what was the matter, and whether he was afraid of the warrior upon the stage. "O la! sir," said he, "I perceive now it is what you told me. I am not afraid of anything, for I know it is but a play, and if it was really a ghost, it could do one no harm at such a distance, and in so much company; and yet if I was frightened, I am not the only person." "Why, who," cried Jones, "dost thou take to be such a coward here beside thyself?" "Nay, you may call me a coward if you will; but if that little man there upon the stage is not frightened, I never saw any man frightened in my life. Ay, ay; go along with you! Ay, to be sure! Who's fool, then? Will you? Lud have mercy upon such foolhardiness! Whatever happens, it is good enough for you. Follow you! I'd follow the devil as soon. Nay, perhaps it is the devil—for they say he can put on what likeness he pleases. Oh! here he is again. No further! No, you have gone far enough already; further than I'd have gone for all the king's dominions." Jones offered to speak, but Partridge cried: "Hush, hush, dear sir; don't you hear him?" And during the whole speech of the ghost, he sat with his eyes fixed partly on Hamlet, and with his mouth open; the same passions which succeeded each other in Hamlet, succeeded likewise in him. . . .

The grave-digging scene next engaged the attention of Partridge, who expressed much surprise at the number of skulls thrown upon the stage. To which Jones answered, that it was one of the most famous burial-places about town. "No wonder, then," cried Partridge, "that the place is haunted. But I never saw in my life a worse grave-digger. I had a sexton when I was clerk that should have dug three graves while he is digging one. The fellow handles a spade as if it was the first time he had one in his hand. Ay, ay, you may sing. You had rather sing than work, I believe." Upon Hamlet's taking up the skull, he cried out: "Well! it is strange to see how fearless some men are: I never could bring myself to touch anything belonging to a dead man on any account. He seemed frightened enough too at the ghost, I thought. *Nemo omnibus horis sapit.*"

Little more worth remembering occurred during the play; at the end of which Jones asked him which of the players he had liked best. To this he answered, with some appearance of indignation at the question: "The king without doubt." "Indeed, Mr. Partridge," said Mrs. Miller, "you are not of the same opinion with the town: for they are all agreed that Hamlet is acted by the best player who ever was on the stage." "He the best player!" cried Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer; "why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure if I had seen a ghost I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did. And then, to be sure, in that scene, as you called it, between him and his mother, where you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me! any man—that is, any good man—that had such a mother, would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me; but, indeed, madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country; and the king for my money; he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other. Anybody may see he is an actor."

Thus ended the adventure at the playhouse, where Partridge had afforded great mirth, not only to Jones and Mrs. Miller, but to all who sat within hearing, who were more attentive to what he said than to anything that passed on the stage. He durst not go to bed all that night for fear of the ghost; and for many nights after, sweated two or three hours before he went to sleep with the same apprehensions, and waked several times in great horrors, crying out: "Lord have mercy upon us! there it is."'

Amelia (1751), a character sketched from his own wife. Captain Booth, Amelia's husband, is irregular, extravagant, a bad

manager, a victim to temptation, but a sincere penitent; is instinctively generous, as a dog is instinctively affectionate; has a woman's heart in his soldier's body; is devoted to his wife, weeps at thought of her, treasures her words, loves her supremely, with a perennial warmth:

'If I had the world, I was ready to lay it at my Amelia's feet; and so Heaven knows, I would ten thousand worlds.'

Amelia is, according to Fielding's idea, the assembly of domestic virtues. She is tender, forgiving, and excessively modest; says: 'Dear Billy, though my understanding be much inferior to yours'; receives a love-letter, throws it away, and says:

'I would not have such a letter in my possession for the universe; I thought my eyes contaminated with reading it.'

Style.—Fresh, vigorous, easy, idiomatic, exhibiting a care and refinement altogether unknown to that of Richardson.

Rank.—A masterly observer and painter of human nature as he witnessed it. What he has given us is for the most part his actual experience, illuminated, of course, by his own genius. He declares that if he imagines a feature, it is because he has seen it. He lived through the scenes and characters he has described; saw the world in its hilarity, coarseness, and brutality; saw natural impulse unveiled; saw the turmoil of vanities, follies, lusts, and rancors, naked and uncloaked; saw men of nerve and muscle, full of warmth and force, with overflowing instincts, jostling and violent, yet liberal, loyal, and joyous. *Of what he saw, he drew living pictures.* Here lies his preëminence. He announced that his object was faithfully to paint real life. But in doing so, he gathered the harvest and forgot the flowers. Life has its poetry, as well as its prose; its moral heroism, as well as its physical valor; its visions, as well as its bread. Of these less solid and loftier constituents, he had but slight appreciation. Hence his characters are strongly built rather than refined. As a mere observer, he was superior to Richardson and little inferior to Shakespeare, though without any of the poetical qualities of either. Width of sympathy, delicacy of perception, high cast of thought, are wanting. He is the novelist of the lower million; Richardson, of the upper ten thousand. He teaches morality indirectly, in the comic style, which, he maintained, disposes men to be 'more full of good humor and benevolence'; Richardson,

directly, in the serious, tragic style, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

If the novel be held to include love, satire, humour, observation, genuine portrayal of facts, of living, veritable persons, and skill in the arrangement of plot and incident, he surpasses Richardson, and perhaps is unsurpassed by any other; if, more justly, the ethical tendency, the predominance of character, is the leading index of power in the novelist, to Richardson must be assigned the seat of honor.

Character. — Sanguine, affectionate, extravagant, careless, jolly; a drinker, a roisterer, acquainted with the lower orders of all classes, and familiar with the ups and downs of life. His views were those which commend themselves to a man who sees the world as it is, who has no visionary dreams or passionate aspirations, and who has a thoroughly generous nature. Morality, with him, was not a law; yet in his way, he was a moralist. He satirizes vice, excuses, condemns, suggests moral conclusions. His hero is neither a libertine nor an ascetic; he is a full-blooded healthy animal, with respect for the Church so long as it does not break with common sense, but without exaltation or poetic rapture. The novelist, preëminently of authors, records himself in his writings. Not more decisively does a Chinese drawing reveal its nationality than do the works of his imagination reveal the experience and observation out of which that imagination has grown. His heroes and heroines are his ideals, and these must be built of the idealized materials of his actual life and history. Perhaps he had all the best parts of a man, except delicacy and moderation.

Influence.—Probably his only legacy to mankind, certainly his chief one, is the picture he has set before us of English society in his generation. We see pretty much what we should have seen as lookers-on. In vindicating the novel against the loftier pretensions of professed historians, he asserted that 'in their productions nothing is true but the names and dates, whereas in mine everything is true but the names and dates.' Without going so far, still, as the novel embodies substantially the remarks of the ablest observers upon their contemporaries, we may admit his claim to be a writer of history, who, more

faithfully than many historians proper, has given us the very form and presence of the times.

In his own age, when coarseness was less offensive, he did, as a humorist, the good that mere pleasure can do. His humor, however, is in this age situated where those who are refined or well-dressed will not care to enter. In this direction, as in others, his influence has ceased to be felt. This is the criterion of a truly great man,—that his life has been deepened and chastened by sorrow, enabling him to discern the inner heart of things, so that there rises out of him a kind of universal Psalm; his thought is in our thoughts, and the fruit of his genius scatters its seed across continents and centuries.

HUME.

Upon the whole, I have always considered him, both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit.—*Adam Smith.*

Biography.—Born in Edinburgh, in 1711, and educated at Edinburgh University; was designed for the law, studied, but never practised. He had an insurmountable aversion to everything but literature:

'While they (the family) fancied I was poring upon Voet and Vinnius, Cicero and Virgil were the authors which I was secretly devouring.'

His slender fortune and impaired health—the result of a too ardent application—forced him to try mercantile life, but in a few months he found this employment equally uncongenial. He then went to France, studied three years in retirement, living with the utmost frugality, and returned in 1737. His patrimony hardly sufficient for his support, he became tutor one year to a young nobleman of deranged mind; next became a candidate for the professorship of moral philosophy in the university of his native town, but was unsuccessful:

'I am informed that such a popular clamor has been raised against me in Edinburgh, on account of scepticism, heterodoxy, and other hard names, which confound the ignorant, that my friends find some difficulty in working out the point of my professorship, which once appeared so easy.'

He then acted as secretary, two years, to General St. Clair,

attending him first in an expedition against Canada, afterwards in an embassy to the courts of Vienna and Turin:

'These two years were almost the only interruptions which my studies have received during the course of my life: I passed them agreeably, and in good company: and my appointments, with my frugality, had made me reach a fortune which I called independent, though most of my friends were inclined to smile when I said so: in short, I was now master of near a thousand pounds.'

Wrote industriously, as had been his habit; published, was neglected, but pressed on:

'On my return from Italy (1749), I had the mortification to find all England in a ferment on account of Dr. Middleton's *Free Inquiry*, while my performance was entirely overlooked and neglected. A new edition which had been published in London, of my Essays, moral and political, met not with a much better reception.

Such is the force of natural temper, that these disappointments made little or no impression on me.'

In 1752, he was chosen librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, and, placed in command of a large library, struck into the path of historical writing. In 1763, he attended Lord Hertford on his embassy to Paris, where he was received with marked distinction. Three years later, he returned to his native city, with the view of burying himself in a philosophical retreat, but was induced to accept the office of Under Secretary of State, which he held for two years:

'I returned to Edinburgh in 1769, very opulent (for I possessed a revenue of one thousand pounds a year), healthy, and, though somewhat stricken in years, with the prospect of enjoying long my ease, and of seeing the increase of my reputation.'

Here he lived in the tranquil enjoyment of his fame, and in the affection of his personal friends. In the spring of 1775, he was struck with what he knew to be a mortal disease, and, with the utmost composure, awaited his speedy dissolution. While his person declined, his spirits were unabated. He possessed the same assiduity in study, and the same gayety in company:

'I consider, besides, that a man of sixty-five, by dying, cuts off only a few years of infirmities; and though I see many symptoms of my literary reputation's breaking out at last with additional lustre, I know that I could have but few years to enjoy it. It is difficult to be more detached from life than I am at present.'

Sensible that he was sinking, he diverted himself with the revision of his works, with books of amusement, with an occasional game of whist in the evening. His cheerfulness was so great, that many could not believe he was dying. He was perfectly resigned, free from anxiety or impatience. Reading, shortly before his death, Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead*, he said

that, of all the excuses alleged to Charon[1] for not entering readily into his boat, he could find none that fitted himself: he had no house to complete, no daughter to provide for, no enemies to be revenged upon:

'I could not well imagine what excuse I could make to Charon in order to obtain a little delay. I have done every thing of consequence which I ever meant to do; and I could at no time expect to leave my relations and friends in a better situation than that in which I am now likely to leave them: I, therefore, have all reason to die contented.'

He invents jocular excuses, which he supposes may be made to Charon, and imagines the very surly answers which it may suit the character of the grim ferryman to return:

'Upon further consideration, I thought I might say to him, "good Charon, I have been correcting my works for a new edition. Allow me a little time, that I may see how the public receives the alterations." "There will be no end of such excuses; so, honest friend, please step into the boat." But I might still urge, "Have a little patience, good Charon: I have been endeavoring to open the eyes of the public. If I live a few years longer, I may have the satisfaction of seeing the downfall of some of the prevailing systems of superstition." But Charon would then lose all temper and decency. "You loitering rogue, that will not happen these many hundred years. Do you fancy I will grant you a lease for so long a term? Get into the boat this instant, you lazy, loitering rogue."'

On the 26th of August, 1776, his physician wrote to Adam Smith:

'*Dear Sir:*—Yesterday about four o'clock, afternoon, Mr. Hume expired. The near approach of his death became evident in the night between Thursday and Friday, when his disease became excessive, and soon weakened him so much that he could no longer rise out of his bed. He continued to the last perfectly sensible, and free from much pain or feelings of distress. He never dropped the smallest expression of impatience; but when he had occasion to speak to the people about him, always did it with affection and tenderness. I thought it improper to write to bring you over, especially as I heard that he had dictated a letter to you, desiring you not to come. When he became very weak, it cost him an effort to speak; and he died in such a happy composure of mind, that nothing could exceed it.'

Men who have formed a high conception of duty, who have bridled the tumult of passion, who pass their lives in a calm sense of virtue and of dignity, are little likely to be assailed by the superstitious fears that are the nightmare of weaker minds. 'Ask,' said Seneca, 'for a brave soul unscared by death.' On the last night in which Antoninus Pius lived, the tribune came to ask

[1] The ferryman in Greek mythology, who for a halfpenny carries across the Stygian lake the souls of the dead that flock to its shores:

'There Charon stands, who rules the dreary coasts;
A sordid god: down from his hoary chin
A length of beard descends, uncomb'd, unclean;
His eyes like hollow furnaces on fire;
A girdle foul with grease binds his obscene attire.
He spreads his canvas, with his pole he steers;
The freights of flitting ghosts in his thin bottom bears.
He look'd in years, yet in his years were seen
A youthful vigor, an autumnal green.'

for the pass-word of the night. 'Æquanimitas,' answered the dying emperor. A wise man, who has studied how to live, has learned how to die.

Writings.—*Inquiry Concerning the Human Understanding* (1748). In this he recast the first part of an earlier work, *Treatise on Human Nature* (1737), which, he says, 'fell dead-born from the press.' Nor did his speculations now attract much more attention, though they proved eventually to be the most exciting and productive that have been promulgated in modern times. To derive any profit from the consideration of his metaphysical views, the student should remind himself,—

1. That the aim of Philosophy is to ascertain the nature and essence of things.

2. Locke was allowed to have established,—

(1) That we could have no knowledge not derived from experience.

(2) That experience was of two kinds, namely, of external objects and of internal operations; therefore, it had two distinct sources,—sensation and reflection.

(3) That all knowledge could consist only in the agreement or disagreement of ideas.

(4) Finally, that we could never know things in themselves, but only as they affect us; that is, we could know only our ideas.

He supposes the mind to begin its acts of intelligence with *impressions;* by which is meant the lively sensations we have when we hear, see, feel, love, hate, desire, will. When we reflect on any impression, as in acts of memory or imagination, the result is an *idea.* An idea is, then, the faint image or copy of an impression. Thus, when I see a picture, there is an impression; when I think about this picture in its absence, there is an idea. The difference between impressions and ideas is one of degree merely—the former are stronger, the latter weaker; the first are the originals, the second are the vestiges. When, in reasoning, a thing is said to exist, we are to search for an impression (new or old) corresponding to the word used. If no such impression is found, the word, so far as our human faculties are concerned, has no meaning at all. Whether there is any existence corresponding to its meaning, no one can tell—there may or may not be. Hence, whether there be an infinite mind behind the veil of phe-

nomena, no mortal may presume to say. That idea is reached by magnifying the human attributes of wisdom and goodness. If it be asked what knowledge we have of an external world, the answer is, that there are certain impressions and ideas which we suppose to relate to it; further we know not. If we look into ourselves, and, watching the figures as they come and go, seek for assurance of our identity and continuity, we find but a string of separate entities, a procession of shadows, called in one view impressions, in another ideas; not something self-existent, which was, is, and shall continue:

'Pain and pleasure, grief and joy, passions and sensations, succeed each other, and never exist at the same time. It cannot, therefore, be from any of these impressions, or from any other, that the idea of self is derived; and consequently there is no such idea. . . . For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without perception, and can never observe anything but the perception.'

Hume's philosophical significance is connected chiefly with his speculations concerning causality. No sooner is an event perceived than we conclude at once that it is an effect, and begin to inquire the cause. Between these two terms he could see no other connection, than that the former immediately follows the latter, as in the melting of wax before the flame of a taper. When they are seen to be conjoined repeatedly, we learn to expect that, when the one accustomed to precede makes its appearance, the other will follow; and this expectation strengthens as repetitions multiply. If now the unsatisfied investigator demands a *power* in the one, which enables it to produce the other, the answer is, such a thing may be; we have no clue to it—no impression of it—by which its existence or non-existence may be argued. Our belief in the maxim that like causes produce like effects is based not on any knowledge of the hidden force through which the one thing brings the other into being, but on habit:

'When we look about us towards external objects, and consider the operation of causes, we are never able in a single instance to discover any power or necessary connection, any quality, which binds the effect to the cause, and renders the one an infallible consequence of the other. The impulse of one billiard-ball is attended with motion in the second. This is the whole that appears to the outward senses. The mind feels no sentiment or inward impression from this succession of objects; consequently there is not, in any single instance of cause and effect, any thing which can suggest the idea of power or necessary connection.'

The mind cannot perceive any necessary connection between

events, but only an invariableness of antecedence and sequence. The ground of our belief that some power is involved in every causal act is custom. If I believe that the sun will rise to-morrow, it is merely because it has always risen. If I believe that fire will burn, it is merely because it has always burned:

> 'When many uniform instances appear and the same object is always followed by the same event, we then begin to entertain the notion of cause and connection. We then feel a new sentiment, to wit, a customary connection in the thought between one object and its usual attendant; and this sentiment is the original of that idea which we seek for.'

Hence, the causal idea, owing to its origin in habit, admits of use only within the field of experience; and our pains are vain, if we attempt to ascend from data given empirically, to that which lies beyond the whole range of experience,—God and immortality. Again, if we cannot infer the exercise of power in a material cause, neither can we in an immaterial one. As in the world of matter, so in the world of spirit, events are merely conjoined. Impulses and motives, which date their origin from sensation only, impressed by matter and material law, chase each other through the corridors of the unresisting mind like boulders and pebbles in a river bed. Man, receptive to the ever-shifting train of 'impressions,' is bound fast in fate. Once more, where experience teaches that two things are related by an invariable sequence, if we hear of an instance in which this has not been the case, we ought to doubt the truth of the narrative. Which is the more probable,—that men should make false statements, designedly or otherwise, or that an event should have occurred which contradicts all previous authenticated experience? Therefore, to prove a miracle is impossible, if by miracle is meant an interference with the usual order of nature; for it is simpler to believe that the evidence is mistaken than that the course of nature is not uniform.

It is not here proposed to inquire whether these views, with their quiet and indifferent, yet momentous, applications, will bear close scrutiny. The present business is neither to impugn nor to defend, but to describe.

Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals (1751), 'which, in my own opinion (who ought not to judge on that subject), is of all my writings, historical, philosophical, or literary, incomparably the best.' The work is a full development, so far as made by Hume, of the utilitarian system. Actions are virtuous, if they

tend to increase the pleasures or diminish the pains of mankind; vicious, if they have, or tend to have, the opposite effect. The motive to virtue is an enlightened self-interest. Temperance and chastity should be encouraged, not because they are right and obligatory in themselves, but for the mutual benefit of the individual and the public. The leading principle of his system was very explicitly given ten years earlier, in a letter to Hutcheson:

'Now, I desire you to consider if there be any quality that is virtuous without having a tendency either to the public good or to the good of the person who possesses it. If there be none without these tendencies, we may conclude that their merit is derived from sympathy.[1] I desire you would consider only the *tendencies* of qualities, not their actual operations, which depend on chance. *Brutus* riveted the chains of Rome faster by his opposition; but the natural tendency of his noble dispositions—his public spirit and magnanimity—was to establish her liberty.'

But what reveals to us the beauty and obligation of benevolence? A special sense. Why do we approve an action performed in the interest of the common welfare? Because we are so constituted:

'The final sentence, it is probable, which pronounces characters and actions amiable or odious, praiseworthy or blamable, . . . depends on some internal sense or feeling which nature has made universal in the whole species. As virtue is an end, and is desirable on its own account without fee or reward, merely for the immediate satisfaction it conveys, it is requisite that there should be some sentiment which it touches, some internal feeling, or whatever you please to call it, which distinguishes moral good and evil, and which embraces one and rejects the other.'

Moral decisions, consequently, are complex, involving a judgment of the reason and an emotion of the heart — an intuition:

'Reason instructs us in the several tendencies of actions, and humanity makes a distinction in favor of those which are useful and beneficial.'

It may be questioned whether his admission of a moral sense can be reconciled with his metaphysical theory of impressions and ideas, though with much ingenuity he endeavors to rank it among the impressions. So referred, morality becomes a floating fancy. Virtue and vice, like color and taste, bitter and sweet, lie merely in our sensations.

Natural History of Religion (1755), which drew upon him the enmity of many. Its object is to ascertain the origin and process of religious ideas. The conclusion is, that the worship of many Gods must, everywhere, have preceded the worship of one God. Man, in his earliest state, is a savage. As such, he feels no interest in ordinary events of nature, no desire to study the principles which govern them; and therefore his attention is

[1] That is, from our natural sympathy with the person benefited.

confined to those which are extraordinary, startling, terrible, or deadly,— famine and pestilence, the blast of the gathered lightning, the blaze of the comet, the solemn gloom of the eclipse, the wild echoes of the mountain gorge. Powerless to control the causes, he reckons them superior to himself. Cowering before what he cannot measure nor comprehend, he turns them into deities, and propitiates them with gifts. Terror, issuing in polytheism, is thus the beginning of religion:

'The primary religion of mankind arises chiefly from an anxious fear of future events. By degrees, the active imagination of men, uneasy in this abstract conception of objects, about which it is incessantly employed, begins to render them more particular, and to clothe them in shapes more suitable to its natural comprehension. It represents them to be sensible, intelligent beings, like mankind; actuated by love and hatred, and flexible by gifts and entreaties, by prayers and sacrifices. Hence the origin of religion. And hence the origin of idolatry, or polytheism. It seems certain, that, according to the natural progress of human thought, the ignorant multitude must first entertain some grovelling and familiar notion of superior powers, before they stretch their conception to that perfect Being who bestowed order on the whole frame of nature. We may as reasonably imagine, that men inhabited palaces before huts and cottages, or studied geometry before agriculture, as assert that the Deity appeared to them a pure spirit, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, before he was apprehended to be a powerful though limited being, with human passions and appetites, limbs and organs. The mind rises gradually from inferior to superior. By abstracting from what is imperfect, it forms an idea of perfection; and slowly distinguishing the nobler parts of its own frame from the grosser, it learns to transform only the former, much elevated and refined, to its divinity.'

It may be observed, in passing, that Hume has only wrought into more plausible form a theory propounded by Lucretius nineteen hundred years ago:

'Whate'er in heaven,
In earth, man sees mysterious, shakes his mind,
With sacred awe o'erwhelms him, and his soul
Bows to the dust; the cause of things concealed
Once from his vision, instant to the gods
All empire he transfers, all rule supreme,
And doubtful whence they spring, with headlong haste
Calls them the workmanship of power divine.'

History of England (1754–1762), an exquisite production of art, that will never cease to be admired as long as taste remains. It procured for its author what the genius and originality of his philosophical works could never have done,— a popular reputation. The general reader found in it elegant and animated narrative; the statesman and thinker, profound and original views. The doctrine of necessity, applied to historical observation, now bore its practical fruits,— a propensity to disbelieve narratives of great and remarkable deeds; a disposition to find all men pretty

much upon a level, none in a marked manner better or worse than their neighbors; an inclination to regard human society as a corporate part of the mechanism of the universe, whose movement is regulated by eternal and irresistible law.

Style. — Remarkably clear and flowing, simple, graceful, and vivacious, often impregnated with a vein of the quietest yet truest and richest humor. A finished expression was his studious care. Content to take his authorities at second hand, he was constantly subjecting the *History* to revision in point of style. Defending himself against the charge of coldness in the cause of virtue, he says, with the evident anxiety to be thought innocent:

'Though I am much more ambitious of being esteemed a friend to virtue than a writer of taste, yet I must always carry the latter in my eye, otherwise I must despair of ever being serviceable to virtue.'

Character. — From his earliest years he had a genuine love of letters and philosophy, and consecrated himself to their pursuit:

'I resolved to make a very rigid frugality supply my deficiency of fortune, to maintain unimpaired my independency, and to regard every object as contemptible, except the improvement of my talents in literature.'

His supreme motive was the desire of greatness — not the greatness of circumstance or the blazonry of power, but the higher and more lasting distinction of mental empire:

'Such a superiority do the pursuits of literature possess over every other occupation, that even he who attains but a mediocrity in them, merits the preëminence above those that excel the most in the common and vulgar professions.'

He was generous, yet frugal; gentle, yet firm; modest, yet self-respectful. Pleasantry was tempered with delicacy. Raillery was without the asperity of wit,— the effusion of good nature, light, and sometimes elegant as that of Addison. Its peculiar type is most finely illustrated in his correspondence, as in the reference, in a letter of 1751, to his brother's marriage:

'*Dear Madam:*— Our friend at last plucked up a resolution, and has ventured on that dangerous encounter. He went off on Monday morning; and this is the first action of his life wherein he has engaged himself, without being able to compute exactly the consequences. But what arithmetic will serve to fix the proportion between good and bad wives, and rate the different classes of each? Sir Isaac Newton himself, who could measure the course of planets, and weigh the earth as in a pair of scales,— even he had not algebra enough to reduce that amiable part of our species to a just equation; and they are the only heavenly bodies whose orbits are yet uncertain.'

Possibly this will explain why he never ventured upon 'that untried state,' preferring rather to bear the ills he had than fly to others that he knew not of. Whether a great man has loved, is

no unimportant feature of his history; but unhappily, in the present instance, little or no light can be shed upon the question. He frequently discusses the passion of love, divides it into its elements as systematically as if he were subjecting it to a chemical analysis; lays down rules regarding it as if it were a system of logic: but the mood of mind in which passions are analyzed is not that in which they are strongly felt. We suspect that, while he had a superficial admiration of women in general, he had not the depth of emotional power to be profoundly influenced by any in particular; and the suspicion is strengthened by his own declaration on hearing of the infatuation of a nobleman, whose eyes, withdrawn from severe study, had opened in a fatal moment upon the charms of a merchant's daughter of sixteen:

'They say many small fevers prevent a great one. Heaven be praised that I have always liked the persons and company of the fair sex! for by that means I hope to escape such ridiculous passions.'

Gayety of temper, which is usually accompanied with frivolous qualities of mind, was in him coupled with extensive learning, profound thought, severe application, and a general earnestness of spirit. In his last illness, a spectator of the past, facing the infinite Silence, he communed with himself:

'I am, or rather was, . . . a man of mild disposition, of command of temper, of an open, social, and cheerful humor, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling passion, never soured my temper, notwithstanding my frequent disappointments. My company was not unacceptable to the young and careless, as well as to the studious and literary; and as I took a particular pleasure in the company of modest women, I had no reason to be displeased with the reception I met with from them. In a word, though most men, anywise eminent, have found reason to complain of Calumny, I never was touched, or even attacked, by her baleful tooth; and though I wantonly exposed myself to the rage of both civil and religious factions, they seemed to be disarmed in my behalf of their wonted fury.'

Rank.—An accomplished reasoner, an original, profound, and fearless thinker, more remarkable for depth than for erudition. As a philosopher, the greatest in the school of materialism; as a historian, the first to treat the sequence of historical events in a philosophical manner; as a man, one of the leaders of the race.

Locke had shown that all knowledge is the product of experience. Berkeley, admitting the truth of the statement, had shown that since we can know nothing but our own ideas, matter, as unknown and unknowable, must be pronounced a figment. Hume, taking up the line where Berkeley had cast it, flung it once more

into the deep sea, and found that mind was a figment also. If the 'substratum' in which material phenomena are supposed to inhere could be denied, because not founded on experience, so, for the same reason, the substratum (mind) which supports the 'impressions' might be denied. Substance is an aggregate of impressions and ideas. Belief is nothing but a strong and lively idea derived from a present impression related to it. Nothing is a subject of belief, that is not at the moment vividly impressed, and everything that chances to be so impressed is worthy of acceptance.

Hume, then, concluding from admitted premises, logically reduced philosophy to the singular dilemma of either refuting the sceptical arguments or of declaring itself to be vain and baseless. He tried the strength of human reason, and exposed its feebleness:

'The observation of human blindness and weakness is the result of all philosophy, and meets us at every turn, in spite of our endeavors to elude or avoid it.'

Do not essay the incomprehensible. You know all that directly concerns you, with a certainty sufficient for all your wants; but if you push your speculations farther, and attempt to fathom the mysteries of being, you end in that soundless and shoreless gulf which yawns as the terminal road of all consistent metaphysics,—*Scepticism*, belief in nothing, doubt in all. With how wise a sadness does Plato say of such ambitions: 'In these things, we must reach one of two results: either learn and discover how the fact really stands; or else, should this be impossible, at least take up with the best and most incontrovertible belief respecting it; and then, borne upon this as in a skiff, venture the voyage of life,—unless we can find a securer and less hazardous passage on the firm support of some Divine Word.'

What, it may still be asked, was Hume's real belief? He explicitly declares that we do believe, and cannot help believing, though in the last analysis we can give no reason for our belief:

'The sceptic still continues to reason and believe, even though he asserts that he cannot defend his reason by reason.'

But what points of support had this traveller with his fatal unrest? Did he carry his theoretical scepticism into his inner life? It must be confessed that while seeking an answer to this question, we have more than once been reminded of the famous

saying attributed to Humboldt: 'What is your religion?—The religion of all sensible men. And what is the religion of all sensible men?—Sensible men never tell.' Hume has been talked at, shrieked at, and vanquished 'with a grin.' Let us hear him as now and then he gives us admission into the audience-chamber of his thoughts:

'I have long entertained a suspicion with regard to the decisions of philosophers upon all subjects, and found in myself a greater inclination to dispute than assent to their conclusions.'

See the solitary student, who has to combat the feelings and sympathies of his fellow creatures, cannot wholly ignore his moods, wavers, but immures himself, and faces the great Darkness:

'Before I launch out into those immense depths of philosophy which lie before me, I find myself inclined to stop a moment in my present station, and to ponder that voyage which I have undertaken, and which undoubtedly requires the utmost art and industry to be brought to a happy conclusion. Methinks I am like a man who, having struck on many shoals, and having narrowly escaped shipwreck in passing a small frith, has yet the temerity to put out to sea in the same leaky, weather-beaten vessel, and even carries his ambition so far as to think of compassing the globe under these disadvantageous circumstances. My memory of past errors and perplexities makes me diffident for the future. The wretched condition, weakness, and disorder of the faculties I must employ in my inquiries, increase my apprehensions. . . . The intense view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another. Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? Whose favour shall I court, and whose anger must I dread? What beings surround me? and on whom have I any influence, or who have any influence on me? I am confounded with all these questions, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environed with the deepest darkness, and utterly deprived of the use of every member and faculty. . . . I cannot forbear having a curiosity to be acquainted with the principles of moral good and evil, the nature and foundation of government, and the cause of those several passions and inclinations which actuate and govern me. I am uneasy to think I approve of one object, and disapprove of another; call one thing beautiful, and another deformed; decide concerning truth and falsehood, reason and folly, without knowing upon what principles I proceed. I am concerned for the condition of the learned world, which lies under such a deplorable ignorance in all these particulars. I feel an ambition to arise in me of contributing to the instruction of mankind, and of acquiring a name by my inventions and discoveries. These sentiments spring up naturally in my present disposition: and should I endeavor to banish them, by attaching myself to any other business or diversion, I feel I should be a loser in point of pleasure; and this is the origin of my philosophy.'

Was he a sceptic, and a sceptic only,—an uncertain, troubled voyager on a limitless sea of doubt?—

'Should it be here asked me whether I sincerely assent to this argument which I seem to take such pains to inculcate, and whether I be really one of those skeptics who is not in *any* thing possessed of *any* measures of truth and falsehood, I should reply that this question is entirely superfluous, and that neither I nor any other person was ever sincerely and constantly of that opinion. Nature, by an absolute and uncontrollable

necessity, has determined us to judge as well as to breathe and feel; nor can we any more forbear viewing certain objects in a stronger and fuller light upon account of their customary connection with a present impression, than we can hinder ourselves from thinking as long as we are awake, or seeing the surrounding bodies when we turn our eyes towards them in broad sunshine. Whoever has taken the pains to refute the cavils of this *total* skepticism, has really disputed without an antagonist, and endeavored by arguments to establish a faculty which *Nature has antecedently implanted in the mind and rendered unavoidable.* But as experience will sufficiently convince any one that, although he finds no error in my arguments, yet he still continues to believe and think and reason as usual, he may safely conclude that his reasoning and belief is some sensation or peculiar manner of conception, which 'tis impossible for mere ideas and reflections to destroy.'

Was he an *Atheist?* Is there a God? Is there, behind the veil, some power analogous to human intelligence?—

'Though the stupidity of men, barbarous and uninstructed, be so great that they may not see a Sovereign Author in the more obvious works of nature to which they are familiarized; yet it scarcely seems possible that any one of good understanding should reject that idea when once it is suggested to him. A purpose, an intimation, a design, is evident in everything, and when our comprehension is so far enlarged as to contemplate the first rise of this visible system, we must adopt with the strongest conviction the idea of some intelligent cause or author.'

Yes, we must believe, though our belief cannot be imprisoned in formulæ or condensed into demonstrations. At the end of all discussions we come to the inscrutable:

'The whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery. Doubt, uncertainty, suspense of judgment, appear the only result of our most accurate scrutiny concerning this subject.'

We must have a standard of achievement, too; one great object to be kept forever in view. Domitian may chase flies, Rufus may hunt wild beasts, Alexander may conquer kingdoms, but the student is inspired by another ideal, not a dream of conquest nor the palling pleasures of sense, but a reality of character; stoical, severe, reaching above the storm-line into the heaven of calm dominion:

'In vain do you seek repose from beds of roses. In vain do you hope for enjoyment from the most delicious wines and fruits. Your indolence itself becomes a fatigue. Your pleasure itself creates disgust. The mind, unexercised, finds every delight insipid and loathsome; and ere yet the body, full of noxious humours, feels the torment of its multiplied diseases, your nobler part is sensible of the invading poison, and seeks in vain to relieve its anxiety by new pleasures, which still augment the fatal malady.' 'As much as the wildest savage is inferior to the polished citizen, who, under the protection of laws, enjoys every convenience which industry has invented; so much is this citizen himself inferior to the man of virtue and the true philosopher, who governs his appetites, subordinates his passions, and has learned from reason to set a just value on every pursuit and enjoyment.'

One capital defect narrowed Hume's field of vision,—a cold, unimaginative temperament. It appears in his sentiments; in

the mechanism of his language, polished as marble, cold as marble, too; in Philosophy, where he works with human nature as an anatomist, who feels that his minute examinations might be injured by any burst of feeling or eloquence; in History, where, naturally opposed to turbulence and enthusiasm, he as naturally leans towards despotism, intolerant of liberty among actors, though he wished it to be fearless and unrestrained among thinkers. No hatred of oppression burns in his pages, no yearning love of man glows there, no stirring sympathy with the restless human soul, no just appreciation of the religious instinct in directing the course of public events. A second defect was his disregard of facts, a negligence which proceeded not from an indifference to truth, for he was an ardent lover of it, nor from a 'constitutional indolence,' which is the usual account, but from his devotion to *ideas*.

Influence.—He was a nettle, and aroused thinkers to unwonted activity.

In Philosophy, before submitting to be gored by either horn of the dilemma to which Hume had reduced it, men looked about to see if there were any possible avenue of escape. The result was the birth of two great schools of thought,—the Common Sense, and the Transcendental: the first an appeal, for guidance, to the consciousness of mankind; the second, an attempt to ascertain whether we have any ideas independent of experience, ideas which may be called universal, necessary, and certain.

In Theology, he produced expansion. The foundations of Christianity were deepened and broadened. Its spirit became more liberal and enlightened.

In Ethics, he was the first to give to the utilities the aspect of a theoretical system which to-day is so extensively applied to the successful guidance of daily life, though it discovers not the far-reaching light of eternity.

In Political Economy, he was the first to declare the principles of Free Trade. He told—what the politicians of his time despised, but what those of our time are teaching[1]—that all commodities are bought by labor, that the question for international legislation was one, not of rivalry, but of coöperation.

[1] Mr. Hume is, beyond all doubt, the author of the modern doctrines which now rule the world of science.—*Lord Brougham.*

In History, he was the first to divert attention from the pomp of historic events to the deep under-currents which float them and reveal the living progress of the people. Moreover, the *History of England*, by provoking a host of controversial attacks, was the means of throwing new and important light on portions of British history.

Thus has Hume, by forcing men to doubt and inquire, rendered inestimable service to the cause of truth. The movement of civilization describes the spiral of the calculus—progressive but revolutionary. The disturbance at the outset is uncomfortable; but as the frame-work of affairs adjusts itself to the new truth, the good effects become apparent, and at length prevail:

> 'For I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
> And the thoughts of men are widened by the process of the suns.'

After all, his greatest service may be the incidental one of teaching human reason its weakness, of showing how the noblest fabric may be undermined by a destructive force not greater than the constructive one which has raised it. 'Man,' says Goethe, 'is not born to solve the mystery of Existence; but he must nevertheless attempt it, in order that he may learn how to keep within the limits of the knowable.'

And now, Mr. Hume, we cannot refrain from wishing that, along with your incisive intellect, you possessed more heart and soul; along with your self-reliant majesty, more reverence and trust. The noblest natures among men have been devout ones, whose hearts have been centrally dedicated, whose sympathies have gone out to the struggling and the sorrowing. Sometimes the sadness of the universe bows you; sometimes a sense of God comes to you, and changes the hue and expression of things before you; once in a while, the cloud of scepticism breaks, and you know in that vision what it is to believe in immortality: but we regret that you have not sensibilities strong enough to see the heights, nor fine enough to feel the depths, of this world mystery and grandeur. You carry in your bosom no sheaves of sunbeams, no carols of birds, nor plaintive cadence of Æolian harp. You bring no real joy to the troubled, no inspiration to the indifferent, nothing to console the suffering or to dry the mourner's tear. But we do not forget that you are a metaphysician, living in an age neither aglow with conviction nor alive to the hopes and fears of life.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

The characteristic peculiarity of his intellect was the union of great powers with low prejudices.—*Macaulay.*

Biography.—Born in Litchfield, in 1709. Entered Oxford in 1728. At the expiration of three years, the financial distress of his father obliged him to quit the University without his degree. Tried to support himself by teaching in a grammar-school, but failed. At twenty-five, married a widow, fat and fifty, who had children as old as himself. As a means of subsistence, opened a boarding-school, and failed. Went to London in 1737, to earn his bread, resolved, against want, disease, and the world, to live by his pen without patronage or party; climbing, by toilsome stairs, slowly but manfully up to eminence and command. Placed above want by a royal pension in 1762. Died in 1784, having struggled from childhood against scrofula, melancholy, indolence, and the fear of insanity, and, during the greater part of his life, having passed the morning in doubt that he should have food for the afternoon.

Appearance.—Large, robust, corpulent, shabby, and slovenly, with the outward signs of a voracious appetite.

Manners.—Eccentric and boorish. In company he would retire to a window or corner, and mutter a Latin verse or a prayer. Again, he would roll his head, sway his body to and fro, stretch out, and then convulsively draw back his leg. It was his constant anxiety to go in and out of a door in a particular way. When he had gone wrong, he would go back, put himself in the proper posture, and start anew. At table, he stoops suddenly, seizes the foot of a lady, and draws off her shoe. Dinner served, he darts at the food, with eyes riveted to his plate, refusing to speak, and eating till he perspires, and the veins of his forehead stand out. Having gorged himself, he is ready for a sparring-match at debate. 'Why, sir!' 'What then, sir?' 'No, sir!' 'You don't see your way through the question, sir!' 'Sir, I perceive you are a vile Whig!' 'My dear lady, talk no more of this; nonsense can be defended but by nonsense.' 'One thing I know, which you don't seem to know, that you are very uncivil.'

At the end of a period, in dispute, he would blow out his breath like a whale, and swallow several cups of tea. He had a trick of touching the posts as he walked, and a practice of treasuring up scraps of orange-peel. Pensioned by the king, he indulged his natural indolence, lying in bed often till mid-day and later. In a pretty drawing-room, among elegant philosophers, he would be regarded as a strange animal, into whose history people would inquire with wondering caution.

Writings.—The *Rambler* (1750–1752), and the *Idler* (1758–1760),—attempts to revive the periodical miscellany, sunk into disrepute at the death of Addison. Sage, sensible, moral, and pious, they wanted the ease, grace, pleasantry, and variety, to make them popular. The happy sketches of prevailing manners, which contributed so much to the popularity of former essayists, found no place in his serious pages. His essays have rather the character of sermons, teaching solid and profitable truths in an earnest and impressive way. Here is an example which will give some idea of their dignified strain:

'To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined to look on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system of philosophy, it may be necessary to consider, that though admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by softer accomplishments, and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious, must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions may die without exercising his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments and tender officiousness; and, therefore, no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted as others are qualified to enjoy.'

A Dictionary of the English Language (1755); the first of the kind in English literature, and eminently successful; imperfect in its etymologies, but accurate in its definitions, and happy in its illustrative quotations. He was never able to divest himself entirely of prejudice, and a few of the definitions, which betray his personal feelings and peculiarities, are somewhat amusing. As a Tory, hating Walpole and the Whig Excise Act, he defines *excise* as 'a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and

adjudged, not by the common judges of property, but by wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid.' *Pension* is 'an allowance made to any one without an equivalent. In England, it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country.' Johnson, it will be remembered, had not yet been pensioned, and it is not surprising that he should have had some 'compunctious visitings' at his subsequent acceptance of one. He mortally offended the Scotch by defining *oats* to be 'a grain which, in England, is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people.' Lord Chesterfield, hoping to secure its dedication to himself, extolled it; but his favor, once sought and refused, now so tardily bestowed, was disdained, and Johnson addressed him a letter whose keen sarcasm, condensed vigor, and chiselled diction are admirably typical of the writer and his style:

'MY LORD:—I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of *The World*, that two papers, in which my *Dictionary* is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished, is an honor which, being very little accustomed to favors from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When upon some slight encouragement I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre;* that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached the ground, encumbers him with help?

The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favorer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation.'

Rasselas (1759), a novel written in eight nights to pay for his mother's funeral; a series of dialogues and reflections on art,

literature, society, philosophy, the state of departed souls, the probability of the reappearance of the dead, etc. The scene is laid in the East, but the characters talk exactly as Johnson had talked in the club for twenty years. Its gloomy eloquence, born of a saddening experience and a sombre imagination, sometimes rises to the height of poetry, as in the apostrophe to the river Nile:

'Answer, thou great Father of waters! thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou waterest through all thy course a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint.'

Lives of the Poets (1781), his greatest work; pronounced by Byron to be 'the finest critical work extant,' and by Macaulay to be 'as entertaining as any fairy tale.' A serious defect is the injustice done to some of our greatest masters. He accepted blank verse under protest; the drum-and-fife music of rhyme was his delight. The higher order of imaginative poetry, moreover, was too ethereal for his rugged, ponderous grasp.

Style.—Heavy, antithetical, rolling, and pompous. He was classical in prose, as Pope in poetry; and gave to all subjects the same balanced, artificial tone. Its peculiar character is derived, not so much from the use of unfamiliar words, as from the ponderous quality of his mind. 'Dr. Johnson,' said Goldsmith, 'if you could make little fishes talk, they would talk like whales.' Weighty thoughts, he maintained, required weighty words. He was a whale. Here is a portrait of 'Squire Bluster:

'He is weighty without followers; he is magnificent without witnesses; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbors scorn him as a brute; his dependants dread him as an oppressor; and he has the gloomy comfort of reflecting that if he is hated, he is likewise feared.'

This is the manner in which he attempts to destroy that immortal enigma,—Junius. Mark the exact poise of ideas, and the correspondence of considerations:

'Junius burst into notice with a blaze of impudence which has rarely glared upon the world before, and drew the rabble after him as a monster makes a show. When he had once provided for his safety by impenetrable secrecy, he had nothing to combat but truth and justice, enemies whom he knows to be feeble in the dark. Being then at liberty to indulge himself in all the immunities of invisibility,—out of the reach of danger, he has been bold; out of the reach of shame, he has been confident. As a rhetorician, he has had the art of persuading when he seconded desire; as a reasoner, he has convinced those who had no doubt before; as a moralist, he has taught that virtue may disgrace; and as a patriot, he has gratified the mean by insults on the high. Finding sedition ascendant, he has been able to advance it; finding the nation combustible,

he has been able to inflame it. . . . Junius is an unusual phenomenon, on which some have gazed with wonder and some with terror; but wonder and terror are transitory passions. He will soon be more closely viewed, or more attentively examined; and what folly has taken for a comet, that from his flaming hair shook pestilence and war, inquiry will find to be only a meteor formed by the vapors of putrefying democracy, and kindled into flames by the effervescence of interest struggling with conviction; which, after having plunged its followers into a bog, will leave us inquiring why we regard it.'

Rank.—By the weight of his thoughts, the immense stores of his reading and observation, the power and brilliancy of his conversation,—the central figure in the second half of the eighteenth century. Chesterfield proposed to assign him, on every word in the language, the authority of dictator. He was the law of criticism, and the arbiter of style.

Character.—Conservative in politics and religion. He was called the Hercules of Toryism, and declared that the first Whig was the devil. He thought Rousseau to be the prince of felons, and could hardly settle the proportion of iniquity between him and Voltaire. He was not afraid to be thought antiquated, could give respectful audience to the peeping and chatter of ghosts, and went to a church, at one o'clock in the morning, to interrogate a tormented spirit that had promised to give a token of her presence there by a knock upon her coffin.

For severe distress, he had pity; but for the suffering which a harsh word inflicts, he had none. He could carry home on his shoulders a sick and starving girl from the streets, turn his house into a refuge for homeless ingrates; but all that could be expected of him in the presence of wounded sensibilities was, as a rule, not to laugh. 'Poh, ma'am,' he exclaimed to Mrs. Carter, 'who is the worse for being talked of uncharitably?' But we do not forget how he had lived.

A Christian from conviction, the service of God was the actuating principle of his life. If he was intolerant in matters of opinion, it was because spiritual interests were his supreme concern.

A stranger to artifice, he could neither personate another nor disguise himself. His characters always move with an elephant tread. Garrick remarked of the females that they were only Johnsons in petticoats. A deliberate, cautious manner was the normal movement of his mind. He will not marry till he has weighed the virtues and vices in antithesis, reduced them to an equation, and found the value of the unknown quantity:

'I lived in a state of celibacy beyond the usual time. In the hurry, first of pleasure and afterward of business, I felt no want of a domestic companion; but becoming weary of labor, I soon grew weary of idleness, and thought it reasonable to follow the custom of life, and to seek some solace of my cares in female tenderness, and some amusement of my leisure in female cheerfulness.

The choice which is long delayed is commonly made at last with great caution. My resolution was to keep my passions neutral, and to marry only in compliance with my reason. I drew upon a page of my pocket-book a scheme of all female virtues and vices, with the vices which border on every virtue, and the virtues which are allied to every vice. I considered that wit was sarcastic, and magnanimity imperious; that avarice was economical, and ignorance obsequious, and having estimated the good and evil of every quality, employed my own diligence and that of my friends to find the lady in whom nature and reason had reached that happy mediocrity which is equally remote from exuberance and deficiency.'

As an author, he loved strong moral painting. He saw more knowledge of the heart in a page of Richardson than in all Fielding. 'The end of writing,' he says, 'is to instruct.' The end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing; hence his criticism of Shakespeare:

'He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write without any moral purpose. . . . His precepts and axioms drop casually from him; he makes no just distribution of good or evil, nor is always careful to show in the virtuous a disapprobation of the wicked.'

His mind was analytic rather than comprehensive. His thoughts on national manners are the thoughts of one who saw little — only London. Everybody who lives in the country is either stupid or miserable. When he judged compositions fashioned on his own principles, the canons of the artificial school, he succeeded splendidly; when a deeper philosophy was required, to estimate those which yield 'homage only to eternal laws,' he failed ignominiously. His powers appeared to the best advantage in the free methods of conversation. When he talked, his wit and sense were forcible, natural; when he wrote, they were fettered and artificial. It was in spirited, personal intercourse, that his arguments were weapons, and Goldsmith could say of him, 'There's no getting along with Johnson; if his pistol misses fire he knocks you down with the butt of it.' Writing to Mrs. Thrale from the Hebrides, he says: 'When we were taken up stairs, a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed on which one of us was to lie.' Published, this incident was translated, 'out of one of the beds on which we were to repose, started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge.' '*The Rehearsal*,' he said, 'has not wit enough to keep it sweet';

then, after a pause, 'It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction.'

In a word, a man of powerful mind, of surly independence, of stern integrity, of deep piety, of offensive manners, and eccentric habits; generous, reverent, and sincere,— an illustrious blending of narrowness and strength, of noble and of boorish traits.

Influence.— In morals and criticism, it will ever be to his praise that he has assailed all sentimentalism and licentiousness. His wit, eloquence, and logic were always enlisted on the side of revealed religion, to deepen and extend, in heart and practice, the human faith in God. In the fields of literature, which were now beginning to be cultivated on all sides, he did more than any of his contemporaries to create a pure and invigorating atmosphere.

His balanced pomp of antithetic clauses soon had for others, as it had for him, an irresistible charm, and caused a complete revolution, for a time, in English style. Unhappily, it was too often imitated by inferior writers, who had not the glow to kindle the massive structure — little fishes talking like whales. There has been no English prose writer, onward to the present day, whose style has not been influenced by that of Johnson.

The reputation of his writings is every day fading, but his peculiarities are immortal.

Let us remember that Johnson came to London in what was for authors a period of famine; that, all unknown, ill-dressed, and ungainly, he began his long, toilsome ascent in squalor and misery; that he pressed forward amid calamities, and hopes deferred, eating behind a screen because he was ashamed to show his ragged clothes; that he emerged at length from garrets and cellars into the society of the polished and the opulent — the last survivor of a race of hacks; that in his old age, such men as Burke, Gibbon, Fox, Goldsmith, and others, yielded to him, in literature, a quiet supremacy. Surely here was a man who, in one sense the product of his 'environment,' was yet a final law to much that was around him.

SECOND TRANSITION PERIOD.

CHAPTER IV.

FEATURES.

The resemblance between fashions in literature, and heresies in religion, holds good in several points; most of them, as they passed away, left something behind them. But there is this difference, that in literature nothing was ever retained except the little that was good.—*Southey.*

Politics.—The death of George II terminated the ministerial ascendancy of Pitt, as well as the undisputed supremacy of the Whig party. After about ten years of feeble government and party anarchy, there was formed a Tory ministry of commanding strength, whose dominion, with an unimportant interval, became as absolute as that of the Whigs had ever been, and lasted without break to the end of the century. In 1783 the younger Pitt, second son of Lord Chatham, began his long and eventful career as Prime Minister.

The reaction was aided by the personal character of the king, who, without taste or education, was narrow and ignorant. Despotic, as well as superstitious, he steadily resisted the spirit of reform. But no man can stop the march of destiny. The result, in a few years, was a nation convulsed by faction, a throne assailed by the fiercest invective, a House of Commons hated and despised. So complete had been the change in political affairs, that, when a bill was introduced to tax the Americans without even the form of asking their consent, not the least difficulty was found in passing a measure which no minister of the preceding reign had been bold enough to propose. The policy of the government bore its legitimate fruit—the American Revolution, which emphasized the questions of right, and embodied the spirit of the age, in the memorable sentence:

'Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.'

The fire started in the Colonies kindled those latent tendencies

which wildly flamed out first in France, then in Ireland, spreading commotion everywhere. Questions of government and social organization became the topics of most urgent and varied consideration. The leading minds were roused to fresh activity, and literature, reflecting the ardent desire for freedom, was influenced profoundly.

Society.—Literature began to be addressed to the common miscellaneous public, and became in consequence more simple and independent. Authors, relying upon the patronage of the people, advocated the claims of their new allies with unusual boldness. Having previously assailed public men by their initials only, they now attacked them by name. The demand for amusement and instruction was increasing, and democratic principles were spreading. The year 1769 witnessed the first public meeting ever assembled in England to enlighten Englishmen respecting their political rights. Nothing more clearly indicates the prevalence of the spirit of inquiry than the bitter war which the government carried on against every kind of free discussion. Men were fined, imprisoned, transported, for the use of language such as in our time is employed with perfect impunity. In 1795, a law was passed conferring upon any common magistrate the power to dissolve a public gathering. If the meeting should consist of twelve persons, or upwards, a refusal to disperse one hour after being ordered to do so was punishable with death. But liberal opinions had taken root in the popular mind, and it was impossible either to stifle them or to prevent their increase. While the political movement went back, the intellectual movement went on, and eventually produced those legislative reforms which signalize the present century.

More effective police measures were adopted for the preservation of order. While the country highways were still infested with robbers, Browne, writing in 1757, was able to say that 'the reigning evil of street robberies has been almost wholly suppressed.'

The law which condemned a prisoner, who refused to plead a capital charge, to be slowly pressed to death, was repealed in 1771; and in 1790, that which condemned women to be publicly burned for the murder of their husbands.

The improvement in the moral tone of society at the end of the century, is happily illustrated by a well-known anecdote of Sir Walter Scott. His grand-aunt assured him that, when led by curiosity to turn over the forgotten pages of a novel in which she had delighted in her youth, she was astonished to find that, sitting alone at the age of eighty, she was unable to read without shame a book which sixty years before she had heard read out for amusement in large circles consisting of the best society in London.

Religion.—Methodism created a higher regard for spiritual matters. The movement begun by Wesley and Whitefield was essentially a popular one, exercising its deepest influence over the lower and middle classes. But the seed cast here germinated largely among the upper. It produced many forms of charity, many holy lives, many triumphant deaths. It implanted a fervid and enduring religious sentiment amid brutality and neglect; it imparted a warmer and more energetic tone to the devotion and philanthropy of every denomination.

Poetry.—In **Burns** and **Cowper,** poetry returned to the paths she had long deserted, to—

> 'Thoughts that voluntary move
> Harmonious numbers,'—

and to some it had never traversed. After many years, a man speaks as men speak, without premeditation, whose voice is the echo of nature, whose verse is full of personal emotions genuinely felt. Stars and clouds, streams and forests, blossoming vine and mantling green, joy and sorrow, hope and despair, love and kindness, higher beauty and ideal happiness,—these become the inspiration of the poet. We no longer listen, but sympathize. Poetry, from being artificial, has become natural.

Drama.—Only here and there do we meet with a name, eminent in literary art, that is at all associated with the stage. The dramatic literature consists chiefly of comedies and farces of modern life, all in prose. Much was written, but the only addition to the classic comedy of Congreve was **Sheridan's** *School for Scandal* (1777). It is a continual discharge of malice and witticism, a brilliant fire-work, skilfully constructed of society materials. Hear Mrs. Candour:

'Yesterday Miss Prim assured me that Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon are now become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She likewise hinted that a certain widow in the next street had got rid of her dropsy, and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner.'

Again:

'*Mrs. Candour.* Well, I will never join in the ridicule of a friend; so I tell my cousin Ogle, and ye all know what pretensions she has to beauty.

Crab. She has the oddest countenance — a collection of features from all the corners of the globe.

Sir Benjamin. She has, indeed, an Irish front.

Crab. Caledonian locks.

Sir B. Dutch nose.

Crab. Austrian lips.

Sir B. The complexion of a Spaniard.

Crab. And teeth *à la Chinoise.*

Sir B. In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa, where no two guests are of a nation.

Crab. Or a congress at the close of a general war, where every member seems to have a different interest, and the nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.'

Sheridan himself was a lucky adventurer, clever, amiable, irregular, seductive, brilliant. He rose and descended like a rocket. At one time in the House of Commons opposing Pitt, at another he was picked up in the street by the watch. Bailiffs were at his death-bed, and lords at his funeral.

Periodical.—The manufacture of newspapers was beyond all former example. This, with the increase of magazines and reviews, proves the large increase of readers, and the miscellaneous activity of writers. The *British Critic*, thus far the chief periodical devoted to criticism, appeared in 1793.

Novel.—It is doubtful whether the best novels of the preceding reign could be read aloud in any family circle, they contain so many passages of needless and offensive coarseness. The heroes are often profane and gross. The heroines take part in conversations which no modest woman would consent to hear. Yet these novels were the delight of their generation, not so much because that generation was less chaste, as because it was less delicate and refined. Words now considered indecent were then in common and daily use. But the moment approaches when the novel becomes natural without being indelicate. Purified manners give to it its final impress and character. In the noble hands of Goldsmith, it becomes in every respect moral.

History.—The ablest representative in this department is th

illustrious **Gibbon.** His work, by its critical spirit and finished style, evinces the upward progress.

It should be observed, also, that this period witnessed the first approach to histories of literature; as in **Percy's** *Reliques of Ancient Poetry* (1765), destined to exert an important influence upon youthful genius, and in **Warton's** *History of English Poetry* (1774), valuable for research and appreciative criticism.

Theology.—The religious revival created a demand for devotional literature; and the sermons of the period exemplify the increasing inclination of men's minds to serious thought and sentiment.

'Who born within the last forty years,' asked Burke in 1790, 'has read one word of Collins, and Toland, and Tindal, and Chubb, and Morgan, and that whole race who called themselves freethinkers? Who now reads Bolingbroke? Who ever read him through?' Oblivion had settled upon the Deists; and Deism, though not dead, slept.

Controversies about the Trinity preceded and accompanied the controversy with the Deists; and, in the latter half of the century, Unitarianism was the prevailing creed of the most intelligent Dissenters. It regards the Bible as the record of God's successive revelations, but interpreting that record in a special sense, denies the divinity of Christ. Where the Trinitarian says there are three distinct and equal persons in the Godhead,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,—the Unitarian says there is but one.

The scepticism of Hume, Gibbon, and Voltaire, produced a multitude of answers in defence of religion both natural and revealed. The method of discussion was twofold—internal and external. The internal evidence of Christianity was its spiritual excellence; the external evidence was its history. The historical view, mainly corroborating the New Testament from independent sources, was now the dominant one. Most of these performances survive only in their wisdom, in their effect. The works themselves, having served each its temporary purpose, are either forgotten or are fast passing into forgetfulness,—seed returned to the soil as the condition of further increase.

Not so, however, with **Paley's** *Natural Theology* (1802); or, appearances of nature applied to the proof of an intelligent

Creator. So wonderful for its beauty, for its skilful statement, for its common sense, so valuable as a logical basis for the Christian faith, that the world will not willingly let it die.

If we do not believe in a God, it is utterly impossible to believe in a Revelation. There must be somebody to speak before a message can come. Hence the question, whether there be a God, is not only the sublimest that can employ the mind, but is one of transcendent import, to Christians as well as to others.

What evidence have we of the being of God as a real existence essentially distinct from other beings? Evidence, says Paley, of the same kind and degree as that by which we conclude that a given piece of machinery must have had an intelligent maker. We must infer a designing mind wherever, in any object, we see fitness and use:[1]

'In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a *stone*, and were asked how the stone came to be there; I might possibly answer, that, for anything I knew to the contrary, it had lain there forever; nor would it perhaps be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a *watch* upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place; I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given, that, for anything I knew, the watch might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer serve for the watch as well as for the stone? Why is it not as admissible in the second case, as in the first? For this reason, and for no other, viz: that, when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, *e. g.* that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that if the different parts had been differently shaped from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or in any other order than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none which would have answered the use that is now served by it. . . . This mechanism being observed, . . . the inference, we think is inevitable; that the watch must have had a maker; that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers, who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer, who comprehended its construction, and designed its use.'

Now, to apply the argument:

'Every indication of contrivance, every manifestation of design, which existed in the watch, exists in the works of nature; with the difference, on the side of nature, of being greater or more, and that in a degree which exceeds all computation. . . .

I know no better method of introducing so large a subject, than that of comparing a single thing with a single thing; an eye, for example, with a telescope. As far as the examination of the instrument goes, there is precisely the same proof that the eye was made for vision, as there is that the telescope was made for assisting it. They are made upon the same principles; both being adjusted to the laws by which the transmission and refraction of rays of light are regulated. . . .

[1] Once more we are reminded of the ever recurring circle of human science. In the *Memorabilia*, Xenophon has preserved a conversation of Socrates with Aristodemus, in which he develops this proof at great length:

'Canst thou doubt, Aristodemus, whether a disposition of parts like this (in the human body) should be the work of chance, or of wisdom and contrivance?'

The resemblance between the two cases is still more accurate, and obtains in more points than we have yet represented, or than we are, on the first view of the subject, aware of. In dioptric telescopes there is an imperfection of this nature. Pencils of light, in passing through glass lenses, are separated into different colors, thereby tingeing the object, especially the edges of it, as if it were viewed through a prism. To correct this inconvenience had been long a desideratum in the art. At last it came into the mind of a sagacious optician, to inquire how this matter was managed in the eye; in which there was exactly the same difficulty to contend with as in the telescope. His observation taught him that, in the eye, the evil was cured by combining lenses composed of different substances, *i. e.* of substances which possessed different refracting powers. Our artist borrowed thence his hint, and produced a correction of the defect by imitating, in glasses made from different materials, the effects of the different humours through which the rays of light might pass before they reach the bottom of the eye. Could this be in the eye without purpose, which suggested to the optician the only effectual means of attaining that purpose?'

But animal anatomy is an accumulation of such instances. Indeed, they may be seen on every hand; in the structural plan of the whole solar system,—for every orb moves forever in its calculated track, which is shaped by the joint action of the sun and each planet, all of which act constantly by their law of motion; in the formation of crystals, in the growth of plants. What wisdom in the structure of a leaf, how admirable its architecture, how nice its frame-work, how exquisite its finish, how wonderful the chemistry by which it assimilates the particles of earth, air, and water,—a little mason, building up the stem of the tree, and preparing the substance of its flower and fruit! No city government could get a steam-engine to pump water with such economy! Yet, if there were but one watch in the world, we must infer a human artisan. So from natural contrivances, singly or jointly considered, we must by the same reasoning infer a divine one. The proofs of divine agency are separately supplied by every separate example. This, then, is the argument:

Whatever is by its constitution adapted to a particular end supposes contrivance, and hence a contriver.

Natural objects, and especially organized creatures, are adapted to certain ends; and must, therefore, be the product of a Being who contrived them for the ends to which their adaptation points.

Furthermore, as the means by which those ends are effected far surpass all human power and skill, their contriver is a Being whose power and skill are infinite. The cause must be adequate to the effect.

If now the sceptic tells me that the order of nature is fixed, I am able to ask him, By whom or by what is it fixed? By an

iron fate?—by an inflexible necessity? Turning against you your own weapon—induction—and ascending from particulars, have we not seen that nature bears the signature of an intelligent Cause? Does not the universe, the more it is explored, bear increasing testimony to a Being superior to itself? Then the order of nature is fixed by a Will which can reverse it. Then a power equal to miracles exists. Then miracles are not incredible. It may be replied, God indeed *can* work miracles, but He *will* not. Will not? How have you ascertained this? Has God so told you? Does it become you, who have exposed to poor human reason its impotence, to make laws for the Creator, and to restrict His agency to particular modes?

If, finally, the believer should say, after considering the proofs of a divine existence, that he leaves off only where he began, that he was not ignorant of this truth, never doubted it, that therefore he has gained nothing by his researches, the answer is, You have at least illuminated your instinct; you have confirmed and justified your God-idea; more, you have converted it into a living, available power:

'By *investigation*, the following points are always gained, . . . viz: stability and impression. Occasions will arise to try the firmness of our most habitual opinions. And upon these occasions, it is a matter of incalculable use to feel our foundation; to find a support in argument for what we have taken up upon authority. . . .

Secondly, what is gained by research in the stability of our conclusion, is also gained from it in *impression*. Physicians tell us that there is a great deal of difference between taking a medicine, and the medicine getting into the constitution. A difference, not unlike which, obtains with respect to those great moral propositions which ought to form the directing principles of human conduct. It is one thing to assent to a proposition of this sort; and another, and very different thing, to have properly imbibed its influence. I take the case to be this: Perhaps almost every man living has a particular train of thought, into which his mind glides and falls, when at leisure from the impressions and ideas that occasionally excite it; perhaps, also, the train of thought here spoken of, more than any other thing, determines the character. It is of the utmost consequence, therefore, that this property of our constitution be well regulated. Now it is by frequent or continued meditation upon a subject, by placing a subject in different points of view, by induction of particulars, by variety of examples, by applying principles to solution of phenomena, by dwelling upon proofs and consequences, that mental exercise is drawn into any particular channel. It is by these means, at least, that we have any power over it. The train of spontaneous thought, and the choice of that train, may be directed to different ends, and may appear to be more or less judiciously fixed, according to the purpose in respect of which we consider it; but, in a *moral view*, I shall not, I believe, be contradicted when I say that, if one train of thinking be more desirable than another, it is that which regards the phenomena of nature with a constant reference to a supreme intelligent author. To have made this the ruling, the habitual sentiment of our minds, is to have laid the foundation of everything which is religious. The world thenceforth becomes a temple, and life itself one continued act of adoration. The change is no less than this: that whereas formerly God was seldom in our thought, we can now scarcely look upon anything without perceiving its relation to Him.'

A piece of triangular glass is utterly valueless in itself, but becomes a precious treasure to the reverent student, when he finds that with it he can paint his walls with rainbow hues, and untwist the charming tints that are braided into a beam of light. A loadstone is no other than a fragment of common rock, till it is discovered to be alive with magnetic qualities that girdle the globe. A piece of common quartz is worth nothing by market estimates, but, by the philosopher, is more prized than a lump of gold, when it is seen to hold the secret of the force of crystallization. So the wonder and beauty of the world are not apparent, till we understand the principles with which the Infinite Mind has intrusted its material forms. God is not truly manifest in His works, till we read His thought, which they enshrine, and see the great uses in the power of things, the great wisdom in the meaning of things. Then is He revealed in every fibre of the human body, in every lichen that scars the rock, in every rose that flings out its loveliness; in the blade of grass as in the star, in the single wild flower of the woods as in the arch flower of creation. Look up, and revere; bow down, and trust.

Science.—Medical science owes much to **John Hunter,** who, by his researches in animal and vegetable Physiology, made a vast number of discoveries, which, considered singly, are curious, but which, collectively, constitute an invaluable body of new truths. His museum, at the time of his death, contained upwards of ten thousand preparations illustrative of the phenomena of nature. His great object was to show that nature is a vast and united whole, that nothing is irregular, that nothing is perturbed, that in every change there is order, that all things are done according to never-failing law.

Astronomy was enriched, and its field was greatly enlarged, by the labors of **Sir William Herschel.**

Watt's discovery that water, instead of being an element, is a compound of two gases, was a considerable step in the history of chemical analysis.

Geology was coming to life. Geologists were conducting their investigations without regard to the doctrines hitherto received. **Sir William Jones,** writing in 1784, says with regret that he lived in 'an age when some intelligent and virtuous persons are inclined to doubt the authenticity of the accounts delivered by

Moses concerning the primitive world.' For the first time, the earth's crust was represented as divided into strata, and **Hutton's** *Theory of the Earth* (1795) was the first attempt to explain its formation by natural agents:

'The doctrine, therefore, of our Theory is briefly this: That whatever may have been the operation of dissolving water, and the chemical action of it upon the materials accumulated at the bottom of the sea, the general solidity of that mass of earth, and the placing of it in the atmosphere above the surface of the sea, has been the immediate operation of fire and heat melting and expanding bodies.'

These facts indicate the spread of the scientific spirit, the excitement of a lively curiosity; and suggest that the 'conflict of studies' was beginning to put on something of its modern form.

Ethics.—The utilitarian view was defended by Paley:

'Virtue is the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, for the sake of everlasting happiness.'

This definition characterizes the man, the age, and his profession. It expresses essentially every form which the doctrine of utility has assumed, yet contains as many errors as it contains clauses. As to the doing good, practically, of course, there can be nothing better; but, as a principle to define the essence of virtue, it is faulty. For virtue of various kinds may be exercised where no man exists to be the object of our benevolence. Again, while the pursuit of public interest,—works of charity and brotherly kindness,—is undoubtedly one form of virtue, there are forms of virtue which, even if beneficial to mankind, do not become virtuous on that account, but have an intrinsic excellence in no way dependent on their utility. In the second place, as to the will of God, that it could be the sole rule of morals is inconceivable. The square upon the hypothenuse is equal to the sum of the squares upon the two remaining sides, and the will of Infinite Power could no more change the equation than the will of infinite impotence. As little, it would appear, could any decree change ingratitude into virtue and gratitude into vice. They subsist by their own inherent natures, being what they are, eternally, as a triangle or a circle is what it is. Moreover, it is meaningless to speak of the Divine attributes as deserving of our admiration, unless there be already such a quality as goodness, to which the Divine acts conform. Then, too, in this view of everlasting happiness lies the greatest blunder of all. The prospect of eternal reward is no part of virtue, or rather it annihilates

the very idea of virtue. To give away ten dollars to-day with the sure expectation of receiving ten thousand for it to-morrow, is hardly an act of generosity. To refrain from indulgence here, only that a richer banquet may be enjoyed hereafter, is merely a systematic selfishness, and to such conduct we must deny the character of genuine goodness. Still, the happiness principle, while it does not constitute virtue, may be appealed to for the purpose of leading men to virtue. A benevolent course, though pursued with an interested motive, is better than an indifferent or malevolent one. A moral code denotes the height of the collective life in its hour; and the moral teacher, for the enforcement of the moral law, yet finds it expedient or necessary to appeal, by the joys and sufferings of another life, to the vivid and mobile passions of hope and fear. Only the stoics, the sages, the self-poised and self-collected,—the 'heights and pinnacles of the human mind,'—can immolate the desire of happiness, the hope of all reward, human or divine, to the abstract idea of good; only they can do right for the sake of right, in 'scorn of consequence'; but that they can do so, is the highest proof of the divine within us, and the highest augury of the future before us. We regret, therefore, that Paley, instead of treating ethics practically, in its application to the duties of daily life, sought to lay its foundations.

Philosophy.—If the idealist or sceptic denies the existence of matter, or affirms that we have no grounds for our belief in its existence, let him walk over a precipice or run his head against a post. If ideas are nothing but *impressions*, the idea of an inch must itself be an inch long. If, therefore, I am in a room of one thousand cubic feet, I may introduce into it an idea of St. Paul's, say, which may contain a million cubic feet, or I can transport a mountain as big as the Peak of Teneriffe in a post-chaise! Such was a popular method of confuting Berkeley and Hume,—the argument from consequences, a kind of *reductio ad absurdum.* It proceeded upon a crude interpretation of the systems it professed to confute, but clearly enough indicates that the reaction against scepticism in speculative truth was assuming the form of an appeal to common sense. The belief of the mass is more reliable than the judgment of the philosopher who loses his head among the clouds. This reaction found its highest

expression in **Thomas Reid,** whose aim, as he frequently asserts, was to justify the ordinary beliefs of mankind. Alarmed by the conclusions at which philosophy had arrived, he took his appeal to the common consciousness of the race, and asserted anew the intuitive power of the mind. The ideas of beauty, of right and wrong; belief in our personal identity, in the existence of the material world, that design implies a designer, that every effect must have an efficient cause,—these, and others like them, are not derived from observation or experience, but are prior and necessary to such experience. They *do not admit of proof*, there being nothing more certain which can be brought in evidence of them; and *the denial of them involves us in absurdity:*

'All reasoning must be from first principles; and for first principles no other reason can be given but this, that, by the constitution of our nature, we are under a necessity of assenting to them.'

To attempt an account of them is foolish, for all reasoning is grounded on them, as the science of Geometry is built upon axioms and postulates. If the sceptic will call an inexplicable belief a fiction, because he cannot give a reason for it,—why, even so he must, at least we must let him; we, says Reid, will call it a divine instinct. Said blunt old Johnson, 'We know that we are free, and there's an end on't.'

Political Science.—The Greek philosophers had regarded money-getting with contempt; later philosophers had looked upon *luxury* as the foe of morals, and so were little disposed to inquire into the sources of that material prosperity which made luxury possible. The clergy of the middle ages were the sole educators of society, and were not likely to engage in studies which lay so entirely out of their sphere of thought and action. To these causes may be ascribed the late rise of political science. A more general intelligence and active curiosity, however, now furnished the conditions of its appearance; and now it was that the first successful attempt was made to raise Political Economy into a science, by discovering the laws which regulate the creation and distribution of wealth.

The principles of trade, it is true, had received scattering attention in the preceding century; and Hume, as we have seen, had given the lights of which economists to-day are largely

reflective; but the science was first comprehensively treated and organized by **Adam Smith** in his celebrated *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.* At the beginning, he lays down two propositions: first, that all wealth is derived, not from land, but from labor; and, second, that the amount of wealth depends, partly on the skill of the laborer, and partly on the proportion between the number of those who labor and the number of those who do not labor. These two principles are applied, in the rest of the work, to explain the growth and mechanism of society. In applying them, he assumes that the great moving power of all men, in all ages and in all countries, is selfishness. Yet, considering society as a whole, it usually happens that men in promoting their own interest, will unintentionally promote the interest of others. Selfishness, therefore, should not be suppressed, but enlightened:

'Parsimony, and not industry, is the immediate cause of the increase of capital. Industry, indeed, provides the subject which parsimony accumulates; but whatever industry might acquire, if parsimony did not save and store up, the capital would never be the greater. . . . But the principle which prompts to save, is the desire of bettering our condition; a desire which, though generally calm and dispassionate, comes with us from the womb, and never leaves us till we go into the grave.'

As long as the wealth of a country was supposed to consist of its gold, the sole object of trade was to increase the influx of the precious metals. This, however, could be done, only by draining other countries, repressing trade in one direction and encouraging it in another. Hence, every commercial treaty was an attempt by one nation to outwit another, a reciprocal desire of injuring and impoverishing; and thus what should be the most peaceable of pursuits became the frequent cause of war. But the commercial spirit became invariably pacific, as soon as it was clearly understood that gold and silver are not wealth, but merely the representatives of wealth; that wealth itself consists in the value which skill and labor can add to the raw material; that in the absence of monopoly, the benefits of trade must be reciprocal; that these benefits arise simply from the facility with which a nation exports those commodities which it can produce most cheaply, and imports those which it can produce only at great expense, but which the other, from the bounty of nature or superior skill in production, can afford to supply at a lower rate.

This result, among others, making its way year by year, is

mainly due to the researches of Adam Smith. So has the solitary thinker contributed more to the happiness of man than all the statesmen and legislators of whom history gives us record. He persuaded his own generation and governs ours, as he will govern those unborn. All men revolve about the thinker, albeit they know it not. He makes no noise, his voice is not heard in the stir of the street, perhaps nobody knows him, and there is no looker-on; but sitting in his little room, he constructs institutions which are to mould the destinies of coming millions, and endure when politicians, merchants, ships, and factories have vanished into silence and night. The traffic of Athens is hushed, its pride is faded, its rich men all forgotten; but Socrates still sways the counsels of the thoughtful all around the world. When he left off stone-cutting, to teach philosophy, his townsmen, if they noticed him at all, pitied him; but he set up great statues of thought to inspire the ages. When Archimedes spent his days drawing figures in the sand, circles and spheres, sines and cosines, the fishermen in the bay thought him an idler, but when Syracuse was besieged, that man was the hero-king of the nation. When Galvani hung up the leg of a frog on an iron fence, his servants considered him a dreamer and a fool; but that was the first step in the discovery which now flashes thought from Scotia to Orleans. The pomp of Herod's glory, the High Priest's solemn grandeur, have passed away; only the beatitudes of the Nazarene peasant live, larger and brighter through the mists of eighteen hundred years. The invisible mind is the great workshop of the race.

Oratory.—This was the age of English Eloquence. Perhaps the world has never seen such a galaxy of orators. Chatham, Fox, Burke, Erskine, Pitt, Sheridan and Grattan form a group unequalled before or since. To this development, the conditions were peculiarly favorable; for the period was one of aroused thought, of exacting style, of new political principles, of pressing, practical, yet national interests. Additional stimulus was given by the increased facility of circulating speeches. For the first time, the people were studying the proceedings of the national legislature, the right of publishing parliamentary debates having been substantially established in 1772. The winged words had henceforth for their audience the great public beyond the walls. Parliamentary reporting was beneficial to oratory in two ways,—

it immeasurably extended the influence of parliamentary speaking, and did much to purify it from extravagance and bombast, thus promoting its literary excellence. The orator knew that language may exercise a thrilling effect in delivery, which would be insufferable if submitted the next day to the cold criticism of unimpassioned readers.

The principal figure of this group was **Burke.** Born in Dublin, in 1730, he came to London in 1750, a poor and unknown adventurer; rose by dint of work and merits, and entered Parliament at the age of thirty-five, trained in law, history, philosophy, and literature; lifted himself into fame by his speeches on the Stamp Act and the American War, and won the crown of his glory as an orator when in the great Hall of Westminster, in the presence of the fairest and most gifted of the land, he voiced the thunders of his eloquence in the impeachment of Warren Hastings. His reading was extensive and varied, his intellect broad, his imagination fertile and precise, his emotions warm and abundant. 'I have learned more from him,' exclaimed Fox, 'than from all the books I ever read.' His style is the outpouring of a great heart and a deep mind, rolling and impetuous, broad as the sea, brilliant with color. Take an example:

'It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in,—glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendor, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what an heart must I have to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream, when she added titles of veneration to that enthusiastic, distinct, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness.'[1]

In advanced years, he had reluctantly accepted a pension, and was reproached by the Duke of Bedford, to whom he answered:

[1] *Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

'The grants to the house of Russell were so enormous, as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility. The Duke of Bedford is the leviathan among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about in his unwieldy bulk; he plays and frolicks in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilst "he lies floating many a rood," he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with the spray,—everything of him and about him is from the throne.'[1]

In the September election of 1780, he was rejected for the part he had taken in a recent mitigation of the penal laws against the Romanists. His address to the electors of Bristol has this noble conclusion:

'Gentlemen, I have had my day. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude to you for having set me in a place wherein I could lend the slightest help to great and laudable designs. If I have had my share in any measure giving quiet to private property, and private conscience; if by my vote I have aided in securing to families the best possession, peace; if I have joined in reconciling kings to their subjects, and subjects to their prince; if I have assisted to loosen the foreign holdings of the citizen, and taught him to look for his protection to the laws of his country, and for his comfort to the good-will of his countrymen; if I have thus taken my part with the best of men in the best of their actions; I can shut the book: I might wish to read a page or two more, but this is enough for my measure. I have not lived in vain.

And now, gentlemen, on this serious day, when I come, as it were, to make up my account with you, let me take to myself some degree of honest pride on the nature of the charges that are brought against me. I do not here stand before you accused of venality or of neglect of duty. It is not said, that, in the long period of my service, I have in a single instance sacrificed the slightest of your interests to my ambition, or to my fortune. It is not alleged that, to gratify any anger or revenge of my own, or of my party, I have had a share in wronging or oppressing any description of men, or any one man of any description. No! the charges against me are all of one kind;—that I have pushed the principles of general justice and benevolence too far; further than a cautious policy would warrant, and further than the opinions of many would go along with me. In every accident which may happen through life, in pain, in sorrow, in depression, and distress—I will call to mind this accusation, and be comforted.'

Long before he retired from the House, he stood almost alone; for the length of his speeches, the profundity of his argument, the profusion of his imagery, his want of temper and discretion, wearied and perplexed the squires and merchants about him. Too philosophical, he—

'Still went on refining,
And thought of convincing when they thought of dining.'

But if his eloquence flew over the heads of those to whom it was addressed, it was to be the admiration of future ages. Few speeches can be read with profit when the hearer and speaker have long been turned to dust; but 'the immortality of Burke is that which is common to Cicero or to Bacon—that which can never be interrupted while there exists the beauty of order or

[1] *A Letter to a Noble Lord.*

the love of virtue; and which can fear no death except what barbarity may impose on the globe.'

Through the trials of obscurity and the seductions of splendor, he preserved a pure reputation and an unscathed conscience, fighting nobly for noble causes, the friend of the afflicted, the champion of principle, and the persecutor of vice:

> 'His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
> Nor number nor example with him wrought
> To swerve from truth or change his constant mind.'

Résumé.—The closing years of the period were marked by a revival of interest in early English poetry, by political and social conflicts. Physical science was rapidly enlarging its acquisitions. The scepticism of Hume was calling forth a new school of metaphysicians, who emphasized the intuitive nature of man, and thus helped to deepen its spiritual impulses. Political Economy formed a new intellectual movement of vast importance to the interests of peace, and therefore of civilization. Able and devout men were giving proof of the practical control of Christian truth, as well as of its theoretical force. Cowper and Burns ushered in a new school of poetry, natural, spontaneous, and sincere. It was preëminently an age of historical inquiries and historical methods of investigation; wakeful, speculative, germinant.

The century developed, in prose, two distinct modes of literary expression,—the colloquial elegance of Addison, and the impressive pomp of Johnson. The first is English, the second is Latinistic. Both contribute to the formation of modern style, in which poetry combines polish with nature and feeling, and prose becomes at once vigorous and easy.

GIBBON.

> Pardon me, sir, but, as much as I admire your abilities, I cannot bear without indignation your sarcastic slyness upon Christianity, and cannot see without pity your determined hostility to the Gospel.—*Whitaker.*

Biography.—Born in the village of Putney, in the county of Surrey, in 1737.

> 'Nor can I reflect without pleasure on the bounty of Nature, which cast my birth in a free and civilized country, in an age of science and philosophy, in a family of honorable rank, and decently endowed with the gifts of fortune.'

He was succeeded by five brothers and one sister, all of whom died in infancy. He was himself so frail that the most tender assiduity was scarcely sufficient to rear him:

'As soon as the use of speech had prepared my infant reason for the admission of knowledge, I was taught the arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic.'

In his ninth year he was sent to Kingston, whence he was recalled, after a residence of two years, by the death of his mother:

'I was too young to feel the importance of my loss; and the image of her person and conversation is faintly imprinted in my memory. My poor father was inconsolable. I can never forget the scene of our first interview, some weeks after the fatal event; the awful silence, the room hung with black, the mid-day tapers, his sighs and tears; his praises of my mother, a saint in heaven; his solemn adjuration that I would cherish her memory, and imitate her virtues; and the fervor with which he kissed and blessed me as the sole surviving pledge of their loves.'

At fifteen he was sent to Oxford, carrying there a stock of erudition that would have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a school-boy would have been ashamed. His reading was extensive, but desultory; and his education without direction or discipline. Hence, as he himself states, he spent fourteen months at college idly and unprofitably. While here, he read himself into Romanism.

'Youth is sincere and impetuous, and a momentary glow of enthusiasm had raised me above all temporal considerations.'

To reclaim him, he was immediately sent to Lausanne, to be under the care of a Calvinist minister, whose prudent management, in the absence of opposing influences, effected his return to Protestantism. It is more than probable, however, that he was now indifferent to either faith, and the change was a mere matter of form; since we are told that for the rest of his life he was a 'philosopher,' as the eighteenth century understood the term; in other words, a disbeliever in revealed religion. His disorders had wonderfully vanished, and he was able to pursue, with astonishing success, a regular and severe system of study in the Latin and French languages, and in general literature. During his residence here, he became the devoted admirer of a charming girl, refined by education and exalted by piety. It is curious to speculate on the effect of such a union upon his character and opinions, but he was to be one of the illustrious men who have felt keenly the disappointment of their affection.

'I need not blush at recollecting the object of my choice; and though my love was disappointed of success, I am rather proud that I was once capable of feeling such a pure

and exalted sentiment. . . . The wit, the beauty, and erudition of Mademoiselle Curchod were the theme of universal applause. The report of such a prodigy awakened my curiosity; I saw and loved. I found her learned without pedantry, lively in conversation, pure in sentiment, and elegant in manners; and the first sudden emotion was fortified by the habits and knowledge of a more familiar acquaintance. She permitted me to make her two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there, in the mountains of Burgundy; her parents honorably encouraged the connection. In calm retirement the gay vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom; she listened to the voice of truth and passion; and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on a virtuous heart. At Crassy and Lausanne I indulged my dream of felicity; but on my return to England I soon discovered that my father would not hear of this strange alliance, and that without his consent I was myself destitute and helpless. After a painful struggle, I yielded to my fate; I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son; my wound was insensibly healed by time, absence, and the habits of a new life. My cure was accelerated by a faithful report of the tranquillity and cheerfulness of the lady herself; and my love subsided in friendship and esteem. The minister of Crassy soon afterwards died; his stipend died with him, his daughter retired to Geneva, where, by teaching young ladies, she earned a hard subsistence for herself and her mother; but in her lowest distress, she maintained a spotless reputation and a dignified behavior. A rich banker from Paris, a citizen of Geneva, had the good fortune and good sense to discover and possess this inestimable treasure; and in the capital of taste and luxury she resisted the temptations of wealth, as she had sustained the hardships of indigence. The genius of her husband has exalted him to the most conspicuous station in Europe. In every change of prosperity and disgrace he has reclined on the bosom of a faithful friend; and Mademoiselle Curchod is now the wife of M. Necker, the minister, and perhaps the legislator, of the French monarchy.'

In 1758 he returned to England, spent two years and a half in the unpromising occupation of a militia captain; travelled and studied in France and Italy, his indiscriminate appetite having subsided by degrees into the historic line. While at Rome, his long cherished desire to write some historical work took definite shape from a romantic incident:

'As I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the temple of Jupiter, the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started in my mind.'

Some years elapsed, however, before he was seriously engaged in the execution of his scheme. In 1778 he settled in London. Once seated in his library, he began the composition of his history:

'At the outset all was dark and doubtful,—even the title of the work, the true era of the Decline and Fall of the Empire, the limits of the introduction, the division of the chapters, and the order of the narrative,—and I was often tempted to cast away the labor of seven years.'

Entered Parliament, where, through eight sessions, he was 'a mute member,' for the great speakers filled him with despair, and the bad ones with terror. Finding it necessary to retrench, and disappointed of a lucrative place for which he had hoped from ministerial patronage, he retired to Lausanne, the paradise of his

early recollections. Here he lived happily, devoting his mornings to composition, and his evenings to the enlightened and polished society which had gathered in that city and neighborhood. He died tranquilly, of a long-standing complaint, during a visit to London, in 1794.

Writings.—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1788). It begins with the reign of Trajan, A.D. 98, and closes with the fall of the Eastern Empire, in 1452. These limits include the irruption of the barbarians, the establishment of the Byzantine power, the reorganization of Europe, the foundation of the Mahometan system, and the Crusades. Much of the material had to be patiently gathered from the rubbish of annalists and the wild stories of chroniclers. To reproduce the sequence and connection of events through this long and obscure period, he had to study, with laborious diligence, philosophy, theology, science, jurisprudence, geography, war, manners, and opinions, in the principal countries of Europe and Asia. All this done, he had to set it forth in a clear and attractive manner. When we consider the vast sweep of his subject, his long and solitary confinement to study and meditation, we can appreciate his feelings when the task was ended:

'It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion; and that, whatsoever might be the future fate of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious.'

Style.—In keeping with the formal rhetorical tendency of his time,—stately and ornate, elaborate and antithetical, clear and cold, everywhere supported by a profusion of learning:

'The style of an author should be the image of his mind, but the choice and command of language is the fruit of exercise. Many experiments were made before I could hit the middle tone between a dull tone and a rhetorical declamation: three times did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second and third, before I was tolerably satisfied with their effect. In the remainder of the way I advanced with a more equal and easy pace.'

The verses of Pope accustomed his ear to the sound of poetic harmony.

Rank.—'Few men,' says Guizot, 'have combined, if we are not to say in so high a degree, at least in a manner so complete and well regulated, the necessary qualifications for a writer of history.' His chief defect is coldness of feeling, disqualifying him for that dramatic animation which, with his solid and bright acquirements, would entitle him to be pronounced the first of English historians. A second fault, nearly allied to the first, is a sensuous imagination, leading him to dwell upon material grandeur with a fonder enthusiasm than he could feel for spiritual beauty or the moral sublime. More accurate, erudite, and comprehensive than Hume, he is less philosophical,—fonder of splendor and display.

The faults of the artist are the faults of his art. Its brilliancy, sustained throughout, is metallic; its splendor, though imposing, is artificial; its descriptions are luminous rather than warm. It regards all creeds, political and religious, from the outside. Facts are examined with judicial severity; but the passions of which those facts are the outward symbols, are not appreciated. Hence Christianity, that school of tranquil heroism, is disparaged. The zeal of the early Christians, we are told, was earthly; their doctrine of a future life, subordinated to worldly ends; their legends of miracles, so many proofs of their credulity; their morality, suited to popular prejudices; their contempt of ambition, a mere covering to ambition of a different kind; their sufferings, not to be compared to those which have been voluntarily encountered by other men without supernatural support. Julian the Apostate is idolized, but a bishop or a religious king is under the suspicion of enthusiasm, superstition or roguery. The successes of barbarous energy receive more embellishment than the triumphs of Christian faith and benevolence. The former are treated with fervid eloquence; the latter, with frigid apathy. This is the famous method of attack,—insidious, though unequivocal. Covert sneers are substituted for distinct assertions. Without an open avowal of disbelief, Revelation is insinuated to be a poetical fable. Without an explicit denial of its Divine origin, we are asked calmly to consider whether the phenomenon is really such as to imply the intervention of the Deity.

Thus the fidelity of the *Decline and Fall*, as a historical

picture, is greatly marred; yet, whatever its faults, it is a monumental work, not yet, if it ever will be, superseded.

Character.—He was born a student. His love of reading was early and invincible; and he would not have exchanged it, he said, for the treasures of India:

'My father could never inspire me with his love and knowledge of farming. I never handled a gun, I seldom mounted a horse; and my philosophic walks were soon terminated by a shady bench, where I was long detained by the sedentary amusement of reading or meditation.'

Industry must be incorporated with our treasures to give them value,—industry that occupies itself in useful dreams by night, and when the morning rises, flies to its unfinished labors:

'By the habit of early rising, I always secured a sacred portion of the day, and many scattered moments were stolen and employed by my studious industry.'

He was a historian by predilection:

'After his oracle, Dr. Johnson, my friend Sir Joshua Reynolds denies all original genius, any natural propensity of the mind to one art or science rather than another. Without engaging in a metaphysical, or rather verbal dispute, I *know*, by experience, that from my early youth I aspired to the character of an historian.'

In religion he was a Deist. His attitude is suggested indirectly by his general estimate of the religions of the Roman Empire:

'The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the magistrate as equally useful.'

If he was an infidel, he was such from conviction, from temperament, from environment. A lover of order, he abhorred controversy; and those who aspired to break a lance upon his shield were treated, as a rule, with calm contempt. Only once was he vexed into a defence, and then by imputations of bad faith. Let us hear the conclusion of his *Vindication:*

'It is not without some mixture of mortification and regret, that I now look back to the number of hours which I have consumed, and the number of pages which I have filled, in vindicating my literary and moral character from the charges of wilful *misrepresentations*, gross *errors*, and servile *plagiarisms*. I cannot derive any triumph or consolation from the occasional advantages which I may have gained over those adversaries whom it is impossible for me to consider as objects either of terror or esteem. The spirit of resentment, and every other lively sensation, have long since been extinguished; and the pen would long since have dropped from my weary hand, had I not been supported in the execution of this ungrateful task by the consciousness, or at least by the opinion, that I was discharging a debt of honor to the public and to myself. I am impatient to dismiss, and to dismiss FOREVER, this odious controversy, with the success of which I cannot surely be elated; and I have only to request that, as soon as my readers are convinced of my innocence, they would forget my vindication.'

A man of vast erudition, of comprehensive intellect, of upright purpose, of dignified self-respect; but deficient in moral depth and elevation of sentiment.

Past his fiftieth year, he estimated the value of his existence in the threefold division of mind, body, and estate:

'The first and indispensable requisite of happiness is a clear conscience, unsullied by the reproach or remembrance of an unworthy action. . . . I am endowed with a cheerful temper, a moderate sensibility, and a natural disposition to repose rather than to activity; some mischievous appetites and habits have perhaps been corrected by philosophy or time. The love of study, a passion which derives fresh vigor from enjoyment, supplies each day, each hour, with a perpetual source of independent and rational pleasure; and I am not sensible of any decay of the mental faculties.

Since I have escaped from the long perils of my childhood, the serious advice of a physician has seldom been requisite. . . .

I am indeed rich, since my income is superior to my expense, and my expense is equal to my wishes. My friend Lord Sheffield has kindly relieved me from the cares to which my taste and temper are most adverse: shall I add that, since the failure of my first wishes, I have never entertained any serious thoughts of a matrimonial connection?'

This solitude, however, at first a necessity, then a pleasure, seems not to have been borne without repining:

'I feel, and shall continue to feel, that domestic solitude, however it may be alleviated by the world, by study, and even by friendship, is a comfortless state, which will grow more painful as I descend in the vale of years.'

Afterwards he writes to a friend:

'Your visit has only served to remind me that man, however amused and occupied in his closet, was not made to live alone.'

Influence.—Great intellects are both representative and creative; mirroring the tendencies of their own time, they also modify them, spontaneously evolving events and ideas which, passing into the life of the world, become the originating cause of subsequent developments. Designedly or not, their energies bear us on. As a conspicuous factor in the sceptical movement of the eighteenth century, Gibbon has aided the march of the English mind. Scepticism, which to the ignorant is an abomination, is yet the necessary antecedent of progress. Intellectual content means intellectual stagnation. Without doubt, there would be no investigation; without investigation, no knowledge; without knowledge, no progress. To scepticism is due that spirit of inquiry which, during the last two centuries, has encroached on every possible subject. To it we owe, primarily, the correction of the three fundamental errors of the past,—intolerance in religion, credulity in science, and despotism in politics. To examine the basis on which its opinions are built, is the duty

of every thoughtful mind. When the Apostle says 'Prove all things,' he implicitly commands us to doubt all things. 'He,' says Bacon, 'who would be a philosopher, must commence by repudiating belief.' Absolute certainty would be the paralysis of study. Unless we feel the darkness, we do not seek the light. True, scepticism forms temporarily a crisis—a period of mental distress; but it is still the fire by which the gold must be purged before it can leave its dross in the pot of the refiner. As a permanent state of mind, nothing could be more calamitous. It is a mean, not an end. We are to doubt, that we may rationally believe,—doubt, not from fancy, or from the very wish to doubt, but from prudence, and through penetration of mind,—doubt, that we may reach the divine realities beyond the Slough of Despond and the Valley of Death.

Thus it is chiefly in this indirect way, as if blindly executing a trust, that Gibbon has added to the stature of humanity. He has left no track of benevolence. He serves us, not by holy thoughts, which invite us to resist evil and subdue the world, but by the reflective power which compels us to ask whether things are as they are commonly supposed. Perhaps he has helped us also by his method. At least he has furnished a new idea in the art of reading. We ought not, he says, to attend to the order of our *books* so much as of our *thoughts:*

'The perusal of a particular work gives birth perhaps to ideas unconnected with the subject it treats; I pursue these ideas, and quit my proposed plan of reading.'

Thus, in the midst of Homer he read Longinus; a chapter of Longinus led to an epistle of Pliny; and he followed the train of his ideas in Burke's *Inquiry Concerning the Sublime and Beautiful.* He offers an important advice to a writer engaged on a particular subject:

'I suspended my perusal of any new book on the subject till I had reviewed all that I knew, or believed, or had thought on it, that I might be qualified to discern how much the authors added to my original stock.'

Of all our popular writers, he was the most experienced reader; and his precepts, as well as example, are valuable hints to students:

'Let us read with method, and propose to ourselves an end to which all our studies may point. Detached parcels of knowledge cannot form a whole. . . .

While we propose an end in our reading, let not this end be too remote; and when once we have attained it, let our attention be directed to a different subject. Inconstancy weakens the understanding; a long and exclusive application to a single object hardens and contracts it. . . .

To read with attention, exactly to define the expressions of our author, never to admit a conclusion without comprehending its reason, often to pause, reflect, and interrogate ourselves; these are so many advices which it is easy to give, but difficult to follow.'

