THE PLEASURES OF LIFE

PART II

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BY

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PREFACE

"And what is writ, is writ—
Would it were worthier."

BYRON.

HEREWITH I launch the conclusion of my subject. Perhaps I am unwise in publishing a second part. The first was so kindly received that I am running a risk in attempting to add to it.

In the preface, however, to the first part I have expressed the hope that the thoughts and quotations in which I have found most comfort and delight, might be of use to others also.

In this my most sanguine hopes have been more than realised. Not only has the book passed through thirteen editions in less than two years, but the many letters which I have received have been most gratifying.

Two criticisms have been repeated by several of those who have done me the honor of noticing my previous volume. It has been said in the first place that my life has been exceptionally bright and full, and that I cannot therefore judge for others. Nor do I attempt to do so. I do not forget, I hope I am not ungrateful for, all that has been bestowed on me. But if I have been greatly favoured, ought I not to be on that very account especially qualified to write on such a theme? Moreover, I have had,—who has not,—my own sorrows.

Again, some have complained that there is too much quotation—too little of my own. This I take to be in reality a great compliment. I have not striven to be original.

If, as I have been assured by many, my book have proved a comfort, and have been able to cheer in the hour of darkness, that is indeed an ample reward, and is the utmost I have ever hoped.

High Elms, Down,
Kent, *April* 1889.

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AMBITION

"Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble minds)
To scorn delights and live laborious days."

MILTON.

CHAPTER I

AMBITION

If fame be the last infirmity of noble minds, ambition is often the first; though, when properly directed, it may be no feeble aid to virtue.

Had not my youthful mind, says Cicero, "from many precepts, from many writings, drunk in this truth, that glory and virtue ought to be the darling, nay, the only wish in life; that, to attain these, the torments of the flesh, with the perils of death and exile, are to be despised; never had I exposed my person in so many encounters, and to these daily conflicts with the worst of men, for your deliverance. But, on this head, books are full; the voice of the wise

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is full; the examples of antiquity are full: and all these the night of barbarism had still enveloped, had it not been enlightened by the sun of science."

The poet tells us that

> "The many fail: the one succeeds." [1]

But this is scarcely true. All succeed who deserve, though not perhaps as they hoped. An honourable defeat is better than a mean victory, and no one is really the worse for being beaten, unless he loses heart. Though we may not be able to attain, that is no reason why we should not aspire.

I know, says Morris,

> "How far high failure overleaps the bound
> Of low successes."

And Bacon assures us that "if a man look sharp and attentively he shall see fortune; for though she is blind, she is not invisible."

To give ourselves a reasonable prospect

[1] Tennyson.

of success we must realise what we hope to achieve; and then make the most of our opportunities. Of these the use of time is one of the most important. What have we to do with time, asks Oliver Wendell Holmes, but to fill it up with labour.

"At the battle of Montebello," said Napoleon, "I ordered Kellermann to attack with 800 horse, and with these he separated the 6000 Hungarian grenadiers before the very eyes of the Austrian cavalry. This cavalry was half a league off, and required a quarter of an hour to arrive on the field of action; and I have observed that it is always these quarters of an hour that decide the fate of a battle," including, we may add, the battle of life.

Nor must we spare ourselves in other ways, for

> "He who thinks in strife
> To earn a deathless fame, must do, nor ever care for life."[1]

In the excitement of the struggle, more-

[1] Beowulf.

over, he will suffer comparatively little from wounds and blows which would otherwise cause intense suffering.

It is well to weigh scrupulously the object in view, to run as little risk as may be, to count the cost with care.

But when the mind is once made up, there must be no looking back, you must spare yourself no labour, nor shrink from danger.

> "He either fears his fate too much
> Or his deserts are small,
> That dares not put it to the touch
> To gain or lose it all."[1]

Glory, says Renan, "is after all the thing which has the best chance of not being altogether vanity." But what is glory?

Marcus Aurelius observes that "a spider is proud when it has caught a fly, a man when he has caught a hare, another when he has taken a little fish in a net, another when he has taken wild boars, another when he has taken bears, and another

[1] Montrose.

when he has taken Sarmatians;"[1] but this, if from one point of view it shows the vanity of fame, also encourages us with the evidence that every one may succeed if his objects are but reasonable.

Alexander may be taken as almost a type of Ambition in its usual form, though carried to an extreme.

His desire was to conquer, not to inherit or to rule. When news was brought that his father Philip had taken some town, or won some battle, instead of appearing delighted with it, he used to say to his companions, "My father will go on conquering, till there be nothing extraordinary left for you and me to do."[2] He is said even to have been mortified at the number of the stars, considering that he had not been able to conquer one world. Such ambition is justly foredoomed to disappointment.

[1] He is referring here to one of his expeditions.

[2] Plutarch.

The remarks of Philosophers on the vanity of ambition refer generally to that unworthy form of which Alexander may be taken as the type—the idea of self-exaltation, not only without any reference to the happiness, but even regardless of the sufferings, of others.

"A continual and restless search after fortune," says Bacon, "takes up too much of their time who have nobler things to observe." Indeed he elsewhere extends this, and adds, "No man's private fortune can be an end any way worthy of his existence."

Goethe well observes that man "exists for culture; not for what he can accomplish, but for what can be accomplished in him."[1]

As regards fame we must not confuse name and essence. To be remembered is not necessarily to be famous. There is infamy as well as fame; and unhappily

[1] Emerson.

almost as many are remembered for the one as for the other, and not a few for a mixture of both.

Who would not rather be forgotten, than recollected as Ahab or Jezebel, Nero or Commodus, Messalina or Heliogabalus, King John or Richard III. ?

"To be nameless in worthy deeds exceeds an infamous history. The Canaanitish woman lives more happily without a name than Herodias with one; and who would not rather have been the good thief than Pilate?"[1]

Kings and Generals are often remembered as much for their deaths as for their lives, for their misfortunes as for their successes. The Hero of Thermopylæ was Leonidas, not Xerxes. Alexander's Empire fell to pieces at his death. Napoleon was a great genius, though no Hero. But what came of all his victories. They passed away like the smoke of his guns,

[1] Sir J. Browne.

and he left France weaker, poorer, and smaller than he found her. The most lasting result of his genius is no military glory, but the Code Napoléon.

A surer and more glorious title to fame is that of those who are remembered for some act of justice or self-devotion: the self-sacrifice of Leonidas, the good faith of Regulus, are the glories of history.

In some cases where men have been called after places, the men are remembered, while the places are forgotten. When we speak of Palestrina or Perugino, of Nelson or Wellington, of Newton or Darwin, who remembers the towns? We think only of the men.

Goethe has been called the soul of his century.

It is true that we have but meagre biographies of Shakespeare or of Plato; yet how much we know about them.

Statesmen and Generals enjoy great

celebrity during their lives. The newspapers chronicle every word and movement. But the fame of the Philosopher and Poet is more enduring.

Wordsworth deprecates monuments to Poets, with some exceptions, on this very account. The case of Statesmen, he says, is different. It is right to commemorate them because they might otherwise be forgotten; but Poets live in their books for ever.

The real conquerors of the world indeed are not the generals but the thinkers; not Genghis Khan and Akbar, Rameses, or Alexander, but Confucius and Buddha, Aristotle, Plato, and Christ. The rulers and kings who reigned over our ancestors have for the most part long since sunk into oblivion—they are forgotten for want of some sacred bard to give them life—or are remembered, like Suddhodana and Pilate, from their association with higher spirits.

Such men's lives cannot be compressed into any biography. They lived not merely in their own generation, but for all time. When we speak of the Elizabethan period we think of Shakespeare and Bacon, Raleigh and Spenser. The ministers and secretaries of state, with one or two exceptions, we scarcely remember, and Bacon himself is recollected less as the Judge than as the Philosopher.

Moreover, to what do Generals and Statesmen owe their fame? They were celebrated for their deeds, but to the Poet and the Historian they owe their fame, and to the Poet and Historian we owe their glorious memories and the example of their virtues.

> "Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
> Multi; sed omnes illacrimabiles
> Urgentur ignotique longâ
> Nocte, carent quia vate sacro."

There were many brave men before Agamemnon, but their memory has perished

because they were celebrated by no divine Bard.

Montrose happily combined the two, when in "My dear and only love" he promises,

> "I'll make thee glorious by my pen,
> And famous by my sword."

It is remarkable, and encouraging, how many of the greatest men have risen from the lowest rank, and triumphed over obstacles which might well have seemed insurmountable; nay, even obscurity itself may be a source of honour. The very doubts as to Homer's birthplace have contributed to this glory, seven cities as we all know laying claim to the great poet—

> "Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, Salamis, Rhodos, Argos, Athenæ."

To take men of Science only. Ray was the son of a blacksmith, Watt of a shipwright, Franklin of a tallow-chandler, Dalton of a handloom weaver, Fraünhofer of a glazier, Laplace of a farmer, Linnæus

of a poor curate, Faraday of a blacksmith, Lamarck of a banker's clerk; Davy was an apothecary's assistant, Galileo, Kepler, Sprengel, Cuvier, and Sir W. Herschel were all children of very poor parents.

It is, on the other hand, sad to think how many of our greatest benefactors are unknown even by name. Who discovered the art of procuring fire? Prometheus is merely the personification of forethought. Who invented letters? Cadmus is a mere name.

These inventions, indeed, are lost in the mists of antiquity, but even as regards recent progress the steps are often so gradual, and so numerous, that few inventions can be attributed entirely, or even mainly, to any one person.

Columbus is said, and truly said, to have discovered America, though the Northmen were there before him.

We Englishmen have every reason to be proud of our fellow-countrymen. To

take Philosophers and men of Science only, Bacon and Hobbes, Locke and Berkeley, Hume and Hamilton, will always be associated with the progress of human thought; Newton with gravitation, Adam Smith with Political Economy, Young with the undulatory theory of light, Herschel with the discovery of Uranus and the study of the star depths, Lord Worcester, Trevethick, and Watt with the steam-engine, Wheatstone with the electric telegraph, Jenner with the banishment of smallpox, Simpson with the practical application of anæsthetics, and Darwin with the creation of modern Natural History.

These men, and such as these, have made our history and moulded our opinions; and though during life they may have occupied, comparatively, an insignificant space in the eyes of their countrymen, they became at length an irresistible power, and have now justly grown to a glorious memory.

CHAPTER II

WEALTH

"The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all."—PROVERBS OF SOLOMON.

CHAPTER II

WEALTH

AMBITION often takes the form of a love of money. There are many who have never attempted Art or Music, Poetry or Science; but most people do something for a livelihood, and consequently an increase of income is not only acceptable in itself, but gives a pleasant feeling of success.

Doubt is often expressed whether wealth is any advantage. I do not myself believe that those who are born, as the saying is, with a silver spoon in their mouth, are necessarily any the happier for it. No doubt wealth entails almost more

labour than poverty, and certainly more anxiety. Still it must, I think, be confessed that the possession of an income, whatever it may be, which increases somewhat as the years roll on, does add to the comfort of life.

Unquestionably the possession of wealth is by no means unattended by drawbacks. Money and the love of money often go together. The poor man, as Emerson says, is the man who wishes to be rich; and the more a man has, the more he often longs to be richer. Just as drinking often does but increase thirst; so in many cases the craving for riches does grow with wealth.

This is, of course, especially the case when money is sought for its own sake. Moreover, it is often easier to make money than to keep or to enjoy it. Keeping it is dull and anxious drudgery. The dread of loss may hang like a dark cloud over life. Apicius, when he had squandered

most of his patrimony, but had still 250,000 crowns left, committed suicide, as Seneca tells us, for fear he should die of hunger.

Wealth is certainly no sinecure. Moreover, the value of money depends partly on knowing what to do with it, partly on the manner in which it is acquired.

"Acquire money, thy friends say, that we also may have some. If I can acquire money and also keep myself modest, and faithful, and magnanimous, point out the way, and I will acquire it. But if you ask me to love the things which are good and my own, in order that you may gain things that are not good, see how unfair and unwise you are. For which would you rather have? Money, or a faithful and modest friend. . . .

"What hinders a man, who has clearly comprehended these things, from living with a light heart, and bearing easily the reins, quietly expecting everything which

can happen, and enduring that which has already happened? Would you have me to bear poverty? Come, and you will know what poverty is when it has found one who can act well the part of a poor man."[1]

We must bear in mind Solon's answer to Crœsus, "Sir, if any other come that hath better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold."

Midas is another case in point. He prayed that everything he touched might be turned into gold, and this prayer was granted. His wine turned to gold, his bread turned to gold, his clothes, his very bed.

"Attonitus novitate mali, divesque miserque,
Effugere optat opes, et quæ modo voverat, odit."

He is by no means the only man who has suffered from too much gold.

The real truth I take to be that wealth is not necessarily an advantage, but that

[1] Epictetus.

whether it is so or not depends on the use we make of it. The same, however, might be said of most other opportunities and privileges; Knowledge and Strength, Beauty and Skill, may all be abused; if we neglect or misuse them we are worse off than if we had never had them. Wealth is only a disadvantage in the hands of those who do not know how to use it. It gives the command of so many other things — leisure, the power of helping friends, books, works of art, opportunities and means of travel.

It would, however, be easy to exaggerate the advantages of money. It is well worth having, and worth working for, but it does not requite too great a sacrifice; not indeed so great as is often offered up to it. A wise proverb tells us that gold may be bought too dear. If wealth is to be valued because it gives leisure, clearly it would be a mistake to sacrifice leisure in the struggle for wealth. Money has no

doubt also a tendency to make men poor in spirit. But, on the other hand, what gift is there which is without danger?

Euripides said that money finds friends for men, and has great (he said the greatest) power among Mankind, cynically adding, "A mighty person indeed is a rich man, especially if his heir be unknown."

Bossuet tells us that "he had no attachment to riches, still if he had only what was barely necessary, he felt himself narrowed, and would lose more than half his talents."

Shelley was certainly not an avaricious man, and yet "I desire money," he said, "because I think I know the use of it. It commands labour, it gives leisure; and to give leisure to those who will employ it in the forwarding of truth is the noblest present an individual can make to the whole."

Many will have felt with Pepys when

he quaintly and piously says, "Abroad with my wife, the first time that ever I rode in my own coach; which do make my heart rejoice and praise God, and pray him to bless it to me, and continue it."

This, indeed, was a somewhat selfish satisfaction. Yet the merchant need not quit nor be ashamed of his profession, bearing in mind only the inscription on the Church of St. Giacomo de Rialto at Venice: "Around this temple let the merchant's law be just, his weights true, and his covenants faithful."[1]

If life has been sacrificed to the rolling up of money for its own sake, the very means by which it was acquired will prevent its being enjoyed; the chill of poverty will have entered into the very bones. The term Miser was happily chosen for such persons; they are essentially miserable.

"A collector peeps into all the picture

[1] Ruskin.

shops of Europe for a landscape of Poussin, a crayon sketch of Salvator; but the Transfiguration, the Last Judgment, the Communion of St. Jerome, and what are as transcendent as these, are on the walls of the Vatican, the Uffizi, or the Louvre, where every footman may see them; to say nothing of Nature's pictures in every street, of sunsets and sunrises every day, and the sculpture of the human body never absent. A collector recently bought at public auction in London, for one hundred and fifty-seven guineas, an autograph of Shakespeare: but for nothing a schoolboy can read Hamlet, and can detect secrets of highest concernment yet unpublished therein."[1] And yet "What hath the owner but the sight of it with his eyes."[2]

We are really richer than we think. We often hear of Earth hunger. People

[1] Emerson. [2] Solomon.

envy a great Landlord, and fancy how delightful it must be to possess a large estate. But, as Emerson says, "if you own land, the land owns you." Moreover, have we not all, in a better sense—have we not all thousands of acres of our own? The commons, and roads, and footpaths, and the seashore, our grand and varied coast—these are all ours. The sea-coast has, moreover, two great advantages. In the first place, it is for the most part but little interfered with by man, and in the second it exhibits most instructively the forces of Nature. We are all great landed proprietors, if we only knew it. What we lack is not land, but the power to enjoy it. Moreover, this great inheritance has the additional advantage that it entails no labour, requires no management. The landlord has the trouble, but the landscape belongs to every one who has eyes to see it. Thus Kingsley called the

heaths round Eversley his "winter garden"; not because they were his in the eye of the law, but in that higher sense in which ten thousand persons may own the same thing.

CHAPTER III

HEALTH

"Health is best for mortal man, next beauty; thirdly, well gotten wealth; fourthly, the pleasure of youth among friends."

SIMONIDES.

CHAPTER III

HEALTH

But if there has been some difference of opinion as to the advantage of wealth, with reference to health all are agreed.

"Health," said Simonides long ago, "is best for mortal man; next beauty; thirdly, well gotten wealth; fourthly, the pleasure of youth among friends." "Life," says Longfellow, "without health is a burden, with health is a joy and gladness." Empedocles delivered the people of Selinus from a pestilence by draining a marsh, and was hailed as a Demigod. We are told that a coin was struck in his honour, representing the

Philosopher in the act of staying the hand of Phœbus.

We scarcely realise, I think, how much we owe to Doctors. Our system of Medicine seems so natural and obvious that it hardly occurs to us as somewhat new and exceptional. When we are ill we send for a Physician; he prescribes some medicine; we take it, and pay his fee. But among the lower races of men pain and illness are often attributed to the presence of evil spirits. The Medicine Man is a Priest, or rather a Sorcerer, more than a true Doctor, and his effort is to exorcise the evil spirit.

In other countries where some advance has been made, a charm is written on a board, washed off, and drunk. In some cases the medicine is taken, not by the patient, but by the Doctor. Such a system, however, is generally transient; it is naturally discouraged by the Profession, and is indeed incompatible with a large

practice. Even as regards the payment we find very different systems. The Chinese pay their medical man as long as they are well, and stop his salary as soon as they are ill. In ancient Egypt we are told that the patient feed the Doctor for the first few days, after which the Doctor paid the patient until he made him well. This is a fascinating system, but might afford too much temptation to heroic remedies.

On the whole our plan seems the best, though it does not offer adequate encouragement to discovery and research. We do not appreciate how much we owe to the discoveries of such men as Hunter and Jenner, Simpson and Lister. And yet in the matter of health we can generally do more for ourselves than the greatest Doctors can for us.

But if all are agreed as to the blessing of health, there are many who will not take the little trouble, or submit to the

slight sacrifices, necessary to maintain it. Many, indeed, deliberately ruin their own health, and incur the certainty of an early grave, or an old age of suffering.

No doubt some inherit a constitution which renders health almost unattainable. Pope spoke of that long disease, his life. Many indeed may say, "I suffer, therefore I am." But happily these cases are exceptional. Most of us might be well, if we would. It is very much our own fault that we are ill. We do those things which we ought not to do, and we leave undone those things which we ought to have done, and then we wonder there is no health in us.

We all know that we can make ourselves ill, but few perhaps realise how much we can do to keep ourselves well. Much of our suffering is self-inflicted. It has been observed that among the ancient Egyptians the chief aim of life seemed to be to be well buried. Many, however,

live even now as if this were the principal object of their existence.

Like Naaman, we expect our health to be the subject of some miraculous interference, and neglect the homely precautions by which it might be secured.

I am inclined to doubt whether the study of health is sufficiently impressed on the minds of those entering life. Not that it is desirable to potter over minor ailments, to con over books on illnesses, or experiment on ourselves with medicine. Far from it. The less we fancy ourselves ill, or bother about little bodily discomforts, the more likely perhaps we are to preserve our health.

It is, however, a different matter to study the general conditions of health. A well-known proverb tells us that every one is a fool or a physician at forty. Unfortunately, however, many persons are invalids at forty as well as physicians.

