The Recreations of A Country Parson

A. K. H. Boyd

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CHAPTER I. CONCERNING THE PARSON'S CHOICE BETWEEN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

One very happy circumstance in a clergyman's lot, is that he is saved from painful perplexity as regards his choice of the scene in which he is to spend his days and years. I am sorry for the man who returns from Australia with a large fortune; and with no further end in life than to settle down somewhere and enjoy it. For in most cases he has no special tie to any particular place; and he must feel very much perplexed where to go. Should any person who may read this page cherish the purpose of leaving me a hundred thousand pounds to invest in a pretty little estate, I beg that he will at once abandon such a design. He would be doing me no kindness. I should be entirely bewildered in trying to make up my mind where I should purchase the property. I should be rent asunder by conflicting visions of rich English landscape, and heathery Scottish hills: of seaside breezes, and inland meadows: of horse−chestnut avenues, and dark stern pine−woods. And after the estate had been bought, I should always be looking back and thinking I might have done better. So, on the whole, I would prefer that my reader should himself buy the estate, and bequeath it to me: and then I could soon persuade myself that it was the prettiest estate and the pleasantest neighbourhood in Britain.

Now, as a general rule, the Great Disposer says to the parson, Here is your home, here lies your work through life: go and reconcile your mind to it, and do your best in it. No doubt there are men in the Church whose genius, popularity, influence, or luck is such, that they have a bewildering variety of livings pressed upon them: but it is not so with ordinary folk; and certainly it was not so with me. I went where Providence bade me go, which was not where I had wished to go, and not where I had thought to go. Many who know me through the pages which make this and a preceding volume, have said, written, and printed, that I was specially cut out for a country parson, and specially adapted to relish a quiet country life. Not more, believe me, reader, than yourself. It is in every man who sets himself to it to attain the self−same characteristics. It is quite true I have these now: but, a few years since, never was mortal less like them. No cockney set down near Sydney Smith at Foston−le−Clay: no fish, suddenly withdrawn from its native stream: could feel more strange and cheerless than did I when I went to my beautiful country parish, where I have spent such happy days, and which I have come to love so much.

I have said that the parson is for the most part saved the labour of determining where he shall pitch his tent: his place and his path in life are marked out for him. But he has his own special perplexity and labour: quite different from those of the man to whom the hundred thousand pounds to invest in land are bequeathed: still, as some perhaps would think, no less hard. His work is to reconcile his mind to the place where God has set him. Every mortal must, in many respects, face one of these two trials. There is all the world before you, where to choose; and then the struggle to make a decided choice with which you shall on reflection remain entirely satisfied. Or there is no choice at all: the Hand above gives you your place and your work; and then there is the struggle heartily and cheerfully to acquiesce in the decree as to which you were not consulted.

And this is not always an easy thing; though I am sure that the man who honestly and Christianly tries to do it, will never fail to succeed at last. How curiously people are set down in the Church; and indeed in all other callings whatsoever! You find men in the last places they would have chosen; in the last places for which you would say they are suited. You pass a pretty country church, with its parsonage hard−by embosomed in trees and bright with roses. Perhaps the parson of that church had set his heart on an entirely different kind of charge: perhaps he is a disappointed man, eager to get away, and (the very worst possible policy) trying for every vacancy of which he can hear. You think, as you pass by, and sit down on the churchyard wall, how happy you could be in so quiet and sweet a spot: well, if you are willing to do a thing, it is pleasant: but if you are struggling with a chain you cannot break, it is miserable. The pleasantest thing becomes painful, if it is felt as a restraint. What can be cosier than the warm environment of sheet and blanket which encircles you in your snug bed? Yet if you awake during the night at some alarm of peril, and by a sudden effort try at once to shake yourself clear of these trammels, you will, for the half−minute before you succeed, feel that soft restraint as irksome as iron fetters. 'Let your will lead whither necessity would drive,' said Locke, 'and you will always preserve your liberty.' No doubt, it is wise advice; but how to do all that?

Well, it can be done: but it costs an effort. Great part of the work of the civilized and educated man consists of that which the savage, and even the uneducated man, would not regard as work at all. The things which cost the greatest effort may be done, perhaps, as you sit in an easy chair with your eyes shut. And such an effort is that of making up our mind to many things, both in our own lot, and in the lot of others. I mean not merely the intellectual effort to look at the success of other men and our own failure in such a way as that we shall be intellectually convinced that, we have no right to complain of either: I do not mean merely the labour to put things in the right point of view: but the moral effort to look fairly at the facts not in any way disguised,—not tricked out by some skilful art of putting things;—and yet to repress all wrong feeling;—all fretfulness, envy, jealousy, dislike, hatred. I do not mean, to persuade ourselves that the grapes are sour; but (far nobler surely) to be well aware that they are sweet, and yet be content that another should have them and not we. I mean the labour, when you have run in a race and been beaten, to resign your mind to the fact that you have been beaten, and to bear a kind feeling towards the man who beat you. And this is labour, and hard labour; though very different from that physical exertion which the uncivilized man would understand by the word. Every one can understand that to carry a heavy portmanteau a mile is work. Not every one remembers that the owner of the portmanteau, as he walks on carrying nothing weightier than an umbrella, may be going through exertion much harder than that of the porter. Probably St. Paul never spent days of harder work in all his life, than the days he spent lying blind at Damascus, struggling to get free from the prejudices and convictions of all his past years, and resolving—on the course he would pursue in the years to come.

I know that in all professions and occupations to which men can devote themselves, there is such a thing as com petition: and wherever there is competition, there will be the temptation to envy, jealousy, and detraction, as regards a man's competitors: and so there will be the need of that labour and exertion which lie in resolutely trampling that temptation down. You are quite certain, rny friend, as you go on through life, to have to make up your mind to failure and disappointment on your own part, and to seeing other men preferred before you. When these tilings come, there are two ways of meeting them. One is, to hate and vilify those who surpass you, either in merit or in success: to detract from their merit and under−rate their success: or, if you must admit some merit, to bestow upon it very faint praise. Now, all this is natural enough; but assuredly it is neither a right nor a happy course to follow. The other and better way is, to fight these tendencies to the death: to struggle against them, to pray against them: to resign yourself to God's good will: to admire and love the man who beats you. This course is the right one, and the happy one. I believe the greatest blessing God can send a man, is disappointment, rightly met and used. There is no more ennobling discipline: there is no discipline that results in a happier or kindlier temper of mind. And in honestly fighting against the evil impulses which have been mentioned, you will assuredly get help and strength to vanquish them. I have seen the plain features look beautiful, when man or woman was faithfully by God's grace resisting wrong feelings and tendencies, such as these. It is a noble end to attain, and it is well worth all the labour it costs, to resolutely be resigned, cheerful, and kind, when you feel a strong inclination to be discontented, moody, and bitter of heart. Well said a very wise mortal, 'Better is he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.' And that ruling of the spirit which is needful to rightly meet disappointment, brings out the best and noblest qualities that can be found in man.

Sometimes, indeed, even in the parson's quiet life, he may know something of the first perplexity of which we have been thinking: the perplexity of the man who is struggling to make up his mind where he is to settle down for the remainder of life. And it is not long since such a perplexity came my way. For I had reached a spot in my onward path at which I must make a decided choice. I must go either to the right or the left: for, as Goldsmith has remarked with great force, when the road you are pursuing parts into several roads, you must be careful to follow only one. And I had to decide between country and town. I had to resolve whether I was to remain in that quiet cure of souls about which I formerly told you; or go into the hard work and hurry of a large parish in a certain great city.

I had been for more than five years in that sweet country place: it seemed a very long time as the days passed over. Even slow−growing ivy grew feet longer in that time, and climbing roses covered yards and yards of wall. And for very many months I thought that here I was to live and die, and never dreamt of change. Not indeed that my tastes were always such. At the beginning of that term of years, when I went down each Sunday morning to preach in the plain little church to a handful of quiet rustic people, I used to think of a grand edifice where once upon a time, at my first start in my profession, I had preached each afternoon for many months to a very large

congregation of educated folk; and I used to wonder whether my old friends remembered and missed me. Once there was to me a fascination about that grand church, and all connected with it: now it is to me no more than it is to every one else, and I pass near it almost every day and hardly look at it. Other men have taken my old place in it, and had the like feelings, and got over them. Several of these men I never saw: how much I should like to shake each man's hand! But all these fancies were long, long ago: I was pleased to be a country parson, and to make the best of it. Friends, who have held like stations in life, have you not felt, now and then, a little waking up of old ideas and aspirations? All this, you thought, was not what you once had wished, and pictured to yourself. You vainly fancied, in your student days, that you might reach a more eminent place and greater usefulness. I know, indeed, that even such as have gone very unwillingly to a little remote country parish, have come most heartily to enjoy its peaceful life: have grown fond of that, as they never thought to do. I do not mean that you need affectedly talk, after a few months there, as if you had lived in the country all your life, and as if your thoughts had from childhood run upon horses, turnips, and corn. But in sober earnest, as weeks pass over, you gain a great interest in little country cares; and you discover that you may be abundantly useful, and abundantly laborious, amid a small and simple population.

Yet sometimes, my clever friend, I know you sit down on a green bank, under the trees, and look at your little church. You think, of your companions and competitors in College days, filling distinguished places in life: and, more particularly, of this and that friend in your own calling, who preaches to as many people on one Sunday as you do in half a year. Fine fellows they were: and though you seldom meet now, you are sure they are faithful, laborious, able, and devoted ministers: God bless them all! You wonder how they can do so much work; and especially how they have confidence to preach to so large and intelligent congregations. For a certain timidity, and distrust of his own powers, grows upon the country parson. He is reaching the juster estimate of himself, indeed: yet there is something not desirable in the nervous dislike to preach in large churches and to cultivated people which is sure to come. And little things worry him, which would not worry a mind kept more upon the stretch. It is possible enough that among the Cumberland hills, or in curacies like Sydney Smith's on Salisbury Plain, or wandering sadly by the shore of Shetland fiords, there may be men who had in them the makings of eminent preachers; but whose powers have never been called out, and are rusting sadly away: and in whom many petty cares are developing a pettiness of nature.

I have observed that in those advertisements which occasionally appear in certain newspapers, offering for sale the next presentation to some living in the Church, the advertiser, after pointing out the various advantages of the situation, frequently sums up by stating that the population of the parish is very small, and so the clergyman's duty very light. I always read such a statement with great displeasure. For it seems to imply, that a clergyman's great object is, to enjoy his benefice and do as little duty as possible in return for it. I suppose it need not be proved, that if such were truly the great object of any parson, he has no business to be in the Church at all. Failing health, or powers overdriven, may sometimes make even the parson whose heart is in his work desire a charge whose duty and responsibility are comparatively small: but I firmly believe that in the case of the great majority of clergymen, it is the interest and delight they feel in their work, and not its worldly emolument, that mainly attach them to their sacred profession: and thus that the more work they have to do (provided their strength be equal to it), the more desirable and interesting they hold their charge to be. And I believe that the earnest pastor, settled in some light and pleasant country charge, will oftentimes, even amid his simple enjoyment of that pleasant life, think that perhaps he would be more in the path of duty, if, while the best years of his life are passing on, he were placed where he might serve his Master in a larger sphere.

And thinking now and then in this fashion, I was all of a sudden asked to undertake a charge such as would once have been my very ideal: and in that noble city where my work began, and so which has always been very dear. But I felt that everything was changed. Before these years of growing experience, I dare say I should not have feared to set myself even to work as hard; but now I doubted greatly whether I should prove equal to it. That time in the country had made me sadly lose confidence. And I thought it would be very painful and discouraging to go to preach to a large congregation, and to see it Sunday by Sunday growing less, as people got discontented and dropped away.

But happily, those on whom I leant for guidance and advice, were more hopeful than myself; and so I came away from my beautiful country parish. You know, my friends, who have passed through the like, the sorrow to look for the last time at each kind homely face: the sorrow to turn away from the little church where you have

often preached to very small congregations: the sorrow to leave each tree you have planted, and the evergreens whose growth you have watched, year by year. Soon, you are in all the worry of what in Scotland we call a flitting: the house and all its belongings are turned upside down. The kindness of the people comes out with tenfold strength when they know how soon you are to part. And some, to whom you had tried to do little favours, and who had somewhat disappointed you by the slight sense of them they had shown, now testify by their tears a hearty regard which you never can forget.

The Sunday comes when you enter your old pulpit for the last time. You had prepared your sermon in a room from which the carpet had been removed, and amid a general confusion and noise of packing. The church is crowded in a fashion never seen before. You go through the service, I think, with a sense of being somewhat stunned and bewildered. And in the closing sentences of your sermon, you say little of yourself; but in a few words, very hard to speak, you thank your old friends for their kindness to you through the years you have passed together; and you give them your parting advice, in some sentence which seems to contain the essence of all you meant to teach in all these Sundays; and you say farewell, farewell.

You are happy, indeed, if after all, though quitting your country parsonage, and turning over a new leaf in life, you have not to make a change so entire as that from country to town generally is: if, like me, you live in the most beautiful city in Britain: a city where country and town are blended together: where there are green gardens, fields, and trees: shady places into which you may turn from the glaring streets, into verdure as cool and quiet as ever, and where your little children can roll upon the grass, and string daisies as of old; streets, from every opening in which you look out upon blue hills and blue sea. No doubt, the work is very hard, and very constant; and each Sunday is a very exciting and exhausting day. You will understand, my friend, when you go to such a charge, what honour is due to those venerable men who have faithfully and efficiently done the duty of the like for thirty or forty years. You will look at them with much interest: you will receive their kindly counsel with great respect. You will feel it somewhat trying and nervous work to ascend your pulpit; and to address men and women who in mental cultivation, and in things much more important, are more than equal to yourself. And as you walk down; always alone, to church each Sunday morning, you will very earnestly apply for strength and wisdom beyond your own, in a certain Quarter where they will never be sought in vain. Yet you will delight in all your duty: and you will thank God you feel that were your work in life to choose again, you would give yourself to the noblest task that can be undertaken by mortal, with a resolute purpose firmer a thousand times than even the enthusiastic preference of your early youth. The attention and sympathy with which your congregation will listen to your sermons, will be a constant encouragement and stimulus; and you will find friends so dear and true, that yon. will hope never to part from them while life remains. In such a life, indeed, these Essays, which never would have been begun had my duty been always such, must be written in little snatches of time: and perhaps a sharp critic could tell, from internal evidence, which of them have been written in the country and which in the town. I look up from the table at which I write: and the roses, honeysuckle, and the fuchsias, of a year since, are far away: through the window I discover lofty walls, whose colour inclines to black. Yet I have not regretted the day, and I do not believe I ever will regret the day, when I ceased to be a Country Parson.

CHAPTER II. CONCERNING DISAPPOINTMENT AND SUCCESS.

Russet woods of Autumn, here you are once more! I saw you, golden and brown, in the afternoon sunshine to−day. Crisp leaves were falling, as I went along the foot−path through the woods: crisp leaves lie upon the green graves in the churchyard, fallen from the ashes: and on the shrubbery walks, crisp leaves from the beeches, accumulated where the grass bounds the gravel, make a warm edging, irregular, but pleasant to see. It is not that one is 'tired of summer:' but there is something soothing and pleasing about the autumn days. There is a great clearness of the atmosphere sometimes; sometimes a subdued, gray light is diffused everywhere. In the country, there is often, on these afternoons, a remarkable stillness in the air, amid which you can hear a withering leaf rustling down. I will not think that the time of bare branches and brown grass is so very near as yet; Nature is indeed decaying, but now we have decay only in its beautiful stage, wherein it is pensive, but not sad. It is but early in October; and we, who live in the country all through the winter, please ourselves with the belief that October is one of the finest months of the year, and that we have many warm, bright, still days yet before us. Of course we know we are practising upon ourselves a cheerful, transparent delusion; even as the man of forty−eight often declares that about forty−eight or fifty is the prime of life. I like to remember that Mrs. Hemans was describing October, when she began her beautiful poem on The Battle of Morgarlen, by saying that, 'The wine−month shone in its golden prime:' and I think that in these words the picture presented to the mind of an untravelled Briton, is not the red grapes hanging in blushing profusion, but rather the brown, and crimson, and golden woods, in the warm October sunshine. So, you russet woods of autumn, you are welcome once more; welcome with all your peculiar beauty, so gently enjoyable by all men and women who have not used up life; and with all your lessons, so unobtrusive, so touching, that have come home to the heart of human generations for many thousands of years. Yesterday was Sunday; and I was preaching to my simple rustics an autumn sermon from the text We all do fade as a leaf. As I read out the text, through a half−opened window near me, two large withered oak−leaves silently floated into the little church in the view of all the congregation. I could not but pause for a minute till they should preach their sermon before I began mine. How simply, how unaffectedly, with what natural pathos they seemed to tell their story! It seemed as if they said, Ah you human beings, something besides us is fading; here we are, the things like which you fade!

And now, upon this evening, a little sobered by the thought that this is the fourth October which has seen this hand writing that which shall attain the authority of print, I sit down to begin an essay which is to be written leisurely as recreation and not as work. I need not finish this essay, unless I choose, for six weeks to come: so I have plenty of time, and I shall never have to write under pressure. That is pleasant. And I write under another feeling, more pleasing and encouraging still. I think that in these lines I am addressing many unknown friends, who, though knowing nothing more of me than they can learn from pages which I have written, have come gradually not to think of me as a stranger. I wish here to offer my thanks to many whose letters, though they were writing only to a shadow, have spoken in so kindly a fashion of the writer's slight productions, that they have given me much enjoyment in the reading, and much encouragement to go on. To all my correspondents, whether named or nameless, I now, in a moral sense, extend a friendly hand. As to the question sometimes put, who the writer is, that is of no consequence. But as to what he is, I think, intelligent readers of his essays, you will gradually and easily see that.

It is a great thing to write leisurely, and with a general feeling of kindliness and satisfaction with everybody; but there is a further reason why one should set to work at once. I feel I must write now, before my subject loses its interest; and before the multitude of thoughts, such as they are, which have been clustering round it since it presented itself this afternoon in that walk through the woods, have faded away. It is an unhappy thing, but it is the fact with many men, that if you do not seize your fancies when they come to you, and preserve them upon the written page, you lose them altogether. They go away, and never come back. A little while ago I pulled out a drawer in this table whereon I write; and I took out of it a sheet of paper, on which there are written down various subjects for essays. Several are marked with a large cross; these are the essays which are beyond the reach of fate: they are written and printed. Several others have no cross; these are the subjects of essays which are yet to be

written. But upon four of those subjects I look at once with interest and sorrow. I remember when I wrote down their names, what a vast amount, as I fancied, I had to say about them: and all experience failed to make me feel that unless those thoughts were seized and chronicled at once, they would go away and never come back again. How rich the subjects appeared to me, I well remember! Now they are lifeless, stupid things, of which it is impossible to make anything. Before, they were like a hive, buzzing with millions of bees. Now they are like the empty hive, when the life and stir and bustle of the bees are gone. O friendly reader, what a loss it was to you, that the writer did not at once sit down and sketch out his essays, Concerning Things Slowly Learnt; and Concerning Growing Old! And two other subjects of even greater value were, Concerning the Practical Effect of Illogical Reasons, and An Estimate of the Practical Influence of False Assertions. How the hive was buzzing when these titles were written down: but now I really hardly remember anything of what I meant to say, and what I remember appears wretched stuff. The effervescence has gone from the champagne; it is flat and dead. Still, it is possible that these subjects may recover their interest; and the author hereby gives notice that he reserves the right of producing an essay upon each of them. Let no one else infringe his vested claims.

There is one respect in which I have often thought that there is a curious absence of analogy between the moral and the material worlds. You are in a great excitement about something or other; you are immensely interested in reaching some aim; you are extremely angry and ferocious at some piece of conduct; let us suppose. Well, the result is that you cannot take a sound, clear, temperate view of the circumstances; you cannot see the case rightly; you actually do see it very wrongly. You wait till a week or a month passes; till some distance, in short, intervenes between you and the matter; and then your excitement, your fever, your wrath, have gone down, as the matter has lost its freshness; and now you see the case calmly, you see it very differently indeed from the fashion in which you saw it first; you conclude that now you see it rightly. One can think temperately now of the atrocities of the mutineers in India, It does riot now quicken your pulse to think of them. You have not now the burning desire you once felt, to take a Sepoy by the throat and cut him to pieces with a cat−of−nine−tails. The common consent of mankind has decided that you have now attained the right view. I ask, is it certain that in all cases the second thought is the best;—is the right thought, as well as the calmest thought? Would it be just to say (which would be the material analogy) that you have the best view of some great rocky island when you have sailed away from it till it has turned to a blue cloud on the horizon; rather than when its granite and heather are full in view, close at hand? I am not sure that in every case the calmer thought is the right thought, the distant view the right view. You have come to think indifferently of the personal injury, of the act of foul cruelty and falsehood, which once roused you to flaming indignation. Are you thinking rightly too? Or has not just such an illusion been practised upon your mental view, as is played upon your bodily eye when looking over ten miles of sea upon Staffa? You do not see the basaltic columns now; but that is because you see wrongly. You do not burn at the remembrance of the wicked lie, the crafty misrepresentation, the cruel blow; but perhaps you ought to do so. And now (to speak of less grave matters) when all I had to say about Growing Old seems very poor, do I see it rightly? Do I see it as my reader would always have seen it? Or has it faded into falsehood, as well as into distance and dimness? When I look back, and see my thoughts as trash, is it because they are trash and no better? When I look back, and see Ailsa as a cloud, is it because it is a cloud and nothing more? Or is it, as I have already suggested, that in one respect the analogy between the moral and the material fails.

I am going to write Concerning Disappointment and Success. In the days when I studied metaphysics, I should have objected to that title, inasmuch as the antithesis is imperfect between the two things named in it. Disappointment and Success are not properly antithetic; Failure and Success are. Disappointment is the feeling caused by failure, and caused also by other things besides failure. Failure is the thing; disappointment is the feeling caused by the thing; while success is the thing, and not the feeling. But such minute points apart, the title I have chosen brings out best the subject about which I wish to write. And a very wide subject it is; and one of universal interest.

I suppose that no one will dispute the fact that in this world there are such things as disappoititment and success. I do not mean merely that each man's lot has its share of both; I mean that there are some men whose life on the whole is a failure, and that there are others whose life on the whole is a success. You and I, my reader, know better than to think that life is a lottery; but those who think it a lottery, must see that there are human beings who draw the prizes, and others who draw the blanks. I believe in Luck, and Ill Luck, as facts; of course I do not believe the theory which common consent builds upon these facts. There is, of course, no such thing as

chance; this world is driven with far too tight a rein to permit of anything whatsoever falling out in a way properly fortuitous. But it cannot be denied that there are persona with whom everything goes well, and other persons with whom everything goes ill. There are people who invariably win at what are called games of chance. There are people who invariably lose. You remember when Sydney Smith lay on his deathbed, how he suddenly startled the watchers by it, by breaking a long silence with a sentence from one of his sermons, repeated in a deep, solemn voice, strange from the dying man: His life had been successful at last; but success had come late; and how much of disappointment he had known! And though he had tried to bear up cheerily under his early cares, they had sunk in deep. 'We speak of life as a journey,' he said, 'but how differently is that journey performed! Some are borne along their path in luxury and ease; while some must walk it with naked feet, mangled and bleeding.'

Who is there that does not sometimes, on a quiet evening, even before he has attained to middle age, sit down and look back upon his college days, and his college friends; and think sadly of the failures, the disappointments, the broken hearts, which have been among those who all started fair and promised well? How very much has after life changed the estimates which we, formed in those days, of the intellectual mark and probable fate of one's friends and acquaintances! You remember the dense, stolid dunces of that time: you remember the men who sat next you in the lecture−room, and never answered rightly a question that was put to them: you remember how you used to wonder if they would always be the dunces they were then. Well, I never knew a man who was a dunce at twenty, to prove what might be called a brilliant or even a clever man in after life; but we have all known such do wonderfully decently. You did not expect much of them, you see. You did not try them by an exacting standard. If a monkey were to write his name, you would be so much surprised at seeing him do it at all, that you would never think of being surprised that he did not do it very well. So, if a man you knew as a remarkably stupid fellow preaches a decent sermon, you hardly think of remarking that it is very common−place and dull, you are so much pleased and surprised' to find that the man can preach at all. And then, the dunces of college days are often sensible, though slow and in this world, plain plodding common sense is very likely in the long run to beat erratic brilliancy. The tortoise passes the hare. I owe an apology to Lord Campbell for even naming him on the same page on which stands the name of dunce: for assuredly in shrewd, massive sense, as well as in kindness of manner, the natural outflow of a kind and good heart, no judge ever surpassed him. But I may fairly point to his career of unexampled success as an instance which proves my principle. See how that man of parts which are sound and solid, rather than brilliant or showy, has won the Derby and the St. Ledger of the law: has filled with high credit the places of Chief Justice of England and Lord Chancellor. And contrast his eminently successful and useful course with that of the fitful meteor, Lord Brougham. What a great, dazzling genius Brougham unquestionably is; yet his greatest admirer must admit that his life has been a brilliant failure. But while you, thoughtful reader, in such a retrospect as I have been supposing, sometimes wonder at the decent and reasonable success of the dunce, do you not often lament over the fashion in which those who promised well, and even brilliantly, have disappointed the hopes entertained of them? What miserable failures such have not unfrequently made! And not always through bad conduct either: not always, though sometimes, by taking to vicious courses; but rather by a certain want of tact and sense, or even by just somehow missing the favourable tide. You have got a fair living and a fair standing in the Church; you have held them for eight or ten years; when some evening as you are sitting in your study or playing with your children, a servant tells you, doubtfully, that a man is waiting to see you. A poor, thin, shabbily−dressed fellow comes in, and in faltering tones begs for the lean of five shillings. Ah, with what a start you recognise him! It is the clever fellow whom you hardly beat at college, who was always so lively and merry, who sang so nicely, and was so much asked out into society. You had lost sight of him for several years; and now here he is, shabby, dirty, smelling of whisky, with bloated face and trembling hand: alas, alas, ruined! Oh, do not give him up. Perhaps you can do something for him. Little kindness he has known for very long. Give him the five shillings by all means; but next morning see you go out, and try what may be done to lift him out of the slough of despond, and to give him a chance for better days! I know that it may be all in vain; and that after years gradually darkening down you may some day, as you pass the police−office, find a crowd at the door, and learn that they have got the corpse of the poor suicide within. And even when the failure is not so utter as this, you find, now and then, as life goes onward, that this and that old acquaintance has, you cannot say how, stepped out of the track, and is stranded. He went into the Church: he is no worse preacher or scholar than many that succeed; but somehow he never gets a living. You sometimes meet him in the street, threadbare and soured: he probably passes you without recognising you. O reader, to whom God has sent moderate success,

always be chivalrously kind and considerate to such a disappointed man!

I have heard of an eminent man who, when well advanced in years, was able to say that through all his life he had never set his mind on anything which he did not succeed in attaining. Great and little aims alike, he never had known what it was to fail. What a curious state of feeling it would be to most men to know themselves able to assert so much! Think of a mind in which disappointment is a thing unknown! I think that one would be oppressed by a vague sense of fear in regarding one's self as treated by Providence in a fashion so different from the vast majority of the race. It cannot be denied that there are men in this world in whose lot failure seems to be the rule. Everything to which they put their hand breaks down or goes amiss. But most human beings can testify that their lot, like their abilities, their stature, is a sort of middling thing. There is about it an equable sobriety, a sort of average endurableness. Some things go well: some things go ill. There is a modicum of disappointment: there is a modicum of success. But so much of disappointment comes to the lot of almost all, that there is no object in nature at which we all look with so much interest as the invariably lucky man—the man whom all this system of things appears to favour. You knew such a one at school: you knew him at college: you knew him at the bar, in the Church, in medicine, in politics, in society. Somehow he pushes his way: things turn up just at the right time for him: great people take a fancy to him: the newspapers cry him up. Let us hope that you do not look at him with any feeling of envy or bitterness; but you cannot help looking at him with great interest, he is so like yourself, and at the same time so very unlike you. Philosophers tell us that real happiness is very equally distributed; but there is no doubt that there is a tremendous external difference between the man who lives in a grand house, with every appliance of elegance and luxury, with plump servants, fine horses, many carriages, and the poor struggling gentleman, perhaps a married curate, whose dwelling is bare, whose dress is poor, whose fare is scanty, whose wife is careworn, whose children are ill−fed, shabbily dressed, and scantily educated. It is conceivable that fanciful wants, slights, and failures, may cause the rich man as much and as real suffering as substantial wants and failures cause the poor; but the world at large will recognise the rich man's lot as one of success, and the poor man's as one of failure.

This is a world of competition. It is a world full of things that many people wish to get, and that all cannot get at once; and to say this is much as to say that this is a world of failure and disappointments. All things desirable, by their very existence imply the disappointment of some. When you, my reader, being no longer young, look with a philosophic eye at some pretty girl entering a drawing−room, you cannot but reflect, as you survey the pleasing picture, and more especially when you think of the twenty thousand pounds—Ah! my gentle young friend, you will some day make one heart very jolly, but a great many more extremely envious, wrathful, and disappointed. So with all other desirable things; so with a large living in the Church; so with aliy place of dignity; so with a seat on the bench; so with the bishopric; so with the woolsack; so with the towers of Lambeth. So with smaller matters; so with a good business in the greengrocery line; so with a well−paying milk−walk; so with a clerk's situation of eighty pounds a year; so with an errand boy's place at three shillings a week, which thirty candidates want, and only one can get. Alas for our fallen race! Is it not part, at least, of some men's pleasure in gaining some object which has been generally sought for, to think of the mortification of the poor fellows that failed?