Yet we must deplore the bias of his mind which disqualified him to translate our human nature. During fifteen centuries he has *Gibbonized* it, denying to it any pure and exalted experience which could not be verified by his own. That he was honest in his researches does not prove that we can see in his pages the real truth of persons and events. He who has not an aspiring reverence — an anxiety of conscience — who does not realize the thirst of men for the Unknown — who cannot sympathize with moral enthusiasm and trembling delicacy — who feels not a warm desire to be a free and helpful man, a lover and doer of good,— can render life and character but partially. Suppressing the religious instinct, he ties the right arm of human strength and puts out the right eye of human light. He is himself a fraction, however great his intellect. Without this commanding affection, his soul may breathe this or that rich tone, but it is a lyre without its chief string — an organ with its central octave dumb.

GOLDSMITH.

Where eminent talent is united to spotless virtue, we are awed and dazzled into admiration, but our admiration is apt to be cold and reverential; while there is something in the harmless infirmities of a good and great, but erring individual, that pleads touchingly to our nature; and we turn more kindly towards the object of our idolatry, when we find that, like ourselves, he is mortal and is frail.—*Washington Irving.*

Biography.—Born in the small village of Pallas, Ireland, in 1728. His father was a clergyman, whose whole income did not exceed forty pounds:

'And passing rich with forty pounds a year.'

Tradition says that his birthplace, a half rustic mansion in a lonely part of the country, was haunted ground. In after years, when it had fallen into decay, fairies held in it their midnight revels. Vain were the attempts to repair it. A huge goblin bestrode the house every evening, and with an immense pair of jack-boots kicked to pieces all the work of the preceding day.

About two years after his birth, his father removed to the pretty hamlet of Lissoy, which became the little world of his boyhood. It was the pride and boast of a good old motherly dame, when ninety years of age, that she taught Goldsmith his letters. At six, he passed into the hands of the village schoolmaster, an old soldier, who, when he ought to have been teaching his pupils their lessons, told them marvellous stories of his wanderings in foreign lands, tales of ghosts and pirates. The fruit of this tuition was an unconquerable passion for everything that savored of romance, fable, and adventure. His motley preceptor had also a disposition to dabble in poetry, and before he was eight years old, Goldsmith had contracted a habit of scribbling verses on scraps of paper. A few of these were conveyed to his mother, who read them with a mother's delight, and saw at once that her son was a poet. A trifling incident soon induced a general concurrence in this opinion. While executing a hornpipe at an evening's social, the musician, making merry at his rather ludicrous figure, dubbed him his little Æsop. Nettled by the jest, he stopped short, and exclaimed:

> 'Our herald hath proclaimed this saying,
> See Æsop dancing and his monkey playing.'

This was thought wonderful for a boy of nine years, and it was resolved to give him an education suitable to his talents, several of the relatives agreeing to contribute towards the expense.

To prepare him for the university, he was transferred to schools of a higher order, where he was the leader of all boyish sports, and was foremost in all mischievous pranks. In his seventeenth year he entered Trinity College, Dublin, as a sizar;[1] lodging in one of the top rooms, where it is said his name may still be seen, scratched by himself upon a pane of glass. The sense of his inferior station was very annoying, and he became at times moody and despondent. He was known, however, as a boon companion, a lover of convivial pleasures. Fond of classics, he had, naturally, a positive aversion to mathematics, ethics, and logic. The death of his father, in 1747, put him to great straits. In the intervals between occasional remittances from friends at home, he would borrow from his college associates; and when these supplies had

[1] A student of this class was taught and boarded gratuitously; and, in return for these advantages, was expected to be diligent, and to make himself useful in a variety of ways, several of which were derogatory and menial.

failed, he would pawn his books. Again he would scribble a street-ballad, dispose of it for five shillings, then stroll privately through the streets at night to hear it sung, listening to the comments and criticisms of bystanders. His first distinction was the winning of a minor prize, amounting to but thirty shillings. This influx of success and wealth proved too much. He forthwith gave a supper and a dance at his chamber, in direct violation of rules. The sound of the unhallowed fiddle reached the ears of his tutor, who rushed to the scene of festivity, chastised the 'father of the feast,' and turned the astonished guests, male and female, out of doors. Unable to endure this humiliation, the next day he sallied forth upon life, resolved to bury his disgrace in some foreign land. For three whole days he subsisted on a shilling, then parted with some of the clothes from his back; then, starved into submission, as well as soothed by the gentle counsel of his brother, retraced his steps to the university. Nearly two years later he received his degree, and gladly took his final leave.

Returning to Lissoy, he spent two years idly among his relatives, most of whom shook their heads and shrugged their shoulders when they spoke of him. Ostensibly a period of probation for the clerical office, it was in reality a period of miscellaneous reading, of rural sports and careless enjoyments, on which he was wont to look back as one of the few sunny spots of his cloudy life. On the solemn occasion of ordination, he presented himself luminously arrayed in scarlet breeches! The bishop rejected him,—whether on account of deficient preparation, reports of irregularities, or his gay colors, is not determined.

A year's tutoring put him in possession of what seemed a fabulous sum of money; and immediately procuring a good horse, without a word to his friends, with thirty pounds in his pocket, he made a second sally in quest of adventures, but came back to his home, after the lapse of several weeks, forlorn as the prodigal son, mounted on a sorry creature, which he had named Fiddleback.

It was then decided that he should be sent to London for the study of law. The necessary funds were advanced by his uncle, but he was beguiled into a gambling house, and lost the whole amount before quitting Dublin.

A second contribution was raised, and in the autumn of 1752

he proceeded to Edinburgh, where he spent two winters in the study of medicine. Setting out, as usual, with the best intentions, he soon fell into convivial and thoughtless habits. He now prepared to finish his medical studies on the Continent, though his true motive was probably his long-cherished desire to see foreign parts. Accordingly he is next found at Leyden, where he was put to many a shift to meet his expenses. He thence determined to go to Paris, and was furnished by a fellow-student with money for the journey—all of which he spent for tulips, having unluckily rambled into the garden of a florist just before his departure. Too proud to recede, too shamefaced to make another appeal to his friend, he set out to make the tour of Europe on foot, with but one spare shirt, a flute, and a guinea:

'I had some knowledge of music, with a tolerable voice; I now turned what was once my amusement into a present means of subsistence. I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry, for I ever found them sprightly in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards nightfall, I played one of my merriest tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day; but in truth I must own, whenever I attempted to entertain persons of a higher rank, they always thought my performance odious, and never made me any return for my endeavors to please them.'[1]

His ramblings took him into Germany, Switzerland, France, and Italy. At Padua, where he remained some months, he is said to have taken his medical degree. After two years of pilgrimage, 'pursuing novelty,' as he said, 'and losing content,' he reached England in 1756, penniless and without any definite plan of action, yet buoyed up by visions of hope and fame. In the gloomy month of February we find him, a houseless stranger, adrift in the streets of London at night. Long afterwards he startled a polite circle by humorously dating an anecdote from the time he 'lived among the beggars of Axe Lane.' After acting as general drudge to a chemist, he commenced the practice of medicine, in a small way, among the poor. There he might have been seen, at one time, dressed in tarnished finery of green and gold, laughing and talking with an old schoolmate whom he had met; at another, in second-hand velvet, with cane and wig, adroitly covering a patch in his coat by pressing his old three-cornered hat fashionably against his side, while he resisted the courteous efforts of his patient to relieve him of the encumbrance. His next shift was as reader and corrector of the press to

[1] The 'Philosophic Vagabond' in the *Vicar of Wakefield.*

Richardson the novelist, an occupation which he alternated with his medical duties. Discouraged by the slow growth of his reputation and practice, he accepted the charge of an academy, where he soon became a favorite with the scholars, mingling in their sports, diverting them with stories, amusing them with his flute, and treating them to sweetmeats. Changing once more his mode of life, he began to write miscellaneously for reviews and other periodicals, but without making any decided hit; writing only on the spur of the moment, and at the urgent importunity of his employer. A letter of this date, after indulging in visions of future magnificence and wealth, concludes:

'Let me, then, stop my fancy to take a view of my future self,—and, as the boys say, light down to see myself on horseback. Well, now that I am down, where . . . *is I?* Oh gods! gods! here in a garret, writing for bread, and expecting to be dunned for a milk score!'

In 1758 he presented himself at Surgeons' Hall for examination as hospital mate, but was rejected as unqualified. That he might make a respectable appearance, he obtained a new suit of clothes, which were to be either returned or paid for as soon as the temporary purpose was served. Four days after his defeat, in response to a piteous tale of distress, he *pawned the clothes.* His security threatened, and he replied:

'I know of no misery but a jail, to which my own imprudence and your letter seem to point. I have seen it inevitable these three or four weeks, and, by heaven! request it as a favor—as a favor that may prevent something more fatal. I have been some years struggling with a wretched being—with all that contempt that indigence brings with it—with all those passions which make contempt insupportable. What, then, has a jail that is formidable?'

Bishop Percy says of his squalid apartment:

'I called on Goldsmith at his lodgings in March 1759, and found him writing his *Inquiry*, in a miserable, dirty-looking room, in which there was but one chair; and when, from civility, he resigned it to me, he himself was obliged to sit in the window.'

While in less forlorn quarters, suffering under extreme depression of spirits, he wrote to his brother:

'I must confess it gives me some pain to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong, active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study have worn me down.'

Henceforward his career was that of a man of letters. As he rose in the world, he sought to improve his style of living, took chambers in the Temple, began to receive visits of ceremony, and to entertain his literary friends. In 1766, from being partially

known as the author of some clever anonymous writings and a tolerated member of the Johnson circle, he had risen to fame, and become one of the lions of the day. Difficulty and distress, however, still clung to him. His finances were often at very low ebb, owing to his imprudent hospitality, to his extravagance in dress, to his liability to be imposed upon, and his irresistible propensity to give to any who asked. Much of the time he lived literally from hand to mouth, by the forced drudgery of his pen. A gleam of prosperity plunged him into heedless gayety—fine rooms, fine furniture, fine dress, fine suppers. When his purse gave out, he drew upon futurity, obtaining advances from booksellers and loans from friends. Some of his works, before they were finished, were paid for and the money spent. Thus his literary tasks outran him, and he began to 'toil after them in vain.' The autumn of 1772 found him 'working with an overtasked head and weary heart to pay for pleasures and past extravagance, and at the same time incurring new debts to perpetuate his struggles and darken his future prospects.'

He expired in April, 1774, of a nervous fever induced by close study, irregular habits, and depressing cares. 'Your pulse,' said his physician, 'is in greater disorder than it should be from the degree of fever which you have; is your mind at ease?' 'No, it is not,' was his last sad reply. Burke, on hearing of his death, burst into tears. Reynolds threw by his pencil for the day. Johnson wrote to Boswell three months afterwards: 'Of poor Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told more than the papers have made public. He died of a fever, made, I am afraid, more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy, and all his resources were exhausted. . . . Was ever poet so trusted before?' His remains were interred in the Temple burying-ground, and the Literary Club erected a monument to his memory in Westminster Abbey.

Appearance.—In stature, about five and a half feet; in build, strong but not heavy; in features, plain but not repulsive; in manners, simple and natural; in mirth, often boisterous. His face was pock-marked, rather fair in complexion; his hair, brown enough to be distinguished from the wig which he always wore.

Writings.—*The Traveller* (1764); the first of his works to which he prefixed his name, and the first to lift him into celebrity.

Johnson pronounced it a poem to which it would be difficult to find anything equal since the death of Pope. It opens with an allusion to his lone wanderings, the forsaken delights of his youth, and the fond remembrance of a brother's protecting kindness. A homeless vagrant, his heart turns with longing recollection to that brother's happy fireside and sheltering care:

'Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend;
Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire:
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair:
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crowned,
Where all the ruddy family around
Catch at the jest or pranks, that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.'

With how much of truth and graceful melancholy he adds:

'But me, not destined such delights to share,
My prime of life in wandering spent and care;
Impelled with steps unceasing, to pursue
Some fleeting good that mocks me with the view;
That, like the circle rounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.'

The plan is noble and simple. A roaming stranger, seated upon an Alpine crag, looks down on three converging countries, searches for some spot of bliss without alloy, reviews his long pilgrimage, recalls the varieties of scenery, of government, of religion, of character, which he has observed, and comes to the conclusion that our happiness depends far less upon political institutions than upon the temper and regulation of our minds:

'How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!
Still to ourselves in every place consigned,
Our own felicity we make or find.'

The predominant impression of the poem is of its naturalness; that it is built, not upon fantastic unreality, but upon nature, dealing with the world which the poet has himself lived in and known, and appealing to our sympathies by its fact of experience, by its humanity, by its lovely images of various life, by the serene graces of its style, and the mellow flow of its verse.

Vicar of Wakefield (1766), sold to save its author from arrest.[1] The scenes and characters are taken from the originals of his own motley experience, but he has set them forth with the colorings of his amiable nature. The Primrose family, like the Goldsmiths, are remarkable for their worth, but of no cleverness in the ways of the world; their hearts always right, but their heads often wrong. Mrs. Primrose can read without much spelling, is an excellent cook, and at dinner gives the history of every dish. She has a motherly vanity to appear genteel, and her daughters, imbibing the spirit of elegance, 'make a wash for the face over the fire.' Her son Moses gets cheated at the fair, and sells a colt for a box of green spectacles, that makes him sweat to carry it. Their cousins, 'even to the fortieth remove,' come to eat dinner, and sometimes to borrow a pair of boots. Dr. Primrose, husband and father, is a country clergyman; a good, easy-going soul, whose only adventures have been by the fireside. 'He writes pamphlets, which no one buys, against second marriages of the clergy; writes his wife's epitaph, while she is still living, stating that 'she was the only wife of Dr. Primrose'; has it elegantly framed and placed over the chimney-piece.

He loses a fortune and migrates,—his family with him on horseback,—easing the fatigues of the journey with philosophical disputes. Though his fortune is diminished, his happiness is not; for he has a constitution that extracts cheerful content from the humblest lot:

'Nothing could exceed the neatness of my little enclosures, the elms and hedge-rows appearing with inexpressible beauty. . . . Our little habitation was situated at the foot of a sloping hill, sheltered with a beautiful underwood behind, and a prattling river before; on one side a meadow, on the other a green. . . . It consisted of but one story, and was covered with thatch, which gave it an air of great snugness; the walls on the inside were nicely whitewashed, and my daughters undertook to adorn them with pictures of their own designing. Though the same room served us for parlor and kitchen, that only made it the warmer. Besides, as it was kept with the utmost neatness, the dishes, plates, and coppers, being well scoured, and all disposed in bright rows on the shelves, the eye was agreeably relieved, and did not want richer furniture.'

[1] I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and, as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent; at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return, and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill.—*Boswell's Life of Johnson.*

'The little republic to which I gave laws was regulated in the following manner: by sunrise we all assembled in our common apartment, the fire being previously kindled by the servant. After we had saluted each other with proper ceremony, for I always thought fit to keep up some mechanical forms of good breeding, without which freedom ever destroys friendship, we all bent in gratitude to that Being who gave us another day. This duty being performed, my son and I went to pursue our usual industry abroad, while my wife and my daughters employed themselves in providing breakfast, which was always ready at a certain time. I allowed half an hour for this meal, and an hour for dinner; which time was taken up in innocent mirth between my wife and daughters, and in philosophical arguments between my son and me.'

They all make hay together, and in the calm of the evening sit under the hawthorn hedge, drink tea and enjoy the landscape; the two little ones read, the girls sing to the guitar; while the parents stroll down the sloping field, 'that was embellished with blue-bells,' and drink in the breeze that wafts both health and harmony:

'It is a proverb abroad, that if a bridge were built across the sea, all the ladies of the continent would come over to take pattern from ours; for there are no such wives in Europe as our own. But let us have one bottle more, Deborah, my life, and, Moses, give us a good song. What thanks do we not owe to Heaven for thus bestowing tranquillity, health, and competence! I think myself happier now than the greatest monarch upon earth. He has no such fireside, nor such pleasant faces about it.'

The poor Vicar's eldest daughter is abducted, and he sets out, with his Bible and pilgrim's staff, to find her; returns at midnight, to discover his house in a blaze of fire; burns his arm terribly in rescuing his two little children from the flames, but thinks only of the blessings he still enjoys:

'"Now," cried I, holding up my children, "now let the flames burn on, and all my possessions perish; here they are,—I have saved my treasure; here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall yet be happy." We kissed our little darlings a thousand times; they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns.'

Fresh calamities come. He is thrown into jail for debt, in a vile atmosphere, among wretches who swear and blaspheme; but he feels for them only compassion,—even resolves to reclaim them:

'These people, however fallen, are still men; and that is very good title to my affections. Good counsel rejected, returns to enrich the giver's bosom; and though the instruction I communicate may not mend them, yet it will assuredly mend myself. If these wretches . . . were princes, there would be thousands ready to offer their ministry; but, in my opinion, the heart that is buried in a dungeon is as precious as that seated upon a throne. . . . Perhaps I may catch up even one from the gulf, and that will be a great gain; for is there upon earth a gem so precious as the human soul?'

The prisoners wink, whisper, cough, and laugh, but he never gives way. In less than six days, some were penitent, and all were attentive:

'I did not stop here, but instituted fines for the punishment of immorality, and rewards for peculiar industry. Thus in less than a fortnight, I had formed them into

something social and humane, and had the pleasure of regarding myself as a legislator, who had brought men from their native ferocity into friendship and obedience.'

He falls ill, his illness increases; he sees that his family will soon be without bread, learns that his daughter is dying; still his soul is paternal and humane towards the author of his misery:

'Heaven be praised, there is no pride left me now. I should detest my own heart, if I saw either pride or resentment lurking there. On the contrary, as my oppressor has been once my parishioner, I hope one day to present him an unpolluted soul at the eternal tribunal.'

His second daughter is carried off and his eldest son is imprisoned under a false accusation of murder. He is not a stoic; he weeps, wants to die, even a curse is on his lips; but he remembers his calling, recovers his fortitude, and thinks how he will fit himself and his son for eternity. But he must also exhort his fellow-prisoners; makes an effort to rise from the straw, but is too weak, and is forced to recline against the wall. In this position, he explains that,—

'Providence has given to the wretched two advantages over the happy in this life—greater felicity in dying, and in Heaven all that superiority of pleasure which arises from contrasted enjoyment.'

Fortune will at last change in our favor, if we are inflexible. Benevolence is repaid with unexpected favor; simplicity and truth have their reward:

'I had nothing now on this side of the grave to wish for; all my cares were over, my pleasure was unspeakable. It now only remained that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my former submission in adversity.'

Good triumphant over evil is the moral. Remember that patience in distress, trust in God, indulgent forgiveness, quiet labor, and cheerful endeavor, are the certain means of pleasure and of turning pain to noble uses. Consider that self-denial and heroism may coexist with many follies; that in the improvement of the race the most lowly have their allotted part. Be kind to the poor—a lover of happy human faces. Verily, this is Goldsmith himself.

The Deserted Village (1770). Few poems, if any, have attained a wider popularity. Gray, in this the last summer of his life, had it read aloud to him, and exclaimed, '*This man is a poet.*' It describes, not a living and active, but a departed and vanished, existence, which the poet has looked upon, loved and prized,—once a rural paradise, a seat of plenty and content; now a decay; a thing of memory, round which fancy and feeling

twine their golden, ever lengthening chain. Its original, we are inclined to think, is Lissoy, the scene of his boyhood. Much of it, we are told, was composed while strolling in the beautiful environs of London, and thus much of the softness and sweetness of English landscape is blended with the ruder features of his native village.

It is a mirror of the author's heart, of the fond pictures of early friends and early life forever sacred. Desolation has settled upon the haunts of his childhood, but imagination peoples the deserted spot anew, rebuilds its ruined haunts, carries us back to the season of natural pastimes, of simple joys in romantic seclusion:

'Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheered the labouring swain;
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed;
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please;
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene;
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topped the neighbouring hill;
The hawthorn-bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I blessed the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play;
And all the village train, from labour free;
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree. . . .
Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There as I passed, with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below;
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school.'

The whole poem is a transcript of his own associations and experience, idealized. From his father and brother alike were drawn the exquisite features of the village preacher, leading a life of active piety and of humble but noble usefulness. Observe the sublime simile in the closing lines:

'Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild,
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,

And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns, he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train;
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain.
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and shewed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began. . . .
At church with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway;
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran;
E'en children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile;
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed;
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven;
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm;
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.'

Through his immortal wanderings, amid the din and toil of crowded London, his heart—ever innocent and childlike amid a thousand follies and errors of the head—had cheated itself with a dream of rural quiet; but time at last had shattered the fabric of his vision, and cut to its root his cherished hope:

'In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has giv'n my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amid these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose;
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amid the swains to show my book-learn'd skill,
Around my fire an ev'ning group to draw,
And tell of all I felt and all I saw;
And as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,

I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—*and die at home at last.*

O bless'd retirement! friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, *that never must be mine,*
How blest is he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labor with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
Nor surly porter stands, in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves, to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceiv'd decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.'

'he *Stoops to Conquer*, or *The Mistakes of a Night* (1773); 'ose comedy, in which the hero and his audience are led ugh five acts of blunders. Johnson said that he knew of no ɜdy for many years that had so much exhilarated an audi-, and had answered the great end of comedy—making an ence merry. Two parties mistake a gentleman's house for ın—such is the chief incident. The author but dramatized ›wn adventure, true to his habit of turning the events of his to literary account. In his school days, a friend had given a guinea for his travelling expenses homeward. He deter-ɜd to spend his money royally. Instead of pushing directly ɜ, he halted for the night at the little town of Ardagh, and, sting the first person he met, inquired, with a lofty air, for ›est house in the place. The person addressed chanced to be torious wag, who, amused with the self-consequence of the directed him to the family mansion of Mr. Featherstone. ving there, he ordered his horse to be taken to the stable, ed into the parlor, seated himself by the fire, and demanded ; he could have for his supper. Though commonly diffident, ɔw rose to the grandeur of the occasion, and assumed the car-ɜ of the experienced traveller. The owner of the house soon ›vered the mistake, but, being a man of humor, determined ›ol his whimsical guest 'to the top of his bent.' Accordingly stripling was permitted to swagger as he pleased. Supper ɜd, he ordered a bottle of wine, and condescendingly insisted the family should partake. As a last flourish, on going to

bed, he gave particular instructions to have a hot cake at breakfast! It was not till he had dispatched his morning meal, and was regarding his guinea with a pathetic farewell, that he was told, to his confusion and dismay, of his ludicrous blunder.

During the period of his newspaper drudgery (1756–64), he composed his *Essays;* weekly contributions, neglected at their first appearance, but generally read and admired when known to be from the pen of the famous author of the *Vicar of Wakefield;* sad commentary on the world, withholding from unknown and unhonored genius that praise which it lavishes at the sound of the trumpet when it is no longer needed. Also, *Letters from a Citizen of the World,* describing English life and manners under the assumed character of a Chinese traveller; *Letters from a Nobleman to his Son,* a short and gracefully narrated history of England.

As task-work, to recruit his exhausted finances, he put forth successively the *History of Rome, History of England, History of Greece,* and *History of Animated Nature.* The charms of his style and the play of his happy disposition throughout, have rendered these works far more popular than many others of much greater scope and science. Yet the undertakings were not congenial with his studies, which renders their popularity somewhat wonderful. His genius was diverted from its bent to drudge for bread, and his own correspondence betrays his misery:

'Every soul is visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard too, as I have been trying these three months to do something to make people laugh. There have I been strolling about the hedges, studying jests with a most tragical countenance. The *Natural History* is about half finished, and I will shortly finish the rest. God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances. . . . I have published, or Davies has published for me, an *Abridgement of the History of England,* for which I have been a good deal abused in the newspapers for betraying the liberties of the people. God knows I had no thought for or against liberty in my head; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, that, as 'Squire Richard says, "*would do no harm to nobody.*"'

Style.—Simple, delicate, animated, pure, humane; lifted, by its warmth, above the school to which it belongs; abounding in images, mild, tender, and various, reflected from the calm depths of philosophic contemplation.

Rank.—The most charming and versatile writer of the eighteenth century. Johnson, estimating him as a writer, thus, in conversation with Boswell, compares him with Robertson:

'Sir, you must consider how that penetration and that painting are employed. It is not history, it is imagination. He who describes what he never saw, draws from fancy. Robertson paints minds as Sir Joshua paints faces, in a history-piece; he imagines an heroic countenance. You must look upon Robertson's work as romance, and try it by that standard. History it is not. Besides, sir, it is the great excellence of a writer to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldsmith has done this in his history. Now Robertson might have put twice as much in his book. Robertson is like a man who has packed gold in wool; the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, sir, I always thought Robertson would be crushed with his own weight—would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldsmith tells you shortly all you want to know: Robertson detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertson's cumbrous detail a second time, but Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again. I would say to Robertson what an old tutor of a college said to one of his pupils, "Read over your composition, and, wherever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out!" . . . Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying everything he has to say in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian tale.'

As a novelist, he wrote the first pure example of simple domestic fiction. Its pleasantry is great, its morality is impressive, its language is what 'angels might have heard, and virgins told.' As a poet, though less pointed and subtle than Pope, his appeal to the heart is more gentle, direct, and pure.

He had buffeted the trials and temptations of the world, and they had widened his sympathies; he had seen suffering, and bled for it—want, and relieved it—iniquity, and deplored it—gladness, and loved it—sadness, and cheered it,—because tenderness and sunshine were in him. Thus it is, by this fact of intimate contact with human nature and experience, that he held in his hand the moving strings of humanity, and, with the skill to make them vibrate regularly, drew from them immortal harmonies. Other writings have had higher power—his have that universal expression which never rises above the comprehension of the humblest, yet is ever on a level with the understanding of the loftiest; that familiar sweetness of household imagery which wins them welcome alike in the palace of the rich and the cottage of the poor, to solace and improve and gladden all. He wrote from the heart, seemingly unconscious of his fairy gifts and the excellence of his creations. 'Mr. Goldsmith,' said Paoli, 'is like the sea, which casts forth pearls and many other beautiful things without perceiving it.'

Character.—From childhood he was noted for his charitable feelings. If he was prodigal, his prodigality is more than redeemed by the circumstance that he lavished oftener upon others than upon himself. His benevolence, always prompt and

often whimsical, forms one of the most eccentric, yet endearing, points of his character. At college, engaged to breakfast with a class-mate, he failed to make his appearance. His friend, repairing to his room, knocked, and was bidden to enter. Goldsmith was in bed — immersed in feathers. In the course of a stroll, the preceding evening, he had met a woman whose husband was in the hospital, herself a stranger from the country, destitute, without food or shelter for her five children. Without money, almost as poor as herself, he brought her to the college gate, gave her the blankets from his bed to cover her little ones, and part of his clothes to sell and purchase food. In consequence, finding himself cold during the night, he had cut open his feather-bed and buried himself in the feathers. His prompt disposition to oblige placed him, at times, in awkward positions; such as inviting to tea ladies whom he met unexpectedly; running up a bill in the most open-handed manner, then finding himself without a penny in his pocket to satisfy the claims of the sneering waiter.

His simplicity made him the victim of many a practical joke. As he and his countryman, Glover, on a rural excursion in the vicinity of London, were passing a cottage, they noticed through the open window a party at tea. 'How I would like to be of that party,' exclaimed the tired Goldsmith, casting a wistful glance at the cheerful tea-table. 'Nothing is more easy,' replied Glover, who was a notorious wag; 'allow me to introduce you.' On the word he entered the house, an utter stranger, followed by the unsuspecting Goldsmith, who supposed him to be an old acquaintance. The owner rose. The dauntless Glover shook hands with him cordially, fixed his eye on a good-natured looking face in the company, muttered something like a recognition, and straightway began an amusing story, invented at the moment, of something which he pretended had occurred on the road. The host supposed that the intruders were the friends of his guests; the guests that they were the friends of the host. They were not allowed time to discover the truth, for Glover followed one story with another, and kept the whole party in a roar. Tea was offered and accepted. At the end of an hour, spent in the most sociable manner, with some last facetious remarks, Glover bowed himself and his companion out, leaving the company to compare notes and find out how impudently they had been imposed upon.

He had that heedless, or, perhaps, happy disposition which takes no care for the morrow. He even threw the present upon the neck of the future, struggled with poverty in the days of his obscurity, and the struggle was rendered still more intense by his elevation into the society of the wealthy and luxurious.

His nature was affectionate and confiding. His heart craved familiar intercourse, family firesides, the guileless and happy company of children. In children's sports he was a leader, and the most noisy of the party, playing all kinds of tricks to amuse them. Hence his love of inferior society. He had neither the graces to sustain him in the elevated circles of literature and fashion, which talk and live for display, nor the tastes which make that artificial sphere congenial. He relished free, unstudied human nature, and sought it, where he was sure to find it,—among the unlettered, in the innocence of the child and the conviviality of the rustic. If his associations left his genius unsullied, it was because his nature, innately pure and good, had nothing in it to assimilate vice and vulgarity.

He had a constitutional gayety of heart, an elastic hilarity, 'a knack of hoping,' as he expressed it; and extracted sweets from that worldly experience which yields to others nothing but bitterness. As often as he returned to solitude and a garret, he was returning also to habitual cheerfulness. What he touched, he transmuted into gold.

As a child, he was shy, awkward, sensitive, bright, blundering, desultory,—and the child was father to the man. His affections lacked concentration; his pursuits, unity; his character, solidity. His overmastering defect in proper reserve, in self-control, placed him at a great disadvantage in animated conversation, and caused him to be habitually undervalued by his associates. The club were lost in astonishment at the appearance of *The Traveller*. They knew not how to reconcile its magic numbers with the heedless garrulity of its author. Hence Walpole called him an 'inspired idiot,' and Johnson said, 'no man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had.' This was the special wrong he suffered,—that in his lifetime he was never fully appreciated by any one. His genius flowered early, but his laurels came late. He never saw himself enthroned, and he was always overshadowed by men less genial, though more

showy. Those who ridiculed him, disliked him the more because they could not understand how he came by the intellectual wealth which he poured into the lap of the public, and which compelled them at last to respect him. These things, however, have happened to most of earth's benefactors. They whose minds are of no age or country must wait, in order to have justice done them, for the award of posterity. The song of commemoration ascends not till the ears are deaf that would have thrilled to the music.

> 'A hundred cities claimed great Homer dead,
> Through which the living Homer begged his bread.'

The scorn of fools and the imperfect sympathy of friends were far heavier afflictions than the battles which he fought for his daily bread. These last belong to the appointed conditions of victory and of power. To struggle is not really to suffer. Only the soul that is taxed yields revenue. Only the ore that has felt the heat of the flames can become a golden crown. 'Heaven,' says De Quincey, 'grants to few of us a life of untroubled prosperity, and grants it least of all to its favorites.'

Influence.—High art covers a moral beauty, is to itself a kind of religion, and thus by sequence is a noble ally of the moral and religious sentiments; it awakens, preserves, and develops them. Animated by the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, it purifies and ennobles the soul by elevating it towards the Infinite, that is to say, towards God. Now literature, in its more genial functions, as it speaks to the human spirit, works by the very same organs as the fine arts, educates the same deep sympathies with the ideal,—reflects the images of the sensible world, like sculpture and painting; reflects sentiment, like painting and music. Nay, its charm is more potent, because its impressions are deeper; its influence is more durable, in the degree that language is durable beyond marble or canvas; its empire is broader and deeper, in the degree that it expresses what is inaccessible to every other art,—thought that has no forms, thought that has no colors, thought that has no sounds, thought in its most refined abstraction.

Thus has Goldsmith wrought imperishably for mankind,—by exposing vice and exalting virtue, by charming us to love, to gladness, and to trust; by making the world's daily accidents

easier and kinder; by the charities that soothe, and heal and bless; by the nameless spell that draws all men in the line of his spiritual movement, in the direction of the true, the sweet, the natural, and the gentle. Thus he who was once a journeying beggar, now rides on the shoulders of the world. While the rich and the proud who ridiculed or disparaged him are forgotten, *he* is embalmed to perpetuity. Verily, the value of a man is not in the splendor of his externals, but in the ideas and the principles enshrined in him, in the central sentiments which move him. The diadems of kings, the riches of Ormus and of Ind, were poor and cheap, compared to this single possession of the dead, who all his life wore the badge of poverty:

OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH,—
A POET, NATURALIST, AND HISTORIAN,
WHO LEFT SCARCELY ANY STYLE OF WRITING UNTOUCHED,
AND TOUCHED NOTHING THAT HE DID NOT ADORN,
OF ALL THE PASSIONS,
WHETHER SMILES WERE TO BE MOVED OR TEARS,
A POWERFUL YET GENTLE MASTER:
IN GENIUS, SUBLIME, VIVID, VERSATILE,
IN STYLE, ELEVATED, CLEAR, ELEGANT,—
THE LOVE OF COMPANIONS,
THE FIDELITY OF FRIENDS,
AND THE VENERATION OF READERS,
HAVE BY THIS MONUMENT HONORED THE MEMORY.
HE WAS BORN IN IRELAND,
AT A PLACE CALLED PALLAS,
IN THE PARISH OF FORNEY, AND THE COUNTY OF LONGFORD,
ON THE 10TH NOVEMBER, 1728,
EDUCATED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN,
AND DIED IN LONDON,
4TH APRIL, 1774.

BURNS.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius 'glinted' forth,
Rose like a star, that, touching earth,
For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth,
With matchless beams.—*Wordsworth.*

Biography.—Born in a low clay-built cottage in Ayrshire, Scotland, in 1759. His father was a poor farmer, but of manly

qualities and Christian virtues, who is said to have practised every known duty and to have avoided everything criminal. The following is the epitaph written for him by the son:

> 'O ye, whose cheek the tear of pity stains,
> Draw near, with pious reverence, and attend!
> Here lie the husband's dear remains,
> The tender father and the generous friend:
> The pitying heart that felt for human woe;
> The dauntless heart that feared no human pride;
> The friend of man, to vice alone a foe,
> "For e'en his failings lean'd to virtue's side."'

His mother was a very sagacious woman, who possessed an inexhaustible fund of ballads and legendary tales, with which she nourished the poet's infant imagination.

Subsistence was scanty. The family were obliged to live sparingly, did all the labor, almost fasted. For several years, butcher's meat was a thing unknown in the house. Robert went barefoot, bareheaded; at thirteen was busily employed, and at fifteen was the principal laborer on the farm:

> 'This kind of life—the cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing toil of a galley-slave, brought me to my sixteenth year.'

Too much toil rounded his shoulders, and induced melancholy. 'Almost every evening,' says his brother, 'he was constantly afflicted with a dull headache, which at a future period of his life was exchanged for a palpitation of the heart, and a threatening of fainting and suffocation in the bed in the night-time.' The father, a renter, worn out with grief and labor, received insolent letters from the factor, which set all the family in tears. The farm was changed, but a lawsuit sprang up:

> 'After three years' tossing and whirling in the vortex of litigation, my father was just saved from the horrors of a gaol by a consumption, which after two years' promises kindly stepped in.'

To rescue a pittance from the gripe of the law, the children, including two daughters, became creditors for arrears of wages. Another farm was taken. Robert had seven pounds annually for his services, and during four years his expenses did not exceed this wretched allowance. He said:

> 'I entered on this farm with a full resolution, *Come, go to, I will be wise!* I read farming books; I calculated crops: I attended markets, and, in short, in spite of *the devil, and the world, and the flesh*, I believe I should have been a wise man; but the first year, from unfortunately buying bad seed, and the second, from a late harvest, we lost half our crops. This overset all my wisdom, and I returned, *like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire!*'

Clouds of misfortune gathered darkly. He was obliged to hide. Jamaica was his destination. From the age of fifteen he had written rhymes, as the divine rage happened upon him,—songs, epistles, satires, and reveries. Before leaving his native land 'forever,' he resolved to publish his best poems, which had already acquired a local fame:

'I weighed my productions as impartially as was in my power: I thought they had merit; and it was a delicious idea that I should be called a clever fellow, even though it should never reach my ears—a poor negro-driver; or perhaps a victim to that inhospitable clime, and gone to the world of spirits.'

The imagery and the sentiments were so natural and impressive, so familiar and striking, whether of superstition, of religion, of character, or of scandal,—old and young, learned and ignorant, were alike surprised and transported. He grew suddenly famous, altered his resolution, and hastened to Edinburgh with anticipating heart:

'I had been for some days skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail, as some ill-advised people had uncoupled the merciless pack of the law at my heels. I had taken the last farewell of my friends; my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed the last song I should ever measure in Caledonia—*The Gloomy Night is Gathering Fast*—when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine overthrew all my schemes, by opening new prospects to my poetic ambition. The doctor belonged to a set of critics for whose applause I had not dared to hope. His encouragement in Edinburgh for a second edition fired me so much, that away I posted for that city, without a single acquaintance, or a single letter of introduction. The baneful star that had so long shed its blasting influence in my Zenith, for once made a revolution to the Nadir.'

Arriving there, he was feasted, flattered, and caressed, as the wonderful peasant. Multitudes, the sage, the noble, and the lovely, vied with each other in doing him honor. His hours were divided between poetry and rich men's banquets, where his divine fire mingled with the smoke of intoxication. A subscription, conducted under the patronage of the great, brought him a second edition and five hundred pounds. For one winter he basked in the noontide sun of popularity, then, after an excursion of two months to the southern border, he returned to his family and the shades whence he had emerged. He now married Miss Armour, to whom he had been long attached. Compelled to work for his living, he took a little farm, and lived in a hovel. He seems to have contemplated his situation and prospects with consideration and forethought. He writes:

'I am such a coward in life, so tired of the service, that I would almost at any time with Milton's Adam, "gladly lay me in my mother's lap and be at peace." But a wife and children bind me to struggle with the stream, till some sudden squall shall overset

the silly vessel, or, in the listless return of years, its own craziness reduce it to a wreck. Farewell now to those giddy follies, those varnished vices, which, though half sanctified by the bewitching levity of wit and humour, are at best but thriftless idling with the precious current of existence.'

Amidst dreary objects and sordid cares, he mused on the image of his wife, and sent his thoughts, in charming lyrics, towards the place which her presence brightened; for she yet tarried on the banks of the Ayr, till he should be able to provide a suitable dwelling. When she arrived, we may well believe that he had a brief release from the pain of life; that he found an inexpressible charm in sitting at his own fireside, in wandering over his own ground, in resuming the spade and the plough, in farming his enclosures and managing his cattle. Indeed, he was accustomed to say that the happiest period of his life was the first winter spent in his new location. But the farming speculation proved a failure, and in 1791 he relinquished it, with empty pockets, to fill at Dumfries the small post of Exciseman, which was worth, in all, ninety pounds a year. His duties were, to brand leather, to gauge casks, to test the make of candles, to issue license for the transit of liquors. What employment for an immortal bard! what an atmosphere for grand or graceful dreams!

In his seventeenth year, he attended a country dancing-school and there whet his appetite for convivial pleasures. He had passed his nineteenth summer on a smuggling coast, studying mensuration—and learning to fill his glass. He had joined a flax-dresser in a neighboring town, and the shop had burned to ashes during a carousal. Growing celebrity had flushed him with its irregular excitement and indulgence had issued in excess. Wild desires and wild repentance alternately oppressed him. At Dumfries, his moral career was downwards. He shared the revels of the dissolute and the idle. The young pressed him to drink that they might enjoy his wit. Health and spirits failed. Ever and anon the heavenly instinct flamed, and he struck from his harp notes of imperishable excellence, then sat morose amidst the memories of his faults and his lost pleasures. He was very often drunk. Once at Mr. Riddell's, he made himself so tipsy that he insulted the lady of the house; the next day sent her an apology, which she refused, then dashed off some rhymes against her. One night in January he drank too much, and fell asleep in the street. A fatal chill penetrated to his bones, and the seeds of rheumatic

fever were rooted in his weakened frame. A month later he wrote: 'I close my eyes in misery, and open them without hope.' 'What business,' said he to his doctor, 'has a physician to waste his time on me? I am a poor pigeon not worth plucking. Alas! I have not feathers enough upon me to carry me to my grave.' On the 26th of June he wrote:

'Alas, Clarke! I begin to fear the worst. As to my individual self, I am tranquil, and would despise myself if I were not; but Burns's poor widow, and half-a-dozen of his poor little ones—helpless orphans!—there I am weak as a woman's tear.'

A letter from a solicitor, urging the payment of a bill, struck him with terror, and he had the bitterness of being obliged to beg:

'A rascal of a haberdasher, to whom I owe a considerable bill, taking it into his head that I am dying, has commenced a process against me, and will infallibly put my emaciated body into jail. Will you be so good as to accommodate me, and that by return of post, with ten pounds? O James! did you know the pride of my heart, you would feel doubly for me! Alas! I am not used to beg. . . . Save me from the horrors of a jail!'

A few days afterwards he sank into an untimely grave, consumed, at the early age of thirty-seven, by the fires of his own heart. His last words were a muttered execration against the legal agent by whose note his parting days had been embittered. He was interred with military honors, and a procession of ten thousand persons testified to the interest he had excited.

Appearance.—In height, about five feet ten inches; in person, agile and strong; his hair, tied behind and spreading in black curls upon his well-raised forehead; his eyes, large and dark, glowing when he spoke with feeling or interest; his shoulders bent, his dress often slovenly, his manners rustic, his air dignified.

Education.—He received, rather imperfectly, the training of the common school. In his sixth year he was put under the tuition of one Campbell, about a mile distant from the cottage, and subsequently under that of Mr. Murdoch, a very faithful and painstaking teacher, by whom he was accurately instructed in the first principles of composition. He is said to have been an apt pupil, to have made rapid progress, and to have been remarkable for the ease with which he committed devotional poetry to memory. His school attendance, however, seems to have been less appreciated by himself than the legendary lore which he derived from an old woman who resided in the family. He says:

'At those years I was by no means a favorite with anybody. I was a good deal noted for a retentive memory, a stubborn, sturdy something in my disposition, and an enthusi-

astic idiot piety. I say *idiot* piety, because I was then but a child. Though it cost the schoolmaster some thrashings, I made an excellent English scholar; and by the time I was ten or eleven years of age, I was a critic in substantives, verbs, and participles. In my infant and boyish days, too, I owed much to an old woman who resided in the family, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity, and superstition. She had, I suppose, the largest collection in the country, of tales and songs concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraips, giants, enchanted towers, dragons, and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent seeds of poetry; but had so strong an effect upon my imagination, that to this hour in my nocturnal rambles, I sometimes keep a sharp look-out in suspicious places; and though nobody can be more sceptical than I am in such matters, yet it often takes an effort of philosophy to shake off these idle terrors. The earliest composition that I recollect taking pleasure in, was *The Vision of Mirza*, and a hymn of Addison's beginning, "How are thy servants blest, O Lord!" I particularly remember one stanza, which was music to my boyish ear:

> "For though on dreadful whirls we hung,
> High on the broken wave."

I met with these pieces in *Mason's English Collection*, one of my school-books. The first two books I ever read in private, and which gave me more pleasure than any two books I ever read since, were *The Life of Hannibal* and *The History of Sir William Wallace*. Hannibal gave my young ideas such a turn that I used to strut in raptures up and down after the recruiting drum and bagpipe, and wish myself tall enough to be a soldier; while the story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice into my mind, which will boil along there till the floodgates of life shut in eternal rest.'

At fourteen he was sent to school every alternate week for the improvement of his writing. At sixteen, obtaining a respite of three weeks, he reviewed English grammar, and studied French, which he is said to have acquired with uncommon facility. He tried Latin, but finding it dry and uninteresting, quickly laid it aside. He afterwards devoted a summer quarter to the study of surveying, with a somewhat fitful and irregular attention, having in the meanwhile, however, considerably extended his reading. He never struggled forward to a university, as many weaker men have done, but he grew into practical wisdom, into strength, into expertness, by the irrepressible movement of his own spirit. To him the gates of the temple of science were never opened, but mankind and the universe supplied him with ideas, and were not exhausted or diminished by the using.

Motive.—Ambition early made itself felt in him:

'I had felt early some stirrings of ambition, but they were the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclops round the walls of his cave. . . . The only two openings by which I could enter the temple of fortune were the gate of niggardly economy, or the path of little chicaning bargain-making. The first is so contracted an aperture, I never could squeeze myself into it; the last I always hated—there was contamination in the very entrance.'

So was his life an insurrection, between the spirit that would soar and the base entanglements that bound it down. While he

stooped behind his plow, his heart panted ardently to be distinguished:

'Obscure I am, and obscure I must be, though no young poet's, nor young soldier's heart, ever beat more fondly for fame than mine,—

"And if there is no other scene of being
Where my insatiate wish may have its fill—
This something at my heart that heaves for room,
My best, my dearest part was made in vain."'

Method.— He carried a book in his pocket when he went to the field, to study in his spare moments. He wore out thus two copies of Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling*. He had a favorite collection of songs, and pored over them driving his cart or walking to labor, 'song by song, verse by verse, carefully noticing the true, tender, or sublime, from affectation and fustian.' He kept a common-place book, in which he criticised his own productions, entered his ideas on man, religion, and literary phrases particularly fine. He maintained a correspondence with several of his companions, in order to form his expression. Some book he always carried, and read when not otherwise employed—even at meals, a spoon in one hand and a book in the other. He organized a debating club, to exercise himself in general questions, and discussed *pro* and *con*, in order to see both sides of every idea. Here are some specimen questions:

'Whether do we derive more happiness from love or friendship?' 'Whether between friends, who have no reason to doubt each other's friendship, there should be any reserve?' 'Whether is the savage man, or the peasant of a civilized country, in the most happy situation?' 'Whether is a young man of the lower ranks of life likeliest to be happy who has a good education and a well-informed mind, or he who has just the education and information of those around him.'

He wrote poetry according to the humor of the hour. He had usually half a dozen or more pieces on hand, and would take up one or other, as it suited the momentary tone of his mind, dismissing it as it brought on fatigue. His songs were composed with the utmost care and attention:

'Until I am complete master of a tune in my own singing, such as it is, I can never compose for it.' My way is this: I consider the poetic sentiment correspondent to my idea of the musical expression, then choose my theme, compose one stanza. When that is composed, which is generally the most difficult part of the business, I walk out, sit down now and then, look out for objects in nature round me that are in unison or harmony with the cogitations of my fancy, and workings of my bosom,—humming every now and then the air, with the verses I have framed. When I feel my muse beginning to jade, I retire to the solitary fireside of my study, and there commit my effusions to paper; swinging at intervals on the hind legs of my elbow-chair, by way of calling forth my own critical strictures, as my pen goes.'

One more proof that the harvest, though gathered in a day, is the result of ploughing, harrowing, planting, and growth. Not a page of fine writing was ever produced, without much intellectual effort; and the more seemingly simple, the greater the cost of production. Virgil occupied ten years in writing six books of the Æneid. Pericles, 'who thundered, and astonished Greece,' never spoke *extempore*, nor even ventured to deliver an opinion without ample preparation. Behind every little point of accomplishment, there is a great beam of endeavor and toil.

Loves.—Power of feeling is essential to greatness of character. The heart is the wizard that evokes thought, and opens the sluices of the inner skies. Imagination furnishes the poet with wings, but feeling is the muscle which plies them and lifts him from the ground.

Love was the consuming fire that revealed to Burns what manner of spirit he was of,—the volcano that heaved up mountains within his mind, gathered and whirled the spiritual waters in vigorous currents to the sea. At fifteen he had for his companion in the harvest-field a sweet and lovable girl, a year younger than himself:

> 'In short, she altogether, unwittingly to herself, initiated me in that delicious passion which, in spite of acid disappointment, gin-horse prudence, and book-worm philosophy, I hold to be the first of human joys, our dearest blessing here below!'

In the evening, as the toilers returned from their toil, he loitered behind with her,—he knew not why. With a joy he could not explain, he sat beside her to 'pick from her little hands the cruel nettle-stings and thistles.' This simple girl sang, sweetly, a song composed by a neighboring country lad. Burns, with the consuming fire in his breast, saw no reason why he might not rhyme as well:

> 'Thus with me began love and poetry, which at times have been my only, and still within the last twelve months have been my highest, enjoyment.'

Away at school, a next-door rustic charmer set him off at a tangent from the sphere of his studies. He struggled on with his *sines* and *cosines* for a few days more, but stepping into the garden one noon to take the sun's altitude, there he met his angel,—

> 'Like Proserpine, gathering flowers,
> Herself a fairer flower.'

After that, he did nothing but craze the faculties of his soul about her, or steal out to meet her:

'The last two nights of my stay in the country, had sleep been a mortal sin, the image of this modest and innocent girl had kept me guiltless.'

He met yet another, a sprightly, blue-eyed creature, amiable and trusting. On the eve of his intended voyage to the West Indies, they stood on each side of a purling brook, laved their hands in the limpid stream, held a Bible between them, pronounced their vows of eternal constancy, then parted,—never to meet again.

On the banks of the Ayr, in the hush of a vernal evening, as he leaned against a tree, listening to the melody of birds, he spied with rapture 'one of the fairest pieces of nature's workmanship that ever crowned a poetic landscape.' It was a golden moment, that coined the air with song, and he sang her into immortality.

Anon, in Edinburgh, he met a young widow,—the celebrated Clarinda; saw and admired, kindled at the recollection of their interview; saw again, and loved with deathless affection, swore to remember her in all the pride and warmth of friendship till he should cease to be. He said:

'What luxury of bliss I was enjoying this time yester-night! My ever dearest Clarinda, you have stolen away my soul; but you have refined, you have exalted it; you have given it a stronger sense of virtue, and a stronger relish for piety. Clarinda, first of your sex! if ever I am the veriest wretch on earth to forget you,—if ever your lovely image is effaced from my soul,—

"May I be lost, no eye to weep my end,
And find no earth that's base enough to bury me."'

Exactly. A few weeks later he wrote to still another, his wife:

'By night, by day, a-field, at hame
The thoughts of thee my breast inflame;
And aye I muse and sing thy name,—
I only live to love thee.
Though I were doomed to wander on
Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,
Till my last weary sand was run;
Till then,—and then I love thee.'

But enough. He pursued every butterfly that promised to settle. He composed a song on every tolerable-looking lass in his parish, and finally one in which they were all included. He organized a club, and exacted that every candidate for admission should be the professed lover of one or more fair ones. When pressed to tell why he never applied himself to Latin, he was

wont to reply with a smile that he had learned all the Latin he desired to know, and that was *omnia vincit amor*. Verily, we have found the excitant that disturbs the electricity of the mental clouds.

Writings.—Burns could be religious. After the death of his father, he conducted cottage worship, and drew tears from those present. This phase of Scottish rustic life he has placed in everlasting remembrance in *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, the most heartfelt of virtuous idyls. The following exquisite picture represents the father and his family in their evening devotions:

'The evening supper done, wi' serious face,
They round the ingle form a circle wide; [*fire*
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
The big ha'-bible, ance his father's pride;
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare; [*gray cheeks*
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care: [*selects*
And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air. . . .

Then kneeling down to Heaven's Eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:
"Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing,"
That thus they all shall meet in future days:
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear;
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere. . . .

Compared with this, how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method, and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power, incens'd, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But, haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;
And in his book of life the inmates poor enroll.'

He loved the religion which is piety in the heart and morality in the outer life, which approves joy and speaks well of happiness; but against the gloomy theology that draws down the corners of the mouth and hangs a pall over the life of man, Voltaire was not more bitter or more jocose. Gatherings of the pious were held, in which the sacrament was administered in the open air. The rustic population from every quarter flocked to the communion as to a fair, presenting a serio-comic mixture of religion, sleep, drinking, courtship, a confusion of sexes, ages,

and characters. Presently, over all the congregation silent expectation sits, while the clergymen, one after another, hurl the thunderbolts of divine vengeance. This rural celebration, with its fierce creed which damns men, Burns has satirized in *The Holy Fair*. Rev. Mr. Moodie raves and fumes to impress the terrors of the law:

'Should Hornie, as in ancient days,
'Mong sons of God present him,
The very sight o' Moodie's face
To's ain het hame hed sent him
Wi' fright that day.

Hear how he clears the points o' faith
Wi' rattlin' an' wi' thumpin'!
Now meekly calm, now wild in wrath
He's stampin' an' he's jumpin'!
His lengthen'd chin, his turn'd-up snout,
His eldritch squeal and gestures,
Oh! how they fire the heart devout,
Like cantharidian plasters,
On sic a day!'

Now 'Smith opens out with his cold harangues,' then two more ministers speak. At last the audience have a respite, the people fall to eating, the dishes rattle, whiskey flows, kindling wit and raising a din of comment that is like to breed a rupture of wrath; lads and lasses, bent on minding both soul and body, sit round the table, and 'steer about the toddy,'—some making observation on this one's dress and that one's look, others forming appointments 'to meet some day':

'But now the Lord's ain trumpet touts,
Till a' the hills are rairin',
An' echoes back return the shouts;
Black Russell is na sparin':
His piercing words, like Highlan' swords,
Divide the joints and marrow,
His talk o' hell, where devils dwell,
Our vera sauls does harrow
Wi' fright that day.

A vast unbottom'd boundless pit,
Fill'd fu' o' lowin' brunstane,
Wha's ragin' flame an' scorchin' heat,
Wad melt the hardest whunstane!
The half-asleep start up wi' fear,
And think they hear it roarin'
When presently it does appear
'Twas but some neebor snoorin'
Asleep that day. . . .

How mony hearts this day converts
O' sinners and o' lasses!

Their hearts o' stane, gin night, are gane,
As saft as ony flesh is.
There's some are fou o' love divine;
There's some are fou o' brandy.'

Are not all creatures fellow-mortals, subject alike to the inexorable edict of 'dust to dust'? Are not all born to trouble, pursuing visions and losing content, doomed, in the very mantling flush of promise, to look upon the wreck or miscarriage of provident pains? Even a mouse stores up, calculates, and suffers, like a man. So was the love of Burns all-embracing. He pitied, and that sincerely, the *Mouse* whose home, in chill November, his ploughshare laid in ruins. The assistant, who drove the horses, ran after it to kill it, but was checked by his master, who was observed to fall immediately into reverie:

'Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
Oh, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start away sae hasty,
Wi' bickerin' brattle! [*hasty clatter*
I wad be laith to rin an chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle![1]

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast;
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell;
Till, crash! the cruel coulter passed
Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald, [*without, hold*
To thole the winter's sleety dribble; [*endure*
An' cranrench cald. [*hoar-frost*

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In provin' foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promised joy.'

Amidst the gloom of personal misery brooding over the wintry desolation without, how touchingly he adds:

'Still thou art blest compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear;
An' forward, though I canna see,
I guess an' fear.'

[1] The stick used for clearing away the clods from the plough.

Was ever common incident rendered into expression more natural, delicately graceful, and true?

Of the same nature, rich in poetic light and color, is the poem to the *Mountain Daisy*, that lay in the path of his plough:

'Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem. . . .

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies! . . .

E'en thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till, crushed beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom.'

In these poems, Burns is seen in his happiest inspiration, in his brightest sunshine, and tenderest moods.

Of quite another style, and best displaying the variety of his poetic talent, is *Tam O'Shanter*, a witch-story, beginning with revelry and ranging through the terrible, the supernatural, and the ludicrous:

'Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious—
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious!'

The Jolly Beggars, picturesque, varied, and powerful. A joyous band of vagrants are accustomed to collect at a lodging-house, to compensate in a hearty supper for the privations and contumelies of the day. Travelling tinkers, brawlers, and gypsies, all in rags, fight, bang, kiss each other, and make the glasses ring with their frantic merriment:

'Wi' quaffing and laughing
They ranted and they sang;
Wi' jumping and thumping
The very girdle rang.'

Low life, but not below the regard of one who finds a human heart beating even in a happy devil.

In Burns, preëminently, the poet is the man. In all that he has written best, he has given us himself. But his songs, born of real emotion, are the very flame-breath of his heart, simple and

direct as laughter or tears. Here is one that contains 'the essence of a thousand love-tales':

'Ae fond kiss, and then we sever
Ae fareweel, alas! for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

Who shall say that fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerful' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her;
Love but her and love for ever.

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare-thee-weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure!

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas! for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.'

Style.—Musical, graceful, picturesque, familiar, glowing with the warmth and truth of nature. He was content to exhibit his feeling as he felt it:

'My passions, when once lighted up, raged like so many devils, till they got vent in rhyme; and then the conning over my verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet.'

This man, who despises cant, could not wear the classical dress. His figure is too awkward and powerful for the gold-embroidered jacket. Humming his verses to old Scotch airs as he walks in the furrow, he consults no fashion. In fact, he is contemptuous of rule, and sometimes pronounces more decisively than is consistent with politeness. At a private breakfast party, in a literary circle of Edinburgh, a fastidious clergyman made an attack on Gray's *Elegy*. He was urged to quote the passages which he thought exceptionable. This he attempted to do, but always in a blundering manner. Burns, who was enthusiastically fond of the poem, was at length goaded beyond forbearance by the wretched quibblings of the critic, and, with an eye flashing indignation, cried:

'Sir, I now perceive a man may be an excellent judge of poetry by square and rule, and after all be a d—— blockhead.'

In prose, he was more ambitious, more studied, more artificial. His letters have sometimes an inflated tone which contrasts ill with the rugged simplicity of his verses. Pleased now to show himself as well bred as fashionable folks, he put on the grand conventional robe. For example:

'O Clarinda, shall we not meet in a state, some yet unknown state of being, where the lavish hand of plenty shall minister to the highest wish of benevolence, and where the chill north-wind of prudence shall never blow over the flowery fields of enjoyment?

It is but fair to state, however, that he was not master of pure English as of his native dialect.

Rank. — By far the greatest peasant-poet that has ever appeared. He is not like Shakespeare in the range of his genius — has little of his imagination or inventive power; but within the limited compass of personal feeling or domestic incident, he comes up to nature — and who can go beyond? Pope had more wisdom, but which is the poet for man's heart and his pillow? He seldom rose into the region of great ideas, but he had the gift of vision — the eye to see and the divining instinct to understand what came and passed before him. He could not, like the great dramatists, lose himself in the creations of his fancy, but, within the sphere of his experience, or observation, whatever he has written is perfect and complete, as the humblest weed or the proudest flower,— pulsating with thought as well as with passion, full of light as well as of fire. He found his ideal, not in the remote and conventional, but in the familiar and near-at-hand; and, without rant or trick, with genuine feeling, gave it articulate voice — a voice not from the university, but from the heart of Nature. Thus we may understand why no poetry was ever more instantaneously and more widely popular; why in the rural circle he was a delight and an admiration, and in cultured Edinburgh a phenomenon.

He is the first of all our song writers. His songs are in themselves music — fitful gushes — every line, every cadence steeped in pathos.

He has left us only fragments of himself. He was too much the sport of stormy influences for the calm and regulated movement of sustained effort. Perhaps the most truly natural poets

are in this sense passive, Æolian harps swept by an ever-varying breeze.

Character.—His general abilities were extraordinary. His intellect was strong and its perceptions vivid. Its movement was that of gigantic but unpolished strength, remarkably quick, penetrating and sure. Especially in conversation, in brilliant repartee and social argument, his sagacious energy amazed the best thinkers of his time.

His intellectual character was fine, as well as logical; delicate, as well as powerful. Witness:

'There is scarcely any earthly object gives me more—I do not know if I should call it pleasure—but something which exalts me, something which enraptures me—than to walk in the sheltered side of a wood, or high plantation, in a cloudy winter day, and hear the stormy wind howling among the trees and raving over the plain. . . . I listened to the birds and frequently turned out of my path, lest I should disturb their little songs or frighten them to another station.'

Again:

'We know nothing, or next to nothing, of the structure of our souls, so we cannot account for those seeming caprices in them, that one should be particularly pleased with that which on minds of a different cast makes no extraordinary impression. I have some favorite flowers in spring, among which are the mountain-daisy, the harebell, the foxglove, the wild-briar rose, the budding birch and the hoary hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never heard the loud solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of gray plover in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can this be owing? Are we a piece of machinery, which, like the Æolian harp, passive, takes the impression of the passing accident; or do these argue something within us above the trodden clod? I own myself partial to such proofs of those awful and important realities: a God that made all things, man's immaterial and immortal nature, and a world of weal or woe beyond death and the grave.'

Calvinism, methodical, austere, iron-bound, was the prevalent religion. Against this proscriptive and gloomy form of faith, the vigorous and impetuous mind of Burns revolted, and, like a bow unstrung, tended to the opposite extreme:

'Polemical divinity about this time was putting the country half mad; and I, ambitious of shining in conversation parties on Sundays, between sermons, at funerals, etc., used, a few years afterwards, to puzzle Calvinism with so much heat and indiscretion, that I raised a hue and cry of heresy against me, which has not ceased to this hour.'

He considers Christ to be only an inspired man, and resolves religion into adoration, benevolence, universal sympathies:

'He who is our Author and Preserver, and will one day be our Judge, must be (not for His sake in the way of duty, but from the native impulse of our hearts) the object of our reverential awe and grateful adoration. He is almighty and all-bounteous, we are weak and dependent; hence prayer and every other sort of devotion. . . . He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to "everlasting life"; consequently it must be in every one's power to embrace His offer of "everlasting life"; otherwise He could not, in justice, condemn those who did not. A mind pervaded,

actuated, and governed by purity, truth, and charity, though it does not *merit* heaven, yet is an absolutely necessary prerequisite, without which heaven can neither be obtained nor enjoyed; and, by divine promise, such a mind shall never fail of attaining "everlasting life"; hence the impure, the deceiving, and the uncharitable, extrude themselves from eternal bliss by their unfitness for enjoying it. The Supreme Being has put the immediate administration of all this, for wise and good ends known to Himself, into the hands of Jesus Christ, a great personage, whose relation to Him we cannot comprehend, but whose relation to us is [that of] a guide and Saviour; and who, except for our own obstinacy and misconduct, will bring us all, through various ways, and by various means, to bliss at last.'

Beyond question, he is fundamentally devout. He will not quarrel with a man for his irreligion, any more than for his want of a musical ear; but he will regret his exclusion from so 'superlative a source of enjoyment,' and would deeply imbue the mind of every child with the principles of religion. Often, at Edinburgh, he disapproved of the sceptical jokes which he heard at the table. He advises his pupil to keep up 'a regular warm intercourse with the Deity.' In difficulty, sorrow, and remorse, his unfailing support was his firm assurance of the loving-kindness of God, and the reality of a future existence, where riches return to their native sordid matter, where titles are disregarded, and human frailties are as if they had not been. One of his favorite quotations, spoken of religion, was:

> 'Tis *this*, my friend, that streaks our morning bright,
> 'Tis *this* that gilds the honor of our night.
> When wealth forsakes us, and when friends are few;
> When friends are faithless, or when foes pursue.'

His sensibilities are tremblingly alive. The sounding woods are his delight. Solemn desolation charms him to a sad and oft-returning fondness. A beautiful face kindles him into song. A daisy turned under by his plough, a field-mouse hurrying from its ruined dwelling, moves him to pity and eloquence. Now buoyant, now pathetic, now stern, now stormful, he has a tone and the words for every mood of man's heart. Feeling himself equal to the highest, he claims no rank above the lowest,—a playmate to Nature and to Man.

His grand characteristic is *unconscious sincerity*. He is an honest man and an honest writer, abhorring formalism and hypocrisy. Always, in his successes and his failures, with genuine earnestness, he speaks his convictions. This virtue belongs to all men in any way heroic; and this it is, if they have also depth of vision, that makes men poets and prophets. In the preface of his first edition, he states that he had written,—

'To amuse himself with the little creations of his own fancy, amid the toil and fatigues of a laborious life; to transcribe the various feelings, the loves, the griefs, the hopes, the fears, in his own breast; to find some kind of counterpoise to the struggles of a world, always an alien scene, a task uncouth to the poetical mind.'

Byron has wisely styled man a pendulum betwixt a smile and a tear. A tumultuous pulse, an excess of sap, kept Burns in apparent variations and extremes. Side by side with jocose satires are stanzas full of humble repentance or Christian resignation. He acknowledged but two classes of objects,—those of adoration the most fervent, or of aversion the most uncontrollable. Wrung with anguish one day, the next he was in merriment. In the prospective horrors of a jail, he composed verses of compliment; on his death-bed, he wrote a love-song. He says:

'I lie so miserably open to the inroads and incursions of a mischievous, light-armed, well-mounted banditti, under the banners of imagination, whim, caprice, and passion; and the heavy-armed veteran regulars of wisdom, prudence, and forethought move so very, very slow, that I am almost in a state of perpetual warfare, and alas! frequent defeat. There are just two creatures I would envy,—a horse in his wild state traversing the forests of Asia, or an oyster on some of the desert shores of Europe. The one has not a wish without enjoyment, the other has neither wish nor fear.'

Yet what harmony, what music are in these discords! Perhaps it is a law of our nature, that as high as we have mounted in delight we shall sink in dejection. Hood expresses it, 'There's not a string attuned to mirth, but has its chord in melancholy'; and Burns, 'Chords that vibrate sweetest pleasure thrill the deepest notes of woe.' 'Even in the hour of social mirth,' he tells us, 'my gayety is the madness of an intoxicated criminal under the hands of an executioner.'

If you would probe the real value of a man, ask not what is the grade of his living or the scale of his expenses, but what is the moral skeleton or frame-work of his career. Weigh the man, not his titles. There are those noble by nature, and they alone are noble. Only virtue is nobility,—all else is but paint wherewith to write its name. A lord with all his tinsel glitter is but a creature formed as you and I,—like us a wayfarer from tomb to tomb. He may have been rocked in a golden cradle, but he is not therefore well-born. He is better than the peasant, precisely in the degree that he has more thought, more truth, more humanity; richer, only in proportion as he is richer in his immortal nature. Ideas and principles,—these are the stamp of royalty. Wisdom, integrity, justice, piety,—these are kingly, and whoso

has them, he only is the best-born of men, though laid in the crib of an ass, or trained in the soil between the furrows. So has Burns a just self-consciousness. As the first duty of man, he respects his own nature, estimating himself and others by the spiritual method. In the splendid drawing-rooms of Edinburgh, he is unaffected, unastonished, never forgets the majesty of manhood. Standing on his own basis, conscious of his natural rank, he repels the forward, and subdues the supercilious. Pretensions of wealth or of ancestry he ignores or despises. The sterling of his honest worth no poverty can debase into servility. Oppression may bend, but it cannot subdue, his independence. He will not be hired. He would rather assert his integrity than wear a diadem. A mercenary motive he abhors. He was solicited to supply twenty or thirty songs for a musical work, with an understanding distinctly specified that he should receive a regular pecuniary remuneration for his contributions. With the first part of the proposal he instantly complied, but the last he peremptorily rejected:

'As to any remuneration, you may think my songs either above or below price; for they shall absolutely be the one or the other. In the honest enthusiasm with which I embark in your undertaking, to talk of money, wages, fee, hire, etc., would be downright prostitution of soul.'

The editor subsequently ventured to acknowledge his services by a small sum, which the poet with difficulty restrained himself from returning:

'I assure you, my dear sir, that you truly hurt me by your pecuniary parcel. It degrades me in my own eyes. However, to return it would savor of affectation; but as to any more traffic of that debtor and creditor kind, I swear by that honor which crowns the upright statue of Robert Burns' integrity—on the least motion of it, I will indignantly spurn the by-past transaction, and from that moment commence entire stranger to you.'

So did proud old Samuel Johnson throw away with indignation the new shoes which had been placed at his chamber door. 'I ought not,' says Emerson, 'to allow any man, because he has broad lands, to feel that he is rich in my presence. I ought to make him feel that I can do without his riches, that I cannot be bought,—neither by comfort, neither by pride,—and though I be utterly penniless, and receiving bread from him, that he is the poor man beside me.'

To measure his struggles and his pains, we must consider that he had not the patient dulness nor the crafty vigilance to make

mechanical toil and perpetual economy congenial or prosperous. He could plough, sow, harrow, reap, thrash, winnow, and sell,—none could do it better; but he did it by a sort of mechanical impulse—his thoughts were elsewhere. He would pen an ode on his sheep when he should have been driving them to pasture, see visions on his way home from market, write a ballad on the girl who shows the brightest eyes among his reapers. When addressed about a business matter, he always turned it off with, 'Oh, talk to my brother about that.' He procured a book of blank paper with the purpose, as expressed on the first page, of making farm memoranda. Here is a detached specimen of his entries:

> 'Oh, why the deuce should I repine,
> And be an ill-foreboder?
> I'm twenty-three, and five feet nine,
> I'll go and be a sodger!'

How should a man grow opulent, or purchase the soil he tills, who says:

> 'I might write you on farming, on building, on marketing; but my poor distracted mind is so jaded, so racked, and bedeviled with the task of the superlatively damned obligation to make one guinea do the business of three, that I detest, abhor, and swoon at the very word business.'

His great defect was the lack of unity in his purposes, of consistency in his aims; the want of that self-command and self-suppression by which great souls, conceiving a mission, are able to fulfil it, despite the impulses of earth, alike in sunshine and in wintry gloom.

To the last, he had a divided aim in his activity,—conviviality and the muse. Thus it is that, while his hoofs were of fire, he continued to wade the mud. To this, more than to his outward situation, is it due that he never rose permanently above his environment into the serene ether of moral and physical victory, but passed existence in an angry discontent with fate. We can believe that to his culture as a poet a season of poverty and suffering was a positive advantage—a divine mean to a divine end. It was required only that his heart should be right, that he should constitute one object the soul of his endeavors; then, as it was his lot to strive, it would have been his glory to conquer. Said Jean Paul, who had often only an allowance of water, 'I would not for much that I had been born richer.' 'The canary bird sings sweeter, the longer it has been trained in a

darkened cage.' 'Fortune,' says Disraeli, 'has rarely condescended to be the companion of genius.' Tasso was obliged to borrow a crown to subsist through the week. Cervantes, the genius of Spain, wanted bread. Said a nobleman to a bishop: 'I want your advice, my lord; how am I to bring up my son so as to make him get forward in the world?' 'I know of but one way,' replied the bishop; 'give him parts and poverty.' Poussin, shown a picture by a person of rank, remarked, 'You only want a little poverty, sir, to make you a good painter.' Johnson usually wrote from the pressure of want. With his lassitude and love of ease, he would never have been the literary autocrat of his century, had he not been pressed into service and driven on to glory at the sharp point of necessity.

Influence.—On the popular mind of Scotland his influence has been great and lasting. His poetry has helped to awaken, enlarge, elevate, and refine it. This frank, generous, and reckless blooming of poetic life was needed as a counteraction against the pitiless doctrines of Calvinism. To the national literature it restored the idea of beauty; to the national religion, the pleasures of instinct; to both, the natural expression of the heart's emotions.

While 'rivers roll and woods are green,' aspiring youth will be instructed by the efforts, the miseries, the revolts, the errors, and the virtues of the mighty peasant who 'grew immortal as he stooped behind his plough.'

COWPER.

Poor charming soul, perishing like a frail flower transplanted from a warm land to the snow: the world's temperature was too rough for it; and the moral law, which should have supported it, tore it with its thorns.—*Taine.*

Biography.—Born in the county of Hertford, in 1731, son of a clergyman. In his seventh year, he lost his mother, a lady of most amiable temper and agreeable manners. At this tender age he was sent to a boarding-school. Timid and home-sick, he was singled out by a boy of fifteen who persecuted him with

relentless cruelty, and never seemed pleased except when tormenting him:

'I conceived such a dread of his figure, . . . that I well remember being afraid to lift my eyes upon him higher than his knees; and that I knew him better by his shoe-buckles than by any other part of his dress.'

At nine a malady of the nerves seized him, the shadow of evil to come. At ten he was sent to Westminster, where he studied the classics diligently till eighteen. Here he experienced more brutality, and in consequence could never advert to those years without a feeling of horror. Warren Hastings was one of his schoolmates.

He next studied, or professed to study, the law, with a London attorney, and was admitted to the bar in 1754. A more unsuitable choice of profession it would have been difficult to make. He devoted his time chiefly to poetry and general literature. As students, he and Thurlow—the future Lord Chancellor—were 'constantly employed from morning to night in giggling and making giggle.' His evil had not left him. Melancholy came, profound dejection:

'Day and night I was upon the rack, lying down in horror and rising up in despair.'

At thirty-one, almost without an object in life, his father dead and his fortune small, he accepted gladly, without reflection, the post of reading clerk in the House of Lords. But his meek and gentle spirit was so overwhelmed by the idea of a public appearance, that he resigned his position before he assumed its duties. Thinking, like a man in a fever, that a change of posture would relieve his pain, he had requested appointment to the clerkship of the Journals—an office which, he had supposed, would not require his presence in the House. But he had to undergo an examination, and again his nerves were unstrung:

'They whose spirits are formed like mine, to whom a public exhibition of themselves, on any occasion, is mortal poison, may have some idea of the horror of my situation—others can have none. My continual misery at length brought on a nervous fever; quiet forsook me by day, and peace by night; even a finger raised against me seemed more than I could bear.'

For six months he studied the Journal books and tried to prepare himself, but he read without understanding:

'In this situation, such a fit of passion has sometimes seized me when alone in my chambers, that I have cried out aloud, and cursed the hour of my birth; lifting up my eyes to heaven not as a suppliant, but in the hellish spirit of rancorous reproach and blasphemy against my Maker.'

The day of examination arrived, and he attempted suicide as a means of escape. At last insanity came, and he was sent to an asylum, whilst his conscience was scaring him, and the bottomless pit seemed yawning to receive him.

On his recovery, feeling himself incapable of an active life, he withdrew into the country, with the remnant of his patrimony, and a further sum contributed by his friends. Here he formed an intimacy with the family of Mr. Unwin, a resident clergyman:

'They are the most agreeable people imaginable; quite sociable, and as free from the ceremonious civility of country gentlefolks as any I ever met with. They treat me more like a near relation than a stranger, and their house is always open to me.'

To his joy they received him as an inmate. Their cheerful company, the wholesome air, and, above all, the maternal tenderness of Mrs. Unwin, gave him a few gleams of light. Several hours of each day he worked in the garden; the rest of the time he employed in reading scripture or sermons, in singing hymns with his friends, and in Christian conversation:

On the death of Mr. Unwin, he removed with the family to Olney, where he enjoyed the friendship of Rev. Mr. Newton, a man of great force of character and of fervid piety. Here, amid picturesque scenery, he lived a religious recluse. As a pastime to divert him from sad reflections, Mr. Newton engaged his assistance in preparing a volume of hymns; but his morbid melancholy increased, and in 1778 he was again shrouded in the gloom of madness. Mrs. Unwin watched over him with untiring vigilance. After four years, reason returned. As he began to recover, he took to gardening and composing poetry. A friend gave him three hares, which yet live in his verse. He had also five rabbits, two guinea-pigs, two dogs, a magpie, a jay, a starling, canaries, pigeons, and gold-finches.

When upwards of fifty years old he published his first volume of poems. On the occasion, he wrote to Mr. Unwin:

'Your mother says I *must* write, and "must" admits of no apology; I might otherwise plead that I have nothing to say, that I am weary, that I am dull. . . . But all these pleas, and whatever pleas besides, either disinclination, indolence, or necessity, might suggest, are overruled, as they ought to be, the moment a lady adduces her irrefragable argument, *you must*.'

At this time, Lady Austen, a baronet's widow, sister-in-law of a clergyman near Olney, became his friend. Elegant, accomplished, and witty, her society was an antidote to his low spirits.

Whenever the cloud seemed to be coming over him, her sprightliness dispelled it. She was the taskmaster of his muse, assigned him topics, and exhorted him to undertake the translation of Homer. Mrs. Unwin, the devoted friend of twenty years, looked with no little jealousy upon the ascendancy of this fair inspirer; and finding it necessary to choose which he should please to retain, Cowper, in mental anguish, sent Lady Austen a valedictory letter. Depression continued:

'My heart resembles not the heart of a Christian, mourning and yet rejoicing, pierced with thorns, yet wreathed about with roses; I have the thorn without the rose. My brier is a wintry one, the flowers are withered, but the thorn remains.'

His cousin, a woman of refined and fascinating manners, whom he had not seen for three-and-twenty years, came to visit them; and, with her, sweet moments. Thus he records the promised delight:

'I shall see you again, I shall hear your voice. We shall take walks together. I will show you my prospects—the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse, and its banks, everything that I have described. . . . I will not let you come till the end of May or the beginning of June, because before that time my green-house will not be ready to receive us, and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out, we go in. I line it with nets, and spread the floor with mats, and there you shall sit, with a bed of mignonette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jasmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day.'

Despair was seldom out of his mind. He floated on a sea of endless conjectures, apprehending the worst. In 1788 he wrote:

'O trouble! the portion of mortals—but mine in particular. Would I had never known thee, or could bid thee farewell forever! for I meet thee at every turn, my pillows are stuffed with thee, my very roses smell of thee.'

In 1792 Mrs. Unwin was stricken with paralysis, and the task of nursing her fell upon the sensitive and dejected poet. Again he battled with despondency, planned work upon Milton in his occasionally bright intervals, relapsed again into a painful illness of mind, from which, after the death of Mrs. Unwin, he found relief only in the revision of *Homer*. 'I may as well do this,' he said, 'for I can do nothing else'; and toiled sadly on till he died, in 1800, under the terrors of eternal damnation. On his death-bed, when told to confide in the Redeemer, who desired to save all men, he uttered a passionate cry, begging the clergyman not to offer him such consolations.

Writings.—*Truth*, one of his earlier poems—all of which, perhaps, have been less read than they deserved. The parallel

between Voltaire and the poor cottager is an exquisite piece of eloquence and poetry:

> 'Yon cottager, who weaves at our own door,
> Pillows and bobbins all her little store:
> Content though mean, and cheerful if not gay,
> Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,
> Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
> Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;
> She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
> Has little understanding, and no wit;
> Receives no praise; but, though her lot be such,
> (Toilsome and indigent) she renders much;
> Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
> A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;
> And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
> Her title to a treasure in the skies.
>
> O happy peasant: O unhappy bard!
> His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward;
> He prais'd perhaps, for ages yet to come,
> She never heard of half a mile from home;
> He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
> She safe in the simplicity of hers.'

On one occasion, to arouse him from unusual depression, Lady Austen told him, in her happiest manner, an amusing story of a famous horseman; and it kept him laughing during the greater part of the night. The next morning he turned it into the best of playful ballads—*John Gilpin.* It rapidly found its way into all the periodicals of the day, was read to crowded houses in London, and was repeated with equal success on provincial stages. Perhaps it has given as much pleasure to as many people, young and old, educated and uneducated, as anything of the same length that ever was written. It is worthy of remark that this merry ballad was written by a man who at the time seemed to himself suspended over an abyss—the flame and darkness of hell, and, while it was convulsing audiences with laughter, he was in the depths of despair.

A cousin sent him his mother's portrait. He received it in trepidation, kissed it, hung it where it would be seen last at night, first in the morning, and wrote a poem on it, whose tenderness and pathos, flowing in richer and sweeter music than he has elsewhere reached, are unequalled by anything else he has written, and surpassed by little in the language. Springing from the deepest and purest fount of passion, and shaping itself into mobile and fluent verse, it reveals his true originality, as well as

that life-like elegance, that natural spirit of art, wherein consists the great revolution of the modern style:

'O that those lips had language! Life has pass'd
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine — thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss.
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such? It was. Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more! . . .
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet-capt,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! But the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced. . . .
Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I prick'd them into paper with a pin.
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and smile),
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here? . . .
Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)
Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay:—
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reach'd the shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;"
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life, long since has anchor'd by thy side.

But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest toss'd,
Sails ripp'd, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.'

Lady Austen advised him to write something in blank verse. 'Set me a subject, then,' said he. 'Oh, you can write on anything; take the sofa.' So he began his masterpiece—*The Task.* Hence the mock-heroic opening:

'I sing the *Sofa.* I who lately sang
Truth, Hope, and Charity, and touch'd with awe
The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,
Escap'd with pain from that advent'rous flight,
Now seek repose upon an humbler theme;
The theme though humble, yet august and proud
Th' occasion—for the fair commands the song.'

He begins with a history of *seats*, and, having come down to the creation of the sofa, goes backwards in memory to his school-days, when he rambled along the banks of the Thames till tired, and needed no sofa when he returned; then he dreams, traces his life down the stream of time to the present hour, noting what has charmed him, strengthened him, made him happy, or raised his drooping spirits,—and concludes that it has ever been free communion with Nature in the country:

'God made the country and man made the town,
What wonder, then, that health and virtue, gifts
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
That life holds out to all should most abound
And least be threaten'd in the fields and groves.'

Then he follows the bent of his mind, describing what he has seen and felt,—sounds and sights, landscapes and domestic incidents, joy and sorrow; mingling here and there stories, opinions, dissertations, apostrophes, reflections; always expressing his convictions, not dreaming that he is heard, and employing words only to mark emotions.

He is never in want of a subject. To his eye, all objects, the smallest and most familiar, are poetic. Here is his memorable description of the post coming in:

'Hark! 'tis the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood; in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright:—
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,

With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumb'ring at his back,
True to his charge, the close-pack'd load behind,
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destin'd inn;
And having dropp'd the expected bag, pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch.
Cold and yet cheerful; messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some.' . . .

With expectant hand we open the close-packed load, to learn the tidings from noisy London, jewelled India, and the universe:

'Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steaming column, and the cups,
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful ev'ning in.'

He sees a gallery of splendid and various pictures where others hear only a sound or see only extension. His description of a winter's walk at noon is one of the most feeling and elegant specimens of his manner:

'There is in souls a sympathy with sounds;
And, as the mind is pitch'd, the ear is pleas'd
With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave;
Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.
How soft the music of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet, now dying all away;
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on!
With easy force it opens all the cells
Where Mem'ry slept. Wherever I have heard
A kindred melody the scene recurs,
And with it all its pleasures and its pains. . . .
The night was winter in his roughest mood,
The morning sharp and clear. But now at noon
Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
And where the woods fence off the northern blast,
The season smiles, resigning all its rage,
And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue,
Without a cloud; and white, without a speck,
The dazzling splendour of the scene below.
Again the harmony comes o'er the vale:
And through the trees I view th' embattled tow'r,
Whence all the music. I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings as I tread
The walk, still verdant, under oaks and elms,
Whose outspread branches overarch the glade.'

Not infrequently the rudest and most insignificant sight,—a mole, for instance,—awakens a touch of native humor:

> '[We] feel at every step
> Our foot half sunk in hillocks green and soft,
> Raised by the mole, the miner of the soil.
> He, not unlike the great ones of mankind,
> Disfigures earth, and, plotting in the dark,
> Toils much to earn a monumental pile
> That may record the mischiefs he has done.'

Homely, flat, and tame was the country he described; but its figures, seen by the poet, not the realist, are transfigured and ennobled by the earnestness of love, and are painted in lines which are genuine poetry,—exact, transparent, lingering fondly over the scene upon which the eye has rested. As one of many landscape views, take this:

> 'How oft upon yon eminence our pace
> Has slackened to a pause, and we have borne
> The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it blew,
> While admiration, feeding at the eye,
> And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene.
> Thence with what pleasure have we just discerned,
> The distant plow, slow-moving, and beside
> His laboring team, that swerved not from the track,
> The sturdy swain diminished to a boy!
> Here Ouse, slow-winding through a level plain
> Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,
> Conducts the eye along his sinuous course
> Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank,
> Stand, never overlooked, our favorite elms,
> That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;
> While far beyond, and overthwart the stream,
> That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale,
> The sloping land recedes into the clouds;
> Displaying, on its varied side, the grace
> Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tower,
> Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
> Just undulates upon the listening ear,
> Groves, heaths, and smoking villages, remote.'

The nature of his theme,—the *Sofa*,—suggestive of home scenes and experiences, naturally led to an immethodical treatment of topics coming up, as in every-day life, without order or coherence. It as naturally led to a diversity of sentimental expression,—descriptive, humorous, pathetic, satirical, moral, religious. Hence few poems contain so great a number of things to attract and attach readers. In his zeal to avoid the polished uniformity of Pope and his imitators, he had often become, in his former versification, too rugged. Sensible of his error, *The Task*

was made to unite strength and freedom with grace and melody. The doctrinal strain, too, which had operated against the popularity of his earlier poems, was pitched upon a lower key, and religion, without compromising any of its essentials, assumed an aspect less rueful and severe.

'My principal purpose has been, to allure the reader by character, by scenery, by imagery, and such poetical embellishments, to the reading of what may profit him. . . . What there is of a religious cast in the volume, I have thrown towards the end of it, for two reasons: first, that I might not revolt the reader at his entrance, and, secondly, that my best impressions might be made last.'

These considerations, added to that of pervading sincerity, may explain why the success of the *Task* was instant and decided, giving its author rank as one of the classics of the language. 'The best didactic poems,' says Southey, 'when compared with the *Task*, are like formal gardens in comparison with woodland scenery.'

His *Letters* are the purest and most perfect specimens of familiar correspondence in the language. Their charm consists in their *natural* elegance—their inimitable ease and colloquial freedom; in their exquisite light of poetic truth shed upon daily life; in the glimpse which they afford of an amiable, suffering, and benevolent character.

One day, being in much distress of mind, he took up the *Iliad*, and translated the first twelve lines. The same necessity pressing him again, he had recourse to the same expedient, and translated more. Every day, in a similar way, added something to the work; till at last he formed the design of translating the whole of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—forty thousand verses. His task, self-constituted, was forty lines per day, to which he gave all the finish that the most scrupulous accuracy could command. He appears to have had a just conception of Homer, to have entered into the spirit of his poetry, and to have justly considered that the neat and artificial style of Pope was ill suited to the fire and majesty of the original:

'There is not, I believe, in all the world to be found an uninspired poem so simple as are both of those of Homer; nor in all the world a poem more bedizened with ornaments than Pope's translation of them. . . . Neither had Pope the faintest conception of those exquisite discriminations of character for which Homer is so remarkable. All his persons, and equally upon all occasions, speak in an inflated and strutting phraseology, as Pope has managed them; although in the original, the dignity of their utterance, even when they are most majestic, consists principally in the simplicity of their sentiments and of their language. . . . No writer more pathetic than Homer, because none more natural;

and because none less natural than Pope, in his version of Homer, therefore, than he, none less pathetic. . . .

As an accomplished person moves gracefully without thinking of it, in like manner the dignity of Homer seems to have cost him no labor. It was natural to him to say great things, and to say them well, and little ornaments were beneath his notice.'

These ideas and strictures indicate that a new light had risen in the poetical firmament; that in the manner of writing a new spirit had broken out: that, as the flower grows into fruit, the form of the human mind, since the soulless days of Queen Anne, had changed. Feeling is poetical, and nature is reasserted. Cowper's version, however, though more faithful than Pope's, in aiming at greater force and vigor, became too rugged and harsh.

Style.—Animated, vigorous, pointed, free, clear, and expressive. Less musical and brilliant than Pope's, less warm and glowing perhaps than Goldsmith's, it has more nature than the former, more 'bone and muscle' than the latter. His manner was his own. He wrote from a full soul, not for the pleasure of making a noise in the world, but to occupy himself. Hence his naturalness; hence his contempt of the 'creamy smoothness' of fashionable verse. Not the constraint of outward form, but,—

'Give me the line that ploughs its stately course
Like a proud swan, conquering the stream by force;
That, like some cottage beauty, strikes the heart,
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.'

While he admires Pope,—

'As harmony itself exact,
In verse well disciplined, complete, compact,'

he condemns his devotion to form:

'But he, his musical finesse was such,
So nice his ear, so delicate his touch,
Made poetry a mere mechanic art,
And every warbler has his time by heart.'

In reading Pope, we are impressed by the wonderful subjection of the idea to the exactions of the rhyme and the rhythm; in Cowper, by the earnestness of his thought, the purity and sweetness of his emotion. We read no poetry with a deeper conviction that its sentiments have come from the author's heart. We are not to suppose, however, that he wrote without care and even anxiety. On the contrary, his example is but another cumulative illustration of the truth, that the price of excellence in composition is labor. In more than one passage he has descanted on,—

'The shifts and turns,
The expedients and inventions multiform,
To which the mind resorts, in chase of terms,
Though apt, yet coy and difficult to win.'

Rank.—For colloquial freedom of manner, for noble and tender sentiment, for fervent piety, for glowing patriotism, for appreciation of natural beauty and of domestic life, for humor and quiet satire, for descriptive power, for skill and variety of expression (at least in the *Task*), he has seldom been equalled; and for all of these qualities combined, he has been surpassed by few or by none.

Young's religion and mirth seem to belong to different men; Cowper lives in every line, and moves in every scene. Milton is more majestic, erudite, and profound; but he has less ease and elegance—is less completely a companion, a friend. In the productions of Milton and Young, religion is mainly controversial and theoretical; in those of Cowper, it is practical and experimental. Indeed, it is Cowper's distinction to have dissipated the prejudice that contemplative piety cannot be poetical. For the first time the multitude saw with pleasure,—

'A bard all fire,
Touched with a coal from heaven, assume the lyre,
And tell the world, still kindling as he sung,
With more than mortal music on his tongue,
That He who died below, and reigns above,
Inspires the song, and that his name was Love.'

Pope has more brilliancy and a more exquisite sense of the elegances of art; but who would select him as a mirror of the affections, the regrets, the feelings, the desires, which all have felt and would wish to cherish? In his descriptions of nature, he is less ideal than Thomson, but more rapturous, simpler in diction, and more picturesque—more abounding in curious details. Thomson's piety is of the kind easily satisfied and only thoughtlessly thankful. With all his love of natural scenery, the world is comparatively mechanical and dead. With Cowper,—

'There lives and moves
A soul in all things, and that soul is God.'

It is He who alike—

'Gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
And wheels His throne upon the rolling world.'

When the human is touched and enlightened by the Divine,—

'In that blest moment, Nature, throwing wide
Her veil opaque, discloses with a smile

The author of her beauties, who, retired
Behind His own creation, works unseen
By the impure, and hears His word denied. . . .
But O Thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all Thy gifts Thyself the crown!
Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor,
And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away.'

It is to be observed, also, that Cowper, more intimately than Thomson, sees Nature in union with human passion. Her full depth and tenderness are never revealed except to the heart that throbs with human interest.

His productions were eminently his own. He says:

'I reckon it among my principal advantages as a composer of verses, that I have not read an English poet these thirteen years, and but one these twenty years. Imitation even of the best models is my aversion; it is a servile and mechanical trick, that has enabled many to usurp the name of author, who could not have written at all if they had not written upon the pattern of some original. But when the ear and the task have been much accustomed to the style and manner of others, it is almost impossible to avoid it, and we imitate, in spite of ourselves, just in the same proportion as we admire.'

Again, referring to *The Task:*

'My descriptions are all from nature, not one of them second-handed. My delineations of the heart are from my own experience; not one of them borrowed from books, or in the least degree conjectural.'

Objects hitherto regarded with disdain or despair, were by him thought fit to be clothed in poetic imagery. He scrupled not to employ in verse every expression that would have been admitted in prose. In both these particulars — the choice and management of subjects — his predecessors had been circumscribed by the observance of the classical model; but moved by his inner strength and courage of soul, he crossed the enchanted circle, and regained the long-lost freedom of English poetry.

Character.— Quiet, earnest, pure, sensitive, tender, imaginative, devout, and unhappy.

He was predisposed to melancholy and insanity. A disposition to sadness was habitual; and subsiding grief, or the pressure of severe calamity, passing away, left in his mind the gray and solemn twilight that succeeds a partial or total eclipse. This state of gloom most probably resulted from some physical derangement; certainly not from sympathy with the suffering and sorrowing world, nor from sad experience of the troubles and conflicts of life. He says:

'My mind has always a melancholy cast, and is like some pools I have seen, which, though filled with a black and putrid water, will nevertheless in a bright day reflect the sunbeams from their surface.'

'Indeed, I wonder, that a sportive thought should ever knock at the door of my intellect, and still more that it should gain admittance. It is as if a harlequin should intrude himself into the gloomy chamber where a corpse is deposited in state. His antic gesticulations would be unreasonable at any rate, but more specially so if they should distort the features of the mournful attendants into laughter. But the mind, long wearied with the sameness of a dull, dreary prospect, will gladly fix its eyes on anything that may make a little variety in its contemplations, though it were but a kitten playing with her tail.'

His only human relief was occupation:

'The melancholy that I have mentioned to you, and concerning which you are so kind as to inquire, is of a kind, so far as I know, peculiar to myself. It does not at all affect the operations of my mind on any subject to which I can attach it, whether serious or ludicrous, or whatever it may be; for which reason I am almost always employed either in reading or writing, when I am not engaged in conversation. A vacant hour is my abhorrence; because when I am not occupied, I suffer under the whole influence of my unhappy temperament.'

Innocent, amiable, and pious, he lived—oftentimes in a sweat of agony—in dread of the eternal wrath. He could not persuade himself that one so vile as he conceived himself to be, could ever partake of the benefits of the Gospel; and—consistently with the Calvinistic system he had embraced—thought himself predestined to be damned:

'The dealings of God with me are to myself utterly unintelligible. I have never met, either in books or in conversation, with an experience at all similar to my own. More than twelve months have now passed since I began to hope, that having walked the whole breadth of the bottom of this Red Sea, I was beginning to climb the opposite shore, and I prepared to sing the song of Moses. But I have been disappointed; those hopes have been blasted; those comforts have been wrested from me.'

Writing to his friend, Mr. Newton, respecting himself and Mrs. Unwin, he said:

'But you may be assured, that notwithstanding all the rumours to the contrary, we are exactly what we were when you saw us last;—I, miserable on account of God's departure from me, which I believe to be final; and she seeking His return to me in the path of duty, and in continual prayer.'

Already in the lengthening shadow of the grave he wrote:

'I expect that in six days, at the latest, I shall no longer foresee, but feel, the accomplishment of all my fears. O lot of unexampled misery incurred in a moment! O wretch! to whom death and life are alike impossible! Most miserable at present in this, that being thus miserable I have my senses continued to me, only that I may look forward to the worst. It is certain, at least, that I have them for no other purpose, and but very imperfectly for this. My thoughts are like loose and dry sand, which, the closer it is grasped, slips the sooner away. . . .

Adieu. I shall not be here to receive your answer, neither shall I ever see you more, Such is the expectation of the most desperate, and the most miserable of all beings.'

Yet he never questioned the loving-kindness of God, the perfect rectitude of His providence, nor the support and joy of His religion to all men. For him alone, mysteriously, there was no assured hope.

We are not to charge religion with the affecting peculiarity of his case. It seems to be the nature of the poetic temperament — physical disorder aside — to vibrate between extremes, to carry everything to excess, to find torment or rapture where others find only relaxation. Thus the author of *Night Thoughts* was in conversation a jovial and witty man. 'There have been times in my life,' says Goethe, 'when I have fallen asleep in tears; but in my dreams the most charming forms have come to console and to cheer me.' 'Alas! it is all outside,' said Johnson; 'I may be cracking my joke and cursing the sun: sun, how I hate thy beams!' So we have the saintly Cowper despairing of Heaven, and the melancholy Cowper singing *John Gilpin:*

'Strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote have been when in the saddest mood, and but for that saddest mood, perhaps, would never have been written at all.'

Never was poet more lonely or sad; yet by none has domestic happiness been more beautifully described. Despondent and remorseful, no one knew better the divine skill of strengthening the weak, of encouraging the timid, of pouring the healing oil into the wounded spirit.