Ill-health, however, is no excuse for

moroseness. If we have one disease we may at least congratulate ourselves that we are escaping all the rest. Sydney Smith, ever ready to look on the bright side of things, once, when borne down by suffering, wrote to a friend that he had gout, asthma, and seven other maladies, but was "otherwise very well"; and many of the greatest invalids have borne their sufferings with cheerfulness and good spirits.

It is said that the celebrated physiognomist, Campanella, could so abstract his attention from any sufferings of his body, that he was even able to endure the rack without much pain; and whoever has the power of concentrating his attention and controlling his will, can emancipate himself from most of the minor miseries of life. He may have much cause for anxiety, his body may be the seat of severe suffering, and yet his mind will remain serene and unaffected; he may triumph over care and pain.

But many have undergone much unnecessary suffering, and valuable lives have often been lost, through ignorance or carelessness. We cannot but fancy that the lives of many great men might have been much prolonged by the exercise of a little ordinary care.

If we take musicians only, what a grievous loss to the world it is that Pergolesi should have died at twenty-six, Schubert at thirty-one, Mozart at thirty-five, Purcell at thirty-seven, and Mendelssohn at thirty-eight.

In the old Greek myth the life of Meleager was indissolubly connected by fate with the existence of a particular log of wood. As long as this was kept safe by Althæa, his mother, Meleager bore a charmed life. It seems wonderful that we do not watch with equal care over our body, on the state of which happiness so much depends.

The requisites of health are plain

enough; regular habits, daily exercise, cleanliness, and moderation in all things —in eating as well as in drinking— would keep most people well.

I need not here dwell on the evils of drinking, but we perhaps scarcely realise how much of the suffering and ill-humour of life is due to over-eating. Dyspepsia, for instance, from which so many suffer, is in nine cases out of ten their own fault, and arises from the combination of too much food with too little exercise. To lengthen your life, says an old proverb, shorten your meals. Plain living and high thinking will secure health for most of us, though it matters, perhaps, comparatively little what a healthy man eats, so long as he does not eat too much.

Mr. Gladstone has told us that the splendid health he enjoys is greatly due to his having early learnt one simple physiological maxim, and laid it down as

a rule for himself always to make twenty-five bites at every bit of meat.

> "Go to your banquet then, but use delight,
> So as to rise still with an appetite."[1]

No doubt, however, though the rule not to eat or drink too much is simple enough in theory, it is not quite so easy in application. There have been many Esaus who have sold their birthright of health for a mess of pottage.

Moreover, it may seem paradoxical, but it is certainly true, that in the long run the moderate man will derive more enjoyment even from eating and drinking, than the glutton or the drunkard will ever obtain. They know not what it is to enjoy "the exquisite taste of common dry bread."[2]

And yet even if we were to consider merely the pleasure to be derived from eating and drinking, the same rule would

[1] Herrick. [2] Hamerton.

hold good. A lunch of bread and cheese after a good walk is more enjoyable than a Lord Mayor's feast. Without wishing, like Apicius, for the neck of a stork, so that he might enjoy his dinner longer, we must not be ungrateful for the enjoyment we derive from eating and drinking, even though they be amongst the least æsthetic of our pleasures. They are homely, no doubt, but they come morning, noon, and night, and are not the less real because they have reference to the body rather than the soul.

We speak truly of a healthy appetite, for it is a good test of our bodily condition; and indeed in some cases of our mental state also. That

> "There cometh no good thing
> Apart from toil to mortals,"

is especially true with reference to appetite; to sit down to a dinner, however simple, after a walk with a friend among

the mountains or along the shore, is no insignificant pleasure.

Cheerfulness and good humour, moreover, during meals are not only pleasant in themselves, but conduce greatly to health.

It has been said that hunger is the best sauce, but most would prefer some good stories at a feast even to a good appetite; and who would not like to have it said of him, as of Biron by Rosaline—

> "A merrier man
> Within the limit of becoming mirth
> I never spent an hour's talk withal."

In the three great "Banquets" of Plato, Xenophon, and Plutarch, the food is not even mentioned.

In the words of the old Lambeth adage—

> "What is a merry man?
> Let him do what he can
> To entertain his guests
> With wine and pleasant jests,
> Yet if his wife do frown
> All merryment goes down."

What salt is to food, wit and humour are to conversation and literature. "You do not," an amusing writer in the *Cornhill* has said, "expect humour in Thomas à Kempis or the Hebrew Prophets"; but we have Solomon's authority that there is a time to laugh, as well as to weep.

"To read a good comedy is to keep the best company in the world, when the best things are said, and the most amusing things happen."[1]

It is not without reason that every one resents the imputation of being unable to see a joke.

Laughter appears to be the special prerogative of man. The higher animals present us with proof of evident, if not highly-developed reasoning power, but it is more than doubtful whether they are capable of appreciating a joke.

Wit, moreover, has solved many difficulties and decided many controversies.

[1] Hazlitt.

"Ridicule shall frequently prevail,
And cut the knot when graver reasons fail." [1]

A careless song, says Walpole, with a little nonsense in it now and then, does not misbecome a monarch, but it is difficult now to realise that James I. should have regarded skill in punning in his selection of bishops and privy councillors.

The most wasted of all days, says Chamfort, is that on which one has not laughed.

It is, moreover, no small merit of laughter that it is quite spontaneous. "You cannot force people to laugh; you cannot give a reason why they should laugh; they must laugh of themselves or not at all. . . . If we think we must not laugh, this makes our temptation to laugh the greater." [2] Humour is, moreover, contagious. A witty man may say, as Falstaff does of himself, "I am not only

[1] Francis. [2] Hazlitt.

witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men."

But one may paraphrase the well-known remark about port wine and say that some jokes may be better than others, but anything which makes one laugh is good. "After all," says Dryden, "it is a good thing to laugh at any rate; and if a straw can tickle a man, it is an instrument of happiness," and I may add, of health.

I have been told that in omitting any mention of smoking I was overlooking one of the real pleasures of life. Not being a smoker myself I cannot perhaps judge; much must depend on the individual temperament; to some nervous natures it certainly appears to be a great comfort; but I have my doubts whether smoking, as a general rule, does add to the pleasures of life. It must, moreover, detract somewhat from the sensitiveness of taste and of smell.

Those who live in cities may almost lay

it down as a rule that no time spent out of doors is ever wasted. Fresh air is a cordial of incredible virtue; old families are in all senses county families, not town families; and those who prefer Homer and Plato and Shakespeare to hares and partridges and foxes must beware that they are not tempted to neglect this great requisite of our nature.

Most Englishmen, however, love open air, and it is probably true that most of us enjoy a game at cricket or golf more than looking at any of the old masters. The love of sport is engraven in the English character. As was said of William Rufus, "he loves the tall deer as if he had been their father."

An Oriental traveller is said to have watched a game of cricket and been much astonished at hearing that many of those playing were rich men. He asked why they did not pay some poor people to do it for them.

Wordsworth made it a rule to go out every day, and he used to say that as he never consulted the weather, he never had to consult the physicians.

It always seems to be raining harder than it really is when you look at the weather through the window. Even in winter, though the landscape often seems cheerless and bare enough when you look at it from the fireside, still it is far better to go out, even if you have to brave the storm: when you are once out of doors the touch of earth and the breath of the fresh air gives you fresh life and energy. Men, like trees, live in great part on air.

After a gallop over the downs, a row on the river, a sea voyage, a walk by the seashore or in the woods,

> "The blue above, the music in the air,
> The flowers upon the ground,"[1]

one feels as if one could say with Henry IV, "Je me porte comme le Pont Neuf."

[1] Trench.

The Roman proverb that a child should be taught nothing which he cannot learn standing up, went no doubt into an extreme, but surely we fall into another when we act as if games were the only thing which boys could learn upon their feet.

The love of games among boys is certainly a healthy instinct, and though carried too far in some of our great schools, there can no question that cricket and football, boating and hockey, bathing and birdnesting, are not only the greatest pleasures, but the best medicines for boys.

We cannot always secure sleep. When important decisions have to be taken, the natural anxiety to come to a right decision will often keep us awake. Nothing, however, is more conducive to healthy sleep than plenty of open air. Then indeed we can enjoy the fresh life of the early morning: "the breezy call of incense-bearing morn."[1]

[1] Gray.

"At morn the Blackcock trims his jetty wing,
'Tis morning tempts the linnet's blithest lay,
All nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving with reviving day."

Epictetus described himself as "a spirit bearing about a corpse." That seems to me an ungrateful description. Surely we ought to cherish the body, even if it be but a frail and humble companion. Do we not owe to the eye our enjoyment of the beauties of this world and the glories of the Heavens; to the ear the voices of friends and all the delights of music; are not the hands most faithful and invaluable instruments, ever ready in case of need, ever willing to do our bidding; and even the feet bear us without a murmur along the roughest and stoniest paths of life.

With reasonable care then, most of us may hope to enjoy good health. And yet what a marvellous and complex organisation we have!

We are indeed fearfully and wonderfully made. It is

> "Strange that a harp of a thousand strings
> Should keep in tune so long."

When we consider the marvellous complexity of our bodily organisation, it seems a miracle that we should live at all; much more that the innumerable organs and processes should continue day after day and year after year with so much regularity and so little friction that we are sometimes scarcely conscious of having a body at all.

And yet in that body we have more than 200 bones, of complex and varied forms, any irregularity in, or injury to, which would of course grievously interfere with our movements.

We have over 500 muscles; each nourished by almost innumerable bloodvessels, and regulated by nerves. One of our muscles, the heart, beats over 30,000,000

times in a year, and if it once stops, all is over.

In the skin are wonderfully varied and complex organs—for instance, over 2,000,000 perspiration glands, which regulate the temperature and communicate with the surface by ducts, which have a total length of some ten miles.

Think of the miles of arteries and veins, of capillaries and nerves; of the blood, with the millions of millions of blood corpuscles, each a microcosm in itself.

Think of the organs of sense,—the eye with its cornea and lens, vitreous humour, aqueous humour, and choroid, culminating in the retina, no thicker than a sheet of paper, and yet consisting of nine distinct layers, the innermost composed of rods and cones, supposed to be the immediate recipients of the undulations of light, and so numerous that in each eye the cones are estimated at over 3,000,000, the rods at over 30,000,000.

Above all, and most wonderful of all, the brain itself. Meinert has calculated that the gray matter of the convolutions alone contains no less than 600,000,000 cells; each cell consists of several thousand visible atoms, and each atom again of many millions of molecules.

And yet with reasonable care we can most of us keep this wonderful organisation in health, so that it will work without causing us pain, or even discomfort, for many years; and we may hope that even when old age comes

> "Time may lay his hand
> Upon your heart gently, not smiting it,
> But as a harper lays his open palm
> Upon his harp, to deaden its vibrations."

CHAPTER IV

LOVE

"Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above;
For love is heaven and heaven is love."

SCOTT.

CHAPTER IV

LOVE

Love is the light and sunshine of life. We are so constituted that we cannot fully enjoy ourselves, or anything else, unless some one we love enjoys it with us. Even if we are alone, we store up our enjoyment in hope of sharing it hereafter with those we love.

Love lasts through life, and adapts itself to every age and circumstance; in childhood for father and mother, in manhood for wife, in age for children, and throughout for brothers and sisters, relations and friends. The strength

of friendship is indeed proverbial, and in some cases, as in that of David and Jonathan, is described as surpassing the love of women. But I need not now refer to it, having spoken already of what we owe to friends.

The goodness of Providence to man has been often compared to that of fathers and mothers for their children.

"Just as a mother, with sweet, pious face,
Yearns towards her little children from her seat,
Gives one a kiss, another an embrace,
Takes this upon her knees, that on her feet;
And while from actions, looks, complaints, pretences,
She learns their feelings and their various will,
To this a look, to that a word, dispenses,
And, whether stern or smiling, loves them still;—
So Providence for us, high, infinite,
Makes our necessities its watchful task,
Hearkens to all our prayers, helps all our wants,
And e'en if it denies what seems our right,
Either denies because 'twould have us ask,
Or seems but to deny, or in denying grants."[1]

Sir Walter Scott well says—

[1] *Filicaja.* Translated by Leigh Hunt.

"And if there be on Earth a tear
From passion's dross[1] refined and clear,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head."

Epaminondas is said to have given as his main reason for rejoicing at the victory of Leuctra, that it would give so much pleasure to his father and mother.

Nor must the love of animals be altogether omitted. It is impossible not to sympathise with the Savage when he believes in their immortality, and thinks that after death

"Admitted to that equal sky
His faithful dog shall bear him company."[2]

In the *Mahabharata*, the great Indian Epic, when the family of Pandavas, the heroes, at length reach the gates of heaven, they are welcomed themselves, but are told that their dog cannot come in. Having pleaded in vain, they turn to depart, as they say they can never

[1] Not from passion itself. [2] Pope.

leave their faithful companion. Then at the last moment the Angel at the door relents, and their Dog is allowed to enter with them.

We may hope the time will come when we shall learn

> "Never to blend our pleasure or our pride,
> With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."[1]

But at the present moment I am speaking rather of the love which leads to marriage. Such love is the music of life, nay, "there is music in the beauty, and the silent note of love, far sweeter than the sound of any instrument."[2]

The Symposium of Plato contains an interesting and amusing disquisition on Love.

"Love," Phædrus is made to say, "will make men dare to die for their beloved—love alone; and women as well as men. Of this, Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, is a monument to all Hellas; for she was willing to lay down her life on behalf of

[1] Wordsworth. [2] Browne.

her husband, when no one else would, although he had a father and mother; but the tenderness of her love so far exceeded theirs, that she made them seem to be strangers in blood to their own son, and in name only related to him; and so noble did this action of hers appear to the gods, as well as to men, that among the many who have done virtuously she is one of the very few to whom they have granted the privilege of returning to earth, in admiration of her virtue; such exceeding honour is paid by them to the devotion and virtue of love."

Agathon is even more eloquent—

Love "fills men with affection, and takes away their disaffection, making them meet together at such banquets as these. In sacrifices, feasts, dances, he is our lord —supplying kindness and banishing unkindness, giving friendship and forgiving enmity, the joy of the good, the wonder of the wise, the amazement of the gods,

desired by those who have no part in him, and precious to those who have the better part in him; parent of delicacy, luxury, desire, fondness, softness, grace, regardful of the good, regardless of the evil. In every word, work, wish, fear—pilot, comrade, helper, saviour; glory of gods and men, leader best and brightest: in whose footsteps let every man follow, sweetly singing in his honour that sweet strain with which love charms the souls of gods and men."

No doubt, even so there are two Loves, "one, the daughter of Uranus, who has no mother, and is the elder and wiser goddess; and the other, the daughter of Zeus and Dione, who is popular and common,"—but let us not examine too closely. Charity tells us even of Guinevere, "that while she lived, she was a good lover and therefore she had a good end."[1]

[1] Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*.

The origin of love has exercised philosophers almost as much as the origin of evil. The Symposium continues with a speech which Plato attributes in joke to Aristophanes, and of which Jowett observes that nothing in Aristophanes is more truly Aristophanic.

The original human nature, he says, was not like the present. The Primeval Man was round,[1] his back and sides forming a circle ; and he had four hands and four feet, one head with two faces, looking opposite ways, set on a round neck and precisely alike. He could walk upright as men now do, backwards or forwards as he pleased, and he could also roll over and over at a great rate, whirling round on his four hands and four feet, eight in all, like tumblers going over and over with their legs in the air ; this was when he wanted to run fast. Terrible was their might and strength, and

[1] I avail myself of Dr. Jowett's translation.

the thoughts of their hearts were great, and they made an attack upon the gods; of them is told the tale of Otys and Ephialtes, who, as Homer says, dared to scale heaven,, and would have laid hands upon the gods. Doubt reigned in the celestial councils. Should they kill them and annihilate the race with thunderbolts, as they had done the giants, then there would be an end of the sacrifices and worship which men offered to them; but, on the other hand, the gods could not suffer their insolence to be unrestrained. At last, after a good deal of reflection, Zeus discovered a way. He said: "Methinks I have a plan which will humble their pride and mend their manners; they shall continue to exist, but I will cut them in two, which will have a double advantage, for it will halve their strength and we shall have twice as many sacrifices. They shall walk upright on two legs, and if they continue insolent and will not be quiet, I will split them again

and they shall hop on a single leg." He spoke and cut men in two, "as you might split an egg with a hair." . . . After the division the two parts of man, each desiring his other half, came together. . . . So ancient is the desire of one another which is implanted in us, reuniting our original nature, making one of two, and healing the state of man. Each of us when separated is but the indenture of a man, having one side only, like a flat-fish, and he is always looking for his other half.

And when one of them finds his other half, the pair are lost in amazement of love and friendship and intimacy, and one will not be out of the other's sight, as I may say, even for a minute: they will pass their whole lives together; yet they could not explain what they desire of one another. For the intense yearning which each of them has towards the other does not appear to be

the desire of lovers' intercourse, but of something else, which the soul of either evidently desires and cannot tell, and of which she has only a dark and doubtful presentiment.

However this may be, there is such instinctive insight in the human heart that we often form our opinion almost instantaneously, and such impressions seldom change, I might even say, they are seldom wrong. Love at first sight sounds like an imprudence, and yet is almost a revelation. It seems as if we were but renewing the relations of a previous existence.

> "But to see her were to love her,
> Love but her, and love for ever." [1]

Yet though experience seldom falsifies such a feeling, happily the reverse does not hold good. The deepest affection is often of slow growth. Many a warm love has been won by faithful devotion.

[1] Burns.

Montaigne indeed declares that "Few have married for love without repenting it." Dr. Johnson also maintained that marriages would generally be happier if they were arranged by the Lord Chancellor; but I do not think either Montaigne or Johnson were good judges. As Lancelot said to the unfortunate Maid of Astolat, "I love not to be constrained to love, for love must arise of the heart and not by constraint."[1]

Love defies distance and the elements; Sestos and Abydos are divided by the sea, "but Love joined them by an arrow from his bow."[2]

Love can be happy anywhere. Byron wished

> "O that the desert were my dwelling-place,
> With one fair Spirit for my minister,
> That I might all forget the human race,
> And, hating no one, love but only her."

[1] Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*. [2] Symonds.

And many will doubtless have felt

"O Love! what hours were thine and mine
In lands of Palm and southern Pine,
In lands of Palm, of Orange blossom,
Of Olive, Aloe, and Maize and Vine."

What is true of space holds good equally of time.

"In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love." [1]

Even when, as among some Eastern races, Religion and Philosophy have combined to depress Love, truth reasserts itself in popular sayings, as for instance in the Turkish proverb, "All women are perfection, especially she who loves you."

A French lady having once quoted to Abd-el-Kader the Polish proverb, "A woman draws more with a hair of her

[1] Scott.

head than a pair of oxen well harnessed;" he answered with a smile, "The hair is unnecessary, woman is powerful as fate."

But we like to think of Love rather as the Angel of Happiness than as a ruling force: of the joy of home when "hearts are of each other sure."

> "It is the secret sympathy,
> The silver link, the silken tie,
> Which heart to heart, and mind to mind
> In body and in soul can bind."[1]

What Bacon says of a friend is even truer of a wife; there is "no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less."

Let some one we love come near us and

> "At once it seems that something new or strange
> Has passed upon the flowers, the trees, the ground;
> Some slight but unintelligible change
> On everything around."[2]

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[1] Scott. [2] Trench.

We might, I think, apply to love what Homer says of Fate:

"Her feet are tender, for she sets her steps
Not on the ground, but on the heads of men."

