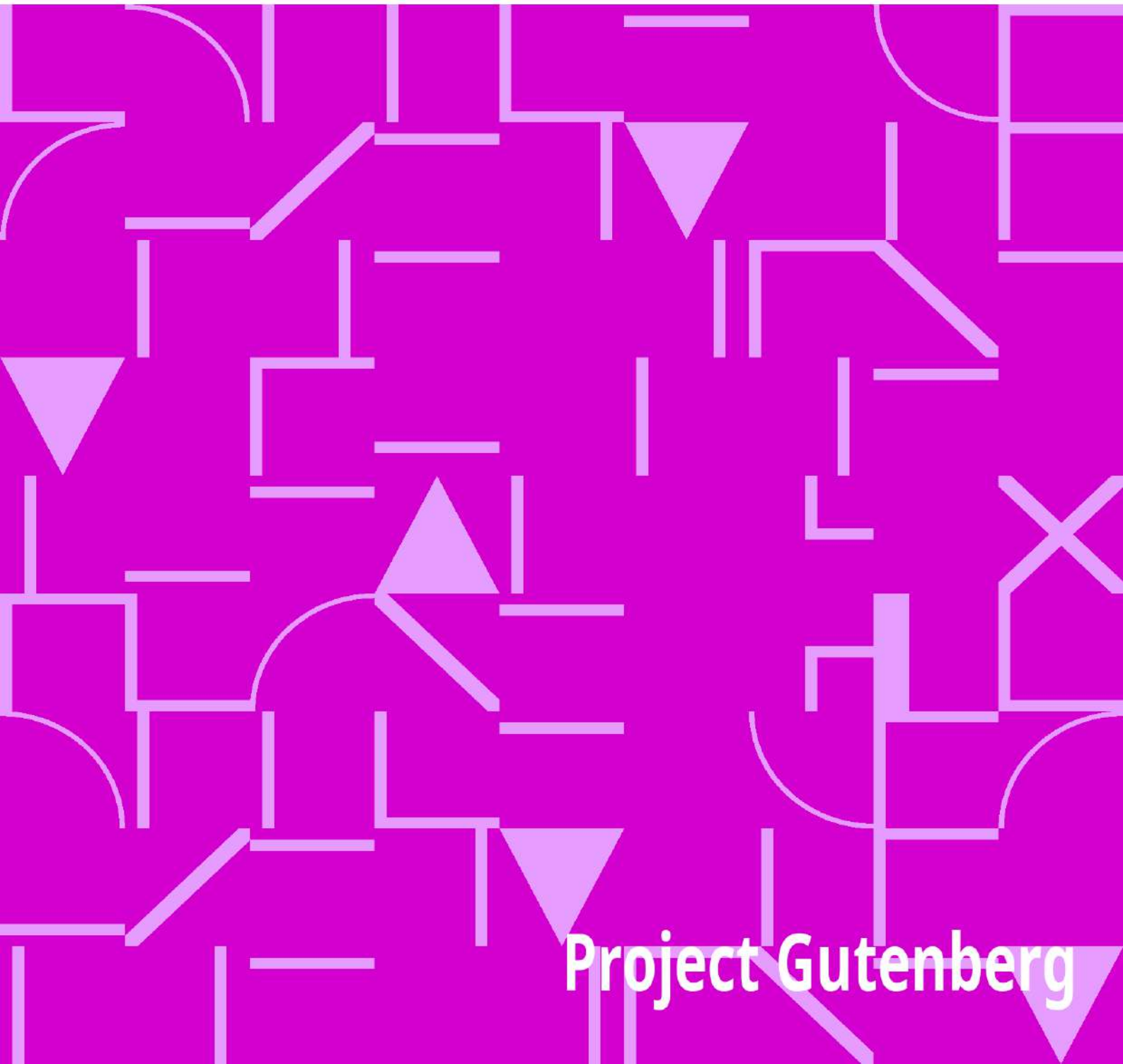
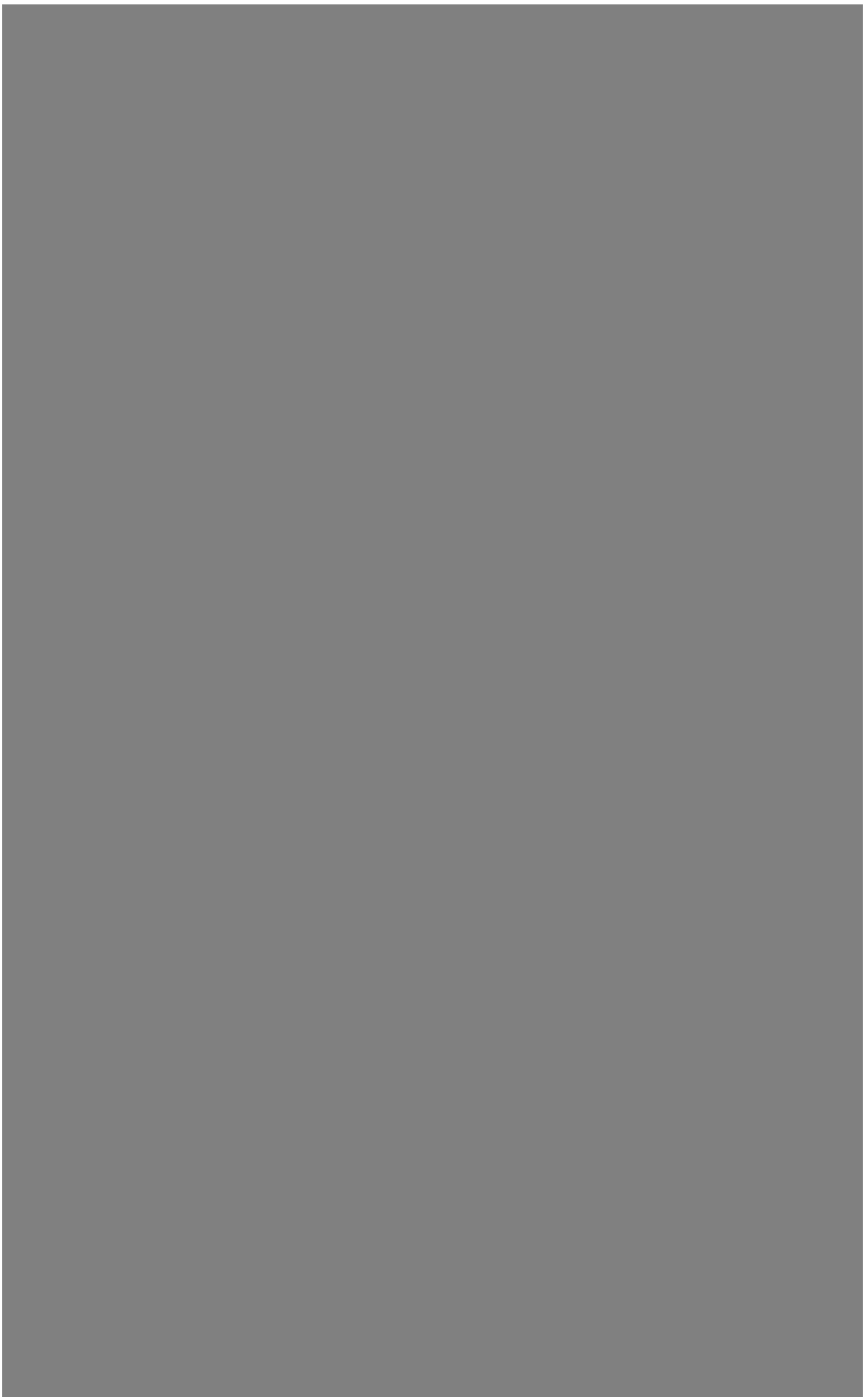
Little Journeys to the Homes of the Great - Volume 05

Elbert Hubbard





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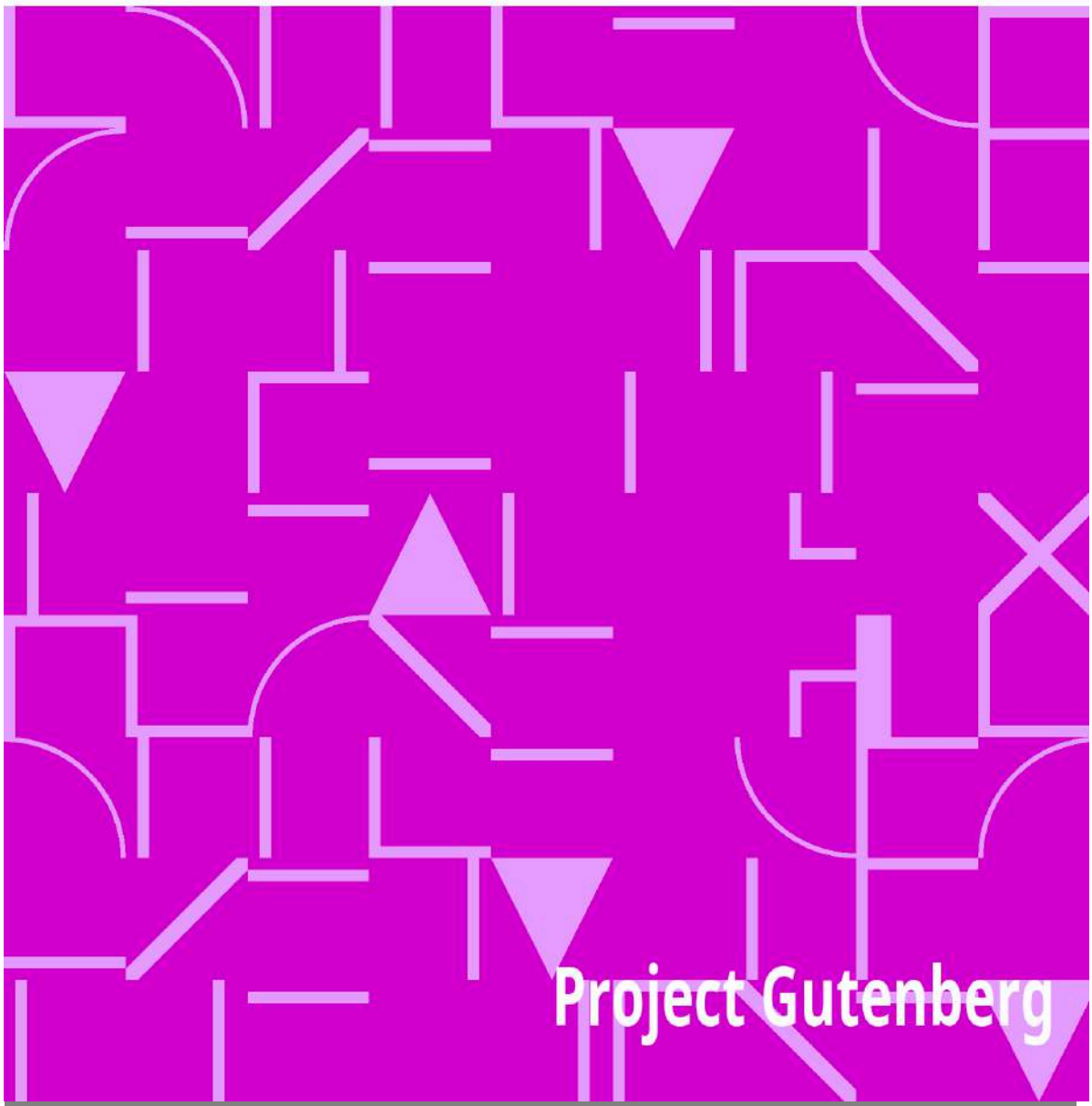

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Little Journeys to the Homes of the Great, Volume 5

Little Journeys to the Homes of English Authors

by

Elbert Hubbard

Memorial Edition

New York

1916

Contents

WILLIAM MORRIS

THE IDLE SINGER

Of Heaven or Hell I have no power to sing,
I can not ease the burden of your fears,
Or make quick-coming death a little thing,
Or bring again the pleasure of past years,
Nor for my words shall ye forget your tears,
Or hope again for aught that I can say,
The idle singer of an empty day.

But rather, when aweary of your mirth,
From full hearts still unsatisfied ye sigh,
And feeling kindly unto all the earth,
Grudge every minute as it passes by,
Made the more mindful that the sweet days die,—
Remember me a little then, I pray,
The idle singer of an empty day.

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

—From "The Earthly Paradise"

WILLIAM MORRIS

The parents of William Morris were well-to-do people who lived in the village of Walthamstow, Essex. The father was a London bill-broker, cool-headed, calculating, practical. In the home of his parents William Morris received small impulse in the direction of art; he, however, was taught how to make both ends meet, and there were drilled into his character many good lessons of plain commonsense—a rather unusual equipment for a poet, but still one that should not be waived or considered lightly. At the village school William was neither precocious nor dull, neither black nor white: his cosmos being simply a sort of slaty-gray, a condition of being which attracted no special attention from either his schoolfellows or his tutors. From the village school he went to Marlborough Academy, where by patient grubbing he fitted himself for Exeter College, Oxford.

Morris, the elder, proved his good sense by taking no very special interest in the boy's education. Violence of direction in education falls flat: man is a lonely creature, and has to work out his career in his own way. To help the grub spin its cocoon is quite unnecessary, and to play the part of Mrs. Gamp with the butterfly in its chrysalis stage is to place a quietus upon its career.

The whole science of modern education is calculated to turn out a good, fairish, commonplace article; but the formula for a genius remains a secret with Deity. The great man becomes great in spite of teachers and parents: and his near kinsmen, being color-blind, usually pooh-pooh the idea that he is anything more than mediocre. At Oxford, William Morris fell in with a young man of about his own age, by the name of Edward Burne-Jones. Burne-Jones was studying theology. He was slender in stature, dreamy, spiritual, poetic. Morris was a giant in strength, blunt in speech, bold in manner, and had a shock of hair like a lion's mane. This was in the year Eighteen Hundred Fifty-three—these young men being nineteen years of age. The slender, yellow, dreamy student of theology and the ruddy athlete became fast friends.

“Send your sons to college and the boys will educate them,” said Emerson. These boys read poetry together; and it seems the first author that specially attracted them was Mrs. Browning; and she attracted them simply because she had recently eloped with the man she loved. This fact proved to Morris that she was a worthy woman and a discerning. She had the courage of her convictions. To elope with a poor poet, leaving a rich father and a luxurious home—what nobler ambition?

Burne-Jones, student of theology, considered her action proof of depravity. Morris, in order to show his friend that Mrs. Browning was really a rare and gentle soul, read aloud to Burne-Jones from her books. Morris himself had never read much of Mrs. Browning’s work, but in championing her cause and interesting his friend in her, he grew interested himself. Like lawyers, we undertake a cause first and look for proof later. In teaching another, Morris taught himself. By explaining a theme it becomes luminous to us.

In passing, it is well to note that this impulse in the heart of William Morris to come to the defense of an accused person was ever very strong. His defense of Mrs. Browning led straight to “The Defense of Guinevere,” begun while at Oxford and printed in book form in his twenty-fourth year. Not that the offenses of Guinevere and Elizabeth Barrett were parallel, but Morris was by nature a defender of women. And it should further be noted that Tennyson had not yet written his “Idylls of the King,”-at the time Morris wrote his poetic brief.

Another author that these young men took up at this time was Ruskin. John Ruskin was fifteen years older than Morris—an Oxford man, too; also, the son of a merchant and rich by inheritance. Ruskin’s natural independence, his ability for original thinking and his action in embracing the cause of Turner, the ridiculed, won the heart of Morris. In Ruskin he found a writer who expressed the thoughts that he believed. He read Ruskin, and insisted that Burne-Jones should. Together they read “The Nature of Gothic,” and then they went out upon the streets of Oxford and studied examples at first hand. They compared the old with the new, and came to the conclusion that the buildings erected two centuries before had various points to recommend them which modern buildings have not. The modern buildings were built by contractors, while the old ones were constructed by men who had all the time there was, and so they worked out their conceptions of the eternal fitness of things.

Then these young men, with several others, drew up a remonstrance against “the desecration by officious restoration, and the tearing down of time-mellowed structures to make room for the unsightly brick piles of boarding-house keepers.”

The remonstrance was sent in to the authorities, and by them duly pigeonholed, with a passing remark that young fellows sent to Oxford to be educated had better attend to their books and mind their own business. Having espoused the cause of the Middle Ages in architecture, these young men began to study the history of the people who lived in the olden time. They read Spenser and Chaucer, and chance threw in their way a dog-eared copy of Mallory’s “Morte d’ Arthur,” and this was still more dog-eared when they were through with it. Probably no book ever made more of an impression on Morris than this one; and if he had written an article for the “Ladies’ Home Journal” on “Books That Influenced Me Most,” he would have placed Mallory’s “Morte d’ Arthur” first.

The influence of Burne-Jones on Morris was marked, and the influence of Morris on Burne-Jones was profound. Morris discovered himself in explaining things to Burne-Jones,

and Burne-Jones, without knowing it, adopted the opinions of Morris; and it was owing to Morris that he gave up theology.

Having abandoned the object that led him to college, Burne-Jones lost faith in Oxford, and went down to London to study art.

Morris hung on, secured his B.A., and articled himself to a local architect with the firm intent of stopping the insane drift for modern mediocrity, and bringing about a just regard for the stately dignity of the Gothic.

A few months' experience, however, and he discovered that an apprentice to an architect was not expected to furnish plans or even criticize those already made: his business was to make detail drawings from completed designs for the contractors to work from.

A year at architecture, with odd hours filled in at poetry and art, and news came from Burne-Jones that he had painted a picture, and sold it for ten pounds.

Now Morris had all the money he needed. His father's prosperity was at flood, and he had but to hint for funds and they came; yet to make things with your own hands and sell them was the true test of success.

He had written "Gertha's Lovers," "The Tale of the Hollow Land," and various poems and essays for the college magazine; and his book, "The Defense of Guinevere," had been issued at his own expense, and the edition was on his hands—a weary weight.

Thoreau wrote to his friends, when the house burned and destroyed all copies of his first book, "The edition is exhausted," but no such happiness came to Morris. And so when glad tidings of an artistic success came from Burne-Jones, he resolved to follow the lead and abandon architecture for "pure art."

Arriving in London he placed himself under the tutorship of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, poet, dreamer and artist, six years his senior, whom he had known for some time, and who had also instructed Burne-Jones.

While taking lessons in painting at the rather shabby house of Rossetti in Portland Street, he was introduced to Rossetti's favorite model—a young woman of rare grace and beauty. Rossetti had painted her picture as "The Blessed Damozel," leaning over the bar of Heaven, while the stars in her hair were seven. Morris, the impressionable, fell in love with the canvas and then with the woman.

When they were married, tradition has it that Rossetti withheld his blessing and sought to drown his sorrow in fomentation's, with dark, dank hints in baritone to the effect that the Thames only could appreciate his grief.

But grief is transient; and for many years Dante Rossetti and Burne-Jones pictured the tall, willowy figure of Mrs. Morris as the dream-woman, on tapestry and canvas; and as the "Blessed Virgin," her beautiful face and form are shown in many sacred places.

Truth need not be distorted in a frantic attempt to make this an ideal marriage—only a woman with the intellect of Minerva could have filled the restless heart of William Morris. But the wife of Morris believed in her lord, and never sought to hamper him; and if she failed at times to comprehend his genius, it was only because she was human.

Whistler once remarked that without Mrs. Morris to supply stained-glass attitudes and the lissome beauty of an angel, the Preraphaelites would have long since gone down to dust and forgetfulness.

The year which William Morris spent at architecture, he considered as nearly a waste of time, but it was not so in fact. As a draftsman he had developed a marvelous skill, and the grace and sureness of his lines were a delight to Burne-Jones, Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Ford Madox Brown and others of the little artistic circle in which he found himself.

Youth lays great plans; youth is always in revolt against the present order; youth groups itself in bands and swears eternal fealty; and life, which is change, dissipates the plans, subdues the revolt into conformity, and the sworn friendships fade away into dull indifference. Always? Well, no, not exactly.

In this instance the plans and dreams found form; the revolt was a revolution that succeeded; and the brotherhood existed for near fifty years, and then was severed only by death.

Without going into a history of the Preraphaelite Brotherhood, it will be noted that the band of enthusiasts in art, literature and architecture had been swung by the arguments and personality of William Morris into the strong current of his own belief, and this was that Art and Life in the Middle Ages were much lovelier things than they are now.

That being so, we should go back to medieval times for our patterns.

A study of the best household decorations of the Fifteenth Century showed that all the furniture used then was made to fit a certain apartment, and with a definite purpose in view.

Of course it was made by hand, and the loving marks of the tool were upon it. It was made as good and strong and durable as it could be made. Floors and walls were of mosaic or polished wood, and these were partly covered by beautifully woven rugs, skins and tapestries. The ceilings were sometimes ornamented with pictures painted in harmony with the use for which the room was designed. Certainly there were no chromos and the pictures were few and these of the best, for the age was essentially a critical one.

A modest circular was issued in which the fact was made known that “a company of historical artists will use their talents in home decoration.”

Dealers into whose hands this circular fell, smiled in derision, and the announcement made no splash in England’s artistic waters. But the leaven was at work which was bound to cause a revolution in the tastes of fifty million people.

Most of our best moves are accidents, and every good thing begins as something else. In the beginning there was no expectation of building up a trade or making a financial success of the business. The idea was simply that the eight young men who composed the band were to use their influence in helping one another to secure commissions, and corroborate the views of doubting patrons as to what was art and what not. In other words, they were to stand by one another.

Ford Madox Brown, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Arthur Hughes were painters; Philip Webb an architect; Peter Paul Marshall a landscape-gardener and engineer;

Charles Joseph Faulkner, an Oxford don, was a designer, and William Morris was an all-round artist—ready to turn his hand to anything.

These men undertook to furnish a home from garret to cellar in an artistic way.

Work came, and each set himself to help all the others. From simply supplying designs for furniture, rugs, carpets and wall-paper they began to manufacture these things, simply because they could not buy or get others to make the things they desired.

Morris undertook the entire executive charge of affairs, and mastered the details of half a dozen trades in order that he might intelligently conduct the business. The one motto of the firm was, “Not how cheap, but how good.” They insisted that housekeeping must be simplified, and that we should have fewer things and have them better. To this end single pieces of furniture were made, and all sets of furniture discarded. I have seen several houses furnished entirely by William Morris, and the first thing that impressed me was the sparsity of things. Instead of a dozen pictures in a room, there were two or three—one on an easel and one or two on the walls. Gilt frames were abandoned almost entirely, and dark-stained woods were used instead. Wide fireplaces were introduced and mantels of solid oak. For upholstery, leather covering was commonly used instead of cloth. Carpets were laid in strips, not tacked down to stay, and rugs were laid so as to show a goodly glimpse of hardwood floor; and in the dining-room a large, round table was placed instead of a right-angled square one. This table was not covered with a tablecloth; instead, mats and doilies were used here and there. To cover a table entirely with a cloth or spread was pretty good proof that the piece of furniture was cheap and shabby; so in no William Morris library or dining-room would you find a table entirely covered. The round dining-table is in very general use now, but few people realize how its plainness was scouted when William Morris first introduced it.

One piece of William Morris furniture has become decidedly popular in America, and that is the “Morris Chair.” The first chair of this pattern was made entirely by the hands of the master. It was built by a man who understood anatomy, unlike most chairs and all church pews. It was also strong, durable, ornamental, and by a simple device the back could be adjusted so as to fit a man’s every mood.

There has been a sad degeneracy among William Morris chairs; still, good ones can be obtained, nearly as excellent as the one in which I rested at Kelmscott House—broad, deep, massive, upholstered with curled hair, and covered with leather that would delight a bookbinder. Such a chair can be used a generation and then passed on to the heirs.

Furnishing of churches and chapels led naturally to the making of stained-glass windows, and hardly a large city of Christendom but has an example of the Morris work.

Morris managed to hold that erratic genius, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in line and direct his efforts, which of itself was a feat worthy of record. He made a fortune for Rossetti, who was a child in this world’s affairs, and he also made a fortune for himself and every man connected with the concern.

Burne-Jones stood by the ship manfully, and proved his good sense by never interfering with the master’s plans, or asking foolish, quibbling questions—showing faith on all occasions.

The Morris designs for wall-paper, tapestry, cretonnes and carpets are now the property of the world, but to say just which is a William Morris design and which a Burne-Jones is an impossibility, for these two strong men worked together as one being with two heads and four hands. At one time, I find the firm of Morris and Company had three thousand hands at work in its various manufactories, the work in most instances being done by hand after the manner of the olden time. William Morris was an avowed socialist long before so many men began to grow fond of calling themselves Christian Socialists. Morris was too practical not to know that the time is not ripe for life on a communal basis, but in his heart was a high and holy ideal that he has partially explained in his books, “A Dream of John Ball” and “News From Nowhere,” and more fully in many lectures. His sympathy was ever with the workingman and those who grind fordone at the wheel of labor. To better the condition of the toiler was his sincere desire. But socialism to him was more of an emotion than a well-worked-out plan of life. He believed that men should replace competition by Co-operation. He used to say: “I’m going your way, so let us go hand in hand. You help me and I’ll help you. We shall not be here very long, for soon, Death, the kind old nurse, will come and rock us all to sleep—let us help one another while we may.” And that is about the extent of the socialism of William Morris.

There is one criticism that has been constantly brought against Morris, and although he answered this criticism a thousand times during his life, it still springs fresh—put forth by little men who congratulate themselves on having scored a point.

They ask in orotund, “How could William Morris expect to benefit society at large, when all of the products he manufactured were so high in price that only the rich could buy them?”

Socialism, according to William Morris, does not consider it desirable to supply cheap stuff to anybody. The socialist aims to make every manufactured article of the best quality possible. It is not how cheap can this be made, but how good. Make it as excellent as it can be made to serve its end. Then sell it at a price that affords something more than a bare subsistence to the workmen who put their lives into its making. In this way you raise the status of the worker—you pay him for his labor and give him an interest and pride in the product. Cheap products make cheap men. The first thought of socialism is for the worker who makes the thing, not the man who buys it.

Work is for the worker.

What becomes of the product of your work, and how the world receives it, matters little. But how you do it is everything. We are what we are on account of the thoughts we have thought and the things we have done. As a muscle grows strong only through use, so does every attribute of the mind, and every quality of the soul take on new strength through exercise. And on the other hand, as a muscle not used atrophies and dies, so will the faculties of the spirit die through disuse.

Thus we see why it is very necessary that we should exercise our highest and best. We are making character, building soul-fiber; and no rotten threads must be woven into this web of life. If you write a paper for a learned society, you are the man who gets the benefit of that paper—the society may. If you are a preacher and prepare your sermons with care, you are the man who receives the uplift—and as to the congregation, it is all very doubtful.

Work is for the worker.

We are all working out our own salvation. And thus do we see how it is very plain that John Ruskin was right when he said that the man who makes the thing is of far more importance than the man who buys it. Work is for the worker.

Can you afford to do slipshod, evasive, hypocritical work? Can you afford to shirk, or make-believe or practise pretense in any act of life? No, no; for all the time you are molding yourself into a deformity, and drifting away from the Divine. What the world does and says about you is really no matter, but what you think and what you do are questions vital as Fate. No one can harm you but yourself. Work is for the worker. And so I will answer the questions of the critics as to how society has been benefited by, say, a William Morris book:

1. The workmen who made it found a pride and satisfaction in their work.

2. They received a goodly reward in cash for their time and efforts.

3. The buyers were pleased with their purchase, and received a decided satisfaction in its possession.

4. Readers of the book were gratified to see their author clothed in such fitting and harmonious dress.

5. Reading the text has instructed some, and possibly inspired a few to nobler thinking.

After “The Defense of Guinevere” was published, it was thirteen years before Morris issued another volume. His days had been given to art and the work of management. But now the business had gotten on to such a firm basis that he turned the immediate supervision over to others, and took two days of the week, Saturday and Sunday, for literature.

Taking up the active work of literature when thirty-nine years of age, he followed it with the zest of youth for over twenty years—until death claimed him. William Morris thought literature should be the product of the ripened mind—the mind that knows the world of men and which has grappled with earth’s problems. He also considered that letters should not be a profession in itself—to make a business of an art is to degrade it. Literature should be the spontaneous output of the mind that has known and felt. To work the mine of spirit as a business and sift its product for hire, is to overwork the vein and palm off slag for sterling metal. Shakespeare was a theater-manager, Milton a secretary, Bobby Burns a farmer, Lamb a bookkeeper, Wordsworth a government employee, Emerson a lecturer, Hawthorne a custom-house inspector, and Whitman a clerk. William Morris was a workingman and a manufacturer, and would have been Poet Laureate of England had he been willing to call himself a student of sociology instead of a socialist. Socialism itself (whatever it may be) is not offensive—the word is.

The great American Apostle of Negation expressed, once upon a day, a regret that he had not been consulted when the Universe was being planned, otherwise he would have arranged to make good things catching instead of bad.

The remark tokened a slight lesion in the logic of the Apostle, for good things are now, and ever have been, infectious.

Once upon a day, I met a young man who told me that he was exposed at Kelmscott House for a brief hour, and caught it, and ever after there were in his mind, thoughts, feelings, emotions and ideals that had not been there before. Possibly the psychologist would explain that the spores of all these things were simply sleeping, awaiting the warmth and sunshine of some peculiar presence to start them into being; but of that I can not speak —this only I know, that the young man said to me, “Whereas I was once blind, I now see.”

William Morris was a giant in physical strength and a giant in intellect. His nature was intensely masculine, in that he could plan and act without thought of precedent. Never was a man more emancipated from the trammels of convention and custom than William Morris.

Kelmscott House at Hammersmith is in an ebb-tide district where once wealth and fashion held sway; but now the vicinity is given over to factories, tenement-houses and all that train of evil and vice that follows in the wake of faded gentility.

At Hammersmith you will see spacious old mansions used as warehouses; others as boarding-houses; still others converted into dance-halls with beer-gardens in the rear, where once bloomed and blossomed milady’s flowerbeds.

The broad stone steps and wide hallways and iron fences, with glimpses now and then of ancient doorplates or more ancient knockers, tell of generations lost in the maze of oblivion.

Just why William Morris, the poet and lover of harmony, should have selected this locality for a home is quite beyond the average ken. Certainly it mystified the fashionable literary world of London, with whom he never kept goose-step, but that still kept track of him—for fashion has a way of patronizing genius—and some of his old friends wrote him asking where Hammersmith was, and others expressed doubts as to its existence. I had no difficulty in taking the right train for Hammersmith, but once there no one seemed to have ever heard of the Kelmscott Press. When I inquired, grave misgivings seemed to arise as to whether the press I referred to was a cider-press, a wine-press or a press for “cracklings.”

Finally I discovered a man—a workingman—whose face beamed at the mention of William Morris. Later I found that if a man knew William Morris, his heart throbbed at the mention of his name, and he at once grew voluble and confidential and friendly. It was the “Open Sesame,” And if a person did not know William Morris, he simply didn’t, and that was all there was about it.

But the man I met knew “Th’ Ole Man,” which was the affectionate title used by all the hundreds and thousands who worked with William Morris. And to prove that he knew him, when I asked that he should direct me to the Upper Mall, he simply insisted on going with me. Moreover, he told a needless lie and declared he was on the way there, although when we met he was headed in the other direction. By a devious walk of half a mile we reached the high iron fence of Kelmscott House. We arrived amid a florid description of the Icelandic Sagas as told by my new-found friend and interpreted by Th’ Ole Man. My friend had not read the Sagas, but still he did not hesitate to recommend them; and so we passed through the wide-open gates and up the stone walk to the entrance of Kelmscott House. On the threshold we met F.S. Ellis and Emery Walker, who addressed my companion as “Tom.” I knew Mr. Ellis slightly, and also had met Mr. Walker, who works Rembrandt miracles with a camera.

Mr. Ellis was deep in seeing the famous “Chaucer” through the press, and Mr. Walker had a print to show, so we turned aside, passed a great pile of paper in crates that cluttered the hallway, and entered the library. There, leaning over the long, oaken table, in shirt-sleeves, was the master. Who could mistake that great, shaggy head, the tangled beard, and frank, open-eyed look of boyish animation?

The man was sixty and more, but there was no appearance of age in eye, complexion, form or gesture—only the whitened hair! He greeted me as if we had always known each other, and Ellis and piles of Chaucer proof led straight to old Professor Child of Harvard, whose work Ellis criticized and Morris upheld. They fell into a hot argument, which was even continued as we walked across the street to the Doves Bindery.

The Doves Bindery, as all good men know, is managed by Mr. Cobden-Sanderson, who married one of the two daughters of Richard Cobden of Corn-Law fame.

Just why Mr. Sanderson, the lawyer, should have borrowed his wife’s maiden name and made it legally a part of his own, I do not know. Anyway, I quite like the idea of linking one’s name with that of the woman one loves, especially when it has been so honored by the possessor as the name of Cobden.

Cobden-Sanderson caught the rage for beauty from William Morris, and began to bind books for his own pleasure. Morris contended that any man who could bind books as beautifully as Cobden-Sanderson should not waste his time with law. Cobden-Sanderson talked it over with his wife, and she being a most sensible woman, agreed with William Morris.

So Cobden-Sanderson, acting on Th’ Ole Man’s suggestion, rented the quaint and curious mansion next door to the old house occupied by the Kelmscott Press, and went to work binding books.

When we were once inside the Bindery, the Chaucerian argument between Mr. Ellis and Th’ Ole Man shifted off into a wrangle with Cobden-Sanderson. I could not get the drift of it exactly—it seemed to be the continuation of some former quarrel about an oak leaf or something. Anyway, Th’ Ole Man silenced his opponent by smothering his batteries—all of which will be better understood when I explain that Th’ Ole Man was large in stature, bluff, bold and strong-voiced, whereas Cobden-Sanderson is small, red-headed, meek, and wears bicycle-trousers.

The argument, however, was not quite so serious an affair as I at first supposed, for it all ended in a laugh and easily ran off into a quiet debate as to the value of Imperial Japan versus Whatman.

We walked through the various old parlors that now do duty as workrooms for bright-eyed girls, then over through the Kelmscott Press, and from this to another old mansion that had on its door a brass plate so polished and repolished, like a machine-made sonnet too much gone over, that one can scarcely make out its intent. Finally I managed to trace the legend, “The Seasons.” I was told it was here that Thomson, the poet, wrote his book. Once back in the library of Kelmscott House, Mr. Ellis and Th’ Ole Man leaned over the great oaken table and renewed, in a gentler key, the question as to whether Professor Child was justified in his construction of the Third Canto of the “Canterbury Tales.” Under cover of the smoke I quietly disappeared with Mr. Cockerill, the Secretary, for a better view of the Kelmscott Press.

This was my first interview with William Morris. By chance I met him again, some days after, at the shop of Emery Walker in Clifford Court, Strand. I had been told on divers occasions by various persons that William Morris had no sympathy for American art and small respect for our literature. I am sure this was not wholly true, for on this occasion he told me he had read “Huckleberry Finn,” and doted on “Uncle Remus.” He also spoke with affection and feeling of Walt Whitman, and told me that he had read every printed word that Emerson had written. And further he congratulated me on the success of my book, “Songs From Vagabondia.”

The housekeeping world seems to have been in thrall to six haircloth chairs, a slippery sofa to match, and a very cold, marble-top center table, from the beginning of this century down to comparatively recent times. In all the best homes there was also a marble mantel to match the center table; on one end of this mantel was a blue glass vase containing a bouquet of paper roses, and on the other a plaster-of-Paris cat. Above the mantel hung a wreath of wax flowers in a glass case. In such houses were usually to be seen gaudy-colored carpets, imitation lace curtains, and a what-not in the corner that seemed ready to go into dissolution through the law of gravitation.

Early in the Seventies lithograph-presses began to make chromos that were warranted just as good as oil-paintings, and these were distributed in millions by enterprising newspapers as premiums for subscriptions. Looking over an old file of the “Christian Union” for the year Eighteen Hundred Seventy-one, I chanced upon an editorial wherein it was stated that the end of painting pictures by hand had come, and the writer piously thanked heaven for it—and added, “Art is now within the reach of all.” Furniture, carpets, curtains, pictures and books were being manufactured by machinery, and to glue things together and give them a look of gentility and get them into a house before they fell apart, was the seeming desideratum of all manufacturers.

The editor of the “Christian Union” surely had a basis of truth for his statement; art had received a sudden chill: palettes and brushes could be bought for half-price, and many artists were making five-year contracts with lithographers; while those too old to learn to draw on lithograph-stones saw nothing left for them but to work designs with worsted in perforated cardboard.

To the influence of William Morris does the civilized world owe its salvation from the mad rage and rush for the tawdry and cheap in home decoration. It will not do to say that if William Morris had not called a halt some one else would, nor to cavil by declaring that the inanities of the Plush-Covered Age followed the Era of the Hair-Cloth Sofa. These things are frankly admitted, but the refreshing fact remains that fully one-half the homes of England and America have been influenced by the good taste and vivid personality of one strong, earnest man.

William Morris was the strongest all-round man the century has produced. He was an Artist and a Poet in the broadest and best sense of these much-bandied terms. William Morris could do more things, and do them well, than any other man of either ancient or modern times whom we can name. William Morris was master of six distinct trades. He was a weaver, a blacksmith, a wood-carver, a painter, a dyer and a printer; and he was a musical composer of no mean ability.

Better than all, he was an enthusiastic lover of his race: his heart throbbed for humanity, and believing that society could be reformed only from below, he cast his lot with the toilers, dressed as one of them, and in the companionship of workingmen found a response to his holy zeal which the society of an entailed aristocracy denied.

The man who could influence the entire housekeeping of half a world, and give the kingdom of fashion a list to starboard; who could paint beautiful pictures; compose music; speak four languages; write sublime verse; address a public assemblage effectively; produce plays; resurrect the lost art of making books, books such as were made only in the olden time as a loving, religious service; who lived a clean, wholesome, manly life—beloved by those who knew him best—shall we not call him Master?

ROBERT BROWNING

So, take and use Thy work,
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o’ the stuff, what warpings past the aim:
My times be in Thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same.

—Rabbi Ben Ezra

ROBERT BROWNING

If there ever lived a poet to whom the best minds pour out libations, it is Robert Browning. We think of him as dwelling on high Olympus; we read his lines by the light of dim candles; we quote him in sonorous monotone at twilight when soft-sounding organ-chants come to us mellow and sweet. Browning’s poems form a lover’s litany to that elect few who hold that the true mating of a man and a woman is the marriage of the mind. And thrice blest was Browning, in that Fate allowed him to live his philosophy—to work his poetry up into life, and then again to transmute life and love into art. Fate was kind: success came his way so slowly that he was never subjected to the fierce, dazzling searchlight of publicity; his recognition in youth was limited to a few obscure friends and neighbors. And when distance divided him from these, they forgot him; so there seems a hiatus in his history, when for a score of years literary England dimly remembered some one by the name of Browning, but could not just place him.

About the year Eighteen Hundred Sixty-eight the author of “Sordello” was induced to appear at an evening of “Uncut Leaves” at the house of a nobleman at the West End,

London. James Russell Lowell was present and was congratulated by a lady, sitting next to him, on the fact that Browning was an American.

“But only by adoption!” answered the gracious Lowell.

“Yes,” said the lady; “I believe his father was an Englishman, so you Americans can not have all the credit; but surely he shows the Negro or Indian blood of his mother. Very clever, isn’t he?—so very clever!”

Browning’s swarthy complexion, and the fine poise of the man—the entire absence of “nerves,” as often shown in the savage—seemed to carry out the idea that his was a peculiar pedigree. In his youth, when his hair was as black as the raven’s wing and coarse as a horse-tail, and his complexion mahogany, the report that he was a Creole found ready credence. And so did this gossip of mixed parentage follow him that Mrs. Sutherland Orr, in her biography, takes an entire chapter to prove that in Robert Browning’s veins there flowed neither Indian nor Negro blood.

Doctor Furnivall, however, explains that Browning’s grandmother on his father’s side came from the West Indies, that nothing is known of her family history, and that she was a Creole.

And beyond this, the fact is stated that Robert Browning was quite pleased when he used to be taken for a Jew—a conclusion made plausible by his complexion, hair and features.

In its dead-serious, hero-worshiping attitude, the life of Robert Browning by Mrs. Orr deserves to rank with Weems’ “Life of Washington.” It is the brief of an attorney for the defense. “Little-Willie” anecdotes appear on every page.

And thus do we behold the tendency to make Browning something more than a man—and, therefore, something less.

Possibly women are given to this sort of thing more than men—I am not sure. But this I know, every young woman regards her lover as a distinct and peculiar personage, different from all others—as if this were a virtue—the only one of his kind. Later, if Fate is kind, she learns that her own experience is not unique. We all easily fit into a type, and each is but a representative of his class.

Robert Browning sprang from a line of clerks and small merchants; but as indemnity for the lack of a family ‘scutcheon, we are told that his uncle, Reuben Browning, was a sure-enough poet. For once in an idle hour he threw off a little thing for an inscription to be placed on a presentation ink-bottle, and Disraeli seeing it, declared, “Nothing like this has ever before been written!”

Beyond doubt, Disraeli made the statement—it bears his earmark. It will be remembered that the Earl of Beaconsfield had a stock form for acknowledging receipt of the many books sent to him by aspiring authors. It ran something like this: “The Earl of Beaconsfield begs to thank the gifted author of——for a copy of his book, and gives the hearty assurance that he will waste no time in reading the volume.”