As a writer, his ruling desire was to be useful. Referring to *The Task*, he says:

'I can write nothing without aiming, at least, at usefulness. It were beneath my years to do it, and still more dishonourable to my religion. I know that a reformation of such abuses as I censured is not to be expected from the efforts of a poet; but to contemplate the world, its follies, its vices, its indifference to duty, and its strenuous attachment to what is evil, and not to reprehend it, were to approve it. From this charge, at least I shall be clear, for I have neither tacitly, nor expressly, flattered either its characters or its customs.'

Influence.—He was, if not the founder of a new school, the pioneer of a new era. When he died — one hundred years after the death of Dryden — blank verse was restored to favor, and English poetry was again in possession of its varied endowment. For the first time it became apparent that the despotism of Pope and Addison had passed away.

By the marriage of verse to theology and morals, he secured for poetry a more cordial reception in religious quarters.

He was practically the first to make poetry the handmaid to piety. Religion no longer stood 'shivering and forlorn,' but attired in the beauty of poetic enchantment, scattering flowers 'where'er she deigned to stray.'

To estimate the scope and endurance of his practical influence, it is sufficient to consider the popularity which his poems gained and still preserve; their meditative and moral tone, ever slipping in between —

> 'The beauty coming and the beauty gone;'

and the natural law by which the mind grows into the likeness of its associated images. No good thing is lost. All excellence is perpetual:

> 'When one that holds communion with the skies
> Has filled his urn where the pure waters rise,
> And once more mingles with us meaner things,
> 'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
> Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide.'

SECOND CREATIVE PERIOD.

CHAPTER V.

FEATURES.

E'en now we hear with inward strife
A motion toiling in the gloom,
The Spirit of the years to come
Yearning to mix himself with life.—*Tennyson.*

Politics.—A colonial senate had confronted the British Parliament. Colonial militia had crossed bayonets with British regulars; and beyond the Atlantic, on the shores of an immeasurable land, three millions of Englishmen, refusing to be taxed without representation, had founded the English Republic. Across the Channel, where freedom was wholly extinct, the leading fact of the English Revolution,—the struggle between free inquiry and pure monarchy,—had been repeated. A Versailles audience had greeted with thunders of applause the lines of Voltaire: 'I am the son of Brutus, and bear graven on my heart the love of liberty and the horror of kings.' News of the American revolt had fallen like a spark on the inflammatory mass; and the Bastile, grim symbol of despotism, had been razed to the ground,—

'By violence overthrown
Of indignation, and with shouts that drowned
The crash it made in falling.'

Feudal France became a youthful America. Napoleon, organ and leader of the popular movement, was the giant of the middle-class. His only nobility, he said, was the rabble. His judicial code taught the equality of man before the law. Revolutionary principles were sown broadcast. Underneath the tumult of universal war, new forces waxed silently strong. Europe rallied, it is true, and the dread apostle of Democracy was banished to the barren rock of St. Helena; but the impulses he created and strengthened lived on. A hollow and insincere tranquillity

ensued, broken first by the insurrection of the Spanish colonies in America; then by the democratic ardor which their success kindled in Spain herself, and which extended into Portugal on the one hand, into Naples on the other. Emulating the energy of her neighbors, Greece, after four centuries of servitude, asserted and won her independence. Her triumph hastened the French Revolution of 1830, which in turn quickened the republican efforts of the Swiss, roused the unhappy Poles to a vain rebellion, inflamed an anti-papal rising in Italy, and in England intensified the desire for parliamentary reform.

The need was urgent. The representative system had become corrupt. Two-thirds of the lower house were appointed by peers. Three hundred members, it was estimated, were returned by one hundred and sixty persons. Seats were openly offered for sale, and the purchasers sold their votes. Only a small minority had the privilege of franchise. In Scotland, the county of Bute had at one time but a single resident voter. At an election he took the chair, proposed and seconded his own return, and solemnly announced himself unanimously elected. The House of Commons had ceased to represent the nation. Before the end of 1816, the demand even for universal suffrage was loud. The great work of the next sixteen years was the agitation for the correction of legislative abuses. Then, amid such rejoicing as political victory has seldom awakened, the Reform Act inaugurated forever the government of the people, by the people, for the people,—one more advance against the spirit of exclusiveness, restriction, narrowness, monopoly. That the change was accomplished by the pressure of public opinion is proof decisive of the natural and healthy march of English civilization,—its elasticity and yet sobriety of spirit.

> 'While men pay reverence to mighty things,
> They must revere thee, thou blue-cinctured isle,
> . . . not to-day, but this long while
> In the front rank of nations, mother of great kings,
> Soldiers, and poets.'

Society.—The cause which most disturbed or accelerated normal progress, in antiquity, was the appearance of great men; in modern times, it has been the appearance of great inventions. Printing has secured the past, and has guaranteed the future. Gunpowder and military appliances render the triumph of bar-

barians impossible. In 1807 the gas-light was tried in London, and soon the cheerful blaze chased away forever the tumultuous vagabonds who were wont, in the darkness, to insult, to plunder, and to kill. In the same year, Fulton made, from New York to Albany, the first successful voyage by steam. Ten years later, steamboats were flying on the Thames. Here is Jeffrey's description of one of these smoke-puffing vessels which surprised him and his wife on Loch Lomond:

'It is a new experiment for the temptation of tourists. It circumnavigates the whole lake every day in about ten hours; and it was certainly very strange and striking to hear and see it hissing and roaring past the headlands of our little bay, foaming and spouting like an angry whale; but, on the whole, I think it rather vulgarizes the scene too much, and I am glad that it is found not to answer, and is to be dropped next year.'

Scarcely less important was the application of steam to printing. On a November morning of 1814, the following announcement appeared in a London paper:

'The reader now holds in his hands one of the many thousand impressions of the *Times* newspaper, which were taken last night by a mechanical apparatus. That the magnitude of the invention may be justly appreciated by its effects, we shall inform the public that after the letters are placed by the compositors, and enclosed in what is called a "form," little more remains for man to do than to attend and watch this unconscious agent in its operations. The machine is then merely supplied with paper; itself places the form, inks it, adjusts the paper to the form newly inked, stamps the sheet, and gives it forth to the hands of the attendant, at the same time withdrawing the form for a fresh coat of ink, which itself again distributes, to meet the ensuing sheet, now advancing for impression; and the whole of these complicated acts are performed with such a velocity and simultaneousness of movement, that no less than eleven hundred sheets are impressed in one hour.'

In 1802 the vain experiment was tried of fitting a little engine to a carriage on the common road. Soon after wagers were won as to the weight a horse could draw on an iron train-way. Next the two were combined — the iron rail and the steam-carriage. From 1830 the old modes of transit were changed throughout the civilized world. The New England Puritan, when told how by magic a witch rode from Salem to Boston, looked up, trembled, and wished he had the power. A few generations after, in 1837, not a witch, but the lightning, rode, not the crupper of a broom, but a permanent wire, and thought was postilioned across the air. Machinery superseded forever the spindle and the distaff of the primeval world. Once three hundred women sat a long summer's day on Boston Common, and spun with three hundred wheels, well content with their few hanks of cotton, linen thread, and woollen yarn. But the spinning-wheel sank in turn

into disuse when it was found that the power-loom could spin more in a day than these three hundred in a month. A writer in 1833 was able to say that the length of yarn spun in England in one year was sufficient to girdle the earth two hundred thousand times, and the wrought fabrics of cotton exported in one year would form a continuous sheet from the earth to the moon.

These vast improvements were effected slowly, against bitter opposition. The adventurers in lighting by gas were universally derided. It was alleged in Parliament that 'the company aimed at a monopoly, which would ultimately prove injurious to the public, and ruin that most important branch of trade, our whale fisheries.' Fulton was mocked: 'Poor fellow, what a pity he is crazy!' Against the railway it was urged that the experiment of conveying goods in this manner had failed completely; for the average rate of the best engine was not four miles per hour. When it was suggested that the speed might be increased to fifteen and even to twenty miles, the rejoinder was that 'people would as soon suffer themselves to be fired off from a rocket as trust themselves to such a machine going at such a rate.' A writer in the *Quarterly Review* thus summarily disposes of the question:

> 'As to those persons who speculate on making railways general throughout the kingdom and superseding all canals, all the wagons, mail and stage-coaches, post-chaises, and, in short, every other mode of conveyance by land and by water, we deem them and their visionary schemes unworthy of notice.'

Workmen, suffering from a stagnation of trade, organized conspiracies for the destruction of machinery, which had lessened the requirements of manual labor. When the *Times* adopted the new press, the innovation was made with the utmost caution. All being ready, the pressmen were told one night to wait for news from the Continent. At six o'clock of the next morning the proprietor appeared among them, to tell them that the *Times* was already printed off by *steam;* that if they were evilly disposed, he was prepared; but that if they were peaceable, he would continue their wages till they should obtain employment elsewhere. The operative was not incorrect in his conclusion that machinery was throwing him out of work; and doubtless the distress was temporarily severe. Men were compelled to starve or turn to new vocations. Before long, however, the depression was seen to be a real elevation. Demands were mul-

tiplied. The new system, moreover, was doing the drudgery, while forms of activity were developed requiring observation and intelligence.

The advance of civilization is thus shown by the growing substitution of pacific for warlike occupations; further and in a still higher degree, by the rapid multiplication of the ties of connection between classes and nations, by the introduction of refined and intellectual tastes, by the repudiation of practices as inhuman which once were accepted as natural and right. After 1834 it was no longer permitted to behead the body of the slain criminal, to dissect it or hang it in chains. At the opening of the period men were hung for a theft of five shillings. In 1837 the death penalty was abolished for more than two-thirds of the crimes to which it had been assigned. *Trial by Battle*, though fallen into desuetude, was not legislatively abolished till 1817, when the right to it was openly claimed in Westminster Hall. The bench, the bar, the kingdom, were startled by the outrage. The emancipation of the slaves in all the dominions of the British crown was the result of a solemn conviction that man cannot justly be held and used as property; that he has sacred rights, the gifts of God, and inseparable from his nature, of which his bondage is an infraction. In 1834 the laborer, much as in the days of serfdom, was confined to a given area as the utmost range of his employment. In that year his sphere was extended, and the ditcher might carry his spade and pickaxe where he would. Among the glories of the present age, none is greater than the voluntary effort to relieve the suffering and raise the fallen. At the beginning of the century the number of schools, public and private, is said to have been three thousand three hundred and sixty-three. Here is a picture of one:

> 'In a garret, up three pair of dark, broken stairs, was a common school-room, with forty children, in a compass of ten feet by nine. On a perch forming a triangle with a corner of the room, sat a cock and two hens; under a stump bed, immediately beneath, was a dog-kennel in the occupation of three black terriers, whose barking, added to the voice of the children and the cackling of the fowls, on the approach of a stranger, were almost deafening. There was only one small window, at which sat the master, abstracting three-fourths of the light it was capable of admitting.'

Of the married, one-third of the men and one-half of the women could not sign the register. In 1818 only one person in seventeen attended school. In 1833 the proportion was one in eleven.

Five years before, in opposing the appointment of Wellington as Prime Minister, Brougham said:

'I am perfectly satisfied that there will be no unconstitutional attack on the liberties of the people. These are not the times for such an attempt. There have been periods when the country heard with dismay that the soldier was abroad. That is not the case now. Let the soldier be ever so much abroad, in the present age he can do nothing. There is another person abroad,—a less important person,—in the eyes of some an insignificant person,—whose labors have tended to produce this state of things,—the schoolmaster is abroad.'

Education was in various ways improving the general character. The establishment of Sunday schools in 1783 was the first attempt to broaden the instruction of the poor. Fifty years later, the attendance exceeded a million and a half. Societies were founded for the diffusion of knowledge, and literature was cheapened. During the first quarter of the century, missionary work, in Europe and America, was organized into a system. Even if no other good should result from it, the philanthropist might rejoice that, at the least, a new channel had been opened for carrying off the superabundant energies of the multitude. But the Fountain of Life was to send forth its stream to gladden the wilderness and the solitary place.

A glimpse of young America in this period may not be irrelevant or uninstructive; and it may enhance the interest of the picture to view ourselves in a foreign glass. The reader will judge how considerable have been the changes, to what extent prejudice mingles with the observations recorded, how incomplete may be the data, and how far the writers, who dislike the structure of American society, may forget or ignore the English descent of American manners. A transatlantic brother is *en route* from New York to Philadelphia:

'I now mounted, for the first time, an American stage, literally a kind of light wagon. While I attempt to describe this clumsy and uncomfortable machine, I cannot suppress the wish of being possessed of one of them, with the horses, harness, and driver, just as we set off, in order to convert them into an exhibition in London.'[1]

Arrived at his destination, he is forced to believe that,—

'Manufactures, the great source of national wealth, are at a very low ebb in the United States.'

He goes to the theatre, taking his seat in the pit:

'I was early in my attendance, and on my entrance, I found the back row taken up by a number of boys. . . . As the house filled, these urchins set up a violent clamor, beating with sticks, stamping with their feet, and the house echoed with their shrill pipes for the music of *Yankee Doodle*, and *Jefferson's March*.'

[1] Jansen's *Stranger in America*, 1807.

This is generalized into 'the indecorous behavior of an American audience.' It was still the day of primeval forests and vast solitudes. Of the lower class he says, in apparent oblivion that multitudes in England were living miserably on shell-fish and other sea-ware:

'They live in the woods and deserts, and many of them cultivate no more land than will raise them corn and cabbages, which with fish, and occasionally a piece of pickled pork or bacon, are their constant food. . . . Their habitations . . . are constructed of pine (?) trees, cut in lengths of ten or fifteen feet, and piled up in a square. . . . The interstices between the logs are often left open to the elements, and are large enough to give admission to vermin and reptiles.'

He is shocked to think that,—

'Amid the accumulated miseries, the inhabitants of log-houses are extremely tenacious of the rights and liberties of republicanism. They consider themselves on an equal footing with the best educated people of the country, and upon the principles of equality they intrude themselves into every company.'

Yet trade, steam, education, and chartism were doing what they could to create in England the same social condition. Intensely patriotic, he makes a painful effort to be candid:

'The punishments annexed to criminal convictions, throughout almost every state, are worthy of imitation. The many public executions which take place in England after every general gaol delivery, form a spectacle which strikes Americans with horror.'

Another, a lady, with whom loyalty is a sub-religion, sails from London in 1827, reaches Cincinnati in the course of her wanderings, and is astonished at the dearth of public amusement:

'I never saw any people who appeared to live so much without amusement as the Cincinnatians. Billiards are forbidden by law; so are cards. To sell a pack of cards in Ohio subjects the seller to a penalty of fifty dollars.'[1]

In Washington she visits the theatre. Unmindful that the Middle Ages still lurk in London, ignorant that the turbulent health of the young English had made the English traveller a proverb for bold and offensive manners, she says:

'The theatre was not open while we were in Washington, but we afterwards took advantage of our vicinity to the city to visit it. The house is very small, and most astonishingly dirty and void of decoration, considering that it is the only place of public amusement that the city affords. I have before mentioned the want of decorum at the Cincinnati theatre, but certainly that of the capital at least rivalled it in the freedom of action and attitude; a freedom which seems to disdain the restraints of civilised manners. One man in the pit was seized with a violent fit of vomiting, which appeared not in the least to annoy or surprise his neighbours; and the happy coincidence of a physician being at that moment personated on the stage, was hailed by many of the audience as an excellent joke, of which the actor took advantage, and elicited shouts of applause by saying, "I expect my services are wanted elsewhere." The spitting was incessant;

[1] *Domestic Manners of the Americans:* Frances Trollope.

and not one in ten of the male part of the illustrious legislative audience sat according to the usual custom of human beings; the legs were thrown sometimes over the front of the box, sometimes over the side of it; here and there a senator stretched his entire length along a bench; and in many instances the front rail was preferred as a seat.'

She deplores and abhors the iniquity of slavery, in which the North joins hands with the South:

'There is something in the system of breeding and rearing negroes in the Northern States, for the express purpose of sending them to be sold in the South, that strikes painfully against every feeling of justice, mercy, or common humanity.'

She has a fixed purpose to qualify all praise, and cannot or will not see the interior excellence, of which the outward charm is but a record in sculpture:

'I certainly believe the women of America to be the handsomest in the world, but as surely do I believe they are the least attractive.'

Her energy of observation breaks out in spasms of impatience with defective individuals:

'The ladies have strange ways of adding to their charms. They powder themselves immoderately, face, neck, and arms, with pulverized starch; the effect is indescribably disagreeable by daylight, and not very favourable at any time. They are also most unhappily partial to false hair, which they wear in surprising quantities. . . . I suspect this fashion to arise from an indolent mode of making their toilet, and from accomplished ladies' maids not being very abundant; it is less trouble to append a bunch of waving curls, here and there, and everywhere, than to keep their native tresses in perfect order.'

In no country was the homage to wealth so absolute as in England, in none was the reproach of poverty so great, in none was the logic of the soul so coarse; yet she complains, perhaps with a justness that needs no apology:

'Nothing can exceed their activity and perseverance in all kinds of speculation, handicraft, and enterprise, which promises a profitable pecuniary result. I heard an Englishman, who had been long resident in America, declare that in following, in meeting, or in overtaking, in the street, on the road, or in the field, at the theatre, the coffee-house, or at home, he had never overheard Americans conversing without the word *dollar* being pronounced between them.'

English nature cannot readily see beyond England, and there the gale which directs the vanes on university towers blows out of antiquity, while the definition of a public school is 'a school which excludes all that could fit a man for standing behind a counter.' Hence:

'Were we to read a prospectus of the system pursued in any of our public schools, and that of a first-rate seminary in America, we should be struck by the confined scholastic routine of the former, when compared to the varied and expansive scope of the latter; but let the examination go a little farther, and I believe it will be found that the old-fashioned school discipline of England has produced something higher, and deeper too, than that which roars so loud, and thunders in the index. . . . At sixteen, often much

earlier, education ends. . . . When the money-getting begins, leisure ceases, and all of lore which can be acquired afterwards, is picked up from novels, magazines, and newspapers.'

A few years later, there came to the United States a Frenchman, an ardent friend of free institutions, a careful and profound observer. In his eyes equality and civility are correlative facts:

'In no country is criminal justice administered with more mildness than in the United States. While the English seem disposed carefully to retain the bloody traces of the dark ages in their penal legislation, the Americans have almost expunged capital punishment from their codes. North America is, I think, the only country upon earth in which the life of no one citizen has been taken for a political offence in the course of the last fifty years.'[1]

In contrast with the social condition of England, where moneyed aristocracy has influence next to aristocracy of birth,—

'In America, where the privileges of birth never existed, and where riches confer no peculiar rights on their possessors, men unacquainted with each other . . . find neither peril nor advantage in the free interchange of their thoughts. If they meet by accident they neither seek nor avoid intercourse; their manner is therefore natural, frank, and open. . . If their demeanor is often cold and serious, it is never haughty or constrained; and if they do not converse, it is because they are not in a humor to talk, not because they think it their interest to be silent.'

Under the influence of religion and democracy, austere authority vanishes, a familiar intimacy springs up, the son, master of his thoughts, is soon master of his conduct, the daughter enters early upon a free observation of the world, and acquires a character of self-reliance:

'Among all Protestant nations, young women are far more mistresses of their own actions than they are in Catholic countries. . . . In the United States the doctrines of Protestantism are combined with great political freedom and a most democratic state of society; and nowhere are young women surrendered so early or so completely to their own guidance.'

Married, their parts are changed, their habits are different; but their early culture survives, and they contract the conjugal tie voluntarily, having learned by the use of their independence, to relinquish it without a murmur:

'The Americans are at the same time a puritanical people and a commercial nation: their religious opinions, as well as their trading habits, consequently lead them to require much abnegation on the part of woman, and a constant sacrifice of her pleasures to her duties which is seldom demanded of her in Europe.'

In England, he says, public malice is constantly attacking the frailties of women, but:

'In America, all books, novels not excepted, suppose women to be chaste, and no one thinks of relating affairs of gallantry.'

[1] *Democracy in America:* Tocqueville.

And:

'Although the travellers who have visited North America differ on a great number of points, they all agree in remarking that morals are far more strict there than elsewhere. It is evident that on this point Americans are very far superior to their progenitors, the English.'

The position of woman in society is determined by the existing state of civilization. The one may be accepted as the measure of the other, which, by reaction, it promotes. A European may affect to be the slave of woman, although 'he never sincerely thinks her his equal.' But:

'In the United States men seldom compliment women, but they daily show how much they esteem them. They constantly display an entire confidence in the understanding of a wife, and a profound respect for her freedom; they have decided that her mind is just as fitted as that of a man to discover the plain truth, and her heart as firm to embrace it.'

England is slow and staid, sad by comparison with singing and dancing France; yet ringing and cheerful by comparison with America, it would seem:

'I thought that the English constituted the most serious nation on the face of the earth, but I have since seen the Americans, and have changed my opinion.'

American life is a moving pageant. The aspect is animated, but its prevailing type is monotonous. The reason is, that the ruling passion is the love of riches:

'The love of wealth is therefore to be traced, either as a principal or an accessory motive, at the bottom of all that the Americans do: this gives to all their passions a sort of family likeness, and soon renders the survey of them exceedingly wearisome.'

This, we are told, chiefly explains why, in the midst of a universally ambitious stir, there is so little grandeur of aim. All aim to rise, but few entertain hopes of great magnitude:

'What chiefly diverts the men of democracies from lofty ambition is not the scantiness of their fortunes, but the vehemence of the exertions they daily make to improve them. They strain their faculties to the utmost to achieve paltry results, and this cannot fail speedily to limit their discernment and to circumscribe their powers. They might be much poorer and still be greater.'

If, while the social condition becomes more equal, commerce and industry afford but a slow and arduous way to fortune, the aspirants rush into politics as a profession, to relieve their necessities at the cost of the public treasury, and office-seeking becomes a rage. But the government which encourages this tendency, imperils its own tranquillity. It should teach subjects the art of providing for themselves:

'I shall not remark that the universal and inordinate desire for place is a great social evil; that it destroys the spirit of independence in the citizen, and diffuses a venal

and servile humour throughout the frame of society; that it stifles the manlier virtues; nor shall I be at the pains to demonstrate that this kind of traffic only creates an unproductive activity which agitates the country without adding to its resources; all these things are obvious.'

The conclusion appears to be that America, in spite of the ocean which intervenes, is not to be sundered from Europe; that her people are a portion of the English — Norse pirates mellowed into civility — commissioned to explore the wilds of the New World; that the doctrine of equality has suggested to them certain laws, and given them a certain political character; that this democratic state has engendered among them feelings and opinions unknown among the elder aristocratic nations; that it has modified or destroyed the relations which before existed, and established others of a novel kind; that literature and art will be correspondingly affected.

Religion.—Mankind will return, in thought, to the first years of this century as to a great fructifying season of the race. The conflict of interests and the storm of ideas left Truth and Right more powerful than they were before the battle began. Wrote Robert Hall, a dissenter, in 1801:

'To an attentive observer . . it will appear one of the most extraordinary phenomena of this eventful crisis, that amid the ravages of Atheism and infidelity, real religion is evidently on the increase.'

The precepts of Christianity were sensibly pervading the moral atmosphere. The faith was felt to be not a doctrine, but a life. Thoughtful minds were affected with a 'noble discontent,' instruction was acquiring an improved tone, the light was penetrating the darkness, and touching it with colors of ideal promise. In 1820 he could write:

'Evangelical truth has been administered in a purity and abundance in which preceding ages bear no proportion. And here, in justice to the established clergy of the realm, I cannot but remark the great advance in piety and diligence which they have exhibited during the last half-century. They have gone forth in numbers, rekindling the lamp of heavenly truth where before it had burned with a dim and sickly ray. They have explored and cultivated many a neglected spot, into which other laborers could not (for various reasons) gain admission with equal facilities of influence, and far be it from any of their dissenting brethren to regard their success with any other than a *godly* jealousy, a *holy* emulation.'

Among the 'signs of the times' he notes the growing disposition to estimate opinion by the sincere rule of the private heart, the diffusion of a milder, more candid, and charitable temper:

'At last the central principle of union begins to be extensively felt and acknowledged: amid all the diversities of external discipline or subordinate opinion, the seed

of God, the principle of spiritual and immortal life implanted in the soul, is recognized by the sincere followers of the Lamb as the transcendent point of mutual attraction in the midst of minor differences.'

Foster, pleading, in 1834, for the dissolution of the Established Church as a State institution, says of the Dissenters, among whom the Methodists are the most aggressive:

'In a survey of the country there are brought in our view several thousand places of worship, raised at their expense, many of them large, many of them smaller ones under the process, at any given time, of being enlarged, with the addition of many new ones every year. And I believe a majority of them are attended by congregations which may be described as numerous in proportion to their dimensions and the population of the neighborhood. So that if the dissenters be somewhat too sanguine in assuming that their number would already be found, on a census of the whole country, fully equal to the attendants of the churches of the establishment (in most of the great towns they far exceed), there is every probability that their rapid augmentation will very soon bring them to an equality.'

In the National Church, however, there were now no Wycliffes, no Latimers, no Taylors, no Butlers, whom plenitude of Divine Presence had made possible in ages of genius and piety. The curates were ill paid, the prelates overpaid. The abuse was converting bishops into surpliced merchants. Said Brougham in the House of Commons:

'How will the reverend bishops of the other House be able to express their due abhorrence of the crime of perjury, who solemnly declare in the presence of God, that when they are called upon to accept a living, perhaps of four thousand pounds a year, at that very instant they are moved by the Holy Ghost to accept the office and administration thereof, and for no other reason whatever?'

The old structures were kept in repair, but the spirit that once dwelt in them had gone out to animate other activities. The Establishment was the church, not of the poor, but of the gentry, the well-bred, whose worship was a quotation and a ceremonial. Hence to Sidney Smith Methodism was foolishness. Its preachers gained popularity by arts which the regular clergy were 'too dignified' to employ. Yet the convulsionary sect was producing a moral revolution; an upsetting of the physical machine, some would call it; a mad fermentation, he would say:

'That it has rapidly increased within these few years, we have no manner of doubt; and we confess we cannot see what is likely to impede its progress. The party which it has formed in the Legislature; and the artful neutrality with which they give respectability to their small number,—the talents of some of this party, and the unimpeached excellence of their characters, all make it probable that fanaticism will increase rather than diminish. The Methodists have made an alarming inroad into the Church, and they are attacking the army and navy. The principality of Wales, and the East India Company, they have already acquired. All mines and subterraneous places belong to them; they creep into hospitals and small schools, and so work their way upwards. . . . We most sincerely deprecate such an event; but it will excite in us no manner of sur-

prise if a period arrives when the churches of the sober and orthodox part of the English clergy are completely deserted by the middling and lower classes of the community.'

The morning that spread upon the mountains was shedding its glory upon the plains.

The religious element, with whose European antecedents we may here assume a general acquaintance, was dominant in the initial idea and impulse of the colonies; it was mighty and pervasive through the whole colonial period; and among the forces which have entered into American development, it must be regarded as the first in time, the steadiest in mode, and the most potent in energy:

'It must never be forgotten that religion gave birth to Anglo-American society. In the United States, religion is therefore commingled with all the habits of the nation, and all the feelings of patriotism; whence it derives a peculiar force. To this powerful reason, another of no less intensity may be added; in America, religion has, as it were, laid down its own limits. Religious institutions have remained wholly distinct from political institutions, so that former laws have been easily changed, while former belief has remained unshaken. Christianity has therefore retained a strong hold on the public mind in America; and it should be particularly remarked that its sway is not only that of a philosophical doctrine, which has been adopted upon inquiry, but of a religion, which is believed without discussion. In the United States, Christian sects are infinitely diversified and perpetually modified; but Christianity itself is a fact so irresistibly established, that no one undertakes either to attack or to defend it.'

Religion, in this country, is by common consent a distinct sphere. Nowhere is it invested with fewer forms, figures, and observances. By a judicious respect for democratic tendencies, moreover, it has sustained an advantageous struggle with that spirit of individualism which elsewhere, at certain epochs, has proved to be a most dangerous antagonist. It may here be a confirmed habit, or there a tender memory; but it is not an institution — a something planted and fixed, which would thwart or stay the spiritual laws of human nature.

Poetry.—With the sudden concourse of extraordinary events, the human mind flowered anew. Amidst the visible progress and the general ennobling of the public was manifested the moving sentiment of the age, at once generous and rebellious,—discontent with the present, aspiration for the future. We have seen it in the fervor and misery of Burns, in the overcharged soul of Cowper; we may see it in the passionate unrestraint of the Byronic school; in the dissenting principles, in the humanitarian dreams, in the restless explorations, of the school of Wordsworth.

The heart, in weariness of the precise art that fettered it,

clamored for pulsation and utterance. Already the nation had returned to the fresh wild strains of its youth, and Percy's *Reliques* had fed the enthusiasm which it accompanied and indicated. Other omens of the change were Warton's *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, and the imitations or forgeries of Macpherson and Chatterton, all which materially strengthened the new reviving love for the romantic past. This was the historical impulse, which reproduced on the literary stage at this moment the conceptions and manners of the Middle Age, the ideals of the Renaissance, and the vanished civilizations of the East. A second impulse — the philosophical — was communicated over the whole of Europe from Germany, whose literature from this date onward, bold, speculative, profound, has been gaining ground in both England and America, and has become the most vigorous of European forces. Of the political excitement which carried discussion and commotion everywhere; of the social circumstances which refined experience, enfranchised the intellect, and stimulated hope, we have spoken. In this period of converging tendencies, conservative and revolutionary, the useful, the beautiful, and the worthless struggled together for survival and preëminence. The era does not reach the elevation of the Elizabethan, but its productions are more varied, and only less magnificent. Poetry — narrative, dramatic, lyric, didactic — is clearly its distinguishing feature. Among the minor poets who rank as its renovators, is **Crabbe** (1754–1832), a gloomy painter of every-day life, uniting great power of delineation to great fondness for nature, but lacking ideality, and very unequal; often exciting admiration, too frequently provoking derision. His *Tales of the Hall* has a more regular plan and a more equable strain than any of his other works. Two brothers, meeting late in life at the hall of their native village, relate to each other passages of their past experience. After many years, the elder discovers, as he says, the lost object of his idolatry living in infamy:

> 'Will you not ask, how I beheld that face,
> Or read that mind, and read it in that place?
> I have tried, Richard, ofttimes, and in vain,
> To trace my thoughts, and to review their train —
> If train there were — that meadow, grove, and stile,
> The fright, the escape, her sweetness, and her smile;
> Years since elapsed, and hope, from year to year,
> To find her free — and then to find her here!
> But is it she? — O! yes; the rose is dead,

All beauty, fragrance, freshness, glory, fled;
But yet 'tis she—the same and not the same—
Who to my bower a heavenly being came;
Who waked my soul's first thought of real bliss,
Whom long I sought, and now I find her—this.'

offers her hand, sees his troubled look, bids him discard it, ı, while he stands gazing and perplexed, sings:

'My Damon was the first to wake
The gentle flame that cannot die:
My Damon is the last to take
The faithful bosom's softest sigh:
The life between is nothing worth,
O! cast it from thy thought away;
Think of the day that gave it birth,
And this its sweet returning day.

Buried be all that has been done,
Or say that nought is done amiss;
For who the dangerous path can shun
In such bewildering world as this?
But love can every fault forgive,
Or with a tender look reprove;
And now let nought in memory live,
But that we meet, and that we love.'

is moved to pity:

'Softened, I said, "Be mine the hand and heart,
If with your world you will consent to part."
She would,—she tried. Alas! she did not know
How deeply-rooted evil habits grow.'

vain; the fateful presence is there, and the resisting soul ds, sinks, then wastes to the end:

'There came at length request
That I would see a wretch with grief oppressed,
By guilt affrighted,—and I went to trace
Once more the vice-worn features of that face,
That sin-wrecked being! and I saw her laid
Where never worldly joy a visit paid:
That world receding fast! the world to come
Concealed in terror, ignorance, and gloom;
Sin, sorrow, and neglect; with not a spark
Of vital hope,—all horrible and dark.
It frightened me! I thought,—and shall not I
Thus feel? thus fear? this danger can I fly?
Do I so wisely live that I can calmly die?'

ing in two eras, he wrote in two styles; dealing in the first ıer with the surface, in the second more with the heart, of ıgs. But in general he was too classical, and has been nick-ıed 'Pope in worsted stockings.' Here, in a glimpse of the ›romising scene of his nativity, is a specimen of his rough rgy of description:

'Lo! where the heath, with withering brake grown o'er
Lends the light turf that warms the neighboring poor;
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves its withered ears;
Rank weeds that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye:
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies nodding mock the hope of toil;
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade;
With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,
And a sad splendor vainly shines around.'

Another who enters the new school without abandoning his half classical but noble style, is **Campbell** (1777–1844), a Highlander in blood and nature, dreamy and meditative, of delicate taste and pure sentiment, calm, uniform, and mellifluous in the general tone of his verse. At eleven he begins to compose, and at twenty-one, in a dusky lodging of Edinburgh, writes the *Pleasures of Hope*, writes much of it several times over, writes it in sections, then arranges them in proper order; writes the opening last, revises it again and again, because he appreciates the importance of a good beginning, then, when it bears no resemblance to the original draught, captivates us with this exquisite picture:

'At summer eve, when Heaven's ethereal bow
Spans with bright arch the glittering hill below,
Why to yon mountain turns the musing eye,
Whose sunbright summit mingles with the sky?
Why do those cliffs of shadowy tint appear
More sweet than all the landscape smiling near?
'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,
And robes the mountain in its azure hue.
Thus, with delight, we linger to survey
The promised joys of life's unmeasured way,
Thus, from afar, each dim-discovered scene
More pleasing seems than all the past hath been,
And every form, that Fancy can repair
From dark oblivion, glows divinely there.'

Hardly less felicitous are the following lines:

'Till Hymen brought his love-delighted hour,
There dwelt no joy in Eden's rosy bower!
In vain the viewless seraph lingering there,
At starry midnight charm'd the silent air;
In vain the wild-bird caroll'd on the steep,
To hail the sun, slow wheeling from the deep;

In vain, to soothe the solitary shade,
Aërial notes in mingling measure play'd;
The summer wind that shook the spangled tree,
The whispering wave, the murmur of the bee;
Still slowly pass'd the melancholy day,
And still the stranger wist not where to stray.
The world was sad! the garden was a wild!
And man, the hermit, sigh'd — till woman smiled!'

When the guardian deities forsook mankind, Hope remained. When Epimetheus indiscreetly opened Pandora's jar, all the ills which have since afflicted humanity were let loose, and the lid was replaced only in time to prevent the escape of Hope. What emotion is so beneficent? Limited to no age, no clime, no condition, it is strength to the weary, courage to the desponding, promise to the desolate, life to the dying:

'Angel of life! thy glittering wings explore
Earth's loveliest bounds, and ocean's widest shore.'

When reason deserts her empire, Hope takes her seat upon the vacant throne, as the radiant angels sat upon the stone by the door of the empty sepulchre:

'Hark! the wild maniac sings, to chide the gale
That wafts so slow her lover's distant sail; . . .
Oft when yon moon has climb'd the midnight sky,
And the lone sea-bird wakes its wildest cry,
Piled on the steep, her blazing faggots burn
To hail the bark that never can return;
And still she waits, but scarce forbears to weep
That constant love can linger on the deep.'

Hope illumes, for the dying, the dread unknown, and on the tombs of the departed it hangs the unfading garlands of a blessed immortality. No cheerless creed of materialism can wed us to the dust:

'Ah me! the laurell'd wreath that Murder rears,
Blood-nursed, and water'd by the widow's tears,
Seems not so foul, so tainted, and so dread,
As waves the night-shade round the sceptic's head. . . .
If Chance awaked, inexorable power,
This frail and feverish being of an hour;
Doom'd o'er the world's precarious scene to sweep,
Swift as the tempest travels on the deep,
To know Delight but by her parting smile,
And toil, and wish, and weep a little while;
Then melt, ye elements, that form'd in vain
This troubled pulse, and visionary brain!
Fade, ye wild flowers, memorials of my doom,
And sink, ye stars, that light me to the tomb!'

Only less important than the beginning is the ending:

> 'Eternal Hope! when yonder spheres sublime
> Peal'd their first notes to sound the march of Time,
> Thy joyous youth began,—but not to fade.
> When all the sister planets have decay'd;
> When wrapt in fire the realms of ether glow,
> And Heaven's last thunder shakes the world below;
> Thou, undismay'd, shalt o'er the ruins smile,
> And light thy torch at Nature's funeral pile.'

Campbell's fame is secure in quotation. Many of his lines have become household words. For example:

> ''Tis distance lends enchantment to the view.'
>
> ''Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
> And coming events cast their shadows before.'
>
> 'What though my winged hours of bliss have been,
> Like angel-visits, few and far between?'

In the stories of the Border he has more freedom; as in *Lochiel's Warning*, *O'Conner's Child*, and *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, with which every school-boy is familiar. Of the same romantic type is *Gertrude of Wyoming, A Tale of Pennsylvania*, founded on a tragedy of the Revolution, and sanctified by the usual ideal loveliness. The heroine, falling in a general massacre, dies in her husband's arms:

> 'Clasp me a little longer on the brink
> Of fate! while I can feel the dear caress;
> And when this heart hath ceased to beat,—oh! think,
> And let it mitigate thy woe's excess,
> That thou hast been to me all tenderness,
> And friend to more than human friendship just.
> Oh! by that retrospect of happiness,
> And by the hopes of an immortal trust,
> God shall assuage thy pangs—when I am laid in dust!
>
> Go, Henry, go not back, when I depart,
> The scene thy bursting tears too deep will move,
> Where my dear father took thee to his heart,
> And Gertrude thought it ecstasy to rove
> With thee, as with an angel through the grove
> Of peace, imagining her lot was cast
> In heaven; for ours was not like earthly love.
> And must this parting be our very last?
> No! I shall love thee still, when death itself is past.'

Another, of sterner tone and fuller swing, is **Southey** (1774–1843), voluminous and learned; a poet, scholar, antiquary, critic, historian, leader; beginning as a Socinian and a Radical; ending as a decided Anglican and an intolerant Conservative; in point of taste, however, a revolutionist, who violently breaks with tra-

dition, finds his models in the great masters of the Epic, and his themes in the wild and supernatural; gorgeous and sublime in imagery, but too fanciful, too remote, and wanting in sympathy and dramatic art. His most elaborate performance is the *Curse of Kehama*, founded upon the Hindu mythology; a theatre of horrors, whose hero is a second Dr. Faustus. The description of Padalon, or the Indian Hades, is Miltonic:

'Far other light than that of day there shone
Upon the travellers, entering Padalon.
They, too, in darkness entering on their way,
But far before the car
A glow, as of a fiery furnace light,
Filled all before them. 'Twas a light that made
Darkness itself appear
A thing of comfort; and the sight, dismayed,
Shrank inward from the molten atmosphere.
Their way was through the adamantine rock
Which girt the world of woe; on either side
Its massive walls arose, and overhead
Arched the long passage; onward as they ride,
With stronger glare the light around them spread—
And, lo! the regions dread—
The world of woe before them opening wide,
There rolls the fiery flood,
Girding the realms of Padalon around.
A sea of flame it seemed to be,
Sea without bound:
For neither mortal nor immortal sight
Could pierce across through that intensest light.'

Equally fond of decorations and scenery, equally factitious, but more radiant, is **Moore** (1779–1852); witty and worldly, gay, nimble, and airy; a lively and pungent satirist; a writer of patriotic songs for his native Ireland, and of sacred lyrics for two hemispheres. His national airs were sung everywhere, from the palace to the highway. Judge from a single example the secret of their popularity:

'When he who adores thee has left but the name
Of his fault and his sorrows behind,
Oh, say, wilt thou weep, when they darken the fame
Of a life that for thee was resigned?
Yes, weep, and however my foes may condemn,
Thy tears shall efface their decree;
For Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
I have been but too faithful to thee!

With thee were the dreams of my earliest love;
Every thought of my reason was thine;
In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above,
Thy name shall be mingled with mine!
Oh, blest are the lovers and friends who shall live

The days of thy glory to see;
But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give,
Is the pride of thus dying for thee!'

Rarely has there been such an artist of harmony. The same wonder-working gift is exhibited here:

'Sound the loud timbrel o'er Egypt's dark sea:
Jehovah hath triumphed; his people are free.
Sing; for the might of the tyrant is broken;
His chariots, his horsemen, so splendid and brave,
How vain was their boasting! the Lord hath but spoken,
And chariots and horsemen are sunk in the wave.'

And in the following:

'I saw from the beach, when the morning was shining,
A bark o'er the waters move gloriously on;
I came when the sun o'er that beach was declining—
The bark was still there, but the waters were gone.
And such is the fate of our life's early promise,
So passing the spring-tide of joy we have known;
Each wave that we danced on at morning ebbs from us,
And leaves us at eve on the bleak shore alone.'

Having risen to the ascendant in this his proper region, he follows the rest, and produces a romance,—*Lalla Rookh*, composed of four tales,—the *Veiled Prophet*, *Fire-Worshippers*, *Paradise and the Peri*, and the *Light of the Harem*. A tissue of prose narrative, gracefully told, connects them; for they are all recited for the entertainment of Lalla Rookh while she is journeying to wed her affianced lord. Here is an instance, from the second, of his rich Orientalism:

'How calm, how beautiful, comes on
The stilly hour when storms are gone;
When warring winds have died away,
And clouds, beneath the glancing ray,
Melt off, and leave the land and sea
Sleeping in bright tranquillity,—
Fresh as if Day again were born,
Again upon the lap of Morn!
When the light blossoms, rudely torn
And scattered at the whirlwind's will,
Hang floating in the pure air still,
Filling it all with precious balm,
In gratitude for this sweet calm;—
And every drop the thunder-showers
Have left upon the grass and flowers
Sparkles, as 'twere the lightning-gem
Whose liquid flame is born of them!
When 'stead of one unchanging breeze,
There blow a thousand gentle airs,
And each a different perfume bears,—
As if the loveliest plants and trees
Had vassal breezes of their own
To watch and wait on them alone,
And waft no other breath than theirs!
When the blue waters rise and fall,
In sleepy sunshine mantling all;
And even that swell the tempest leaves
Is like the full and silent heaves
Of lovers' hearts when newly blest,
Too newly to be quite at rest.'

The third—perhaps the simplest and best—describes the efforts of an exiled fairy to regain admission to Heaven. She offers successively the last drop of blood of a patriot, the last sigh of a devoted lover, then the tear of a penitent:

'Joy, joy forever! my task is done,
The gates are passed, and Heaven is won!
Oh! am I not happy? I am, I am.
To thee, sweet Eden! how dark and sad
Are the diamond turrets of Shadukiam,
And the fragrant bowers of Amberabad!

Farewell, ye odors of earth, that die
Passing away like a lover's sigh;
My feast is now of the Tooba Tree,
Whose scent is the breath of eternity!
Farewell, ye vanishing flowers, that shone
In my fairy wreath, so bright and brief;
O! what are the brightest that e'er have blown,
To the lote tree, springing by Alla's throne,
Whose flowers have a soul in every leaf!
Joy, joy forever! my task is done,
The gates are passed, and Heaven is won!'

The most undeniable and wide-ranging genius of this extraordinary and agitated period is **Coleridge** (1772–1834); at three, able to read the Bible; at eight, solitary, fretful, passionate, tormented by the boys, flattered and wondered at by all the old women; till fourteen, a playless day-dreamer; at fifteen, a fluent master of the classics and a lover of metaphysics; perusing Virgil 'for pleasure,' but unable to give a rule of syntax save in his own way; alternating Greek and Latin medical books with Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary;* in college a voracious and desultory reader, his room the resort of the gowned politicians, himself the life and fire of debate as the champion of democracy; first a Unitarian, then convinced that Unitarianism was null and void; projector of a second Eden on the banks of the Susquehanna,—a Pantisocracy whose blessings were to extend from bards to donkeys; now preaching, now editing; now scheming stupendous epics, now troubled and trembling to propitiate 'the two Giants, Bread and Cheese'; a thinker and a dreamer, poet and critic, a talker at whose feet sat men of fame, like children round a wizard; deep, exhaustless, inscrutable; of gifts so varied and so great that patient and wise use would have put him among the few masters, but of naturally vacillating temper, enhanced in early life by lack of discipline, and later by indulgence in opium; falling at last into pitiful imbecility, receiving from friends charity, and craving from Heaven forgiveness. His best poems are *The Ancient Mariner*, *Christabel*, and *Kubla Khan*, in all which the supernatural and fantastic are touched with matchless skill. The first is a phantasmagoria of mystery and sublimity, limned

forth in magical and meteoric tints. What a wild, weird picture is this:

'The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen;
To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The moon was at its side;
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.'

Consider the still and awful grandeur in these lines:

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the moon is cast.'

And the inexpressible beauty in these:

'Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion,
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.'

Where shall we look for such a marvellous piece of imaginative painting as this? —

'One after one, by the star-dogged moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men,—
And I heard nor sigh nor groan,—
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul it passed me by
Like the whiz of my cross-bow. . . .

Alone, alone, all, all alone,—
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

The many men so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand, thousand slimy things
Lived on, and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.'

Such strains will sound in the ears of latest generations. *Christabel* is a fragment, a romantic supernatural tale of chilliest horror. Geraldine is a fiend-lady, beautiful and bright, who illustrates the dangerous spell of Satanic malice under the garb of fair innocence:

'A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrank in her head,

Each shrank up to a serpent's eye;
And with somewhat of malice and more of dread
At Christabel she look'd askance. . . .
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise,
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those *shrunken, serpent eyes,*
That all her features were resign'd
To this sole image in her mind,
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate.'

occurs that fine and familiar passage on broken friendship:

'Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain:
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain. . . .

Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted,—ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining:
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder:
A dreary sea now flows between.
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.'

ubla Khan is the record of a gorgeous dream, and a miracle ısic. 'The most wonderful of all poems,' says Swinburne, revels in melodious words. What a thrilling landscape is

'*But oh, that deep romantic chasm which slanted*
Down the green hill, athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thrasher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks, at once and ever,
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a hazy motion,
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean.'

different mood and manner is *Love.* How trancingly rolls elody:

'All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
Are all but ministers of love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour
When midway on the mount I lay
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!'

Who shall estimate the wild beatings and the widowed longings of the heart of genius? Sad, yet inevitable, that the sigh of regret or the moan of despair should mingle with its music:

'*When* I was young? Ah, woful *when!*
Ah, for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er airy cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly then it flashed along. . . .

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O the joys that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!
Ere I was old? Ah woful *Ere,*
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known that thou and I were one;
I'll think it but a fond conceit,—
It cannot be that thou art gone! . . .
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are housemates still.'

Was never poet more radiant in genius, more rich in promise, than the short-lived **Keats**[1] (1796–1821); of fragile frame and delicate features; eyes mellow and glowing, large, dark, and sensitive, suffused with tears at the recital of a noble act or a beautiful thought; adverse to every kind of restraint, resolved to be free from all critical trammels; studied Italian, read Ariosto, devoured classical mythology, worshipped the Elizabethans,—above all, Spenser; nobly ambitious, longing for fame, but longing first to deserve it, pressing on assiduously with birth and health against him, feeling that what he did was to be done swiftly; talked down by inferiors who chanced to have the advantage of position; conscious of the unpruned savagery in the

[1] Son of an assistant in a livery stable.

gled forest of his verse, and suffering from the vulgarities of tile criticism in proportion as his ideal was high. In the ter of 1820 he was chilled in riding on the top of a stage-ch. On coming home he was persuaded to retire, and in get-; between the cold sheets coughed slightly. 'That is blood in mouth,' he said: 'bring me the candle; let me see this blood.' n, looking up with sudden calmness: 'I know the color of ; blood; it is arterial blood; I cannot be deceived in that r. That drop is my death-warrant; I must die.' In vain he ired to Naples, and thence to Rome. Shortly before his th he told his friend that 'he thought the intensest pleasure ad received in life was in watching the growth of flowers'; once, after lying peacefully awhile, he said, 'I feel the ers growing over me.' On a grassy slope, in a secluded spot, d the verdurous ruins of the Honorian walls, he sleeps, his ple headstone inscribed with his name, age, and the epitaph ated by himself,—

'HERE LIES ONE WHOSE NAME WAS WRIT IN WATER.'

tree or shrub is there, but the faithful daisies, mingling with fresh herbage, crown the mound of their buried lover with a xy of their innocent stars, 'making one in love with death,' s Shelley, so soon to rest his own ashes beside him, 'to think one should be buried in so sweet a place.'

ntensity of conception was his bliss and his bane. *Endymion* the rankness of tropic vegetation. Images are heaped in tesque and tiresome profusion; but in passages like the invo-on to Pan — the All — we see the divine faculty, the control he finer sense which underlies the sensuous:

'O thou, whose mighty palace roof doth hang
From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death,
Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness; . . .
Be still the unimaginable lodge
For solitary thinkings; such as dodge
Conception to the very bourne of heaven,
Then leave the naked brain: be still the leaven,
That spreading in this dull and clodded earth,
Gives it a touch ethereal,—a new birth:
Be still a symbol of immensity;
A firmament reflected in a sea;
An element filling the space between;
An unknown,—but no more: we humbly screen
With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bending,

And giving out a shout most heaven-rending,
Conjure thee to receive our humble Pæan,
Upon thy Mount Lycean!'

One line is current wherever the English language is spoken:

'A thing of beauty is a joy forever.'

Hyperion is more evenly tempered; a noble fragment, lofty and clear-aired, showing the unerring instinct for fine words and the poetic uses of things. Byron thought it inspired by the Titans. Note the antique grace of the following:

'*Deep in the shady sadness of a vale,*
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
Sat grey-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair;
Forest on forest hung about his head,
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer's day
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.'

You will never open a page without lighting on the loveliest imagery or the most eloquent expression. Thus, from the *Eve of St. Agnes:*

'Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke in pallid moonshine died:
She clos'd the door, she panted all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide;
Nor utter'd syllable, or "Wo betide!"
But to her heart her heart was voluble
Paining with eloquence her balmy side:
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die heart-stifled in her dell.'

Turn again and hear the sweet voice when mortal illness is closing upon its accents. The concrete is elevated into the typical; melody and meaning float together, 'accordant as swan and shadow.' From his house on the border of the fields he hears the plaintive anthem of the nightingale:

'Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit, and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs;
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies,
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs. . . .

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet

Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine. . . .

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time,
I have been *half in love with easeful Death,*
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it *rich* to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy! . . .

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down.'

He died too soon to develop a well-outlined character, but did enough to show the world all it had lost in him. How many flowers perish on the promise of the fruit, how many are blighted in the bud!

'The splendors of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb,
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil.'

When a soul of superlative power appears, all the breadth of human faculty is required to know it, and men, in proportion to their intellect, will admit its transcendent claims. The poetic elements in **Shelley** (1792–1822) were superabundant; the son of a rich baronet, sweet, generous, tender, beautiful, and born a bard;[1] from his birth aglow with the transcendental rapture, and painting for the ideal Good,—

'Pinnacled dim in the intense inane.'

So sensitive that he could—

'Hardly bear
The weight of the superincumbent hour.'

At school harshly treated by his instructors and mates; at Eton suffered revolting cruelty from the boys and his masters; judged society by the oppression he underwent, rebelled against authority and opinion, began to form socialistic Utopias, and found himself, by the very compass of his humanity, at war with existing institutions:

'I do remember well the hour which burst
My spirit's sleep: a fresh May-dawn it was,
When I walked forth upon the glittering grass,
And wept, I knew not why: until there rose

[1] See *Queen Mab*, composed at eighteen.

From the near school-room voices, that, alas!
Were but one echo from a world of woes,—
The harsh and grating strife of tyrants and of foes.

And then I clasped my hands and looked around,
But none was near to mock my streaming eyes,
Which poured their warm drops on the sunny ground,—
So, without shame, I spake: "I will be wise,
And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies
Such power, for I grow weary to behold
The selfish and the strong still tyrannize
Without reproach or check." . . .

And from that hour did I with earnest thought
Heap knowledge from forbidden mines of lore,
Yet nothing that my tyrants knew or taught
I cared to learn, but from that secret store
Wrought linked armor for my soul, before
It might walk forth to war among mankind.'

He incessantly speculated, thought, and read; began with Lucretius, and ended with Plato; avowed himself a republican and a sceptic; wrote novels at fifteen, and verses earlier; issued a syllabus of Hume's *Essays* when only seventeen, and challenged the authorities of Oxford to a public controversy; published a tract *On the Necessity of Atheism*, and was expelled from the university, yet an honest unbeliever, loving truth with a martyr's love, and willing to die to do the world a service; at nineteen married a fair maid of inferior birth, and was exiled from his father's presence; abandoned her, believing that husband and wife should continue united only so long as they love each other; was then deprived, as being unworthy, of the custody of his two children, by a decree of the Lord Chancellor, whom he cursed —

'By all the happy see in children's growth,
That undeveloped flower of budding years,
Sweetness and sadness interwoven both,
Source of the sweetest hopes and saddest fears!'

Meanwhile he had left for the Continent, in company with a lady who afterward became his second wife, who could 'feel poetry and understand philosophy'; returned and settled on the banks of the Thames. Consumption came, and he repaired to Italy, where he continued to pour out his inspirations, whether men would listen or no. There, it will be remembered, he was ingulfed in the sea, his wave-beaten body burned, and the ashes buried. So ended a miracle of thirty years,— a romance of mystery and grief, passing at the moment when the stormy dawn was yielding to the noonday calm.

Never was poetry a more vivid expression of personal experience and aspiration. A unique spirituality pervades it all. The first touches of his wild poem of *Queen Mab* announce the dreamer and the idealist:

'How wonderful is death,—
Death and his brother Sleep!
One, pale as yonder waning moon,
With lips of lurid blue;
The other, rosy as the morn
When, throned on ocean's wave,
It blushes o'er the world:
Yet both so passing wonderful!
Hath then the gloomy Power
Whose reign is in the tainted sepulchres
Seized on her sinless soul?
Must then that peerless form
Which love and admiration cannot view
Without a beating heart, those azure veins
Which steal like streams along a field of snow,
That lovely outline, which is fair
As breathing marble, perish?'

His impassioned eloquence, the witchery of his music, his consolations in nature, the yearning for the spirit of loveliness, his burning desire to pierce the inner shrine of being, are conspicuous in *Alastor*, a youth enamored of solitude, who wanders long and fondly in quest of the unattainable Vision, then dies in the Caucasian wilderness. Nature is to him something living and divine. Her bloom is but the sheen of the peaceful Soul. He has felt her great heart throb, and in every existence sees the secret essence. How tenderly he speaks to her:

'Earth, ocean, air, beloved brotherhood!
If our great Mother have imbued my soul
With aught of natural piety to feel
Your love, and recompense the boon with mine;
If dewy morn, and odorous noon, and even
With sunset and its gorgeous ministers,
And solemn midnight's tingling silentness,—
If autumn's hollow sighs in the sere wood,
And winter robing with pure snow and crowns
Of starry ice the gray grass and bare boughs,—
If spring's voluptuous pantings when she breathes
Her first sweet kisses,—have been dear to me,—
If no bright bird, insect, or gentle beast
I consciously have injured, but still loved
And cherished these my kindred,—then forgive
This boast, beloved brethren, and withdraw
No portion of your wonted favor now!'

How has he craved to penetrate behind all phenomena to the inmost sanctuary:

'Mother of this unfathomable world!
Favor my solemn song, for I have loved
Thee ever, and thee only; I have watched
Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy steps,
And my heart ever gazes on the depth
Of thy deep mysteries. I have made my bed
In charnels and on coffins, where black death
Keeps record of the trophies won from thee,
Hoping to still these obstinate questionings
Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone ghost,
Thy messenger, to render up the tale
Of what we are. In lone and silent hours,
When night makes a weird sound of its own stillness,
Like an inspired and desperate alchemist
Staking his very life on some dark hope,
Have I mixed awful talk and asking looks
With my most innocent love, until strange tears,
Uniting with those breathless kisses, made
Such magic as compels the charmed night
To render up thy charge.'

Alastor drinks deep of the fountain of knowledge, and is still insatiate; has lingered long in lonesome vales, making the wild his home, and,—

'His wandering step,
Obedient to high thoughts, has visited
The awful ruins of the days of old:
Athens and Tyre and Balbec, and the waste
Where stood Jerusalem, the fallen towers
Of Babylon, the eternal pyramids. . . .
Among the ruined temples there,
Stupendous columns, and wild images
Of more than man, where marble demons watch
The Zodiac's brazen mystery, and dead men
Hang their mute thoughts on the mute walls around,
He lingered, poring on memorials
Of the world's youth.'

At length, far within a lonely dell, where odorous plants entwine a natural bower, the wanderer stretches his weary limbs. A vision visits him, a dream of hopes that never yet had flushed his cheek. For one tranced moment it has breath and being, then is swallowed up in night:

'Lost, lost, forever lost,
In the wide pathless desert of dim sleep,
That beautiful shape!'

He wanders on, impelled by the bright memory of that ineffable dream,—

'Day after day, a weary waste of hours,
Bearing within his life the brooding care
That ever fed on its decaying flame.'

Urged by a restless impulse, he bends his steps to the sea-shore,

embarks in a stray shallop floating near, and speeds as before a whirlwind —

'Through the white ridges of the chafed sea.'

On flees the straining boat, safely,—

'As if that frail and wasted human form
Had been an elemental god.'

On, driven by the boiling torrent, while crags close round it their black and jagged arms:

'A cavern there
Yawned, and amid its slant and winding depths
Ingulfed the rushing sea. The boat fled on
With unrelaxing speed. "Vision and Love!"
The poet cried aloud, "I have beheld
The path of thy departure. Sleep and death
Shall not divide us long."'

On amid the windings of the cavern, now hurled by the battling tides, now moving slowly where the 'fiercest war' is calm. Now it pauses 'shuddering' in a pool of treacherous quiet, then,—

'With gentle motion between banks
Of mossy slope, and on a placid stream,
Beneath a woven grove, it sails. . . .
The ghastly torrent mingles its far roar
With the breeze murmuring in the musical woods.'

Has any one painted more magnificently a primeval landscape?—

'The noonday sun
Now shone upon the forest, one vast mass
Of mingling shade, whose brown magnificence
A narrow vale embosoms. There huge caves,
Scooped in the dark base of those airy rocks,
Mocking its moans, respond and roar forever
The meeting boughs and implicated leaves
Wove twilight o'er the poet's path, as, led
By love or dream or god or mightier Death,
He sought in Nature's dearest haunt some bank,
Her cradle and his sepulchre. More dark
And dark the shades accumulate; the oak,
Expanding its immense and knotty arms,
Embraces the light beech. The pyramids
Of the tall cedar, overarching, frame
Most solemn domes within, and far below,
Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,
The ash and the acacia floating hang
Tremulous and pale. Like restless serpents, clothed
In rainbow and in fire, the parasites,
Starred with ten thousand blossoms, flow around
The gray trunks, and, as gamesome infants' eyes
With gentle meanings and most innocent wiles
Fold their beams round the hearts of those that love,
These twine their tendrils with the wedded boughs

Uniting their close union; the woven leaves
Make network of the dark blue light of day,
And the night's moontide clearness, mutable
As shapes in the weird clouds. Soft mossy lawns
Beneath these canopies extend their swells,
Fragrant with perfumed herbs, and eyed with blooms
Minute, yet beautiful.'

Farther on a gradual change ensues, yet ghastly:

'On every side now rose
Rocks, which in unimaginable forms
Lifted their black and barren pinnacles
In the light of evening, and its precipice
Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,
'Mid toppling stones, black gulfs, and yawning caves,
Whose windings gave ten thousand various tongues
To the loud stream. Lo! where the pass expands
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,
And seems, with its accumulated crags,
To overhang the world: for wide expand
Beneath the wan stars and descending moon
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,
Dim tracts and vast, robed in the lustrous gloom
Of leaden-colored even, and fiery hills
Mingling their flames with twilight, on the verge
Of the remote horizon.'

On the threshold of a green recess, that seemed to smile in the lap of horror, the wanderer, feeling that death is on him, resigns himself 'to images of the majestic past.' As the horned moon, 'with whose dun beams inwoven darkness seemed to mingle,' sinks behind the jagged hills, his blood,—

'That ever beat in mystic sympathy
With nature's ebb and flow, grew feebler still;
And when two lessening points of light alone
Gleamed through the darkness, the alternate gasp
Of his faint respiration scarce did stir
The stagnate night,—till the minutest ray
Was quenched, the pulse yet lingered in his heart.
It paused,—it fluttered. But when heaven remained
Utterly black, the murky shades involved
An image silent, cold, and motionless
As their own voiceless earth and vacant air.
Even as a vapor fed with golden beams
That ministered on sunlight, ere the west
Eclipses it, was now that wondrous frame,—
No sense, no motion, no divinity.'

His benevolence, his passion to solve the riddle of the universe, to lose himself in the Spirit of Beauty, reappear in *Prometheus Unbound*, a tragedy fashioned after the Greek models, its high ideal the renovation of man and the world. No analysis will be attempted; yet we cannot omit an illustration of the marvellous

eness of his powers. What a lightness of touch, what a wild, mitable grace in the flight of the Hours:

'The rocks are cloven, and through the purple night
I see cars drawn by rainbow-winged steeds,
Which trample the dim winds: in each there stands
A wild-eyed charioteer urging their flight.
Some look behind, as fiends pursued them there,
And yet I see no shapes but the keen stars:
Others, with burning eyes, lean forth and drink
With eager lips the wind of their own speed,
As if the thing they loved fled on before,
And now, even now, they clasp it. Their bright locks
Stream like a comet's flashing hair: they all sweep onward.'

w truly imaginative is the song with which Panthea hails her ter Asia:

'Life of Life! thy lips enkindle
With their love the breath between them,
And thy smiles before they dwindle
Make the cold air fire: then screen them
In those locks where whoso gazes
Faints, entangled in their mazes.

Child of Light! thy limbs are burning
Through the vest which seems to hide them,
As the radiant lines of morning
Through the clouds, ere they divide them,
And this atmosphere divinest
Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.'

w exquisitely beautiful the response:

My soul is an enchanted boat
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing;
And thine doth like an angel sit
Beside the helm conducting it,
While all the winds with melody are ringing.
It seems to float ever, forever,
Upon that many-winding river,
Between mountains, woods, abysses,
A paradise of wildernesses!
Till, like one in slumber bound,
Borne to the ocean, I float down, around,
Into a sea profound of ever-spreading sound.'

ce only was he content to leave that interstellar region which s his home, and paint men and women. The *Cenci*, dark and omy, founded on an Italian tragedy of real life, may chalge comparison with any dramatic work since Otway. A single sage will suggest his wonderful descriptive power, his conat idealization, as well as the sombre character of the whole:

'I remember,
Two miles on this side of the fort, the road

Crosses a deep ravine; 'tis rough and narrow,
And winds with short turns down the precipice;
And in its depth there is a mighty rock,
Which has from unimaginable years
Sustained itself with terror and with toil
Over a gulf, and, with the agony
With which it clings, seems slowly coming down;
Even as a wretched soul, hour after hour,
Clings to the mass of life, yet clinging, leans,
And, leaning, makes more dark the dread abyss
In which it fears to fall,—beneath this crag,
Huge as despair, as if in weariness,
The melancholy mountain yawns; below
You hear, but see not, an impetuous torrent,
Raging among the caverns, and a bridge
Crosses the chasm; and high above there grow,
With intersecting trunks, from crag to crag,
Cedars and yews, and pines, whose tangled hair
Is matted in one solid roof of shade
By the dark ivy's twine. At noonday here
'Tis twilight, and at sunset blackest night.'

And the final words of the daughter, who is going forth with her mother to execution, could not easily be surpassed for naturalness, force of simplicity, and moral sweetness:

'Farewell, my tender brother! Think
Of our sad fate with gentleness, as now:
And let mild pitying thoughts lighten for thee
Thy sorrow's load. Err not in harsh despair,
But tears and patience. One thing more, my child:
For thine own sake be constant to the love
Thou bearest us; and to the faith that I,
Though wrapped in a strange cloud of crime and shame,
Lived ever holy and unstained. And though
Ill tongues shall wound me, and our common name
Be as a mark stamped on thine innocent brow,
For men to point at as they pass, do thou
Forbear, and never think a thought unkind
Of those who perhaps love thee in their graves.
So mayest thou die as I do; fear and pain
Being subdued. Farewell! Farewell! Farewell!'

And:

'Here, mother, tie
My girdle for me, and bind up this hair
In any simple knot; ay, that does well.
And yours, I see, is coming down. How often
Have we done this for one another!'

The deep undertone of all his poetry is the sadness of the dark grave and of the limitless ocean, to which the poor, weak mortal must descend, with no unfaltering assurance of a Personality to rest upon in the wide, wide realm of change:

'We are as clouds that vail the midnight moon;
How restlessly they speed, and gleam, and quiver,

Streaking the darkness radiantly! — yet soon
Night closes round, and they are lost forever;

Or like forgotten lyres, whose dissonant strings
Give various response to each varying blast,
To whose frail frame no second motion brings
One mood or modulation like the last.'[1]

d:

'Who telleth a tale of unspeaking death?
Who lifteth the vail of what is to come?
Who painteth the shadows that are beneath
The wide-winding caves of the peopled tomb?
Or uniteth the hopes of what shall be
With the fears and the love for that which we see?'[2]

er, under the influence of Platonic ideas, he finds a sort of tral peace in a Spirit of Love and Beauty as the animating nciple of the universe:

'While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
Through many a listening chamber, cave and ruin,
And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
I called on poisonous names with which our youth is fed;
I was not heard; I saw them not;
When musing deeply on the lot
Of life, at that sweet time when winds are wooing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of birds and blossoming,
Sudden thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!'[3]

It is in his lyrics that we have Shelley at his best. It is in se that he lays hold of the real sentiments, the unchanging otions, of man. Mark the splendor of imagery and the magical sic of these lines:

'I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under:
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder. . . .

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead. . . .

[1] *Mutability.* [2] *On Death.* [3] *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty.*

That orbed maiden, with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn. . . .

I bind the sun's throne with the burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl. . . .

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.'[1]

All things are made to pulsate, all to breathe and yearn. The verses seem to have been composed at a white heat of fervor. How rapturously he soars into the empyrean with the Skylark, as if delighting to dissolve himself in its triumphal chant:

'Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher,
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.'

Then the ever-haunting melancholy:

'Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught:
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.'[2]

The mysticism, the haziness, which obscure much of his poetry — as the *Revolt of Islam*, the *Sensitive Plant*, the *Triumph of Life* — spring from these thrills of desire, this straining after something seen afar, the dreamy ecstasy too high for speech.

[1] *The Cloud.* [2] *To a Skylark.*

Such men supply our need of wings. They bring us freedom and ideality. They forecast the possibilities of the race, and they rise in esteem in proportion as souls are refined. Art and eloquence are vain to weep their loss:

> 'It is a woe too deep for tears, when all
> Is reft at once,— when some surpassing spirit,
> Whose light adorned the world around it, leaves
> Those who remain behind nor sobs nor groans,
> The passionate tumult of a clinging hope;
> But pale despair and cold tranquillity,
> Nature's vast frame, the web of human things,
> Birth and the grave, that are not as they were.'

It yet remains to notice the chief of those who, while reflecting the light and shadow of their environment, communicated heat and lustre to this revolutionary period,— **Scott, Wordsworth,** and **Byron.**

In America there was yet no national type, and the situation was adverse to art. We were cultured at the outset; but ideality is retarded by the necessities of a new land which absorb passion in the contest with Nature. Imaginative productiveness, after the legendary stage is passed, follows material security and wealth.

Drama.— The dramas now produced were a compound of the characteristics of previous schools, excepting the profligacy of the Restoration. Nearly all, while possessed of literary merit, were wanting in the qualities requisite for successful presentation. The first writers of the age — Scott, Byron, Shelley, Coleridge, Wordsworth — adopted the dramatic form, but only to prove how rare a gift is popular dramatic art,— the art of portraying actual life and passion in interesting situations. In the dearth of successful playwrights, plays were introduced from Germany, full of exaggeration and horror,— the very antipodes of the sentimental; but after a run of unexampled success they ceased to attract attention. To them, however, we probably owe the five volumes of Miss Baillie, of which only one piece has been acted, though all have been largely read. Jerrold's *Black-eyed Susan* received a brief but cordial welcome. Talfourd's *Ion* and Miss Mitford's *Rienzi*, though they made a stage success, were of a day whose fashion has gone by. Amid the many tragedies which are better fitted for reading than for acting, amid the many in which Dulness lays the ghost of Wit, one shines out like the stars of heaven, more fiery by night's blackness,— the

Virginius of **James Sheridan Knowles,** the most successful of modern tragic dramatists.

At the opening of this period, Mrs. Siddons, the greatest tragic actress of the English theatre, had passed her prime. Before its close, both she and her brother, Kemble, had withdrawn from the boards. Kean died in 1833. Macready was left to transmit to a few some of the traditions which had passed from hand to hand, from mouth to mouth, within the lineal artistic descendants of Garrick and Betterton.

Periodical.—A department of literature now absorbing the productive energy of mind — as well as an influence destructive to the drama by superseding the band of critics who had been its body-guard — was the newspaper press. Now, also, as an inevitable necessity, was founded the dynasty of the Reviews, — the *Edinburgh*, the *London Quarterly*, the *North American*, and *Blackwood's Magazine.* The first ushered in the century, as the organ of the Whigs,— the organ of a progressive and liberal literary and political party. Its zeal led to the establishment of the next and the last by the Tory or Conservative party. Soon the *Westminster* appeared as a medium for the representation of Radical opinions. These, it is needless to add, were made the exemplars of numerous similar publications. The primary object of most was to furnish thorough criticisms of books, and careful papers on the current topics of politics and reform. As their scope enlarged, contributions were received on any subject to which the writer had devoted special attention. Their limits and popular purpose required that the articles should be condensed and spirited. Hence a peculiar style,— brief, pithy, trenchant, often eloquent, but always positive. Jeffrey, Sidney Smith, and Macaulay were master spirits in the first; Gifford and Southey, in the second; the Peabodys and the Everetts, in the third; Lockhart and Wilson, in the fourth.

The first *Daily* in the United States appeared in Philadelphia in 1784,— the *American Daily Advertiser.* The first newspaper in the Northwest appeared in Cincinnati in 1793,— the *Sentinel of the Northwestern Territory!* The *Morning Post* — the first penny paper of any pretensions — was started in 1833, with two hundred dollars capital and a doubtful credit, Mr. Greeley being one of the partners, printers, and publishers. In 1833 the first

number of the *Sun* was issued, with a circulation of three hundred, and comprising twelve columns, each ten inches in length. In after years (1851) the editor and originator said:

'In 1835 I introduced steam power, now so necessary an appendage to almost every newspaper office. At that time all the Napier presses in the city were turned by crankmen, and as the *Sun* was the only daily of large circulation, so it seemed to be the only establishment where steam was really indispensable.'

The American press had as yet hardly emerged from its swaddling clothes. There can be no surer proof that the general mind is seeking higher aliment, that the love of knowledge is spreading through all classes of the community, than the growth of periodical literature.

Essay.—The miscellaneous literature of the period took mainly the form of long essays, most of which first appeared in the Reviews and Magazines. Among the many who thus distinguished themselves a few stand forth preëminent. Highest in the file is the name of **Jeffrey** (1773–1850), an eminent barrister, a versatile writer, and a brilliant critic. His style is flowing, spirited, and symmetrical, embellished with a copious felicity of illustration, as in the following observations on the steam-engine:

'It has become a thing stupendous alike for its force and its flexibility,—for the prodigious power which it can exert, and the ease, and precision, and ductility with which it can be varied, distributed, and applied. The trunk of an elephant, that can pick up a pin or rend an oak, is as nothing to it. It can engrave a seal, and crush masses of obdurate metal before it,—draw out, without breaking, a thread as fine as gossamer, and lift up a ship of war like a bauble in the air. It can embroider muslin and forge anchors, cut steel into ribbons, and impel loaded vessels against the fury of the winds and waves.'

At times, indeed, his diction is very poetical, as in the following tribute to Shakespeare:

'Although his sails are purple and perfumed, and his prow of beaten gold, they waft him on his voyage, not less, but more rapidly and directly, than if they had been composed of baser materials. All his excellences, like those of Nature herself, are thrown out together; and instead of interfering with, support and recommend each other. His flowers are not tied up in garlands, nor his fruits crushed into baskets, but spring living from the soil, in all the dew and freshness of youth; while the graceful foliage in which they lurk, and the ample branches, the rough and vigorous stem, and the wide-spreading roots on which they depend, are present along with them, and share, in their places, the equal care of their creator.'

In his early days he seems to have been betrayed occasionally into undue severity; but in his latter, to have made criticism a careful, conscientious, discriminating task. Of *Hyperion*, he said, with genial candor, but too late to cheer the dying poet:

'Mr. Keats is, we understand, still a very young man; and his whole works, indeed, bear evidence enough of the fact. They manifestly require, therefore, all the indulgence

that can be claimed for a first attempt; but we think it no less plain that they deserve it; for they are flushed all over with the rich lights of fancy, and so coloured and bestrown with the flowers of poetry, that, even while perplexed and bewildered in their labyrinths, it is impossible to resist the intoxication of their sweetness, or to shut our hearts to the enchantments they so lavishly present.'

He nobly endeavored to 'combine ethical precepts with literary criticism, and earnestly sought,' as he says, 'to impress his readers with a sense both of the close connection between sound intellectual attainments and the highest elements of duty and enjoyment, and of the just and ultimate subordination of the former to the latter.' Hence the moral suggestiveness of his critical writings, as in the following remarks on the transitoriness of poetical fame:

'When an army is *decimated*, the very bravest may fall; and many poets, worthy of eternal remembrance, have been forgotten, merely because there was not room in our memories for all.

By such a work as the *Specimens*, however, this injustice of fortune may be partly redressed, some small fragments of an immortal strain may still be rescued from oblivion, and a wreck of a name preserved, which time appeared to have swallowed up forever. There is something pious, we think, and endearing, in the office of thus gathering up the ashes of renown that has passed away; or rather, of calling back the departed life for a transitory glow, and enabling those great spirits which seemed to be *laid* forever, still to draw a tear of pity, or a throb of admiration, from the hearts of a forgetful generation. The body of their poetry, probably, can never be revived; but some sparks of its spirit may yet be preserved, in a narrower and feebler frame. . . .

There never was an age so prolific of popular poetry as that in which we now live; and as wealth, population, and education extend, the produce is likely to go on increasing. The last ten years have produced, we think, an annual supply of about ten thousand lines of good staple poetry — poetry from the very first hands that we can boast of — that runs quickly to three or four large editions — and is as likely to be permanent as present success can make it. Now, if this goes on for a hundred years longer, what a task will await the poetical readers of 1919! Our living poets will then be nearly as old as Pope and Swift are at present, but there will stand between them and that generation nearly ten times as much fresh and fashionable poetry as is now interposed between us and those writers: and if Scott, and Byron, and Campbell have already cast Pope and Swift a good deal into the shade, in what form and dimensions are they themselves likely to be presented to the eyes of their great-grandchildren?'

One of the most popular and influential writers of the period was the **Rev. Sidney Smith** (1771–1845); manly, fearless, independent; scorning hypocrites, pedants, and Tories; sometimes too flippant, sometimes too dogmatical, often a little unjust to his adversaries, but always frank, always himself, using his pen to enforce practical views in the cause of human improvement, and bringing to the aid of logical argument fertility of fancy and breadth of humor. Almost everything which he has written is characteristic. Thus:

'Daniel Webster struck me like a steam-engine in trowsers.'

Also:

'No, I don't like dogs; I always expect them to go mad. A lady asked me once for a motto for her dog Spot. I proposed, "Out, damned Spot!" but she did not think it sentimental enough.'

Again:

'I do not mean to be disrespectful, but the attempt of the Lords to stop the progress of reform reminds me very forcibly of the great storm of Sidmouth, and of the conduct of the excellent Mrs. Partington on that occasion. In the winter of 1824 there set in a great flood upon that town — the sea rose to an incredible height — the waves rushed in upon the houses — and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime storm, Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, trundling her mop, and squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused. Mrs. Partington's spirit was up; but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic Ocean beat Mrs. Partington. She was excellent at a slop or puddle, but she should not have meddled with a tempest.'

We see that this wit, which has something of levity, is nevertheless earnest. There is a grave thought at the bottom, worth remembering for its own sake — something to reflect upon after we have laughed. Thus:

'I like pictures, without knowing anything about them; but I hate coxcombry in the fine arts, as well as in anything else. I got into dreadful disgrace with Sir George Beaumont once, who, standing before a picture at Bowood, exclaimed, turning to me, "immense breadth of light and shade!" I innocently said, "Yes; about an inch and a half." He gave me a look that ought to have killed me.'

And:

'Yes, he is of the Utilitarian school. That man is so hard you might drive a broad-wheeled wagon over him, and it would produce no impression; if you were to bore holes in him with a gimlet, I am convinced saw-dust would come out of him. That school treats mankind as if they were mere machines; the feelings or affections never enter into their calculations. If everything is to be sacrificed to utility, why do you bury your grandmother at all? why don't you cut her into small pieces at once and make portable soup of her?'

He has healthy views of life, and concentrates them into cut and polished diamonds:

'Take short views, hope for the best, and trust in God.'

'Some very excellent people tell you they dare not hope. To me it seems much more impious to dare to despair.'

'True, it is most painful not to meet the kindness and affection you feel you have deserved, and have a right to expect from others; but it is a mistake to complain of it, for it is of no use; you cannot extort friendship with a cocked pistol.'

'Moralists tell you of the evils of wealth and station, and the happiness of poverty. I have been very poor the greatest part of my life, and have borne it as well, I believe, as most people, but I can safely say that I have been happier every guinea I have gained.'

These marked individual features are delightful. In them, as in a glass, is mirrored the personality of the writer, and we meet a companion where we expect a book.

A prominent figure of the period was **William Hazlitt**[1] (1778–1830), son of a Unitarian clergyman, first a painter, then an author by profession — a critic of art and of literature; a liberalist in opinion, a lover of paradox, an enthusiastic student of the early dramatists; of rich imagination, of delicate but not well-balanced tastes; vivid, pungent, and picturesque in style; moody and somewhat bigoted, having refinement and eloquence, but wanting that quality which is the girdle and safeguard of all the rest,— which it is the characteristic of rightly trained minds in all things to prefer, and of common minds to reject,— moderation, self-restrained liberty. The following are cases in point:

'The indefatigable readers of books are like the everlasting copiers of pictures, who, when they attempt to do anything of their own, find they want an eye quick enough, a hand steady enough, and colors bright enough, to trace the living forms of nature. Any one who has passed through the regular gradations of a classical education, and is not made a fool by it, may consider himself as having had a very narrow escape.'

And:

'Women have often more of what is called good sense than men. They have fewer pretensions, are less implicated in theories, and judge of objects more from their immediate and voluntary impression on the mind, and, therefore, more truly and naturally. They cannot reason wrong, for they do not reason at all. They do not think or speak by rule, and they have in general more eloquence and wit, as well as sense, on that account. By their wit, sense, and eloquence together, they generally contrive to govern their husbands.'

Also:

'Uneducated people have most exuberance of invention, and the greatest freedom from prejudice. Shakespeare's was evidently an uneducated mind, both in the freshness of his imagination and in the variety of his views, as Milton's was scholastic in the texture both of his thoughts and feelings. Shakespeare had not been accustomed to write themes at school in favor of virtue or against vice. To this we owe the unaffected but healthy tone of his dramatic morality. If we wish to know the force of human genius, we should read Shakespeare. If we wish to see the insignificance of human learning, we may study his commentators.'

The lesson is useful, but must be received with caution; it has a certain truth, but is not wholly true. Less critically, more sincerely, more happily:

'No young man believes he shall ever die. . . . There is a feeling of Eternity in youth which makes us amends for everything. To be young is to be as one of the Immortals. . . . As infants smile and sleep, we are rocked in the cradle of our desires, and hushed into fancied security by the roar of the universe around us; we quaff the cup of life with eager thirst without draining it, and joy and hope seem ever mantling to the brim; objects press around us, filling the mind with their magnitude and with the throng of desires that wait upon them, so that there is no room for the thoughts of death.'

Of a quite different temper was **Charles Lamb** (1775–1834) [illegible];

[1] His best known works are: *Table Talk*, *The Round Table*, *English Poets and Com[illegible]ic Writers*, *Elizabethan Dramatists*, *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*.

a wayward and eccentric humorist, occasionally and in a lower key a poet, beloved by all his contemporaries, somewhat quaint and antique in style, but natural and graceful; preëminently human, mingling the simplicity of the child with the learning of the scholar, seeking his materials chiefly in the common paths of life,—often in the humblest. His *Letters* and *Essays of Elia*, fanciful and meditative sketches, gay, serious, brilliant, or tender, have a strong individuality, and reflect, as in a mirror, his quick, penetrative, and genial nature. One or two detached sentences can but faintly suggest that diffusive quality of humor which so eminently distinguishes his manner:

'Absurd images are sometimes irresistible. I will mention two. An elephant in a coach office gravely coming to have his trunk booked; a mermaid over a fish-kettle cooking her own tail.'

And:

'Dost thou love silence deep as that "before the winds were made"? go not out into the wilderness; descend not into the profundities of the earth; shut not up thy casements, nor pour wax into the little cells of thine ears, with little-faithed, self-mistrusting Ulysses: retire with me into a Quakers' meeting.'

This characteristic is illustrated at great length in the famous *Dissertation on Roast Pig*. In all humor there is an influx of the moral nature. Through the mask shine the features of the man,—the broad, swimming eyes of love, or the sad earnestness into which the mind relaxes when it has stammered out its joke:

'We willingly call phantoms our fellows, as knowing we shall soon be of their dark companionship. Therefore we cherish dreams. We try to spell in them the alphabet of the invisible world; and think we know already how it shall be with us. Those uncouth shapes, which while we clung to flesh and blood affrighted us, have become familiar. We feel attenuated into their meagre essences, and have given the hand of half-way approach to incorporated being. We once thought life to be something; but it has unaccountably fallen from us before its time. Therefore we choose to dally with visions.'

Few have soared into regions of the vast and vague with so uniform and easy a flight as the variously-gifted **Thomas De Quincey** (1785–1859); in boyhood morbidly sensitive and precociously active, a truant from school, and a vagrant through England and Wales, setting out with a parcel under his arm, an English poet in one pocket, and the plays of Euripides in the other; lodging at farm-houses or subsisting on road-side berries as he tramped his way, and in return for casual hospitality writing letters of business for cottagers, or letters of love for maids; in manhood a writer of prodigious industry, and an intimate of literary celebrities; like Coleridge, a slave to opium,

from which, after years of indulgence, he liberated himself only by agonizing struggles; a philosophic inquirer, a critic of no common delicacy, an honest and fearless investigator; fitful, occasionally ungenial, at times unjustly depreciative, at others absurdly eulogistic; in faculty uniting to metaphysical acuteness poetical taste and sensibility; in style affluent, graphic, richly colored. His charm, his merit, indeed, is not so much in the novelty of his thoughts as in the dazzling fence of his rhetoric, his word-painting, his rhythm, his majestic swells and dying falls, which are to his bare ideas as autumn's gorgeous dyes to the landscape. Thus:

'Yes, reader, countless are the mysterious handwritings of grief or joy which have inscribed themselves successively upon the palimpsest[1] of your brain; and like the annual leaves of aboriginal forests, or the undissolving snows on the Himalaya, or light falling upon light, the endless strata have covered up each other in forgetfulness. But by the hour of death, but by fever, but by the searchings of opium, all these can revive in strength. . . . The romance has perished that the young man adored; the legend has gone by that deluded the boy: but the deep, deep tragedies of infancy, as when the child's hands were unlinked forever from his mother's neck, or his lips forever from his sister's kisses,— these remain lurking below all, and these lurk to the last.'

Not seldom is the meaning lost in a mere vague of music, as if clear and consecutive vision had swooned in the piling up and excess of imagery and sound. The minuteness and tenacity of his memory lead him into frequent and undue parentheses, into long digressions from which he never comes back to his theme; sometimes, however, apt and luminous, and generally sure to be instructive or entertaining. Thus:

'Entering I closed the door so softly that, although it opened upon a hall which ascended through all the stories, no echo ran along the silent walls. Then turning around I sought my sister's face. But the bed had been moved, and the back was now turned. Nothing met my eyes but one large window wide open, through which the sun of midsummer at noonday was showering down torrents of splendor. The weather was dry, the sky was cloudless, the blue depths seemed to express types of infinity: and it was not possible for eye to behold or for heart to conceive any symbols more pathetic of life and the glory of life.

Let me pause for one instant in approaching a remembrance so affecting and revolutionary in my own mind, and one which (if any earthly remembrance) will survive for me in the hour of death, to remind some readers and to inform others that in the original Opium Confessions I endeavored to explain the reason why death, *cæteris paribus*, is more profoundly affecting in summer than in other parts of the year; so far at least as it is liable to any modification at all from accidents of scenery or season. The reason, as I there suggested, lies in the antagonism between the tropical redundancy of life in summer and the dark sterilities of the grave.'[2]

[1] A parchment from which the original writing has been obliterated in order to receive new, which in turn has been obliterated, so that the first draught stands revealed.

[2] De Quincey's most valuable writings are perhaps to be found in the *Confessions of an Opium Eater* and the *Miscellaneous Essays*. In the latter are *Joan of Arc*, the *Mail-coach*, and *Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*, which it is the custom to call fine piece of 'grim humor,' but which to us has always seemed a moody performance.

But the Nimrod of literary criticism was **Thomas B. Macaulay** (1800–1859), poet, essayist, historian, legislator, jurist, orator. When three years old, books were his companions. At four he replied to a condolence, 'Thank you, madam, the agony is abated.' At seven, left for a week with Hannah More, he stood on a chair and preached sermons to people brought in from the fields. At eight, with the whole of Marmion in his head, he began to imitate Scott's verse. At fourteen he appeared in print. To retentive memory was added a quick wit. Mathematics he detested. At eighteen he wrote to his mother:

'I can scarcely bear to write on mathematics or mathematicians. Oh, for words to express my abomination of that science, if a name, sacred to the useful and embellishing arts, may be applied to the perception and recollection of certain properties, numbers, and figures! Oh, that I had to learn astrology, or demonology, or school divinity! Oh, that I were to pore over Thomas Aquinas, and to adjust the relation of entity with the two predicaments, so that I were exempted from this miserable study! Discipline of the mind! Say rather starvation, confinement, torture, annihilation! But it must be. I feel myself a personification of algebra, a living trigonometrical canon, a walking table of logarithms. All my perceptions of elegance and beauty gone, or at least going. By the end of the term my brain will be as dry as the remainder biscuit after a voyage.'

The classics he loved. He cried over Homer, laughed over Aristophanes, and could not read *De Corona*, even for the twentieth time, without striking his clenched fist once a minute on the arms of his easy-chair. From this power of realizing the past proceeds his skill in the delineation of character. Hence his energetic, impassioned tone. From his vast and well-digested reading proceed the abounding mass and weight of his style,—a river of ideas and facts, urged forward by the internal heat. He is so opulent that he makes criticism almost a creative art, and the author or work reviewed becomes a hint for the construction of picturesque dissertations, magnificent comparisons, and glowing dialectic. At twenty-four he writes on Milton, and says:

'The Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker; but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions and groans and tears. He was half-maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid His face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle.'

Then he becomes a story-teller, in splendid metaphors:

'Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!'

At forty, professedly reviewing Ranke's *History of the Popes*, he dismisses the writer in two paragraphs, and straightway enters upon an examination of the Roman Catholic Church:

'No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when camelopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series, from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century, to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique; but full of life and youthful vigour. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the furthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine; and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. Her acquisitions in the New World have more than compensated her for what she has lost in the Old. Her spiritual ascendancy extends over the vast countries which lie between the plains of the Missouri and Cape Horn; countries which, a century hence, may not improbably contain a population as large as that which now inhabits Europe. The members of her community are certainly not fewer than a hundred and fifty millions; and it will be difficult to show that all the other Christian sects united amount to a hundred and twenty millions. Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments, and of all the ecclesiastical establishments, that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine,—when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.'

These single passages present an abstract of his talent—opulence of illustration and adornment, antithesis of ideas, regular sequence of thought, harmonious construction, and incomparable lucidity. Jeffrey, in acknowledging the manuscript of *Milton*, said, 'The more I think, the less I can conceive where you picked up that style.' It was the prevalent opinion of literary friends, that he wrote rapidly and made few corrections, so spontaneous

seemed his manner. On the contrary, he was minutely studious of every sentence, would often rewrite paragraphs and chapters to improve the arrangement or expression. Again would he correct, and his manuscripts were covered with erasures. He was equally attentive to proof-sheets. 'He could not rest until the lines were level to a hair's breadth, and the punctuation correct to a comma; until every paragraph concluded with a telling sentence, and every sentence flowed like running water.' Excellence is not matured in a day. Montesquieu, in allusion to one of his works, says to a correspondent, 'You will read it in a few hours, but the labor expended on it has whitened my hair.'

Franklin and Edwards, the one a philosopher and the other a theologian, were not of the *literary* guild in any strict sense of the term. Our veteran Chief of Letters was the amiable and gifted **Irving** (1783–1859), in whom the creative vigor, that, breathing and burning in the bosom of the nation, had found issue in action, blossomed into art. All his life a desultory genius, reading much, but studying little. In boyhood a rover, familiar with every spot where a murder or robbery had been committed, or a ghost seen; neglecting the exercises of the school for books of voyage and travel, gazing wistfully after the parting ships whose lessening sails wafted his imagination to distant climes. He knew and loved the sublime and beautiful of natural scenery, but more potent were the charms of historic ruins, of storied and poetical association:

> 'I longed to wander over the scenes of renowned achievement — to tread, as it were, in the footsteps of antiquity—to loiter about the ruined castle—to meditate on the falling tower — to escape, in short, from the commonplace realities of the present, and lose myself among the shadowy grandeurs of the past.'

Perhaps no other American ever met with so hearty a welcome abroad from men of all classes and nationalities, as he during the twenty odd years he passed in Europe. There he began his literary career under the kind and cordial auspices of Scott, and nearly all the leading writers of the day were among his friends. At home he was everywhere honored, and the gate of his pretty domain on the Hudson, though he was wifeless and childless, was forever opening to visitors. Never obsequious to the great, honest and grateful, kind, affable, generous, gentle, affectionate, self-denying,— above all, an exemplar of goodness, whose last words, characteristically embodying the supreme concern of this

life, might consistently have been: Be good. May we not predict a style which is an inborn elegance of mind, and a pleasure which is almost witching yet always refining?

In his *History of New York* we have at length something all our own, not copied from London, nor borrowed from Paris. The elements of his art are here, its admirable grace and temper, in this his early work; and his peculiar talent, ever reverting instinctively to the lights and shadows that play upon the surface of social life, as in the following unique account of the traditionary manners of the Dutch settlers. Of their architecture he says, like one who has lived among the objects he describes:

'The houses of the higher class were generally constructed of wood, excepting the gable-end, which was of small black and yellow Dutch bricks, and always faced on the street; as our ancestors, like their descendants, were very much given to outward show, and were noted for putting the best leg foremost. The house was always furnished with abundance of large doors and small windows on every floor; the date of its erection was curiously designated by iron figures on the front; and on the top of the roof was perched a fierce little weather-cock, to let the family into the important secret which way the wind blew. These, like the weather-cocks on the tops of our steeples, pointed so many different ways, that every man could have a wind to his mind; and you would have thought old Æolus had set all his bags of wind adrift, pell-mell, to gambol about this windy metropolis; the most staunch and loyal citizens, however, always went according to the weather-cock on the top of the governor's house, which was certainly the most correct, as he had a trusty servant employed every morning to climb up and point it whichever way the wind blew.'

Of their home-life:

'As to the family, they always entered in at the gate, and most generally lived in the kitchen. To have seen a numerous household assembled around the fire, one would have imagined that he was transported back to those happy days of primeval simplicity which float through our imaginations like golden visions. The fire-places were of a truly patriarchal magnitude, where the whole family, old and young, master and servant, black and white, nay, even the very cat and dog, enjoyed a community of privilege, and had each a prescriptive right to a corner. Here the old burgher would sit in perfect silence, puffing his pipe, looking in the fire with half-shut eyes, and thinking of nothing for hours together; his *goede vrouw* on the opposite side would employ herself diligently in spinning her yarn or knitting stockings. The young folks would crowd around the hearth, listening with breathless attention to some old crone of a negro who was the oracle of the family, and who, perched like a raven in the corner of the chimney, would croak forth for a long winter afternoon a string of incredible stories about New England witches, grisly ghosts, horses without heads, and hairbreadth escapes, and bloody encounters among the Indians.'

Of their conviviality:

'These fashionable parties were generally confined to the higher classes or noblesse,—that is to say, such as kept their own cows and drove their own wagons. The company commonly assembled at three o'clock, and went away about six, unless it was in wintertime, when the fashionable hours were a little earlier, that the ladies might get home before dark. I do not find that they ever treated their company to iced creams, jellies, or syllabubs, or regaled them with musty almonds, mouldy raisins, or sour oranges, as is often done in the present age of refinement. Our ancestors were fond of more sturdy, substantial fare. The tea-table was crowned with a huge earthen dish, well stored with

slices of fat pork, fried brown, cut up into morsels, and swimming in gravy. The company being seated around the genial board, and each furnished with a fork, evinced their dexterity in launching at the fattest pieces of this mighty dish, in much the same manner as sailors harpoon porpoises at sea, or our Indians spear salmon. Sometimes the table was graced with immense apple-pies, or saucers full of preserved peaches and pears; but it was always sure to boast of an enormous dish of balls of sweetened dough fried in hog's fat and called dough-nuts or *oly koeks;* a delicious kind of cake, at present scarce known in this city, except in genuine Dutch families.'

This playfulness never betrays him from decorum. It is the gayety and airiness of a light, pure spirit, pleased with men and things, and fancying others equally pleased, or innocent of their displeasure. He continues:

'The tea was served out of a majestic delf tea-pot, ornamented with paintings of fat little Dutch shepherds and shepherdesses, tending pigs, with boats sailing in the air, and houses built in the clouds, and sundry other ingenious Dutch fantasies. The beaux distinguished themselves by their adroitness in replenishing this pot from a huge copper tea-kettle, which would have made the pigmy macaronies of these degenerate days sweat merely to look at it. To sweeten the beverage, a lump of sugar was laid beside each cup, and the company alternately nibbled and sipped with great decorum, until an improvement was introduced by a shrewd and economic old lady, which was to suspend a large lump directly over the tea-table by a string from the ceiling, so that it could be swung from mouth to mouth,—an ingenious expedient, which is still kept up by some families in Albany, but which prevails, without exception, in Communipaw, Bergen, Flat-Bush, and all our uncontaminated Dutch villages.'

How easy, simple, and sprightly, as of one who catches his tints direct from nature, always fresh and felicitous. Thus he completes the picture:

'No flirting nor coquetting, no gambling of old ladies, nor hoyden chattering and romping of young ones, no self-satisfied struttings of wealthy gentlemen with their brains in their pockets, nor amusing conceits and monkey divertisements of smart young gentlemen with no brains at all. On the contrary, the young ladies seated themselves demurely in their rush-bottomed chairs, and knit their own woollen stockings; nor ever opened their lips excepting to say, 'Yah, Mynheer,' or 'Yah, ya Vrouw,' to any question that was asked them; behaving in all things like decent well-educated damsels. As to the gentlemen, each of them tranquilly smoked his pipe, and seemed lost in contemplation of the blue and white tiles with which the fire-places were decorated. . . .