Love and Reason divide the life of man. We must give to each its due. If it is impossible to attain to virtue by the aid of Reason without Love, neither can we do so by means of Love alone without Reason.

Love, said Melanippides, "sowing in the heart of man the sweet harvest of desire, mixes the sweetest and most beautiful things together."

No one indeed could complain now, with Phædrus in Plato's Symposium, that Love has had no worshippers among the Poets. On the contrary, Love has brought them many of their sweetest inspirations; none perhaps nobler or more beautiful than Milton's description of Paradise:

"With thee conversing, I forget all time,
All seasons, and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit, and flower
Glistering with dew, fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night
With this her solemn bird and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heaven, her starry train:
But neither breath of morn when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flower
Glistering with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon
Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet."

Moreover, no one need despair of an ideal marriage. We fortunately differ so much in our tastes; love does so much to create love, that even the humblest may hope for the happiest marriage if only he deserves it; and Shakespeare speaks, as he does so often, for thousands when he says

"She is mine own,
And I am rich in having such a jewel

As twenty seas, if all their sands were pearls,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold."

True love indeed will not be unreasonable or exacting.

"Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.
True! a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field,
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.
Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore,
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."[1]

And yet

"Alas! how light a cause may move
Dissension between hearts that love!
Hearts that the world in vain had tried,
And sorrow but more closely tied,
That stood the storm, when waves were rough,
Yet in a sunny hour fall off,

[1] Lovelace.

Like ships that have gone down at sea,
When heaven was all tranquillity." [1]

For love is brittle. Do not risk even any little jar; it may be

"The little rift within the lute,
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all." [2]

Love is delicate; "Love is hurt with jar and fret," and you might as well expect a violin to remain in tune if roughly used, as Love to survive if chilled or driven into itself. But what a pleasure to keep it alive by

"Little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love." [3]

"She whom you loved and chose," says Bondi,

"Is now your bride,
The gift of heaven, and to your trust consigned;
Honour her still, though not with passion blind;
And in her virtue, though you watch, confide.
Be to her youth a comfort, guardian, guide,
In whose experience she may safety find;

[1] Moore. [2] Tennyson. [3] Wordsworth.

And whether sweet or bitter be assigned,
The joy with her, as well as pain, divide.
Yield not too much if reason disapprove;
Nor too much force; the partner of your life
Should neither victim be, nor tyrant prove.
Thus shall that rein, which often mars the bliss
Of wedlock, scarce be felt; and thus your wife
Ne'er in the husband shall the lover miss." [1]

Every one is ennobled by true love—

"'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all." [2]

Perhaps no one ever praised a woman more gracefully in a sentence than Steele when he said of Lady Elizabeth Hastings that "to know her was a liberal education"; but every woman may feel as she improves herself that she is not only laying in a store of happiness for herself, but also raising and blessing him whom she would most wish to see happy and good.

Love, true love, grows and deepens with time. Husband and wife, who are married indeed, live

[1] Bondi. Tr. by Glassford. [2] Tennyson.

"By each other, till to love and live
Be one." [1]

Nor does it end with life. A mother's love knows no bounds.

"They err who tell us Love can die,
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In Heaven Ambition cannot dwell,
Nor Avarice in the vaults of Hell;
Earthly these passions of the Earth;
They perish where they have their birth,
But Love is indestructible;
Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From Heaven it came, to Heaven returneth;
Too oft on Earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times opprest,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in Heaven its perfect rest:
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest time of Love is there.

"The Mother when she meets on high
The Babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight?" [2]

As life wears on the love of husband or

[1] Swinburne. [2] Southey.

wife, of friends and of children, becomes the great solace and delight of age. The one recalls the past, the other gives interest to the future; and in our children, it has been truly said, we live our lives again.

CHAPTER V

ART

"High art consists neither in altering, nor in improving nature; but in seeking throughout nature for 'whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are pure'; in loving these, in displaying to the utmost of the painter's power such loveliness as is in them, and directing the thoughts of others to them by winning art, or gentle emphasis. Art (caeteris paribus) is great in exact proportion to the love of beauty shown by the painter, provided that love of beauty forfeit no atom of truth."—RUSKIN.

CHAPTER V

ART

THE most ancient works of Art which we possess are representations of animals, rude indeed, but often strikingly characteristic, engraved on, or carved in, stag's-horn or bone; and found in English, French, and German caves, with stone and other rude implements, and the remains of mammalia, belonging apparently to the close of the glacial epoch: not only of the deer, bear, and other animals now inhabiting temperate Europe, but of some, such as the reindeer, the musk sheep, and the mammoth, which have either retreated north or become alto-

gether extinct. We may, I think, venture to hope that other designs may hereafter be found, which will give us additional information as to the manners and customs of our ancestors in those remote ages.

Next to these in point of antiquity come the sculptures and paintings on Assyrian and Egyptian tombs, temples, and palaces.

These ancient scenes, considered as works of art, have no doubt many faults, and yet how graphically they tell their story! As a matter of fact a king is not, as a rule, bigger than his soldiers, but in these battle-scenes he is always so represented. We must, however, remember that in ancient warfare the greater part of the fighting was, as a matter of fact, done by the chiefs. In this respect the Homeric poems resemble the Assyrian and Egyptian representations. At any rate, we see at a glance which

is the king, which are officers, which side is victorious, the struggles and sufferings of the wounded, the flight of the enemy, the city of refuge—so that he who runs may read; while in modern battle-pictures the story is much less clear, and, indeed, the untrained eye sees for some time little but scarlet and smoke.

These works assuredly possess a grandeur and dignity of their own, even though they have not the beauty of later art.

In Greece Art reached a perfection which has never been excelled, and it was more appreciated than perhaps it has ever been since.

At the time when Demetrius attacked the city of Rhodes, Protogenes was painting a picture of Ialysus. "This," says Pliny, "hindered King Demetrius from taking Rhodes, out of fear lest he should burn the picture; and not being able to fire the town on any other side, he was pleased rather to spare the painting than

to take the victory, which was already in his hands. Protogenes, at that time, had his painting-room in a garden out of the town, and very near the camp of the enemies, where he was daily finishing those pieces which he had already begun, the noise of soldiers not being capable of interrupting his studies. But Demetrius causing him to be brought into his presence, and asking him what made him so bold as to work in the midst of enemies, he answered the king, 'That he understood the war which he made was against the Rhodians, and not against the Arts.'"

With the decay of Greece, Art sank too, until it was revived in the thirteenth century by Cimabue, since whose time its progress has been triumphal.

Art is unquestionably one of the purest and highest elements in human happiness. It trains the mind through the eye, and the eye through the mind. As the sun colors flowers, so does art color life.

"In true Art," says Ruskin, "the hand, the head, and the heart of man go together. But Art is no recreation: it cannot be learned at spare moments, nor pursued when we have nothing better to do."

It is not only in the East that great works, really due to study and labour, have been attributed to magic.

Study and labour cannot make every man an artist, but no one can succeed in art without them. In Art two and two do not make four, and no number of little things will make a great one.

It has been said, and on high authority, that the end of all art is to please. But this is a very imperfect definition. It might as well be said that a library is only intended for pleasure and ornament.

Art has the advantage of nature, in so far as it introduces a human element, which is in some respects superior even

to nature. "If," says Plato, "you take a man as he is made by nature and compare him with another who is the effect of art, the work of nature will always appear the less beautiful, because art is more accurate than nature."

Bacon also, in *The Advancement of Learning*, speaks of "the world being inferior to the soul, by reason whereof there is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety than can be found in the nature of things."

The poets tell us that Prometheus, having made a beautiful statue of Minerva, the goddess was so delighted that she offered to bring down anything from Heaven which could add to its perfection. Prometheus on this prudently asked her to take him there, so that he might choose for himself. This Minerva did, and Prometheus, finding that in heaven all things were animated by fire, brought back a

spark, with which he gave life to his work.

In fact, Imitation is the means and not the end of Art. The story of Zeuxis and Parrhasius is a pretty tale; but to deceive birds, or even man himself, is but a trifling matter compared with the higher functions of Art. To imitate the *Iliad*, says Dr. Young, is not imitating Homer, but as Sir J. Reynolds adds, the more the artist studies nature "the nearer he approaches to the true and perfect idea of art."

"Following these rules and using these precautions, when you have clearly and distinctly learned in what good coloring consists, you cannot do better than have recourse to Nature herself, who is always at hand, and in comparison of whose true splendour the best colored pictures are but faint and feeble."[1]

Art, indeed, must create as well as copy. As Victor Cousin well says, "The ideal

[1] Reynolds.

without the real lacks life; but the real without the ideal lacks pure beauty. Both need to unite; to join hands and enter into alliance. In this way the best work may be achieved. Thus beauty is an absolute idea, and not a mere copy of imperfect Nature."

The grouping of the picture is of course of the utmost importance. Sir Joshua Reynolds gives two remarkable cases to show how much any given figure in a picture is affected by its surroundings. Tintoret in one of his pictures has taken the Samson of Michael Angelo, put an eagle under him, placed thunder and lightning in his right hand instead of the jawbone of an ass, and thus turned him into a Jupiter. The second instance is even more striking. Titian has copied the figure in the vault of the Sistine Chapel which represents the Deity dividing light from darkness, and has introduced it into his picture of the battle of Cadore, to

represent a general falling from his horse.

We must remember that so far as the eye is concerned, the object of the artist is to train, not to deceive, and that his higher function has reference rather to the mind than to the eye.

No doubt

> "To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
> To throw a perfume on the violet,
> To smooth the ice, or add another hue
> Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
> To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,
> Is wasteful and ridiculous excess." [1]

But all is not gold that glitters, flowers are not all arrayed like the lily, and there is room for selection as well as representation.

"The true, the good, and the beautiful," says Cousin, "are but forms of the infinite: what then do we really love in truth, beauty, and virtue? We love the

[1] Shakespeare.

infinite himself. The love of the infinite substance is hidden under the love of its forms. It is so truly the infinite which charms in the true, the good, and the beautiful, that its manifestations alone do not suffice. The artist is dissatisfied at the sight even of his greatest works; he aspires still higher."

It is indeed sometimes objected that Landscape painting is not true to nature; but we must ask, What is truth? Is the object to produce the same impression on the mind as that created by the scene itself? If so, let any one try to draw from memory a group of mountains, and he will probably find that in the impression produced on his mind the mountains are loftier and steeper, the valleys deeper and narrower, than in the actual reality. A drawing, then, which was literally exact would not be true, in the sense of conveying the same impression as Nature herself.

In fact, Art, says Goethe, is called Art simply because it is not Nature.

It is not sufficient for the artist to choose beautiful scenery, and delineate it with accuracy. He must not be a mere copyist. Something higher and more subtle is required. He must create, or at any rate interpret, as well as copy.

Turner was never satisfied merely to reach to even the most glorious scenery. He moved, and even suppressed, mountains.

A certain nobleman, we are told, was very anxious to see the model from whom Guido painted his lovely female faces. Guido placed his color-grinder, a big coarse man, in an attitude, and then drew a beautiful Magdalen. "My dear Count," he said, "the beautiful and pure idea must be in the mind, and then it is no matter what the model is."

Guido Reni, who painted St. Michael for the Church of the Capuchins at Rome,

wished that he "had the wings of an angel, to have ascended unto Paradise, and there to have beheld the forms of those beautiful spirits, from which I might have copied my Archangel. But not being able to mount so high, it was in vain for me to seek for his resemblance here below; so that I was forced to look into mine own mind, and into that idea of beauty which I have formed in my own imagination." [1]

Science attempts, as far as the limited powers of Man permit, to reproduce the actual facts in a manner which, however bald, is true in itself, irrespective of time and scene. To do this she must submit to many limitations; not altogether unvexatious, and not without serious drawbacks. Art, on the contrary, endeavours to convey the impression of the original under some especial aspect.

In some respects, Art gives a clearer

[1] Dryden.

and more vivid idea of an unknown country than any description can convey. In literature rock may be rock, but in painting it must be granite or slate, and not merely rock in general.

It is remarkable that while artists have long recognised the necessity of studying anatomy, and there has been from the commencement a professor of anatomy in the Royal Academy, it is only of late years that any knowledge of botany or geology has been considered desirable, and even now their importance is by no means generally recognised.

Much has been written as to the relative merits of painting, sculpture, and architecture. This, if it be not a somewhat unprofitable inquiry, would at any rate be out of place here.

Architecture not only gives intense pleasure, but even the impression of something ethereal and superhuman.

Madame de Staël described it as

"frozen music"; and a cathedral is a glorious specimen of "thought in stone," whose very windows are transparent walls of gorgeous hues.

Caracci said that poets paint in their words and artists speak in their works. The latter have indeed one great advantage, for a glance at a statue or a painting will convey a more vivid idea than a long and minute description.

Another advantage possessed by Art is that it is understood by all civilised nations, whilst each has a separate language.

Even from a material point of view Art is most important. In a recent address Sir F. Leighton has observed that the study of Art "is every day becoming more important in relation to certain sides of the waning material prosperity of the country. For the industrial competition between this and other countries —a competition, keen and eager, which

means to certain industries almost a race for life—runs, in many cases, no longer exclusively or mainly on the lines of excellence of material and solidity of workmanship, but greatly nowadays on the lines of artistic charm and beauty of design."

The highest service, however, that Art can accomplish for man is to become "at once the voice of his nobler aspirations, and the steady disciplinarian of his emotions; and it is with this mission, rather than with any æsthetic perfection, that we are at present concerned."[1]

Science and Art are sisters, or rather perhaps they are like brother and sister. The mission of Art is in some respects like that of woman. It is not Hers so much to do the hard toil and moil of the world, as to surround it with a halo of beauty, to convert work into pleasure.

In science we naturally expect pro-

[1] Haweis.

gress, but in Art the case is not so clear; and yet Sir Joshua Reynolds did not hesitate to express his conviction that in the future "so much will painting improve, that the best we can now achieve will appear like the work of children," and we may hope that our power of enjoying it may increase in an equal ratio. Wordsworth says that poets have to create the taste for their own works, and the same is, in some degree at any rate, true of artists.

In one respect especially modern painters appear to have made a marked advance, and one great blessing which in fact we owe to them is a more vivid enjoyment of scenery.

I have of course no pretensions to speak with authority, but even in the case of the greatest masters before Turner, the landscapes seem to me singularly inferior to the figures. Sir Joshua Reynolds tells us that Gainsborough framed a kind of model of

a landscape on his table, composed of broken stones, dried herbs, and pieces of looking-glass, which he magnified and improved into rocks, trees, and water; and Sir Joshua solemnly discusses the wisdom of such a proceeding. "How far it may be useful in giving hints," he says, "the professors of landscape can best determine," but he does not recommend it, and is disposed to think, on the whole, the practice may be more likely to do harm than good!

In the picture of Ceyx and Alcyone, by Wilson, of whom Cunningham said that, with Gainsborough, he laid the foundation of our School of Landscape, the castle is said to have been painted from a pot of porter, and the rock from a Stilton cheese. There is indeed another version of the story, that the picture was sold for a pot of porter and a cheese, which, however, does not give a higher idea of the appreciation of the art of landscape at that date.

Until very recently the general feeling

with reference to mountain scenery has been that expressed by Tacitus. "Who would leave Asia or Africa or Italy to go to Germany, a shapeless and unformed country, a harsh sky, and melancholy aspect, unless indeed it was his native land?"

It is amusing to read the opinion of Dr. Beattie, in a special treatise on *Truth, Poetry, and Music*, written at the close of last century, that "The Highlands of Scotland are in general a melancholy country. Long tracts of mountainous country, covered with dark heath, and often obscured by misty weather; narrow valleys thinly inhabited, and bounded by precipices resounding with the fall of torrents; a soil so rugged, and a climate so dreary, as in many parts to admit neither the amenities of pasturage, nor the labours of agriculture; the mournful dashing of waves along the firths and lakes; the portentous noises which every

change of the wind is apt to raise in a lonely region, full of echoes, and rocks, and caverns; the grotesque and ghastly appearance of such a landscape by the light of the moon: objects like these diffuse a gloom over the fancy," etc.[1]

Even Goldsmith regarded the scenery of the Highlands as dismal and hideous. Johnson, we know, laid it down as an axiom that "the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees is the high road that leads him to England"—a saying which throws much doubt on his distinction that the Giant's Causeway was "worth seeing but not worth going to see."[2]

Madame de Staël declared, that though she would go 500 leagues to meet a clever man, she would not care to open her window to see the Bay of Naples.

Nor was the ancient absence of appreciation confined to scenery. Even Burke, speaking of Stonehenge, says, "Stone-

[1] Beattie. 1776. [2] Boswell.

henge, neither for disposition nor ornament, has anything admirable."

Ugly scenery, however, may in some cases have an injurious effect on the human system. It has been ingeniously suggested that what really drove Don Quixote out of his mind was not the study of his books of chivalry, so much as the monotonous scenery of La Mancha.

The love of landscape is not indeed due to Art alone. It has been the happy combination of art and science which has trained us to perceive the beauty which surrounds us.

Art helps us to see, and "hundreds of people can talk for one who can think; but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion all in one. . . Remembering always that there are two characters in which all greatness of Art consists—first, the earnest and intense seizing of natural facts; then the ordering those facts by

strength of human intellect, so as to make them, for all who look upon them, to the utmost serviceable, memorable, and beautiful. And thus great Art is nothing else than the type of strong and noble life; for as the ignoble person, in his dealings with all that occurs in the world about him, first sees nothing clearly, looks nothing fairly in the face, and then allows himself to be swept away by the trampling torrent and unescapable force of the things that he would not foresee and could not understand: so the noble person, looking the facts of the world full in the face, and fathoming them with deep faculty, then deals with them in unalarmed intelligence and unhurried strength, and becomes, with his human intellect and will, no unconscious nor insignificant agent in consummating their good and restraining their evil."[1]

May we not also hope that in this

[1] Ruskin.

respect also still further progress may be made, that beauties may be revealed, and pleasures may be in store for those who come after us, which we cannot appreciate, or at least can but faintly feel.

Even now there is scarcely a cottage without something more or less successfully claiming to rank as Art,—a picture, a photograph, or a statuette ; and we may fairly hope that much as Art even now contributes to the happiness of life, it will do so even more effectively in the future.

CHAPTER VI

POETRY

"And here the singer for his Art
Not all in vain may plead;
The song that nerves a nation's heart
Is in itself a deed."

TENNYSON.

CHAPTER VI

POETRY

After the disastrous defeat of the Athenians before Syracuse, Plutarch tells us that the Sicilians spared those who could repeat any of the poetry of Euripides.

"Some there were," he says, "who owed their preservation to Euripides. Of all the Grecians, his was the muse with whom the Sicilians were most in love. From the strangers who landed in their island they gleaned every small specimen or portion of his works, and communicated it with pleasure to each other. It is said that upon this occasion a number of Athenians on their return home went to

Euripides, and thanked him in the most grateful manner for their obligations to his pen; some having been enfranchised for teaching their masters what they remembered of his poems, and others having procured refreshments, when they were wandering about after the battle, by singing a few of his verses."

Nowadays we are none of us likely to owe our lives to Poetry in this sense, yet in another we many of us owe to it a similar debt. How often, when worn with overwork, sorrow, or anxiety, have we taken down Homer or Horace, Shakespeare or Milton, and felt the clouds gradually roll away, the jar of nerves subside, the consciousness of power replace physical exhaustion, and the darkness of despondency brighten once more into the light of life.

"And yet Plato," says Jowett, "expels the poets from his Republic because they are allied to sense; because they stimulate

the emotions; because they are thrice removed from the ideal truth."