And further, the fact is set forth with unction that Robert Browning was entrusted with a latchkey early in life, and that he always gave his mother a good-night kiss. He gave her the good-night kiss willy-nilly. If she had retired when he came home, he used the trusty latchkey and went to her room to imprint on her lips the good-night kiss. He did this, the

biographer would have us believe, to convince the good mother that his breath was what it should be; and he awakened her so she would know the hour was seasonable.

In many manufactories there is an electric apparatus wherewith every employee registers when he arrives, by turning a key or pushing a button. Robert Browning always fearlessly registered as soon as he got home—this according to Mrs. Orr.

Unfortunately, or otherwise, there is a little scattered information which makes us believe that Robert Browning's mother was not so fearful of her son's conduct, nor suspicious as to his breath, as to lie awake nights and keep tab on his hours. The world has never denied that Robert Browning was entrusted with a latchkey, and it cares little if occasionally, early in life, he fumbled for the keyhole. And my conception of his character is such that, when in the few instances Aurora, rosy goddess of the morn, marked his homecoming with chrome-red in the eastern sky, he did not search the sleeping-rooms for his mother to apprise her of the hour.

In one place Mrs. Orr avers, in a voice hushed with emotion, that Browning carefully read all of Johnson's Dictionary "as a fit preparation for a literary career." Without any attempt to deny that the perusal of a dictionary is "fit preparation for a literary career," I yet fear me that the learned biographer, in a warm anxiety to prove the man exceeding studious and very virtuous, has tipped a bit to t' other side.

She has apotheosized her subject—and in an attempt to portray him as a peculiar person, set apart, has well-nigh given us a being without hands, feet, eyes, ears, organs, dimensions, passions.

But after a careful study of the data, various visits to the places where he lived in England, trips to Casa Guidi, views from Casa Guidi windows, a journey to Palazzo Rezzonico at Venice, where he died, and many a pious pilgrimage to Poets' Corner, in Westminster Abbey, where he sleeps, I am constrained to believe that Robert Browning was made from the same kind of clay as the rest of us. He was human—he was splendidly human.

Browning's father was a bank-clerk; and Robert Browning, the Third, author of "Paracelsus," could have secured his father's place in the Bank of England, if he had had ambitions. And the fact that he had not was a source of silent sorrow to the father, even to the day of his death, in Eighteen Hundred Sixty-six.

Robert Browning, the grandfather, entered the Bank as an errand-boy, and rose by slow stages to Principal of the Stock-Room. He served the Bank full half a century, and saved from his salary a goodly competence. This money, tightly and rightly invested, passed to his son. The son never secured the complete favor of his employers that the father had known, but he added to his weekly stipend by what a writer terms, "legitimate perquisites." This, being literally interpreted, means that he purchased paper, pens and sealing-wax for the use of the Bank, and charged the goods in at his own price, doubtless with the consent of his superior, with whom he divided profits. He could have parodied the remark of Fletcher of Saltoun and said, "Let me supply the perquisite-requisites and I care not who makes the laws." So he grew rich—moderately rich—and lived simply and comfortably up at Camberwell, with only one besetting dissipation: he was a book-collector and had learned more Greek than Robert the Third was to acquire. He searched bookstalls on the

way to the City in the morning, and lay in wait for First Editions on the way home at night. When he had a holiday, he went in search of a book. He sneaked books into the house, and declared to his admonishing wife the next week that he had always owned ‘em, or that they were presented to him. The funds his father had left him, his salary and “the perquisites,” made a goodly income, but he always complained of poverty. He was secretly hoarding sums so as to secure certain books.

The shelves grew until they reached the ceiling, and then bookcases invaded the dining-room. The collector didn’t trust his wife with the household purchasing; no bank-clerk ever does—and all the pennies were needed for books. The good wife, having nothing else to do, grew anemic, had neuralgia and lapsed into a Shut-in, wearing a pale-blue wrapper and reclining on a couch, around which were piled—mountain-high—books.

The pale invalid used to imagine that the great cases were swaying and dancing a minuet, and she fully expected the tomes would all come a-toppling down and smother her—and she didn’t care much if they would; but they never did. She was the mother of two children—the boy Robert, born the year after her marriage; and in a little over another year a daughter came, and this closed the family record.

The invalid mother was a woman of fine feeling and much poetic insight. She didn’t talk as much about books as her husband did, but I think she knew the good ones better. The mother and son moused in books together, and Mrs. Orr is surely right in her suggestion that this love of mother and son took upon itself the nature of a passion.

The love of Robert Browning for Elizabeth Barrett was a revival and a renewal, in many ways, of the condition of tenderness and sympathy that existed between Browning and his mother. There certainly was a strange and marked resemblance in the characters of Elizabeth Barrett and the mother of Robert Browning; and to many this fully accounts for the instant affection that Browning felt toward the occupant of the “darkened room,” when first they met.

The book-collector took much pride in his boy, and used to take him on book-hunting excursions, and sometimes to the Bank, on which occasions he would tell the Beef-Eaters how this was Robert Browning, the Third, and that all three of the R.B.‘s were loyal servants of the Bank. And the Beef-Eaters would rest their staves on the stone floor, and smile Fifteenth-Century grimaces at the boy from under their cocked hats.

Robert the Third was a healthy, rollicking lad, with power plus, and a deal of destructiveness in his nature. But destructiveness in a youngster is only energy not yet properly directed, just as dirt is useful matter in the wrong place.

To keep the boy out of mischief, he was sent to a sort of kindergarten, kept by a spinster around the corner. The spinster devoted rather more attention to the Browning boy than to her other pupils—she had to, to keep him out of mischief—and soon the boy was quite the head scholar.

And they tell us that he was so much more clever than any of the other scholars that, to appease the rising jealousy of the parents of the other pupils, the diplomatic spinster requested that the boy be removed from her school—all this according to the earnest biographer. The facts are that the boy had so much energy and restless ambition; was so full of brimming curiosity, mischief and imagination—introducing turtles, bats and mice

on various occasions—that he led the whole school a merry chase and wore the nerves of the ancient maiden to a frazzle.

He had to go.

After this he studied at home with his mother. His father laid out a schedule, and it was lived up to, for about a week.

Then a private tutor was tried, but soon this plan was abandoned, and a system of reading, best described as “natural selection,” was followed.

The boy was fourteen, and his sister was twelve, past. These are the ages when children often experience a change of heart, as all “revivalists” know. Robert Browning was swinging off towards atheism. He grew melancholy, irritable and wrote stanzas of sentimental verse. He showed this verse, high-sounding, stilted, bold and bilious, to his mother and then to his father, and finally to Lizzie Flower.

A word about Lizzie Flower: She was nine years older than Robert Browning; and she had a mind that was gracious and full of high aspiration. She loved books, art, music, and all harmony made its appeal to her—and not in vain. She wrote verses and, very sensibly, kept them locked in her workbox; and then she painted in water-colors and worked in worsted. A thoroughly good woman, she was far above the average in character, with a half-minor key in her voice and a tinge of the heartbroken in her composition, caused no one just knew how. Probably a certain young curate at Saint Margaret’s could have thrown light on this point; but he married, took on a double chin, moved away to a fat living and never told.

No woman is ever wise or good until destiny has subdued her by grinding her fondest hopes into the dust.

Lizzie Flower was wise and good.

She gave singing lessons to the Browning children. She taught Master Robert Browning to draw.

She read to him some of her verses that were in the sewing-table drawer. And her sister, Sarah Flower, two years older, afterwards Sarah Flower Adams, read aloud to them a hymn she had just written, called, “Nearer, My God, to Thee.”

Then soon Master Robert showed the Flower girls some of the verses he had written.

Robert liked Lizzie Flower first-rate, and told his mother so. A young woman never cares anything for an unlicked cub, nine years younger than herself, unless Fate has played pitch and toss with her heart’s true love. And then, the tendrils of the affections being ruthlessly lacerated and uprooted, they cling to the first object that presents itself.

Lizzie Flower was a wallflower. That is to say, she had early in life rid herself of the admiration of the many, by refusing to supply an unlimited amount of small talk. In feature she was as plain as George Eliot. A boy is plastic, and even a modest wallflower can woo him; but a man, for her, inspires awe—with him she takes no liberties. And the wallflower woos the youth unwittingly, thinking the while she is only using her influence the better to instruct him.

It is fortunate for a boy escaping adolescence to be educated and loved (the words are synonymous) by a good woman. Indeed, the youngster who has not violently loved a

woman old enough to be his mother has dropped something out of his life that he will have to go back and pick up in another incarnation.

I said Robert liked Lizzie Flower first-rate; and she declared that he was the brightest and most receptive pupil she had ever had.

He was seventeen—she was twenty-six. They read Shelley, Keats and Byron aloud, and together passed through the "Byronic Period." They became violently atheistic, and at the same time decidedly religious: things that seem paradoxical, but are not. They adopted a vegetable diet and for two years they eschewed meat. They worshiped in the woods, feeling that the groves were God's first temples; and sitting at the gnarled roots of some great oak, they would read aloud, by turn, from "Queen Mab."

On one such excursion out across Hampstead Heath they lost their copy of "Shelley" in the leaves, and a wit has told us that it sprouted, and as a result—the flower and fruit—we have Browning's poem of "Pauline." And this must be so, for Robert and Miss Flower (he always called her "Miss Flower," but she called him "Robert") made many an excursion, in search of the book, yet they never found it.

Robert now being eighteen, a man grown—not large, but very strong and wiry—his father made arrangements for him to take a minor clerkship in the Bank. But the boy rebelled—he was going to be an artist, or a poet, or something like that.

The father argued that a man could be a poet and still work in a bank—the salary was handy; and there was no money in poetry. In fact, he himself was a poet, as his father had been before him. To be a bank-clerk and at the same time a poet—what nobler ambition!

The young man was still stubborn. He was feeling discontented with his environment: he was cramped, cabined, cribbed, confined. He wanted to get out of the world of petty plodding and away from the silly round of conventions, out into the world of art—or else of barbarism—he didn't care which.

The latter way opened first, and a bit of wordy warfare with his father on the subject of idleness sent him off to a gipsy camp at Epsom Downs. How long he lived with the vagabonds we do not know, but his swarthy skin, and his skill as a boxer and wrestler, recommended him to the ragged gentry, and they received him as a brother.

It is probable that a week of pure vagabondia cured him of the idea that civilization is a disease, for he came back home, made a bonfire of his attire, and after a vigorous tubbing, was clothed in his right mind.

Groggy studies in French under a private tutor followed, and then came a term as special student in Greek at London University.

To be nearer the school, he took lodgings in Gower Street; but within a week a slight rough-house incident occurred that crippled most of the furniture in his room and deprived the stair-rail of its spindles. R. Browning, the Second, bank-clerk, paid the damages, and R. Browning, the Third, aged twenty, came back home, formally notifying all parties concerned that he had chosen a career—it was Poetry. He would woo the Divine Goddess, no matter who opposed. There, now!

His mother was delighted; his father gave reluctant consent, declaring that any course in life was better than vacillation; and Miss Flower, who probably had sown the dragon's

teeth, assumed a look of surprise, but gave it as her opinion that Robert Browning would yet be Poet Laureate of England.

Robert Browning awoke one morning with a start—it was the morning of his thirtieth birthday. One's thirtieth birthday and one's seventieth are days that press their message home with iron hand. With his seventieth milestone past, a man feels that his work is done, and dim voices call to him from across the Unseen. His work is done, and so illy, compared with what he had wished and expected! But the impressions made upon his heart by the day are no deeper than those his thirtieth birthday inspires. At thirty, youth, with all it palliates and excuses, is gone forever. The time for mere fooling is past; the young avoid you, or else look up to you as a Nestor and tempt you to grow reminiscent. You are a man and must give an account of yourself.

Out of the stillness came a Voice to Robert Browning saying, "What hast thou done with the talent I gave thee?"

What had he done? It seemed to him at the moment as if he had done nothing. He arose and looked into the mirror. A few gray hairs were mixed in his beard; there were crow's feet on his forehead; and the first joyous flush of youth had gone from his face forever. He was a bachelor, inwardly at war with his environment, but making a bold front with his tuppence worth of philosophy to conceal the unrest within.

A bachelor of thirty, strong in limb, clear in brain and yet a dependent! No one but himself to support, and couldn't even do that! Gadzooks! Fie upon all poetry and a plague upon this dumb, dense, shopkeeping, beer-drinking nation upon which the sun never sets!

The father of Robert Browning had done everything a father could. He had supplied board and books, and given his son an allowance of a pound a week for ten years. He had sent him on a journey to Italy, and published several volumes of the young man's verse at his own expense. And these books were piled high in the garret, save a few that had been bought by charitable friends or given away.

Robert Browning was not discouraged—oh no, not that!—only the world seemed to stretch out in a dull, monotonous gray, where once it was green, the color of hope, and all decked with flowers.

The little literary world of London knew Browning and respected him. He was earnest and sincere and his personality carried weight. His face was not handsome, but his manner was one of poise and purpose; and to come within his aura and look into his calm eyes was to respect the man and make obeisance to the intellect that you felt lay behind.

A few editors had gone out of their way to "discover" him to the world, but their lavish reviews fell flat. Buyers would not buy—no one seemed to want the wares of Robert Browning. He was hard to read, difficult, obscure—or else there wasn't anything in it at all—they didn't know which.

Fox, editor of the "Repository," had met Browning at the Flowers' and liked him. He tried to make his verse go, but couldn't. Yet he did what he could and insisted that Browning should go with him to the "Sunday evenings" at Barry Cornwall's. There Browning met Leigh Hunt, Monckton Milnes and Dickens. Then there were dinner-parties

at Sergeant Talfourd's, where he got acquainted with Wordsworth, Walter Savage Landor and Macready.

Macready impressed him greatly and he impressed Macready. He gave the actor a copy of "Paracelsus" (one of the pile in the garret) and Macready suggested he write a play. "Strafford" was the result, and we know it was stillborn, and caused a very frosty feeling to exist for many a year between the author and the actor. When a play fails, the author blames the actor and the actor damns the author. These men were human. Of course Browning's kinsmen all considered him a failure, and when the father paid over the weekly allowance he often rubbed it in a bit. Lizzie Flower had modified her prophecy as to the Laureateship, but was still loyal. They had tiffed occasionally, and broken off the friendship, and once I believe returned letters. To marry was out of the question—he couldn't support himself—and besides that, they were old, demnition old; he was past thirty and she was forty—Gramercy!

They tiffed.

Then they made up.

In the meantime Browning had formed a friendship, very firm and frank, but strictly Platonic, of course, for Fanny Haworth. Miss Haworth had seen more of the world than Miss Flower—she was an artist, a writer, and moved in the best society. Browning and Miss Haworth wrote letters to each other for a while most every day, and he called on her every Wednesday and Saturday evening.

Miss Haworth bought and gave away many copies of "Pauline," "Sordello" and "Paracelsus"; and informed her friends that "Pippa Passes" and "Two in a Gondola" were great quality.

About this time we find Edward Moxon, the publisher (who married the adopted daughter of Charles and Mary Lamb), saying to Browning: "Your verse is all right, Browning, but a book of it is too much: people are appalled; they can not digest it. And when it goes into a magazine it is lost in the mass. Now just let me get out your work in little monthly instalments, in booklet form, and I think it will go."

Browning jumped at the idea.

The booklets were gotten out in paper covers and offered at a moderate price.

They sold, and sold well. The literary elite bought them by the dozen to give away.

People began to talk about Browning—he was getting a foothold. His royalties now amounted to as much as the weekly allowance from his father, and Pater was talking of cutting off the stipend entirely. Finances being easy, Browning thought it a good time to take another look at Italy. Some of the best things he had written had been inspired by Venice and Asolo—he would go again. And so he engaged passage on a sailing-ship for Naples.

Shortly after Browning's return to London, in Eighteen Hundred Forty-four, he dined at Sergeant Talfourd's. After the dinner a well-dressed and sprightly old gentleman introduced himself and begged that Browning would inscribe a copy of "Bells and Pomegranates," that he had gotten specially bound. There is an ancient myth about writers

being harassed by autograph-fiends and all that; but the simple fact is, nothing so warms the cockles of an author's heart as to be asked for his autograph. Of course Browning graciously complied with the gentleman's request, and in order that he might insert the owner's name in the inscription, asked:

"What name, please?"

And the answer was, "John Kenyon."

Then Mr. Browning and Mr. Kenyon had a nice little visit, talking about books and art. And Mr. Kenyon told Mr. Browning that Miss Elizabeth Barrett, the poetess, was a cousin of his—he was a bit boastful of the fact.

And Mr. Browning nodded and said he had often heard of her, and admired her work.

Then Mr. Kenyon suggested that Mr. Browning write and tell her so—"You see she has just gotten out a new book, and we are all a little nervous about how it is going to take. Miss Barrett lives in a darkened room, you know—sees no one—and a letter from a man like you would encourage her greatly."

Mr. Kenyon wrote the address of Miss Barrett on a card and pushed it across the table.

Mr. Browning took the card, put it in his pocketbook and promised to write Miss Barrett, as Mr. Kenyon requested.

And he did.

Miss Barrett replied.

Mr. Browning answered, and soon several letters a week were going in each direction.

Not quite so many missives were being received by Fanny Haworth; and as for Lizzie Flower, I fear she was quite forgotten. She fell into a decline, drooped and died in a year.

Mr. Browning asked for permission to call on Miss Barrett.

Miss Barrett explained that her father would not allow it, neither would the doctor or nurse, and added: "There is nothing to see in me. I am a weed fit for the ground and darkness."

But this repulse only made Mr. Browning want to see her the more. He appealed to Mr. Kenyon, who was the only person allowed to call, besides Miss Mitford—Mr. Kenyon was her cousin.

Mr. Kenyon arranged it—he was an expert at arranging anything of a delicate nature. He timed the hour when Mr. Barrett was down town, and the nurse and doctor safely out of the way, and they called on the invalid prisoner in the darkened room.

They did not stay long, but when they went away Robert Browning trod on air. The beautiful girl-like face, in its frame of dark curls, lying back among the pillows, haunted him like a shadow. He was thirty-three, she was thirty-five. She looked like a child, but the mind—the subtle, appreciative, receptive mind! The mind that caught every allusion, that knew his thought before he voiced it, that found nothing obscure in his work, and that put a high and holy construction on his every sentence—it was divine! divinity incarnated in a woman.

Robert Browning tramped the streets forgetful of meat, drink or rest.

He would give this woman freedom. He would devote himself to restoring her to the air and sunshine. What nobler ambition! He was an idler, he had never done anything for anybody. He was only a killer of time, a vagrant, but now was his opportunity—he would do for this beautiful soul what no one else on earth could do. She was slipping away as it was—the world would soon lose her. Was there none to save?

Here was the finest intellect ever given to a woman—so sure, so vital, so tender and yet so strong!

He would love her back to life and light!

And so Robert Browning told her all this shortly after, but before he told, she had divined his thought. For solitude and loneliness and heart-hunger had given her the power of an astral being; she was in communication with all the finer forces that pervade our ether. He would love her back to life and light—he told her so. She grew better.

And soon we find her getting up and throwing wide the shutters. It was no longer the darkened room, for the sunlight came dancing through the apartment, driving out all the dark shadows that lurked therein.

The doctor was indignant; the nurse resigned.

Of course, Mr. Barrett was not taken into confidence and no one asked his consent. Why should they?—he was the man who could never understand.

So one fine day when the coast was clear, the couple went over to Saint Marylebone Church and were married. The bride went home alone—could walk all right now—and it was a week before her husband saw her, because he would not be a hypocrite and go ring the doorbell and ask if Miss Barrett was home; and of course if he had asked for Mrs. Robert Browning, no one would have known whom he wanted to see.

But at the end of a week, the bride stole down the stairs, while the family was at dinner, leading her dog Flush by a string, and all the time, with throbbing heart, she prayed the dog not to bark. I have oft wondered in the stilly night season what the effect on English Letters would have been, had the dog really barked! But the dog did not bark; and Elizabeth met her lover-husband there on the corner where the mail-box is. No one missed the runaways until the next day, and then the bride and groom were safely in France, writing letters back from Dieppe, asking forgiveness and craving blessings.

“She is the Genius and I am the Clever Person,” Browning used to say. And this I believe will be the world’s final judgment.

Browning knew the world in its every phase—good and bad, high and low, society and commerce, the shop and gypsy camp. He absorbed things, assimilated them, compared and wrote it out.

Elizabeth Barrett had never traveled, her opportunities for meeting people had been few, her experiences limited, and yet she evolved truth: she secreted beauty from within.

For two years after their elopement they did not write—how could they? goodness me! They were on their wedding-tour. They lived in Florence and Rome and in various mountain villages in Italy.

Health came back, and joy and peace and perfect love were theirs. But it was joy bought with a price—Elizabeth Barrett Browning had forfeited the love of her father. Her letters written him came back unopened, books inscribed to him were returned—he declared she was dead.

Her brothers, too, discarded her, and when her two sisters wrote, they did so by stealth, and their letters, meant to be kind, were steel for her heart. Then her father was rich; and she had always known every comfort that money could buy. Now, she had taken up with a poor poet, and every penny had to be counted—absolute economy was demanded.

And Robert Browning, with a certain sense of guilt upon him, for depriving her of all the creature comforts she had known, sought by tenderness and love to make her forget the insults her father heaped upon her.

As for Browning, the bank-clerk, he was vexed that his son should show so little caution as to load himself up with an invalid wife, and he cut off the allowance, declaring that if a man was old enough to marry, he was also old enough to care for himself. He did, however, make his son several “loans”; and finally came to “bless the day that his son had sense enough to marry the best and most talented woman on earth.”

Browning’s poems were selling slowly, and Mrs. Browning’s books brought her a little royalty, thanks to the loyal management of John Kenyon, and so absolute want and biting poverty did not overtake the runaways.

After the birth of her son, in Eighteen Hundred Forty-nine, Mrs. Browning’s health seemed to have fully returned. She used to ride horseback up and down the mountain passes, and wrote home to Miss Mitford that love had turned the dial backward and the joyousness of girlhood had come again to her.

When John Kenyon died and left them ten thousand pounds, all their own, it placed them forever beyond the apprehension of want, and also enabled them to do for others; for they pensioned old Walter Savage Landor, and established him in comfortable quarters around the corner from Casa Guidi.

I intimated a moment ago that their honeymoon continued for two years. This was a mistake, for it continued for just fifteen years, when the beautiful girl-like form, with her head of flowing curls upon her husband’s shoulder, ceased to breathe. Painlessly and without apprehension or premonition, the spirit had taken its flight.

That letter of Miss Blagdon’s, written some weeks after, telling of how the stricken man paced the echoing hallways at night crying, “I want her! I want her!” touches us like a great, strange sorrow that once pierced our hearts.

But Robert Browning’s nature was too strong to be subdued by grief. He remembered that others, too, had buried their dead, and that sorrow had been man’s portion since the world began. He would live for his boy—for Her child.

But Florence was no longer his Florence, and he made haste to settle up his affairs and go back to England. He never returned to Florence, and never saw the beautiful monument, designed by his lifelong friend, Frederick Leighton.

When you visit the little English Cemetery at Florence, the slim little girl that comes down the path, swinging the big bunch of keys, opens the high iron gate and leads you, without word or question, straight to the grave of Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Browning was forty-nine when Mrs. Browning died.

And by the time he had reached his fiftieth meridian, England, harkening to America's suggestion, was awakening to the fact that he was one of the world's great poets.

Honors came slowly, but surely: Oxford with a degree; Saint Andrew's with a Lord-Rectorship; publishers with advance payments. And when Smith and Elder paid one hundred pounds for the poem of "Herve Riel," it seemed that at last Browning's worth was being recognized. Not, of course, that money is the infallible test, but even poetry has its Rialto, where the extent of appreciation is shown by prices current.

Browning's best work was done after his wife's death; and in that love he ever lived and breathed. In his seventy-fifth year, it filled his days and dreams as though it were a thing of yesterday, singing in his heart a perpetual eucharist.

"The Ring and the Book" must be regarded as Browning's crowning work. Offhand critics have disposed of it, but the great minds go back to it again and again. In the character of Pompilia the author sought to pay tribute to the woman whose memory was ever in his mind; yet he was too sensitive and shrinking to fully picture her. He sought to mask his inspiration; but tender, loving recollections of "Ba" are interlaced and interwoven through it all.

When Robert Browning died, in Eighteen Hundred Eighty-nine, the world of literature and art uncovered in token of honor to one who had lived long and well and had done a deathless work. And the doors of storied Westminster opened wide to receive his dust.

ALFRED TENNYSON

Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Nor of the starlight!
O young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel,
And crowd your canvas,
And ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam.

—*Merlin*

ALFRED TENNYSON

The grandfather of Tennyson had two sons, the elder boy, according to Clement Scott, being “both wilful and commonplace.” Now, of course, the property and honors and titles, according to the law of England, would all gravitate to the commonplace boy; and the second son, who was competent, dutiful and worthy, would be out in the cold world—simply because he was accidentally born second and not first. It was not his fault that he was born second, and it was in no wise to the credit of the other that he was born first.

So the father, seeing that the elder boy had small executive capacity, and no appreciation of a Good Thing, disinherited him, giving him, however, a generous

allowance, but letting the titles go to the second boy, who was bright and brave and withal a right manly fellow.

Personally, I'm glad the honors went to the best man. But Hallam Tennyson, son of the poet, sees only rank injustice in the action of his ancestor, who deliberately set his own opinion of right and justice against precedent as embodied in English Law. As a matter of strictest justice, we might argue that neither boy was entitled to anything which he had not earned, and that, in dividing the property between them, instead of allowing it all to drift into the hands of the one accidentally born first, the father acted wisely and well.

But neither Alfred nor Hallam Tennyson thought so. How much their opinions were biased by the fact that they were descendants of the firstborn son, we can not say. Anyway, the descendants of the second son, the Honorable Charles Tennyson d'Eyncourt, have made no protest of which I can learn, about justice having been defeated.

Considering this subject of the Law of Entail one step further, we find that Hallam, the present Lord Tennyson, is a Peer of the Realm simply because his father was a great poet, and honors were given him on that account by the Queen. These honors go to Hallam, who, as all men agree, is in many ways singularly like his grandfather.

Genius is not hereditary, but titles are. Hallam is eminently pleased with the English Law of Entail, save that he questions whether any father has the divine right to divert his titles and wealth from the eldest son. Lord Hallam's arguments are earnest and well expressed, but they seem to show that he is lacking in what Herbert Spencer calls the "value sense"—in other words, the sense of humor.

Hallam's lack of perspective is further demonstrated by his patient efforts to explain who the various Tennysons were. In my boyhood days I thought there was but one Tennyson. On reading Hallam's book, however, one would think there were dozens of them. To keep these various men, bearing one name, from being confused in the mind of the reader, is quite a task; and to better identify one particular Tennyson, Hallam always refers to him as "Father," or "My Father." In the course of a recent interview with W.H. Seward, of Auburn, New York, I was impressed by his dignified, respectful, and affectionate references to "Seward." "This belonged to Seward," and "Seward told me"—as though there were but one. In these pages I will speak of Tennyson—there has been but one—there will never be another.

I think Clement Scott is a little severe in his estimate of the character of Tennyson's father, although the main facts are doubtless as he states them. The Reverend George Clayton Tennyson, Rector of Somersby and Wood Enderby parishes, was a typical English parson. As a boy he was simply big, fat and lazy. His health was so perfect that it overtopped all ambition, and having no nerves to speak of, his sensibilities were very slight.

When he was disinherited in favor of his younger brother, a keen, nervous, forceful fellow, he accepted it as a matter of course. His career was planned for him: he "took orders," married the young woman his folks selected, and slipped easily into his proper niche—his adipose serving as a buffer for his feelings. In his intellect there was no flash, and his insight into the heart of things was small.

Being happily married to a discreet woman who managed him without ever letting him be aware of it, and having a sure and sufficient income, and never knowing that he had a stomach, he did his clerical work (with the help of a curate), and lived out the measure of his days, no wiser at the last than he was at thirty.

In passing, we may call attention to the fact that the average man is a victim of Arrested Development, and that the fleeting years bring an increase of knowledge only in very exceptional cases. Health and prosperity are not pure blessings—a certain element of discontent is necessary to spur men on to a higher life.

The Reverend George Clayton Tennyson had income enough to meet his wants, but not enough to embarrass him with the responsibility of taking care of it. Each quarterly stipend was spent before it arrived, and the family lived on credit until another three months rolled around. They had roast beef as often as they wanted it; in the cellar were puncheons, kegs and barrels, and as there was no rent to pay nor landlords to appease, care sat lightly on the Rector.

Elizabeth, this man's wife, is worthy of more than a passing note. She was the daughter of the Reverend Stephen Fytche, vicar of Louth. Her family was not so high in rank as the Tennysons, because the Tennysons belonged to the gentry. But she was intelligent, amiable, fairly good-looking, and being the daughter of a clergyman, had beyond doubt a knowledge of clerical needs; so it was thought she would make a good wife for the newly appointed incumbent of Somersby.

The parents arranged it, the young folks were willing, and so they were married—and the bridegroom was happy ever afterward.

And why shouldn't he have been happy? Surely no man was ever blessed with a better wife! He had made a reach into the matrimonial grab-bag and drawn forth a jewel. This jewel was many-faceted. Without affectation or silly pride, the clergyman's wife did the work that God sent her to do. The sense of duty was strong upon her. Babies came, once each two years, and in one case two in one year, and there was careful planning required to make the income reach, and to keep the household in order. Then she visited the poor and sick of the parish, and received the many visitors. And with it all she found time to read. Her mind was open and alert for all good things. I am not sure that she was so very happy, but no complaints escaped her. In all she bore twelve children—eight sons and four daughters. Ten of these children lived to be over seventy-five years of age. The fourth child that came to her they named Alfred.

Tennyson's education in early youth was very slight. His father laid down rules and gave out lessons, but the strictness of discipline never lasted more than two days at a time. The children ran wild and roamed the woods of Lincolnshire in search of all the curious things that the woods hold in store for boys. The father occasionally made stern efforts to "correct" his sons. In the use of the birch he was ambidextrous. But I have noticed that in households where a strap hangs behind the kitchen-door, for ready use, it is not utilized so much for pure discipline as to ease the feelings of the parent. They say that expression is a need of the human heart; and I am also convinced that in many hearts there is a very strong desire at times to "thrash" some one. Who it is makes little difference, but children being

helpless and the law giving us the right, we find gratification by falling upon them with straps, birch-rods, slippers, ferules, hairbrushes or apple-tree sprouts.

No student of pedagogics now believes that the free use of the rod ever made a child “good”; but all agree that it has often served as a safety-valve for a pent-up emotion in the parent or teacher.

The father of Alfred Tennyson applied the birch, and the boy took to the woods, moody, resentful, solitary. There was good in this, for the lad learned to live within himself, and to be self-sufficient: to love the solitude, and feel a kinship with all the life that makes the groves and fields melodious.

In Eighteen Hundred Twenty-eight, when nineteen years of age, Alfred was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge. He remained there three years, but left without a degree, and what was worse, with the ill-will of his teachers, who seemed to regard his as a hopeless case. He wouldn’t study the books they wanted him to, and was never a candidate for academic distinctions.

College life, however, has much to recommend it beside the curriculum. At Cambridge, Tennyson made the acquaintance of a group of young men who influenced his life profoundly. Kemble, Milnes, Brookfield and Spedding remained his lifelong friends; and as all good is reciprocal, no man can say how much these eminent men owe to the moody and melancholy Tennyson, or how much he owes to them.

Tennyson began to write verse very young. His first line is said to have been written at five, and he has told of going when thirteen years of age to visit his grandfather, and of presenting him a poem. The old gentleman gave him half a guinea with the remark, “This is the first money you ever made by writing poetry, and take my word for it, it will be the last!” When eighteen years of age, with his brother, Charles, he produced a thin book of thin verses.

We have the opinion of Coleridge to the effect that the only lines which have any merit in the book are those signed C.T. Charles became a clergyman of marked ability, married rich, and changed his name from Tennyson to Turner for economic and domestic reasons. Years afterward, when Alfred had become Poet Laureate, rumor has it he thought of changing the “Turner” back to “Tennyson,” but was unable to bring it about.

The only honor captured by Alfred at Cambridge was a prize for his poem, “Timbuctoo.” The encouragement that this brought him, backed up by Arthur Hallam’s declaiming the piece in public—as a sort of defi to detractors—caused him to fix his attention more assiduously on verse. He could write—it was the only thing he could do—and so he wrote.

At Cambridge he was in the habit of reading his poetry to a little coterie called “The Apostles,” and he always premised his reading with the statement that no criticism would be acceptable.

The year he was twenty-one he published a small book called, “Poems, Chiefly Lyrical.” The books went a-begging for many years; but times change, for a copy of this edition was sold by Quaritch in Eighteen Hundred Ninety-five for one hundred eighty pounds. The only piece in the book that seems to show genuine merit is “Mariana.”

Two years afterward a second edition, revised and enlarged, was brought out. This book contains “The Lady of Shalott,” “The May Queen,” “A Dream of Fair Women” and “The Lotus-Eaters.”

Beyond a few fulsome reviews from personal friends and a little surly mention from the tribe of Jeffrey, the volume attracted little or no attention. This coldness on the part of the public shot an atrabilarian tint through the ambition of our poet, and the fond hope of a success in literature faded from his mind.

And then began what Stopford Brooke has called “the ten fallow years in the life of Tennyson.” But fallow years are not all fallow. The dark brooding night is as necessary for our life as the garish day. Great crops of wheat that feed the nations grow only where the winter’s snow covers all as with a garment. And ever behind the mystery of sleep, and beneath the silence of the snow, Nature slumbers not nor sleeps.

The withholding of quick recognition gave the mind of Tennyson an opportunity to ripen. Fate held him in leash that he might be saved for a masterly work, and all the time that he lived in semi-solitude and read and thought and tramped the fields, his soul was growing strong and his spirit was taking on the silken self-sufficient strength that marked his later days. This hiatus of ten years in the life of our poet is very similar to the thirteen fallow years in the career of Browning. These men crossed and recrossed each other’s pathway, but did not meet for many years. What a help they might have been to each other in those years of doubt and seeming defeat! But each was to make his way alone.

Browning seemed to grow through society and travel, but solitude served the needs of Tennyson.

“There must be a man behind every sentence,” said Emerson. After ten years of silence, when Tennyson issued his book, the literary world recognized the man behind it. Tennyson had grown as a writer, but more as a man. And after all, it is more to be a man than a poet. All who knew Tennyson, and have written of him, especially during those early years, begin with a description of his appearance. His looks did not belie the man. In intellect and in stature he was a giant. The tall, athletic form, the great shaggy head, the classic features, and the look of untried strength were all thrown into fine relief by the modesty, the half-embarrassment, of his manner.

To meet the poet was to acknowledge his power. No man can talk as wise as he can look, and Tennyson never tried to. His words were few and simple.

Those who met him went away ready to back his lightest word. They felt there was a man behind the sentence.

Carlyle, who was a hero-worshiper, but who usually limited his worship to those well dead and long gone hence, wrote of Tennyson to Emerson: “One of the finest-looking men in the world. A great shock of dusky hair; bright, laughing, hazel eyes; massive aquiline face, most massive, yet most delicate; of sallow brown complexion, almost Indian-looking, clothes cynically loose, free and easy, smokes infinite tobacco. His voice is musical, metallic, fit for loud laughter and piercing wail, and all that may lie between; speech and speculation free and plenteous; I do not meet in these late decades such company over a pipe! We shall see what he will grow to.”

And then again, writing to his brother John: “Some weeks ago, one night, the poet Tennyson and Matthew Arnold were discovered here sitting smoking in the garden. Tennyson had been here before, but was still new to Jane—who was alone for the first hour or two of it. A fine, large-featured, dim-eyed, bronze-colored, shaggy-headed man is Alfred; dusty, smoky, free and easy; who swims outwardly and inwardly, with great composure, in an articulate element as of tranquil chaos and tobacco-smoke; great now and then when he does emerge; a most restful, brotherly, solid-hearted man.”

The “English Idylls,” put forth in Eighteen Hundred Forty-two, contained all the poems, heretofore published, that Tennyson cared to retain. It must be stated to the credit, or discredit, of America, that the only complete editions of Tennyson were issued by New York and Boston publishers. These men seized upon the immature early poems of Tennyson, and combining them with his later books, issued the whole in a style that tried men’s eyes—very proud of the fact that “this is the only complete edition,” etc. Of course they paid the author no royalty, neither did they heed his protests, and possibly all this prepared the way for frosty receptions of daughters of quick machine-made American millionaires, who journeyed to the Isle of Wight in after-days. Soon after the publication of “English Idylls,” Alfred Tennyson moved gracefully, like a ship that is safely launched, into the first place among living poets. He was then thirty-three years of age, with just half a century, lacking a few months, yet to live. In all that half-century, with its many conflicting literary judgments, his title to first place was never seriously questioned. Up to Eighteen Hundred Forty-two, in his various letters, and through his close friends, we learn that Tennyson was sore pressed for funds. He hadn’t money to buy books, and when he traveled it was through the munificence of some kind kinsman. He even excuses himself from attending certain social functions on account of his lack of suitable raiment—probably with a certain satisfaction.

But when he tells of his poverty to Emily Sellwood, the woman of his choice, there is anguish in his cry. In fact, her parents succeeded in breaking off her relations with Tennyson for a time, on account of his very uncertain prospects. His brothers, even those younger than he, had slipped into snug positions—“but Alfred dreams on with nothing special in sight.” Poetry, in way of a financial return, is not to be commended. Honors were coming Tennyson’s way as early as Eighteen Hundred Forty-two, but it was not until Eighteen Hundred Forty-five, when a pension of two hundred pounds a year was granted him by the Government, that he began to feel easy. Even then there were various old scores to liquidate.

The year Eighteen Hundred Fifty, when he was forty-one, has been called his “golden year,” for in it occurred the publication of “In Memoriam,” his appointment to the post of Poet Laureate, and his marriage.

Emily Sellwood had waited for him all these years. She had been sought after, and had refused several good offers from eligible widowers and others who pitied her sad plight and looked upon her as an old maid forlorn. But she was true to her love for Alfred. Possibly she had not been courted quite so assiduously as Tennyson’s mother had been. When that dear old lady was past eighty she became very deaf, and the family often ventured to carry on conversations in her presence which possibly would have been modified had the old lady been in full possession of her faculties. On a day as she sat knitting in the chimney-corner, one of her daughters in a burst of confidence to a visitor,

said, “Why, before Mamma married Papa she had received twenty-three offers of marriage!”

“Twenty-four, my dear—twenty-four,” corrected the old lady as she shifted the needles.

No one has ever claimed that Tennyson was an ideal lover. Surely he never could have been tempted to do what Browning did—break up the peace of a household by an elopement. His love was a thing of the head, weighed carefully in the scales of his judgment. His caution and good sense saved him from all Byronic excesses, or foolish alliances such as took Shelley captive. He believed in law and order, and early saw that his interests lay in that direction. He belonged to the Church of England, and doubtless thought as he pleased, but ever expressed himself with caution.

It is easy to accuse Tennyson of being insular—to say that he is merely “the poet of England.” Had he been more he would have been less. World-poets have usually been revolutionists, and dangerous men who exploded at an unknown extent of concussion. None of them has been a safe man—none respectable. Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Hugo and Whitman were outcasts.

Tennyson is always serene, sane and safe—his lines breathe purity and excellence. He is the poet of religion, of the home and fireside, of established order, of truth, justice and mercy as embodied in law.

Very early he became a close personal friend of Queen Victoria, and many of his lines ministered to her personal consolation. For fifty years Tennyson’s life was one steady, triumphal march. He acquired wealth, such as no other English poet before him had ever gained; his name was known in every corner of the earth where white men journeyed, and at home he was beloved and honored. He died October Sixth, Eighteen Hundred Ninety-two, aged eighty-three, and for him the Nation mourned, and with deep sincerity the Queen spoke of his demise as a poignant, personal sorrow.

It was at Cambridge he met Arthur Hallam—Arthur Hallam, immortal and remembered alone for being the comrade and friend of Tennyson.

Alfred took his friend Arthur to his home in Lincolnshire one vacation, and we know how Arthur became enamored of Tennyson’s sister Emily, and they were betrothed. Together, Tennyson and Hallam made a trip through France and the Pyrenees.

Carlyle and Milburn, the blind preacher, once sat smoking in the little arbor back of the house in Cheyne Row. They had been talking of Tennyson, and after a long silence Carlyle knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and with a grunt said: “Ha! Death is a great blessing—the joyousest blessing of all! Without death there would ha’ been no ‘In Memoriam,’ no Hallam, and like enough no Tennyson!” It is futile to figure what would have occurred had this or that not happened, since every act of life is a sequence. But that Carlyle and many others believed that the death of Hallam was the making of Tennyson, there is no doubt. Possibly his soul needed just this particular amount of bruising in order to make it burst into undying song—who knows! When Charles Kingsley was asked for the secret of his exquisite sympathy and fine imagination, he paused a space, and then answered—“I had a friend.” The desire for friendship is strong in every human heart. We crave the

companionship of those who can understand. The nostalgia of life presses, we sigh for “home,” and long for the presence of one who sympathizes with our aspirations, comprehends our hopes and is able to partake of our joys. A thought is not our own until we impart it to another, and the confessional seems a crying need of every human soul.

One can bear grief, but it takes two to be glad.

We reach the Divine through some one, and by dividing our joy with this one we double it, and come in touch with the Universal. The sky is never so blue, the birds never sing so blithely, our acquaintances are never so gracious, as when we are filled with love for some one.

Being in harmony with one we are in harmony with all.