The parties broke up without noise and without confusion. They were carried home by their own carriages,—that is to say, by the vehicles nature had provided them, excepting such of the wealthy as could afford to keep a wagon. The gentlemen gallantly attended their fair ones to their respective abodes, and took leave of them with a hearty smack at the door; which, as it was an established piece of etiquette, done in perfect simplicity and honesty of heart, occasioned no scandal at that time, nor should it at the present: if our great grandfathers approved of the custom, it would argue a great want of reverence in their descendants to say a word against it.'

But the best example of his powers is the *Sketch Book*, mild, cheerful, fanciful, thoughtful, humorous. *The Wife*, *The Pride of the Village*, and *The Broken Heart*, are gems of sentiment and description. *Rip Van Winkle* and *Sleepy Hollow* are among the finest pieces of fiction to be found in any literature. As we

read, we are all drawn to beauty, gentleness, sunshine, elevating seriousness, or chastening sorrow. It is fundamentally the fascination of the *man*. We are captivated by the poetic graces of his fancy and the liquid music of his style; but behind all, under all, pervading all, is the deeper charm of the genial and sensitive soul in sympathy with the human heart. Here, in a few random sentences, is his essential self,—the modest and thoughtful saunterer in his meditations, the simple but polished artist in the scenes which he sets before us, filled with interest and passion by the magic infusion of mind:

'I delighted to loll over the quarter-railing, or climb to the main-top, of a calm day, and muse for hours together on the tranquil bosom of a summer's sea; to gaze upon the piles of golden clouds just peering above the horizon, fancy them some fairy realms, and people them with a creation of my own; to watch the gentle, undulating billows, rolling their silver volumes, as if to die away on those happy shores.'[1]

'A tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use.'[2]

'As the vine, which has long twined its graceful foliage about the oak, and been lifted by it into sunshine, will, when the hardy plant is rifted by the thunderbolt, cling round it with its caressing tendrils, and bind up its shattered boughs; so is it beautifully ordered by Providence that woman, who is the mere dependant and ornament of man in his happier hours, should be his stay and solace when smitten with sudden calamity; winding herself into the rugged recesses of his nature, tenderly supporting the drooping head, and binding up the broken heart.'[3]

'If ever Love, as poets sing, delights to visit a cottage, it must be the cottage of an English peasant.'[4]

'Other men are known to posterity only through the medium of history, which is continually growing faint and obscure: but the intercourse between the author and his fellow men is ever new, active, and immediate. He has lived for them more than for himself; he has sacrificed surrounding enjoyments, and shut himself up from the delights of social life, that he might the more intimately commune with distant minds and distant ages. Well may the world cherish his renown; for it has been purchased, not by deeds of violence and blood, but by the diligent dispensation of pleasure.'[5]

How easily might this inimitable description be transferred to canvas:

'Hard by the farm-house was a vast barn, that might have served for a church; every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins skimmed twittering about the eaves; and rows of pigeons, some with one eye turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings, or buried in their bosoms, and others swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek, unwieldy porkers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens; whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farm-yard, and guinea-fowls fretting about it, like ill-tempered housewives, with their

[1] *The Voyage.* [2] *Rip Van Winkle.* [3] *The Wife.* [4] *Rural Life in England.* [5] *Westminster Abbey.*

peevish, discontented cry. Before the barn door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior, and a fine gentleman, clapping his burnished wings, and crowing in the pride and gladness of his heart, sometimes tearing up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.'[1]

Where beyond the Atlantic will you find anything happier? And in this gallery of delightful pictures, what more happily conceived and executed than the following?

'The pedagogue's mouth watered, as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting pig running about with a pudding in his belly and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing cosily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy, relishing ham; not a turkey but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side-dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.'[2]

What author has succeeded so well as he in making literature *delicious?*

Novel.—We have seen the germs of fiction existing everywhere in the earliest ages, and expanding into the verse or prose of feudalism and chivalry as naturally as the grass grows upon the surface of the soil. We have seen it pass beyond the romantic into the realistic development, as an advancing society demanded more and more the narration of what is probable under the laws of poetic justice. Little cultivated from Chaucer to Queen Anne, we have seen it undergo a revolution in the hands of observers and moralists, becoming in De Foe and Richardson the novel of *character*, holding the mirror up to Nature, and aiming to elevate while it informed the mind. Like painting and sculpture, it was to appeal henceforth, in its highest products, to universal human experience.

After a long declension, when the poetical light was waning, this branch of literature acquired an unprecedented lustre in the masterpieces of **Scott,** who enlarged the scope of its topics, and gave it a higher finish of execution. Illustrative of English history, devoted in the best instances to the glorification of virtue and the chastisement of vice, it now became what the drama in its palmy summer had been. Before and around the *Waverley* were the *Caleb Williams* of Godwin, the *Persuasion* of Miss Austen,

[1] *Sleepy Hollow.* [2] *Ibid.*

the *Scottish Chiefs* of Miss Porter, and, in particular, the Irish tales of Miss Edgeworth,—all of which are directed in one way or another to utility, all seeking the amelioration of man, all realistic and moral.

The master's splendid illumination of the new path naturally drew into it a throng of competitors, the most illustrious of whom was our own countryman, **James Fenimore Cooper** (1789–1851), one of the most original and national of American writers. His favorite elements were the sea and the forest; his favorite characters were the sailor and the hunter, the pioneer and the Indian. These were no vivified pictures, but seeming realities,—like Long Tom Coffin and Leatherstocking. He has had few rivals in this power of breathing into phantoms of the brain the breath of life. His fame in the description of natural scenery under new and striking aspects is world-wide. His portraiture, without warm and varied coloring, is remarkable for fidelity and strength. Thus:

'On all sides, wherever the eye turned, nothing met it but the mirror-like surface of the lake, the placid view of heaven, and the dense setting of woods. So rich and fleecy were the outlines of the forest, that scarce an opening could be seen; the whole visible earth, from the rounded mountain-top to the water's edge, presenting one unvaried line of unbroken verdure. As if vegetation were not satisfied with a triumph so complete, the trees overhung the lake itself, shooting out towards the light; and there were miles along its eastern shore where a boat might have pulled beneath the branches of dark Rembrandt-looking hemlocks, quivering aspens, and melancholy pines. In a word, the hand of man had never yet defaced or deformed any part of this native scene, which lay bathed in the sunlight, a glorious picture of affluent forest grandeur, softened by the balminess of June, and relieved by the beautiful variety afforded by the presence of so broad an expanse of water.'

Of his numerous works, the best are *The Pilot*, *The Red Rover*, *The Spy*, *The Pioneers*, and *The Last of the Mohicans*. His attempts at sentiment were calamitous. The titles indicate that the field of his success was narrow and objective,—romantic rather than psychological. His most appreciative readers have been found, not among those of a sedentary and studious bent, but among the young and those of an active turn, who like an exciting and picturesque story, having little concern with the analysis of motives and the inner conflicts of feeling. Cooper will hold a permanent place for his vivid reflection of scenes and characters which have passed, or are passing, forever away. Over his native landscape he has cast a glamour, similar to that which was thrown over Scotland by the 'Wizard of the North.'

History.—Among historians during the last hundred years, we have seen the indications of a more critical judgment of historical facts, and an increasing comprehensiveness of view,—the disposition to explain phenomena by their principles and laws. Long series of uncritical narratives, like the *Universal History*, have been reduced to rubbish by the method which took a distinct and recognized form under the shaping genius of Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, and Niebuhr. It was this last, a Prussian, who accomplished a revolution in the prevailing ideas respecting early Rome. Other writers, notably **Thomas Arnold**[1] (1795–1842) and **George Grote**[2] (1794–1871), traversed, in his spirit, the same and other fields of ancient history, eliminating the fabulous and legendary elements, and toning down to a juster estimate the exaggerated conceptions of men and events.

It seems unnecessary to add that, in becoming more critical and exact, history has become more humane and democratic. Two characteristics are especially worthy of notice in the tendencies of the period under consideration. One is a growing interest in early English history. The indefatigable Palgrave and the ambitious Turner did valuable work in these dark mines. Another is the mingling of manners with events, of portrait with narrative. Less importance is attached to the fortunes of princes and the issues of campaigns; more to the condition of the middle and lower classes, how the people actually lived, their habits of thought, modes of feeling, surroundings, domestic details, the daily aspect of their lives. Such is the charm of **Macaulay's** *History of England*, whose purpose is declared at the outset:

'I should very imperfectly execute the task which I have undertaken if I were merely to treat of battles and sieges, of the rise and fall of administrations, of intrigues in the palace, and of debates in the parliament. It will be my endeavor to relate the history of the people as well as the history of the government, to trace the progress of useful and ornamental arts, to describe the rise of religious sects and the changes of literary taste, to portray the manners of successive generations, and not to pass by with neglect even the revolutions which have taken place in dress, furniture, repasts, and public amusements. I shall cheerfully bear the reproach of having descended below the dignity of history, if I can succeed in placing before the English of the nineteenth century a true picture of the life of their ancestors.'

All this, under his lively consciousness of causes, forms a harmonious whole. Hence the readableness, the interest, of this work. He brought to it a marvellous memory, vast erudition,

[1] *History of Rome*, and *Lectures on Modern History*. [2] *History of Greece*.

eloquence, rhetoric; a talent for demonstration, for development; the faculty of the orator for expounding and pleading, the gift of the poet to resuscitate the dead.

Before him, the acute and learned **Hallam** (1778–1859) had said of the duties and responsibilities of a historian:

'The philosophy of history embraces far more than the wars and treaties, the factions and cabals of common political narration; it extends to whatever illustrates the character of the human species in a particular period,—to their reasonings and sentiments, their arts and industry.'

But Macaulay is an advocate, a pleader. Hume writes of trial and suffering, of heroism and faith, with a continued sneer at religious fervor and belief; Gibbon drops the seeds of death from his gorgeous robes of damask and gold; and history in all its forms, ancient or modern, is liable to be *partisan*. Hallam, however, with breadth and accuracy of knowledge, has, like M. Guizot, the calm judgment and the impartial emotion of a philosopher. These are the qualities which mark his *Middle Ages*, *Constitutional History of England* and *Literature of Europe*. Tried, moreover, by the underlying principle of his performance, the merit of a trustworthy guide must be conceded to him:

'The trite metaphors of light and darkness, of dawn and twilight, are used carelessly by those who touch on the literature of the Middle Ages, and suggest by analogy an uninterrupted progression, in which learning, like the sun, has dissipated the shadows of barbarism. But with closer attention, it is easily seen that this is not a correct representation; that, taking Europe generally, far from being in a more advanced stage of learning at the beginning of the fifteenth century than two hundred years before, she had in many respects gone backwards, and gave little sign of any tendency to recover her ground. There is, in fact, no security, so far as the past history of mankind assures us, that any nation will be uniformly progressive in science, arts, or letters; nor do I perceive, whatever may be the current language, that we can expect this with much greater confidence of the whole civilized world.'

Historical literature in America finds its most eminent representative in the brilliant and genial **Prescott** (1796–1859), who, surpassed by others in vigor and profundity, is rarely equalled in power to win the fancy and to touch the heart. An aspiring student, with ample means for needful travel and illustrative material, he chose an unappropriated and romantic theme, spent eleven years in research and composition, hearing documents and authorities, dictating notes, which he afterwards repeated orally till the important details were photographed, then arranging them consecutively, harmoniously, and publishing in 1837 the *History of Ferdinand and Isabella*. The work was immediately rendered into five European languages. His reputation

was still further extended by *The Conquest of Mexico.* Not less successful was *The Conquest of Peru.* Visiting England, he was received with the utmost distinction. Oxford conferred upon him the degree of LL.D. His *Philip II* was left unfinished. From the first of the following passages you will judge that he excels in description; from the second, that he is master of the art of narrative; from both, that his talents are more artistic than philosophical:

'Their progress was now comparatively easy, and they marched forward with a buoyant step, as they felt they were treading the soil of Montezuma. They had not advanced far when, turning an angle of the Sierra, they suddenly came on a view which more than compensated the toils of the preceding day. It was that of the valley of Mexico, or Tenochtitlan, as more commonly called by the natives; which, with its picturesque assemblage of water, woodland, and cultivated plains, its shining cities and shadowy hills, was spread out like some gay and gorgeous panorama before them. In the highly rarefied atmosphere of these upper regions even remote objects have a brilliancy of colouring and a distinctness of outline which seem to annihilate distance. Stretching far away at their feet were seen noble forests of oak, sycamore, and cedar, and beyond yellow fields of maize, and the towering maguey, intermingled with orchards and blooming gardens; for flowers, in such demand for their religious festivals, were even more abundant in this populous valley than in other parts of Anahuac. In the centre of the great basin were beheld the lakes, occupying then a much larger portion of its surface than at present, their borders thickly studded with towns and hamlets; and in the midst—like some Indian empress with her coronal of pearls—the fair city of Mexico, with her white towers and pyramidal temples, reposing, as it were, on the bosom of the waters,—the far-famed "Venice of the Aztecs." High over all rose the royal hill of Chapoltepec, the residence of the Mexican monarchs, crowned with the same grove of gigantic cypresses which at this day fling their broad shadows over the land. In the distance, beyond the blue waters of the lake, and nearly screened by intervening foliage, was seen a shining speck, the rival capital of Tezcuco; and still further on, the dark belt of porphyry, girdling the valley around, like a rich setting which nature had devised for the fairest of her jewels. Such was the beautiful vision which broke on the eyes of the conquerors. And even now, when so sad a change has come over the scene; when the stately forests have been laid low, and the soil, unsheltered from the fierce radiance of a tropical sun, is in many places abandoned to sterility; when the waters have retired, leaving a broad and ghastly margin white with the incrustations of salts, while the cities and hamlets on their borders have mouldered into ruins;—even now that desolation broods over the landscape, so indestructible are the lines of beauty which nature has traced on its features, that no traveller, however cold, can gaze on them with any other emotions than those of astonishment and rapture. What, then, must have been the emotions of the Spaniards, when, after working their toilsome way into the upper air, the cloudy tabernacle parted before their eyes, and they beheld these fair scenes in all their pristine magnificence and beauty! It was like the spectacle which greeted the eyes of Moses from the summit of Pisgah, and in the warm glow of their feelings they cried out: "It is the promised land!"'

And:

'The parties closed with the desperate fury of men who had no hope but in victory. Quarter was neither asked nor given; and to fly was impossible. The edge of the area was unprotected by parapet or battlement. The least slip would be fatal; and the combatants, as they struggled in mortal agony, were sometimes seen to roll over the sheer sides of the precipice together. Cortes himself is said to have had a narrow escape from this dreadful fate. Two warriors, of strong, muscular frame, seized on him, and were

dragging him violently towards the brink of the pyramid. Aware of their intention, he struggled with all his force, and, before they could accomplish their purpose, succeeded in tearing himself from their grasp, and hurling one of them over the walls with his own arm. The story is not improbable in itself, for Cortes was a man of uncommon agility and strength. It has been often repeated, but not by contemporary history.

The battle lasted with unintermitting fury for three hours. The number of the enemy was double that of the Christians; and it seemed as if it were a contest which must be determined by numbers and brute force, rather than superior science. But it was not so. The invulnerable armour of the Spaniard, his sword of matchless temper, and his skill in the use of it, gave him advantages which far outweighed the odds of physical strength and numbers. After doing all that the courage of despair could enable men to do, resistance grew fainter and fainter on the side of the Aztecs. One after another they had fallen. Two or three priests only survived to be led away in triumph by the victors. Every other combatant was stretched a corpse on the bloody arena, or had been hurled from the giddy heights. Yet the loss of the Spaniards was not inconsiderable: it amounted to forty-five of their best men; and nearly all the remainder were more or less injured in the desperate conflict.

The victorious cavaliers now rushed towards the sanctuaries. The lower story was of stone, the two upper were of wood. Penetrating into their recesses, they had the mortification to find the image of the Virgin and Cross removed. But in the other edifice they still beheld the grim figure of Huitzilopotchli, with his censer of smoking hearts, and the walls of his oratory reeking with gore,—not improbably of their own countrymen. With shouts of triumph the Christians tore the uncouth monster from his niche, and tumbled him, in the presence of the horror-struck Aztecs, down the steps of the teocalli. They then set fire to the accursed building. The flame speedily ran up the slender towers, sending forth an ominous light over city, lake, and valley, to the remotest hut among the mountains. It was the funeral pyre of paganism, and proclaimed the fall of that sanguinary religion which had so long hung like a dark cloud over the fair regions of Anahuac.'

Theology.—In Gibbon, Deism had changed its form—its point and mode of attack. The one, from being *a priori* moral, became historic; instead of denying facts, it felt bound to explain them: the other, from being a fear and hatred of Christianity, became a philosophical contempt. The latter, in its prevalent satire and irony, marks the influence of French infidelity. This influence is reproduced more conspicuously in **Paine,** a politician, a creature of the Revolution, who derives his doctrines from the English deists, his ribaldry from Voltaire, and his politics from Rousseau. Derived in some respects by direct lineage from him, are the socialist schemes of **Owen,** who, desirous to improve the condition of the industrial classes, and aiming to modify or remove temptations, proposes equality of property and facilitation of divorce. The French spirit animates literature in the poetry of Byron and Shelley, the one a type of the scepticism of despair, the other of the madness of enthusiasm; the one drawn down to earth, the other lifted into the ideal.

Now rose into importance and power the philosophic German genius, original and universal, to fertilize and renew human

thought. As far back as 1780, German ideas had been making their way into England. Intimate relations of the English royal family to Germany, English patronage of German universities, English alliance with the German States to arrest French arms, aided the movement. A result was the science of criticism, a method of analysis, in which philosophy and history were jointly employed in the investigation of every branch of knowledge. Thence English rationalism in its several forms of philosophical, literary, and critical: the first supplying reason with a fund of speculative objections to Revelation, and either utilitarian, as in **Bentham,** or intuitional, as in **Coleridge;** the former relying on sensation, the latter on primitive cognitions, as the ultimate test of truth; the second, more imaginative, appealing for its proof to the faculty of insight, regarding the inner consciousness as able to evolve a religion, tending either to pantheism or to naturalism, and expressing itself, not analytically, in the region of science, but, as in **Carlyle,** sentimentally, in the region of of literature; the third, of later growth, directly attacking the historical and inspired basis of faith, the orthodox view of miracles and atonement, by the deductions of physics, language, and ethnology. Already are manifest the tendencies which mark the unbelief of to-day,—a more radical anti-supernaturalism, and a more earnest effort to give to Christianity a natural origin, to account for it as one, as the highest, of those spiritual products which have sprung from the depths of the soul.

Without indicating the special modifications of doctrinal theology, it may be said in general that criticism was setting it free from those accessories which are so often mistaken for its essence, giving it opportunity for new departures, to prove its immortal continuity by developments in fresh directions.

In America it was the heroic age of that fertile protest against Calvinism which has given to Boston Theology a name in Europe. It was the flushful morning of Unitarianism, born of evangelical religion on the one side, and of rationalistic criticism on the other. There were anticipations of it at and before the Reformation, but he who first brought it under the notice of the world was the illustrious **Dr. Channing,** of whom, pure, ardent, philanthropic, and brilliant, none should allow himself to speak except with reverence. Against the prevalent faith, which prostrates itself

in the dust, and darkens creation in order to bring out the splendor of the Creator, he asserts the free agency and moral dignity of man, especially the greatness seen in —

'The intellectual energy which discerns absolute, universal truth, in the idea of God, in freedom of will and moral power, in disinterestedness and self-sacrifice, in the boundlessness of love, in the aspirations after perfection, in desires and affections, which time and space cannot confine, and the world cannot fill. The soul, viewed in these lights, should fill us with awe. It is an immortal germ, which may be said to contain now within itself what endless ages are to unfold. It is truly an image of the infinity of God, and no words can do justice to its grandeur.'

Loftiness of conception raised him and his disciples into the region of art; and, with much that was produced in the charged atmosphere of Unitarian revolt, their discourses, overleaping the boundaries of sect, form additions to American literature. While denying the divinity of Christ, he adhered to the inspiration of Scripture. A bolder thinker appeared, a strong and impulsive nature, courageous to defend the weak against the strong, and prompted by a deep and unselfish love of man. **Parker,** passing the limitations set by his master, constructed an absolute religion, a system drawn: (1) from the intuition of the Divine, a consciousness that there is a God; (2) from the intuition of right, a consciousness that there is a moral law; (3) from the intuition of the immortal, a consciousness that the soul never dies. Rarely has a clergyman drawn his society so closely to himself. You will not be surprised that he should become the object of passionate devotion whose heart, out of its very abundance, inspires reflections like these:

'The greatest star is that at the little end of the telescope, the star that is looking, not looked after or looked at.'

'The orbit of the mind is wider than creation's utmost rim; nor ever did centripetal and centrifugal forces describe in their sweep a comet's track so fair-proportioned as the sweep of human life round these two foci, the mortal here, and the immortal in the world not seen.'

'Last autumn, in some of the pastures, fire ran along the wall, and left the ground black with its ephemeral charcoal, where now the little wind-flower lifts its delicate form and bends its slender neck, and blushes with its own beauty, gathered from the black ground out of which it grew; or some trillium opens its painted cup, and in due time will show its fruit, a beautiful berry there. So out of human soil, blackened by another fire which has swept over it, in due time great flowers will come in the form of spiritual beauty not yet seen, and other fruit grow there whose seed is in itself, and which had not ripened but out of that black ground. Thus the lilies of peace cover the terrible fields of Waterloo, and out of the graves of our dear ones there spring up such flowers of spiritual loveliness as you and I else had never known. It is not from the tall crowded warehouse of prosperity that men first or clearest see the eternal stars of heaven. It is often from the humble spot where we have laid our dear ones that we find our best observatory, which gives us glimpses into the far-off world of never-ending time.'

Ethics.—Assuming an acquaintance on the part of the reader with the discussions of this subject in previous chapters, it would seem quite unnecessary to do more, now and hereafter, than to classify ethical philosophers with respect to the two great schools of morals,—the rational or intuitive, which considers the idea of good to be an *a priori* conception of reason, an original principle, in which the idea of obligation is, apart from all consequences, essentially and necessarily implied; the inductive or utilitarian, which, denying that we have any such natural perception, maintains that the notions of merit and demerit are derived solely from an observation of the tendency of actions to promote pleasure or to cause pain, and holds, moreover, that pleasure and pain are the only possible objects of choice, the only motives that can determine the will. The former are the fundamental tenets of **Stewart, Hamilton,** and Coleridge; the latter, of **Bentham,** who declares that, if we 'take away pleasures and pains, not only happiness, but justice, and duty, obligation and virtue, all of which have been so elaborately held up to view as independent of them, are so many empty sounds'; and of **Mackintosh,** who asserts that conscience, or the moral faculty, is a 'secondary formation' out of our animal appetites, engendered by the association of ideas. The latter is similar to the doctrine of Hartley,—that virtue, becoming, through the observed course of events and the promised joys of religion, peculiarly associated with the idea of pleasurable things, is by the force of habit soon loved independently of and in excess of these.

We have amply shown the inadequacy of the 'happiness' principle to reveal the origin and nature of the moral sentiments. Its dynamic force, as furnishing a rule of action, is obvious; but, in every consistent form, it is resolvable into selfishness, and its motive is therefore not moral. Doubtless a place must be given it in every moral system, but a subordinate, not a primary, one. All theories of virtue which do not, in the last analysis, raise men above the thought of self, withdraw from moral action that which is a main constituent of it—its unselfish character—and so at best reduce it to the level of prudence. The happiest are those who think least about happiness. To possess its purer essence, its finer bloom, not it, but some higher object, must be the end:

Goodness and piety may not merely fail of a proposed outward advantage, but are often compelled, if they would remain such, to lose all, and to suffer much. What, then, endures? What is sure in this world of vicissitude, confusion, and strife, of iniquity, suffering, and mysterious doom?

> 'What wouldst thou have a good, great man obtain?
> Wealth, title, dignity, a golden chain,
> Or heaps of corses which the sword hath slain?
> Goodness and greatness are not means, but ends.
> Hath he not always treasure, always friends,
> The good, great man? Three treasures—love, and light,
> And calm thoughts, equable as infant's breath;
> And three fast friends more sure than day or night,—
> Himself, his Maker, and the angel Death?'[1]

Science.—The initial and significant fact to be noted here, for its influence on speculative opinions, is the gradual replacing of the conception of law by that of supernatural intervention. The discoveries of geology, even in the last century, greatly modified the notion that the earth was called into existence and elaborated instantaneously in all its parts by the creative fiat of the Deity. **Sir Charles Lyell** extended the ideas previously entertained, by showing (1) how great the changes in the form of the earth are known to have been, (2) how constantly they are going on, if we take into our survey the whole surface, and (3) by urging the aggregate effect of operations long continued, in themselves not extraordinary. In addition he indicated how plants and animals are now, as anciently, being embedded in mineral deposits, how their remains are washed into caves, or preserved in peat-mosses, and arrived at the conclusion that the crust of the earth has been fashioned *in the course of vast ages by causes like those which are still in action.*

It was perceived that the fossil species of life were not only different from those which at present inhabit the same regions, but, for the most part, different from any extant; that therefore the whole organic creation must have been renewed repeatedly. Hence either we must believe that types are interchangeable, that is, that the organized beings of one geological epoch were transmuted into those of another by natural agencies; or we must assume many successive creative acts, out of the common course of nature, and consequently miraculous. On the one

[1] Coleridge.

hand, in all our experience, we have never known a species *created.* On the other, we have never known such a phenomenon as *transmutation;* but it is established: (1) that animals and plants, when placed under conditions different from their previous ones, immediately begin to undergo certain alterations of structure; (2) that such alterations have been effected not only in irrational creatures, but in the several races of men; (3) that it is a matter of dispute whether some of the forms so modified are varieties or separate species. The astonishing discovery is made that every vertebrate, in the progress of its development, passes through the phases of the several orders below it. Thus our attention is invited to the correspondence which the embryo man exhibits to the fish, the salamander, the tortoise, the bird, the whale, the quadruped, and the ape. Which, then, we are asked, is the more reasonable and defensible hypothesis,— that life originates in some simple primordial substance, and is slowly *evolved* into ten million varieties, or that a new species is a special creation, moulded into being, thrown from the clouds, or sprung from the ground?—

> 'Perfect forms
> Limbed and full-grown: out of the ground uprose,
> As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons
> In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den; . . .
> The grassy clods now calved; now half appeared
> The tawny lion, pawing to get free
> His hinder parts; then springs as broke from bounds,
> And rampant shakes his brinded mane.'[1]

And so the scientific conceptions which in these latter days have been so fruitful of debate, which have so profoundly affected literature and opinion, were already assuming form and lineament. Darwin was preparing to stir all Europe by the boldness of his speculations. The unknown author of *Vestiges of Creation* first attempted systematically to prove that the physical and vital affairs of the universe are all under the regulation of law. A reviewer, who has probably lived to smile at his incredulity and alarm, curiously styles it 'one of the most striking and ingenious scientific romances that we have ever read.' Its cardinal teachings are thus summarized:

'The masses of space are formed by law; law makes them in due time theatres of existence for plants and animals; sensation, disposition, intellect, are all in like manner

[1] *Paradise Lost*, VII.

developed and sustained in action by law. It is most interesting to observe into how small a field the whole of the mysteries of nature thus ultimately resolve themselves. The inorganic has been thought to have one final, comprehensive law, *gravitation*. The organic, the other great department of mundane things, rests in like manner on one law, and that is—*development*. Nor may even these be after all twain, but only branches of one still more comprehensive law, the expression of a unity, flowing immediately from the One who is First and Last.'

But the Development Theory, whether applied to the organic world or to the inorganic, is itself a historical growth, older than the nineteenth century, older even than the eighteenth. We have intimations of it in Aristotle. More or less crudely, it was held by Anaximander over two thousand years ago. 'The originals,' says Emerson, 'are not original. There is imitation, model, and suggestion, to the very archangels, if we knew their history. . . . Read Tasso, and you think of Virgil; read Virgil, and you think of Homer; and Milton forces you to think how narrow are the limits of human invention.'

Philosophy.—As a reaction against the materialism of the eighteenth century, believed to be the source of frightful immorality, Reid in England and Kant in Germany had laid the foundations of a more spiritual creed. At Berlin, students had assembled in crowds to hear the ideal grandeur of Fichte. The transcendental Schelling, the sphinx-like Hegel, were attracting the attention of Europe. In France, the impassioned Cousin was charming the gay Parisians into sympathy with the lofty, profound, and divine. At this juncture a new star rose on the philosophic horizon. **Sir William Hamilton,** an intellectual athlete, the most brilliant of English metaphysicians, carried to its zenith the fame of the Scottish school for the study of the human mind. His subjective cast, his ideal bent. his elevated conception of speculative problems, appear at the outset in his definition of philosophy itself:

'The limitation of the term philosophy to the sciences of mind, when not expressly extended to the other branches of science, has been always that generally prevalent;—yet it must be confessed that, in this country, the word is applied to subjects with which, on the continent of Europe, it is rarely, if ever, associated. With us, the word philosophy, taken by itself, does not call up the precise and limited notion which it does to a German, a Hollander, a Dane, an Italian, or a Frenchman; and we are obliged to say the philosophy of mind, if we do not wish it to be vaguely extended to the sciences conversant with the phenomena of matter. We not only call Physics by the name of Natural Philosophy, but every mechanical process has with us its philosophy. We have books on the philosophy of Manufactures, the philosophy of Agriculture, the philosophy of Cookery, etc. In all this we are the ridicule of other nations. Socrates, it is said, brought down philosophy from the clouds,—the English have degraded her to

the kitchen; and this, our prostitution of the term, is, by foreigners, alleged as a significant indication of the low state of the mental sciences in Britain.'

Consciousness, he holds, is the basis of all intelligence. We are conscious not of the internal alone but of the external, of the *non-ego* as really as of the *ego*. Mind and matter are the two antithetical factors always and necessarily given in every act of perception. 'We have no reason whatever to doubt the report of consciousness, that we actually perceive at the external point of sensation, and that we perceive the material reality.' That is, we have an immediate and direct knowledge of physical objects:

'The total and real object of perception is the external object under relation to our sense and faculty of cognition. Suppose the total object to be twelve, that the external reality constitutes six, the material sense three, and the mind three; this may enable you to form some conjecture of the nature of the object of perception.'

Moreover, we can know a thing only as it stands related to our faculties. The latter being different, our knowledge would be different. To know is thus to limit. Hence we can know or conceive only the conditioned, not the infinite or the absolute. 'Existence, absolutely and in itself, is to us as zero.' The *absolute commencement* of anything that exists is, therefore, inconceivable. Consequently we are compelled to believe that every event has a cause. The idea of causation, we are taught, does not arise from power, but from want of it — the inability to pursue a thing into nonentity. In like manner, we cannot conceive a volition wholly undetermined; that is, a cause which is not itself caused: but if liberty is inconceivable, so also is its opposite, necessity. Though each of two contradictory opposites be beyond the limits of thought, one must be held as true; and the appeal is to consciousness, the Bible of philosophy, which declares in favor of God, freedom, and immortality.

Our present concern is, not to ask whether these doctrines be true, but to suggest that the lesson is salutary,— faith in the invisible; and to note, in this revival of philosophy, the change from the sensual to the super-sensual, a change manifest in all the high imaginative literature of the period. Speculation and poetry were alike uplifting and essentially interior,— engrossed by interests of the soul; a common character due in part to the universal renewal of ideas and ideality, in part to the importation of systems and dreams across the German Ocean, mainly by Coleridge, Wordsworth, the Scotch thinkers, and Carlyle.

Résumé.—The death of William IV, in 1837, closes the reign of personal government, and the accession of Victoria marks, amid confusion, discontent, and doubt, the expansion of constitutional freedom. The Tories, or Conservatives, go into office; the Whigs, or Liberals, into opposition; while the rise of the Free-Trade movement and the Chartist agitations indicate the ferment and spread of republican, or democratic, principles. Industrial strikes, socialistic assemblages, reform projects, church dissensions, mechanical improvements, the discoveries of science and their application to the business of life, prove the period to be one of excitement, of enthusiasm, and of growth. The opinions and contests born of the French Revolution inflame the passions and stimulate the imaginations of Europe. New thoughts, new hopes, new fears, new sentiments, pass into the heart and brain, and inspire a new literature, that reflects the mighty commotions and the numerous agencies which concur in its formation. Poets become innovators. Scott revives primitive feeling and feudal exploit. Coleridge opens the door to a stream of German ideas, while another sweeps in from France. The two currents lead to the study of first principles and the assertion of transcendental truth. Emotion is preëminent; nature, the goddess of adoration. Style becomes a free and direct expression of thought. Poetry, the predominant form of literature, breathes a spirit of universal sympathy; distinguished in its philosophical character especially by Wordsworth, in its imaginative character by Shelley, in its revolutionary character by Byron. The drama is less prolific of excellence. Few of the great venture on the field; still fewer reap any laurels. Fiction communicates the spirit and lessons of history, or exhibits in life and action new theories of education and morals. Much of the intellectual power of the age is expended in reviews. Criticism, aiming at life, clearness, and unity, throws a flood of light upon the past. Historical composition, aiming at the harmony and significance of manners and events, appeals to the thoughtful, cultivated student of human affairs. Utility is the avowed principle of action, and science, spreading with unexampled zeal, is applied to the arts with brilliant success. The consciousness of the Divine presence is being identified with the notion of consistent and regular evolution. Rationalism engenders more liberal views of God, a more fra-

ternal disposition, and a purer worship. Benevolence acts on a wider scale. Religious culture flows into new channels, winds its course among humble valleys, refreshes thirsty deserts, and enriches distant climes.

America, absorbing within herself and harmonizing the discordant elements of other races, produces little of general interest likely to become classical. The leading impulse is the pursuit of wealth. The cares of existence exclude its embellishments. Originality passes into machines. Religion is expansive and practical. Literature is, to a great degree, an offshoot or continuation of the European. The few who write are largely English in substance, still more in form. Irving and Cooper — though the one remembers Addison or Goldsmith, and the other Scott — have the refreshing flavor of nationality. Poetry, with hardly an exception, harps on the transatlantic strings. Here and there, in this and other departments, are risen or rising lights which render the country conspicuous at a distance. But the literary atmosphere is wanting; and what is done is chiefly prized, on the whole, as a promise of higher and more extensive effort.

A stirring, pregnant, eventful age, whose utterance — displaying the prevalent passion for change, the thirst for untried good, the impatience of endured wrong, the deeper sense of human worth — comes from the soul in the language of conviction and strong feeling.

SCOTT.

Blessings and prayers in nobler retinue
Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
Follow the wondrous potentate.—*Wordsworth.*

Biography.—Born in Edinburgh, in 1771; taken at the age of three to the farm-house of an aged relative to try the efficacy of bracing air on his little shrunken leg; spent his days till his eighth year in the open fields, in the fellowship of sheep and lambs, and fed his imagination on legends of border heroism and adventure; then sent to the High School of his native town, where he became distinguished as a story-teller; transferred to the uni-

versity, where, instead of the regular course of studies, he pored over Ariosto, Cervantes, and other romancers; contracted an illness by the bursting of a blood-vessel, and, forbidden to speak, did nothing but read from morning till night; became a clerk to his father, and, in the midst of his mechanical duties, made frequent excursions — often on foot — in search of traditional relics; became an advocate, and continued to travel, exploring streams and ruins, gleaning legends and ballads; married, settled on the banks of the Tweed, collated the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and in 1805 appeared as an original poet. From poetry he passed, in 1814, to fiction, beginning the long series of Waverley, and continuing it at the rate of two each year; transformed his cottage into a mansion, tried to revive the feudal life, and dispensed princely hospitality to those who were attracted in crowds by the splendor of his name; went into partnership with his printers, and at the age of fifty-five found himself ruined; resolved, with admirable courage and uprightness, to wipe out by literary task-work a debt of one hundred and seventeen thousand pounds; paid seventy thousand in four years, exhausted his brain, and died a paralytic in 1832.

Writings.—Percy's *Reliques* had prepared the way for the *Minstrelsy*, which contained many new ballads, with valuable local and historical notes. Its reputation led the world to expect something brilliant. In the maturity of his powers, he wrote the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, which was received with a rapture of enthusiasm. This is a story of the sixteenth century reviving the manners and sentiments of chivalrous times. The portrait of the aged harper, last of the race, is inimitable:

'The way was long, the wind was cold,
The minstrel was infirm and old;
His withered cheek, and tresses gray,
Seemed to have known a better day;
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy.
The last of all the bards was he
Who sung of Border chivalry;
For well-a-day! their date was fled;
His tuneful brethren all were dead,
And he, neglected and oppressed,
Wished to be with them, and at rest.
No more, on prancing palfrey borne,
He caroled, light as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caressed,

High placed in hall a welcome guest,
He poured to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay:
Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger filled the Stuart's throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had called his harmless art a crime.
A wandering harper, scorned and poor,
He begged his bread from door to door,
And tuned, to please a peasant's ear,
The harp a king had loved to hear.'

Scott's love of country was like the passion of a lover for his bride. His fervid patriotism is inspirational in these famous lines:

'Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.'

The same rapid movement, the same animated variety of scenery and incident, appear in the greater poem of *Marmion.* The battle scene and death of the hero are among its most spirited passages. The following is a fine piece of description:

'Day set at Norham's castled steep,
And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
And Cheviot's mountains lone:
The battled towers, the donjon keep,
The loophole grates where captives weep,
The flanking walls that round it sweep,
In yellow lustre shone.
The warriors on the turrets high,
Moving athwart the evening sky,
Seemed forms of giant height:
Their armor, as it caught the rays,
Flashed back again the western blaze,
In lines of dazzling light.
St. George's banner, broad and gay,
Now faded as the fading ray,
Less bright, and less, was flung;
The evening gale had scarce the power
To wave it on the donjon tower,
So heavily it hung.
The scouts had parted on their search,
The castle gates were barred;
Above the gloomy portal arch,
Timing his footsteps to a march,
The warder kept his guard,
Low humming, as he paced along,
Some ancient Border gathering-song.'

Here and there we find a well remembered passage, to instruct or elevate by its sentiment:

'O woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,

And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!'

Of the same chivalric type, but more richly picturesque, as well as more regular and interesting in plot, is the *Lady of the Lake*, the most popular of the author's poems. The press could hardly keep pace with the demand. The post-horse duty rose in Scotland to an extraordinary degree, from the eagerness of travellers to visit the localities described. If the other may be styled courtly, sounding, and stirring, this may be called tender, gentle and domestic. The following are illustrations of its deeper meaning and subtler interest:

'At first the chieftain to his chime,
With lifted hand, kept feeble time;
That motion ceased; yet feeling strong
Varied his look as changed the song:
At length no more his deafened ear
The minstrel's melody can hear:
His face grows sharp; his hands are clenched
As if some pang his heart-strings wrenched;
Set are his teeth, his fading eye
Is sternly fixed on vacancy.
Thus, motionless and moanless, drew
His parting breath stout Roderick Dhu.'

And:

'He is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain
When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing,
From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!
The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing,
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.
Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and forever!'

Thenceforth his popularity as a poet sensibly declined, a fact due in part to unfortunate choice of subject, in part to exhaustion of the particular vein, and in part to the eclipsing radiance of a new star,— Byron,— who now drew attention, for the first time, from the outward form of man and nature to the secret recesses of soul. Returning, therefore, to his former notion of illustrating the manners of the past in prose, as he had done in verse, he found among some old lumber in the attic an incomplete manuscript thrown aside nearly ten years before, and in 1814 presented

anonymously to the world the first of his long series of descriptive and historical novels,—*Waverley.* Pouring after it, came the flood of its successors. The following, including historical epochs and dates, is a tabular view of the vast and varied cycle which made the 'Great Unknown,' as he was called, the wonder of his age:

1. Historical.

TITLES.		EPOCHS.	DATES.
WAVERLEY,	*Scottish*,	Pretender's attempt,	1745
OLD MORTALITY,	"	Rebellion of the Covenanters,	1679
LEGEND OF MONTROSE,	"	Civil War,	1645
THE ABBOT,	"	Mary Queen of Scots,	1568
THE MONASTERY,	"	Mary Queen of Scots,	1559
FAIR MAID OF PERTH,	"	Reign of Robert III,	1402
CASTLE DANGEROUS,	"	Black Douglas,	1306
IVANHOE,	*English*,	Richard Lion-Heart,	1194
KENILWORTH,	"	Reign of Elizabeth,	1575
FORTUNES OF NIGEL,	"	Reign of James I,	1620
PEVERIL OF THE PEAK,	"	Reign of Charles II,	1660
BETROTHED,	"	Welsh Wars,	1187
TALISMAN,	"	Richard Lion-Heart,	1193
WOODSTOCK,	"	Civil War and Commonwealth,	1652
QUENTIN DURWARD,	*Continental*,	Louis XI and Charles the Bold,	1470
ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN,	"	Epoch of Battle of Nancy,	1477
COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS,	"	Crusaders at Byzantium,	1099

2. Social.

TITLES.	DATES.	TITLES.	DATES.
GUY MANNERING,	1750	THE PIRATE,	1700
ANTIQUARY,	1798	ST. RONAN'S WELL,	1800
BLACK DWARF,	1708	REDGAUNTLET,	1770
ROB ROY,	1715	SURGEON'S DAUGHTER,	1750
HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN,	1751	TWO DROVERS,	1765
BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR,	1700	HIGHLAND WIDOW,	1755

The latter class, differing from the former mainly in a less close attachment of the narrative to history, relate chiefly to Scottish scenery and character. In addition to this prodigious amount of labor, he wrote much of a miscellaneous nature for reviews, edited Dryden and Swift, produced numerous works in the departments of criticism and biography; among them, *Life of Napoleon, Tales of a Grandfather, Demonology and Witchcraft.* Was ever such activity known, combined with such general excellence in the results?

Style.—Always easy and graphic, full of grace and glowing brightness, though never polished, proverbially careless and incorrect, as of one who looked only at broad and general effects, and was studious not so much of melody as of pictures. In verse,

flowing and vivid; an imitation, to some extent, of the irregular form adopted by the early minstrels. The prevailing measure is the octosyllabic, so well suited to a rapidly-succeeding variety of emotions.

The picturesque would seem to have been his forte. Witness the magnificent descriptions of sunset, sea, and forest:

'The sun was now resting his huge disk upon the edge of the level ocean, and gilded the accumulation of towering clouds through which he had travelled the livelong day, and which now assembled on all sides, like misfortunes and disasters around a sinking empire and falling monarch. Still, however, his dying splendour gave a sombre magnificence to the massive congregation of vapours, forming out of the unsubstantial gloom the show of pyramids and towers, some touched with gold, some with purple, some with a hue of deep and dark red. The distant sea, stretched beneath this varied and gorgeous canopy, lay almost portentously still, reflecting back the dazzling and level beams of the descending luminary, and the splendid colouring of the clouds amidst which he was setting. Nearer to the beach, the tide rippled onward in waves of sparkling silver, that imperceptibly, yet rapidly, gained upon the sand.'[1]

And:

'The sun was setting upon one of the rich glassy glades of the forest. Hundreds of broad-headed, short-stemmed, wide-branched oaks, which had witnessed, perhaps, the stately march of the Roman soldiery, flung their gnarled arms over a thick carpet of the most delicious greensward; in some places they were intermingled with beeches, hollies, and copsewood of various descriptions, so closely as totally to intercept the level beams of the sinking sun; in others, they receded from each other, forming those long sweeping vistas, in the intricacy of which the eye delights to lose itself; while imagination considers them as the paths to yet wider scenes of silvan solitude. Here the red rays of the sun shot a broken and discoloured light, that fell partially upon the shattered boughs and mossy trunks of the trees; and there they illuminated, in brilliant patches, the portions of turf to which they made their way. A considerable open space in the midst of this glade seemed formerly to have been dedicated to the rites of Druidical superstition; for on the summit of a hillock, so regular as to seem artificial, there still remained part of a circle of rough unhewn stones, of large dimensions. Seven stood upright; the rest had been dislodged from their places, probably by the zeal of some convert to Christianity, and lay, some prostrate near their former site, and others on the side of the hill. One large stone only had found its way to the bottom, and in stopping the course of a small brook which glided smoothly round the foot of the eminence, gave, by its opposition, a feeble voice of murmur to the placid and elsewhere silent streamlet.'[2]

Rank.—In poetry, the great modern troubadour. Though not of the illustrious few of the first class, he is the most eminent in minstrelic power. To Wordsworth, Shelley, and Byron, he is inferior in the perception of the spiritual mysteries of the universe; superior in creative conception, or the comprehensiveness which freed him from personal prejudices in describing life and manners, and which enabled him to represent, not one man, but collective human nature. In the refined processes of imagination and feeling, as poet or novelist, he is confessedly deficient, while

[1] *Antiquary.* [2] *Ivanhoe.*

he has something in common with Shakespeare in the power of rendering palpable the remote, and idealizing the actual. Profound analysis there is not. In the delineation of character and scenery he devotes himself comparatively to the exterior, having neither the talent nor the leisure to reach the depth. The world which he exhibits is not of the highest art, true at once to the particular and the universal. Call it either modern, enlightened by the far-setting sun of chivalry; or Middle Age, sifted of its harsher features, softened and transfigured by the present. In the power of simple narration he is almost unequalled. Over every scene he pours the full tide of exuberant existence, and makes it live and glow. Writing with great rapidity, he aimed, in his plots, at no more than picturesque arrangement. The bravery of his struggle raises him as high among the heroes of his race as does his genius among its writers.

Character.—The temper of his mind was spirited, active, objective, chivalrous. He had a peculiar affinity with historic forces. His tastes and habits were antiquarian. He wished to be the founder of a distinct branch. His establishment was on the feudal scale; his house was fashioned in imitation of the ancient castles. His museum and grounds were adorned with relics. The tunes he loved were the simple notes of his native minstrelsy. As was remarked above, he could seize readily the sensible, significant features of objects, but had little spiritual penetration into their sources, relations, and issues. He said himself, in expressing his admiration of Miss Austen:

'The big bow-wow strain I can do myself, like any now going, but the exquisite touch which renders ordinary commonplace things and characters interesting, from the truth of the description and the sentiments, is denied to me.'

Though an aristocrat and a Tory, he loved men from the bottom of his heart. None ever treated his inferiors with greater kindness. His domestics served him gladly because they loved him. His shining face diffused its exhilarating glow wherever it appeared. His manners were spontaneous. 'Give me an honest laugher,' he said. 'Sir Walter,' said one of his old retainers, 'speaks to every man as if he were his blood-relation.' It was in his own home that his benevolence found its proper theatre for expansion. He delighted to collect his tenantry around him convivially. He watched over the education of his children,

shared in their rides, rambles and sports. He says in one of his letters:

'There are many good things in life, whatever satirists and misanthropes may say to the contrary, but probably the best of all, next to a conscience void of offence (without which, by the by, they can hardly exist), are the quiet exercise and enjoyment of the social feelings, in which we are at once happy ourselves, and the cause of happiness to them who are dearest to us.'

His fellowship extended to dogs, of which he was excessively fond, pet hens, pet donkeys, and pet pigs.

The genial sunshiny freshness, the general healthiness, manifest in his pages, indicate a radical quality of his mind. Though his sensibilities were easily moved, he thought less of sympathizing with sorrow than of mitigating it. Such is his philosophy:

'The last three or four years have swept away more than half the friends with whom I lived in habits of great intimacy. . . . Yet we proceed with our plantations and plans as if any tree but the sad cypress would accompany us to the grave where our friends have gone before us. It is the way of the world, however, and must be so; otherwise life would be spent in unavailing mourning for those whom we have lost. It is better to enjoy the society of those who remain to us.'

The basis of his character, as of all great ones, was energy triumphant over infirmity, disease, and disaster. His memory was precocious. An urchin at school, he could repeat whole cantos of Ossian and Spenser. What he acquired with facility he retained with pertinacity. He threw his ideas into language with marvellous ease. The last two volumes of *Waverley* were written in *three weeks!* A student watching the movement of his hand from the window of a neighboring attic, said: 'It never stops; page after page is finished and thrown upon that heap of manuscript, and still it goes on unwearied; and so it will be till candles are brought in, and God knows how long after that. It is the same every night. I can't stand the sight of it when I am not at my books.' He rose at five the year round, and was scrupulously exact in the distribution of his hours..

His first ambition was feudal magnificence. Literary glory was secondary. His own productions he disparaged, yet criticism annoyed him. 'I make it a rule never to read the attacks made upon me.' So is Voltaire said to have been indifferent to praise, while the least word from an enemy drove him crazy.

Light and careless as he would seem to have been, he was inherently and consistently sad. This is an entry in his journal:

'Anybody would think from the fal-de-ral conclusion of my journal of yesterday that I left town in a very good humor. But nature has given me a kind of buoyancy—I

know not what to call it—that mingles with my deepest afflictions and most gloomy hours. I have a secret pride—I fancy it will be most truly termed—which impels me to mix with my distress strange snatches of mirth, which have no mirth in them.'

We have more than once remarked this blending of opposite if not paradoxical qualities. Grimaldi, a celebrated clown, was pursued by a devouring melancholy. Liston, whose face would set an audience in good humor, was a confirmed hypochondriac. Molière was grave and silent. Invited to an evening party, to entertain the company with his wit, he scarcely opened his lips. To a physician of Paris there came one day an unknown patient, suffering under the deepest depression of mind, without any discoverable or assignable cause. 'You must drink good wine,' said he. 'I have in my cellar the best wine in the world,' replied the unknown; 'but it cannot make me forget my sadness.' 'You must travel, then.' 'I have made the tour of Europe; and still my wretchedness has travelled with me.' 'Oh, oh! the case is sad, indeed; but still there is a remedy: go every evening to the Italian comedy; you will see the celebrated harlequin Biancolelli play; his gayety is catching; that will make you cheerful.' 'Alas, sir! I see my malady is incurable: *I am Biancolelli!*'

Influence.—The vast sums which his prose and verse won, show how extensive was his popularity. He was the favorite of his age, read over the whole of Europe. He was the master-spirit that entered the wide field of historical romance and gleaned its wealth for posterity. Without writing specifically for ethical aims, he wrote with ethical truth, and is full charged with the morality of the future. Apart from their historical value, which is great, the Waverley series created an improved taste—a taste for good sense and genuine feeling, as opposed to vapid sentimentalism and romantic extravagance. With all his delight in Highland chiefs and Border thieves, he has a true brotherhood with men, and continually hints some tie between the reader and the vast varieties of being, ever with an eye and a heart to—

> 'Make channels for the streams of love
> Where they may broadly run.'

Doubtless, without being professedly so, he wished to be useful. It filled his eyes with tears to be told that he was doing great good by his attractive and noble tales. His fundamental honesty, and his wide humanity would form an *a priori* guarantee

that his works, on the whole, should contribute to the amelioration of man and society. On his deathbed it consoled him that he had not compromised the interests of virtue. He said to his son-in-law:

'Lockhart, I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man — be virtuous, be religious — be a good man. Nothing else will give you comfort when you come to lie here.'

WORDSWORTH.

I do not know a man more to be venerated for uprightness of heart and loftiness of genius.— *Walter Scott.*

Biography.—Born at Cockermouth, in the north of England, in 1770; educated at Cambridge; travelled, visited France, and, with the rest, felt the flame of the Revolution; returned, lived in seclusion and devoted himself to poetry, which he was enabled to do by a small legacy from a young friend; formed the acquaintance of Coleridge, and with him went to Germany; returned and settled with his sister at Grasmere, Coleridge and Southey residing near them,— whence the famous Lake School; received an increase of fortune, and married a friend of his early days, of whom, in the third year of his married life, he wrote:

'*She came*, no more a Phantom to adorn
A moment, but an inmate of the heart,
And yet a spirit there for me enshrined
To penetrate the lofty and the low;
Even as one essence of pervading light
Shines in the brightest of ten thousand stars.'

Made repeated tours in Scotland and on the Continent, enjoyed the favors of government, succeeded Southey as poet-laureate, lived uneventfully, engrossed by contemplations, and gladdened by growing fame, and died in 1850, calmly, peacefully.

Writings.—Such a life was suited to nourish a thinker and a moralist. His great work is the *Excursion*, a genuinely noble poem on the interests of the soul, as thus set forth with the imposing seriousness of meditation, in the grave, grand harmonies of the organ:

'On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,
Musing in solitude, I oft perceive

Fair trains of imagery before me rise,
Accompanied by feelings of delight,
Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed;
And I am conscious of affecting thoughts
And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes
Or elevates the mind, intent to weigh
The good and evil of our mortal state.
To these emotions, whencesoe'er they come,
Whether from breath of outward circumstance,
Or from the Soul,—an impulse to herself,—
I would give utterance in numerous verse.
Of Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,
And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith;
Of blessed consolations in distress;
Of moral strength, and intellectual Power;
Of joy in widest commonalty spread;
Of the individual mind that keeps her own
Inviolate retirement, subject there
To Conscience only, and the law supreme
Of that Intelligence which governs all—
I sing!'

poet falls in with a meditative pedler: the two walk and mune regarding nature and human destiny. The wandering ɜ muses tenderly, cheerfully, on the troubles of the world, ıred —

'That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power,
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.'

brooding quiet, as of distance and space; the circling seasons, falling leaves, the episodical and momentary aspects of his ·oundings,— inevitably suggest the everlasting flow and ebb hings, the final evanescence of all:

'So fails, so languishes, grows dim and dies,
All that this world is proud of. From their spheres
The stars of human glory are cast down;
Perish the roses and the flowers of kings.
Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and palms
Of all the mighty, withered and consumed!
Nor is power given to lowliest innocence
Long to protect her own. The man himself
Departs; and soon is spent the line of those
Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,
In heart or soul, in station or pursuit
Did most resemble him. Degrees and ranks,
Fraternities and orders — heaping high
New wealth upon the burthen of the old,
And placing trust in privilege confirmed
And re-confirmed — are scoffed at with a smile
Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand
Of desolation aimed; to slow decline

These yield, and these to sudden overthrow;
Their virtue, service, happiness, and state
Expire; and Nature's pleasant robe of green,
Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps
Their monuments and their memory.'

They are introduced to a hermit, a man driven to despair by disappointment and bereavement, unable to learn the lesson of submission, fiery, impatient, proud and passionate. All proceed to the house of the pastor, who recounts some of the mutations which have passed over his sequestered valley, and delivers this sublime message to the proud, vain, restless, doubting, and weary — the comprehensive and familiar invitation of the eternal Beneficence:

'The sun is fixed,
And the infinite magnificence of heaven
Fixed within reach of every human eye.
The sleepless Ocean murmurs for all ears,
The vernal field infuses fresh delight
Into all hearts. . . .
The primal duties shine aloft like stars,
The charities that soothe and heal and bless
Are scattered at the feet of man,—like flowers.'

Then this final great truth, which comprehends the rest:

'Life, I repeat, is energy of love
Divine or human; exercised in pain,
In strife and tribulation; and ordained,
If so approved and sanctified, to pass,
Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy.'

The beautiful is not confined to the rare. That which makes the beauty of poetry is the sentiment, not the dignity of the characters, nor the pomp of the words. Wordsworth's desire was to teach and elevate by simple means; to reveal, to the humblest, the inexhaustible treasures, the loveliness, the sacredness, the mystery of the common-place. *We are Seven* is an illustration, altogether spiritualistic and non-conventional:

'I met a little cottage girl;
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick, with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic woodland air,
And she was wildly clad,
Her eyes were fair, and very fair,—
Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? Seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."
She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And in the churchyard cottage I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven! I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be?"

Then did the little maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree."

"You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem,
And there upon the ground I sit,—
I sit and sing to them.

And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

The first that died was little Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her from her pain,
And then she went away.

So in the churchyard she was laid;
And when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,—
My brother John and I.

And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,—
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
The little maiden did reply,
"O master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still

The little maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"'

It is perhaps to these minor poems that he, like Milton, owes his warm and living place in the English heart. Another is the *Intimations of Immortality*, a marvellous outburst of highest poetry, as unexceptionable in diction as it is deep and true. Whoever has recollection of his early years, whoever cherishes the hallowed dreams of youth, whoever has observed with thoughtful reverence the tastes, delights, affections, the mythic utterances and strange questionings of childhood, will appreciate these Platonic lines:

'There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more. . . .

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us—our life's star—
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar,
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.
Heaven lies about us in our infancy;
Shades of the prison house begin to close
Upon the growing boy;
But he beholds the light and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The youth who daily farther from the east
Must travel still is nature's priest;
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended.
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.'

Some of his sonnets are very beautiful; for instance, the following, at once powerful and sweet:

'It is a beauteous evening, calm and free;
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven is on the sea;
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with His eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child! dear girl! that walkest with me here,

If thou appear'st untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year;
And worship'st at the temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.'

Style.—Himself a creature of the reaction which set in with Cowper and Burns, he rushed to ridiculous extremes of simplicity, and in his earlier poems resolved to write as rustics talked, maintaining that their language was the fittest for verse of every description. He also contended that poetic diction should be in all respects the same with that of prose. Accordingly, we have a serious and affecting poem, *We are Seven*, beginning thus:

'A little child, dear brother *Jim*.'

In another, equally pathetic, a blind boy ventures on the sea:

'In such a vessel ne'er before
Did human creature leave the shore.'

That is, he pushes out into the perilous element in—

'A household tub like one of those
Which women use to wash their clothes.'

Words derive their tone and color from the ideas they embody and the heat they contain. Poetry may descend to the level of colloquialism, but cannot be confined there. In his later productions, and in the most successful of his earlier ones, Wordsworth deviated from his theory. Sometimes insipid, sometimes diffuse, he is usually graceful and harmonious, austerely pure, and deeply musical, often magnificent.

Rank.—The poet of reflection and contemplation. By his self-consciousness, and his want of passion, he is not of the Shakespearean mould, nor hence of those who move human nature most profoundly. His personages are without reality—abstractions. Solemn and even, essentially philosophical and undramatic, he belongs to the Miltonian type without reaching the eminence of that bard of Paradise. As an interpreter of nature, he took the step which Chaucer and Shakespeare never took,—to explore the virtue which resides in the symbol, to describe objects as they affect human hearts, to show how the inflowing world is a material image through which the sovereign mind holds intercourse with man. Foremost and alone as the poet of the common and familiar, not, indeed, of the wit and merriment in things, but of the tenderness and thoughtfulness in

them. His ideas and sentiments are not in general those of the present, and cannot interest the worldly. They rank him with those who sing prophecies of a new and larger era.

No English author has so divided the critics. A few — De Quincey and Coleridge among them — think that he belongs to the first class; the majority think that he is not entitled to this distinction. Meanwhile his star is climbing ever higher into the unclouded sky. The circle of his readers widens with the process of the suns.

Character.—His reading was not extensive. He looked nature and man directly in the face, seemingly resolved to take nothing at second-hand. Essentially a thinker and a dreamer, listening to his own thoughts in solitary complacency, and thus falling into the errors of undue exaltation of the trivial, undue consciousness of self, excessive indifference to the meditative world and its noisy inanities. Carlyle, speaking of his deportment at a large and sumptuous dinner, says:

'I look upwards, leftwards, the coast being luckily for a moment clear; then, far off, beautifully screened in the shadow of his vertical green circle, which was on the other side of him, sate Wordsworth, silent, slowly, but steadily, gnawing some portion of what I judged to be raisins, with his eye and attention placidly fixed on these and these alone; the sight of whom, and of his rock-like indifference to the babble, quasi-scientific and other, with attention turned on the small practical alone, was comfortable and amusing to me, who felt like him, but could not eat raisins. This little glimpse I could still paint, so clear and bright is it, and this shall be symbolical of all.'[1]

His self-absorption was so great that he was unconquerable by criticism or ridicule. He was a law unto himself, moving forward in the full assurance that his work, though unpopular, would be immortal. Spared the disturbing cares with which most men have to struggle, worshipped by his family, prosperous and happy,—circumstances increased his naturally high sense of merit. This is Carlyle's peculiar 'reminiscence':

'One evening, I got him upon the subject of great poets, who I thought might be admirable equally to us both; but was rather mistaken, as I gradually found. Pope's partial failure I was prepared for; less for the narrowish limits visible in Milton and others. I tried him with Burns, of whom he had sung tender recognition; but Burns also turned out to be a limited inferior creature, any genius he had a theme for one's pathos rather; even Shakespeare himself had his blind sides, his limitations; gradually it became apparent to me that of transcendent unlimited there was, to this critic, probably but one specimen known, Wordsworth himself!'

Seated on a throne in the seclusion of his mountains, it doubt-

[1] *Reminiscences.*

less seemed to him right and fitting to relate in the *Prelude* the history of his mind—'how it had orbed into the perfect star.'

His love of nature was a passion—a blissful and holy one. In boyhood, forms and colors were a rapture; in manhood, they were essences ineffable:

> 'For I have learned
> To look on nature, not as in the hour
> Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
> The still, sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
> To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,
> A motion, and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.'

So intense was his spirituality, that he saw poetical elements in all objects, something sacred and sublime in the lowest. A washing-tub and a sucking pig are linked with exalted and kindling truths. Doubtless he thus invited, if he did not merit, the shafts of ridicule. It is, we think, this disposition or desire to see under disguises and humble forms everlasting beauty, that explains the occasional want of dignity in his themes, as well as his colloquial familiarity of treatment. He desired so to wed the minds of men to this goodly universe, that Elysian groves and Fortunate Fields should be a produce of the common day:

> 'By words
> Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
> Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep
> Of death, and win the vacant and the vain
> To noble raptures.'

Only through the soul can the outer world be rightly apprehended. Affection, pure and noble, is always to be honored and admired as much in the peasant as in the prince. No one has more powerfully delineated the sentiments of benevolence, charity, and love. With an exquisite delicacy and depth of feeling, he was defective in the stronger passions, and hence had little power to stir the blood. Seldom, indeed, has he reached the warmth of the following description, whose tints are all ideal:

> 'His present mind
> Was under fascination; he beheld

A vision, and adored the thing he saw.
Arabian fiction never filled the world
With half the wonders that were wrought for him.
Earth breathed in one great presence of the spring:
Life turned the meanest of her implements
Before his eyes, to price above all gold:
The house she dwelt in was a sainted shrine;
Her chamber window did surpass in glory
The portals of the dawn; all paradise
Could, by the simple opening of a door,
Let itself in upon him; pathways, walks,
Swarmed with enchantment, till his spirit sank
Surcharged within him,—overblest to move
Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world
To its dull round of ordinary cares;
A man too happy for mortality!'

On the whole, a plain, sincere, manly, wise, and happy man, calm, contemplative, and self-supported, to whom existence was moral and divine; quite inexplicable, indeed, by English mud and English utilities!

Influence.—On the poetry of his age, beneficial and extensive. He supplied an inexhaustible fund of antagonism to the philosophy which wraps the soul in a 'sensual fleece,' and gave the final quietus to the theory of mere taste and imitation, opposing to romantic themes and inflated diction, sense, nature and simplicity. More than any other, perhaps, did he contribute to spiritualize modern imaginative literature. He enlisted intellects in favor of an expansive and kindly philanthropy, brightened daily life with images of beauty and grace, gave us nobler loves and nobler cares.

Too little sensuous to be, as yet, widely popular; but that popularity will extend in proportion as the general mind ascends to his mount of vision. As long as perfection is the pole-star of humanity, admiring reverence will be paid —

'TO THE MEMORY OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH,
A TRUE PHILOSOPHER AND POET.
WHO BY A SPECIAL GIFT AND CALLING OF ALMIGHTY GOD,
WHETHER HE DISCOURSED ON MAN OR NATURE,
FAILED NOT TO LIFT UP THE HEART TO HOLY THINGS,
TIRED NOT OF MAINTAINING THE CAUSE OF THE POOR AND SIMPLE,
AND SO, IN PERILOUS TIMES, WAS RAISED UP TO BE
A CHIEF MINISTER, NOT ONLY OF NOBLEST POESY,
BUT OF HIGH AND SACRED TRUTH.'[1]

[1]Inscription on the mural monument in Grasmere Church.

BYRON.

Never had any writer so vast a command of the whole eloquence of scorn, misanthropy, and despair.—*Macaulay.*

Biography.—Born in London, in 1788; son of a brutal roisterer, who ill-treated his wife, squandered her property, then deserted her; his mother a 'lioness,' so passionate that in moments of fury she would rend in pieces her dresses and bonnets, call him a 'lame brat,' throw the fire-shovel at his head, then caress him, weep over him. Both were alternate storm and calm. Once they quarrelled so terribly, that each went privately to the apothecary's to see whether the other had been to purchase poison. Another time, they snatched from his hand a knife with which, in one of his silent rages, he was in the act of cutting his throat. To school at five, and at eight, like Dante, a lover:

'My passion had its usual effects upon me. I could not sleep—I could not eat—I could not rest; and although I had reason to know that she loved me, it was the texture of my life to think of the time which must elapse before we could meet again, being usually about twelve hours of separation. But I was a fool then, and am not much wiser now.'

At twelve he fell in love with his cousin, who died a year or two afterwards, 'one of the most beautiful of evanescent beings.' At fifteen he formed an ardent attachment for Mary Chaworth, whose father the poet's grand-uncle had slain in a tavern brawl. She became the betrothed of another, and their parting interview is immortalized in *The Dream:*

'I saw two beings in the hues of youth,
Standing upon a hill; a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last,
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave,
Of woods and corn-fields, and the abodes of men,
Scattered at intervals, and wreathing smoke,
Arising from such rustic roofs; the hill
Was crowned with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fixed,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath,
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her;
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;

The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him.'

At twenty-seven, when the soul had well-nigh exhausted the body, and the body the soul, he married Miss Milbanke, of whom he had said:

'Yesterday, a very pretty letter from Annabella, which I answered. What an odd situation and friendship is ours!—without one spark of love on either side, and produced by circumstances which in general lead to coldness on one side, and aversion on the other. She is a very superior woman, and very little spoiled, which is strange in an heiress — a girl of twenty — a peeress that is to be, in her own right — an only child and a *savante*, who has always had her own way. She is a poetess, a mathematician, a metaphysician, and yet, withal, very kind, generous, and gentle, with very little pretension. Any other head would be turned with half her acquisitions, and a tenth of her advantages.'

Meanwhile he had studied at Harrow and at Cambridge, reading much, exercising vehemently, living irregularly, devouring all sorts of learning except that which was prescribed; had travelled on the Continent, had risen to renown, had been the idol of the gay and the life of the riotous; had been lashed to madness by the critics, had declared war upon society. His wife thought him insane, had him examined by physicians, learned that he was in his right mind, then left him, after a union of twelve months, and refused ever to see him again. This is his wail:

'Would that breast were bared before thee,
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again. . . .

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know:
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go. . . .

Fare thee well! thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.'

A daughter, Ada, reminded the wretched parents of what might have been,— a child of love, 'though born in bitterness and nurtured in convulsion.' In the touching lines which close the third canto of *Childe Harold*, he has vision of the sweet face that is lost without hope, and of the happiness which he shall never know:

'My daughter! with thy name this song begun,—
My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end,—
I see thee not, I hear thee not,—but none
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend

To whom the shadows of far years extend;
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart, when mine is cold,—
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould.'

The blame rested upon him. Popular feeling was strong. He was abused in the papers, and hooted in the streets. Miserable and reckless, he left England in 1816 forever:

'Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar!
Swift be their guidance wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.'

He went to Geneva, the poisoned arrows rankling in his memory and his heart; to Rome, to Ravenna, to Venice, where he steeped himself in the voluptuous Italian life; wrote continually, in scornful isolation, inspired by the sublimity without and the tempest within; braved danger, a score of times near death; sank even to debauchery; roused himself, and in 1823 embarked for Greece, to aid in her struggle for independence. There, from exposure, he was seized with a fever, and expired in a few days, at the age of thirty-six, amid the mourning of the nation, having raised himself to the height of glory, and debased himself to the depth of shame.

Writings.—Such a man will transcribe himself into his verses. *Childe Harold* is a diary of travel and experience. All were captivated. 'I awoke one morning and found myself famous.' All saw the author in the hero, who—

'Was sore sick at heart,
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee:
'Tis said, at times the sullen tear would start,
But Pride congeal'd the drop within his e'e:
Apart he stalk'd in joyless reverie,
And from his native land resolved to go,
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea:
With pleasure drugg'd, he almost long'd for woe.'

Later he throws off the mask, and avows:

'Yet must I think less wildly:—I *have* thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:

And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poisoned. 'Tis too late!
Yet am I changed: though still enough the same
In strength to bear what life cannot abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.'

When nature is thus surveyed, every word will note an emotion. Every touch will be vivid. The most powerful will reveal the caged panther that rages to leap upon some satisfying object. Thus:

'Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find at length, like eagles, some high nest?

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,—could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into one word,
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.'

In this furnace-flame history becomes animate, and we see again the pomps and splendors of its plumed and disorderly procession:

'I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand;
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand;
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying glory smiles
O'er the far times when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!'

The far past is repeopled, palpitates and lives. Within the vacant, magic circuit of the Coliseum, the thronged amphitheatre rises to view, with the sights and sounds of Rome's brutal sports. Here 'murder breathes her bloody steam,' and the eager nations murmur pity or roar applause. You shall behold the distant cottage of the dying athlete, slaughtered for the imperial pleasure, then the avenging Alaric descending upon the doomed city:

'I see before me the Gladiator lie;
He leans upon his hand,—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,

And his droop'd head sinks gradually low,—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him,—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not,—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother,—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday.
All this rush'd with his blood. Shall he expire,
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire.'

Cain gives us the heroism of wickedness and misery, the thirst of knowledge which cannot be quenched, the pride of power which defies heaven and hell:

'*Cain.* Are ye happy?
Lucifer. *We are mighty.*
Cain. Are ye *happy?*
Lucifer. No! Art thou?'

His *Corsair* is the story of a pirate whose purer feelings have been chilled and petrified. The heart of rock shelters one flower, and that is blasted when dies the love of his youth:

'The only living thing he could not hate,
Was reft at once,—and he deserved his fate,
But did not feel it less;—the good explore,
For peace, those realms where guilt can never soar;
The proud, the wayward, who have fix'd below
Their joy, and find this earth enough for woe,
Lose in that one their all,—perchance a mite,—
But who in patience parts with all delight?
Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern
Mask hearts where grief hath little left to learn;
And many a withering thought lies hid, not lost,
In smiles that least befit who wear them most.'

His *Giaour* is a narrative of woe, for which joy has no balm and affliction no sting; a tale of—

'The wither'd frame, the ruin'd mind,
The wreck by passion left behind,
A shrivell'd scroll, a scatter'd leaf,
Sear'd by the autumn blast of grief!'

Mazeppa is a record of torture. A lover is bound, by a savage count, on a furious horse rushing over wild plain and through black forest, while the wolves howl behind, and his cords are wet with gore. All day, all night, the race continues, then his pulse grows feeble, his eye dim, and his brain giddy:

'The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
I seem'd to sink upon the ground;
But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more:
The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no further: he who dies
Can die no more than then I died.
O'er-tortured by that ghastly ride,
I felt the blackness come and go,
And strove to wake; but could not make
My senses climb up from below:
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee
At the same time upheave and whelm,
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.'

Lara presents the spectacle of a man vainly rearing himself against inevitable fate, the tragic picture of one who—

'Stood a stranger in this breathing world
An erring spirit from another hurl'd,
A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped
By choice the perils he by chance escap'd;
But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory yet
His mind would half exult and half regret: . . .
His early dreams of good outstripp'd the truth,
And troubled manhood follow'd baffled youth;
With thought of years in phantom chase misspent,
And wasted powers for better purpose lent,
And fiery passions that had pour'd their wrath
In hurried desolation o'er his path,
And left the better feelings all at strife
In wild reflection o'er his stormy life; . . .
So much he soared beyond, or sunk beneath,
The men with whom he felt condemn'd to breathe,
And long'd by good or ill to separate
Himself from all who shared his mortal state:
His mind abhorring this had fix'd her throne,
Far from the world, in regions of her own.'

In *The Prisoner of Chillon* we see a father perish at the stake for his faith. Of his six sons, one is burned, two fall fighting, and three waste in chains, in dungeon darkness. The eldest sees his brothers sink, one by one, in slow agony, himself unable to reach their dying hands; sees the jailers coldly laugh as they scoop a shallow grave from the turfless earth in the pale and livid light of the cell:

'I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist,

For all was blank, and bleak and gray,
It was not night,—it was not day;
It was not even the dungeon light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness, without a place:
There were no stars,—no earth,—no time,
No check,—no change,—no good,—no crime,—
But silence and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!'

Manfred is the deification of self-will, a history of remorse without repentance, of suffering which seeks neither hope nor alleviation. It represents a man of unconquerable pride and boundless ambition, hating the world and his kind, yearning after the inaccessible, searching in the loneliest and most tempestuous aspects of nature for sympathy:

'From my youth upwards
My spirit walked not with the souls of men,
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes;
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh. . . .
My joy was in the Wilderness, to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river, stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their development; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While autumn winds were at their evening song.'

If he has had father or mother or friend, they seem not such to him; yet was there one—

'Like me in lineaments,—her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty:
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears,—which I had not;
And tenderness,—but that I had for her;

Humility,—and that I never had.
Her faults were mine,—her virtues were her own;—
I loved her, and destroy'd her! . . .
Not with my hand, but heart,—which broke her heart,—
It gazed on mine and wither'd.'

The fatal remembrance occupies and fills him:

'My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies,—I have gnash'd
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset;—I have pray'd
For madness as a blessing,—'tis denied me.
I have affronted death,—but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless,—the cold hand
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not break.
In phantasy, imagination, all
The affluence of my soul. . . . I plunged deep,
But like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.'

He will yield to neither men nor demons. When the infernal spirit rises, glaring forth the immortality of hell, and summons him away, he hurls defiance back:

'Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know;
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine;
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts,—
Is its own origin of ill and end,—
And its own place and time,—its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No color from the fleeting things without;
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey,—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter. Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of death is on me,—but not yours!'

There is one delight, a grim one,—consciousness of the capacity to suffer. Here and there, twinkling in sombre imagery of despair, are touches of quiet beauty and holy sentiment:

'How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
A conflict of its elements. . . . Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,

A bodiless enjoyment,—born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!'

'The night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me that in my youth,
When I was wandering, upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watch-dog bay'd beyond the Tiber. . . .
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old!—
The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.'

If now you would see the grandest of the funereal poems, the st imposing of misanthropical creations, turn to *Darkness*, and ness the dream of universal destruction:

'I had a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguished, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless; and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chilled into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watch-fires, and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consumed,
And men were gathered round their blazing homes
To look once more upon each other's face; . .
A fearful hope was all the world contained;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguished with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands and smiled;

And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnashed their teeth, and howled: the wild birds shriek'd,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless — they were slain for food: . . .
A meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom: . . .
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds, and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the drooping dead
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food —
But with a piteous and perpetual moan,
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answer'd not with a caress — he died.
The crowd was famished by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies: they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects — saw, and shrieked and died —
Ev'n of their mutual hideousness they died, . . .
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirred within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal; as they dropp'd,
They slept on the abyss without a surge.'

When Byron had imbued himself with Southern manners and morality he wrote *Don Juan*, the longest, and in some respects, the most characteristic of his poems; a vast medley of description, knowledge, wit, satire, mire and gold, Epicurean philosophy, and hopeless scepticism. It is draped with passages of delicacy and sweetness that form a pleasing contrast with the mockery and hatred which are the prevailing mood. Thus:

'An infant when it gazes on the light,
A child the moment when it drains the breast,
A devotee when soars the Host in sight,
An Arab with a stranger for a guest,
A sailor when the prize has struck in fight,

A miser filling his most hoarded chest,
Feel rapture; but not such true joy are reaping,
As they who watch o'er what they love while sleeping. . . .

All that it hath of life with us is living;
So gentle, stirless, helpless, and unmoved,
And all unconscious of the joy 'tis giving,
All it hath felt, inflicted, passed, proved,
Hushed into depths beyond the watcher's diving.'

ɜ great merits of the piece are powerful versification, witty ısion, richness of ideas, sentiments, images. Here is a speci- ɲ never to be forgotten:

'Between two worlds life hovers like a star,
'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge.
How little do we know that which we are!
How less what we may be! The eternal surge
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
Our bubbles; as the old burst, new emerge,
Lash'd from the foam of ages; while the graves
Of empires heave but like some passing waves.'

Style.—Free, energetic, intense, affluent, melodious, often ɹpt and irregular, always representative of himself,—now ·my and smiting, now soft and equable, a foaming, glittering :. Byron preferred Pope to Shakespeare or Milton. The he considered barbarians; the new school, as shabby-genteel. loved the oratorical form, symmetrical phrase, balanced anti- ɜis. Yet was he more intent on what he had to say than on way he said it. Most of his romantic tales are written in the ɔsyllabic measure which Scott brought into fashion. Of his · great performances, *Harold*, his masterpiece, is written in the ɜnserian stanza, with an attempt—soon abandoned—to imitate archaic character of the *Fairy Queen; Juan*, in a more flow- and plastic verse, the *ottava rima*, better fitted for the ɲic vein of which his earlier pieces give no sign, as well as for ɜldry and cynicism.

Rank.—The preëminent type of the revolutionary spirit, as ·tt of the historical, and Wordsworth of the philosophical. ·haps the most distinguished genius of the age for originality · energy. When we consider his inexhaustible fertility, his liant excesses, his rocket-like flights, the whirling gulf of :asy and of flame, we are disposed to think him 'a miraculous d'; but his passionate, tumultuous nature so narrowed and ·erted his conceptions of man and the world, as to make him

less the poet of the universe than of the individual, and thus to rob him of the real supremacy which his fruitful imagination seemed to promise. His ideals are false to genuine nobility. He could never metamorphose himself into another. There is in all his personages an essential sameness,—men proud and moody, cynical and defiant; women devoted and loving, but unreasoning and instinctive, with the latent fury of the tigress. In all his dramas the central figure is himself, persisting in his eternal monologue. The varieties are varieties of situation and costume.

He called himself 'the grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.' But we have left his point of view behind us. Man is not an abortion. Life is not a farce. The business of poetry is not revolt mainly. Much has been rejected as worthless, passing with the restless, feverish conditions which gave it birth. Much can perish only with the English language. So felt the unhappy Byron:

> 'My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
> And my frame perish even in conquering pain;
> But there is that within me which shall tire
> Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire.'

Character.—Never was literature so intensely subjective. Never did a man so clearly impress upon his work his own glory and his own condemnation. Over all are thrown the sable hues of his master-mood,—the gloomy humor of a mighty and sensitive spirit, madly and vainly struggling to break through its enclosure, then recoiling upon itself to find stability in universal scepticism:

> 'We wither from our youth, we gasp away,
> Sick; sick; unfound the boon, unslaked the thirst,
> Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
> Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first;
> But all too late; so are we doubly curst.
> Love, fame, ambition, avarice; 'tis the same,—
> Each idle, and all ill, and none the worst;
> For all are meteors with a different name,
> And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.'

Joy is a bubble. Wretchedness is the common destiny. All rush to their doom. Some are wrecked earlier, others later:

> 'There is an order
> Of mortals on the earth who do become
> Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
> Without the violence of warlike death.
> Some perishing of pleasure, some of study,
> Some worn with toil, some of mere weariness,

Some of disease, and some of insanity,
And some of withered or of broken hearts;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are numbered in the lists of fate,
Taking all shapes and bearing many names.'

This genius was born long ago, its root in the Northern Scald, predisposed to the sad and sombre, revelling in dread images of desolation:

'When I have looked on some face that I love, imagination has often figured the changes that Death must one day produce on it,— the worm rioting on lips now smiling, the features and hues of health changed to the livid and ghastly tints of putrefaction; and the image, conjured up by my fancy, but which is as true as it is a fearful anticipation of what *must* arrive, has left an impression for hours that the actual presence of the object, in all the bloom of health, has not been able to banish: this is one of my pleasures of imagination.'

A volcanic nature is everywhere manifest in his life and utterance. He was a rudderless vessel, tossed about by every breeze of desire, on every wave of passion, impelled to ruin by his own fateful energy. Be it so. 'I will work the mine of my youth to the last vein of the ore, and then,—good night.' Restlessness, the relish of excitement, the craving for strife, are at once the propelling and limiting force of his art:

'To withdraw myself from myself has ever been my sole, my entire, my sincere motive in scribbling at all,—and publishing also the continuance of the same object, by the action it affords to the mind, which else recoils upon itself.'

To a mind thus driven and whirled, yet hedged, life could be only fever and torture. This is the confession wrung from him:

'The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze,
A funeral pile!'

But in the wind-sped clouds are momentary rents which reveal the elysium of repose and the heaven of his yearning. His love of nature was passionate, thoughtful, and imaginative. His perceptions of beauty were exquisitely delicate. Passages like the following lace with light and stud with stars the gloom of his meditations:

'And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm,—
When elements to elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not

Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
The bodiless thought, and spirit of each spot,
Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?'

And:

'Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me with its stillness to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear,
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.'

His tastes and opinions were capricious, varying with his physical condition. Intellect and imagination were alike restricted. Both were wanting in comprehensiveness. He had many rare glimpses of truth, but not the patience or the talent to pursue or combine them. His strength consisted in insight or intention, on the one hand; a vehement energy or inner exaltation, on the other. He was brave and generous. Scott describes him as being 'a man of real goodness of heart, and the kindest and best feelings.' What he needed was to be centrally fixed in principle. How many are the illustrations of his higher and better self, showing that his deep and abiding sympathies were with the tender, pure, noble, and good! Thus:

'There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture in the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.'

Of *Don Juan:*

'I am jealously tenacious of the undivided sympathy of my daughter; and that work (*Don Juan*), written to beguile hours of *tristesse* and wretchedness, is well calculated to loosen my hold on her affection. I will write no more of it;—would that I had never written a line!'

Of *Childe Harold:*

'My theme
Has died into an echo: it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguished which hath lit
My midnight lamp,—and what is writ is writ,—
Would it were worthier!'

Of humanity:

'It is enough that those who want assistance are men, in order to claim the pity and protection of the meanest pretender to humane feelings.'

Of woman:

'Men have no criterion to judge of purity or goodness but woman. Some portion of this purity and goodness always adheres to woman, even though she may lapse from virtue: she makes a willing sacrifice of herself on the altar of affection, and thinks only of him for whom it is made; while men think of themselves alone.'

Of a prayer in his behalf:

'I can assure you that all the fame which ever cheated humanity into higher notions of its own importance would never weigh in my mind against the pure and pious interest which a virtuous being may be pleased to take in my welfare.'

Of immortality:

'The belief in the immortality of the soul is the only true panacea for the ills of life.'

Of the separation from his wife:

'You are one of the few persons with whom I have lived in what is called intimacy, and have heard me at times conversing on the untoward topic of my recent family disquietudes. Will you have the goodness to say to me at once, whether you ever heard me speak of her with disrespect, with unkindness, or defending myself at her expense, by any serious imputations of any description against her? Did you never hear me say, that "when there was a right or wrong, she had the right?" The reason I put these questions to you or other of my friends is, because I am said, by her and hers, to have resorted to such means of exculpation.'

Though proud and reserved, music made him weep. He preferred the Bible above all books, but observe the significant discrimination:

'I am a great reader and admirer of those books, and had read them through and through before I was eight years old,—that is to say, the Old Testament; for the New struck me as a task, but the other as a pleasure.'

Impatient of all restraint, he feels intensely the moral law, and would flee to materialism as a refuge from bitter self-rebuke; yet, in words of immortal grandeur, revolts against its extinguished hopes:

'I feel, I feel my immortality o'ersweep
All pains, all tears, all time, all fears, and peal,
Like the eternal thunders of the deep,
Into my ears this truth—"Thou liv'st forever!"'

Himself vicious, he lashed vice in others with bitterness of invective. Aspiring after excellence, he was practically enslaved to vice. In short, he was an assemblage of clashing qualities, an extraordinary mixture of the seraph and the beast. We cannot but say of him, with mournful regret:

> 'This should have been a noble creature: he
> Hath all the energy which would have made
> A goodly frame of glorious elements,
> Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
> It is an awful chaos — light and darkness,
> And mind and dust, and passions and pure thoughts,
> Mix'd and contending, without end or order,
> All dormant or destructive.'

Influence.— He flooded forth good and evil impetuously. Much that he wrote is licentious in tone; some of it is openly obscene. Worse still, he holds up to admiration moral monsters in whom 'one virtue is linked with a thousand crimes.' The mean and corrupt are made attractive by clothing them in a blaze of diction, or by associating them with images of beauty and sublimity. Virtue is often disparaged, and dignity is conferred on vice. Doubtless, personal hatreds, bitter and reckless moods, frequently prompted him to say what he did not believe or feel. Accused, for example, of thinking ill of women, he replied:

> 'If I meet a romantic person, with what I call a too exalted opinion of women, I have a peculiar satisfaction in speaking lightly of them; not out of pique to the sex, but to mortify their champion; as I always conclude, that when a man overpraises women, he does it to convey the impression of how much they must have favored him, to have won such gratitude towards them; whereas there is such an abnegation of vanity in a poor devil's decrying women,— it is such a proof positive that they never distinguished him, that I can overlook it.'

As we have seen, side by side with this alluring Dead-sea fruit,—

> 'Which tempts the eye
> But turns to ashes on the lip,'—

are the fruits of the spirit,— beauty, loveliness, aspiration, pity, faith, hope, charity. Byron will always have charms for active, restless youth; and will ever find an echo in the breast of voiceless suffering. We shall not venture to pronounce on the *general tendency* of his writings. In that fadeless garden, flowers and weeds are commingled; in that eternal spring the waters are both salubrious and noxious.

How much does the man of great poetic genius or eloquence owe to mankind! If he sing not the highest word of joy or woe, how great is his remissness! If he dedicate his pen to lust and wine, to ribald mock and scoff, it is the greatest charity that can say to him, 'Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.' The glory that burns around the brow of the Nazarene, so that we see him two thousand years off, was the birth of this thought —'The Son of Man has come to save that which is lost.'

DIFFUSIVE PERIOD.

CHAPTER VI.

FEATURES.

On, like the comet's way, through infinite space,
Stretches the long untravelled path of light,
Into the depths of ages.—*Bryant.*

Politics.—Legislative measures are but temporary expedients. Because times are progressive, institutions must change. The Act of 1832 came to be regarded by many as a mere instalment of justice. Further expansion was demanded, and the advocacy of reform was no longer attended with personal risk. The agitators grew into a formidable party. The chief were extreme Liberals,—the 'Chartists.' Vast meetings were held, at one of which two hundred thousand persons were computed to be present A monster petition, bearing more than a million names, was rolled into Parliament in a huge tub. Six points were embodied, most of which, in whole or in part, have since been incorporated in British law: universal suffrage; annual parliaments; secret voting,—vote by ballot; abolition of the property qualification for a seat in the House of Commons; payment of members; equal electoral districts. In 1846 the Corn Law, the key-stone of the protective system, was repealed. Free Trade was soon adopted in every department of commerce, and for nearly forty years the commercial policy of Britain has accepted the maxim,—'Buy in the cheapest market, and sell in the dearest.' Among later political achievements are the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Protestant Church, and the abolition of all religious tests for admission to office or for university degrees.

Evidently England in this era has entered upon the victories of peace. The only war which properly recalls the battle-period of her history was the Crimean, waged with Russia in defence of Turkey. Insular security and national sense have left

her tranquil. The stormy contentions that rage abroad and imperil the fortunes of continental nations, present themselves to her islands in a mitigated form.

Anglo-Americans, troubled with no fear of their neighbors, entertaining no purposes of aggression, and occupying a continent of boundless resources, had elected from the first a career of peaceful industry. Two notable wars have interrupted this development,—that of 1812, and the Great Rebellion; the first originating in the British claim to search American ships, the second in the awakened conscience on the subject of slavery, and the conflict of opinion regarding state sovereignty. The South maintained the right of each state to withdraw, at pleasure, from the Union; and the northern antipathy to the slave system furnished the pretext for secession. The rebellion quelled, industry was resumed with quickened energy. The restoration of order in the wasted and disorganized South, however, has been slow. In the North, growth has been rapid beyond all precedent. To-day united America presents a record of industrial progress without parallel in the annals of the human family. Her population has increased to more than fifty millions. To her hospitable shores men throng from the four quarters of the globe. Yet only a fraction of her magnificent heritage is under cultivation. A century since, in the words of Chatham, she was not allowed to make a horse-shoe nail. Year by year her imports have diminished, and may so continue, till she virtually ceases to be a customer, and supplies her own wants. Her industries have rooted firmly in the soil under the shelter of protective duties. That she will adopt ultimately the broad principle of unrestricted commerce, it may be safe to predict. Meanwhile the disastrous experience of the Old World, in the creation of sectional jealousies and class tyrannies, gives warning of the increasing peril of a tariff which has outlived its necessity. In 1879 Mr. Bright wrote to the editor of the *North American Review:*

'It is a grief to me that your people do not yet see their way to a more moderate tariff. You are doing wonders, unequalled in the world's history, in paying off your national debt. A more moderate tariff, I should think, would give you a better revenue, and by degrees you might approach a more civilized system. What can be more strange than for your great free country to build barriers against that commerce which is everywhere the handmaid of freedom and civilization?

I should despair of the prospects of mankind if I did not believe that before long the intelligence of your people would revolt against the barbarism of your tariff. It seems

now your one great humiliation; the world looks to you for example in all forms of freedom. As to commerce, the great civilizer, shall it look in vain?'

A deplorable taint which has gradually infected the body politic, is the Corruption of the Civil Service. The doctrine of spoils and the system of appointments and removals offend the morality and impair the independence of the dominant party. A difficulty which more or less perplexes and troubles both sides of the Atlantic is the Labor Question — the problem of reconciling the rights of employers and employed. The relations of Capital and Labor are the angriest and most important with which we have to deal. But we have no such feudal relics as Game Laws, no such irritable associations as Orangemen, no convulsing Representative Reform, no collision of Church and State or of Church and Dissenters, no conquered territories to manage. Among us, of all communities in either hemisphere, the development of the democratic principle — the power of the people — has been most peaceful and most complete. Heirs of all the Past, we are the true Ancients, who from the vantage ground of our liberal institutions may first recognize the ascending sun of a new era, as those on the mountain-top first discern the coming beams of the morning.

'All crimes shall cease, and ancient frauds shall fail,
Returning justice lift aloft her scale,
Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,
And white-robed Innocence from heaven descend.'

Society.—An unlimited possibility of improvement seems to have revealed itself. A main fact is the creation of value. England is a garden, with here and there a grove. Her fields have been 'combed and rolled till they seem finished with a pencil.' She presents an accumulation of toil and work which has no equal on the planet. Her Thames is an inextricable forest of masts, yards, and cables. Her docks, six miles long, resemble towns. Her air is darkened with the smoke of furnaces. Her warehouses are Babylonian. The East brings her tribute. Her colonies are becoming other Englands. Money, goods, business, flow hither, and pour thence. Her prosperity is the argument of materialism.

A part of this wealth, in compensation, returns to the brain, to establish schools and libraries, to create preachers, astronomers, and chemists, to found hospitals, savings-banks, mechanics' insti-

tutes, parks, and other charities and amenities. The cultivated are many, and ever becoming more numerous. The press, which voices the will of the people as the source of sovereignty, is more powerful than fleets and armies. Universities provide munificently for the education of the upper classes; and National Schools, for the 'lower million.' The advantages once confined to men of family are now open to the untitled nobility, who possess the power without the inconveniences that belong to rank.

Insular limitation remains. With a pitiless logic, the serious Swedenborg shut up the English souls in a heaven by themselves. Race strives immortally to keep its own. Anciently two monarchs would divert themselves, after dinner, by thrusting each his sword through the other's body. It was the redundancy of animal vigor. The primitive Teuton still lives — though in well-cut modern garments — in the love of full stomachs, of great feasts; in the passion for stimulants; in the necessity for violent impressions; in the furor for horses and races; in the combative and daring instinct which requires prodigious risks; in the abounding sap which, averse to culture, prefers eating and drinking, boxing and cricket, equestrianism and boating. In the schools, athletic games occupy a portion of every day. When Tom Brown asks himself why he comes to school, he replies:

'I want to be *A 1* at cricket and football and all the other games, and to make my hands keep my head against my fellow, lout or gentleman. . . . I want to carry away just as much Latin and Greek as will take me through Oxford respectably. . . . I want to leave behind me the name of a fellow who never bullied a little boy or turned his back on a big one.'

Doubtless these athletes will behave rudely. A fist-fight is the natural way of settling their quarrels. During the exercises of Commemoration week, the undergraduates keep up an incessant howl. When the Oxford degree was conferred upon Longfellow, they proposed 'Three cheers for the red man of the West.' When the Vice-Chancellor was reading a Latin address, they called out, 'Now construe.' A man, whose attire was not in taste, was stormed at: 'Take off that coat, sir.' 'Go out, sir.' '*Won't* you go at once?' 'Ladies, request him to leave.' 'Doctor Brown, won't *you* put that man out?'

The school is a sort of primitive society. Each big boy has several who are bound to be his servants. Says a witness:

'I state as a fact, that from the 1st of January to the 31st of December, the young foundation scholar has not a single moment which is not exposed to interruption. At

half-past three in the morning, two of the younger, chosen in succession, rise to light the fire, boil the water, call up those of the big boys who have ordered this to be done. Frequently the senior, awakened at four o'clock, does not get up till half-past seven; he must then be called every half hour. This task falls to each of the small boys two or three times weekly.'

To maintain obedience, terror is used; and among the oppressed it is considered a point of honor not to denounce their oppressors. Kicks are commonplace:

'In the first degree the real punishments are systematic boxes on the ears; the offender must keep his hands at his sides, and hold his head forward to receive a dozen slaps applied right and left.'

Sometimes he is so cruelly bruised that he is unable for many days to join in the games and other exercises. Tom Brown was tossed upwards in a blanket with such force that he struck the ceiling. On one occasion he was seized and held before a blazing fire till he was ready to faint.

The picture, indeed, softens and brightens under the operation of a gradual reform; nevertheless, we perceive here the revival of a feudal aristocracy. 'Talent and wit,' said Steudhal, 'lose twenty-five per cent in value on reaching England. So great is the ascendancy of birth or fortune.'

Frightful contrasts exist in the social strata. Gentlemen and fine ladies gaze upon the ragged toiler with a frigid curiosity. Few workmen rise to be independent. They drink much and save nothing. Dull seasons are inevitable. Competition is severe. They have children in droves. Strikes turn them into the streets by thousands. Accident and sickness engulf them in a black and bottomless pit. Yet they are not utterly isolated. From reading the newspapers and hearing important questions discussed, they possess no inconsiderable store of intelligence in social, political, and religious matters. It tends to equalize conditions, that masters are compelled to send to school two hours daily all factory children from twelve to fifteen years of age. The fundamental maxim is, that unless a nation be educated, it will become ungovernable, as well as improvident. Into the hands of great proprietors the soil has now entirely passed. Half of it is owned by about a thousand persons. Commerce has assisted the process by giving birth to large fortunes, the owners of which are led by social ambition to buy landed estates. The proprietor's stable is more admirable than the tiller's hovel. In the midst of cottages are country seats which replace the mediæval

castle, and whose masters play therein, under new forms, the part of the mediæval baron. This enormous concentration of land, coupled with the cruelties of the Tudor conquest, explains the deplorable evils of sea-girt Ireland, and her deathless hatred of the conquerors.