In that respect, as in some others, few would accept Plato's Republic as being an ideal Commonwealth, and most would agree with Sir Philip Sidney that "if you cannot bear the planet-like music of poetry . . . I must send you in the behalf of all poets, that while you live, you live in love, and never get favour for lacking skill of a sonnet; and when you die, your memory die from the earth, for want of an epitaph."

Poetry has often been compared with painting and sculpture. Simonides long ago said that Poetry is a speaking picture, and painting is mute Poetry.

"Poetry," says Cousin, "is the first of the Arts because it best represents the infinite."

And again, "Though the arts are in some respects isolated, yet there is one which seems to profit by the resources of

all, and that is Poetry. With words, Poetry can paint and sculpture; she can build edifices like an architect; she unites, to some extent, melody and music. She is, so to say, the centre in which all arts unite."

A true poem is a gallery of pictures.

It must, I think, be admitted that painting and sculpture can give us a clearer and more vivid idea of an object we have never seen than any description can convey. But when we have once seen it, then on the contrary there are many points which the poet brings before us, and which perhaps neither in the representation, nor even in nature, should we perceive for ourselves. Objects can be most vividly brought before us by the artist, actions by the poet; space is the domain of Art, time of Poetry.[1]

Take, for instance, as a typical instance, female beauty. How laboured and how

[1] See Lessing's *Laocoön*.

cold any description appears. The greatest poets recognise this; as, for instance, when Scott wishes us to realise the Lady of the Lake he does not attempt any description, but just mentions her attitude and then adds—

> "And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
> A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
> Of finer form or lovelier face!"

A great poet indeed must be inspired; he must possess an exquisite sense of beauty, and feelings deeper than those of most men, and yet well under his control. "The Milton of poetry is the man, in his own magnificent phrase, of devout prayer to that eternal spirit that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases."[1] And if from one point of view Poetry brings home to us the immeasurable inequalities of different

[1] Arnold.

minds, on the other hand it teaches us that genius is no affair of rank or wealth.

"I think of Chatterton, the marvellous boy,
The sleepless soul, that perish'd in his pride;
Of Burns, that walk'd in glory and in joy
Behind his plough upon the mountain-side."[1]

A man may be a poet and yet write no verse, but not if he writes bad or poor ones.

"Mediocribus esse poetis
Non homines, non Di, non concessere columnæ."[2]

Second-rate poets, like second-rate writers generally, fade gradually into dreamland; but the great poets remain always.

Poetry will not live unless it be alive, "that which comes from the head goes to the heart;"[3] and Milton truly said that "he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem."

For "he who, having no touch of the Muses' madness in his soul, comes to the

[1] Coleridge. [2] Horace. [3] Wordsworth.

door and thinks he will get into the temple by the help of Art—he, I say, and his Poetry are not admitted."[1]

But the work of the true poet is immortal.

"For have not the verses of Homer continued 2500 years or more without the loss of a syllable or a letter, during which time infinite palaces, temples, castles, cities, have been decayed and demolished? It is not possible to have the true pictures or statues of Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar, no, nor of the kings or great personages of much later years; for the originals cannot last, and the copies cannot but lose of the life and truth. But the images of men's wits and knowledge remain in books, exempted from the wrong of time and capable of perpetual renovation. Neither are they fitly to be called images, because they generate still and cast their seeds

[1] Plato.

in the minds of others, provoking and causing infinite actions and opinions in succeeding ages; so that if the invention of the ship was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities from place to place, and consociateth the most remote regions in participation of their fruits, how much more are letters to be magnified, which, as ships, pass through the vast seas of time and make ages so distant to participate of the wisdom, illuminations, and inventions, the one of the other?"[1]

The poet requires many qualifications. "Who has traced," says Cousin, "the plan of this poem? Reason. Who has given it life and charm? Love. And who has guided reason and love? The Will."

> "All men have some imagination, but
> The Lover and the Poet
> Are of imagination all compact.
> . . . . . .

[1] Bacon.

The Poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name." [1]

Poetry is the fruit of genius; but it cannot be produced without labour. Moore, one of the airiest of poets, tells us that he was a slow and painstaking workman.

The works of our greatest Poets are all episodes in that one great poem which the genius of man has created since the commencement of human history.

A distinguished mathematician is said once to have inquired what was proved by Milton in his *Paradise Lost;* and there are no doubt still some who ask themselves, even if they shrink from putting the question to others, whether Poetry is of any use, just as if to give pleasure were not useful in itself. No true Utili-

[1] Shakespeare.

tarian, however, would feel this doubt, since the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the rule of his philosophy.

"We must not estimate the works of genius merely with reference to the pleasure they afford, even when pleasure was their principal object. We must also regard the intelligence which they presuppose and exercise."[1]

Thoroughly to enjoy Poetry we must not so limit ourselves, but must rise to a higher ideal.

"Yes; constantly in reading poetry, a sense for the best, the really excellent, and of the strength and joy to be drawn from it, should be present in our minds, and should govern our estimate of what we read."[2]

Cicero, in his oration for Archias, well asked, "Has not this man then a right to my love, to my admiration, to all the

[1] St. Hilaire. [2] Arnold.

means which I can employ in his defence? For we are instructed by all the greatest and most learned of mankind, that education, precepts, and practice, can in every other branch of learning produce excellence. But a poet is formed by the hand of nature; he is aroused by mental vigour, and inspired by what we may call the spirit of divinity itself. Therefore our Ennius has a right to give to poets the epithet of Holy,[1] because they are, as it were, lent to mankind by the indulgent bounty of the gods."

"Poetry," says Shelley, "awakens and enlarges the mind itself by rendering it the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought. Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar; it reproduces all that it represents, and the im-

[1] Plato styles poets the sons and interpreters of the gods.

personations clothed in its Elysian light stand thenceforward in the minds of those who have once contemplated them, as memorials of that gentle and exaltęd content which extends itself over all thoughts and actions with which it co-exists."

And again, "All high Poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn, which contained all oaks potentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain for ever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight."

Or, as he has expressed himself in his Ode to a Skylark:

"Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

"Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,

Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not.

"Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view."

We speak now of the poet as the Maker or Creator—ποιήτης; the origin of the word "bard" seems doubtful.

The Hebrews well called their poets "Seers," for they not only perceive more than others, but also help other men to see much which would otherwise be lost to us. The old Greek word was ἀοιδός—the Bard or Singer.

Poetry lifts the veil from the beauty of the world which would otherwise be hidden, and throws over the most familiar objects the glow and halo of imagination. The man who has a love for Poetry can scarcely fail to derive intense

pleasure from Nature, which to those who love it is all "beauty to the eye and music to the ear."

"Yet Nature never set forth the earth in so rich tapestry as divers poets have done; neither with so pleasant rivers, fruitful trees, sweet-smelling flowers, nor whatsoever else may make the too-much-loved earth more lovely."[1]

In the smokiest city the poet will transport us, as if by enchantment, to the fresh air and bright sun, to the murmur of woods and leaves and water, to the ripple of waves upon sand, and enable us, as in some delightful dream, to cast off the cares and troubles of life.

The poet, indeed, must have more true knowledge, not only of human nature, but of all Nature, than other men are gifted with.

Crabbe Robinson tells us that when a stranger once asked permission to see

[1] Sydney, *Defence of Poetry*.

Wordsworth's study, the maid said, "This is master's Library, but he studies in the fields." No wonder then that Nature has been said to return the poet's love.

> "Call it not vain ;—they do not err
> Who say that, when the poet dies,
> Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
> And celebrates his obsequies." [1]

Swinburne says of Blake, and I feel entirely with him, though in my case the application would have been different, that "The sweetness of sky and leaf, of grass and water—the bright light life of bird, child, and beast—is, so to speak, kept fresh by some graver sense of faithful and mysterious love, explained and vivified by a conscience and purpose in the artist's hand and mind. Such a fiery outbreak of spring, such an insurrection of fierce floral life and radiant riot of childish power and pleasure, no poet or painter ever gave before; such lustre of

[1] Scott.

green leaves and flushed limbs, kindled cloud and fervent fleece, was never wrought into speech or shape."

To appreciate Poetry we must not merely glance at it, or rush through it, or read it in order to talk or write about it. One must compose oneself into the right frame of mind. Of course for one's own sake one will read Poetry in times of agitation, sorrow, or anxiety, but that is another matter.

The inestimable treasures of Poetry again are open to all of us. The best books are indeed the cheapest. For the price of a little beer, a little tobacco, we can buy Shakespeare or Milton—or indeed almost as many books as a man can read with profit in a year.

Nor, in considering the advantage of Poetry to man, must we limit ourselves to its past or present influence. The future of Poetry, says Mr. Matthew Arnold, and no one was more qualified to

speak, "The future of Poetry is immense, because in Poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay. But for Poetry the idea is everything; the rest is a world of illusion, of divine illusion. Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea; the idea *is* the fact. The strongest part of our religion to-day is its unconscious Poetry. We should conceive of Poetry worthily, and more highly than it has been the custom to conceive of it. We should conceive of it as capable of higher uses, and called to higher destinies than those which in general men have assigned to it hitherto."

Poetry has been well called the record "of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds"; it is the light of life, the very "image of life expressed in its eternal truth"; it immortalises all that is best and most beautiful in the world; "it purges from our inward sight

the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being"; "it is the centre and circumference of knowledge"; and poets are "mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present."

Poetry, in effect, lengthens life; it creates for us time, if time be realised as the succession of ideas and not of minutes; it is the "breath and finer spirit of all knowledge"; it is bound neither by time nor space, but lives in the spirit of man. What greater praise can be given than the saying that life should be Poetry put into action.

CHAPTER VII

MUSIC

"Music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, gaiety and life to everything. It is the essence of order, and leads to all that is good, just, and beautiful, of which it is the invisible, but nevertheless dazzling, passionate, and eternal form."—PLATO.

CHAPTER VII

MUSIC

Music is in one sense far more ancient than man, and the voice was from the very commencement of human existence a source of melody: but so far as musical instruments are concerned, it is probable that percussion came first, then wind instruments, and lastly, those with strings: first the Drum, then the Flute, and thirdly, the Lyre. The early history of Music is, however, unfortunately wrapped in much obscurity. The use of letters long preceded the invention of notes, and tradition in such a matter can tell us but little.

The contest between Marsyas and

Apollo is supposed by some to typify the struggle between the Flute and the Lyre; Marsyas representing the archaic Flute, Apollo the champion of the Lyre. The latter of course was victorious: it sets the voice free, and the sound

> "Of music that is born of human breath
> Comes straighter to the soul than any strain
> The hand alone can make."[1]

Various myths have grown up to explain the origin of Music. One Greek tradition was to the effect Grasshoppers were human beings themselves in a world before the Muses; that when the Muses came, being ravished with delight, they sang and sang and forgot to eat, until "they died of hunger for the love of song. And they carry to heaven the report of those who honour them on earth."[2]

The old writers and commentators tell us that Pythagoras, "as he was one day meditating on the want of some rule to

[1] Morris. [2] Plato.

guide the ear, analogous to what had been used to help the other senses, chanced to pass by a blacksmith's shop, and observing that the hammers, which were four in number, sounded very harmoniously, he had them weighed, and found them to be in the proportion of six, eight, nine, and twelve. Upon this he suspended four strings of equal length and thickness, etc., fastened weights in the above-mentioned proportions to each of them respectively, and found that they gave the same sounds that the hammers had done; viz. the fourth, fifth, and octave to the gravest tone."[1] However this may be, it would appear that the lyre had at first four strings only; Terpander is said to have given it three more, and an eighth was subsequently added.

We have unfortunately no specimens of Greek or Roman, or even of Early Christian music. The Chinese indicated

[1] Crowest.

the notes by words or their initials. The lowest was termed "Koung," or the Emperor, as being the Foundation on which all were supported; the second was Tschang, the Prime Minister; the third, the Subject; the fourth, Public Business; the fifth, the Mirror of Heaven.[1] The Greeks also had a name for each note. The so-called Gregorian notes were not invented until six hundred years after Gregory's death. The Monastery of St. Gall possesses a copy of Gregory's Antiphonary, made about the year 780 by a chorister who was sent from Rome to Charlemagne to reform the Northern music, and in this the notes are indicated by "pneumss," from which our notes were gradually developed, and first arranged along one line, to which others were gradually added. But I must not enlarge on this interesting subject.

In the matter of music Englishmen

[1] Rowbotham, *History of Music.*

have certainly deserved well of the world. Even as long ago as 1185 Giraldus Cambrensis, Bishop of St. David's, says, "The Britons do not sing their tunes in unison like the inhabitants of other countries, but in different parts. So that when a company of singers meet to sing, as is usual in this country, as many different parts are heard as there are singers."[1]

The most ancient known piece of music for several voices is an English four men's song, "Summer is a-coming in," which is considered to be at least as early as 1240, and is now in the British Museum.

The Venetian Ambassador in the time of Henry VIII. said of our English Church music: "The mass was sung by His Majesty's choristers, whose voices are more heavenly than human; they did not chaunt like men, but like angels."

Speaking of Purcell's anthem, "Be merciful to me, O God," Burney says it is

[1] Wakefield.

"throughout admirable. Indeed, to my conception there is no better music existing of the kind than the opening of this anthem, in which the verse 'I will praise God' and the last movement in C natural are, in melody, harmony, and modulation, truly divine music."

Dr. Burney says that Purcell was "as much the pride of an Englishman in music as Shakespeare in productions of the stage, Milton in epic poetry, Locke in metaphysics, or Sir Isaac Newton in philosophy and mathematics;" and yet Purcell's music is unfortunately but little known to us now, as Macfarren says, "to our great loss."

The authors of some of the loveliest music, and even in some cases that of comparatively recent times, are unknown to us. This is the case for instance with the exquisite song "Drink to me only with thine eyes," the words of which were taken by Jonson from Philostratus, and

which has been considered as the most beautiful of all "people's songs."

The music of "God save the Queen" has been adopted in more than half a dozen other countries, and yet the authorship is a matter of doubt, being attributed by some to Dr. John Bull, by others to Carey. It was apparently first sung in a tavern in Cornhill.

Both the music and words of "O Death, rock me to sleep" are said to be by Anne Boleyn: "Stay, Corydon" and "Sweet Honey-sucking Bees" by Wildye, "the first of madrigal writers." "Rule Britannia" was composed by Arne, and originally formed part of his Masque of *Alfred*, first performed in 1740 at Cliefden, near Maidenhead. To Arne we are also indebted for the music of "Where the Bee sucks, there lurk I." "The Vicar of Bray" is set to a tune originally known as "A Country Garden." "Come unto these yellow sands" we owe to Purcell;

"Sigh no more, Ladies" to Stevens; "Home, Sweet Home" to Bishop.

There is a curious melancholy in national music, which is generally in the minor key; indeed this holds good with the music of savage races generally. They appear, moreover, to have no love songs.

Herodotus tells us that during the whole time he was in Egypt he only heard one song, and that was a sad one. My own experience there was the same. Some tendency to melancholy seems indeed inherent in music, and Jessica is not alone in the feeling

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

The epitaphs on Musicians have been in some cases very well expressed. Such, for instance, is the following:

"Philips, whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty power and hapless love,
Rest here, distressed by poverty no more;
Here find that calm thou gav'st so oft before;
Sleep, undisturbed, within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine!"

Still more so that on Purcell, whose premature death was so irreparable a loss to English music—

"Here lies Henry Purcell, who left this life, and is gone to that blessed place, where only his harmony can be exceeded."

The histories of Music contain many curious anecdotes as to the circumstances under which different works have been composed.

Rossini tells us that he wrote the overture to the "Gazza Ladra" on the very day of the first performance, in the upper loft of the La Scala, where he had been confined by the manager under the guard of four scene-shifters, who threw the text out of window to copyists bit by bit as it was composed. Tartini is said to have composed "Il trillo del Diavolo," considered to be his best work, in a dream. Rossini, speaking of the chorus in G minor in his "Dal tuo stellato

soglio," tells us: "While I was writing the chorus in G minor I suddenly dipped my pen into a medicine bottle instead of the ink. I made a blot, and when I dried this with the sand it took the form of a natural, which instantly gave me the idea of the effect the change from G minor to G major would make, and to this blot is all the effect, if any, due." But these of course are exceptional cases.

There are other forms of Music, which, though not strictly entitled to the name, are yet capable of giving intense pleasure. To the sportsman what Music can excel that of the hounds themselves. The cawing of rooks has been often quoted as a sound which has no actual beauty of its own, and yet which is delightful from its associations.

There is, however, a true Music of Nature,—the song of birds, the whisper of leaves, the ripple of waters upon a sandy shore, the wail of wind or sea.

There was also an ancient impression that the Heavenly bodies give out music as well as light: the Music of the Spheres is proverbial.

"There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims;
Such harmony is in immortal souls
But while this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it." [1]

Music indeed often seems as if it scarcely belonged to this material universe, but was

"A tone
Of some world far from ours,
Where music, and moonlight, and feeling are one." [2]

There is Music in speech as well as in song. Not merely in the voice of those we love, and the charm of association, but in actual melody; as Milton says,

"The Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he awhile
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear."

---

[1] Shakespeare. [2] Swinburne.

It is remarkable that more pains are not taken with the voice in conversation as well as in singing, for

> "What plea so tainted and corrupt
> But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
> Obscures the show of evil."

It may be true as a general rule that

> "The man that hath no Music in himself
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils";[1]

but there are some notable exceptions. Dr. Johnson had no love of music. On one occasion, hearing that a certain piece of music was very difficult, he expressed his regret that it was not impossible.

Poets, as might have been expected, have sung most sweetly in praise of song. They have, moreover, done so from the most opposite points of view.

Milton invokes it as a luxury—

> "And ever against eating cares
> Lap me in soft Lydian airs;

[1] Shakespeare.

Married to immortal verse
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out;
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running;
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony."

Sometimes as a temptation: so Spenser says of Phædria,

"And she, more sweet than any bird on bough
Would oftentimes amongst them bear a part,
And strive to passe (as she could well enough)
Their native musicke by her skilful art."

Or as an element of pure happiness—

"There is in souls a sympathy with sounds;
And as the mind is pitched, the ear is pleased
With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave;
Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touched within us, and the heart replies.
How soft the music of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again and louder still
Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on." [1]

As touching the human heart—

[1] Cowper.

"The soul of music slumbers in the shell,
Till waked and kindled by the master's spell,
And feeling hearts—touch them but rightly—pour
A thousand melodies unheard before." [1]

As an education—

"I have sent books and music there, and all
Those instruments with which high spirits call
The future from its cradle, and the past
Out of its grave, and make the present last
In thoughts and joys which sleep, but cannot die,
Folded within their own eternity." [2]

As an aid to religion—

"As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the blessed above,
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And music shall untune the sky." [3]

Or again—

"Hark how it falls! and now it steals along,
Like distant bells upon the lake at eve,
When all is still; and now it grows more strong
As when the choral train their dirges weave

[1] Rogers. [2] Shelley. [3] Dryden.

Mellow and many voiced ; where every close
O'er the old minster roof, in echoing waves reflows.
Oh ! I am rapt aloft. My spirit soars
Beyond the skies, and leaves the stars behind ;
Lo ! angels lead me to the happy shores,
And floating pæans fill the buoyant wind.
Farewell ! base earth, farewell ! my soul is freed."

The power of Music to sway the feelings of Man has never been more cleverly portrayed than by Dryden in "The Feast of Alexander," though the circumstances of the case precluded any reference to the influence of Music in its noblest aspects.

Poets have always attributed to Music, —and who would wish to deny it, a power even over the inanimate forces of Nature. Shakespeare accounts for shooting stars by the attraction of Music :

" The rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the Sea-maid's Music."