The lover idealizes and clothes the beloved with virtues that exist only in his imagination. The beloved is consciously or unconsciously aware of this, and endeavors to fulfil the high ideal; and in the contemplation of the transcendent qualities that his mind has created, the lover is raised to heights otherwise unattainable.

Should the beloved pass from the earth while this condition of exaltation endures, the conception is indelibly impressed upon the soul, just as the last earthly view is said to be photographed upon the retina of the dead. The highest earthly relationship is, in its very essence, fleeting, for men are fallible, and living in a world where material wants jostle, and time and change play their ceaseless parts, gradual obliteration comes and disillusion enters. But the memory of a sweet affinity once fully possessed, and snapped by Fate at its supremest moment, can never die from out the heart. All other troubles are swallowed up in this, and if the individual is of too stern a fiber to be completely crushed into the dust, time will come bearing healing, and the memory of that once ideal condition will chant in the heart a perpetual eucharist.

And I hope the world has passed forever from the nightmare of pity for the dead: they have ceased from their labors and are at rest.

But for the living, when death has entered and removed the best friend, Fate has done her worst; the plummet has sounded the depths of grief, and thereafter nothing can inspire terror. At one fell stroke all petty annoyances and corroding cares are sunk into nothingness. The memory of a great love lives enshrined in undying amber. It affords a ballast ‘gainst all the storms that blow, and although it lends an unutterable sadness, it imparts an unspeakable peace. Where there is this haunting memory of a great love lost, there are always forgiveness, charity and a sympathy that makes the man brother to all who suffer and endure. The individual himself is nothing: he has nothing to hope for, nothing to lose, nothing to win, and this constant memory of the high and exalted friendship that once was his is a nourishing source of strength; it constantly purifies the mind and inspires the heart to nobler living and diviner thinking. The man is in communication with Elemental Conditions.

To know an ideal friendship and to have it fade from your grasp and flee as a shadow before it is touched with the sordid breath of selfishness, or sullied by misunderstandings, is the highest good. And the constant dwelling in sweet, sad recollection on the exalted virtues of the one that has gone, tends to crystallize these very virtues in the heart of him who meditates them. The beauty with which love adorns its object becomes at last the possession of the one who loves.

At the hour when the strong and helpful, yet tender and sympathetic, friendship of Alfred Tennyson and Arthur Hallam was at its height, there came a brief and abrupt word from Vienna to the effect that Arthur was dead.

“In Vienna’s fatal walls
God’s finger touched him and he slept!”

The shock of surprise, followed by dumb, bitter grief, made an impression on the youthful mind of Tennyson that the sixty years which followed did not obliterate.

At first a numbness and a deadness came over his spirit, but this condition erelong gave way to a sweet contemplation of the beauties of character that his friend possessed, and he tenderly reviewed the gracious hours they had spent together.

“In Memoriam” is not one poem; it is made up of many “short swallow-flights of song that dip their wings in tears and skim away.” There are one hundred thirty separate songs in all, held together by the silken thread of love for the poet’s lost friend.

Seventeen years were required for their evolution. Some people, misled by the title, possibly, think of these poems as a wail of grief for the dead, a vain cry of sorrow for the lost, or a proud parading of mourning millinery. Such views could not be more wholly wrong.

To every soul that has loved and lost, to those who have stood by open graves, to all who have beheld the sun go down on less worth in the world, these songs are a victor’s cry. They tell of love and life that rise phoenix-like from the ashes of despair; of doubt turned to faith; of fear which has become serenest peace.

All poems that endure must have this helpful, uplifting quality. Without violence of direction they must be beacon-lights that gently guide stricken men and women into safe harbors.

The “Invocation,” written nearly a score of years after Hallam’s death, reveals Tennyson’s personal conquest of pain. His thought has broadened from the sense of loss into a stately march of conquest over death for the whole human race. The sharpness of grief has wakened the soul to the contemplation of sublime ideas—truth, justice, nobility, honor, and the sense of beauty as shown in all created things. The man once loved a person—now his heart goes out to the universe. The dread of death is gone, and he calmly contemplates his own end and waits the summons without either impatience or fear. He realizes that death itself is a manifestation of life—that it is as natural and just as necessary.

“Sunset and evening star
And one clear call for me,
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea.”

The desire for sympathy and the wish for friendship are in his heart, but the fever of unrest and the spirit of revolt are gone. His heart, his hope, his faith, his life, are freely laid on the altar of Eternal Love.

ROBERT BURNS

TO JEANNIE

Come, let me take thee to my breast,
And pledge we ne’er shall sunder;
And I shall spurn, as vilest dust,
The warld’s wealth and grandeur.

And do I hear my Jeannie own
That equal transports move her?
I ask for dearest life, alone,
That I may live to love her.

Thus in my arms, wi’ a’ thy charms,
I clasp my countless treasure;
I’ll seek nae mair o’ heaven to share
Than sic a moment’s pleasure.

And by thy een, sae bonnie blue,
I swear I’m thine for ever:
And on thy lips I seal my vow,
And break it shall I never.

—*Robert Burns*

ROBERT BURNS

The business of Robert Burns was love-making.

All love is good, but some kinds of love are better than others. Through Burns' penchant for falling in love we have his songs. A Burns bibliography is simply a record of his love-affairs, and the spasms of repentance that followed his lapses are made manifest in religious verse.

Poetry is the very earliest form of literature, and is the natural expression of a person in love; and I suppose we might as well admit the fact at once that without love there would be no poetry.

Poetry is the bill and coo of sex. All poets are lovers, and all lovers, either actual or potential, are poets. Potential poets are the people who read poetry; and so without lovers the poet would never have a market for his wares.

If you have ceased to be moved by religious emotion; if your spirit is no longer exalted by music, and you do not linger over certain lines of poetry, it is because the love-instinct in your heart has withered to ashes of roses. It is idle to imagine Bobby Burns as a staid member of the Kirk; had he been so, there would now be no Bobby Burns. The literary ebullition of Robert Burns (he himself has told us) began shortly after he had reached the age of indiscretion; and the occasion was his being paired in the hayfield, according to the Scottish custom, with a bonnie lassie. This custom of pairing still endures, and is what the students of sociology call an expeditious move. The Scotch are great economists—the greatest in the world. Adam Smith, the father of the science of economics, was a Scotchman; and Draper, author of "A History of Civilization," flatly declares that Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" has influenced the people of Earth for good more than any other book ever written—save none.

The Scotch are great conservators of energy.

The practise of pairing men and women in the hayfield gets the work done. One man and one woman going down the grass-grown path afield might linger and dally by the way. They would never make hay, but a company of a dozen or more men and women would not only reach the field, but do a lot of work. In Scotland the hay-harvest is short—when the grass is in bloom, just right to make the best hay, it must be cut. And so the men and women, the girls and boys, sally forth. It is a jolly picnic-time, looked forward to with fond anticipation, and after recalled with sweet, sad memories, or otherwise, as the case may be.

But they all make hay while the sun shines, and count it joy. Liberties are allowed during haying-time that otherwise would be declared scandalous; during haying-time the Kirk waives her censor's right, and priest and people mingle joyously. Wives are not jealous during hay-harvest, and husbands never faultfinding, because they each get even by allowing a mutual license. In Scotland during haying-time every married man works alongside of some other man's wife. To the psychologist it is somewhat curious how the desire for propriety is overridden by a stronger desire—the desire for the shilling. The Scotch farmer says, "Anything to get the hay in"—and by loosening a bit the strict bands of social custom, the hay is harvested.

In the hay-harvest the law of natural selection holds; partners are often arranged for weeks in advance; and trysts continue year after year. Old lovers meet, touch hands in friendly scuffle for a fork, drink from the same jug, recline at noon and eat lunch in the shade of a friendly stack, and talk to heart's content, sweetening the labor of the long summer day.

Of course this joyousness of the haying-time is not wholly monopolized by the Scotch. Haven't you seen the jolly haying parties in Southern Germany, France, Switzerland and the Tyrol? How the bright costumes of the men and the jaunty attire of the women gleam in the glad sunshine!

But the practise of pairing is carried to a degree of perfection in Scotland that I have not noticed elsewhere. Surely it is a great economic scheme! It is like that invention of a Connecticut man, which utilizes the ebb and flow of the ocean-tides to turn a gristmill.

And it seems queer that no one has ever attempted to utilize the waste of dynamic force involved in the maintenance of the Company Sofa.

In Ayrshire, I have started out with a haying party of twenty—ten men and ten women—at six o'clock in the morning and worked until six at night. I never worked so hard, nor did so much. All day long there was a fire of jokes and jolly gibes, interspersed with song, while beneath all ran a gentle hum of confidential interchange of thought. The man who owned the field was there to direct our efforts and urge us on in well-doing by merry raillery, threat, and joyous rivalry.

The point I make is this—we did the work. Take heed, ye Captains of Industry, and note this truth, that where men and women work together under right influences, much good is accomplished, and the work is pleasurable. Of course there are vinegar-faced philosophers who say that the Scotch custom of pairing young men and maidens in the hayfield is not without its effect on esoterics, also on vital statistics; and I'm willing to admit there may be danger in the scheme. But life is a dangerous business anyway—few indeed get out of it alive!

Burns succeeded in his love-making and succeeded in poetry, but at everything else he was a failure. He failed as a farmer, a father, a friend, in society, as a husband, and in business.

From his twenty-third year his days were passed in sinning and repenting.

Poetry and love-making should be carried on with caution: they form a terrific tax on life's forces. Most poets die young, not because the gods especially love them, but because life is a bank-account, and to wipe out your balance is to have your checks protested. The excesses of youth are drafts payable at maturity. Chatterton dead at eighteen, Keats at twenty-six, Shelley at thirty-three, Byron at thirty-six, Poe at forty, and Burns at thirty-seven, are the rule. When drafts made by the men mentioned became due, there was no balance to their credit and Charon beckoned.

Most life-insurance companies now ask the applicant this question, "Do you write poetry to excess?" Shakespeare, to be sure, clung to life until he was fifty-three, but this seems to be the limit. Dickens and Thackeray, their candles well burned out, also died under sixty. Of course, I know that Browning, Tennyson, Morris and Bryant lived to a fair old age, but this was on borrowed time, for in the early life of each there was a hiatus of from ten to eighteen years, when the men never wrote a line, nor touched a drop of anything, bravely eschewing all honey from Hymettus. Then the four men last named were all happily married, and married life is favorable to longevity, but not to poetry. As a rule only single men, or those unhappily mated, make love and write poetry. Men happily

married make money, cultivate content, and evolve an aldermanic front; but love and poetry are symptoms of unrest. Thus is Emerson's proposition partially proven, that in life all things are bought and must be paid for with a price—even success and happiness.

Burns once explained to Doctor Moore that the first fine, careless rapture of his song was awakened into being when he was sixteen years old, by "a bonnie sweet sonsie lass" whom we now know as "Handsome Nell." Her other name to us is vapor, and history is silent as to her life-pilgrimage. Whether she lived to realize that she had first given voice to one of the great singers of earth—of this we are also ignorant. She was one year younger than Burns, and little more than a child when she and Bobby lagged behind the troop of tired haymakers, and walked home, hand in hand, in the gloaming. Here is one of the stanzas addressed to "Handsome Nell":

"She dresses all so clean and neat,
Both decent and genteel,
And then there's something in her gait
Makes any dress look weel."

And how could Nell then ever guess why her cheeks burned scarlet, and why she was so sorry when haying-time was over? She was sweet, innocent, artless, and their love was very natural, tender, innocent. It's a pity that all loves can not remain in just that idyllic, milkmaid stage, where the girls and boys awaken in the early morning with the birds, and hasten forth barefoot across the dewy fields to find the cows. But love never tarries. Love is progressive; it can not stand still. I have heard of the "passiveness" of woman's love, but the passive woman is only one who does not love—she merely consents to have affection lavished upon her. When I hear of a passive woman, I always think of the befuddled sailor who once saw one of those dummy dress-frames, all duly clothed in flaming bombazine (I think it was bombazine) in front of a clothing establishment. The sailor, mistaking the dummy for a near and dear lady friend, embraced the wire apparatus and imprinted a resounding smack on the chaste plaster-of-Paris cheek. Meeting the sure-enough lady shortly after, he upbraided her for her cold passivity on the occasion named.

A passive woman—one who consents to be loved—should seek occupation among those worthy firms who warrant a fit in ready-made gowns, or money refunded.

Love is progressive—it hastens onward like the brook hurrying to the sea. They say that love is blind: love may be short-sighted, or inclined to strabismus, or may see things out of their true proportion, magnifying pleasant little ways into seraphic virtues, but love is not really blind—the bandage is never so tight but that it can peep. The only kind of love that is really blind and deaf is Platonic love. Platonic love hasn't the slightest idea where it is going, and so there are surprises and shocks in store for it. The other kind, with eyes wide open, is better. I know a man who has tried both. Love is progressive. All things that live should progress. To stand still is to retreat, and to retreat is death. Love dies, of course. All things die, or become something else. And often they become something else by dying. Behold the eternal Paradox! The love that evolves into a higher form is the better kind. Nature is intent on evolution, yet of the myriads of spores that cover earth, most of them are doomed to death; and of the countless rays sent out by the sun, the number that fall athwart this planet are infinitesimal. Edward Carpenter calls attention to the fact that

disappointed love—that is, love that is “lost”—often affects the individual for the highest good. But the real fact is, nothing is ever lost. Love in its essence is a spiritual emotion, and its office seems to be an interchange of thought and feeling; but often thwarted in its object, it becomes general, transforms itself into sympathy, and embracing a world, goes out to and blesses all mankind.

Very, very rare is the couple that has the sense and poise to allow passion just enough mulberry-leaves, so it will spin a beautiful silken thread, out of which a Jacob’s ladder can be constructed, reaching to the Infinite. Most lovers in the end wear love to a fringe, and there remains no ladder with angels ascending and descending—not even a dream of a ladder. Instead of the silken ladder on which one can mount to Heaven, there is usually a dark, dank road to Nowhere, over which is thrown a package of letters and trinkets, all fastened round with a white ribbon, tied in a lover’s knot. The many loves of Robert Burns all ended in a black jumping-off place, and before he had reached high noon, he tossed over the last bundle of white-ribboned missives and tumbled in after them. The life of Burns is a tragedy, through which are interspersed sparkling scenes of gaiety, as if to retrieve the depth of bitterness that would otherwise be unbearable. Go ask Mary Morison, Highland Mary, Agnes McLehose, Betty Alison, and Jean Armour!

The poems of Robert Burns fall easily into four divisions.

First, those written while he was warmly wooing the object of his affection.

Second, those written after he had won her.

Third, those written when he had failed to win her.

Fourth, those written when he felt it his duty to write, and really had nothing to say.

The first-named were written because he could not help it, and are, for the most part, rarely excellent. They are joyous, rapturous, sprightly, dancing, and filled with references to sky, clouds, trees, fruit, grain, birds and flowers. Birds and flowers, by the way, are peculiarly lovers’ properties. The song and the plumage of birds, and the color and perfume of flowers are all distinctly sex manifestations. Robert Burns sang his songs just as the bird wings and sings, and for the same reason. Sex holds first place in the thought of Nature; and sex in the minds of men and women holds a much larger place than most of us are willing to admit. All religious emotion and all art are born of the sex instinct.

Burns’ poems of the second variety, written after he had won her, are touched with religious emotion, or filled with vain regret and deep remorse, as the case may be, all owing to the quality and kind of success achieved, and the influence of the Dog-Star.

Burns wrote several deeply religious poems. Now, men are very seldom really religious and contrite, except after an excess. Following a debauch a man signs the pledge, vows chastity, writes fervently of asceticism and the need of living in the spirit and not in the senses. Good pictures show best on a dark back-ground. Men talk most about things they do not possess.

“The Cotter’s Saturday Night,” perhaps the most quoted of any of Burns’ poems, is plainly the result of a terrible tip to t’ other side. Bobby had gone so far in the direction of Venusburg that he resolved on getting back, and living thereafter a staid and proper life.

In order to reform you must have an ideal, and the ideal of Burns, on the occasion of having exhausted all capacity for sin, is embodied in the “Saturday Night.” It is all a beautiful dream. The real Scottish cotter is quite another kind of person. The religion of the live cotter is well seasoned with fear, malevolence and absurd dogmatism. The amount of love, patience, excellence and priggishness shown in “The Cotter’s Saturday Night” never existed, except in a poet’s imagination. In stanza Number Ten of that particular poem is a bit of unconscious autobiography that might as well ha’ been omitted; but in letting it stand, Burns was loyal to the thought that surged through his brain.

People who are not scientific in their speech often speak of the birds as being happy. My opinion is that birds are not any more happy than men—probably not as much so. Many birds, like the English sparrow and the blue jay, quarrel all day long. Come to think of it, I believe that man is happier than the birds. He has a sense of remorse, and this suggests reformation, and from the idea of reformation comes the picturing of an ideal. This exercise of the imagination is pleasure, for indeed there is a certain satisfaction in every form of exercise of the faculties. There is a certain pleasure in pain: for pain is never all pain. And sin surely is not wholly bad, if through it we pass into a higher life—the life of the spirit.

Anything is better than the Dead Sea of neutral nothingness, wherein a man merely avoids sin by doing nothing and being nothing. The stirring of the imagination by sorrow for sin, sometimes causes the soul to wing a far-reaching upward flight.

Asceticism is often only a form of sensuality: the man finds satisfaction in overcoming the flesh. And wherever you find asceticism you find potential passion—a smoldering volcano held in check by a devotion to duty; and a gratification is oft found in fidelity.

The moral and religious poems of Burns were written in a desire to work off a fit of depression, and make amends for folly. They are sincere and often very excellent. Great preachers have often been great sinners, and the sermons that have moved men most are often a direct recoil from sin on the part of the preacher. Remorse finds play in preaching repentance. When a man talks much about a virtue, be sure that he is clutching for it. Temperance fanatics are men with a taste for strong drink, trying hard to keep sober. The moral and religious poems of Robert Burns are not equal to his love-songs. The love-songs are free, natural, untrammeled and unrestrained; while his religious poems have a vein of rotten warp running through them in the way of affectation and pretense. From this I infer that sin is natural, and remorse partially so. In Burns’ moral poems the author tries to win back the favor of respectable people, which he had forfeited. In them there is a violence of direction; and all violence of direction—all endeavors to please and placate certain people—is fatal to an artist. You must work to please only yourself.

Work to please yourself and you develop and strengthen the artistic conscience. Cling to that and it shall be your mentor in times of doubt: you need no other. There are writers who would scorn to write a muddy line, and would hate themselves for a year and a day should they dilute their honest thought with the platitudes of the fear-ridden. Be yourself and speak your mind today, though it contradict all you have said before. And above all, in art, work to please yourself—that Other Self that stands over and behind you, looking over your shoulder, watching your every act, word and deed—knowing your every thought. Michelangelo would not paint a picture on order. “I have a critic who is more exacting than you,” said Meissonier—“it is my Other Self.”

Rosa Bonheur painted pictures just to please her Other Self, and never gave a thought to any one else, nor wanted to think of any one else, and having painted to please herself, she made her appeal to the great Common Heart of humanity—the tender, the noble, the receptive, the earnest, the sympathetic, the lovable. That is why Rosa Bonheur stands first among women artists of all time: she worked to please her Other Self.

That is the reason Rembrandt, who lived at the same time Shakespeare lived, is today without a rival in portraiture. He had the courage to make an enemy. When at work he never thought of any one but his Other Self, and so he infused soul into every canvas. The limpid eyes look down into yours from the walls and tell of love, pity, earnestness and deep sincerity. Man, like Deity, creates in his own image, and when he portrays some one else, he pictures himself, too—this provided his work is Art. If it is but an imitation of something seen somewhere, or done by some one else, to please a patron with money, no breath of life has been breathed into its nostrils, and it is nothing, save possibly dead perfection—no more.

Is it easy to please your Other Self? Try it for a day. Begin tomorrow morning and say: "This day I will live as becomes a man. I will be filled with good-cheer and courage. I will do what is right; I will work for the highest; I will put soul into every hand-grasp, every smile, every expression—into all my work. I will live to satisfy my Other Self."

Do you think it is easy? Try it for a day.

Robert Burns wrote some deathless lines—lines written out of the freshness of his heart, simply to please himself, with no furtive eye on Dumfries, Edinburgh, the Kirk, or the Unco Guid of Ayrshire; and these are the lines that have given him his place in the world of letters.

The other day I was made glad by finding that John Burroughs, Poet and Prophet, says that the male thrush sings to please himself, out of pure delight; and pleasing himself, he pleases his mate. "The female," says Burroughs, "is always pleased with a male that is pleased with himself."

The various controversial poems (granting for argument's sake that controversy is poetic) were written when Burns was smarting under the sense of defeat. These show a sharp insight into the heart of things, and a lively wit, but are not sufficient foundation on which to build a reputation. Ali Baba can do as well. Considering the fact that twice as many people make pilgrimages to the grave of Burns as visit the dust of Shakespeare, and that his poems are on the shelves of every library, his name now needs no defense. The ores are very seldom found pure, and if even the work of Deity is composite, why should we be surprised that man, His creature, should express himself in a varying scale of excellence!

There was nothing of Jack Falstaff about Francis Schlatter, whose whitened bones were found amid the alkali dust of the desert, a few years ago—dead in an endeavor to do without meat and drink for forty days.

Schlatter purported, and believed, that he was the reincarnation of the Messiah. Letters were sent to him, addressed simply, "Jesus Christ, Denver, Colorado," and he walked up to

the General-Delivery window and asked for them with a confidence, we are told, that relieved the postmaster of a grave responsibility.

Schlatter was no mere ordinary pretender, working on the superstitions of shallow-pated people. He lived up to his belief—took no money, avoided notoriety when he could; and the proof of his sincerity lies in the fact that he died a victim to it.

Herbert Spencer has said all about the Messianic Instinct that there is to say, save this—the Messianic Instinct first had its germ in the heart of a woman. Every woman dreams of the coming of the Ideal Man—the man who will give her protection, even to giving up his life for her, and vouchsafe peace to her soul. I am told by a noted Bishop of the Catholic Church that many women who become nuns are prompted to take their vows solely through the occasion of an unrequited love. They become the bride of the Church and find their highest joy in following the will of Christ. He is their only Spouse and Master.

The terms of endearment one hears at prayer-meetings, “Blessed Jesus,” “Dear Jesus,” “Loving Jesus,” “Elder Brother,” “Patient, gentle Jesus,” etc., were first used by women in an ecstasy of religious transport. And the thought of Jesus as a loving, “personal Savior,” would die from the face of the earth did not women keep it alive. The religious nature and the sex nature are closely akin: no psychologist can tell where the one ends and the other begins.

There may be wooden women in the world, and of these I will not speak, but every strong, pulsing, feeling, thinking woman goes through life, seeking the Ideal Man. Whether she is married or single, rich or poor, old or young, every new man she meets is interesting to her, because she feels in some mysterious way that possibly he is the One.

Of course, I know that every good man, too, seeks the Ideal Woman—but that deserves another chapter.

The only woman in whose heart there is not the live, warm, Messianic Instinct is the wooden woman, and the one who believes she has already found him. But this latter is holding an illusion that soon vanishes with possession.

That pale, low-voiced, gentle and insane man, Francis Schlatter, was followed at times by troops of women. These women believed in him and loved him—in different ways, of course, and with passion varying according to temperament and the domestic environment already existing. To love deeply is a matter of propinquity and opportunity.

One woman, whom “The Healer” had cured of a lingering disease, loved this man with a wild, mad, absorbing passion. Chance gave her the opportunity. He came to her house, cold, hungry, homeless, sick. She fed him, warmed him, looked into his liquid eyes, sat at his feet and listened to his voice. She loved him—and partook of his every mental delusion.

This woman now waits and watches in her mountain home for his return. She knows the coyotes and buzzards picked the scant flesh from his starved frame, but she says: “He promised he would come back to me, and he will. I am waiting for him here.”

This woman writes me long letters from her solitude, telling me of her hopes and plans. Just why all the cranks in the United States should write me letters, I do not know, but they do—perhaps there is a sort o’ fellow-feeling. This woman may write letters to others, just

as she does to me. Of this I do not know, but surely I would not thus make public the heart-tragedy told me in a private letter, were it not that the woman herself has printed a pamphlet, setting forth her faith and veiling only those things into which it is not our right to pry.

This Mary Magdalene believes her lover was the Chosen Son of God, and that the Father will reclothe the Son in a new garment of flesh and send him back to his beloved. So she watches and waits, and dresses herself to receive him, and at night places a lighted lantern in the window to guide the way.

She watches and waits.

Other women wait for footsteps that will never come, and listen for a voice that will never be heard. All round the world there is a sisterhood of such. Some, being wise, lose themselves in loving service to others—in useful work. But this woman, out in the wilds of New Mexico, hugs her sorrow to her heart, and feeds her passion by recounting it, and watches away the leaden hours, crying aloud to all who will listen: “He is not dead—he is not dead! he will come back to me! He promised it—he will come back to me! This long, dreary waiting is only a test of my loyalty and love! I will be patient, for he will come back to me! He will come back to me!”

This world would be a sorry place if most men conducted their lives on the Robert Burns plan. Burns was affectionate, tender, generous and kind; but he was not wise. He never saw the future, nor did he know that life is a sequence, and that if you do this, it is pretty sure to lead to that. His loves were largely of the earth.

Excess was a part of his wayward, undisciplined nature; and that constant tendency to put an enemy in his mouth to steal away his brains, bound him at last, hand and foot. His old age could never have been frosty, but kindly—it would have been babbling, irritable, senile, sickening. Death was kind and reaped him young. Sex was the rock on which Robert Burns split. He seemed to regard pleasure-seeking as the prime end of life, and in this he was not so very far removed from the prevalent “civilized” society notion of marriage. But it is a phantasmal idea, and makes a mock of marriage, serving the satirist his excuse.

To a great degree the race is yet barbaric, and as a people we fail utterly to touch the hem of the garment of Divinity. We have been mired in the superstition that sex is unclean, and therefore honesty and free expression in love matters have been tabued.

But the day will yet dawn when we will see that it takes two to generate thought; that there is the male man and the female man, and only where these two walk together hand in hand is there a perfect sanity and a perfect physical, moral and spiritual health.

We reach infinity through the love of one, and loving this one, we are in love with all. And this condition of mutual sympathy, trust, reverence, forbearance and gentleness that can exist between a man and a woman, gives the only hint of Heaven that mortals ever know. From the love of man for woman we guess the love of God, just as the scientist from a single bone constructs the skeleton—aye! and then clothes it with a complete garment.

In their love-affairs women are seldom wise, or men just. How should we expect them to be when but yesterday woman was a chattel and man a slave-owner? Woman won by

diplomacy—that is to say, by trickery and untruth, and man had his way through force, and neither is quite willing to disarm. An amalgamated personality is the rare exception, because neither Church, State nor Society yet fully recognizes the fact that spiritual comradeship and the marriage of the mind constitute the only Divine mating. Doctor Blacklock once said that Robert Burns had eyes like the Christ. Women who looked into those wide-open, generous orbs lost their hearts in the liquid depths.

In the natures of Robert Burns and Francis Schlatter there was little in common; but their experiences were alike in this: they were beloved by women. Behind him Burns left a train of weeping women—a trail of broken hearts. And I can never think of him except as a mere youth—"Bobby Burns"—one who never came into man's estate. In all his love-making he never seemed really to benefit any woman, nor did he avail himself of the many mental and spiritual excellencies of woman's nature, absorbing them into his own. He only played a devil's tattoo upon her emotions.

If Burns knew anything of the beauty and inspiration of a high and holy friendship between a thinking man and a thinking woman, with mutual aims, ideals and ambitions, he never disclosed it. The love of a man for a maid, or a maid for a man, can never last, unless these two mutually love a third something. Then, as they are traveling the same way, they may move forward hand in hand, mutually sustained. The marriage of the mind is the only compact that endures. I love you because you love the things that I love. That man alone is great who utilizes the blessings that God provides; and of these blessings no gift equals the gentle, trusting companionship of a good woman.

So, having written thus far, I find that already I have reached the limit of my allotted space.

In closing, it may not be amiss for me to state that Robert Burns was an Irish poet whose parents happened to be Scotch. He was born in Ayrshire in Seventeen Hundred Fifty-nine. He died in Seventeen Hundred Ninety-six, and was buried at Dumfries by the "gentleman volunteers," in spite of his last solemn words—"Don't let the Awkward Squad fire over my grave!"

His mother survived him thirty-eight years, passing out in Eighteen Hundred Thirty-four. Burns left four sons, each of whom was often pointed out as the son of his father—but none of them was.

This is all I think of, at present, concerning Robert Burns.

For further facts I must refer the Gentle Reader to the "Encyclopedia Britannica," a compilation that I cheerfully recommend, it having been vouched for to me by a dear friend, a clergyman of East Aurora, who, the past year, perused the entire work, from A to Z, reading five hours a day: and therefore is competent to speak.

JOHN MILTON

Thus with the year
Seasons return; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me; from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of Nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

—Paradise Lost: Book III

JOHN MILTON

Shakespeare and Milton lived at the same time, though the difference in their ages was such that we may not speak of them as contemporaries. John Milton was eight years old when William Shakespeare died. The Miltons lived in Bread Street, and out of the back garret-window of their house could catch a glimpse of the Globe Theater.

The father of John Milton might have known Shakespeare—might have dined with him at the "Mermaid," played skittles with him on Hampstead Heath, fished with him from the same

boat in the river at Richmond; and then John Milton, the lawyer, might have discreetly schemed for passes to the “Globe” and gone with his boy John, Junior, to see “As You Like It” played, with the Master himself in the role of old Adam.

Bread Street was just off Cheapside, where the Mermaid Tavern stood, and where Beaumont, Fletcher, Ben Jonson and other roysterers often lingered and made the midnight echo with their mirth. In all probability, John Milton, Senior, father of John Milton, Junior, knew Shakespeare well. But the Miltons owned their home; were rich, influential, eminently respectable; attended Saint Giles’ Church, and really didn’t care to cultivate the society of play-actors who kept bad hours, slept in the theater, and had meal-tickets at half a dozen taverns.

There were six children born into the Milton family, three of whom died in infancy. Of the survivors, the eldest was Anne, the second John, the third Christopher.

Anne was strong, robust and hearty; John was slender, pale, with dreamy, dark gray eyes and a head too big for his body; Christopher was so-so. And, in passing, it is well to explain, once for all, that Christopher made his way straight to the front in life, taking up his father’s business and being appointed a Court Officer. Thence he was promoted to the Woolsack, became rich, cultivated a double chin, was knighted, and passed out full of honors. The chief worriment and source of shame in the life of Sir Christopher Milton came from the unseemly conduct of his brother John, who was much given to producing political and theological pamphlets. And once in desperation Sir Christopher Milton requested John Milton to change his family name, that the tribe of Milton might be saved the disgrace of having in it “a traducer of the State, an enemy of the King, and a falsifier of Truth.” Sir Christopher Milton was an excellent and worthy man, and I must apologize for not giving him more attention at this time; but lack of space forbids.

Sickly boys who are wise beyond their years are ever the pets of big sisters, and the object of loving, jealous, zealous care on the part of their mothers. John Milton talked like an oracle while yet a child, and one biographer records that even as a babe he sometimes mildly reproved his parents for levity.

He was a precocious child, and have we not been told that precocity does not fulfill its promises? But this boy was an exception. He was incarnated into a family that prized music, poetry, philosophy, and yet held fast to the Christian faith. His father set psalms to music, his sister wrote madrigals, and his mother played sweet strains on a harp to waken him at morningtide. The entire household united in a devotion to poetry and art. Possibly this atmosphere of high thinking was too rarefied for real comfort—the gravity of the situation being sustained only by a stern effort.

But no matter—father, mother and sister joined hands to make the pale, handsome boy a prodigy of learning: one that would surprise the world and leave his impress on the time.

And they succeeded.

Of the three Milton children that passed away in childhood, I can not but think that they succumbed to overtraining, being crammed quite after the German custom of stuffing geese so as to produce that delicious diseased tidbit known to gourmets as pate de foies gras. John Milton stood the cramming process like a true hero. His parents set him apart for the Church—therefore he must be learned in books, familiar with languages, versed in theories. They desired that he should have knowledge, which they did not know is quite a different thing from wisdom.

So the boy had a private tutor in Greek and Latin at nine years of age, and even then began to write verse. At ten years of age his father had the lad's portrait painted by that rare and thrifty Dutchman, Cornelius Jansen. We have this picture now, and it reveals the pale, grave, winsome face with the flowing curls that we so easily recognize.

No expense or pains were spared in the boy's education. The time was divided up for him as the hours are for a soldier. One tutor after another took him in hand during the day; but the change of study and a glad respite of an hour in the morning and the same in the afternoon, for music, bore him up.

He was the pride of his parents, the delight of his tutors.

Three years were spent at Saint Paul's School; then he was sent to Cambridge. From there he wrote to his mother, "I am penetrating into the inmost recesses of the Muses; climbing high Olympus, visiting the green pastures of Parnassus, and drinking deep from Pierian Springs."

This is terrible language for a child of fourteen. A boy who should talk like that now would be regarded with anxious concern by his loving parents. The present age is incredulous of the Infant Phenomenon. And no fond parent must for a moment imagine that by following the system laid out for the education of John Milton can a John Milton be produced. The Miltonian curriculum, if used today, would be sufficient ground for action on the part of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

But John Milton, though but a weak-eyed boy with a chronic headache, had a deal of whipcord fiber in his make-up. He stood the test and grubbed at his books every night until the clock tolled twelve. He was born at a peculiar time, being a child of the Reformation married to the Renaissance. The toughness and grimness of Calvin were united in him with the tenderness of Erasmus. From out of the Universal Energy, of which we are particles, he had called into his being qualities so diverse that they seemed never to have been before or since united in one person.

He remained at Cambridge seven years. The beauty of his countenance had increased so that he was as one set apart. His finely chiseled features, framed in their flowing curls, challenged the admiration of every person he met. A writer of the time described him as "a grave and sober person, but one not wholly ignorant of his own parts."

There is a sly touch in this sentence that sheds light upon "The Lady of Christ's." John Milton was a bit of a poseur, as Schopenhauer declares all great men are and ever have been. With the masterly mind goes a touch of the fakir or charlatan. Milton knew his power—he gloried in this bright blade of the intellect. He was handsome—and he knew it. And yet we will not cavil at his velvet coats, or laces, or the golden chain that adorned his slender, shapely person. These things were only the transient, springtime adornments that passion puts forth.

And yet I see that one writer mentions the chaste and ascetic quality of Milton's early life as proof of a cold and measured nature. Seemingly the writer does not know that intense feeling often finds a gratification in asceticism, and that vows of chastity are proof of passion. There are many ways of working off one's surplus energy—Milton was married to his work. He traversed the vast fields of Classic Literature, read in the original from Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, French, Spanish, Latin and Italian. He delved into abstruse mathematics, studied music as a science, and labored at theology. In fact, he came to know so much of all religions that he had faith in none. He seemed to view religion in the cold, calculating light of a syllogistic problem—not as a warm, pulsing motive in life. His real religion was music, a fact he once frankly acknowledged.

On the pinions of music he was carried out and away beyond the boundaries of time and space, and there he found that rest for his soul, without which he would have sunk to earth and been covered by the kindly, drifting leaves of oblivion.

For some, the secrets of music, the wonder of love, and the misty, undefined prayers of the soul constitute true religion. When you place a creed in a crucible and afterward study the particles on a slide encased in balsam, you are apt to get a residuum or something—a something that does not satisfy the heart.

Milton got well acquainted with theology. It was interesting, but not what he had supposed. He came to regard the Church as a useful part of the Government—divine, of course, as all good things are divine. But to become a priest and play a part—he would not do it. He was honest—stubbornly honest.

Seven years he had been at Cambridge, and now that he was just ready to step into a "living"—right in the line of promotion of which his beauty and intellect tokened a sure presage—he balked.

It was a great blow to his parents. His mother pleaded; his father threatened; but they soon perceived that this son they had brought forth had a will stronger than theirs. Their fond dreams of his preferment—the handsome face of their boy above an oaken pulpit, with thousands feeding on his words, the public honors, and all that—faded away into tears and misty nothingness. But parenthood is doomed to disappointment—it does not endure long enough to see the end. Youth is so headstrong and wilful: it will not learn from the experience of others.

And all these years of preparation and expense! Better had he died and been laid to rest with the three now in the churchyard.

Before Milton had served his seven years' apprenticeship at Cambridge, his parents moved to the village of Horton—twenty miles out of London, Windsor way.

The village of Horton has not changed much with the years, and a tramp across the fields from Eton by way of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Pogis, where Gray wrote "The Elegy," is quite worth while. It is a land of lazy woods, and winding streams and hedgerows melodious with birds. One treads on storied ground, and if you wish you can recline beneath gnarled old oaks where Milton mused and scribbled, and wrote the first draft of "L' Allegro" and "Il Penseroso."

Milton loitered here at Horton for six years, and in that time produced just six poems.

He was thirty-two years of age, and had never earned a sixpence. But what booted it! His father and mother's home was his: they gladly supplied his every want; and his mother, especially, was ever his kindly critic and most intimate friend. His days were spent in study, dreams, lonely walks across green fields, and homecomings when, with his mother's hand in his, he would talk or recite to her in order to clarify the thought that pressed upon him. Very calm, very peaceful and very beautiful were those days. "The pensive attitude of mind brings the best result—not the active," he used to say. It was then he wrote to his old friend, Diodati: "You asked what I am about—what I am thinking of? Why, with God's help, I am thinking of immortality. Forgive the word, it is for your ear alone—I am pluming my wings for flight."

The good mother had misty, prophetic visions of what this flight might be, and had ceased to counsel her son against the sin of idleness. But she did not live to see her prophecies confirmed, for in this time of peace and love, when the vibrant air was filled with hope, she passed Beyond.

Long years after, John Milton exclaimed, “Oh! Why could she not have lived to know!” And the poignant grief of this son, then a man in years (with his thirtieth birthday well behind), turned on the thought that he had disappointed Her—the mother who had loved him into being.

Milton’s woes began with his marriage—they have given rise to nearly as much discussion as his poetry. In his “Defensio Secunda,” he tells, with a touch of pride, of the absolute innocency that continued until his thirty-fifth year. When we consider how his combined innocence and ignorance plunged him into a sudden marriage with a bit of pink-and-white protoplasm, aged seventeen, we can not but regret that he had not devoted a little of his valuable time to a study of femininity. And in some way we think of Thackeray, when he was being shown the marvelous works of a certain amateur artist. “Look at that! look at that!” cried the zealous guide, “and he never had a lesson in art in his life!”

Thackeray adjusted his glasses, looked at the picture carefully, sighed and said, “What a pity he didn’t have just a little good instruction!”

Milton the student, versed in abstractions and full of learned lore, went up the Thames seeking a little needed rest. Five miles from Oxford lived an ebb-tide aristocratic family by the name of Powell. Milton had long known this family, and, it seems, decided to tarry with them a day or so. Just why he sought their company no one ever knew, and Milton was too proud to tell. The brown thrush, rival of the lark and mockingbird, seldom seeks the society of the blue jay. But it did this time. The Powells were a roaring, riotous, roystering, fox-hunting, genteel, but reduced family, on the eve of bankruptcy, with marriageable daughters.

The executive functions of love-making are best carried on by shallow people; so mediocre women often show rare skill in courtship, and sometimes succeed in bagging big game. But surely Mary Powell had no conception of the greatness of Milton’s intellect—she only knew that he was handsome, and her parents said he was rich.

There was feasting and mirth when Milton arrived back in town accompanied by his bride and various of her kinsmen. In all marriage festivals there is something pathetically absurd, and I never see a sidewalk awning spread without thinking of the one erected for John Milton and Mary Powell, who were led through it by an Erebus that was not only blind, but stone-deaf.

John Milton was an ascetic, and lived in a realm of reverie and dreams; his wife had a strong bias toward the voluptuous, reveling in a world of sense, and demanding attention as her right. Milton began diving into his theories and books, and forgot the poor child who had no abstract world into which to withdraw. Suddenly bereft of the gay companionship that her father’s house supplied, she felt herself aggrieved, alone; and tears of vexation and homesickness began to stream down her pretty cheeks.

When summoned into her husband’s presence she had nothing to say, and Milton, the theorist, discovered that what he had mistaken for the natural reticence and bashfulness of maidenhood was mere inanity and lack of ideas. But the loneliness of the poor country girl, shut up in a student’s den, is a deal more touching than the scholar’s wail about “the silent and insensate” wife. The girl was being deprived of the rollicking freedom to which she had been used, but the great man was waking the echoes with his wail for a companionship he had never known.

Yet the girl was shrewd. All women are shrewd, I am told, and some are wise and some are not; and many women there be who consider finesse an improvement on frankness. At the end

of a month, Milton's wife contrived to have her parents send for her to return home on a visit that was to last only until come Michaelmas. But Michaelmas arrived and the young bride refused to return, sending back saucy answers to the great author of "Il Penseroso."

In the meantime Milton wrote pamphlets urging that divorce should be granted on the grounds of incompatibility, and pronouncing as inhuman the laws that gave freedom from marital woes on no less ignoble grounds than that a man should violate his honor.

There is pretty good evidence that a part of Milton's argument on the subject of divorce was written out while his wife was under his roof. This reveals a slight lack of delicacy as well as the author's habit to make copy out of his private griefs; but it must be granted that Milton goes to the very bottom of the subject, even to stating the fact that those happily married have neither pity nor patience with those mismated. "If you want sympathy," he says, "you must go to those who are regarded as not respectable," Any man who writes on philosophy can find his every cue in Plato, and he who discusses divorce from a radical standpoint can find himself anticipated by Milton in the Seventeenth Century. Every view is taken, even down to the suggestion of a probationary marriage, which Milton thought might come about when civilization had ceased to crawl and begun to walk.