The American is the continuation of English genius into new conditions, more or less propitious. There is the same practical common-sense, a similar, but more general, love of physical well-being. Under a feudal system, the poor get as much accustomed to their poverty, as the rich to their opulence. Here, on the contrary, the desire of acquisition haunts the imagination of the one, and the dread of loss that of the other. All strain to pursue or to retain delights so imperfect, so fugitive. The love of material gain is the predominant taste. Hence the universal stir, the ceaseless change, the perpetual hurry, the unrest in the midst of abundance. Says Tocqueville:

'A man of the United States clings to this world's goods as if he were certain never to die; and he is so hasty in grasping at all within his reach, that one would suppose he was constantly afraid of not living long enough to enjoy them. He clutches everything, he holds nothing fast, but soon loosens his grasp to pursue fresh gratifications. . . .

A man builds a house to spend his latter years in, and he sells it before the roof is on: he plants a garden, and lets it just as the trees are coming into bearing: he brings a field into tillage, and leaves other men to gather the crops: he embraces a profession, and gives it up: he settles in a place which he soon afterward leaves, to carry his changeable lodgings elsewhere. . . . Death at length overtakes him, but it is before he is weary of his bootless chase of that complete felicity which is forever on the wing.'

It is this restlessness, united to love of freedom and attention to public affairs, that creates prosperity. The world affords no similar example of rapid development. Our territory touches two oceans a thousand leagues apart, stretching through all the productive degrees of latitude. Our surplus products amounted in 1860 to sixty million sterling; in 1878 to one hundred and forty million. We can supply wheat enough to feed the world, cotton enough to clothe it, coal enough to warm it, oil enough to light it. We have almost as many miles of railroad, and as many miles of telegraph, as the rest of the globe. Our mines of gold and silver, of copper and iron, are practically inexhaustible. In ten thousand ways machinery has lifted the burden from labor, and multiplied the comforts of life.

But our progress consists not in material things alone. Mental equality is the basis of popular sovereignty. The free school spreads republican principles, and creates the reading

public. We consume a periodical literature twice as great as that of England and France. Nowhere have such vast and complete educational systems been so rapidly perfected. By their influence the circle of knowledge unceasingly expands. The rural districts assimilate to the towns, and the provinces to the capital. Nowhere are individuals so insignificant. Nowhere are men so nearly alike, nowhere is competition so intense, nowhere is it so difficult for any one person to walk quick and cleave a way through the dense throng which presses him. Nowhere are fixed distinctions so improbable. The new are constantly springing up, the old are constantly falling away. Those who went before are soon forgotten; those who will come after, who can tell? Real superiorities are coveted and respected, but it is also easily seen that the greatest men have their limitations; and the humblest may follow in the track which the grandest levels for his coach.

With the decrease of drudgery, and the increase of leisure, habits become more contemplative, feeling more refined, and mind widens its empire in all directions. A most notable fact of the period is the art movement. The marked devotion to the art-galleries of the Centennial Exhibition, the multiplication of art-schools, reveal a taste for the beautiful from which time and opportunity will reap grand harvests of achievement and appreciation. Humanitarian advance, everywhere, is seen in the helpful treatment of criminals and unfortunates; in prison reforms, in the tender care of the insane, in the efforts to mitigate the horrors of war, in the mitigation of the penal code, in the foundation of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, in the abolition of slavery, in the growing disposition to live, not for self merely, but for some form of the eternal good. This is the last and best hope of civilization.

Religion.—In looking at the nineteenth century, we are struck with one commanding characteristic,—the tendency in all its movements to expansion, to diffusion, to universality. It is more and more understood that religious truth is every man's property and right; that it is committed to no order or individual, to no priest or sage, to be given or withheld. The historical questions, once so much disputed between Anglican and Puritan, are less and less controverted by scholars on either side. Few

maintain a divine right for either system of church organization. A multitude agree that Episcopal government, however ancient and however beneficial, is not essential to the existence of an authorized ministry. Few, without concealing their fear that externalism may become a duty or settle into hypocrisy, would now assert the unlawfulness of written forms; and the time is past for any to speak contemptuously of spontaneous prayer. Protestants everywhere are coming to perceive that there may be a legitimate development in doctrine, in ethics, in ceremonial, in polity.

In England, the State Church, rich and powerful, finds favor with the majority. But her separating walls are crumbling, while her shield has broadened till it spreads over three distinct parties,—the *High*, which is the more aristocratic, leaning more upon authority, fonder of ritual; the *Low*, more popular, more ardent, more eager to renovate the heart; the *Liberal*, or *Rationalistic*, which includes a large number of the most cultivated minds, eminently qualified for reconciling science and faith. The political influence of the clergy has steadily declined.[1] Once the chief directors of the policy of Europe, they now form a baffled, if not desponding, minority, whose ideal is not so much in the future as in the past.

In America, all parties unite in the conviction that the civil authority should be neutral as regards the different denominations, and that these should severally govern themselves. We have over twenty-two million worshippers, and above seventy-two thousand congregations,—more than twice as many as in England. State support, supplemented by private bounty, has done less for the one than voluntary offerings have done for the other. Religion here, so far as its vital power is concerned, is individual. Its allies are culture and reform, but its foundations shift perpetually. It is less a habit,—more a thought, feeling, sentiment and purpose, impulsive and growing.

In both countries, dogma is fast yielding to reason and persuasion; in both, a diminished importance is ascribed to the outward parts of Christianity. Its inward evidences, the marks of divinity which it wears on its own brow, are becoming of greater

[1] In the reign of Henry III, the spiritual peers formed one half of the Upper House; in the middle of this century, only one fourteenth.

moment. Not a name or a creed, but purity of desire and deed, Christly love of God and man,— this is the essential thing:

> 'Let us think
> Of forms less, and the external. Trust the spirit,
> As sovran nature does, to make the form;
> For otherwise we only imprison spirit,
> And not embody. Inward evermore
> To outward,— so in life, and so in art,
> Which still is life.'

So the modern typical preacher exposes and reproves public sins, applies and urges the motives to sobriety, honesty, charity; and without being entirely released from the old narrowness, broadens into a critic and cultivator of character. His grand endeavor is not so much to save men as to make them worthy.

The more closely we approach the centre of our faith, the more closely we draw together. The followers of Calvin no longer burn, torture, imprison, or traduce the descendants of Servetus. When they have ceased to be good sectarians, they are merely 'suspended.' They may still be — as all believe them to be — good Christians, and may find themselves, in their non-sectarian sphere, more attractive, more influential, more useful.

But human affairs admit no unmixed good. That the tendencies are achieving a higher condition for the race there can be no doubt; but the simplicity and fervor of the elder time seem to have passed away before the self-assertion of liberty, the levelling of democracy, the distrust of cupidity, the spirit of criticism, the decline of imagination, the discovery of unchanging law. There is much preaching for lucre or display; much attendance from usage, for propriety's sake, or from a vague notion of salvation. There is a disposition to look at religion, instead of living in it; to own it as a noble fact, as if it were a fair creation of the soul, instead of a divine reality; to discuss with the lips each other's doctrines, instead of going into silence with their own God. In particular, we mourn the decay of reverence, that most beautiful of all forms of moral goodness; that character of humility and of awe, so dependent, so earnest, so devout, which, Ixion-like, bestowed its affections upon a cloud, and made its illusions the source of purest virtues. 'Why is it,' said Luther's wife, looking sadly back upon the sensuous creed which she had left, 'that in our old faith we prayed so often and so warmly, and that our

prayers are now so few and so cold?' The child, as it develops into youth, exchanges its repose for conflict fraught with danger; but would we forever keep it a child?

But if there is a loss of enthusiasm, there is a gain of temper. Unbelief has grown gentle and respectful. Benevolence, uprightness, enterprise, and freedom are multiplying. The religious element, the sighing for the perfect, the longing for the infinite, the thirst for beauty, the hunger for righteousness, can never die. The central, saving truths of the faith will flower and fruit as long as there are days of toil and sorrow, or nights of weariness and pain.

Meanwhile the effective strength of the ministry is in earnestness,—in a solemn conviction that religion is a great concern; in a solemn purpose that its claims shall be felt; in acquaintance with contemporary secular thought; in ability to discern and explain the consistency of Christianity with the new lights which are breaking in from the outer world; in courage to renounce ideas that are outlived, or habits that are outlawed; in culture that is instinct with life and feeling.

Poetry.—The potent tidal wave which threw on shore so many treasures of the deep, has long since ebbed, and no second has arisen which approaches the level of the former. The genius of the present is less creative than elective and refining, exquisite rather than imaginative, diffusive rather than powerful.

Two kinds of verse are discernible,—one which continues the impulse received from Keats and Shelley, the other from Wordsworth. The dominant tone is composite, uniting the classicism and romanticism of the first to the reflection and naturalism of the second. Richly melodied and highly colored, embracing every variety of rhythm and technical effect, it finds its chief voice in **Tennyson.**

The conditions affecting the social order have affected the conditions bearing upon art. The most notable of these are the iconoclastic tendencies of science and the passion for material progress. Both indicate a subsidence of the forces which heaved up the mountain ranges of the Byronic age. Never, perhaps, was the poetical talent so largely diffused. Never was so much good poetry written—never so much performance above mediocrity; but poets have been supplanted in general regard, and

very few are able to command the attention of the English nations. New theories are far more exciting than new poems.

It is hardly necessary to add, that the refinements of life are transferred to literature and its works; that our poets, therefore, carry to further perfection reverence for human character, regard to human duty, tenderness for Nature, and love for the Divine. Their specific excellence is elaborateness of finish—perfection of form and structure—richness of diction and variety of metre.

Without much originality, the verses of **Hunt** (1784–1859) are sweet, fluent, and feeling,—successful imitations of the lighter and more picturesque parts of Chaucer. The following, on the grasshopper and the cricket, are characteristic:

'Green little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass;
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass;

O sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To ring in thoughtful ears this natural song—
Indoors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.'

We recognize at once the simple delight of his master in the concrete forms and objects of the outer world.

Then the calm gravity of heart which makes the pulse of the two-fold inspiration:

'Blest is the turf, serenely blest,
Where throbbing hearts may sink to rest,
Where life's long journey turns to sleep,
Nor ever pilgrim wakes to weep.
A little sod, a few sad flowers,
A tear for long-departed hours,
Is all that feeling hearts request
To hush their weary thoughts to rest.

There shall no vain ambition come
To lure them from their quiet home.
Nor sorrow lift, with heart-strings riven,
The meek imploring eye to heaven;
Nor sad remembrance stoop to shed
His wrinkles on the slumberer's head;
And never, never love repair
To breathe his idle whispers there.'

Another who warbled cheerful and trustful music, even through privation, sorrow, and anguish, was **Hood** (1799–1845), a nightingale in the stormy dark. There is something Shakespearean in his analysis of a spectral conscience:

'But Guilt was my grim Chamberlain
That lighted me to bed
And drew my midnight curtains round,
With fingers bloody red.'

His noble efforts in behalf of the poor and unfortunate, his sympathy with suffering and woe, are felicitously wrought in *The Song of the Shirt*, and *The Bridge of Sighs*, all pathetic and tragical. But he could seldom express himself except through witty and humorous forms. One of his most popular effusions in the style peculiarly his own, is the ode to his infant son:

'Thou happy, happy elf!
(But stop—first let me kiss away that tear)
Thou tiny image of myself;
(My love, he's poking peas into his ear!)
Thou merry, laughing sprite!
With spirits feather light,
Untouched by sorrow, and unsoiled by sin,
(Good heavens! the child is swallowing a pin!)

Thou little tricksy Puck!
With antic joys so funnily bestuck,
Light as the singing bird that wings the air,
(The door! the door! he'll tumble down the stair!)
Thou darling of thy sire!
(Why, Jane, he'll set his pinafore afire!)
Thou imp of mirth and joy!
In Love's dear chain so strong and bright a link,
Thou idol of thy parents (Drat the boy!
There goes my ink!) . . .

Thou young domestic dove!
(He'll have that jug off with another shove!)
Dear nursling of the hymeneal nest,
(Are those torn clothes his best?)
Little epitome of man!
(He'll climb upon the table, that's his plan!) . . .

Thou pretty opening rose!
(Go to your mother, child, and wipe your nose!)
Balmy, and breathing music like the south,
(He really brings my heart into my mouth!)
Fresh as the morn, and brilliant as its star,
(I wish that window had an iron bar!)
Bold as the hawk, yet gentle as the dove,
(I'll tell you what, my love,
I cannot write, unless he's sent above!)'

A contemporary of Cowper, who bandied epithets with Byron, who lived to see Tennyson pass for the greatest poet of his country and his time, was the wayward and impetuous **Landor** (1775–1864); a pioneer of the school gone by, a reverend landmark of the one under review; a scholar of opulent range; a delightful essayist; a lover of beauty pure and simple; among recent singers, one of the most versatile, most independent, though far from being the greatest in achievement. His taste for classical themes, his facility in classical verse, his power of

bringing the antique spirit within the range of modern thought and sympathy, are seen in the *Heroic Idyls*, which are Latin poems, and their English version,—the *Hellenics*. He was always at ease in either language. The famous shell-passage in *Gebir*—an early poetical romance—is said to have been written first in Latin, and to have been more musical than its translation:

> 'But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue
> Within, and they that lustre have imbibed
> In the sun's palace-porch, where when unyoked
> His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave:
> Shake one and it awakens, then apply
> Its polished lips to your attentive ear,
> And it remembers its august abodes,
> And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.'

On the whole, however, to the multitude he will ever be a sealed book, because radically deficient in geniality of feeling. His imagery seems to us cold and statuesque. This may be due partly or mainly to his habit of first composing in a foreign tongue. We may be surprised that he often shed tears in the passion of his work. His affection for nature was instinctive and sincere. He desired,—

> 'To let all flowers live freely, and all die,
> Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart,
> Among their kindred in their native place.
> I never pluck the rose; the violet's head
> Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank,
> And not reproached me; the ever-sacred cup
> Of the pure lily hath between my hands
> Felt safe, unsoiled, nor lost one grain of gold.'

To read Landor one must exert himself, and the exertion is to some purpose. The same is true, in even a higher degree, of **Browning** (1812–), subtle and penetrating, eminently a thinker, exercising our thought rather than our emotion; concrete in presentation, and, when most felicitous, dramatic, but capricious in expression, and greatly deficient in warmth and music; original and unequal; an eclectic, not to be restricted in his themes, with a prosaic regard for details, and a barbaric sense of color and form.

The poem of his youth—*Paracelsus*—is a metaphysical dialogue, the history of a thwarted soul that would know and enjoy, that would drink deep at the fountains both of knowledge and of pleasure. The following passage is characteristic:

> 'Another world!
> And why this world, this common world, to be . . .

A make-shift, a mere foil, how fair soever,
To some fine life to come? Man must be fed
With angels' food, forsooth; and some few traces
Of a diviner nature, which look out
Through his corporeal baseness, warrant him
In a supreme contempt for all provision
For his inferior tastes—some straggling marks
Which constitute his essence, just as truly
As here and there a gem would constitute
The rock, their barren bed, a diamond.
But were it so—were man all mind—he gains
A station little enviable. From God
Down to the lowest spirit ministrant,
Intelligence exists which casts our mind
Into immeasurable shade. No, no:
Love, hope, fear, faith—these make humanity,
These are its sign, and note, and character;
And these I have lost!—gone, shut from me forever.'

This has the simplicity and truth of the old drama:

'Festus, strange secrets are let out by Death,
Who blabs so oft the follies of this world:
And I am Death's familiar, as you know.
I helped a man to die some few weeks since. . . .
No mean trick
He left untried; and truly well-nigh wormed
All traces of God's finger out of him.
Then died, grown old; and just an hour before—
Having lain long with blank and soulless eyes—
He sate up suddenly, and with natural voice
Said, that in spite of thick air and closed doors,
God told him it was June; and he knew well,
Without such telling, harebells grew in June;
And all that kings could ever give or take
Would not be precious as those blooms to him.'

Observe now the magical effect of high passion:

'*O lyric Love, half angel and half bird,*
And all a wonder and a wild desire!'

Such the self-forgetful cadences in which he addresses his dead wife, **Elizabeth Barrett Browning** (1809–1861); a rhymer at ten, an author at seventeen; an omnivorous reader, a loving student of philosophy and the classics; in style, original from the beginning, remarkable alike for defects and for beauties; often rugged and unfinished, from subordination of taste to excess of feeling; always intense, rarely sportive; worshipful and sympathetic, tremulously sensitive to the sorrows and mysteries of existence; the most fragile of beings, yet essaying to reach the infinite; all ethereal, yet all human, the idol of her kindred, the most beloved of minstrels and of women.

Her poetry as a whole is an uneven production, full of prosaic

episodes, with much that is forced and unnatural, a chaos from which rare lustres break out. Thus:

'The essence of all beauty I call love.
The attribute, the evidence, and end,
The consummation, to the inward sense,
Of beauty apprehended from without,
I still call love. As form, when colourless,
Is nothing to the eye—that pine-tree there,
Without its black and green, being all a blank—
So, without love, is beauty undiscerned
In man or angel. Angel! rather ask
What love is in thee, what love moves to thee,
And what collateral love moves on with thee,
Then shalt thou know if thou art beautiful.'[1]

Also:

'A *Thought* lay like a flower upon mine heart,
And drew around it other thoughts like bees
For multitude and thirst of sweetnesses. . . .
While I spoke,
The thought I called a flower, grew nettle-rough;
The thoughts, called bees, stung me to festering.
Oh, entertain (cried Reason, as she woke)
Your best and gladdest thoughts but long enough,
And they will all prove sad enough to sing.'[2]

And this:

'O sorrowful great gift
Conferred on poets, of a two-fold life,
When one life has been found enough for pain.
We staggering 'neath our burden as mere men,
Being called to stand up straight as demi-gods,
Support the intolerable strain and stress
Of the universal, and send clearly up
With voices broken by the human sob,
Our poems to find rhymes among the stars!'[3]

Of a mother gazing on her fatherless child, just waking from sleep, and perplexed between a mortal presence and the angelhood it had been away to visit:

'She leaned above him (drinking him as wine)
In that extremity of love 'twill pass
For agony or rapture, seeing that love
Includes the whole of nature, rounding it
To love,—no more,—since more can never be
Than just love. Self-forgot, cast out of self,
And drowning in the transport of the sight,
Her whole pale passionate face, mouth, forehead, eyes,
One gaze, she stood! then, slowly as he smiled,
She smiled too, slowly, smiling unaware,
And drawing from his countenance to hers
A fainter red, as if she watched a flame
And stood in it aglow.'[4]

[1] *A Drama of Exile.* [2] *Sonnet.* [3] *Aurora Leigh.* [4] *Ibid.*

Aurora Leigh is essentially an autobiography, withal a mirror of modern life and issues, almost a handbook of literature and the arts; superior in power to any similar contemporary structure, yet incongruous in the parts, unsatisfactory in the aggregate, and the most idiosyncratic of its author's poems. One feels that life was to her a very serious thing, that she wrought reverently, that she struggled painfully to render the music that was in her,—the dream was so far beyond the symbol,—the mount of vision was so high, time and opportunity all so narrow and so brief:

> 'The winds sound only in opposing straits;
> The sea, beside the shore; man's spirit rends
> Its quiet only up against the ends
> Of wants and oppositions, loves and hates,
> Where, worked and worn by passionate debates,
> And losing by the loss it apprehends,
> The flesh rocks round, and every breath it sends
> Is ravelled to a sigh. All tortured states
> Suppose a straitened place. Jehovah Lord,
> Make room for rest around me! out of sight
> Now float me of the vexing land abhorred,
> Till in deep calms of space, my soul may right
> Her nature—shoot large sail on lengthening cord,
> And rush exultant on the Infinite.'

Another elaborate novel in verse, less profound, less imaginative, but more graceful, more musical, and far more readable, is *Lucile*, by **Robert Lytton,**[1] to whom friends once looked for signs of a new poetical dawn. In this his masterpiece we must admire the noble features which distinguish all that he has written,—the generous reach of thought, the disposition to look inward to the duties, onward to the destinies of man, and the doctrine of the gradual education of the race by struggle against evil. The reader may find an indication of the author's spirit and manner, as well as somewhat that may be useful in pleasure or suggestive in reflection, in sentences like these. Of concentration:

> 'The man who seeks one thing in life, and but one,
> May hope to achieve it before life be done;
> But he who seeks all things, wherever he goes,
> Only reaps from the hopes which around him he sows
> A harvest of barren regrets.'

Of courage and self-respect:

> 'Let any man once show the world that he feels
> Afraid of its bark, and 'twill fly at his heels:
> Let him fearlessly face it, 'twill leave him alone:
> But 'twill fawn at his feet if he flings it a bone.'

[1] 'Owen Meredith,' born 1831, son of Edward Lytton Bulwer.

What need to remind us that we cannot subsist on visions?

'We may live without poetry, music, and art;
We may live without conscience, and live without heart;
We may live without friends; we may live without books;
But civilized man cannot live without cooks.'

Of the beauty and beatitude which we conceive and pursue:

'We but catch at the skirts of the thing we would be,
And fall back on the lap of a false destiny.
So it will be, so has been since this world began!
And the happiest, noblest, and best part of man
Is the part which he never hath fully play'd out:
For the first and last word in life's volume is—Doubt.
The face the most fair to our vision allow'd
Is the face we encounter and lose in the crowd.
The thought that most thrills our existence is one
Which, before we can frame it in language, is gone.'

Of the price of excellence:

'Not a truth has to art or to science been given,
But brows have ached for it, and souls toil'd and striven.'

Of the principle of concord, or the law of friendship:

'There are loves in man's life for which time can renew
All that time may destroy. Lives there are, though, in love,
Which cling to one faith, and die with it; nor move
Though earthquakes may shatter the shrine.'

Of influence:

'No life
Can be pure in its purpose and strong in its strife
And all life not be purer and stronger thereby.'

Of the divine significance of life and the reward of the faithful:

'Honest love, honest sorrow,
Honest work for the day, honest hope for the morrow,
Are these worth nothing more than the hand they make weary.
The heart they have sadden'd, the life they leave dreary?'

Matthew Arnold (1822–) is the poet of cultured intellect. The qualities of his verse are simplicity, clearness, music, calm. Uniting great mental activity to great moral earnestness, he is one of those who represent the unsatisfied aspirations of their age. His characteristic mood is sadness. Man is a wanderer from his birth, adrift on the river of Time:

'Vainly does each, as he glides,
Fable and dream
Of the lands where the river of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been closed.
Only the tract where he sails
He wots of; only the thoughts,
Raised by the objects he passes, are his. . . .

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed.
Haply, the river of Time,—
As it grows, as the towns on its marge
Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream,—
May acquire, if not the calm
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush
Of the gray expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted with foam
As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on its breast,—
As the pale waste widens around him,
As the banks fade dimmer away,
As the stars come out, and the night-wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite sea.'[1]

Not wholly passive. He shall have the firm endurance of the Stoic, with the uplift of a more spiritual faith:

'We cannot kindle when we will
The fire which in the heart resides:
The spirit bloweth and is still,
In mystery our soul abides.
But tasks in hours of insight will'd
Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

With aching hands and bleeding feet
We dig and heap, lay stone on stone;
We bear the burden and the heat
Of the long day, and wish 'twere done.
Not till the hours of light return,
All we have built do we discern.'[2]

His sentiment and purpose shall be the highest truth, the wisest conduct of life, help to encounter with courage and to bear with fortitude the brief ills of this brief life:

'Is it so small a thing
To have enjoyed the sun;
To have lived light in the spring;
To have loved, to have thought, to have done;
To have advanced true friends, and beat down baffling foes? . . .
I say, Fear not! Life still
Leaves human effort scope.
But since life teems with ill,
Nurse no extravagant hope;
Because thou must not dream, thou need'st not then despair!'[3]

After all, who has not felt, under the cloud of mortal destiny, to ask of what profit is this persistent upward effort, this vain

[1] *The Future.* [2] *Morality.* [3] *Empedocles on Etna.*

struggle to be content, this painful conflict between the mind which cannot find God and the heart which cannot rest without Him? Why not yield, and be as others,—benumbed by the world's sway, or possessed by the fiery glow of passion?—

'For most men in a brazen prison live,
Where, in the sun's hot eye,
With heads bent o'er their toil, they languidly
Their lives to some unmeaning taskwork give,
Dreaming of naught beyond their prison wall,
And as, year after year,
Fresh products of their barren labor fall
From their tired hands, and rest
Never yet comes more near,
Gloom settles slowly down over their breast;
And while they try to stem
The waves of mournful thought by which they are prest,
Death in their prison reaches them,
Unfreed, having seen nothing, still unblest!'[1]

A few escape these narrow limits, and depart anew on the wide ocean of being. There the freed prisoner sails where he listeth, happily ignorant of the fatal typhoons that cross his sea from eternity:

'And then the tempest strikes him; and between
The lightning-bursts is seen
Only a driving wreck,
And the pale master on his spar-strewn deck,
With anguish'd face and flying hair,
Grasping the rudder hard,
Still bent to make some port, he knows not where,
Still standing for some false, impossible shore.
And sterner comes the roar
Of sea and wind, and through the deepening gloom
Fainter and fainter wreck and helmsman loom,
And he too disappears, and comes no more.'[2]

Are we, then, ordained to the condition either of a madman or a slave? Look again, and see a tract of heaven disclosed:

'Plainness and clearness without shadow of stain!
Clearness divine!
Ye heavens, whose pure dark regions have no sign
Of languor, though so calm; and, though so great,
Are yet untroubled and unpassionate;
Who, though so noble, share in the world's toil,
And, though so task'd, keep free from dust and soil!
I will not say that your mild deeds retain
A tinge, it may be, of their silent pain
Who have long'd deeply once, and long'd in vain—
But I will rather say that you remain
A world above man's head, to let him see
How boundless might his soul's horizons be,
How vast, yet of what clear transparency!'[3]

[1] *A Summer Night.* [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*

In **Swinburne** (1837–), unflagging and impetuous, will be found a world of melody and a wealth of imaginative song. He represents the world and the flesh. His devotion is addressed to sensuous beauty. This is the stamp on all his poems, early and late,—audacity of diction, exuberance of fancy, profusion of double epithets, ever-shifting variety of metre. Judge, from lines such as these, the richness of the soil, and the rank unwholesome flowers that may spring therefrom:

'Love, that is flesh upon the spirit of man
And spirit within the flesh whence breath began;
Love, that keeps all the choir of lives in chime;
Love, that is blood within the veins of time;
That wrought the whole world without stroke of hand,
Shaping the breadth of sea, the length of land,
And with the pulse and motion of his breath
Through the great heart of the earth strikes life and death;
Love, that for every life shall not be sold,
Nor bought nor bound with iron nor with gold;
So strong that heaven, could love bid heaven farewell,
Would turn to fruitless and unflowering hell;
So sweet that hell, to hell could love be given,
Would turn to splendid and sonorous heaven.'[1]

And:

'Her flower-soft lips were meek and passionate,
For love upon them like a shadow sate
Patient, a foreseen vision of sweet things,
A dream with eyes fast shut and plumeless wings
That knew not what man's love or life should be,
Nor had it sight nor heart to hope or see
What thing should come, but childlike satisfied
Watched out its virgin vigil in soft pride
And unkissed expectation.'[2]

There runs through these verses, however, a strong moral energy, an exultant sense of kinship with the illimitable:

'A land that is thirstier than ruin;
A sea that is hungrier than death;
Heaped hills that a tree never grew in;
Wide sands where the wave draws breath;
All solace is here for the spirit
That ever for ever may be
For the soul of thy son to inherit
My mother, my sea.'[3]

One might almost suspect him of that deep Germanic instinct, pantheistic yet pensive, which seeks and loves desert and solitary places, where the soul enjoys the pleasure of believing itself infinite. And what more natural, in these moments of abandonment and expansion, than the ascriptions of an adoring reference

[1] *Tristram and Iseult.* [2] *Ibid.* [3] *By the North Sea.*

from the grandeur and loveliness of things to a Divine Presence of which they are the acknowledged symbol?

'As my soul has been dutiful
Only to thee,
O God most beautiful
Lighten thou me,
As I swim through the dim long rollers, with eyelids uplift from the sea.

Be praised and adored of us
All in accord,
Father and lord of us,
Alway adored,
The slayer and the stayer and the harper, the light of us all, and our lord.

At the sound of thy lyre,
At the touch of thy rod,
Air quickens to fire
By the foot of thee trod,
The saviour and healer and singer, the living and visible God.

The years are before thee
As shadows of thee,
As men that adore thee,
As cloudlets that flee:
But thou art the God, and thy kingdom is heaven, and thy shrine is the sea.'[1]

Another fine example, musical with the cadences distinctly his own,— the emotion of a pagan who chooses to die with his gods:

'A little while and we die; shall life not thrive as it may?
For no man under the sky lives twice, outliving his day.
And grief is a grievous thing, and a man hath enough of his tears:
Why should he labor, and bring fresh grief to blacken his years?
Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean; the world has grown gray from thy breath;
We have drunken of things Lethean, and fed on the fulness of death.'[2]

In the following we not only see his surprising command of rhythm, but discover something of the seer-like power to drop the plummet below the ordinary world of experience:

'Before the beginning of years
There came to the making of man
Time, with the gift of tears;
Grief, with the glass that ran;
Pleasure, with sin for leaven;
Summer, with flowers that fell;
Remembrance, fallen from Heaven;
And madness, risen from hell;
Strength, without hands to smite;
Love, that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light;
And life, the shadow of death.
And the high gods took in hand
Fire, and the falling of tears;
And a measure of sliding sand
From under the feet of the years;
And froth and drift of the sea;
And dust of the laboring earth,
And bodies of the things to be
In the houses of death and of birth,
And wrought with weeping and laughter,
And fashioned with loathing and love,
With life before and after,
And death beneath and above,
For a day and a night and a morrow,
That his strength might endure for a span,
With travail and heavy sorrow,
The holy spirit of man.'

[1] *Off Shore.*

[2] *Hymn to Proserpine.*

There is a disposition to regard Mr. Swinburne as the foremost of a new school of British poets,—a New Romantic school, of which Browning and Rosetti have been leaders, and which, resisting an established ideal, aims to reunite beauty and passion in rhythmical art. It is to be regretted that he tends to carry epithet and sound to a fatiguing excess; that he presents so little variety of mood, so few studies of visible objects; that he is not more profoundly ethical. We should not be surprised to learn that he has lived without trial,—without the refining fire which is needed to draw forth the sweetest and most perfect harmonies of soul. No chasm has yawned before him to make him aware of the divinity within him. Out of their abyss of anguish, Tasso, Dante, and Milton, purified, redeemed, exalted, sang such songs to their fellows as others who had never suffered could never utter. Simple Robert Burns goes singing down the centuries,—why? Because he was in sympathy with life,—loved nature, loved mankind, entered into human joy and sorrow, hated oppression, despised cant, mourned over his weakness, revered Christian goodness.

Within the last fifty years national development has greatly modified the conditions which in America were antagonistic to a devoted pursuit of the ideal. Material interests are less urgent than formerly. The 'useful' is perpetually passing beyond the vulgar notions of utility. A large and increasing proportion of energy is given to the gratification of an elegant taste. We are beginning to enjoy that rest and leisure out of which spring the fine and gracious attributes of imagination and fancy, which are the bloom of civilization. At last the sweet and varied measures of a band of genuine singers are heard, no longer with dull amazement but with grateful welcome, essentially American in tone and object. The treasures of all ages are at their disposal, but on the whole they occupy themselves, not with mediæval and classical themes, but with Nature and Man,—scenery, patriotism, friendship, religion, love.

To enumerate all or a majority of those who here have added to the sum of human pleasure by their ministry of song, is beyond our need and intention. We cannot even allude individually to the minor voices, which are many and charming; and can but briefly refer to the clearer and louder ones that lead the

chorus, and more distinctly echo the yearnings of our divergent destiny.

Among those who have given substantial evidence of a home-movement in poetic art, the firstborn is **Richard H. Dana** (1787–1879), contemplative, compact, and original, possessed of a deep sensibility to beauty and sublimity, and uniting exact description with a suggestive imagination, as in these stanzas of the *Buccaneer:*

'The island lies nine leagues away.
  Along its solitary shore,
Of craggy rock and sandy bay,
  No sound but ocean's roar,
Save where the bold, wild sea-bird makes her home,
Her shrill cry coming through the sparkling foam.

But when the light winds lie at rest,
  And on the glassy, heaving sea,
The black duck, with her glossy breast,
  Sits swinging silently,—
How beautiful! no ripples break the reach,
And silvery waves go noiseless up the beach.

Nor holy bell, nor pastoral bleat,
  In former days within the vale;
Flapped in the bay the pirate's sheet:
  Curses were on the gale:
Rich goods lay on the sand, and murdered men;
Pirate and wrecker kept their revels then.'

Less subjective, but more spirited and flowing, is **Percival** (1795–1856). The joy and exuberance of his mind are displayed with fine effect in the *Prevalence of Poetry:*

'The world is full of poetry — the air
Is living with its spirit; and the waves
Dance to the music of its melodies,
And sparkle in its brightness. Earth is veiled
And mantled with its beauty; and the walls
That close the universe with crystal in
Are eloquent with voices that proclaim
The unseen glories of immensity,
In harmonies too perfect and too high
For aught but beings of celestial mould,
And speak to man in one eternal hymn,
Unfading beauty and unyielding power.'

More popular than either is **Halleck** (1790–1867), whose verse is a mixture of serious thought and emotion with playful and careless fancies,— manly, clear, vivid, warm with feeling, or sparkling with wit. In lines such as these we see the purity, tenderness, and melody, of which he is capable:

'Young thoughts have music in them, love
And happiness their theme;
And music wanders in the wind
That lulls a morning dream.
And there are angel voices heard
In childhood's frolic hours,
When life is but an April day
Of sunshine and of flowers. . . .

To-day the forest leaves are green,
They'll wither on the morrow;
And the maiden's laugh be changed ere long
To the widow's wail of sorrow.
Come with the winter snows and ask
Where are the forest birds?
The answer is a silent one
More eloquent than words.'

The most elevated of his strains is the martial lyric of *Marco Bozzaris.* The following lines evince qualities which ought to rank their author high among lyric artists:

'An hour passed on—the Turk awoke;
That bright dream was his last;
He woke—to hear his sentries shriek,
"To arms! they come! the Greek! the Greek!"
He woke—to die midst flame, and smoke,
And shout, and groan, and sabre-stroke,
And death-shots falling thick and fast
As lightnings from the mountain-cloud;
And heard, with voice as trumpet loud,
Bozzaris cheer his band:
"Strike—till the last armed foe expires;
Strike—for your altars and your fires;
Strike—for the green graves of your sires;
God—and your native land!"'

There may be in **Willis** (1806–1867) a tendency to exaggeration, a too strong inclination to finely turned periods; but so rich, so sweet, so captivating is his poetry, that for some attributes of the poetic character we hardly know where to look for his superior. Lessons of piety gave the impulse, and around the domestic scenes of old Hebrew life he threw a charm which has made his Scripture pieces unique in our literature. The *Healing of the Daughter of Jairus* is an example, of which the conclusion is drawn with exquisite beauty:

'Like a form
Of matchless sculpture in her sleep she lay—
The linen vesture folded on her breast,
And over it her white transparent hands,
The blood still rosy in their tapering nails.
A line of pearl ran through her parted lips,
And in her nostrils, spiritually thin,

The breathing curve was mockingly like life;
And round beneath the faintly tinted skin
Ran the light branches of the azure veins;
And on her cheek the jet lash overlay,
Matching the arches pencill'd on her brow.
Her hair had been unbound, and, falling loose
Upon her pillow, hid her small round ears
In curls of glossy blackness, and about
Her polished neck, scarce touching it, they hung,
Like airy shadows floating as they slept.
'Twas heavenly beautiful. The Saviour raised
Her hand from off her bosom, and spread out
The snowy fingers in his palm, and said,
"Maiden! Arise!"—and suddenly a flush
Shot o'er her forehead, and along her lips
And through her cheek the rallied color ran;
And the still outline of her graceful form
Stirred in the linen vesture; and she clasp'd
The Saviour's hand, and fixing her dark eyes
Full on his beaming countenance—*arose!*'

The *Dying Alchemist* is powerfully conceived and powerfully executed:

'The night wind with a desolate moan swept by;
And the old shutters of the turret swung
Screaming upon their hinges; and the moon,
As the torn edges of the clouds flew past,
Struggled aslant the stain'd and broken panes
So dimly, that the watchful eye of death
Scarcely was conscious when it went and came.'

And:

'The fire beneath his crucible was low;
Yet still it burn'd; and ever as his thoughts
Grew insupportable, he raised himself
Upon his wasted arm, and stirr'd the coals
With difficult energy, and when the rod
Fell from his nerveless fingers, and his eye
Felt faint within its socket, he shrunk back
Upon his pallet, and with unclosed lips
Mutter'd a curse on death!'

The despair of the visionary, who has agonized, watched, and fasted for a hope that mocks him at last:

'I did not think to die
Till I had finish'd what I had to do;
I thought to pierce th' eternal secret through
With this my mortal eye;
I felt,—oh God! it seemeth even now
This cannot be the death-dew on my brow!'

The *Wife's Appeal* is highly finished. Her approach and the attendant circumstances, the appeal to her husband's latent love of fame, are most delicately and dramatically represented. His reply is in a lofty strain:

'I did hope to vary
My life but with surprises sweet as this,—
A dream—but for thy waking—fill'd with bliss.
Yet now I feel my spirit
Bitterly stirr'd, and—nay, lift up thy brow!
It is thine own voice echoing to thee now,
And thou didst pray to hear it,—
I must unto my work and my stern hours!
Take from my room thy harp, and books, and flowers!'

he sequel is touching and instructive. A year has elapsed:

'He had won power and held it. He had walk'd
Steadily upward in the eye of Fame,
And kept his truth unsullied,—but his home
Had been invaded by envenom'd tongues;
His wife—his spotless wife—had been assail'd
By slander, and his child had grown afraid
To come to him,—his manner was so stern,
He could not speak beside his own hearth freely.
His friends were half estranged, and vulgar men
Presumed upon their services and grew
Familiar with him. He'd small time to sleep,
And none to pray; and, with his heart in fetters,
He bore harsh insults silently, and bow'd
Respectfully to men who knew he loath'd them!
And, when his heart was eloquent with truth,
And love of country, and an honest zeal
Burn'd for expression, he could find no words
They would not misinterpret with their lies.
What were his many honors to him now?
The good half doubted, falsehood was so strong,—
His home was hateful with its cautious fears,—
His wife lay trembling on his very breast,
Frighted with calumny!—And this is *Fame!*'

ırth and sky were perpetual ministers to his imagination; and th some effort, we suspect, did he subdue his fancy to the osaic spirit of the time. Scepticism, analysis, scientific conıest, realism, may be in the order of growth to better things; ıt we shall never cease to read with a pleased sadness, as of a auty irretrievably lost, *A Child's First Impression of a Star:*

'She had been told that God made all the stars
That twinkled up in heaven, and now she stood
Watching the coming of the twilight on,
As if it were a new and perfect world,
And this were its first eve. She stood alone

By the low window, with the silken lash
Of her soft eye upraised, and her sweet mouth
Half parted with the new and strange delight
Of beauty that she could not comprehend,
And had not seen before. The purple folds
Of the low sunset clouds, and the blue sky
That look'd so still and delicate above,

Fill'd her young heart with gladness, and the eve
Stole on with its deep shadows, and she still
Stood looking at the west with that half smile,
As if a pleasant thought were at her heart.
Presently, in the edge of the last tint
Of sunset, where the blue was melted in
To the faint golden mellowness, a star
Stood suddenly. A laugh of wild delight
Burst from her lips, and putting up her hands,
Her simple thought broke forth expressively—
"Father! dear father! God has made a star!"'

Who has not observed that every child recalls the primitive ages, when the lightning was a bird of fire, and the clouds were the flocks of heaven?

We have had one poet to whom Mr. Swinburne has condescended to pay a tribute,—the gifted and eccentric **Poe** (1809–1849), a man of rare capacity cursed by an incurable perversity; writer of a manuscript volume of verses at ten years of age; at school noted as 'the swiftest runner, the best boxer, the most daring swimmer'; sensitive, tender, and melancholy, yet reckless and unmanageable; expelled from college, then from a military academy; enlisting in the army, then deserting; at twenty-six married to his cousin, a girl of thirteen, angelically beautiful in person and spirit, to whom he was idolatrously devoted; a contributor, an editor, an author, usually in debt; dying at last, in a Baltimore hospital, of delirium tremens, on the eve of his second marriage. The wild weird *Raven* was hailed as the most original poem America had produced. Its popularity is world-wide. The poet, or speaker, is represented as losing his early love Lenore (innocence), and as visited by a raven (remorse). Now from these four stanzas construct the tragedy of a soul, seeking to allay its immortal thirst, wounded by its immoderate desires and withered by its premature experience:

'But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore—
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking, "Nevermore." . . .

"Prophet!" cried I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore!—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if, within the distant Aiden,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore,—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting.
"Get thee back into the tempest and the night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul *from out that shadow* that lies floating on the floor,
Shall be lifted—nevermore!'

The *Bells* is perhaps the rarest instance in the language of the suggestiveness of rhyme and the power of onomatopoetic words. *Annabel Lee* is thoroughly artistic, and nothing could be more melodious or more nobly sentimental. The impression left is one of pleasurable sadness, arising from the contemplation of generous and high devotion to a loveliness that has become an undying memory:

'And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.'

We have seen how large an element of truth is contained in the traditional opinion that poets are wayward creatures, bad, glad, or mad, meteoric vagabonds of Parnassus, like Byron or Poe. Our **Bryant,** however, has the distinction of being a representative poet without any of the disastrous vagrancies that make a biography picturesque. In childhood mild and meditative, in maturity calm and careful. Blair's *Grave* and Young's *Night Thoughts* were his early favorites, and to the strife of passion he ever preferred the quietude of Nature in fields and forests. There he saw only the tokens of creative beneficence, and from every scene could elicit some elevating inference or cheering sentiment.

Inevitably, the *ars poetica,* with such a mind, will be subservient to purposes of moral utility. It will solemnize existence

rather than adorn it, because happiness is only an accessory — worthiness is the end. It will minister only to high, manly, serious views. Benevolence and veneration will give it color; the mysteries of time and the transitoriness of human life, which have touched men most in all ages, will inspire it; and the conviction that —

> 'Eternal Love doth keep
> In his complacent arms the earth, the air, the deep,'—

will constitute its dominant charm.

From the beginning, a deep sad thought has weighed upon the restless spirit of man — the troubled dream — the unknown goal — the valley of the shadow — the infinite obscurity — the black sea of oblivion that swallows up the grace and loveliness, the thoughts and acts, of so many million beings whom no eye shall ever see again. The instinctive dread is upon all men, and in a thousand ways they seek to fortify themselves against the terrors of dissolution, that they may meet their fate serenely. 'When I am dead,' said an expiring chief at Washington, 'let the big guns be fired over me.' It were easier to die, if buried in state. Saladin, in his last illness, ordered his shroud to be uplifted as a flag, and the herald was commanded to cry: 'Behold! this is all which Saladin, the vanquisher of the East, carries away of all his conquests.' To pass from the world in a striking antithesis was not barren comfort! The humblest desires at least a simple stone — that he may pretend to live by the proof of his last sleep. It is this overshadowing idea of the death-doom which the author of *Thanatopsis* has rendered imperishably articulate for every fearful and longing soul, with a voice so gentle, so wise, and so winning, as to mitigate what cannot be remedied, and consecrate what before was painful. With what thoughtful tenderness he asks us to seek the healing sympathy of Nature, to receive bravely her mild and gentle lesson that we must die, to bring our conduct up to her loftiness, to contemplate our fate with that resignation which leadeth to wisdom:

> 'When thoughts
> Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
> Over thy spirit, and sad images
> Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
> And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
> Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;—
> Go forth, under the open sky, and list

To Nature's teachings, while from all around,—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air,—
Comes a still voice. Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.'

What consolation is offered? Not the Christian idea of a heaven with its chrysolite splendors and harping angels, but the Pagan idea of a nameless multitude vanished into the great drowned regions of the past, where the least may in some sort share the awful and shadowy unconsciousness of kings and seers:

'Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world,—with kings,
The powerful of the earth,—the wise, the good,
Fair forms and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre.'

Visible glories are but dying mementos. Beauty and grandeur do but embellish the universal grave:

'The hills,
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods,—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man.'

Since the morning of creation the recorded names contain not half a century, and the living are as vaporous phantasms on the peaks of a submerged continent. On no spot of earth may you plant your foot, and affirm that none sleeps beneath:

'All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom. Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,

Save his own dashings,—yet the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep,—the dead reign there alone.'

It is related of Buddha that there came to him one day a woman who had lost her only child. She called frantically on the prophet to give back her little one to life. 'Go, my daughter,' said he, 'get me a mustard-seed from a house into which death has never entered, and I will do as thou hast bidden me.' From house to house she went, saying, 'Give me a mustard-seed, kind folk, for the prophet to revive my child'; but far as she wandered, in the crowded thoroughfare, and by the lonely roadside, she found not the home on whose door the shadow had not settled. Gradually the prophet's meaning dawned upon her mind; she saw the broader grief of the race, and her passion was merged in pity. Forget yourself in the common sorrow, be reconciled to Destiny. Why hesitate to enter the darkness where so vast a company have gone,—where all must go? Yet a few days, and the rest will follow. The brave and the fair, the bright and the joyous shall—like you who depart in silence and alone—have their light in ashes:

'All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come,
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glides away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.'

Be fortified by these considerations. If other solace is needed, seek it in the performance of duty. Above all, be conscience-clear; think nobly, act nobly, hope well:

'So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.'

After the lapse of sixty-four years, we have the same general tone of thought and a similar organ-like movement in *The Flood of Years.* His longest poem is *The Ages,* which treats of the theme of human progress, recapitulates the course of history, argues the gradual amelioration of mankind, and predicts for the nations a still more glorious era. That the earth is a theatre whereon the human drama is everlastingly played, is a conception fundamental to *The Fountain, The Antiquity of Freedom,* and *The Crowded Street.* With what depth of feeling, with what sweet, mild music, does he say:

'Let me move slowly through the street,
Filled with an ever-shifting train,
Amid the sound of steps that beat
The murmuring walks like autumn rain. . . .

The struggling tides of life that seem
In wayward, aimless course to tend,
Are eddies of the mighty stream
That rolls to its appointed end.'

These pieces are almost perfect of their kind. Here is another:

'Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;
Th' eternal years of God are hers;
But error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshippers.'

They purify and elevate, as well as please. The verses, *Future Life,* addressed to his wife, are among his best:

'How shall I know thee in the sphere which keeps
The disembodied spirits of the dead,
When all of thee that time could wither sleeps
And perishes among the dust we tread?

For I shall feel the sting of ceaseless pain
If there I meet thy gentle presence not;
Nor hear the voice I love, nor read again
In thy serenest eyes the tender thought.'

His most poetical poems are, perhaps, *The Land of Dreams,* and *The Voice of Autumn.* It will be seen that his vein is narrow, but rich and deep. He has brought us more pure gold than many others who have ranged over wider fields.

In the fine, artistic blending of wit, fancy, and imagination, **Dr. Holmes** (1809–) excels every modern Englishman. He has many points of resemblance with Hood, but is healthier in tone, wider in culture, and superior in splendor of effect. In the *vis comica* no American is comparable to him, except Lowell. A satirist, humorist, novelist, scholar, scientist,— he is, above

everything, a poet; and, as such, is the best example of the school of Pope that either side of the Atlantic has produced. Since the *Essay on Man* and the *Dunciad*, no metrical essays have appeared that were so pointed, musical, and judicious. In commemorative verse — in the power of lifting the 'occasional' into the classic, he is almost unrivalled. His obvious characteristics are nationality, vigor, elasticity, terseness, and finish, including a wonderful perfection of movement. Thus:

'What secret charm long whispering in mine ear
Allures, attracts, compels, and chains me here,
Where murmuring echoes call me to resign
Their secret haunts to sweeter lips than mine;
Where silent pathways pierce the solemn shade,
In whose still depths my feet have never strayed;
Here, in the home where grateful children meet,
And I, half alien, take the stranger's seat,
Doubting, yet hoping that the gift I bear
May keep its bloom in this unwonted air?
Hush, idle fancy, with thy needless art,
Speak from thy fountains, O my throbbing heart!
Say, shall I trust these trembling lips to tell
The fireside tale that memory knows so well?
How in the days of Freedom's dread campaign,
A home-bred school-boy left his village plain,
Slow faring southward, till his wearied feet
Pressed the worn threshold of this fair retreat;
How with his comely face and gracious mien,
He joined the concourse of the classic green,
Nameless, unfriended, yet by Nature blest
With the rich tokens that she loves the best;
The flowing locks, his youth's redundant crown,
Smoothed o'er a brow unfurrowed by a frown;
The untaught smile, that speaks so passing plain,
A world all hope, a past without a stain;
The clear-hued cheek, whose burning current glows
Crimson in action, carmine in repose;
Gifts such as purchase, with unminted gold,
Smiles from the young, and blessings from the old.'[1]

Goldsmith wrote nothing at once so forceful and so sweet. Add to that portrait this true and charming picture of spring:

'Winter is past; the heart of Nature warms
Beneath the wrecks of unresisted storms;
Doubtful at first, suspected more than seen,
The Southern slopes are fringed with tender green;
On sheltered banks, beneath the dripping eaves,
Spring's earliest nurslings spread their glowing leaves,
Bright with the hues from wider pictures won,
While azure, golden,—drift, or sky or sun:
The snowdrop, bearing on her patient breast

[1] *Astræa*, delivered before a society of Yale College, 1850.

The frozen trophy torn from winter's crest;
The violet, gazing on the arch of blue
Till her own iris wears its deepened hue;
The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the mold,
Naked and shivering, with his cup of gold.
Swelled with new life, the darkening elm on high
Prints her thick buds against the spotted sky;
On all her boughs the stately chestnut cleaves
The gummy shroud that wraps her embryo leaves;
The house-fly stealing from his narrow grave,
Drugged with the opiate that November gave,
Beats with faint wing against the snowy pane,
Or crawls tenacious o'er its lucid plain;
From shaded chinks of lichen-crusted walls
In languid curves the gliding serpent crawls;
The bog's green harper, thawing from his sleep,
Twangs a hoarse note and tries a shortened leap;
On floating rails that face the softening noons
The still shy turtles range their dark platoons,
Or toiling, aimless, o'er the mellowing fields,
Trail through the grass their tessellated shields.'

Commonly, as in Hood, humor jostles pathos. Thus:

'I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here:
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!'[1]

And near it, this perfect pearl:

'The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has pressed
In their bloom;
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.'[2]

Or:

'Come, dear old comrade, you and I
Will steal an hour from days gone by;
The shining days when life was new,
And all was bright with morning dew,—
The lusty days of long ago,
When you were Bill and I was Joe. . . .

You've won the great world's envied prize,
And grand you look in people's eyes,
With H. O. N. and L. L. D.,
In big, brave letters, fair to see,—
Your fist, old fellow! off they go!—
How are you, Bill? How are you, Joe?'[3]

Then, characteristically:

'Ah, pensive scholar, what is fame?
A fitful tongue of leaping flame:

[1] *The Last Leaf.* [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Bill and Joe.*

A giddy whirlwind's fickle gust,
That lifts a pinch of mortal dust;
A few swift years, and who can show
Which dust was Bill, and which was Joe? . . .

No matter; while our home is here,
No sounding name is half so dear:
When fades at length our lingering day,
Who cares what pompous tombstones say?
Read on the hearts that love us still,
Hic jacet Joe. *Hic jacet* Bill.'[1]

We soon discover that he is always graceful and melodious, whether lofty or sportive, swift or measured; that he is always fresh, always genial, always manly; that his sense of the ludicrous is not keener than his sense of the beautiful — that, in fact, the latter is his chief fascination. Above the host of things brilliant and magnificent, should ever be foremost among all our inculcating, deepest in the heart, largest in the remembrance of youth, the following lines, than which, for combined melody, saving sentiment, and sublime earnestness, grander cannot be conceived:

'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!'

In his serious and sentimental verse, **Lowell** (1819–) has several equals and some superiors; but in wide range of power and variety of expression he is surpassed by none. The *Biglow Papers* have given him a prominent rank among the greatest satirists and humorists of the age. To his many other merits he adds that of an accomplished philologist; in particular, he is esteemed for his accurate knowledge of the Yankee dialect, so flexibly and amusingly employed in the unique *Papers*. A few brief examples will sufficiently exhibit his tone and style in satire and humor. For instance, here are some hints to statesmen:

'A ginooine statesman should be on his guard,
Ef he *must* hev beliefs, nut to b'lieve 'em tu hard;
For, ez sure ez he does, he'll be blartin' 'em out
'Thout regardin' the natur o' man more'n a spout;
Nor it don't ask much gumption to pick out a flaw
In a party whose leaders are loose in the jaw:
An' so in our own case I ventur' to hint
Thet we'd better nut air our perceedins in print,

[1] *Bill and Joe.*

Nor pass resserlootions ez long ez your arm,
Thet may, ez things heppen to turn, do us harm;
For when you've done all your real meanin' to smother,
The darned things 'll up and mean sunthin' or 'nother.
No, never say nothin' without you're compelled tu,
An' then don't say nothin' that you can be held tu,
Nor don't leave no friction-idees layin' loose,
For the ign'ant to put tu incend'ary use.'

Here is a fragment decidedly pastoral:

'Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'Ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in,—
There warn't no stove (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her!
And little flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser. . . .

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelins flew,
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle;
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle.'

Here is a typical theological controversy:

'Somewhere in India upon a time,
(Read it not in Injah, or you spoil the verse)
There dwelt two saints whose privilege sublime
It was to sit and watch the world grow worse,
Their only care (in that delicious clime)
At proper intervals to pray and curse; . . .

Each from his hut rushed six score times a day,
Like a great canon of the Church full-rammed
With cartridge theologic (so to say,)
Touched himself off, and then, recoiling, slammed
His hovel's door behind him in a way
That to his foe said plainly,—you'll be damned; . .

Our saints had practised for some thirty years;
Their talk beginning with a single stem,
Spread like a banyan, sending down live piers,
Colonies of digression, and, in them
Germs of yet new dispersion; once by the ears,
They could convey damnation in a hem,
And blow the pinch of premise-priming off
Long syllogistic batteries, with a cough. . . .

At length, when their breath's end was come about,
And both could, now and then, just gasp "impostor!"
Holding their heads thrust menacingly out,
As staggering cocks keep up their fighting posture,
The stranger smiled and said, "Beyond a doubt
'Tis fortunate, my friends, that you have lost your
United parts of speech, or it had been
Impossible for me to get between. . . .

So having said the youth was seen no more,
And straightway our sage Brahmin, the philosopher,

Cried, "That was aimed at thee, thou endless bore,
Idle and useless as the growth of moss over
A rotting tree-trunk!" "I would square that score
Full soon," replied the Dervise, "could I cross over
And catch thee by the beard. Thy nails I'd trim
And make thee work, as was advised by him." . . .

And so
The good old quarrel was begun anew;
One would have sworn the sky was black as sloe,
Had but the other dared to call it blue;
Nor were the followers who fed them slow
To treat each other with their curses, too,
Each hating t'other (moves it tears or laughter?)
Because he thought him sure of hell hereafter!'[1]

But more than the sportive quality of his imagination do we enjoy its depth and earnestness, its contemplative, ideal vein; as in the following verses:

'Of all the myriad moods of mind
That through the soul come thronging,
Which one was e'er so dear, so kind,
So beautiful as longing?
The thing we long for, that we are
For one transcendent moment;
Before the present, poor and bare,
Can make its sneering comment.

Still through our paltry stir and strife
Glows down our wished Ideal;
And longing moulds in clay what life
Carves in the marble Real;
To let the new life in, we know,
Desire must ope the portal;
Perhaps the longing to be so
Helps make the soul immortal.'[2]

And the lofty faith of these lines:

'Careless seems the Great Avenger; history's pages but record
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne;
But that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own!'[3]

Nowhere has Lowell appeared to us personally so attractive as in his sonnets, which he calls 'the firstlings of my muse.' Any of them will kindle a desire to see its companions. The moral beauty of this one will excite regret that strains which began so worthily were not more frequently renewed:

[1] *An Oriental Epilogue.* [2] *Longing.*

[3] Compare the Greek poet:
'The mills of the gods grind late, but they grind fine;'
and Longfellow's paraphrase:
'Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small:
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all.'

'What were I, Love, if I were stripped of thee,
If thine eyes shut me out whereby I live,
Thou who unto my calmer soul dost give
Knowledge, and Truth, and holy Mystery,
Wherein Truth mainly lies for those who see
Beyond the earthly and the fugitive,
Who in the grandeur of the soul believe,
And only in the Infinite are free?
Without thee I were naked, bleak, and bare
As yon dead cedar on the sea-cliff's brow;
And Nature's teachings, which come to me now,
Common and beautiful as light and air,
Would be as fruitless as a stream which still
Slips through the wheel of some old ruined mill.'

It is impossible to read Lowell's poems without being entertained or improved. We think them valuable not only for their intrinsic excellence, but for the vast influence which their increasing circulation destines them to exert.

One of our most characteristic and popular poets is **Whittier** (1807–). Bryant excepted, no one has been less influenced by other literatures. He may be said to illustrate four principal phases in our national history: Aboriginal Life, *Mogg Megone;* Colonial Life, *Mabel Martin;* Abolitionism, *Farewell of a Virginia Slave Mother;* and the Civil War, *Barbara Fritchie.* He was the poet of anti-slavery, as Phillips its orator, Mrs. Stowe its novelist, and Sumner its statesman: but while his anti-slavery poetry had a vast effect in rousing and condensing public sentiment, it was more vehement than inspirational; and as the events which suggested it were temporary, it is read with constantly waning interest. Far more successful have been his narrative and legendary poems. *Maud Muller* and *Skipper Ireson's Ride* had no prototypes; nor has *The Barefoot Boy* a parallel:

'Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace:
From my heart I give thee joy,—
I was once a barefoot boy!
Prince thou art—the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye—
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy! . . .
Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,

Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil:
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!'

No writer of ballads founded on our native history and tradition can be compared with him. Much of his material appears to have been gathered, in his wanderings, from the lips of sailors, farmers, and old women, as in the exquisite *Robin:*

'My old Welsh neighbor over the way
Crept slowly out in the sun of spring,
Pushed from her ears the locks of gray,
And listened to hear the robin sing.

Her grandson, playing at marbles, stopped,
And, cruel in sport as boys will be,
Tossed a stone at the bird, who hopped
From bough to bough in the apple-tree.

"Nay!" said the grandmother; "have you not heard,
My poor, bad boy! of the fiery pit,
And how, drop by drop, this merciful bird
Carries the water that quenches it?

He brings cool dew in his little bill,
And lets it fall on the souls of sin:
You can see the mark on his red breast still
Of fires that scorch as he drops it in.

My poor Bron rhuddyn! my breast-burned bird,
Singing so sweetly from limb to limb,
Very dear to the heart of our Lord
Is he who pities the lost like Him!"

"Amen!" I said to the beautiful myth;
"Sing, bird of God, in my heart as well:
Each good thought is a drop wherewith
To cool and lessen the fires of hell.

Prayers of love like rain-drops fall,
Tears of pity are cooling dew,
And dear to the heart of our Lord are all
Who suffer like Him in the good they do!"'

We soon perceive that it is not by marvellous finish or by lofty imagination that Whittier has obtained the suffrages of the reading public. He himself disclaims these eminent merits:

'I love the old melodious lays
Which softly melt the ages through,
The songs of Spenser's golden days,
Arcadian Sidney's silvery phrase,
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours
To breathe their marvellous notes I try;
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers

In silence feel the dewy showers,
And drink with glad, still lips the blessing of the sky. . . .

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
No rounded art the lack supplies;
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
Or softer shades of Nature's face,
I view her common forms with unanointed eyes.'

he reaches the hearts of his countrymen, because he has that ı of nature which is beyond art; because he embodies, in th and flowing metre, the cardinal qualities of greatness,— licity, sincerity, manliness, piety. The ethical element is not neous and occasional, but inherent and intense. Who can- nderstand the aspirations and discontent of *Maud Muller?* has not had the elevated and thoughtful tendencies of his developed or encouraged by the well-known concluding lets:

'God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!'

devout seriousness, the motive of such pieces as *The Hermit hebaid*, is never long absent. We quote at random:

ıe dead, the unforgot!
their solemn homes of thought,
the cypress shadows blend
y over foe and friend,
love or sad rebuke,
upon the living look.
And the tenderest ones and weakest,
Who their wrongs have borne the meekest,
Lifting from those dark, still places,
Sweet and sad-remembered faces,
O'er the guilty hearts behind
An unwitting triumph find.'[1]

n:

still, my soul, in the silent dark,
ld question thee,
in the shadow drear and stark,
God and me!

my soul, was the errand here?
t mirth or ease,
aping up dust from year to year?
, none of these!" . . .

vhere art thou going, soul of mine?
see the end?
whither this troubled life of thine
nore doth tend?

What daunts thee now? what shakes thee so?
My sad soul say.
"I see a cloud, like a curtain low,
Hang o'er my way." . . .

Know well, my soul, God's hand controls
Whate'er thou fearest;
Round Him in calmest music rolls
Whate'er thou hearest.

What to thee is shadow, to Him is day,
And the end He knoweth,
And not on a blind and aimless way
The spirit goeth.'[2]

[1] *The New Wife and the Old.* [2] *My Soul and I.*

In these days of iconoclasm it is good to read:

> 'I see the wrong that round me lies,
> I feel the guilt within;
> I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
> The world confess its sin.
>
> Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
> And tossed by storm and flood,
> To one fixed stake my spirit clings;
> I know that God is good!'[1]

The manly and pathetic reflections in *Snow-bound*, as well as its pictures of winter life and landscape, are admirable. *Questions of Life* is replete with felicitous thoughts and phrases. *The Tent on the Beach* is celebrated. In these and later poems, the author is seen to be a poet of steady growth. There is no falling off as the shadows thicken. If in his last volume we miss the fire of his first, the loss is amply compensated by a more artistic workmanship, and by the calmer, deeper tone of thought and feeling. There is no probability that a new school, of which the rough barbaric 'realisms' of Whitman are the supposed nucleus, will ever draw the nation away from the stainless pages of Whittier and his leading contemporaries, chief among whom is **Longfellow** — the central figure in our poetical literature.

Drama.—The downward tendency of the stage, as a field for literary effort, has continued to the present hour. However it may be explained, the fact is clear, that, with few exceptions —as **Bulwer's** *Richelieu* and *Lady of Lyons*—the dramas written by men of genius within the present period have not been of the available kind; while the authors of successful plays have not been men of genius, and most of them are scarcely known in the literary world. Browning represents the dramatic element of recent times, such as it is; but, in the original sense of the term, he is not a dramatist at all. He has not the peculiar faculty for the invention of incidents adapted to dramatic effect, nor the power of forgetting himself in the separate creations which he strives to inform. Tennyson's *Queen Mary* is a forced effort, the result of deliberate forethought, a dramatic poem rather than a stage-drama. Beyond all the rest, yet vainly, Swinburne seeks to renew the vigor of other days, when the

[1] *Eternal Goodness.*

drama was the natural outgrowth of a passionate and adventurous era.

If we seek the causes for this decline, we shall find a main one, it is believed, in the practical, positive temper of the age. Intellect has been diverted to other and utilitarian objects,—invention, discovery, journalism. Writers and readers are occupied with new ideas, new themes, new forms. The early stage, moreover, was an important means of instruction, and a primary means of entertainment. But facilities for amusing and instructing the people greatly multiplied. That office is now assumed very largely by the novel and the press. The times are no less stirring, but surplus desire has at present a thousand outlets where it then had one. The diffusion of literature brings intellectual diversion to every fireside at a cheaper rate than dramatic performances. Again, this degeneracy has been confirmed by theatrical management. Formerly, while dramatists were often actors, managers were one or both; to-day, the latter are merely a trading, monetary class. The introduction of movable scenery has begotten and fostered the love of scenic effects. The theatre, as a commercial institution, strives to draw 'the crowd' by ephemeral and dazzling display. The stress is transferred from the mental to the physical. Sensuous appeals take the place of ideas and sentiments. Pomp and noise supply the need of vivid language and vigorous thought. Here, as described by a newspaper critic, is the pageant of a modern play:

'It includes a burning house, a modern bar-room, real gin cock-tails, a river-side pier, a steamboat in motion, the grand saloon or state-cabin of the steamboat, the deck of the same, the wheel-house, the funnels, and the steamboat in flames; and all these objects are presented with singular fidelity to their originals.'

How wide the contrast between this show and the meagre equipment on which the grand old Elizabethans could rely! Of a similar play a like critic observes:

'It is not a work of literature, but a work of business. The piece is a rough conglomeration of the nothings of the passing hour — objects and incidents drawn, but not always drawn with accuracy, from the streets, the public conveyances, the haunts of profligacy. These nothings are offered for their own sake, and not made tributary to any intellectual purpose whatever.'

Finally, with the spread of the religious movement at the close of the last century, a reaction set in against the theatre, and had the natural effect of lowering its tone and manners, as well as its

literature. Thus an adverse moral feeling has been an accelerating force to sink it below the level of high art.

Yet the general elevation has told powerfully here as elsewhere; and the morale of the theatre, in sympathetic accord with society, has improved beyond precedent. The coarseness and indecency of the past have been left forever behind. It were wise to promote this advancement by a discriminating censure and a judicious restraint. It were vain and senseless to attempt to destroy what has sprung from an instinctive demand of the soul for the incarnate exhibition of the ideals which it trusts — heroism, grandeur, beauty, sorrow, hope, honor that swerves not, virtue triumphant. The dramatic element which creates the theatre is universal and innate. Every preacher who would agitate men out of moral apathy, and rouse them to a sense of personal duty, must employ it. The great divines of the world — as Chrysostom, Whitefield, Wesley, Spurgeon, Beecher — have been essentially great actors — teachers by action. Historians, like Carlyle, Froude, and Motley, who marshal ideas as a living and breathing host, have been masters of the dramatic manner. Springing from what is best in man, the theatre is potent for good. Nowhere can elevated lessons be brought home so directly to the heart. Every great emotion is uplifting. He who has felt like a hero or saint, is thereby more heroic or saintly. It was a very healthy feeling which prompted the boatman, when he saw Forrest as Iago, to cry out: 'I would like to get hold of you, after the show is over, and wring your infernal neck.' Said Steele of Betterton: 'From his acting I have received a stronger impression of what is great and noble in human nature than from the arguments of the most solid philosophers, or the descriptions of the most charming poets.' When the elder Booth had recited the Lord's Prayer in the presence of a select company, the host stepped forward with streaming eyes, and in broken accents said: 'Sir, you have afforded me a pleasure for which my whole future life will feel grateful. I am an old man, and every day from my boyhood to the present I have repeated that prayer; but I never heard it before, never!' When the stage is divorced from its mission, it is also potent for ill; and here lies the secret of the felt antagonism. No agency can compare with it in power to corrupt,

when surrendered to shame, when villany is invested with charms, and portraits of debauchery attract more than they repel. Those who seek its redemption will condemn its abuse, and encourage the 'legitimate drama.' Meanwhile, there is needed, in its present state, a more careful discrimination both of dramas to be read and of dramas as acted. Pope's lines should be remembered:

> 'Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
> Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace.'

Periodical.—One of the most peculiar and influential of the literary forces in this era of prose is the periodical press in its manifold forms, ranging between the two extremes of quarterly and daily. The phenomenal facts are quantity, quality, and rate of increase. The older reviews and magazines, while much less vigorous than formerly, still keep the lead, though having to contest the field with many younger and very formidable rivals. The most remarkable advancement, alike in ability of thought and extent of power, has been made by the newspaper, and its development in the United States—especially within the last decade—has never been paralleled in any other country, nor here by any other industry or pursuit. In 1880, nine hundred and eighty dailies were witness to the soul of enterprise and energy in America; while, in 1881, Great Britain had but one hundred and sixty-six for the news supply of its population of thirty-five millions. We have long been the greatest readers in the world. Our periodical publications nearly equal those of the rest of the globe, and the diffusion is growing annually more penetrating and minute.

It is needless to allude to the services of a free, pervasive press as a cohesive agent of civilization; as an appliance to chronicle facts, to circulate theories, to expose chronic vice and constitutional abuse,[1] to report and enlarge discussion, to correct the sins of extravagance and chimera, to hold the community, with a wide-reaching sagacity, to a constant deliberation on social and reformatory questions, till sober principles prevail and the elements are left to a peaceful readjustment. That it has multi-

[1] Four hostile newspapers are more to be dreaded than a hundred thousand bayonets. —*Napoleon I.*

plied readers, and excited curiosity touching every department of knowledge, is beyond dispute. That it is a great intellectual convenience, is equally patent. It is the democratic form of literature to the multitude who have neither the money to purchase books nor the leisure to read them. It abbreviates and systematizes labor, condensing the researches of the few for the disposal of the many.

On the other hand—while the evils to be deplored are far less than the blessings conferred—constant reading of reviews, so far as it accustoms the reader to accept information at second-hand, tends to make him superficial, to induce the feeling of submission and dependence. So far, also, as its attitude is partisan, he is liable to the infection of partisan habits. Criticism is much a form of personal expression. It is an assistant, not a finality. Often it is only the self-revelation of a man. The greatest works have made their way seemingly without the slightest reference to the opinions and protests of critics.

Undoubtedly the newspaper of the future will be less commercial and more literary. It will have a more catholic spirit. It will have a juster sense of moral and social values. It will devote more space to the remedial and purifying agencies of society, less to the frivolities and vices which now exclude so much of greater moment and sweeter import, which only cater to a prurient taste, and stimulate a morbid desire for low excitements. A paper that treats crime as a jest, that labels immorality as 'rich developments,' that puts forward uncleanness with startling head-lines and exhaustive detail, to become the daily food of children and youth,—is a moral scourge. Few things can be of graver importance to the parent than the selection of a family paper, destined to occupy the thoughts and to possess the imagination of forming and susceptive minds. Let us be grateful to the noble men and women who are honestly trying to realize their own ideal, and to make the press what it ought to be,—an emanation from the best spirit and culture.

Essay.—It is the province of some to spread out a topic in all its breadth and variety; of others, to touch upon many subjects, but to exhaust none. The aggregate of good done by these gleaners in the fields of thought is not easily to be estimated. How much should we lose of what is most attractive

and valuable in English literature, if the productions of even the later essayists were left out of the account! They are a legitimate and most characteristic outgrowth of the national and dominant tendencies, reflecting that practical morality which has filled the last two centuries with dissertations on the rule of duty, and that freedom of discussion which has been asserted for so many ages by English writers, enforced by the public sense, then secured by the laws.

Slight but spirited essays are no uncommon feature of the daily and weekly journal; while the contributors to our leading periodicals, and the authors of the well-known series of *English Men of Letters*, represent such a mass of critical opinion as was never before brought together. It is generally admitted, however, that *reviewing* has lost something of its authority by the newspaper press, which, tending to constrain it within the limits of a quarter-column and the party creed, has in a measure turned it into a fatal facility of stock phrases and commonplace ideas. A few papers, indeed, keep up the traditions of better days, and a standard of excellence, in some respects really high, is not seldom reached; but the average 'notice' in even these is too empirical and hasty. The enormous multiplication of books has doubtless tended to this decadence, in which, though the reviewer may have a sound head and a good heart, with a wish to find merit and a purpose to exhibit it, he rarely has time to look beyond the preface.

While our critics seem not to have the collective force, the recognized leading, of the race that has passed away, they perhaps have a more enlarged and profound conception of their functions. Without neglecting form, they think more of the matter,—the energy and nobleness of the thoughts and sentiments. Not without some acrimony, they evince less personal rancor than formerly, when the critics composed a tribunal. Interesting examples of this higher, wider, more earnest criticism may be found in Vaughan's *Hours with the Mystics*, Taylor's *Notes on Books*, Masson's *British Novelists*, Shairp's *Aspects of Poetry;* above all, in the works of Carlyle, Arnold, Froude, and Ruskin. The first, our 'modern Ezekiel,' will be treated by himself. He requires a wide and open space. **Matthew Arnold** (1822–) is by many relished rather as a critic

than as a poet. The bent of his faculty lies more in the direction of argument, which he illustrates by his poetic imagination. While criticism, with Macaulay, clings to practical considerations, with him, as with Sainte-Beuve, it must maintain its independence of the practical spirit. How shall it see things in themselves, as they are,—how shall it be disinterested?—

'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; by steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political, practical considerations about ideas which plenty of people will be sure to attach to them, which perhaps ought often to be attached to them, which in this country at any rate are certain to be attached to them quite sufficiently, but which criticism has really nothing to do with. Its business is, as I have said, simply to know the best that is known and thought in the world, and, by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas. Its business is to do this with inflexible honesty, with due ability; but its business is to do no more, and to leave alone all questions of practical consequences and applications, questions which will never fail to have due prominence given to them.'[1]

This is high ground. You are to deal with facts and fancies for the sake of the truth which is in them, not for the sake of a sect or party. It is no organized preference of the useful to the ornamental; for what can be more profitable to the mind than to dwell upon what is excellent in itself, upon the absolute beauty and fitness of things? Yet do not suppose that you are to ignore or undervalue consequences. Your main business, however, is '*to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.*' That is, you are to be 'perpetually dissatisfied' with whatsoever falls 'short of a high and perfect ideal.' You are not, therefore, to be a mere spectator, though Arnold should seem to advise it. He is himself, fortunately, more than this—he is also a judge. Else he had not made so many admirable observations like these:

'Heine had all the culture of Germany; in his head fermented all the ideas of modern Europe. And what have we got from Heine? A half-result, for want of more balance, and of nobleness of soul and character. That is what I say; there is so much power, so many seem able to run well, so many give promise of running well; so few reach the goal, so few are chosen. *Many are called, few chosen.*'[2]

And:

'What a manifest failure is this last word of the religion of pleasure! One man in many millions, a Heine, may console himself, and keep himself erect in suffering, by a colossal irony of this sort, by covering himself and the universe with the red fire of this sinister mockery; but the many millions cannot—cannot if they would. That is where the sentiment of a religion of sorrow has such a vast advantage over the sentiment of a religion of pleasure,—in its power to be a general, popular, religious sentiment, a stay for the mass of mankind, whose lives are full of hardship.'[3]

[1] *Essays in Criticism.* [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Ibid.*

Nor shall you assume the liberal gait of a Frenchman. As an Englishman you are too moral to consider a man as a mere subject of painting—you are concerned to know whether he is a rascal, or one on whose principles of life the wayfaring and the foot-sore may rest.

'But moral rules, apprehended as ideas first, and then rigorously followed as laws, are, and must be, for the sage only. The mass of mankind have neither force of intellect enough to apprehend them clearly as ideas, nor force of character enough to follow them strictly as laws. The mass of mankind can be carried along a course full of hardship for the natural man, can be borne over the thousand impediments of the narrow way, only by the tide of a joyful and bounding emotion. It is impossible to rise from reading Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius without a sense of constraint and melancholy, without feeling that the burden laid upon man is well-nigh greater than he can bear. Honor to the sages who have felt this, and yet have borne it! . . . The paramount virtue of religion is, that it has *lighted up* morality; that it has supplied the emotion and inspiration needful for carrying the sage along the narrow way perfectly, for carrying the ordinary man along it at all. Even the religions with most dross in them have had something of this virtue; but the Christian religion manifests it with unexampled splendor.'[1]

Indeed, Arnold's great charm is sentiment. His supreme virtue is his essentially religious feeling,—his serious intention, and his sympathetic treatment.

The same large and noble way of treating subjects is evident in the *Short Studies* of **Froude,** famous chiefly as a historian. This writer combines an almost matchless English style with analytical acuteness and a high spiritual tone. He is, it is true, hostile to most ecclesiastical institutions, and is distrusted by the religious public; but there is in him an honest homage to truth, while the conviction of divine government is central. We may dissent from some of his opinions, but we must allow that the spirit of his teachings, as indicated in the following passage, is lofty and sound:

'The saint when he has the power calls the sword to his aid, and in his zeal for what he calls the honor of God, makes war upon such people with steel and fire. The innovator, on the other hand, knowing that he is not that evil creature which his rival represents him as being, first suffers; suffers in rough times at stake and scaffold; suffers in our own later days in good name, in reputation, in worldly fortune; and as the whirligig of time brings round his turn of triumph, takes, in French revolutions and such other fits of madness, his own period of wild revenge. The service of truth is made to appear as one thing, the service of God as another; and in that fatal separation religion dishonors itself with unavailing enmity to what nevertheless it is compelled at last to accept in humiliation; and science, welcoming the character which its adversary flings upon it, turns away with answering hostility from doctrines without which its own highest achievements are but pyramids of ashes.'

He exists for the excellent who can utter or entertain such a truth as this:

[1] *Essays in Criticism.*

'Property is consistent with intense worldliness, intense selfishness, intense hardness of heart; while the grander features of human character,—self-sacrifice, disregard of pleasure, patriotism, love of knowledge, devotion to any great and good cause,—these have no tendency to bring men what is called fortune; they do not even necessarily promote their happiness; for do what they will in this way, the horizon of what they desire to do perpetually flies before them. High hopes and enthusiasms are generally disappointed in results; and the wrongs, the cruelties, the wretchedness of all kinds, which forever prevail among mankind,—the shortcomings in himself of which he becomes more conscious as he becomes really better,—these things, you may be sure, will prevent a noble-minded man from ever being particularly happy.'

They add points of light to our sky who teach:

'Whether the end be seventy years hence, or seven hundred,—be the close of the mortal history of humanity as far distant in the future as its shadowy beginnings seem now to lie behind us,—this only we may foretell with confidence,—that the riddle of man's nature will remain unsolved. There will be that in him yet which physical laws will fail to explain,—that something, whatever it be, in himself and in the world, which science cannot fathom, and which suggests the unknown possibilities of his origin and his destiny.'

But the greatest living master of English prose is **Ruskin** (1819–), the prolific and versatile art-critic, at once a theorizer and an artist, to whom conviction gives prophetic fervor; sometimes—and not strangely—dogmatic; thoroughly partisan, frequently excessive in blame or praise, and so to be read with discrimination, but not followed blindly, while ever impressing us more with the amplitude of his genius, with the loftiness of his spirit, and with the nobleness of his aim. After the poets, who had depicted Nature in melodious verse; after the painters, who had portrayed her in expressive color,—he it was who revealed her in prose, with the imaginative splendor of the one and the graphic power of the other. The first thing he remembers, we are told, was the 'intense joy, mingled with awe,' which he felt in the presence of some natural scene; and before he had completed his ninth year he wrote:

'Papa, how pretty those icicles are,
That are seen so near, that are seen so far;
Those dropping waters that come from the rocks
And many a hole, like the haunt of a fox.
That silvery stream that runs babbling along,
Making a murmuring, dancing song.
Those trees that stand waving upon the rock's side,
And men, that, like spectres, among them glide.
And waterfalls that are heard from far,
And come in sight when very near.
And the water-wheel that turns slowly round,
Grinding the corn that requires to be ground.
And mountains at a distance seen,
And rivers winding through the plain.
And quarries with their craggy stones,
And the wind among them moans.'

It is beauty, we see, that expands the thought, while it gives to the wing liberty and might. To mediate for this and future generations, between the materialism which would depress our higher self and the spiritualism which would unduly exalt it,—to divest the one of its grossness, and the other of its vagueness, was the mission of Mr. Ruskin. And how beautifully, how grandly, beyond all chance of successful rivalry, has he spoken! The gods might dream of writing thus:

'The noon-day sun came slanting down the rocky slopes of La Riccia, and its masses of entangled and tall foliage, whose autumnal tints were mixed with the wet verdure of a thousand evergreens, were penetrated with it as with rain. I cannot call it color, it was conflagration. Purple, and crimson, and scarlet, like the curtains of God's tabernacle, the rejoicing trees sank into the valley in showers of light, every separate leaf quivered with buoyant and burning life; each, as it turned to reflect or transmit the sunbeam, first a torch and then an emerald. Far up into the recesses of the valley, the green vistas arched like the hollows of mighty waves of some crystalline sea, with the arbutus flowers dashed along their flanks for foam, and silver flakes of orange spray tossed into the air around them, breaking over the gray walls of rock into a thousand separate stars, fading and kindling alternately as the weak wind lifted and let them fall. Every blade of grass burned like the golden floor of heaven, opening in sudden gleams as the foliage broke and closed above it, as sheet-lightning opens in a cloud at sunset; the motionless masses of dark rock,—dark, though flushed with scarlet lichen,—casting their quiet shadows across its restless radiance, the fountain underneath them filling its marble hollow with blue mist and fitful sound, and over all,—the multitudinous bars of amber and rose, the sacred clouds that have no darkness, and only exist to illumine, were seen in fathomless intervals between the solemn and orbed repose of the stone pines, passing to lose themselves in the last, white blinding lustre of the measureless line where the Campagna melted into the blaze of the sea.'

With what exuberant splendor he describes the dawn in the Alps, transferring to his page the very glory and freshness of the morning:

'And then wait yet for one hour, until the east again becomes purple, and the heaving mountains, rolling against it in darkness, like waves of a wild sea, are drowned one by one in the glory of its burning; watch the white glaciers blaze in their winding paths about the mountains, like mighty serpents, with scales of fire; watch the columnar peaks of solitary snow, kindling downwards, chasm by chasm, each in itself a new morning; their long avalanches cast down in keen streams brighter than the lightning, sending each his tribute of driven snow, like altar-smoke, up to the heaven; the rose light of their silent domes flushing that heaven about them and above them, piercing with purer beams through its purple lines of lifted cloud, casting a new glory on every wreath as it passes by, until the whole heaven — one scarlet canopy — is interwoven with a roof of waving flame, and tossing, vault beyond vault, as with the drifted wings of many companies of angels; and then, when you look no more for gladness, and when you are bowed down with fear and love of the Maker and Doer of this, tell me who has best delivered this His message unto men!'

We are pleased with the stateliness of his style, the chastened magnificence of his diction, and are grateful; but we are doubly grateful for the burning purity of his feeling, the elevation of his ideal, his noble reverence, his inspiring truth. All beauty, he

would teach us, has a human and a Divine side. Forms, however ugly, from which great qualities shine, are loved. The facts in Nature are 'the nouns of the intellect, and make the grammar of the eternal language.' Her beauty is only emblematic of the attributes of God. For how can an object be beautiful without moderation, the type of Government by Law, opposed to every sign of violence, to every sign of extravagance? or perfectly so without symmetry, the type of Divine Justice? without repose, the type of the Divine Permanence, the most unfailing test, without which nothing can be right, with which nothing can be ignoble? without unity, the type of the Divine Comprehensiveness, which, connecting change and contrast, as in the melodies of music, is 'at the root of all our delight in any beautiful form whatsoever'? Have you understood that nothing, though it be pretty, graceful, rich, is beautiful until it speaks to the imagination? Tones of music, depths of space, sky and flower,—have they not somewhat immeasurable and divine, as chosen men and women have a largeness of suggestion,—somewhat that is catholic, spiritual, universal? This is the reason why Proclus says of beauty that 'it swims on the light of forms.' Hence, too, the remark that he who climbs the white roof of the Milan Cathedral, and gazes on the forest of statues, 'feels as though a flight of angels had alighted there and been struck to marble.' And in the same strain Ruskin declares:

'Whatever beauty there may result from the effects of light on foreground objects, from the dew of the grass, the flash of the cascade, the glitter of the birch trunk, or the fair daylight hues of darker things (and joyfulness there is in all of them), there is yet a light which the eye invariably seeks with a deeper feeling of the beautiful, the light of the declining or breaking day, and the flakes of scarlet cloud burning like watch-fires in the green sky of the horizon; a deeper feeling, I say, not perhaps more acute, but having more of spiritual hope and longing, less of animal and present life, more manifest, invariably, in those of more serious and determined mind (I use the word serious not as being opposed to cheerful, but to trivial and volatile); but, I think, marked and unfailing even in those of the least thoughtful dispositions. I am willing to let it rest on the determination of every reader, whether the pleasure which he has received from these effects of calm and luminous distance be not the most singular and memorable of which he has been conscious; whether all that is dazzling in color, perfect in form, gladdening in expression, be not of evanescent and shallow appealing, when compared with the still small voice of the level twilight behind purple hills, on the scarlet arch of dawn over the dark troublous-edged sea.'

We need not fear too much admiring this adorer of beauty, who at eve so truly obeys the voice obeyed at prime; who never swerves from reliance on those verities which have been the joy of all great souls; who never falters in his conviction that the

principles of beauty are brought 'to a root in human passion or human hope'; who is so fine and high a lover that he must deny to art any greatness which is not the expression of a pure soul, to the face any loveliness which is not ethical, and to the voice any excellence which is not born of virtue:

'A bad woman may have a sweet voice; but that sweetness of voice comes of the past morality of her race. That she can sing with it at all she owes to the determination of laws of music by the morality of the past. Every act, every impulse, of virtue and vice, affects in any creature, face, voice, nervous power, and vigour and harmony of invention, at once. Perseverance in rightness of human conduct, renders, after a certain number of generations, human art possible; every sin clouds it, be it ever so little a one; and persistent vicious living and following of pleasure render, after a certain number of generations, all art impossible.'

'That is ever the difference,' says Emerson, 'between the wise and the unwise: the latter wonders at what is unusual, the wise man wonders at the usual.' The artist of highest aim creates his ideal by combining things which, though never wanting, are ordinarily little noticed. It is in these that the lesson of devotion is chiefly taught. For instance:

'If in our moments of utter idleness and insipidity, we turn to the sky as a last resource, which of its phenomena do we speak of? One says it has been wet, and another it has been windy, and another it has been warm. Who, among the whole chattering crowd, can tell me of the forms and the precipices of the chain of tall white mountains that girded the horizon at noon yesterday? Who saw the narrow sunbeams that came out of the south and smote upon their summits until they melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves? All has passed, unregretted as unseen; or if the apathy be ever shaken off, even for an instant, it is only by what is gross, or what is extraordinary; and yet it is not in the broad and fierce manifestations of the elemental energies, not in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed. God is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice.'

And:

'All those passings to and fro of fruitful shower and grateful shade, and all those visions of silver palaces built about the horizon, and voices of moaning winds and threatening thunders, and glories of colored robe and cloven ray, are but to deepen in our hearts the acceptance, and distinctness, and dearness of the simple words, "Our Father, which art in heaven."'

Blessings upon him who has opened so many thousand eyes to the beauty of the sky which is above us, and of the grass which we trample under our feet:

'Gather a single blade of grass, and examine for a minute, quietly, its narrow sword-shaped strip of fluted green. Nothing, as it seems there, of notable goodness or beauty. A very little strength, and a very little tallness, and a few delicate long lines meeting in a point,—not a perfect point neither, but blunt and unfinished, by no means a creditable or apparently much cared for example of Nature's workmanship; made, as it seems, only to be trodden on to-day, and to-morrow to be cast into the oven; and a little pale

and hollow stalk, feeble and flaccid, leading down to the dull brown fibres of roots. And yet, think of it well, and judge whether of all the gorgeous flowers that beam in summer air, and of all strong and goodly trees, pleasant to the eyes and good for food,—stately palm and pine, strong ash and oak, scented citron, burdened vine,—there be any by man so deeply loved, by God so highly graced, as that narrow point of feeble green.'

Like most voluminous writers, he shows to greatest advantage in select passages; but eloquence and suggestiveness are his general features. None has said truer or finer things. Few have been so helpful. Who will not own the fascination of such periods as we have read? Who would not wish to remember the multitude like these?

'The picture which has the nobler and more numerous ideas, however awkwardly expressed, is a greater and a better picture than that which has the less noble and less numerous ideas, however beautifully expressed. No weight, nor mass, nor beauty of execution can outweigh one grain or fragment of thought.'

'Of all God's gifts to the sight of man, colour is the holiest, the most divine, the most solemn. We speak rashly of gay colour, and sad colour is in some degree pensive, the loveliest is melancholy, and the purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love colour the most.'

'In mortals, there is a care for trifles, which proceeds from love and conscience, and is most holy; and a care for trifles, which comes of idleness and frivolity, and is most base. And so, also, there is a gravity proceeding from dulness and mere incapability of enjoyment, which is most base.'

'If ever, in autumn, a pensiveness falls upon us as the leaves drift by in their fading, may we not wisely look up in hope to their mighty mountains? Behold how fair, how far prolonged, in arch and aisle, the avenues of the valleys, the fringes of the hills! So stately,—so eternal; the joy of man, the comfort of all living creatures, the glory of the earth,—they are but the monuments of those poor leaves that flit faintly past us to die. Let them not pass, without our understanding their last counsel and example; that we also, careless of the monument by the grave, may build it in the world,—monument by which men may be taught to remember, not where we died, but where we lived.'

'The whole period of youth is one essentially of formation, edification, instruction. There is not an hour of it but is trembling with destinies,—not a moment of which, once past, the appointed work can ever be done again, or the neglected blow struck on cold iron. Take your vase of Venice glass out of the furnace, and strew chaff over it in its transparent heat, and recover *that* to its clearness and rubied glory when the north wind has blown upon it; but do not think to strew chaff over the child fresh from God's presence, and to bring the heavenly colours back to him,—at least in this world.'

Perhaps next to Lowell, the most capable, as well as the most popular of American critics, is **Whipple** (1819–). He approaches his work with kindness and candor; and brings to it an irradiating fancy, quick perception, range of thought, elaborate research, rich stores of illustration and ornament. His style, it will be seen, is natural, easy, clear, spirited, and attractive. For example:

'As an artist, Mr. Emerson exhibits the same fidelity to his own ideas which he has always taken for his guide in the pursuit of truth. The construction of his verse is as

unique as his mental idiosyncrasy. It certainly betrays incidentally the proof of a rare poetic culture. His masterly command of English shows a careful study of the best sources of the language; but not a sign of imitation can be found in his writings,—not even the use of the imagery which has been consecrated by the habit of ages. His lines are often abrupt, sometimes a little uncouth, but never deficient in masculine strength. With no pretension to the finish and smoothness which give grace to the poems of Tennyson, they present frequent surprises of dainty melody, and charm as much by the sweetness of their flow as by the grandeur of their thought.'

And:

'Wit is abrupt, darting, scornful, and tosses its analogies in your face; Humor is slow and shy, insinuating its fun into your heart. Wit is negative, analytical, destructive; Humor is creative. The couplets of Pope are witty, but Sancho Panza is a humorous creation. Wit, when earnest, has the earnestness of passion, seeking to destroy; Humor has the earnestness of affection, and would lift up what is seemingly low into our charity and love. Wit, bright, rapid, and blasting as the lightning, flashes, strikes, and vanishes in an instant; Humor, warm and all-embracing as the sunshine, bathes its objects in a genial and abiding light. Wit implies hatred or contempt of folly and crime, produces its effects by brisk shocks of surprise, uses the whip of scorpions and the branding-iron, stabs, stings, pinches, tortures, goads, teases, corrodes, undermines; Humor implies a sure conception of the beautiful, the majestic, and the true, by whose light it surveys and shapes their opposites. It is a humane influence, softening with mirth the ragged inequalities of existence, promoting tolerant views of life, bridging over the spaces which separate the lofty from the lowly, the great from the humble. . . . When Wit and Humor are commingled, the result is a genial sharpness, dealing with its objects somewhat as old Izaak Walton dealt with the frog he used for bait,—running the hook neatly through his mouth and out at his gills, and in so doing "using him as though he loved him!" '[1]

Was never a truer American than **Henry Thoreau** (1817–1862), a disciple of Emerson, a transcendentalist, who demanding something better than tradition — the original and eternal life out of which tradition springs — found it in moral isolation, as a borderer on the confines of civilization. He never married, never went to church, never voted; would not be restricted by craft or profession, and declined long engagements. With no talent for wealth, he knew how to be poor; and, if he must have money, preferred earning it by a short piece of manual labor,— as a land-survey,— then back to his endless rambles and miscellaneous studies. He had no homage but for truth. Advised by the Republican and Abolitionist committees of Concord not to lecture on John Brown, he answered, 'I did not send to you for advice, but to announce that I am to speak.' His aim was 'plain living and high thinking.' With no taste for conventional elegance, he would not attend dinner-parties, because there each was in the other's way. 'They make their pride in making their dinner cost much; I make my pride in making my dinner cost little.' Asked at table what dish he preferred, he replied, 'The

[1] *Literature and Life.* His chief work is *Literature of the Age of Elizabeth.*

nearest.' A mind of rare quality, with a temper of natural sweetness; indigenous as the oak, untouched by English and European manners,—a sturdy, independent son of nature, like the primeval Teuton whose name he bore,—Thor, the Northman.

He had a profound passion for the wild, and was happy in solitude:

'I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time. To be in company, even with the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude. We are for the most part more lonely when we go abroad among men than when we stay in our chambers. A man thinking or working is always alone, let him be where he will. Solitude is not measured by the miles of space that intervene between a man and his fellows. The really diligent student in one of the crowded hives of Cambridge College is as solitary as a dervis in the desert.'

With an axe, a few dollars, and none but the clothes he wore, he went into the woods, on the edge of Walden Pond, and unaided, except at the raising, built himself a house fifteen feet long, ten feet wide, eight feet high, at an expense of about twenty-eight dollars, and lived there by himself over two years, at a total net cost of about twenty-five dollars! He would not starve for want of luxuries:

'I have made a satisfactory dinner, satisfactory on several accounts, simply off a dish of purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) which I gathered in my cornfield, boiled and salted. I give the Latin on account of the unsavoriness of the trivial name. And pray what more can a reasonable man desire, in peaceful times, in ordinary noons, than a sufficient number of ears of green sweet corn boiled, with the addition of salt?'

He would be no butterfly entangled in a spider's web:

'My furniture, part of which I made myself, and the rest cost me nothing of which I have not rendered an account, 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, a jug for oil, a jug for molasses, and a japanned lamp. None is so poor that he need sit on a pumpkin.'

The chairs were,—

'One for solitude, two for friendship, three for society. When visitors came in larger and unexpected numbers there was but the third chair for them all, but they generally economized the room by standing up.'

There was one inconvenience, however,—the difficulty of getting to a sufficient distance from his guests:

'I have found it a singular luxury to talk across the pond to a companion on the opposite side. In my house we were so near that we could not begin to hear,—we could not speak low enough to be heard; as when you throw two stones into calm water so near that they break each other's undulations. If we are merely loquacious and loud talkers, then we can afford to stand very near together, cheek by jowl, and feel each other's breath; but if we speak reservedly and thoughtfully, we want to be farther apart,

that all animal heat and moisture may have a chance to evaporate. If we would enjoy the most intimate society with that in each of us which is without, or above, being spoken to, we must not only be silent, but commonly so far apart bodily that we cannot possibly hear each other's voice in any case.'

Reading and meditation, the sights and sounds of the pathless forest, were his rarest society:

'I kept neither dog, cat, cow, pig, nor hens, so that you would have said there was a deficiency of domestic 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 one. An old-fashioned man would have lost his senses or died of ennui before this. Not even rats in the wall, for they were starved out, or rather were never baited in,— only squirrels on the roof and under the floor, a whippoorwill on the ridge pole, a blue-jay screaming beneath the window, a hare or woodchuck under the house, a screech-owl or a cat-owl behind it, a flock of wild geese or a laughing loon on the pond, and a fox to bark in the night. . . . Wild sumachs and blackberry vines breaking through into your cellar; sturdy pitch-pines rubbing and creaking against the shingles for want of room, their roots reaching quite under the house.'