Prose writers have also been inspired by Music to their highest eloquence.

"Music," says Plato, "is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, gaiety and life to everything. It is the essence of order, and leads to all that is good, just, and beautiful, of which it is the invisible, but nevertheless dazzling, passionate, and eternal form." "Music," said Luther, "is a fair and glorious gift from God. I would not for the world renounce my humble share in music." "Music," said Halevy, "is an art that God has given us, in which the voices of all nations may unite their prayers in one harmonious rhythm." Or Carlyle, "Music is a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into it."

Let me also quote Helmholtz, one of the profoundest exponents of modern science. "Just as in the rolling ocean, this movement, rhythmically repeated,

and yet ever-varying, rivets our attention and hurries us along. But whereas in the sea blind physical forces alone are at work, and hence the final impression on the spectator's mind is nothing but solitude—in a musical work of art the movement follows the outflow of the artist's own emotions. Now gently gliding, now gracefully leaping, now violently stirred, penetrated, or laboriously contending with the natural expression of passion, the stream of sound, in primitive vivacity, bears over into the hearer's soul unimagined moods which the artist has overheard from his own, and finally raises him up to that repose of everlasting beauty of which God has allowed but few of his elect favourites to be the heralds."

"There are but seven notes in the scale; make them fourteen," says Newman, "yet what a slender outfit for so vast an enterprise! What science brings so much out

of so little? Out of what poor elements does some great master in it create his new world! Shall we say that all this exuberant inventiveness is a mere ingenuity or trick of art, like some game of fashion of the day, without reality, without meaning? . . . Is it possible that that inexhaustible evolution and disposition of notes, so rich yet so simple, so intricate yet so regulated, so various yet so majestic, should be a mere sound, which is gone and perishes? Can it be that those mysterious stirrings of the heart, and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence, should be wrought in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends in itself? it is not so; it cannot be. No; they have escaped from some higher sphere; they are the outpourings of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound; they are echoes from our Home;

they are the voice of Angels, or the Magnificat of Saints, or the living laws of Divine Governance, or the Divine Attributes; something are they besides themselves, which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter, though mortal man, and he perhaps not otherwise distinguished above his fellows, has the gift of eliciting them."

Poetry and Music unite in song. From the earliest ages song has been the sweet companion of labour. The rude chant of the boatman floats upon the water, the shepherd sings upon the hill, the milkmaid in the dairy, the ploughman at the plough. Every trade, every occupation, every act and scene of life, has long had its own especial music. The bride went to her marriage, the labourer to his work, the old man to his last long rest, each with appropriate and immemorial music.

Music has been truly described as the

mother of sympathy, the handmaid of Religion, and will never exercise its full effect, as the Emperor Charles VI. said to Farinelli, unless it aims not merely to charm the ear, but to touch the heart.

There are many who consider that our life at present is peculiarly prosaic and mercenary. I greatly doubt whether that be the case, but if so our need for Music is all the more imperative.

Much as Music has already done for man, we may hope even more from it in the future.

It is, moreover, a joy for all. To appreciate Science or Art requires some training, and no doubt the cultivated ear will more and more appreciate the beauties of Music; but though there are exceptional individuals, and even races, almost devoid of any love of Music, still they are happily but rare.

Good Music, moreover, does not neces-

sarily involve any considerable outlay; it is even now no mere luxury of the rich, and we may hope that as time goes on, it will become more and more the comfort and solace of the poor.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE

"Speak to the earth and it shall teach thee."

JOB.

"And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

SHAKESPEARE.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BEAUTIES OF NATURE

We are told in the first chapter of Genesis that at the close of the sixth day "God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." Not merely good, but very good. Yet how few of us appreciate the beautiful world in which we live!

In preceding chapters I have incidentally, though only incidentally, referred to the Beauties of Nature; but any attempt, however imperfect, to sketch the blessings of life must contain some special reference to this lovely world itself, which the Greeks happily called κόσμος—beauty.

Hamerton, in his charming work on *Landscape*, says, "There are, I believe, four new experiences for which no description ever adequately prepares us, the first sight of the sea, the first journey in the desert, the sight of flowing molten lava, and a walk on a great glacier. We feel in each case that the strange thing is pure nature, as much nature as a familiar English moor, yet so extraordinary that we might be in another planet." But it would, I think, be easier to enumerate the Wonders of Nature for which description can prepare us, than those which are altogether beyond the power of language.

Many of us, however, walk through the world like ghosts, as if we were in it, but not of it. We have "eyes and see not, ears and hear not." To look is much less easy than to overlook, and to be able to see what we do see, is a great gift. Ruskin maintains that "The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to

see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way." I do not suppose that his eyes are better than ours, but how much more he sees with them!

We must look before we can expect to see. "To the attentive eye," says Emerson, "each moment of the year has its own beauty; and in the same field it beholds every hour a picture that was never seen before, and shall never be seen again. The heavens change every moment and reflect their glory or gloom on the plains beneath."

The love of Nature is a great gift, and if it is frozen or crushed out, the character can hardly fail to suffer from the loss. I will not, indeed, say that a person who does not love Nature is necessarily bad; or that one who does, is necessarily good; but it is to most minds a great help. Many, as Miss Cobbe says, enter the Temple through the gate called Beautiful.

There are doubtless some to whom none of the beautiful wonders of Nature; neither the glories of the rising or setting sun; the magnificent spectacle of the boundless ocean, sometimes so grand in its peaceful tranquillity, at others so majestic in its mighty power; the forests agitated by the storm, or alive with the song of birds; nor the glaciers and mountains—there are doubtless some whom none of these magnificent spectacles can move, whom "all the glories of heaven and earth may pass in daily succession without touching their hearts or elevating their minds."[1]

Such men are indeed pitiable. But, happily, they are exceptions. If we can none of us as yet fully appreciate the beauties of Nature, we are beginning to do so more and more.

For most of us the early summer has a special charm. The very life is luxury. The air is full of scent, and sound, and

[1] Beattie.

sunshine, of the song of birds and the murmur of insects; the meadows gleam with golden buttercups, it almost seems as if one could see the grass grow and the buds open; the bees hum for very joy, and the air is full of a thousand scents, above all perhaps that of new-mown hay.

The exquisite beauty and delight of a fine summer day in the country has never perhaps been more truly, and therefore more beautifully, described than by Jefferies in his "Pageant of Summer." "I linger," he says, "in the midst of the long grass, the luxury of the leaves, and the song in the very air. I seem as if I could feel all the glowing life the sunshine gives and the south wind calls to being. The endless grass, the endless leaves, the immense strength of the oak expanding, the unalloyed joy of finch and blackbird; from all of them I receive a little. . . . In the blackbird's melody one note is mine; in the dance of the leaf shadows

the formed maze is for me, though the motion is theirs; the flowers with a thousand faces have collected the kisses of the morning. Feeling with them, I receive some, at least, of their fulness of life. Never could I have enough; never stay long enough. . . . The hours when the mind is absorbed by beauty are the only hours when we really live, so that the longer we can stay among these things so much the more is snatched from inevitable Time. . . . These are the only hours that are not wasted—these hours that absorb the soul and fill it with beauty. This is real life, and all else is illusion, or mere endurance. To be beautiful and to be calm, without mental fear, is the ideal of Nature. If I cannot achieve it, at least I can think it."

This chapter is already so long that I cannot touch on the contrast and variety of the seasons, each with its own special charm and interest, as

> "The daughters of the year
> Dance into light and die into the shade." [1]

Our countrymen derive great pleasure from the animal kingdom, in hunting, shooting, and fishing, thus obtaining fresh air and exercise, and being led into much varied and beautiful scenery. Still it will probably ere long be recognised that even from a purely selfish point of view, killing animals is not the way to get the greatest enjoyment from them. How much more interesting would every walk in the country be, if Man would but treat other animals with kindness, so that they might approach us without fear, and we might have the constant pleasure of watching their winning ways. Their origin and history, structure and habits, senses and intelligence, offer an endless field of interest and wonder.

The richness of life is wonderful. Any one who will sit down quietly on the

[1] Tennyson.

grass and watch a little will be indeed surprised at the number and variety of living beings, every one with a special history of its own, every one offering endless problems of great interest.

"If indeed thy heart were right, then would every creature be to thee a mirror of life, and a book of holy doctrine."[1]

The study of Natural History has the special advantage of carrying us into the country and the open air.

Not but what towns are beautiful too. They teem with human interest and historical associations.

Wordsworth was an intense lover of nature; yet does he not tell us, in lines which every Londoner will appreciate, that he knew nothing in nature more fair, no calm more deep, than the city of London at early dawn?

"Earth has not anything to show more fair;
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by

[1] Thomas à Kempis.

A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at its own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!"

Milton also described London as

"Too blest abode, no loveliness we see
In all the earth, but it abounds in thee."

But after being some time in a great city, one feels a longing for the country.

"The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening paradise." [1]

Here Gray justly places flowers in the first place, for when in any great town we think of the country, flowers seem first to suggest themselves.

[1] Gray.

"Flowers," says Ruskin, "seem intended for the solace of ordinary humanity. Children love them; quiet, tender, contented, ordinary people love them as they grow; luxurious and disorderly people rejoice in them gathered. They are the cottager's treasure; and in the crowded town, mark, as with a little broken fragment of rainbow, the windows of the workers in whose heart rests the covenant of peace." But in the crowded street, or even in the formal garden, flowers always seem, to me at least, as if they were pining for the freedom of the woods and fields, where they can live and grow as they please.

There are flowers for almost all seasons and all places. Flowers for spring, summer, and autumn, while even in the very depth of winter here and there one makes its appearance. There are flowers of the fields and woods and hedgerows, of the seashore and the lake's margin, of the

mountain-side up to the very edge of the eternal snow.

And what an infinite variety they present.

"Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength, a malady
Most incident to maids; bold oxlips and
The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,
The flower-de-luce being one." [1]

Nor are they mere delights to the eye; they are full of mystery and suggestions. They almost seem like enchanted princesses waiting for some princely deliverer. Wordsworth tells us that

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Every color again, every variety of form, has some purpose and explanation.

And yet, lovely as Flowers are, Leaves

[1] Shakespeare.

add even more to the Beauty of Nature. Trees in our northern latitudes seldom own large flowers; and though of course there are notable exceptions, such as the Horse-chestnut, still even in these cases the flowers live only a few days, while the leaves last for months. Every tree indeed is a picture in itself: The gnarled and rugged Oak, the symbol and source of our navy, sacred to the memory of the Druids, the type of strength, the sovereign of British trees; the Chestnut, with its beautiful, tapering, and rich green, glossy leaves, its delicious fruit, and to the durability of which we owe the grand and historic roof of Westminster Abbey.

The Birch is the queen of trees, with her feathery foliage, scarcely visible in spring but turning to leaves of gold in autumn; the pendulous twigs tinged with purple, and silver stems so brilliantly marked with black and white.

The Elm forms grand masses of foliage

which turn a beautiful golden yellow in autumn; and the Black Poplar with its perpendicular leaves, rustling and trembling with every breath of wind, towers over most other forest trees.

The Beech enlivens the country by its tender green in spring, rich green in summer, and glorious gold and orange in autumn, set off by the graceful gray stems; and has, moreover, such a wealth of leaves that in autumn there are enough not only to clothe the tree itself but to cover the grass underneath.

If the Beech owes much to its delicate gray stem, even more beautiful is the reddish crimson of the Scotch Pines, in such charming contrast with the rich green of the foliage, by which it is shown off rather than hidden; and, with the green spires of the Firs, they keep the woods warm in winter.

Nor must I overlook the smaller trees: the Yew with its thick green foliage; the

wild Guelder rose, which lights up the woods in autumn with translucent glossy berries and many-tinted leaves; or the Bryonies, the Briar, the Traveller's Joy, and many another plant, even humbler perhaps, and yet each with some exquisite beauty and grace of its own, so that we must all have sometimes felt our hearts overflowing with gladness and gratitude, as if the woods were full of music—as if

> "The woods were filled so full with song
> There seemed no room for sense of wrong."[1]

On the whole, no doubt, woodlands are less beautiful in the winter; yet even then the delicate tracery of the branches, which cannot be so well seen when they are clothed with leaves, has a special beauty of its own; while every now and then hoar frost or snow settles like silver on every branch and twig, lighting up the

[1] Tennyson.

forest as if by enchantment in preparation for some fairy festival.

I feel with Jefferies that "by day or by night, summer or winter, beneath trees the heart feels nearer to that depth of life which the far sky means. The rest of spirit found only in beauty, ideal and pure, comes there because the distance seems within touch of thought."

The general effect of forests in tropical regions must be very different from that of those in our latitudes. Kingsley describes it as one of helplessness, confusion, awe, all but terror. The trunks are very lofty and straight, and rising to a great height without a branch, so that the wood seems at first comparatively open. In Brazilian forests, for instance, the trees struggle upwards, and the foliage forms an unbroken canopy, perhaps a hundred feet overhead. Here, indeed, high up in the air is the real life of the forest. Everything seems to climb to the light. The quad-

sion of freedom and grandeur more intense perhaps even than the aspect of the heavens themselves. A poor woman from Manchester, on being taken to the seaside, is said to have expressed her delight on seeing for the first time something of which there was enough for everybody. The sea coast is always interesting. When we think of the cliff sections with their histories of bygone ages; the shore itself teeming with seaweeds and animals, waiting for the return of the tide, or thrown up from deeper water by the waves; the weird cries of seabirds; the delightful feeling that with every breath we are laying in a store of fresh life, and health, and energy, it is impossible to over-estimate all we owe to the sea.

It is, moreover, always changing. We went for our holiday this year to Lyme Regis. Let me attempt to describe the changes in the view from our windows

during a single day. Our sitting-room opened on to a little lawn, beyond which the ground drops suddenly to the sea, while over about two miles of water were the hills of the Dorsetshire coast—Golden Cap, with its bright crest of yellow sand, and the dark blue Lias Cliff of Black Ven. When I came early down in the morning the sun was rising opposite, shining into the room over a calm sea, along an avenue of light; by degrees, as it rose, the whole sea was gilt with light, and the hills bathed in a violet mist. By breakfast-time all color had faded from the sea—it was like silver passing on each side into gray; the sky was blue, flecked with fleecy clouds; while, on the gentler slopes of the coast opposite, fields and woods, and quarries and lines of stratification begin to show themselves, though the cliffs are still in shadow, and the more distant headlands still a mere succession of ghosts, each one fainter than the one

before it. As the morning advances the sea becomes blue, the dark woods, green meadows, and golden cornfields of the opposite coast more distinct, and the details of the cliffs come gradually into view, and fishing-boats with dark sails begin to appear.

Gradually the sun rises higher, a yellow line of shore appears under the opposite cliffs, and the sea changes its color, mapping itself out as it were, the shallower parts turquoise blue, almost green; the deeper ones deep violet.

This does not last long—a thunderstorm comes up. The wind mutters overhead, the rain patters on the leaves, the coast opposite seems to shrink into itself, as if it would fly from the storm. The sea grows dark and rough, and white horses appear here and there.

But the storm is soon over. The clouds break, the rain stops, the sun shines once more, the hills opposite come out again.

They are divided now not only into fields and woods, but into sunshine and shadow. The sky clears, and as the sun begins to descend westwards the sea becomes one beautiful clear uniform azure, changing again soon to pale blue in front and dark violet beyond; and once more as clouds begin to gather again, into an archipelago of bright blue sea and deep islands of ultramarine. As the sun travels westward, the opposite hills change again. They scarcely seem like the same country. What was in sun is now in shade, and what was in shade now lies bright in the sunshine. The sea once more becomes a uniform solid blue, only flecked in places by scuds of wind, and becoming paler towards evening as the sun sinks, the cliffs which catch his setting rays losing their deep color and in some places looking almost as white as chalk, while at sunset they light up again for a moment with a golden glow, the sea at the same time sink-

ing to a cold gray. But soon the hills grow cold too, Golden Cap holding out bravely to the last, and the shades of evening settle over cliff and wood, cornfield and meadow.

These are but a part, and a very small part, of the changes of a single day. And scarcely any two days are alike. At times a sea-fog covers everything. Again the sea which sleeps to-day so peacefully sometimes rages, and the very existence of the bay itself bears witness to its force.

The night, again, varies like the day. Sometimes shrouded by a canopy of darkness, sometimes lit up by millions of brilliant worlds, sometimes bathed in the light of a moon, which never retains the same form for two nights together.

If Lakes are less grand than the sea, they are in some respects even more lovely. The seashore is comparatively bare. The banks of Lakes are often richly clothed with vegetation which comes close down

to the water's edge, sometimes hanging even into the water itself. They are often studded with well-wooded islands. They are sometimes fringed with green meadows, sometimes bounded by rocky promontories rising directly from comparatively deep water, while the calm bright surface is often fretted by a delicate pattern of interlacing ripples, or reflects a second, softened, and inverted landscape.

To water again we owe the marvellous spectacle of the rainbow—"God's bow in the clouds." It is indeed truly a heavenly messenger, and so unlike anything else that it scarcely seems to belong to this world.

Many things are colored, but the rainbow seems to be color itself.

"First the flaming red
Sprang vivid forth; the tawny orange next,
And next delicious yellow; by whose side
Fell the kind beams of all-refreshing green.
Then the pure blue that swells autumnal skies,
Ethereal play'd; and then, of sadder hue

Emerged the deeper indigo (as when
The heavy-skirted evening droops with frost),
While the last gleamings of refracted light
Died in the fainting violet away." [1]

We do not, I think, sufficiently realise how wonderful is the blessing of color. It would have been possible, it would even seem more probable, that though light might have enabled us to perceive objects, this could only have been by shade and form. How we perceive color it is very difficult to comprehend, and yet when we speak of beauty, among the ideas which come to us most naturally are those of birds and butterflies, flowers and shells, precious stones, skies, and rainbows.

Our minds might have been constituted exactly as they are, we might have been capable of comprehending the highest and sublimest truths, and yet, but for a small organ in the head, the world of sound would have been shut out from us; we

[1] Thomson.

should have lost the sounds of nature, the charms of music, the conversation of friends, and have been condemned to perpetual silence: and yet a slight alteration in the retina, which is not thicker than a sheet of paper, not larger than a finger nail,—and the glorious spectacle of this beautiful world, the exquisite variety of form, the glory and play of color, the variety of scenery, of woods and fields, and lakes and hills, seas and mountains, the glory of the sky alike by day and night, would all have been lost to us.

Mountains, again, "seem to have been built for the human race, as at once their schools and cathedrals; full of treasures of illuminated manuscript for the scholar, kindly in simple lessons for the worker, quiet in pale cloisters for the thinker, glorious in holiness for the worshipper. And of these great cathedrals of the earth, with their gates of rock, pavements of cloud, choirs of stream and stone, altars

of snow, and vaults of purple traversed by the continual stars." [1]

All these beauties are comprised in Tennyson's exquisite description of Œnone's vale—the city, flowers, trees, river, and mountains.

"There is a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand
The lawns and meadow-ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea.
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus
Stands up and takes the morning; but in front
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,
The crown of Troas."

And when we raise our eyes from earth, who has not sometimes felt "the witchery of the soft blue sky"; who has not watched a cloud floating upwards as if on its way to heaven, or when

[1] Ruskin.