Disappointment, in short, may come and must come wherever man can set his wishes and his hopes. The only way not to be disappointed when a thing turns out against you, is not to have really cared how the thing went. It is not a truism to remark that this is impossible if you did care. Of course you are not disappointed at failing of attaining an end which you did not care whether you attained or not; but men seek very few such ends. If a man has worked day and night for six weeks in canvassing his county, and then, having been ignominiously beaten, on the following day tells you he is not in the least degree disappointed, he might just as trulv assure you, if you met him walking up streaming with water from a river into which he had just fallen, that he is not the least wet. No doubt there is an elasticity in the healthy mind which very soon tides it over even a severe disappointment; and no doubt the grapes which are unattainable do sometimes in actual fact turn sour. But let no man tell us that he has not known the bitterness of disappointment for at least a brief space, if he have ever from his birth tried to get anything, great or small, and yet not got it. Failure is indeed a thing of all degrees, from the most fanciful to the most weighty: disappointment is a thing of all degrees, from the transient feeling that worries for a minute, to the great crushing blow that breaks the mind's spring for ever. Failure is a fact which reaches from the poor tramp who lies down by the wayside to die, up to the man who is only made Chief Justice when he wanted the

Chancellorship, or who dies Bishop of London when he had set his heart upon being Archbishop of Canterbury; or to the Prime Minister, unrivalled in eloquence, in influence, in genius, with his fair domains and his proud descent, but whose horse is beaten after being first favourite for the Derby. Who shall say that either disappointed man felt less bitterness and weariness of heart than the other? Each was no more than disappointed; and the keenness of disappointment bears no proportion to the reality of the value of the object whose loss caused it. And what endless crowds of human beings, children and old men, nobles and snobs, rich men and poor, know the bitterness of disappointment from day to day. It begins from the child shedding many tears when the toy bought with the long−hoarded pence is broken the first day it comes home; it goes on to the Duke expecting the Garter, who sees in the newspaper. at breakfast that the yards of blue ribbon have been given to another. What a hard time his servants have that day. How loudly he roars at them, how willingly would he kick them! Little recks he that forenoon of his magnificent castle and his ancestral woods. It may here be mentioned that a very pleasing opportunity is afforded to malignant people for mortifying a clever, ambitious man, when any office is vacant to which it is known he aspires. A judge of the Queen's Bench has died: you, Mr. Verjuice, know how Mr. Swetter, Q. C., has been rising at the bar; you know how well he deserves the ermine. Well, walk down to his chambers; go in and sit down; never mind how busy he is—your time is of no value—and talk of many different men as extremely suitable for the vacant seat on the bench, but never in the remotest manner hint at the claims of Swetter himself. I have often seen the like done. And you, Mr. Verjuice, may conclude almost with certainty that in doing all this you are vexing and mortifying a deserving man. And such a consideration will no doubt be compensation sufficient to your amiable nature for the fact that every generous muscular Christian would like to take you by the neck, and swing your sneaking carcase out of the window.

Even a slight disappointment, speedily to be repaired, has in it something that jars painfully the mechanism of the mind. You go to the train, expecting a friend, certainly. He does not come. Now this worries you, even though you receive at the station a telegraphic message that he will be by the train which follows in two hours. Your magazine fails to come by post on the last day of the month; you have a dull, vague sense of something wanting for an hour or two, even though you are sure that you will have it next morning. And indeed a very krge share of the disappointments of civilized life are associated with the post−office. I do not suppose the extreme case of the poor fellow who calls at the office expecting a letter containing the money without which he cannot see how he is to get through the day; nor of the man who finds no letter on the day when he expects to hear how it fares with a dear relative who is desperately sick. I am thinking merely of the lesser disappointments which commonly attend post−time: the Times not coming when you were counting with more than ordinary certainty on its appearing; the letter of no great consequence, which yet you would have liked to have had. A certain blankness—a feeling difficult to define—attends even the slightest disappointment; and the effect of a great one is very stunning and embittering indeed. You remember how the nobleman in Ten Thousand a Year, who had been refused a seat in the Cabinet, sympathized with poor Titmouse's exclamation when, looking at the manifestations of gay life in Hyde−park, and feeling his own absolute exclusion from it, he consigned everything to perdition. All the ballads of Professor Aytoun and Mr. Theodore Martin are admirable, but there is none which strikes me as more so than the brilliant imitation of Locksley Hall, And how true to nature the state of mind ascribed to the vulgar snob who is the hero of the ballad, who, bethinking himself of his great disappointment when his cousin married somebody else, bestowed his extremest objurgations upon all who had abetted the hateful result, and then summed up thus comprehensively:—

Cursed be the foul apprentice, who his loathsome fees did earn;
Cursed be the clerk and parson; CURSED BE THE WHOLE CONCERN!

It may be mentioned here as a fact to which experience will testify, that such disappointments as that at the railway station and the post−office are most likely to come when you are counting with absolute certainty upon things happening as you wish; when not a misgiving has entered your mind as to your friend's arriving or your letter coining. A little latent fear in your soul that you may possibly be disappointed, seems to have a certain power to fend off disappointment, on the same principle on which taking out an umbrella is found to prevent rain. What you are prepared for rarely happens. The precise thing you expected comes not once in a thousand times. A confused state of mind results from long experience of such cases. Your real feeling often is: Such a thing seems quite sure to happen; I may say I expect it to happen; and yet I don't expect it, because I do: for experience has taught me that the precise thing which I expect, which I think most likely, hardly ever comes. I am not prepared to

side with a thoughtless world, which is ready to laugh at the confused statement of the Irishman who had killed his pig. It is not a bull; it is a great psychological fact that is involved in his seemingly contradictory declaration—'It did not weigh as much as I expected, and I never thought it would!'

When young ladies tell us that such and such a person 'has met with a disappointment,' we all understand what is meant. The phrase, though it is conventionally intelligible enough, involves a fallacy: it seems to teach that the disappointment of the youthful heart in the matter of that which in its day is no doubt the most powerful of all the affections, is by emphasis the greatest disappointment which a human being can ever know. Of course that is an entire mistake. People get over that disappointment not but what it may leave its trace, and possibly colour the whole of remaining life; sometimes resulting in an unlovely bitterness and hardness of nature; sometimes prolonging even into age a lingering thread of old romance, and keeping a kindly corner in a heart which worldly cares have in great measure deadened. But the disappointment which has its seat in the affections is outgrown as the affections themselves are outgrown, as the season of their predominance passes away; and the disappointment which sinks the deepest and lasts the longest of all the disappointments which are fanciful rather than material, is that which reaches a man through his ambition and his self−love,—principles in his nature which outlast the heyday of the heart's supremacy, and which endure to man's latest years. The bitter and the enduring disappointment to most human beings is that which makes them feel, in one way or other, that they are less wise, clever, popular, graceful, accomplished, tall, active, and in short fine, than they had fancied themselves to be. But it is only to a limited portion of human kind that such words as disappointment and success are mainly suggestive of gratified or disappointed ambition, of happy or blighted affection; to the great majority they are suggestive rather of success or non−success in earning bread and cheese, in finding money to pay the rent, in generally making the ends meet. You are very young, my reader, and little versed in the practical affairs of ordinary life, if you do not know that such prosaic matters make to most men the great aim of their being here, so far as that aim is bounded by this world's horizon. The poor cabman is successful or is disappointed, according as he sees, while the hours of the day are passing over, that he is making up or not making up the shillings he must hand over to his master at night, before he has a penny to get food for his wife and children. The little tradesman is successful or the reverse, according as he sees or does not see from week to week such a small accumulation of petty profits as may pay his landlord, and leave a little margin by help of which he and his family may struggle on. And many an educated man knows the analogous feelings. The poor barrister, as he waits for the briefs which come in so slowly—the young doctor, hoping for patients—understand them all. Oh what slight, fanciful things, to such men, appear such disappointments as that of the wealthy proprietor who fails to carry his county, or the rich mayor or provost who fails of being knighted!

There is an extraordinary arbitrariness about the way in which great success is allotted in this world. Who shall say that in one case out of every two, relative success is in proportion to relative merit? Nor need this be said in anything of a grumbling or captious spirit. It is but repeating what a very wise man said long ago, that 'the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.' I suppose no one will say that the bishops are the greatest men in the Church of England, or that every Chief Justice is a greater man than every puisne judge. Success is especially arbitrary in cases where it goes by pure patronage: in many such cases the patron would smile at your weakness if you fancied that the desire to find the best man ever entered his head. In the matter of the bench and bar, where tangible duties are to be performed, a patron is compelled to a certain amount of decency; for, though he may not pretend to seek for the fittest man, he must at least profess to have sought a fit man. No prime minister dare appoint a blockhead a judge, without at least denying loudly that he is a blockhead. But the arbitrariness of success is frequently the result of causes quite apart from any arbitrariness in the intention of the human disposer of success; a Higher Hand seems to come in here. The tide of events settles the matter: the arbitrariness is in the way in which the tide of events sets. Think of that great lawyer and great man, Sir Samuel Romilly. Through years of his practice at the bar, he himself, and all who knew him, looked to the woolsack as his certain destination. You remember the many entries in his diary bearing upon the matter; arid I suppose the opinion of the most competent was clear as to his unrivalled fitness for the post. Yet all ended in nothing. The race was not to the swift. The first favourite was beaten, and more than one outsider has carried ofil the prize for which he strove in vain. Did any mortal ever dream, during his days of mediocrity at the bar, or his time of respectability as a Baron of the Exchequer, that Sir R. M. Rolfe was the future Chancellor? Probably there is no sphere in which there is more of disappointment and heartburning than the army. It must be supremely mortifying to a

grey−headed veteran, who has served his country for forty years, to find a beardless Guardsman put over his head into the command of his regiment, and to see honours and emoluments showered upon that fair−weather colonel. And I should judge that the despatch written by a General after an important battle must be a source of sad disappointment to many who fancied that their names might well be mentioned there. But after all, I do not know but that it tends to lessen disappointment, that success should be regarded as going less by merit than by influence or good luck. The disappointed man can always soothe himself with the fancy that he deserved to succeed. It would be a desperately mortifying thing to the majority of mankind, if it were distinctly ascertained that each man gets just what he deserves. The admitted fact that the square man, is sometimes put in the round hole, is a cause of considerable consolation to all disappointed men, and to their parents, sisters, aunts, and grandmothers.

No stronger proof can be adduced of the little correspondence that often exists between success and merit, than the fact that the self−same man, by the exercise of the self−same powers, may at one time starve and at another drive his carriage and four. When poor Edmund Kean was acting in barns to country bumpkins, and barely rinding bread for his wife and child, he was just as great a genius as when he was crowding Drury Lane. When Brougham presided in the House of Lords, he was not a bit better or greater than when he had hung about in the Parliament House at Edinburgh, a briefless and suspected junior barrister. When all London crowded to see the hippopotamus, he was just the animal that he was a couple of years later, when no one took the trouble of looking at him. And when George Stephenson died, amid the applause and gratitude of all the intelligent men in Britain, he was the same man, maintaining the same principle, as when men of science and of law regarded as a mischievous lunatic the individual who declared that some day the railroad would be the king's highway, and mail−coaches would be drawn by steam.

As to the very highest prizes of human affairs, it is, I believe, admitted on all hands, that these generally fall to second−rate men. Civilized nations have found it convenient entirely to give up the hallucination that the monarch is the greatest, wisest, and best man in his dominions. Nobody supposes that. And in the case of hereditary dynasties, such an end is not even aimed at. But it is curious to find how with elective sovereignties it is just the same way. The great statesmen of America have very rarely attained to the dignity of President of the United States. Not Clays and Webstcrs have had their four years at the White House. And even Cardinal Wiseman candidly tells us that the post which is regarded by millions as the highest which can be held by mortal, is all but systematically given to judicious mediocrity. A great genius will never be Pope. The coach must not be trusted to too dashing a charioteer. Give us the safe and steady man. Everybody knows that the same usage applies to the Primacy in England. Bishops must be sensible; but archbishops are by some regarded with suspicion if they have ever committed themselves to sentiments more startling than that two and two make four. Let me suppose, my reader, that you have met with great success: I mean success which is very great in your own especial field. The lists are just put out, and you are senior wrangler; or you have got the gold medal in some country grammar−school. The feeling in both cases is the same. In each case there combines with the exultant emotion, an intellectual conception that you are one of the greatest of the human race. Well, was not the feeling a strange one? Did you not feel somewhat afraid? It seemed too much. Something was sure to come, you thought, that would take you down. Few are burdened with such a feeling; but surely there is something alarming in great success. You were a barber's boy: you are made a peer. Surely you must go through life with an ever−recurring emotion of surprise at finding yourself where you are. It must be curious to occupy a place whence you look down upon the heads of most of your kind. A duke gets accustomed to it; but surely even he must sometimes wonder how he comes to be placed so many degrees above multitudes who deserve as well. Or do such come to fancy that their merit is equal to their success; and that by as much as they are better off than other men, they are better than other men? Very likety they do. It is all in human nature. And I suppose the times have been in which it would have been treasonable to hint that a man with a hundred thousand pounds a year was not at least two thousand times as good as one with fifty.

The writer always feels a peculiar sympathy with failure, and with people who are suffering from disappointment, great or small. It is not that he himself is a disappointed man. No; he has to confess, with deep thankfulness, that his success has far, very far, transcended his deserts. And, like many other men, he has found that one or two events in his life, which seemed disappointments at the time, were in truth great and signal blessings. Still, every one has known enough of the blank, desolate feeling of disappointment, to sympathize keenly with the disappointments of others. I feel deeply for the poor Punch and Judy man, simulating great

excitement in the presence of a small, uninterested group, from which people keep dropping away. I feel for the poor barn−actor, who discovers, on his first entrance upon his rude stage, that the magnates of the district, who promised to be present at the performance, have not come. You have gone to see a panorama, or to hear a lecture on phrenology. Did you not feel for the poor fellow, the lecturer or exhibitor, when ne came in ten minutes past the hour, and found little but empty benches? Did you not see what a chill fell upon him: how stupified he seemed: in short, how much disappointed he was? And if the money he had hoped to earn that evening was to pay the lodgings in which he and his wife were staying, you may be sure there was a heart sickness about his disappointment far beyond the mortification of mere self−love. When a rainy day stops a pic−nic, or mars the enjoyment of it, although the disappointment is hardly a serious one, still it is sure to cause so much real suffering, that only rancorous old ladies will rejoice in the fact. It is curious how men who have known disappointment themselves, and who describe it well, seem to like to paint lives which in the meantime are all hope and success. There is Mr. Thackeray. With what sympathy, with what enjoyment, he shows us the healthy, wealthy, hopeful youths, like Clive Newcome, or young Pendennis, when it was all sunshine around the young prince! And yet how sad a picture of life he gives us in The Newcomes. It would not have done to make it otherwise: it is true, though sad: that history of the good and gallant gentleman, whose life was a long disappointment, a long failure in all on which he had set his heart; in his early love, in his ambitious plans for his son, even in his hopes for his son's happiness, in his own schemes of fortune, till that life of honour ended in the almshouse at last. How the reader wishes that the author would make brighter days dawn upon his hero! But the author cannot: he must hold on unflinchingly as fate. In such a story as his, truth can no more be sacrificed to our wishes than in real life we know it to be. Well, all disappointment is discipline; and received in a right spirit, it may prepare us for better things elsewhere. It has been said that heaven is a place for those who failed on earth. The greatest hero is perhaps the man who does his very best, and signally fails, and still is not embittered by the failure. And looking at the fashion in which an unseen Power permits wealth and rank and influence to go sometimes in this world, we are possibly justified in concluding that in His judgment the prizes of this Vanity Fair are held as of no great account. A life here, in which you fail of every end you seek, yet which disciplines you for a better, is assuredly not a failure.

What a blessing it would be, if men's ambition were in every case made to keep pace with their ability. Very much disappointment arises from a man's having an absurd over−estimate of his own powers, which leads him, to use an expressive Scotticism, to even himself to some position for which he is utterly unfit, and which he has no chance at all of reaching. A lad comes to the university who has been regarded in his own family as a great genius, and who has even distinguished himself at some little country school. What a rude shock to the poor fellow's estimate of himself; what a smashing of the hopes of those at home, is sure to come when he measures his length with his superiors; and is compelled, as is frequently the case, to take a third or fourth−rate position. If you ever read the lives of actors (and every one ought, for they show you a new and curious phase of life), you must have smiled to see the ill−spelled, ungrarnmatical letters in which some poor fellow writes to a London manager for an engagement, and declares that he feels within him the makings of a greater actor than Garrick or Kean. How many young men who go into the Church fancy that they are to surpass Melvill or Chalmers! No doubt, reader, you have sometimes come out of a church, where you had heard a preacher aiming at the most ambitious eloquence, who evidently had not the slightest vocation that way; and you have thought it would be well if no man ever wished to be eloquent who had it not in him to be so. Would that the principle were universally true! Who has not sometimes been amused iff passing along the fashionable street of a great city, to see a little vulgar snob dressed out within an inch of his life, walking along, evidently fancying that he looks like a gentleman, and that he is the admired of all admirers? Sometimes, in a certain street which I might name, I have witnessed such a spectacle, sometimes with amusement, oftener with sorrow and pity, as I thought of the fearful, dark surmises which must often cross the poor snob's mind, that he is failing in his anxious endeavours. Occasionally, too, I have beheld a man bestriding a horse in that peculiar fashion which may be described as his being on the outside of the animal, slipping away over the hot stones, possibly at a trot, and fancying ivthough with many suspicions to the contrary; that he is witching the world with noble horsemanship. What a pity that such poor fellows will persist in aiming at what they cannot achieve! What mortification and disappointment they must often know! The horse backs on to the pavement, into a plate−glass window, just as Maria, for whose sake the poor screw was hired, is passing by. The boys halloo in derision; and some ostler, helpful, but not complimentary, extricates the

rider, and says, 'I see you have never been on 'ossback before; you should not have pulled the curb−bit that way!' And when the vulgar dandy, strutting along, with his Brummagem jewellery, his choking collar, and his awfully tight boots which cause him agony, meets the true gentleman; how it rushes upon him that he himself is only a humbug! How the poor fellow's heart sinks!

Turning from such inferior fields of ambition as these, I think how often it happens that men come to some sphere in life with a flourish of trumpets, as destined to do great things, and then fail. There is a modest, quiet self−confidence, without which you will hardly get on in this world; but I believe, as a general rule, that the men who have attained to very great success have started with very moderate expectations. Their first aim was lowly; and the way gradually opened before them. Their ambition, like their success, went on step by step; they did not go at the top of the tree at once. It would be easy to mention instances in which those who started with high pretensions have been taught by stern fact to moderate them; in which the man who came over from the Irish bar intending to lead the Queen's Bench, and become a Chief Justice, was glad, after thirty years of disappointment, to get made a County Court judge. Not that this is always so; sometimes pretension, if big enough, secures success. A man setting up as a silk−mercer in a strange town, is much likelier to succeed if he opens a huge shop, painted in flaring colours and puffed by enormous bills and vast advertising vans, than if he set up in a modest way, in something like proportion to his means. And if he succeeds, well; if he fails, his creditors bear the loss. A great field has been opened for the disappointment of men who start with the flourish of trumpets already mentioned, by the growing system of competitive examinations. By these, your own opinion of yourself, and the home opinion of you, are brought to a severe test. I think with sympathy of the disappointment of poor lads who hang on week after week, hoping to hear that they have succeeded in gaining the coveted appointment, and then learn that they have failed. I think with sympathy of their poor parents. Even when the prize lost is not substantial pudding, but only airy praise, it is a bitter thing to lose it, after running the winner close. It must be a supremely irritating and mortifying thing to be second wrangler. Look at the rows of young fellows, sitting with their papers before them at a Civil Service Examination, and think what interest and what hopes are centred on every one of them. Think how many count on great success, kept up to do so by the estimation in which they are held at home. Their sisters and their mothers think them equal to anything. Sometimes justly; sometimes the fact justifies the anticipation. When Baron Alderson went to Cambridge, he tells us that he would have spurned the offer of being second man of his year; and sure enough, he was out of sight the first. But for one man of whom the home estimation is no more than just, there are ten thousand in whose case, to strangers, it appears simply preposterous.

There is one sense in which all after−life may be said to be a disappointment. It is far different from that which it was pictured by early anticipations and hopes. The very greatest material success still leaves the case thus. And no doubt it seems strange to many to look back on the fancies of youth, which experience has sobered down. When you go back, my reader, to the village where you were brought up, don't you remember how you used to fancy that when you were a man you would come to it in your carriage and four? This, it is unnecessary to add, you have not yet done. You thought likewise that when you came back you would be arrayed in a scarlet coat, possibly in a cuirass of steel; whereas in fact you have come to the little inn where nobody knows you to spend the night, and you are wandering along the bank of the river (how little changed!) in a shooting−jacket of shepherd's plaid. You intended to marry the village grocer's pretty daughter; and for that intention probably you were somewhat hastily dismissed to a school a hundred miles off; but this evening as you passed the shop you discovered her, a plump matron, calling to her children in a voice rather shrill than sweet; and you discovered from the altered sign above the door that her father is dead, and that she has married the shopman, your hated rival of former years. And yet how happily the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb! You are not the least mortified. You are much amused that your youthful fancies have been blighted. It would have been fearful to have married that excellent individual; the shooting−jacket is greatly more comfortable than the coat of mail; and as for the carriage and four, why, even if you could afford them, you would seldom choose to drive four horses. And it is so with the more substantial anticipations of maturer years. The man who, as already mentioned, intended to be a Chief Justice, is quite happy when he is made a County Court judge. The man who intended to eclipse Mr. Dickens in the arts of popular authorship is content and proud to be the great writer of the London Journal. The clergyman who would have liked a grand cathedral like York Minster is perfectly pleased with his little country church, ivy−green and grey. We come, if we are sensible folk, to be content with what we can get, though we have not what we could wish.

Still, there are certain cases in which this can hardly be so. A man of sense can bear cheerfully the frustration of the romantic fancies of childhood and youth; but not many are so philosophical in regard to the comparatively reasonable anticipations of more reasonable years. When you got married at five−and−forty, your hopes were not extravagant. You knew quite well you were not winning the loveliest of her sex, and indeed you felt you had no right to expect to do so. You were well aware that in wisdom, knowledge, accomplishment, amiability, you could not reasonably look for more than the average of the race. But you thought you might reasonably look for that: and now, alas, alas! you find you have not got it. How have I pitied a worthy and sensible man, listening to his wife making a fool of herself before a large company of people! How have I pitied such a one, when I heard his wife talking the most idiotical nonsense; or when I saw her flirting scandalously with a notorious scapegrace; or learned of the large parties which she gave in his absence, to the discredit of her own character and the squandering of his hard−earned gains! No habit, no philosophy, will ever reconcile a human being of right feeling to such a disappointment as that. And even a sadder thing than this—one of the saddest things in life—is when a man begins to feel that his whole life is a failure; not merely a failure as compared with the vain fancies of youth, but a failure as compared with his sobered convictions of what he ought to have been and what he might have been. Probably, in a desponding mood, we have all known the feeling; and even when we half knew it was morbid and transient, it was a very painful one. But painful it must be beyond all names of pain, where it is the abiding, calm, sorrowful conviction of the man's whole being. Sore must be the heart of the man of middle age, who often thinks that he is thankful his father is in his grave, and so beyond mourning over his son's sad loss in life. And even when the stinging sense of guilt is absent, it is a mournful thing for one to feel that he has, so to speak, missed stays in his earthly voyage, and run upon a mud−bank which he can never get off: to feel one's self ingloriously and uselessly stranded, while those who started with us pass by with gay flag and swelling sail. And all this may be while it is hard to know where to attach blame; it may be when there was nothing worse to complain of than a want of promptitude, resolution, and tact, at the one testing time. Every one knows the passage in point in Shakspeare.

Disappointment, I have said, is almost sure to be experienced in a greater or less degree, so long as anything remains to be wished or sought. And a provision is made for the indefinite continuance of disappointment in the lot of even the most successful of men, by the fact in rerum naturu that whenever the wants felt on a lower level are supplied, you advance to a higher platform, where a new crop of wants is felt. Till the lower wants are supplied you never feel the higher; and accordingly people who pass through life barely succeeding in gaining the supply of the lower wants, will hardly be got to believe that the higher wants are ever really felt at all. A man who is labouring anxiously to earn food and shelter for his children—who has no farther worldly end, and who thinks he would be perfectly happy if he could only be assured on New Year's day that he would never fail in earning these until the thirty−first of December, will hardly believe you when you tell him that the Marquis at the castle is now utterly miserable because the King would not give him a couple of yards of blue or green ribbon. And it is curious in how many cases worldly−successful men mount, step after step, into a new series of wants, implying a new set of mortifications and disappointments. A person begins as a small tradesman; all he aims at is a maintenance for him and his. That is his first aim. Say he succeeds in reaching it. A little ago he thought he would have been quite content could he only do that. But from his new level he sees afar a new peak to climb; now he aims at a fortune. That is his next aim. Say he reaches it. Now he buys an estate; now he aims at being received and admitted as a country gentleman; and the remainder of his life is given to striving for social recognition in the county. How he schemes to get the baronet to dine with him, and the baronet's lady to call upon his homely spouse! And every one has remarked with amusement the hive of petty mortifications, failures, and disappointments, through which he fights his way, till, as it may chance, he actually gains a dubious footing in the society he seeks, or gives up the endeavour as a final failure. Who shall say that any one of the successive wants the man has felt is more fanciful, less real, than any other? To Mr. Oddbody, living in his fine house, it is just as serious an aim to get asked to the Duke's ball, as in former days it was to Jack Oddbody to carry home on Saturday night the shillings which were to buy his bread and cheese.

And another shade of disappointment which keeps pace with all material success is that which arises, not from failing to get a thing, but from getting it and then discovering that it is not what we had fancied—that it will not make us happy. Is not this disappointment ft It everywhere? When the writer was a little boy, he was promised that on a certain birthday a donkey should be bought for his future riding. Did not he frequently allude to it in

conversation with his companions? Did not he plague the servants for information as to the natural history and moral idiosyncrasy of donkeys? Did not the long−eared visage appear sometimes through his dreams? Ah, the donkey came! Then followed the days of being pitched over his head; the occasions on which the brute of impervious hide rushed through hedges and left me sticking in them: happiness was no nearer, though the donkey was there. Have you not, my philosophic friend, had your donkey? I mean your moral donkey. Yes, and scores of such. When you were a schoolboy, longing for the holidays, have you not chalked upon doors the legend—OH FOR AUGUST! Vague, delightful visions of perfect happiness were wrapped up in the words. But the holidays came, as all holidays have done and will do; and in a few days you were heartily wearied of them. When you were spoony about Marjory Anne, you thought that once your donkey came, once you were fairly married and settled, what a fine thing it would be! I do not say a syllable against that youthful matron; but I presume you have discovered that she falls short of perfection, and that wedded life has its many cares. You thought you would enjoy so much the setting−up of your carriage; your wife and you often enjoyed it by anticipation on dusty summer days: but though all very well, wood and iron and leather never made the vehicle that shall realize your anticipations. The horses were often lame; the springs would sometimes break; the paint was always getting scratched and the lining cut. Oh, what a nuisance is a carriage! You fancied you would be perfectly happy when you retired from business and settled in the country. What a comment upon such fancies is the fashion in which retired men of business haunt the places of their former toils like unquiet ghosts! How sick they get of the country! I do not think of grand disappointments of the sort; of the satiety of Vathek, turning sickly away from his earthly paradise at Cintra; nor of the graceful towers I have seen rising from a woody cliff above a summer sea, and of the story told me of their builder, who, after rearing them, lost interest in them, and in sad disappointment left them to others, and went back to the busy town wherein he had made his wealth. I think of men, more than one or two, who rented their acre of land by the sea−side, and built their pretty cottage, made their grassplots and trained their roses, and then in unaccustomed idleness grew weary of the whole and sold their place to some keen bargain−maker for a tithe of what it cost them.

Why is it that failure in attaining ambitious ends is so painful? When one has honestly done one's best, and is beaten after all, conscience must be satisfied: the wound is solely to self−love; and is it not to the discredit of our nature that that should imply such a weary, blank, bitter feeling as it often does? Is it that every man has within his heart a lurking belief that, notwithstanding the world's ignorance of the fact, there never was in the world anybody so remarkable as himself? I think that many mortals need daily to be putting down a vague feeling which really comes to that. You who have had experience of many men, know that you can hardly over−estimate the extent and depth of human vanity. Never be afraid but that nine men out of ten will swallow with avidity flattery, however gross; especially if it ascribe to them those qualities of which they are most manifestly deficient.

A disappointed man looks with great interest at the man who has obtained what he himself wanted. Your mother, reader, says that her ambition for you would be entirely gratified if you could but reach a certain place which some one you know has held for twenty years. You look at him with much curiosity; he appears very much like yourself; and, curiously, he does not appear particularly happy. Oh, reader, whatever you do—though last week he gained without an effort what you have been wishing for all your life—do not hate him. Resolve that you will love and wish well to the man who fairly succeeded where you fairly failed. Go to him and get acquainted with him: if you and he are both true men, you will not find it a difficult task to like him. It is perhaps asking too much of human nature to ask you to do all this in the case of the man who has carried off the woman you loved; but as regards anything else, do it all. Go to your successful rival, heartily congratulate him. Don't be Jesuitical; don't merely felicitate the man; put down the rising feeling of envy: that is always out−and−out wrong. Don't give it a moment's quarter. You clerks in an office, ready to be angry with a fellow−clerk who gets the chance of a trip to Scotland on business, don't give in to the feeling. Shake hands with him all round, and go in a body with him to Euston Square, and give him three cheers as he departs by the night mail. And you, greater mortals—you, rector of a beautiful parish, who think you would have done for a bishop as well as the clergyman next you who has got the mitre; you, clever barrister, sure some day to be solicitor−general, though sore to−day because a man next door has got that coveted post before you; go and see the successful man—go forthwith, congratulate him heartily, say frankly you wish it had been you: it will do oreat good both to him and to yourself. Let it not be that envy—that bitter and fast−growing fiend—shall be suffered in your heart for one minute. When I was at college I sat on the same bench with a certain man. We were about the same age. Now, I am a country parson, and he is a

cabinet minister. Oh, how he has distanced poor me in the race of life! Well, he had a tremendous start, no doubt. Now, shall I hate him? Shall I pitch into him, rake up all his errors of youth, tell how stupid he was (though indeed he was not stupid), and bitterly gloat over the occasion on which he fell on the ice and tore his inexpressibles in the presence of a grinning throng? No, my old fellow−student, who hast now doubtless forgotten my name, though I so well remember yours, though you got your honours possibly in some measure from the accident of your birth, you have nobly justified their being given you so early; and so I look on with interest to your loftier advancement yet, and I say—God bless you!

I think, if I were an examiner at one of the Universities, that I should be an extremely popular one. No man should ever be plucked. Of course it would be very wrong, and, happily, the work is in the hands of those who are much fitter for it; but, instead of thinking solely and severely of a man's fitness to pass, I could not help thinking a great deal of the heartbreak it would be to the poor fellow and his family if he were turned. It would be ruin to any magazine to have me for its editor. I should always be printing all sorts of rubbishing articles, which are at present consigned to the Balaam−box. I could not bear to grieve and disappoint the young lady who sends her gushing verses. I should be picturing to myself the long hours of toil that resulted in the clever lad's absurd attempt at a review, and all his fluttering hopes and fears as to whether it was to be accepted or not. No doubt it is by this mistaken kindness that institutions are damaged and ruined. The weakness of a sympathetic bishop burdens the Church with a clergy−man who for many years will be an injury to her; and it would have been far better even for the poor fellow himself to have been decidedly and early kept out of a vocation for which he is wholly unfit. I am far from saying that the resolute examiner who plucks freely, and the resolute editor who rejects firmly, are deficient in kindness of heart, or even in vividness of imagination to picture what they are doing: though much of the suffering and disappointment of this world is caused by men who are almost unaware of what they do. Like the brothers of Isabella, in Keats' beautiful poem,

> Half ignorant, they turn an easy wheel,
> That sets sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel.