Such hearts hold their fortunes within. They have liberty vast as the sky. Like birds which come and go, they enjoy the most valuable part of every domain, while themselves live free and uncommitted:

'In imagination I have bought all the farms in succession, for all were to be bought, and I knew their price. I walked over each farmer's premises, tasted his wild apples, discoursed on husbandry with him, took his farm at his price, at any price, mortgaging it to him in my mind; even put a higher price on it,— took everything but a deed of it,— took his word for his deed, for I dearly love to talk,— cultivated it, and him too to some extent, I trust, and withdrew when I had enjoyed it long enough, leaving him to carry it on.'

We may guess that he knew the country like a bird, and had paths of his own. On a walk with Emerson he drew out a diary, and read the names of all the plants that should bloom on that day. 'He saw as with microscope, heard as with ear-trumpet; and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard.' Thus:

'I could always tell if visitors had called in my absence, either by the bending twigs or grass, or the print of their shoes, and generally of what sex or age or quality they were by some slight trace left, as a flower dropped, or a bunch of grass plucked and thrown away, even as far off as the railroad, half a mile distant, or by the lingering odor of a cigar or pipe. Nay, I was frequently notified of the passage of a traveller along the highway sixty rods off, by the scent of his pipe.'

Again:

'One day when I went to my wood-pile, or rather my pile of stumps, I observed two large ants, the one red, the other much larger, nearly half an inch long, and black, fiercely contending with one another. Having once got hold they never let go, but struggled and wrestled and rolled on the chips incessantly. Looking farther, I was surprised to find that the chips were covered with such combatants, that it was not a *duellum*, but a *bellum*, a war between two races of ants, the red always pitted against the black, and frequently two red ones to one black. . . . It was evident that their battle-cry was — Conquer or die. In the meanwhile there came along a single red ant on the hill-side of

this valley, evidently full of excitement, who either had despatched his foe, or had not yet taken part in the battle; probably the latter, for he had lost none of his limbs; whose mother had charged him to return with his shield or upon it. Or perchance he was some Achilles, who had nourished his wrath apart, and had now come to avenge or rescue his Patroclus. He saw this unequal combat from afar,— for the blacks were nearly twice the size of the red,— he drew near with rapid pace till he stood on his guard within half an inch of the combatants; then, watching his opportunity, he sprang upon the black warrior, and commenced his operations near the root of his right fore-leg, leaving the foe to select among his own members; and so there were three united for life. . . . I should not have wondered by this time to find that they had their respective musical bands stationed on some eminent chip, and playing their national airs the while, to excite the slow and cheer the dying combatants.'

Here are the heroism and courage of Austerlitz. Here is the patriotism of Bunker Hill. Doubtless they are fighting for a principle, and the result will be as important and memorable to them as was Gettysburg to those there engaged:

'I took up the chip on which the three I have particularly described were struggling, carried them into my house, and placed it under a tumbler on my window-sill, in order to see the issue. Holding a microscope to the first-mentioned red ant, I saw that, though he was assiduously gnawing at the near fore-leg of his enemy, having severed his remaining feeler, his own breast was all torn away, exposing what vitals he had there to the jaws of the black warrior, whose breast-plate was apparently too thick for him to pierce; and the dark carbuncles of the sufferer's eyes shone with ferocity such as war only could excite. They struggled half an hour longer under the tumbler, and when I looked again the black soldier had severed the heads of his foes from their bodies, and the still living heads were hanging on either side of him, like ghastly trophies at his saddle-bow, still apparently as firmly fastened as ever, and he was endeavoring with feeble struggles, being without feelers and with only the remnant of a leg, and I know not how many other wounds, to divest himself of them; which at length, after half an hour more, he accomplished. I raised the glass, and he went off over the window-sill in that crippled state. . . . I never learned which party was victorious, nor the cause of the war; but I felt for the rest of that day as if I had had my feelings excited and harrowed by witnessing the struggle, the ferocity and carnage, of a human battle before my door.'

The world was full of poetic suggestion to him. It existed, to his imagination, for the uplifting and consolation of human life. The things seen symbolized the things unseen. Thus:

'The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.'

And:

'When other birds are still the screech-owls take up the strain, like mourning women their ancient u-lu-lu. Their dismal scream is truly Ben Jonsonian. Wise midnight hags! . . . Yet I love to hear their wailing, their doleful responses, trilling along the wood-side; reminding me sometimes of music and singing birds; *as if it were the dark and tearful side of music, the regrets and sighs that would fain be sung.*'

We may see clearly, though it be less obtrusive than his nature-worship, that the primary element in him was the ideal. Congratulated by his friends that he had opened his way to fortune

by the manufacture of a superior pencil, he said that he should never make another. 'Why should I? *I would not do again what I have done once.*' His religion was deep and essential, though of a primitive and absolute kind. This is his obedience to the Highest:

'Chastity is the flowering of man; and what are called Genius, Heroism, Holiness, and the like, are but various fruits which succeed it. Man flows at once to God when the channel of purity is open. By turn our purity inspires and our impurity casts us down. He is blessed who is assured that the animal is dying out in him day by day, and the divine being established.'

His English, we might judge, was acquired from the poets and prose-writers of its best days. His metaphors and images have the freshness of the soil. His range was narrow, but within his limits he was a master. He needed only a tender and pervading sentiment to have been a Homer. Pure and guileless, and fond of sympathy, he yet was cold and wintry. 'I love Henry,' said one of his friends, 'but I cannot like him; and as for taking his arm, I should as soon think of taking the arm of an elm-tree.' His works are replete with fine observations, finely expressed. One cannot fail to see the resemblance of his style to Emerson's and Alcott's. Nothing that he wrote can be spared. We subjoin several of his compact and vigorous sentences:

'The blue-bird carries the sky on his back.'

'Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep.'

'Who but the Evil One has said, "Whoa!" to mankind?'

'How can we expect a harvest of thought who have not a seed time of character?'

'Only he can be trusted with gifts who can present a face of bronze to expectations.'

'Mythology is the crop which the Old World bore before its soil was exhausted, before the fancy and imagination were affected with blight.'

'Any nobleness begins at once to refine a man's features, any meanness or sensuality to imbrute them.'

'Goodness is the only investment that never fails. In the music of the harp which trembles round the world it is the insisting on this which thrills us.'

'Give me a culture which imports much muck from the meadows, and deepens the soil,—not that which trusts to heating manures, and improved implements and modes of culture only!'

'No humane being, past the thoughtless age of boyhood, will wantonly murder any creature, which holds its life by the same tenure that he does. The hare in its extremity cries like a child.'

'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 slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars.'

Here, finally, is the mythical record of his disappointments:

'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 to 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.'

It is not the fact that imports, but the impression. Experience has a triple value under a poetic veil. Thoreau, in tone and imagery, is American; fresh, free, generous, and bold.

Two men of superior talent will hereafter claim our attention,—the subtle-minded **Hawthorne,** and the wide-minded **Emerson.**[1]

Novel.—This, next to the newspaper, is that form of literature which has the widest popular influence and is most characteristic of the period. It is distributed among all classes by ten thousand agencies,—publishing houses, Sunday-school libraries, magazines, and weeklies. It is the daily food, for good or evil, of the civilized world. So great is the interest which the human mind takes in human life—in the doubts and fears, the hopes, ambitions, and passions, of the *people.*

The pictorial novel—which is predominantly of a descriptive and historical cast, and in which the romance element is ever liable to appear—affords no parallel to the multifarious power of Scott. Its most illustrious representative is **Lord Lytton**[2] (1805–1873). His *Rienzi, The Last Days of Pompeii,* and *The Last of the Barons,* are fascinating, instructive, and nobly ambitious. Few have been so brilliantly equipped for literary performance, and none could have used his gifts more industri-

[1] Other essayists and critics, English and American, some of whom are well-known poets, all of whom have added to our sum of knowledge and means of entertainment, are: J. Brown, *Spare Hours;* James Martineau, *Essays, Philosophical and Theological;* Goldwin Smith, *Lectures on the Study of History;* J. A. Symonds, *Sketches and Studies in Southern Europe;* R. H. Hutton, *Essays, Theological and Literary;* Bayard Taylor, *Studies in German Literature;* Richard Grant White, Shakespearean critic, *Words and their Uses;* Henry N. Hudson, Shakespearean editor and critic; R. H. Stoddard, *Bric-a-Brac Series;* Henry Reed, *Lectures on English History as Illustrated by Shakespeare's Plays;* C. J. and A. Hare, *Guesses at Truth;* Peter Bayne, *Essays in Biography and Criticism;* A. Bronson Alcott, *Table-Talk;* T. W. Higginson, *Atlantic Essays;* D. J. Mitchell, *Reveries of a Bachelor;* A. K. H. Boyd, *The Country Parson;* H. W. Beecher, *Life Thoughts;* C. H. Spurgeon, *John Ploughman's Talk;* F. W. Farrar, *Eternal Hope;* Dean Stanley, *Memorials of Westminster Abbey;* T. De Witt Talmage, *Daily Thoughts;* John Fiske, *The Unseen World;* Leslie Stephen, *Hours in a Library;* W. R. Creg, *Enigmas of Life;* Thomas Starr King, *Substance and Show;* Gail Hamilton, *Skirmishes and Sketches;* J. G. Holland, *Every-Day Topics;* James T. Field, *Yesterdays with Authors;* E. C. Stedman, *Victorian Poets;* G. W. Cooke, *Ralph Waldo Emerson.* The list could be extended almost indefinitely.

[2] Edward Lytton Bulwer. No novel or novelist is purely of one kind. No classification can be made except by predominant features.

ously. Yet his works enter no more into the life of the world. Politically and socially, he was a power in his day; the admired, courted, titled, rich *litterateur:* but he was poised in a superb selfishness, and his fame was loveless. Much that he wrote sustains the testimony of his wife and neighbors, that his personal character was not admirable. Marvellous jewelry of thought and fancy, brilliant with many dyes, has he bequeathed us; but he needed the heart that should bring him into sympathy with the phases of humanity, and give him permanency in popular regard. 'A thousand brilliant men have risen and passed away, attracting wide attention while they lived, but warming and fructifying no mind by their light, and expiring at last like a burned-out star, leaving no trace in the sky. So near the earth were they, that their light faded at once when the fountain failed, while many a lesser star, by burning nearer heaven, has been able to send down its rays for centuries after its fires were extinguished.'[1]

The ethical novel — which is preëminently a study of life, definitely in the interest of reform, or penetratively in view of its many issues — has had innumerable cultivators, some of whom are not likely soon to be equalled. It was **Thackeray's** mission to paint the manners of a day and of a class, to renew the combative spirit of Swift and the realistic spirit of Fielding. He was a reformer, a satirist, who brought to the aid of satire an abounding truth, consummate humor, a clear understanding, a profound knowledge of the heart, an unfailing skill to detect the good or the vile. Hating distinctions of rank, he wrote the *Book of Snobs.* Outside of an aristocracy, where each on the social ladder respects the man above him and despises the one below, solely on account of their position, this would have been impossible:

'If ever our cousins the Smigsmags asked me to meet Lord Longears, I would like to take an opportunity after dinner, and say, in the most good-natured way in the world: Sir, Fortune makes you a present of a number of thousand pounds every year. The ineffable wisdom of our ancestors has placed you as a chief and hereditary legislator over me. Our admirable Constitution (the pride of Britons and envy of surrounding nations) obliges me to receive you as my senator, superior, and guardian. Your eldest son, Fitz-Heehaw, is sure of a place in Parliament; your younger sons, the De Brays, will kindly condescend to be post-captains and lieutenant-colonels, and to represent us in foreign courts, or to take a good living when it falls convenient. These prizes our admirable Constitution (the pride and envy of, etc.) pronounces to be your due; without count of your dulness, your vices, your selfishness; of your entire incapacity or folly. Dull as you may be (and we have as good a right to believe that my lord is an ass, as the other

[1] J. G. Holland.

proposition that he is an enlightened patriot)—dull, I say, as you may be, no one will accuse you of such monstrous folly, as to suppose that you are indifferent to the good luck which you possess, or have any inclination to part with it. No—and patriots as we are, under happier circumstances, Smith and I, I have no doubt, were we dukes ourselves, would stand by our order.

We would submit good-naturedly to sit in a high place. We would acquiesce in that admirable Constitution (pride and envy of, etc.) which made us chiefs and the world our inferiors; we would not cavil particularly at that notion of hereditary superiority which brought so many simple people cringing to our knees. May be we would rally round the Corn Laws; we would make a stand against the Reform Bill; we would die rather than repeal the acts against Catholics and Dissenters; we would, by our noble system of class legislation, bring Ireland to its present admirable condition.'

Hating the emptiness of pretentious and uncultured fashion, he wrote *Pendennis*, in which the hero, sighing after the ideal and beginning an epic, falls in love with a stupid actress, who learns her parts mechanically. She has just been playing Ophelia, and he asks her if Ophelia loved Hamlet:

'"In love with such a little ojous wretch as that stunted manager of a Bingley?" She bristled with indignation at the thought. Pen explained it was not of her he spoke, but of Ophelia of the play. "Oh, indeed; if no offence was meant, none was taken;" but as for Bingley, indeed, she did not value him—not that glass of punch. Pen next tried her on Kotzebue. "Kotzebue? who was he?" "The author of the play in which she had been performing so admirably." She did not know that—"the man's name at the beginning of the book was Thompson," she said. Pen laughed at her adorable simplicity. Pendennis, Pendennis, how she spoke the words! Emily, Emily! how good, how noble, how beautiful, how perfect, she is.'

With the same justified and contained hatred he lashes in *Vanity Fair* the vulgarity of snobbery, the flimsiness of shams, gilded ignorance, blustering hypocrisy, legacy-hunters, illustrious fools, the flatteries and intrigues, the villanies and miseries, of money worship. The satire may develop itself in the personages, naturally, psychologically, in the literary form, or exhibit itself alone, in dissertations, as here:

'What a dignity it gives an old lady, that balance at the banker's! How tenderly we look at her faults, if she is a relative (and may every reader have a score of such), what a kind, good-natured old creature we find her! How the junior partner of Hobbs and Dobbs leads her smiling to the carriage with the lozenge upon it, and the fat, wheezy coachman! How, when she comes to pay us a visit, we generally find an opportunity to let our friends know her station in the world! We say (and with perfect truth) I wish I had Miss Mac Whirter's signature to a cheque for five thousand pounds. She wouldn't miss it, says your wife. She is my aunt, say you, in an easy, careless way, when your friend asks if Miss Mac Whirter is any relative? Your wife is perpetually sending her little testimonies of affection; your little girls work endless worsted baskets, cushions, and foot-stools for her. What a good fire there is in her room when she comes to pay you a visit, although your wife laces her stays without one! The house during her stay assumes a festive, neat, warm, jovial, snug appearance not visible at other seasons. You yourself, dear sir, forget to go to sleep after dinner, and find yourself all of a sudden (though you invariably lose) very fond of a rubber. What good dinners you have—game every day, Malmsey, Madeira, and no end of fish from London! Even the servants in the kitchen share in the general prosperity; and, somehow, during the stay of Miss

Mac Whirter's fat coachman, the beer is grown much stronger, and the consumption of tea and sugar in the nursery (where her maid takes her meals) is not regarded in the least. Is it so, or is it not so? I appeal to the middle classes. Ah, gracious powers! I wish you would send me an old aunt — a maiden aunt — an aunt with a lozenge on her carriage, and a front of light coffee-coloured hair — how my children should work work-bags for her, and my Julia and I would make her comfortable! Sweet — sweet vision! Foolish — foolish dream!'

There is the like reiterated irony in *The Newcomes*, the like sanguinary sarcasm, the studied presence of a moral intention. Here is one of his caustic essays on forced and ill-sorted marriages, that unhallowed traffic of the great and worldly:

'Poor Lady Clara! I fancy a better lot for you than that to which fate handed you over. I fancy there need have been no deceit in your fond, simple, little heart, could it have been given into other keeping. But you were consigned to a master whose scorn and cruelty terrified you; under whose sardonic glances your scared eyes were afraid to look up, and before whose gloomy coldness you dared not to be happy. Suppose a little plant, very frail and delicate from the first, but that might have bloomed sweetly and borne fair flowers, had it received warm shelter and kindly nurture; suppose a young creature taken out of her home, and given over to a hard master whose caresses are as insulting as his neglect; consigned to cruel usage, to weary loneliness, to bitter, insulting recollections of the past; suppose her schooled into hypocrisy by tyranny,— and then, quick let us hire an advocate to roar out to a British jury the wrongs of her injured husband, to paint the agonies of his bleeding heart (if Mr. Advocate gets plaintiff's brief in time, and before defendant's attorney has retained him), and to shew society injured through him! Let us console that martyr, I say, with thumping damages; and as for the woman — the guilty wretch! — let us lead her out and stone her. . . . So Lady Clara flies from the custody of her tyrant, but to what a rescue! The very man who loves her, and gives her asylum, pities and deplores her. She scarce dares to look out of the windows of her new home upon the world, lest it should know and reproach her. All her sisterhood of friendship is cut off from her. If she dares to go abroad, she feels the sneer of the world as she goes through it, and knows that malice and scorn whisper behind her. People as criminal, but undiscovered, make room for her, as if her touch were pollution. She knows she has darkened the lot and made wretched the home of the man she loves best, that his friends who see her treat her with but a doubtful respect, and the domestics who attend her, with a suspicious obedience. In the country lanes, or the streets of the country town, neighbors look aside as the carriage passes in which she is splendid and lonely. Rough hunting companions of her husband's come to the table: he is driven perforce to the company of flatterers and men of inferior sort; his equals, at least in his own home, will not live with him. She would be kind, perhaps, and charitable to the cottagers around her, but she fears to visit them, lest they too should scorn her. The clergyman who distributes her charities blushes and looks awkward on passing her in the village, if he should be walking with his wife or one of his children.'

To blame a vice is to laud the contrary. To abase the false is to exalt the true. To sacrifice selfishness and pride is to raise an altar to sweetness and tenderness. We perceive that satire veils the essential side of Thackeray's character; that he adores love and kindness; that he reveres the family, simple sentiments, pure contentments; that, so far from being only a cold and sneering cynic, his crown and glory is his humanity. Visibly,

incessantly, this appears,—above all, in the *History of Henry Esmond*, the least popular, but the most elevated, touching, and artistic of his stories. Forgetting the author, we listen to the hero, a contemporary of Queen Anne, a writer of memoirs, whose observations are microscopical, whose details are photographic, who carries us back, in style and manners, a hundred and fifty years. Here are some illustrations of his modulated and noble tone, of his sympathy with the tender, good, and beautiful:

'With a look of infinite pity and tenderness in her eyes, she took his hand again, placing her other fair hand on his head, and saying some words to him, which were so kind and said in a voice so sweet, that the boy, who had never looked upon so much beauty before, felt as if the touch of a superior being or angel smote him down to the ground, and kissed the fair protecting hand as he knelt on one knee. To the very last hour of his life, Esmond remembered the lady as she then spoke and looked, the rings on her fair hands, the very scent of her robe, the beam of her eyes lighting up with surprise and kindness, her lips blooming in a smile, the sun making a golden halo round her hair.'

And:

'As I think of the immense happiness which was in store for me, and of the depth and intensity of that love which, for so many years, hath blessed me, I own to a transport of wonder and gratitude for such a boon,—nay, am thankful to have been endowed with a heart capable of feeling and knowing the immense beauty and value of the gift which God hath bestowed upon me. Sure, love *vincit omnia*, is immeasurably above all ambition, more precious than wealth, more noble than name. He knows not life who knows not that: he hath not felt the highest faculty of the soul who hath not enjoyed it. In the name of my wife I write the completion of hope, and the summit of happiness. To have such a love is the one blessing, in comparison of which all earthly joy is of no value; and to think of her, is to praise God.'

Also:

'They walked out, hand-in-hand, through the court, and to the terrace-walk, where the grass was glistening with dew, and the birds in the green woods above were singing their delicious choruses under the blushing morning sky. How well all things were remembered! The ancient towers and gables of the hall darkling against the east, the purple shadows on the green slopes, the quaint devices and carvings of the dial, the forest-crowned heights, the fair yellow plain cheerful with crops and corn, the shining river rolling through it towards the pearly hills beyond; all these were before us, along with a thousand beautiful memories of our youth, beautiful and sad, but as real and vivid in our minds as that fair and always remembered scene our eyes beheld once more. We forget nothing. The memory sleeps, but wakens again; I often think how it shall be when, after the last sleep of death, the *réveille* shall rouse us forever, and the past in one flash of self-consciousness rush back, like the soul revivified.'

That novel is truly historic which attains illusion, which puts us in living contact with the varied spectacle of its era, affording us the extreme pleasure of believing in what we read.

The most obvious characteristic of fiction in America, as on the opposite shores of the Atlantic, is brilliant profusion. In this respect it may be said to occupy the position of the Eliza-

bethan drama. Here, however, with some qualification, the resemblance ceases. The efflorescence of the present has little of the powerful vitality, the rich color, of that wonderful bloom. Novels there are, in perilous abundance, technical finish, talent of a high order; but they lack the baptism of fire, the heat that breeds excellence. Deficient in ardor, energy, depth of feeling, depth of thought, the multitudinous tones — though each in turn clear and bell-like — lose their music day by day.

The widest fame yet attained by American novelists has been won by **Cooper** and **Mrs. Stowe,** each of whom had the rare fortune to introduce a new and conquering figure to European letters,— first the Indian, then the Negro. Theme, more than form, renders them imperishable. No other, pursuing the virgin vein, can hope to repeat their successes; for the conditions on which they were based will never recur. But a higher triumph, by a profounder treatment, is possible to others. It is truth to human nature beyond anything else — external phenomena or nationality — that makes the novel great; and by this criterion will the slow alembic of years extract the immortal from the transient. Meanwhile, in the fading, ever-shifting train, one man stands out thus in clear relief, above the accidental caprice of time and place, one who will hold his own before the master-artists of the world,—**Hawthorne.** On other pages we shall endeavor to comprehend him, and Dickens, and George Eliot,—

> 'Authors of delight
> And happiness, which to the end of time
> Will live, and spread, and kindle.'[1]

History.—The period develops, with more or less distinctness, three schools of historians,— the imaginative or romantic, which makes the most lavish effort to reanimate souls, to picture the past dramatically, vividly; the realistic, which aims to show events and people as they were; and the philosophic, which seeks

[1] Other novelists, some of whom will be recognized as eminent in other departments, are: Benjamin Disraeli, *Lothair;* Bayard Taylor, *John Godfrey's Fortune;* Thomas Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd;* Wilkie Collins, *Woman in White;* W. D. Howells, *Lady of the Aroostook;* Henry James, Jr., *A Passionate Pilgrim;* Charles Reade, *Never too Late to Mend;* J. G. Holland, *Arthur Bonnicastle;* Edward Eggleston, *The Hoosier Schoolmaster;* Francis Bret Harte, *Roaring Camp;* Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown at Oxford;* Charles Lever, *Tom Burke of Ours;* George Macdonald, *Robert Faulkner;* E. P. Roe, *The Opening of a Chestnut Burr;* A. W. Tourgee, *A Fool's Errand;* William Ware, *Zenobia;* Julian Hawthorne, *Garth;* Charles Kingsley, *Hypatia;* Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre;* Miss Mulock, *John Halifax;* Mrs. Holmes, *Tempest and Sunshine;* Mrs. Whitney, *Faith Gartney's Girlhood;* Mrs. Oliphant, *Son of the Soil;* Miss Phelps, *The Gates Ajar;* Miss Burnett, *That Lass o' Lowrie's;* Miss Spofford, *Amber Gods;* Misses Warner, *The Wide, Wide World.* We are, as hitherto, forced to omit some deserving names.

to show that historical phenomena have a system and a sequence, determined by natural laws. We have seen that Macaulay set the fashion of the first. To it belong the sinister and furious Carlyle,[1] the more popular and paradoxical Froude;[2] to the second, the calm and scholarly Freeman,[3] the spirited and artistic Green;[4] to the third, the learned and ambitious Buckle,[5] the careful and comprehensive Lecky.[6]

Froude is a portrait-painter, and, wanting the scientific quality which clings to facts, is often led astray by his vivid genius. He is, it is needless to add, widely read, and might be broadly characterized by Carlyle's advice to an invalid, to 'read the last volume of Macaulay's History, or *any other new novel.*' Here is his conception of history:

'It often seems to me as if History was like a child's box of letters, with which we can spell any word we please. We have only to pick out such letters as we want, arrange them as we like, and say nothing about those things which do not suit our purpose.'

In other words, let your theory be what it will, history will not object — it will provide you abundant facts to prove whatever you wish to believe. Nevertheless, like Matthew Arnold, who yet would have a book consist only of premises, one must have a theory, higher or lower: an ignoble one, it may be, like that of Comte, or a noble one like that of Froude — life a baffling duality of principle, a drama where good and evil fight out their everlasting battle. Very naturally he adds:

'The address of history is less to the understanding than the higher emotions. We learn in it to sympathize with what is great and good; we learn to hate what is base. In the anomalies of fortune we feel the mystery of our mortal existence; and in the companionship of the illustrious natures who have shaped the fortunes of the world, we escape from the littlenesses which cling to the round of common life, and our minds are tuned in a higher and nobler key.'

Buckle (1822–1862), a man of rare talent, was the first to apply, on a considerable scale, scientific treatment to the facts of human experience, and the first to attempt, by such means, to bring history into the category of the exact sciences. This implies the belief, evidently, that human actions are determined

[1] *Cromwell. The French Revolution.*
[2] *England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth.*
[3] *The Norman Conquest. Conquest of the Saracens. Federal Government. Old English History.*
[4] *A Short History of the English People. The Making of England.*
[5] *Civilization in England.*
[6] *Rationalism. European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne. England in the Eighteenth Century.*

by natural causes — by influences which are palpable and ponderable; that men, as much as the acorn, are a physiological growth. That there is in this general view a large element of truth, is quite certain; but it excludes special and personal agencies. Hence arises the one-sidedness of the author, his exaggeration of physical considerations, his depreciation of moral ones. A not strange reaction from the credulous annalists and chroniclers, with whom the two forces of history were arbitrary,— individual volition and supernatural caprice. Never was a work, not fictitious, the subject of so much interest to minds so numerous and diverse. The world was startled into admiration by its bold assumptions, vigorous style, and vast reading. Only a fraction of the immense design was accomplished. 'My book, my book! I shall never finish my book!' was his dying lament. But the labor was not in vain. The effect was unmistakable. Seeds were dropped to germinate,— the fragment notes an epoch.

Buckle acquired the sudden brilliancy of the meteor, and has suffered an abatement of his lustre. **Lecky,** on the contrary, the truer philosopher, just, candid, liberal, and broad, always the historian, never the partisan,— is growing into the permanent illumination of the planet.

Bancroft's *United States*, thus far the standard, is accorded a high rank in the historical literature of the age. The labor of more than forty years, and still incomplete, it is far the most successful effort to reduce to order and beauty the chaotic materials of American history. His style combines the poetic and the philosophic, with a strong inclination to declamatory magnificence. Such a taste is liable to produce a historical romance, and to sacrifice accuracy for eloquence. It is dangerous, also, to that unity which, in the midst of complexity, we perceive or feel in the histories of such as Gibbon, Grote, and Macaulay.

For its research, freshness, flow, and finish, *the Rise of the Dutch Republic*, by **Motley** (1814–1877), was hailed as the dawn of a new star. It has attracted readers and translators only fewer than Prescott's. The promise given by this was at an early date fulfilled by its continuation, *The United Netherlands.* The faults of this eminent writer are an occasional redundance and a rather over-zealous partisanship; his merits — labor, patience, consistency, life-like representation — have inscribed his name

imperishably on the scroll of fame. A brief extract or two will give a fair idea of his vivid, pictorial style. He is speaking of the cathedral of Antwerp:

'The church, placed in the centre of the city, with the noisy streets of the busiest metropolis in Europe eddying around its walls, was a sacred island in the tumultuous main. Through the perpetual twilight, tall columnar trunks in thick profusion grew from a floor chequered with prismatic lights and sepulchral shadows. Each shaft of the petrified forest rose to a preternatural height, their many branches intermingling in the space above to form an impenetrable canopy. Foliage, flowers and fruit of colossal luxuriance; strange birds, beasts, griffins and chimeras in endless multitudes; the rank vegetation and the fantastic zoölogy of a fresher or fabulous world seemed to decorate and to animate the screened trunks and pendant branches; while the shattering symphonies or dying murmurs of the organ suggested the rushing of the wind through the forest,—now the full diapason of the storm, and now the gentle cadence of the evening breeze.'

And of the reforming fury of the image breakers:

'And now, as the shadows of night were deepening the perpetual twilight of the church, the work of destruction commenced. Instead of vespers rose the fierce music of a psalm yelled by a thousand angry voices. It seemed the preconcerted signal for a general attack. A band of marauders flew upon the image of the Virgin, dragged it forth from its receptacle, plunged daggers into its inanimate body, tore off its jewelled and embroidered garments, broke the whole figure into a thousand pieces, and scattered the fragments along the floor. A wild shout succeeded, and then the work, which seemed delegated to a comparatively small number of the assembled crowd, went on with incredible celerity. Some were armed with axes, some with bludgeons, some with sledge-hammers, others brought ladders, pulleys, ropes, and levers. Every statue was hurled from its niche, every picture torn from the wall, every painted window shivered to atoms, every ancient monument shattered, every sculptured decoration, however inaccessible in appearance, hurled to the ground. Indefatigably, audaciously, endowed, as it seemed, with preternatural strength and nimbleness, these furious iconoclasts clambered up the dizzy heights, shrieking and chattering like malignant apes, as they tore off in triumph the slowly-matured fruit of centuries. In a space of time wonderfully brief they had accomplished their task.'

Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe* must take its place among the valuable contributions of the age to the philosophy of history. It is intended to demonstrate *a posteriori* that human life, collective and individual, is subject to the dominion of law. Varieties of antecedent and concomitant conditions determine social advancement: and its stages—the same for the miniature man as for a nation—are the Age of Credulity, the Age of Inquiry, the Age of Faith, the Age of Reason, and the Age of Decrepitude. We are thus reminded of Buckle and of Comte, with their one-sided accumulation of facts, and their fatalistic views of causation.

We are also reminded of the two-fold evil of physical study, when made exclusive—the disposition to reduce all facts of

intelligence to phenomena of matter, and to resolve all existence into mechanism.[1]

Theology.—We live in an age of unsparing research, an age in which rapidity of transition is a marked feature, an age in which alterations are being wrought, by numerous and subtle forces, upon current beliefs. The changing spirit of the times — so far as it has a rationalistic drift — may be represented by churchmen like Maurice, Newman, Kingsley, Stanley, Martineau; by transcendentalists like Carlyle and Emerson; by speculative thinkers like Spencer and Mill; by refined physicists like Tyndall and Huxley; by advanced critics like Froude, Arnold, Müller, and Lecky. Some of these, it will be understood, are merely liberal; some are in the line of materialism, but will not be called materialists; others are moderate or intermediate sceptics, giving the precedence to Reason when the alternative is Reason or Revelation; all, directly or indirectly, promotive doubtless of the effort of man to rise higher in the apprehension of the Infinite, to descend deeper into the eternal ground of things.

Let three of them exhibit the prominent attitudes of cultured Free Thought. We are told by **J. S. Mill** that 'in the present state of our knowledge the adaptations in nature afford a large balance of probability in favor of creation by intelligence'; that miracles — which it were better to call wonders — are not of the character to convince eye-witnesses, but may be explicable by natural law yet undiscovered; that it can only be hoped, not scientifically believed, that Jesus is a divine messenger; that of the origin of Christianity we know nothing more than that 'God made provision in the scheme of creation for its arising at the appointed time by natural development'; that 'familiarity of the imagination with the conception of a morally perfect Being, and the habit of taking the approbation of such a Being as the standard of conduct,' is a benefit precious beyond calculation to mankind; that,—

'The indulgence of hope with regard to the government of the universe and the destiny of man after death, while we recognize as a clear truth that we have no ground for more than hope, is legitimate, and philosophically defensible. The beneficial effect of such a hope is far from trifling. It makes life and human nature a far greater thing

[1] Two literary historians in this country must be regarded as doing honor to the literature of our mother-tongue,—Ticknor and Tyler; the one in his *Spanish Literature*, the other in his *American Literature*; both enthusiastic in research, both vigorous and vivid in style, with a sustained moral dignity that not seldom rises to eloquence.

to the feelings, and gives greater strength, as well as greater solemnity, to all the sentiments which are awakened in us by our fellow-creatures and by mankind at large.'

Finally, that the standard of excellence in Christ, held up to believers as a model for imitation, is a gift of inestimable value which can never be lost:

'About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which, if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this preëminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon the earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life. When to this we add that to the conception of the rational sceptic, it remains a possibility that Christ actually was what he supposed himself to be,—not God, for he never made the smallest pretension to that character, and would probably have thought such a pretension as blasphemous as it seemed to the men who condemned him,—but a man charged with a special, express, and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue, we may well conclude that the influences of religion on the character which will remain after rational criticism has done its utmost against the evidences of religion, are well worth preserving, and that what they lack in direct strength, as compared with those of a firmer belief, is more than compensated by the greater truth and rectitude of the morality they sanction.'

Lecky defines the position of a large class of rationalists, when he says of their profession:

'It regards Christianity as designed to preside over the moral development of mankind, as a conception which was to become more and more sublimated and spiritualized as the human mind passed into new phases, and was able to bear the splendour of a more unclouded light. Religion it believes to be no exception to the general law of progress, but rather the highest form of its manifestation, and its earlier systems but the necessary steps of an imperfect development. In its eyes the moral element of Christianity is as the sun in heaven, and dogmatic systems are as the clouds that intercept and temper the exceeding brightness of its ray. The insect whose existence is but for a moment might well imagine that these were indeed eternal, that their majestic columns could never fail, and that their luminous folds were the very source and centre of light. And yet they shift and vary with each changing breeze; they blend and separate; they assume new forms and exhibit new dimensions; as the sun that is above them waxes more glorious in its power, they are permeated and at last absorbed by its increasing splendour; they recede, and wither, and disappear, and the eye ranges far beyond the sphere they had occupied into the infinity of glory that is above them. Any one who has attentively examined that great school, which exercises so vast an influence over the literature and policy of our age, must have perceived that it is in many respects widely removed from the old Voltairean spirit. It is no longer exclusively negative and destructive, but is, on the contrary, intensely positive, and in its moral aspect intensely Christian. It clusters around a series of essentially Christian conceptions,—equality, fraternity, the suppression of war, the elevation of the poor, the love of truth, and the diffusion of liberty. It revolves around the ideal of Christianity, and represents its spirit without its dogmatic system, and its supernatural narratives. From both of these it unhesitatingly recoils, while deriving all its strength and nourishment from Christian ethics.'

Next to Carlyle, **Emerson** presents the highest type of the antagonism which literature assumes towards the Christian faith. A lover of the truth, who will not commit his trust to the limits of any formula, he says:

'I am glad to hear each sect complain that they do not now hold the opinions they are charged with. The earth moves and the mind opens. I am glad to believe society contains a class of humble souls who enjoy the luxury of a religion that does not degrade; who think it the highest worship to expect of Heaven the most and best; who do not wonder there was a Christ, but there were not a thousand; who have conceived an infinite hope for mankind; who believe that the history of Jesus is the history of every man, written large.'

And these are the 'excelsior' heights which he sees from afar in the empyrean:

'There will be a new church founded on moral science, at first cold and naked, a babe in the manger again, the algebra and mathematics of ethical law, the church of men to come, without shawms or psaltery or sackbut; but it will have heaven and earth for its beams and rafters; science for symbol and illustration; it will fast enough gather beauty, music, picture, poetry. Was never stoicism so stern and exigent as this shall be. It shall send man home to his central solitude, shame these social supplicating manners, and make him know that much of the time he must have himself to his friend. He shall expect no coöperation, he shall walk with no companion. The nameless thought, the nameless Power, the super-personal Heart,—he shall repose alone on that.'

With this partial introductory survey of influences, we may now offer some general reflections on their spirit, significance and effect:

1. It cannot escape observation that unbelief, the extreme of dissent, has the characteristic of present thought — increased moral earnestness. It is far more sincere, discriminating, and just, than formerly. Instead of revelling in the ruin which it effects, it confesses with pain its inevitable conflict with human aspirations, and bewails the impossibility of solving the enigma. It has a deeper appreciation of the system it protests against or assails, and, not destructive only, it aims to be reconstructive. The difference lies in the more subjective and spiritual tone which has passed into every department of mental activity, which lifts even the man of science — as in the noble instance of Tyndall — above the grovelling idea that facts are to be sought solely for the purpose of utility.

2. It must be clear that the history of religious ideas has been an onward process of development. Theology, for example, has abandoned the geocentric theory of the universe, which there once seemed plenty of texts to support. It no longer combats the discoveries of geology which have renovated and transformed

the six-day interpretations of Genesis. Death and pain, once believed with unfaltering assurance to be the fruit of disobedience in Paradise, are acknowledged to have raged and revelled on the globe ages before it was trodden by man. The alarm over evolution, once considered subversive of the Bible, has subsided in the gradual conviction that the question at bottom is one of method, and that Darwinism needs a God as much as does the old view. Witchcraft, to disbelieve which was once the eccentricity of the few, has passed into the region of fables. The old-fashioned doctrinal sermon has almost totally disappeared. Hell-fire, once deemed fundamental, has become a metaphor. The words 'eternal punishment' stand; but in how many ways are they defined? The God of wrath is displaced by the God of love, whose judgments are meant only for correction. Would you realize how completely the aspect and complexion of religion have altered, consider your feelings as you read the following passage from *The Sight of Hell*, a tract 'for children and young persons,' by a priest of the Roman church, who, living in the present, is still in the bondage of the Middle Ages:

'See, on the middle of that red-hot floor stands a girl; she looks about sixteen years old. Her feet are bare. She has neither shoes nor stockings. . . . Listen! she speaks. She says, "I have been standing on this red-hot floor for years. Day and night my only standing-place has been this red-hot floor. . . . Look at my burnt and bleeding feet. Let me go off this burning floor for one moment, only for one single short moment." . . . The fourth dungeon is the boiling kettle . . . in the middle of it there is a boy. . . . His eyes are burning like two burning coals. Two long flames come out of his ears. . . . Sometimes he opens his mouth, and blazing fire rolls out. But listen! there is a sound like a kettle boiling. . . . The blood is boiling in the scalded veins of that boy. The brain is boiling and bubbling in his head. The marrow is boiling in his bones. . . . The fifth dungeon is the red-hot oven. . . . The little child is in this red-hot oven. Hear how it screams to come out. See how it turns and twists itself about in the fire. It beats itself against the roof of the oven. It stamps its little feet on the floor. . . . God was very good to this child. Very likely God saw it would get worse and worse, and would never repent, and so it would have to be punished much more in hell. So God in His mercy called it out of the world in its early childhood.'

Consider the surprise, the repugnance, the horror which these infamous sentences now excite; yet consider again how perfectly they harmonize with the realizations of rather more than two hundred years ago, when even the latitudinarian and impassioned Taylor could write:

'Alexander, the son of Hyrcanus, caused eight hundred to be crucified, and whilst they were yet alive caused their wives and children to be murdered before their eyes, so that they might not die once, but many deaths. This rigour shall not be wanting in hell. . . . Mezentius tied a living body to the dead until the putrefied exhalations of the dead

had killed the living. . . . What is this in respect of hell, when each body of the damned is more loathsome and unsavoury than a million of dead dogs? . . . What comparison will there be between burning for an hundred years' space, and to be burning without interruption as long as God is God?'

3. To suppose religion endangered by these changes, or future ones, is altogether misleading. As the satisfaction of an ineradicable want, it is deathless. Only the visible body waxes old as a garment. The vital element is indestructible, growing with the race and revealing itself. The dogma perishes; the intuition — the instinct of devotion — can never die. Transition is the sign of life. The 'increasing purpose' of the ages, by the orderly processes of natural law, brings ever to the front fresh modifications of belief. Without change, no expansion. To be perfect is to have changed often.

Ethics.—It accords with the hard, Philistine temper of the age, that the utilitarian school of morals and politics should be at present extremely influential in England. Spencer and Bain are prominent names, but **John Stuart Mill** has done more to popularize and spread it than any other of its members. His father, stern and repellant, was an uncompromising disciple of Bentham. 'He resembled,' says the son, 'most Englishmen in being ashamed of the signs of feeling, and by the absence of demonstration starved the feelings themselves.' 'His entering the room where the family was assembled, was observed by strangers to operate as an immediate damper.' He resolved so to educate his son that he should be 'a worthy successor.' 'In all his teaching he demanded of me not only the utmost I could do, but much that I could by no possibility have done.' The child began Greek at the age of three, by means of 'lists of common Greek words, with their signification in English,' written out for him on cards by his father. At eight he had read the *Anabasis*, the *Memorabilia*, part of Lucian, two orations of Isocrates, and six dialogues of Plato. In addition to this, lessons in arithmetic in the evening; then, according to his taste, the histories of Robertson, Hume, Gibbon, Hooke, or the *Annual Register*. At twelve he was put upon a severe course of logic, beginning with Aristotle's *Organon*, followed by the *Computatio* of Hobbes. As he read and studied, he made notes on slips of paper for the daily report required to be given, while father and son took their morning walk. Already, at seven, in the composition of a brief Roman

history, he had made his *début* in authorship. Is it a matter of wonder, after such an education, that this man should be true to the theoretical convictions in which he had been drilled? Is it surprising that he should define happiness to be 'the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge of all human conduct'? Here is the formal statement:

'The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals, utility or the greatest happiness principle, holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness.'

If it be observed, as a fact, that virtue is often desired for its own sake, the explanation is:

'We gradually, through the influence of association, come to desire the means without thinking of the end; the action itself becomes an object of desire, and is performed without reference to any motive beyond itself. Thus far, it may still be objected that the action having, through association, become pleasurable, we are as much as before moved to act by the anticipation of pleasure, namely, the pleasure of the action itself. But granting this, the matter does not end here. As we proceed in the formation of habits, and become accustomed to will a particular act . . . because it is pleasurable, we at last continue to will it without any reference to its being pleasurable.'

Very plausible, but no essential modification of Hartley's doctrine of association, and — we need not further argue — unable to account for the unique and preëminent position which mankind have assigned to virtue. The principle is the same, but the spirit has altered. We have travelled far since we left Hobbes. The main object was then to depress human nature by resolving the noblest deeds into gross elements; the main object is now to sublimate conceptions of happiness so as to include the highest displays of heroism. Bentham held that nothing but self-interest would 'serve for diet,' though, 'for a dessert, benevolence is a very valuable addition'; Mill affirms that even hygienic precepts should be inculcated, not chiefly on prudential grounds, but because 'by squandering our health, we disable ourselves from rendering services to our fellow-creatures.' Not less significant is the position, that 'the mind is not in a state conformable to utility, unless it loves virtue as a thing desirable in itself.' Rather conciliatory, and very gratifying. At this rate there will soon be no quarrel (because so slight difference) between utilitarian and intuitive moralists. Still more important are the concessions that there is a distinction of *kind* in pleasures, and that human action may have 'its æsthetic aspect, or that of its beauty.' We remember, however, that his boyish fancy revelled,

when permitted, in *Robinson Crusoe, Arabian Nights*, and *Don Quixote;* that he was often mentally depressed, as if the spirit were struggling to rend the bonds which had been laid upon it; that he found genuine comfort in the poetry of Wordsworth; that he himself had a poetic temperament, starved in the training; that of his dead wife he has said, 'her memory is to me a religion, and her approbation the standard by which, summing up as it does all worthiness, I endeavor to regulate my life';—then we see that the foundation of him is the ideal; that utilitarianism only separates him from the ethical idealism to which his inmost self is inclined; that the beauty of his style, the admissions (inconsistent with his method) into which he is frequently betrayed by his sympathy with the spiritual, are the overflowings of the ideal nature, which transcends the boundaries vainly set for it. Therefore is he better than his logic.

> 'Below the surface stream, shallow and light,
> Of what we say we feel; below the stream,
> As light, of what we think we feel,—there flows,
> With noiseless current strong, obscure and deep,
> The central stream of what we feel indeed.'

We quote once more:

> 'The contest between the morality which appeals to an external standard, and that which grounds itself on internal conviction, is the contest of progressive against stationary morality, of reason and argument against the deification of mere opinion and habit.'

Nothing, as we have before had occasion to explain, could be more fallacious. That the standard of duty may become progressively higher is fully admitted; but the change is only a development. The moral idea is original and underived; circumstances determine the nature and range of its application. In itself immutable, the future will but give it a grander sweep.

The opposite system of morals is represented by the learned **Whewell,** the judicial **Lecky,** and the brilliant **Martineau.**

Forty years ago Tocqueville declared:

> 'The Americans do not read the works of Descartes, because their social condition deters them from speculative studies; but they follow his maxims, because this very social condition naturally disposes their understanding to adopt them.'

He concluded that the Americans display more readiness and taste for general ideas than their transatlantic forefathers, because democratic institutions tend to expand and dilate thought, and to suggest the indefinite perfectibility of man. Be this how it may, our foremost speculative thinkers — as **Bascom, Haven,**

Hickok, McCosh, and **Porter** — are of the intuitive school. Here, where men are immersed in love of coal, steam, and electricity, absorbed in pursuit of the means,— worshipping the machinery, losing sight of the ends,— it is reassuring to hear a voice like this:

> 'There is an awful sanctuary in every immortal spirit, and man needs nothing more than to exclude all else, and stand alone before himself, to be made conscious of an authority he can neither dethrone nor delude. From its approbation comes self-respect; from its disapprobation comes self-contempt. A stern behest is ever upon him that he do nothing to degrade the real dignity of his spiritual being. He is a law to himself, and has both the judge and executioner within himself, and inseparable from him.'

Science.— Perhaps the distinguishing characteristic of the age is, that it draws, far more largely than heretofore, upon experiment as a means of arriving at truth, while the knowledge thus acquired is applied to art and investigation with a freedom and boldness hitherto unknown. The innovations thus made upon other modes of thought are without parallel. New direction has been given to inquiry and aspiration. Gifted intellects have been diverted from poetry,— from the search for the ideal to the search for the real. We have seen how profoundly historical method has been influenced by the conception of order. Metaphysicians study the nervous system, and speak of the *dynamics* of mind. All departments have the scientific coloring,— the widened survey of man and of nature.

The highest generalization of science is development,—development from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the general to the special, from the simple to the complex. This process is considered by Spencer to be traceable 'in the formation of the worlds in space, in the multiplication of the types and species of plants and animals on the globe, in the organization and diversity of languages, . . . and in all the changes of human institutions and society.' Evolution,— theistic, not atheistic,— once opposed by naturalists themselves, and still contested by some, may almost be regarded as an established law. In biology, it was famously reinforced in 1859 by **Darwin's** (1809–1882) *Origin of Species*, and in 1871 by his *Descent of Man.* The former, though it may be tracked in the snow of the ancients, was the first elaborate essay to explain the mode in which the alleged progressive transmutation of organic bodies from the lowest to the highest has been conducted. 'Darwinism' passed

into current use as expressing a strong theory of the differentiation of species,—a proposed solution of the problem *how* animals and plants came to have the structure and habits that characterize them as distinct classes. Organisms multiply so rapidly that, were all to live, there would be neither room enough nor subsistence. Each struggles to adapt itself to the constantly altering condition of its environment. Each, in this manner, is slowly modified in its natural state, as a rose or a dog under artificial cultivation and breeding. Each resembles its parents in generic points, but varies in particulars:

'Amid the struggle for existence which has been always going on among living beings, variations of bodily conformation and structure, if in any degree profitable to an individual of any species, will tend to the preservation of that individual, and will generally be inherited by its offspring.'

In the battle for life, the strong prevail, the weak die,—those least adapted to the situation giving way before those better adapted; and this is Darwin's celebrated principle of Natural Selection, or 'survival of the fittest.' Tragical and depressing in some of its aspects, sublime and poetical in others:

'It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being growth with reproduction; inheritance, which is almost implied by reproduction; variability from the indirect and direct action of the conditions of life, and from use and disuse; a ratio of increase so high as to lead to a struggle for life, and as a consequence to natural selection, entailing divergence of character and the extinction of less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving—namely, the production of the higher animals—directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed laws of gravity, from so simple a beginning, endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved.'

Every full-orbed soul feels the uplift of the ideal. **Tyndall** (1820–), in recasting the definitions of matter and force, illustrates the ground-idea of man, which, though restricted, has a movable boundary, and tends ever outward into the illimitable. 'These evolution notions,' he exclaims, 'are absurd, monstrous, and fit only for the intellectual gibbet, *in relation to the ideas concerning matter which were drilled into us when young.*' There is, he decides, but one substance; not matter as vulgarly understood, nor yet spirit, but the original of both, possessing

therefore a physical and a spiritual side. Hence 'matter is essentially mystical and transcendental.' 'Emotion, intellect, will, and all their phenomena, were once latent in a fiery cloud.' Again:

'Supposing that, in youth, we had been impregnated with the notion of the poet Goethe, instead of the notion of the poet Young, looking at matter not as brute matter, but as the *living garment of God*, is it not probable that our repugnance to the idea of primeval union between spirit and matter might be considerably abated?'[1]

Bain (1818–) is more explicit: 'The arguments for the two substances have, we believe, now entirely lost their validity. The one substance with two sets of properties, two sides,—the physical and the mental,—*a double-faced unity*, would appear to comply with all the exigencies of the case.'

As often as supposed isolated phenomena have been seen to occupy fixed places in invariable sequences, they have been regarded as accounted for and explained, without recourse to the volition of superior beings, who, to such extent, have retired from participation in the world's affairs. Hence science has seemed to antagonize the religious sentiment. But no fundamental belief is possibly in danger. The concessions of **Huxley** (1825–), added to the utterances of Tyndall, should compose the popular apprehension:

'The properties of living matter distinguish it absolutely from all other kinds of things; and the present state of knowledge furnishes us with no link between the living and the not-living.'

Nothing has been found to bridge the chasm between the inorganic and the organic. Minuteness of change does not account for the introduction of a new principle. Life must have been put originally into the series from which it is at last evolved. In other words, it must be admitted that a supernatural act, directly or indirectly, originated life in the primordial cell.

'Has matter more than motion? has it thought,
Judgment, and genius? is it deeply learn'd
In mathematics? has it framed such laws
Which but to guess, a Newton made immortal?
If so, how each sage atom laughs at me
Who think a clod inferior to a man:
If art to form, and counsel to direct,
And that which greater far than human skill,
Resides not in each block,—a god-head reigns.'

Be not frightened with a word. 'Reign of law' can mean nothing

[1] *Fragments of Science.*

more than the universal prevalence of methodical succession. When events are said to 'come by law,' they are explained scientifically, not exhaustively. You gain no further insight into why the apple falls when you say that it does so by the force of gravitation. You are merely able, by this expression, most usefully to relate it to other phenomena, as the fall of a rose-leaf and the velocities of comets. Molecular groupings, molecular motions, explain nothing. Rarely is our patience so severely tried as by the flippant blasphemy of those arrogant scientists (or scientific *attachés*) who inscribe on their banners, 'full high advanced,' *No faith, Believe nothing.* Science, that can catalogue the stars, calculate eclipses, girdle the globe with lightning, and send your messages upon flaming wings, is impotent, with all her vaunted resources, to produce one fibre of a blade of grass, to tell the cause of one vein in the radiant tracery of a flower, or approximate to the most distant definition of what thought may really be. Let a poet rebuke, with an emphasis of far-reaching instinct, the audacious materialist:

> 'Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies;
> Hold you here in my hand,
> Little flower, root and all.
> And if I could understand
> What you are, roots and all, and all in all,
> I should know what God and man is.'[1]

Philosophy.—As the dominant ethics is utilitarian, so the dominant psychology is empirical or sensational. First among the representatives of the latter school are Mill, Lewes, Spencer, and Bain. They have powerful auxiliaries in Tyndall and Huxley, who are not philosophers, but scientists. All our knowledge comes primarily from the senses. All our ideas — as of right and wrong, truth and beauty, duty and honor — are derived from experience. If any are admittedly in the mind, yet admittedly beyond experience, they are pronounced delusive. Nothing is true necessarily and *a priori.* The only certitude is that we have such and such impressions. You are convinced that two parallel lines cannot meet, that a part is less than the whole; but it might be otherwise in the universities of the Dog-Star. Some boldly resolve all thought into the mere action of nervous cen-

[1] Tennyson.

tres, induced by purely physical forces. Others identify the *laws* of matter and mind. Some, like **Spencer,** unlike **Mill,** adopt the Hamiltonian test of belief — the inconceivableness of the opposite, the inability to think a given proposition false. All decline to recognize intuitive elements. Space and time are evolved from sensation, though themselves the conditions of sensation. Causation means invariable antecedence, though it must be evident that no phenomenon comes into existence *because* another phenomenon precedes. Precedence is but the *sign* of antecedent *efficiency*. As a class, they reduce the idea of the Infinite to a mere negation, an impotency. If there are feelings which spring up in an unknown way by means of association, these in turn generate no reality. Ask what assurance you have for your highest hopes, and the reply is, *Whence gravitation?* They will utter no profession of faith, but leave you on a wide sea of conjecture — in the open polar zone —

> 'To starve in ice,
> Immovable, infixed, and frozen round.'

This is the principle employed by the subtlest form of infidelity to-day,—that man knows nothing except appearances or relations between things unknown. Its logical issue is *Agnosticism,*[1] and this is its final message 'unto men':

> 'An immense solitary spectre waits:
> It has no shape, it has no sound; it has
> No place, it has no time; it is, and was,
> And will be; it is never more nor less,
> Nor glad nor sad. Its name is Nothingness.
> Power walketh high; and misery doth crawl;
> And the clepsydron drips; and the sands fall
> Down in the hour-glass; and the shadows sweep
> Around the dial; and men wake and sleep,
> Live, strive, regret, forget, and love, and hate,
> And know it. This spectre saith, I wait,
> And at the last it beckons, and they pass;
> And still the red sands fall within the glass,
> And still the shades around the dial sweep;
> And still the water-clock doth drip and weep.
> And this is all.'

The soul, like the bare and rayless moon, is left with only its rocks and its extinct volcanoes. Contemplating, in this darkness, the perpetual struggle for existence, it plunges into a lower deep, —*Pessimism*, the religion of the Unconscious, the philosophy of despair, whose end is the Byronic wail:

[1] A contradiction in terms. We know, if only it be in knowing that we do not know.

'Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free;
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better — not to be.'

True, possibly, when you mistake the meaning of pleasure and the object of life, which, as we shall forever insist, is not to derive the greatest enjoyment, but —

'To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.'

Against this materialistic drift there have been protests. Poetry attests the strength and continuity of the supernatural. The satire that covers with ridicule the revived doctrine of Lucretius voices the imperishable instinct which refuses to abide in a vacuum or to accept a stone when it asks for bread:

'From floating elements in chaos hurled,
Self-formed of atoms, sprang the infant world.
No great First Cause inspired the happy plot,
But all was matter,— and no matter what,—
Atoms attracted by some law occult,
Settling in spheres,— this globe was the result.
I sing how casual bricks, in airy climb,
Encountered casual cow-hair, casual lime;
How rafters, borne through wondering clouds elate,
Kissed in their slope blue elemental slate,
Clasped solid beams in chance-directed fury,
And gave to birth our renovated Drury.'[1]

The spiritual and inner, as distinguished from the exterior and carnal, find impassioned expression in Carlyle. Stirling, Martineau, and others, promise not a little in the way of qualifying favorably the metaphysics of Britain. The chief resistance has been offered by the hereditary moral tone. It is this that has made the name of *materialist* opprobrious,— a designation which few of the school are now willing to accept. The effort to spiritualize matter proves their reluctance, as well as the existence of a higher nature, which will not allow them to rest satisfied in their creed. They incline to say with Huxley, 'If I were compelled to choose, I do not know whether I should express the facts of nature in terms of matter or terms of spirit.'

In America, admiring Tyndall discovers an authority in Dr. Draper, and Spencer has an accomplished expounder in Fiske; but materialism, on the whole, has little acceptance. Its entrance and progress have been opposed by the Concord transcendentalists,— **Emerson** and his associates; by our foremost scientists,

[1] *Rejected Addresses;* on the rebuilding of Drury Lane Theatre.

as Winchell, Gray, and Agassiz; by the entire class of metaphysicians, as **McCosh, Porter,** and **Bascom**; above all, by the religious sentiment, by democratic tastes which tend to create a more flowing and aspiring type of thought.

But the scientific current, as we before intimated, is moving more or less all schools of thought. Scientific methods are introduced into all parts of philosophical speculation.[1] Theories of mental processes which despise or ignore the disclosures of physiology and natural history, cannot hope to receive favor. The mistake is in making physiological investigation the sole or chief guide. All its achievements have only illuminated the old statement that soul and body are here intimately related. 'The problem of the connection of soul and body,' says Tyndall, 'is as insolvable in its modern form as it was in the pre-scientific ages.' No light has been shed upon the arcana of intellect and volition; nor can there be, by exclusive approaches from the outside. No sage of physical wisdom can bring word of solace or vision of peace to the troubled and weary who ask:

> 'Canst thou not minister to a *mind* diseased,
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
> Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
> And by some sweet oblivious antidote
> Cleanse the stuffed bosom of the perilous stuff
> Which weighs upon the heart?'

Résumé.—The many, growing intelligent, guide the world. The universal tendency is towards popular institutions. Government, it is now understood, exists not for the pomp or pleasure of a few, but for the good, the safety, the rights of all. Education becomes the work of nations. In religion, the tone of authority gives place to reason and persuasion. An enlarged and trustful philanthropy springs up amidst the prevalence of selfishness and crime. Benevolence gathers its armies. Beyond all former experience, evil awakens antagonistic effort. Woman becomes an evangelist. In one age a drudge, in another a toy, the inspirations of her genius, through the agency of the press, are now felt far and wide. Literature of an increasingly high order, sends its light into cottages. Discoveries and theories, once the monopoly of philosophers, become the property of the

[1] Notably illustrated in Mr. Bascom's late work, *Science of Mind.*

multitude. Science, passing, beyond precedent, from speculation into life, confers dominion over earth, sea, and air.

In bulk and quality of productiveness, the supremacy passes to prose. In historical labors the period is rich. The leading characteristics here are fulness of treatment, vividness of style, depth of insight, breadth of generalization. Fiction and journalism are preponderant. The newspaper addresses every age, class, and calling. Essayists of various schools,—Positive, Æsthetic, Agnostic, Satiric,—keep historical, religious, and social dogmas in perpetual agitation. A pronounced feature is literary criticism; not seldom false and malicious in fact, but fearless, flexible, ardent, cosmopolitan in tendency, seeking to find and propagate the best that is known and thought. The novel, pictorial and ethical, realistic and ideal, is cultivated with preëminent assiduity and success. From Scott to George Eliot it has been, in fruitfulness and favor, what the drama was to Elizabethan times. The number of singers is prodigious, but the great are few, and none reaches the level of the voices whose earlier music we have heard. As the average in every other department is higher, so never, on the whole, was so much good poetry produced; yet is it rather the literature of culture than the literature of power. It has exactness, finish, art, but lacks spontaneousness and glow. Taste has changed, inspiration has declined, the practical temper is dominant. Theological thought, whose controversies are the phases of its evolution, proves in the perpetual vicissitude of forms, the continuity and development of its spirit. Philosophy is disparaged. Its prevailing drift is on the side of material rather than spiritual interests. Aspiration that looks for guidance, finds it, not in the regular metaphysicians, but in the moral teachers,—Wordsworth, Carlyle, Emerson.

Not many years ago it was said in England that no one ever read an American book. Recently, in an address at the opening of Birmingham Library, Bright, the English statesman, dwelt particularly on the growth and importance of American literature. We have attained our majority. The bonds of foreign fashion are broken. Our excellences are being accorded candid recognition. We are less frequently reminded of our immaturity. Critics of the old country are dropping the aristocratic

hauteur with which they were wont to bear down upon the writers and thinkers of the new. Some of the ablest English scholars, on the contrary, express a preference to publish originally in American periodicals. Bryant, Whittier, Longfellow, Emerson, and Hawthorne, are the leaders of the select band who have signed the declaration of intellectual independence, and are raising the nation above the 'rustic murmur' of provincial life into 'the great wave that echoes round the world.'

Two important characteristics of the day merit emphasis. One is the activity and universality of scientific influence. The idea of law has been so extended and generalized as to dwarf its former proportions. It is diffused throughout the mental atmosphere, and powerfully affects every department of thought. Again, literature, English and American, is distinguished by a profounder moral consciousness than ever before, a greater delicacy of analysis, a deeper ground of sentiment and reflection. High and low run the race of accumulation, but human interest circles with growing appreciation about the moral man,—his origin, his possibilities, his aspirations, his destiny.

DICKENS.

We doubt whether there has ever been a writer of fiction who took such a real and loving interest in the world about him.—*Sir Arthur Helps.*

Biography.—Born at Landport, in 1812, second in a family of eight; at two, was brought to London, but soon removed to Chatham, where he lived till the age of nine. Here, debarred from boyish sports by a delicate constitution, he sought the companionship of books:

'My father had left a small collection of books in a little room up-stairs to which I had access, and which nobody else in our house ever troubled. From that blessed little room, "Roderick Random," "Peregrine Pickle," "Humphrey Clinker," "Tom Jones," "Vicar of Wakefield," "Don Quixote," "Gil Blas," and "Robinson Crusoe," came out, a glorious host, to keep me company. They kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time.'[1]

From Chatham back to London, where his father was imprisoned for debt. By degrees the furniture was sold or pawned, the

[1] *David Copperfield.*

library with the rest; and the boy, weakly and sensitive, was put to work in a blacking-house at six or seven shillings a week, his occupation being to cover the blacking-pots with paper. He has described his sense of degradation, which grew larger and more ghastly in the retrospect:

'No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship: compared these every-day associates with those of my happier childhood; and felt my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man crushed in my breast. The deep remembrance of the sense I had of being utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my position; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe that, day by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing away from me, never to be brought back any more, cannot be written.'

The family resources improving, he was sent to school, where 'the boys trained white mice much better than the master trained the boys'; at fifteen, an office-lad to attorneys, then a student of short-hand, frequenting the British Museum and reading diligently. 'Pray, Mr. Dickens,' said a friend to the father, 'where was your son educated?' 'Why, indeed, sir — ha, ha! — he may be said to have educated himself.' In a similar strain, Weller in *Pickwick* speaks of his hopeful Sam: 'I took a good deal o' pains with his eddication, sir; let him run in the streets when he was wery young, and shift for his-self.' At nineteen, in the Gallery of the House of Commons, where he was quickly acknowledged the best of eighty or ninety reporters. Three years later, having ventured one evening to drop a story into the letter-box of the *Old Monthly Magazine*, he saw himself in print. 'On which occasion I walked down to Westminster Hall, and turned into it for half an hour, because my eyes were so dimmed with joy and pride that they could not bear the street, and were not fit to be seen there.' Other sketches followed, signed 'Boz'; and in 1836 these were collected into two volumes,— his first work, the copyright of which was sold for one hundred and fifty pounds, and shortly repurchased for two thousand pounds! On the thirty-first of March he began the *Pickwick Papers;* on the second of April, married; in August, quit the Reporter's Gallery, and entered literature as a profession. Travelled in the Highlands, visited Switzerland and the United States, resided in Italy and France, engaged in public readings from his novels, and in this way alone gained forty thousand pounds in Britain and America. Health declined, but love of money and love of applause urged

him on, till at last he was stricken with apoplexy, and died in a state of unconsciousness on the evening of the ninth of June, 1870. Though he had desired to be laid quietly in the old church-yard amidst the scenes that were dear to memory, the national cemetery claimed him, and he was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Writings.—It was the mission of Dickens as an artist to give a masterly realism to the good and ill of every-day life. *Oliver Twist* is the story of a child born in a workhouse and brought up by the parish, thrown amid scenes of vice, wretchedness, and misery, yet preserved from pollution by an exquisite delicacy and strength of natural sentiment. Call it a series of pictures,—portraits of associates in crime, who forever skulk uneasily, with the ghastly gallows closing up their prospect. Here is the ruffian Sykes, who has horribly murdered a trusted girl that betrayed him:

'The sun — the bright sun, that brings back, not light alone, but new life, and hope, and freshness to man—burst upon the crowded city in clear and radiant glory. Through costly colored glass and paper-mended window, through cathedral dome and rotten crevice it shed its equal ray. It lighted up the room where the murdered woman lay. It did. He tried to shut it out, but it would stream in. If the sight had been a ghastly one in the dull morning, what was it now, in all that brilliant light!

He had not moved; he had been afraid to stir. There had been a moan and motion of the hand; and, with terror added to rage, he had struck and struck again. Once he threw a rug over it: but it was to fancy the eyes, and imagine them moving toward him, then to see them glaring upward, as if watching the reflection of the pool of gore that quivered and danced in the sunlight on the ceiling. He had plucked it off again. And there was the body—mere flesh and blood, no more — but such flesh, and so much blood!

He struck a light, kindled a fire, and thrust the club into it. There was hair upon the end, which blazed and shrunk into a light cinder, and, caught by the air, whirled up the chimney. Even that frightened him, sturdy as he was; but he held the weapon till it broke, and then piled it on the coals to burn away, and smoulder into ashes. He washed himself, and rubbed his clothes: there were spots that would not be removed, but he cut the pieces out, and burnt them. How those stains were dispersed about the room!'

In vain he flies, hither and thither, from memory and himself. The very children seem to view him with suspicion. Waking or sleeping, the dreadful vision is before him,—the room with its familiar contents, each well-known object in its accustomed place; above all, the widely staring eyes, so lustreless and so glassy:

'He went on doggedly; but as he left the town behind him, and plunged into the solitude and darkness of the road, he felt a dread and awe creeping upon him which shook him to the core. Every object before him, substance or shadow, still or moving, took the semblance of some fearful thing; but these fears were nothing compared to the sense that haunted him of that morning's ghastly figure following at his heels. He could trace its shadow in the gloom, supply the smallest item of the outline, and note how stiff and solemn it seemed to stalk along. He could hear its garments rustling in the leaves;

and every breath of wind came laden with that last low cry. If he stopped, it did the same. If he ran, it followed—not running too; that would have been a relief; but like a corpse endowed with the mere machinery of life, and borne on the slow melancholy wind that never rose or fell.

At times, he turned, with desperate determination, resolved to beat this phantom off, though it should look him dead; but the hair rose on his head, and his blood stood still: for it had turned with him and was behind him then. He had kept it before him that morning, but it was behind him now—always. He leaned his back against a bank, and felt that it stood above him, visibly out against the cold night-sky. He threw himself upon the road—on his back upon the road. *At his head it stood, silent, erect, and still—a living gravestone, with its epitaph in blood.*'

Since Shakespeare there has been no such depicture—so lucid and so powerful. Fagin, the abhorred Jew, overwhelmed by a sense of the grave that opens at his feet, has heard mechanically, like a marble figure, the sentence that dooms him to die, and, hurried to one of the condemned cells, is left—alone:

'He sat down on a stone bench opposite the door, which served for seat and bedstead; and casting his bloodshot eyes upon the ground, tried to collect his thoughts. After a while he began to remember a few disjointed fragments of what the judge had said: though it had seemed to him, at the time, that he could not hear a word. These gradually fell into their proper places, and by degrees suggested more; so that in a little time he had the whole, almost as it was delivered. To be hanged by the neck, till he was dead—that was the end. To be hanged by the neck till he was dead.

As it came on very dark, he began to think of all the men he had known who had died upon the scaffold, some of them through his means. They rose up, in such quick succession that he could hardly count them. He had seen some of them die,—and had joked too, because they died with prayers upon their lips. With what a rattling noise the drop went down; and how suddenly they changed, from strong and vigorous men to dangling heaps of clothes!

Some of them might have inhabited that very cell—sat upon that very spot. It was very dark; why didn't they bring a light? The cell had been built for many years. Scores of men must have passed their last hours there. It was like sitting in a vault strewn with dead bodies—the cap, the noose, the pinioned arms, the faces that he knew, even beneath that hideous veil—Light, light!'

In *The Old Curiosity Shop* we have the like wealth and fulness of individual oddities and striking contrasts. Dick Swiveller is worthy of a high place in English comedy. He is a good-natured vagabond, a clever compound of conceit and assurance. He purchases, notoriously without means to pay, promising with dignified carelessness to call and settle when he 'should be passing presently.' To spare himself unnecessary annoyance, he makes a memorandum of the locality:

'I enter in this little book the names of the streets that I can't go down while the shops are open. This dinner to-day closes Long Acre. I bought a pair of boots in Great Queen Street, and made that no thoroughfare too. There's only one avenue in the Strand left open now, and I shall have to stop up that to-night with a pair of gloves. The roads are closing so fast in every direction, that in about a month's time, unless my aunt sends me a remittance, I shall have to go three or four miles out of town to get over the way.'

His head is stored with scraps of songs and plays, ready for the sentiment of the moment. Jilted, as he thinks, by Miss Wackles, he takes leave of her in the following style:

'My boat is on the shore and my bark is on the sea, but before I pass this door I will say farewell to thee. . . . I believed you true, and I was blest in so believing, but now I mourn that e'er I knew a girl so fair yet so deceiving. . . . I came here . . . with my bosom expanded, my heart dilated, and my sentiments of a corresponding description. I go away with feelings that may be conceived but cannot be described; feeling within myself the desolating truth that my best affections have experienced, this night, a stifler! . . . I wish you a very good night; concluding with this slight remark, that there is a young lady growing up at this present moment for me, who has not only great personal attractions, but great wealth, and who has requested her next of kin to propose for my hand, which having a regard for some members of her family, I have consented to promise. It's a gratifying circumstance which you'll be glad to hear, that a young and lovely girl is growing into a woman expressly on my account, and is now saving up for me. I thought I'd mention it. I have now merely to apologise for trespassing so long upon your attention. Good night!'

In the pangs of disappointed love, he exhibits to Quilp, the wolfish dwarf, a piece of the indigestible wedding-cake:

'"What should you say this was?" demanded Mr. Swiveller.

"It looks like bride-cake," replied the dwarf, grinning.

"And whose should you say it was?" inquired Mr. Swiveller, rubbing the pastry against his nose with a dreadful calmness. "Whose?"

"Not—"

"Yes," said Dick, "the same. You needn't mention her name. There's no such name now. Her name is Cheggs, now, Sophy Cheggs. Yet loved I as man never loved that hadn't wooden legs, and my heart, my heart is breaking for the love of Sophy Cheggs."'

In his own bed-chamber, having divested himself of one boot and forgotten the other, he falls into deep cogitation:

'"These rubbers," said Mr. Swiveller, putting on his night-cap in exactly the same style as he wore his hat, "remind me of the matrimonial fireside. . . . By this time, I should say," added Richard, getting his left cheek into profile, and looking complacently at the reflection of a very little scrap of whisker in the looking-glass; "by this time, I should say, the iron has entered into her soul. It serves her right!"'

With a vast opinion of his own abilities, he is the victim of every knave he encounters. His life is a series of failures and defeats, but all his woes are beguiled with this cheerful philosophy:

'"No money; no credit; . . . notice to quit the old lodgings—staggerers, three, four, five, and six! Under an accumulation of staggerers, no man can be considered a free agent. No man knocks himself down; if his destiny knocks him down, his destiny must pick him up again. Then I'm very glad that mine has brought all this upon itself, and I shall be as careless as I can, and make myself quite at home to spite it. So go on, my buck," said Mr. Swiveller, taking his leave of the ceiling with a significant nod, "and let us see which of us will be tired first!"'

In contrast with these grotesque and reckless characters is the trusting and loving little Nell, a frail and charming child, with a sad maturity of experience, much-wandering, much-suffering, yet

always patient, always helpful, a ministering angel that wins and holds all hearts:

'The roughest among them was sorry if he missed her in the usual place upon his way to school, and would turn out of the path to ask for her at the latticed window. If she were sitting in the church, they perhaps might peep in softly at the open door; but they never spoke to her, unless she rose and went to speak to them. Some feeling was abroad which raised the child above them all.

So, when Sunday came. They were all poor country people in the church, for the castle in which the old family had lived was an empty ruin, and there were none but humble folks for seven miles around. There, as elsewhere, they had an interest in Nell. They would gather around her in the porch, before and after service; young children would cluster at her skirts; and aged men and women forsake their gossips to give her kindly greeting. None of them, young or old, thought of passing the child without a friendly word. Many who came from three or four miles distant brought her little presents; the humblest and rudest had good wishes to bestow.'

There is but one way in which forms so young, so good, so beautiful, may be immortal to the fancy in their youth, innocence, and beauty,—they must die. Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Decrepit age and helpless infancy, the pride of strength, the bloom of promise, the deaf, the blind, the lame, the palsied, gather round her tomb:

'One called to mind how he had seen her sitting on that very spot, and how her book had fallen on her lap, and she was gazing with a pensive face upon the sky. Another told how he had wondered much that one so delicate as she should be so bold; how she had never feared to enter the church alone at night, but had loved to linger there when all was quiet, and even to climb the tower stair, with no more light than that of the moon's rays stealing through the loopholes in the thick old wall. A whisper went about among the oldest, that she had seen and talked with angels; and when they called to mind how she had looked, and spoken, and her early death, some thought it might be so, indeed.'

Dickens is said never to have closed a tale with such a sorrowful reluctance. 'I tremble to approach the place a great deal more than Kit. . . . I sha'n't recover it for a long time. Nobody will miss her like I shall.' All his sorrow and the wisdom of it are told in this burst of pathetic eloquence:

'When Death strikes down the innocent and young, for every fragile form from which he lets the panting spirit free, a hundred virtues rise, in shapes of mercy, charity, and love, to walk the world, and bless it. Of every tear that sorrowing mortals shed on such green graves, some good is born, some gentler nature comes. In the Destroyer's steps there spring up bright creations that defy his power, and his dark path becomes a way of light to Heaven.'

Hypocrisy and selfishness are the central themes of *Martin Chuzzlewit.* Pecksniff is one of those who affect piety because it is serviceable, who regard morality as a needful coin:

'Perhaps there never was a more moral man than Mr. Pecksniff; especially in his conversation and correspondence. It was once said of him by a homely admirer, that he

had a Fortunatus' purse of good sentiments in his inside. In this particular he was like the girl in the fairy tale, except that if they were not actual diamonds which fell from his lips, they were the very brightest paste, and shone prodigiously. He was a most exemplary man: fuller of virtuous precept than a copy-book. Some people likened him to a direction-post, which is always telling the way to a place, and never goes there: but these were his enemies; the shadows cast by his brightness; that was all. His very throat was moral. You saw a good deal of it. You looked over a very low fence of white cravat (whereof no man had ever beheld the tie, for he fastened it behind), and there it lay, a valley between two jutting heights of collar, serene and whiskerless before you. It seemed to say, on the part of Mr. Pecksniff, "There is no deception, ladies and gentlemen, all is peace, a holy calm pervades me." So did his hair, just grizzled with an iron-gray, which was all brushed off his forehead, and stood bolt upright, or slightly drooped in kindred action with his heavy eyelids. So did his person, which was sleek though free from corpulency. So did his manner, which was soft and oily. In a word, even his plain black suit, and state of widower, and dangling double eye-glass, all tended to the same purpose, and cried aloud, "Behold the moral Pecksniff!"'

He names his daughters Mercy and Charity. When visited, he displays the family virtues. All desirable qualities are blended in a flexible adaptability to persons and occasions. He receives, for instance, a speculator and capitalist:

'"Welcome, respected sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, "to our humble village! We are simple people; primitive clods, Mr. Montague; but we can appreciate the honor of your visit, as my dear son-in-law can testify. It is very strange," said Mr. Pecksniff, pressing his hand almost reverentially, "but I seem to know you. That towering forehead, my dear Jonas," said Mr. Pecksniff aside; "and those clustering masses of rich hair—I must have seen you, my dear sir, in the sparkling throng."'

With the plea of usefulness to his fellow-creatures, he enters into a compact with the two rascals, which must succeed 'as long as there are gulls upon the wing'; then passes out, and soars above the earth into the region of pure ideas:

'"How glorious is this scene! When I look up at those shining orbs, I think that each of them is winking to the other to take notice of the vanity of men's pursuits. My fellow-men!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head in pity, "you are much mistaken; my wormy relatives, you are much deceived! The stars are perfectly contented (I suppose so) in their several spheres. Why are not you? Oh! do not strive and struggle to enrich yourselves, or to get the better of each other, my deluded friends, but look up there, with me!"

Mrs. Lupin shook her head, and heaved a sigh. It was very affecting.

"Look up there, with me!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff, stretching out his hand; "with me, an humble individual who is also an Insect like yourselves. Can silver, gold, or precious stones, sparkle like those constellations! I think not. Then do not thirst for silver, gold, or precious stones; but look up there, with me!"'

He moralizes on cream, sugar, tea, toast, ham, and eggs. 'How they come and go! Every pleasure is transitory.' When he can eat no more, he rises to lofty contemplations on the process of digestion:

'"I do not know how it may be with others, but it is a great satisfaction to me to know, when regaling on my humble fare, that I am putting in motion the most beautiful machinery with which we have any acquaintance. I really feel at such times as if I was

doing a public service. When I have wound myself up, if I may employ such a term," said Mr. Pecksniff with exquisite tenderness, "and know that I am going, I feel that in the lesson afforded by the works within me, I am a Benefactor to my Kind!"'

Jonas Chuzzlewit has had from his cradle the precept and example which engender cunning, treachery, and avarice. As we sow, we reap. 'Is that my father a-snoring, Pecksniff? Tread upon his foot, will you be so good? The foot next you's the gouty one.' He has been born and bred to the vices which make him odious, and which recoil upon his sire's unhonored age:

'The very first word he learnt to spell was "gain," and the second (when he got into two syllables), "money." But for two results, which were not clearly foreseen perhaps by his watchful parent in the beginning, his training may be said to have been unexceptionable. One of these flaws was, that having been long taught by his father to overreach everybody, he had imperceptibly acquired a love of overreaching that venerable monitor himself. The other, that from his early habits of considering everything as a question of property, he had gradually come to look, with impatience, on his parent as a certain amount of personal estate, which had no right whatever to be going at large, but ought to be secured in that particular description of iron safe which is commonly called a coffin, and banked in the grave.'

He treacherously murders his enemy, and the recollection is like a nightmare. He becomes in a manner his own ghost and phantom. He has a horror of his dwelling, approaches it stealthily, using every by-way near his course, gliding swiftly through this one, and stopping to survey the next; steals on tiptoe to the door of his chamber, turns the key with trembling hand, beset by a monstrous fear lest the murdered man be there before him! At last he enters, removes his disguise, ties it in a bundle ready to be sunk in the river, then buries himself in the bed:

'The raging thirst, the fire that burnt within him as he lay beneath the clothes, the augmented horror of the room, when they shut it out from his view; the agony of listening, in which he paid enforced regard to every sound, and thought the most unlikely one the prelude to that knocking which should bring the news; the starts with which he left his couch, and looking in the glass imagined that his deed was broadly written in his face, and lying down and burying himself once more beneath the blankets, heard his own heart beating Murder, Murder, Murder!'

It is not contrition or remorse that moves him, but alarm. One dread question is forever present—When will they find the body in the shadowy wood?—

'He tried—he had never left off trying—not to forget it was there, for that was impossible, but to forget to weary himself by drawing vivid pictures of it in his fancy: by going softly about it and about it among the leaves, approaching it nearer and nearer through a gap in the boughs, and startling the very flies that were thickly sprinkled all over it, like heaps of dried currants. His mind was fixed and fastened on the discovery, for intelligence of which he listened intently to every cry and shout; listened when any one came in, or went out; watched from the window the people who passed up and down the street; and mistrusted his own looks and words. And the more his thoughts

were set upon the discovery, the stronger was the fascination which attracted them to the thing itself: lying alone in the wood. He was forever showing and presenting it, as it were, to every creature whom he saw. "Look here! Do you know of this? Is it found? Do you suspect *me?*"'

In *Dombey and Son*, as in his other novels, the characters are more than the story. Mr. Dombey, a London merchant, is an English picture of the aristocratic spirit. For twenty years he has been the sole representative of an ancient firm, to perpetuate the name of which is the one idea of his life:

'The earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in, and the sun and moon were made to give them light. Rivers and seas were formed to float their ships; rainbows gave them promise of fair weather; winds blew for or against their enterprises; stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre.'

He has never been known to use a term of endearment but once — at the birth of the infant Paul, when exultation betrayed him into 'Mrs. Dombey, my — my dear.' Hides he has dealt in largely, but hearts he has left as fancy-ware to boarding-schools and books. He would reason: 'That a matrimonial alliance with himself *must*, in the nature of things, be gratifying and honorable to any woman of common sense.' His little Florence's conception of a father is embodied in a blue coat and a stiff white cravat, with a pair of creaking boots and a loud ticking watch. When it is hinted that the mother, whose happiness is in the past, a broken spirit bound to a meek endurance of the present, may not survive, he is neither shocked nor startled, though he certainly has a sense within him 'that if his wife should sicken and decay, he would be very sorry, and that he would find something gone from among his plate and furniture, and other household possessions, which was well worth the having, and could not be lost without sincere regret.' His second wife is a proud and defiant beauty, linked to him, but arrayed with her whole soul against him. He asserts his greatness, and she regards him with ineffable disdain. He is arrogant, and she repays him in kind. He determines to bind her to his magnificent will, and she is only urged on to hate him. She flees on the anniversary of her marriage, neglect and desolation drive away his daughter. Eaten up by a sense of dishonor, by the haunting demon of public ridicule, he hides the world within him from the world without, haughty as ever, impenetrable though altered. By a fatal infatuation, he launches out into

rash, venturesome schemes of business, and is bankrupted,—fallen, never to be raised up any more:

'For the night of his worldly ruin there was no to-morrow's sun; for the stain of his domestic shame there was no purification; nothing, thank Heaven, could bring his dead child back to life. But that which he might have made so different in all the Past—which might have made the Past itself so different, though this he hardly thought of now—that which was his own work, that which he could so easily have wrought into a blessing, and had set himself so steadily for years to form into a curse: that was the sharp grief of his soul.'

Thought goads him to the verge of suicide. On the moment, Florence arrives, entreats him, redeems him: 'O my God, forgive me, for I need it very much!' The storm that passes on forever, leaves a clear evening in its track.

'Like many fond parents,' says Dickens, 'I have in my heart of hearts a favorite child; and his name is *David Copperfield*.' This is a masterpiece, marked throughout by a free and cheery style, much autobiography in disguise, a prodigal wealth of detail, an unusual variety of incident, a profusion of distinct people: the country undertaker, who dares not even inquire after friends that are ill, for fear of misconstruction; the brutal schoolmaster, who is ultimately converted into the tender magistrate; a carrier, all of whose vicissitudes are condensed into three words, 'Barkis is willin'; a mountebank who abandons his daughter, his only joy, lest he may bring her into disrepute; old Peggotty, who walks, stick in hand, over France, Germany, and Italy, to find and reclaim his lost niece; Micawber, who sells his bedstead to entertain a friend, dulling the edge of poverty by rhetorical exuberance; Mell, the musician, who blows on his flute 'until I almost thought he would gradually blow his whole being into the large hole at the top, and ooze away at the keys'; Rosa Dartle, a monstrous imagination; Agnes, patient, sensible, self-sacrificing, an angel-wife; Dora, ever a little girl, a pretty, pouting, chirping, loving child-wife; above all, the hero David, born into the world a posthumous waif, whose warm nest of love is changed by a second marriage into a scene of hard dependence and servile treatment, but whose griefs, privations, and other varieties of experience during the growth of emotions and faculties into manhood, discipline his ideal and real parts for a successful cultivation of letters. We cannot refrain from quoting here an illustration of Dickens' artistic faculty. It is David's recollection from the blank of infancy:

'On the ground-floor is Peggotty's kitchen, opening into a back-yard; with a pigeon-house on a pole, in the centre, without any pigeons in it; a great dog-kennel in a corner, without any dog; and a quantity of fowls that look terribly tall to me, walking about, in a menacing and ferocious manner. There is one cock who gets upon a post to crow, and seems to take particular notice of me as I look at him through the kitchen window, who makes me shiver, he is so fierce. Of the geese outside the side gate who come waddling after me with their long necks stretched out when I go that way, I dream at night; as a man environed by wild beasts might dream of lions.

Here is a long passage — what an enormous perspective I make of it! — leading from Peggotty's kitchen to the front-door. A dark store-room opens out of it, and that is a place to be run past at night; for I don't know what may be among those tubs and jars and old tea-chests, when there is nobody in there, with a dimly-burning light, letting a mouldy air come out at the door, in which there is the smell of soap, pickles, pepper, candles, and coffee, all at one whiff. Then there are the two parlors; the parlor in which we sit of an evening, my mother and I and Peggotty — for Peggotty is quite our companion, when her work is done and we are alone — and the best parlor where we sit on a Sunday; grandly, but not so comfortably. There is something of a doleful air about that room to me, for Peggotty has told me — I don't know when, but apparently ages ago — about my father's funeral, and the company having their black cloaks put on. On Sunday night my mother reads to Peggotty and me in there, how Lazarus was raised up from the dead. And I am so frightened that they are afterwards obliged to take me out of bed, and show me the quiet churchyard out of the bedroom window, with the dead all lying in their graves at rest, below the solemn moon.'

The following is a noble piece of description:

'The tremendous sea itself, when I could find sufficient pause to look at it, in the agitation of the blinding wind, the flying stones and sand, and the awful noise, confounded me. As the high watery walls came rolling in, and, at their highest, tumbled into surf, they looked as if the least would engulf the town. As the receding wave swept back with a hoarse roar, it seemed to scoop out deep caves in the beach as if its purpose were to undermine the earth. When some white-headed billows thundered on, and dashed themselves to pieces before they reached the land, every fragment of the late whole seemed possessed by the full might of its wrath, rushing to be gathered to the composition of another monster. Undulating hills were changed to valleys, undulating valleys (with a solitary storm-bird sometimes skimming through them) were lifted up to hills; masses of water shivered and shook the beach with a booming sound; every shape tumultuously rolled on, as soon as made, to change its shape and place, and beat another shape and place away; the ideal shore on the horizon, with its towers and buildings, rose and fell; the clouds flew fast and thick; I seemed to see a rending and upheaving of all nature.'

Hard Times is the combat of the oppressor and the plea for the oppressed. Mr. Gradgrind, a splendid specimen of his class, represents the positive mercantile spirit, which rails at enthusiasm and compassion, would extinguish all that is warming, and would educate children as they raise hogs, by placing them in favorable circumstances to fatten:

'"Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them. . . . Stick to Facts, sir!"

The scene was a plain, bare, monotonous vault of a school-room, and the speaker's square forefinger emphasized his observations by underscoring every sentence with a line on the schoolmaster's sleeve. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's square

wall of a forehead, which had his eyebrows for its base, while his eyes found commodious cellerage in two dark caves, overshadowed by the wall. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's mouth, which was wide, thin, and hard set. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's voice, which was inflexible, dry, and dictatorial. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's hair, which bristled on the skirts of his bald head, a plantation of firs to keep the wind from its shining surface, all covered with knobs, like the crust of a plum pie, as if the head had scarcely warehouse-room for the hard facts stored inside. The speaker's obstinate carriage, square coat, square legs, square shoulders,—nay, his very neckcloth, trained to take him by the throat with an unaccommodating grasp, like a stubborn fact, as it was—all helped the emphasis.

"In this life, we want nothing but Facts, sir; nothing but Facts!"

The speaker, and the schoolmaster, and the third grown person present, all backed a little, and swept with their eyes the inclined plane of little vessels then and there arranged in order, ready to have imperial gallons of facts poured into them until they were full to the brim.'

Take a view of human miseries in the great manufacturing towns. Stephen, an honest factory-hand, has refused, conscientiously, to join a combination of operatives. They renounce him, and he is commanded into the presence of his master to tell what he knows. But he will be faithful to the last, even to those who have repudiated him, and only states, in a general way, their grievance:

'"Sir, I never were good at showin o't, though I ha had'n my share in feelin o't. 'Deed we are in a muddle, sir. Look round town—so rich as 'tis—and see the numbers o' people as has been broughten into bein heer, fur to weave, an to card, an to piece out a livin, aw the same one way, somehows, twixt their cradles and their graves. Look how we live, an wheer we live, an in what numbers, an by what chances, and wi' what sameness; and look how the mills is awlus a goin, and how they never works us no nigher to ony dis'ant object—ceptin awlus, Death. Look how you considers of us, an writes of us, an talks of us, and goes up wi' yor deputations to Secretaries o' State 'bout us, and how yo are awlus right, and how we are awlus wrong, and never had'n no reason in us sin ever we were born. Look how this ha growen an growen, sir, bigger an bigger, broader an broader, harder an harder, fro year to year, fro generation unto generation. Who can look on't, sir, and fairly tell a man 'tis not a muddle?"'

He is misunderstood, calumniated, accused of theft, and, on his way to answer the summons, falls into a pit, from which, after lingering six days at the bottom, he is at last rescued, maimed, and dying:

'A low murmur of pity went round the throng, and the women wept aloud, as this form, almost without form, was moved very slowly from its iron deliverance, and laid upon the bed of straw. At first, none but the surgeon went close to it. He did what he could in its adjustment on the couch, but the best that he could do was to cover it. That gently done, he called to him Rachel and Sissy. And at that time the pale, worn, patient face was seen looking up at the sky, with the broken right hand lying bare on the outside of the covering garments, as if waiting to be taken by another hand.'

Rachel, his only friend, is there; and she bends over him until her eyes are between him and the sky, for he cannot so much as turn them to look at her. He takes her hand, and faintly, without anger, merely as speaking the truth, says:

'"I ha' fell into th' pit, my dear, as have cost wi'in the knowledge o' old fok now livin, hundreds and hundreds o' men's lives — fathers, sons, brothers, dear to thousands an thousands, an keepin 'em fro' want and hunger. I ha' fell into a pit that ha' been wi' th' Fire-damp crueller than battle. I ha' read on't in the public petition, as onny one may read, fro' the men that works in pits, in which they ha' pray'n an pray'n the law-makers for Christ's sake not to let their work be murder to 'em, but to spare 'em for th' wives and children that they loves as well as gentlefok love theirs. When it were in work, it killed wi'out need; when 'tis let alone, it kills wi'out need."'

His accuser, the Hard Fact man is there; but Stephen, in whose bosom is no bitterness, merely asks him to 'clear me an mak' my name good wi' aw men.' His eyes are fixed upon a star which he has seen from his bed of stones, shining serenely and tenderly, soothing the anguish of body and mind:

'"It ha' shined upon me," he said reverently, "in my pain and trouble down below. It ha' shined into my mind. I ha' look'n at't an thowt o' thee, Rachael, till the muddle in my mind have cleared awa, above a bit, I hope. If soom ha' been wantin in unnerstan'in me better, I, too, ha' been wantin in unnerstan'in them better. . . . In my pain an trouble, lookin up yonder,— wi' it shinin on me — I ha' seen more clear, and ha' made it my dyin prayer that aw th' world may on'y coom toogether more, an get a better unnerstan'in o' one another, than when I were in't my own weak seln. . . . Often as I coom to myseln, and found it shinin on me down there in my trouble, I thowt it were the star as guided to our Saviour's home. I awmust think it be the very star!"

They lifted him up, and he was overjoyed to find that they were about to take him in the direction whither the star seemed to him to lead.

"Rachael, beloved lass! Don't let go my hand. We may walk toogether t'night, my dear!"

"I will hold thy hand and keep beside thee, Stephen, all the way."

"Bless thee! Will somebody be pleased to coover my face!"

They carried him very gently along the fields, and down the lanes, and over the wide landscape; Rachael always holding the hand in hers. Very few whispers broke the mournful silence. It was soon a funeral procession. The star had shown him where to find the God of the poor; and through humility, and sorrow, and forgiveness, he had gone to his Redeemer's rest.'

Style.— On the whole, spontaneous, easy, free, idiomatic; now simple and vivid, partaking the genial flow of spirits, the full, abundant tide of life, which runs throughout the man; now impassioned and potent, springing from a lucid and energetic imagination in which objects are made visible and indelible; sometimes careless and languid, or level and redundant, where his feelings are not moved, but always rising to great purity and power before the concentrating force of passion.

Method.—In his walks, in his recreations, in his labor, he was governed by rules, from which he seldom departed. His hours for writing were regular, commencing about ten and ending about two. At his compositions, which are so easily read, he labored prodigiously, in conception and execution. Not a wearisome, but a happy process — the enjoyment of his own

fancies, nursed to their utmost growth. His precision and accuracy, the elaborate notes, comments, and plans, which form the basis of his works, refute the idle notion that men of genius dash off their efforts without forethought or preparation. It was one of his theories, that a main difference in men is in their power of attention.

Rank.—He is to be classed among the very first of the noble company to which he belongs. He does not probe so profoundly as Fielding, and — less a spectator of his personages — delineates with less exquisite art; but is superior to him in pathos and humanity, in sweetness and purity of feeling. Others have had greater power of generalization, few have had equal comprehensiveness of sympathy. Everything he touches, speaks; stones, flowers, clouds, seem happy or sad. The instinctive perception of individual character is his unique faculty. In evolving beautiful and heroic qualities from humble souls, he is excelled only by Wordsworth. His forte is not to enter into and represent the higher phases of existence, to form lofty or universal types, but to give cheerful, clear, and graphic pictures of persons and things as he sees them, especially among the vulgar and poor. If, having viewed them realistically, he somewhat exaggerates their natural features, so much the more striking and impressive do the realities become to the majority of readers who yawn much. Were his books destroyed, a score of figures would remain, our indestructible acquaintances. No writer has carried such an amount of observation, fun, and humor into the lowest scenes; none has so largely increased for the language its stores of harmless pleasure.

He is more luxuriant, perhaps more versatile, than Thackeray, but less compact and penetrating; of wider range as an artist, and more ideal, but less reflective, careful, and sure; more kindly, genial, and sentimental, less tart, pungent, and satirical. Both paint the manners of a day and a class, the one doing for middle and lower what the other does for upper London; the one having his mind more occupied with conditions, the other with foibles; the one more bent on defending the weak, the other on censuring man; yet both ministering to the same cause, either by contrast completing the other.

Character.—Not eminently profound, nor eminently erudite, far less indebted to books than to a diligent scrutiny of actual life. Perhaps his master faculty was an ardent and tenacious imagination, which immersed him in an idea, animated the vulgar and ridiculous, beset him with visions, displayed an object under a hundred forms. Hence his minute description, as here:

'It was small tyranny for a respectable wind to go wreaking its vengeance on such poor creatures as the fallen leaves; but this wind happening to come up with a great heap of them just after venting its humor on the insulted Dragon, did so disperse and scatter them that they fled away, pell-mell, some here, some there, rolling over each other, whirling round and round upon their thin edges, taking frantic flights into the air, and playing all manner of extraordinary gambols in the extremity of their distress. Nor was this enough for its malicious fury: for, not content with driving them abroad, it charged small parties of them and hunted them into the wheelwright's saw-pit, and below the planks and timbers in the yard, and, scattering the sawdust in the air, it looked for them underneath, and when it did meet with any, whew! how it drove them on and followed at their heels!

The scared leaves only flew the faster for all this, and a giddy chase it was: for they got into unfrequented places, where there was no outlet, and where their pursuer kept them eddying round and round at his pleasure; and they crept under the eaves of houses, and clung tightly to the sides of hay-ricks, like bats; and tore in at open chamber windows, and cowered close to hedges; and, in short, went anywhere for safety.'