"Sunbeam proof, I hang like a roof
The mountain its columns be." [1]

And yet "if, in our moments of utter idleness and insipidity, we turn to the sky as a last resource, which of its phenomena do we speak of? One says, it has been wet; and another, it has been windy; and another, it has been warm. Who, among the whole chattering crowd, can tell me of the forms and the precipices of the chain of tall white mountains that girded the horizon at noon yesterday? Who saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the south, and smote upon their summits until they melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves? All has passed, unregretted as unseen; or if the apathy be ever shaken off, even for an instant, it is only by what

[1] Shelley.

is gross, or what is extraordinary; and yet it is not in the broad and fierce manifestations of the elemental energies, not in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed." [1]

But exquisitely lovely as is the blue arch of the midday sky, with its inexhaustible variety of clouds, "there is yet a light which the eye invariably seeks with a deeper feeling of the beautiful, the light of the declining or breaking day, and the flakes of scarlet cloud burning like watch-fires in the green sky of the horizon." [2]

The evening colors indeed soon fade away, but as night comes on,

> "How glorious the firmament
> With living sapphires! Hesperus that led
> The starry host, rode brightest; till the moon
> Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
> Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
> And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw." [3]

[1] Ruskin. [2] *Ibid.* [3] Wordsworth.

We generally speak of a beautiful night when it is calm and clear, and the stars shine brightly overhead; but how grand also are the wild ways of Nature, how magnificent when the lightning flashes, "between gloom and glory"; when

> "From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
> Leaps the live thunder." [1]

In the words of Ossian—

> "Ghosts ride in the tempest to-night;
> Sweet is their voice between the gusts of wind,
> Their songs are of other worlds."

Nor are the wonders and beauties of the heavens limited by the clouds and the blue sky, lovely as they are. In the heavenly bodies we have before us "the perpetual presence of the sublime." They are so immense and so far away, and yet on soft summer nights "they seem leaning down to whisper in the ear of our souls." [2]

"A man can hardly lift up his eyes to-

[1] Swinburne. [2] Symonds.

wards the heavens," says Seneca, "without wonder and veneration, to see so many millions of radiant lights, and to observe their courses and revolutions, even without any respect to the common good of the Universe."

Who does not sympathise with the feelings of Dante as he rose from his visit to the lower regions, until, he says,

"On our view the beautiful lights of heaven
Dawned through a circular opening in the cave,
Thence issuing, we again beheld the stars."

As we watch the stars at night they seem so still and motionless that we can hardly realise that all the time they are rushing on with a velocity far far exceeding any that man has ever accomplished.

Like the sands of the sea, the stars of heaven have ever been used as an appropriate symbol of number, and we know that there are some 75,000,000, many, no doubt, with planets of their own. But this is by no means all. The floor of

heaven is not only "thick inlaid with patines of bright gold," but is studded also with extinct stars, once probably as brilliant as our own sun, but now dead and cold, as Helmholtz tells us our sun itself will be some seventeen millions of years hence. Then, again, there are the comets, which, though but few are visible to us at once, are even more numerous than the stars; there are the nebulæ, and the countless minor bodies circulating in space, and occasionally visible as meteors.

Nor is it only the number of the heavenly bodies which is so overwhelming; their magnitude and distances are almost more impressive. The ocean is so deep and broad as to be almost infinite, and indeed in so far as our imagination is the limit, so it may be. Yet what is the ocean compared to the sky? Our globe is little compared to the giant orbs of Jupiter and Saturn, which again sink into insignificance by the side of the sun.

The sun itself is almost as nothing compared with the dimensions of the solar system. Sirius is calculated to be a thousand times as great as the Sun, and a million times as far away. The solar system itself travels in one region of space, sailing between worlds and worlds, and is surrounded by many other systems as great and complex as itself; and we know that even then we have not reached the limits of the Universe itself.

There are stars so distant that their light, though travelling 180,000 miles in a second, yet takes years to reach us; and beyond all these are other systems of stars which are so far away that they cannot be perceived singly, but even in our most powerful telescopes appear only as minute clouds or nebulæ. It is, indeed, but a feeble expression of the truth to say that the infinities revealed to us by Science,—the infinitely great in the one direction, and the infinitely small in the other,—go

far beyond anything which had occurred to the unaided imagination of Man, and are not only a never-failing source of pleasure and interest, but seem to lift us out of the petty troubles and sorrows of life.

CHAPTER IX

THE TROUBLES OF LIFE

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We have in life many troubles, and troubles are of many kinds. Some sorrows, alas, are real enough, especially those we bring on ourselves, but others, and by no means the least numerous, are mere ghosts of troubles: if we face them boldly, we find that they have no substance or reality, but are mere creations of our own morbid imagination, and that it is as true now as in the time of David that "Man disquieteth himself in a vain shadow."

Some, indeed, of our troubles are evils, but not real; while others are real, but not evils.

"And yet, into how unfathomable a gulf the mind rushes when the troubles of this world agitate it. If it then forget its own light, which is eternal joy, and rush into the outer darkness, which are the cares of this world, as the mind now does, it knows nothing else but lamentations."[1]

"Athens," said Epictetus, "is a good place,—but happiness is much better; to be free from passions, free from disturbance."

We should endeavour to maintain ourselves in

> "that blessed mood
> In which the burden of the mystery,
> In which the heavy and the weary weight,
> Of all this unintelligible world
> Is lightened."[2]

So shall we fear "neither the exile of Aristides, nor the prison of Anaxagoras, nor the poverty of Socrates, nor the condemnation of Phocion, but think virtue

[1] King Alfred's translation of the *Consolations of Bœthius.*

[2] Wordsworth.

worthy our love even under such trials."[1] We should then be, to a great extent, independent of external circumstances, for

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage,
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage.

"If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free;
Angels alone that soar above
Enjoy such liberty."[2]

Happiness indeed depends much more on what is within than without us. When Hamlet says the world is "a goodly prison; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst," and Rosencrantz differs from him, he rejoins wisely, "Why then, 'tis none to you: for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison." "All is opinion," said Marcus Aurelius. "That which does not make a man worse, how can it make

[1] Plutarch. [2] Lovelace.

his life worse? But death certainly, and life, honor and dishonor, pain and pleasure, all these things happen equally to good men and bad, being things which make us neither better nor worse."

"The greatest evils," says Jeremy Taylor, "are from within us; and from ourselves also we must look for our greatest good."

"The mind," says Milton,

> "is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven."

Milton indeed in his blindness saw more beautiful visions, and Beethoven in his deafness heard more heavenly music, than most of us can ever hope to enjoy.

We are all apt, when we know not what may happen, to fear the worst. When we know the full extent of any danger, it is half over. Hence, we dread ghosts more than robbers, not only without reason, but against reason; for even

if ghosts existed, how could they hurt us? and in ghost stories, few, even those who say that they have seen a ghost, ever profess or pretend to have felt one.

Milton, in his description of death, dwells on this characteristic of obscurity:

"The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable, in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either; black he stood as night;
Fierce as ten furies; terrible as hell;
And shook a deadly dart. What seem'd his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on."

The effect of darkness and night in enhancing terrors is dwelt on in one of the sublimest passages in Job—

"In thoughts from the visions of the night,
When deep sleep falleth on men,
Fear came upon me, and trembling,
Which made all my bones to shake.
Then a spirit passed before my face;
The hair of my flesh stood up.
It stood still, an image was before mine eyes.
There was silence; and I heard a voice saying
Shall mortal man be more just than God?"

Thus was the terror turned into a lesson of comfort and of mercy.

We often magnify troubles and difficulties, and look at them till they seem much greater than they really are.

"Dangers are no more light, if they once seem light; and more dangers have deceived men than forced them: nay, it were better to meet some dangers half way, though they come nothing near, than to keep too long a watch upon their approaches; for if a man watch too long, it is odds he will fall asleep."[1]

Foresight is very wise, but foresorrow is very foolish; and castles are at any rate better than dungeons, in the air.

Some of our troubles, no doubt, are real enough, but yet are not evils.

It happens, unfortunately too often, that by some false step, intentional or unintentional, we have missed the right road, and gone wrong. Can we then

[1] Bacon.

retrace our steps? can we recover what is lost? This may be done. It is too gloomy a view to affirm that

> "A word too much, or a kiss too long,
> And the world is never the same again."

There are two noble sayings of Socrates, that to do evil is more to be avoided than to suffer it; and that when a man has done evil, it is better for him to be punished than to be unpunished.

We generally speak of selfishness as a fault, and as if it interfered with the general happiness. But this is not altogether correct.

The pity is that so many people are foolishly selfish: that they pursue a course of action which neither makes themselves nor any one else happy.

"Every man," says Goethe, "ought to begin with himself, and make his own happiness first, from which the happiness of the whole world would at

we complain of what is but a preparation for future happiness?

We ought to

"Count each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee; do thou
With courtesy receive him; rise and bow;
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first his heavenly feet to lave;
Then lay before him all thou hast; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
The soul's marmoreal calmness: Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end."[1]

Some persons are like the waters of Siloam, and require to be troubled before they can exercise their virtue.

"We shall get more contentedness," says Plutarch, "from the presence of all these blessings if we fancy them as absent, and remember from time to time how people

[1] Aubrey de Vere.

when ill yearn for health, and people in war for peace, and strangers and unknown in a great city for reputation and friends, and how painful it is to be deprived of all these when one has once had them. For then each of these blessings will not appear to us only great and valuable when it is lost, and of no value when we have it. . . . And yet it makes much for contentedness of mind to look for the most part at home and to our own condition; or if not, to look at the case of people worse off than ourselves, and not, as people do, to compare ourselves with those who are better off. . . . But you will find others, Chians, or Galatians, or Bithynians, not content with the share of glory or power they have among their fellow-citizens, but weeping because they do not wear senators' shoes; or, if they have them, that they cannot be prætors at Rome; or if they get that office, that they are not consuls; or if they are consuls, that they

are only proclaimed second and not first. . . . Whenever, then, you admire any one carried by in his litter as a greater man than yourself, lower your eyes and look at those that bear the litter." And again, "I am very taken with Diogenes' remark to a stranger at Lacedæmon, who was dressing with much display for a feast, 'Does not a good man consider every day a feast?' . . . Seeing then that life is the most complete initiation into all these things, it ought to be full of ease of mind and joy"; and if properly understood, would enable us "to acquiesce in the present without repining, to remember the past with thankfulness, and to meet the future hopefully and cheerfully without fear or suspicion."

CHAPTER X

LABOUR AND REST

"Through labour to rest, through combat to victory."

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

CHAPTER X

LABOUR AND REST

AMONG the troubles of life I do not, of course, reckon the necessity of labour.

Work indeed, and hard work, if only it is in moderation, is in itself a rich source of happiness. We all know how quickly time passes when we are well employed, while the moments hang heavily on the hands of the idle. Occupation drives away care and all the small troubles of life. The busy man has no time to brood or to fret.

"From toil he wins his spirits light,
From busy day the peaceful night;
Rich, from the very want of wealth,
In Heaven's best treasures, peace and health."[1]

[1] Gray.

This applies especially to the labour of the field and the workshop. Humble it may be, but if it does not dazzle with the promise of fame, it gives the satisfaction of duty fulfilled, and the inestimable blessing of health. As Emerson reminds those entering life, "The angels that live with them, and are weaving laurels of life for their youthful brows, are toil and truth and mutual faith."

Labour was truly said by the ancients to be the price which the gods set upon everything worth having. We all admit, though we often forget, the marvellous power of perseverance, and yet all Nature, down to Bruce's spider, is continually impressing this lesson on us.

Hard writing, it has been said, makes easy reading; Plato is said to have re-written the first page of the *Republic* thirteen times; and Carlo Maratti, we are told, sketched the head of Antinoüs three

hundred times before he wrought it to his satisfaction.

It is better to wear out than to rust out, and there is "a dust which settles on the heart, as well as that which rests upon the ledge."[1]

But though labour is good for man, it may be, and unfortunately often is, carried to excess. Many are wearily asking themselves

"Ah why
Should life all labour be?"[2]

There is a time for all things, says Solomon, a time to work and a time to play: we shall work all the better for reasonable change, and one reward of work is to secure leisure.

It is a good saying that where there's a will there's a way; but while it is all very well to wish, wishes must not take the place of work.

In whatever sphere his duty lies every

[1] Jefferies. [2] Tennyson.

man must rely mainly on himself. Others can help us, but we must make ourselves. No one else can see for us. To profit by our advantages we must learn to use for ourselves

> "The dark lantern of the spirit
> Which none can see by, but he who bears it."

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that honest work is never thrown away. If we do not find the imaginary treasure, at any rate we enrich the vineyard.

"Work," says Nature to man, "in every hour, paid or unpaid; see only that thou work, and thou canst not escape the reward: whether thy work be fine or coarse, planting corn or writing epics, so only it be honest work, done to thine own approbation, it shall earn a reward to the senses as well as to the thought: no matter how often defeated, you are born to victory. The reward of a thing well done is to have done it."[1]

[1] Emerson.

Nor can any work, however persevering, or any success, however great, exhaust the prizes of life.

The most studious, the most successful, must recognise that there yet remain

> "So much to do that is not e'en begun,
> So much to hope for that we cannot see,
> So much to win, so many things to be." [1]

At the present time, though there may be some special drawbacks, still we come to our work with many advantages which were not enjoyed in olden times. We live in much greater security ourselves, and are less liable to have the fruits of our labour torn violently from us.

In olden times the difficulties of study were far greater than they are now. Books were expensive and cumbersome, in many cases moreover chained to the desks on which they were kept. The greatest scholars have often been very poor. Erasmus used to read by moonlight

[1] Morris.

because he could not afford a candle, and "begged a penny, not for the love of charity, but for the love of learning."[1]

Want of time is no excuse for idleness. "Our life," says Jeremy Taylor, "is too short to serve the ambition of a haughty prince or a usurping rebel; too little time to purchase great wealth, to satisfy the pride of a vainglorious fool, to trample upon all the enemies of our just or unjust interest: but for the obtaining virtue, for the purchase of sobriety and modesty, for the actions of religion, God gives us time sufficient, if we make the outgoings of the morning and evening, that is our infancy and old age, to be taken into the computations of a man."

Work is so much a necessity of existence, that it is less a question whether, than how, we shall work. An old proverb tells us that the Devil finds work for those who do not make it for themselves.

[1] Coleridge.

If we Englishmen have succeeded as a race, it has been due in no small measure to the fact that we have worked hard. Not only so, but we have induced the forces of Nature to work for us. "Steam," says Emerson, "is almost an Englishman."

The power of work has especially characterised our greatest men. Cecil said of Sir W. Raleigh that he "could toil terribly."

We are most of us proud of belonging to the greatest Empire the world has ever seen. It may be said of us with especial truth in Wordsworth's words that

> "The world is too much with us; late and soon
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers."

Yes, but what world? The world will be with us sure enough, and whether we please or not. But what sort of world it will be for us will depend greatly on ourselves.

We are told to pray not to be taken

out of the world, but to be kept from the evil.

There are various ways of working. Quickness may be good, but haste is bad.

"Wie das Gestirn
Ohne Hast
Ohne Rast
Drehe sich Jeder
Um die eigne Last."[1]

"Like a star, without haste, without rest, let every one fulfil his own hest."

Newton is reported to have described as his mode of working that "I keep the subject constantly before me, and wait till the first dawnings open slowly by little and little into a full and clear light."

"The secret of genius," says Emerson, "is to suffer no fiction to exist for us; to realise all that we know; in the high refinement of modern life, in Arts, in Sciences, in books, in men, to exact good faith, reality, and a purpose; and first, last, midst, and without end, to honour every truth by use."

[1] Goethe.

Lastly, work secures the rich reward of rest, we must rest to be able to work well, and work to be able to enjoy rest.

"We must no doubt beware that our rest become not the rest of stones, which so long as they are torrent-tossed and thunder-stricken maintain their majesty; but when the stream is silent, and the storm past, suffer the grass to cover them, and the lichen to feed on them, and are ploughed down into the dust. . . . The rest which is glorious is of the chamois couched breathless in its granite bed, not of the stalled ox over his fodder." [1]

When we have done our best we may wait the result without anxiety.

"What hinders a man, who has clearly comprehended these things, from living with a light heart and bearing easily the reins; quietly expecting everything which can happen, and enduring that which has already happened? Would you have me

[1] Ruskin.

to bear poverty? Come and you will know what poverty is when it has found one who can act well the part of a poor man. Would you have me to possess power? Let me have power, and also the trouble of it. Well, banishment? Wherever I shall go, there it will be well with me."[1]

The Buddhists believe in many forms of future punishment; but the highest reward of virtue is Nirvana—the final and eternal rest.

Very touching is the appeal of Ashmanezer to be left in peace, which was engraved on his Sarcophagus at Sidon,—now in Paris.

"In the month of Bul, the fourteenth year of my reign, I, King Ashmanezer, King of the Sidonians, son of King Tabuith, King of the Sidonians, spake, saying: 'I have been stolen away before my time—a son of the flood of days. The whilom great is dumb; the son of gods

[1] Epictetus.

is dead. And I rest in this grave, even in this tomb, in the place which I have built. My adjuration to all the Ruling Powers and all men: Let no one open this resting-place, nor search for treasure, for there is no treasure with us; and let him not bear away the couch of my rest, and not trouble us in this resting-place by disturbing the couch of my slumbers. . . . For all men who should open the tomb of my rest, or any man who should carry away the couch of my rest, or any one who trouble me on this couch: unto them there shall be no rest with the departed: they shall not be buried in a grave, and there shall be to them neither son nor seed. . . . There shall be to them neither root below nor fruit above, nor honour among the living under the sun.'"[1]

The idle man does not know what it is to rest. Hard work, moreover, tends

[1] From Sir M. S. Grant Duff's *A Winter in Syria.*

not only to give us rest for the body, but, what is even more important, peace to the mind. If we have done our best to do, and to be, we can rest in peace.

"En la sua voluntade è nostra pace."[1] In His will is our peace; and in such peace the mind will find its truest delight, for

"When care sleeps, the soul wakes."

In youth, as is right enough, the idea of exertion, and of struggles, is inspiriting and delightful; but as years advance the hope and prospect of peace and of rest gain ground gradually, and

"When the last dawns are fallen on gray,
And all life's toils and ease complete,
They know who work, not they who play,
If rest is sweet."[2]

[1] Dante. [2] Symonds.

CHAPTER XI

RELIGION

"For what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."—MICAH.

"Pure religion and undefiled is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."—JAMES I.

"The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

2 CORINTHIANS.

CHAPTER XI

RELIGION

It would be quite out of place here to enter into any discussion of theological problems or to advocate any particular doctrines. Nevertheless I could not omit what is to most so great a comfort and support in sorrow and suffering, and a source of the purest happiness.

We commonly, however, bring together under this term two things which are yet very different: the religion of the heart, and that of the head. The first deals with conduct, and the duties of Man; the second with the nature of the supernatural

and the future of the soul, being in fact a branch of knowledge.

Religion should be a strength, guide, and comfort, not a source of intellectual anxiety or angry argument. To persecute for religion's sake implies belief in a jealous, cruel, and unjust Deity. If we have done our best to arrive at the truth, to torment oneself about the result is to doubt the goodness of God, and, in the words of Bacon, "to bring down the Holy Ghost, instead of the likeness of a dove, in the shape of a raven." "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life," and the first duty of religion is to form the highest possible conception of God.

Many a man, however, and still more many a woman, render themselves miserable on entering life by theological doubts and difficulties. These have reference, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, not to what we should do, but to what we should think. As regards action, con-

science is generally a ready guide; to follow it is the real difficulty. Theology, on the other hand, is a most abstruse science; but as long as we honestly wish to arrive at truth we need not fear that we shall be punished for unintentional error. "For what," says Micah, "doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." There is very little theology in the Sermon on the Mount, or indeed in any part of the Gospels; and the differences which keep us apart have their origin rather in the study than the Church. Religion was intended to bring peace on earth and goodwill towards men, and whatever tends to hatred and persecution, however correct in the letter, must be utterly wrong in the spirit.