One seeks in vain to learn if the unhappy wife of Milton ever read her husband's bitter tracts. It is probable she never did, and would not have comprehended their import if she had; and it is still more likely that she never came to realize that she was wedded to the greatest man of the age. A truce was patched up, on the bankruptcy of her father, and she came back penitent, and was taken into favor. Not only did she come back, but she brought her family; and the ravenous Royalists consumed the substance of the spiritual and ascetic Puritan.

Had Milton then died, it is probable that the gladsome widow would have been consoled and married again very shortly, just as did the widows of Van Dyck and Rubens—not knowing that to have been the wife of a king was honor enough for one woman.

But after fifteen years of domestic "neglect," during which she doubtless benefited her husband by stirring in him a noble discontent, she passed from earth; and it was left for John Milton to repeat twice more his marital venture, with a similar result. And in this, Fate sends back a fact that leers like Mephistopheles, by way of answer to Milton's pamphlets on divorce: Why should the State grant a divorce, when great men refuse to learn by experience, and, given the opportunity, only repeat the blunders they have already made?

God in His goodness has in certain instances sent great men angels of light for assistants—mates who could comprehend and sympathize with their ideals. But it is expecting too much to suppose that Nature can look out for such a trifle as that the right man should marry the right woman. Nature possibly never considered a time-contract, and she is a careless jade, anyway. She moves blindly along with never a thought for the individual.

Audubon the naturalist records that one-third of all birds hatched tumble out of the nest before they can fly, and once on the ground the parent birds are unable either to warm, feed or protect them.

Read the lives of the Great Men who have lived during the past three thousand years, and listen closely, and you will hear the wild wail of neglected and unappreciated wives. A woman can forgive a beating, but to be forgotten—never. She hates, by instinct, an austere and self-contained character. Dignity and pride repel her; preoccupation keeps her aloof; concentration on an idea is unforgivable.

The wife of Tolstoy seeking to have her husband adjudged insane is not a rare instance in the lives of thinkers. To think thoughts that are different from the thoughts one's neighbors think is surely good reason why the man should be looked after. Recently we have had evidence that the wife of Victor Hugo regarded the author of "Les Miserables" with suspicion, and at one time actually made preparations to let him enjoy his exile alone—she would go back to Paris and enjoy life as every one should. At Guernsey there was no society!

When Isaac Newton called upon his ladylove and in a fit of abstraction, looking about for a utensil to push the tobacco down in his pipe, chanced upon the lady's little finger, the law of gravitation was abrogated at once, and Newton and his pipe were sent, like nebulæ whirling into space.

When the Great Inventor, absorbed in a problem as to Electricity (that thing which to us is only a name and of which we know nothing), forgets home, wife, child, supper; and midnight finds him in his laboratory, where he has been since sunrise—just imagine, if you please, the shrill greeting that is in cold storage for him when he stumbles home, haggard and worn, at dawn. How can he explain why he did this thing and answer the questions as to who was there, and what good it all did anyway!

Thought is a torture, and requires such a concentration of energy that there is nothing left for the soft courtesies of marriage. The day is fleeting, and the night cometh when no man can work. The hot impulse to grasp and materialize the dream ere it fades, is strong upon the man.

Of course he is selfish—he sacrifices everything, as Palissy did when fuel was short and the clay just at the turning-point. Yes, the artist is selfish: he sacrifices his wife and society, and himself, too, to get the work done. Four-o'clocks, mealtime, bedtime, and all the household system as to pink teas, calls and etiquette, stand for naught. And down the corridors of Time comes to us the shrill wail of neglected wives, and the crash of broken hearts echoes like the sound of a painter falling through a skylight. All this is the price of achievement.

Making a little look backward into Milton's life, we find that until his thirty-third year he had not tasted of practical life at all. About that time his father, in a sort of desperation, packed him off to the Continent, in charge of a trusty attendant, who acted in the dual capacity of servant and friend. The letters he carried to influential men in Paris, Florence, Venice and Rome secured him the Speaker's eye, and his beauty and learning did the rest. His march was that of a conquering hero. In Paris he surprised the savants by addressing them in their own tongue, and reciting from their chief writers. This was repeated in Italy; and at Florence, as a sort of half-challenge for permission to occupy the highest seat, he was invited to read from his own compositions, which he did with such grace and power that thereafter all doors flew open at his touch.

Returning to England after an absence of fifteen months, he found his father's household broken up, and through bad investments, the family fortune sadly depleted. But travel had added cubits to his stature: the mixture with men had put him into possession of his own, and he now felt well able to cope with the world. He secured modest lodgings in Saint Bride's Churchyard, and set to work to make a living and a name by authorship. His head teemed with subjects for poems, but cash advances were not forthcoming from publishers, and, to bridge over, he tried tutoring.

It was at this time that "Paradise Lost," the one matchless epic of English literature, was conceived. Rough jottings were made as to divisions and heads, and a few stanzas were written of the immortal poem that was not to be completed for a score of years.

The first volume of Milton's poems was issued in Sixteen Hundred Forty-five, when he was thirty-seven years of age. But before this he was known as the author of some pamphlets which had made political London reel. The writer was at once seen to be a man of remarkable learning and marvelous intellect, and the work secured Milton a few friends and divers enemies.

From a man of leisure Milton had suddenly become a worker, whose every daylight hour was crammed with duties. His skill as a teacher brought him all the pupils he cared for, and he moved into better quarters in Aldersgate. He was immersed in his work, was making valuable acquaintances among literary people, was revered by his pupils, and the happiness was his of knowing that he was influential and independent. A fine intoxication comes to every brain-worker when the world acknowledges with tangible remittances that the product of his mind has a value on the Rialto. Such was Milton's joy in Sixteen Hundred Forty-three.

The "Comus," "Il Penseroso," "L'Allegro" and "Lycidas" had established his place as a poet; and the power of his pen had been proven in sundry religious and political controversies.

In his household were two sons of his sister and several other pupils who had sought his tutorship. He was contented in his work, pleased and happy with the young friends who sat at his board, and in an hour or two snatched each day from toil, for music and reverie.

Seize upon the moments as they fly, O John Milton, and hug them to your heart! Those were days of gold when your mother was your patient listener and friend. Her love enveloped you as an aura; and her voice, soft and low, upheld you when courage faltered. But these, too, are glorious days—days full of work, and health, and hope, and high endeavor. But these days of peace and freedom are the last you shall ever know. Even now they flee as a shadow and fade into mist! Gross stupidity, silent and insensate, sits waiting for you at the door; calumny is near; taunting hate comes riding fast!

The sympathy for which you yearn shall be yours only in dreams, and you shall be cheated of all the tenderness for which your heart prays. The love and gentleness which you associate with your mother, you ascribe in innocence and ignorance to all women; but Fate shall undeceive you, O John Milton, and make mock of all your high ideals. You dote on liberty, but liberty is not for you. You shall see the funeral of the Republic; the defamation of your honor; the proscription of all the sacred things you prize. Your companions shall not be of your own choosing, but shall be those who neither know nor value the sweet, subtle mintage of the mind. Around you mad riot shall surge, a hatred for liberty shall prevail—an enthusiasm for slavery. The glorious leaders of your Puritan faith shall be condemned and executed, hanged, cut down from the gallows alive, and quartered amid the hoarse insults of the people they sought to serve; and you yourself shall be hunted like a wild beast. You shall see the prisons filled to overflowing with men and women whose only crime was their love for truth. And a libertine shall sit on the throne of the England that you love. These things you shall see with those mild, dark eyes, and then night, eternal night, shall settle down upon you; and for those idle orbs no day shall dawn nor starry night appear, nor face of man nor child shall be reflected there. Your sightlessness shall give those who owe you gratitude and love, opportunity to filch your gold; and, lastly, fire shall rob you of your books, and well-nigh all your treasures.

Like another Lear, your daughters shall neither esteem nor respect you, and the lines you dictate shall be to them but the idle vaporings of a mind diseased. Your acute ears shall hear these daughters express the wish that you were dead; and then in your blindness you will give yourself into the keeping of a woman as dull, inane and unfeeling as the foolish child you first

chose as wife. But with it all your obstinacy shall constitute your power; and that beauty which was yours in youth shall be with you to the last. You shall feel all the torments of the damned and become inured to the scorching flames of hell! But, as recompense, the splendors of the Celestial Kingdom shall open upon your inward vision, and your soul shall behold that which the eyes of earth have lost. Something great and proud shall go out from your presence to all the discerning ones who shall approach you; and your end shall be like the setting of the sun, bright, calm, poised and resplendent.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

* * * Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms and 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 Vergil 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 can not enjoy it; till I am a solitary, and can not 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, should 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, my Lord.

Your Lordship’s most humble, most obedient servant,

—

Sam Johnson

SAMUEL JOHNSON

The critics, I believe, have made a distinction between large men and great men.

Samuel Johnson was both. He was massive in intellect, colossal in culture, prodigious in memory, weighed nigh three hundred pounds, and had prejudices to match. He was possessed of a giant's strength, and occasionally used it like a giant—for instance, when he felled an offending bookseller with a folio.

Johnson was most unfortunate in his biographer. In picturing the great writer, Boswell writes more entertainingly than Johnson ever did, and thereby overtops his subject. And when in reply to the intimation that Boswell was going to write his life, Johnson answered, "If I really thought he was, I would take his," he spoke a jest in earnest.

Walking along Market Street in the city of Saint Louis, with a friend, not long ago, my comrade suddenly stopped and excitedly pointed out a man across the way—"Look quick—there he goes!" exclaimed my friend, "that man with the derby and duster—see? That's the husband of Mrs. Lease of Kansas!" And all I could say was, "God help him!"

Not but that Mrs. Lease is a most excellent and amiable lady; but the idea of a man, made in the image of his Maker, being reduced to the social state of a drone-bee is most depressing.

Among that worthy class of people referred to somewhat ironically as "the reading public," Boswell is read, but Johnson never. And so sternly true is the fact that many critics, set on a hair-trigger, aver that were it not for Boswell no one would now know that a writer by the name of Johnson ever lived. Yet the fact is, Boswell ruined the literary reputation of Johnson by intimating that Johnson wrote Johnsonese; but that is a mistake.

Johnson never wrote Johnsonese. The piling up of reasons, the cumulation of argument—setting off epigram against epigram—that mark Johnson's literary style are its distinguishing features. He is profound, but always lucid. And lucidity is just what modern Johnsonese lacks. The word was coined by a man who had neither the patience to read Johnson nor the ability to comprehend him. Only sophomores, and private secretaries who write speeches for able Congressmen, write Johnsonese.

Quibblers possibly may arise and present Johnson's definition of network—"anything reticulated or decussated at equal distances with interstices between the intersections"—but with the quibbler we have no time to dally. Some people insist on having their literature illustrated, just as others refuse to attend lectures that are not reinforced by a stereopticon.

Johnson had a style that is stately, dignified, splendid. It moves from point to point with absolute precision, and in it there is seldom anything ambiguous, muddy, confused or uncertain. Get down a volume of "Lives of the Poets," and prove my point for yourself, by opening at any page. It was Boswell who set his own light, chatty and amusing gossip over against the wise, stately diction of Johnson, and allowed Goldsmith to say, "Dear Doctor, if you were to write a story about little fishes, you would make them talk like whales," and the mud ball has stuck. The average man is much more willing to take the wily Boswell's word for it than to read Johnson for himself.

The balanced power of Johnson's English can not fail to delight the student of letters who cares to interest himself in the matter of sentence-building. Johnson handles a thought with such ease! He makes you think of the circus "strong man" who tosses the cannon-ball, marked "weight 250 lbs." What if the balls are sometimes only wood painted black! Have we not been entertained? Read this specimen paragraph:

"Criticism is a study by which men grow important and formidable at very small expense. The power of invention has been conferred by Nature upon few, and the labor of learning those sciences which may by continuous effort be obtained is too great to be willingly endured; but every man can exert such judgment as he has upon the works of others; and he whom Nature has made weak, and idleness keeps ignorant, may yet support his vanity by the name of 'critic,'"

But the greatest literary light of his day has been thrown into the shadow by a man whom no one suspected of being able to write entertainingly. In the world of letters the great Cham exists only as a lesser luminary; just as the once-noted novelist, George Henry Lewes, is now known only as the husband of George Eliot.

And yet no one is so rash as to say that the name of Boswell would now be known were it not for Johnson. And conversely (or otherwise), if it were the proper place, I could show that were it not for George Henry Lewes we should never have had "Adam Bede" or "The Mill on the Floss."

Boswell wrote the best "Life" ever written. Nothing like it was ever written before; nothing to equal it has been written since. It has had hundreds of imitators, but no competitors. Matthew Arnold said that no man ever had so good a subject, but Arnold for the moment seemed to forget that Hawkins, a professional literary man, published his "Life of Johnson" long before Boswell's was sent to the printer—and who reads Hawkins?

Surely Boswell had a great subject, and he rises to the level of his theme and makes the most of it. At times I have wondered if Boswell were not really a genius so great and profound that he was willing to play the fool, as Edgar in "Lear" plays the maniac, and allow himself to be snubbed (in print) in order to make his telling point! Millionaires can well afford to wear ragged coats. Second-rate man Boswell may have been, as he himself so oft admits, yet as a biographer he stands first in the front rank. But suppose his extreme ignorance was only the domino disguising a cleverness so subtle that it was not discovered until after his death! And what if he smiles now, as from out of Elysium he looks and beholds how, as a writer, he has eclipsed old Ursa Major, and thus clipped the claws that were ready for any chance Scot who might pass that way!

John Hay has suggested that possibly the insight, piquancy and calm wisdom of Omar Khayyam are two-thirds essence of FitzGerald. If so, the joke is on Omar, not on FitzGerald.

A dozen of Johnson's contemporaries wrote about him, and all make him out a profound scholar, a deep philosopher, a facile writer. Boswell by his innocent quoting and recounting makes his conversation outstrip all of his other accomplishments. He reveals the man by the most skilful indirection, and by leaving his guard down, often allows the reader to score a point. And of all devices of writing folk, none is finer than to please the reader by allowing him to pat himself on the back.

If a writer is too clever he repels. Shakespeare avoids the difficulty, and proves himself the master by keeping out of sight; Renan wins by a great show of modesty and deferential fairness; Boswell assumes an artlessness and ignorance that were really not parts of his nature. Every man who reads Boswell considers himself the superior of Boswell, and therefore is perfectly at home. It is not pleasant to be in the society of those who are much your superiors. Any man who sits in the company of Samuel Pepys for a half-hour feels a sort of half-patronizing pity for him, and therefore is happy, for to patronize is bliss.

If Boswell has reinforced fact with fiction, and given us art for truth, then his character of Samuel Johnson is the most vividly conceived and deeply etched in all the realm of books. But if he gives merely the simple facts, then Boswell is no less a genius, for he has omitted the irrelevant and inconsequential, and by playing off the excellent against the absurd, he has placed his subject among the few great wits who have ever lived—a man who wrote remarkably well, but talked infinitely better.

Montaigne advises young men that if they will fall in love, why, to fall in love with women older than themselves. His argument is that a young and pretty woman makes such a demand on a man's time and attention that she is sure, eventually, to wear love to the warp. So the wise old Gascon suggests that it is the part of wisdom to give your affection to one who is both plain and elderly—one who is not suffering from a surfeit of love, and one whose head has not been turned by flattery. "Young women," says the philosopher, "demand attention as their right and often flout the giver; whereas old women are very grateful."

Whether Samuel Johnson, of Lichfield, ever read Montaigne or not is a question; but this we know, that when he was twenty-six he married the Widow Porter, aged forty-nine.

Assuming that Johnson had read Montaigne and was mindful of his advice, there were other excellent reasons why he did not link his fortunes with those of a young and pretty woman.

Johnson in his youth, as well as throughout life, was a Grind of the pure type. The Grind is a fixture, a few being found at every University, even unto this day. The present writer, once in a book of fiction, founded on fact, took occasion to refer to the genus Grind, with Samuel Johnson in mind, as follows: He is poor in purse, but great in frontal development.

He goes to school because he wishes to (no one ever "sent" a Grind to college). He has a sallow skin, a watery eye, a shambling gait, but he has the facts. His clothes are outgrown, his coat shiny, his linen a dull ecru, his hands clammy. He reads a book as he walks, and when he bumps into you, he always exculpates himself in Attic Greek.

This absent-mindedness and habit of reading on the street affords the Sport (another college type) great opportunity for the playing of pranks. It is very funny to walk along in front

of a Grind who is reading as he walks, and then suddenly stop and stoop, and let the Grind fall over you; for the innocent Grind, thinking he has been at fault, is ever profuse in apologies.

Many years ago there was a Grind. A party of Sports saw him approaching, deeply immersed in his book. “Look you,” quoth the chief of the Sports—“look you and observe him fall over me.”

And they looked.

Onward blindly trudged the Grind, reading as he came. The Sport stepped ahead of him, stooped, and —— one big foot of the Grind shot out and kicked him into the gutter. Then the Grind continued his walk and his reading without saying a word.

This incident is here recorded for the betterment of the Young, to show them that things are not always what they seem.

Samuel Johnson, I have said, was a Grind of the pure type. He was so nearsighted that he fell over chairs in drawing-rooms, and so awkward that his long arms occasionally brushed the bric-a-brac from mantels. No lady’s train was safe if he was in the room. At gatherings of young people, if Johnson appeared, his presence was at once the signal for mirth, of which he was, of course, the unconscious object.

Johnson’s face was scarred by the King’s Evil, which even the touch of Queen Anne had failed to cure. While a youth he talked aloud to himself—a privilege that should be granted only to those advanced in years. He would grunt out prayers and expletives at uncertain times, keep up a clucking sound with his tongue, sway his big body from side to side, and drum a tattoo upon his knee. Now and again would come a suppressed whistle, and then a low humming sound, backed up by a vacant non-compos-mentis smile.

Another odd whim of Johnson’s was, that he would never pass a lamp-post without touching it, and would go back miles upon his way to repair an omission. Surely great wit to madness is near allied.

This most strange young man was a boarder in the home of Mrs. Porter, when her husband was alive, and the husband and boarder had been fast friends—drawn together by a bookish bias.

Very naturally, when the husband passed away, the boarder sought to console the bereaved landlady, and the result was as usual. And when, long years after, Johnson would solemnly explain that it was a pure love-match on both sides, the statement never failed to excite much needless and ill-suppressed merriment on the part of the listeners. In mimicking the endearments of Johnson and his “pretty creature”—so the admiring husband called her—Garrick many years later added to his artistic reputation.

Unlike most literary men, Johnson was domestic, and his marriage was one of the most happy events of his career. But to show that the philosophy of Montaigne is not infallible, and that all signs fail in dry weather, it may be stated that the bride proved by her conduct on her wedding-day that she had some relish of the saltness of time in her cosmos, despite her fifty summers and as many hard winters.

Said Johnson to Boswell, referring to the horseback-ride home after the wedding-ceremony: “Sir, she had read the old romances, and had got into her head the fantastical notion that a woman of spirit should use her lover like a dog. So, sir, at first she told me that I rode too fast, and she could not keep up with me; and when I rode a little slower, she passed me, and complained that I lagged behind. I was not to be made the slave of caprice; and I resolved to begin as I meant to end. I therefore pushed on briskly, till I was fairly out of sight. The road

lay between two hedges, so I was sure she could not miss it; and I contrived that she should soon come up with me. When she did I observed her to be in tears."

Shortly after his marriage, Johnson opened a private school for boys. To operate a private school successfully implies a certain amount of skill in the management of parents; but Johnson's uncouth manners and needlessly blunt speech were appalling to those who had children who might possibly be given to imitation.

Only three pupils were secured, and but one of these received any benefit from the tutor; and this benefit came, according to the scholar, from the master's supplying an excellent object for ridicule.

This pupil's name was David Garrick.

The meeting with David Garrick was a pivotal point in the life of Johnson. Johnson's mental and spiritual existence flowed on, separate and apart from that of his wife. There was no meeting of the waters. His affection for her was most tender and constant, but in quality it seemed to differ but slightly from the sentiment he entertained toward "Hodge," his cat.

Hodge was fed on oysters that his owner could ill afford; and after Johnson had spent the little fortune that belonged to his wife, the lady was regaled on the best and choicest that his income, or credit, could secure. But if one of those lightning-flashes of wit ever escaped him in her direction, we do not know it. Garrick evidently was the first flint that tried his steel. The distinctions of teacher and scholar were soon lost between these two, and the lessons took the turn of a fusillade of wit. They made comments on the authors they read, and comments on the people they met, and criticized each other with encaustic remarks that tested friendship to its extremest limit. And this continual skirmish that would have made sworn foes of common men in a day revealed to each that the other had the element of unexpectedness in his nature and was worth loving.

Humor and melancholy go hand in hand; both are born of an extreme sensitiveness, and the man who smiles at the trivial misfits of life realizes also that all men who tread the earth are living under a sentence of death, and that Fate has merely allowed them an indefinite, but limited, reprieve.

At the outset of Johnson's career, one can not but see that the companionship and nimble wit of Garrick saved his ponderous and melancholy mind from going into bankruptcy.

And now we find them: one twenty-eight, big, nearsighted, theoretical, blundering; and the other twenty-one, slight, active, graceful, practical. They were alike in this: they both loved books and were possessed of the eager, earnest, receptive mind. To possess the hospitable mind! For what greater blessing can one pray?

And then they were alike in other respects—they were desperately poor; neither had an income; neither had a profession; both were ambitious. Johnson had written a tragedy —"Irene"—and he had read it to Garrick several times, and Garrick said it was good and should make a hit. But Garrick didn't know much about tragedies—law was his bent—he had read law for two years, off and on. They would go to London and seize fortune by the scalp-lock. In London good lawyers were needed, and London was the only place for a playwright.

They scraped together their pennies, borrowed a few more, got a single letter of introduction between them to some person of unknown influence, and started away, with the lacrimose blessings of the elderly bride, and of Davy's mother.

They must have been a queer sight when the stage let them down at the Strand—dusty, dirty, tired and scared by the babel of sounds and sights! And no doubt Johnson's enormous size saved them from sundry insults and divers taunts that otherwise might have come their way.

Those first few weeks in London were given to staring into shop-windows and wandering, open-mouthed, up and down. No one wanted the tragedy—the managers all sniffed at it. Little then did Davy dream, as they made their way from the office of one theater-manager to that of another, that he himself would some day own a theater and give the discarded play its first setting. And little did he think that he would yet be the foremost actor of his time, and his awkward mate the literary dictator of London. Oh! this game of life is a great play! The blissful uncertainty of it all! The ambitions, plans, strivings, heartaches, mad desires and vain reaching out of empty arms! The tears, the bitter disappointments, the sleepless nights, the echoes of prayers unheard, and the hollow hopelessness of love turned to hate!

And then mayhap we do as Emerson did—go out into the woods, and all the trees say, "Why so hot, my little man?"

Garrick, disappointed and undone at the thought of defeat in his chosen profession, turned to commercial life and then to the theater. At his first stage appearance he trembled with diffidence and all but fled in fright. He persevered, for he could do nothing else. He arose step by step, and honors, wealth and fame were his. Love came to him: he wedded the woman of his choice. And after his death she survived for forty-three years. She lived one hundred years, lacking two. Garrick was born in Seventeen Hundred Sixteen; and his wife died in Eighteen Hundred Twenty-two, which seems to bring the times of Johnson pretty close home to us. Throughout her long life, she lived in the memory of the love that had been hers; cherishing and protecting, idolizing, as did Mary Shelley, the one name and that alone.

Johnson and Garrick thoroughly respected and admired each other, yet they often quarreled—they quarreled to the last. But when Davy had lain him down in his last sleep, aged sixty-three, it was Johnson, aged seventy, who wrote his epitaph, introducing into it the deathless sentence * * * "by that stroke of death which has eclipsed the gaiety of nations, and impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasure."

Three months in London and Johnson succeeded in getting a place on the editorial staff of "The Gentleman's Magazine." Prosperity smiled, not exactly a broad grin; but the expression was something better than a stony, forbidding stare.

He made haste to go back to Lichfield after his "Letty," which name, by the way, is an improvement on Betty, Betsy or Tetsy—being baby-talk for Elizabeth.

They took modest lodgings in a third floor back, off Fleet Street, and Johnson began that life of struggle against debt, ridicule and unkind condition that was to continue for forty-seven years; never out of debt, never free from attacks of enemies; a life of wordy warfare and inky broadsides against cant, affectation and untruth—with the weapons of his dialectics always kept well burnished by constant use; hated and loved; jeered and praised; feared and idolized.

Coming out of his burrow one dark night, he encountered an old beggar-woman who importuned him for alms. He was brushing past her, when one of her exclamations caught his ear.

"Sir," said the woman, "I am an old struggler!"

“Madam,” replied Johnson, “so am I!” And he gave her his last sixpence.

But life in London was cheap in those days—it is now if you know how to do it, or else have to. Johnson used to maintain that for thirty pounds a year one could live like a gentleman, and as proof would quote an imaginary acquaintance who argued that ten pounds a year for clothes would keep a man in good appearance; a garret could be hired for eighteen pence a week, and if any one asked your address you could reply, “I am to be found in such a place,” Threepence laid out at a coffeehouse would enable one to pass some hours a day in good company; dinner might be had for sixpence, and supper you could do without. On clean-shirt day you could go abroad and call on your lady friends. Among Johnson’s first literary tasks in London was the work of reporting the debates in Parliament. In order that the best possible results might be obtained, he resorted to the rather unique, but not entirely original, method of not attending Parliament at all. Two or three young men would be sent to listen to the debates; they would make notes giving the general drift of the argument, and Johnson would write out the speech. His style was exactly suited to this kind of work, being eminently rhetorical. And as at the time no public record of proceedings was kept and Parliament did not allow the press the liberty it now possesses—all being as it were clouded in mysterious awe—these reports of debates were eagerly sought after. To evade the law, a fictitious name was given the speaker, or his initials used in such a way that the individual could be easily recognized by the reading public.

Some of Johnson’s best work was done at this time, and in several instances the speaker, not slow to appreciate a good thing, allowed the matter to be reissued as his own. Long years after, a certain man was once praising the speeches of Lord Chesterfield and was led on to make explanations. He did so, naming two speeches, one of which he zealously declared had the style of Cicero; the other that of Demosthenes. Johnson becalmed the speaker by agreeing with him as to the excellence of the speeches, and then adding, “I wrote them both.”

The gruffness of Ursa Major should never be likened to that of the Sage of Chelsea. Carlyle vented his spleen on the nearest object, as irate gentlemen sometimes kick at the cat; but Johnson merely sparred for points. When Miss Monckton undertook to refute his statements as to the shallowness of Sterne by declaring that “Tristram Shandy” affected her to tears, Johnson rolled himself into contortions, made an exasperating grimace, and replied, “Why, dearest, that is because you are a dunce!” Afterward, when reproached for the remark, he replied, “Madam, if I had thought so, I surely would not have said it.”

Once, at the house of Garrick, to the terror of every one, Burke contradicted Johnson flatly, but Johnson’s good sense revealed itself by his making no show of resentment. Burke’s experience was, it must be said, exceptional. An equally exciting, but harmless occasion, was the only time that the author of “Rasselas” met the man who wrote the “Wealth of Nations,” Johnson called Adam Smith a liar, and Smith promptly handed back an epithet not in the Dictionary. Nevertheless, old Ursa spoke in an affectionate praise of “Adam,” as he called him thereafter, thus recognizing the right of the other man to be frank if he cared to be. Johnson wanted no privilege that he was not willing to grant to others—except perhaps that of dictator of opinions.

When Blair asked Johnson if he thought any modern man could have written “Ossian,” Johnson replied, “Yes, sir—many men, many women, and many children.” And if Blair took umbrage at the remark, so much the worse for Blair.

We have recently heard of the Boston lady who died and went to Heaven, and on being questioned by an archangel as to how she liked it, replied languidly, “Very, very beautiful it all is!” And then sighed and added, “But it is not Boston!” This story seems to illustrate that all

tales have their prototype, for Boswell tells of taking Doctor Johnson out to Greenwich Park, and saying, “Now, now, isn’t this fine!” But Johnson would not enthuse; he only grunted, “All very fine—but it’s not Fleet Street.”

On another occasion when a Scotchman was dilating on the noble prospects to be enjoyed among the hills of Scotland, Johnson called a halt by saying, “Sir, let me tell you that the noblest prospect a Scotchman ever sees is the highroad that leads him to England.”

This seems to evince a strong prejudice toward Scotland, and several Scots, with their usual plentiful lack of wit, have so solemnly written it down. But the more sensible way is to conclude that the situation simply afforded opportunity for a little harmless banter.

Another equally indisputable proof of prejudice is shown when Boswell tells Johnson of the wonderful preaching of a Quaker woman. Johnson listened in grim, cold silence and then exclaimed: “Sir, a woman’s preaching is like a dog’s walking on its hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all.”

One of the leading encyclopedias, I see, says, “Doctor Johnson was one of the greatest conversationalists of all time.” The writer evidently does not distinguish between talk, conversation and harangue. Johnson could talk and he often harangued; but he was not a conversationalist. Neither could he address a public assembly, and I do not find that he ever attempted it. Good talkers are seldom orators. One reads with amusement tinged with pity, of Carlyle’s sleepless nights and cold, terror-fraught anticipations of his Lord Rector’s speech. In deliberative gatherings a very small man could apply the snuffers to the great Dictator of Letters.

“Sir,” said Doctor Johnson to a talkative politician, at a dinner-party, “I perceive you are a vile Whig,” and then he proceeded to demolish him. Yet Johnson himself was a Whig, although he never knew it; just as he was a liberal in religion, and yet was boastful of being a stanch Churchman.

Johnson’s irritability never vented itself against the helpless. His charity knew no limit—not even the bottom of his purse. When he had no money to give, he borrowed it. And when his pension was three hundred pounds a year, the Thrales could not figure out that he spent more than seventy or eighty on himself. The rest went to his dependents. In his latter days his home was a regular museum of waifs and strays. There was Miss Williams, the ancient aristocratic spinster who came to London to have an operation performed on one of her eyes. She came to Johnson’s home and remained ten years, because she had been a friend of his wife. This claim was enough, and she slid into the head place in Johnson’s household. Her peevishness used to drive the old man, at times, into the street; but that tongue of his, with its crushing retorts, was ever silent and tender towards her. The poor creature became blind, and used to shock the finicky Boswell by testing the fulness of the teacups with her finger.

Then there was a Mrs. Desmoulins and her daughter, who drifted down from Lichfield and came to Johnson, because forty years before, he, too, had lived in Lichfield. He gave them house-room, treated them as guests, and each week left a half-guinea on the mantel of their room.

Then there was the broken-down Levett, and Francis Barber, who, coming as a servant, remained as one of the family, because he was too old to work. A Miss Carmichael, in green spectacles and bombazine, carrying a cane, completed what the Doctor called his “seraglio.” Writing to Mrs. Thrale in playful mood, telling of his household troubles, he says, “Williams hates everybody; Levett hates Desmoulins, and does not love Williams; Desmoulins hates them both; Poll loves none of them.” And he, the great, gruff and mighty Ursa Major, listened

to all their woes, caring for them in sickness, wiping the death-dew from their foreheads, wearing crape upon his sleeve for them when dead.

This man tasted all the fame that is one man's due; he had all the money he needed, or knew how to use; the coveted LL.D. came from his Alma Mater; and the patronage from Lord Chesterfield, for which he craved, only that he might fling it back. He was the friend and confidant of the great and proud, deferred to by the King and sought out by those who prized the far-reaching mind and subtle imagination—the things that link us with the Infinite. The fear of hell and dread of death that haunted him in youth and middle age, finally gave way to faith and trust. When partial paralysis came to him at midnight, his sanity did not fail him, and knowing the worst, he yet hesitated to disturb the other members of the household, but went to sleep, philosophizing on the phenomena of the case—alert for more knowledge, as was his wont. Morning came and being speechless, he wrote on his ever-ready pad of paper and handing the sheet to his servant, watched with amused glances the perplexity and terror of the man. He next wrote to his friend, Mrs. Thrale, that letter, a classic of wit and resignation, wherein he explains his condition and excuses himself for not calling upon her and explaining the matter by word of mouth.

Such willingness to accept the inevitable is curative. He grew better and recovered his speech. But old age is a disease that has no cure save death. Johnson accepted the issue as a brave man should—thankful for the gift of conscious life that had been his. When the last hour was nigh he sent loving messages to his nearest friends, repeating their names over one by one. His last recorded words were directed to a young woman who called upon him, "God bless you, my dear."

And so he passed painlessly and quietly into the sleep that knows no waking; pleased at last to know that his dust would rest in Westminster Abbey.

Thus ended, as the day dies out of the western sky, this life, seemingly so full of tempest and contradiction. The autumn of his life was full of enjoyment, and no day passed but that some one, weak, weary and worn, arose and called him blessed. Most of his wild imprecations and blustering contradictions were reserved for those who fattened on such things, and who came to be tossed and gored. In his spirit Socrates and Falstaff joined hands. In his life there was a deal of gladness—far, far more than of misery and unrest; which fact I believe is true of every life.

The Universe seems planned for good.

A world made up of such men as Samuel Johnson would be a wild chaos of tasks undone. But since Nature has never sent but one such man, and more than a century has passed since his death and we know not yet with whom to compare him, we need have no fears. The world is held in place through the opposition of forces: and the body of every healthy man is the battle-ground of animal organisms that match strength against strength. So, too, a healthy society always has these active and sturdy organisms, which set in play other forces that hold in check their seeming excess. That the Divine Energy should incarnate itself and find expression in the form of a man, and that this man should inspire others to think and write, to do and dare, is a subject the contemplation of which should make us stand uncovered. The companionship of Johnson inspired Reynolds to better painting, Garrick to stronger acting, Burke to more profound thinking—and hundreds of others, too, quenched their thirst at the rock which he smote whenever he discoursed or wrote.

Sympathy is the first essential to insight. So with sympathy, I pray, behold this blundering giant, and you will see that the basis of his character was a great Sincerity. He was honest—doggedly honest—and saw with flashing vision the thing that was; and thither he followed, crowding, pushing, knocking down whatsoever opinion or prejudice was in the way. And so he ever struggled forward. But hate him not, for he is thy brother—yea! he is brother to all who strive and reach forward toward the Ideal. Shining through dust and disorder, now victorious, now eclipsed in deepest gloom, in him is the light of genius; and this is never base, but at the worst is admirable, lovable with pity. There was pride in his heart, but no vanity; and he should be loved for this if for no other reason: he had the courage to make an enemy. In his great heart were wild burstings of affection, and a hunger for love that only the grave requited. There, too, were fierce flashes of wrath, smothered in an hour by the soft dew of pity. His faults and follies were manifold, as he often lamented with tears; but the soul of the man was sublime in its qualities—worldwide in its influence.

THOMAS B. MACAULAY

> The perfect historian is he in whose work the character and spirit of the age is exhibited in miniature. He relates no fact, he attributes no expression to his characters, which is not authenticated by sufficient testimony. But by judicious selection, rejection and arrangement, he gives to truth those attractions which have been usurped by fiction. In his narrative a due subordination is observed: some transactions are prominent; others retire. But the scale on which he represents them is increased or diminished, not according to the dignity of the persons concerned in them, but according to the degree in which they elucidate the condition of society and the nature of man.
>
> *—Essay on History*

THOMAS MACAULAY

Success is in the blood.

There are men whom Fate can never keep down—they march jauntily forward, and take by divine right the best of everything that earth affords. But their success is not attained by the Doctor Samuel Smiles Connecticut policy. They do not lie in wait, nor scheme, nor fawn, nor seek to adapt their sails to catch the breeze of popular favor. Still, they are ever alert and alive to any good that may come their way, and when it comes they simply appropriate it, and tarrying not, move steadily forward.

Good health! Whenever you go out of doors, draw the chin in, carry the crown of your head high, and fill the lungs to the utmost; drink in sunshine; greet your friends with a smile, and put soul into every hand-clasp. Do not fear being misunderstood and never waste a minute

thinking about your enemies. Try to fix firmly in your mind what you would like to do, and then without violence of direction you will move straight to the goal.

Fear is the rock on which we split, and hate is the shoal on which many a bark is stranded. When we are fearful, the judgment is as unreliable as the compass of a ship whose hold is full of iron ore; when we hate, we have unshipped the rudder; and if we stop to meditate on what the gossips say, we have allowed a hawser to befoul the screw.

Keep your mind on the great and splendid thing you would like to do; and then, as the days go gliding by, you will find yourself unconsciously seizing upon the opportunities that are required for the fulfilment of your desire, just as the coral-insect takes from the running tide the elements that it needs. Picture in your mind the able, earnest, useful person you desire to be, and the thought you hold is hourly transforming you into that particular individual. Thought is supreme, and to think is often better than to do.

Preserve a right mental attitude—the attitude of courage, frankness and good-cheer.

To think rightly is to create.

Darwin and Spencer have told us that this is the method of Creation. Each animal has evolved the parts it needed and desired. The horse is fleet because it wishes to be; the bird flies because it desires to; the duck has a web-foot because it wants to swim. All things come through desire, and every sincere prayer is answered. Many people know this, but they do not believe it thoroughly enough so that it shapes their lives.

We want friends, so we scheme and chase ‘cross lots after strong people, and lie in wait for good folks—or alleged good folks—hoping to attach ourselves to them. The only way to secure friends is to be one.

And before you are fit for friendship you must be able to do without it. That is to say, you must have sufficient self-reliance to take care of yourself, and then out of the surplus of your energy you can do for others. The man who craves friendship, and yet desires a self-centered spirit more, will never lack for friends.

If you would have friends, cultivate solitude instead of society. Drink in the ozone; bathe in the sunshine; and out in the silent night, under the stars, say to yourself again and yet again, “I am a part of all my eyes behold!” And the feeling will surely come to you that you are no mere interloper between earth and sky; but that you are a necessary particle of the Whole. No harm can come to you that does not come to all, and if you shall go down, it can only be amid a wreck of worlds.

Thus by laying hold on the forces of the Universe, you are strong with them. And when you realize this, all else is easy, for in your arteries course red corpuscles, and in your heart there is the will to do and be. Carry your chin in, and the crown of your head high. We are gods in the chrysalis.

Thomas B. Macauley was small in stature; but he always carried his chin well in and the crown of his head high.

It was said of Rubens that throughout his lifetime he kept success tied to the leg of his easel with a blue ribbon. If ever a writing man had success tied to the leg of his easy chair, that man was Macaulay. In the characters and careers of Rubens and Macaulay there is a marked resemblance.

When Macaulay was twenty-two he was at Cambridge, and the tidings arrived that a dire financial storm had wrecked the family fortune. The young man had ever been led to suppose that his father was rich—rich beyond all danger from loss—and that he himself would never have a concern beyond amusing himself, and the cultivation of his intellect. And so in practical affairs his education had been sadly neglected. But when the news of calamity came, instead of being depressed, he was elated to think that now he could make himself positively useful.

Responsibility gravitates to the man who can shoulder it. Strong men who can wisely direct the efforts of others are always needed—they were needed in Eighteen Hundred Twenty-two, when Tom Macaulay received word of his father's trouble—they are needed today more than then—men who meet calamity with a smile and are pleased at sight of obstacles, knowing they can overcome them. Augustine Birrell has written, "Macaulay always went his sublime way rejoicing like a strong man to run a race, knowing full well that he could give anybody five yards in fifty and win easily."

Macaulay took up the burden that his father was not able to bear, mastered every detail of the business, studied out the weak points, and then explained to the creditors just what they had better do.

And they did it.

We always trust the man who has courage plus, enthusiasm to spare, and who shows by his manner that he is master of the situation.

In a few years Macaulay saved from the wreck enough to secure his father, mother and sisters against want for the rest of their days, and eventually he paid every creditor in full with interest. Had he run away from the difficulty, as his father was on the point of doing, the family would have been turned homeless into the streets.

Moral—Things are never so bad as they seem; and all difficulties sneak away when you look them squarely in the eye.

At this time the family, consisting of the father, mother, three sisters and a brother, lived at Fifty Great Ormond Street, not far from the British Museum. The house is still standing, but I recently discovered that the occupants know nothing, and care less, about Thomas Macaulay.

Tom was the child of his mother. In temperament, disposition and physique he was as much unlike his father as two men can well be. Old Zachary Macaulay was a strong, earnest man who took himself seriously. In latter years he grew morose, puritanic and was full of dread of the Unseen. He preached long sermons to his family, cautioned them against frivolity, forbade music, tabued games, and constantly spoke of the tongue as "the unruly member."

He, of course, was not aware of it, but he was teaching his children by antithesis.

"When I meet Macaulay I always imagine I am in Holland," once said Sydney Smith.

"Why so!" asked a friend.

"Because he is such a windmill," was the reply.

But then we must remember that Sydney Smith never much liked Macaulay—they were too near alike. Whenever they met there was usually a wordy duel. "He is so overflowing with learning that it runs over and he stands in the slop," said Smith.

Tom talked a great deal, he was fond of music and games, and was never so pleased as when engaging in some wild frolic with his sisters and any chance youngster that happened to stray in. His sister, Lady Trevelyan, has recorded that during those days of gloom which

followed her father's failure, matters were made worse by the stricken man moping at home and tightening the domestic discipline.