Hence, too, his dramatic gift of identifying himself with his creations. In them he could forget himself, enter into all their peculiarities, make their joys and sorrows his own. He says:

'It would concern the reader little, perhaps, to know how sorrowfully the pen is laid down at the close of a two-years' imaginative task; or how an Author feels as if he were dismissing some portion of himself into the shadowy world, when a crowd of the creatures of his brain are going from him forever. Yet, I had nothing else to tell; unless, indeed, I were to confess (which might be of less moment still) that no one can ever believe this narrative, in the reading, more than I believed it in the writing.'

His comic power is pervading. His tragic power appears in his skilful depiction of the soul stained with crime, in his delineation of remorse, avarice, fear, hatred, revenge.

His almost feminine sensibility had, in the main, a twofold issue—humor and pathos. His instinct was always for the pure and beautiful—unsullied simplicity and moral beauty. Witness the character of little Nell, framed from the finest and fairest elements of human nature. The picturesque in the lower or middle ranks won his eye, the suffering there won his heart, and he drew the good, rather than the bad, because he delighted to find diamonds in the hidden and far-away. 'I have yet to learn,' he says, 'that a lesson of the purest good may not be drawn from the vilest evil.' The good Samaritan was native to him.

In his presence was perpetual sunshine. To company he was

only the pleasantest of companions, never bookish, but unaffected and natural. His talk was simple and direct. Boyishness, so often remarked in men of genius, was exuberant in him; ever ready for leap-frog, or other frolic, upon the lawn.

He estimated men and women so thoroughly by moral and intellectual worth, that he was equally at home with all kinds of society, the highest and the lowliest. As a metaphysician, he would have been of the intuitional school. 'All kind things,' he wrote to his children, 'must be done on their own account, and for their own sake, and without the least reference to any gratitude.' He was, though not a saint, benevolently and essentially Christian. 'Do you ever pray?' asked a dying lady. 'Every morning and evening,' was the answer. In the year of his death, he wrote a reader of *Edwin Drood:*

> 'I have always striven in my writings to express veneration for the life and lessons of our Saviour; because I feel it; and because I re-wrote that history for my children—every one of whom knew it, from having it repeated to them, long before they could read, and almost as soon as they could speak. But I have never made proclamation of this from the house-tops.'

Doubtless there were grave defects. How many of them are implied in the infatuation which led to separation from an amiable wife and the mother of ten children, we do not undertake to say. This is his complaint:

> 'Poor Catherine and I are not made for each other, and there is no help for it. It is not only that she makes me uneasy and unhappy, but that I make her so too—and much more so. She is exactly what you know, in the way of being amiable and complying; but we are strangely ill-assorted for the bond there is between us. . . . I am often cut to the heart by thinking what a pity it is, for her own sake, that I ever fell in her way; and if I were sick or disabled to-morrow, I know how sorry she would be, and how deeply grieved myself, to think how we had lost each other. But exactly the same incompatibility would arise the moment I was well again; and nothing on earth could make her understand me, or suit us to each other.'

And this his confession:

> 'I claim no immunity from blame. There is plenty of fault on my side, I dare say, in the way of a thousand uncertainties, caprices, and difficulties of disposition; but only one thing will alter all that, and that is the end which alters everything.'

Much is to be forgiven to such as have done much for their kind; but how much higher and nobler were his place, had he been true and strong straight through, living the fair and sweet ideals which he conceived.

Influence.—He wrote for the multitude, pleased them, and secured a popularity seldom permitted to man. Who else of the

great has been in his own day the inmate of so many homes? The greatest, indeed, have written for the few, and their merits have not been appreciated until after-ages; yet, however far the world may progress, it can never outgrow the best of Dickens. His characters are a part of literature, and his works will furnish to all future times an important commentary on the nineteenth century; while in mirth-moving jest, in his words of good cheer, in the benevolence, the charity, the holy lessons, which he inculcates, he will be an ever-welling spring, from which the generations will drink. Thirty years ago, Daniel Webster said that Dickens had done more to ameliorate the condition of the English poor than all the statesmen Great Britain had sent into Parliament. It is impossible to calculate the harm he might have done; but his weight is always thrown into the scale of goodness. It was his mission to make people happy, and he did what he could 'to lighten,' as he says, 'the lot of those rejected ones whom the world has too long forgotten and too often misused.' He has also made them better; for this is the substance of his novels—their sentiment and their exhortation: '*Be good, and love;* there is genuine joy only in the emotions of the heart; sensibility is the whole man. Leave science to the wise, pride to the nobles, luxury to the rich; have compassion on humble wretchedness; *the smallest and most despised being may in himself be worth as much as thousands of the powerful and the proud.* Take care not to bruise the delicate souls which flourish in all conditions, under all costumes, in all ages. *Believe that humanity, pity, forgiveness, are the finest things in man; believe that intimacy, expansion, tenderness, tears, are the finest things in the world.* To live is nothing; to be powerful, learned, illustrious, is little; to be useful is not enough. He alone has lived and is a man who has wept at the remembrance of a benefit, given or received.'[1]

[1] Taine.

CARLYLE.

No literary man in the nineteenth century is likely to stand out more distinct, both for flaws and genius, to the centuries which will follow.—*R. H. Hutton.*

Biography.—Born in Dumfriesshire in 1795; his father first a stone-mason, then a farmer, a 'pithy bitter-speaking body'; his mother a careful and industrious woman, a great reader, deeply religious, sweet-tempered; the one teaching by his battle reminiscences, the other by her reverent look and habitude; sent to the parish school while yet little more than an infant, and declared fit for the learned professions; transferred to an academy at eight, where in three months he was able to translate Virgil and Horace with an ease that astonished his tutor; entered the University of Edinburgh at fourteen, where he learned to 'read fluently in almost all cultivated languages, on almost all subjects and sciences,' while from the chaos of the library he also 'succeeded in fishing up more books, perhaps, than had been known to the very keepers thereof'; was designed by his parents for the Church, and studied Divinity, suffering unspeakable agonies of doubt, added to which were 'earthly distresses—want of practical guidance, want of sympathy, want of money, want of hope'; concluded at last that his vocation did not lie in the direction of the pulpit:

'The voice came to me, saying, "Arise and settle the problem of thy life." I had been destined by my father and my father's minister to be myself a minister. But now that I had gained man's estate, I was not sure that I believed the doctrines of my father's kirk; and it was needful I should now settle it. And so I entered into my chamber and closed the door, and around me there came a trooping throng of phantasms dire from the abysmal depths of nethermost perdition. Doubt, Fear, Unbelief, Mockery, and Scorn were there; and I arose and wrestled with them in travail and agony of spirit.'

A new plan of life had to be formed, and he turned to the scholastic profession, but abandoned it shortly, to devote himself to literature. In 1826 he married an attractive and amiable lady of vigorous intellect and varied culture, to whom, when his course should be nearly run, he was to ascribe all of worth he had ever achieved. Her dowry, though not large, delivered him from compulsory drudgery; and they made their home in solitude, among the granite hills, where he could dream and meditate. In a letter addressed to Goethe, he says:

'In this wilderness of heath and rock, our estate stands forth a green oasis, a tract

of ploughed, partly enclosed and planted, ground, where corn ripens and trees afford a shade, although surrounded by sea-mews and rough-woolled sheep. Here, with no small effort, have we built and furnished a neat, substantial dwelling; here, in the absence of a professional or other office, we live to cultivate literature according to our strength, and in our own peculiar way. We wish a joyful growth to the roses and flowers of our garden; we hope for health and peaceful thoughts to further our aims. The roses, indeed, are still in part to be planted, but they blossom already in anticipation. Two ponies which carry us everywhere, and the mountain air, are the best medicines for weak nerves. This daily exercise, to which I am much devoted, is my only recreation; for this nook of ours is the loneliest in Britain, six miles removed from any one likely to visit me. Here Rousseau would have been as happy as on his island of St. Pierre. . . . I came hither solely with the design to simplify my way of life, and to secure the independence through which I could be enabled to remain true to myself. This bit of earth is our own: here we can live, write, and think as best pleases ourselves.'

The mountain fastness, with its stern yet tender beauties, was congenial to the recluse; and here, from time to time, he was visited by friends and strangers desirous of seeing the new genius who had so profoundly touched their spirits. To have the best libraries within easy reach, he moved to a suburb of London, 1834, where till the day of his death he continued to reside, thence known to the English-speaking world as 'the sage of Chelsea.' He died from a general failure of vital power, February 5, 1881, regretted and mourned by an entire nation.

Writings.—Open at random any of Carlyle's works, and you shall perceive yourself at once in the presence of a new and extraordinary species of mind. His earliest—*Sartor Resartus*—begins in the manner of an innovator or anomaly:

'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; how, in these times especially, not only the Torch, still burns, and perhaps more fiercely than ever, but innumerable Rush-lights and Sulphur-matches, kindled thereat, are also glancing in every direction, so that not the smallest cranny or doghole in Nature or Art can remain unilluminated,—it might strike the reflective mind with some surprise 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.'

We soon discover that this unique book, which professes to be a review of a German treatise on dress, is a veiled metaphysics, according to which all things visible, especially we ourselves, are a vesture of sensuous appearance:

'For Matter, were it never so despicable, is Spirit, the manifestation of Spirit: were it never so honourable can it be more? The thing Visible, nay the thing Imagined, the thing in any way conceived as Visible, what is it but a Garment, a Clothing of the higher celestial Invisible, unimaginable, formless, dark with excess of bright?'

Man is a symbol, capable of two interpretations:

'To the eye of vulgar Logic, what is man? An omnivorous Biped that wears Breeches. To the eye of Pure Reason, what is he? A soul, a Spirit, and divine Appari-

tion. Round his mysterious Me, there lies, under all those wool-rags, a Garment of Flesh (or of Senses), contextured in the Loom of Heaven; whereby he is revealed to his like, and dwells with them in Union and Division; and sees and fashions for himself a Universe, with azure Starry Spaces, and long Thousands of Years. Deep-hidden is he under that strange Garment, amid Sounds and Colours and Forms, as it were, swathed in and inextricably overshrouded: yet it is skywoven, and worthy of a God.'

Every object has a double significance:

'The Universe is but one vast Symbol of God; nay, if thou wilt have it, what is man himself but a Symbol of God: is not all that he does symbolical; a revelation to Sense of the mystic God-given Force that is in him. . . . Not a Hut he builds but is the visible embodiment of a thought; but bears visible record of invisible things; but is, in the transcendental sense, symbolical as well as real.'

Abysmal Space and Time are but forms of thought, world-enveloping illusions:

'These, as spun and woven for us from before Birth itself, to clothe our celestial Me for dwelling here, and yet to blind it,—lie all-embracing, as the universal canvas, or warp and woof, whereby all minor illusions, in this Phantasm Existence, weave and paint themselves. In vain, while here on earth, shall you endeavor to strip them off; you can, at best, but rend them asunder for moments and look through.'

The great weaver of these vain raiments which conceal or obstruct the spiritual nature, is custom:

'Philosophy complains that Custom has hoodwinked us, from the first; that we do everything by Custom, even Believe by it; that our very Axioms, let us boast of Free-thinking as we may, are oftenest simply such Beliefs as we have never heard questioned. Nay, what is Philosophy throughout but a continual battle against Custom; an ever-renewed effort to *transcend* the sphere of blind Custom, and so become Transcendental?'

Of all the garnitures of human existence, the most important is religion; but pierce through the garment to the inner, moral sense of it, and you will see, in any age, the need of reformation:

'In our era of the World, those same Church-Clothes have gone sorrowfully out at elbows: nay, far worse, many of them have become mere hollow Shapes, or Masks, under which no living Figure or Spirit any longer dwells; but only spiders and unclean beetles, in horrid accumulation, drive their trade; and the Mask still glares on you with its glass eyes, in ghastly affectation of Life,—some generation and half after Religion has quite withdrawn from it, and in unnoticed nooks is weaving for herself new Vestures, wherewith to reappear, and bless us.'

But far down in the centre, under every apparition, is the fair and indestructible reality, whereof nature is the changing and living robe:

'Oh, could I . . . transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the Light-sea of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.'

Rites, ceremonies, liturgies, creeds, Pagan and Christian, are

embodiments of the same essential Idea—births of the troubled heart before the august and infinite Mystery:

'Knowest thou that "*Worship of Sorrow?*" The Temple thereof, founded some eighteen centuries ago, now lies in ruins, overgrown with jungle, the habitation of doleful creatures: nevertheless, venture forward; in a low crypt, arched out of falling fragments, thou findest the Altar there, and its sacred Lamp perennially burning.'

Inspiration is unceasing, prophets there are in our own day, and without some inspired Orpheus was no city built nor work done that man glories in:

'Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen hundred years ago; his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold Accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts, and modulates, and divinely leads them.'

Our lives are portions of this Divine Essence, and we have our root in eternity:

'And seest thou therein any glimpse of Immortality?—O Heaven! is the white Tomb of our Loved One, who died from our arms, and had to be left behind us there, which rises in the distance, like a pale, mournfully receding Milestone, to tell how many toilsome uncheered miles we have journeyed on alone,—but a pale spectral Illusion! . . . Know of a truth that only the Time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, *is* even now and forever.'

We have called this book a metaphysics, a psychology: it is also an autobiography, 'written in star fire and immortal tears'; a picture of the soul bravely battling with haggard Doubt and Fear in a Pilgrim's Progress to the Celestial City of light and truth. Quitting the faith of his fathers, he wanders wearisomely through the death-shadows, looking 'vaguely all around into a dim copper firmament, pregnant with earthquake and tornado,' shouting question after question 'into the Sibyl-cave of Destiny,' and receiving no answer but an echo:

'It is all a grim Desert, this once fair world of his; wherein is heard only the howling of wild beasts, or the shrieks of despairing, hate-filled men; and no Pillar of Cloud by day, and no Pillar of Fire by night, any longer guides the Pilgrim. To such length has the spirit of inquiry carried him.'

This is the gulf of 'the everlasting *No*.' What next? The sum-total of the worst is death. Therefore defy Destiny, and in your defiance you shall have at least a fixed point of revolution—'the centre of Indifference':

'Thousands of human generations, all as noisy as our own, have been swallowed up of Time, and there remains no wreck of them any more; and Arcturus, and Orion and Sirius and the Pleiades are still shining in their courses, clear and young, as when the Shepherd first noted them as in the plain of Shinar. Pshaw! what is this paltry little

Dog-cage of an Earth; what art thou that sittest whining there? Thou art still Nothing, Nobody: true; but who then is Something, Somebody? For thee the Family of Man has no use; it rejects thee; thou art wholly as a dissevered limb: so be it, perhaps it is better so!'

Beyond 'the enchanted forests, demon-peopled, doleful of sight and of sound,' are the sunlit slopes of the Mountain whose summit is in Heaven. Here the way-weary may find rest sweeter than dayspring to the shipwrecked:

'Like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults, . . . came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres: but Godlike, and my Father's!

With other eyes, too, could I now look upon my fellow-man; with an infinite Love, an infinite Pity. . . . Truly, the din of many-voiced Life, which in this solitude, with the mind's organ, I could hear, was no longer a maddening discord, but a melting one: like inarticulate cries, and sobbings of a dumb creature, which in the ear of Heaven are prayers. . . . Man, with his so mad Wants and so mean Endeavours, had become the dearer to me; and even for his sufferings and his sins, I now first named him brother.'

Temptations in the Wilderness! Have we not all to be tried with such? Is not our life a warfare? And to what end?—

'Man's Unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite. . . . There is in man a Higher than Love of Happiness: he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! Was it not to preach forth this same Higher that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in Man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom. . . . On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulphed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God.'

This is 'the everlasting *Yea*,' wherein all contradiction is solved, and—

'The mad primeval Discord is hushed; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate firmaments: deep silent rock-foundations are built beneath; and the skyey vault with its everlasting Luminaries above: instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, Heaven-encompassed World.'

Through all this gloom, vision, and ecstasy there runs the sentiment of German Idealism,—that existence is divine and mysterious; that beyond the reach of experience is a spiritual force, manifested through time and space, the principle and substance of concretes, the source of things, the only reality, the grand Unfathomable. It animates you, it subsists in me; it moves in the millions, but, above all, in the great mountain-peaks of the historic landscape—in a Mahomet, a Dante, a Shakespeare, a Luther, a Cromwell, a Napoleon. Such is the fundamental conception of *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, a course of six lectures understood to have been delivered, without previous composition,

to the 'distinguished and accomplished, the beautiful and the wise,' of London. The great man is a natural luminary of Heaven:

'Ever, to the true instincts of men, there is something godlike in him. Whether they shall take him to be a god, to be a prophet, or what they shall take him to be? that is ever a grand question; by their way of answering that, we shall see, as through a little window, into the very heart of these men's spiritual condition. For at bottom the Great Man, as he comes from the hand of Nature, is ever the same kind of thing: Odin, Luther, Johnson, Burns; I hope to make it appear that these are all originally of one stuff; that only by the world's reception of them, and the shapes they assume, are they so immeasurably diverse.'

Genius is of the skies, with its voice from the unknown Deep. In it we may see ourselves in higher forms. The greatest is the nameless One—the ultimate perfection or fountain of the Me. Hence the uses of great men and of hero-worship. We increase our stature by doing reverence to what is really above us:

'No nobler feeling than this of admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and at all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life. Religions I find stand upon it; not Paganism only, but far higher and truer religions,—all religion hitherto known.'

Say not that the hero is a mere creature of the times, which are only as dead fuel waiting for the heroic lightning, direct of God, that shall kindle it:

'The Time call forth? Alas, we have known Times *call* loudly enough for their great man; but not find him when they called! He was not there; Providence had not sent him; the Time, *calling* its loudest, had to go down to confusion and wreck because he would not come when called. For if we will think of it, no Time need have gone to ruin, could it have *found* a man great enough: wisdom to discern truly what the Time wanted, valour to lead it on the right road thither; these are the salvation of any Time.'

Thus the history of what man has accomplished, is at bottom the history of the few great men who have wrought:

'They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modellers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world: the soul of the whole world's history, it may justly be considered, were the history of these.'

Hence the history of Puritanism, the spiritual and political conflict of the seventeenth century, may be comprised in *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches.* The greatest of the Puritans is the abstract of all the rest—their original characteristics and noblest features—their terrible energy and flaming conscience. Here he is, face to face:

'Does the reader see him? A rather likely figure, I think. Stands some five feet ten or more: a man of strong, solid stature, and dignified, now partly military carriage:

the expression of him valour and devout intelligence—energy and delicacy on a basis of simplicity. Fifty-four years old, gone April last; brown hair and moustache are getting gray. A figure of sufficient impressiveness—not lovely to the man-milliner species, not pretending to be so. Massive stature; big, massive head, of somewhat leonine aspect; wart above the right eyebrow; nose of considerable blunt-aquiline proportions; strict yet copious lips, full of all tremulous sensibilities, and also, if need were, of all fierceness and rigours; deep, loving eyes—call them grave, call them stern—looking from under those craggy brows as if in life-long sorrow, and yet not thinking it sorrow, thinking it only labour and endeavour: on the whole, a right noble lion-face and hero-face; and to me royal enough.'

With like devotion to the epic sentiment, in the same luminous style, with all the force of his heart and sympathy, he writes the *French Revolution*, a most original book, fresh from the soul, original in its complete sincerity, in its disregard of conventionalism. In fact, a new fashion. Men and events pass before us, not as shadows and abstractions, but as beings of flesh and blood. Never was the general spirit of an age expressed with such intensity and splendor. Was ever the state of an agitated nation made thus present and palpable?—

'How the whole people shakes itself as if it had one life; and, in thousand-voiced rumor, announces that it is awake, suddenly out of long death-sleep, and will thenceforth sleep no more! The long looked-for has come at last; wondrous news, of victory, deliverance, enfranchisement, sounds magical through every heart. To the proud strong man it has come; whose strong hands shall no more be gyved; to whom boundless unconquered continents lie disclosed. The weary day-drudge has heard of it; the beggar with his crust moistened in tears. What! To us also has hope reached; down even to us? Hunger and hardship are not to be eternal? The bread we extorted from the rugged glebe, and, with the toil of our sinews, reaped and ground, and kneaded into loaves, was not wholly for another, then; but we also shall eat of it, and be filled? Glorious news (answer the prudent elders), but all too unlikely!—Thus, at any rate, may the lower people, who pay no money taxes and have no right to vote, assiduously crowd round those that do; and most halls of assembly, within doors and without, seem animated enough.'

Almost anywhere you will find examples of this unique power—this mode of comprehending life, and this gift of resuscitating the past. Take his description of Marie Antoinette from the 'Diamond Necklace' of his *Miscellanies:*

'Oh, is there a man's heart that thinks, without pity, of those long months and years of slow-wasting ignominy;—of thy Birth, soft-cradled in Imperial Schönbrunn, the winds of heaven not to visit thy face too roughly, thy foot to light on softness, thy eye on splendour; and then of thy Death, or hundred Deaths, to which the Guillotine and Fouquier Tinville's judgment-bar was but the merciful end? Look *there*, O man born of woman! The bloom of that fair face is wasted, the hair is gray with care; the brightness of those eyes is quenched, their lids hang drooping, the face is stony pale, as of one living in death. Mean weeds (which her own hand has mended) attire the Queen of the World. The death-hurdle, where thou sittest, pale motionless, which only curses environ, has to stop: a people, drunk with vengeance, will drink it again in full draught looking at thee there: far as the eye reaches, a multitudinous sea of maniac heads; the air deaf with their triumph-yell! The Living-dead must shudder with yet one other pang;

her startled blood yet again suffuses with the hue of agony that pale face, which she hides with her hands. There is, then, *no* heart to say, God pity thee? O think not of these: think of Him whom thou worshippest, the Crucified,—who, also, treading the wine-press *alone*, fronted sorrow still deeper: and triumphed over it, and made it Holy; and built of it a "Sanctuary of Sorrow," for thee and all the wretched! Thy path of thorns is nigh ended One long last look at the Tuileries, where thy step was once so light,—where thy children shall not dwell. The head is on the block: the axe rushes—Dumb lies the World: that wild-yelling World, and all its madness, is behind thee.'

Style.—New and strange, but like the man himself,—rugged, forceful, disjointed, gnarled, lurid, Titanic, marvellously vivid. Glib words, smooth periods, simple expression, do not suffice for the sparkling or gloomy images that besiege and haunt his brain. Fancy the chapters of a historical work with such captions as 'Realized ideals,' 'Petition in Hieroglyphs,' 'Windbags.' German speculations are 'transcendental moonshine.' The analytic thinkers of the eighteenth century are 'logic-choppers.' Servile imitators are 'apes of the Dead Sea.' The cocks and hens in his neighbor's yard are 'demon fowls.' The mess served up by an objectionable cook can only be described as 'Stygian,' with 'Tartarean' for a variant. Democracy is 'the gradual uprise and rule of all things of roaring, million-headed, unreflecting, darkly-suffering, darkly-sinning Demos.'

Between his early reviews in the *Edinburgh* and his later productions there is an obvious difference, which some critics have attempted to explain by the corrections of Jeffrey. Says Charles Sumner: 'I observed to Lord Jeffrey that I thought Carlyle had changed his style very much since he wrote the article on Burns. "Not at all," said he; "I will tell you why that is different from the other articles—*I altered it.*"' The alterations, however, could scarcely have been so radical and constant. Let us rather suppose that, if he then used English more nearly as others, it was his natural voice. The like simplicity is apparent in his remarks on the death of Goethe:

'So, then, our greatest has departed. That melody of life, with its cunning tones, which took captive ear and heart, has gone silent; the heavenly force that dwelt here victorious over so much is here no longer; thus far, not farther, by speech and by act, shall the wise man utter himself forth. The end! What solemn meaning lies in that sound, as it peals mournfully through the soul, when a living friend has passed away! All now is closed, irrevocable; the changeful life-picture, growing daily into new coherence, under new touches and hues, has suddenly become completed and unchangeable; there, as it lay, it is dipped, from this moment, in the æther of the Heavens, and shines transfigured, to endure even so—forever Time and Time's Empire; stern, wide devouring, yet not without their grandeur! The week-day man, who was one of us, has put on the garment of Eternity, and become radiant and triumphant; the present is all at once the

past; Hope is suddenly cut away, and only the backward vistas of Memory remain, shone on by a light that proceeds not from this earthly sun.'

Gradually, as convictions deepen, and doubts multiply, and shadows thicken, and the ferment increases, the style becomes more crowded, contrasted, contorted, phosphorescent. Form is little, the basis alone is important. The essential thing is to grasp the central truth, to strike at the inmost, to exhibit strongly a few focal points of light which may be clearly discerned against the illimitable darkness. When thought is a tempest, when the intellect foams and gasps, simplicity must go to the wall. The conventional costume of ordinary mortals was not made for this man, altogether too limpid and feeble for 'the great fiery heart of him.' Doubtless there may be something of preconceived intention, but the affectation, if any such, is thrice redeemed by rare advantages—wonderful suggestiveness and photographic power.

Rank.—One after another, critics have repeated that Carlyle's manner is atrocious, that he is not great as a thinker, but only as a word-painter, that he is merely destructive, with no definite plan of rectification or improvement. Strange and anomalous as his style may appear, it is, as we have said, indubitably natural, and incomparably vigorous, having the inspiration of the Sybil and the strength of the oak. If he is not an analyst, like Spencer or Mill, he is something higher,—a seer, a revealer, like Bacon or Shakespeare; intuitive rather than scientific, not decomposing notions into regular series, and verifying the steps, but perceiving them in their entirety and reproducing them by divination. If he is critical and negative, consider that the ideal compels it, that the tallest-minded must be so in proportion to their gift of insight. Consider of how great service this function has been to mankind. Consider, moreover, that the office of diffusing through the social atmosphere great generalities of truth and justice is in itself a loftier one than that of initiating specific social remedies.

The most recognized and the most original of the interpreters who have introduced German ideas into England. Doubtless from temperament, he views life and the world through an imperfect and distorting medium, and is not equally at home in all directions; but he has seen, with unexampled intensity, the central spots in the surrounding gloom, and has made others see

them with unexampled vividness. No one has spoken deeper words about human life, or seen more penetratingly into the mysterious grandeur of 'the mighty All,' into the divine idea which underlies the phenomenal. He is beyond all rivalry, since Shakespeare, in minute characterization. What distinguishes the one as a dramatist, distinguishes the other as a historian,—that the 'forms of things unknown,' or known by their names only, are bodied forth, not as algebraical symbols which present no image to the fancy, but as realities of soul-inviting warmth and completeness.

Prophecy fails. Carlyle does not sustain himself. He is less readable in wholes than in parts. Plenitude and depth of insight, fervor and exaltation of feeling, make his least successful volumes teem with passages noteworthy, beautiful, and wise. Here are some diamonds in the rough:

'*Genius* is an immense capacity for taking trouble.'

'The fearful unbelief is unbelief in yourself.'

'Always there is a black spot in our sunshine; it is the shadow of ourselves.'

'Pin thy faith to no man's sleeve; hast thou not two eyes of thy own?'

'Do the duty which liest nearest thee! Thy second duty will already have become clearer.'

'One Life; a little gem of Time between two Eternities; no second chance to us forevermore!'

'We will not estimate the Sun by the quantity of gas-light it saves us; Dante shall be invaluable, or of no value.'

'Wouldst thou plant for Eternity, then plant into the deep infinite faculties of man, his Fantasy and Heart.'

'History is a mighty drama, enacted upon the theatre of time, with suns for lamps, and eternity for a background.'

'No magic *Rune* is stranger than a Book. All that mankind has done, thought, gained, or been,—it is lying in magic preservation in the pages of Books.'

'All true work is sacred; in all true work, were it but true hand-labor, there is something of divineness. Labor, wide as the earth, has its summit in heaven.'

'To sit as a passive bucket, and be pumped into, can, in the long run, be exhilarating to no creature, how eloquent soever the flood of utterance that is descending.'

'In books lies the *Soul* of the whole past time; the audible voice of the Past, when the body and material substance of it has altogether vanished like a dream.'

'Ghosts! There are nigh a thousand million walking the earth openly at noon-tide; some half-hundred have vanished from it, some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch ticks once.'

With all his limitations, after all deductions, Carlyle remains one of the few most profound, most dramatic, most imaginative,

most original writers of modern times,—one of the fixed stars whose glory is not dimmed by the greatness of the rest.

Character.—'I have never met with a question yet,' says Ruskin, 'which did not need, for the right solution of it, at least one positive and one negative answer, like an equation of the second degree. Mostly, matters of any consequence are three-sided, or four-sided, or polygonal; and the trotting round a polygon is severe work for people any way stiff in their opinions. For myself I am never satisfied that I have handled a subject properly till I have contradicted myself at least three times.' Carlyle, who has the simplicity and complexity of nature, may appear to be full of contradictions, but these we believe to be mainly of the superficial sort; and it shall be our endeavor, without pursuing all his apparent aberrations and intersections, to indicate the secret of his unity, the fundamental and prevailing truth of him, and the man in his prime rather than in his decay:

From the first he had the stamp of sadness on his countenance. Little is known of him as a student. By the scant testimony of his few personal acquaintances, he was lonely and contemplative in his habits. While a child, he was thoughtful and studious, preferring the society of his grandfather to that of the village children. He was 'noted as a still infant that kept his mind much to himself; above all, that seldom or never cried.' On the orchard wall, at eve, he loved to take his porringer of bread and milk. 'There many a sunset have I, looking at the distant western mountains, consumed, not without relish, my evening meal. Those hues of gold and azure that hush the world's expectation as day dies, were still a Hebrew speech for me; nevertheless, I was looking at the fair illuminated letters, and had an eye for their gilding.' He tells us that he could not remember ever to have learned to read—'so perhaps had it by nature.' His memory was extraordinary. At the age of five, it is said, he could give an outline of any sermon he heard. While yet a boy, he astonished the audience, including his father, by a burst of oratory on the occasion of some local discussion.

A profound sense of the Eternal brooded ceaselessly over him. His eyes were fixed habitually on the vague shoreless Universe, the gloomy abyss which closes upon troubled and shuddering mortality. 'Remember now and always that life is no idle

dream but a solemn reality, based upon Eternity and encompassed by Eternity.' A little while ago you were not; a little while you are not, sunk beyond plummet's sounding into the Bottomless. The ages waited for your birth, the ages wait to see what you will do when born.

Spirit is the substance, all else is dust and shadow. The earth is but a film; the warrior and his war-horse are a vision, nothing more — a symbol of the Everlasting, whose highest revelation is keen insight, exclusive devotion to some worthy end, indomitable will, valor in defiance of the darkness, as in the struggling, sombre, sorrow-stricken Johnson, the rugged, silent, inarticulate Cromwell. If you will but consider this, and the inadequacy of human struggle against the world-embracing element of mournful *black*, you may understand how it was natural to this grim Norseman to venerate the intelligence that could see into the heart of things, and the energy that could get the mastery over things. Not mere force of martyrdom, but marrowy vigor of soul, moral and intellectual inclusive. 'Without hands a man might have feet and still walk; but, consider it, without morality intellect were impossible for him, he could not know anything at all.' Impatience with indecision in the midst of chaos, enthusiasm over stoical endurance or heroic success, despondency under manifold doubts, the much that was hoped, the little performed, may seem at times to make him a mere power-worshipper; but we are bound to read all in the light of his calmer utterances, and essential nature. 'That Goethe was a great teacher of men means already that he was a good man.' Again: 'Voltaire was not the wisest of men, because he was not the best. Because the thinking and the moral nature are but different phases of the same indissoluble unity — a living mind.' There could be no falser proposition, he would say, than that might is right. '*Bad* is by its nature negative, and can do *nothing;* whatsoever enables us to *do* anything is by its very nature *good.*' The only might is moral. An Austerlitz is not Heaven's stamp of approval. 'If the thing is unjust, thou hast not succeeded.' Below all resemblances or single phrases are the guiding convictions of Carlyle's thought:

'In this God's-world, with its wild-whirling eddies and mad foam-oceans where men and nations perish as if without law, and judgment for an unjust is sternly delayed, dost thou think that there is therefore no justice? It is what the fool hath said in his heart.

It is what the wise, in all times, were wise because they denied, and knew forever not to be.'

In one of his cynical or despairing moods, he may be driven into the preaching of Fate, but do not imagine that he is only a fatalist:

'I would wish all men to know and lay to heart, that he who discerns nothing but mechanism in the universe has in the fatalest way missed the secret of the universe altogether. That all Godhood should vanish out of man's conception of the universe seems to me precisely the most brutal error,—I will not disparage heathenism by calling it a heathen error,—that men could fall into. It is not true; it is false at the very heart of it. A man who thinks so will think *wrong* about all things in the world; this original sin will vitiate all other conclusions he can form.'

Necessity and free-will are in a sense reconcilable and true. It is the immediate consciousness of freedom that saves Carlyle from a pessimistic philosophy:

'Evil, what we call evil, must ever exist while man exists: evil, in the widest sense we can give it, is precisely the dark disordered material out of which man's farewell has to create an edifice of order and good. Ever must pain urge us to labor; and only in free effort can any blessedness be imagined for us.'

Renounce pleasure, adore pain, comprehend holiness, exalt virtue, which is the divine part. A profound sentiment is a finer thing than a beautiful form. A serious soul, wholly intent upon its goal, yet feeling the Cimmerian night of our present being, is the one attractive object. Have little regard, he would say, for the artists,—sculptors, painters, poets, novelists. To a writer of Scotch stories, who called upon him, he said, 'When are you going to begin some honest, genuine work?' and to a popular wit, 'When, sir, do you bring out the Comic Bible?' Of verse, he was intolerant. When Mrs. Browning sent him one of her earliest books, he advised her 'to say rather than to sing.' On being asked by a lady if he had read her poems, he replied, 'Nae, I've not, and I dare say they're sad trash. If you have anything to say to the world, put it down in prose, and the less of it the better.'

When to this haunting sense of the infinities we add the galling burden of ill-health, 'the cursed hag of dyspepsia,' his inheritance of an austere creed, his untoward circumstances, and the early neglect of him, and the attentions afterwards lavished upon him, we may understand and pardon his violence, his idolatry of the past, his depreciation of the present, his objec-

tionable manners,[1] his superior air,[2] his treatment of contemporaries,[3]— scorn of some, condescension to others, meagre praise of the best. The same considerations account for sulky or sour ebullitions like these: 'In fifty years, I should guess, it will be a credit to declare, "I never tried literature."' 'There are south of the Tweed some thirty millions of Englishmen, chiefly fools'; and, 'our American cousins have begotten, with a rapidity beyond example, eighteen millions of the greatest bores ever seen in the world before.' To one who had made a ship and named it after him in honor of the good he had done in the world: 'I don't believe it, maun! I never did any gude in the warld!' It is when he enters politics that he is most irritating. There, like Swift, he takes a fierce delight in laceration. Here is a picture of the modern age,—plunged in materialism, he conceives; Pigdom, he calls it:

'1. The Universe, so far as sane conjecture can go, is an immeasurable Swine's-trough, consisting of solid and liquid, and of other contrasts and kinds;—especially consisting of attainable and unattainable, the latter in immensely greater quantities for most pigs.

2. Moral evil is unattainability of Pig's-wash; moral good, attainability of ditto.

3. "What is Paradise, or the state of Innocence?" Paradise, called also State of Innocence, Age of Gold, and other names, *was* (according to Pigs of weak judgment) unlimited attainability of Pig's-wash; perfect fulfilment of one's wishes, so that the Pig's imagination could not outrun reality; a fable and an impossibility, as Pigs of sense now see.

4. "Define the Whole Duty of Pigs." It is the mission of universal Pighood, and the duty of all Pigs, at all times, to diminish the quantity of unattainable and increase that of attainable. All knowledge and device and effort ought to be directed thither and thither only: Pig science, Pig enthusiasm and Devotion have this one aim. It is the Whole Duty of Pigs.

5. Pig poetry ought to consist of universal recognition of the excellence of Pig's-wash and ground barley, and the felicity of Pigs whose trough is in order, and who have had enough: Hrumph!

6. The Pig knows the weather; he ought to look out what kind of weather it will be.

7. "Who made the Pig?" Unknown;—perhaps the Pork-butcher.

8. "Have you Law and Justice in Pigdom?" Pigs of observation have discerned that there is, or was once supposed to be, a thing called justice. Undeniably at least there is a sentiment in Pig-nature called indignation, revenge, etc., which, if one Pig provoke another, comes out in a more or less destructive manner: hence laws are necessary, amazing quantities of laws. For quarrelling is attended with loss of blood, of life, at any rate with frightful effusion of the general stock of Hog's-wash, and ruin (temporary ruin) to large sections of the universal Swine's-trough; wherefore let justice be observed, that so quarrelling be avoided.

9. "What is justice?" Your own share of the general Swine's-trough, not any portion of my share.

[1] To a lady whose poems he declined to read: 'I can't read your poems, but you've a beautiful nose. I like to look at your nose.'

[2] To a self-confident editor who had just delivered an opinion at a dinner-party: 'Eh, but you're a puir cratur, a puir wratched meeserable cratur!' Then with a sigh, he relapsed into silence.

[3] See *Reminiscences*.

10. "But what is 'my' share?" Ah! there, in fact, lies the grand difficulty; upon which Pig science, meditating this long while, can settle absolutely nothing. My share —hrumph! my share is, on the whole, whatever I can contrive to get without being hanged or sent to the hulks.'[1]

Primarily, this is only excess of indignation at the hollow, the insipid, the corrupt, the carnal, the love of comfort, and the lust of gain. It is the furious tension of the moral Scandinavian, the lava discharged by the Vesuvian fire within.

He satirized Coleridge for his endless harangues, yet was himself an orator in conversation. 'You are a perfect prisoner,' wrote Margaret Fuller, 'when he has once got hold of you.' Personally, one of the kindest of men, helpful and tender. His friendships, his domestic affections, the passionate attachment to his wife, the loving reverence of her memory, impart the chief interest to the *Reminiscences*. He might turn against an opinion, but not against a friend. He was at home with the humblest, in whom he saw courage, sincerity, or resolute faith. No man has given more explicit recognition to the infinitude of each wayfaring soul:

'Of those multitudes there is no one but has an immortal soul within him, a reflex and living image of God's whole universe; strangely, from its dim environment, the light of the Highest looks through him; for which reason, indeed, it is that we claim a brotherhood with him, and so love to know his history, and come into clearer and clearer union with all that he feels, and says, and does.'[2]

Altogether, a colossal spirit, fearless, pure, and true; proud, sensitive, and suffering; manfully earnest, concentrated, and devout; undisciplined, unequal, paradoxical; persistent with 'desperate hope,' predestined to sadness, full of radiant sublimities.

Influence.—Never has an Englishman swept through the souls of a generation with such power, though, like every one eminently original and aggressive, he has fought hard to obtain pardon for his originality. He has stamped himself upon historical method, upon ways of thought, and modes of expression. In thousands of books his expression is traceable, into thousands of lives his fire has penetrated, and thus does he pass out into the wide sphere of constant and incalculable forces. If he has produced no tangible fruits, like those of the scientific discoverer, he has given a mighty impulse to the intellectual and moral activity which underlies all practical results. To his glory will it

[1] *Latter-Day Pamphlets.* [2] *Miscellanies: Johnson.*

ever be, that in opposition to the tendencies of materialism, he maintained the spiritual dignity of man. What there is of one-sided or exaggerated, of false or of evil, will fail; but the best of him will be a perpetual anthem to kindle a noble discontent. In every age hearts will be touched, and intellects will be exalted by his oracular words: '*Remember now and always that life is no idle dream, but a solemn reality based upon Eternity, and encompassed by Eternity. Find out your task: stand to it: the night cometh when no man can work.*'

GEORGE ELIOT.

Duty divine and Thought with eyes of fire,
Still following Righteousness with deep desire,
Shone sole and stern before her and above,
Sure stars and sole to steer by: but more sweet
Shone lower the loveliest lamp for earthly feet,
The light of little children, and their love.—*Swinburne.*

Biography.—Born in a prosaic country district of Warwickshire, in 1819, the youngest of three children by a second marriage. Her father, Robert Evans, was first a carpenter, then a land surveyor and steward of estates. Her Christian name was Mary Ann, which in conversation and correspondence with her intimate friends was changed to Marian. When she was about fifteen years of age, her loving mother died. When the elder children married, she presided over her father's household, accompanied him in his drives during the day, and entertained him during the evening by reading aloud the novels of Scott. Her education, long pursued with unwearied industry, was exceptionally good, including Greek, Latin, French, German, Italian, Hebrew, and music. After her father's death in 1849, she went abroad with some literary friends, tarried at Geneva to perfect herself in foreign tongues, on her return visited London, met the editor of the *Westminster Review*, and there, as his assistant, began her memorable career as a writer. Meanwhile she had become a dissenter, even a free-thinker, had translated Strauss' *Life of Jesus*, had read liberalist books, had been introduced to

men of note and expansive thought,—transcendentalists like Froude and Emerson; positivists like Spencer, who found her 'already distinguished by that breadth of culture and universality of power which have since made her known to all the world'; versatile speculators like Lewes, to whom, in 1853, without the social sanction, she became a devoted helpmate.[1]

In the years during which she was enriching English literature with her incomparable fictions, her life, on the whole, was quiet and uneventful. Her brilliant and accomplished consort died in 1878, and in 1880 she married a former acquaintance, a Mr. Cross. After a few months of companionship, mostly spent in continental travel, she sank rapidly from the effects of a cold, and on the 22d of December passed calmly and painlessly away.

Writings.—Every conscience, as well as every imagination, will be clarified and invigorated by the perusal of *Adam Bede*, the first work of the author that attracted wide public attention. A novel of the real school, humble in its characters, faithful in its portraiture, and beyond praise in its moral spirit. The epoch is of the eighteenth century. The opening sentences, descriptive of a village workshop scene, constitute a fine piece of English painting:

'The afternoon sun was warm on the five workmen there, busy upon doors and window-frames and wainscoting. A scent of pine wood from a tent-like pile of planks outside the open door mingled itself with the scent of the elder-bushes which were spreading their summer snow close to the open window opposite; the slanting sunbeams shone through the transparent shavings that flew before the steady plane, and lit up the fine grain of the oak panelling which stood propped against the wall. On a heap of those soft shavings a rough gray shepherd dog had made himself a pleasant bed, and was lying with his nose between his fore paws, occasionally winking his brows to cast a glance at the tallest of the five workmen, who was carving a shield in the centre of a wooden mantelpiece. It was to this workman that the strong barytone belonged which was heard above the sound of plane and hammer, singing,

"Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth . . ."

Here some measurement was to be taken which required more concentrated attention, and the sonorous voice subsided into a low whistle; but it presently broke out again with renewed vigor

"Let all thy converse be sincere,
Thy conscience as the noonday clear."

Such a voice could only come from a broad chest, and the broad chest belonged to a large-boned, muscular man, nearly six feet high, with a back so flat and a head so well

[1] The earlier married life of Lewes had terminated suddenly and irreversibly. A divorce required an Act of Parliament, the difficulty of obtaining which was in most cases insuperable.

poised that when he drew himself up to take a more distant survey of his work he had the air of a soldier standing at ease. The sleeves rolled up above the elbows showed an arm that was likely to win the prize for feats of strength; yet the long, supple hand, with its broad finger-tips, looked ready for works of skill. In his tall stalwartness Adam Bede was a Saxon, and justified his name; but the jet-black hair, made the more noticeable by its contrast with the light paper cap, and the keen glance of the dark eyes that shone from under strongly-marked, prominent, and mobile eyebrows, indicated a mixture of Celtic blood.'

As the story begins, so it culminates to a natural end, like the actual tragedies of life, without evil omens or extraneous machinery, keeping close to the broad stream of human interests. We feel it to be not a romance, but a history, in which the personages are more than the action. Perhaps a more typical English group has never been delineated than is formed by the practical, secular, energetic, manly Adam; the visionary, brooding, absent-minded Seth; the pretty, vain, pleasure-loving, light-headed dairymaid Hetty; the sweet, unselfish, saintly Methodist Dinah; the good-natured, weak, self-deceiving Arthur; the tricky, smooth-tongued, well-chiselled squire; the noble, easy-minded, tolerant rector; the keen, fond, fretful Lisbeth; the plain, quick-witted, audacious Mrs. Poyser; the grizzled, cheery, helpful bachelor schoolmaster, Bartle Massey. All these are perfectly handled — none better than the last. What a unique picture is that of the night-school,— the bare rafters, the white-washed walls, the eight or nine heads bending over the desks lighted with thin dips, the class of three laboring painfully through the reading lesson, the spectacled teacher, with his gray, inch-long, bristly hair, saying mildly: 'Nay, Bill, nay, begin that again, and then perhaps it'll come to you what d-r-y spells. It's the same lesson you read last week, you know.' Bill, remember, is a sturdy fellow, aged four-and-twenty:

'An excellent stone-sawyer, who could get as good wages as any man in the trade of his years; but he found a reading lesson in words of one syllable a harder matter to deal with than the hardest stone he had ever had to saw. The letters he complained were so "uncommon alike, there was no tellen' 'em one from another," the sawyer's business not being concerned with minute differences such as exist between a letter with its tail turned up and a letter with its tail turned down. But Bill had a firm determination that he would learn to read, founded chiefly on two reasons: first, that Tom Hazelow, his cousin, could read anything "right off," whether it was print or writing, and Tom had sent him a letter from twenty miles off, saying how he was prospering in the world, and had got an overlooker's place; secondly, that Sam Phillips, who sawed with him, had learned to read when he was turned twenty; and what could be done by a little fellow like Sam Phillips, Bill considered, could be done by himself, seeing that he could pound Sam into wet clay if circumstances required it. So here he was, pointing his big finger toward three words at once, and turning his head on one side that he might keep better hold with his eyes of the one word which was to be discriminated out of the group. The

amount of knowledge Bartle Massey must possess was something so dim and vast that Bill's imagination recoiled before it; he would hardly have ventured to deny that the schoolmaster might have something to do in bringing about the regular return of daylight and the changes in the weather.'

This amiable cynic and the farmer's voluble wife, who 'keeps at the top o' the talk like a fife,' are fellow-immortals. The following dialogue is full of the humorous revelation, the ideal comedy, which is a peculiarity of George Eliot's prose dramas:

'"What!" said Bartle, with an air of disgust. "Was there a woman concerned? Then I give you up, Adam." "But it's a woman you've spoke well on, Bartle," said Mr. Poyser. "Come, now, you canna draw back; you said once as women wouldna ha' been a bad invention if they'd all been like Dinah." "I meant her voice, man,—I meant her voice, that was all," said Bartle. "I can bear to hear her speak without wanting to put wool in my ears. As for other things, I dare say she's like the rest o' women,—thinks two and two 'll come to make five, if she cries and bothers enough about it."

"Ay, ay!" said Mrs. Poyser; "one 'ud think, an' hear some folks talk, as the men war 'cute enough to count the corns in the bag o' wheat wi' only smelling at it. They can see through a barn door, they can. Perhaps that's the reason they can see so little o' this side on't."

Martin Poyser shook with delighted laughter, and winked at Adam, as much as to say the schoolmaster was in for it now.

"Ah!" said Bartle, sneeringly, "the women are quick enough,—they're quick enough; they know the rights of a story before they hear it, and can tell a man what his thoughts are before he knows 'em himself."

"Like enough," said Mrs. Poyser; "for the men are mostly so slow, their thoughts overrun 'em, and they can only catch 'em by the tail. I can count a stocking-top while a man's getting's tongue ready; an' when he outs wi' his speech at last, there's little broth to be made on't. It's your dead chicks takes the longest hatchin'. Howiver, I'm not denyin' the women are foolish; God Almighty made 'em to match the men."

"Match!" said Bartle; "ay, as vinegar matches on's teeth. If a man says a word, his wife 'll match it with a contradiction; if he's a mind for hot meat, his wife 'll match it with cold bacon; if he laughs, she 'll match it with a whimpering. She's such a match as the horse-fly is to the horse; she's got the right venom to sting him with,—the right venom to sting him with."

"Yes," said Mrs. Poyser, "I know what the men like,—a poor soft, as 'ud simper at 'em like the picture o' the sun, whether they did right or wrong, an' say thank you for a kick, an' pretend she didna know which end she stood uppermost, till her husband told her. That's what a man wants in a wife, mostly; he wants to make sure o' one fool as 'll tell him he's wise. But there's some men can do wi'out that,—they think so much o' themselves a'ready; that's how it is there's old bachelors."

"Come, Craig," said Mr. Poyser, jocosely, "you must get married pretty quick, else you'll be set down for an old bachelor; and you see what the women 'll think on you."

"Well," said Mr. Craig, willing to conciliate Mrs. Poyser, and setting a high value on his own compliments, "I like a cleverish woman,—a woman o' spirit,—a managing woman."

"You're out there, Craig," said Bartle, dryly; "you're out there. You judge of your garden-stuff on a better plan than that; you pick the things for what they can excel in,—for what they can excel in. You don't value your peas for their roots, or your carrots for their flowers. Now that's the way you should choose women; their cleverness will never come to much,—never come to much; but they make excellent simpletons, ripe and strong-flavored."

"What dost say to that?" said Mr. Poyser, throwing himself back and looking merrily at his wife.

"Say!" answered Mrs. Poyser, with dangerous fire kindling in her eyes, "why, I say

as some folks' tongues are like the clocks as run on strikin', not to tell you the time o' day, but because there's summat wrong i' their own inside."'

The greatest artistic success of the book is the sustained and powerful, yet unobtrusive, contrast between Dinah, the real heroine of the tale, and Hetty, the rustic coquette; the one tender, generous, earnest,—wholesomely, not morbidly, spiritual; the other confiding, bewitching, yet sterile, frivolous, and earthly:

'It is of little use to tell you that Hetty's cheek was like a rose-petal, that dimples played about her pouting lips, that her large, dark eyes had a roguishness under their long lashes, and that her curly hair, though all pushed back under her round cap while she was at work, stole back in dark, delicate rings on her forehead, and about her white, shell-like ears; it is of little use for me to say how lovely was the contour of her pink and white neckerchief, tucked into her low, plum-colored stuff bodice, or how the linen butter-making apron, with its bib, seemed a thing to be imitated in silk by duchesses, since it fell in such charming lines, or how her brown stockings and thick-soled, buckled shoes lost all that clumsiness which they must certainly have had when empty of her foot and ankle—of little use, unless you have seen a woman who affected you as Hetty affected her beholders; for otherwise, though you might conjure up the image of a lovely woman, she would not in the least resemble that distracting, kitten-like maiden. I might mention all the divine charms of a bright spring day, but if you had never in your life utterly forgotten yourself in straining your eyes after the mounting lark, or in wandering through the still lanes when the fresh opened blossoms fill them with a sacred, silent beauty like that of fretted aisles, where would be the use of my descriptive catalogue? I could never make you know what I meant by a bright spring day. Hetty's was a spring-tide beauty; it was the beauty of young, frisking things, round-limbed, gamboling, circumventing you by a false air of innocence—the innocence of a young star-browed calf, for example, that, being inclined for a promenade out of bounds, leads you a severe steeple-chase over hedge and ditch, and only comes to a stand in the middle of a bog.'

The harvest is the fruit of the seed sown. With no apparent leaning towards the depraved and vicious, she is intent only on present enjoyment; and, preoccupied with self, she flutters to her ruin like a moth into the candle, unrestrained in danger as in delight, sorry for herself, not repentant of her sin, meditating suicide, yet shrinking violently from the dark gulf:

'The horror of this cold, and darkness, and solitude—out of all human reach—became greater every long minute; it was as if she were dead already, and knew that she was dead, and longed to get back to life again. But no; she was alive still; she had not taken the deadly leap. She felt a strange contradictory wretchedness and exultation; wretchedness, that she did not dare to face death; exultation, that she was still in life—that she might yet know light and warmth again. She walked backward and forward to warm herself, beginning to discern something of the objects around her, as her eyes became accustomed to the night; the darker line of the hedge, the rapid motion of some living creature—perhaps a field-mouse—rushing across the grass.

She no longer felt as if the darkness hedged her in; she thought she could walk back across the field, and get over the stile: and then, in the very next field, she thought she remembered there was a hovel of furze near a sheepfold. If she could get into that hovel, she would be warmer; she could pass the night there, for that was what Alick did at Hayslope in lambing-time. The thought of this hovel brought the energy of a new hope; she took up her basket and walked across the field, but it was some time before she got in the right direction for the stile. The exercise, and the occupation of finding

the stile, were a stimulus to her, however, and lightened the horror of the darkness and solitude. There were sheep in the next field, and she started a group as she set down her basket and got over the stile; and the sound of their movement comforted her, for it assured her that her impression was right; this was the field where she had seen the hovel, for it was the field where the sheep were. Right on along the path, and she would get to it. She reached the opposite gate, and felt her way along its rails, and the rails of the sheepfold, till her hands encountered the pricking of the gorsy wall. Delicious sensation! She had found the shelter; she groped her way, touching the prickly gorse, to the door, and pushed it open.

It was an ill-smelling, close place, but warm, and there was straw on the ground. Hetty sank down on the straw with a sense of escape. Tears came—she had never shed tears before since she left Windsor—tears and sobs of hysterical joy that she had still hold of life, that she was still on the familiar earth, with the sheep near her. She turned up her sleeves, and kissed her arms with the passionate love of life.'

Slowly, by the dull pressure of mingled shame and hardship, a feeling of remorse and a sense of the divine are wrung from the wrecked and wasted soul, till, under the influence of the seraphic Dinah, the inarticulate stirring becomes a confession of guilt and a cry for mercy.

Inferior in concentration, unity, and depth, though displaying other powers almost equally great, is the *Mill on the Floss*, a love-tragedy pure and simple. Tom and Maggie, brother and sister, the central figures in the novel, are complementary opposites; the one utilitarian, narrow, and prejudiced, while rigidly upright, subordinating every consideration to that of personal honor and family pride, postponing every interest to the one sovereign aim of winning or retaining a good name, implacable when supposing himself to be in the line of duty, distinguished in boyhood by 'the justice that desires to hurt culprits as much as they deserve to be hurt, and is troubled with no doubts concerning the exact amount of their deserts'; the other bright, handsome, impulsive, high-hearted, musically attuned to all that is beautiful and heroic, craving affection, mingling in her nature the inexplicable forces which make existence a perpetual struggle and, externally, an ultimate failure. The portrayal of their childhood is inimitable. With what marvellous force and fidelity are the traits and incidents of Maggie's early years presented,—her bitter griefs over wounded love or slighted merit, the attic in which she frets out her ill-humors, the doll which she punishes for her misfortunes, her visits to the mill, her sorrow over her *brown* complexion, her flight to the Gypsies, to become their queen, and to forget her troubles in the noble labor of regenerating that race of wanderers, then the rapid evanescence of

her romance, and the dread of giving offence by the betrayal of her unfavorable opinion:

'Maggie Tulliver, you perceive, was by no means that well-trained, well-informed young person that a small female of eight or nine necessarily is in these days: she had only been to school a year at St. Ogg's, and had so few books that she sometimes read the dictionary, so that in travelling over her small mind you would have found the most unexpected ignorance as well as unexpected knowledge. She could have informed you that there was such a word as "polygamy," and being also acquainted with "polysyllable," she had deduced the conclusion that "poly" meant "many"; but she had had no idea that gypsies were not well supplied with groceries, and her thoughts generally were the oddest mixture of clear-eyed acumen and blind dreams.

Her ideas about the gypsies had undergone a rapid modification in the last five minutes. From having considered them very respectful companions, amenable to instruction, she had begun to think that they meant perhaps to kill her as soon as it was dark, and cut up her body for gradual cooking: the suspicion crossed her that the fierce-eyed old man was in fact the devil, who might drop that transparent disguise at any moment, and turn either into the grinning blacksmith or else a fiery-eyed monster with dragon's wings.'

She visits the boarding-school to see Tom, who finds no difficulty in discerning a pointer from a setter, but calls Latin 'beastly stuff,' and who can throw a stone right into the centre of a given ripple, but is in a state bordering on idiocy when he attempts to demonstrate the equality of two given triangles:

'"Well, my lad, . . . you look rarely! School agrees with you."

Tom wished he had looked rather ill.

"I don't think I am well, father," said Tom; "I wish you'd ask Mr. Stelling not to let me do Euclid; it brings on the toothache, I think." . . .

"Euclid, my boy,—why, what's that?" said Mr. Tulliver.

"Oh, I don't know; it's definitions, and axioms, and triangles, and things. It's a book I've got to learn in,—there's no sense in it."

"Go, go!" said Mr. Tulliver, reprovingly, "you mustn't say so. You must learn what your master tells you. He knows what it's right for you to learn."

"*I'll* help you now, Tom," said Maggie, with a little air of patronizing consolation. "I'm come to stay ever so long, if Mrs. Stelling asks me. I've brought my box and my pinafores,—haven't I, father?"

"*You* help me, you silly little thing!" said Tom, in such high spirits at this announcement that he quite enjoyed the idea of confounding Maggie by showing her a page of Euclid. "I should like to see you doing one of *my* lessons! Why, I learn Latin too! Girls never learn such things. They're too silly."

"I know what Latin is very well," said Maggie, confidently. "Latin's a language. There are Latin words in the dictionary. There's bonus, a gift."

"Now you're just wrong there, Miss Maggie!" said Tom, secretly astonished. "You think you're very wise! But 'bonus' means 'good,' as it happens,—bonus, bona, bonum."

"Well, that's no reason why it shouldn't mean 'gift,'" said Maggie, stoutly. "It may mean several things,—almost every word does. There's 'lawn,'—it means the grass-plot, as well as the stuff pocket-handkerchiefs are made of."'

Her womanhood is saddening. Self-renunciation alone redeems it from irrevocable loss. In her moments of strongest temptation, perplexed by opposing desires, she does not forget what is

due to those who have trusted her. Herein lies the moral of the whole matter:

'If life did not make duties for us before love comes, love would be a sign that two people ought to belong to each other.'

In *Middlemarch* the peculiar powers of the author are exhibited in the highest and widest play of their development. None of her books is so deeply thoughtful, none commands so broad a view of the human horizon, none is so rich in personal portraiture. What a rich variety of moral and intellectual life is presented in the learned and sanctimonious Casaubon, who always delivers himself with as careful precision as if he were a diplomatic envoy, groping in hopeless, helpless confusion in the bewildering fog of antiquity, seeking to show that all the mythical systems of the world are corruptions of a tradition originally revealed, and dying while only his notes, still accumulating, make a formidable range of volumes; the good-natured Garth, with his chivalrous devotion to labor, preferring good work with little pay to bad work with more money, but endangering the future of his children in order to oblige the self-indulgent, extravagant Fred; his clever, capable wife, who, with no false shame of poverty, continues to wash the dishes while the vicar makes his call; their open and genial daughter Mary, with her quaint, sarcastic impulsiveness; the benevolent Brooke, of miscellaneous opinions and uncertain vote, who will run into any mould, but won't keep shape; the elastic Chettam, the blooming Englishman of the red-whiskered type; the match-making Mrs. Cadwallader, whose mind, active as phosphorus, bites into the form that suits it everything that comes near; the generous Farebrother, wisely-speaking, but not always wisely-acting, with 'as little of the parson about him as will serve to carry orders'; the self-complacent Rosamond, with her worldly arts and aims, her exquisite manners, her talent for precise rendering of noble music, making herself from morning till night her own standard of perfect ladyhood,—a rare compound of beauty and amiability, of 'correct sentiments, of music, dancing, drawing, elegant note-writing, private album for extracted verse, and perfect blonde loveliness,' whose ideal includes a marriage that shall raise her to that celestial condition in which she shall be quite equal to the aristocrats of the county who look down on the Middlemarchers; the sub-

dued, deferential Bulstrode, with his tragical self-delusion, cajoling himself into the belief of his innocence, while the secret self declares his guilt; the ardent Lydgate, hopeful of achievement, a professional enthusiast, who dreams of himself as a discoverer in anatomy and a reformer in medicine, a little too self-confident, too disdainful of others and their influence, protuberant here and there with native prejudices, liable also to lapse down the wrong channel,—a nobly ambitious soul, foiled by its own mistakes, entangled in the web of adverse and sordid circumstances, limited and maimed by the meanness of opportunity; the yearning and theoretic Dorothea, longing to know the truths of life, eager to be useful, sure that she would have accepted Hooker to save him from that wretched mistake in matrimony, or Milton when his blindness had come on; enamored of intensity and greatness, rash in embracing whatever seems to have those aspects; finding in Mr. Casaubon one who could think with her, or, rather, whose thought is 'a whole world, of which my thought is but a poor twopenny mirror,' seeing reflected in that ungauged reservoir every quality which she herself brought, convinced by each succeeding visit that he is all she first imagined him to be, treasuring his remarks like specimens from a mine, or inscriptions on the door of a museum; marrying him at length, sadly to discover that her admiration was misplaced, that feeling as well as intellect is essential in a husband, exemplifying in her history 'the mixed results of young and noble impulse struggling amidst the conditions of an imperfect social state, in which great feelings will often take the aspect of error, and great faith the aspect of illusion'; reading, for the inspiration of all good women, a helpful lesson in the thought that 'however just her indignation might be, her ideal was not to claim justice, but to give tenderness.' Here is the keynote to the entire story:

'Who that cares much to know the history of man, and how that mysterious mixture behaves under the varying experiments of time, has not dwelt, at least briefly, on the life of Saint Theresa, has not smiled with some gentleness at the thought of the little girl walking forth one morning hand-in-hand with her still smaller brother, to go and seek martyrdom in the country of the Moors? Out they toddled from rugged Avila wide-eyed and helpless-looking as two fawns, but with distinctly human hearts, already beating to a national idea, until domestic reality met them in the shape of uncles, and turned them back from their great resolve. That child-pilgrimage was a fit beginning. Theresa's passionate, ideal nature demanded an epic life: what were many-volumed romances of chivalry and the social conquests of a brilliant girl to her? Her flame quickly burned up that light fuel, and, fed from within, soared after some illimitable satisfaction, some object which would never justify weariness, which would reconcile

self-despair with the rapturous consciousness of life beyond self. She found her epos in the reform of a religious order. That Spanish woman, who lived three hundred years ago, was certainly not the last of her kind. Many Theresas have been born who found for themselves no epic life wherein there was a constant unfolding of far-resonant action; perhaps only a life of mistakes, the offspring of a certain spiritual grandeur ill-matched with the meanness of opportunity; perhaps a tragic failure which found no sacred poet and sank unwept into oblivion. With dim lights and tangled circumstances they tried to shape their thoughts and deeds to noble agreement; but after all, to common eyes their struggle seemed mere inconsistency and formlessness; for these later-born Theresas were helped by no coherent social faith and order which could perform the function of knowledge for the ardently willing soul. Their ardor alternated between a vague ideal and the common yearning of womanhood; so that the one was disapproved as extravagance, and the other condemned as a lapse. . . . Here and there is born a Saint Theresa, foundress of nothing, whose loving heart-beats and sobs after an unattained goodness tremble off and are dispersed among hindrances, instead of centring in some long-recognizable deed.'

Romola is a masterly historical novel, a classic picture of Florence in the fifteenth century, an age in which faith and culture contended passionately for preëminence, an age that shared the enthusiasm of the incomparable Lorenzo and the ecstasies of the fiery Savonarola. What a vivid glimpse of the rapturous regard for the New Learning is given in the blind old Bardo, who all his days 'hung over the books and lived with the shadows,' and the vindictive Baldassarre, whose paralyzed memory is electrified by a thrill of revenge:

'He leaned to take up the fragments of the dagger; then he turned towards the book which lay open at his side. It was a fine large manuscript, an old volume of Pausanias. . . . In old days he had known Pausanias familiarly; yet an hour or two ago he had been looking hopelessly at that page, and it had suggested no more meaning to him than if the letters had been black weather-marks on a wall; but at this moment they were once more the magic signs that conjure up a world. That moonbeam falling on the letters had raised Messina before him, and its struggle against Spartan oppression. He snatched up the book, but the light was too pale for him to read further by. No matter; he knew that chapter; he read inwardly. He saw the stoning of the traitor Aristocrates — stoned by a whole people, who cast him out from their borders to lie unburied, and set up a pillar with verses upon it, telling how time had brought home justice to the unjust. The words arose within him, and stirred innumerable vibrations of memory. He forgot that he was old: he could almost have shouted. The light was come again, mother of knowledge and joy! In that exultation his limbs recovered their strength. He started up with his broken dagger and book, and went out under the broad moonlight. It was a nipping, frosty air, but Baldassarre could feel no chill—he only felt the glow of conscious power. He walked about and paused on all the open spots of that high ground, and looked down on the domed and towered city, sleeping darkly under its sleeping guardians, the mountains; on the pale gleam of the river; on the valley vanishing towards the peaks of snow, and felt himself master of them all. That sense of mental empire which belongs to us all in moments of exceptional clearness was intensified for him by the long days and nights in which memory had been little more than the consciousness of something gone. That city, which had been a weary labyrinth, was material that he could subdue to his purposes now. His mind glanced through its affairs with flashing conjecture; he was once more a man who knew cities, whose sense of vision was instructed with large experience, and who felt the keen delight of holding all things in the grasp of language. Names! Images! His mind rushed through its wealth without pausing, like one who enters on a great inheritance.'

Tito, the Greek, is a figure to live in the imagination; brilliant, insinuating, worldly, calm as a faithless summer sea, not originally false, but bent on pleasure and power; swerving continually from the direct path in his cowardly recoil from pain, or in the consistent desire to compass, with the least resistance, the pleasant end which suggests itself; sliding easily into foulest treachery, yet spurred at last, by fear, into a sort of desperate energy,—a being that at once fascinates and repels. Judge him by the first impressions of the Florentine artist, who is eager to paint his face for that of the traitor Sinon, and, being rebuked, offers this equivocal explanation:

'A perfect traitor should have a face which vice can write no marks on—lips that will lie with a dimpled smile—eyes with such agate-like brightness and depth that no infamy can dull them—cheek that will rise from a murder and not look haggard. I say not this young man is a traitor: I mean, he has a face that would make him the more perfect traitor if he had the heart of one, which is saying neither more nor less than that he has a beautiful face, informed with rich young blood, that will be nourished enough by food, and keep its color without much help of virtue. He may have the heart of a hero along with it; I aver nothing to the contrary.'

Romola herself, a shade more modern, is the incarnation of nobleness; stately in body; stately in soul; realizing, with the emphasis of habitual action, the angelical ideal of humanity, which holds 'that life to be the highest which is a conscious voluntary sacrifice.' Finally, nothing could be more impressive than Savonarola's exhortation to her to return to the home from which she is flying:

'What! the earth is full of iniquity—full of groans—the light is still struggling with a mighty darkness, and you say, "I can not bear my bonds; I will burst them asunder; I will go where no man claims me?" My daughter, every bond of your life is a debt: it can lie nowhere else. In vain will you wander over the earth; you will be wandering forever away from the right. . . . You seek to break your ties in self-will and anger, not because the higher life calls upon you to renounce them. The higher life begins for us, my daughter, when we renounce our own will to bow before a divine law. That seems hard to you. It is the portal of wisdom, and freedom, and blessedness. And the symbol of it hangs before you. That wisdom is the religion of the cross. . . .

You would leave your place empty, when it ought to be filled with your pity and your labor. If there is wickedness in the streets, your steps should shine with the light of purity: if there is a cry of anguish, you should be there to still it. My beloved daughter, sorrow has come to teach you a new worship: the sign of it hangs before you. . . . Make your marriage sorrows an offering too, my daughter—an offering to the great work by which sin and sorrow are being made to cease. The end is sure, it is already beginning. Here in Florence it is beginning, and the eyes of faith behold it. And it may be our blessedness to die for it: to die daily by the crucifixion of our selfish will—to die at last by laying our bodies on the altar. My daughter, you are a child of Florence—for your own people, whom God is preparing to bless the earth. Bear the anguish and the smart. The iron is sharp—I know, I know—it rends the tender flesh. The draught is bitterness on the lips. But there is rapture in the cup—there is the vision which makes all life below it dross forever. Come, my daughter, come back to your place!'

The spirit of the age has found no fuller and broader expression than in *Daniel Deronda*, a study of Jewish life in its best aspects; analytical, severe, scientific; fine, strong, brilliant. The hero, a happy, hopeful boy, is suddenly transformed by the brooding suspicion of a blot upon his origin, discovers himself to be a *Jew*, yet a Jew rationalized by a Christian education, and devotes his manhood to the problem of restoring his people to the land of their ancestors. His greatness lies in his persistent choice of the highest motive,—in steadfast and noble human endeavor. The heroine is a moral paradox, introduced to us as a 'Nereid in sea-green robes and silver ornaments,' singularly fascinating by her rare beauty, enigmatical conduct, and purgatorial experience; a spoiled child, idolized by a widowed mother, served like a 'princess in exile' by her younger sisters; wedding a rich suitor, and living in splendid misery; compelled to an outward obedience, yet stirred with bitter hate and suppressed passion, with which is mingled a gnawing remorse for her folly in marrying a man she did not love; turning in her agony to Deronda, who becomes her confidant, her instructor, her ideal of rectitude, declaring the curse upon her to be, that 'all passion is spent in the narrow round—the small drama of personal desires—for want of ideas and sympathies to make a larger home for it'; gradually renewing her distressed and erratic spirit with such counsels as these:

'Looking at your life as a debt may seem the dreariest view of things at a distance; but it cannot really be so. What makes life dreary is the want of motive; but once beginning to act with that penitential, loving purpose you have in your mind, there will be unexpected satisfaction—there will be newly opening needs—continually coming to carry you on from day to day. You will find your life growing like a plant. . . . This sorrow, which has cut down to the root, has come to you while you are so young—try to think of it, not as a spoiling of your life, but as a preparation for it. . . . You have been saved from the worst evils that might have come from your marriage, which you feel was wrong. You have had a vision of injurious, selfish action—a vision of possible degradation; think that a severe angel, seeing you along the road of error, grasped you by the wrist, and showed you the horror of the life you must avoid. And it has come to you in your spring-time. Think of it as a preparation. You can, you will, be among the best of women, such as make others glad that they were born.'

Mordecai is the ideal incarnate, whose expectant and heavenly dream is the revived unity of the dispersed and despised race, whose light in the gathering shadows of dissolution is the assurance that his vision and passion—his immortal flame—have entered into Deronda:

'Death is coming to me as the divine kiss which is both parting and reunion—which

takes me from your bodily eyes and gives me full presence in your soul. Where thou goest, Daniel, I shall go. Is it not begun? Have I not breathed my soul into you? We shall live together.'

No laughing humor here, and gone forever the luminous wit which we heard in *Adam Bede*, which lingered still, as glimpses of sunlight, in *Middlemarch*. The indescribable glow of youth has vanished before the disenchantments of a hard, unyielding, compelling universe. Believe that character is a process under immutable law. You are surrounded by a wall of external condition; yet oppose to the shocks of fate a stoical resolution. Man lives in man. Personal continuance there is none. Believe that human life is a sorrowful riddle; yet believe, with Fichte, in the moral order of the world. Above all, believe in human sympathy in the hour of overpowering calamity.

Style.—Pure and homogeneous, intense and life-like, broad and steady, full of majesty when deepest, unique in the absolute fitness of the phrase to the thought. A living organism, whose every particle tingles with the fine vibration of heart and brain. George Eliot was one of the most careful among authors. Her manuscript is said to have been free from blur or erasure, every letter delicately and distinctly drawn. A conspicuous feature of her excellent literary method is perfection of dialect. Thus: 'It's your inside as isn't right made for music; it's no better nor a hollow stock'; and, 'I hate the sound of women's voices; they're always either a-buzz or a-squeak—always either a-buzz or a-squeak. Mrs. Poyser keeps at the top o' the talk like a fife.' Seldom cumbrous, with an occasional false note in the music or venial neglect in the diction and arrangement, notwithstanding the usual elaborate finish of the sentences. Thus: 'Presently Baldassarre *began to* move. He threw away the broken dagger, and slowly and gradually, still trembling, *began to* raise himself from the ground. Tito put out his hand to help him, and so strangely quick are men's souls that in this moment, when he *began to* think his atonement was accepted, he had a darting thought of the irksome efforts it entailed.'

Rank.—She belongs neither to the school of fiction which is a partisan of passion, nor to that which is a worshipper of conventionality; the one representing the excess of feeling and impulse under the attractive title of Nature, the other deifying

custom and depicting a code of manners woven of the latest fashion. Surpassing the truth and beauty of both, she deals with the permanent heart of humanity, and represents, beyond all others, the moral type of to-day, which brings into prominence character, as active and passive, struggling with temptation, and perfecting itself through trivial cares and besetting trials.

She has not the vigorous movement, the serene tone, of Scott; she may not have the exquisite finish of Miss Austen, nor the concentrative intensity of Miss Brontë; she cannot sketch with the rapidity of Fielding: but none of them combines in equal splendor the power of painting the external, and the insight into the life of the soul. Above them all is she distinguished by the constant reference of things to facts and laws which are universal — always the condition of highest literature. She stands at the confluence of the real and the ideal, looking from the less into the larger, with finer and stronger vision than Dickens or Thackeray. With Shakespeare, she has the gift of the dramatist — narrower than his in range, but, within its limits, equal; with him, she has the gift of analysis — less in quantity, superior in quality. Like him, she enters sympathetically into minds and opinions quite opposite to her own. How admirably can she draw a lively, a shallow, or a flippant personage,—herself grave even to melancholy; or a believing and devout Christian,— herself a naturalist, an eclectic in religion! The figures on her canvas, especially the earlier, are known as directly and intimately as any in real or fictitious history. And who has approached her in the ability to seize the essential characteristics and exhibit the real charm of that quiet English country life which is her sphere?

As with the great Elizabethan, form is subordinate to content. The motive is supreme over all. How large a space in the whole bulk of her volumes does she usurp for her own interspersed interpretation and comment! This may seem to Taine and Matthew Arnold very inartistic; but we are rather glad that, not content to be a mere anatomist or spectator, she has ventured not only to *exhibit* human nature in action, but to explain the motives of the action, and to speculate lovingly and vividly on human life. Possibly, in her later works she may sometimes be too discursive. Perhaps, also, her finest moral effects may there be injured by a too fatalistic conception of things, by a certain vagueness and doubt,

as of a world hopelessly and irrecoverably dark; but this is no reproach to her art, except so far as it may be partial. Mistake, frustration, doom, dimness of perception and waste of force, are indisputable phases of mortality; and judgments can differ only as to the *degree* in which the destiny of mankind shall be painted justly in hues of gloom.

Noteworthy as a poet, she will be remembered as a novelist. It is in the latter function that she has wrought upon the taste and conscience of her age. She will continue to be read in the former by those who desire to know the fulness of her genius.

One of the rare human souls whom we account our loftiest — one who neither carries the feminine quality to its height, like Mrs. Browning; nor transcends the limitations of her sex, like Madame de Staël. Fixing our estimate of success by humor, pathos, thought, portraiture, and mastery of language,— what woman has touched so high a point in literature? Shakespeare enables us to dispense with Jonson and Beaumont, but who has rendered George Eliot superfluous?

Character.—Of the calm, contemplative order; of opulent imagination, profound humor, delicate selective talent; supreme over all English novelists in rich and multifarious culture; uniting to a truthful realism a poetic idealism, and to the largeness of conception that views the simplest and homeliest object in broad relationship, a psychological insight that pursues life to its inmost solitude.

Her sympathy with human suffering and human limitation was elemental. She was fond of children, had a deep, catholic love for mankind, appreciated all varieties of character, believing that in the humblest are sublime promptings. Her nature was thoroughly feminine — sensitive, deeply and nobly affectionate. If she could expound the broad claims of universal brotherhood, and comprehend the 'high necessities of art,' she could also feel and express with simplicity the intensity of personal devotion:

'Sweet evenings come and go, love,
They came and went of yore:
This evening of our life, love,
Shall go and come no more.

When we have passed away, love,
All things will keep their name;
But yet no life on earth, love,
With ours will be the same.

The daisies will be there, love,
The stars in heaven will shine:
I shall not feel thy wish, love,
Nor thou my hand in thine.

A better time will come, love,
And better souls be born:
I would not be the best, love,
To leave thee now forlorn.'

To the highest gifts she united the noblest purposes. How grateful was she for every moulding and elevating influence! and she yearned to be helpful! Her glowing prayer was to —

> 'Be to other souls
> The cup of strength in some great agony;
> Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love;
> Beget the smiles that have no cruelty;
> Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
> And in diffusion ever more intense.'

Profoundly devout, she was unable to accept much of what is usually held as religious belief. Her works, eminently among those of the day, embody the central ethics of Christ, yet without any intellectual acceptance of Christianity as a dogmatic scheme. Her religion appears to have been in general harmony with that of Auguste Comte,—the religion of Humanity. Her creed is, 'Religion is kindness.' 'The first condition of human goodness is something to love; the second, something to reverence.' The soul ascends to a divine life by self-surrender to its own highest intimations. Man lives in man — so much, at least, is certain. An assured blessing of Death, if not the final one, is, that it destroys the selfish egotisms of the flesh, and leaves us an impersonal immortality in human gladness for gifts bestowed. With sad incompleteness she says:

> 'The only better is a Past that lives
> On through an added Present, stretching still
> In hope unchecked by shaming memories
> To life's last memories.'

If not an optimist, neither is she a pessimist. If she neither affirms nor denies, she *hopes*. Of the sweet Methodist in *Adam Bede:* 'When she came to the question, Will God take care of us when we die? she uttered it in such a tone of plaintive appeal that the tears came into some eyes.' The idea of Destiny, which environs us like a drop of dew in the heart of a rock, seems in her latter years *almost* to master her, yet does she continue a writer of generous aims, who would carve out larger space for every soul imprisoned in pettiness, doubt, or convention:

> 'Nay, *never falter; no great deed is done*
> *By falterers who ask for certainty.*
> No good is certain; but the steadfast mind,
> The undivided will to seek the good,—
> 'Tis that compels the elements, and wrings
> A human music from the indifferent air.
> The greatest gift the hero leaves his race

Is to have been a hero. Say we fail?—
We feed the high tradition of the world,
And leave our spirits in Zincalo breasts.'

Influence.—A moral teacher of the purest and noblest tone, not incidentally or artistically, but purposely and distinctly. She has afforded the deepest speculation to the few, while she has impressed upon the many the excellence of patient work, the beauty of self-sacrifice, the sovereignty of duty; and to all she has brought exalting inspiration.

While we do not doubt that the total effect is beneficent, we must believe that the nobleness she inculcates is hindered by her agnosticism. The utmost manhood and womanhood can never be developed without the clear appeal to eternity. The strongest will feel at last the oppression of that mournful philosophy whose lights of gayety seem but foil to the overhanging gloom; whose sweetest, grandest creatures — ill-matched with the environment of their life — struggle so often to a pitiable or sorrowful end; and which, in abortive answer to human entreaty, peeps over the edges of our planet, to discover for the Gethsemane of life only an illimitable void.

Besides the choral strain of moral piety, consider the wealth of wit and wisdom which the mind and heart of the race inherit forever. Where can be found in works of the same kind so rare a mine of thought for the worshipper to take to his bosom, for the writer to enrich his discourse, for the thinker to ponder, for the divine to quote,— for all to assimilate and to use? Here are some examples:

'It is hard to be wise on an empty stomach.'

'It is never too late to be what you might have been.'

'Speech is but broken light upon the depths of the unspoken.'

'It's easy finding reasons why other people should be patient.'

'Genius, at first, is little more than a great capacity for receiving discipline.'

'When God makes His presence felt through us, we are like the burning bush.'

'I've never any pity for conceited people, because I think they carry their comfort about with them.'

'The tale of the Divine pity was never yet believed from lips that were not felt to be moved by human pity.'

'When Death, the great reconciler, has come, it is never our tenderness that we repent of, but our severity.'

'Every man's work, pursued steadily, tends to become an end in itself, and so bridges over the loveless chasms of his life.'

'There is no sorrow I have thought more about than to love what is great, and try to reach it and yet to fail.'

'Th' young men nooadeys, th're poor squashy things,—the' looke weel enoof, but the' woon't wear, the' woon't wear.'

'So our lives glide on: the river ends, we don't know where, and the sea begins, and then there is no more jumping ashore.'

'There's no pleasure in living if you're to be corked up forever, and only dribble your mind out by the sly, like a leaky barrel.'

'Our deeds are like children born to us; they live and act apart from our own will. Children may be strangled, but deeds never.'

'We look at the one little woman's face we love as we look at the face of our mother earth, and see all sorts of answers to our own yearnings.'

'Our guides, we pretend, must be sinless; as if those were not often the best teachers, who only yesterday got corrected for their mistakes.'

'Things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.'

'It's poor work, allus settin' the dead above the livin'. It 'ud be better if folks 'ud make much on us beforehand instid o' beginnin' when we're gone.'

'By desiring what is perfectly good, even when we don't quite know what it is, and cannot do what we would, we are part of the divine power against evil.'

'Tito was experiencing that inexorable law of human souls, that we prepare ourselves for sudden deeds by the reiterated choice of good or evil that gradually determines character.'

'Men and women make sad mistakes about their own symptoms—taking their vague, uneasy longings, sometimes for genius, sometimes for religion, and oftener still for a mighty love.'

'A child, more than all other gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it and forward-looking thought.'

'Our caresses, our tender words, our still rapture under the influence of autumn sunsets or calm majestic statues, or Beethoven symphonies, all bring with them the consciousness that they are mere waves and ripples in an unfathomable ocean of love and beauty. Our emotion in its keenest moment passes from expression into silence, our love at its highest flood rushes beyond its object, and loses itself in the sense of divine mystery.'

The temptation to quote further must be resisted. The prayer of this good and gifted woman is answered. Her place is secure among those—

'Immortal dead who still live on
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity;
In deeds of daring rectitude; in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self;
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.'

TENNYSON.

Not of the howling dervishes of song,
Who craze the brain with their delirious dance,
Art thou, O sweet historian of the heart!
Therefore to thee the laurel-leaves belong,
To thee our love and our allegiance,
For thy allegiance to the poet's art.—*Longfellow.*

Biography.—Born at Somersby, Lincolnshire, in 1810; one of a numerous and gifted family; the youngest in a poetical brotherhood of three—Frederick, Charles, and Alfred—sons of a clergyman, said to have been remarkable for strength, stature, and energy; educated at Cambridge, where in 1829 he gained the Chancellor's medal for a prize poem; the next year, while still an undergraduate, published his first volume, under the title of *Poems Chiefly Lyrical*, hailed by the *Westminster* as the promise of higher things than recent literature had seen, and by the *Blackwood's* as dismal drivel; his second volume in 1832, under the name simply of *Poems;* his third, partly compiled from the *débris* of his earlier ones, in 1842, from which date he entered upon the enjoyment of a growing and select popularity; received the decoration of D.C.L. from Oxford; appointed Laureate, upon the death of Wordsworth in 1850, continuing to exhibit by successive works the progressive widening and deepening of his mind. He lives in the country, amid books and flowers, mostly in the Isle of Wight, free from the burdens and disturbances of society. When he dies, we shall know more of him. Meanwhile, we console ourselves with the reflection that his intellectual biography is more important than the rather uneventful story of his life.

Writings.—From the first, Tennyson has shown himself to be a born artist, a master of charm, a lover of form and color, a builder of imaginary castles, an ethical instructor. The *Palace of Art* is an allegory of a soul whose purpose is to enjoy Beauty always and only for herself, within a 'lordly pleasure-house,' on a huge crag-foundation, high above the herds of human swine, in command of all delights save spiritual, and exulting in her isolation:

'I take possession of man's mind and deed,
I care not what the sects may brawl,
I sit as God, holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all.'

After a time, lest she should perish utterly, Heaven smites her with an inward sense of poverty and misery:

'Back on herself her serpent pride had curled.
"No voice," she shrieked in that lone hall,
"No voice breaks through the stillness of this world:
One deep, deep silence all!" . . .

And death and life she hated equally,
And nothing saw, for her despair,
But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
No comfort anywhere.'

Four years the agony endures, then she quits her royal solitude, with its haunting horrors, in pursuit of a higher life:

'"Make me a cottage in the vale," she cried,
"Where I may mourn and pray."'

The imagery and rhythm of the *Lotos-Eaters* are marvellously beautiful and expressive. How exquisitely does the poem represent the luxurious sleepiness said to be produced in those who feed upon the lotus! How perfectly are the deep quietude, the dreamy haze, the lulling spell, of the enchanted land, reflected in the verse:—

'A land of streams! Some, like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
And some through wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below. . . .
There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And through the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep. . . .
Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.'

Since the *Fairy Queen*, there has been no such melodious effeminacy. And how felicitously is the plaintive or languid mood of the weary or enervated soul given in that which follows! —

'Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence; ripen, fall, and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.
How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half dream! . . .
To hear each other's whispered speech;
Eating the lotus day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy:
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!'

Quite naturally, the companions of Ulysses forget their country, renounce action, and nervelessly resolve to 'lie reclined on the hills like gods.'

Now and then over the calm and correct surface pours the high tide of emotion, with a billowy splendor and a glorious freedom, as in these verses of *Locksley Hall:*

'And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee."

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night.

And she turned — her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs —
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes —

Saying "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong":
Saying "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long." . . .

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper thronged my pulses with the fulness of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rushed together at the touching of our lips.

O my cousin shallow hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!'

In the *Princess*, Tennyson essayed a masterpiece. A mix-

ture of modern ideas and manners with mediæval chivalry and romance, of the farcical with the sentimental, of the conventional with the real,—it is styled 'a medley.' A story of a prince and princess affianced in childhood by their parents. The lady, when the appointed time has arrived, repudiates the alliance; but after a series of adventures and incidents culminating in a combat, she relents, pities, then loves. The wounded prince, received into her palace, sees the fair Ida before him when consciousness returns, and says, painfully:

> '"If you be, what I think you, some sweet dream,
> I would but ask you to fulfil yourself;
> But if you be that Ida whom I knew,
> I ask you nothing: only if a dream,
> Sweet dream, be perfect; I shall die to-night,
> Stoop down and seem to kiss me ere I die." . . .
>
> She stooped; and out of languor leapt a cry;
> Leapt fiery Passion from the brinks of death;
> And I believed that in the living world
> My spirit closed with Ida's at the lips;
> Till back I fell, and from mine arms she rose
> Glowing all over noble shame; and all
> Her falser self slipt from her like a robe,
> And left her woman, lovelier in her mood
> Than in her mould that other, when she came
> From barren deeps to conquer all with love.'

The beautiful enthusiast, irritated against the rule of men, had resolved upon a social revolution; and, to liberate her sex, had founded a university on the frontiers, designed to be the colony of future equality. The failure of the enterprise suggests the true philosophy of the 'woman question':

> '"For woman is not undeveloped man,
> But diverse; could we make her as the man,
> Sweet Love were slain: his dearest bond is this,
> Not like to like, but like in difference.
> Yet in the long years liker must they grow;
> The man be more of woman, she of man;
> He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
> Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world. . . .
> Till at the last she set herself to man,
> Like perfect music unto noble words;
> And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,
> Sit side by side, full-summed in all their powers,
> Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
> Self-reverent each, and reverencing each." . . .
> "May these things be!" Sighing she spoke, "I fear
> They will not." "Dear, but let us type them now
> In our own lives, and this proud watchword rest
> Of equal; seeing either sex alone
> Is half itself; and in true marriage lies

Nor equal, nor unequal; each fulfils
Defect in each, and always thought in thought,
Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,
The single pure and perfect animal,
The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke,
Life."'

In Memoriam is an elegiac of sorrow-brooding thought, a series of meditations circling around the recollection of a gifted friend who died young, a cry of the bereaved soul into the dark infinite after the vanished love. The gloom, the utter stillness, the apparent nothingness, of Death, raise, before the mind that looks beyond the bourne, questions relating to the being of God, the immortality of the soul, the nature and conditions of future existence. Thus the soliloquist speaks typically in behalf of humanity, and teaches deep lessons of life and conscience. Immortal Love is the true conception of the adorable Sovereign, yet the world of realities does not seem to be that of unmixed benevolence:

'Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life.'

Driven by an awful pain of need, he cuts the Gordian knot, and betakes himself reverently to faith:

'I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.'

Can man who trusts, who battles for the true, be only the product of material forces, 'blown about the desert dust, or sealed within the iron hills'?—

'No more? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons of the prime,
That tare each other in their slime,
Were mellow music matched with him.

O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil.'

The hereafter is guaranteed by its being the complement of the present. Listen then to the voice of the spirit, inarticulate, yet

intense, and the haunting problem of human destiny shall become the glad promise of joy, the memory of the dead shall be changed to a sense of the living:

'What art thou, then? I cannot guess;
But though I seem in star and flower
To feel thee, some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less.

My love involves the love before;
My love is vaster passion now;
Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
I have thee still, and I rejoice;
I prosper, circled with thy voice;
I shall not lose thee though I die.'

Therefore:

'Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night:
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease:
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.'

In the long roll of Christian heroes there is not a truer one than that of *Enoch Arden*, a sweet depicture of 'hearts centred in the sphere of common duties.' Two children, Enoch and Philip, love their playmate Annie Lee. She is willing to be 'a little wife to both,' though secretly she loves Enoch the better. At twenty-one he marries her, and they are prospered until he falls from a mast and breaks a limb. Then, though a God-fearing man, doubt and gloom fall upon him:

'He seemed, as in a nightmare of the night,
To see his children leading evermore
Low, miserable lives of hand to mouth,
And her he loved, a beggar: then he prayed,
"Save them from this, whatever comes to me."'

While he prays, the ship-master comes, and offers to take him as boatswain. He consents joyfully, and bids his wife farewell,

who entreats him not to go, sure that evil will come of it. He bids her cheer up and be comforted:

> '"And fear no more for me; or if you fear
> Cast all your cares on God: that anchor holds.
> Is He not yonder in those uttermost
> Parts of the morning? If I flee to these
> Can I go from Him? and the sea is His,
> The sea is His: He made it."'

Years go by, and no tidings of the voyager, who has been wrecked upon a tropic island. There, with infinite yearning, he thinks of the domestic heaven far away:

> 'Once likewise, in the ringing of his ears,
> Though faintly, merrily—far and far away—
> He heard the pealing of his parish bells;
> Then, though he knew not wherefore, started up
> Shuddering, and when the beauteous hateful isle
> Returned upon him, had not his poor heart
> Spoken with That, which being everywhere
> Lets none, who speak with Him, seem all alone,
> Surely the man had died of solitude.'

At last he is rescued by a passing vessel, returns whence he had sailed, reaches home, where his Annie lived, and babes, 'in those far-off seven happy years'; but, 'finding neither light nor murmur there (a bill of sale gleamed thro' the drizzle),' the sad wanderer seeks a tavern which he knew of old. The good and garrulous hostess, never suspecting the identity of her guest—'so brown, so bowed, so broken'—tells him, with other annals of the port,—

> 'All the story of his house:
> His baby's death, her growing poverty,
> How Philip put her little ones to school,
> And kept them in it, his long wooing her,
> Her slow consent, and marriage and the birth
> Of Philip's child: and o'er his countenance
> No shadow passed, nor motion: anyone,
> Regarding, well had deemed he felt the tale
> Less than the teller: only when she closed
> "Enoch, poor man, was cast away and lost"
> He, shaking his gray head pathetically,
> Repeated, muttering, "cast away and lost";
> Again in deeper inward whispers "lost!"'

Longing to look once more upon her sweet face, in the darkness he goes and peeps in at the window, sees them all in perfect comfort, retraces his steps, feeling along the garden-wall lest he should swoon, then falls prone, and prays:

> '"Too hard to bear! why did they take me thence?
> O God Almighty, blessed Saviour, Thou

That didst uphold me on my lonely isle,
Uphold me, Father, in my loneliness
A little longer! aid me, give me strength
Not to tell her, never to let her know.
Help me not to break in upon her peace."'

The *Idyls of the King* may in future be rated as an epochal composition. It is the renewed legend of Arthur, Merlin, and the knights of the Round Table, in which the poet not only restores the primitive age, purified and elevated, but gives noble expression to the aspirations of man, the hopes of religion, and the harmonies of Nature. It is subdivided into ten distinct poems, some of which, for imaginative passion and admirable art, must be classed as belonging to the mountain-summits of English poetry. Lancelot, though he swerves from virtue, is at heart heroic, deeply in sympathy with righteousness and honor, just, brave, and generous, with love and compassion, enough and to spare, for every living creature. The 'lily maid Elaine' is smitten with an absorbing fondness for the great warrior:

'The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had marred his face, and marked it ere his time.
Another sinning on such heights with one,
The flower of all the west and all the world,
Had been the slecker for it: but in him
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
And drove him into wastes and solitudes
For agony, who was yet a living soul.
Marred as he was, he seemed the goodliest man
That ever among ladies ate in Hall,
And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes.
However marred, of more than twice her years,
Seamed with an ancient sword-cut on the cheek,
And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes
And loved him, with that love which was her doom.'

She keeps his shield, a precious token, counting daily 'every dint a sword had beaten in it, and every scratch a lance had made upon it.' He is wounded: she seeks him out, 'brain-feverous in his heat and agony,' heals him, and he is grateful:

'And the sick man forgot her simple blush
Would call her friend and sister, sweet Elaine;
Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and held her tenderly,
And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and woman when they love their best,
Closest and sweetest, and had died the death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.'

His heart is another's, she suspects the truth, and sorrow dims her sight:

> 'She murmur'd "vain, in vain: it cannot be.
> He will not love me: how then? must I die?"
> Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
> That has but one plain passage of few notes,
> Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er
> For all an April morning, till the ear
> Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
> Went half the night repeating, "Must I die?"'

She confesses her secret, prays to be his wife, or—when that cannot be—to remain with him, to wait upon him. This refused, she droops and fades, mixing her fancies with the moanings of the wind, her flower of life passing away in the measures of this little song:

> 'Love, art thou sweet? Then bitter death must be;
> Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to me,
> O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.
>
> Sweet love that seems not made to fade away,
> Sweet death, that seems to make us loveless clay,
> I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.
>
> I fain would follow love, if that could be;
> I needs must follow death, who calls for me;
> Call and I follow, I follow! let me die.'

Her body, by her own prayer, is floated in a barge to Arthur's palace, with only a steerer old and dumb, bearing in her hand the written announcement of her fate:

> 'Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the dead,
> Steered by the dumb, went upward with the flood,—
> In her right hand the lily, in her left
> The letter,—all her bright hair streaming down,—
> And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
> Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white,
> All but her face; and that clear-featured face
> Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
> But fast asleep, and lay as though she smiled.'

The illicit loves of Lancelot and Guinevere are detected, not, however, till the dark shadows of repentance have begun to cross between him and his idol. They have had a last meeting, and she has fled the court to take sanctuary at Almesbury, without making known her name. There the persistent allusions of a simple child to the golden days of the Round Table 'before the coming of the sinful queen' force from her this solemn, fateful burst of passion:

> '"But help me, heaven, for surely I repent.
> For what is true repentance but in thought,—

Not ev'n in inmost thought to think again
The sins that made the past so pleasant to us:
And I have sworn never to see him more,—
To see him more."'

Where in modern verse is there anything finer than the interview between Arthur and his remorseful wife? Where, in history or in letters, is there a nobler, grander conception of man as he might be, than in this resplendent king who says to the penitent and stricken queen:

'"Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives; do thou for thine own soul the rest.
But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play,
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with thee.
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine. . . .
My love through flesh hath wrought into my life
So far that my doom is, I love thee still.
Let no man dream but that I love thee still.
Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter, in that world where all are pure,
We two may meet before high God, and thou
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine, and know
I am thine husband,—not a smaller soul. . . .
Leave me that,
I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I hence.
Through the thick night I hear the trumpet blow;
They summon me their King to lead mine hosts
Far down to that great battle in the west,
Where I must strike against the man they call
My sister's son—no kin of mine, who leagues
With lords of the White Horse, heathen, and knights—
Traitors—and strike him dead, and meet myself
Death, or I know not what mysterious doom.
And thou remaining here wilt learn the event;
But hither shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side, see thee no more,
Farewell!"'