How much misery would have been saved to Europe if Christians had been satisfied with the Sermon on the Mount!

Bokhara is said to have contained more

than three hundred colleges, all occupied with theology, but ignorant of every thing else, and it was probably one of the most bigoted and uncharitable cities in the world. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."

We must not forget that

> "He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things both great and small."

Theologians too often appear to agree that

> "The awful shadow of some unseen power
> Floats, though unseen, among us";[1]

and in the days of the Inquisition many must have sighed for the cheerful child-like religion of the Greeks, if they could but have had the Nymphs and Nereids, the Fays and Faeries, with Destiny and Fate, but without Jupiter and Mars.

Sects are the work of Sectarians. No truly great religious teacher, as Carlyle said, ever intended to found a new Sect.

[1] Shelley.

Diversity of worship, says a Persian proverb, "has divided the human race into seventy-two nations." From among all their dogmas I have selected one—"Divine Love." And again, "He needs no other rosary whose thread of life is strung with the beads of love and thought."

There is more true Christianity in some pagan Philosophers than in certain Christian theologians. Take, for instance, Plato, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and Plutarch.

"Now I, Callicles," says Socrates, "am persuaded of the truth of these things, and I consider how I shall present my soul whole and undefiled before the judge in that day. Renouncing the honours at which the world aims, I desire only to know the truth, and to live as well as I can, and, when the time comes, to die. And, to the utmost of my power, I exhort all other men to do the same. And in return for your exhortation of me, I ex-

hort you also to take part in the great combat, which is the combat of life, and greater than every other earthly conflict."

"As to piety towards the Gods," says Epictetus, "you must know that this is the chief thing, to have right opinions about them, to think that they exist, and that they administer the All well and justly; and you must fix yourself in this principle (duty), to obey them, and to yield to them in everything which happens, and voluntarily to follow it as being accomplished by the wisest intelligence."

"Do not act," says Marcus Aurelius, "as if thou wert going to live ten thousand years. Death hangs over thee. While thou livest, while it is in thy power, be good. . . .

"Since it is possible that thou mayest depart from life this very moment, regulate every act and thought accordingly. But to go away from among men, if there be gods, is not a thing to be afraid of,

for the gods will not involve thee in evil; but if indeed they do not exist, or if they have no concern about human affairs, what is it to me to live in a universe devoid of gods, or devoid of Providence. But in truth they do exist, and they do care for human things, and they have put all the means in man's power to enable him not to fall into real evils. And as for the rest, if there was anything evil, they would have provided for this also, that it should be altogether in a man's power not to fall into it."

And Plutarch: "The Godhead is not blessed by reason of his silver and gold, nor yet Almighty through his thunder and lightnings, but on account of knowledge and intelligence."

It is no doubt very difficult to arrive at the exact teaching of Eastern Moralists, but the same spirit runs through Oriental Literature. For instance, in the *Toy Cart*, when the wicked Prince wishes

Vita to murder the Heroine, and says that no one would see him, Vita declares "All nature would behold the crime—the Genii of the Grove, the Sun, the Moon, the Winds, the Vault of Heaven, the firm-set Earth, the mighty Yama who judges the dead, and the conscious Soul."

Take even the most extreme type of difference. Is the man, says Plutarch, "a criminal who holds there are no gods; and is not he that holds them to be such as the superstitious believe them, is he not possessed with notions infinitely more atrocious? I for my part would much rather have men say of me that there never was a Plutarch at all, nor is now, than to say that Plutarch is a man inconstant, fickle, easily moved to anger, revengeful for trifling provocations, vexed at small things."

There is no doubt a tone of doubting sadness in Roman moralists, as in Hadrian's dying lines to his soul—

"Animula, vagula, blandula
Hospes, comesque corporis
Qua nunc abibis in loca:
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos."

The same spirit indeed is expressed in the epitaph on the tomb of the Duke of Buckingham in Westminster Abbey—

"Dubius non improbus vixi
Incertus morior, non perturbatus;
Humanum est nescire et errare,
Deo confido
Omnipotenti benevolentissimo:
Ens entium miserere mei."

Many things have been mistaken for religion, selfishness especially, but also fear, hope, love of music, of art, of pomp; scruples often take the place of love, and the glory of heaven is sometimes made to depend upon precious stones and jewellery. Many, as has been well said, run after Christ, not for the miracles, but for the loaves.

In many cases religious differences are mainly verbal. There is an Eastern tale of four men, an Arab, a Persian, a Turk, and a Greek, who agreed to club together for an evening meal, but when they had done so they quarrelled as to what it should be. The Turk proposed Azum, the Arab Aneb, the Persian Anghur, while the Greek insisted on Staphylion. While they were disputing

> "Before their eyes did pass,
> Laden with grapes, a gardener's ass.
> Sprang to his feet each man, and showed,
> With eager hand, that purple load.
> 'See Azum,' said the Turk; and 'see
> Anghur,' the Persian; 'what should be
> Better.' 'Nay Aneb, Aneb 'tis,'
> The Arab cried. The Greek said, 'This
> Is my Staphylion.' Then they bought
> Their grapes in peace.
> Hence be ye taught."[1]

It is said that on one occasion, when Dean Stanley had been explaining his views to Lord Beaconsfield, the latter

[1] Arnold. *Pearls of the Faith.*

replied, "Ah! Mr. Dean, that is all very well, but you must remember,—No dogmas, no Deans." To lose such Deans as Stanley would indeed be a great misfortune; but does it follow? Religions, far from being really built on Dogmas, are too often weighed down and crushed by them. No one can doubt that Stanley has done much to strengthen the Church of England.

We may not always agree with Spinoza, but is he not right when he says, "The first precept of the divine law, therefore, indeed its sum and substance, is to love God unconditionally as the supreme good —unconditionally, I say, and not from any love or fear of aught besides"? And again, that the very essence of religion is belief in "a Supreme Being who delights in justice and mercy, whom all who would be saved are bound to obey, and whose worship consists in the practice of justice and charity towards our neighbours"?

Doubt is of two natures, and we often confuse a wise suspension of judgment with the weakness of hesitation. To profess an opinion for which we have no sufficient reason is clearly illogical, but when it is necessary to act we must do so on the best evidence available, however slight that may be. Herein lies the importance of common sense, the instincts of a General, the sagacity of a Statesman. Pyrrho, the recognised representative of doubt, was often wise in suspending his judgment, however foolish in hesitating to act, and in apologising when, after resisting all the arguments of philosophy, an angry dog drove him from his position.

Collect from the Bible all that Christ thought necessary for his disciples, and how little Dogma there is. "Pure religion and undefiled is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the

world." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." "Suffer little children to come unto me." And one lesson which little children have to teach us is that religion is an affair of the heart and not of the mind only.

Why should we expect Religion to solve questions with reference to the origin and destiny of the Universe? We do not expect the most elaborate treatise to tell us the origin of electricity or of heat. Natural History throws no light on the origin of life. Has Biology ever professed to explain existence?

"Simonides was asked at Syracuse by Hiero, who or what God was, when he requested a day's time to think of his answer. On subsequent days he always doubled the period required for deliberation; and when Hiero inquired the reason, he replied that the longer he con-

sidered the subject, the more obscure it appeared."

The Vedas say, "In the midst of the sun is the light, in the midst of light is truth, and in the midst of truth is the imperishable being." Deity has been defined as a circle whose centre is everywhere, and whose circumference is nowhere, but the "God is love" of St. John appeals more forcibly to the human soul.

The Church is not a place for study or speculation. Few but can sympathise with Eugénie de Guérin in her tender affection for the little Chapel at Cahuze where she tells us she left "tant de misères."

Doubt does not exclude Faith.

> "Perplexed in faith, but pure in deeds
> At last he beat his music out.
> There lies more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds."[1]

[1] Tennyson.

And if we must admit that many points are still, and probably long will be involved in obscurity, we may be pardoned if we indulge ourselves in various speculations both as to our beginning and our end.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home."[1]

Unfortunately many have attempted to compound for wickedness in life by purity of belief, a vain and fruitless effort. To do right is the sure ladder which leads up to Heaven, though the true faith will help us to find and to climb it.

"It was my duty to have loved the highest,
It surely was my profit had I known,
It would have been my pleasure had I seen."

[1] Wordsworth.

But though religious truth can justify no bitterness, it is well worth any amount of thought and study.

I hope I shall not be supposed to depreciate any honest effort to arrive at truth, or to undervalue the devotion of those who have died for their religion. But surely it is a mistake to regard martyrdom as a merit, when from their own point of view it was in reality a privilege.

Let every man be persuaded in his own mind

"Truth is the highest thing that man may keep."[1]

To arrive at truth we should spare ourselves no pain, but certainly inflict none on others.

We may be sure that quarrels will never advance religion, and that to persecute is no way to convert. No doubt those who consider that all who do not agree with them will suffer eternal tor-

[1] Chaucer.

ments, seem logically justified in persecution even unto death. Such a course, if carried out consistently, might stamp out a particular sect, and any sufferings which could be inflicted here would on this hypothesis be as nothing in comparison with the pains of Hell. Only it must be admitted that such a view of religion is incompatible with any faith in the goodness of God, and seems quite irreconcilable with the teaching of Christ.

Moreover, the Inquisition has even from its own point of view proved generally a failure. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.

"In obedience to the order of the Council of Constance (1415) the remains of Wickliffe were exhumed and burnt to ashes, and these cast into the Swift, a neighbouring brook running hard by, and thus this brook hath conveyed his ashes into Avon; Avon into Severn; Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main

ocean. And thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over." [1]

The Talmud says that when a man once asked Shamai to teach him the Law in one lesson, Shamai drove him away in anger. He then went to Hillel with the same request. Hillel said, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. This is the whole Law; the rest, merely Commentaries upon it."

The Religion of the lower races is almost as a rule one of terror and of dread. Their deities are jealous and revengeful, cruel, merciless, and selfish, hateful and yet childish. They require to be propitiated by feasts and offerings, often even by human sacrifices. They are not only exacting, but so capricious that, with the best intentions, it is often impossible to be sure of pleasing them. From such evil beings Sorcerers and Witches derived

[1] Fuller.

their hellish powers. No one was safe. No one knew where danger lurked. Actions apparently the most trifling might be fraught with serious risk: objects apparently the most innocent might be fatal.

In many cases there are supposed to be deities of Crime, of Misfortunes, of Disease. These wicked Spirits naturally encourage evil rather than good. An energetic friend of mine was sent to a district in India where smallpox was specially prevalent, and where one of the principal Temples was dedicated to the Goddess of that disease. He had the people vaccinated, in spite of some opposition, and the disease disappeared, much to the astonishment of the natives. But the priests of the Deity of Smallpox were not disconcerted; only they deposed the Image of their discomfited Goddess, and petitioned my friend for some emblem of himself which they might install in her stead.

We who are fortunate enough to live in this comparatively enlightened century hardly realise how our ancestors suffered from their belief in the existence of mysterious and malevolent beings; how their life was embittered and overshadowed by these awful apprehensions.

As men, however, have risen in civilisation, their religion has risen with them; they have by degrees acquired higher and purer conceptions of divine power.

We are only just beginning to realise that a loving and merciful Father would not resent honest error, not even perhaps the attribution to him of such odious injustice. Yet what can be clearer than Christ's teaching on this point. He impressed it over and over again on his disciples. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

"If," says Ruskin, "for every rebuke that we utter of men's vices, we put forth a claim upon their hearts; if, for every as-

sertion of God's demands from them, we should substitute a display of His kindness to them; if side by side, with every warning of death, we could exhibit proofs and promises of immortality; if, in fine, instead of assuming the being of an awful Deity, which men, though they cannot and dare not deny, are always unwilling, sometimes unable, to conceive; we were to show them a near, visible, inevitable, but all-beneficent Deity, whose presence makes the earth itself a heaven, I think there would be fewer deaf children sitting in the market-place."

But it must not be supposed that those who doubt whether the ultimate truth of the Universe can be expressed in human words, or whether, even if it could, we should be able to comprehend it, undervalue the importance of religious study. Quite the contrary. Their doubts arise not from pride, but from humility: not because they do not appreciate divine truth, but

on the contrary they doubt whether we can appreciate it sufficiently, and are sceptical whether the infinite can be reduced to the finite.

We may be sure that whatever may be right about religion, to quarrel over it must be wrong. "Let others wrangle," said St. Augustine, "I will wonder."

Those who suspend their judgment are not on that account sceptics, and it is often those who think they know most, who are especially troubled by doubts and anxiety.

It was Wordsworth who wrote

> "Great God, I had rather be
> A Pagan suckled in some creed outworn;
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn."

In religion, as with children at night, it is darkness and ignorance which create dread; light and love cast out fear.

In looking forward to the future we may fairly hope with Ruskin that "the

charities of more and more widely extended peace are preparing the way for a Christian Church which shall depend neither on ignorance for its continuance, nor on controversy for its progress, but shall reign at once in light and love."

CHAPTER XII

THE HOPE OF PROGRESS

"To what then may we not look forward, when a spirit of scientific inquiry shall have spread through those vast regions in which the progress of civilisation, its sure precursor, is actually commenced and in active progress? And what may we not expect from the exertions of powerful minds called into action under circumstances totally different from any which have yet existed in the world, and over an extent of territory far surpassing that which has hitherto produced the whole harvest of human intellect."

HERSCHEL.

CHAPTER XII

THE HOPE OF PROGRESS

THERE are two lines, if not more, in which we may look forward with hope to progress in the future. In the first place, increased knowledge of nature, of the properties of matter, and of the phenomena which surround us, may afford to our children advantages far greater even than those which we ourselves enjoy. Secondly, the extension and improvement of education, the increasing influence of Science and Art, of Poetry and Music, of Literature and Religion,—of all the powers which are tending to good, will, we may reasonably hope, raise man and make

him more master of himself, more able to appreciate and enjoy his advantages, and to realise the truth of the Italian proverb, that wherever light is, there is joy.

One consideration which has greatly tended to retard progress has been the floating idea that there was some sort of ingratitude, and even impiety, in attempting to improve on what Divine Providence had arranged for us. Thus Prometheus was said to have incurred the wrath of Jove for bestowing on mortals the use of fire; and other improvements only escaped similar punishment when the ingenuity of priests attributed them to the special favour of some particular deity. This feeling has not even yet quite died out. Even I can remember the time when many excellent persons had a scruple or prejudice against the use of chloroform, because they fancied that pain was ordained under certain circumstances.

We are told that in early Saxon days

Edwin, King of Northumbria, called his nobles and his priests around him, to discuss whether a certain missionary should be heard or not. The king was doubtful. At last there rose an old chief, and said: —"You know, O King, how, on a winter evening, when you are sitting at supper in your hall, with your company around you, when the night is dark and dreary, when the rain and the snow rage outside, when the hall inside is lighted and warm with a blazing fire, sometimes it happens that a sparrow flies into the bright hall out of the dark night, flies through the hall and then flies out at the other end into the dark night again. We see him for a few moments, but we know not whence he came nor whither he goes in the blackness of the storm outside. So is the life of man. It appears for a short space in the warmth and brightness of this life, but what came before this life, or what is to follow this life, we know not.

If, therefore, these new teachers can enlighten us as to the darkness that went before, and the darkness that is to come after, let us hear what they have to teach us."

It is often said, however, that great and unexpected as recent discoveries have been, there are certain ultimate problems which must ever remain unsolved. For my part, I would prefer to abstain from laying down any such limitations. When Park asked the Arabs what became of the sun at night, and whether the sun was always the same, or new each day, they replied that such a question was foolish, being entirely beyond the reach of human investigation.

M. Comte, in his *Cours de Philosophie Positive*, as recently as 1842, laid it down as an axiom regarding the heavenly bodies, "We may hope to determine their forms, distances, magnitude, and movements, but we shall never by any means be able to

study their chemical composition or mineralogical structure." Yet within a few years this supposed impossibility has been actually accomplished, showing how unsafe it is to limit the possibilities of science.[1]

It is, indeed, as true now as in the time of Newton, that the great ocean of truth lies undiscovered before us. I often wish that some President of the Royal Society, or of the British Association, would take for the theme of his annual address "The things we do not know." Who can say on the verge of what discoveries we are perhaps even now standing! It is extraordinary how slight a margin may stand for years between Man and some important improvement. Take the case of the electric light, for instance. It had been known for years that if a carbon rod be placed in an exhausted glass receiver, and a current of electricity be passed through

[1] Lubbock. *Fifty Years of Science.*

it, the carbon glowed with an intense light, but on the other hand it became so hot that the glass burst. The light, therefore, was useless, because the lamp burst as soon as it was lighted. Edison hit on the idea that if you made the carbon filament fine enough, you would get rid of the heat and yet have abundance of light. Edison's right to his patent has been contested on this very ground. It has been said that the mere introduction of so small a difference as the replacement of a thin rod by a fine filament was so slight an item that it could not be patented. The improvements by Swan, Lane Fox, and others, though so important as a whole, have been made step by step.

Or take again the discovery of anæsthetics. At the beginning of the century Sir Humphrey discovered laughing gas, as it was then called. He found that it produced complete insensibility to pain

and yet did not injure health. A tooth was actually taken out under its influence, and of course without suffering. These facts were known to our chemists, they were explained to the students in our great hospitals, and yet for half a century the obvious application occurred to no one. Operations continued to be performed as before, patients suffered the same horrible tortures, and yet the beneficent element was in our hands, its divine properties were known, but it never occurred to any one to make use of it.

I may give one more illustration. Printing is generally said to have been discovered in the fifteenth century; and so it was for all practical purposes. But in fact printing was known long before. The Romans used stamps; on the monuments of the Assyrian kings the name of the reigning monarch may be found duly printed. What then is the difference? One little, but all-important step. The

real inventor of printing was the man into whose mind flashed the fruitful idea of having separate stamps for each letter, instead of for separate words. How slight seems the difference, and yet for 3000 years the thought occurred to no one. Who can tell what other discoveries, as simple and yet as far-reaching, lie at this very moment under our very eyes!

Archimedes said that if you would give him room to stand on, he would move the earth. One truth leads to another; each discovery renders possible another, and, what is more, a higher.

We are but beginning to realise the marvellous range and complexity of Nature. I have elsewhere called attention to this with special reference to the problematical organs of sense possessed by many animals.[1]

There is every reason to hope that

[1] *The Senses of Animals.*

future studies will throw much light on these interesting structures. We may, no doubt, expect much from the improvement in our microscopes, the use of new re-agents, and of mechanical appliances; but the ultimate atoms of which matter is composed are so infinitesimally minute, that it is difficult to foresee any manner in which we may hope for a final solution of these problems.

Loschmidt, who has since been confirmed by Stoney and Sir W. Thomson, calculates that each of the ultimate atoms of matter is at most $\frac{1}{50,000,000}$ of an inch in diameter. Under these circumstances we cannot, it would seem, hope at present for any great increase of our knowledge of atoms by improvements in the microscope. With our present instruments we can perceive lines ruled on glass which are $\frac{1}{90,000}$ of an inch apart; but owing to the properties of light itself, it would appear that we cannot hope to

be able to perceive objects which are much less than $\frac{1}{100,000}$ of an inch in diameter. Our microscopes may, no doubt, be improved, but the limitation lies not in the imperfection of our optical appliances, but in the nature of light itself.