Tom never resented this, but on the instant the father would leave the house, it was the signal of a wild pandemonium of disorder. Tom would play he was a tiger, and crawling under the sofa would emit fearful growls that would cause the children to scream with pretended fright. Next they would play fire, and pile all the furniture in the center of the room, heaping books, clothing, rugs on top. Then Tom would "rescue" his mother if she appeared on the scene, and seizing her in his arms carry her to a place of safety, and then engage in a pillow-fight if she came back.

This wild frolic was always a delight to the children, and Tom's homecoming was ever watched with eager anticipation. His visits shot the gloom through with sunshine, and when he went away even the neighbors' children were in tears. His health and enthusiasm infected everybody he met.

In the course of looking after his father's business Macaulay unlearned most of the previous lessons of his life, and taught himself that to do for others and sink self was the manly method. But so lightly did he bear the burden that it is doubtful if he ever considered he was making any sacrifice.

When his father died, Macaulay put entirely out of his mind the question of a household separate and apart from that of his mother and sisters. He devoted himself entirely to them; he wanted no other love than theirs.

Unlike so many men of decided talent, the best and most loving side of Macaulay's nature was made manifest at home. His bubbling wit, brilliant conversation, and good-cheer were for his own fireside, first; and all that cutting, critical, scathing flood of invective was for the public that wore a rhinoceros-hide.

Macaulay's article on Milton, published during his twenty-fifth year, in the "Edinburgh Review," is generally regarded as a most wonderful achievement. "Just think!" the critics cry —"the first article printed to be of a quality that electrified the world!" But we must remember that this youth had been getting ready to write that article for ten years.

At college Macaulay shirked mathematics and philosophy, spending his time and attention on things he liked better. The only study in which he excelled was composition. Even in babyhood his command of language had been a wonder to the neighborhood in which he lived. Hannah More had for a time taken him under her immediate charge and prophesied great things of his literary faculty; and his mother was not slow in seconding the opinion.

At Cambridge he already had more than a local reputation as a writer, and it was this reputation that secured him the commission to write for the "Review." The terrible Jeffrey was getting old and his regular staff had pretty nearly worked out their vein. Jeffrey wrote up to London (being south) to a friend telling him that the "Review" must have new blood, and imploring him to be on the lookout for some young man who had ideas in his ink-bottle.

This friend knew the vigor and incisiveness of Macaulay's style, and as he read the letter from Jeffrey he exclaimed, "Macaulay!"

It was a great compliment to a mere youth to be asked to contribute to the "Edinburgh Review." Edinburgh was a literary center, and you could not throw a stone in Princess Street,

any more than you can in Tremont Street, Boston, without hitting a poet and caroming on two novel-writers and an essayist.

Thomas Carlyle, five years older than Macaulay, and who was to live and write for twenty-five years after Macaulay's passing, had not yet struck twelve. London, too, like Edinburgh, was full of writing men, standing in the market-places of Grub Street with no man to hire.

And yet Fate sought out Tom Macaulay, five feet four, who had plenty of other work on hand; and through that single "Essay on Milton" he sprang at once into the front rank of British writers—and at the same time there was thrust into his hands a bonus of fifty pounds for the work.

As a study of a thing that made the reputation of a writer, the "Milton" is worth a careful reading. It is very sure that in America today there are a hundred men who could write just as good an article, but whether these men are Macaulays or not is quite another question. But it is not at all probable that a writer will ever again leap into place and power on so small a feat.

Yet the article surely shows all the dash and vigor that mark Macaulay's literary style. There is personality in it; it reveals the red corpuscle; and tells without question that there is a man behind the guns. It was opportune; for literature at that particular time had reached a point where the sciolist was in full possession, and the dead husks of learning were being palmed off for the living thoughts of living men.

Periodicity reveals itself in all Nature, and even in the world of thought there are years of famine and years of plenty. Dry rot gets into letters; things are ripe for a revolution; the tinder is dry, and along comes some Martin Luther and applies the torch.

Macaulay simply expressed himself boldly, frankly, and without thought of favor—writing as he felt.

The article made a great stir—the first edition of the magazine was quickly exhausted, and Macaulay awoke one morning, like Byron, and found himself famous. All there was about it, the "Milton" revealed a man, a strong, vivid-thinking, vigorous man, who, seeing things clearly, wrote from his heart. Art is born of feeling: it is heart, not head, that carries conviction home; but if you have both, as Macaulay had, it is no special disadvantage.

From the publication of Macaulay's first article the "Review" took on a new lease of life. Prosperity came that way and for the rest of his life the "Review" was not long without contributions from his pen; and the numbers that contained his articles were always in great demand. Writers who possess a piercing insight into the heart of things, and who have the courage to express themselves, regardless of the views of others, are well feared by men in power.

The man who knows, who can think, and who can write, holds a sword of Damocles over every politician.

Governments are honeycombed with vulnerable spots; and to secure the ready writer on your side is the part of wisdom.

Macaulay's article on Milton proved that there was a thinker loose, and that on occasion he could strike. The politicians began to court him, and we find him writing articles of a very Junius-like quality on contemporary issues.

When he was twenty-six years old we are told he was "called to the Bar," which means that he was given permission to practise law—the expression, "called," being a mild form of fiction

that still obtains in England in legal matters, while in America the word applies only in theology.

The practise of law, however, was not at all to the taste of Macaulay, and after a few short terms on the circuit he relinquished it entirely.

In the meantime we find he read continually. Indeed, about the only bad habit this man had was reading. He read to excess—he read everything and read all the time. He read novels, history, poetry, and dived deeply into the dead languages, reading Plutarch's Lives twice in a year, and Euripides, Thucydides, Homer, Cicero, Cæsar—all without special aim or end. Such a restless appetite for reading is apt to produce mental dyspepsia, and is not at all to be advised for average people; and the probabilities are that even in Macaulay's case his time might often have been better spent in meditation.

In Eighteen Hundred Twenty-seven appeared in the "Review" the "Essay on Mill." Like all of Macaulay's articles it reveals a wealth of learning and bristles with information on many themes. It often seems as if Macaulay took a subject simply to execute a learned war-dance around it. The article on Mill is a good example of merely touching the central theme and then going off into by-lanes of economics, history and civil government, with endless allusions to literature, poetry, art and philosophy. It is all intensely interesting, closely woven, often gorgeous in its coloring; and "style" runs like a thread of gold through it all.

Shortly after this article appeared, Lord Lansdowne intimated to the young writer that he would like the honor of introducing him into public life, and if agreeable he could arrange for him to stand for Parliament in the vacant seat of Calne.

Calne was one of those vest-pocket boroughs, owned by a single man, of which England has so many. The people think they choose their representative, but they do not, any more than we do in America. The government by the Boss and for the Boss is no new institution. Macaulay presented himself and was elected without opposition. And so before his thirtieth year he found himself on the flood-tide of national politics.

Fifteen years before, if any one had expressed himself as plainly as Macaulay did on entering Parliament, he would have had a taste of jail, the hulks, or the pillory. So alert had the Government agents been for sedition that to stick one's tongue in his cheek at a member of the Cabinet was considered fully as bad as poaching, both being heinous offenses before God and man. Persecution was in the air and tyranny stalked abroad.

But tyranny is self-limiting. If laws are too severe, there will surely come a time when they will not be observed, and history shows that the men who have introduced the guillotine ended their careers in its embrace.

A change had come in England. The Tories were being jostled from their seats, and the Whigs were just coming into power. Liberalism was abroad in the land, and surely the time had come when a strong man might speak his mind.

Macaulay was by nature a protester; he was "agin 'em"; and when he chose a subject for his maiden speech he was not only sincere, but exceeding politic. He guessed the lay of the land, and knew the direction of the wind. Heresy was popular.

His address was in favor of an act removing the legal disabilities of Jews. It was a plea for liberty, and such was the vigor, power and vivid personality he threw into the address that he astonished the House and brought in the loungers from the cloakrooms.

It was his only speech during the session. Efforts were made to get him on his feet again, but he was too wise to lend the battery of his mind to any commonplace theme. Only a subject

such as might stir men's souls could tempt him.

Wise Thomas Macaulay!

He had made a reputation as a writer by his first article, and after his maiden speech all London chanted his praises as an orator. He practised self-restraint and knew better than to dilute his fame by holding argument with small men on little topics.

His first speech at the next session of Parliament only served to fix his place as an orator more firmly. The immediate excuse was the "Reform Bill"; but the subject was liberty, and literature and history were called upon to furnish fire and supply the fuel for pyrotechnics. After its delivery the Speaker sent for Macaulay and personally congratulated him on making the most effective address to which he had listened for twenty-five years. The House of Commons, ever willing and anxious to appropriate a genius, being glutted by the dull and commonplace, sought in many ways from this time forward to do honor to Macaulay.

The elder members grew reminiscent and said the good old times were coming back, and talked of Burke, Fox, Canning and Lord Plunket.

Jeffrey, feeling a sense of guardianship over Macaulay, having launched him, as he rightfully claimed, was on hand to hear the speech, and made haste to embrace his ward, kissing him on both cheeks.

Judging from this distance, there was nothing especially peculiar or distinctive about Macaulay's oratory, save his intense personality and vivid earnestness. An educated man, thoroughly alive on any one theme, is always interesting. And it was Macaulay's policy never to speak in public on a theme that did not bring out his entire armament, and yet with it all he was wise enough to cultivate a feeling of restraint and leave the impression that he had much more in reserve. So it was in his literary work: he never wrote when tired, nor attempted to express when he was not thoroughly alive to the subject in hand. He watched his mood. And thus in all Macaulay's "Essays" we feel the systole and diastole, and the hot, strong, impatient movement of ruddy life. There is "go" in every sentence. This is what constitutes his marvelous style—life, life, life!

To very few men, indeed, is it given to be at once a brilliant talker, a strong writer and an effective orator. Clever talkers are seldom orators, and the great writers usually ebulliate only in the silence of their studies.

The fame of Macaulay went abroad, and he became the social lion of London—he was courted, feted, petted—and in drawing-rooms when he attended, people stood on tiptoe to catch a glimpse of him, and remained breathless that they might hear him speak. No doubt the fact that he was a bachelor helped fan the social flame. His sister has recorded that every morning cards and letters of invitation were piled high on his breakfast-table.

With it all, though, the handsome little man preserved his poise, and his modesty and becoming dignity in public never failed him.

Such was Macaulay's popularity that, after having served two terms for the borough of Calne, the way was opened for him to stand for Leeds. Indeed, it is probable that a dozen districts would have been glad to elect him as their representative.

After the passing of the "Reform Bill," to which his efforts had been so valuable, he was appointed one of the Commissioners of the Board of Control. This Board represented the King in the Government's relations with the East India Company. Macaulay, being the strongest man on the Board, was naturally chosen its secretary, just as the best man in a jury is chosen foreman. Here was a man who was not content to be a mere figurehead in office, trusting to

paid clerks and underlings to secure him information and do the work—not he. Macaulay set himself the task of thoroughly acquainting himself with Indian affairs. He read every book of importance bearing on the subject; and studied the record and history of every man of consequence who was or had been connected with India. His intensely practical, businesslike mind sifted every detail, intuitively separating the relevant from the inconsequential, so that within a few months older heads were going to him for information, just as in a store or shop there is always one man who knows where things are, and in times of doubt he is the man who is sought out. To the many it is so much easier to ask some one else than to find out for themselves; and it also shifts the responsibility, and gives one a chance, if necessary, to prove a halibi—goodness gracious!

One feature of the Reform Bill provided that one of the members of the Supreme Council of India should be chosen from among persons not connected in any way with the East India Company.

This membership of the Supreme Council was a most important office, and carried with it the modest salary of ten thousand pounds a year—fifty thousand dollars—double what the President of the United States then received.

Macaulay had had no hand in creating this office, and indeed, at the time the Reform Bill was being gotten into shape, his interest in Indian affairs had only been casual. But now he was recognized as the one man for the new office, and the office sought the man.

Comparatively, Macaulay was a poor man, and the acceptance of the office for the term of six years would place him for the rest of his life beyond the reach of want. He could live royally and retire at forty years of age, with at least thirty thousand pounds to his credit. And yet he hesitated about accepting the office. His far-reaching eye told him that an exile for six years from England would place him out of touch with things at home, and that the greater office to which he aspired would be beyond his grasp. Besides that, the fact would always be brought up that his reward for well-doing had been enough, just as we have an unwritten law in America that there shall be no “third term.”

Macaulay saw all this and hesitated.

He advised with Lord Lansdowne, and with his sister Hannah, his nearest and best friend; and if it had been possible his mother would have been given the casting vote; but two years before, she had passed out, yet not until she realized that her son was one of the foremost men in England. Hannah Macaulay (named in honor of Hannah More) advised the acceptance of the office, and upon his earnest request agreed to share her brother’s exile.

Hannah Macaulay, gracious in every way, was the sister of her brother. Her mind was fit companion for his, and whenever he had a difficult problem on hand he would clarify it by explaining it to her; and be it known, you can never talk well to a dullard.

And so Hannah the loyal resigned her position as governess, and brother and sister packed up and sailed away in the good ship “Asia” for India. Among their belongings was a modest library of three thousand volumes, all of which, a wit has said, were read twice through by Macaulay on the outward voyage. India was safely reached, and Macaulay set himself with his accustomed vigor to learning the language and informing himself as to the actual status of things, in order that he might provide for their betterment. On account of his grasp on legal matters he was elected Legal Adviser of the Supreme Council.

Everything went well for a year, and then a terrible calamity overtook Macaulay.

His sister was in love.

This seems a good place to explain that Thomas Babington Macaulay himself was never in love. He had no time for that—his days were too full of books and practical business to ever waste any time on soft sentiment.

But now he was confronted by a condition, not a theory: Lord Trevelyan was in love with his sister, and his sister was in love with Lord Trevelyan. Macaulay might have discovered the fact for himself and saved the lovers the embarrassment of making a confession, had he not been so terribly busy with his books, but Macaulay, like love, was blind—to some things.

He heard the confession, and wept.

Then he gave the pair his blessing—there was nothing else to do.

It was not long after the wedding that he discovered he had found a brother instead of having lost a sister; and the sister being very happy, Macaulay was happy, too. He insisted that they move their effects into his house, and they did so, all living as one happy family. So the years passed; and when children came Macaulay's joy was complete. His heart went out to his sister's children as though they were his own. Occasionally the good mother complained that the Legal Adviser of the Supreme Council undid her discipline by indulging the youngsters in things that she had forbidden. To all of which the Legal Adviser would only laugh, and crawling under the settle would emit many tigerish growls, and the children would scream with terror and delight, and other children, brown-legged, wearing no clothes to speak of, would come trooping in, and together they would manage, after an awful struggle, to capture the tiger, and with some in front and others behind and two or three on his back, would carry him away captive.

One of these children, grown to manhood, Sir George Trevelyan, was destined to write, with the help of his mother, the best life of Macaulay that has ever been written.

The exile did not prove quite so severe as was anticipated; but when in Eighteen Hundred Thirty-eight it was necessary for Lord Trevelyan to return to England, Macaulay, sick at the thought of being left behind, resigned his office and sailed back with the family.

We are told that officeholders seldom die and never resign. This may be true in the main; but surely there can not be found another instance in history of a man throwing up an office with a fifty-thousand-dollar salary attachment, simply because he could not bear the thought of being separated from his sister's children.

Soon after his return to England Macaulay was elected to a seat in Parliament from Edinburgh, a city that he had scarcely so much as visited, but to whose interest he had been loyal in that, up to this time, nine-tenths of all he had written had been printed there.

To represent Edinburgh in the House of Commons was no small matter, and we know that Macaulay was not unmindful of the honor.

His next preferment was his appointment as Secretary of War, and a seat in the Cabinet.

During all these busy years he ever had on hand some piece of literary work. In fact, all of the "Essays" on which his literary fame so largely rests, were composed on "stolen time" in the lull seized from the official and social whirl in which he lived.

If you want a piece of work well and thoroughly done, pick a busy man. The man of leisure postpones and procrastinates, and is ever making preparations and "getting things in shape";

but the ability to focus on a thing and do it is the talent of the man seemingly o'erwhelmed with work. Women in point lace and diamonds, club habitues and "remittance men"—those with all the time there is—can never be entrusted to carry the message to Gomez.

Pin your faith to the busy person.

Macaulay's first and only political rebuff came with his defeat the second time he stood for election in Edinburgh. His conscientious opposition to a measure in which the Scottish people were especially interested caused the tide to turn against him.

No doubt, though, the failure of re-election was a good thing for Macaulay—and for the world. He at once began serious work on his "History of England"—that project which had been in his head and heart for a score of years. All of his literary labors so far had been merely ephemeral—at least he so regarded them. The Essays he regarded only as so many newspaper articles, not worth the collecting. It was America that first guessed their true value as literature, and it was not until the American editions were pouring into England that Macaulay allowed his scattered work to be collected, corrected and put into authorized book form.

This history was to be the thesis that would admit his name to the Roster of Fame. But, alas, the history was destined to be only a fragment. It covers scarce fifteen years, and is like that other splendid fragment, the work of Henry Thomas Buckle, a preface; Buckle's preface is the greatest ever penned, with its author dead at forty. The projected work of both of these men was too great for any one man to accomplish in a single lifetime. A hundred years of unremitting toil could not have completed Macaulay's task.

In Eighteen Hundred Forty-nine he was elected Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow; and at his speech of installation he took occasion to take formal leave of political life. He would devote the remainder of his days to literature and abstract thought.

Men are continually "retiring" from business and active life, all unaware of the grim humor of the proceedings. It was not so very long before Edinburgh, in an endeavor to undo the slight she had put upon Macaulay, again elected him to Parliament, without his being near, or raising his hand either for or against the measure.

And again his voice was heard in the House of Commons.

Macaulay was a modest man, and yet he knew his power.

The Premiership dangled just beyond his reach. Many claim that if he had not gone to India he would have moved by strong, steady strides straight to the highest office that England could bestow. And others aver that when he was created a Peer in Eighteen Hundred Fifty-seven it was a move toward the Premiership, and that if his health had not failed he would surely have won the goal. But how futile it is to speculate on what might have happened had not this or the other occurred!

Yet certainly the daring caution of Macaulay's mind, his dignity and luring presence, his patience, self-command, good temper, and all those manifold graces of his heart, would have made him an almost ideal Premier, one who might rank with Palmerston, Peel, Disraeli or Gladstone.

But the highest office was not for him.

We die by heart-beats; and Macaulay at fifty-nine had lived as much as most strong men do if they exist a hundred years.

It is easy to show where Lord Macaulay could have been greater. His life lies open to us as the ether. We complain because he did not read less and meditate more; we sigh at his lack of

religion and mention the fact that he never loved a woman, seemingly waiving tautology and the fact that men who do not love are never religious.

We forget that it takes a good many men to make the Ideal Man.

If Macaulay had been different he would have been some one else. He was a brave, tender-hearted man who lived one day at a time, packing the moments with good-cheer, good work and an earnest wish to do better tomorrow than he had done today. That Nature occasionally produces such a man should be a cause for gratitude in the hearts of all the rest of us little folk who jig, mince, mouth, amble, run, peek about and criticize our betters.

LORD BYRON

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!

—*Childe Harold*

LORD BYRON

Man! I wonder what a man really is! Starting from a single cell, this seized upon by another, and out of the Eternal comes a particle of the Divine Energy that makes these cells its home. Growth follows, cell is added to cell, and there develops a man—a man whose body, two-thirds water, can be emptied by a single dagger-thrust and the spirit given back to its Maker.

This being, which we call man, does not last long.

Fifty-seven generations have come and gone since Cæsar trod the Roman Forum. The pillars against which he often leaned still stand, the thresholds over which he passed are there, the pavements ring beneath your tread as they once rang beneath his. Three generations and more have come and gone since Napoleon trod the streets of Toulon contemplating suicide.

Babes in arms were carried by fond mothers to see Lincoln, the candidate for President. These babes have grown into men, are grandfathers possibly, with whitened hair, furrowed

faces, looking calmly forward to the end, having tasted all that life holds in store for them.

And yet Lincoln lived but yesterday! You can reach back into the past and grasp his hand, and look into his sad and weary eyes.

A man! weighted with the sins of his parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, who fade off into dim spectral shapes in the dark and dreamlike past; no word of choice has he in the selection of his father and mother, no voice in the choosing of environment—brought into life without his consent and thrust out of it against his will—battling, striving, hoping, cursing, waiting, loving, praying; burned by fever, torn by passion, checked by fear, reaching for friendship, longing for sympathy, clutching—nothing.

Doctors and priests attend us at both ends of the route. We can not be born, neither can we die, without consulting the tax-collector, and interviewing those who look after us for a consideration.

The doctor who sought to assist George Gordon Byron into the world dislocated the bones of his left foot in the operation. Forsooth, this baby would not be born as others—-he selected a way of his own and paid the penalty. “It is a malformation—take these powders—I’ll be back tomorrow,” quoth the busy doctor.

The autopsy proved it was not a malformation, but a displacement.

“Doctor, now please tell me just what is the matter with me,” once asked an anxious patient.

“Tut, tut!” replied the absent-minded physician; “can’t you wait? The post-mortem will reveal all that.”

The critics did not wait for Byron’s death—it was vivisection. And after his death the dissection was zealously continued. Byron’s life lies open to us in many books. Scarcely a month in the entire life of the man is unaccounted for, and if a hiatus of a few weeks is found, the men of imagination fill in and make him a pirate on the Mediterranean coast, or give him a seraglio in some gloomy old Moorish palace in Venice.

In his lifetime Byron was overpraised and overcensured, and since his death the dust has been allowed to gather over his matchless books. Between the two extremes lies the truth; and the true Byron is just now being discovered. Byron in literature will not die. He is the brightest comet that has darted into our ken since Shakespeare’s time; and as comets have no orbit, but are vagrants of the heavens, so was he. Tragedy was in his train, and his destiny was disgrace and death.

And yet as we review the life of this man, “the lame brat” of his mother, as this mother called him, and behold the whirlwind of passion that swept him on, the fulsome praise, the shrill outcry of hypocritical prudes and pedants, the torrent of abuse, and the piling up of sins that he never committed (and God knows he committed enough!); and yet behold his craving for tenderness, the reaching out for truth, and hear his earnest and unquenchable prayer to be understood and loved, we blot out the record of his sins with our tears. To know the life of Byron and not be moved to profoundest pity marks one as alien to his kind.

“God is on the side of the most sensitive,” said Thoreau. And did there ever tread the earth a man more sensitive than Byron?—such capacity for suffering, such exaltation, such heights, such depths! Music made him tremble and weep, and in the presence of kindness he was powerless. He lived life to its fullest, and paid the penalty with shortened years. He expressed

himself without reserve—being emancipated from superstition and precedent. And the man who is not dominated by the fetish of custom is marked for contumely by the many. Custom makes law, and the one who violates custom is “bad.” Yet all respectable people are not good; and all good people are not respectable. If you do not know this you are ignorant of life.

So imagine this handsome, headstrong, restless young man, in whose lexicon there was no such word as prudence, with time and money at his command, defying the state, society and religion, and listen to the anathemas that fill the air at mention of his name.

That a world full of such men would not be at all desirable is stern truth; but that one such man lived is a cause for congratulation. His life holds for us both warning and example.

Beneath the strain of the stuff and the onward swirl of his verse we see that this man stood for truth and justice as against hypocrisy and oppression. Folly and freedom are better far than smugness and persecution. Byron stood for the rights of the individual, for the right of free speech and free thought: and he stood for political and physical freedom, long before abolition societies became popular. He sided with the people; his heart went out to the oppressed; and all of his fruitless gropings and stumblings were a reaching out for tenderness and truth, for life and love—for the Ideal.

The father of Byron, the poet, was a captain in the army—a man of small mental ability, whose recklessness won him the sobriquet of “Mad Jack Byron.” When twenty-three years of age he eloped to France with the Baroness Conyers, wife of the Marquis of Carmarthen. Happiness, in a foreign country, for a woman who has exchanged one love for another is outside the pale of possibilities. Love is much—but love is not all. Life is too short to break family-ties and adjust one’s self to a new language and a new country. The change means death.

Two years and the woman died, leaving a daughter, Augusta by name, afterward Mrs. Augusta Leigh.

Back to England went Mad Jack Byron, broken-hearted, bearing in his arms the baby girl. Kind kinsmen, ready to forgive, cared for the child. Mad Jack didn’t remain broken-hearted long—what would you expect from a man? He sought sympathy among several discreet dames, and in two years we find him safely and legally married to Catherine Gordon. Scotch, and heiress to twenty-five thousand pounds. On the occasion of the wedding, Jack informed a friend that the fact of the lady’s being Scotch was forgiven in view of the dowry. Most of this fortune went into a rat-hole to help pay the debts of the Mad Jack.

One child was born to this ill-assorted pair—a boy who was destined to write his name large on history’s page. But such a pedigree! No wonder the youth once wrote to Augusta, his half-sister, expressing a covetous appreciation of her parentage, even with its bar sinister. In passing, it is well to note the sunshine of this love of brother and sister, which continued during life—confidential, earnest, tender, frank. In their best moods they were both lofty souls, and their mutuality was cemented in a contempt for the man who was their sire. This fine brotherly and sisterly affection comes close to us when we remember that it was our own Harriet Beecher Stowe, with sympathies worn to the quick through much brooding over the wrongs of a race in bondage, who rushed into print with a scandalous accusation concerning this same sweet affection of brother for sister. The charge was brought on no better foundation than some old-woman gossip held over the hyson when it was red, and moved itself aright—all vouchsafed to Mrs. Stowe by the widow of Byron in Eighteen Hundred Fifty-six. If a woman

as good at heart as Harriet Beecher Stowe was deceived, why should we blame humanity for biting at a hook that is not baited?

No sane dentist will administer an anesthetic to a woman, without a witness: not that women as a class are dangerous, but because some women can not be trusted to distinguish between their dreams and the facts. Every practising lawyer of insight also knows that a wronged woman's reasons are plentiful as blackberries, and must always be taken with large pinches of the Syracuse product.

Mad Jack followed his regiment here and there, dodging his creditors, and finally in Seventeen Hundred Ninety-one induced his wife to borrow a hundred pounds for him, with which he started to Paris intent on retrieving fortune with pasteboard.

He died on the way, and the money was used to bury him. The lame boy was then three years old, but a few dark memories, no doubt retouched by hearsay, were retained by him of Mad Jack, who in his most sober moments never guessed that he would be known to the ages as the father of the greatest poet of his time.

Mad Jack was neither literary nor psychic.

The widowed mother remained at Aberdeen with her boy, living on the hundred and fifty pounds a year that had been settled on her in a way that she could not squander the principal—all the rest had gone.

The child was shy, sensitive, proud and headstrong.

The mother used to reprove him by throwing things at him, and by chasing him with the tongs. At other times she diverted herself by imitating his limp. And yet again she would smother him with caresses, beseech his pardon for abusing him, and praise the beauty of his matchless eyes.

Children are usually better judges of grown-ups than grown-ups are of children. This boy at five years of age had estimated his mother's character correctly. He knew that she was not his steadfast friend, and that she was unworthy of his confidence and whole heart's love. He grew moody, secretive, wilful. Once, being wrongly accused and punished, he seized a knife from the table and was about to apply it to his throat when he was disarmed. The child longed for tenderness and love, and being denied these, was already taking on that proud and haughty temper which was to serve as a mask to hide the tenderness of his nature.

We are told that seven brothers Byron fought at Edgehill, but when we get down to the time of Mad Jack there was danger of the name being snuffed out entirely. Nature is not anxious to perpetuate the idle and dissipated.

When little George Gordon was ten years old, his mother one day ran to him, seized him in her arms, wept and laughed, then laughed and wept, kissing him violently, addressing him as "My Lord!"

His great-uncle, William, Lord Byron of Rochdale and Newstead Abbey, had died, and the big-eyed, lame boy was the nearest heir—in fact, the only living male who bore the family-name. The next day at school, when the master called the roll and mentioned his name with the prefix "Dominus," the lad did not reply "Adsum"—he only stood up, gazed helplessly at the teacher, and burst into tears.

Even at this time he had given promise of the quality of his nature, by his firm affection for Mary Duff, his cousin. All the intensity of his childish nature was centered in this young woman, several years his senior. To call it a passion would be too much, but this child, denied

of love at home, clung to Mary Duff, to whom he went in confession with all his childish tales of woe. When his mother proposed to leave Aberdeen, now that fortune had smiled, the anguish of the boy at thought of leaving his “first love” nearly caused him a fit of sickness.

And all this wealth of love was met with jeers and loud laughter, save by Mary Duff. The vibrating sensitiveness of such a child, with such a mother, must have caused a misery we can only guess.

“Your mother is a fool,” said a boy to Byron at college some years later.

“I know it,” was the melancholy answer, as the brown eyes filled with tears.

When money came, Mrs. Byron’s first move was to take the lad to Nottingham and place him in charge of a surgical quack, who proposed, for a price, to make the lame foot just as good as the other, if not better. To this effect wooden clamps were placed on the foot and screwed down by thumbscrews, causing a torture that would have been unbearable to many.

No benefit was experienced from the treatment, although it was continued by another physician at London soon after. A schoolfellow of Byron’s visited him in his room when his foot was encased in a wooden compress. The visitor noted the white face, and the beads of anguish on the boy’s forehead, and at last said, “I know you are suffering awfully!”

“You will never hear me say so,” was the grim reply.

The emphasis placed on Byron’s lameness has been altogether overdone. In fact, as he grew to manhood, it was nothing more than a stiffness that would never have been noticed in a drawing-room. We have this on the testimony of the Countess Guiccioli, Lady Blessington and others. Byron himself made the mistake of referring to it several times in his verse, and doubtless all the torture he had suffered through ill-considered medical counsel, and his mother’s taunts, caused the matter to take a place in his sensitive mind quite out of its due proportion. Sir Walter Scott was lame, too, but whoever heard of his discussing it, either by word of mouth or in print?

Of Byron’s life at Harrow we have many tales as to his defending his juniors, volunteering to take punishment for them—and of lessons unlearned. He could not be driven nor forced, and pedagogics a hundred years ago, it seemed, was largely a science of coercion. Mary Gray, a nurse and early teacher of Byron’s, has told us that kindness was the unfailing touchstone with this boy; no other plan would work. But Harrow knew nothing of Froebel methods, and does not yet.

Byron’s first genuine love-affair occurred when he was sixteen. The object of this affection, as all the world knows, was Miss Chaworth, whose estate adjoined Newstead. The lady was two years older than Byron, and being of a lively nature found a pleasant diversion in leading the youth a merry chase. So severe was his attack that he was alternately oppressed by chills of fear and fevers of ecstasy. He lost appetite, and the family began to fear for his sanity. Such a love must find expression some way, and so the daily stealthy notes to the young woman took the form of rhyme. The lovesick youth was revealing considerable facility in this way. It pleased him, and did the buxom young woman no harm.

Beyond the mere prettiness and pinky whiteness of a healthy country lass, Miss Chaworth evidently had no beauties of character, save those conjured forth from the inner consciousness of the poet—a not wholly original condition.

Byron loved the Ideal. And this love-affair with Miss Chaworth is only valuable as showing the evolution of imagination in the poet. The woman hadn't the slightest idea that she was giving wings to a soul—to her the affair was simply funny.

The fact that Byron's great-uncle, from whom he had inherited his title, had killed the grandfather of Miss Chaworth in a duel, lent a romantic tinge to the matter—the boy was doing a sort of penance, and in one of his poems hints at the undoing of the sin of his kinsman by the lifelong devotion that he will bestow. This calling up the past, and incautious revealing of the fact that the ancestor Chaworth could not hold his own with a Byron, but allowed himself to be run through the body by the Byron cold steel, was not pleasing to Miss Chaworth.

"Don't imagine I am such a fool as to love that lame boy," cried Miss Chaworth to her maid one day.

Unluckily, "the lame boy" was in the next room and heard the remark.

He rushed from the house with a something gripping at his heart. Straightway he would go back to Harrow, which he had left in wrath only a few months before.

So he went to Harrow.

When he next returned home, his mother met him with the remark, "I have news for you; get out your handkerchief—Miss Chaworth is married."

In just another year Byron was home again, and was invited to dine with the Chaworths. He accepted the invitation, and when he was introduced to a baby girl, a month old, the child of his old sweetheart, his emotions got the better of him and he had to leave the room. And to ease his woe he indited a poem to the baby.

Miss Chaworth was not happy with her fox-hunting squire. Her mind became clouded, and after some years she passed out, in poverty and alone. And if there ever came to her mind any appreciation of the greatness of the man who had given her name immortality, we do not know it.

The years from Eighteen Hundred Five to Eighteen Hundred Eight Byron spent at Cambridge. The arts in which he perfected himself there were shooting, swimming, fencing, drinking and gambling.

During vacations, and off and on, he lived at Southwell, a village halfway between Mansfield and Newark. Southwell was sleepy, gossipy, dull—and exerted a wholesome restraint on our restless youth. It was simply a question of economy that took Byron and his mother to Southwell. The run-down estate of Newstead was yielding a meager income, but at Southwell one could be shabby and yet respectable.

At Southwell Byron met John Pigot and his sister—cultured people of a refined and quiet sort. Byron took to them at once, and they liked him.

In a country town the person who thinks, instinctively hunts out the other man who thinks—granting the somewhat daring hypothesis that there are two of them. So Byron and the Pigots often met for walks and talks, and on such occasions the poet would read to his friends the scraps of verse he had written. He had gotten into the habit—he wrote whenever his pulse ran up above eighty—he wrote because he could not help it; and he read his productions to his friends for the same reason. Every one who writes longs to read his work to some sympathetic soul. A thought is not ours until we repeat it to another, and this crying need of expression marks every poetic soul. All art is born of feeling, high, intense, holy feeling, and the creative faculty is largely a matter of temperature. We feel, and not to impart our feelings is stagnation

—death. People who do not feel deeply never have anything to impart, either to individuals or to the world. They have no message.

The young man, fresh from the dusty, musty lectures of Cambridge, and out of the reach of his boisterous and carousing companions, grasped at the gentle, refined and sympathetic friendship of this brother and sister. The trinity would walk off across the fields and recline on the soft turf under a great spreading tree, reading aloud by turn from some good book. Such meetings always ended by Byron's reading to his friends any chance rhymes he had written since they last met.

John Morley dates the birth of Byron's poetic genius from his meeting with Miss Chaworth, while Taine names Southwell as the pivotal point. Probably both are right.

But this we know, that it was the Pigots who induced Byron to collect his rhymes and have them printed. This was done at the neighboring town of Newark, when Byron was nineteen years old. Possibly you have a few of these thin, poorly printed, crudely bound little books entitled "Juvenilia" around in the garret somewhere, and, if so, it might be well enough to take care of them. Quaritch says they are worth a hundred pounds apiece, although in the poet's lifetime they were dear at sixpence.

Byron sent copies to all the leading literary men whom he knew, including Mackenzie, the man of feeling. Mackenzie replied, praising the work, and so did several others. All writers of note are favored with many such juvenilia, and usually there is a gracious electrotype reply. A doubt exists as to whether Mackenzie ever read Byron's book, but we know that his letter of stock platitude fired Byron to do still better. It is said that no flattery is too fulsome for a pretty woman—she inwardly congratulates the man on his subtle insight in discovering excellences that she hardly knew existed. This may be so and may not, but the logic holds when applied to fledgling authors. When it comes to praise he is quite willing to take your word for it.

Byron's spirits arose to an ecstacy—he would be a poet.

About this time we find Hydra, as Byron pleasantly called his mother, rushing to the village apothecary and warning that worthy not to sell poison to the poet; and a few moments after her leaving, the astonished apothecary was visited by the poet, who begged that no poison should be sold to his mother. Each thought the other was going to turn Lucretia Borgia, or play the last act of Romeo and Juliet, at least.

There were wild bursts of rage on the mother's part, stubborn mockery on the other, followed up once by a poker flung with almost fatal precision at the poet's curly head.

Upon this he took flight to London and Hydra followed, repentant and lacrimose. A truce was patched up; they agreed to disagree, and coldly shaking hands withdrew in opposite directions.

After this, when the poet wrote he addressed his mother as "Dear Madam," and confined himself to business matters. Only rarely was there any flash in his letters, as when he said, "Dear Mother—you know you are a vixen, but save me some champagne." If Byron's mother had been of the stuff of which most mothers are made, we would have found these two safely settled at Newstead, making the best of their battered fortune, with the son in time marrying some neighbor lass, and slipping into the place of a respectable English gentleman, a worthy member of the House of Lords.

But the boy, now grown twenty, had no home, and either was supplied too much money or else too little. He wasted his substance in London, economized in Southwell, sponged on friends, and borrowed of Scrope Davis at Cambridge. When a remittance again came, he

explored the greenrooms, took lessons from Professor Johnson, the pugilist (referred to as “my corporeal pastor”), drank whole companies under the table, bought a tame bear and a wolf to guard the entrance of Newstead, and roamed the country as a gipsy, in company with a girl dressed in boy’s clothes, thus supplying Richard Le Gallienne an interesting chapter in his “Quest of the Golden Girl.”

But all this time his brain was active, and another book of poetry had been printed, entitled “Hours of Idleness.” This book was gotten out, at his own expense, by the same country printer as the first.

Surely the verse must have had merit, or why should Lord Brougham, in the great “Edinburgh Review,” go after it with a slashing, crashing, damning criticism?

When Byron read the review, a bystander has told us he turned red, then livid green. He straightway ordered and drank two bottles of claret, said nothing, but looked like a man who had sent a challenge.

A challenge! that was exactly what Byron proposed. He would fight Jeffrey first, and then take up in turn every man who had ever contributed to the magazine—he would kill them all. And to that end he called for his pistols and went out to practise firing at ten paces. Wiser counsel prevailed, and he decided to attack the enemy in their own citadel, and with their own weapons. He ordered ink, and began “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.”

It took time to get this enormous siege-gun into position and find the range. Finally, it was loaded with more kinds of missiles, in the way of what Augustine Birrell has called literary stinkpots, than were ever before rammed home in a single charge.

It was an audacious move—to reverse the initiative and go after a whole race of critics, scribblers and reviewers, who had been badgering honest folks, and blow ‘em into kingdom come.

But at the last moment Byron’s heart failed him, his wrath gave way to caution, and “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers” appeared anonymously.

The edition was soon exhausted—the shot had at least raised a mighty dust.

The author got his nerve back, fathered the book, made corrections; and this edition, too, sold with a rush. Byron returned to Newstead, invited a score of his Cambridge cronies, who came down, entering the mansion between the bear and the wolf, and were received with salvos of pistol-shots. Here they played games over the spacious grounds, wrestled, boxed, swam, and at night feasted and drank deep damnation out of a skull to all Scotch reviewers.

Probably the acme of this depravity was reached when the young gentlemen began shooting the pendants off the chandelier; then the servants hastily decamped and left the rogues to do their own cooking.

This brought them to their senses, sanity came back, and the company disbanded. Then the servants, who had watched the orgies from afar, returned and found a week’s pile of dishes unwashed and a horse stabled in the library.

Then Byron had reached the mature age of twenty-one, he was formally admitted to the House of Lords as a Peer of the realm. His titles and pedigree were so closely scanned on this occasion that he grew quite out of conceit with the noble company, and was seriously thinking of launching a dunciad in their direction. His good nature was especially ruffled by Lord Carlisle, his guardian, who refused to stand as his legal sponsor. The chief cause of the old

Lord's prejudice against the young one lay in the fact that the young 'un had ridiculed the old 'un's literary pretensions.

They were rivals in letters, with a very beautiful, natural and mutual disdain for each other.

Lord Byron was not welcomed into the House of Lords: he simply pushed in the door because he had a right to. He thirsted for approbation, for distinction, for notoriety. His sensitive soul hung upon newspaper clippings with feverish expectations; and about all the attention he received was in the line of being damned by faint praise, or smothered with silence. Patriotism, as far as England was concerned, was not a part of Byron's composition.

When all Great Britain was execrating Napoleon, picturing him as a devil with horns and hoofs, Byron looked upon him as the world's hero.

In this frame of mind he went forth and borrowed a goodly sum, and started cut to view the world. He was accompanied by his friend Hobhouse, and his valet, Fletcher.

It was a two years' trip, this jolly trio made—down along the coast of France, Spain, through the Straits of Gibraltar, lingering in queer old cities, mousing over historic spots, alternately living like princes or vagabonds. They frolicked, drank, made love to married women, courted maidens, fought, feasted and did all the foolish things that sophomores usually do when they have money and opportunity.

These months of travel supplied Byron enough in way of suggestion to keep him writing many moons. His active imagination seized upon everything picturesque, peculiar, romantic, sentimental or tragic, and stored it up in those wondrous brain-cells, to be used when the time was ripe.

The disciples of Munchausen, who delight in showing Byron's verse to be only biography, have found a rich field in that two years' travel. One man really did a brilliant thing—in three volumes—recounting the conquering march of the poet, whom he depicts as a combination of Don Juan and Rob Roy.

The probabilities are that the real facts, not illumined by fancy, would be a tale with which to conjure sleep. Foreign travel is hard work. It constitutes the final test of friendship, and to make the tour of Europe with a man and not hate him marks one or both of the parties as seraphic in quality. The best of travel is in looking back upon it from the dreamy quiet and rest of home—laughing at the things that once rasped your nerves, and enjoying, through recollection, the scenes you only glanced at wearily.

Two instances of that trip—when Hobhouse threatened to desert the party and was dared to do so, and Byron slapped Fletcher's face and got himself well kicked in return—will suffice to show how Byron had the faculty of seizing trivial incidents, and by lifting them up and separating them from the mass, made them live as Art.