Yet though principle and moral decision may be in you sufficient to prevent your weakly yielding to the feeling, be sure you always sympathize with failure;—honest, laborious failure. And I think all but very malicious persons generally do sympathize with it. It is easier to sympathize with failure than with success. No trace of envy comes in to mar your sympathy, and you have a pleasant sense that you are looking down from a loftier elevation. The average man likes to have some one to look down upon—even to look down upon kindly. I remember being greatly touched by hearing of a young man of much promise, who went to preach his first sermon in a little church by the sea−shore in a lonely highland glen. He preached his sermon, and got on pretty fairly; but after service he went down to the shore of the far−sounding sea, and wept to think how sadly he had fallen short of his ideal, how poor was his appearance compared to what he had intended and hoped. Perhaps a foolish vanity and self−conceit was at the foundation of his disappointment; but though I did not know him at all, I could not but have a very kindly sympathy for him. I heard, years afterwards, with great pleasure, that he had attained to no small eminence and success as a pulpit orator; and I should not have alluded to him here but for the fact that in early youth, and amid greater expectations of him, he passed away from this life of high aims and poor fulfilments. I think how poor Keats, no doubt morbidly ambitious as well as morbidly sensitive, declared in his preface to Endymion that 'there is no fiercer hell than failure in a great attempt.'

Most thoughtful men must feel it a curious and interesting study, to trace the history of the closing days of those persons who have calmly and deliberately, in no sudden heat of passion, taken away their own life. In such cases, of course, we see the sense of failure, absolute and complete. They have quietly resolved lo give up life as a losing game. You remember the poor man who, having spent his last shilling, retired to a wood far from human dwellings, and there died voluntarily by starvation. He kept a diary of those days of gradual death, setting out his feelings both of body and mind. No nourishment passed his lips after he had chosen his last resting−place, save a little water, which he dragged himself to a pond to drink. He was not discovered till he was dead; but his melancholy chronicle appeared to have been carried down to very near the time when he became unconscious. I remember its great characteristic appeared to be a sense of utter failure. There seemed to be no passion, none of the bitter desperate resolution which prompts the energetic 'Anywhere, anywhere, out of the world;' but merely a weary, lonely wish to creep quietly away. I have no look but one of sorrow and pity to cast on the poor suicide's grave. I think the common English verdict is right as well as charitable, which supposes that in every such case

reason has become unhinged, and responsibility is gone. And what desperate misery, what a black horrible anguish of heart, whether expressing itself calmly or feverishly, must have laid its gripe upon a human being before it can overcome in him the natural clinging to life, and make him deliberately turn his back upon 'the warm precincts of the cheerful day.' No doubt it is the saddest of all sad ends; but I do not forget that a certain Authority, the highest of all authorities, said to all human beings, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' The writer has, in the course of his duty, looked upon more than one suicide's dead face; and the lines of Hood appeared to sketch the fit feeling with which to do so:—

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behaviour;
And leaving, with meekness,
Her soul to her Saviour.

What I have just written recalls to me, by some link of association, the words I once heard a simple old Scotch−woman utter by her son's deathbed. He was a young man of twenty−two, a pious and good young man, and I had seen him very often throughout his gradual decline. Calling one morning, I found he was gone, and his mother begged me to come and see his face once more; and standing for the last time by him, I said (and I could say them honestly) some words of Christian comfort to the poor old woman. I told her, in words far better than any of my own, how the Best Friend of mankind had said, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die.' I remember well her answer. 'Aye,' said she, 'he gaed away trusting in that; and he'll be sorely disappointed if he doesna' find it so.' Let me venture to express my hope, that when my readers and I pass within the veil, we may run the risk of no other disappointment than that these words should prove false; and then it will be well with us. There will be no disappointment there, in the sense of things failing to come up to our expectations.

Let it be added, that there are disappointments with which even the kindest hearts will have no sympathy, and failures over which we may without malignity rejoice. You do not feel very deeply for the disappointed burglar, who retires from your dwelling at 3 A. M., leaving a piece of the calf of his leg in the jaws of your trusty watch−dog; nor for the Irish bog−trotter who (poor fellow), from behind the hedge, misses his aim at the landlord who fed him and his family through the season of famine. You do not feel very deeply for the disappointment of the friend, possibly the slight acquaintance, who with elongated face retires from your study, having failed to persuade you to attach your signature to a bill for some hundreds of pounds 'just as a matter of form.' Very likely he wants the money; so did the burglar: but is that any reason why you should give it to him? Refer him to the wealthy and influential relatives of whom he has frequently talked to you; tell him they are the very people to assist him in such a case with their valuable autograph. As for yourself, tell him you know what you owe to your children and yourself; and say that the slightest recurrence to such a subject must be the conclusion of all intercourse between you. Ah, poor disappointed fellow! How heartless it is in you to refuse to pay, out of your hard earnings, the money which he so jauntily and freely spent!

How should disappointment be met? Well, that is far too large a question to be taken up at this stage of my essay, though there are various suggestions which I should like to make. Some disappointed men take to gardening and farming; and capital things they are. But when disappointment is extreme, it will paralyse you so that you will suffer the weeds to grow up all about you, without your having the heart to set your mind to the work of having the place made neat. The state of a man's garden is a very delicate and sensitive test as to whether he is keeping hopeful and well−to−do. It is to me a very sad sight to see a parsonage getting a dilapidated look, and the gravel walks in its garden growing weedy. The parson must be growing old and poor. The parishioners tell you how trim and orderly everything was when he came first to the parish. But his affairs have become embarrassed, or his wife and children are dead; and though still doing his duty well, and faithfully, he has lost heart and interest in these little matters; and so things are as you see.

I have been amused by the way in which some people meet disappointment. They think it a great piece of worldly wisdom to deny that they have ever been disappointed at all. Perhaps it might be so, if the pretext were less transparent than it is. An old lady's son is plucked at an examination for a civil appointment. She takes up the ground that it is rather a credit to be plucked; that nearly everybody is plucked; that all the cleverest fellows are plucked; and that only stupid fellows are allowed to pass. When the examiners find a clever man, they take a pleasure in plucking him. A number of the cleverest men in England can easily put out a lad of one−and−twenty.

Then, shifting her ground, she declares the examination was ridiculously easy: her son was rejected because he could not tell what two and two amount to: because he did not know the name of the river on which London is built: because he did not (in his confusion) know his own name. She shows you the indignant letter which the young man wrote to her, announcing the scandalous injustice with which he was treated. You remark three words misspelt in the first five lines; and you fancy you have fathomed the secret of the plucking.

I have sometimes tried, but in vain, to discover the law which regulates the attainment of extreme popularity. Extreme popularity, in this country and age, appears a very arbitrary thing. I defy any person to predict a priori what book, or song, or play, or picture, is to become the rage,—to utterly transcend all competition. I believe, indeed, that there cannot be popularity for even a short time, without some kind or degree of merit to deserve it; and in any case there is no other standard to which one can appeal than the deliberate judgment of the mass of educated persons. If you are quite convinced that a thing is bad which all such think good, why, of course you are wrong. If you honestly think Shakspeare a fool, you are aware you must be mistaken. And so, if a book, or a picture, or a play, or a song, be really good, and if it be properly brought before the public notice, you may, as a general rule, predict that it will attain a certain measure of success. But the inexplicable thing—the thing of which I am quite unable to trace the law—is extreme success. How is it that one thing shoots ahead of everything else of the same class; and without being materially better, or even materially different, leaves everything else out of sight behind? Why is it that Eclipse is first and the rest nowhere, while the legs and wind of Eclipse are no whit better than the legs and wind of all the rest? If twenty novels of nearly equal merit are published, it is not impossible that one shall dart ahead of the remaining nineteen; that it shall be found in every library; that Mr. Mudie may announce that he has 3250 copies of it; that it shall be the talk of every circle; its incidents set to music, its plot dramatized; that it shall count readers by thousands while others count readers by scores; while yet one cannot really see why any of the others might not have taken its place. Or of a score of coarse comic songs, nineteen shall never get beyond the walls of the Cyder Cellars (I understand there is a place of the name), while the twentieth, no wise superior in any respect, comes to be sung about the streets, known by everybody, turned into polkas and quadrilles and in fact to become for the time one of the institutions of this great and intelligent country. I remember how, a year or two since, that contemptible Rat−catcher's Daughter, without a thing to recommend it, with no music, no wit, no sentiment, nothing but vulgar brutality, might be heard in every separate town of England and Scotland, sung about the streets by every ragged urchin; while the other songs of the vivacious Cowell fell dead from his lips. The will of the sovereign people has decided that so it shall be. And as likings and dislikings in most cases are things strongly felt, but impossible to account for even by the person who feels them, so is it ffith the enormous admiration, regard, and success which fall to the lot of many to whom popularity is success. Actors, statesmen, authors, preachers, have often in England their day of quite undeserved popular ovation; and by and bye their day of entire neglect. It is the rocket and the stick. We are told that Bishop Butler, about the period of the great excesses of the French Revolution, was walking in his garden with his chaplain. After a long fit of musing, the Bishop turned to the chaplain, and asked the question whether nations might not go mad, as well as individuals? Classes of society, I think, may certainly have attacks of temporary insanity on some one point. The Jenny Lind fever was such an attack. Such was the popularity of the boy−actor Betty. Such the popularity of the Small Coal Man some time in the last century; such that of the hippopotamus at the Regent's Park; such that of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

But this essay must have an end. It is far too long already. I am tired of it, and a fortiori my reader must be so. Let me try the effect of an abrupt conclusion.

CHAPTER III. CONCERNING SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS; SOME THOUGHTS UPON THE SWING OF THE PENDULUM.

[Footnote: For the suggestion of the subject of this essay, and for many valuable hints as to its treatment, I am indebted to the kindness of the Archbishop of Dublin. Indeed, in all that part of the essay which treats of Secondary Vulgar Errwi, I have done little more than expand and illustrate the skeleton of thought supplied to me by Archbishop Whately.]

I have eaten up all the grounds of my tea, said, many years since, in my hearing, in modest yet triumphant tones, a little girl of seven years old. I have but to close my eyes, and I see all that scene again, almost as plainly as ever. Six or seven children (I am one of them) are sitting round a tea−table; their father and mother are there too; and an old gentleman, who is (in his own judgment) one of the wisest of men. I see the dining−room, large and low−ceilinged; the cheerful glow of the autumnal fire; the little faces in the soft candle−light, for glaring gas was there unknown. There had been much talk about the sinfulness of waste—of the waste of even very little things. The old gentleman, so wise (in his own judgment, and indeed in my judgment at that period), was instilling into the children's minds some of those lessons which are often impressed upon children by people (I am now aware) of no great wisdom or cleverness. He had dwelt at considerable length upon the sinfulness of wasting anything; likewise on the sinfulness of children being saucy or particular as to what they should eat. He enforced, with no small solemnity, the duty of children's eating what was set before them without minding whether it was good or not, or at least without minding whether they liked it or not. The poor little girl listened to all that was said, and of course received it all as indubitably true. Waste and sauciness, she saw, were wrong, so she judged that the very opposite of waste and sauciness must be right. Accordingly, she thought she would turn to use something that was very small, but still something that ought not to be wasted. Accordingly, she thought she would show the docility of her taste by eating up something that was very disagreeable. Here was an opportunity at once of acting out the great principles to which she had been listening. And while a boy, evidently destined to be a metaphysician, and evidently possessed of the spirit of resistance to constituted authority whether in government or doctrine, boldly argued that it could not be wicked in him to hate onions, because God had made him so that he did hate onions, and (going still deeper into things) insisted that to eat a thing when you did not want it was wasting it much more truly than it would be wasting it to leave it; the little girl ate up all the grounds left in her teacup, and then announced the fact with considerable complacency.

Very, very natural. The little girl's act was a slight straw showing how a great current sets. It was a fair exemplification of a tendency which is woven into the make of our being. Tell the average mortal that it is wrong to walk on the left side of the road, and in nine cases out of ten he will conclude that the proper thing must be to walk on the right side of the road; whereas in actual life, and in almost all opinions, moral, political, and religious, the proper thing is to walk neither on the left nor the right side, but somewhere about the middle. Say to the ship−master, You are to sail through a perilous strait; you will have the raging Scylla on one hand as you go. His natural reply will be, Well, I will keep as far away from it as possible; I will keep close by the other side. But the rejoinder must be, No, you will be quite as ill off there; you will be in equal peril on the other side: there is Charybdis. What you have to do is to keep at a safe distance from each. In avoiding the one, do not run into the other.

It seems to be a great law of the universe, that Wrong lies upon either side of the way, and that Right is the narrow path between. There are the two ways of doing wrong—Too Much and Too Little. Go to the extreme right hand, and you are wrong; go to the extreme left hand, and you are wrong too. That you may be right, you have to keep somewhere between these two extremes: but not necessarily in the exact middle. All this, of course, is part of the great fact that in this world Evil has the advantage of Good. It is easier to go wrong than right.

It is very natural to think that if one thing or course be wrong, its reverse must be right. If it be wrong to walk towards the east, surely it must be right to walk towards the west. If it be wrong to dress in black, it must be right to dress in white. It is somewhat hard to say, Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt—to declare, as if that were a statement of the whole truth, that fools mistake reverse of wrong for right. Fools do so indeed, but not

fools only. The average Jiuman being, with the most honest intentions, is prone to mistake reverse of wrong for right. We are fond, by our natural constitution, of broad distinctions—of classifications that put the whole interests and objects of this world to iho Tight−hand and to the left. We long for Aye or No—for Heads or Tails. We are impatient of limitations, qualifications, restrictions. You remember how Mr. Micawber explained the philosophy of income and expenditure, and urged people never to run in debt. Income, said he, a hundred pounds a year; expenditure ninety−nine pounds nineteen shillings: Happiness. Income, a hundred pounds a year; expenditure a hundred pounds and one shilling: Misery. You see the principle involved is, that if you are not happy, you must be miserable—that if you are not miserable, you must be happy. If you are not any particular thing, then you are its opposite. If you are not For, then you are Against. If you are not black, many men will jump to the conclusion that you are white: the fact probably being that you are gray. If not a Whig, you must be a Tory: in truth, you are a Liberal−Conservative. We desiderate in all things the sharp decidedness of the verdict of a jury—Guilty or Not Guilty. We like to conclude that if a man be not very good, then he is very bad; if not very clever, then very stupid; if not very wise, then a fool: whereas in fact, the man probably is a curious mixture of good and evil, strength and weakness, wisdom and folly, knowledge and ignorance, cleverness and stupidity.

Let it be here remarked, that in speaking of it as an error to take reverse of wrong for right, I use the words in their ordinary sense, as generally understood. In common language the reverse of a thing is taken to mean the thing at the opposite end of the scale from it. Thus, black is the reverse of white, bigotry of latitudinarianism, malevolence of benevolence, parsimony of extravagance, and the like. Of course, in strictness, these things are not the reverse of one another. In strictness, the reverse of wrong always is right; for, to speak with severe precision, the reverse of steering upon Scylla is simply not steering upon Scylla; the reverse of being extravagant is not being parsimonious—it is simply not being extravagant; the reverse of walking eastward is not walking westward—it is simply not walking eastward. And that may include standing still, or walking to any point of the compass except the east. But I understand the reverse of a thing as meaning the opposite extreme from it. And you see, the Latin words quoted above are more precise than the English. It is severely true, that while fools think to shun error on one side, they run into the contrary error—i. e., the error that lies equi−distant, or nearly equi−distant, on the other side of the line of right.

One class of the errors into which men are prone to run under this natural impulse are those which have been termed Secondary Vulgar Errors. A vulgar error, you will understand, my reader, does not by any means signify an error into which only the vulgar are likely to fall. It does not by any means signify a mistaken belief which will be taken up only by inferior and uneducated minds. A vulgar error means an error either in conduct or belief into which man, by the make of his being, is likely to fall. Now, people a degree wiser and more thoughtful than the mass, discover that these vulgar errors are errors. They conclude that their opposites (i. e., the things at the other extremity of the scale) must be right; and by running into the opposite extreme they run just as far wrong upon the other side. There is too great a reaction. The twig was bent to the right—they bend it to the left, forgetting that the right thing was that the twig should be straight. If convinced that waste and sauciness are wrong, they proceed to eat the grounds of their tea; if convinced that self−indulgence is wrong, they conclude that hair−shirts and midnight floggings are right; if convinced that the Church of Rome has too many ceremonies, they resolve that they will have no ceremonies at all; if convinced that it is unworthy to grovel in the presence of a duke, they conclude that it will be a fine thing to refuse the duke ordinary civility; if convinced that monarehs are not much wiser or better than other human beings, they run off into the belief that all kings have been little more than incarnate demons; if convinced that representative government often works very imperfectly, they raise a cry for imperialism; if convinced that monarchy has its abuses, they call out for republicanism; if convinced that Britain has many things which are not so good as they ought to be, they keep constantly extolling the perfection of the United States.

Now, inasmuch as a rise of even one step in the scale of thought elevates the man who has taken it above the vast host of men who have never taken even that one step, the number of people who (at least in matters of any moment) arrive at the Secondary Vulgar Error is much less than the number of the people who stop at the Primary Vulgar Error. Very great multitudes of human beings think it a very fine thing, the very finest of all human things, to be very rich. A much smaller number, either from the exercise of their own reflective powers, or from the indoctrination of romantic novels and overdrawn religious books, run to the opposite extreme: undervalue wealth, deny that it adds anything to human comfort and enjoyment, declare that it is an unmixed evil, profess to despise

it. I dare say that many readers of the Idylls of the King will so misunderstand that exquisite song of 'Fortune and her Wheel,' as to see in it only the charming and sublime embodiment of a secondary vulgar error,—the error, to wit, that wealth and outward circumstances are of no consequence at all. To me that song appears rather to take the further step, and to reach the conclusion in which is embodied the deliberate wisdom of humankind upon this matter: the conclusion which shakes from itself on either hand either vulgar error: the idolization of wealth on the one side, the contempt of it on the other: and to convey the sobered judgment that while the advantages and refinements of fortune are so great that no thoughtful man can long despise it, the responsibilities and temptations of it are so great that no thoughtful man will much repine if he fail to reach it; and thus that we may genially acquiesce in that which it pleases God to send. Midway between two vulgar errors: steering a sure track between Scylla and Charybdis: the grovelling multitude to the left, the romantic few to the right; stand the words of inspired wisdom. The pendulum had probably oscillated many times between the two errors, before it settled at the central truth; 'Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.'

But although these errors of reaction are less common than the primary vulgar errors, they are better worth noticing: inasmuch as in many cases they are the errors of the well−intentioned. People fall into the primary vulgar errors without ever thinking of right or wrong: merely feeling an impulse to go there, or to think thus. But worthy folk, for the most part, fall into the secondary vulgar errors, while honestly endeavouring to escape what they have discerned to be wrong. Not indeed that it is always in good faith that men run to the opposite extreme. Sometimes they do it in pet and perversity, being well aware that they are doing wrong. You hint to some young friend, to whom you are nearly enough related to be justified in doing so, that the dinner to which he has invited you, with several others, is unnecessarily fine, is somewhat extravagant, is beyond what he can afford. The young friend asks you back in a week or two, and sets before you a feast of salt herrings and potatoes. Now the fellow did not run into this extreme with the honest intention of doing right. He knew perfectly well that this was not what you meant. He did not go through this piece of folly in the sincere desire to avoid the other error of extravagance. Or, you are a country clergyman. You are annoyed, Sunday by Sunday, by a village lad who, from enthusiasm or ostentation, sings so loud in church as to disturb the whole congregation. You hint to him, as kindly as you can, that there is something very pleasing about the softer tones of his voice, and that you would like to hear them more frequently. But the lad sees through your civil way of putting the case. His vanity is touched. He sees you mean that you don't like to hear him bellow: and next Sunday you will observe that he shuts up his hymn−book in dudgeon, and will not sing at all. Leave the blockhead to himself Do not set yourself to stroke down his self−conceit: he knows quite well he is doing wrong: there is neither sense nor honesty in what he does. You remark at dinner, while staying with a silly old gentleman, that the plum−pudding, though admirable, perhaps errs on the side of over−richness; next day he sets before you a mass of stiff paste with no plums at all, and says, with a look of sly stupidity, 'Well, I hope you are satisfied now.' Politeness prevents your replying, 'No, you don't. You know that is not what I meant. You are a fool.' You remember the boy in Pickwick, who on his father finding fault with him for something wrong he had done, offered to kill himself if that would be any satisfaction to his parent. In this case you have a more recondite instance of this peculiar folly. Here the primary course is tacitly assumed, without being stated. The primary impulse of the human being is to take care of himself; the opposite of that of course is to kill himself. And the boy, being chidden for doing something which might rank under the general head of taking care of himself, proposed (as that course appeared unsatisfactory) to take the opposite one. 'You don't take exercise enough,' said a tutor to a wrong−headed boy who was under his care: 'you ought to walk more.' Next morning the perverse fellow entered the breakfast parlour in a fagged condition, and said, with the air of a martyr, 'Well, I trust I have taken exercise enough to−day: I have walked twenty miles this morning.' As for all such manifestations of the disposition to run into opposite extremes, let them be treated as manifestations of pettedness, perversity, and dishonesty. In some cases a high−spirited youth may be excused them; but, for the most part, they come with doggedness, wrong−headedness, and dense stupidity. And any pretext that they are exhibited with an honest intention to do right, ought to be regarded as a transparently false pretext.

I have now before me a list (prepared by a much stronger hand than mine) of honest cases in which men, avoiding Scylla, run into Charybdis: in which men, thinking to bend the crooked twig straight, bend it backwards. But before mentioning these, it may be remarked, that there is often such a thing as a reaction from a natural

tendency, even when that natural tendency is not towards what may be called a primary vulgar error. The law of reaction extends to all that human beings can ever feel the disposition to think or do. There are, doubtless, minds of great fixity of opinion and motive: and there are certain things, in the case of almost all men, as regards which their belief and their active bias never vary through life: but with most human beings, with nations, with humankind, as regards very many and very important matters, as surely and as far as the pendulum has swung to the right, so surely and so far will it swing to the left. I do not say that an opinion in favour of monarchy is a primary vulgar error; or that an opinion in favour of republicanism is a secondary: both may be equally right: but assuredly each of these is a reaction from the other. America, for instance, is one great reaction from Europe. The principle on which these reactionary swings of the pendulum take place, is plain. Whatever be your present position, you feel its evils and drawbacks keenly. Your feeling of the present evil is much more vivid than your imagination of the evil which is sure to be inherent in the opposite system, whatever that may be. You live in a country where the national Church is Presbyterian. You see, day by day, many inconveniences and disadvantages inherent in that form of church government. It is of the nature of evil to make its presence much more keenly felt than the presence of good. So while keenly alive to the drawbacks of presbytery, you are hardly conscious of its advantages. You swing over, let us suppose, to the other end: you swing over from Scotland into England, from presbytery to episcopacy. For awhile you are quite delighted to find yourself free from the little evils of which you had been wont to complain. But by and bye the drawbacks of episcopacy begin to push themselves upon your notice. You have escaped one set of disadvantages: you find that you have got into the middle of another. Scylla no longer bellows in your hearing; but Charybdis whirls you round. You begin to feel that the country and the system yet remain to be sought, in which some form of evil, of inconvenience, of worry, shall not press you. Am I wrong in fancying, dear friends more than one or two, that but for very shame the pendulum would swing back again to the point from which it started: and you, kindly Scots, would find yourselves more at home in kindly and homely Scotland, with her simple forms and faith? So far as my experience has gone, I think that in all matters not of vital moment, it is best that the pendulum should stay at the end of the swing where it first found itself: it will be in no more stable position at the other end: and it will somehow feel stranger−like there. And you, my friend, though in your visits to Anglican territory you heartily conform to the Anglican Church, and enjoy as much as mortal san her noble cathedrals and her stately worship; still I know that after all, you cannot shake off the spell in which the old remembrances of your boyhood have bound you. I know that your heart warms to the Burning Bush; [Footnote: The scutcheon of the Church of Scotland.] and that it will, till death chills it.

A noteworthy fact in regard to the swing of the pendulum, is that the secondary tendency is sometimes found in the ruder state of society, and the less reflective man. Naturalness comes last. The pendulum started from naturalness: it swung over into artificiality: and with thoughtful people it has swung back to naturalness again. Thus it is natural, when in danger, to be afraid. It is natural, when you are possessed by any strong feeling, to show it. You see all this in children: this is the point which the pendulum starts from. It swings over, and we find a reaction from this. The reaction is, to maintain and exhibit perfect coolness and indifference in danger; to pretend to be incapable of fear. This state of things we find in the Red Indian, a rude and uncivilized being. But it is plain that with people who are able to think, there must be a reaction from this. The pendulum cannot long stay in a position which flies so completely in the face of the law of gravitation. It is pure nonsense to talk about being incapable of fear. I remember reading somewhere about Queen Elizabeth, that 'her soul was incapable of fear.' That statement is false and absurd. You may regard fear as unmanly and unworthy: you may repress the manifestations of it; but the state of mind which (in beings not properly monstrous or defective) follows the perception of being in danger, is fear. As surely as the perception of light is sight, so surely is the perception of danger fear. And for a man to say that his soul is incapable of fear, is just as absurd as to say that from a peculiarity of constitution, when dipped in water, he does not get wet. You, human being, whoever you may be, when you are placed in danger, and know you are placed in danger, and reflect on the fact, you feel afraid. Don't vapour and say no; we know how the mental machine must work, unless it be diseased. Now, the thoughtful man admits all this: he admits that a bullet through his brain would be a very serious thing for himself, and like−wise for his wife and children: he admits that he shrinks from such a prospect; he will take pains to protect himself from the risk; but he says that if duty requires him to run the risk he will run it. This is the courage of the civilized man as opposed to the blind, bull−dog insensibility of the savage. This is courage—to know the existence of danger, but to face it nevertheless. Here, under the influence of longer thought, the pendulum has swung into

common sense, though not quite back to the point from which it started. Of course, it still keeps swinging about in individual minds. The other day I read in a newspaper a speech by a youthful rifleman, in which he boasted that no matter to what danger exposed, his corps would never take shelter behind trees and rocks, but would stand boldly out to the aim of the enemy. I was very glad to find this speech answered in a letter to the Times, written by a rifleman of great experience and proved bravery. The experienced man pointed out that the inexperienced man was talking nonsense: that true courage appeared in manfully facing risks which were inevitable, but not in running into needless peril: and that the business of a soldier was to be as useful to his country and as destructive to the enemy as possible, and not to make needless exhibitions of personal foolhardiness. Thus swings the pendulum as to danger and fear. The point of departure, the primary impulse, is,

1. An impulse to avoid danger at all hazards: i. e., to run away, and save yourself, however discreditably.

The pendulum swings to the other extremity, and we have the secondary impulse—

2. An impulse to disregard danger, and even to run into it, as if it were of no consequence at all; i. e., young rifleman foolhardiness, and Red Indian insensibility.

The pendulum comes so far back, and rests at the point of wisdom:

3. A determination to avoid all danger, the running into which would do no good, and which may be avoided consistently with honour; but manfully to face danger, however great, that comes in the way of duty.

But after all this deviation from the track, I return to my list of Secondary Vulgar Errors, run into with good and honest intentions. Here is the first—

Don't you know, my reader, that it is natural to think very bitterly of the misconduct which affects yourself? If a man cheats your friend, or cheats your slight acquaintance, or cheats some one who is quite unknown to you, by selling him a lame horse, you disapprove his conduct, indeed, but not nearly so much as if he had cheated yourself. You learn that Miss Limejuice has been disseminating a grossly untrue account of some remarks which you made in her hearing: and your first impulse is to condemn her malicious falsehood, much more severely than if she had merely told a few lies about some one else. Yet it is quite evident that if we were to estimate the doings of men with perfect justice, we should fix solely on the moral element in their doings; and the accidental circumstance of the offence or injury to ourselves would be neither here nor there. The primary vulgar error, then, in this case is, undue and excessive disapprobation of misconduct from which we have suffered. No one but a very stupid person would, if it were fairly put to him, maintain that this extreme disapprobation was right: but it cannot be denied that this is the direction to which all human beings are likely, at first, to feel an impulse to go. A man does you some injury: you are much angrier than if he had done the like injury to some one else. You are much angrier when your own servants are guilty of little neglects and follies, than when the servants of your next neighbour are guilty in a precisely similar degree. The Prime Minister (or Chancellor) fails to make you a Queen's Counsel or a Judge: you are much more angry than if he had overlooked some other man, of precisely equal merit. And I do not mean merely that the injury done to yourself comes more home to you, but that positively you think it a worse thing. It seems as if there were more of moral evil in it. The boy who steals your plums seems worse than other boys stealing other plums. The servant who sells your oats and starves your horses, seems worse than other servants who do the like. It is not merely that you feel where the shoe pinches yourself, more than where it pinches another: that is all quite right. It is that you have a tendency to think it is a worse shoe than another which gives an exactly equal amount of pain. You are prone to dwell upon and brood over the misconduct which affected yourself.

Well, you begin to see that this is unworthy, that selfishness and mortified conceit are at the foundation of it. You determine that you will shake yourself free from this vulgar error. What more magnanimous, you think, than to do the opposite of the wrong thing? Surely it will be generous, and even heroic, to wholly acquit the wrong−doer, and even to cherish him for a bosom friend. So the pendulum swings over to the opposite extreme, and you land in the secondary vulgar error. I do not mean to say that in practice many persons are likely to thus bend the twig backwards; but it is no small evil to think that it would be a right thing, and a fine thing, to do even that which you never intend to do. So you write an essay, or even a book, the gist of which is that it is a grand thing to select for a friend and guide the human being who has done you signal injustice and harm. Over that book, if it be a prettily written tale, many young ladies will weep: and though without the faintest intention of imitating your hero's behaviour, they will think that it would be a fine thing if they did so. And it is a great mischief to pervert the moral judgment and falsely to excite the moral feelings. You forget that wrong is wrong,

though it be done against yourself, and that you have no right to acquit the wrong to yourself as though it were no wrong at all. That lies beyond your province. You may forgive the personal offence, but it does not rest with you to acquit the guilt. You have no right to confuse moral distinctions by practically saying that wrong is not wrong, because it is done against you. All wrong is against very many things and very grave things, besides being against you. It is not for you to speak in the name of God and the universe. You may not wish to say much about the injury done to yourself, but there it is; and as to the choosing for your friend the man who has greatly injured you, in most cases such a choice would be a very unwise one, because in most cases it would amount to this—that you should select a man for a certain post mainly because he has shown himself possessed of qualities which unfit him for that post. That surely would be very foolish. If you had to appoint a postman, would you choose a man because he had no legs? And what is very foolish can never be very magnanimous.