It has been calculated that a particle of albumen $\frac{1}{80,000}$ of an inch in diameter contains no less than 125,000,000 of molecules. In a simpler compound the number would be much greater; in water, for instance, no less than 8,000,000,000. Even then, if we could construct microscopes far more powerful than any which we now possess, they could not enable us to obtain by direct vision any idea of the ultimate organisation of matter. The smallest sphere of organic matter which could be clearly defined with our most powerful microscopes may be, in reality, very complex; may be built up of many millions of molecules, and it follows that

there may be an almost infinite number of structural characters in organic tissues which we can at present foresee no mode of examining.[1]

Again, it has been shown that animals hear sounds which are beyond the range of our hearing, and I have proved they can perceive the ultra-violet rays, which are invisible to our eyes.[2]

Now, as every ray of homogeneous light which we can perceive at all, appears to us as a distinct color, it becomes probable that these ultra-violet rays must make themselves apparent to animals as a distinct and separate color (of which we can form no idea), but as different from the rest as red is from yellow, or green from violet. The question also arises whether white light to these creatures would differ from our white light in containing this additional color.

[1] Lubbock. *Fifty Years of Science.*

[2] *Ants, Bees, and Wasps.*

These considerations cannot but raise the reflection how different the world may —I was going to say must—appear to other animals from what it does to us. Sound is the sensation produced on us when the vibrations of the air strike on the drum of our ear. When they are few, the sound is deep; as they increase in number, it becomes shriller and shriller; but when they reach 40,000 in a second, they cease to be audible. Light is the effect produced on us when waves of light strike on the eye. When 400 millions of millions of vibrations of ether strike the retina in a second, they produce red, and as the number increases the color passes into orange, then yellow, green, blue, and violet. But between 40,000 vibrations in a second and 400 millions of millions we have no organ of sense capable of receiving the impression. Yet between these limits any number of sensations may exist. We have five senses, and some-

times fancy that no others are possible. But it is obvious that we cannot measure the infinite by our own narrow limitations.

Moreover, looking at the question from the other side, we find in animals complex organs of sense, richly supplied with nerves, but the function of which we are as yet powerless to explain. *There may* be fifty other senses as different from ours as sound is from sight; and even within the boundaries of our own senses there may be endless sounds which we cannot hear, and colors, as different as red from green, of which we have no conception. These and a thousand other questions remain for solution. The familiar world which surrounds us may be a totally different place to other animals. To them it may be full of music which we cannot hear, of color which we cannot see, of sensations which we cannot conceive. To place stuffed birds and beasts in glass

cases, to arrange insects in cabinets, and dried plants in drawers, is merely the drudgery and preliminary of study; to watch their habits, to understand their relations to one another, to study their instincts and intelligence, to ascertain their adaptations and their relations to the forces of Nature, to realise what the world appears to them; these constitute, as it seems to me at least, the true interest of natural history, and may even give us the clue to senses and perceptions of which at present we have no conception.[1]

From this point of view the possibilities of progress seem to me to be almost unlimited.

So far again as the actual condition of man is concerned, the fact that there has been some advance cannot, I think, be questioned.

In the Middle Ages, for instance, culture and refinement scarcely existed

[1] Lubbock. *The Senses of Animals.*

beyond the limits of courts, and by no means always there. The life in English, French, and German castles was rough and almost barbarous. Mr. Galton has expressed the opinion, which I am not prepared to question, that the population of Athens, taken as a whole, was as superior to us as we are to Australian savages. But even if that be so, our civilisation, such as it is, is more diffused, so that unquestionably the general European level is much higher.

Much, no doubt, is owing to the greater facility of access to the literature of our country, to that literature, in the words of Macaulay, "the brightest, the purest, the most durable of all the glories of our country; to that Literature, so rich in precious truth and precious fiction; to that Literature which boasts of the prince of all poets, and of the prince of all philosophers; to that Literature which has exercised an influence wider than

that of our commerce, and mightier than that of our arms."

Few of us make the most of our minds. The body ceases to grow in a few years; but the mind, if we will let it, may grow as long as life lasts.

The onward progress of the future will not, we may be sure, be confined to mere material discoveries. We feel that we are on the road to higher mental powers; that problems which now seem to us beyond the range of human thought will receive their solution, and open the way to still further advance. Progress, moreover, we may hope, will be not merely material, not merely mental, but moral also.

It is natural that we should feel a pride in the beauty of England, in the size of our cities, the magnitude of our commerce, the wealth of our country, the vastness of our Empire. But the true glory of a nation does not consist in the

extent of its dominion, in the fertility of the soil, or the beauty of Nature, but rather in the moral and intellectual pre-eminence of the people.

And yet how few of us, rich or poor, have made ourselves all we might be. If he does his best, as Shakespeare says, "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! in form and movement, how express and admirable!" Few indeed, as yet, can be said to reach this high ideal.

The Hindoos have a theory that after death animals live again in a different form; those that have done well in a higher, those that have done ill in a lower grade. To realise this is, they find, a powerful incentive to a virtuous life. But whether it be true of a future life or not, it is certainly true of our present existence. If we do our best for a day, the next morning we shall rise to a higher life; while if we give way to our passions and

temptations, we take with equal certainty a step downwards towards a lower nature.

It is an interesting illustration of the Unity of Man, and an encouragement to those of us who have no claims to genius, that, though of course there have been exceptions, still on the whole, periods of progress have generally been those when a nation has worked and felt together; the advance has been due not entirely to the efforts of a few great men, but also of a thousand little men; not to a single genius, but to a national effort.

Think, indeed, what might be.

> "Ah! when shall all men's good
> Be each man's rule, and universal Peace
> Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
> And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
> Thro' all the circle of the golden year."[1]

Our life is surrounded with mystery, our very world is a speck in boundless space; and not only the period of our

[1] Tennyson.

own individual life, but that of the whole human race is, as it were, but a moment in the eternity of time. We cannot imagine any origin, nor foresee the conclusion.

But though we may not as yet perceive any line of research which can give us a clue to the solution, in another sense we may hold that every addition to our knowledge is one small step towards the great revelation.

Progress may be more slow, or more rapid. It may come to others and not to us. It will not come to us if we do not strive to deserve it. But come it surely will.

> "Yet one thing is there that ye shall not slay,
> Even thought, that fire nor iron can affright." [1]

The future of man is full of hope, and who can foresee the limits of his destiny.

[1] Swinburne.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DESTINY OF MAN

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."—ROMANS viii. 18.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DESTINY OF MAN

But though we have thus a sure and certain hope of progress for the race, still, as far as man is individually concerned, with advancing years we gradually care less and less for many things which gave us the greatest pleasure in youth. On the other hand, if our time has been well used, if we have warmed both hands wisely "before the fire of life," we may gain even more than we lose. If our strength becomes less, we feel also the less necessity for exertion. Hope is gradually replaced by memory: and whether this adds to our happiness or not depends on what our life has been.

There are of course some lives which diminish in value as old age advances, in which one pleasure fades after another, and even those which remain gradually lose their zest; but there are others which gain in richness and peace all, and more, than that of which time robs them.

The pleasures of youth may excel in keenness and in zest, but they have at the best a tinge of anxiety and unrest; they cannot have the fulness and depth which may accompany the consolations of age, and are amongst the richest rewards of an unselfish life.

For as with the close of the day, so with that of life; there may be clouds, and yet if the horizon is clear, the evening may be beautiful.

Old age has a rich store of memories. Life is full of

> "Joys too exquisite to last,
> And yet more exquisite when past."[1]

[1] Montgomery.

Swedenborg imagines that in heaven the angels are advancing continually to the spring-time of their youth, so that those who have lived longest are really the youngest; and have we not all had friends who seem to fulfil this idea? who are in reality—that is in mind—as fresh as a child: of whom it may be said with more truth than of Cleopatra that

> "Age cannot wither nor custom stale
> Their infinite variety."

"When I consider old age," says Cicero, "I find four causes why it is thought miserable: one, that it calls us away from the transaction of affairs; the second, that it renders the body more feeble; the third, that it deprives us of almost all pleasures; the fourth, that it is not very far from death. Of these causes let us see, if you please, how great and how reasonable each of them is."

To be released from the absorbing affairs of life, to feel that one has earned a claim

to leisure and repose, is surely in itself no evil.

To the second complaint against old age, I have already referred in speaking of Health.

The third is that it has no passions. "O noble privilege of age! if indeed it takes from us that which is in youth our greatest defect." But the higher feelings of our nature are not necessarily weakened; or rather, they may become all the brighter, being purified from the grosser elements of our lower nature.

Then, indeed, it might be said that "Man is the sun of the world; more than the real sun. The fire of his wonderful heart is the only light and heat worth gauge or measure."[1]

"Single," says Manu, "is each man born into the world; single he dies; single he receives the reward of his good deeds; and single the punishment of his sins.

[1] Emerson.

When he dies his body lies like a fallen tree upon the earth, but his virtue accompanies his soul. Wherefore let Man harvest and garner virtue, that so he may have an inseparable companion in that gloom which all must pass through, and which it is so hard to traverse."

Is it not extraordinary that many men will deliberately take a road which they know is, to say the least, not that of happiness. That they prefer to make others miserable, rather than themselves happy.

Plato, in the Phædrus, explains this by describing Man as a Composite Being, having three natures, and compares him to a pair of winged horses and a charioteer. "Of the two horses one is noble and of noble origin, the other ignoble and of ignoble origin; and the driving, as might be expected, is no easy matter." The noble steed endeavours to

raise the chariot, but the ignoble one struggles to drag it down.

"Man," says Shelley, "is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever-changing wind over an Æolian lyre, which move it by their motion to ever-changing melody."

Cicero mentions the approach of death as the fourth drawback of old age. To many minds the shadow of the end is ever present, like the coffin in the Egyptian feast, and overclouds all the sunshine of life. But ought we so to regard death?

Shelley's beautiful lines,

> "Life, like a Dome of many-coloured glass,
> Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
> Until death tramples it to fragments,"

contain, as it seems to me at least, a double error. Life need not stain the white radiance of eternity; nor does death necessarily trample it to fragments.

Man has, says Coleridge,

"Three treasures,—love and light
And calm thoughts, regular as infants' breath;
And three firm friends, more sure than day and night,
Himself, his Maker, and the Angel Death."

Death is "the end of all, the remedy of many, the wish of divers men, deserving better of no men than of those to whom she came before she was called."[1]

It is often assumed that the journey to

"The undiscovered country from whose bourne
No traveller returns"

must be one of pain and suffering. But this is not so. Death is often peaceful and almost painless.

Bede during his last illness was translating St. John's Gospel into Anglo-Saxon, and the morning of his death his secretary, observing his weakness, said, "There remains now only one chapter, and it seems difficult to you to speak." "It is easy," said Bede; "take your pen and write as fast as you can." At the

[1] Seneca.

close of the chapter the scribe said, "It is finished," to which he replied, "Thou hast said the truth, *consummatum est.*" He then divided his little property among the brethren, having done which he asked to be placed opposite to the place where he usually prayed, said "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," and as he pronounced the last word he expired.

Goethe died without any apparent suffering, having just prepared himself to write, and expressed his delight at the return of spring.

We are told of Mozart's death that "the unfinished requiem lay upon the bed, and his last efforts were to imitate some peculiar instrumental effects, as he breathed out his life in the arms of his wife and their friend Süssmaier."

Plato died in the act of writing; Lucan while reciting part of his book on the war of Pharsalus; Blake died singing; Wagner

in sleep with his head on his wife's shoulder. Many have passed away in their sleep. Various high medical authorities have expressed their surprise that the dying seldom feel either dismay or regret. And even those who perish by violence, as for instance in battle, feel, it is probable, but little suffering.

But what of the future? There may be said to be now two principal views. There are some who believe indeed in the immortality of the soul, but not of the individual soul: that our life is continued in that of our children would seem indeed to be the natural deduction from the simile of St. Paul, as that of the grain of wheat is carried on in the plant of the following year.

So long indeed as happiness exists it is selfish to dwell too much on our own share in it. Admit that the soul is immortal, but that in the future state of existence there is a break in the continuity

of memory, that one does not remember the present life, and from this point of view is not the importance of identity involved in that of continuous memory? But however this may be according to the general view, the soul, though detached from the body, will retain its conscious identity, and will awake from death, as it does from sleep; so that if we cannot affirm that

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the Earth,
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep,"[1]

at any rate they exist somewhere else in space, and we are indeed looking at them when we gaze at the stars, though to our eyes they are as yet invisible.

In neither case, however, can death be regarded as an evil. To wish that youth and strength were unaffected by time might be a different matter.

"But if we are not destined to be immortal, yet it is a desirable thing for a

[1] Milton.

man to expire at his fit time. For, as nature prescribes a boundary to all other things, so does she also to life. Now old age is the consummation of life, just as of a play: from the fatigue of which we ought to escape, especially when satiety is superadded." [1]

From this point of view, then, we need

"Weep not for death,
'Tis but a fever stilled,
A pain suppressed,—a fear at rest,
A solemn hope fulfilled.
The moonshine on the slumbering deep
Is scarcely calmer. Wherefore weep?

"Weep not for death!
The fount of tears is sealed,
Who knows how bright the inward light
To those closed eyes revealed?
Who knows what holy love may fill
The heart that seems so cold and still."

Many a weary soul will have recurred with comfort to the thought that

"A few more years shall roll,
A few more seasons come,

[1] Cicero.

And we shall be with those that rest
Asleep within the tomb.

"A few more struggles here,
A few more partings o'er,
A few more toils, a few more tears,
And we shall weep no more."

By no one has this, however, been more grandly expressed than by Shelley.

"Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep!
He hath awakened from the dream of life.
'Tis we who, lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
He has outsoared the shadows of our night.
Envy and calumny, and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again.
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown gray, in vain—"

Most men, however, decline to believe that

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."[1]

According to the more general view death frees the soul from the encumbrance

[1] Shakespeare.

of the spirit, and summons us to the seat of judgment. In fact,

> "There is no Death! What seems so is transition;
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
> Whose portal we call Death."[1]

We have bodies, "we are spirits." "I am a soul," said Epictetus, "dragging about a corpse." The body is the mere perishable form of the immortal essence. Plato concluded that if the ways of God are to be justified, there must be a future life.

To the aged in either case death is a release. The Bible dwells most forcibly on the blessing of peace. "My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Heaven is described as a place where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

But I suppose every one must have asked himself in what can the pleasures of heaven consist.

[1] Longfellow.

"For all we know
Of what the blessed do above
Is that they sing, and that they love."[1]

It would indeed accord with few men's ideal that there should be any "struggle for existence" in heaven. We should then be little better off than we are now. This world is very beautiful, if we could only enjoy it in peace. And yet mere passive existence—mere vegetation—would in itself offer few attractions. It would indeed be almost intolerable.

Again, the anxiety of change seems inconsistent with perfect happiness; and yet a wearisome, interminable monotony, the same thing over and over again for ever and ever without relief or variety, suggests dulness rather than bliss.

I feel that to me, said Greg, "God has promised not the heaven of the ascetic temper, or the dogmatic theologian, or of the subtle mystic, or of the stern martyr

[1] Waller.

ready alike to inflict and bear; but a heaven of purified and permanent affections—of a book of knowledge with eternal leaves, and unbounded capacities to read it—of those we love ever round us, never misconceiving us, or being harassed by us —of glorious work to do, and adequate faculties to do it—a world of solved problems, as well as of realised ideals."

"For still the doubt came back,—Can God provide
For the large heart of man what shall not pall,
Nor through eternal ages' endless tide
On tired spirits fall?

"These make him say,—If God has so arrayed
A fading world that quickly passes by,
Such rich provision of delight has made
For every human eye,

What shall the eyes that wait for him survey
When his own presence gloriously appears
In worlds that were not founded for a day,
But for eternal years?"[1]

Here Science seems to suggest a possible answer: the solution of problems

[1] Trench.

which have puzzled us here; the acquisition of new ideas; the unrolling the history of the past; the world of animals and plants; the secrets of space; the wonders of the stars and of the regions beyond the stars. To become acquainted with all the beautiful and interesting spots of our own world would indeed be something to look forward to, and our world is but one of many millions. I sometimes wonder as I look away to the stars at night whether it will ever be my privilege as a disembodied spirit to visit and explore them. When we had made the great tour fresh interests would have arisen, and we might well begin again.

Here there is an infinity of interest without anxiety. So that at last the only doubt may be

"Lest an eternity should not suffice
To take the measure and the breadth and height
Of what there is reserved in Paradise
Its ever-new delight."[1]

[1] Trench.

Cicero surely did not exaggerate when he said, "O glorious day! when I shall depart to that divine company and assemblage of spirits, and quit this troubled and polluted scene. For I shall go not only to those great men of whom I have spoken before, but also to my son Cato, than whom never was better man born, nor more distinguished for pious affection; whose body was burned by me, whereas, on the contrary, it was fitting that mine should be burned by him. But his soul not deserting me, but oft looking back, no doubt departed to these regions whither it saw that I myself was destined to come. Which, though a distress to me, I seemed patiently to endure: not that I bore it with indifference, but I comforted myself with the recollection that the separation and distance between us would not continue long. For these reasons, O Scipio (since you said that you with Lælius were accustomed to wonder at this), old age is

tolerable to me, and not only not irksome, but even delightful. And if I am wrong in this, that I believe the souls of men to be immortal, I willingly delude myself: nor do I desire that this mistake, in which I take pleasure, should be wrested from me as long as I live; but if I, when dead, shall have no consciousness, as some narrow-minded philosophers imagine, I do not fear lest dead philosophers should ridicule this my delusion."

Nor can I omit the striking passage in the *Apology*, when pleading before the people of Athens, Socrates says, "Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good; for one of two things—either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of

him who is undisturbed even by the sight of dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private man, but even the great king will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others. Now, if death is like this, I say that to die is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead are, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this?

"If, indeed, when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered from the professors of justice in this world, and

finds the true judges, who are said to give judgment there,—Minos, and Rhadamanthus, and Æacus, and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life,—that pilgrimage will be worth making. What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus, and Musæus, and Hesiod, and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I myself, too, shall have a wonderful interest in there meeting and conversing with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and other heroes of old, who have suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasure, as I think, in comparing my own sufferings with theirs. Above all, I shall then be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in that; and I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the

leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus or Sisyphus, or numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions. In another world they do not put a man to death for asking questions; assuredly not. For besides being happier in that world than in this, they will be immortal, if what is said be true.

"Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that to die and be released was better for me; and therefore the oracle gave no sign. For which reason, also, I am not angry with my condemners, or with my accusers; they have done me no harm, although they did not mean to do me any good;

and for this I may gently blame them. The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways—I to die and you to live. Which is better God only knows."

In the *Wisdom of Solomon* we are promised that—

"The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.

"In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die; and their departure is taken for misery.

"And their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace.

"For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality.

"And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded: for God proved them, and found them worthy for himself."

And assuredly, if in the hour of death

the conscience is at peace, the mind need not be troubled. The future is full of doubt, indeed, but fuller still of hope.

If we are entering upon a rest after the struggles of life,

> "Where the wicked cease from troubling,
> And the weary are at rest,"

that to many a weary soul will be a welcome bourne, and even then we may say,

> "O Death! where is thy sting?
> O Grave! where is thy victory?"

On the other hand, if we are entering on a new sphere of existence, where we may look forward to meet not only those of whom we have heard so often, those whose works we have read and admired, and to whom we owe so much, but those also whom we have loved and lost; when we shall leave behind us the bonds of the flesh and the limitations of our earthly existence; when we shall join the Angels, and Archangels, and all the company of

Heaven,—then, indeed, we may cherish a sure and certain hope that the interests and pleasures of this world are as nothing compared to those of the life that awaits us in our Eternal Home.

THE END

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