At Athens the trio made a sudden resolve to be respectable, and practise economy. To this end they hired rooms of a worthy widow, who accommodated travelers with a transient home for a moderate stipend. This widow had three daughters: the eldest, Theresa by name, lives in letters as the Maid of Athens, and the glory that came to her was achieved without any special danger to either her heart or the poet's. The young woman, we know, assisted in the household affairs; and probably often dusted the mantel in the poet's room while he sat smoking with one foot on the table, making irrelevant remarks to her about this or that.

Suddenly he wrote a poem, "Maid of Athens, ere we part, give, O give me back my heart."

* * *

With the genuine literary thrift that marked all of Byron's career, he preserved a copy of the lines, and some years after recast them, touched them up a bit, included the stuff in a book—and there you are.

The other incident is that of Hobhouse recording in his journal the bare and barren fact that outside the city wall in Persia they once saw two dogs gnawing a human body. Byron saw the sight, but made no mention of it at the time. He waited, the scene sealed up in his brain-cells. Years after he wrote thus:

"And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall,
Hold o'er the dead their carnival;
Gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb,
They were too busy to bark at him.
From a Tartar's skull they stripped the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunched on the whiter skull,
As it slipped through their jaws when the edge grew dull."

And this only proves that Hobhouse was not a poet and Byron was. The poet is never content to state the mere facts—facts are only valuable as suggestions for poetry.

Travel often excites the spirit to the point of expression. Good travelers carry pads and pencils. Byron reached England with fragments of marbles, skulls, pictures, shells, spears, guns, curios beyond count, and many manuscripts in process.

Upon arriving on the English coast the first news that reached him was that his mother had just died. He hastened to Newstead and reached there in time to attend the funeral, but refrained from following the cortege to the grave because he could not master his emotions. Their quarrels were at last ended.

A diversion to his feelings came soon after, in the way of a blunt letter from Tom Moore demanding if Lord Byron was the author of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers."

Byron replied very stiffly that he was, but he really had intended no insult to Mr. Moore, with whom he had not the honor of being acquainted. Furthermore, if Mr. Moore felt himself aggrieved, why, the author of "English Bards" was at his service to supply him such satisfaction as he required.

The irate Irishman accepted "the apology," a genial reply followed, and soon the poets met at the house of a friend, and there began that lifelong friendship, with the result that Moore wrote Byron's "Life" and used much needless whitewash.

While abroad Byron had gotten into shape for publication one piece of manuscript. This was "Hints From Horace," and the matter was placed in the hands of Mr. Dallas, his businessman, very soon after his arrival. Dallas read the poem and did not like it.

"Haven't you anything else?" asked Dallas.

"Oh, nothing but a few stanzas of Spenserian stuff," was the answer.

Dallas asked to see it, and there were placed in his hands rough drafts of the first and second cantos of "Childe Harold." This time Dallas was better suited, and to corroborate his judgment the matter was submitted to Murray, the publisher.

Murray thought the matter had more or less merit, and arrangements were at once made for its publication. And so it came out, hammered into shape while in the printer's hands.

“Childe Harold” was an instantaneous, brilliant success—a success beyond the publisher’s or author’s expectations. The book ran through seven editions in four weeks, and Lord Byron “became famous in a night.”

London society became Byron-mad. The poet was feted, courted, petted.

He indulged in much innocent and costly dissipation, and some not so innocent.

Finally all this began to pall upon him. When twenty-six we find him making a bold stand for reform: he would get married and live a staid, sober, respectable life. His finances were reduced—all the money he had made out of his books had been given away, prompted by a foolish whim that no man should take pay for the product of his mind.

Now he would marry and “settle down”; and to marry a woman with an income would be no special disadvantage. To sell one’s thoughts was abhorrent to the young man, but to marry for money was quite another thing. Morality depends upon your point of view.

The paradox of things found expression when Byron the impressionable, Byron the irresistible, sat himself down and after chewing the end of his penholder, wrote a letter to Miss Milbanke, with whom he was only slightly acquainted, proposing marriage. The lady very properly declined. To be courted with a fresh-nibbed pen, and paper cut sonnet-size, instead of by a live man, deserves rebuke. Men who propose by mail to a woman in the next town are either insincere, self-deceived, or else are of the sort whose pulse never goes above sixty-five, and therefore should be avoided.

Byron was both insincere and self-deceived. He had grown to distrust the emotions of his heart, and so selected a wife with his head. He chose a woman with income, one who was strong, cool-headed, safe and sensible. Miss Milbanke was the antithesis of his mother.

The lady declined—but that is nothing.

They were married within a year.

In another year the wife left her husband and went back to her mother, carrying in her arms a girl baby, only a few weeks old.

She never returned to her husband.

What the trouble was no one ever knew, although the gossips named a hundred and one reasons—running from drunkenness to homicide. But Byron, the world now knows, was no drunkard—he was at times convivial, but he had no fixed taste for strong drink. He was, however, peevish, impulsive, impetuous and often very unreasonable.

Byron, be it said to his credit, brought no recriminating charges against his wife. He only said their differences were inexplicable and unexplainable.

The simple facts were that they breathed a different atmosphere—their heads were in a different stratum. His normal pulse was eighty; hers, sixty-five.

What do you think of a spiritual companionship where the wife demands, “How much longer are you going to follow this foolish habit of writing verses?”

They did not understand each other. Byron uttered words that no man should voice to a woman, and his outbursts were met with a forced calmness that was exasperating. The lady sat down, yawned wearily, and when there came a lull in the gentleman’s verbal pyrotechnics, she would ask him if he had anything more to say.

One day she varied the program by packing up her effects and leaving him.

Of course, it is easy to say that had this woman been wise she would have stood the childish outbursts and endured the peevish tantrums, for the sake of the hours of tenderness and love that were sure to follow. By right treatment he would have been on his knees, begging forgiveness and crying it out with his head in her lap very shortly. But all this implies a woman of unusual power—extraordinary patience. And this woman was simply human. She left, and then in order to justify her action she gave reasons. Our actions are usually right, but our reasons for them seldom are.

Mrs. Byron made no concealment of her troubles. Society had occasion for gossip and the occasion was improved. Stories of Byron’s cruelty and inhumanity filled the coffeehouses and drawing-rooms; and the hints at crimes so grave they could not even be mentioned gave the gossips their cue.

The press took it up, and the poet was warned by his friends not to appear at the theater or upon the street for fear of the indignation of the mob. The spoilt child of London was paying the penalty of popularity. The pendulum had swung too far and was now coming back.

Byron, hunted by creditors, hooted by enemies, broken in health, crushed in spirit, left the country—left England, never to return alive.

When Byron trod the deck of the good ship bound for Ostend, and saw a strip of tossing, blue water separating him from England, his spirits rose. He was twenty-eight years old, and the thought that he would yet do something and be somebody was strong in his heart. All the old pride came back.

The idea that he would not sell the product of his brain for hire was abandoned, and soon after arriving in Holland he began to write letters home, making sharp bargains with publishers.

Further than this, his attorneys, on his order, made demand for a share of his wife's estate. And erelong we find Byron, the wasteful, cultivating the good old gentlemanly habit of penuriousness. He was making money, and had he lived to be sixty it is probable he would have evolved into a conservative and written a book on "Getting on in the World, or Success as I Have Found It."

Byron's pilgrimage down through Germany, along the Rhine to Switzerland, was one of rest and recreation. At Berne, Basle, Lausanne and Geneva he found food for literary thought, and many instances in his writings show the reflected scenes he saw. No visitor at Lausanne fails to visit the Castle of Chillon, and all the guides will recite you these sweeping lines, so surcharged with feeling, beginning:

"Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls;
A thousand feet in depth below,
Its many waters meet and flow."

At Geneva began the most interesting friendship between Byron and that other young man, so like and yet so unlike him.

Only a few years and Byron was to search the shores of the Mediterranean for Shelley's dead body, and finding it, be one of the friends who reduced it to ashes.

Tiring of Geneva and the tourists who pointed him out as a curiosity, we find Byron and his little party making their way across the Simplon, to cross which is an epoch in the life of any man, and then down by the Lago Maggiore to Milan.

“The Last Supper” of Leonardo da Vinci did not impress Byron—the art of painting never did—this was his most marked limitation. From Milan they wandered down through Italy to Verona and Venice.

The third Canto of “Childe Harold,” “Manfred,” and dozens of shorter poems had been sent to Murray. England read and paid for all that Byron wrote, and accepted it all as autobiography. Possibly Byron’s defiant manner lent an excuse for this, but by applying similar rules we could convict Sophocles, Schiller and Shelley of basest crimes, put Shakespeare in the dock for murder, Milton for blasphemy, Scott for forgery, and Goethe for questionable financial deals with the devil. Byron’s sins were as scarlet and the number not a few, but the moths that came just to flit about the flame were all of mature age. Byron set no snares for the innocent, and in all of the man’s misdoings, he himself it was who suffered most.

The Countess Guiccioli, it seems, was the only woman who comprehended his nature sufficiently to lead him in the direction of peace and poise. With her, for the first time, he began to systematize his life on a basis of sanity. They lived together for five years, and from the time he met her until his death no other love came to separate them.

Throughout his life Byron was a man in revolt; and it was only a variation of the old passion for freedom that led him to Greece and to his grave. The personal bravery of the man was proven more than once in his life, and on the approach of death he was undismayed. When he passed away, April Nineteenth, Eighteen Hundred Twenty-four, Stanhope wrote, “England has lost her brightest genius—Greece her best friend.”

His body was returned to England, denied burial in Westminster, and now rests in the old church at Hucknall, near Newstead.

JOSEPH ADDISON

Thus am I doubly armed: my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me.
This in a moment brings me to an end;
But this informs me I shall never die.
The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
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!

—*Cato's Soliloquy*

JOSEPH ADDISON

Men are not punished for their sins, but by them.

Expression is necessary to life. The spirit grows through exercise of its faculties, just as a muscle grows strong through use. Life is expression and repression is stagnation—death.

Yet there is right expression and wrong expression. If a man allows his life to run riot, and only the animal side of his nature is allowed to express itself, he is repressing his highest and best, and therefore those qualities, not used, atrophy and die.

Sensuality, gluttony and the life of license repress the life of the spirit, and the soul never blossoms; and this is what it is to lose one's soul. All adown the centuries thinking men have noted these truths, and again and again we find individuals forsaking, in horror, the life of the senses and devoting themselves to the life of the spirit.

The question of expression through the spirit or through the senses—through the soul or the body—has been the pivotal point of all philosophies and the inspiration of all religions. Asceticism in our day finds an interesting manifestation in the Trappists, who live on a mountain, nearly inaccessible, and deprive themselves of almost every vestige of bodily comfort; going without food for days, wearing uncomfortable garments, suffering severe cold. So here we find the extreme instance of men repressing the faculties of the body in order that the spirit may find ample time and opportunity for exercise.

Between this extreme repression and the license of the sensualist lies the truth. But just where, is the great question; and the desire of one person, who thinks he has discovered the norm, to compel all other men to stop there, has led to war and strife untold. All law centers around this point—what shall men be allowed to do? And so we find statutes to punish "strolling play-actors," "players on fiddles," "disturbers of the public conscience," "persons who dance wantonly," "blasphemers," etc. In England there were, in the year Eighteen Hundred, sixty-seven offenses punishable with death.

What expression is right and what is not is largely a matter of opinion. Instrumental music has been to some a rock of offense, exciting the spirit, through the sense of hearing, to wrong thoughts—through "the lascivious pleasing of a lute." Others think dancing wicked, while a few allow square dances, but condemn the waltz. Some sects allow pipe-

organ music, but draw the line at the violin; while others, still, employ a whole orchestra in their religious service. Some there may be who regard pictures as implements of idolatry, while the Hook-and-Eye Baptists look upon buttons as immoral.

Strange evolutions are often witnessed within the life of one individual, as to what is right and what wrong. For instance, Leo Tolstoy, that great and good man, once a worldling, has now turned ascetic, a not unusual evolution in the lives of the saints. Not caring for harmony as expressed in color, form and sounds, Tolstoy is now quite willing to deprive all others of these things which minister to their well-being. There is in most souls a hunger for beauty, just as there is a physical hunger. Beauty speaks to their spirits through the senses; but Tolstoy would have his house barren to the verge of hardship, and he advocates that all other houses should be likewise. My veneration for Count Tolstoy is profound, but I mention him here simply to show the danger that lies in allowing any man, even one of the best, to dictate to us what is right.

Most of the frightful cruelties inflicted on mankind during the past have arisen out of a difference of opinion arising through a difference in temperament. The question is as live today as it was two thousand years ago—what expression is best? That is, what shall we do to be saved? And concrete absurdity consists in saying we must all do the same thing.

Whether the race will ever grow to a point where men will be willing to leave the matter of life-expression to the individual is a question. Most men are anxious to do what is best for themselves and least harmful for others. The average man now has intelligence enough! Utopia is not far off, if the self-appointed folk who govern us for a consideration would only be willing to do unto others as they would be done by, and cease coveting things that belong to other people. War among nations, and strife among individuals, is a result of the covetous spirit to possess either power or things, or both. A little more patience, a little more charity for all, a little more devotion, a little more love; with less bowing down to the past, a brave looking forward to the future, with more confidence in ourselves, and more faith in our fellows, and the race will be ripe for a great burst of light and life.

Macaulay has said that the Puritan did not condemn bear-baiting because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the

spectator. The Puritan regarded beauty as a pitfall and a snare: that which gave pleasure was a sin; he found his gratification in doing without things. Puritanism was a violent oscillation of the pendulum of life to the other side. From the vanity, pretense, affectation and sensualism of a Church and State bitten by corruption, we find the recoil in Puritanism.

Asceticism to the verge of hardship, frankness bordering on rudeness, and a stolidity that was impolite; or soft, luxurious hypocrisy in a moth-eaten society—which shall it be? And Joseph Addison comes upon the scene and by the sincerity, graciousness and gentle excellence of his life and work, says, “Neither!”

The little village of Wiltshire is noted as the birthplace of Addison, who was the son of a clergyman, afterward the Dean of Lichfield. An erstwhile resident of Lichfield, Samuel Johnson by name, once said of Joseph Addison, “Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.”

For elegance, simplicity, insight, and a wit that is sharp but which never wounds, Addison has no rival, although more than two hundred years have come and gone since he ceased to write.

Addison was a gentleman—the best example of a perfect gentleman that the history of English literature affords. And in letters it is much easier to find a genius than a gentleman. The field today is not at all over-worked; and those who wish to cultivate the art of being gentlemen will find no fearsome competition. In fact, the chief reason for not engaging in this line is the discomfort of isolation, and the lack of comradeship one is sure to suffer. To be gentle, generous, kind; to win by few words; and to disarm criticism and prejudice through the potency of a gracious presence, is a fine art. Books on etiquette will not serve the end, nor studious attempts to smile at the proper time, nor zealous efforts to avoid jostling the whims of those we meet; for to attempt to please is often to antagonize.

Sympathy, Knowledge and Poise seem the three ingredients most needed in forming the gentle man. I place these elements according to their value. No man is great who does not possess Sympathy plus, and

the greatness of men can safely be gauged by their sympathies. Sympathy and imagination are twin sisters. Your heart must go out to all men, the high, the low, the rich, the poor, the learned, the unlearned, the good, the bad, the wise, the foolish—you must be one with them all, else you can never comprehend them. Sympathy! It is the touchstone to every secret, the key to all knowledge, the open sesame of all hearts. Put yourself in the other man's place, and then you will know why he thinks certain thoughts and does certain deeds. Put yourself in his place, and your blame will dissolve itself into pity, and your tears will wipe out the record of his misdeeds. The saviors of the world have simply been men with wondrous Sympathy.

But Knowledge must go with Sympathy, else the emotions will become maudlin and pity may be wasted on a poodle instead of a child; on a field-mouse instead of a human soul. Knowledge in use is wisdom, and wisdom implies a sense of values—you know a big thing from a little one, a valuable fact from a trivial one. Tragedy and comedy are simply questions of value: a little misfit in life makes us laugh, a great one is tragedy and cause for grief.

Poise is the strength of body and strength of mind to control your Sympathy and your Knowledge. Unless you control your emotions they run over and you stand in the slop. Sympathy must not run riot, or it is valueless and tokens weakness instead of strength. In every hospital for nervous disorders are to be found many instances of this loss of control. The individual has Sympathy, but not Poise, and therefore his life is worthless to himself and to the world.

He symbols inefficiency, not helpfulness. Poise reveals itself more in voice than in words; more in thought than in action; more in atmosphere than in conscious life. It is a spiritual quality, and is felt more than it is seen. It is not a matter of size, nor bodily attitude, nor attire, nor personal comeliness: it is a state of inward being, and of knowing your cause is just. And so you see it is a great and profound subject after all, great in its ramifications, limitless in extent, implying the entire science of right living. I once met a man who was deformed in body and little more than a dwarf, but who had such Spiritual Gravity—such Poise—that to enter a room where he was, was to feel his presence and acknowledge his superiority. To allow Sympathy to waste itself on unworthy subjects is to deplete one's life-forces. To conserve is the part of wisdom. No great

orator ever exerts himself to his fullest, and reserve is a necessary element in all good literature, as well as in everything else. Poise being the control of your Sympathy and Knowledge implies the possession of these attributes, for without Sympathy and Knowledge you have nothing to control but your physical body. To practise Poise as a mere gymnastic exercise, or a study in etiquette, is to be self-conscious, stiff, preposterous and ridiculous. Those who cut such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make angels weep are men void of Sympathy and Knowledge trying to cultivate Poise. Their science is a mere matter of what to do with arms and legs. Poise is a question of spirit controlling flesh, heart controlling attitude. And so in the cultivation of Poise it is well to begin quite aways back. Let perfect love cast out fear; get rid of all secrets; have nothing in your heart to conceal; be gentle, generous, kind; do not bother to forgive your enemies—it is better to forget them, and cease conjuring them forth from your inner consciousness. The idea that you have enemies is egotism gone to seed. Get Knowledge by coming close to Nature, listening to her heart-beats, studying her ways. And let your heart go out to humanity by a desire to serve.

That man is greatest who best serves his kind. Sympathy and Knowledge are for use—you acquire that you may give out; you accumulate that you may bestow. And as God has given you the sublime blessings of Sympathy and Knowledge, there will come to you the wish to reveal your gratitude by giving them out again, for the wise man knows that we retain spiritual qualities only as we give them away. Let your light shine. To him that hath shall be given. The exercise of wisdom brings wisdom; and at the last the infinitesimal quantity of man’s knowledge, compared with the Infinite, and the meagerness of man’s Sympathy when compared with the source from which ours is absorbed, will evolve an abnegation and a humility that will lend a perfect Poise. The Gentleman is a man with Sympathy, Knowledge and Poise; and as I sit here in this quiet corner, Joseph Addison seems to me to fit the requirements a little better than any other name I can recall.

Born into a family where economy was a necessity, yet Addison had every advantage that good breeding and thorough tutorship could give.

At Charterhouse School he won the affection of his teachers by his earnest wish to comply. The receptive spirit and the desire to please were his by inheritance. When fifteen he went to Queen's College, Oxford, where, within a year, his beauty, good nature and intelligence made his presence felt.

In another year he was elected a scholar at Magdalen College, his recommendation being his skill in Latin versification.

It was the hope and expectation of his parents that he should become a clergyman and follow in his father's footsteps. This also seems to have been the bent of the young man's mind. But the grace of his personality, his obliging disposition, with a sort of furtive ability to peer into a millstone as far as any, had attracted the attention of several statesmen. One of these, Charles Montague, afterward Lord Halifax, remarked, "I am a friend of the Church, but I propose to do it the injury of keeping Addison out of it."

Montague discussed the matter with Lord Somers, and these two concluded that just a trifle more maturity of that gently ironical mind, a little more seasoning of the gracious personality, and the State would have in Joseph Addison a servant of untold value.

Thus we see that England's policy of selecting and training men for the consular and diplomatic service is no new thing. It is a wonder that America has not ere this profited by the example. The tradition holds that we must at least have a scholar and a gentleman for the Court of Saint James, and several times we have been put to straits to find the man. The only way is to breed them and then bring them up in the way they should go.

But beyond the zealous desire of Montague and Lord Somers to educate good men for the diplomatic service, lurked the still more eager wish to secure able writers to plead and defend the party cause. With this phase of the question America is more familiar; the policy of rewarding able speakers and ready writers with offices ready made or made to order has come to us ably backed by precedent untold.

Addison set himself to literary tasks, but still regarded himself as a scholar. Leisure fitted his temperament—he was never in haste, even when he was in a hurry, and he carried with him the air of having all the time there was. Nothing is so ungraceful as haste. Addison always had

time to listen; and we make friends, not by explaining things to other folks, but by allowing others to explain to us.

The habit of attentive, sympathetic listening came to Addison early in life. From his twenty-first to his twenty-seventh year he lived a studious life—idle, his father called it—writing essays, political pamphlets and Latin verse. His political friends took care that some of the output was purchased, so that he was assured a comfortable living; but his success was not sufficient to inflate his cosmos with an undue amount of ego.

One small book of criticism which he produced about this time was entitled, “Account of the English Poets.” A significant feature of the work is that Shakespeare is not mentioned, even once, while Dryden is placed as the standard of excellence, just as in “Modern Painters,” Ruskin takes Turner and lets him stand for one hundred, and all other artists grade down from this.

Addison merely reflected the taste of his time. Shakespeare was not thought any more of two hundred years ago than we think of him now, with this difference—that he is the author we now talk about and seldom read, but then they did not discuss him any more than we now go to see him played.

An interesting character by the name of Jacob Tonson appears upon the scene, as a friend of Addison in his early days. Tonson enjoyed the distinction of being the father of the modern publishing business—the first man to bring out the works of authors at his own risk and then sell the product to bookstores. I believe it is Mr. Le Gallienne who has been so unkind as to speak of “Barabbas Tonson.” Among Tonson’s many good strokes was his act in buying the copyright of “Paradise Lost” from Simmons, the bookseller, who had purchased all rights in the manuscript from the bereaved widow on a payment of eight pounds.

Tonson appreciated good things in a literary way. He was on friendly terms with all the principal writers, and did much in bringing some shy writers to the front. Addison and Tonson laid great plans, few of which materialized, and some were carried out by other people—notably the compilation of an English Dictionary. In Sixteen Hundred Ninety-nine we find Addison, in possession of a pension of three hundred pounds a year, crossing the Channel into France with the object “to travel and qualify himself to serve His Majesty.”

The diplomatic language of the world was French. With intent to learn the language, Addison made his home with a modest French family; and a better way of acquiring a language than this has never been devised. A young friend of mine, however, recently returned from Europe, tells me that the ideal plan is to make love to a vivacious French girl who can not speak English. Of the excellence of this plan I know nothing—it may be a mere barren ideality.

A little over a year in France and we are told that “Addison spoke the language like a native “—a glib expression, still able-bodied, that means little or much. From France Addison followed down into Italy, and spent a year there, residing in various small towns with the same object in view that took him to France.

And one of his admirers relates that “he learned to speak Italian perfectly, his pronunciation being marred only by a slight French accent.” Addison’s three years of foreign travel, and the friendly society of the highest and best wherever he journeyed, had caused him to blossom out into a most exceptional man. Nature had done much for him, but her best gift was the hospitable mind. Travel to many young men is the opportunity to indulge in a line of conduct not possible at home. But Addison, ripening slowly, appreciated the fact that the Puritan has a deal of truth on his side. There is a manly abstinence that is most becoming, and to moderate one’s desires and partake of the good things of earth sparingly is the best way to garner their benefit. No doubt, too, Addison’s modesty and tendency to shyness saved him from many a danger. “Bashfulness is the tough husk in which genius ripens,” says Emerson.

Thus do we find our man at thirty, strong, manly, gifted, handsome, chivalrous, proud, yet tender, sympathetic, knowing—ready to serve his country in whatsoever capacity he could serve it best. When lo! the death of the King cut off his pension, a new party came in, his influential friends were thrown out of power, and Addison’s prospects wilted in a single night.

The fact is that Addison from his thirtieth to his fortieth year was little better than a denizen of Grub Street. Fortunately he was a bachelor, with no one but himself to support, else actual hardship might have

entered. Several flattering offers to act as tutor or companion to rich men's sons came his way, and were declined in polite and gracious language; and once a suggestion that he wed a woman of wealth was tabled in a manner not quite so gracious. In passing, it is well to state that all of Addison's relations with women seem to have occupied a lofty plane of chivalry. His respect for the good name of woman was profound, and whether any woman ever broke through that fine reserve and exquisite formality is a question. He was intensely admired by women, of course, but it was from the other side of the drawing-room. He kept gush at bay, and never tempted to indiscretion.

Addison's youth was past; he was creeping well into the thirties, and still with no prospects. He was out of money, with no profession, and no special reputation as a writer. The popular poets of the time were Sedley, Rochester, Buckingham and Dorset—and you have never heard of them? Well, it only shows how a literary reputation is a shadow that fades in a night.

Addison had written his "Cato" several years before, but no one had seen it. He carried the manuscript about with him, as Goethe did his "Faust," for years, and added to it, or erased, all according to the moods that came to him. And we have reason to believe that the sublime soliloquy in "Cato" was written by Addison when the blankness of his prospects and the blackness of the future had forced the question of self-destruction upon him.

Cato made a great mistake in committing suicide—he did the deed right on the eve of success—he should have waited. Addison waited.

At this time Lord Godolphin, who had the happiness to have a great racehorse named after him, occupied the chief place in the Ministry. Marlborough had just fought the battle of Blenheim, and it was Godolphin's wish to have the victory sung in adequate verse, for history's sake and for the sake of the political party. But he could not think of a poet who was equal to the task; so in his dilemma he called in Lord Halifax, who had a reputation for knowing good things in a literary way.

Lord Halifax was unfortunate in having his portrait transmitted by two poets who hated him thoroughly, each for the amply sufficient reason that he failed to confer the favors that were much desired. Swift

calls Halifax “a would-be Mæcenas”; and Pope refers to him as “penurious, mean and chicken-hearted,” satirizing him in the well-known character of Bufo.

Do not take the poets too seriously: all good men have had mud-balls thrown at them—sometimes bricks—and Halifax was not a bad man by any means. Let the poets make copy of their thwarted hopes.

In reply to Lord Godolphin’s inquiries, Halifax said he did indeed know the man who could celebrate the victory in verse, and in fact there was only one man in England who could do the task justice. He, however, refused to divulge his man’s identity until a suitable reward for the poet was fixed upon.

Godolphin finally thought of an office in the Excise, worth three hundred pounds a year or more.

Halifax then stipulated that the negotiations must be carried on directly between the Government and the poet, otherwise the poet’s pride would rebel. Godolphin agreed to shield Halifax from all mention in the matter, and the name and address of Joseph Addison were then taken down.

Godolphin had never heard of Addison, but relying on Halifax, he sent Boyle, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the address named, where Addison was found over a haberdasher’s, up three flights, back. The account comes from Pope, who was the enemy of both Addison and Halifax, and can therefore be relied upon.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer broached the subject, was gently repulsed, the case was argued, and being put on the plane of duty the poet surrendered, and as a result we have Addison’s poem, “The Campaign.” It was considered a great literary feat in its day, but like all things performed to order, comes tardy off. Only work done in love lives. But Addison slid into the Excise office, taking it as legal tender. This brought him into relationship with Godolphin, who one day exclaimed, “I thought that man Addison was nothing but a poet—I’m a rogue if he isn’t really a great man!” Lord Godolphin was needing a good man, a man of address, polish, tact and education. And Addison was selected to fill the office of Under-Secretary of State, the place for which he had fitted himself and to which he had aspired eight years before. Moral: Be prepared.

The party that called Addison was not the one to which he was supposed to be attached, but his merits were recognized, his help was needed, and so he was sent for. It was a great compliment. But good men are always needed—they were then, and the demand is greater now than ever before. The highest positions are hard to fill—good men are scarce.

Addison's knowledge, his modesty, his willingness, his caution, his grace of manner, fitted him exactly for the position; and we have reason to believe that the salary of one thousand pounds a year was very acceptable to one in his situation.

In another year the Whigs had grown stronger; Halifax was again a recognized power; and erelong we find Addison entering Parliament. So great was his popularity that he was elected from one district six times, representing Malmesbury until his death.

It was stated by Congreve that Addison's habit of shyness was an affectation. If so, it was a good stroke, for nothing is so becoming in a man known to be versatile and strong as a half-embarrassment when in society. The Duke of Wellington's awkwardness in a drawing-room put all others at their ease. The eternal fitness of things demands that when greatness is in evidence some one should be embarrassed, and if the celebrity is "it," so much the better.

Personally, I feel sure that Addison's shyness was not feigned, for on the only occasion he ever attempted to speak ex-tempore in Parliament he muffed the subject, forgot his theme, and sat down in confusion. With all his incisive thought and fine command of language, Addison could not think on his feet. And as if aware of his limitations, in one of the "Spectator" essays he said, with more or less truth, "The fluent orator, ready to speak on any topic, is never profound, and when once his thought is cold it will seldom repay examination—it was only a skyrocket."

Without Addison's literary reputation, resting upon his essays published in the "Tatler" and the "Spectator," it is very possible that we would now know about as much concerning him as we do about Sir John Hawkins. The "Tatler" and the "Spectator" allowed him to express his best, and in his own way.

With the name of Addison is inseparably coupled that of Richard Steele. These men had a literary style which they held in partnership. The nearest approach to it in our time is the “Easy Chair” of George William Curtis. Curtis was once called by Lowell, with a goodly degree of justice, “our modern Addison.”

Steele and Addison had been schoolmates at the Charterhouse, and friends for a lifetime. They were of the same age within a year. Steele had been a soldier and an adventurer, and his disposition was decidedly convivial. He was a clever writer, knowing the world of politics and society, but he lacked the spiritual and artistic qualities which Addison’s moderate and studious life had fostered. But on simple themes, where the argument did not rise above the commonplace, Addison and Steele wrote exactly alike, just as all writers on the “Sun” used to write like Dana. Steele had filled the lowest office in the Ministry, the office of “Gazeteer”: the duties of the office being to issue a newspaper giving the official news of the day. It was a licensed monopoly, and all infringers were severely punished.

Steele, however, did not like the office, because the Powers demanded that all writing in the “Gazette” be very innocent and very insipid. “To publish a newspaper and say nothing is no easy task,” said Steele. Had he lived in our day he could have seen the trick performed on every hand.

Finally the office of Gazetteer was abolished, and any man who wished might issue a “gazette,” provided he kept within proper bounds. The result was a flight of small leaflet periodicals, quite like the Chapbook Renaissance of Eighteen Hundred Ninety-five and Eighteen Hundred Ninety-six, when over eleven hundred “brownie” and “chipmunk” magazines were started in America. Every man with two or three ideas and ten dollars’ capital started a magazine. Steele, teeming with thoughts demanding expression, at war with smug society, and possessing wit withal, started the “Tatler,” to be issued three times a week, price one penny. Seizing upon a creation of Swift’s, “Isaac Bickerstaff,” a character already known to the public, was introduced as editor. Bickerstaff announced his assistants, and among others named as authority in Foreign Affairs a waiter at Saint James Coffeehouse known as “Kidney.” The spirit of rollicking freedom in the publication, with a touch of philosophy, and a dash of culture, caught the public fancy at

once. The “Tatler” was the theme in every coffeehouse, and in the drawing-rooms, as well. Those who understood it laughed and passed it along to others who pretended they understood, and so it became the fad. Then the anonymity lent the charm of mystery—who could it be who was into all the secrets, and knew the world so thoroughly?

Addison read each issue with surprise and amusement, but it was not until the fifth number that he located the author positively, by reading an observation of his own that he had voiced to Steele some weeks before. Steele absorbed everything, digested it, and gave the good out as his own, innocent and probably unmindful of where he got it. This accounts for his wonderful versatility: he made others grub and used the net result.

Some years ago Francis Wilson made a mock complaint to the effect that whenever he met Eugene Field in the “Saints and Sinners Corner” for a half-hour’s chat, any good thing he might voice was duly printed next day in the “Sharps and Flats” column as Field’s very own, and thus did the genial Eugene acquire his reputation as a genius. All of which gentle gibing contains more fact than fiction.

When Addison saw his bright thoughts appearing in the “Tatler,” he went to Steele and said, “Here, I’ll write that out myself and save you the trouble.” Steele welcomed him with open arms. The first “Tatler” article written by Addison relates to the distress of news-writers at the prospect of peace. This is exactly in Steele’s style; but we find erelong in the “Tatler” a spiritual quality that was not a part of Steele’s nature. From current gossip and easy society commonplace, the tone is exalted, and this we know was the result of Addison’s influence. Out of two hundred seventy-one articles in the “Tatler,” one hundred eighty-eight were produced by Steele and forty-two by Addison. Yet Steele was wise enough to perceive the superior quality of Addison’s work, and this dictated the key in which the magazine was pitched. Yet the fertility of Steele surpassed that of Addison. Steele initiated the crusade against gambling, dueling and vice; and this was all very natural, for he simply inveighed against sins with which experience had made him familiar. His moral essays were all written in periods of repentance. His sharp tirades on dueling in one instance approached the point of personality, and on being criticized, he resented the interference and expressed a willingness to fight his man with pistols at ten paces. It must not be forgotten that Richard Steele was an Irishman.

The political tone of the “Tatler” favored the Marlborough administration, and on this account Steele was rewarded with a snug office under the wing of the State. In Seventeen Hundred Ten, the Whig Ministry fell, but Lord Harley knew the value of Steele as a writer, and so notified him that he would not be disturbed in possession of his Stamp Office.

Now, a complete silence concerning things political in the “Tatler” was hardly possible, and a change of front would be humiliating, and whether to give up the “Tatler” or the office—that was the question! Addison was in the same box. The offices they held brought them in twice as much money as the little periodical, and either the patronage or the paper would have to go. They decided to abandon the “Tatler.”

But the habit of writing sticks to a man; and after two months Steele and Addison began to feel the necessity of some outlet for their pent-up thoughts. They had each grown with their work, and were aware of it. They would start a new paper, and make it a daily; and they would keep clear of politics. So we find the “Spectator” duly launched with the intended purpose of forming “a rational standard of conduct in morals, manners, art and literature.”

Every good thing has its prototype, and Addison in Italy had become familiar with the force of “Manners” by Casa, and the “Courtier” by Castiglione. Then he knew the character of La Bruyere, and this gave the cue for the Spectator Club, with Sir Roger de Coverley, Sir Andrew Freeport, Will Honeycomb, Captain Sentry and the Templar.

Swift had contributed several papers to the “Tatler,” but he found the “Spectator” too soft and feminine for his fancy. Probably Steele and Addison were afraid of the doughty Dean’s style; there was too much vitriol in it for popularity—and they kept the Irish parson at a distance, as certain letters to “Stella” seem to indicate. The “Spectator” was a notable success from the start and soon put Steele and Addison in comfortable financial shape.

After the first year the daily issue amounted to fourteen thousand copies. Addison introduced the “Answers to Correspondents” scheme.

He has had many imitators along this line, some of whom yet endure, but they are not Addisons.

An imitation of the “Spectator” was started as a daily in New York in Eighteen Hundred Ninety-eight. In one week it ran short on phosphorus and was obliged to quit. It took two years for Steele and Addison to write themselves out, and rather than let the quality of the periodical decline they discontinued its publication, quitting like the wise men they were at the height of their success.

When Addison’s tragedy of “Cato” was produced in Seventeen Hundred Thirteen, he occupied the first place in English letters. The play was a dazzling success; and it is a great play yet. It lives as literature among the best things men have ever done—a masterpiece!

Addison still continued in the service of the State, and wrote more or less in a political way. The strain of carrying on the “Spectator” and the stress of political affairs had tired the man. The spring had gone out of his intellect, and he began to talk of some quiet retreat in the country. In Seventeen Hundred Sixteen, in his forty-fourth year, he married the Countess of Warwick, a widow of fifteen years’ standing. We have reason to believe that the worthy widow did the courting and literally took our good man captive. He was depressed and worn, and longed for rest and gentle, sympathetic companionship. She promised all these—the buxom creature—and married him, taking him to her home at Holland House. Yes, it would be unjust to blame her; doubtless she wished to do for the man what was best; and so report has it that she exercised a discipline over his hours of work and recreation and curtailed a little there and issued orders here, until the poor patient rebelled and fled to the coffeehouses. There he found the rollicking society that he so despised—and loved, for there was comradeship in it, and comradeship was what he prayed for. His wife did not comprehend that delicate, spiritual quality of his heart: that craving for sympathy which came after he had given out so much. He wanted peace, quiet and rest; but she wished to take him forth and exhibit him to the throng. Yet all of her admonitions that he “brace up” were in vain. His work was done. He foresaw the end, and grew impatient that it did not come. Placid, resigned, sane to the last hour, he passed away at Holland House, June Seventeenth, Seventeen Hundred Nineteen, aged forty-seven. His body,

lying in state, was viewed by more than ten thousand people, and then it was laid to rest in the Poets’ Corner, Westminster Abbey.

ROBERT SOUTHEY

Let no man write
Thy epitaph, Emmett; thou shalt not go
Without thy funeral strain! O young and good,
And wise, though erring here, thou shalt not go
Unhonored or unsung. And better thus
Beneath that undiscriminating stroke,
Better to fall, than to have lived to mourn,
As sure thou wouldst, in misery and remorse,
Thine own disastrous triumph * * * *
How happier thus, in that heroic mood
That takes away the sting of death, to die,
By all the good and all the wise forgiven!
Yea, in all ages by the wise and good
To be remembered, mourned, and honored still!

—*Southey to Robert Emmett*

ROBERT SOUTHEY

Most generally, when I travel, I go alone—this to insure being in good company. To travel with another is a terrible risk: it puts a great strain on the affections.

I once made the tour of Scotland with a man who was traveling for his health. He had kidney-trouble belief. I had known the man in a casual way for several years, and we started out the best of friends, anticipating a good time. We were gone three weeks, and when we got back I hated the fellow thoroughly, and I have every reason to believe that he fully reciprocated the sentiment.

And yet he was an honest man, and I am, too, although not an extremist. There was nothing to quarrel about; it began at Euston Station, where I bought third-class tickets. He said he preferred to ride first-class, or second, at least—there was such a thing as false economy.

I asked him why he had not said something along this line before I had purchased the tickets.

He retorted that I had not consulted his preference in the matter. I brought in a mild rejoinder by moving the previous question, and showing that he, himself, had proposed that I should take entire charge of the arrangements, using my own good judgment at all times.

He said something about his error in supposing he was traveling with a discerning person. Just then the guard came along, slamming the doors, and we were pushed into a third-class carriage, where we enjoyed an all-day journey together.

At Edinburgh my companion wished to ascend the Scott monument, visit a friend at the University, and buy a plaid rug at one of the shops in Princess Street; while I proposed to look up the footprints of Bobbie Burns and John Knox. He said, “Confound John Knox!” I answered, “You evidently think I am referring to Knox the Hatter!” He grew mad as a hatter, and I had to defend John Knox, and later had to do the same for Rab and his friends, as well as for Christopher North.

And so it went—he pooh-poohed my heroes; and I scorned the friend he wished to find at the University, smiled patronizingly on the Scott

monument, and said, “hoot mon” at the idea of buying a plaid rug in Princess Street.

All this was many years ago; since then I have been very cautious about entering into any Anglo-American alliances. Yet to travel alone often seems to be dropping something out of your life. When the voyage is rough, the weather bad and the fare below par, my spirits always rise. I say to myself: “My son, this is certainly tough—but who cares! We can stand it, we have had this way right along year after year—but just imagine your plight if there were some one in your charge expecting a good time!”

Then I drink to Boreas and all the fiends of Gehenna, and am supremely content.

But suppose the night is resplendent with stars, the waves tremulous with reflected beauty, and as the great ship goes gliding across the deep —proud, strong and tireless—there come to you thoughts sublime and emotions such as Wagner knew when he wrote the “Pilgrims’ Chorus.”

But you are not happy, simply because you want to tell some one how happy you are. What is the starlight for, save to call some one’s attention to, or the phosphorescent sheen except to be pointed out and enjoyed by two? Exquisite beauty, as revealed in music, painting, sculpture or beautiful scenery, affects me at times to tears; and there always comes creeping into my life a profound sadness, a dread homesickness, to think that in this wealth of peace and joy I am alone—alone.

Can you stand by yourself on a hillside and look across a beautiful little lake to the woods beyond; or walk through a pine-forest, where the needles sink as a carpet beneath your feet, and the air is full of the pungent odor of the pine, and the gently swaying tree-tops overhead croon you a lullaby—can you enjoy all this without an exquisite melancholy, and a joy that hurts, piercing your soul? It’s homesickness, that’s all; you want to go home and tell some one how happy you are. Give me solitude, sweet solitude, but in my solitude give me still one friend to whom I may murmur, Solitude is sweet.

That about the sea and the forest, the wooded hillside and the little lake may not be the exact words, but the thought is there just as White Pigeon expressed it to me that evening when we sat on the mossy bank of the lake at Grasmere and threw pebbles into the water.

I had come up from Liverpool to Bowness, walked over to Ambleside and along the lake to Grasmere. My luggage consisted of a comb, a toothbrush and a stout second-growth East Aurora hickory stick.

At Grasmere I applied at the Red Lion Inn for supper and lodging. The landlady looked at my dusty, rusty corduroys, paused, coughed and asked where my luggage was. Wishing to be honest, I displayed the luggage aforementioned. She did not smile. She was a large person, sober, sedate, sincere and also serious, with a big bunch of keys dangling from a waist that once was Grecian. And she told me right there that if I wanted accommodations I would have to pay in advance. I demurred, pleaded and finally explained that I had lost my money and had sent to New York for a remittance, I was a remittance-man. Had this been true, it were sad, yet I had a hundred pounds sterling in my belt; but it just came to me to see how it would feel to be penniless and friendless and plead for charity. It is not hard to plead for charity when one has a pocket full of money.