The right course to follow lies between the two which have been set out. The man who has done wrong to you is still a wrong−doer. The question you have to consider is, What ought your conduct to be towards a wrong−doer? Let there be no harbour given to any feeling of personal revenge. But remember that it is your duty to disapprove what is wrong, and that it is wisdom not too far to trust a man who has proved himself unworthy to be trusted. I have no feeling of selfish bitterness against the person who deceived me deliberately and grossly, yet I cannot but judge that deliberate and gross deceit is bad; and I cannot but judge that the person who deceived me once might, if tempted, deceive me again: so he shall not have the opportunity. I look at the horse which a friend offers me for a short ride. I discern upon the knees of the animal a certain slight but unmistakeable roughness of the hair. That horse has been down; and if I mount that horse at all (which I shall not do except in a case of necessity), I shall ride him with a tight rein, and with a sharp look−out for rolling stones.

Another matter in regard to which Scylla and Charybdis are very discernible, is the fashion in which human beings think and speak of the good or bad qualities of their friends.

The primary tendency here is to blindness to the faults of a friend, and over−estimate of his virtues and qualifications. Most people are disposed extravagantly to over−value anything belonging to or connected with themselves. A farmer tells you that there never were such turnips as his turnips; a schoolboy thinks that the world cannot show boys so clever as those with whom he is competing for the first place in his class; a clever student at college tells you what magnificent fellows are certain of his compeers—how sure they are to become great men in life. Talk of Tennyson! You have not read Smith's prize poem. Talk of Macaulay! Ah, if you could see Brown's prize essay! A mother tells you (fathers are generally less infatuated) how her boy was beyond comparison the most distinguished and clever in his class—how he stood quite apart from, any of the others. Your eye happens to fall a day or two afterwards upon the prize−list advertised in the newspapers, and you discover that (curiously) the most distinguished and clever boy in that particular school is rewarded with the seventh prize. I dare say you may have met with families in which there existed the most absurd and preposterous belief as to their superiority, social, intellectual, and moral, above other families which were as good or better. And it is to be admitted, that if you are happy enough to have a friend whose virtues and qualifications are really high, your primary tendency will probably be to fancy him a great deal cleverer, wiser, and better than, he really is, and to imagine that he possesses no faults at all. The over−estimate of his good qualities will be the result of your seeing them constantly, and having their excellence much pressed on your attention, while from not knowing so well other men who are quite as good, you are led to think that those good qualities are more rare and excellent than in fact they are. And you may possibly regard it as a duty to shut your eyes to the faults of those who are dear to you, and to persuade yourself, against your judgment, that they have no faults or none worth thinking of. One can imagine a child painfully struggling to be blind to a parent's errors, and thinking it undutiful and wicked to admit the existence of that: which is too evident. And if you know well a really good and able man, you will very naturally think his goodness and his ability to be relatively much greater than they are. For goodness and ability are in truth very noble things: the more you look at them the more you will feel this: and it is natural to judge that what is so noble cannot be very common; whereas in fact there is much more good in this world than we are ready to believe. If you find an intelligent person who believes that some particular author is by far the best in the language, or that some particular composer's music is by far the finest, or that some particular preacher is by far the most eloquent and useful, or that some particular river has by far the finest scenery, or that some particular sea−side place has by far the most bracing and exhilarating air, or that some particular magazine is ten thousand miles ahead of all competitors, the simple explanation in ninety−nine cases out of a hundred is this—that the

honest individual who holds these overstrained opinions knows a great deal better than he knows any others, that author, that music, that preacher, that river, that sea−side place, that magazine. He knows how good they are: and not having much studied the merits of competing things, he does not know that these are very nearly as good.

But I do not think that there is any subject whatever in regard to which it is so capricious and arbitrary whether you shall run it into Scylla or into Charybdis. It depends entirely on how it strikes the mind, whether you shall go off a thousand miles to the right or a thousand miles to the lefn You know, if you fire a rifle−bullet at an iron−coated ship, the bullet, if it impinge upon the iron plate at A, may glance away to the west, while if it impinge upon the iron plate at B, only an inch distant from A, it may glance off towards the directly opposite point of the compass. A very little thing makes all the difference. You stand in the engine−room of a steamer; you admit the steam to the cylinders, and the paddles turn ahead; a touch of a lever, you admit the selfsame steam to the selfsame cylinders, and the paddles turn astern. It is so oftentimes in the moral world. The turning of a straw decides whether the engines shall work forward or backward.

Now, given a friend, to whom you are very warmly attached: it is a toss−up whether your affection for your friend shall make you,

1. Quite blind to his faults; or,

2. Acutely and painfully alive to his faults.

Sincere affection may impel either way. Your friend, for instance, makes a speech at a public dinner. He makes a tremendously bad speech. Now, your love for him may lead you either

1. To fancy that his speech is a remarkably good one; or,

2. To feel acutely how bad his speech is, and to wish you could sink through the floor for very shame.

If you did not care for him at all, you would not mind a bit whether he made a fool of himself or not. But if you really care for him, and if the speech be really very bad, and if you are competent to judge whether speeches in general be bad or not, I do not see how you can escape falling either into Scylla or Charybdis. And accordingly, while there are families in which there exists a preposterous over−estimate of the talents and acquirements of their several members, there are other families in which the rifle−bullet has glanced off in the opposite direction, and in which there exists a depressing and unreasonable under−estimate of the talents and acquirements of their several members. I have known such a thing as a family in which certain boys during their early education had it ceaselessly drilled into them that they were the idlest, stupidest, and most ignorant boys in the world. The poor little fellows grew up under that gloomy belief: for conscience is a very artificial thing, and you may bring up very good boys in the belief that they are very bad. At length, happily, they went to a great public school; and like rockets they went up forthwith to the top of their classes, and never lost their places there. From school they went to the university, and there won honours more eminent than had ever been won before. It will not surprise people who know much of human nature, to be told that through this brilliant career of school and college work the home belief in their idleness and ignorance continued unchanged, and that hardly at its end was the toil−worn senior wrangler regarded as other than an idle and useless blockhead. Now, the affection which prompts the under−estimate may be quite as real and deep as that which prompts the over−estimate, but its manifestation is certainly the less amiable and pleasing. I have known a successful author whose relatives never believed, till the reviews assured them of it, that his writings were anything but contemptible and discreditable trash.

I have been speaking of an honest though erroneous estimate of the qualities of one's friends, rather than of any expression of that estimate. The primary tendency is to an over−estimate; the secondary tendency is to an under−estimate. A commonplace man thinks there never was mortal so wise and good as the friend he values; a man who is a thousandth part of a degree less common−place resolves that he will keep clear of that error, and accordingly he feels bound to exaggerate the failings of his friend and to extenuate his good qualities. He thinks that a friend's judgment is very good and sound, and that he may well rely upon it; but for fear of showing it too much regard, he probably shows it too little. He thinks that in some dispute his friend is right; but for fear of being partial he decides that his friend is wrong. It is obvious that in any instance in which a man, seeking to avoid the primary error of over−estimating his friend, falls into the secondary of under−estimating him, he will (if any importance be attached to his judgment) damage his friend's character; for most people will conclude that he is saying of his friend the best that can be said; and that if even he admits that there is so little to approve about his friend, there must be very little indeed to approve: whereas the truth may be, that he is saying the worst that can be said—that no man could with justice give a worse picture of the friend's character.

Not very far removed from this pair of vulgar errors stand the following:

The primary vulgar error is, to set up as an infallible oracle one whom we regard as wise—to regard any question as settled finally if we know what is his opinion upon it. You remember the man in the Spectator who was always quoting the sayings of Mr. Nisby. There was a report in London that the Grand Vizier was dead. The good man was uncertain whether to believe the report or not. He went and talked with Mr. Nisby and returned with his mind reassured. Now, he enters in his diary that 'the Grand Vizier was certainly dead.' Considering the weakness of the reasoning powers of many people, there is something pleasing after all in this tendency to look round for somebody stronger upon whom they may lean. It is wise and natural in a scarlet−runner to climb up something, for it could not grow up by itself; and for practical purposes it is well that in each household there should be a little Pope, whose dicta on all topics shall be unquestionable. It saves what is to many people the painful effort of making up their mind what they are to do or to think. It enables them to think or act with much greater decision and confidence. Most men have always a lurking distrust of their own judgment, unless they find it confirmed by that of somebody else. There are very many decent commonplace people who, if they had been reading a book or article and had been thinking it very fine, would, if you were resolutely and loudly to declare in their hearing that it was wretched trash, begin to think that it was wretched trash too.

The primary vulgar error, then, is to regard as an oracle one whom we esteem as wise; and the secondary, the Charybdis opposite to this Scylla, is, to entertain an excessive dread of being too much led by one whom we esteem as wise. I mean an honest candid dread. I do not mean a petted, wrong−headed, pragmatical determination to let him see that you can think for yourself. You see, rny friend, I don't suppose you to be a self−conceited fool. You remember how Presumption, in the Pilgrim's Progress, on being offered some good advice, cut his kind adviser short by declaring that Every tub must stand on its own bottom. We have all known men, young and old, who, upon being advised to do something which they knew they ought to do, would, out of pure perversity and a wrong−headed independence, go and do just the opposite thing. The secondary error of which I am now thinking is that of the man who honestly dreads making too much of the judgment of any mortal: and who, acting from a good intention, probably goes wrong in the same direction as the wrong−headed conceited man. Now, don't you know that to such an extent does this morbid fear of trusting too much to any mortal go in some men, that in their practical belief you would think that the fact of any man being very wise was a reason why his judgment should be set aside as unworthy of consideration; and more particularly, that the fact of any man being supposed to be a powerful reasoner, was quite enough to show that all he says is to go for nothing? You are quite aware how jauntily some people use this last consideration, to sweep away at once all the reasons given by an able and ingenious speaker or writer. And it cuts the ground effectually from under his feet. You state an opinion, somewhat opposed to that commonly received. An honest, stupid person meets it with a surprised stare. You tell him (I am recording what I have myself witnessed) that you have been reading a work on the subject by a certain prelate: you state as well as you can the arguments which are set forth by the distinguished prelate. These arguments seem of great weight. They deserve at least to be carefully considered. They seem to prove the novel opinion to be just: they assuredly call on candid minds to ponder the whole matter well before relapsing into the old current way of thinking. Do you expect that the honest, stupid person will judge thus? If so, you are mistaken. He is not shaken in the least by all these strong reasons. The man who has set these reasons forth is known to be a master of logic: that is good ground why all his reasons should count for nothing. Oh, says the stupid, honest person, we all know that the Archbishop can prove anything! And so the whole thing is finally settled.

I have a considerable list of instances in which the reaction from an error on one side of the line of right, lands in error equally distant from the line of right on the other side: but it is needless to go on to illustrate these at length; the mere mention of them will suffice to suggest many thoughts to the intelligent reader. A primary vulgar error, to which very powerful minds have frequently shown a strong tendency, is bigoted intolerance: intolerance in politics, in religion, in ecclesiastical affairs, in morals, in anything. You may safely say that nothing but most unreasonable bigotry would lead a Tory to say that all Whigs are scoundrels, or a Whig to Bay that all Tories are bloated tyrants or crawling sycophants. I must confess that, in severe reason, it is impossible entirely to justify the Churchman who holds that all Dissenters are extremely bad; though (so does inveterate prepossession warp the intellect) I have also to admit that it appears to me that for a Dissenter to hold that there is little or no good in the Church is a great deal worse. There is something fine, however, about a heartily intolerant man: you like him, though you disapprove of him. Even if I were inclined to Whiggery, I should admire the downright dictum of Dr.

Johnson, that the devil was the first Whig. Even if I were a Nonconformist, I should like Sydney Smith the better for the singular proof of his declining strength which he once adduced: 'I do believe,' he said, 'that if you were to put a knife into my hand, I should not have vigour enough to stick it into a Dissenter!' The secondary error in this respect is a latitudinarian liberality which regards truth and falsehood as matters of indifference. Genuine liberality of sentiment is a good thing, and difficult as it is good: but much liberality, political and religious, arises really from the fact, that the liberal man does not care a rush about the matter in debate. It is very easy to be tolerant in a case in which you have no feeling whatever either way. The Churchman who does not mind a bit whether the Church stands or falls, has no difficulty in tolerating the enemies and assailants of the Church. It is different with a man who holds the existence of a national Establishment as a vital matter. And I have generally remarked that when clergymen of the Church profess extreme catholicity of spirit, and declare that they do not regard it as a thing of the least consequence whether a man be Churchman or Dissenter, intelligent Nonconformists receive such protestations with much contempt, and (possibly with injustice) suspect their utterer of hypocrisy. If you really care much about any principle; and if you regard it as of essential importance; you cannot help feeling a strong impulse to intolerance of those who decidedly and actively differ from you.

Here are some further vulgar errors, primary and secondary:

Primary—Idleness, and excessive self−indulgence;

Secondary—Penances, and self−inflicted tortures.

Primary—Swallowing whole all that is said or done by one's party;

Secondary—Dread of quite agreeing, or quite disagreeing on any point with any one; and trying to keep at exactly an equal distance from each.

Primary—Following the fashion with indiscriminate ardour;

Secondary—Finding a merit in singularity, as such.

Primary—Being quite captivated with thought which is striking and showy, but not sound;

Secondary—Concluding that whatever is sparkling must be unsound.

I hardly know which tendency of the following is the primary, and which the secondary; but I am sure that both exist. It may depend upon the district of country, and the age of the thinker, which of the two is the action and which the reaction:

1. Thinking a clergyman a model of perfection, because he is a stout dashing fellow who plays at cricket and goes out fox−hunting; and, generally, who flies in the face of all conventionalism;

2. Thinking a clergyman a model of perfection because he is of very grave and decorous deportment; never plays at cricket, and never goes out fox−hunting; and, generally, conforms carefully to all the little proprieties.

1. Thinking a bishop a model prelate because he has no stiffness or ceremony about him, but talks frankly to everybody, and puts all who approach him at their ease;

2. Thinking a bishop a model prelate because he never descends from his dignity; never forgets that he is a bishop, and keeps all who approach him in their proper places.

1. Thinking the Anglican Church service the best, because it is so decorous, solemn, and dignified;

2. Thinking the Scotch Church service the best, because it is so simple and so capable of adaptation to all circumstances which may arise.

1. Thinking an artisan a sensible right−minded man, knowing his station, because he is always very respectful in his demeanour to the squire, and great folks generally;

2. Thinking an artisan a fine, manly, independent fellow, because he is always much less respectful in his demeanour to the squire than he is to other people.

1. Thinking it a fine thing to be a fast, reckless, swaggering, drinking, swearing reprobate: Being ashamed of the imputation of being a well−behaved and (above all) a pious and conscientious young man: Thinking it manly to do wrong, and washy to do right;

2. Thinking it a despicable thing to be a fast, reckless, swaggering, drinking, swearing reprobate: Thinking it is manly to do right, and shameful to do wrong.

1. That a young man should begin his letters to his father with HONOURED SIR; and treat the old gentleman with extraordinary deference upon all occasions:

2. That a young man should begin his remarks to his father on any subject with, I SAY, GOVERNOR; and treat the old gentleman upon all occasions with no deference at all.

But indeed, intelligent reader, the swing of the pendulum is the type of the greater amount of human opinion and human feeling. In individuals, in communities, in parishes, in little country towns, in great nations, from hour to hour, from week to week, from century to century, the pendulum swings to and fro. From Yes on the one side to No on the other side of almost all conceivable questions, the pendulum swings. Sometimes it swings over from Yes to No in a few hours or days; sometimes it takes centuries to pass from the one extremity to the other. In feeling, in taste, in judgment, in the grandest matters and the least, the pendulum swings. From Popery to Puritanism; from Puritanism back towards Popery; from Imperialism to Republicanism, and back towards Imperialism again; from Gothic architecture to Palladian, and from Palladian back to Gothic; from hooped petticoats to drapery of the scantiest, and from that backwards to the multitudinous crinoline; from crying up the science of arms to crying it down, and back; from the schoolboy telling you that his companion Brown is the jolliest fellow, to the schoolboy telling you that his companion Brown is a beast, and back again; from very high carriages to very low ones and back; from very short horsetails to very long ones and back again—the pendulum swings. In matters of serious judgment it is comparatively easy to discern the rationale of this oscillation from side to side. It is that the evils of what is present are strongly felt, while the evils of what is absent are forgotten; and so, when the pendulum has swung over to A, the evils of A send it flying over to B, while when it reaches B the evils of B repel it again to A. In matters of feeling it is less easy to discover the how and why of the process: we can do no more than take refuge in the general belief that nature loves the swing of the pendulum. There are people who at one time have an excessive affection for some friend, and at another take a violent disgust at him: and who (though sometimes permanently remaining at the latter point) oscillate between these positive and negative poles. You, being a sensible man, would not feel very happy if some men were loudly crying you up: for you would be very sure that in a little while they would be loudly crying you dovvn. If you should ever happen to feel for one day an extraordinary lightness and exhilaration of spirits, you will know that you must pay for all this the price of corresponding depression—the hot fit must be counterbalanced by the cold. Let us thank God that there are beliefs and sentiments as to which the pendulum does not swing, though even in these I have known it do so. I have known the young girl who appeared thoroughly good and pious, who devoted herself to works of charity, and (with even an over−scrupulous spirit) eschewed vain company: and who by and bye learned to laugh at all serious things, and ran into the utmost extremes of giddiness and extravagant gaiety. And not merely should all of us be thankful if we feel that in regard to the gravest sentiments and beliefs our mind and heart remain year after year at the same fixed point: I think we should be thankful if we find that as regards our favourite books and authors our taste remains unchanged; that the calm judgment of our middle age approves the preferences of ten years since, and that these gather strength as time gives them the witchery of old remembrances and associations. You enthusiastically admired Byron once, you estimate him very differently now. You once thought Festus finer than Paradise Loft, but you have swung away from that. But for a good many years you have held by Wordsworth, Shakspeare, and Tennyson, and this taste you are not likely to outgrow. It is very curious to look over a volume which we once thought magnificent, enthralling, incomparable, and to wonder how on earth we ever cared for that stilted rubbish. No doubt the pendulum swings quite as decidedly to your estimate of yourself as to your estimate of any one else. It would be nothing at all to have other people attacking and depreciating your writings, sermons, and the like, if you yourself had entire confidence in them. The mortifying thing is when your own taste and judgment say worse of your former productions than could be said by the most unfriendly critic; and the dreadful thought occurs, that if you yourself to−day think so badly of what you wrote ten years since, it is probable enough that on this day ten years hence (if you live to see it) you may think as badly of what you are writing to−day. Let us hope not. Let us trust that at length a standard of taste and judgment is reached from which we shall not ever materially swing away. Yet the pendulum will never be quite arrested as to your estimate of yourself. Now and then you will think yourself a block−head: by and bye you will think yourself very clever; and your judgment will oscillate between these opposite poles of belief. Sometimes you will think that your house is remarkably comfortable, sometimes that it is unendurably uncomfortable; sometimes you will think that your place in life is a very dignified and important one, sometimes that it is a very poor and insignificant one; sometimes you will think that some misfortune or disappointment which has befallen you is a very crushing one; sometimes you will think that it is better as it is. Ah, my brother, it is a poor, weak, wayward thing, the human heart!

You know, of course, how the pendulum of public opinion swings backwards and forwards. The truth lies

somewhere about the middle of the arc it describes, in most cases. You know how the popularity of political men oscillates, from A, the point of greatest popularity, to B, the point of no popularity at all. Think of Lord Brougham. Once the pendulum swung far to the right: he was the most popular man in Britain. Then, for many years, the pendulum swung far to the left, into the cold regions of unpopularity, loss of influence, and opposition benches. And now, in his last days, the pendulum has come over to the right again. So with lesser men. When the new clergyman comes to a country parish, how high his estimation! Never was there preacher so impressive, pastor so diligent, man so frank and agreeable. By and bye his sermons are middling, his diligence middling; his manners rather stiff or rather too easy. In a year or two the pendulum rests at its proper point: and from that time onward the parson gets, in most cases, very nearly the credit he deserves. The like oscillation of public opinion and feeling exists in the case of unfavourable as of favourable judgments. A man commits a great crime. His guilt is thought awful. There is a general outcry for his condign punishment. He is sentenced to be hanged. In a few days the tide begins to turn. His crime was not so great. He had met great provocation. His education had been neglected. He deserves pity rather than reprobation. Petitions are got up that he should be let off; and largely signed by the self−same folk who were loudest in the outcry against him. And instead of this fact, that those folk were the keenest against the criminal, being received (as it ought) as proof that their opinion is worth nothing at all, many will receive it as proof that their opinion is entitled to special consideration. The principle of the pendulum in the matter of criminals is well understood by the Old Bailey practitioners of New York and their worthy clients. When a New Yorker is sentenced to be hanged, he remains as a cool as cucumber; for the New York law is, that a year must pass between the sentence and the execution. And long before the year passes, the public sympathy has turned in the criminal's favour. Endless petitions go up for his pardon. Of course he gets off. And indeed it is not improbable that he may receive a public testimonial. It cannot be denied that the natural transition in the popular feeling is from applauding a man to hanging him, and from hanging a man to applauding him.

Even so does the pendulum swing, and the world run away!

CHAPTER IV. CONCERNING CHURCHYARDS.

Many persons do not like to go near a churchyard: some do not like even to hear a churchyard mentioned. Many others feel an especial interest in that quiet place—an interest which is quite unconnected with any personal associations with it. A great deal depends upon habit; and a great deals turns, too, on whether the churchyard which we know best is a locked−up, deserted, neglected place, all grown over with nettles; or a spot not too much retired, open to all passers−by, with trimly−mown grass and neat gravelled walks. I do not sympathize with the taste which converts a burying−place into a flower−garden or a fashionable lounge for thoughtless people: let it be the true 'country churchyard,' only with some appearance of being remembered and cared for. For myself, though a very commonplace person, and not at all sentimentally inclined, I have a great liking for a churchyard. Hardly a day passes on which I do not go and walk up and down for a little in that which surrounds my church. Probably some people may regard me as extremely devoid of occupation, when I confess that daily, after breakfast, and before sitting down to my work (which is pretty hard, though they may not think so), I walk slowly down to the churchyard, which is a couple of hundred yards off, and there pace about for a few minutes, looking at the old graves and the mossy stones. Nor is this only in summer−time, when the sward is white with daisies, when the ancient oaks around the gray wall are leafy and green, when the passing river flashes bright through their openings and runs chiming over the warm stones, and when the beautiful hills that surround the quiet spot at a little distance are flecked with summer light and shade; but in winter too, when the bare branches look sharp against the frosty sky, and the graves look like wavelets on a sea of snow. Now, if I were anxious to pass myself off upon my readers as a great and thoughtful man, I might here give an account of the profound thoughts which I think in my daily musings in my pretty churchyard. But, being an essentially commonplace person (as I have no doubt about nine hundred and ninety−nine out of every thousand of my readers also are), I must here confess that generally I walk about the churchyard, thinking and feeling nothing very particular. I do not believe that ordinary people, when worried by some little care, or pressed down by some little sorrow, have only to go and muse in a churchyard in order to feel how trivial and transient such cares and sorrows are, and how very little they ought to vex us. To commonplace mortals, it is the sunshine within the breast that does most to brighten; and the thing that has most power to darken is the shadow there. And the scenes and teachings of external nature have, practically, very little effect indeed. And so, when musing in the churchyard, nothing grand, heroical, philosophical, or tremendous ever suggests itself to me. I look with pleasure at the neatly cut walks and grass. I peep in at a window of the church, and think how I am to finish my sermon for next Sunday. I read over the inscriptions on the stones which mark where seven of my predecessors sleep. I look vacantly at the lichens and moss which have overgrown certain tombstones three or four centuries old. And occasionally I think of what and where I shall be, when the village mason, whistling cheerfully at his task, shall cut out my name and years on the stone which will mark my last resting−place. But all these, of course, are commonplace thoughts, just what would occur to anybody else, and really not worth repeating.

And yet, although 'death, and the house appointed for all living,' form a topic which has been treated by innumerable writers, from the author of the book of Job to Mr. Dickens; and although the subject might well be vulgarized by having been, for many a day, the stock resort of every commonplace aimer at the pathetic; still the theme is one which never can grow old. And the experience and the heart of most men convert into touching eloquence even the poorest formula of set phrases about the tremendous Fact. Nor are we able to repress a strong interest in any account of the multitude of fashions in which the mortal part of man has been disposed of, after the great change has passed upon it. In a volume entitled God's Acre, written by a lady, one Mrs. Stone, and published a year or two since, you may find a great amount of curious information upon such points: and after thinking of the various ways of burial described, I think you will return with a feeling of home and of relief to the quiet English country churchyard. I should think that the shocking and revolting description of the burning of the remains of Shelley, published by Mr. Trelawney, in his Last Days of Shelhy and Byron, will go far to destroy any

probability of the introduction of cremation in this country, notwithstanding the ingenuity and the eloquence of the little treatise published about two years ago by a Member of the College of Surgeons, whose gist you will understand from its title, which is Burning the Dead; or, Urn−Sepulture Religiously, Socially, and Generally considered; with Suggestions for a Revival of the Practice, as a Sanitary Measure. The choice lies between burning and burying: and the latter being universally accepted in Britain, it remains that it be carried out in the way most decorous as regards the deceased, and most soothing to the feelings of surviving friends. Every one has seen burying−places of all conceivable kinds, and every one knows how prominent a feature they form in the English landscape. There is the dismal corner in the great city, surrounded by blackened walls, where scarce a blade of grass will grow, and where the whole thing is foul and pestilential. There is the ideal country churchyard, like that described by Gray, where the old elms and yews keep watch over the graves where successive generations of simple rustics have found their last resting−place, and where in the twilight the owls hoot from the tower of the ivy−covered church. There is the bare enclosure, surrounded by four walls, and without a tree, far up the lonely Highland hill−side; and more lonely still, the little gray stone, rising above the purple heather, where rude letters, touched up by Old Mortality's hands, tell that one, probably two or three, rest beneath, who were done to death for what they firmly believed was their Redeemer's cause, by Claverhouse or Dalyell. There is the churchyard by the bleak sea−shore, where coffins have been laid bare by the encroaching waves; and the niche in cathedral crypt, or the vault under the church's floor. I cannot conceive anything more irreverent than the American fashion of burying in unconsecrated earth, each family having its own place of interment in the corner of its own garden: unless it be the crotchet of the silly old peer, who spent the last years of his life in erecting near his castle−door, a preposterous building, the progress of which he watched day by day with the interest of a man who had worn out all other interest, occasionally lying down in the stone coffin which he had caused to be prepared, to make sure that it would fit him. I feel sorry, too, for the poor old Pope, who when he dies is laid on a shelf above a door in St. Peter's, where he remains till the next Pope dies, and then is put out of the way to make room for him; nor do I at all envy the noble who has his family vault filled with coffins covered with velvet and gold, occupied exclusively by corpses of good quality. It is better surely to be laid, as Allan Cunningham wished, where we shall 'not be built over;' where 'the wind shall blow and the daisy grow upon our grave.' Let it be among our kindred, indeed, in accordance with the natural desire; but not on dignified shelves, not in aristocratic vaults, but lowly and humbly, where the Christian dead sleep for the Resurrection. Most people will sympathize so far with Beattie, though his lines show that he was a Scotchman, and lived where there are not many trees:—

Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down,
Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
With here and there a violet bestrown,
Fast by a brook, or fountain's murmuring wave;
And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my grave!

But it depends entirely upon individual associations and fancies where one would wish to rest after life's fitful fever: and I have hardly ever been more deeply impressed than by certain lines which I cut out of an old newspaper when I was a boy, and which set out a choice far different from that of The Minstrel. They are written by Mr. Westwood, a true poet, though not known as he deserves to be. Here they are:—

Not there, not there!
Not in that nook, that ye deem so fair;—
Little reck I of the blue bright sky,
And the stream that floweth so murmuringly,
And the bending boughs, and the breezy air—
Not there, good friends, not there!
In the city churchyard, where the grass
Groweth rank and black, and where never a ray
Of that self−same sun doth find its way
Through the heaped−up houses' serried mass—
Where the only sounds are the voice of the throng,
And the clatter of wheels as they rush along—
Or the plash of the rain, or the wind's hoarse cry,

Or the busy tramp of the passer−by,
Or the toll of the bell on the heavy air—
Good friends, let it be there!
I am old, my friends—I am very old—
Fourscore and five—and bitter cold
Were that air on the hill−side far away;
Eighty full years, content, I trow,
Have I lived in the home where ye see me now,
And trod those dark streets day by day,
Till my soul doth love them; I love them all,
Each battered pavement, and blackened wall,
Each court and corner. Good sooth! to me
They are all comely and fair to see—
They have old faces—each one doth tell
A tale of its own, that doth like me well—
Sad or merry, as it may be,
From the quaint old book of my history.
And, friends, when this weary pain is past,
Fain would I lay me to rest at last
In their very midst;—full sure am I,
How dark soever be earth and sky,
I shall sleep softly—I shall know
That the things I loved so here below
Are about me still—so never care
That my last home looketh all bleak and bare—
Good friends, let it be there!

Some persons appear to think that it argues strength of mind and freedom from unworthy prejudice, to profess great indifference as to what becomes of their mortal part after they die. I have met with men who talked in a vapouring manner about leaving their bodies to be dissected; and who evidently enjoyed the sensation which such sentiments produced among simple folk. Whenever I hear any man talk in this way, my politeness, of course, prevents my telling him that he is an uncommonly silly person; but it does not prevent my thinking him one. It is a mistake to imagine that the soul is the entire man. Human nature, alike here and hereafter, consists of soul and body in union; and the body is therefore justly entitled to its own degree of thought and care. But the point, indeed, is not one to be argued; it is, as it appears to me, a matter of intuitive judgment and instinctive feeling; and I apprehend that this feeling and judgment have never appeared more strongly than in the noblest of our race. I hold by Burke, who wrote, 'I should like that my dust should mingle with kindred dust; the good old expression, "family burying−ground," has something pleasing in it, at least to me.' Mrs. Stone quotes Lady Murray's account of the death of her mother, the celebrated Grissell Baillie, which shows that that strong−minded and noble−hearted woman felt the natural desire:—

The next day she called me: gave directions about some few things: said she wished to be carried home to lie by my father, but that perhaps it would be too much trouble and inconvenience to us at that season, therefore left me to do as I pleased; but that, in a black purse in her cabinet, I would find money sufficient to do it, which she had kept by her for that use, that whenever it happened, it might not straiten us. She added, 'I have now no more to say or do:' tenderly embraced me, and laid down her head upon the pillow, and spoke little after that.