Never will the air of sublimity pass from this, nor the air of nobleness from her apostrophe of recalled and revived affection:

'"Now I see thee what thou art,
Thou art the highest and most human too,
Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there none
Will tell the King I love him though so late?
Now—ere he goes to the great Battle? none:
Myself must tell him in that purer life,
But now it were too daring. *Ah, my God,*
What might I not have made of thy fair world,
Had I but loved thy highest creature here?"'

In that 'cloudy battle,' King Arthur is deeply 'smitten through the helm.' Feeling himself about to die, he bids the last of his knights fling his sword 'far into the middle-meer.' He had received it from the sea-nymphs, and after him no mortal must handle it. Sir Bedivere, dazzled by the wondrous jewelled hilt, hesitates,—

> 'This way and that dividing the swift mind,
> In act to throw.'

Twice he returns, pretending to have cast it away. The third time he hurls it, and 'flashing round and round,' 'whirled in an arch,' it—

> 'Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
> Seen when the moving isles of winter shock
> By night, with noises of the northern sea.
> So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur:
> But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
> Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
> And caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
> Three times, and drew him under in the meer.'

Then Arthur bids the knight quickly 'bear me to the margin.' Through 'icy caves and barren chasms' they reach the shores of the 'great water':

> 'Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
> Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
> Beneath them; and descending they were ware
> That all the decks were dense with stately forms
> Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
> Three Queens with crowns of gold: and from them rose
> A cry that shivered to the tingling stars.
> And, as it were one voice, an agony
> Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
> All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
> Or hath come, since the making of the world.'

'Place me in the barge,' says the shattered King. The Queens, weeping, receive him; one, the fairest and tallest, lays his head upon her lap, chafes his hands, 'complaining loud.' Then, ere the barge drifts out, he speaks these solemn and heroic words to the desolate Sir Bedivere, who sees himself companionless amid darkening days and strange faces,—the whole Round Table dissolved, 'which was an image of the mighty world':

> 'The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
> Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me? . . .
> If thou shouldst never see my face again,
> Pray for my soul. . . .
> But now farewell. I am going a long way

With these thou seest—if indeed I go
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of the Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."'

Could anything be more imposing than this farewell, or more pathetic than this spectacle?—

'Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the meer the wailing died away.'

In his minor key, Tennyson has perhaps produced nothing finer than this little song:

'Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To the haven under the hill;
But oh for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.'

Style.—Pure, simple, correct, polished, elegant, ornate; wanting the variety and freedom of the forest-like Shakespeare and the impassioned Byron, yet not unfrequently rising to the level of the former in expressiveness; sometimes Homeric in severity and elevation, sometimes Spenserian in splendid imagery and cloying music; mingling in chaste harmony the flowers of all ages, native and exotic.

Rank.—His method, which is not that of the most inspired periods, is essentially descriptive—idyllic. He delights in minutely finished pictures, felicities of expression, and subtle harmonies of sound. His verse is more remarkable for finish than for fervor. In technical execution, he has no living superior. In the mastery of language, few have been so highly favored. He affords samples of English which, for strength and beauty, can hardly be rivalled. For instance, consider the following:

'The hard-grained muses of the cube and square.'

'With twelve great shocks of sound, the shameless noon
Was clashed and hammered from a hundred towers.'

'A rose-bud set with little wilful thorns,
And sweet as English air could make her.'

'Clothed with his breath, and looking as he walked,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.'

His chief limitations are excessive elaboration — over-anxiety in regard to unimportant details, and inability to catch the life of action — to depict sublime height or depth of mood. His dramas, though noble examples of ambition, are theatrical failures, written for the brain, not for the eye; forced, not intuitive; intellectual exercises, destitute of dramatic spirit in the Shakespearean sense.

Without the sweep or power of the great wits — Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, and the Elizabethans, to whom the natural taste of mankind will recur forever — he is the first of present English poets in the union of intellect, imagination, and literary form; in wisdom, melody, adroitness, in faith and doubt, in the poetic use of scientific materials, he is, by eminence, the representative of our refined, speculative, and composite age.

Character.—Reading him we may not guess his life and story so easily and reliably as we trace those of Byron; nevertheless, his essential qualities are in his work, not of head alone, but also of heart. From no other data than his verses, we conclude with confidence that he is a tranquil, well-proportioned soul, who rarely attains to the fire of the strongest; that he possesses a rare combination of the critical faculty and the producing power; that he is endowed with an earnest capacity for reflection, with a luxurious sense of rhythm, color, and form; that he has an exquisite perception of beauty, a deep ethical insight, associated with a turn for metaphysical analysis; that he is a sympathetic and close observer of Nature; that he is a painstaking, hardworking poet; that he has the culture of the university; that his humanity is not a passion; that he is never carried away by theories; that he is not the man to lead a reform; that, unlike the great novelists and dramatists who have studied character in the thick of the crowd, he — like Wordsworth — has cultivated calm reverie in the seclusion of rural haunts; that he is at least moderately prosperous in externals, leading a life of exclusive devotion to art; that without being an enthusiast he is nobly and tenderly moral. How much personal purity and thoughtfulness, delicacy of feeling, constancy of faith, ideality of conception, are revealed in these touches alone:

'Look through mine eyes with thine. True wife,
Round my true heart thine arms entwine;
My other dearer life in life,
Look through my very soul with thine!'[1]

'Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.'[2]

'More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. . . .
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way,
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.'[3]

'Love took up the glass of Time, and turned it in his glowing hands;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.
Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight.'[4]

Influence.—Novel and despised at first, he has become a classic in his own lifetime. His aim has been pure and lofty, his teaching wholesome and elevating. He has claims upon our gratitude as a purifier and guardian of our language. Not many writers have given such delight to the reading world of their day. Byron has ministered to the appetite for poetry in the people by warmth and force of passion; he, by weight of thought and richness of poetic speech. How many of his lines and phrases, noble or wise, like the following, have become fixed in the popular memory:

''Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.'

'For words, like Nature, half reveal,
And half conceal, the soul within.'

'There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.'

'Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.'

Doubtless there will be, as there have been, periods of favor and rejection. Taste will change. Fashions fly. But when new generations have revised the judgment of the present, there will surely remain for him a high and abiding place.

[1] *The Miller's Daughter.* [2] *The Princess.* [3] *The Passing of Arthur.* [4] *Locksley Hall.*

HAWTHORNE.

There was something of strangeness even in his cherished intimacies, as if he set himself afar from all, and from himself with the rest; the most diffident of men, as coy as a maiden, he could only be won by some cunning artifice, his reserve was so habitual, his isolation so entire, the solitude so vast.—*A. Bronson Alcott.*

Biography.—Born on the Fourth of July, 1804, in Salem, Massachusetts, a village famous in Puritan annals for its persecutions; his mother beautiful, with remarkable eyes, and a mind of singular purity; his father warm-hearted and kindly, of a reticent disposition, a sea-captain, who spent all his leisure time over books; early accompanied his widowed mother and his sister to Maine, where, amid the shadows of the pine forests, he 'lived like a bird of the air,' and developed his 'cursed habits of solitude'; was sent by his uncle to the 'best schools,' one of his instructors being Worcester, the author of the Dictionary; graduated in 1825 from Bowdoin College, where he did 'a hundred things that the Faculty never heard of'; returned to his native town, as to 'the inevitable centre of the universe,' and devoted his days to solitary reverie amid the ghostly scenes of witch trials and hangings; started a paper—'price twelve cents per annum, payment to be made at the end of the year'; became a periodical contributor, threw wild fancies into dim, dreamy tales, under the alluring spell which kindled his imagination; held office in the Boston Custom-House under Bancroft; joined with some friends in a socialistic scheme called the 'Brook Farm Community,' which ended in failure; married, and lived in the 'old manse' at Concord; appointed Surveyor of Customs at the port of witch-haunted Salem; removed to Lenox, in Berkshire, where he lived in 'the ugliest little old red farm-house that you ever saw'; back to Concord, then to Liverpool as consul; travelled in Europe, came home, and settled forever under the Concord hill, where he passed delectable hours, 'in the hottest part of the day, stretched out my lazy length with a book in my hand or an unwritten book in my thoughts.' He died suddenly—as had been his lifelong desire—on the 19th of May, 1864; and now rests, with Thoreau and Emerson, in the cemetery of Sleepy Hollow, on a pine-covered slope overlooking historic fields and the reposeful Concord, —the river of peace.

Writings.—If you would understand the secret of his genius and his power, imagine a contemplative mind, with a predilection for rusty parchments and the days of Puritan witchcraft; a mind that inclines to the analysis and representation of moral anomalies, that revels in the mixture of dark and bright which produces the 'blazes of the infernal regions'; a mind that delights to explore mysteries, carefully, deliberately, stating to itself a problem, then proceeding calmly, coolly to its solution; a mind that seizes upon some phase of human experience, withdraws it from the atmosphere of actual life into the twilight of its own reserve, and clothes it there with concrete and living form; a mind that selects for its task the development of effects on character of an absorbing idea or conviction, and, inverting the process of De Foe, suppresses outward incident in order to concentrate attention upon inner movement. Thus *Edward Fane's Rosebud* is the story of a blooming damsel who, with the revengeful hope of breaking her false lover's heart, imprisons her buoyant youth with the torpid age of another who sickens and dies, his brain so palsied with his body that its utmost energy is peevishness. But his groans and misery have proved a more potent spell to knit her affections than gayety and grace:

'When the palsied old man was gone, even her early lover could not have supplied his place. She had dwelt in a sick-chamber, and been the companion of a half-dead wretch, till she could scarcely breathe in a free air, and felt ill at ease with the healthy and the happy. She missed the fragrance of the doctor's stuff. She walked the chamber with a noiseless footfall. If visitors came in, she spoke in soft and soothing accents, and was startled and shocked by their loud voices. Often in the lonesome evening, she looked timorously from the fireside to the bed, with almost a hope of recognizing a ghastly face upon the pillow. Then went her thoughts sadly to her husband's grave.'

She loves even infirmity for the sake of the dead; in his semblance disease itself wins her for a bride, and she gains a home in every chamber of pain or woe, thoroughly imbued with all that is saddest in the doom of mortals:

'An awful woman! She is the patron saint of young physicians, and the bosom friend of old ones. In the mansions where she enters, the inmates provide themselves black garments, the coffin-maker follows her, and the bell tolls as she comes away from the threshold. Death himself has met her at so many a bed-side, that he puts forth his bony hand to greet Nurse Toothaker.'

At bottom, again, every man is solitary; and the crape which hides the countenance of the mild parson in *The Minister's Black Veil* is but a symbol of the veil which is on all faces. By the visible assertion of his isolation, he becomes an object of

thrilling wonder or fear to beholders. A preternatural horror seems interwoven with the threads of his mysterious emblem. Like Pythagoras behind his screen or in his sable robes, he acquires an awful power over souls. Yet not from caprice or vanity had he chosen to wear the dismal shade:

'In truth, his own antipathy to the veil was known to be so great, that he never willingly passed before a mirror, nor stooped to drink at a still fountain, lest, in its peaceful bosom, he should be affrighted by himself. . . . With self-shuddering and outward terrors, he walked continually in its shadow, groping darkly within his own soul, or gazing through a medium that saddened the whole world.'

Even on his dying bed:

'In his most convulsive struggles, and in the wildest vagaries of his intellect, when no other thought retained its sober influence, he still showed an awful solicitude lest the black veil should slip aside.'

After all, the solitude of another, if you think of it deeply, is less incomprehensible, less startling, than your own. With the breath rattling in his throat, the old man cries to the pale and wondering spectators:

'"Why do you tremble at me alone? . . . Tremble also at each other! Have men avoided me, and women shown no pity, and children screamed and fled, only for my black veil? What, but the mystery which it obscurely typifies, had made this piece of crape so awful? When the friend shows his inmost heart to his friend; the lover to his best beloved; when man does not vainly shrink from the eye of his Creator, loathsomely treasuring up the secret of his sin; then deem me a monster, for the symbol beneath which I have lived, and die! I look around me, and, lo! on every visage a Black Veil!"'

So in *Rappacini's Daughter*, where a philosopher who has devoted himself to occult studies, nourishes, in his zeal for science, his beautiful child upon the same poisons which have given so rich a lustre and so sweet but deadly a perfume to the rare flowers which fill his garden. The malignant influence, gradually administered, becomes essential to health and conducive to loveliness; but the insect that comes within the atmosphere of her breath instantly dies, and her very touch is fatal. Gentle, pure, worthiest to be worshipped, she shudders at herself. She loves, and by Rappacini's skill her lover is likewise bewitched. He suspects the fearful truth, and, resolving to institute some decisive test, hastens to the florists, purchases a bouquet, and retains it in his hand:

'A thrill of indefinable horror shot through his frame on perceiving that those dewy flowers were already beginning to droop; they wore the aspect of things that had been fresh and lovely yesterday. Giovanni grew white as marble, and stood motionless before the mirror staring at his own reflection there as at the likeness of something frightful. He remembered Baglioni's remark about the fragrance that seemed to pervade the chamber. It must have been the poison in his breath!'

His passion seems blended equally of love and horror. He seeks Beatrice, and his rage, quelled for a moment by the presence of the heavenly angel, breaks forth from its sullen gloom as lightning from the cloud:

'"Thou hast done it! Thou hast blasted me! Thou hast filled my veins with poison! Thou hast made me as hateful, as ugly, as loathsome and deadly a creature as thyself,—a world's wonder of hideous monstrosity! Now, if our breath be happily as fatal to ourselves as to all others, let us join our lips in one kiss of unutterable hatred, and so die!"'

Innocent that he has been imbued with the poison, she bids him mingle with his race and forget her. He breathes upon a swarm of insects circling round his head, and smiles bitterly as a score of them fall to the ground:

'"I see it! I see it!" shrieked Beatrice. "It is my father's fatal science! No, no, Giovanni; it was not I! Never! never! I dreamed only to love thee and be with thee a little time, and so to let thee pass away, leaving but thine image in mine heart."'

A mournful sense, not without tenderness, of their separation from humanity comes over him, and he mentions a redeeming medicine, which may restore them within the 'limits of ordinary nature.' The powerful antidote kills her; and as she sinks she murmurs:

'"I would fain have been loved, not feared. . . . But now it matters not. I am going, father, where the evil which thou has striven to mingle with my being will pass away like a dream,—like the fragrance of these poisonous flowers, which will no longer taint my breath among the flowers of Eden. Farewell, Giovanni! Thy words of hatred are like lead within my heart; but they, too, will fall away as I ascend. O, was there not, from the first, more poison in thy nature than in mine?"'

The *Blithedale Romance*, founded on the experiment at Brook Farm, depicts the perilous and often ruinous effects of philanthropy on the individual, when it becomes, in one exclusive channel, a ruling enthusiasm. A knot of transcendental dreamers separate themselves from the greedy, self-seeking, 'swinish multitude,' and undertake the establishment of a modern Arcadia, the basis of the institution being the purpose 'to offer up the earnest toil of our bodies as a prayer no less than an effort for the advancement of our race.' But the Arcadians find that the desired solitude charms only by its contrast with the civilization they have left:

'While our enterprise lay all in theory, we had pleased ourselves with delectable visions of the spiritualization of labor. It was to be our form of prayer and ceremonial of worship. Each stroke of the hoe was to uncover some aromatic root of wisdom heretofore hidden from the sun. Pausing in the field, to let the wind exhale the moisture from our foreheads, we were to look upward, and catch glimpses into the far-off soul of

truth. In this point of view, matters did not turn out quite so well as we anticipated. It is very true that, sometimes, gazing casually around me, out of the midst of my toil, I used to discern a richer picturesqueness in the visible scene of earth and sky. There was at such moments a novelty, an unwonted aspect, on the face of Nature, as if she had been taken by surprise and seen at unawares, with no opportunity to put off her real look, and assume the mask with which she mysteriously hides herself from mortals. But this was all. The clods of earth which we so constantly belabored and turned over and over, were never etherealized into thought. Our thoughts, on the contrary, were fast becoming cloddish. Our labor symbolized nothing, and left us mentally sluggish in the dusk of the evening. Intellectual activity is incompatible with any large amount of bodily exercise. The yeoman and the scholar — the yeoman and the man of finest moral culture, though not the man of sturdiest sense and integrity — are two distinct individuals, and can never be melted or welded into one substance.'

The real interest, however, depends upon the delineation of the tender passion under the modified forms it assumes in Zenobia, a high-spirited woman, whose life is hopelessly entangled with a villain's; in Priscilla, a butterfly maiden, whose nerves are fragile harp-strings, endowing her with 'sybilline attributes'; in Coverdale, a generous poet, who begins his career with strenuous aspirations, which are extinguished with his youthful fervor; in Hollingsworth, a Hercules, of noble impulse but narrow range of sympathy and thought, whose castle in the air is the construction of an edifice for the reformation and mental culture of criminals,— a bond-slave to a theory.

The *House of the Seven Gables* is a history of retribution. In the long past a Colonel Pyncheon, a grasping Puritan, had been instrumental, with invidious acrimony, in one Matthew Maule's execution for the crime of witchcraft; and the condemned had uttered a prophecy from the scaffold: 'God will give him blood to drink!' On the soil for which he had disputed with the dead — over the spot first covered by the log-built hut of the wizard,— the relentless persecutor erects a spacious mansion, and dies suddenly in one of its rooms at the appointed hour of its consecration. A shadow henceforth hangs, like a murky pall of judgment, over the heads of his descendants, who cling to the seven-gabled house from father to son, from generation to generation. The rustiness and infirmity of age gather over it. A large dim mirror is fabled to contain within its depths all the shapes of the departed Pyncheons. The progenitor's half-effaced picture remains affixed to the wall of the room in which he died. Every detail points backward. The most considerable reality seems to be, not the white-oak frames, the boards,

shingles, and crumbling plaster, but the story of human existence latent in the upreared venerable peaks:

'So much of mankind's varied experience had passed there,—so much had been suffered, and something, too, enjoyed,—that the very timbers were oozy, as with the moisture of a heart. It was itself like a great human heart, with a life of its own, and full of rich and sombre reminiscences.'

The distinctive traits of the founder live in the blood and brains of his posterity, and the curse flung from the scaffold becomes a part of their inheritance. If one of them gurgles in his throat, a by-stander is likely to whisper, 'He has Maule's blood to drink!' The sudden demise of a Pyncheon a hundred years ago is held as giving additional probability to the current opinion. Thirty years before the story opens, one member of the family is sentenced to perpetual imprisonment for the murder of another. The little shop which 'old maid Pyncheon' now reopens, was opened a century since by a miserly ancestor who is supposed to haunt it:

'The old counter, shelves, and other fixtures of the little shop remained just as he had left them. It used to be affirmed that the dead shopkeeper, in a white wig, a faded velvet coat, an apron at his waist, and his ruffles carefully turned back from his wrists, might be seen through the chinks of the shutters, any night of the year, ransacking his till, or poring over the dingy pages of his day-book. From the look of unutterable woe upon his face, it appeared to be his doom to spend eternity in a vain effort to make his accounts balance.'

The principal representative of the family, worldly, hardened, outwardly respectable, is stricken dead by apoplexy, in the ancestral arm-chair, while he is bent on the most wicked project of his life. Even the exhausted breed of aristocratic fowls form a tragic aspect of the law of descent, embodying the traditional peculiarities of their whole line, 'derived through an unbroken succession of eggs':

'Chanticleer himself, though stalking on two stilt-like legs, with the dignity of interminable descent in all his gestures, was hardly bigger than an ordinary partridge; his two wives were about the size of quails; and as for the one chicken, it looked small enough to be still in the egg, and, at the same time, sufficiently old, withered, wizened, and experienced, to have been the founder of the antiquated race. Instead of being the youngest of the family, it rather seemed to have aggregated into itself the ages, not only of these living specimens of the breed, but of all its fore-fathers and fore-mothers, whose united excellences and oddities were squeezed into its little body. Its mother evidently regarded it as the one chicken of the world, and as necessary, in fact, to the world's continuance, or, at any rate, to the equilibrium of the present system of affairs, whether in church or state. No lesser sense of the infant fowl's importance could have justified, even in a mother's eyes, the perseverance with which she watched over its safety ruffling her small person to twice its proper size, and flying in everybody's face that so much as looked toward her hopeful progeny. No lower estimate could have vindicated the indefatigable zeal with which she scratched, and her unscrupulousness in digging up

the choicest flower or vegetable, for the sake of the fat earth-worm at its root. Her nervous cluck, when the chicken happened to be hidden in the long grass or under the squash leaves; her gentle croak of satisfaction, while sure of it beneath her wing; her note of ill-concealed fear and obstreperous defiance, when she saw her arch-enemy, a neighbor's cat, on the top of a high fence:—one or other of these sounds was to be heard at almost every moment of the day. By degrees, the observer came to feel nearly as much interest in this chicken of illustrious race as the mother-hen did.'

The characters are described, not self-manifested. Clifford is 'an abortive lover of the beautiful,' whose artist-instinct reduces his entire nature to a refined, unconscious selfishness, a forlorn voyager from the Islands of the Blest, his tendencies hideously thwarted, the records of infinite sorrow across his brow. Hepzibah is a mixture of pathos and humor, whose undying remembrance of vanished affection dries up the well-springs of being. The beam of sunshine in the dismal picture is Phœbe, so cheery, so natural, so innocent, so sweet:

'Natural tunefulness made Phœbe seem like a bird in a shadowy tree; or conveyed the idea that the stream of life warbled through her heart as a brook sometimes warbles through a pleasant little dell. It betokened the cheeriness of an active temperament, finding joy in its activity, and, therefore, rendering it beautiful; it was a New England trait,—the stern old stuff of Puritanism with a gold thread in the web.'

Eternal and illimitable are the consequences of human action. This, also, is the fundamental conception of the *Scarlet Letter*,—the fruits of wrong-doing as displayed in two natures, intrinsically fine, marred by their joint sin; Hester Prynne, who is publicly branded with the shame, and the Rev. Dimmesdale, whose guilt is not published, but who is frantic with the stings of conscience. Add to these, subordinately, the elfish Pearl, who is the offspring of the transgression, and Chillingworth, the injured and vindictive husband.

The unfortunate Hester is sentenced to stand in the market-place, on the platform of the pillory, exposed to a thousand unrelenting eyes, all concentrated at the ignominious letter,—a scarlet A, wrought elaborately on the bosom of her dress, and to be worn there for the remainder of her days. She does not betray the partner of her iniquity, and the magistrates lay their heads together in vain. She realizes that she will become the symbol at which the preacher and the moralist will point. Children creep nigh enough to behold her in the thatched cottage on the outskirts of the town, then scamper off with a strange, contagious fear; or they pursue her with shrill cries as she glides silently through the streets. The poor, upon whom she bestows

her charity, often revile her. The rich contrive drops of anguish for her. Maidens glance at the symbol, shyly and aside. The vulgar aver that it may be seen glowing all alight in the dark, 'red-hot with infernal fire'! What scrutiny, what inquisition!—

'It seemed to argue so wide a diffusion of her shame, that all nature knew of it; it could have caused her no deeper pang, had the leaves of the trees whispered the dark story among themselves,—had the summer breeze murmured about it,—had the wintry blast shrieked it aloud! Another peculiar torture was felt in the gaze of a new eye. When strangers looked curiously at the scarlet letter,—and none ever failed to do so,—they branded it afresh in Hester's soul; so that, oftentimes, she could scarcely refrain, yet always did refrain, from covering the symbol with her hand. But then, again, an accustomed eye had likewise its own anguish to inflict. Its cool stare of familiarity was intolerable. From first to last, in short, Hester Prynne had always this dreadful agony in feeling a human eye upon the token. The spot never grew callous; it seemed, on the contrary, to grow more sensitive with daily torture.'

Naturally, under this pitiless condemnation and scorn of the Puritan, she accepts her exclusion, but hardens, and sees the fabric of society somewhat awry:

'For years past she had looked from an estranged point of view at human institutions. . . . Shame, Despair, Solitude! These had been her teachers,—stern and wild ones,—and they had made her strong, but taught her much amiss.'

Hourly the unhappy minister abhors himself in dust and ashes. Ever the concealed sin rankles and festers. His trouble drives him to the vain practices of Romanism as penance. He keeps vigils, fasts, scourges himself. More than once he has gone into the pulpit with a purpose to confess himself a pollution and a lie, but falls instead into wild self-accusations of general depravity. His flock only reverence him the more. 'The godly youth,' they say. 'The saint on earth! Alas, if he discern such sinfulness in his own white soul, what horrid spectacle would he behold in thine or mine!' His very burden inspires a sad, persuasive eloquence:

'They fancied him the mouthpiece of Heaven's messages of wisdom, and rebuke, and love. In their eyes, the very ground on which he trod was sanctified. The virgins of his church grew pale around him, victims of a passion so imbued with religious sentiment that they imagined it to be all religion, and brought it openly, in their white bosoms, as their most acceptable sacrifice before the altar. The aged members of his flock, beholding Mr. Dimmesdale's frame so feeble, while they were themselves so rugged in their infirmity, believed that he would go heavenward before them, and enjoined it upon their children, that their old bones should be buried close to their young pastor's holy grave.'

His misery is intensified unspeakably by the refined torture of the husband, who, under the same roof, in the character of physician, seeks revenge like an artist who probes calmly to the bottom of the wound to paint with joy a living agony.

Chillingworth, the student and recluse, is transformed into a fiend by the wrong that turns his learning and experience into a curse. He lives only to keep the destroyer of his happiness on the rack. When his wasting patient—creeping to the scaffold where Hester had stood—confesses his infamy to the horror-stricken multitude, and sinks exhausted, he kneels, with a blank countenance from which the life seems to have departed, and repeats, again and again, 'Thou hast escaped me!' Thenceforward, strength and energy desert him. He withers, shrivels, and fades from the circle of human activities. Hatred and love may leave us alike forlorn and desolate.

Little Pearl is an almost anomalous creature, illustrating with infinite variety the truth that what is sown must be reaped. Partly from wanton mischief, partly from the singular fascination of the subject, she is the 'messenger of anguish' to her parents, constantly fretting the ever open wounds of both. She is at once a pain and a solace. Though affectionate, her delight is in the scarlet A. Her first baby smile was at the gold embroidery, which becomes the curiosity of her childhood. She throws wild-flowers at it, dancing with glee whenever she hits it. She associates it with the minister's custom of putting his hand over his heart when agitated. She seeks pertinaciously to force his public acknowledgment of herself and her mother. 'But wilt thou promise to take my hand, and mother's hand, to-morrow noontide?' When he kisses her, she runs to the brook, and bathes her forehead till the unwelcome impress is 'diffused through a long lapse of gliding water.' When she misses the flaming stigma from Hester's breast, she will not approach till it has been fastened on again. Then:

> 'In a mood of tenderness that was not usual with her, she drew down her mother's head, and kissed her brow and both her cheeks. But then—by a kind of necessity that always impelled this child to alloy whatever comfort she might chance to give with a throb of anguish—Pearl put up her mouth, and kissed the scarlet letter too!'

A bud plucked from a wild-rose bush, or a tropic bird of rich plumage, ever poised for flight; a wayward, impulsive, imperious being, whose elements, beautiful and brilliant, are 'all in disorder,' the untempered effluence of a passionate moment, the reflex of the medium through which had been transmitted the rays of its moral life.

The central idea of the *Marble Faun*—called by the English

publishers *Transformation*—is the necessity of sin to convert the 'natural' man into a moral agent. Its whole ideal essence is the imaginative rendering of this notion—that a perfect culture is impossible to a state of simple, unconscious innocence; that we are but imperfect and partial so long as our condition is one of mere guilelessness; that the higher humanity can be evolved only through moral and spiritual struggle. The characters are drawn to exhibit the development of the doctrine: Donatello, rumored to be descended from an ancient Faun, sportive, joyous, instinctive, unreflectingly, spontaneously happy, awakened to higher responsibilities and a higher destiny by his remorse for an impulsive crime—his personal fall and his repentance; Miriam, an artist, with whom he falls in love, ardent and gifted, in whom—enthralled to a sinister personage—there is one of 'those fatalities which are among the most insoluble riddles propounded to mortal comprehension'; Hilda, who is the silver lining to the cloud, a fair, sweet, sanctifying presence, 'whom God has set here in an evil world, and given her only a white robe, and bid her wear it back to Him, as white as when she put it on.' Here, as in the other romances, little is made of outward actualities. Incident plays a comparatively insignificant part. The crisis is reached in the middle, where Donatello, walking with Miriam on a moonlight night, discovers her persecutor under the shadow of an archway, seizes him, reads in her eye a fierce assent, then hurls him over the precipice of the Tarpeian rock. In the description of this scene we have an instance of Hawthorne's fondness for studying and dissecting a mixture of emotions mutually repellent:

'"Did you not mean that he should die?" sternly asked Donatello, still in the glow of that intelligence which passion had developed in him. "There was short time to weigh the matter; but he had his trial in that breath or two while I held him over the cliff, and his sentence in that one glance, when your eyes responded to mine! Say that I have slain him against your will,—say that he died without your whole consent,—and, in another breath, you shall see me lying beside him." "O, never!" cried Miriam. "My one, own friend! Never, never, never!" She turned to him,—the guilty, blood-stained, lonely woman,—she turned to her fellow-criminal, the youth, so lately innocent, whom she had drawn into her doom. She pressed him close, close to her bosom, with a clinging embrace that brought their two hearts together, till the horror and agony of each was combined into one emotion, and that a kind of rapture.

"Yes, Donatello, you speak the truth!" said she; "my heart consented to what you did. We two slew yonder wretch. The deed knots us together for time and eternity, like the coil of a serpent!"'

The subsidiary and extraneous portions—criticisms on Art, delin-

eations of Italian scenery and Roman antiquities—possess an interest and a value of their own. His analysis of the marble Faun of Praxiteles affords the key-note to the book:

'The Faun is the marble image of a young man, leaning his right arm on the trunk or stump of a tree: one hand hangs carelessly by his side; in the other he holds the fragment of a pipe, or some such sylvan instrument of music. His only garment—a lion's skin, with the claws upon his shoulder—falls half way down his back, leaving the limbs and entire front of the figure nude. The form thus displayed is marvellously graceful, but has a fuller and more rounded outline, more flesh, and less of heroic muscle than the old sculptors were wont to assign to their types of masculine beauty. The character of the face corresponds with the figure. . . . The whole statue—unlike anything else that ever was wrought in that severe material of marble—conveys the idea of an amiable and sensual creature, easy, mirthful, apt for jollity, yet not incapable of being touched by pathos. . . . Perhaps it is the very lack of moral severity, of any high and heroic ingredient in the character of the Faun, that makes it so delightful an object to the human eye and to the frailty of the human heart. The being here represented is endowed with no principle of virtue, and would be incapable of comprehending such; but he would be true and honest by dint of his simplicity. We should expect from him no sacrifice or effort for an abstract cause; there is not an atom of martyr's stuff in all that softened marble; but he has a capacity for strong and warm attachment, and might act devotedly through its impulse, and even die for it at need. It is possible, too, that the Faun might be educated through the medium of his emotions, so that the coarser animal portion of his nature might eventually be thrown into the back-ground, though never utterly expelled.'

With a loftier aim and a wider range, this work lacks the intensity of the *Scarlet Letter*, which, for concentrated power, sustained tone, and culminating effect, is the greatest production of this genius.

Style.—Simpler, clearer, more elegant English has never—even by Swift, Addison, or Goldsmith—been made the vehicle of thought and emotion equally profound, delicate, variant, and tortuous. Singularly choice and appropriate in diction; flowing and placid in movement, always sweet and pellucid, giving to objects a subtle ethereal aspect. His pen is a magician's wand, 'creating the semblance of a world out of airy matter, with the impalpable beauty of a soap-bubble.' We have all been exhorted to give days and nights to Addison. Rather, let us give days and nights to Macaulay, Carlyle and Hawthorne.

Rank.—Standing aloof from common interests, looking at the present with shaded eyes, into the past with a half-wistful gaze, attracted by the remote, strange, and unusual, with a style admirably adapted to produce the effect of weird-like mystery,—Hawthorne is not a novelist. His fictions, in conception and performance, are always and essentially romances. Yet have they

a character of fundamental trueness to spiritual laws, of harmony with time, place, and circumstance,—of realism existing in an ideal atmosphere, or invested with the halo of a poetic medium. We have not the worn-out paraphernalia of abbeys, castles, courts, gentry, aristocracy, and sovereigns; but we have types, mental conditions,—beyond the sphere of habitual experience, indeed, yet belonging profoundly to spirit and to man. No civilization has produced a romantic genius at all comparable in power to his. Other writers have been more learned, more dramatic, more versatile, more comprehensive. His stories are generally deficient in converging unity. His personages seldom reveal themselves; but, as in the *Marble Faun*, we are told what they are, in page upon page of description, keen, minute, finished,—marvellous workmanship. No one ever depended so little upon plot or incident. Facts are subordinated to the influences with which they are charged. He is not a portrait-painter who sets forth a complete individuality. His forte is not in adventure, not in movement; but in the depicture of the rare and the occult, in the operation and results of involved and conflicting motives, feelings, and tendencies. He is here a solitary original in English letters. It may be questioned whether the *Scarlet Letter*, as an example of imaginative writing, has its parallel in any literature.

We count him one of the elect spirits, and would take our chances of universality with him cheerfully. First in America as a writer of fiction, he has no superior in the language as a literary artist. He is something more than this. He is also an art-critic, of deep and thorough insight, of refined and liberal sympathies. Witness his criticisms of the Faun, the Dying Gladiator, or Guido's Archangel and the Dragon. Consider him also as a speculative observer, a psychologist, a moralist. How many of the select few who are placed at the fountain-head of the streams of culture, afford so large a number and variety of sentences equally elegant and wise? We quote briefly, limiting ourselves to *Mosses from an Old Manse:*

'Each sect surrounds its own righteousness with a hedge of thorns.'

'The fantasies of one day are the deepest realities of a future one.'

'The prophet dies, and the man of torpid heart and sluggish brain lives on.'

'Each human soul is the first-created inhabitant of its own Eden.'

'When we desire life for the attainment of an object, we recognize the frailty of its texture.'

'Old age is not venerable when it embodies itself in lilacs, rose bushes, or any other ornamental shrub.'

'Persons who can only be graceful and ornamental,—who can give the world nothing but flowers,—should die young.'

'Every author has imagined and shaped out in his thought more and far better works than those which actually proceeded from his pen.'

'On the soil of thought and in the garden of the heart, as well as in the sensual world, lie withered leaves — the ideas and feelings that we have done with.'

'It is as we grow old in life, when objects begin to lose their freshness of hue and our souls the delicacy of perception, that the spirit of beauty is most needed.'

'Some persons assimilate only what is ugly and evil from the same moral circumstances which supply good and beautiful results—the fragrance of celestial flowers—to the daily life of others.'

'Sweet must have been the spring-time of Eden, when no earlier year had strewn its decay upon the virgin turf, and no former experience had ripened into summer and faded into autumn in the hearts of its inhabitants.'

Character.—Of sombre, retrospective temperament and tendencies, cultivated by solitude, pursuits, and studies. He could pass delicious hours among the old advertisements in the Boston newspaper files. The English State Trials were enchanting reading. In Maine, during the moonlight nights of winter, he would skate until midnight all alone on the Sebago Lake. He liked better to meet the sexton of a church than the rector, and loved to wander among graves, reading the epitaphs on moss-grown slabs. He had a predilection for the remote, the shadowy, the vague. We discover, in his introduction to the *Scarlet Letter*, the element congenial to him:

'Moonlight, in a familiar room, falling so white upon the carpet, and showing all its figures so distinctly,— making every object so minutely visible, yet so unlike a morning or noontide visibility,— is a medium the most suitable for a romance-writer to get acquainted with his illusive guests. There is the little domestic scenery of the well-known apartment; the chairs, with each its separate individuality; the centre-table, sustaining a work-basket, a volume or two, and an extinguished lamp; the sofa; the book-case; the picture on the wall; — all these details, so completely seen, are so spiritualized by the unusual light, that they seem to lose their actual substance, and become things of intellect. Nothing is too small or too trifling to undergo this change, and acquire dignity thereby. A child's shoe; the doll, seated in her little wicker carriage; the hobby-horse;—whatever, in a word, has been used or played with, during the day, is now invested with a quality of strangeness and remoteness, though still almost as vividly present as by daylight. Thus, therefore, the floor of our familiar room has become a neutral territory, somewhere between the real world and fairy-land, where the actual and the imaginary may meet, and each imbue itself with the nature of the other.'

The atmosphere he demands is not that of broad and simple daylight, but of a poetic or fairy precinct. 'Romance and poetry,

ivy, lichens, and wall-flowers, need ruin to make them grow.' Or a far-off cloud-land, the debatable border between the natural and the supernatural: 'Fain would I search out the meaning of words, faintly gasped with intermingled sobs, and broken sentences, half audibly spoken between earth and the Judgment-seat!' Hence the fascination which the occult and mysterious had for him. His pages remind us continually of the unseen and inscrutable; of secret associations linking things the most improbable; of unsuspected properties in Nature, which affect us hourly; of strange, subtle sympathies between individuals, between ourselves and inanimate objects:

'The sympathy or magnetism among human beings is more subtle and universal than we think; it exists, indeed, among different classes of organized life, and vibrates from one to another. A flower, for instance, as Phœbe herself observed, always began to droop sooner in Clifford's hand, or Hepzibah's, than in her own; and by the same laws converting her whole daily life into a flower-fragrance for these two sickly spirits, the blooming girl must inevitably droop and fade much sooner than if worn on a younger and happier breast.'

This suggests his inclination to fatalistic views, due to inherited Puritanism on the one hand, and to his training in a school of mystic idealism on the other. The present ever springs from the past. An evil deed is invested with the character of doom; always vital, though it may slumber here; finally irresistible, though it may be ineffective there, obedient ever to eternal law. The universe will keep it in remembrance: 'All the powers of nature call so earnestly for the confession of sin, that these black weeds have sprung up out of a buried heart to make manifest an unspoken crime.' The idea of relentless justice, of the implacableness of a holy God towards the guilty, of the impassable chasm between innocence and sin,—was the soul of the Greek Nemesis; it has been central to the most profound discussions of Pagan theology; it was prominent in the austere code of Puritanic faith; it pervades the romances of Hawthorne. Turn to the *Scarlet Letter* or the *Marble Faun*. Miriam the fallen appeals to Hilda the pure for sympathy; but a voiceless, everlasting gulf yawns between them:

'Standing on the utmost verge of that dark chasm, she might stretch out her hand and never clasp a hand of theirs; she might strive to call out, "Help, friends! help!" but, as with dreamers when they shout, her voice would perish inaudibly in the remoteness that seemed such a little way. This perception of an infinite, shivering solitude, amid which we cannot come close enough to human beings to be warmed by them, and where they turn to cold, chilly shapes of mist, is one of the most forlorn results of any

accident, misfortune, crime, or peculiarity of character that puts an individual ajar with the world.'

One effect of these darker traits is apparent in his peculiar humor, which, always fanciful, is often grotesque, and sometimes grim. One of his notes, suggesting a theme for a story, assumes that two persons make their wills in each other's favor, each waiting patiently for the death of the other, till informed that the long-desired event has occurred, then hasten to be present at each other's funeral, and meet in perfect health. Again, 'Curious to imagine what murmurings and discontent would be excited if any of the great so-called calamities of human beings were to be abolished,—as, for instance, death.' Elsewhere we have the case of a man who tries to be happy in love, but is unable really to give his heart, or to prevent the affair from seeming a mere dream. The degenerated aristocratic hens lay now and then an egg, and hatch a chicken, 'not for any pleasure of their own, but that the world might not absolutely lose what had once been so admirable a breed of fowls.' Of his secluded study in the Old Manse he says:

'When I first saw the room, its walls were blackened with the smoke of unnumbered years, and made still blacker by the grim prints of Puritan ministers that hung around. These worthies looked strangely like bad angels, or at least like men who had wrestled so continually and so sternly with the Devil that somewhat of his sooty fierceness had been imparted to their own visages.'

Of the monkish practice at Rome of taking the longest-buried skeleton out of the oldest grave to make room for a new corpse of the brotherhood, then building the disinterred bones into architectural devices, he says:

'Thus each of the good friars, in his turn, enjoys the luxury of a consecrated bed, attended with the slight drawback of being forced to get up long before daybreak, as it were, and make room for another lodger.'

Thus constituted, it is not surprising that he regarded human beings as psychological phenomena, observed and studied from some speculative outpost. He is a spectator of the drama, sympathetic, but curious and interpretative. His part is like that of Miles Coverdale in the Blithedale enterprise:

'It resembles that of the chorus in a classic play, which seems to be set aloof from the possibility of personal concernment, and bestows the whole measure of its hope or fear, its exultation or sorrow, on the fortunes of others, between whom and itself this sympathy is the only bond.'

He was constitutionally shy, recluse. Gossip represents him as inaccessible to invitations; that he would scale a fence and

take to the fields, to avoid a stranger on the highway. 'During all the time he lived near me,' says Alcott, 'our estates being separated only by a gate and shaded avenue, I seldom caught sight of him; and when I did, it was but to lose it the moment he suspected he was visible.' 'Destiny itself,' he tells us, 'has often been worsted in the attempt to get me out to dinner.'

He strove against his peculiar moods, his reticence and his melancholy. He assures his publisher: 'When I get home, I will try to write a more genial book (than the *Marble Faun*); but the Devil himself always seems to get into my inkstand, and I can only exorcise him by pensful at a time.' Yet the sunny and genial scenes of childhood and natural beauty, which abound in his works, prove his general healthiness. Read *Little Annie's Ramble* or *The Old Manse* for the May-morning freshness of a calm peaceful soul that looks upon all things with the spirit of love. For example, the following:

'In August the grass is still verdant on the hills and in the valleys; the foliage of the trees is as dense as ever and as green; the flowers gleam forth in richer abundance along the margins of the river, and by the stone walls, and deep among the woods; the days, too, are as fervid now as they were a month ago; and yet in every breath of wind and in every beam of sunshine we hear the whispered farewell, and behold the parting smile of a dear friend. There is a coolness amid all the heat, a mildness in the blazing noon. Not a breeze can stir but it thrills us with the breath of autumn. A pensive glory is seen in the far, golden beams, among the shadows of the trees. The flowers—even the brightest of them, and they are the most gorgeous of the year—have this gentle sadness wedded to their pomp, and typify the character of the delicious time each within itself. The brilliant cardinal-flower has never seemed gay to me. Still later in the season Nature's tenderness waxes stronger. It is impossible not to be fond of our mother now; for she is so fond of us! At other periods she does not make this impression on me, or only at rare intervals; but in those genial days of autumn when she has perfected her harvests and accomplished every needful thing that was given her to do, then she overflows with a blessed superfluity of love. She has labor to caress her children now. It is good to be alive and at such times. Thank Heaven for breath,—yes, for mere breath,—when it is made up of a heavenly breeze like this? It comes with a real kiss upon our cheeks; it would linger fondly around us if it might; but, since it must be gone, it embraces us with its whole kindly heart, and passes onward to embrace likewise the next thing that it meets. A blessing is flung abroad and scattered far and wide over the earth, to be gathered up by all who choose. I recline upon the still unwithered grass and whisper to myself, "O perfect day! O beautiful world! O beneficent God!" And it is the promise of a blessed eternity; for our Creator would never have made such lovely days, and have given us the deep hearts to enjoy them, above and beyond all thought, unless we were meant to be immortal.'

He saw things on too many sides, heard too many voices within him, to be dogmatic, or even to render a decision on the questions he was prone to raise. An insoluble mystery faced him everywhere. Possibly, a natural indolence, as well as a natural timidity and a wise humility, may have had a share in his oscilla-

tion between divergent or opposing views of life and motives of conduct. This seems to be a characteristic attitude:

'The greatest obstacle to being heroic is the doubt whether one may not be going to prove one's self a fool; the truest heroism is, to resist the doubt; and the profoundest wisdom to know when it ought to be resisted, and when to be obeyed.'

Meditative, dreamy, coy, sincere, gentle, reverent; of refined taste, of tenderest affection in the domestic circle, of rare kindliness in personal intercourse; so shrinking, so exquisite.

'There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there;
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
So earnest, so graceful, so solid, so fleet,
Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet. . . .
When Nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared.
And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
For making him fully and perfectly man.'[1]

Influence.—The drift and weight of his thought and art are on the side of purity, tenderness, and aspiration. He has too little sympathy with action and its responsibilities to be soon, if ever, widely popular. He is too ideal, too reflective, too deficient in excitement, to be relished by readers of the matter-of-fact type, or by such as require stirring incident, glittering brilliance, or whirlwind power. Like the greatest, he has had tardy recognition. To-day his position among men of imagination is commanding. His popularity will extend with the refinement of taste. By his unique vision and its inimitable form, he mounts into the silent blue of the constellations.

[1] *Fable for Critics.*

LONGFELLOW.

His gracious presence upon earth
Was as a fire upon a hearth;
As pleasant songs, at morning sung,
The words that dropped from his sweet tongue
Strengthened our hearts, or, heard at night,
Made all our slumbers soft and light.—*Golden Legend.*

Biography.—Born in Portland, Maine, in 1807; his father, a man of some note in law and in politics, one of the early members of the House of Representatives; graduated from Bowdoin in 1825, in the same class as Hawthorne; was immediately appointed to the chair of Modern Languages and Literature in his *alma mater*, and, to fit himself more fully for his professorship, spent the next four years in Germany, France, Spain, and Italy; in 1837, having again visited Europe, removed to a similar chair in Harvard University, made vacant by the resignation of his friend Professor Ticknor; continued in the discharge of his official duties until 1854, when he resigned; received the degree of D.C.L. from the University of Oxford in 1869, and a complimentary vote for the Lord Rectorship of the University of Edinburgh in 1874. He died in March, 1882, mourned in two hemispheres by the greatest and the least, whose common experience and sentiments he had sung; in talent and fame, a man of steady growth; having had, beyond most, the satisfaction and joy of existence:

'Type of the wise who soar but never roam,
True to the kindred points of heaven and home.'

Writings.—Living in the heart of the transcendental movement, yet apparently untouched by it, Longfellow wrote his first important work—*Hyperion*, a romance in poetic prose, vivid and beautiful from the vividness and beauty of the author's own mind; charged with the sentiment and lore of storied and picturesque Europe, enriched, almost every page, with his fondness for color, his passion for music, or fine intimations of the gentle faith in which he lived. Thus:

'When I take the history of one poor heart that has sinned and suffered, and represent to myself the struggles and temptations it has passed, the brief pulsations of joy, the feverish inquietude of hope and fear, the tears of regret, the feebleness of purpose, the pressure of want, the desertion of friends, the scorn of a world that has little charity, the desolation of the soul's sanctuary, and threatening voices within; health gone, happiness gone; even hope, that stays longest with us, gone,—I have little heart for anything

but thankfulness that it is not so with me, and would fain leave the erring soul of my fellow-man with Him from whose hands it came.'

And still better, though of like tone,—neither optimistic nor pessimistic, simply submissive:

'Tell me, my soul, why art thou restless? Why dost thou look forward to the future with such strong desire? The present is thine, and the past; and the future shall be! Oh, that thou didst look forward to the great hereafter with half the longing wherewith thou longest for an earthly future, which a few days, at most, will bring thee!—to the meeting of the dead as to the meeting of the absent! Thou glorious spirit land! Oh, that I could behold thee as thou art, the region of light and life and love, and the dwelling-place of those beloved ones whose being has flowed onward, like a silver-clear stream into the solemn-sounding main, into the ocean of Eternity!'

Evangeline, based upon a legend of Acadia; a story of unsuccessful love, in which the heroine, exiled by the fortunes of war, seeks for her lover with pathetic constancy of purpose:

'Like a phantom she came, and passed away unremembered.
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long journey;
Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.'

She finds him at last, among the sick, in a plague-stricken city, where she had taken upon herself the duties of nurse:

'Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their pillows.'

Golden Legend, a mediæval tale, in form and design resembling *Faust*, but without symmetry, and not very intelligible; an ornament, as it were, in which, side by side with inferior substances some gems of the purest lustre are set; for example, the virginal prayer of Elsie:

'My Redeemer and my Lord,
I beseech thee, I entreat thee,
Guide me in each act and word,
That hereafter I may meet thee,
Watching, waiting, hoping, yearning,
With my lamp well-trimmed and burning!'

Her reply to her parents when she communicates to them her resolution to offer her life for that of her Prince:

'Thou wilt not see it. I shall lie
Beneath the flowers of another land;
Far at Salerno, far away
Over the mountains, over the sea,
It is appointed me to die!
And it will seem no more to thee
Than if at the village on market-day
I should a little longer stay
Than I am used.'

Perhaps Longfellow's fame rests most securely on *Hiawatha*, the dirge of a departing race, in strains that sometimes recall

the passing of Arthur. Its best episodes are the accounts of the Son of the Evening Star, of the Ghosts and the Famine, of the hero's childhood, his wooing of Minnehaha, with its sorrowful sequel, so beautifully told:

> '"Farewell," said he. "Minnehaha!
> Farewell, O my Laughing Water!
> All my heart is buried with you,
> All my thoughts go onward with you!
> Come not back again to labor,
> Come not back again to suffer,
> Where the Famine and the Fever
> Wear the heart and waste the body.
> Soon my task will be completed,
> Soon your footsteps I shall follow
> To the Islands of the Blessed."'

The poem, it may be said, sings the parable of human life,— its birth, love, death, civilization, and decay.

But Longfellow throws himself not more completely into the spirit of aboriginal Western life than into that of Northern Paganism in the *Challenge of Thor*—

> 'Thou art a God, too,
> O Galilean!
> And thus single-handed
> Unto the combat,
> Gauntlet or Gospel,
> Here I defy thee!'

Or the *Skeleton in Armor*—

> 'Once as I told in glee
> Tales of the stormy sea,
> Soft eyes did gaze on me,
> Burning yet tender;
> And as the white stars shine
> On the dark Norway pine,
> On that dark heart of mine
> Fell their soft splendor.'

Longfellow's earliest strains preluded the music of his prime, and his essential qualities, familiar emotion, clear thought, pure aspiration, simple melody, reappear in all his verse; in his longer as in his shorter pieces; in his translations, as in his originals; in the *Occultation of Orion*, in the *Building of the Ship*, in *Resignation*, in *Excelsior*, in the *Psalm of Life*.

Style.—Various but simple, choice, musical, sincere, vitalized with sympathy; clear as crystal, pure as snow; admirable in prose as in poetry. We have seen the quality of the former, but the following passage is remarkably pleasing:

'The voice within us is more distinctly audible in the stillness of the place; and the gentler affections of our nature spring up more freshly in its tranquillity and sunshine—nurtured by the healthy principle which we inhale with the pure air, and invigorated by the genial influences which descend into the heart from the quiet of the sylvan solitude around, and the soft serenity of the sky above.'

None studied rhythm more thoroughly. Few have bestowed more pains. He has himself expressed the rule that prevails in all his works: 'In character, in manners, in style, in all things, the supreme excellence is simplicity.'

Rank.—In extent of popularity, the central figure in American poetry. In respect of airy grace, elegance, melody, pathos, naturalness, he stands unsurpassed, if not unequalled, among the poets of the age. In scholarship, in polite culture, he must be classed among the learned; yet he has not the strong pinion to dive into the abyss of thought or soar into the empyrean of speculation. He does not approach the concentration and intensity of the grand masters, nor their dramatic movement and variety. He is not the bard of passion, as Byron; nor of ideality, as Shelley; nor of high contemplation, as Wordsworth; but of daily life, familiar experience, domestic affection. The form is artistic, the ideas are mediocre. In his verse we see the cheer, the glow, the benevolence, of a sunny and benignant spirit in sympathy with the universal life of men; but where is the insight into the deeper passages of the soul? Magnificent almost never; creative rarely. Cut out Germany, it has been said, and you cut out nearly one half. His version of Dante aside, he has given us forty or fifty translations from the European tongues. As a clear and elegant, though uninspired, translator, he is well-nigh incomparable. Loving humanity is the secret of his magnetism. 'Be kind, be patient, be hopeful,' seems the perpetual refrain of his songs. Hence his impregnable position as the laureate of women, children, and gentle folk,—his the desire and the power—

'To quiet
The restless pulse of care
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.'

Character.—As a boy, modest, refined, studious, of gentle manners, and personal charm; as an instructor, mild, sympathetic, generous, helpful; as a man, the most urbane of men, capable of uniform courtesy to an endless procession of pilgrims; meditative, interior, the soul of charity and of kindness, a benign lover

of children; destitute of vanity, and without envy, as without guile; independent, without being aggressive or self-assertive; devout, trusting and submissive before the veiled problems of faith; a poet—

'Whom all the Muses loved, not one alone.'

Like Hawthorne, but without his intense imagination, he had a genuine fondness for the mellow, the distant, the old. His poems indicate the region of his habitual thought,—the legendary of the Old World or the New. The man is more than his work.

Influence.—In this country, by general consent, he is a pervading, purifying, and beneficent agency. He is hardly less extensively read in England, where his death was pronounced a national loss. It is doubtful whether any singer of this generation has so wide a circle of present admirers. But we remember that the most popular are not always the most enduring. Many who once stirred the hearts and touched the fancies of a day, have disappeared in the night, or are names only. Others who were disparaged in their own age, have made the earth wholesome in a succeeding one, and men have travelled into foreign parts to find their works. The veneration of mankind has selected for the highest place one whom the influential of the contemporary world despised or ignored, if they knew of him at all. The sentiments common to races and centuries are the most likely to live. Building upon these with consummate art, Longfellow has qualities which guarantee him against oblivion. His immortality is secure in the bosoms of the bereaved, the tired, the lonely, the desponding, the aspiring, the struggling.

EMERSON.

He has not uttered a word that is false to his own mind or conscience; has not suppressed a word because he thought it too high for man's comprehension. . . . Nothing impedes him in his search for the true, the lovely, and the good; no private hope, no private fear, no love of wife or child or gold or ease or fame. . . . He takes care of his being, and leaves his seeming to take care of itself. Fame may seek him; he never goes out of his way a single inch for her.—*Parker.*

Biography.—Born in Boston, in 1803, the second of five sons; his father a liberal and accomplished pulpit-orator, descended from a ministerial ancestry; his mother a woman of

great sensibility, placid temper, and devout life; sent to school at eight, and at eleven was in correspondence with his aunt, who says, in a letter of inquiry:

'You love to trifle in rhyme a little now and then; why will you not complete this versification of the fifth bucolic? You will answer two ends, or, as the old proverb goes, kill two birds with one stone,—improve in your Latin as well as indulge a taste for poetry. Why can't you write me a letter in Latin? But Greek is your favorite language; *epistola in linguâ Græcâ* would be still better. All the honor will be on my part to correspond with a young gentleman in Greek. Tell me what most interests you in Rollin; in the wars of contending princes under whose banner you enlist, to whose cause you ardently wish success. Write me with what stories in Virgil you are most delighted.'

Entered Harvard College at fourteen; graduated in 1821, taught school five years, then studied divinity, and in 1829 was ordained minister of the Second Unitarian Church in his native city; resigned in 1832, because his purely spiritual interpretation of religion could not sanction the communion service as commonly observed; failed in health, visited Sicily, Italy, France, and England, met Landor, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Carlyle, his visit to the latter resulting in a warm friendship and mutual admiration; entered upon his career as a lecturer, selecting his home in historic Concord, since the Mecca of literary pilgrims; meantime had twice married; began to study the English idealists and German mystics, became prominent in the new philosophical movement under the leadership of Channing; preached occasionally until he was troubled with doubts as to public prayer, when he ceased; joined Margaret Fuller, Alcott, Parker, and kindred spirits, in the conduct of the *Dial*, a short-lived but famous quarterly, known as the organ of the Transcendentalists; took an active interest in the work of reform, achieved recognition as a thinker, wrote some of his best essays, again crossed the Atlantic, delivered a course of lectures in London; welcomed Kossuth to Concord in 1852, addressed societies and fraternities, continued to write, to lecture, and to publish; was presented with the degree of LL.D. by his *alma mater* in 1869; shortly set out for Europe once more,—on this occasion, with his daughter; was cordially received, on his return, with music and a procession by his neighbors; in 1874, was put in nomination by the independents of Glasgow University for the office of Lord-Rector, and won the fair laurel of five hundred votes against seven hundred for Disraeli; lived in meditative seclusion, as hitherto, seeing few, enjoying a comfortable income, a growing reputation, and a

widening circle of listeners. He died in May, 1882, of acute pneumonia, contracted during exposure to the inclement weather at Longfellow's grave.

Writings.—'It is one central fire which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.'[1] Thus early, in a Harvard discourse, nearly a half century ago, did Emerson strike the keynote of his philosophy. The principle had been announced by Plato, and by the succession of grandees who followed in the wake of that inexhaustible fountain of speculation,—Plotinus, Fichte, Schelling, Coleridge, Carlyle. Matter is a garment of spirit. Mind is the sole reality, whose symbol is Nature:

'There seems to be a necessity in spirit to manifest itself in material forms; and day and night, river and storm, beast and bird, acid and alkali, preëxist in necessary Ideas in the mind of God, and are what they are by virtue of preceding affections, in the world of spirit. The visible creation is the terminus or the circumference of the invisible world.'[2]

Ideas are the uncreated essences, necessary, immortal. In their presence, the outward is an appearance, a dream:

'Culture inverts the vulgar views of nature, and brings the mind to call that apparent, which it uses to call real, and that real, which it uses to call visionary. Children, it is true, believe in the external world. The belief that it appears only, is an afterthought; but with culture, this faith will as surely arise on the mind as did the first.'[3]

Hence the first and last lesson of religion, as of ethics: 'The things that are seen, are temporal; the things that are unseen, are eternal.' Under the ceaseless ebb and flow of circumstance is the abyss of real Being, whose currents circulate through you and me. The animate and the inanimate are its expression,—the one in a lower, the other in a higher form. Our thoughts are its manifestations:

'Man is conscious of a universal soul within or behind his individual life, wherein, as in a firmanent, the natures of Justice, Love, Freedom, arise and shine. This universal soul, he calls Reason. That which, intellectually considered, we call Reason, considered in relation to nature, we call Spirit. Spirit is the Creator.'[4]

A great act, a new truth, or a sublime emotion, is a pulse from that surging sea. It flows into individual life, and makes genius. In it we exist. In us it tends evermore to become wisdom, virtue, power, beauty. Subject and object are one,—shining parts of

[1] *The American Scholar.* [2] *Nature.* [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.*

this sovereign energy whose organs we are, this moral beatitude which we incarnate, and which inspires the vision of illimitable possibilities:

'I, the imperfect, adore my own Perfect. I am somehow receptive of the great soul, and thereby I do overlook the sun and the stars, and feel them to be the fair accidents and effects which change and pass. More and more the surges of everlasting nature enter into me, and I become public and human in my regards and actions. So come I to live in thoughts, and act with energies, which are immortal.'[1]

Mind and matter are the polar opposites of the Absolute, the first positive, the second negative. 'Everything in nature is bipolar.' 'Body and spirit are not two separate, independent things, but are necessary to each other, and are only the inward and outward conditions of one and the same being.' The laws of the moral nature answer to those of matter as face to face in a glass. So intimate is this relation, so identical, that man can know the external by self-revelation. 'Man carries the world in his head, the whole astronomy and chemistry suspended in a thought. Because the history of nature is charactered in his brain, therefore is he the prophet and discoverer of her secrets.' This may seem to blot out all distinctions. But it avoids alike the anthropomorphism of theistic faiths and the fatalism of the pantheistic. God, though the substance of the universe, is an Intelligence, a Will, the transcendent Unity in the midst of endless diversity. 'The glory of the One breaks in everywhere.' The individual is not submerged in the universal. We find eternity affirmed in the promise of our faculties:

'A man who has read the works of Plato and Plutarch and Seneca and Kant and Shakespeare and Wordsworth would scorn to ask such school-dame questions as whether we shall know each other in the world beyond the grave. Men of genius do not fear to die; they are sure that in the other life they will be permitted to finish the work begun in this; it is only mere men of affairs who tremble at the approach of death.'[2]

True, law is omnipresent, with invariable methods, because the Over-soul is always in universal process of self-evolution. There is no chance, no anarchy. The wilful and the fantastic, the low and the lofty, are encircled by a necessity. Touch the ring on many sides, and you learn its arc. In its highest ascension it is impassable:

'Whatever limits us, we call Fate. If we are brute and barbarous, the fate takes a brute and dreadful shape. As we refine, our checks become finer. If we rise to spiritual culture, the antagonism takes a spiritual form. In the Hindoo fables, Vishnu follows Maya through all her ascending changes, from insect and craw-fish up to elephant; what-

[1] *The Over-Soul.* [2] *Immortality;* a lecture before the Parker Fraternity, 1870.

ever form she took, he took the male form of that kind, until she became at last woman and goddess, and he a man and a god. The limitations refine as the soul purifies, but the ring of necessity is always perched at the top.'[1]

Yet the world is dual. There is more than natural history. Power antagonizes Fate. Limitation has its limits. Freedom is necessary. Forever wells up the impulse of choosing and acting. Talk much of Destiny, and you invite the evils you fear. 'If there is omnipotence in the stroke, there is omnipotence of recoil.' Show your lordship by manners and deeds on the scale of adamantine force. By the polarity of being, whatever paralyzes you draws in with it the divinity to strengthen you. The central intention of all is harmony and joy. Therefore:

'Let us build altars to the Blessed Unity which holds nature and souls in perfect solution, and compels every atom to serve a universal end. Let us build altars to the Beautiful Necessity. If in thought men were free in the sense, that, in a single exception, one fastastical will could prevail over the law of things, it were all one as if a child's hand could pull down the sun. If, in the least particular, one could derange the order of nature,—who would accept the gift of life?'[2]

Such conceptions involve optimism. The direction of the whole, and of the parts, is melioration—a constant, everlasting effort from better to best. The indwelling All-fair seeks forever to realize its own largeness and excellence. Therefore at heart all things are good, and the Divine methods are perfect:

'All things are moral. That soul, which within us is a sentiment, outside of us is a law. We feel its inspiration; out there in history we can see its fatal strength. . . . Justice is not postponed. A perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life. . . . Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears wherever a part appears. . . . Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it. Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end preëxists in the means, the fruit in the seed.'[3]

Evil is not an entity: it is merely privative, like cold, which is the privation of heat. From the point of view of the intellect, sin is the absence of light. The bad is superficial and evanescent. The good and the true are positive and imperishable. Pain, hardship, humiliation, defeat, are disciplinary, and teach the lessons of spiritual loyalty:

'Passions, resistance, danger, are educators. We acquire the strength we have overcome. Without war, no soldier; without enemies, no hero. The sun were insipid, if the universe were not opaque. And the glory of character is in affronting the horrors of depravity, to draw thence new nobilities of power: as Art lives and thrills in new use and combining of contrasts, and mining into the dark evermore for blacked pits of night.'[4]

[1] *Fate.* [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Compensation.* [4] *Considerations by the Way.*

To say that the majority are wicked, means simply 'that the majority are unripe, and have not yet come to themselves.' To purify is to live onward. To advance is to abandon grossness. Beheld from a greater elevation, virtues become vices; for no virtue is final—all are initial. Therein are you adapted to infinity. You are only a suggestion of what you ought to be. Reform and aspire, be an endless seeker after the starry possible; so shall you renew your spirit perpetually:

'Whilst we converse with what is above us, we do not grow old, but grow young. Infancy, youth, receptive, aspiring, with religious eye looking forward, counts itself nothing, and abandons itself to the instruction flowing from all sides. But the man and woman of seventy asume to know all, they have outlived their hope, they renounce aspiration, accept the actual for the necessary, and talk down to the young. Let them then become organs of the Holy Ghost; let them be lovers, let them behold truth; and their eyes are uplifted, their wrinkles smoothed, they are perfumed again with hope and power.'[1]

Man, a portion of the Universal Mind, is the channel through which heaven flows to earth. Enthusiasm is the thrilling mixture of the private soul with the adorable Over-soul, which has various names; as, Power, Goodness, Holy Ghost, Comforter, Dæmon. However designated, it is thoroughly a unit; and the flood of it is the same, whether it appear as the trances of Socrates, the conversion of Paul, or the illuminations of Swedenborg. Representative men are its specific Revelations. The inward attraction for it, the worship of it, is religion—a motive, an impulse, a trust, an obedience. Systems are different, not the fact which they endeavor to embody. The same religious sentiments recur under whatever garb of sect—Unitarian, Trinitarian, Romanist, Protestant. All faiths are fundamentally identical—'the same wine poured into different glasses.' The highest is that which has the profoundest conviction and sense of spiritual realities. Ceaseless progression turns the oldest into myths. On the ruins of creeds and churches the temple of God is built. It is the Spirit that endures, and the purpose that imports. The central, surviving core is the moral sentiment:

'The changes are inevitable; the new age cannot see with the eyes of the last. But the change is in what is superficial; the principles are immortal, and the rally on the principle must arrive as people become intellectual. I consider theology to be the rhetoric of morals. The mind of this age has fallen away from theology to morals. I conceive it an advance. I suspect, that, when the theology was most florid and dogmatic, it was the barbarism of the people; and that, in that very time, the best men also fell away from theology, and rested in morals. I think that all the dogmas rest on morals,

[1] *Circles.*

and that it is only a question of youth or maturity, of more or less fancy in the recipient; that the stern determination to do justly, to speak the truth, to be chaste and humble, was substantially the same, whether under a self-respect, or under a vow made on the knees at the shrine of Madonna.' [1]

Let these principles be applied to the conduct of life. Holiness is health. Incapacity of melioration is distemper. Calamity, resistance, weight, are wings and means. The soul of Fate is also yours. Be self-reliant. It is the attribute of Deity, whose nature you share. Know your worth, and carry yourself in the presence of pretension and opposition as if all else but you were ephemeral. *Be*, not *seem*. Postpone yourself to none:

'The man that stands by himself, the universe stands by him also. It is related of the monk Basle, that, being excommunicated by the Pope, he was, at his death, sent in charge of an angel to find a fit place of suffering in hell; but, such was the eloquence and good humor of the monk, that, wherever he went he was received gladly, and civilly treated, even by the most uncivil angels; and when he came to discourse with them, instead of contradicting or forcing him, they took his part, and adopted his manners: and even good angels came from far, to see him, and take up their abode with him. The angel that was sent to find a place of torment for him attempted to remove him to a worse pit, but with no better success; for such was the contented spirit of the monk, that he found something to praise in every place and company, though in hell, and made a kind of heaven of it. At last the escorting angel returned with his prisoner to them that sent him, saying, that no phlegethon could be found that would burn him; for that, in whatever condition, Basle remained incorrigibly Basle. The legend says, his sentence was remitted, and he was allowed to go into heaven, and was canonized as a saint.' [2]

The perpetual effort of Nature is to attain beauty, which is not on the surface, but under it,—an emanation from the creative Radiance. Hence a beautiful person was thought by the Greeks to have some secret favor of the gods. Hence, too, nothing is truly beautiful—however rich, elegant, or pretty—until it have suggestiveness, as of the immeasurable and divine:

'The new virtue which constitutes a thing beautiful is a certain cosmical quality, or, a power to suggest relation to the whole world, and so lift the object out of a pitiful individuality. Every natural feature—sea, sky, rainbow, flowers, musical tone—has in it somewhat which is not private but universal, speaks of that central benefit which is the soul of Nature, and thereby is beautiful. And, in chosen men and women, I find somewhat in form, speech, and manners, which is not of their person and family, but of a humane, catholic, spiritual character, and we love them as the sky. They have a largeness of suggestion, and their face and manners carry a certain grandeur, like time and justice.' [3]

The highest beauty has in it a moral element, like fine music or antique sculpture, convincing the beholder of his unworthiness, and suggesting gleams of the unattainable. Therefore is highest friendship no other than love of the celestial good and fair, as was taught by Plato, Petrarch, Angelo, Milton. Its bond is

[1] *Character.* [2] *Behavior.* [3] *Beauty.*

interior, and takes hold upon the upper world. Real marriage is union of the soul with the Over-soul, and hence a purification of the intellect and heart from year to year:

'By conversation with that which is in itself excellent, magnanimous, lovely, and just, the lover comes to a warmer love of these nobilities, and a quicker apprehension of them. Then he passes from loving them in one to loving them in all, and so is the one beautiful soul only the door through which he enters to the society of all true and pure souls. In the particular society of his mate, he attains a clearer sight of any spot, any taint, which her beauty has contracted from this world, and is able to point it out, and this with mutual joy that they *are* now able, without offence, to indicate blemishes and hindrances in each other, and give to each all help and comfort in curing the same. And, beholding in many souls the traits of the divine beauty, and separating in each soul that which is divine from the taint which it has contracted in the world, the lover ascends to the highest beauty, to the love and knowledge of the Divinity, by steps on this ladder of created souls. . . . Thus are we put in training for a love which knows not sex, nor person, nor partiality, but which seeks virtue and wisdom everywhere, to the end of increasing virtue and wisdom. We are by nature observers, and thereby learners. That is our permanent state. But we are often made to feel that our affections are but tents of a night. Though slowly and with pain, the objects of the affections change, as the objects of thought do. There are moments when the affections rule and absorb the man, and make his happiness dependent on a person or persons. But in health the mind is presently seen again,—its overarching vault, bright with galaxies of immutable lights, and the warm loves and fears that swept over us as clouds, must lose their finite characters and blend with God, to attain their own perfection. But we need not fear that we can lose anything by the progress of the soul. The soul may be trusted to the end. That which is so beautiful and attractive as these relations, must be succeeded and supplanted only by that which is more beautiful, and so on forever.'[1]

Carlyle regards the great man as a controlling force, and resolves history into a series of biographies; Emerson, as a finger-post for the future, a rare spirit possessed of a larger share of the Over-soul, an inspired mouth-piece of universal or national ideas, not to be obeyed but to be followed, more serviceable by his example than by his acts,—an imperfect approximation of the ideal of the multitude:

'All that respects the individual is temporary and prospective, like the individual himself, who is ascending out of his limits, into a catholic existence. We have never come at the true and best benefit of any genius, so long as we believe him an original force. In the moment when he ceases to help us as a cause, he begins to help us more as an effect. Then he appears as an exponent of a vaster mind and will. The opaque self becomes transparent with the light of the First Cause. Yet, within the limits of human education and agency, we may say, great men exist that there may be greater men. The destiny of organized nature is amelioration, and who can tell its limits? It is for man to tame the chaos, on every side, whilst he lives, to scatter the seeds of science and of song, that climate, corn, animals, men, may be milder, and the germs of love and benefit may be multiplied.'[2]

Since each individual is an incarnation of the Supreme, there is one mind common to all men. What a philosopher has thought, we may think. What a saint has felt, we may feel.

[1] *Love.* [2] *Representative Men.*

You are interested, for example, in Greek letters and art, because you pass through the whole cycle of experience, and have been personally a Grecian. You may see the first monks and anchorites without crossing seas or centuries, because your nature is thus central and wide-related. The totality of history is in you,—the Age of Gold, the Argonautic Expedition, the Advent of Christ, the Dark Age, the Reformation, the Renaissance. So should the student read, and the historian write:

'The student is to read history actively, and not passively; to esteem his own life the text, and books the commentary. Thus compelled, the muse of history will utter oracles, as never to those who do not respect themselves. I have no expectation that any man will read history aright, who thinks that what was done in a remote age, by men whose names have resounded far has any deeper sense than what he is doing to-day.'

Emerson's philosophy explains his poetry, which is first of all an insight—a vision of the identity of nature and mind—a more or less nebulous embodiment of idealism. At the outset we perceive the idealist in the exultant joy with which the college graduate escapes from the Boston school-room to rustic solitude:

'O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome;
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and pride of man,
At the sophist schools, and the learned clan;
For what are they all, in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet?'[1]

We perceive his elevation of motive and mysticism of mood in the sustained beauty and symbolism of lines like the following:

'Long I followed happy guides;
I could never reach their sides. . . .
Keen my sense, my heart was young,
Right good-will my sinews strung,
But no speed of mine avails
To hunt upon their shining trails.
On and away, their hasting feet
Make the morning proud and sweet;
Flowers they strew—I catch the scent;
Or tone of silver instrument
Leaves on the wind melodious trace;
Yet I could never see their face. . . .
Fleetest couriers alive
Never yet could once arrive,
As they went or they returned,

[1] *Sylvan Home.*

At the house where these sojourned. . . .
Their near camp my spirit knows
By signs gracious as rainbows.
I thenceforward, and long after,
Listen for their harp-like laughter,
And carry in my heart for days,
Peace that hallows rudest ways.'[1]

Though never far distant, the ideal forever eludes us. We perceive his seership, also, in half-eastern rhapsodies such as these:

'The fate of the man-child,
The meaning of man;
Known fruit of the unknown;
Dædalian plan;
Out of sleeping a waking,
Out of waking a sleep;
Life death overtaking;
Deep underneath deep?'[2]

In poem after poem, in forms continually varied and ever new, this is the flame-image of his inspiration,—the incarnated Divine, the Real shining through the apparent, seeking constantly higher and clearer expression of itself. Thus:

'A subtle chain of countless rings
The next unto the farthest brings;
The eye reads omens where it goes,
And speaks all languages the rose;
And striving to be man the worm
Mounts through all the spires of form.'[3]

This is an anticipation of Evolution, not from Darwin's but from Plato's point of view,—nature struggling everywhere to reach consciousness. Again, 'Bring me,' he says,—

'Wine which Music is,—
Music and wine are one,—
That I, drinking this,
Shall hear far Chaos talk with me;
Kings unborn shall walk with me;
And the poor grass shall plot and plan
What it will do when it is man.'[4]

Eternal development is the primordial law. At the root of all mutations is an orderly Intelligence. All change is progress. Rapturously he declares:

'All the forms are fugitive,
But the substances survive.
Ever fresh the broad creation,
A divine improvisation,
From the heart of God proceeds,
A single will, a million deeds.

[1] *Forerunners.* [2] *Sphinx.* [3] *Elements.* [4] *Bacchus.*

Once slept the world an egg of stone,
And pulse, and sound, and light was none;
And God said "Throb!" and there was motion,
And the vast mass became vast ocean.
Onward and on, the eternal Pan,
Who layeth the world's incessant plan,
Halteth never in one shape,
But forever doth escape,
Like wave or flame, into new forms
Of gem and air, of plants and worms.'[1]

A keen susceptibility to Beauty, a deep delight in it, were never more elemental to poet:

'The leafy dell, the city mart,
Equal trophies of thine art;
E'en the flowing azure air
Thou hast touched for my despair;
And, if I languish into dreams,
Again I meet the ardent beams.
Queen of things! I dare not die
In Being's deeps past ear and eye;
Lest thee I find the same deceiver,
And be the sport of Fate forever.
Dread Power, but dear! If God thou be,
Unmake me quite, or give thyself to me!'[2]

One more example of the seer's ecstasy, which, mounting to the divine dark like the eagle towards the sun, admits the mind to the constitution of things, and announces truths that, from the moment of their emergence, are carried hither and thither till they work revolutions:

'Subtle rhymes, with ruin rife,
Murmur in the house of life,
Sung by the sisters as they spin:
In perfect time and measure they
Build and unbuild our echoing clay,
As the two twilights of the day
Fold us, music-drunken, in.'[3]

Method.—Holding all things subservient to thought, his mind was perpetually alert, and its suggestions were jotted on the instant. Gossip tells that his wife, before she knew his habits, was suddenly aroused in the night by his movements in the room. She inquired anxiously if he were ill. 'Only an idea,' was the reply. Observation and experience, conversation and wayside reverie, thus contributed to fill his note-books. The separate memoranda were then at intervals copied into larger commonplaces, and there classified, the subject of each being

[1] *Wood-Notes.* [2] *Ode to Beauty.* [3] *Merlin.*

written in the margin. Desiring to prepare an essay, he turned to his chronicles, and transcribed all the paragraphs on the given theme. A friend once found him in his study, on the eve of a lecture, in the midst of scattered manuscripts which he was endeavoring to reduce to coherence and system for the occasion. After the exigencies of the platform, the lectures are wrought over, unsparingly pruned, carefully corrected, sentence by sentence, revised again and again, until only the most pregnant and perfect parts remain.

The cost of excellence is an old story. Sheridan, urged by his publisher to finish the *School for Scandal*, declared that he had spent nineteen years in the vain attempt to satisfy himself. Lamb's humor was the result of intense labor. Tennyson made the first draught of *Locksley Hall* in two days, then devoted the better part of six weeks, eight hours daily, to its alteration and improvement. Goldsmith occupied ten years with the *Traveller*, setting down his ideas in prose, turning them into rhyme, and retouching with infinite pains. Buffon's Natural History was recopied eighteen times before it was sent to the printer. He wrote on a page of five columns. His thoughts were jotted in the first, corrected in the second, enlarged, pruned, and so on to the fifth, where the result was entered. He once searched fourteen hours for a word to round a period.

Style.—Tersely refined in phrase, trenchant and subtle in illustration; compact, epigrammatic, all armed with points and antitheses. Here is a specimen:

'Our strength grows out of our weakness. . . . A great man is always willing to be little. While he sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit, has got moderation and real skill. The wise man always throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point. The wound cicatrizes, and falls off from him like a dead skin; and when they would triumph, lo! he has passed on invulnerable.'

Usually elegant, often poetical by an imaginative sympathy with Nature, as in this passage:

'I see the spectacle of morning from the hill-top over against my house, from daybreak to sunrise, with emotions which an angel might share. The long, slender bars of cloud float like fishes in the sea of crimson light. From the earth, as a shore, I look out into that silent sea. I seem to partake its rapid transformations: the active enchantment reaches my dust, and I dilate and conspire with the morning wind. How does Nature deify us with a few and cheap elements! Give me health and a day, and I will make the

pomp of emperors ridiculous. The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos, and unimaginable realms of faerie; broad noon shall be my England of the senses and the understanding; the night shall be my Germany of mystic philosophy and dreams.'

Always calm, as with the serenity of Jove; oracular rather than sequacious. His method of composition secured a marvellous conciseness of expression and condensation of thought. Aphoristic, he sacrifices unity — what we are accustomed to consider such — to richness of detail. Logical order, in the common sense of dependence, is not infrequently wanting. His sentences have been compared to Lucretius's 'fortuitous concourse of atoms.' The connection is really in the supreme idea. Their relation is organic in the central theme. Read them in view of this capital image, and interpret them in accordance with the writer's philosophy of the Over-soul.

Unavoidably, such a style lacks repose. There is also, with the author's characteristic disdain of rule, an occasional contempt or disregard of grammar; as, in the use of 'shined' for 'shone,' and of 'shall' for 'will.' In coining terms, he is not always felicitous. A more offensive defect, if not a more serious one, is his undignified mannerism in the employment of *'tis;* as ''Tis certain that worship stands in some commanding relation to the health of man.'

We must think, however inspirational they may appear, that his poems underwent the same patient elaboration as his essays:

'I hung my verses in the wind,
Time and tide their faults may find.
All were winnowed through and through,
Five lines lasted sound and true.'

Yet how many of his verses have the rush of fever heat, quite worthy of the greatest masters by their fantasies and energy! If sometimes obscure, irregular, unmelodious, these peculiarities are referable to the lack of lyric spontaneity, the remoteness or weight of the spiritual element. Judge them by the artist's conception of his art:

'Great be the manners of the bard.
He shall not his brain encumber
With the coil of rhythm and number;
But, leaving rule and pale forethought,
He shall aye climb
For his rhyme.
"Pass in, pass in," the angels say,
Into the upper doors,

Nor count compartments of the floors,
But mount to paradise
By the stairway of surprise.'

Rank.—We say at once that he belongs, first of all, to the intuitive order of minds, that extend their penetrating surmises beyond the region of observation, and discern the vast, indistinct, but populous abyss behind visible phenomena; not a dialectician, like Hobbes, apt in arranging ideas, but a revealer, like Bacon, productive of conceptions; a diviner who casts a comprehensive view over the provinces of thought, condenses universals into maxims, and speaks after the manner of prophets, without proof, with no effort to convince, relying upon simple faith in the highest; not a discursive thinker, like Locke or Hume, not a clear and graduated logician, like Mill, nor a pure classifier, like Spencer; not of those who dispose notions in a continuous series, but of those who have vision of remote causes and distant effects; a spectator of Being, like Plato, Shakespeare, Goethe, who are essentially poetical, who perceive objects in a lump—in their entirety, with the sovereignty of an unique faculty. These are the seers. Theirs is the organ of the Godlike. Striving to assimilate all in the circle of knowledge, they hold themselves aloof from particular schools and societies, while friendly to each.

Beyond any poet of the age, he has subtle insight and cosmopolitan breadth. Not a jingling serenader, but a kingly bard, whose gift it is to 'make the wild blood start in its mystic springs.' He is some generations ahead, and hence must be unappreciated by a large class of readers. He is wanting in the lyric warmth, too, and the sensuous charm, which the general taste will long demand. Like all who have seen into the heart of things, he is attracted by the freshness and wildness of Nature, whose boundless resources suggest a transcendence over rule. His poems are of the Vedic and Orphic class, sure to gain in fame as the years roll on. It accords with his philosophy to say, 'The poet discovers that what men value as substances have a higher value as symbols; that nature is the immense shadow of man.' It accords with his art to say, 'Poetry is the perpetual endeavor to express the spirit of the thing; to pass the brute body, and search the life and reason which cause it to exist.'

Unequal as a critic; chiefly from his strong transcendental or spiritual bias, and his inability to place himself dramatically in

the position of another. He must underrate utilitarians. ''Tis of no importance what bats and oxen think.' Himself as undeviating and unperturbed as a planet, he could see in Byron only perversion, excluded Shelley from the list of singers, and eulogized Whitman. Too fond of epigram to be consistent; too limited in sympathy to be just. While some of his characterizations of men have never been surpassed, while he is at all times penetrating, vigorous, and genuine, he is too liable to be either a censor or a panegyrist.

Between Emerson and Carlyle, contemporaries and friends, there are some points of resemblance, and many of divergence. Both are similarly related to their period. Both have drawn from the same German masters. Both are protestants against materialism. Both have the sentiment of actuality and of the sublime. Both believe that sensible things are but appearances. Both feel the divine and mysterious character of existence. Both decry too much analysis, too careful calculation. Both are sincere and fearless. Both are revolutionary,—disdainful of the traditional and stereotyped. The one is tragic—sometimes grotesque; the other is neither. The one *feels* more profoundly, the other *sees* more truly: rather, the one looks into the abyss, and is overwhelmed; the other looks in, and is sustained. 'With the ideal is immortal hilarity, the rose of joy.' The one doubts, darkens, and circles round the Centre of Indifference alternately from the Everlasting No to the Everlasting Yea; the other ranges freely, is tranquil, and never falters,—his head in the empyrean, his feet on the solid earth. The one is gloomy, the other hopeful. The one sees deterioration in the midst of progress; the other sees melioration in the midst of conflict. The one adores men of action and intensity—Odin, Mahomet, Dante, Luther, Cromwell. The other venerates preëminently men of intellectual grasp—Plato, Swedenborg, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Goethe. What contrasted styles! The one impetuous, oratorical, sweeping, fairly connected even when most abrupt; the other aphoristic and complacent, seemingly unsystematic and without emphasis.

Who among English writers of the nineteenth century has had wider wisdom in human affairs? Who has possessed in larger measure the national realism and the craving for profound belief? Who has penetrated more deeply into the moral sense

of things, with greater extent of survey? What poet has in so catholic a spirit accepted the scientific discoveries of his day, or so happily interpreted as poetic revelation of the Over-soul those abstract laws which are supposed to make poetry impossible? How many have bequeathed to posterity an equal number of quotable sentences, so pithy, so wise, so suggestive, so stimulating,—jewels all? We venture to select a few:

'Hitch your wagon to a star.'

'Every man's task is his life-preserver.'

'Beauty is the mark God sets upon virtue.'

'The joy of the spirit indicates its strength.'

'The hero is he who is immovably centred.'

'If there ever was a good man, be certain there was another, and will be more.'

'If you believe in Fate to your harm, believe it, at least, for your good.'

'Thefts never enrich: alms never impoverish; murder will speak out of stone walls.'

'The relations of the soul to the Divine Spirit are so pure, that it is profane to seek to interpose helps.'

'Jesus and Shakespeare are fragments of the soul, and by love I conquer and incorporate them in my own conscious domain.'

'Rings and other jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself.'

'We fancy men are individuals; so are pumpkins; but every pumpkin in the field goes through every point of pumpkin history.'

'The life of every man is the true romance, which, when it is valiantly conducted, will yield the imagination a higher joy than any fiction.'

'A breath of will blows eternally through the universe of souls in the direction of the Right and the Necessary.'

'A great man is a new statue in every attitude and action. A beautiful woman is a picture which drives all beholders nobly mad.'

'A just thinker will allow full swing to his scepticism. I dip my pen in the blackest ink, because I am not afraid of falling into my inkpot.'

'How shall a man escape from his ancestors, or draw off from his veins the black drop which he drew from his father's or his mother's life?'

'If your eye is on the eternal, your intellect will grow, and your opinions and actions will have a beauty which no learning or combined advantages of other men can rival.'

'No man can write anything, who does not think that what he writes is for the time the history of the world; or do anything well, who does not esteem his work to be of importance.'

'Wherever snow falls, or water flows, or birds fly, wherever day and night meet in twilight, wherever the blue heaven is hung by clouds, or sown with stars, wherever are forms with transparent boundaries, wherever are outlets into celestial space, wherever is danger, and awe, and love, there is Beauty, plenteous as rain, shed for thee, and though thou shouldst walk the world over, thou shalt not be able to find a condition inopportune or ignoble.'

Among men there is no such thing as pure originality — the initiation of materials absolutely new. The least live by constraint; the greatest by assimilation. The ages play into the tutelage of genius. Literature is the ever-renewing flower of antiquity:

> 'For out of olde feldes, as men saith,
> Cometh al this newe corn from yere to yere,
> And out of olde bookes, in good faith,
> Cometh al this newe science that men lere.'

Emerson converted all his predecessors into nutriment for himself. 'What is a great man,' he asks, 'but one of great affinities, who takes up into himself all arts, sciences, all knowables, as his food?' Elsewhere he affirms that the great man must be a great reader, and possess great assimilating power. Many of his leading ideas are derived from Plato, who seems to have impressed him strongly. He was an early and earnest student of Plotinus. His debt to the Platonists of the Elizabethan era is large. He drew liberally from the Oriental mystics, in particular those of Persia and India. The aggregate influence of the representative Germans — Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Herder, Lessing, Goethe — has been considerable. With Carlyle's moral aspiration he was ever in warm sympathy. His style, and even his phraseology, were affected not a little by Landor, of whom he was a hearty admirer.

No man's resources are wholly in himself. 'Every book,' says our author, 'is a quotation; and every house is a quotation out of all forests, and mines, and stone quarries; and every man is a quotation from all his ancestors.' 'Very little of me would be left,' says Goethe, 'if I could but say what I owe to my great predecessors and contemporaries. Molière, accused of theft, replied that he recovered his property wherever he found it. Virgil conveys images, epithets, and paragraphs from Homer and Hesiod. Spenser borrows heavily from Tasso, and Johnson thought Milton a wholesale plagiarist. Byron is only excelled by Pope as an adopter and adapter of ideas and diction. Emerson masters his acquisitions, and organizes them into other and higher forms, like Plato, Aristotle, Shakespeare,— all sublime borrowers. The unfailing fountains of literature have had the tribute of a hundred rivers.

Character. — In relation to the ultimate ends of life, a mystical idealist; in relation to its means, a discriminating man of action.[1] A thinker, without being a recluse; a scholar, without being a pedant. Self-poised, yet modest, never cynical. 'The great man is he who, in the midst of a crowd, keeps, with perfect sweetness, the independence of solitude.' Simple, though profound. Calmly cordial, never demonstrative. Benignant, always accessible. His heaven-lit face set the shyest at their ease, while it forbade the undue familiarity or conventional compliment of any. His humblest neighbor received from him a smile of recognition. 'It was good,' says Hawthorne, 'to meet him in the woodpaths, or sometimes in our avenue, with that pure intellectual gleam diffused about his presence like the garment of a shining one.' Carlyle compared his presence to a heavenly vision. In persons, he liked the plain, preferred the earnest, shunned the egotistic. August and serene, yet intense. Have we not seen how like a sun-worshipper he could gaze on the morning sky? And who could sing more finely of the remedial life in the season of birds and buds? Who has divined more justly, more clearly, and uttered more appropriately, the sentiment of affection? See *Celestial Love* for a scientific study of this passion; the *Amulet* and the lines *To Eva*, for a love that is not 'celestial,' but human: and *Threnody*, for a grief 'too deep for tears':

> 'O child of paradise,
> Boy who made dear his father's home,
> In whose deep eyes
> Men read the welfare of the times to come,
> I am too much bereft:
> The world dishonored thou has left.
> O truth's and nature's costly lie!
> O trusted broken prophecy!
> O richest fortune sourly crossed!
> Born for the future, to the future lost!'

Though a master of expression, he was not fluent. In a swift company, he was mute or hesitating. Yet 'Fortunate the visitor,' says Alcott, 'who is admitted of a morning for the high discourse, or permitted to join the poet in his afternoon walks.' He talked as he wrote,— not continuously,— logically, but abruptly, intuitively, which was his mental process.

Report says that he lived irreproachably, devoted to human

[1] Read the essays on *Power* and *Wealth*.

good, loyal to his own precepts. He reposed on the attributes of Infinity with an unfaltering trust. He held uniformly to the Platonic elevation of view. 'Everything is beautiful seen from the point of the intellect, or as truth. But all is sour, if seen as experience. Details are melancholy; the plan is seemly and noble.' Hence the chivalric ideal which formed the goal, the sanction, and the motive of his example and teaching. 'Always do what you are afraid to do.' 'If I will stand upright, the creation cannot bend me.' Be self-reliant, he would say, because you are the agent of the Over-soul. Keep to your orbit with the steadfastness of Nature to her plan. Live to the level of your thought. Insist forever upon the sovereignty of personality. The present is thousand-eyed. Why let the corpse of memory scare you from the pursuit of truth, which is many-sided? Dwell ever in a new day:

> 'A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day.'

Guard your individuality with jealous care. Reject authority without running into license. Be not the organ of a party. Let nothing provoke you into controversy. Oppose formalism, without being intolerant. Be frank, fair-speaking, but not dogmatic. Say, 'I desire no man to take anything I write or speak upon trust without canvassing, and would be thought rather to propound than to assert.' You may be an unbeliever in the orthodox sense — lead a perfectly orthodox life, devout toward your Maker, brotherly toward your kind. 'The happiest man is he who learns from Nature the lesson of worship.' 'No man ever prayed heartily without learning something.' What more, O fearful, troubled mortal? Help for the living, hope for the dead, reverence for the Creator, love for the creature,— is not this better than all burnt-offering and sacrifice?

Influence.—Such was the charm of his personal character, that those who knew him loved him with the love almost of a devotee,— he was so gentle, so willing to advise, so kindly in reproof. 'Tell Emerson I loved and reverenced him,' said Sumner when dying; which voiced the feeling of a large section of educated Americans. The curious, the admiring, the anxious,

the worshipful, thronged to Concord, as to a shrine, to see or hear the oracle, 'a beauty and a mystery,' whose master-word seemed to many worth the world. 'Young visionaries,' says Hawthorne, 'to whom just so much of insight had been imparted as to make life all a labyrinth around them, came to seek the clew that should lead them out of their self-involved bewilderment. Gray-headed theorists — whose systems, at first air, had imprisoned them in an iron frame-work — travelled painfully to his door, not to ask deliverance, but to invite the free spirit into their own thraldom.'

A noble antithesis to all meanness, flippancy, and sensuality, he has been a forcible protestant against materialism, has thrown his weight into the scale of justice, has fortified men against temptation, and taught them nobly to aspire. In the mountain atmosphere of his thought, how many have been deepened and enlarged, stronger by his strength, greater by his greatness! In how many breasts has he kindled an ardent desire for improvement! How many has he inspired with a finer, higher, keener sense of the purposes of existence! Even where inconclusive, what a tonic to the will and the understanding, by his intense suggestiveness!

We are not likely to be at a loss for practical energy. In an age when commercial interests are strong, in a country where brains are zealously expended on the farm or exchange, there is pressing need of men who lay a chief stress upon the divine symbolism of material existence, that the home may not sink into a house, nor the grave into a pit, nor the fairer elements of human nature become incredible from their foul environment. This has been the mission of Emerson, as of all the sages. He has been light to the illuminators — ministers, instructors, writers. For half a century his ethical and prophetic utterance has been an active and growing power to keep the eyes of people on the strain of rare and noble visions. He has founded no school, he has left behind him no Emersonian system, but fragments of him are scattered everywhere — germs of bloom that will perish never. A great book is a ship deep freighted with immortal treasures, breaking the sea of life into fadeless beauty as it sails, carrying to every shore seeds of truth, goodness, piety, love, to flower and fruit perennially in the soil of the heart and mind.

EPILOGUE.

We have seen a numerous and powerful society, in the enjoyment of material splendor and a complete literature, develop from the ravaging tribes that issued from the German forests, crossed the intractable sea in their pirate boats, and settled in a land of marsh and fog; ill-housed, fierce, carnivorous, long buried in grossness and brutality, but importing, with their savage and transient manners, redeeming and persistent sentiments — their native fidelity and love of freedom, their instinct of the serious and sublime, their inclination for devotion, their worship of heroism, their tragi-heroic conception of the world and man. From the Saxon barbarian to the Englishman of to-day, what a transformation! From the Heptarchy to the 'Model Republic,' how vast the change! Yet in the child was the promise of the youth and adult, as a thousand forests are potentially in the acorn. The nomadic Scandinavian bore within him the germ of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Bacon, Carlyle, and Emerson. A perennial miracle — Causal Power creating forever — Providential Power conserving forever — the visible proceeding from the Unseen, like an odor of incense, like a strain of music — the Over-soul in active and perpetual accomplishment.

But is progress to stop here? Who knows where we are in the duration and development of the race? In the cradle still, or in opening manhood? By the same Divine law of evolution, we too, in turn, shall be outstripped. Our boundary is movable and elastic. Around any circle, another may be drawn. Each end is a beginning, and must be superseded by a better. The latest civilization will be a suggestion of new and higher possibilities. The golden ages are before us. On, ever on, toward the flying Perfect! —

> 'Profounder, profounder
> Man's spirit must dive,
> To his aye-rolling orbit
> No goal will arrive.

> The heavens that now draw him
> With sweetness untold,
> Once found, for new heavens
> He spurneth the old.'

At the centre of succession is the energizing mind. *Beowulf* and *Paradise Lost*, St. Peter's and the Pyramids, cities and institutions, have their roots there. History is the multiform representation of it. Other things are external and fugitive. The web of events is its flowing robe. Ever young, ever ripening, ever advancing into the illimitable. The needle has its dip, and its variation,—

> 'But, though it trembles as it lowly lies,
> Points to that light which changes not in heaven.'

For can we think of tendency without thinking of purpose? Are names and forces alone immortal, and not the souls which give them their immortality? O rich and various man, made of the dust of the earth, and living for the moment! in the majestic Past as a prophecy to the Future, in thy ceaseless discontent with the Present, in thine endless ascension of state, in thine unquenchable thirst for the Infinite, we find the blazing evidence of thine own eternity. Before the magnificent procession of History, forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night, and vanishing into Fathomless Silence, wonder and veneration are the true attitude:

> 'Like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the unknown Deep. . . . 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 to God.*'

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