So I pleaded. But it was of no avail.

I requested a drink of water. This was denied. Then I asked if I could wash in the lake; and this favor was granted, and the advice volunteered that it would be a good thing to do. And further the kind lady made a motion toward a dangling red tassel that hung from a rope, and suggested that I get me to a gunnery and quickly, too, otherwise she would have to call the porter.

I felt to see that my money was all right—to assure myself it was no jest in earnest—and departed. Being singularly psychic to suggestion I followed the thought that I wash in the lake, and started in that direction, along a footpath that led across a meadow, over a stile. A thick growth of bushes lined the lake for aways, and then the footpath seemed to follow right through the undergrowth. I pushed the green branches aside, and continued along for about a hundred feet, when I stood on the green, grass-covered bank of the beautiful “Windermere.” Daffodils lined the water’s edge—the daffodils of Wordsworth—down the lake were the

white wings of several sailboats; the sun had gone down, but his long rays of gold still pierced the sky, while across the water arose, silent and majestic, the dark purple hills.

It was a beautiful sight—so full of quiet and peace and rest. I stood with hat in hand, the evening breeze fanning my face, enjoying the scene. Just then there was a little splash in the water, and looking down I saw a woman with back toward me sitting on a boulder, tossing pebbles into the lake. By the side of the woman were her hat and book. I was on the point of softly backing out through the bushes, when it came to me that I had seen that head with its big coil of brown hair somewhere else—but where, ah, where!

Why, in Paris, two years before. It was White Pigeon.

She had not seen me. I retraced my steps, and then came crashing through the juniper, straight over to the bankside, where I sat down about twenty feet from the good lady. I was whistling violently and throwing pebbles into the water, not even glancing toward her. She let me whistle for a full minute and then said gently: “Do not be absurd! I know you.” Then we both laughed, and I, of course, did the regulation thing, and asked, “When did you arrive, and where are you going, and how do you like it?”

“You see what I am doing here, and as for when I arrived and how long I’ll stay, and how I like it—what difference is it? There, you are surprised to see me, aren’t you? I thought you had gotten past being surprised at anything, long ago—only silly people are surprised—you once said it, yourself!”

Then White Pigeon ceased to speak and we simply gazed into each other’s eyes. White Pigeon has gray eyes that sometimes are blue and sometimes amber—it all depends upon her mood and the thoughts reflected there. The long, sober gaze stole off into a half-smile and she said, “You got things awfully mixed up in that Rosa Bonheur booklet—why not stick to truth?”

“Truth,” I replied, “is hideous, and facts are like some men, stubborn things. But what was the matter with the Bonheur Little Journey?”

“You will not be angry with me?”

“How could I be?”

“You promise?”

“Yes.”

“Well, you said my cousin was a conductor on the Lake Shore—you knew perfectly well it was the Michigan Central!”

I apologized.

It had been two years since I had seen this woman, and not a letter had passed between us. I had sent her a book now and then, and she had sent me a sketch or two.

White Pigeon knows nothing about me, and never asked concerning my history, which is a blank, my lord! Does the lily inquire of the humming-bird, “Hast hummed and fluttered about other flowers?”

That is a charming friendship that asks nothing, makes no demands, needs no assurances, never falters, and is so frank that it disarms prudery and pretense.

I said as much.

White Pigeon made no answer, but flung a pebble into the lake.

And all I know of White Pigeon is that she was born in White Pigeon, Michigan, and had left there ten years before to study art for a short time in Paris. The short time extended to ten years.

White Pigeon does not call herself an artist—she only copies pictures in the Louvre and gives lessons. “Not being able to paint, I give lessons,” she once said to me. The first pictures she copied were sold to kind gentlemen who make many wagons at South Bend, Indiana; other pictures went to men who have interests at Ivorydale; and some have gone to the mill-owner at Ypsilanti, for the mill-owner is interested in art, as all patrons of the “Hum Journal” know.

White Pigeon lived at Paris because one must needs live somewhere, and rich Americans sometimes send her their daughters to “finish.” That was what took her over to the Lake District—she was traveling with two young women from Grand Rapids. And so these three women were doing Great Britain, and White Pigeon was acting as courier, chaperone and instructor.

“I need ‘finish,’” I suggested in one of the long pauses.

“I was just going to suggest it,” said the lady.

“You say you are going to Southey’s old home tomorrow—may I go, too?” I ventured.

And the answer was, “Of course—if you will promise not to work me up into copy.”

I promised.

I found lodgings that night at “Nab Cottage.” Being well recommended, the landlady did not hesitate, but gave me the best accommodations her house afforded.

Hartley Coleridge does not live at “Nab Cottage” now—a moss-covered slab marks his resting-place up at the Grasmere Churchyard, and only a step away in a very straight row are similar old headstones that token the graves of William, Dorothy and Mary Wordsworth. Hartley Coleridge had most of the weaknesses of his father, and only a few of his better traits. Yet Southey brought up the children of Coleridge and gave them just as good advantages as he did his own.

“It is not ‘advantages’ that make great men—it is disadvantages!” said White Pigeon. We were eating breakfast at the table set out under the arbor, back of the Coleridge cottage—Grace, Myrtle, White Pigeon and I.

Grace and Myrtle were the Grand Rapids girls, and fine girls, too—pink and twenty, with diaries and autograph-fans. Girls of that age are charming, but they only interest me as do beautiful kittens or colts. Women do not become wise or discreet until they are past thirty. White Pigeon was past thirty.

We took the stage that morning at nine o’clock for Keswick. The stage started from the Red Lion Inn. It is a great event—the starting of a four-horse stage. The guests came out, and so did the boots, and chamber-maids and waiters, and the cook came also. They stood in line and bade the parting guests godspeed, and all the guests were supposed to express gratitude tangibly. The landlady was busy, flying about like a Plymouth Rock hen with a brood of ducks. She saw me handing up the pink-and-white Grace and Myrtle and the dignified, tailor-made White Pigeon, and she came out and apologized profusely for not having had room to accommodate me the night before.

At last all the hatboxes and bloomin' luggage were safely stowed, the trunks were lashed in place behind, and I climbed to the top of the stage and took my seat beside my charges. A merry blast was blown from the tallyho horn. A man with a red coat, high white hat, kid gloves and a brick-dust complexion mounted the box and gathered up a big handful of reins. The hostlers at the heads of the leaders let go, twenty feet of whiplash went singing through the air—and we were off!

We swung through the village with more majesty and clatter than the Empire State Express ever assumed, stopping just an instant at the post-office for a bag of mail that the brick-dusty driver caught with his feet, and then away we went.

I am sorry I did not live in stagecoach times—things are now so dead and dreary and prosaic. Yet I sometimes have imagined that today the stagecoach business in England is a little stagey—many things are done to heighten effects. For instance, the intense excitement of starting is not exactly necessary—why the mad rush? No one is really in a hurry to reach a certain place at a certain time! And all this is apparent when you notice that a mile out of town the pace subsides to a lazy dog-trot, and the boots has jumped down and unchecked each horse so as to make things easy. I was glad the boots got down, for whenever I see a horse's head checked up in the air my impulse is to uncheck him—and once on Wabash Avenue in Chicago I did.

I was arrested, and it cost me five.

The road to Keswick bristles with history. Coleridge, Wordsworth and Southey tramped it many a time, and since their day, thousands of literary pilgrims have come this way. That two poets-laureate should have come from this beautiful corner of the earth of course is interesting, but the honor of being poet-laureate to the King is a shifting honor, depending upon the poet. No title can ever really honor a man, although a man may honor a title, and no King by taking thought can add a cubit to a subject's stature. The man is what he is. Southey succeeded the poet Pye, who was laureate before him.

A weaker nature than mine might here succumb to temptation and play pleasant philological pranks concerning the poet Pye, but I am above all that. Pye was a good man, and if I could remember any of the

lines he wrote, I would here introduce them; but this is doubtless unnecessary, for the gentle reader can recall to suit.

White Pigeon claimed that Pye was greater than Southey, and she further said that Tennyson's reputation suffered by consenting to act as successor to this line of men in whom felicity and insight were the exception. The tierce of Canary was no pay for acting as successor to Pye, but Southey jumped at the Canary and slipped his last vestige of radicalism quickly.

"Oh, what a funny little church," exclaimed Myrtle; "can't we stop and go in?"

It is a curious little building—that church at Wythburn.

It looks like a little girl's playhouse, that might have belonged to her great-great-grandmother.

Opposite this lovely little church is a tavern, where a lovely barmaid in white apron and lovely collar and cuffs stood in the doorway, ready to serve the thirsty. The red-coated driver pulled in on the tavern side, and men in neckerchiefs, hobnailed shoes, blue woolen stockings and knee-breeches made fussy haste to water the horses. Old Brick-Dusty climbed down to see a man in the tavern, and the Michigan contingent and Colonel Littlejourneys slid down the other side and went into Wythburn Church. There isn't another church in England so peculiar and so interesting. A pew is marked sacred to Wordsworth, and one also to Harriet Martineau, who I did not know before ever went to church. The silver service was the gift of Southey, and is inscribed with his name and crest. Southey was a vestryman of Wythburn Church for many years, and sometimes read the service there. I stood in the pulpit where Southey stood, and so did White Pigeon, and I reminded her that she would never be allowed there on Sunday, for Deity is most easily approached and influenced by men, as all theologians know and have ever stoutly held. One of the busy hostlers came in, pulling his forelock, and apologizing, in a voice full of cobwebs, said that the coach was ready to start. We did the proper thing, and also as much for the red-coated driver, who, in spite of great dignity, we saw was open to reward for well-doing. It was a great mistake, though, to "cross his palm," for he began a lecture on the Cumberland Kings, that lasted until we got to Thirlmere, where he stopped at the Pumping-Station, and told us how the city of Manchester

got its water-supply from here. To him all things were equally interesting. He was still deep in the fight between Manchester aldermen and the ‘Ouse of Commons when we reached Castle Rigg. The Vale of Keswick opened before us. We implored the well-informed driver to stop, and then we got down and begged him to go on without us.

Seated there on the bankside we viewed the beautiful scene of lake, valley and village stretching out so peacefully before us, all framed in the dark towering hills. Even Grace forgot to say, “How lovely!” but sat there, chin in hand, rapt and speechless.

Down in that valley, just a little to one side of the village, Southey lived for over forty years, and all the visitors he really liked he took to Castle Rigg, to show them as he said, “the kingdoms of the earth.” It was a view of which he never tired. Coleridge came up this way first, and took lodgings with a Mr. Johnson, who owned Greta Hall. It is not on record that Coleridge paid any rent, but he was so charmed with the location that he induced Southey to come and visit him. Southey came and liked it so well that he remained. He performed here a life-task that staggers one to contemplate: fifty volumes or more of closely set type are shown you at the Keswick Museum, duly labeled, “The Works of Southey,” Charles Lamb’s “Works” were the East India ledgers, but he wrote one little book of Essays that are still sweet and fresh as wood-violets—essays written hot from the heart, often in tears; written because he could not help it, or to please Mary—he did not know which.

No man ever divided his time up more systematically than Southey. He produced political and theological essays, histories, poems, diatribes, apologies and criticisms, and worked as men work in the Carnegie Consolidated Steel Works.

Robert Southey was the precocious son of a Bristol linen-draper. Being rather delicate, his parents did not set him to work in a drygoods-store, but gave him the benefit of Oxford. The thing that brought him first into prominence was an article he wrote for “The Flaggellant,” a college paper, wherein he ridiculed the idea of a devil. Now the powers did not like that—the creed called for a “personal devil,” and they wanted one. They summoned young Southey before them to account for speaking disrespectfully of the devil. The youth was found guilty and expelled.

He was a reckless young man, but recklessness is its own check—in fact, all things in life are self-regulating, everything is limited. Southey's secret marriage with Edith Fricker tamed him. Nothing tames men like marriage; and when babies came, and Coleridge went to Germany, leaving Mrs. Coleridge and young Hartley in his charge, Southey realized he was dealing with a condition, not a theory. Then soon he had the widowed Mrs. Lovell with her brood on his hands, and his old dream of pantisocracy was realized, only not just as he expected.

Too much can not be said for the patience and unflinching fidelity shown by Southey in shouldering the burdens that Fate sent him.

"Any man can succeed with three good women to help him!" said White Pigeon.

"True," said I, "and next in importance to the person who originates a good thing is the one who quotes it." Men weighted with responsibilities fight for the established order. Southey's pension and his steady income came from the men in power, and he made it his business not to offend them. Southey was a scholar; he associated with educated people; and once he complained because he could not get acquainted with workingmen—they shut up like clams on his approach. Of course they did, for we are simple and sincere only with our own.

Learned, scholarly and cultured men are to be pitied, for they are ever the butt, byword and prey of the untaught, who are often the knowing. As success came to Southey he lost the sense of values, that is to say, the sense of humor. He attacked Byron with great severity, and Byron's reply was the dedication of Don Juan, "To the illustrious Poet-Laureate, Robert Southey, LL.D." It was as if the play of "Sappho" were dedicated to the Reverend Doctor Parkhurst.

Southey came out with a card declaring he had given Lord Byron no permission to dedicate any of his detestable works to him. Byron replied, acknowledging all this, but saying he had a right to honor the name of Southey, if he chose, just the same. No taint of excess or folly marks the name of Southey; his life was filled with good work and kind deeds. His name is honored by a monument in the village of Keswick, and in Crosthwaite Church is another monument to his memory, the inscription being written by Wordsworth.

Were Heaven a place, I still politely maintain, it would probably be located in the Lake District of England.

Every man of genius the world has ever produced has come from a little belt of land in the North Temperate Zone. Snow and cold, rock and mountain, danger and difficulty—these are the conditions required to make men. The heaven of which I can conceive is a place with plenty of oxygen, sunshine and water. In a mountainous country water runs (I hope no one will dispute this) and winds blow, and running water and air in motion are always pure.

When I have no thoughts worth recording I take a walk, and the elements, which seem to carry soul, fill me to the brim.

The Tropics may have much to offer in way of soft, luxurious creature comforts. But the Tropics supply sundry and divers discomforts as well, and really offer too much; for with the flowers, vines, fruits and never-ending foliage go mosquitoes, tarantulas, and snakes that wiggle and sometimes bite.

The climate of Cumberland does not overpower one—the air is of a quality that urges you on to think and do.

By no reach of imagination can one conjure forth anything more beautiful in Nature than is to be realized in vicinity of Keswick; and no home thereabouts surpasses Greta Hall in charm of location and quiet, simple beauty.

Greta Hall is a rambling pile, constructed partly of stone and partly of wood, evolved rather than built, for evidently the work was done by many hands, and stretched over a century or more of time. Vines and flowers, fruits and shrubbery, stone walls covered close by creeping bellflowers where birds chirrup and cheep and play hide-and-seek the livelong day—all these are there. The house is situated on a little wooded plateau that overlooks the lake, and back of it the solemn and everlasting hills stand guard. There are no such mountains here as one sees in Switzerland, overpowering, vast, awful in their majesty; but just green-topped, self-sufficient and friendly hills that invite you to lift up your eyes and be strong.

Visitors are welcome to the grounds at Greta Hall at all times, and the kind old gardener who showed us about gathered us bouquets of

mignonette, rue and thyme, and gave us the history of a wonderful pear-tree that had turned into a vine and now covers one whole side of a stable thirty feet long. Even a tree will lose its individuality if it is not allowed to assert its nature and care for itself. That particular pear-tree, we were told, sprang from a slip planted by Shelley when he once came here on a visit to Southey; and we were further told that the year Shelley was drowned, the leaves of this tree turned pale and withered, and only by patient, loving nursing on the part of our old gardener's father was its life saved. The residence was closed the day we were there, in dread anticipation of Cook tourists with designs on the shrubbery, we had reason to believe, but we lingered around the grounds, listened to the soothing, rippling lullaby of the Greta, watched the strutting peacocks, and ate bread-and-milk, under the trees, out of big bowls supplied us by the old gardener for the most modest of considerations.

Southey never really mixed in the wealth of beauty that covers this beautiful corner of earth. He was learned and profound, and he took himself and the Church and the State seriously. He felt himself a part of an indestructible institution, whereas man and all his works are no more peculiar, no more wonderful than an ant-hill—and last only a day longer. He never realized that he was a part of the great whole that made up mountain, lake, globe, wooded glen and tireless river. He differentiated. He considered himself a man, an educated man, and therefore a little better, and a little above, and a little outside of it all—otherwise how could he have withered at the top at the early age of sixty-seven?

This question White Pigeon asked as we sat in the dim quiet of Crosthwaite Church, down in the village. I did not attempt to reply—people do not ask questions expecting, necessarily, to have them answered. We ask questions in order to clarify our own minds.

The warning blast of the coach-horn was heard, and we went out into the sunshine. I bade my three friends good-by (first placing my autograph on Grace's and Myrtle's fans), and they climbed to the top of the coach. I sat on the stone wall and watched them until they disappeared around the bend of the road, waving handkerchiefs. That night I made my way over to Penreith on the way to Carlisle. It had been a day brimming with thought and feeling, and beauty expressed and unexpressed, and the kindness of kind friends who understand. That night as I dozed off into deep, calm sleep I said to myself: "They were

great men, those Lake Poets, and the world is better because they lived. But there will come other men and they will be greater than those gone—the best is yet to be.”

SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE

Beneath the blaze of a tropical sun the mountain peaks are the Thrones of Frost, this through the absence of objects to reflect the rays.

What no one with us shares, seems scarce our own—we need another to reflect our thoughts.

—

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

Samuel T. Coleridge was a thinker, and thinkers are so rarely found that the world must take note of them. John Stuart Mill, writing in Eighteen Hundred Forty, assigned first place among English

philosophers to Jeremy Bentham, incidentally mentioning that Samuel Taylor Coleridge was Bentham's only rival.

In philosophy there is an apostolic succession. We build on the past, and all the centuries of turmoil and travail which have gone before have made this moment possible. There has never been any such thing as "the fall of man"; for the march of the race has been a continual climb—a movement onward and upward. Were it not for Coleridge and Bentham, we could not have had Buckle, Wallace and Spencer, for the minds of men would not have been prepared to give them a hearing. "Half the battle is in catching the Speaker's eye," said Thomas Brackett Reed; and a John the Baptist to prepare the way is always necessary. Without Coleridge to quietly ignore the question of precedent, and refuse to accept a thing without proof, and ask eternally and yet again, "How do you know?" Charles Darwin with his "Origin of Species" would have been laughed out of court. Or probably had Darwin been persistent we would have consigned him to the stocks, burned his book in the public square, and with the aid of logical thumbscrews made him recant.

Even as it was, the gibes and guffaws of the press and pulpit came near drowning the modest, moderate voice of Darwin; and for a score of years, his reputation as a scientist seemed to be trembling in the balance. Yet today the man who would seriously attempt in an educated assembly to throw obloquy upon the doctrine of Evolution and the name of Charles Darwin would find himself speedily listed with Brudder Jasper of Richmond, Virginia. The Church now, everywhere, has its Drummonds, who build on Darwin and use his citations as proof; and Drummond merely expressed what the many believe—no more.

The man who has dared to think for himself and voiced his thought—the emancipated man—has been as one in a million. What usually passes for thought is only the repetition of things we have heard or been told. We memorize, repeat by rote and call it thought.

With the Church and State in control of food and clothes, and with spears, clubs, knives and guns ready to suppress whatsoever seemed dangerous to their stability, it is a miracle that men have ever improved on anything—for progress has been for centuries a perilous performance. To question a priest was blasphemy. To reason with a judge was heinous. To think and decide for yourself was to invite torture and death.

And all this was very natural, simply because the superior class who monopolized the good things of earth were obliged, in order to enslave and tax men, to make them believe that their power was derived from God. And thus was taught the “divine right of kings,” the duty of submission, the necessity of belief and the sinfulness of doubt. The source of all knowledge was declared to be a book, and the right of interpretation of this book was given to one class alone—those who sided with and were a part of the Superior Class.

The reason the race has progressed so slowly is because the strong, vigorous and independent have been suppressed, either by legal process, or exterminated through war, which reaps the best and lets the weak, the diseased and the cowards go.

Those who doubted and questioned have been deprived of food and clothes, disgraced, mobbed, robbed, lashed naked at the cart’s tail, burned at the stake, or separated from their families and transported beyond the sea to be devoured by wild beasts, die in jungles, or toil out their lives in slavery.

But still there were always a few who would doubt and a few who would question; and in the early part of the Eighteenth Century in England the government was being put to severe straits to cope with the difficulty. Lying in the Thames were receiving-ships on which were crowded men and women to be transported. When the ship was full, crowded to her utmost, she sailed away with her living cargo. From Sixteen Hundred Fifty to Seventeen Hundred Fifty, over forty thousand people were sent away for their country’s good. The hangman worked overtime, all prisons were crowded, and the walls of Newgate bulged with men and women, old and young, who were believed to be dangerous to the stability and well-being of the superior class—that is, those who had the right to tax others.

Finally, the enormity of bloodshed and woe involved caused a sort of concession on both sides to be agreed upon. Oppression continued will surely lead to a point where it cures itself, and the superior class in England, with a wise weather-eye, saw the reef on which they were in danger of striking. They heard the breakers, and began to grant concessions—unwillingly of course—concessions wrung from them. The censorship was abolished, reform bills introduced, the rights of free

speech and a free press were partially recognized. The clergy, taking the cue, began to preach more love and less damnation; for the pew ever dictates to the pulpit what it shall preach. Thus general relaxation was in order to meet the competition of rival sects and independent preachers that were springing up; for although creeds never change, yet their interpretation does, and liberal sects do their work, not by growing strong, but by making all others more liberal.

Thus the latter part of the Eighteenth Century witnessed a weakening of both sides through compromise. The schools and colleges were pedantic, complacent, smug and self-satisfied; by giving in a few points they had absorbed the radicals, and the political protesters had been bought off with snug places in the excise. Pretended knowledge passed for wisdom, dignity paraded as worth, affectation and hypocrisy patronized virtue. And Coleridge appears upon the scene, a conservative, with a beautiful innocence and an indifference to all pretended authority and asks, “How do you know?”

The number of people who have written their names large in literature, who were the children of clergymen, is no mere coincidence. Tennyson, Addison, Goldsmith, Emerson, Lowell, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Coleridge—you can add to the list to suit. Young people follow example, and the habit of the father in writing out his thoughts causes others of the family to try it, too. Then there is an atmosphere of books in a rectory, and leisure to think, and best of all the income is not so great but that the practise of economy of time and money is duly enforced by necessity. To be launched into a library and learn by absorption is a great blessing.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in Seventeen Hundred Seventy-two, the son of the Reverend John Coleridge, of Ottery Saint Mary, a small village of Devonshire. The rector was also a schoolmaster, just as all clergymen were before division of labor forced itself upon us. This worthy clergyman was twice married, his first wife bearing him three children, the second ten. Samuel was the last of the brood—the thirteenth—but his parents were not superstitious.

The youngest in a big family, like the first, is apt to have a deal of love lavished upon him. The question of discipline has proved its own

futility, and when a baby comes to parents approaching fifty, depend upon it, that child transforms the household into a monarchy, with himself as tyrant. This may be well and it may not.

Little Samuel Taylor seemed to be aware of his power; he evolved a wondrous precocity and ruled the rectory with a rod of iron. When he was five he propounded questions that shook the orthodoxy of the worthy vicar to its very center.

Yet, remarkable as was the intellect of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the family would not have remained in obscurity without him. In fact, the very brightness of his fame caused the excellence of his brothers to be lost in the shadow. His brother James became the father of Henry Nelson Coleridge, who married his cousin Sara, the daughter of our poet.

To anticipate a little, it is well enough here to say that the daughter of Coleridge was a woman of remarkable excellence, and if you wish to disprove the adage that genius does not transmit itself she is a good example to bring up—even though there is a difference between fact and truth. James Coleridge was also the father of Mr. Justice Coleridge, himself the father of Lord Chief Justice Coleridge.

And since iconoclasm is not out of place in an essay on Coleridge, it can also be stated that when Sara Coleridge married her cousin she did a wise thing. The marriage was a most happy one, and the children of these cousins have shown themselves to be beyond the average. And once, certainly not with his daughter in mind, Coleridge debated the question of consanguinity with Charles Lamb, and proved to his own satisfaction at least that the marriage of cousins was eminently sane, proper, just and right, and fraught with the best results for humanity.

The only indictment that can be brought against the father of Coleridge is that he was a zealous Latin scholar, and proposed that the term “ablative” be abolished as insufficient, and in its stead should be used that of “quale-quare-quiddative case.” He was a simple, amiable, excellent man who did his work the best he could, and was beloved by all the parish. As to the excellence of the established order of things he had no doubts—government and religion were divine institutions and should be upheld by all honest men.

As to the vicar’s wife we know little, but enough of a glance is given into her character through letters to show that she had in her make-up a

trace of noble discontent. She was not entirely happy in her surroundings, and the amiable ways of her husband were often an exasperation to her, rather than a pleasure—even amiability can be overdone. He never saw more than a mile from home, but her eyes swept England from Cornwall to Scotland, and few men, even, saw so far as that a hundred years ago. The discontent of Samuel Taylor Coleridge was the heritage of mother to son. When Samuel was nine years of age the father passed away. The widow would have been in sore financial straits had it not been for the older children, and even as it was, strict economy and untiring industry were in order. Out of sympathy, Mr. Justice Buller, who had been a pupil of the Reverend John Coleridge, proposed to secure the youngest boy a scholarship in Christ's Hospital School, and so we find him entered there, July Eighteenth, Seventeen Hundred Eighty-two. This was a year memorable in the history of America; and the alertness of the charity boy's intellect is shown in that he was aware of the struggle between England and the Colonies. He discussed the situation with his schoolfellows, and explained that the mother country had made a mistake in exacting too much. His sympathies were with the Colonies, but he thought submission on their part was in order when the stamp-tax was removed and that complete independence was absurd—the Colonies needed some one to protect them.

Such reasoning in a boy of ten years seems strange, especially in view of the fact that a noted professor of pedagogy has recently explained to us that no child under fourteen is capable of independent reasoning.

But it is quite certain that young Coleridge's opinions were not borrowed, for all the lad's acquaintances, who thought of the matter at all, considered the Americans simply "rebels" who merited death.

Coleridge remained at Christ's Hospital for eight years, and before he left had easily taken his place as "Deputy Grecian." Charles Lamb has given many delightful glimpses of that schoolboy life in the "Essays of Elia."

Middleton, afterward Bishop of Calcutta, called the attention of Boyer, the master, to Coleridge by saying, "There is a boy who reads Vergil for amusement!" Boyer was a strict disciplinarian, but he was ever

on the lookout for a lad who loved books—the average youth getting out of all the study he could.

The master began to encourage young Coleridge, and Coleridge responded. He wrote verses and essays, and was a prodigy in memorizing. According to Boyer's idea, and it was the prevailing idea everywhere then, and is yet in some sections, memorization was the one thing desirable. If the subject were Plato, and the master had forgotten his book, he called on Coleridge to recite. And the tall, fair-haired boy, with the big dreamy eyes, would rise and give page after page, "verbatim et literatim."

Before Coleridge went to Cambridge, when nineteen years old he had taken on that masterly quality in conversation that made his society sought, even to the last. Lamb has told us of the gentle voice, not loud nor deep, but full of mellow intonations, and bell-like in its purity.

Such a voice, laden with fine feeling, carrying conviction, only goes with a great soul. No doubt, though, the young man had grown into a bit of a dictator, and this habit of harangue he carried with him to College. To talk enabled him to think, and expression is necessary to growth. So the habit of argument with Coleridge seemed Nature's method of developing his powers of mental analysis. No more foolish saying was ever launched than, "Children should be seen and not heard." From lisping babyhood Coleridge talked, and talked much. When he was twenty, at Cambridge, he drew the boys to his room, until it was crowded to suffocation, just by the magic of his voice, and the subtle quality of his thought. His questioning mind went right to the heart of things, and in his divisions and heads and subheads even the professors could not always follow him. Let us hope that he himself always knew what he was trying to explain.

He discussed metaphysics, theology and politics, and very naturally got to treading on thin ice.

In theology his reasoning led him into Unitarianism, then a very fearful thing; and in politics he dallied with Madame la Revolution.

A polite note from the Master of the College, suggesting that he talk less and follow the curriculum a little more closely, led him straight to

the Master, with whom he proposed to argue the case, or publicly debate it. This was terrible!

Stephen Crane at Syracuse University, a hundred years later, did just such a thing. He sought to argue a point in the classroom with Chancellor Symms.

“Tut, tut!” said the Chancellor. “Have you forgotten what Saint Paul says on that very theme?”

“Yes, I know,” replied the best catcher ever on the Syracuse Nine; “yes, I know what Saint Paul says, but I differ with Saint Paul.” And Stevie, unconsciously, was standing on the well-lubricated chute that landed him, soon, well outside the campus.

The authorities did not admire the brilliant young Coleridge, full of his reasons and prolix abstractions. He was attracting too much attention to himself, and gradually gathering about him a throng of admirers who might disturb the balance of things. He was there anyway only through sufferance, and an intimation was given him that if he were not willing to accept things as they existed, and as they were taught, he had better go elsewhere.

Piqued by his treatment and feeling he had been misunderstood and wronged, he suddenly disappeared.

Some months afterwards, an acquaintance found him in a company of dragoons, duly enlisted in His Majesty’s service, under an assumed name.

The authorities at Jesus College were notified, and knowing that such a youth was out of place serving as a soldier, and feeling further a small pang of regret possibly for having driven him away, a plan was set on foot to secure his discharge. This was soon brought about, and doubtless much to Coleridge’s relief. Erelong he found himself back at Cambridge —a little subdued, and a trifle more discreet, for his rough contact with the workaday world.

A journey to Oxford, to visit an old friend, proved a pivotal point in his life. The fame of Coleridge as a poet had gone abroad, and the literary fledglings at Oxford sought to do the visitor honor in the proper way. Among others whom he met on this visit were Robert Southey and Robert Lovell, both poets of considerable local fame.

Lovell had been married but a few months before to a young woman by the name of Fricker. Southey was engaged to a sister of the bride, and there was still a third sister fancy-free. The three poets became fast friends. They were all radicals, full of ambition to make a name for themselves, and all intent on elevating society out of the ruts into which it had fallen. All had suffered contumely on account of advanced ideas; and all were out of conceit with the existing order.

They discussed the matter at length, and decided to set the world an example, by founding an ideal colony and showing how to make the most of life.

Coleridge had long been interested in America, and from an acquaintanceship with sundry soldiers who had helped fight the battles of George the Third in the New World, he had gathered a rather romantic idea of the country. The stories of returned sailors and soldiers, told to civilians, are seldom exactly authentic. And Coleridge the poet, bubbling with the effervescence of youth, argued that a home on the banks of the Susquehanna, with love and books and comradeship, was the ideal condition.

The matter was broached to the three sisters Fricker, and they of course responded—what woman worthy of the name of woman would not? And so the arrangements were fast being made, and as a necessary feature the three poets were duly and legally married to the three sisters, and Eden was to be peopled with the best.

A date was arranged for sailing, but some trifling matter of finance delayed the exodus—in fact, certain expected loans were not forthcoming. Coleridge put in the time lecturing and preaching from Unitarian pulpits. He also tried his hand as editor, but the publication scheme failed to bring the shekels that were to buy emancipation. The innate contrariness of things seemed to be blocking all his plans.

Meanwhile we find Lovell drifting off into commercialism. That is to say, Barabbas-like, he had turned publisher. Gadzooks! What would you have a man with a wife and baby do? Live on moonshine—well, well, well!

Death claimed poor Lovell before he could make a success either of commerce or of art.

Coleridge moved up to the Lake District, and at Keswick, near where the water comes down at Lodore—or did before the stream dried up—he rented rooms of a kind friend by the name of Johnson, who owned Greta Hall. Southey was writing articles for London papers. He received a guinea a column, and when he wrote a poem, as he did every little while, he sent it to a publisher who returned him a little good cash.

Southey's wife went up to Keswick on a visit to see her sister, Mrs. Coleridge. Southey followed up to Keswick, and rather liked the situation. The Southeys and the Coleridges all lived together as one happy family.

Southey was writing poetry and getting paid for it; and beside this had a small income. Coleridge allowed Southey to buy the supplies, and when he went away on tramp lecturing tours he felt perfectly safe in leaving his family with Southey.

While up that way he met a young man, a native, by the name of Wordsworth—William Wordsworth—and a poet, too.

Wordsworth had a sister named Dorothy, and this brother and sister lived together in a little whitewashed stone cottage, built up against the hillside at Grasmere, a village thirteen miles from Keswick. Coleridge liked these people first-rate and they liked him. He used to go down to visit them, and they would all sit up late listening to the splendid talk of the handsome Coleridge. William said he was the only great man he had ever met, and Dorothy agreed in the proposition.

Coleridge was discouraged: the world did not care for his work, and the men in power had set their faces against him—or he thought they had, which is the same thing. There was a conspiracy, he thought, to keep him down; and Wordsworth should have advised him to join it, but did not.

Dorothy Wordsworth was a most extraordinary woman—she was gentle, kind, low-voiced, sympathetic. She was not handsome, but she had the intellect that entitled her to a membership in the Brotherhood of Fine Minds. She knew the splendid excellence of Coleridge, and could follow him in his most abstract dissertations; and if his logic faltered she could lead him back to the trail.

Dorothy Wordsworth admired and pitied Coleridge; and from pity to love is but a step.

But Coleridge was not capable of a passionate love—the substance of his being was all absorbed in abstract thought. And yet Dorothy Wordsworth attracted him as no other woman ever did. He forgot his wife, Sara, up there at Southey's. Sara was a better-looking woman than Dorothy, but she lacked intellect. Her life was all bound up in housekeeping and going to church, and the petty little round of daily happenings to neighbors and friends. The world of thought and dreams to her was nothing. She loved her husband, but his foolish foibles vexed her, and his lack of application prompted her to chide him. And at such times he would turn to his friends at Dove Cottage for sympathy and rest.

They used to tramp the hills, and discuss philosophy, and recite their poems the livelong day. It was on one such jaunt that out of the ghost of shoreless seas they sighted the "Ancient Mariner." Then Coleridge went ahead, completed the plot and gave the poem to the world. And once he said, half-boastfully, to Dorothy: "This old seafaring poem is valuable in that it is a tale no one will understand, but which will excite universal interest. Only the perfectly sane and sensible is dull."

Wordsworth had read somewhat of the works of the German philosophers, and as he and his sister had a little money saved up they decided to go over and attend the lectures at the University of Göttingen for awhile. Coleridge had nothing in the way to prevent his going, too, save that he didn't have the money. However, he wanted to go and so decided to lay the case before the sons of Josiah Wedgwood. These young men had been schoolfellows of Coleridge at Cambridge, and once he had gone home with them and so had met their father.

And right here comes a very strong temptation to say not another word about Coleridge, but merge this essay off into a sketch of that most excellent, strong and noble man, Josiah Wedgwood. Here is a man who left his impress indelibly on the times, and whose influence outweighed that of a dozen prime ministers. The potter is gone, but he lives in his art, so we still have the best and purest and noblest of the soul of Josiah Wedgwood.

This man had assisted Coleridge at Cambridge, and it was to his sons Coleridge looked for help to realize his Susquehanna dream of Utopia.

But the Wedgwoods knew the hazy, moonshine quality of the project and made excuses.

Coleridge now appealed to them for assistance in a saner project, and they supplied him the money to go to Göttingen.

His stay of fourteen months in Germany gave him a firm hold on the language, and a goodly glimpse into the philosophy of Kant, Leibnitz and Schleiermacher. When Coleridge returned to England, he went at once to see his interesting family. Rumor has it that Mrs. Coleridge, in addition to caring for her own little brood and assisting in the Southey household, had also been working in the Keswick lead-pencil factory for a weekly wage of twelve shillings. The philosopher did not much like this lowering of dignity, and said so mildly. This led to the truthful explanation that he had hardly done his duty by his family in allowing them to shift for themselves or be cared for by kinsmen; and therefore advice from him was out of place. In short, Southey intimated that while he would care for his sisters-in-law he drew the line at brothers-in-law. And Samuel Taylor Coleridge drifted up to London (being down) to see if something would not turn up.

His first task there was to translate “Werther,” but the work did not seem to go. Grub Street took up the brilliant talker, and for a time he gave parlor lectures and filled the air of thought and speculation with his brilliant pyrotechnics. The force of his mind was everywhere acknowledged, but someway he did not seem to get on. Men who have managed the finances of a nation often have not been able successfully to control their own; and more than once we have had the spectacle of one who could do the thinking for a world failing in the humdrum duties of a citizen and neighbor. Coleridge tried various things, among others a secretaryship that took him to Malta, but the lack of system in his habits and his absent-mindedness made him the prey and butt of “practical” men.

When Carlyle said that no more dreary record than the lives of authors existed, save the Newgate Calendar, he spoke truth.

That the lives of most authors is a series of misunderstandings, blunders, heart-burnings, tragedies, is a fact. The author is a man who

diverts and amuses us by doing the things we would do if we had time; and if we like him it is only because he expresses the things we already know. His is a hard task, requiring intense concentration—a concentration that can only be continued for a short time without the absolute burning out of existence.

To think one's best and write out ideas is an abnormal operation. The most artistic work is always done in a sort of fever or ecstacy, which in its very nature is transient. To hunt and fish and dream and to work with one's hands are all very natural; but to sit down and think and then express your thoughts by the artificial scheme of writing on paper is a dangerous operation. If carried to excess it shall be paid for by your life.

Coleridge had turned night into day in his hot zeal to follow the winding, dancing mystery of existence to its inmost recess. At times he had forgotten to eat or sleep; and then to reinforce despairing nature he had resorted to stimulants.

Digestion had become impaired, circulation faulty through lack of exercise, so sleeplessness followed stimulation. Then to quiet pain came the use of the drug that brings oblivion. And lo! thought burned up brighter than ever and all the dreams of youth and twenty came trooping back.

Coleridge had made a discovery. He thought he was getting the start of God Almighty; but he wasn't, for men have tried that before, and are trying it today, and many know not yet that we are strong only as we cling close to the skirts of Mother Nature and follow lovingly in her ways.

From his twenty-ninth year we find Coleridge a wreck in mind and body; shuffling, sick, disheartened, erratic, uncertain, yet occasionally brilliant. He tramped the streets, feared and shunned. His money was gone, his power of concentration had vanished. In search of bread he met an old-time friend, Doctor Gillman.

"Gillman," said Coleridge, "I am sick and helpless—look at me!"

"Why don't you come to my house and live with me?" asked the kind friend.

"Gillman," said the poor man, "Gillman, I am on my way there!"

So Gillman brought him to his house up at Highgate and took care of him as a child. And there he remained, the pride and pet of a group of brave, thinking men and women.

He lived on for thirty years, under the kindly, skilful care of his friend, but all the real work of his life was done before he was thirty. Occasionally the old fire would flash forth, and the wit and insight of his youth would shine out. Keats, Shelley, Lord Byron, and others strong and great sought him out to hold converse with him. And so he existed, a sort of oracle, amiable, kind and generous—wreck of a man that was—protected and defended by loving friends; while up at Keswick, Southey cared for his wife and educated his children as though they were his own.

“I am dying,” said Coleridge to Gillman in July, Eighteen Hundred Thirty-four; “dying, but I should have died, like Keats, in youth and not have made myself a burden to you—do you forgive me?” We can guess the answer.

The dust of Coleridge rests in Highgate Cemetery, just a step from where he lived all those years. He, himself, selected the place and wrote his epitaph. The simple monument that marks the spot was paid for by kind friends who remembered him and loved him and who pardoned him for all that he was not, in memory of what he once had been.

To a young man from the country, who makes his way up, no greater shock ever comes than the discovery that rich people are, for the most part, woefully ignorant. He has always imagined that material splendor and spiritual gifts go hand in hand; and now if he is wise he discovers that millionaires are too busy making money, and too anxious about what they have made, and their families are too intent on spending it, ever to acquire a calm, judicial mental attitude.

The rich are not the leisure class, and they need education no less than the poor. Lord, enlighten thou our enemies, should be the prayer of every man who works for progress: give clearness to their mental perceptions, awaken in them the receptive spirit, soften their callous hearts, and arouse their powers of reason.

Danger lies in their folly, not in their wisdom; their weakness is to be feared, not their strength.

That the wealthy and influential class should fear change, and cling stubbornly to conservatism, is certainly to be expected.

To convince this class that spiritual and temporal good can be improved upon by a more liberal policy has been a task a thousand times greater than the exciting of the poor to riot. It is easy to fire the discontented, but to arouse the rich and carry truth home to the blindly prejudiced is a different matter. Too often the reformer has been one who caused the rich to band themselves against the poor.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was a Tory who defended the existing order on the plea of its usefulness.

He approached the vital issue from the inside, taught the conservative to think, and thus opened the eyes of the aristocrats without exciting their fears or unduly arousing their wrath.

Self-preservation prompts men to move in the line of least resistance. And that any man should ever have put his safety in peril by questioning the authority of those able and ready to confiscate his property and take away his life is very strange. Such a person must belong to one of two types. He must be either a revolutionist—one who would supplant existing authority with his own, thus knowingly and willingly hazarding all—or he is an innocent, indiscreet individual, absolutely devoid of all interest in the main chance.