An instance, at once touching and awful, of care for the body after the soul has gone, is furnished by certain well−known lines written by a man not commonly regarded as weak−minded or prejudiced; and engraved by his direction on the stone that marks his grave. If I am wrong, I am content to go wrong with Shakspeare:

Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
To dig the dust enclosed here:
Blest be the man that spares these stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones.

The most eloquent exposition I know of the religious aspect of the question, is contained in the concluding sentences of Mr. Melvill's noble sermon on the 'Dying Faith of Joseph.' I believe my readers will thank me for quoting it:—

It is not a Christian thing to die manifesting indifference as to what is done with the body. That body is redeemed: not a particle of its dust but was bought with drops of Christ's precious blood. That body is appointed to a glorious condition; not a particle of the corruptible but what shall put on incorruption; of the mortal that shall not assume immortality. The Christian knows this: it is not the part of a Christian to seem unmindful of this. He may, therefore, as he departs, speak of the place where he would wish to be laid. 'Let me sleep,' he may say, 'with my father and my mother, with my wife and my children; lay me not here, in this distant land, where my dust cannot mingle with its kindred. I would he chimed to my grave by my own village bell, and have my requiem sung where I was baptized into Christ.' Marvel ye at such last words? Wonder ye that one, whose spirit is just entering the separate state, should have this care for the body which he is about to leave to the worms? Nay, he is a believer in Jesus as 'the Resurrection and the Life:' this belief prompts his dying words; and it shall have to be said of him as of Joseph, that 'by faith,' yea, 'by faith,' he 'gave commandment concerning his bones!'

If you hold this belief, my reader, you will look at a neglected churchyard with much regret; and you will highly approve of all endeavours to make the burying−place of the parish as sweet though solemn a spot as can be found within it. I have lately read a little tract, by Mr. Hill, the Rural Dean of North Frome, in the Diocese of Hereford, entitled Thoughts on Churches and Churchyards, which is well worthy of the attentive perusal of the country clergy. Its purpose is to furnish practical suggestions for the maintenance of decent propriety about the church and churchyard. I am not, at present, concerned with that part of the tract which relates to churches; but I may remark, in passing, that Mr. Hill's views upon that subject appear to me distinguished by great good sense, moderation, and taste. He does not discourage country clergymen, who have but limited means with which to set about ordering and beautifying their churches, by suggesting arrangements on too grand and expensive a scale: on the contrary, he enters with hearty sympathy into all plans for attaining a simple and inexpensive seemliness where more cannot be accomplished. And I think he hits with remarkable felicity the just mean between an undue and excessive regard to the mere externalities of worship, and a puritanical bareness and contempt for material aids, desiring, in the words of Archbishop Bramhall, that 'all be with due moderation, so as neither to render religion sordid and sluttish, nor yet light and garish, but comely and venerable.'

Equally judicious, and equally practical, are Mr. Hill's hints as to the ordering of churchyards. He laments that churchyards should ever be found where long, rank grass, briers, and nettles abound, and where neatly kept walks and graves are wanting. He goes on:—

And yet, how trifling an amount of care and attention would suffice to render neat, pretty, and pleasant to look upon, that which has oftentimes an unpleasing, desolate, and painful aspect. A few sheep occasionally (or better still, the scythe and shears now and then employed), with a trifling attention to the walks, once properly formed and gravelled, will suffice, when the fences are duly kept, to make any churchyard seemly and neat: a little more than this will make it ornamental and instructive.

It is possible that many persons might feel that flower−beds and shrubberies are not what they would wish to see in a churchyard; they might think they gave too garden−like and adorned a look to so solemn and sacred a spot; persons will not all think alike on such a matter: and yet something may be done in this direction with an effect which would please everybody. A few trees of the arbor vitae, the cypress, and the Irish yew, scattered here and there, with tirs in the hedge−rows or boundary fences, would be unobjectionable; while wooden baskets, or boxes, placed by the sides of the walks, and filled in summer with the fuchsia or scarlet geranium, would give our churchyards an exceedingly pretty, and perhaps not unsuitable appearance. Little clumps of snowdrops and primroses might also be planted here and there; for flowers may fitly spring up, bloom, and fade away, in a spot which so impressively tells us of death and resurrection: and where sheep even are never admitted, all these methods for beautifying a churchyard may be adopted. Shrubs and flowers on and near the graves, as is so universal in Wales; independently of their pretty effect, show a kindly feeling for the memory of those whose bodies rest beneath them; and how far to be preferred to those enormous and frightful masses of brick or stone which the country mason has, alas, so plentifully supplied!

In the case of a clergyman, a taste for keeping his churchyard in becoming order is just like a taste for keeping his garden and shrubbery in order: only let him begin the work, and the taste will grow. There is latent in the mind

of every man, unless he be the most untidy and unobservant of the species, a love for well−mown grass and for sharply outlined gravel−walks. My brethren, credite experto. I did not know that in my soul there was a chord that vibrated responsive to trim gravel and grass, till I tried, and lo! it was there. Try for yourselves: you do not know, perhaps, the strange affinities that exist between material and immaterial nature. If any youthful clergyman shall read these lines, who knows in his conscience that his churchyard−walks are grown up with weeds, and the graves covered with nettles, upon sight hereof let him summon his man−servant, or get a labourer if he have no man−servant. Let him provide a reaping−hook and a large new spade. These implements will suffice in the meantime. Proceed to the churchyard: do not get disheartened at its neglected look, and turn away. Begin at the entrance−gate. Let all the nettles and long grass for six feet on. either side of the path be carefully cut down and gathered into heaps. Then mark out with a line the boundaries of the first ten yards of the walk. Fall to work and cut the edges with the spade; clear away the weeds and grass that have overspread the walk, also with the spade. In a little time you will feel the fascination of the sharp outline of the walk against the grass on each side. And I repeat, that to the average human being there is something inexpressibly pleasing in that sharp outline. By the time the ten yards of walk are cut, you will find that you have discovered a new pleasure and a new sensation; and from that day will date a love of tidy walks and grass;—and what more is needed to make a pretty churchyard? The fuchsias, geraniums, and so forth, are of the nature of luxuries, and they will follow in due time: but grass and gravel are the foundation of rustic neatness and tidiness.

As for the treatise on Burning the Dead, it is interesting and eloquent, though I am well convinced that its author has been putting forih labour in vain. I remember the consternation with which I read the advertisements announcing its publication. I made sure that it must be the production of one of those wrong−headed individuals who are always proposing preposterous things, without end or meaning. Why on earth should we take to burning the dead? What is to be gained by recurring to a heathen rite, repudiated by the early Christians, who, as Sir Thomas Browne tells us, 'stickt not to give their bodies to be burnt in their lives, but detested that mode after death?' And wherefore do anything so horrible, and so suggestive of cruelty and sacrilege, as to consign to devouring flames even the unconscious remains of a departed friend? But after reading the essay, I feel that the author has a great deal to say in defence of his views. I am obliged to acknowledge that in many cases important benefits would follow the adoption of urn−sepulture. The question to be considered is, what is the best way to dispose of the mortal part of man when the soul has left it? A first suggestion might be to endeavour to preserve it in the form and features of life; and, accordingly, in many countries and ages, embalming in its various modifications has been resorted to. But all attempts to prevent the human frame from obeying the Creator's law of returning to the elements have miserably failed. And surely it is better a thousand times to 'bury the dead from our sight,' than to preserve a hideous and revolting mockery of the beloved form. The Egyptian mummies every one has heard of; but the most remarkable instance of embalming in recent times is that of the wife of one Martin Van Butchell, who, by her husband's desire, was embalmed in the year 1775, by Dr. William Hunter and Mr. Carpenter, and who may be seen in the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in London. She was a beautiful woman, and all that skill and science could do were done to preserve her in the appearance of life; but the result is nothing short of shocking and awful. Taking it, then, as admitted, that the body must return to the dust from whence it was taken, the next question is, How? How shall dissolution take place with due respect to the dead, and with least harm to the health and the feelings of the living?

The two fashions which have been universally used are, burial and burning. It has so happened that burial has been associated with Christianity, and burning with heathenism; but I shall admit at once that the association is not essential, though it would be hard, without very weighty reason indeed, to deviate from the long−remembered 'earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.' But such weighty reason the author of this treatise declares to exist. The system of burial, he says, is productive of fearful and numberless evils and dangers to the living. In the neighbourhood of any large burying−place, the air which the living breathe, and the water which they drink, are impregnated with poisons the most destructive of health and life. Even where the damage done to air and water is inappreciable by our senses, it is a predisposing cause of headache, dysentery, sore throat, and low fever;' and it keeps all the population around in a condition in which they are the ready prey of all forms of disease. I shall not shock my readers by relating a host of horrible facts, proved by indisputable evidence, which are adduced by the surgeon to show the evils of burial: and all these evils, he maintains, may be escaped by the revival of burning. Four thousand human beings die every hour; and only by that swift and certain method can the vast mass of

decaying matter which, while decaying, gives off the most subtle and searching poisons, be resolved with the elements without injury or risk to any one. So convinced has the French Government become of the evils of burial that it has patronized and encouraged one M. Bonneau, who proposes that instead of a great city having its neighbouring cemeteries, it should be provided with a building called The Sarcophagus, occupying an elevated situation, to which the bodies of rich and poor should be conveyed, and there reduced to ashes by a powerful furnace. And then M. Bonneau, Frenchman all over, suggests that the ashes of our friends might be preserved in a tasteful manner; the funeral urn, containing these ashes, 'replacing on our consoles and mantelpieces the ornaments of bronze clocks and china vases now found there.' Our author, having shown that burning would save us from the dangers of burying, concludes his treatise by a careful description of the manner in which he would carry out the burning process. And certainly his plan contains as little to shock one as may be, in carrying out a system necessarily suggestive of violence and cruelty. There is nothing like the repulsiveness of the Hindoo burning, only half carried out, or even of Mr. Trelawney's furnace for burning poor Shelley. I do not remember to have lately read anything more ghastly and revolting than the entire account of Shelley's cremation. It says much for Mr. Trelawney's nerves, that he was able to look on at it; and it was no wonder that it turned Byron sick, and that Mr. Leigh Hunt kept beyond the sight of it. I intended to have quoted the passage from Mr. Trelawney's book, but I really cannot venture to do so. But it is right to say that there were very good reasons for resorting to that melancholy mode of disposing of the poet's remains, and that Mr. Trelawney did all he could to accomplish the burning with efficiency and decency: though the whole story makes one feel the great physical difficulties that stand in the way of carrying out cremation successfully. The advocate of urn−sepulture, however, is quite aware of this, and he proposes to use an apparatus by which they would be entirely overcome. It is only fair to let him speak for himself; and I think the following passage will be read with interest:—

On a gentle eminence, surrounded by pleasant grounds, stands a convenient, well−ventilated chapel, with a high spire or steeple. At the entrance, where some of the mourners might prefer to take leave of the body, are chambers for their accommodation. Within the edifice are seats for those who follow the remains to the last: there is also an organ, and a gallery for choristers. In the centre of the chapel, embellished with appropriate emblems and devices, is erected a shrine of marble, somewhat like those which cover the ashes of the great and mighty in our old cathedrals, the openings being filled with prepared plate glass. Within this—a sufficient space intervening—is an inner shrine covered with bright non−radiating metal, and within this again is a covered sarcophagus of tempered fire−clay, with one or more longitudinal slits near the top, extending its whole length. As soon as the body is deposited therein, sheets of flame at an immensely high temperature rush through the long apertures from end to end, and acting as a combination of a modified oxy−hydrogen blowpipe, with the reverberatory furnace, utterly and completely consume and decompose the body, in an incredibly short space of time. Even the large quantity of water it contains is decomposed by the extreme heat, and its elements, instead of retarding, aid combustion, as is the case in fierce conflagrations. The gaseous products of combustion are conveyed away by flues; and means being adopted to consume anything like smoke, all that is observed from the outside is occasionally a quivering transparent ether floating away from the high steeple to mingle vith the atmosphere.

At either end of the sarcophagus is a closely−fitting fire−proof door, that farthest from the chapel entrance communicating with a chamber which projects into the chapel and adjoins the end of the shrine. Here are the attendants, who, unseen, conduct the operation. The door at the other end of the sarcophagus, with a corresponding opening in the inner and outer shrine, is exactly opposite a slab of marble on which the coffin is deposited when brought into the chapel. The funeral service then commences according; to any form decided on. At an appointed signal the end of the coffin, which is placed just within the opening in the shrine, is removed, and the body is drawn rapidly but gently and without exposure into the sarcophagus: the sides of the coffin, constructed for the purpose, collapse; and the wooden box is removed to be burned elsewhere.

Meantime the body is committed to the flames to be consumed, and the words 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust' may be appropriately used. The organ peals forth a solemn strain, and a hymn or requiem for the dead is sung. In a few minutes, or even seconds, and without any perceptible noise or commotion, all is over, and nothing but a few pounds or ounces of light ash remains. This is carefully collected by the attendants of the adjoining chamber: a door communicating with the chapel is thrown open; and the relic, enclosed in a vase of glass or other material, is brought in and placed before the mourners, to be finally enshrined in the funeral urn of marble, alabaster, stone,

or metal.

Speaking for myself, I must say that I think it would cause a strange feeling in most people to part at the chapel−door with the corpse of one who had been very dear, and, after a few minutes of horrible suspense, during which they should know that it was burning in a fierce furnace, to see the vessel of white ashes brought back, and be told that there was all that was mortal of the departed friend. No doubt it may be weakness and prejudice, but I think that few could divest themselves of the feeling of sacrilegious violence. Better far to lay the brother or sister, tenderly as though still they felt, in the last resting−place, so soft and trim. It soothes us, if it does no good to them, and the sad change which we know is soon to follow is wrought only by the gentle hand of Nature. And only think of a man pointing to half−a−dozen vases on his mantelpiece, and as many more on his cheffonier, and saying, 'There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest!'

No, no; the thing will never do!

One of the latest examples of burning, in the case of a Christian, is that of Henry Laurens, the first President of the American Congress. In his will he solemnly enjoined upon his children that they should cause his body to be given to the flames. The Emperor Napoleon, when at St. Helena, expressed a similar desire; and said, truly enough, that as for the Resurrection, that would be miraculous at all events, and it would be just as easy for the Almighty to accomplish that great end in the case of burning as in that of burial. And, indeed, the doctrine of the Resurrection is one that it is not wise to scrutinize too minutely—I mean as regards its rationale. It is best to simply hold by the great truth, that 'this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.' I presume that it has been shown beyond doubt that the material particles which make up our bodies are in a state of constant flux, the entire physical nature being changed every seven years, so that if all the particles which once entered into the structure of a man of fourscore were reassembled, they would suffice to make seven or eight bodies. And the manner in which it is certain that the mortal part of man is dispersed and assimilated to all the elements furnishes a very striking thought. Bryant has said, truly and beautifully,

All that tread
The globe, are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.

And James Montgomery, in a poem of his which is little known, and which is amplified and spoiled in the latest editions of his works, has suggested to us whither the mortal vestiges of these untold millions have gone. It is entitled Lines to a Molehill in a Churchyard.

Tell me, thou dust beneath my feet,—
Thou dust that once hadst breath,—
Tell me, how many mortals meet
In this small hill of death.
The mole, that scoops with curious toil
Her subterranean bed,
Thinks not she plows a human soil,
And mines among the dead.
Yet, whereso'er she turns the ground,
My kindred earth I see:
Once every atom of this mound
Lived, breathed, and felt, like me.
Through all this hillock's crumbling mould
Once the warm lifeblood ran:
Here thine original behold,
And here thy ruins, man!
By wafting winds and flooding rains,
From ocean, earth, and sky,
Collected here, the frail remains
Of slumbering millions lie.
The towers and temples crushed by time,
Stupendous wrecks, appear

To me less mournfully sublime
Than this poor molehill here.
Methinks this dust yet heaves with breath—
Ten thousand pulses beat;—
Tell me, in this small hill of death,
How many mortals meet!

One idea, you see, beaten out rather thin, and expressed in a great many words, as was the good man's wont. And in these days of the misty and spasmodic school, I owe my readers an apology for presenting them with poetry which they will have no difficulty in understanding.

Amid a great number of particulars as to the burial customs of various nations, we find mention made of an odd way in which the natives of Thibet dignify their great people. They do not desecrate such by giving them to the earth, but retain a number of sacred dogs to devour them. Not less strange was the fancy of that Englishwoman, a century or two back, who had her husband burnt to ashes, and these ashes reduced to powder, of which she mixed some with all the water she drank, thinking, poor heart−broken creature, that, thus she was burying the dear form within her own.

In rare cases I have known of the parson or the churchwarden turning his cow to pasture in the churchyard, to the sad desecration of the place. It appears, however, that worse than this has been done, if we may judge from the following passage quoted by Mrs. Stone:—

1540. Proceedings in the Court of Archdeaconry of Colchester, Colne Wake. Notatur per iconimos dicte ecclesie yt the parson mysusithe the churche−yard, for hogis do wrote up graves, and besse lie in the porche, and ther the pavements he broke up and soyle the porche; and ther is so mych catell yt usithe the church−yarde, yt is more liker a pasture than a halowed place.

It is usual, it appears, in the southern parts of France, to erect in the churchyard a lofty pillar, bearing a large lamp, which throws its light upon the cemetery during the night. The custom began in the twelfth or thirteenth century. Sometimes the lanterne des marts was a highly ornamented chapel, built in a circular form, like the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, in which the dead lay exposed to view in the days which preceded their interment: sometimes it was merely a hollow column, ascended by a winding stair inside, or by projections left for the purpose within. It must have been a striking sight when the traveller, through the dark night, saw far away the lonely flame that marked the spot where so many of his fellow−men had completed their journey.

One of the oddest things ever introduced into Materia Medica was the celebrated Mummy Powder. Egyptian mummies, being broken up and ground into dust, were held of great value as medicine both for external and internal application. Boyle and Bacon unite in commending its virtues: the latter, indeed, venturing to suggest that 'the mixture of balms that are glutinous' was the foundation of its power, though common belief held that the virtue was 'more in the Egyptian than in the spice.' Even in the seventeenth century mummy was an important article of commerce, and was sold at a great price. One Eastern traveller brought to the Turkey Company six hundred weight of mummy broken into pieces. Adulteration came into play in a manner which would have gratified the Lancet commission: the Jews collecting the bodies of executed criminals, filling them with common asphaltum, which cost little, and then drying them in the sun, when they became undistinguishable from the genuine article. And the maladies which mummy was held to cure are set forth in a list which we commend to the notice of Professor Holloway. It was 'to be taken in decoctions of marjoram, thyme, elder−flower, barley, roses, lentils, jujubes, cummin−seed, carraway, saffron, cassia, parsley, with oxymel, wine, milk, butter, castor, and mulberries.' Sir Thomas Browne, who was a good deal before his age, did not approve of the use of mummy. He says:

Were the efficacy thereof more clearly made out, we scarce conceive the use thereof allowable in physic: exceeding the barbarities of Cambyses, and turning old heroes into unworthy potions. Shall Egypt lend out her ancients unto chirurgeons and apothecaries, and Cheops and Psammeticus be weighed unto us for drugs? Shall we eat of Chamnes and Amasis in electuaries and pills, and be cured by cannibal mixtures? Surely such diet is miserable vampirism; and exceeds in horror the black banquet of Domitian, not to be paralleled except in those Arabian feasts wherein ghouls feed horribly.

I need hardly add that the world has come round to the great physician's way of thinking, and that mummy is not included in the pharmacopoeia of modern days.

The monumental inscriptions of this country, as a general rule, furnish lamentable proof of the national bad taste. Somehow our peculiar genius seems not to lie in that direction; and very eminent men, who did most other things well, have signally failed when they tried to produce an epitaph. What with stilted extravagance and bombast on the one side, and profane and irreverent jesting on the other, our epitaphs, for the most part, would be better away. It was well said by Addison of the inscriptions in Westminster Abbey,—'Some epitaphs are so extravagant that the dead person would blush; and others so excessively modest that they deliver the character of the person departed in Greek and Hebrew, and by that means are not understood once in a twelve−month.' And Fuller has hit the characteristics of a fitting epitaph when he said that 'the shortest, plainest, and truest epitaphs are the best.' In most cases the safe plan is to give no more than the name and age, and some brief text of Scripture.

Every one knows that epitaphs generally are expressed in such complimentary terms as quite explain the question of the child, who wonderingly inquired where they buried the bad people. Mrs. Stone, however, quotes a remarkably out−spoken one, from a monument in Horselydown Church, in Cumberland. It runs as follows:—

Here lie the bodies
Of Thomas Bond and Mary his wife.
She was temperate, chaste, and charitable;
But
She was proud, peevish, and passionate.
She was an affectionate wife and a tender mother;
But
Her husband and child, whom she loved,
Seldom saw her countenance without a disgusting frown; While she received visitors whom she despised with an endearing smile.
Her behaviour was discreet towards strangers;
But
Imprudent in her family.
Abroad her conduct was influenced by good breeding;
But
At home by ill temper.

And so the epitaph runs on to considerable length, acknowledging the good qualities of the poor woman, but killing each by setting against it some peculiarly unamiable trait. I confess that my feeling is quite turned in her favour by the unmanly assault which her brother (the author of the inscription) has thus made upon the poor dead woman. If you cannot honestly say good of a human being on his grave−stone, then say nothing at all. There are some cases in which an exception may justly be made; and such a one, I think, was that of the infamous Francis Chartres, who died in 1731. He was buried in Scotland, and at his funeral the populace raised a riot, almost tore his body from the coffin, and threw dead dogs into the grave along with it. Dr. Arbuthnot wrote his epitaph, and here it is:—

Here continueth to rot
The body of Francis Chartres:
Who, with an inflexible constancy,
and
Inimitable uniformity of life,
Persisted,
In spite of age and infirmities,
In the practice of every human vice,
Excepting prodigality and hypocrisy:
His insatiable avarice exempted him
from the first,
His matchless impudence from the
second.
Nor was he more singular
In the undeviating pravity of his

manners,
Than successful
In accumulating wealth:
For without trade or profession,
Without trust of public money,
And without bribeworthy service,
He acquired, or more properly created,
A Ministerial Estate:
He was the only person of his time
Who could cheat without the mask of
honesty,
Retain his primeval meanness
When possessed of ten thousand a year:
And having daily deserved the gibbet for
what he did,
Was at last condemned for what he
could not do.
Oh! indignant reader!
Think not his life useless to mankind!
Providence connived at his execrable designs,
To give to after ages
A conspicuous proof and example
Of how small estimation is exorbitant
wealth
In the sight of God,
By his bestowing it on the most
unworthy of all
mortals.

If one does intend to make a verbal assault upon any man, it is well to do so in words which will sting and cut; and assuredly Arbuthnot has succeeded in his laudable intention. The character is justly drawn; and with the change of a very few words, it might correctly be inscribed on the monument of at least one Scotch and one English peer, who have died within the last half−century.

There are one or two extreme cases in which it is in good taste, and the effect not without sublimity, to leave a monument with no inscription at all. Of course this can only be when the monument is that of a very great and illustrious man. The pillar erected by Bernadotte at Frederickshall, in memory of Charles the Twelfth, bears not a word; and I believe most people who visit the spot feel that Bernadotte judged well. The rude mass of masonry, standing in the solitary waste, that marks where Howard the philanthropist sleeps, is likewise nameless. And when John Kyrle died in 1724, he was buried in the chancel of the church of Ross in Herefordshire, 'without so much as an inscription.' But the Man of Ross had his best monument in the lifted head and beaming eye of those he left behind him at the mention of his name. He never knew, of course, that the bitter little satirist of Twickenham would melt into unwonted tenderness in telling of all he did, and apologize nobly for his nameless grave:—

And what! no monument, inscription, stone?
His race, his form, his name almost, unknown?
Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,
Will never mark the marble with his name:
Go, search it there, where to be born and die,
Of rich and poor make all the history:
Enough, that virtue filled the space between,
Proved, by the ends of being, to have been!

[Footnote: Pope's Moral Essays. Epistle III.]

The two fine epitaphs written by Ben Jonson are well known. One is on the Countess of Pembroke:—

Underneath this marble hearse,
Lies the subject of all verse:
Sidney's sister, Pembroke's'mother;
Death! ere thou hast slain another,
Learned and fair, and good as she,
Time shall throw a dart at thee.

And the other is the epitaph of a certain unknown Elizabeth:—

Wouldst thou hear what man can say
In a little?—reader, stay.
Underneath this stone doth lie
As much beauty as could die;
Which in life did harbour give,
To more virtue than doth live.
If at all she had a fault,
Leave it buried in this vault:
One name was Elizabeth,
The other let it sleep with death:
Fitter, where it died, to tell,
Than that it lived at all. Farewell!

Most people have heard of the brief epitaph inscribed on a tombstone in the floor of Hereford Cathedral, which inspired one of the sonnets of Wordsworth. There is no name, no date, but the single word MISERRIMUS. The lines, written by herself, which are inscribed on the gravestone of Mrs. Hemans, in St. Anne's Church at Dublin, are very beautiful, but too well known to need quotation. And Longfellow, in his charming little poem of Nuremburg, has preserved the characteristic word in the epitaph of Albert Durer:—

Emigravit is the inscription on the tombstone where he lies;
Dead he is not,—but departed,—for the artist never dies.

Perhaps some readers may be interested by the following epitaph, written by no less a man than Sir Walter Scott, and inscribed on the stone which covers the grave of a humble heroine whose name his genius has made known over the world. The grave is in the churchyard of Kirkpatrick−Irongray, a few miles from Dumfries:—

This stone was erected
By the Author of Waverley
To the memory of
Helen Walker
Who died in the year of God 1791.
This humble individual
practised in real life
the virtues
with which fiction has invested
the imaginary character
of
Jeanie Deans.
Refusing the slightest departure
from veracity
even to save the life of a sister,
she neverthless showed her
kindness and fortitude
by rescuing her from the severity of the law;
at the expense of personal exertions
which the time rendered as difficult
as the motive was laudable.
Respect the grave of poverty

when combined with love of truth
and dear affection.

Although, of course, it is treasonable to say so, I confess I think this inscription somewhat cumbrous and awkward. The antithesis is not a good one, between the difficulty of Jeanie's 'personal exertions' and the laudableness of the motive which led to them. And there is something not metaphysically correct in the combination described in the closing sentence—the combination of poverty, an outward condition, with truthfulness and affection, two inward characteristics. The only parallel phrase which I remember in literature is one which was used by Mr. Stiggins when he was explaining to Sam Weller what was meant by a moral pocket−handkerchief. 'It's them,' were Mr. Stiggins's words, 'as combines useful instruction with wood−cuts.' Poverty might co−exist with, or be associated with, any mental qualities you please, but assuredly it cannot correctly be said to enter into combination with any.

As for odd and ridiculous epitaphs, their number is great, and every one has the chief of them at his fingers' ends. I shall be content to give two or three, which I am quite sure hardly any of my readers ever heard of before. The following, which may be read on a tombstone in a country churchyard in Ayrshire, appears to me to be unequalled for irreverence. And let critics observe the skilful introduction of the dialogue form, giving the inscription a dramatic effect:—

Wha is it that's lying here?—
Robin Wood, ye needna speer.
Eh Robin, is this you?
Ou aye, but I'm deid noo!

The following epitaph was composed by a village poet and wit, not unknown to me in my youth, for a rival poet, one Syme, who had published a volume of verses On the Times (not the newspaper).

Beneath this thistle,
Skin, bone, and gristle,
In Sexton Goudie's keepin' lies,
Of poet Syme,
Who fell to rhyme,
(O bards beware!) a sacrifice.
Ask not at all,
Where flew his saul,
When of the body death bereft her:
She, like his rhymes
Upon the Times,
Was never worth the speerin' after!

Speerin', I should mention, for the benefit of those ignorant of Lowland Scotch, means asking or inquiring.

It is recorded in history that a certain Mr. Anderson, who filled the dignified office of Provost of Dundee, died, as even provosts must. It was resolved that a monument should be erected in his memory, and that the inscription upon it should be the joint composition of four of his surviving colleagues in the magistracy. They met to prepare the epitaph; and after much consideration it was resolved that the epitaph should be a rhymed stanza of four lines, of which lines each magistrate should contribute one. The senior accordingly began, and having deeply ruminated he produced the following:—

Here lies Anderson, Provost of Dundee.

This formed a neat and striking introduction, going (so to speak) to the heart of things at once, but leaving room for subsequent amplification. The second magistrate perceived this, and felt that the idea was such a good one that it ought to be followed up. He therefore produced the line,

Here lies Him, here lies He:

thus repeating in different modifications the same grand thought, after the style which has been adopted by Burke, Chalmers, Melvill, and other great orators. The third magistrate, whose turn had now arrived, felt that the foundation had thus been substantially laid down, and that the time had come to erect upon it a superstructure of reflection, inference, or exclamation. With the simplicity of genius he wrote as follows, availing himself of a poet's license to slightly alter the ordinary forms of language:—

Hallelujah, Hallelujee!

The epitaph being thus, as it were, rounded and complete, the fourth contributor to it found himself in a difficulty; wherefore add anything to that which needed and in truth admitted nothing more? Still the stanza must he completed. What should he do? He would fall back on the earliest recollections of his youth—he would recur to the very fount and origin of all human knowledge. Seizing his pen, he wrote thus:—

A. B. C. D. E. F. G.!

Whoever shall piece together these valuable lines, thus fragmentarily presented, will enter into the feelings of the Town Council, which bestowed a vote of thanks upon their authors, and caused the stanza to be engraven on the worthy provost's monument. I have not myself read it, but am assured it is in existence.