Coleridge belonged to the last-mentioned type. Genius needs a keeper. Here was a man so absorbed in abstract thought, so intent on attaining high and holy truth, that he neglected his friends, neglected his family, neglected himself until his body refused to obey the helm. It is easy to find fault with such a man, but to refuse to grant an admiring recognition of his worth, on account of what he was not, is an error, pardonable only to the rude, crude and vulgar. The cultivated mind sees the good and fixes attention on that.

Coleridge formulated no system, solved no complex problems, made no brilliant discoveries. But his habit of analysis enriched the world beyond power to compute. He taught men to think and separate truth from error. He was not popular, for he did not adapt himself to the many. His business was to teach teachers—he conducted a Normal School, and taught teachers how to teach. Coleridge went to the very bottom of a subject, and his subtle mind refused to take anything for granted. He

approached every proposition with an unprejudiced mind. In his “Aids to Reflection,” he says, “He who begins by loving Christianity better than truth will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity, and then end in loving himself better than all.”

The average man believes a thing first, and then searches for proof to bolster his opinion. Every observer must have noticed the tenuous, cobweb quality of reasons that are deemed sufficient to the person who thinks he knows, or whose interests lie in a certain direction. The limitations of men seem to make it necessary that pure truth should come to us through men who are stripped for eternity. Kant, the villager who never traveled more than a day’s walk from his birthplace, and Coleridge, the homeless and houseless aristocrat, with no selfish interests in the material world, view things without prejudice.

The method of Coleridge, from his youth, was to divide the whole into parts. Then he begins to eliminate, and divides down, rejecting all things that are not the thing, until he finds the thing. He begins all inquiries by supposing that nothing is known on the subject. He will not grant you that murder and robbery are bad—you must show why they are bad, and if you can not explain, he will take the subject up and divide it into heads for you.

First, the effect on the sufferer. Second, the evil to the doer. Third, the danger of a bad example. Fourth, the injury to society through the feeling of insecurity. Fifth, the pain given to the families of both doer and sufferer. Next he will look for excuses for the crime and give all the credit he can; and then finally strike a balance and give a conclusion.

One of Coleridge’s best points was in calling attention to what constitutes proof; he saw all fallacies and discovered at a glance illusions in logic that had long been palmed off on the world as truth. He saw the gulf that lies between coincidence and sequence, and hastened the day when the old-time pedant with his mighty tomes and tiresome sermons about nothing should be no more. And so today, in the Year of Grace Nineteen Hundred, the man who writes must have something to say, and he who speaks must have a message. “Coleridge,” says Principal Shairp, “was the originator and creator of the higher criticism.” The race has gained ground, made head upon the whole; and thanks to the thinkers gone, there are thinkers now in every community who weigh, sift, try and

decide. No statement made by an interested party can go unchallenged. “How do you know?” and “Why?” we ask.

That is good which serves—man is the important item, this earth is the place, and the time is now. So all good men and women and all churches are endeavoring to make earth heaven; and all agree that to live, now and here, the best you can, is the fittest preparation for a life to come.

We no longer accept the doctrine that our natures are rooted in infamy, and that the desires of the flesh are cunning traps set by Satan, with God’s permission, to undo us. We believe that no one can harm us but ourselves, that sin is misdirected energy, that there is no devil but fear, and that the universe is planned for good. On every side we find beauty and excellence held in the balance of things. We know that work is needful, that winter is as necessary as summer, that night is as useful as day, that death is a manifestation of life, and just as good. We believe in the Now and Here. We believe in a power that is in ourselves that makes for righteousness.

These things have not been taught us by a superior class who have governed us for a consideration, and to whom we have paid taxes and tithes—we have simply thought things out for ourselves, and in spite of them. We have listened to Coleridge, and others, who said: “You should use your reason and separate the good from the bad, the false from the true, the useless from the useful. Be yourself and think for yourself; and while your conclusions may not be infallible they will be nearer right than the opinions forced upon you by those who have a personal interest in keeping you in ignorance. You grow through the exercise of your faculties, and if you do not reason now you never will advance. We are all sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. Claim your heritage!”

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

The stimulus subsided. The paroxysms ended in prostration. Some took refuge in melancholy, and their eminent chief alternated between a menace and a sigh. As I sat opposite the Treasury bench, the Ministers reminded me of those marine landscapes not unusual on the coasts of South America. You behold a range of exhausted volcanoes; not a flame flickers on a single pallid crest; but the situation is still dangerous: there are occasional earthquakes, and ever and anon the dark rumblings of the sea.

—Speech at Manchester

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

Since Disraeli was born a Jew, he was received into the Jewish Church with Jewish rites. But Judaism, standing in the way of his ambition, and his parents' ambition for him, the religion of his fathers was renounced and he became, in name, a Christian. Yet to the last his heart was with his people, and the glory of his race was his secret pride.

The fine irony of affiliating with a people who worship a Jew as their Savior, but who have legislated against, and despised the Jew—this attracted Disraeli. With them he bowed the knee in an adoration they did not feel, and while his lips said the litany, his heart repeated Ben Ezra's prayer. In temperament he belonged with the double-dealing East. He intuitively knew the law of jiu jitsu, best exemplified by the Japanese, and won often by yielding. He was bold, but not too bold.

Israel Zangwill, shrewdest, keenest and kindliest of Jews—with the tragedy of his race pictured on his furrowed face, a face like an ancient weather-worn statue on whose countenance grief has petrified—has summed up the character of Disraeli as no other man ever has or can. I will not rob the reader by quoting from "The Primrose Sphinx"—that gem of letters must ever stand together without subtraction of a word. It belongs to the realm of the lapidary, and its facets can not be transferred. Yet when Mr. Zangwill refers to the Mephistophelian curl of Lord Beaconsfield's lip, the word is used advisedly. No character in history so stands for the legendary Mephisto as does this man. The Satan of the Book of Job, jaunty, daring, joking with his Maker, is the Mephisto of Goethe and all the other playwriters who, have used the character. Mephisto is so much above the ordinary man in sense of humor—which is merely the right estimate of values—so sweeping in intellect, that Milton pictures him as a dispossessed god, the only rival of Deity.

Disraeli, not satisfied with playing the part of Mephisto and tempting men to their ruin, but thirsting for a wider experience, turns Faustus himself and sells his soul for a price. He knows that everything in life is sold—nothing is given gratis—we pay for knowledge with tears; for love with pain; for life with death. He haggles and barters with Fate, and pays the penalty because he must.

He alternately affronts and cajoles his enemies; takes all that the world has to give; knows every pleasure; wins every prize; makes love to the daughters of men (without loving them); and winning the one he

selects, secretly thanks Jehovah, God of his fathers, that he leaves no offspring—because the woman fit for his mate and equal to mothering his children does not exist.

The sublimity of his egotism stands unrivaled. It is so great that it is admirable. We lift our hats to this man. Napoleon gained the field without prejudice; but this man enters the list with hate and prejudice arrayed against him. He plays the pawns of chance with literature, religion, politics, and moves the queen so as to checkmate all adversaries. He flouts love, but to show the world that he yet knows the ideal, he occasionally pictures truth and trusting affection in his speeches and books. This entire game of life is to him only a diversion.

They may jeer him down in the House of Commons, but his patience is unruffled. He says, “Very well, I will wait.” Now and again he smiles that wondrous, contagious smile, showing his white teeth and the depth of his dark, burning eyes.

He knows his power. He revels in the wit he never expresses; he glories in this bright blade of the intellect that is never fully unsheathed.

They think he is interested in English politics—pish! Only world problems really interest him, and those that lie behind mean as much to him as those that are to come. He is one with eternity, and the vanquished glory of Rome, the marble beauty of Athens, the Assyrian Sphinx, the flight from Egypt under the leadership of one who had killed his man—yet had talked with God face to face—these and the dim uncertainty of the unseen, are the things that interest him. He is a dreamer of the Ghetto.

There was no taint of mixed blood in the veins of Benjamin Disraeli. He traced his ancestry in a record that looks like a chapter from the Book of Numbers. His forebears had known every persecution, every contumely, slight and disgrace. Driven from Spain by the Inquisition, barely escaping with life, when Jewish blood actually fertilized the fields about Granada, his direct ancestor became one of the builders of Venice. The Jews practically controlled the trade of the world in the sun-kissed days of prosperity, when Venice produced the books and the art of Christendom.

To trace an ancestry back to those who enthroned Venice on her hundred isles was surely something of which to be proud; and into the blood of Benjamin Disraeli went a dash of the gleam and glory and glamour of Venice—the Venice of the Doges.

This man's grandfather came to England with a goodly fortune, which he managed to increase as the years went by. He had one son, Isaac, who nearly broke his parents' heart in that he not only showed no aptitude for business, but actually wrote poems wherein commerce was held up to ridicule. The tendency of the artistic nature to speak with disdain of the "mere money-grabber," and the habit of the "money-grabber" to refer patronizingly to the helpless, theoretical and dreamy artist, is well known. Isaac Disraeli was an artist in feeling; he must have been a reincarnation of one of those bookmakers of Venice who touched hands with Titian and Giorgione and helped to invest wisely the moneys the merchants of the Rialto made. Never a Gratiano had a greater contempt for a merchant than he. Just to get him out of the way, his parents packed Isaac off to Europe, where he acquired several languages, and some other things, with that ease which the Jew always manifests. He dallied in art, pecked at books, and made the acquaintance of many literary men.

When his father died and left him a goodly fortune, he had the sense to turn the entire management of the estate over to his wife, a woman with a thorough business instinct, while he busied himself with his books.

Benjamin was the second child of these parents. He had a sister older than himself, and two brothers younger. Those philosophers who claim that spirits have their own individuality in the unseen world, and the accident of birth really does not constitute a kinship between brothers and sisters, will find here something that looks like proof. Benjamin Disraeli bore no resemblance in mental characteristics to his sister or brothers; he did, however, possess the mental virtues of both father and mother, multiplied by ten.

When twelve years of age he exhibited that intense disposition for mastery which was through life his distinguishing trait. The Jew does not outrank the Gentile in strength, but the average Jew surely does have the faculty of concentration which the average Gentile does not possess. And

that is what constitutes strength—the ability to focus the mind on one thing and compass it: to concentrate is power.

When Ben was sent to the Unitarian school at Walthamstow, aged fifteen, it was his first taste of school life. Up to this time his father had been his tutor. Now he found himself cast into that den of wild animals—an English school for boys. His Jewish name and features and his dandy ways and attire made him the instant butt of the playground. Ben very patiently surveyed his tormentors, waited to pick his man, and then challenged the biggest boy in the school to single combat. The exasperating way in which he coolly went about the business set his adversary's teeth chattering before the call of "time." The result of the fight was that, even if "Dizzy" was not thoroughly respected from that day forth, no one ever called, "Old clo'! Old clo'!" within his hearing. Of course it was not generally advertised that the lad had been taking boxing lessons from "Coster Joe" for three years, with the villainies of a boys' school in view. In fact, boxing was this young man's diversion, and the Coster on several occasions expressed great regret that writing and politics had robbed the ring of one who showed promise of being the cleverest welter-weight of his time.

The main facts in both "Vivian Gray" and "Contarini Fleming" are autobiographical. Like Byron, upon whom Disraeli fed, the author never got far away from himself.

It was not long before the intense personality of young Disraeli made itself felt throughout the Walthamstow school. The young man smiled at the pedant's idolatry of facts, and seized the vital point in every lesson. He felt himself the superior of every one in the establishment, master included—and he was.

Before a year he split the school into two factions—those who favored Ben Disraeli, and those who were opposed to him. The master cast his vote with the latter class, and the result was that Ben withdrew, thus saving the authorities the trouble of expelling him. His leave-taking was made melodramatic with a speech to the boys, wherein impertinent allusions were made concerning all schoolmasters, and the master of Walthamstow in particular.

And thus ended the school life of Benjamin Disraeli, the year at Walthamstow being his first and last experience.

However, Ben was not indifferent to study; he felt sure that there was a great career before him, and he knew that knowledge was necessary to success. With his father's help he laid out a course of work that kept him at his tasks ten hours a day. His father was a literary man of acknowledged worth, and mingled in the best artistic society of London. Into this society Benjamin was introduced, meeting all his father's acquaintances on an absolute equality. The young man at eighteen was totally unabashed in any company; he gave his opinion unasked, criticized his elders, flashed his wit upon the guests and was looked upon with fear, amusement or admiration, as the case might be.

Froude says of him, "The stripling was the same person as the statesman at seventy, with this difference only, that the affectation which was natural in the boy was itself affected in the matured politician, whom it served well for a mask, or as a suit of impenetrable armor."

That literature is the child of parents is true. That is to say, it takes two to produce a book. Of course there are imitation books, sort o' wax figures that look like books, made through habit by those that have been many years upon the turf, and who work automatically; but every real, live, throbbing, pulsing book was written by a man with a woman at his elbow, or vice versa.

When twenty-one years of age Benjamin Disraeli produced "Vivian Gray." The woman in the case was Mrs. Austen, wife of a prosperous London solicitor. This lady was handsome, a brilliant talker, a fine musician and an amateur artist of no mean ability. She was much older than Disraeli—she must have been in order to comprehend that the young man's frivolity was pretense, and his foppery affectation. A girl of his own age, whose heart-depths had not been sounded by experience, would have fallen in love with the foppery (or else despised it—which is often the same thing); but Mrs. Austen, mature in years, with a decade of London "seasons" behind her, having met every possible kind of man Europe had to offer, discovered that the world did not know Ben Disraeli at all. She saw that the youth did not reveal his true self, and that instead of courting society for its own sake he had a supreme contempt for it. She intuitively knew that he was seething in discontent, and with

prophetic vision she knew that his restless power and his ambition would yet make him a marked figure in the world of letters or politics, or both.

For love as a passion, or supreme sentiment, ruling one's life, Disraeli had no sympathy. He shunned love for fear it might bind him hand and foot. Love not only is blind, but love blinds its votary, and Disraeli, knowing this, fled for freedom when the trail grew warm. A man madly in love is led, subdued—imagine Mephisto captured, crying it out on his knees with his head in a woman's lap!

But Mrs. Austen was happily married, the mother of a family, and occupied a position high in London society.

Marriage with her was out of the question, and scandal and indiscretion equally so—Ben Disraeli felt safe with Mrs. Austen. With her he put off his domino and grew simple and confidential.

And so the lady, doubtless a bit flattered—for she was a woman—set herself to push on the hazard of new fortunes. She encouraged him to write his novel of "Vivian Gray"—discussed every phase of it, read chapter after chapter as they were produced, and by her gentle encouragement and warm sympathy fired the mind of the young man to the point of production.

The book is absurd in plot, and like most first books, flashy and overdrawn. And yet there is a deal of power in it, and the thinly veiled characters were speedily pointed out as living personages. Literary London went agog, and Mrs. Austen fanned the flame by inviting "the set" to her drawing-room to hear the great author read from his amusing work. The best feature of the book, and probably the saving feature, is that the central figure in the plot is Disraeli, himself, and upon his own head the author plays his shafts of wit and ridicule. The impertinence and impudence which he himself manifested were parodied, caricatured and played upon, to the great delight of the uninitiated rabble, who gave themselves much credit for having made a discovery.

The man who scorns, scoffs, gibes and jeers other men, and at the same time is willing to drop his guard and laugh at himself, is not a bad man. Very, very seldom is found a man under thirty who does not take himself and all his wit seriously. But Disraeli, the lawyer's clerk, at twenty was wise and subtle beyond all men in London Town. Mrs. Austen must have been wise, too, for had she been like most other good

women she would have wanted her protege admired, and have rebelled in tears at the thought of placing him in a position where society would serve him up for tittle-tattle. Small men can be laughed down, but great ones, never.

A little American testimony as to the appearance of Disraeli in his manhood may not here be amiss. Says N.P. Willis: “He was sitting in a window looking on Hyde Park, the last rays of sunlight reflected from the gorgeous gold flowers of a splendidly embroidered waistcoat. Patent-leather pumps, a white stick with a black cord and tassel, and a quantity of chains about his neck and pockets, served to make him a conspicuous object. He has one of the most remarkable faces I ever saw. He is lividly pale, and but for the energy of his action and strength of his lungs would seem to be a victim of consumption. His eye is black as Erebus, and has the most mocking, lying-in-wait sort of expression conceivable. His mouth is alive with a kind of working and impatient nervousness, and when he has burst forth, as he does constantly, with a particularly successful cataract of expression, it assumes a curl of triumphant scorn that would be worthy of Mephistopheles. His hair is as extraordinary as his taste in waistcoats. A thick, heavy mass of jet-black ringlets falls on his left cheek almost to his collarless stock, which on the right temple is parted and put away with the smooth carefulness of a girl. The conversation turned on Beckford. I might as well attempt to gather up the foam of the sea as to convey an idea of the extraordinary language in which he clothed his description. He talked like a racehorse approaching the winning-post, every muscle in action.”

Disraeli, like Byron, awoke one morning and found himself famous. And like Byron, he was yet a stripling. Pitt was Prime Minister at twenty-five. Genius has its example, and Disraeli worshiped alternately at the shrines of Byron and Pitt. The daring intellect and haughty indifference of Byron, and the compelling power of Pitt—he saw no reason why he should not unite these qualities within himself. He had been grubbing in a lawyer’s office, and had revealed decided ability in a business way, but novel-writing in office-hours was not appreciated by his employer—Ben was told so, and this gave him an opportunity to resign. He had set his heart on a political career—he thirsted for power—

and no doubt Mrs. Austen encouraged him in this. To push a man to the front, and thus win a vicarious triumph, has been a source of great joy to more than one ambitious woman. To get on in politics, Disraeli must enter the House of Commons. Even now, with the help of the Austens, and his father's purse, a pocket borough might be secured, but it was not enough—he must enter with eclat.

A year of travel was advised—fame grows best where the man is not too much in evidence; there is virtue in obscurity. Disraeli decided to go down through Europe, traveling over the same route that Byron had taken, write another book that would secure him some more necessary notoriety, and then stand for a seat in the House of Commons. Once within the sacred pale, he believed his knowledge of business, his ability to express himself as a writer or speaker, and the magic of his presence would make the rest easy.

There was no dumb luck in the matter—neither father nor son believed in chance; they fixed their faith on cause and effect.

And so Ben went abroad before London society grew aweary of him.

His stay was purposely prolonged; and news of his progress from time to time filled the public prints. He carried letters of introduction to every one and moved in a sort of sublime pageant as he traveled.

When he returned, wearing the costume of the East, he was greeted by society as a prince. His novel, "Contarini Fleming," was published with great acclaim, and interest in "Vivian Gray" was revived by a special edition deluxe. "Contarini" was compared to "Childe Harold," and pictures of Disraeli, with hair curling to his shoulders, were displayed in shop-windows by the side of pictures of Byron.

Disraeli was the lion of the drawing-rooms. When it was known he was to be in a certain place crowds gathered to get a glimpse of his handsome face, and to listen to his wit.

He introduced several of his Eastern accomplishments, one of which was the hookah. "Beware of tobacco, my boy," said an old colonel to him one day; "women do not like it; it has ruined more charming liaisons than anything else I know!"

"Then you must consider smoking a highly moral accomplishment," was the reply. The colonel had wrongly guessed the object of Disraeli's

ambition.

He became acquainted with Tom Moore, Count d'Orsay, and Lady Morgan; Lady Blessington welcomed him at Kensington; Bulwer-Lytton introduced him to Mrs. Wyndham Lewis—wife of the member from Maidstone—aged forty; and he was, say, twenty-five. They tried conclusions in repartee, sparred for points, and amused the company by hot arguments and wordy pyrotechnics. When they found themselves alone in the conservatory, after a little stroll, they shook hands, and the gentleman said, "What fools these mortals be!" "True," replied the lady; "true, and you and I are mortals." And so Disraeli found another woman who correctly gauged him. They liked each other first-rate. At last a vacant borough was found and arrangements made for the young man to stand as a candidate for the House of Commons. The campaign was entered upon with great vigor. Disraeli quite outdid himself in speech-making and waistcoats. The election took place—and he was defeated.

With Disraeli defeat meant merely a transient episode, not a conclusion. On the second venture he was elected, and one sunshiny day found himself duly sworn in as a member of the House of Commons, with a seat just back of Peel's.

There is a tradition in Parliament, adopted also in the United States Senate, that silence is quite becoming to a member during his first session. Disraeli had a motto to the effect that it is better to be impudent than servile, and in order to teach Parliament that in the presence of personality all rules are waived, he very shortly indulged him in an exceeding spread-eagle speech. But he had not spoken five minutes before the members began to laugh. Catcalls, hisses and mad tumult reigned. The young man in the flaming waistcoat let loose all his oratorical artillery, and the result was bravos and left-handed applause that smothered his batteries. Again and again he tried to proceed, but his voice was lost in the Clover-Club fusillade. The Chair was powerless. At last the speaker saw an opening and roared above the din, "I will now sit down, but you shall yet listen to me!"

Opinions were divided as to whether the House had squelched the Israelitish fop, or whether the fop had tantalized the House into unseemliness. The young man needed snubbing, no doubt, but the lesson

had been given so brutally that sympathy was with the snubbed. The original intent was to abash him, so he would break down; but this not succeeding, he had simply been clubbed into silence.

Then when Disraeli refused to accept condolences—merely waiving the whole affair—and a few days after arose to make some trivial motion, just as though nothing had happened, he made friends.

Any man who shows himself to be strong has friends—people wish to attach themselves to such a one. Disraeli showed himself strong in that he held no resentment, and indulged in no recrimination on account of the treatment he had received. A weak man would have done one of these things: resigned his seat, demanded an apology from the House, or refused to let his voice again be heard. Disraeli did neither—he continued to speak on various occasions, and expressed himself so courteously, so modestly, so becomingly, that the members listened in awe and curiosity. Then soon it was discovered that beneath the mild and gentle ripple of his speech ran a deep current of earnest truth, tinged with subtle wit. When he spoke, the loungers came in from the cloakrooms, fearing to miss something that was worth while.

The House of Commons experience taught Disraeli one great truth, and that was this: the most effective oratory is not bombastic. Among educated people (or illiterate) the quiet, deliberate and subdued manner is best. Reserve is a very necessary element in effective speaking. It is soul-weight that counts, not mere words, words, words. The extreme deliberation and compelling quality of quiet self-possession in Disraeli's style dated, according to Gladstone, from the day that Parliament tried to laugh him down. After that if any one wanted to hear him they had to come to him, and he took good care that those who did come did not go away empty. He never explained the evident, illustrated the obvious, nor expatiated on the irrelevant.

However, the motto, "Impudence rather than servility," was not discarded. Instead of a dashing style he developed a slow, subtle, scathing quality that was quite lost on all, save those who gave themselves to close listening.

And the House listened, for when Disraeli went after an antagonist he chose an antlered stag. If little men, fiercely effervescent and childishly

inconsequential, attempted to reply to him or sought to engage him in debate, he simply answered them with silence, or that tantalizing smile.

O’Connell and Disraeli, although unlike, had much in common and should have been fast friends. Surely the age and distinguished record of O’Connell must have commanded Disraeli’s respect, but we know how they grappled in wordy warfare. Disraeli called the Irishman an incendiary, and O’Connell, who was a past master in abuse, replied in a speech wherein he exhausted the Billingsgate lexicon. He wound up by a reference to the ancestry of his opponent, and a suggestion that “this renegade Jew is descended from the impenitent thief, whose name was doubtless Disraeli.” It was a home-thrust—a picture so exaggerated and overdrawn that all England laughed. The very extravagance of the simile should have saved the allusion from resentment; but it touched Disraeli in his most sensitive spot—his pride of birth.

He straightway challenged his traducer. O’Connell had killed a man in a duel years before, and then vowed he would never again engage in mortal combat.

Disraeli intimated that he would fight O’Connell’s son, Morgan, if preferred, a man of his own age.

Morgan replied that his father insulted so many men he could not set the precedent of fighting them all, or standing sponsor for an indiscreet parent. But with genuine Irish spirit he suggested that if the son of Abraham was intent on fight and could not be persuaded to be sensible, why, the matter could probably be arranged.

Happily, about this time, police officers invaded the apartments of Disraeli and arrested him on a bench-warrant. He was bound over, to his great relief, in the sum of five hundred pounds to keep the peace.

O’Connell never took the matter very seriously, and referred soon after in a speech to “my excellent, though slightly bellicose friend, child of an honored race.”

Disraeli did not take up politics to make money—the man who does that may win in his desires, but his career is short. Nothing but honesty really succeeds. Disraeli knew this, and in his record there is no taint. But the income of a member of the House of Commons affords no opportunity for display. Disraeli’s books brought him in only small sums,

and his father's moderate fortune had been sadly drawn upon. He was well past thirty, and was not making head, simply because he was cramped for funds. To rise in politics you must have an establishment; you must entertain and reach out and bring those you wish to influence within your scope. A third floor back, in an ebb-tide street, will not do. Like Agassiz, Disraeli had no time to make money—it was a sad plight. But this was a man of destiny, and to use the language of Augustine Birrell, "Wyndam Lewis at this time accommodatingly died." Mrs. Wyndam Lewis had been the firm friend and helper of Disraeli for many years, and although a small matter of fifteen years separated them as to ages, yet their hearts beat as one.

Scarce a twelvemonth had gone before the widow and Disraeli were married. They disappeared from London for some months, journeying on the Continent. When they returned all the old scores in way of unpaid bills against Disraeli were paid, and he was master of an establishment.

Disraeli was thirty-five, his wife was fifty, but it was a happy mating. They thought alike, and their ambitions were the same. Disraeli treated his wife with all the courtly grace and deference in which he was an adept, and her princely fortune was absolutely his. "There was much cause for gratitude on both sides," said O'Connell. And there is no doubt that Disraeli's wife proved the firmest friend he ever had. For many years she was his sole confidante and best adviser. She attended him everywhere and relieved him of many burdens. That true incident of her fingers being crushed by the careless slamming of the carriage-door, and her hiding the bleeding members in her muff, and attending her husband to the House of Commons, where he was to speak, refusing to disturb him by her pain—this symbols the moral quality of the woman. She was the fit mate of a great man, and it is pleasant to know that she was honored and appreciated.

To tell the story of Disraeli's thirty years in Parliament would be to write the political history of the time. He was in the front of every fight; he expressed himself on every subject; he crossed swords with the strongest men of his age. That he had no great and overpowering convictions on any subject is fully admitted now, even by his most ardent admirers—it was always a question of policy; that is to say, he was a politician. He gave a point here and there when he had to, and when he did, always managed to do it gracefully. When he ambled over from one party to another he affected a fine wrath and gave excellent reasons.

Three times he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and twice was he Prime Minister, and for a time actual Dictator. But he took good care not to exercise his power too severely. When his word was supreme, the safety of the nation lay, as it always does, in a strong opposition.

In one notable instance was Disraeli wrong in his prophecies—he declared again and again that Free Trade meant commercial bankruptcy. Yet Free Trade came about, and the fires were started in ten thousand factories, and such prosperity came to England as she had never known before.

Political economy as a science was a constant butt for his wit, and in physical science he was dense to a point where his ignorance calls for pity. He believed in the literal Mosaic account of creation, and said in his paradoxical way on one occasion, that in belief he was not only a Christian, but a Jew. And this in spite of his most famous mot: "All sensible men are of one religion."

"And what is that?"

"Sensible men never tell."

Had Disraeli been truly sensible he would not have attempted to hold Charles Darwin up to ridicule, by declaring in a speech at Oxford that "it is a choice between apes and angels." He had neither the ability, patience, nor inclination to read the "Origin of Species," and yet was so absurd as to answer it.

In his novels of "Coningsby," "Sybil" and "Tancred," he argues with great skill and adroit sophistry that a landed aristocracy is necessary to a

progressive civilization. “The common people need an example of refinement in way of manners, art and intellect. Some one must take the lead, and reveal the possibility of life in leisurely and luxurious living.” And this example of beauty, gentleness and excellence was to come from the landed gentry of England—ye gods! Was it possible that this man believed in the necessity of the gentry as a virtuous example? Or did he merely view the fact that the aristocracy were there in actual possession, and as they could not be evicted, why then the next best thing was to cajole, flatter and discreetly advise them? Who shall say what this man believed!

Sensible men never tell.

But this we know, this man had no vice but ambition. He conformed pretty closely to England’s ideals, and his thirst for power never caused him to take the chances of a Waterloo. His novels show a close acquaintanceship with the ways of society, and he knew the human heart as few men ever do. The degradation of the average toiler in Great Britain, the infamy of the policy extended toward Ireland, and the cruelty of imperialism—all these he knew, for his books reveal it; but he was powerless as a leader to stem the current of tendency. He acquiesced where he deemed action futile.

“Lothair” is his best novel, for in it he gets furthest away from himself. It reveals a cleverness that is admirable, and this same brilliancy and shifty play of intellect are found in “Endymion,” written in his seventy-fifth year. Whether these novels can ever take their place among the books that endure is a question that is growing more easy to answer each succeeding year. They owed their popularity more to their flippant cleverness than to their insight, and their vogue was due, to a great extent, to the veiled personalities that interline their pages.

That Disraeli did not carry out all the plans and reforms he attempted, need not be set down to his discredit. It is fortunate he did not succeed better than he did. He, however, safely piloted the great ship in the direction the passengers desired to go; and his own personal ambition was reached when he, a Jew at heart—member of a despised race—had made himself master of the fleets, armies and treasury of the proudest nation the world has ever known.

Bound into the life of Disraeli is a peculiar incident in the romantic friendship that existed between him and Mrs. Willyums of Torquay, Cornwall. About the year Eighteen Hundred Forty-nine, Disraeli began to receive letters from an unknown admirer, who expressed a great desire for an interview on “a most important business.” All public men, especially if they have the brilliant mental qualities of Disraeli, receive such letters. The sensitive neurotic female who is ill-appreciated in her own home and whose soul yearns for a “higher companionship” is numerous. Disraeli’s secretary used to take care of such letters with a gentle explanation that the Chief was out of town, but upon his return, etc., etc., and that was the last of it. But this Torquay correspondent was insistent, and finally a letter came from her saying she had come to London on purpose to meet her lord and master, and she would await him at a seat just east of the fountain in Crystal Palace at a certain hour. Disraeli read the missive with impatience—the idea of his meeting an unknown woman in this fishmonger manner at a hurdy-gurdy show! He tossed the letter into the fire. The next day another letter came, expressing much regret that he had not kept the appointment, but saying she would await him at the same place the following day, and begging him, as the matter was very urgent, not to fail her.

Disraeli smiled and showed the letter to his wife. She advised him to go. When his wife said he had better do a thing he usually did it; and so he ordered his carriage and went to the hurdy-gurdy show to meet the impressionable female of unknown age and condition at the seat just east of the fountain. It was a silly thing for the leading member of Parliament to do—to make an assignation in a public place with a fool-woman—all London might be laughing at him tomorrow! He was on the point of turning back.

But he reached the fountain and there was his destiny awaiting him—a little woman in widow’s black. She lifted her veil and showed a face wrinkled and old, but kindly. She was agitated—she really did not expect him—and the great man gave a great sigh of relief when he saw that no flashily dressed creature had entrapped him. Even if people stared at him sitting there it made no difference. In pity he shook hands with the little old woman, sat down beside her, calmed her agitation, spoke of Cornwall and the weather, and inquired what he could do for her. A rambling talk

about nothing followed, and Disraeli was sure it was just a mild case of lunacy.

He arose to go, and the woman gave him an envelope, saying she had written out her case and begged him to read the letter when he had time. The man was preoccupied, his mind on great affairs of state—he simply crushed the letter into the side-pocket of his overcoat, bade the woman a dignified good-morning, and turned away.

It was a month before he found the letter all crumpled and soiled there where he had placed it. He really had forgotten where it came from. The envelope was opened and out dropped a Bank of England note for one thousand pounds. This note was to pay for certain legal advice. The advice wanted was of a trivial nature, and Disraeli, always conscientious in money matters, hastened to return the money, in person, and give the advice gratis.

But the lady had had the interview—two of them—and this was all she wanted. Letters followed, and this developed into a daily correspondence, wherein the old lady revealed the story of her passion—a passion as delicate, earnest and all-devouring as ever a girl of twenty knew. Insane, you say? Well, ah—yes, doubtless. But then, love is illusion; perhaps life is illusion, a very beautiful rainbow, and why old folks should not be allowed to chase it, or allow sweet emotion to gurgle gleefully under their lee, a bit, as well as young folks, I do not know. Then, really, is love simply a physical manifestation and do spirits grow old? If so, where is our belief in the immortality of the soul?

Mrs. Willyums was childless, had long been a widow, was rich, and her heart had been in the grave until she began to trace the record of Disraeli. She was a recluse: read, studied, fed on Disraeli—loved him. After several years of dreaming and planning she had actually bagged the game. She was a woman of education and ideas. Her letters were interesting—and Disraeli's letters to her, now published, reveal the history of his daily life as he never told it to another. At her death the bulk of Mrs. Willyum's fortune went by will to Disraeli.

But Mrs. Disraeli was not jealous of this affection. Why should a woman of sixty be jealous of another woman the same age? They pooled their love and grew rich together in recounting it. Presents were going backward and forward all the time between Disraeli's country home and

Torquay. Mrs. Willyums next came to live at Hughenden. There she died, and there she sleeps, side by side, as was her wish, with Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Privy Seal, Earl Beaconsfield of Beaconsfield, Viscount Hughenden of Hughenden. And the reason the Ex-Premier was not buried in Westminster Abbey was because he had promised these two women that even death should not separate them from him. So there under the spreading elms, in this out-of-the-way country place, they rest —these three, side by side, and the sighing breeze tells and tells again to the twittering birds in the branches, of this triple love, strange as fate, strong as destiny, warm as life, pure as snow, and unselfish as the kiss of the summer sun.

SO HERE ENDETH “LITTLE JOURNEYS TO THE HOMES OF ENGLISH AUTHORS,” BEING VOLUME FIVE OF THE SERIES, AS WRITTEN BY ELBERT HUBBARD: EDITED AND ARRANGED BY FRED BANN; BORDERS AND INITIALS BY ROYCROFT ARTISTS.

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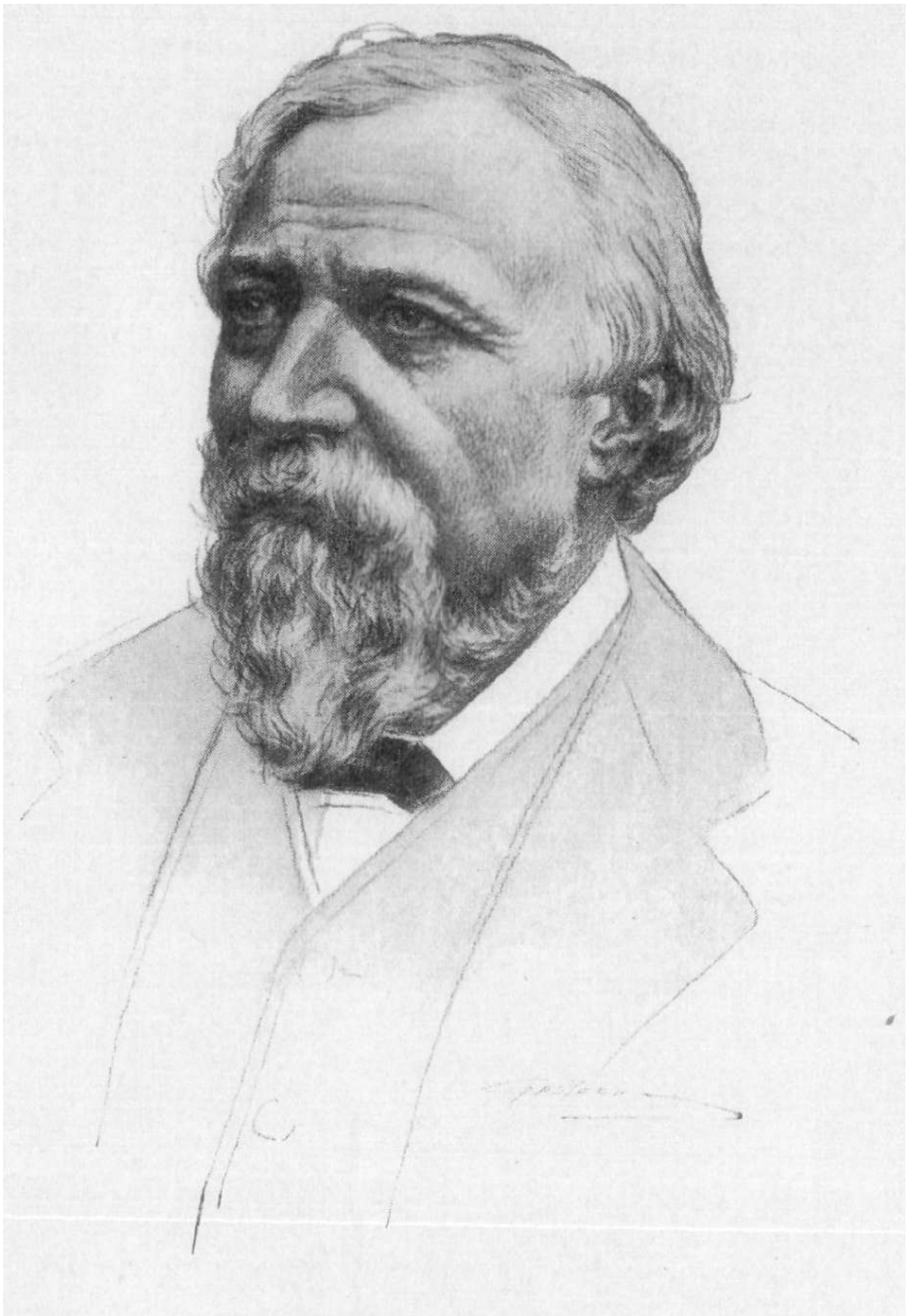

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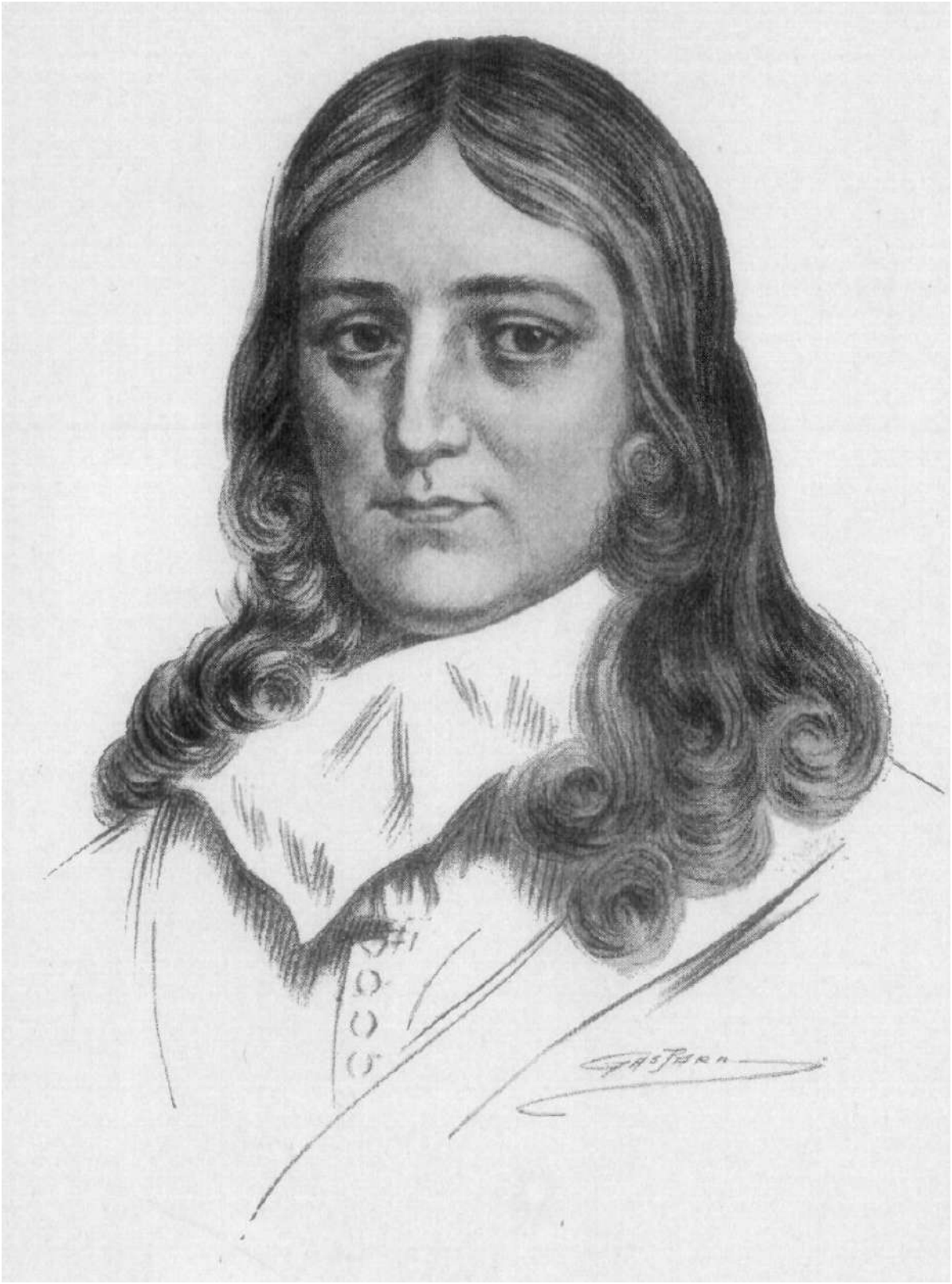

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