There was something of poor Thomas Hood's morbi taste for the ghastly, and the physically repulsive, in his fancy of spending some time during his last illness in drawing a picture of himself dead in his shroud. In his memoirs, published by his children, you may see the picture, grimly truthful: and bearing the legend, He sang the Song of the Shirt. You may discover in what he drew, as well as in what he wrote, many indications of the humourist's perverted taste: and no doubt the knowledge that mortal disease was for years doing its work within, led his thoughts oftentimes to what was awaiting himself. He could not walk in an avenue of elm−trees, without fancying that one of them might furnish his coffin. When in his ear, as in Longfellow's, 'the green trees whispered low and mild,' their sound did not carry him back to boyhood, but onward to his grave. He listened, and there rose within

A secret, vague, prophetic fear,
As though by certain mark,
I knew the fore−ordained tree,
Within whose rugged bark,
This warm and living form shall find
Its narrow house and dark.

Not but that such thoughts are well in their due time and place. It is very fit that we should all sometimes try to realize distinctly what is meant when each of us repeats words four thousand years old, and says, 'I know that Thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.' Even with all such remembrances brought home to him by means to which we are not likely to resort, the good priest and martyr Robert Southwell tells us how hard he found it, while in buoyant life, to rightly consider his end. But in perfect cheerfulness and healthfulness of spirit, the human being who knows (so far as man can know) where he is to rest at last, may oftentimes visit that peaceful spot. It will do him good: it can do him no harm. The hard−wrought man may fitly look upon the soft green turf, some day to be opened for him; and think to himself, Not yet, I have more to do yet; but in a little while. Somewhere there is a place appointed for each of us, a place that is waiting for each of us, and that will not be complete till we are there. Well, we rest in the humble trust, that 'through the grave and gate of death, we shall pass to our joyful resurrection.' And we turn away now from the churchyard, recalling Bryant's lines as to its extent:

Yet not to thy eternal resting−place
Shalt thou retire alone; nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world, with kings,
The powerful of the earth, the wise and good,
Fair forms and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills,
Rock−ribbed and ancient as the sun; the vales,
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods; rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all

Of the Great Tomb of Man!

CHAPTER V. CONCERNING SUMMER DAYS.

There are some people whom all nature helps. They have somehow got the material universe on their side. What they say and do, at least upon important occasions, is so backed up by all the surroundings that it never seems out of keeping with these, and still less ever seems to be contradicted by these. When Mr. Midhurst [Footnote: See the New Series of Friends in Council.] read his essay on the Miseries of Human Life, he had all the advantage of a gloomy, overcast day. And so the aspect of the external world was to the essay like the accompaniment in music to a song. The accompaniment, of course, has no specific meaning; it says nothing, but it appears to accord and sympathize with the sense conveyed by the song's words. But gloomy hills and skies and woods are to desponding views of life and man, even more than the sympathetic chords, in themselves meaningless. The gloomy world not merely accords with the desponding views, but seems somehow to back them. You are conscious of a great environing Presence standing by and looking on approvingly. From all points in the horizon a voice, soft and undefined, seems to whisper to your heart, All true, all too true.

Now, there are human beings who, in the great things they say and do, seldom fail of having this great, vague backing. There are others whom the grand current for the most part sets against. It is part of the great fact of Luck—the indubitable fact that there are men, women, ships, horses, railway−engines, whole railways, which are lucky, and others which are unlucky. I do not believe in the common theory of Luck, but no thoughtful or observant man can deny the fact of it. And in no fashion does it appear more certainly than in this, that in the case of some men cross−accidents are always marring them, and the effect they would fain produce. The system of things is against them. They are not in every case unsuccessful, but whatever success they attain is got by brave fighting against wind and tide. At college they carried off many honours, but no such luck ever befel them as that some wealthy person should offer during their days some special medal for essay or examination, which they would have gained as of course. There was no extra harvest for them to reap: they could do no more than win all that was to be won. They go to the bar, and they gradually make their way; but the day never comes on which their leader is suddenly taken ill, and they have the opportunity of earning a brilliant reputation by conducting in his absence a case in which they are thoroughly prepared. They go into the Church, and earn a fair character as preachers; but Ihe living they would like never becomes vacant, and when they are appointed to preach upon some important occasion, it happens that the ground is a foot deep with snow.

Several years since, on a Sunday in July, I went to afternoon service at a certain church by the sea−shore. The incumbent of that church was a young clergyman of no ordinary talent; he is a distinguished professor now. It was a day of drenching rain and howling hurricane; the sky was black, as in mid−winter; the waves were breaking angry and loud upon the rocks hard by. The weather the previous week had been beautiful; the weather became beautiful again the next morning. There came just the one gloomy and stormy summer day. The young parson could not forsee the weather. What more fitting subject for a July Sunday than the teachings of the beautiful season which was passing over? So the text was, Thou hast made summer: it was a sermon on summer, and its moral and spiritual lessons. How inconsistent the sermon seemed with everything around! The outward circumstances reduced it to an absurdity. The congregation was diminished to a sixth of its usual number; the atmosphere was charged with a muggy vapour from sloppy garments and dripping umbrellas: and as the preacher spoke, describing vividly (though with the chastened taste of the scholar) blue skies, green leaves, and gentle breezes, ever and anon the storm outside drove the rain in heavy plashes upon the windows, and, looking through them, you could see the black sky and the fast−drifting clouds. I thought to myself, as the preacher went on under the cross influence of these surroundings, Now, I am sure you are in small things an unlucky man. No doubt the like happens to you frequently. You are the kind of man to whom the Times fails to come on the morning you specially wish to see it. Your horse falls lame on the morning when you have a long drive before you. Your manservant catches a sore throat, and is unable to go out, just when the visitor comes to whom you wish to show the neighboring country. I felt for the preacher. I was younger then, but I had seen enough to make me think how Mr. Snarling of the next parish (a very dull preacher, with no power of description) would chuckle over the tale of the summer sermon on the stormy day. That youthful preacher (not Mr. Snarling) had been but a few months in

the church, and he probably had not another sermon to give in the unexpected circumstances: he must preach what he had prepared. He had fallen into error. I formed a resolution never to do the like. I was looking forward then with great enthusiasm to the work of my sacred, profession: with enthusiasm which has only grown deeper and warmer through the experience of more than nine years. I resolved that if ever I thought of preaching a summer sermon, I would take care to have an alternative one ready for that day in case of unfavourable weather. I resolved that I would give my summer discourse only if external nature, in her soft luxuriant beauty, looked summer−like: a sweet pervading accompaniment to my poor words, giving them a force and meaning far beyond their own. What talk concerning summer skies is like the sapphire radiance, so distant and pure, looking in through the church windows? You do not remember how blue and beautiful the sky is, unless when you are looking at it: nature is better than our remembrance of her. What description of a leafy tree equals that noble, soft, massive, luxuriant object which I looked at for half−an−hour yesterday through the window of a little country church, while listening to the sermon of a friend? Do not think that I was inattentive. I heard the sermon with the greater pleasure and profit for the sight. It is characteristic of the preaching of a really able man, preaching what he himself has felt, that all he says appears (as a general rule) in harmony with all the universe; while the preaching of a commonplace man, giving us from memory mere theological doctrine which has been drilled into him, and which he repeats because he supposes it must be all right, seems inconsistent with all the material universe, or at least quite apart from it. Yet, even listening to that excellent sermon (whose masculine thought was very superior to its somewhat slovenly style), I thought, as I looked at the beautiful tree rising in the silent churchyard,—the stately sycamore, so bright green, with the blue sky all around it,—how truly John Foster wrote, that when standing in January at the foot of a large oak, and looking at its bare branches, he vainly tried to picture to himself what that tree would be in June. The reality would be far richer and finer than anything he could imagine on the winter day. Who does not know this? The green grass and the bright leaves in spring are far greener (you see when they come back) than you had remembered or imagined; the sunshine is more golden, and the sky more bright. God's works are better and more beautiful than our poor idea of them. Though I have seen them and loved them now for more than thirty summers, I have felt this year, with something of almost surprise, how exquisitely beautiful are summer foliage and summer grass. Here they are again, fresh from God! The summer world is incomparably more beautiful than any imagination could picture it on a dull December day. You did not know on New Year's day, my reader, how fair a thing the sunshine is. And the commonest things are the most beautiful. Flowers are beautiful: he must be a blackguard who does not love them. Summer seas are beautiful, so exquisitely blue under the blue summer sky. But what can surpass the beauty of green grass and green trees! Amid such things let me live; and when I am gone, let green grass grow over me. I would not be buried beneath a stone pavement, not to sleep in the great Abbey itself.

My summer sermon has never been written, and so has never been preached; I doubt whether I could make much of the subject, treated as it ought to be treated there. But an essay is a different matter, notwithstanding that a dear, though sarcastic friend says that my essays are merely sermons played in polka time; the thought of sermons, to wit, lightened somewhat by a somewhat lighter fashion of phrase and illustration. And all that has hitherto been said is introductory to remarking, that I stand in fear of what kind of day it may be when my reader shall see this essay, which as yet exists but vaguely in the writer's mind; and upon, four pieces of paper, three large and one small. If your eye lights upon this page on a cold, bleak day; if it be wet and plashy; above all, if there be east wind, read no further. Keep this essay for a warm, sunshiny day; it is only then that you will sympathize with its author. For amid a dismal, rainy, stormy summer, we have reached fair weather at last; and this is a lovely, sunny summer morning. And what an indescribably beautiful thing is a summer day! I do not mean merely the hours as they pass over; the long light; the sun going up and going down; but all that one associates with summer days, spent in sweet rural scenes. There is great variety in summer days. There is the warm, bright, still summer day; when everything seems asleep, and the topmost branches of the tall trees do not stir in the azure air. There is the breezy summer day, when warm breaths wave these topmost branches gently to and fro, and you stand and look at them; when sportive winds bend the green corn as they swiftly sweep over it; when the shadows of the clouds pass slowly along the hills. Even the rainy day, if it come with soft summer−like rain, is beautiful. People in town are apt to think of rain as a mere nuisance; the chief good it does there is to water the streets more generally and thoroughly than usual; a rainy day in town is equivalent to a bad day; but in the country, if you possess even the smallest portion of the earth, you learn to rejoice in the rain. You go out in it; you

walk about and enjoy the sight of the grass momently growing greener; of the trees looking refreshed, and the evergreens gleaming, the gravel walks so free from dust, and the roads watered so as to render them beautifully compact, but not at all sloppy or muddy; summer rain never renders well−made country roads sloppy or muddy. There is a pleasure in thinking that you have got far ahead of man or machine; and you heartily despise a watering−cart, while enjoying a soft summer shower. And after the shower is over, what fragrance is diffused through the country air; every tree and shrub has an odour which a summer shower brings out, and which senses trained to perception will perceive. And then, how full the trees and woods are of the singing of birds! But there is one feeling which, if you live in the country, is common to all pleasant summer days, but particularly to sunshiny ones; it is that you are doing injustice to nature, that you are losing a great deal, if you do not stay almost constantly in the open air. You come to grudge every half hour that you are within doors, or busied with things that call you off from observing and thinking of all the beauty that is around you everywhere. That fair scene,—trees, grass, flowers, sky, sunshine, is there to be looked at and enjoyed; it seems wrong, that with such a picture passing on before your eyes, your eyes should be turned upon anything else. Work, especially mental work, is always painful; always a thing you would shrink from if you could; but how strongly you shrink from it on a beautiful summer morning! On a gloomy winter day you can walk with comparative willingness into your study after breakfast, and spread out your paper, and begin to write your sermon. For although writing the sermon is undoubtedly an effort; and although all sustained effort partakes of the nature of pain; and although pain can never be pleasant; still, after all, apart from other reasons which impel you to your work, you cannot but feel that really if you were to turn away from your task of writing, there is nothing to which you could take that you would enjoy very much more than itself. And even on the fairest summer morning, you can, if you are living in town, take to your task with comparative ease. Somehow, in town, the weather is farther off from you; it does not pervade all the house, as it does in the country: you have not windows that open into the garden: through which you see green trees and grass every time you look up; and through which you can in a minute, without the least change of dress, pass into the verdant scene. There is all the difference in the world, between the shadiest and greenest public garden or park even within a hundred yards of your door; and the green shady little spot that comes up to your very window. The former is no very great temptation to the busy scholar of rural tastes; the latter is almost irresistible. A hundred yards are a long way to go, with purpose prepense of enjoying something so simple as the green earth. After having walked even a hundred yards, you feel that you need a more definite aim. And the grass and trees seem very far away, if you see them at the end of a vista of washing your hands, and putting on another coat and other boots, and still more of putting on gloves and a hat. Give me the little patch of grass, the three or four shady trees, the quiet corner of the shrubbery, that comes up to the study window, and which you can reach without even the formality of passing through the hall and out by the front door. If you wish to enjoy nature in the summer−time, you must attend to all these little things. What stout old gentleman but knows that when he is seated snugly in his easy chair by the winter evening fireside, he would take up and read many pages in a volume which lay within reach of his arm, though he would do without the volume, if in order to get it he had to take the slight trouble of rising from his chair and walking to a table half a dozen yards off? Even so must nature be brought within easy reach of even the true lover of nature; otherwise on a hundred occasions, all sorts of little, fanciful hindrances will stand between him and her habitual appreciation. A very small thing may prevent your doing a thing which you even wish to do; but which you do not wish with any special excitement, and which you may do at any time. I daresay some reader would have written months since to a friend in India to whom he promised faithfully to write frequently, but that when he sat down once or twice to write, and pulled out his paper−drawer, lie found that all the thin Indian paper was done. And so the upshot is, that the friend has been a year out; and you have never written to him at all.

But to return to the point from which this deviation proceeded, I repeat, that on a fine summer morning in the country it is excessively difficult to take to your work. Apart from the repellent influence which is in work itself, you think that you will miss so much. You go out after breakfast (with a wide−awake hat, and no gloves) into the fresh atmosphere. You walk round the garden. You look particularly at the more eminent roses, and the largest trees. You go to the stable−yard, and see what is doing there. There are twenty things to think of: numberless little directions to give. You see a weedy corner, and that must not be suffered: you see a long spray of a climbing rose that needs training. You look into the corn−chest: the corn is almost finished. You have the fact impressed upon you that the old potatoes are nearly done, and the new ones hardly ready for use. These things partake of the

nature of care: if you do not feel very well, you will regard them as worries. But it is no care nor worry to walk down to your gate, to lean upon it, and to look at the outline of the hills: nor to go out with your little children, and walk slowly along the country lane outside your gate, relating for the hundredth time the legend of the renowned giant−killer, or the enchanted horse that flew through the air; to walk on till you come to the bridge, and there sit down, and throw in stones for your dog to dive after, while various shouts (very loud to come from such little mouths) applaud his success. How crystal−clear the water of the river! It is six feet deep, yet you may see every pebble of its bed. An undefined laziness possesses you. You would like to sit here, and look, and think, all day. But of course you will not give in to the temptation. Slowly you return to your door: unwillingly you enter it: reluctantly you take to your work. Until you have got somewhat into the spirit of your task, you cannot help looking sometimes at the roses which frame your window, and the green hill you see through it, with white sheep. And even when you have got your mind under control, and the lines flow more willingly from your pen, you cannot but look out occasionally into the sunshiny, shady corner in your view, and think you should be there. And when the prescribed pages are at length completed, how delightful to lock them up, and be off into the air again! You are far happier now than you were in the morning. The shadow of your work was upon you then: now you may with a pleased conscience, and under no sense of pressure, saunter about, and enjoy your little domain. Many things have been accomplished since you went indoors. The weeds are gone from the corner: the spray of the rose lias been trained. The potato−beds have been examined: the potatoes will be all ready in two days more. Sit down in the shade, warm yet cool, of a great tree. Now is the time to read the Saturday Review, especially the article that pitches into you. What do you care for it? I don't mean that you despise it: I mean that it causes you no feeling but one of amusement and pleasure. You feel that it is written by a clever man and a gentleman: you know that there is not a vestige of malice in it. You would like to shake hands with the writer, and to thank him for various useful hints. As for reviewing which is truly malignant—that which deals in intentional misrepresentation and coarse abuse—it is practically unknown in respectable periodicals. And wherever you may find it (as you sometimes may) you ought never to be angry with the man who did it: you ought to be sorry for him. Depend upon it, the poor fellow is in bad health or in low spirits: no one but a man who is really unhappy himself will deliberately set himself to annoy any one else. It is the misery, anxiety, poverty, which are wringing the man's heart, that make their pitiful moan in that bitter article. Make the poor man better off, and he will be better natured.

And so, my friend, now that our task is finished, let us go out in this kindly temper to enjoy the summer day. But you must first assure your mind that your work is really finished. You cannot thus simply enjoy the summer day, if you have a latent feeling rankling at your heart that you are neglecting something that you ought to do. The little jar of your moral being caused by such a feeling, will be like the horse−hair shirt, will be like the peas in the pilgrim's shoes. So, clerical reader, after you have written your allotted pages of sermon, and answered your few letters, turn to your tablet−diary, or whatever contrivance you have for suggesting to your memory the work you have to do. If you have marked down some mere call to make, that may fairly enough be postponed on this hot day. But look at your list of sick, and see when you visited each last, and consider whether there be any you ought to visit to−day. And if there be, never mind though the heat be sweltering and the roads dusty and shadeless: never mind though the poor old man or woman lives five miles off, and though your horse is lame: get ready, and walk away as slowly as you can, and do your duty. You are not the reader I want: you are not the man with whom I wish to think of summer days: if you could in the least enjoy the afternoon, or have the faintest pleasure in your roses and your grass, with the thought of that neglected work hanging over you. And though you may return four hours hence, fagged and jaded, you will sit with a pleased heart down to dinner, and you will welcome the twilight when it comes, with the cheerful sense of duty done and temptation resisted. But upon my ideal summer day, I suppose that after looking over your sick−list, and all your memoranda, you find that there is nothing to do that need take you to−day beyond your own little realm. And so, with the delightful sense of leisure to breathe and think, you walk forth into the green shade to spend the summer afternoon. Bring with you two or three books: bring the Times that came that morning: you will not read much, but it is pleasant to know that you may read if you choose: and then sit down upon a garden−seat, and think and feel. Do you not feel, my friend of even five−and−thirty, that there is music yet in the mention of summer days? Well, enjoy that music now, and the vague associations which are summoned up by the name. Do not put off the enjoyment of these things to some other day. You will never have more time, nor better opportunity. The little worries of the present cease to sting in

the pensive languor of the season. Enjoy the sunshine and the leaves while they last: they will not last long. Grasp the day and hold it and rejoice in it: some time soon you will find of a sudden that the summer time has passed away. You come to yourself, and find it is December. The earth seems to pause in its orbit in the dreary winter days: it hurries at express speed through summer. You wish you could put on a break, and make time go on more slowly. Well, watch the sandgrains as they pass. Remark the several minutes, yet without making it a task to do so. As you sit there, you will think of old summer days long ago: of green leaves long since faded: of sunsets gone. Well, each had its turn: the present has nothing more. And let us think of the past without being lackadaisical. Look now at your own little children at play: that sight will revive your flagging interest in life. Look at the soft turf, feel the gentle air: these things are present now. What a contrast to the Lard, repellent earth of winter! I think of it like the difference between the man of sternly logical mind, and the genial, kindly man with both head and heart! I take it for granted that you agree with me in holding such to be the true type of man. Not but what some people are proud of being all head and no heart. There is no flummery about them. It is stern, severe sense and principle. Well, my friends, say I to such, you are (in a moral sense) deficient of a member. Fancy a mortal hopping through creation, and boasting that he was born with only one leg! Or even if you have a little of the kindly element, but very little when compared with the logical, you have not much to boast of. Your case is analogous to that of the man who has two legs indeed, but one of them a great deal longer than the other.

It is pleasanter to spend the summer days in an inland country place, than by the seaside. The sea is too glaring in sunshiny weather; the prospects are too extensive. It wearies eyes worn by much writing and reading to look at distant hills across the water. The true locality in which to enjoy the summer time is a richly−wooded country, where you have hedges and hedge−rows, and clumps of trees everywhere: where objects for the most part are near to you; and, above all, are green. It is pleasant to live in a district where the roads are not great broad highways, in whose centre you feel as if you were condemned to traverse a strip of arid desert stretching through the landscape; and where any carriage short of a four−in−hand looks so insignificantly small. Give me country lanes: so narrow that their glare does not pain the eye upon even the sunniest day: so narrow that the eye without an effort takes in the green hedges and fields on either side as you drive or walk along.

And now, looking away mentally from this cool shady verdure amid which we are sitting, let us think of summer days elsewhere. Let us think of them listlessly, that we may the more enjoy the quiet here: as a child on a frosty winter night, snug in his little bed, puts out a foot for a moment into the chilly expanse of sheet that stretches away from the warm nest in which he lies, and then pulls it swiftly back again, enjoying the cozy warmth the more for this little reminder of the bitter chill. Here, where the air is cool, pure, and soft, let us think of a hoarding round some old house which the labourers are pulling down, amid clouds of the white, blinding, parching dust of lime, on a sultry summer day. I can hardly think of any human position as worse, if not intended directly as a position of torture. I picture, too, a crowded wharf on a river in a great town, with ships lying alongside. There is a roar of passing drays, a cracking of draymen's whips, a howling of the draymen. There is hot sunshine; there are clouds of dust; and I see several poor fellows wheeling heavy casks in barrows up a narrow plank into a ship. Their faces are red and puffy with the exertion: their hair is dripping. Ah, the summer day is hard upon these poor fellows! But it would be pleasant to−day to drive a locomotive engine through a fine agricultural country, particularly if one were driving an express train, and so were not worried by perpetual stoppages. I have often thought that I should like to be an engine−driver. Should any revolution or convulsion destroy the Church, it is to that field of industry that I should devote my energies. I should stipulate not to drive luggage−trains; and if I had to begin with third−class passenger−trains, I have no doubt that in a few months, by dint of great punctuality and carefulness, and by having my engine always beautifully clean and bright, I should be promoted to the express. There was a time when driving a locomotive was not so pleasant as now. In departed days, when the writer was wont to stand upon the foot−plates, through the kindness of engine−driving friends now far away, there was a difficulty in looking out ahead: the current of air was so tremendous, and particles of dust were driven so viciously into one's eyes. But advancing civilization has removed that disadvantage. A snug shelter is now provided for the driver: an iron partition arises before him, with two panes of glass through which to look out. The result is that he can maintain a far more effectual look−out; and that he is in great measure protected from wind and weather. Yes, it would be pleasant to be an engine−driver, especially on such a day as this. Pleasant to look at the great train of carriages standing in the station before starting: to see the piles of luggage going up through the exertions of hot porters: to see the numbers of passengers, old and young, cool and flurried,

with their wraps, their newspapers, their books, at length arranged in the soft, roomy interiors; and then the sense of power, when by the touch of a couple of fingers upon the lever, you make the whole mass of luggage, of life, of human interests and cares, start gently into motion; till, gathering speed as it goes, it tears through the green stillness of the summer noon, amid daisied fields, through little woody dells, through clumps of great forest−trees, within sight of quiet old manor houses, across little noisy brooks and fair broad rivers, beside churchyard walls and grey ivied churches, alongside of roads where you see the pretty phaeton, the lordly coach, the lumbering waggon, and get glimpses that suggest a whole picture of the little life of numbers of your fellow−men, each with heart and mind and concerns and fears very like your own. Yes, my friend, if you rejoice in fair scenery, if you sympathize with all modes of human life—if you have some little turn for mechanics, for neatness and accuracy, for that which faithfully does the work it was made to do, and neither less nor more: retain it in your mind as an ultimate end, that you may one day drive a locomotive engine. You need not of necessity become greasy of aspect; neither need you become black. I never have known more tidy, neat, accurate, intelligent, sharp, punctual, responsible, God−fearing, and truly respectable men, than certain engine−drivers.

Remember the engine must be a locomotive engine. Your taste for scenery and life will not be gratified by employment on a stationary one. And it is fearfully hot work on a summer day to take charge of a stationary steam−engine; while (perhaps you would not think it) to drive a locomotive is perfectly cool work. You never feel, in that rapid motion, the raging flame that is doing its work so near you. The driver of the express train may be a man of large sympathies, of cheerful heart, of tolerant views; the man in charge of the engine of a coal−pit or factory, even of a steam−ship, is apt to acquire contracted ways of thinking, and to become somewhat cynical and gloomy in his ideas as to the possible amelioration of society. It cannot be a pleasing employment, one would think, on a day like this, to sit and watch a great engine fire, and mend it when needful. That occupation would not be healthful, either to mind or body. I dare say you remember the striking and beautiful description in Mr. Dickens's Old Curiosity Shop, of a man who had watched and fed a furnace−fire for years, till he had come to think of it as a living being. The fire was older than he was; it had never gone out since before he was horn. I can imagine, perfectly well, what kind of effect such a mode of life would have had on myself. And very few readers are likely to have within themselves an intellectual and moral fibre of bent and nature so determined, that they are not what they are, mainly through the influence of the external circumstances which have been acting upon them all through life. Did you ever think to yourself that you would like to make trial for a few days' space, of certain modes of life very different from your own, and very different from each other? I have done so many a time. And a lazy summer afternoon here in the green shade is the time to try and picture out such. Think of being to−day in a stifling counting−house in the hot bustling town. I have been especially interested in a glazed closet which I have seen in a certain immensely large and very crowded shop in a certain beautiful city. It is a sort of little office partitioned off from the shop it has a sloping table, with three or four huge books bound in parchment. There is a ceaseless bustle, crush, and hum of talking outside; and inside there are clerks Bitting writing, and receiving money through little pigeonholes. I should like to sit for two or three days in a corner of that little retreat; and to write a sermon there. It would be curious to sit there to−day in the shadow, and to see the warm sunbeams only outside through a distant window, resting on sloping roofs. If one did not get seasick, there would be something fresh in a summer day at sea. It is always cool and breezy there, at least in these latitudes, on the warmest day. Above all there is no dust. Think of the luxurious cabin of a fine yacht to−day. Deep cushions; rich curtains; no tremor of machinery; flowers, books, carpets inches thick; and through the windows, dim hills and blue sea. Then, flying away in spirit, let us go to−day (only in imagination) into the Courts of Law at Westminster. The atmosphere on a summer day in these scenes is always hot and choky. There is a suggestion of summer time in the sunshine through the dusty lanterns in the roofs. Thinking of these courts, and all their belongings and associations, here on this day, is like the child already mentioned when he puts his foot into a very cold corner of his bed, that he may pull it back with special sense of what a blessing it is that he is not bodily in that very cold corner. Yes, let us enjoy this spot where we are, the more keenly, for thinking of the very last place in this world where we should like to−day to be. I went lately (on a bright day in May) to revive old remembrances of Westminster Hall. The judges of the present time are very able and incorruptible men; but they are much uglier than the judges I remember in my youth. Several of them, in their peculiar attire, hardly looked like human beings. Almost all wrore wigs a great deal too large for them; I mean much too thick and massive. The Queen's Counsel, for the most part, seemed much younger than they used to be; but I was aware that this phenomenon

arose from the fact that I myself was older. And various barristers, who fifteen years since were handsome, smooth−faced young men, had now a complexion rough as a nutmeg−grater, and red with that unhealthy colour which is produced by long hours in a poisonous atmosphere. The Courts at Westminster, for cramped space and utter absence of ventilation, are nothing short of a disgrace to a civilized nation. But the most painful reflection which they suggest to a man with a little knowledge of the practical working of law, is, how vainly human law strives to do justice. There, on the benches of the various Courts, you have a number of the most able and honest men in Britain: skilled by long practice to distinguish between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood; and yet, in five cases out of six that come before them, they signally fail of redressing the wrongs brought before them. Unhappily, in the nature of things, much delay must occur in all legal procedure; and further, the machinery of the law cannot be set in motion unless at very considerable expense. Now, every one knows that delay in gaining a legal decision of a debated question, very often amounts to a decision against both parties. What enjoyment of the summer days has the harassed suitor, waiting in nervous anxiety for the judgment or the verdict which may be his ruin? For very small things may be the ruin of many men. A few pounds to be paid may dip an honest man's head under water for years, or for life. But the great evil of the law, after all, is, that it costs so much. I am aware that this may be nobody's fault; it may be a vice inherent in the nature of things. Still, where the matter in question is of no very great amount, it is a fact that makes the wise man willing rather to take injustice than to go to law. A man meets with an injury; he sustains some wrong. He brings his action; the jury give him ten or twenty pounds damages. The jury fancy that this sum will make him amends for what he has lost or suffered; they fancy that of course he will get this sum. What would the jury think if told that he will never get a penny of it? It will all go (and probably a good deal more) for extra costs; that is, the costs the winning party will have to pay his own attorney, besides the costs in the cause which the losing party has to pay. No one profits pecuniarily by that verdict or that trial, except the lawyers on either side. And does it not reduce the administration of justice to an absurdity, to think that in the majority of cases, the decision, no matter on which side, does no good to the man in whose favour it is given.

Another thing which makes the courts of law a sad sight is, that probably in no scene in human affairs are disappointment and success set in so sharp contrast—brought so close together. There, on the bench, dignified, keen, always kind and polite (for the days of bullying have gone by), sits the Chief Justice—a peer (if he pleases to be one)—a great, distinguished, successful man; his kindred all proud of him. And there, only a few yards off, sharp−featured, desponding, soured, sits poor Mr. Briefless, a disappointed man, living in lonely chambers in the Temple: a hermit in the great wilderness of London; in short, a total failure in life. Very likely he absurdly over−estimates his talents, and what he could have done if he had had the chance; but it is at least possible that he may have in him the genius of another Follett, wasting sadly and uselessly away. Now, of course, in all professions, and all walks of life, there are success and failure; but there is none, I think, in which poor failure must bear so keenly the trial of being daily and closely set in contrast with flushed success. Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown were rival suitors for the hand of Miss Jones; Mr. Smith succeeded, and Mr. Brown failed; but though Mr. Brown feels his mortification severely even as things are, it would be a great deal worse if he were compelled to follow at a hundred yards' distance Mr. Smith and Miss Jones in their moonlight walks, and contemplate their happiness; to be present when they are married, and daily to attend them throughout their marriage excursion. Or some one else gets the bishopric you wished for; but you are not obliged daily to contemplate the cathedral and the palace which you had hoped to call your own. In most cases in this world failure may look away from the success which makes its eyes sore and its heart heavy. You try to have a kindly feeling towards the man who succeeded where you failed, and in time you have it; but just at first you would not have liked to have had ever before you the visible manifestation of his success and your failure. You must have a very sweet nature, and (let me say it) much help from a certain high Quarter, if, without the least envy or jealousy, genially and unsoured, you can daily look upon the man who, without deserving to beat you, actually did beat you;—at least while the wound is fresh.

And while talking of disappointment and success in courts of law. let me remark, that petty success sometimes produces, in vulgar natures, manifestations which are inexpressibly disgusting. Did you ever remark the exultation of some low attorney when he had succeeded in snapping a verdict in some contemptible case which he had taken up and carried en upon speculation? I have witnessed such a thing, and cannot but say that it appeared to me one of the most revolting and disgusting phases which it is possible that human nature should assume. I think I see the

dirty, oily−looking animal, at once servile and insolent, with trickery and rascality in every line of his countenance, rubbing his hands in the hour of his triumph, and bustling about to make immediate preparation for availing himself of it. And following him, also sneakily exulting, I see an object more dirty, more oily−looking, than the low attorney; it is the low attorney's clerk. And on such an occasion, glancing at the bench, when the judgment−seat was occupied by a judge who had not yet learned never to look as if he thought or felt anything in particular, I have discerned upon the judicial countenance an expression of disgust as deep as my own.

Pleasanter scenes come up this afternoon with the mention of summer days. I see depths of wood, where all the light is coolly green, and the rippling brook is crystal clear. I see vistas through pines, like cathedral vaults; the space enclosed looks on a sunshiny day almost black, and a bit of bright blue sky at the end of each is framed by the trees into the likeness of a Gothic window. I see walls of gray rock on either side of a river, noisy and brawling in winter time, but now quiet and low. For two or three miles the walls of rock stretch onward; there are thick woods above them, and here and there a sunny field: masses of ivy clothe the rock in places; long sprays of ivy hang over. I walk on in thought till I reach the opening of the glen; here a green bank slopes upward from a dark pool below, and there is a fair stretch of champaign country beyond the river; on the summit of the green bank, on this side, mouldering, grey, ivied, lonely, stand the ruins of the monastery, which has kept its place here for seven hundred years. I see the sky−framing eastern window, its tracery gone. There are masses of large daisies varying the sward, and the sweet fragrance of young clover is diffused through all the air. I turn aside, and walk through lines of rose−trees in their summer perfection. I hear the drowsy hum of the laden bees. Suddenly it is the twilight, the long twilight of Scotland, which would sometimes serve you to read by at eleven o'clock at night. The crimson flush has faded from the bosom of the river; if you are alone, its murmur begins to turn to a moan; the white stones of the churchyard look spectral through the trees. I think of poor Doctor Adam, the great Scotch schoolmaster of the last century, the teacher of Sir Walter Scott, and his last words, when the shadow of death was falling deeper—'It grows dark, hoys; you may go.' Then, with the professional bias, I go to a certain beautiful promise which the deepening twilight seldom fails to suggest to me; a promise which tells us how the Christian's day shall end, how the day of life might be somewhat overcast and dreary, but light should come on the darkened way at last. 'It shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark. But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light.' I think of various senses in which it might be shown that these words speak truly; in which its great principle holds good, that signal blessing shall come when it is needed most and expected least; but I think mainly how, sometimes, at the close of the chequered and sober day, the Better Sun has broken through the clouds, and made the naming west all purple and gold. I think how always the purer light comes, if not in this world, then in a better. Bowing his head to pass under the dark portal, the Christian lifts it on the other side, in the presence and the light of God. J think how you and I, my reader, may perhaps have stood in the chamber of death, and seen in the horizon the summer sun in glory going down. But it is only to us who remain that the evening darkness is growing—only for us that the sun is going down. Look on the sleeping features, and think, 'Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw herself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.' And then, my reader, tell me—as the evening falls on you, but not on him; as the shadows deepen on you, but not on him; as the darkness gathers on you, but not on him—if, in sober reality, the glorious promise has not found its perfect fulfilment, that 'at the evening time there shall be light!'

Every one knows that Summer Days dispose one to a certain listlessly meditative mood. In cold weather, out of doors at least, you must move about actively; it is only by the evening fireside, watching the dancing shadows, that you have glimpses of this not wholly unprofitable condition of mind. In summer−time you sometimes feel disposed to stand and look for a good while at the top of a large tree, gently waving about in the blue sky. You begin by thinking it would be curious to be up there: but there is no thought or speculation, moral, political, or religious, which may not come at the end of the train started by the loftiest branches of the great beech. You are able to sit for a considerable space in front of an ivied wall, and think out your sermon for Sunday as you look at the dark leaves in the sun. Above all, it is soothing and suggestive to look from a height at the soft outline of distant hills of modest elevation; and to see, between yourself and them, many farm−houses and many little cottages dotted here and there. There, under your eye, how much of life, and of the interests of life, is going on! Looking at such things, you muse, in a vague, desultory way. I wonder whether when ordinary folk profess to be thinking, musing, or meditating, they are really thinking connectedly or to any purpose. I daresay the truth is they

have (so to speak) given the mind its head; laid the reins of the will on the mind's neck; and are letting it go on and about in a wayward, interrupted, odd, semi−conscious way. They are not holding onward on any track of thought. I believe that common−place human beings can only get their ideas upon any subject into shape and order by writing them down, or (at least) expressing them in words to some one besides themselves. You have a walk of an hour, before you: you resolve that you will see your way through some perplexed matter as you walk along; your mind is really running upon it all the way: but when you have got within a hundred yards of your journey's end, you find with a start that you have made no progress at all: you are as far as ever from seeing what to think or do. With most people, to meditate means to approach to doing nothing at all as closely as in the nature of humanity it is possible to do so. And in this sense of it, summer days, after your work is over, are the time for meditation. So, indeed, are quiet days of autumn: so the evening generally, when it is not cold. 'Isaac went out to meditate in the field, at the eventide.' Perhaps he thought of the progress of his crops, his flocks, his affairs: perhaps he thought of his expected wife: most, probably he thought of nothing in particular; for four thousand years have left human nature in its essence the selfsame thing. It would be miserable work to moon through life, never thinking except in this listless, purposeless way: but after hard work, when you feel the rest has been fairly earned, it is very delightful on such a day and in such a scene as this, to sit down and muse. The analogy which suggests itself to me is that of a carriage−horse, long constrained to keep to the even track along hard dusty roads, drawing a heavy burden; now turned free into a cool green field to wander, and feed, and roll about untrammelled. Even so does the mind, weary of consecutive thinking—of thinking in the track and thinking with a purpose—expatiate in the license of aimless meditation.

There are various questions which may fitly be thought of in the listlessness of this summer day. They are questions the consideration of which does not much excite; questions to which you do not very much mind whether you get an answer or no. I have been thinking for a little while, since I finished the last paragraph, of this point: Whether that clergyman, undertaking the charge of some important church, is best equipped for his duty, who has a great many sermons carefully written and laid up in a box, ready to come out when needed: or that other clergyman, who has very few sermons fully written out, but who has spent great pains in disciplining his mind into that state in which it shall always be able to produce good material. Which of these has made best progress towards the end of being a good and efficient preacher? Give me, I should say, on the whole, the solid material stock, rather than the trained inind. I look with a curious feeling upon certain very popular preachers, who preach entirely extempore: who make a few notes of their skeleton of thought; but trust for the words and even for the illustrations to the inspiration of the moment. They go on boldly: but their path crumbles away behind them as they advance. Their minds are in splendid working order: they turn off admirable work Sunday by Sunday: and while mind and nervous system keep their spring, that admirable work may be counted on almost with certainty. They have Fortunio's purse: they can always put their hand upon the sovereigns they need: but they have no hoard accumulated which they might draw from, should the purse some day fail. And remembering how much the success of the extempore speaker depends upon the mood of the moment: remembering what little things, menial and physical, may mar and warp the intellectual machine for the moment: remembering how entirely successful extempore speaking founds on perfect confidence and presence of mind: remembering how as one grows older the nervous system may get shaken and even broken down: remembering how the train of thought which your mind has produced melts away from you unless you preserve a record of it (for I am persuaded that to many men that which they themselves have written looks before very long as strange and new as that produced by another mind): remembering these things, I say to myself, and to you if you choose to listen: Write sermons diligently: write them week by week, and always do your very best: never make up your mind that this one shall be a third−rate affair, just to get the Sunday over; and thus accumulate material for use in days when thoughts will not come so readily, and when the hand must write tremblingly and slow. Don't be misled by any clap−trap about the finer thing being to have the mental machine always equal to its task. You cannot have that. The mind is a wayward, capricious thing. The engine which did its sixty miles an hour to−day, may be depended on (barring accident) to do as much to−morrow. But it is by no means certain that because you wrote your ten or twenty pages to−day, you will be able to do the like on another day. What educated man does not know, that when he sits down to his desk after breakfast, it is quite uncertain whether he will accomplish an ordinary task, or a double task, or a quadruple one? Dogged determination may make sure, on almost every day, of a decent amount of produced material: but the quality varies vastly, and the quantity which the same degree and

continuance of strain will produce is not a priori to be calculated. And a spinning−jenny will day by day produce thread of uniform quality: but a very clever man, by very great labour, will on some days write miserable rubbish. And no one will feel that more bitterly than himself.

I pass from thinking of these things to a matter somewhat connected with them. Is it because preachers now−a−days shrink from the labour of writing sermons for themselves, or is it because they distrust the quality of what they can themselves produce, that shameless plagiarism is becoming so common? One cannot but reflect, thus lazily inclined upon a summer day, what an amount of painful labour would be saved one if, instead of toiling to see the way through a subject, and then to set out one's views in an interesting and (if possible) an impressive manner, one had simply to go to the volumes of Mr. Melvill or Bishop Wilberforce or Dean Trench; or, if your taste be of a different order, to those of Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Punshon, or Mr. Stowell Brown—and copy out what you want. The manual labour might be considerable—for one blessing of original composition is, that it makes you insensible to the mere mechanical labour of writing,—but the intellectual saving would be tremendous. I say nothing of the moral deterioration. I say nothing as to what a mean, contemptible pickpocket, what a jackdaw in peacock's feathers, you will feel yourself. There is no kind of dishonesty which ought to be exposed more unsparingly. Whenever I hear a sermon preached which has been stolen, I shall make a point of informing every one who knows the delinquent. Let him get the credit which is his due. I have not read many published sermons, and I seldom hear any one preach except myself; so that I do not speak from personal knowledge of the fact alleged by many, that there never was a period when this paltry lying and cheating was so prevalent. But five or six times within the last nine years I have listened to sermons in which there was not merely a manifest appropriation of thoughts which the preacher had never digested or made his own, but which were stolen word for word; and I have been told by friends in whom I have implicit confidence of instances twice five or six. Generally, this dishonesty is practised by frightful block−heads, whose sole object perhaps is to get decently through a task for which they feel themselves unfit; but it is much more irritating to find men of considerable talent, and of more than considerable popularity, practising it in a very gross degree. And it is curious how such dishonest persons gain in hardihood as they go on. Either because they really escape detection, or because no one tells them that they have been detected, they come at length to parade themselves in their swindled finery upon the most public occasions. I do believe that, like the liar who has told his story so long that he has come to believe it at last, there are persons who have stolen the thoughts of others so often and so long, that they hardly remember that they are thieves. And in two or three cases in which I put the matter to the proof, by speaking to the thief of the characteristics of the stolen composition, I found him quite prepared to carry out his roguery to the utmost, by talking of the trouble it had cost him to write Dr. Newman's or Mr. Logan's discourse. 'Quite a simple matter—no trouble; scribbled off on Saturday afternoon,' said, in my hearing, a man who had preached an elaborate sermon by an eminent Anglican divine. The reply was irresistible: 'Well, if it cost you little trouble, I am sure it cost Mr. Melvill a great deal.'

I am speaking, you remark, of those despicable individuals who falsely pass off as their own composition what they have stolen from some one else. I do not allude to such as follow the advice of Southey, and preach sermons which they honestly declare are not their own. I can see something that might be said in favour of the young inexperienced divine availing himself of the experience of others. Of course, you may take the ground that it is better to give a good sermon by another man than a bad one of your own. Well, then, say that it is not your own. Every one knows that when a clergyman goes to the pulpit and gives out his text, and then proceeds with his sermon, the understanding is that he wrote that sermon for himself. If he did not write it, he is bound in common honesty to say so. But besides this, I deny the principle on which some justify the preaching of another man's sermon. I deny that it is better to give the good sermon of another than the middling one by yourself. Depend upon it, if you have those qualifications of head and heart that fit you for being in the Church at all, your own sermon, however inferior in literary merit, is the better sermon for you to give and for your congregation to hear; it is the better fitted to accomplish the end of all worthy preaching, which, as you know, is not at all to get your hearers to think how clever a man you are. The simple, unambitious instruction into which you have thrown the teachings of your own little experience, and which you give forth from your own heart, will do a hundred times more good than any amount of ingenuity, brilliancy, or even piety, which you may preach at second−hand, with the feeling that somehow you stand to all this as an outsider. If you wish honestly to do good, preach what you have felt, and neither less nor more.

But in no way of regarding the case can any excuse be found for persons who steal and stick into their discourses tawdry little bits of bombast, purple patches of thought or sentiment, which cannot be supposed to do any good to anybody, which stand merely instead of a little stolen gilding for the gingerbread which is probably stolen too. I happened the other day to turn over a volume of discourses (not, I am thankful to say, by a clergyman of either of the national churches), and I came upon a sermon or lecture on Woman. You can imagine the kind of thing it was. It was by no means devoid of talent. The writer is plainly a clever, flippant person, with little sense, and no taste at all. The discourse sets out with a request that the audience 'would kindly try to keep awake by pinching one another in the leg, or giving some nodding neighbour a friendly pull of the hair;' and then there is a good deal about Woman, in the style of a Yankee after−dinner speech in proposing such a toast. After a little we have a highly romantic description of a battle−field after the battle, in which gasping steeds, midnight ravens, spectral bats, moping owls, screeching vultures, howling night wolves appear. These animals are suddenly startled by a figure going about with a lantern 'to find the one she loves.' Of course the figure is a woman; and the paragraph winds up with the following passage:—

Shall we go to her? No! Let her weep on. Leave her, Oh, woman! God beloved in old Jerusalem! We need deal lightly with thy faults, if only for the agony thy nature will endure, in bearing heavy evidence against us on the day of judgment!

Now, my friend, have you read Mr. Dickens' story of Martin Chuzzlewit? Turn up the twenty−eighth chapter of that work, and in the closing sentence you may read as follows:—

Oh woman, God−beloved in old Jerusalem! The best among us need deal lightly with thy faults, if only for the punishment thy nature will endure, in bearing heavy evidence against us on the Day of Judgment!

I wonder whether the writer of the discourse imagined that by varying one or two words, and adopting small letters instead of capitals in alluding to the Last Day, he made this sentence so entirely his own as to justify him in bagging it without one hint that it was a quotation. As for the value of the property bagged, that is another question.

After thinking for a few minutes of the curious constitution of mind which enables a man to feel his vanity flattered when he gets credit to which he knows he is not entitled, as the plagiarist does, I pass away into the. vast field of thought which is afforded by the contemplation of human vanity in general. The Ettrick Shepherd was wont to say that when he tried a new pen, instead of writing his name, as most people do, he always wrote Solomon's famous sentence, All is vanity. But he did not understand the words in Solomon's sense: what he thought of was the limitless amount of self−conceit which exists in human beings, and which hardly any degree of mortification can (in many cases) cut down to a reasonable quantity. I find it difficult to arrive at any fixed law in regard to human self−conceit. It would be very pleasant if one could conclude that monstrous vanity is confined to tremendous fools; but although the greatest intellectual self−conceit I have ever seen has been in blockheads of the greatest density and ignorance; and although the greatest self−conceit of personal attractions has been in men and women of unutterable silliness; still, it must be admitted that very great and illustrious members of the human race have been remarkable for their vanity. I have met very clever men, as well as very great fools, who would willingly talk of no other matters than themselves, and their own wonderful doings and attainments. I have known men of real ability, who were always anxious to impress you with the fact that they were the best riders, the best shots, the best jumpers, in the world; who were always telling stories of the sharp things they said on trying occasions, and the extraordinary events which were constantly befalling them. When a clever man evinces this weakness, we must remember that human nature is a weak and imperfect thing, and try to excuse the silliness for the sake of the real merit. But there are few things more irritating to witness than a stupid, ignorant dunce, wrapped up in impenetrable conceit of his own abilities and acquirements. It requires all the beauty, and all the listlessness too, of this sweet summer day, to think, without the pulse quickening to an indignant speed, of the half−dozen such persons whom each of us has known. It would soothe and comfort us if we could be assured that the blockhead knew that he was a blockhead: if we could be assured that now and then there penetrated into the dense skull and reached the stolid brain, even the suspicion of what his intellectual calibre really is. I greatly fear that such a suspicion never is known. If you witness the perfect confidence with which the man is ready to express his opinion upon any subject, you will be quite sure that the man has not the faintest notion of what his opinion is worth. I remember a blockhead saying that certain lines of poetry were nonsense. He said that they were unintelligible: that they were rubbish. I suggested that it did not follow that they were unintelligible because he

could not understand them. I told him that various competent judges thought them very noble lines indeed. The blockhead stuck to his opinion with the utmost firmness. What was the use of talking to him? If a blind man tells you he does not see the sun, and does not believe there is any sun, you ought to be sorry for him rather than angry with him. And when the blockhead declared that he saw only rubbish in verses which I trust every reader knows, and which begin with the line—

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,

his declaration merely showed that he lacked the power to appreciate Mr. Tennyson. But I think, my thoughtful friend, you would have found it hard to pity him when you saw plainly that the poor blockhead despised and pitied you.

The conceit of the stolid dunce is bad, but the conceit of the brisk and lively dunce is worse. The stolid dunce is comparatively quiet; his crass mind works slowly; his vacant face wears an aspect of repose; his talk is merely dull and twaddling. But the talk of the brisk dunce is ambitiously absurd: he lays down broad principles: he announces important discoveries which lie has made: he has heard able and thoughtful men talk, and he tries to do that kind of thing. There is an indescribable jauntiness about him apparent in every word and gesture. As for the stolid dunce, you would be content if the usages of society permitted your telling him that he is a dunce. As for the brisk dunce, you would like to take him by the ears and shake him.

It is wonderful how ordinary, sensjble persons, with nothing brilliant about them, may live daily in a comfortable feeling that they are great geniuses: if they live constantly amid a little circle of even the most incompetent judges, who are always telling them that they are great geniuses. For it is natural to conclude that the opinion of the people whom you commonly see is a fair reflex of the opinion of all the world; and it is wonderful how highly even a very able man will estimate the value of the opinion of even a very stupid man, provided the stupid man entertains and frequently expresses an immensely high opinion of the very able man. I have known a man, holding a somewhat important position for which he was grossly unfit, and for which every one knew he was grossly unfit; yet perfectly self−satisfied and comfortable under circumstances which would have crushed many men, because he was kept up by two or three individuals who frequently assured him that he was a very eminent and useful person. These two or three individuals acted as a buffer between him and the estimate of mankind at large. He received their opinion as a fair sample of the general opinion. He was indeed a man of very moderate ability; but I have known another of very great talent, who by the laudations of one or two old women was led to suppose that he possessed abilities of a totally different nature from those which he actually possessed. I do not mean higher abilities, but abilities extending into a field into which his peculiar talents did not reach. Yet no one would have been sharper at discerning the worthlessness of the judgment of the old women had it been other than very flattering to himself. Who is there that does not know that sometimes clever young men are bolstered up into a self−conceit which does them much harm with the outer world, by the violent admiration and flattery of their mothers, sisters, and aunts at home?

But not merely does the favourable estimate of the. little circle in which he lives serve to keep a man on good terms with himself; it goes some way towards influencing the estimation in which he is held by mankind at large—so far, that is, as mankind at large know anything about him. I have known such a thing as a family whose several members were always informing everybody they met what noble fellows the other members of the family were. And I am persuaded that all this really had some result. They were fine fellows, no doubt; but this tended to make sure that they should not be hid under a bushel. I am persuaded that if half−a−dozen clever young men were to form themselves into a little association, each member of which should be pledged to lose no opportunity of crying up the other five members in conversation, through the press, and in—every other possible way, this would materially further their success in life and the estimation in which they would be held wherever known. The world would take them at the value so constantly dinned into its ear. When you read on a silver coin the legend one shilling, you readily take it for a shilling; and if a man walks about with great genius painted upon him in large red letters, many people will aecept the truth of the inscription. Every one has seen how a knot of able young men hanging together at college and in after life can help one another even in a material sense, and not less valuably by keeping up one another's heart. All this is quite fair, and so is even the mutual praise when it is hearty and sincere. For several months past I have been possessed of an idea which has been gradually growing into shape. I have thought of getting up an association, whose members should always hold by one another, be true to one another, and cry one another up. A friend to whom I mentioned my plan highly approved it, and suggested the happy name

of the MUTUAL EXALTATION SOCIETY. The association would be limited in number: not more than fifty members could be admitted. It would include educated men in all walks of life; more particularly men whose success in life depends in any measure upon the estimation in which they are commonly held, as barristers, preachers, authors, and the like. Its purposes and operations have already been indicated with as much fulness as would be judicious at the present juncture. Mr. Barnum and Messrs. Moses and Son would be consulted on the details. Sir John Ellesmere, ex−solicitor−general and author of the Essay on the Arts of Self−Advancement, would be the first president, and the general guide, philosopher, and friend of the Mutual Exaltation Society. The present writer will be secretary. The only remuneration he would expect would be that all the members should undertake, at least six times every day, to make favourable mention of a recently published work. Six times a day would they be expected to say promiscuously to any intelligent friend or stranger, 'Have you read the Recreations of a Country Parson? Most wonderful book! Not read it? Go to Mudie's and get it directly '—and the like. For obvious reasons it would not do to make public the names of the members of the association; the moral weight of their mutual laudation would be much diminished. But clever young men in various parts of the country who may desire to join the society, may make application to the Editor of Eraser's Magazine, enclosing testimonials of moral and intellectual character. Applications will be received until the First of April, 1861.

I wonder whether any real impression is produced by those puffing paragraphs which appear in country newspapers about some men, and which are written either by the men themselves or by their near relatives and friends. I think no impression is ever produced upon intelligent people, and no permanent impression upon any one. Still, among a rural population, there may be found those who believe all that is printed in a newspaper; and who think that the man who is mentioned in a newspaper is a very great man. And if you live among such, it is pleasant to be regarded by them as a hero. The Reverend Mr. Smith receives from his parishioners the gift of a silver salver: the county paper of the following Friday contains a lengthy paragraph recording the fact, and giving the reverend gentleman's feeling and appropriate reply. The same worthy clergy−man preaches a charity sermon: and the circumstance is recorded very fully, the eloquent peroration being given with an accuracy which says much for the perfection of provincial reporting—given, indeed, word for word. Now it is natural to think that Mr. Smith is a much more eminent man than those other men whose salvers and charity sermons find no place in the newspaper: and Mr. Smith's agricultural parishioners no doubt think so. A different opinion is entertained by such as know that Mr. Smith's uncle is a large proprietor in the puffing newspaper; and that he wrote the articles in question in a much warmer strain than that in which they appeared, the editor having sadly curtailed and toned them down. In the long run, all this quackery does no good. And indeed long accounts in provincial journals of family matters, weddings and the like, serve only to make the family in question laughed at. Still, they do harm to nobody. They are very innocent. They please the family whose proceedings are chronicled; and if the family are laughed at, why, they don't know it.

And, happily, that which we do not know does us no harm: at least, gives us no pain. And it is a law, a kindly and a reasonable law, of civilized life, that when it is not absolutely necessary that a man should know that which would give him pain, he shall not be told of it. Only the most malicious violate this law. Even they cannot do it long: for they come to be excluded from society as its common enemies. One great characteristic of educated society is this: it is always under a certain degree of Restraint. Nohody, in public, speaks out all his mind. Nobody tells the whole truth, at least, in public speeches and writings. It is a terrible thing when an inexperienced man in Parliament (for instance) blurts out the awkward fact which everybody knows, but of which nobody is to speak except in the confidence of friendship or private society. How such a man is hounded down! He is every one's enemy. Every one is afraid of him. No one knows what he may say next. And it is quite fit that he should be stopped. Civilized life could not otherwise go on. It is quite right (when you calmly reflect upon it) that the county paper, speaking of the member of Parliament, should tell us how this much−respected gentleman has been visiting his Constituents, but should suppress a good deal of the speech he made, which the editor (though of the same politics) tells you frankly was worthy only of an escaped lunatic. Above all, it is fit and decent that the very odd private life and character of the legislator should be by tacit consent ignored even by the journals most opposed to him. It is right that kings and nobles should be, for the most part, spoken of in public as if they actually were what they ought to be. It is something of a reminder and a rebuke to them: and it is just as well that mankind at large should not know too much of the actual fact as to those above them. I should never object to calling a graceless duke Tour Grace: nor to praying for a villariously bad monarch as our most religious and gracious King (I know

quite well, small critic, that religious is an absurd mistranslation: but let us take the liturgy in the sense in which ninety−nine out of every hundred who hear it understand it): for it seems to me that the daily recurring phrases are something ever suggesting what mankind have a right to expect from those in eminent station; and a kindly determination to believe that such are at least endeavoring to be what they ought. No doubt there is often most bitter rehuke in the names! This law of Restraint extends to all the doings of civilized men. No one does anything to the very utmost of his ability. No one speaks the entire truth, unless in confidence. No one exerts his whole bodily strength. No one ever spoke at the very top of his voice, unless in mortal extremity. Unquestionably, the feeling that you must work within limits curtails the result accomplished. You may see this in cases in which the restraint of the civilized man binds him no longer. A man delirious or mad needs four men to hold him: there is no restraint keeping in his exertions; and you see what physical energy can do when utterly unlimited. And a man who always spoke out in public the entire truth about all men and all things, would inspire I know not what of terror. He would be like a mad Malay running a muck, dagger in hand. If the person who in a deliberative assembly speaks of another person as his venerable friend, were to speak of him there as he did half an hour before in private, as an obstructive old idiot, how people would start! It would be like the bare bones of the skeleton showing through the fair covering of flesh and blood.

The shadows are lengthening eastward now; the summer day will soon be gone. And looking about on this beautiful world, I think of a poem by Bryant, in which he tells us how, gazing on the sky and the mountains in June, he wished that when his time should come, the green turf of summer might be broken to make his grave. He could not bear, he tells us, the idea of being borne to his resting−place through sleety winds, and covered with icy clods. Of course, poets give us fanciful views, gained by looking at one side of a picture: arid De Quincey somewhere states the opposite opinion, that death seems sadder in summer, because there is a feeling that in quitting this world our friend is losing more. It will not matter much, friendly reader, to you and me, what kind of weather there may be on the day of our respective funerals; though one would wish for a pleasant, sunshiny time. And let us humbly trust that when we go, we may find admission to a Place so beautiful, that we shall not miss the green fields and trees, the roses and honeysuckle of June. You may think, perhaps, of another reason besides Bryant's, for preferring to die in the summer time; you remember the quaint old Scotch lady, dying on a night of rain and hurricane, who said (in entire simplicity and with nothing of irreverence) to the circle of relations round her bed, 'Eh, what a fearfu' nicht for me to be fleein' through the air!' And perhaps it is natural to think it would be pleasant for the parted spirit, passing away from human ken and comfort, to mount upwards, angel−guided, through the soft sunset air of June, towards the country where suns never set, and where all the days are summer days. But all this is no better than a wayward fancy; it founds on forgetfulness of the nature of the immaterial soul, to think that there need be any lengthened journey, or any flight through skies either stormy or calm. You have not had the advantage, I dare say, of being taught in your childhood the catechism which is drilled into all children in Scotland; and which sketches out with admirable clearness and precision the elements of Christian belief. If you had, you would have been taught to repeat words which put away all uncertainty as to the intermediate state of departed spirits. 'The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do IMMEDIATELY pass into glory.' Yes; IMMEDIATELY; there is to the departed spirit no middle space at all between earth and heaven. The old lady need not have looked with any apprehension to going out from the warm chamber into the stormy winter night, and flying far away. Not but that millions of miles may intervene; not but that the two worlds may be parted by a still, breathless ocean, a fathomless abyss of cold dead space; yet, swift as never light went, swift as never thought went, flies the just man's spirit across the profound. One moment the sick−room, the scaffold, the stake; the next, the paradisal glory. One moment the sob of parting anguish; the next the great deep swell of the angel's song. Never think, reader, that the dear ones you have seen die, had far to go to meet God after they parted from you. Never think, parents who have seen your children die, that after they left you, they had to traverse a dark solitary way, along which you would have liked (if it had been possible) to lead them by the hand, and bear them company till they came into the presence of God. You did so, if you stood by them till the last breath was drawn. You did bear them company into God's very presence, if you only stayed beside them till they died. The moment they left you, they were with him. The slight pressure of the cold fingers lingered with you yet; but the little child was with his Saviour.

CHAPTER VI. CONCERNING SCREWS: BEING THOUGHTS ON THE PRACTICAL SERVICE OF IMPERFECT MEANS. A CONSOLATORY ESSAY.

Almost every man is what, if he were a horse, would be called a screw. Almost every man is unsound. Indeed, my reader, I might well say even more than this. It would be no more than truth, to say that there does not breathe any human being who could satisfactorily pass a thorough examination of his physical and moral nature by a competent inspector.

I do not here enter on the etymological question, why an unsound horse is called a screw. Let that be discussed by abler hands. Possibly the phrase set out at length originally ran, that an unsound horse was an animal in whose constitution there was a screw loose. And the jarring effect produced upon any machine by looseness on the part of a screw which ought to be tight, is well known to thoughtful and experienced minds. By a process of gradual abbreviation, the phrase indicated passed into the simpler statement, that the unsound steed was himself a screw. By a bold transition, by a subtle intellectual process, the thing supposed to be wrong in the animal's physical system was taken to mean the animal in whose physical system the thing was wrong. Or, it is conceivable that the use of the word screw implied that the animal, possibly in early youth, had got some unlucky twist or wrench, which permanently damaged its bodily nature, or warped its moral development. A tendon perhaps received a tug which it never quite got over. A joint was suddenly turned in a direction in which Nature had not contemplated its ever turning: and the joint never played quite smoothly and sweetly again. In this sense, we should discern in the use of the word screw, something analogous to the expressive Scotticism, which says of a perverse and impracticable man, that he is a thrown person; that is, a person who has got a thraw or twist; or rather, a person the machinery of whose mind works as machinery might be conceived to work which had got a thraw or twist. The reflective reader will easily discern that a complex piece of machinery, by receiving an unlucky twist, even a slight twist, would be put into a state in which it would not go sweetly, or would not go at all.

After this excursus, which I regard as not unworthy the attention of the eminent Dean of Westminster, who has for long been, through his admirable works, my guide and philosopher in all matters relating to the study of words, I recur to the grand principle laid down at the beginning of the present dissertation, and say deliberately, that ALMOST EVERY MAN THAT LIVES, IS WHAT, IF HE WERE A HORSE, WOULD BE CALLED A

SCREW. Almost every man is unsound. Every man (to use the language of a veterinary surgeon) has in him the seeds of unsoundness. You could not honestly give a warranty with almost any mortal. Alas! my brother; in the highest and most solemn of all respects, if soundness ascribed to a creature implies that it is what it ought to be, who shall venture to warrant any man sound!

I do not mean to make my readers uncomfortable, by suggesting that every man is physically unsound: I speak of intellectual and moral unsoundness. You know, the most important thing about a horse is. his body; and accordingly when we speak of a horse's soundness or unsoundness, we speak physically; we speak of his body. But the most important thing about a man is his mind; and so, when we say a man is sound or unsound, we are thinking of mental soundness or unsoundness. In short, the man is mainly a soul; the horse is mainly and essentially a body. And though the moral qualities even of a horse are of great importance,—such qualities as vice (which in a horse means malignity of temper), obstinacy, nervous shyness (which carried out into its practical result becomes shying); still the name of screw is chiefly suggestive of physical defects. Its main reference is to wind and limb. The soundness of a horse is to the philosophic and stable mind suggestive of good legs, shoulders, and hoofs; of uncongested lungs and free air−passages; of efficient eyes and entire freedom from staggers. It is the existence of something wrong in these matters which constitutes the unsound horse, or screw.

But though the great thing about rational and immortal man is the soul: and though accordingly the most important soundness or unsoundness about him is that which has its seat THERE; still, let it be said that even as regards physical soundness there are few men whom a veterinary surgeon would pass, if they were horses. Most educated men are physically in very poor condition. And particularly the cleverest of our race, in whom intellect is most developed and cultivated, are for the most part in a very unsatisfactory state as regards bodily soundness.

They rub on: they manage somehow to get through their work in life; but they never feel brisk or buoyant. They never know high health, with its attendant cheerfulness. It is a rare case to find such a combination of muscle and intellect as existed in Christopher North: the commoner type is the shambling Wordsworth, whom even his partial sister thought so mean−looking when she saw him walking with a handsome man. Let it be repeated, most civilized men are physically unsound. For one thing, most educated men are broken−winded. They could not trot a quarter of a mile without great distress. I have been amused, when in church I have heard a man beyond middle age singing very loud, and plainly proud of his volume of voice, to see how the last note of the line was cut short for want of wind. I say nothing of such grave signs of physical unsoundness as little pangs shooting about the heart, and little dizzinesses of the brain; these matters are too serious for this page. But it is certain that educated men, for the most part, have great portions of their muscular system hardly at all developed, through want of exercise. The legs of even hard brain−workers are generally exercised a good deal; for the constitutional exercise of such is usually walking. But in large town such men give fair play to no other thews and sinews. More especially the arms of such men are very flabby. The muscle is soft, and slender. If the fore legs of a horse were like that, you could not ride him but at the risk of your neck.

Still, the great thing about man is the mind; and when I set out by declaring that almost every man is unsound, I was thinking of mental unsoundness. Most minds are unsound. No horse is accepted as sound in which the practised eye of the veterinarian can find some physical defect, something, away from normal development and action. And if the same rule be applied to us, my readers; if every man is mentally a screw, in whose intellectual and moral development a sharp eye can detect something not right in the play of the machinery or the formation of it; then I fancy that we may safely lay it down as an axiom, that there is not upon the face of the earth a perfectly sane man. A sane mind means a healthy mind; that is, a mind that is exactly what it ought to be. Where shall we discover such a one? My reader, you have not got it. I have not got it. Nobody has got it. No doubt, at the first glance, this seems startling; but I intend this essay to be a consolatory one, and I wish to show you that in this world it is well if means will fairly and decently suffice for their ends, even though they be very far from being all that we could wish. God intends not that this world should go on upon a system of optimism. It is enough, if things are so, that they will do. They might do far better. And let us remember, that though a veterinary surgeon would tell you that there is hardly such a thing as a perfectly sound horse in Britain, still in Britain there is very much work done, and well done, by horses. Even so, much work, fair work, passable work, noble work, magnificent work, may be turned off, and day by day is turned off, by minds which, in strict severity, are no better than good, workable, or showy screws.

Many minds, otherwise good and even noble, are unsound upon the point of Vanity. Nor is the unsoundness one that requires any very sharp observer to detect. It is very often extremely conspicuous; and the merest block−head can discern, and can laugh at, the unfortunate defect in one who is perhaps a great and excellent man. Many minds are off the balance in the respect of Suspiciousness; many in that of absurd Prejudice. Many are unsound in the matters of Silliness, Pettiness, Pettedness, Perversity, or general Unpleasantness and Thrawn−ness. Multitudes of men are what in Scotland is called Cat−witted. I do not know whether the word is intelligible in England. It implies a combination of littleness of nature, small self−conceit, readiness to take offence, determination in little things to have one's own way, and general impracticability. There are men to whom even the members of their own families do not like to talk about their plans and views: who will suddenly go off on a long journey without telling anyone in the house till the minute before they go; and concerning whom their nearest relatives think it right to give you a hint that they are rather peculiar in temper, and you must mind how you talk to them. There are human beings whom to manage into doing the simplest and most obvious duty, needs, on your part, the tact of a diplomatist combined with the skill of a driver of refractory pigs. In short, there are in human beings all kinds of mental twists and deformities. There are mental lameness and broken−windedness. Mental and moral shying is extremely common. As for biting, who does not know it? We have all seen human biters; not merely backbiters, but creatures who like to leave the marks of their teeth upon people present too. There are many kickers; men who in running with others do (so to speak) kick over the traces, and viciously lash out at their companions with little or no provocation. There are men who are always getting into quarrels, though in the main warm−hearted and well−meaning. There are human jibbers: creatures that lie down in the shafts instead of manfully (or horsefully) putting their neck to the collar, and going stoutly at the work of life. There are multitudes of people who are constantly suffering from depression of spirits, a malady which appears in countless

forms. There is not a human being in whose mental constitution there is not something wrong; some weakness, some perversion, some positive vice. And if you want further proof of the truth of what I am saying, given by one whose testimony is worth much more than mine, go and read that eloquent and kindly and painfully fascinating book lately published by Dr. Forbes Winslow, on Obscure Diseases of the Brain and Mind; and you will leave off with the firmest conviction that every breathing mortal is mentally a screw.

And yet, my reader, if you have some knowledge of horse−flesh, and if you have been accustomed in your progress through life (in the words of Dr. Johnson) to practise observation, and to look about you with extensive view, your survey must have convinced you that great part of the coaching and other horse work of this country is done, and fairly done, by screws. These poor creatures are out in all kinds of weather, and it seems to do them little harm. Any one who knows how snug, dry, and warm a gentleman's horses are kept, and how often with all that they are unfit for their duty, will wonder to see poor cab horses shivering on the stand hour after hour on a winter day, and will feel something of respect mingle with his pity for the thin, patient, serviceable screws. Horses that are lame, broken−winded, and vicious, pull the great bulk of all the weight that horses pull. And they get through their work somehow. Not long since, sitling on the box of a highland coach of most extraordinary shape, I travelled through Glenorchy and along Loch Awe side. The horses were wretched to look at, yet they took the coach at a good pace over that very up and down road, which was divided into very long stages. At last, amid a thick wood of dwarf oaks, the coach stopped to receive its final team. It was an extraordinary place for a coach to change horses. There was not a house near: the horses had walked three miles from their stable. They were by far the best team that had drawn the coach that day. Four tall greys, nearly white with age; but they looked well and went well, checking the coach stoutly as they went down the precipitous descents, and ascending the opposite hills at a tearing gallop. No doubt you could see various things amiss. They were blowing a little; one or two were rather blind; and all four a little stiff at starting. They were all screws. The dearest of them had not cost the coach proprietor seven pounds; yet how well they went over the eleven−mile stage into Inverary!

Now in like manner, a great part of the mental work that is done, is done by men who mentally are screws. The practical every−day work of life is done, and respectably done, by very silly, weak, prejudiced people. Mr. Carlyle has stated, that the population of Britain consists of 'seventeen millions of people, mostly fools.' I shall endeavour by and bye to make some reservation upon the great author's sweeping statement; but here it is enough to remark that even Mr. Carlyle would admit that the very great majority of these seventeen millions get very decently and creditably through the task which God sets them in this world. Let it be admitted that they are not so wise as they should be; yet surely it may be admitted too, that they possess that in heart and head which makes them good enough for the rough and homely wear of life. No doubt they blow and occasionally stumble, they sometimes even bite and kick a little; yet somehow they get the coach along. For it is to be remembered that the essential characteristic of a screw is, that though unsound, it can yet by management be got to go through a great deal of work. The screw is not dead lame, nor only fit for the knacker; it falls far short of the perfection of a horse, but still it is a horse, after all, and it can fulfil in some measure a horse's duty. You see, my friend, the moderation of my view. I do not say that men in general are mad, but only that men in general are screws. There is a little twist in their intellectual or moral nature; there is something wanting or something wrong; they are silly, conceited, egotistical, and the like; yet decently equal to the work of this world. By judicious management you may get a great deal of worthy work out of the unsound minds of other men; and out of your own unsound mind. But always remember that you have an imperfect and warped machine to get on with; do not expect too much of it; and be ready to humour it and yield to it a little. Just as a horse which is lame and broken−winded can yet by care and skill be made to get creditably through a wonderful amount of labour; so may a man, low−spirited, foolish, prejudiced, ill−tempered, soured, and wretched, be enabled to turn off a great deal of work for which the world may be the better. A human being who is really very weak and silly, may write many pages which shall do good to his fellow men, or which shall at the least amuse them. But as you carefully drive an unsound horse, walking him at first starting, not trotting him down hill, making play at parts of the road which suit him; so you must manage many men, or they will break down or bolt out of the path. Above all, so you must manage your own mind, whose weaknesses and wrong impulses you know best, if you would keep it cheerful, and keep it in working order. The showy, unsound horse can go well perhaps, but it must be shod with leather, otherwise it would be dead−lame in a mile. And just in that same fashion we human beings, all more or less of screws mentally and morally, need all kinds of management, on the part of our friends and on our own part, or we should

go all wrong. There is something truly fearful when we find that clearest−headed and soberest−hearted of men, the great Bishop Butler, telling us that all his life long he was struggling with horrible morbid suggestions, devilish is what he calls them, which, but for being constantly held in check with the sternest effort of his nature, would have driven him mad. Oh, let the uncertain, unsound, unfathomable human heart be wisely and tenderly driven! And as there are things which with the unsound horse you dare not venture on at all, so with the fallen mind. You who know your own horse, know that you dare not trot him hard down hill. And you who know your own mind and heart, know that there are some things of which you dare not think; thoughts on which your only safety is resolutely to turn your back. The management needful here is the management of utter avoidance. How often we find poor creatures who have passed through years of anxiety and misery, and experienced savage and deliberate cruelty which it is best to forget, lashing themselves up to wrath and bitterness by brooding over these things, on which wisdom would bid them try to close their eyes for ever!

But not merely do screws daily draw cabs and stage−coaches: screws have won the Derby and the St. Leger. A noble−looking thorough−bred has galloped by the winning−post at Epsom at the rate of forty miles an hour, with a white bandage tightly tied round one of its fore−legs: and thus publicly confessing its unsoundness, and testifying to its trainer's fears, it has beaten a score of steeds which were not screws, and borne off from them the blue ribbon of the turf. Yes, my reader: not only will skilful management succeed in making unsound animals do decently the hum−drum and prosaic task−work of the equine world; it will succeed occasionally in making unsound animals do in magnificent style the grandest things that horses ever do at all. Don't you see the analogy I mean to trace? Even so, not merely do Mr. Carlyle's seventeen millions of fools get somehow through the petty wrork of our modern life, but minds which no man could warrant sound and free from vice, turn off some of the noblest work that ever was done by mortal. Many of the grandest things ever done by human minds, have been done by minds that were incurable screws. Think of the magnificent service done to humankind by James Watt. It is positively impossible to calculate what we all owe to the man that gave us iho steam−engine. It is sober truth that the inscription in Westminster Abbey tells, when it speaks of him as among the 'best benefactors' of the race. Yet what an unsound organization that great man had! Mentally, what a screw! Through most of his life, he suffered the deepest misery from desperate depression of spirits; he was always fancying that his mind was breaking down: he has himself recorded that he often thought of casting off, by suicide, the unendurable burden of life. And Still, what work the rickety machine got through! With tearing headaches, with a sunken chest, with the least muscular of limbs, with the most melancholy of temperaments, worried and tormented by piracies of his great inventions, yet doing so much and doing it so nobly, was not James Watt like the lame race−horse that won the Derby? As for Byron, he was unquestionably a very great man; and as a poet, he is in his own school without a rival. Still, he was a screw. There was something morbid and unsound about his entire development. In many respects he was extremely silly. It was extremely silly to take pains to represent that he was morally much worse than he really was. The greatest blockheads I know are distinguished by the same characteristic. Oh, empty−headed Noodle! who have more than once dropped hints in my presence as to the awful badness of your life, and the unhappy insight which your life has given you into the moral rottenness of society, don't do it again. I always thought you a contemptible fool: but next time I mean to tell you so. Wordsworth was a screw. Though one of the greatest of poets, he was dreadfully twisted by inordinate egotism and vanity: the result partly of original constitution, and partly of living a great deal too much alone in that damp and misty lake country. lie was like a spavined horse. Coleridge, again, was a jibber. He never would pull in the team of life. There is something unsound in the mind of the man who fancies that because he is a genius, he need not support his wife and children. Even the sensible and exemplary Southey was a little unsound in the matter of a crotchety temper, needlessly ready to take offence. He was always quarrelling with his associates in the Quarterly Review: with the editor and the publisher. Perhaps you remember how on one occasion he wrought himself up into a fever of wrath with Mr. Murray, because that gentleman suggested a subject on which he wished Southey to write for the Quarterly, and begged him to put his whole strength to it, the subject being one which was just then of great interest and importance. 'Flagrant insolence,' exclaimed Southey. 'Think of the fellow bidding me put my whole strength to an article in his six−shilling Review!' Now, reader, there you see the evil consequence of a man who is a little of a screw in point of temper, living in the country. Most reasonable men would never have discerned any insult in Mr. Murray's request: but even if such a one had thought it a shade too authoritatively expressed, he would, if he had lived in town, gone out to the crowded street, gone down to his club, and in half an hour have

entirely forgotten the little disagreeable impression. But a touchy man, dwelling in the country, gets the irritative letter by the morning's post, is worried by it all the forenoon, and goes out and broods on the offence through all his solitary afternoon walk,—a walk in which he does not see a face, perhaps, and certainly does not exchange a sentence with any human being whose presence is energetic enough to turn the current of thought into a healthier direction. And so, by the evening he has got the little offence into the point of view in which it looks most offensive: he is in a rage at being asked to do his best in writing anything for a six−shilling publication. Why on earth not do so? Is not the mind unsoundly sensitive that finds an offence in a request like that? My brilliant brethren who write for Fraser, don't you put your whole strength to articles to be published in a periodical that sells for half−a−crown?

You could not have warranted manly Samuel Johnson sound, on the points of prejudice and bigotry. There was something unsound in that unreasoning hatred of everything Scotch. Rousseau was altogether a screw. He was mentally lame, broken−winded, a shyer, a kicker, a jibber, a biter: he would do anything but run right on and do his duty. Shelley was a notorious screw. I should say, indeed, that his unsoundness passed the limit of practical sanity, and that on certain points he was unquestionably mad. You could not have warranted Keats sound. You could not deny the presence of a little perverse twist even in the noble mind and heart of the great Sir Charles Napier. The great Emperor Napoleon was cracky, if not cracked, on various points. There was unsoundness in his strange belief in his Fate. Neither Bacon nor Newton was entirely sound. But the mention of Newton suggests to me the single specimen of human kind who might stand even before him: and reminds me that Shakspeare was as sound as any mortal ean be. Any defect in him extends no farther than to his taste: and possibly where we should differ from him, he is right and we are wrong. You could not say that Shakspeare was mentally a screw. The noblest of all genius is sober and reasonable: it is among geniuses of the second order that you find something so warped, so eccentric, so abnormal, as to come up to our idea of a screw. Sir Walter Scott was sound: save perhaps in the matter of his veneration for George IV., and of his desire to take rank as one of the country gentlemen of Roxburghshire.

To sum up: let it be admitted that very noble work has been turned off by minds in so far unhinged. It is not merely that great wits are to madness near allied, it is that great wits are sometimes actually in part mad. Madness is a matter of degree. The slightest departure from the normal and healthy action of the mind is an approximation to it. Every mind is a little unsound; but you don't talk of insanity till the un.−oundness becomes very glaring, and unfits for the duty of life. Just as almost every horse is a little lame: one leg steps a hair−breadth shorter than the other, or is a thought less muscular, or the hoof is a shade too sensitive; but you don't talk of lameness till the creature's head begins to go up and down, or till it plainly shrinks from putting its foot to the ground. Southey's wrath about the six−shilling Review, and his brooding on Murray's slight offence, was a step in the direction of marked delusion such as conveys a man to Harwell or Morningside. And the sensitive, imaginative nature, which goes to the production of some of the human mind's best productions, is prone to such little deviations from that which is strictly sensible and right. You do not think, gay young readers, what poor unhappy half−cracked creatures may have written the pages which thrill you or amuse you; or painted the picture before which you pause so long. I know hardly any person who ever published anything; but I have sometimes thought that I should like to see assembled in one chamber, on the first of any month, all the men and women who wrote all the articles in all the magazines for that month. Some of them doubtless would be very much like other people; but many would certainly be very odd−looking and odd−tempered samples of humankind. The history of some would be commonplace enough, but that of many would be very curious. A great many readers, I dare say, would like to stand in a gallery, and look at the queer individuals assembled below. Magazine articles, of course, are not (speaking generally) specimens of the highest order of literature; but still, some experience, some thought, some observation, have gone to produce even them. And it is unquestionably out of deep sorrow, out of the travail of heart and nature, that the finest and noblest of all human thoughts have come.

As for the ordinary task−work of life, it must, beyond all question, be generally done by screws,—that is, by folk whose mental organization is unsound on some point. Vain people, obstinate people, silly people, evil−foreboding people, touchy people, twaddling people, carry on the work−day world. Not that it would be giving a fair account of them to describe them thus, and leave the impression that such are their essential characteristics. They are all that has been said; but there is in most a good substratum of practical sense; and they do fairly, or even remarkably well, the particular thing which it is their business in this life to do. When Mr.

Carlyle said that the population of Britain consists of so many millions, 'mostly fools,' he conveys a quite wrong impression. No doubt there are some who are silly out and out, who are always fools, and essentially fools. No doubt almost all, if you questioned them on great matters of which they have hardly thought, would express very foolish and absurd opinions. But then these absurd opinions are not the staple production of their minds. These are not a fair sample of their ordinary thoughts. Their ordinary thoughts are, in the main, sensible and reasonable, no doubt. Once upon a time, while a famous criminal trial was exciting vast interest, I heard a man in a railway−carriage, with looks of vast slyness and of special stores of information, tell several others that the judge and the counsel on each side had met quietly the evening before to arrange what the verdict should be; and that though the trial would go on to its end to delude the public, still the whole thing was already settled. Now, my first impulse was to regard the man with no small interest, and to say to myself, There, unquestionably, is a fool. But, on reflection, I felt I was wrong. No doubt he talked like a fool on this point. No doubt he expressed himself in terms worthy of an asylum for idiots. But the man may have been a very shrewd and sensible man in matters with which he was accustomed to deal: he was a horse−dealer, I believe, and I doubt not sharp enough at market; and the idiotic appearance he made was the result of his applying his understanding to a matter quite beyond his experience and out of his province. But a man is not properly to be called a fool, even though occasionally he says and does very foolish things, if the great preponderance of the things he says and does be reasonable. No doubt Mr. Carlyle is right in so far as this: that in almost every man there is an element of the fool. Almost all have a vein of folly running through them, and cropping out at the surface now and then. But in most men that is not the characteristic part of their nature. There is more of the sensible man than of the fool.

For the forms of unsoundness in those who are mental screws of the commonplace order; they are endless. You sometimes meet an intellectual defect like that of the conscientious blockhead James II., who thought that to differ from him in opinion was to doubt his word and call him a liar. An unsoundness common to all uneducated people is, that they cannot argue any question without getting into a rage and roaring at the top of their voice. This unsoundness exists in a good many educated men too. A peculiar twist of some minds is this—that instead of maintaining by argument the thesis they are maintaining, which is probably that two and two make five, they branch off and begin to adduce arguments which do not go to prove that, but to prove that the man who maintains that two and two make four is a fool, or even a ruffian. Some good men are subject to this infirmity—that if you differ from them on any point whatever, they regard the fact of your differing from them as proof, not merely that you are intellectually stupid, but that you are morally depraved. Some really good men and women cannot let slip an opportunity of saying anything that may be disagreeable. And this is an evil that tends to perpetuate itself; for when Mr. Snarling comes and says to you something uncomplimentary of yourself or your near relations, instead of your doing what you ought to do, and pitying poor Snarling, and recommending him some wholesome medicine, you are strongly tempted to retort in kind: and thus you sink yourself to Snarling's level, and you carry on the row. Your proper course is either to speak kindly to poor Snarling, or not to speak to him at all. There is something unsound about the man whom you never heard say a good word of any mortal, but whom you have heard say a great many bad words of a great many mortals. There is unsoundness verging on entire insanity in the man who is always fancying that all about him are constantly plotting to thwart his plans and damage his character. There is unsoundness in the man who is constantly getting into furious altercations with his fellow passengers in steamers and rail−ways, or getting into angry and lengthy correspondence with anybody in the newspapers or otherwise. There is unsoundness in the man who is ever telling you amazing stories which he fancies prove himself to be the bravest, cleverest, swiftest of mankind, but which (on his own showing) prove him to be a vapouring goose. There is unsoundness in the man or woman who turns green with envy as a handsome carriage drives past, and then says with awful bitterness that he or she would not enter such a shabby old conveyance. There is unsoundness in the mortal whose memory is full to repletion of contemptible little stories going to prove that all his neighbours are rogues or fools. There is unsoundness in the unfortunate persons who are always bursting into tears and bahooing out that nobody loves them. Nobody will, so long as they bahoo. Let them stop bahooing. There is unsoundness in the mental organization of the sneaky person who stays a few weeks in a family, and sets each member of it against all the rest by secretly repeating to each exaggerated and malicious accounts of what has been paid as to him or her by the others. There is unsoundness in the perverse person who resolutely docs the opposite of what you wish and expect: who won't go the pleasure excursion you had arranged on his account, or partake of the dish which has been cooked for his special eating. There is unsoundness in the

deluded and unamiable person who, by a grim, repellent, Pharisaic demeanour and address excites in the minds of young persons gloomy and repulsive ideas of religion, which wiser and better folk find it very hard to rub away. 'Will my father be there?' said a little Scotch boy to some one who had been telling him of the Happiest Place in the universe, and recounting its joys. 'Yes,' was the reply. Said the little man, with prompt decision, 'Then I'll no gang!' He must have been a wretched screw of a Christian who left that impression on a young child's heart. There is unsoundness in the man who cannot listen to the praises of another man's merit without feeling as though this were something taken from himself. And it is amusing, though sad, to gee how such folk take for granted in others the same pretty enviousness which they feel in themselves. They will go to one writer, painter, preacher, and begin warmly to praise the doings of another man in the same vocation; and when I have seen the man addressed listen to and add to the praises with the hearty, self−forgetting sincerity of a generous mind, I have witnessed the bitter disappointment of the petty malignants at the failure of their poisoned dart. Generous honesty quite baffles such. If their dart ever wounds you, reader, it is because you deserve that it should. There is unsoundness in the kindly, loveable man, whose opinions are preposterous, and whose conversation that of a jackass. But still, who can help loving the man, occasionally to be met, whose heart is right and whose talk is twaddle? Let me add, that I have met with one or two cases in which conscience was quite paralysed, but all the other intellectual faculties were right. Surely there is no more deplorable instance of the mental screw. Tou may find the notorious cheat who is never out of church, and who fancies himself a most creditable man. You will find the malicious tale−bearer and liar, who attends all the prayer−meetings within her reach, and who thanks God (like an individual in former days) that she is so much better than other women.

In the case of commonplace screws, if they do their work well, it is for the most part in spite of their being screws. It is because they are sound in the main, in those portions of their mental constitution which their daily work calls into play; and because they are seldom required to do those things which their unsoundness makes them unfit to do. You know, if a horse never fell lame except when smartly trotted down a hill four miles long, you might say that for practical purposes that horse was never lame at all. For the single contingency to which its powers are unequal would hardly ever occur. In like manner, if the mind of a tradesman is quite equal to the management of his business and the respectable training of his family, you may say that the tradesman's mind is for practical purposes a sound and good one; although if called to consider some important political question, such as that of the connexion of Church and State, his judgment might be purely idiotical. You see, he is hardly ever required to put his mind (so to speak) at a hill at which it would break down. I have walked a mile along the road with a respectable Scotch farmer, talking of country matters; and I have concluded that I had hardly ever conversed with a shrewder and more sensible man. But having accidentally chanced to speak of a certain complicated political question, I found that quoad hoc my friend's intellect was that of a baby. I had just come upon the four−mile descent which would knock up the horse which for ordinary work was sound.

Yes, reader, in the case of commonplace screws, if hey do their work well, it is in spite of their being screws. But in the case of great geniuses who are screws, it is often because of their unsoundness that they do the fine things they do. It is the hectic beauty which his morbid mind cast upon his page, that made Byron the attractive and fascinating poet that he is to young and inexperienced minds. Had his views been sounder and his feeling healthier, he might have been but a commonplace writer after all. In poetry, and in all imaginative writing, we look for beauty, not for sense; and we all know that what is properly disease and unsoundness sometimes adds to beauty. You know the delicate flush, the bright eyes, the long eyelashes, which we often see in a young girl on whom consumption is doing its work. You know the peachy complexion which often goes with undeveloped scrofula. And had Charles Lamb not been trembling on the verge of insanity, the Essays of Elia would have wanted great part of their strange, undefinable charm. Had Ford and Massinger led more regular lives and written more reasonable sentiments, what a caput mortuum their tragedies would be! Had Coleridge been a man of homely common−sense, he would never have written Christabel. I remember in my boyhood reading The Ancient Mariner to a hard−headed lawyer of no literary taste. He listened to the poem, and merely remarked that its author was a horrible fool.

There is no doubt that physical unsoundness often is a cause of mental excellence. Some of the best women on earth are the ugliest. Their ugliness cut them off from the enjoyment of the gaieties of life; they did not care to go to a ball−room and sit all the evening without once being asked to dance; and so they learned to devote themselves to better things. You have seen the pretty sister, a frivolous, silly flirt; the homely sister, quietly

devoting herself to works of Christian charity. Ugly people, we often hear it said, cry up the beauties of the mind. It may be added, that ugly people possess a very large proportion of those beauties. And a great deal of the best intellectual work is done by men who are physically screws; by men who are nearly blind, broken−winded, lame, and weakly. We all know what the Apostle Paul was physically; we know too what the world owes to that dwarfish, bald, stammering man. I never in my life read anything more touching than the story of that poor weakly creature, Dr. George Wilson, the Professor of Technology in the University of Edinburgh. Poor weakly creature, only in a physical sense; what a noble intellectual and moral nature dwelt within that slender frame! You remember how admirably he did his work, though in a condition of almost ceaseless bodily weakness and suffering; how he used to lecture often with a great blister on his chest; how his lungs and his entire system were the very poorest that could just retain his soul. I never saw him; but I have seen his portrait. You see the intellectual kindly face; but it is but the weakly shadow of a physical man. But it was only physically that George Wilson was a poor type of humanity. What noble health and excellence there were in that noble mind and heart! So amiable, so patient, so unaffectedly pious, so able and industrious; a beautiful example of a great, good, memorable and truly loveable man. Let us thank God for George Wilson: for his life and his example. Hundreds of poor souls ready to sink into morbid despair of ever doing anything good, will get fresh hope and heart from his story. It is well, indeed, that there have been some in whom the physical system equals the moral; men like Christopher North and Sydney Smith,—men in whom the play of the lungs was as good as the play of the imagination, and whose literal heart was as excellent as their metaphysical. We have all seen examples in which the noblest intellect and kindest disposition were happily blended with the stoutest limbs and the pleasantest face. And the sound mind in the sound body is doubtless the perfection of the human being. I have walked many miles and many hours over the heather, with one of the ablest men in Britain: a man whom at fourscore his country can heartily trust with perhaps the gravest charge which any British subject can undertake. And I have witnessed with great delight the combination of the keenest head and best heart, with physical strength and activity which quite knock up men younger by forty years.

When I was reading Dr. Forbes Winslow's book, already named, a very painful idea was impressed upon me. Dr. Winslow gives us to understand that madness is for the most part a condition of most awful suffering. I used to think that though there might be dreadful misery on the way to madness, yet once reason was fairly overthrown, the suffering was over. This appears not to be so. All the miserable depression of spirits, all the incapacity to banish distressing fears and suspicions, which paved the way to real insanity, exist in even intensified degree when insanity has actually been reached. The poor maniac fancies he is surrounded by burning fires, that he is encircled by writhing snakes, that he is in hell, tormented by devils; and we must remember that the misery caused by firmly believing a thing which does not exist, is precisely the same as that which would be occasioned to a sane person if the things imagined were facts. It seems, too, that many insane people are quite aware that they are insane, which of course aggravates what they have to endure. It must be a dreadful thing when the mind passes the point up to which it is still useful and serviceable, though unsound, and enters upon the stage of recognized insanity. It must be dreadful to feel that you are not quite yourself; that something is wrong; that you cannot discard suspicions and fears which still you are aware are foolish and groundless. This is a melancholy stage, and if it last long a very perilous one. Great anxiety, if continued for any length of time, is almost certain to lead to some measure of insanity. The man who night and day is never free from the thought of how he is to pay his way, to maintain his children, is going mad. It is thoroughly evil when one single thought conies to take entire possession of the mind. It shows the brain is going. It is no wonder, my friendly reader, that so many men are mentally screws! There is something perfectly awful in reading what are the premonitory symptoms of true insanity. Read this, my friend, and be afraid of yourself. Here are what Dr. Winslow says indicates that insanity is drawing near. Have you never seen it? Have you never felt it?

The patient is irritable, and fractious, peevish, and pettish. He is morbidly anxious about trifles: slight ruffles on the surface, and trivial annoyances in the family circle or during the course of business, worry, flurry, tease and fret him, nothing satisfying or soothing his mind, and everything, to his distempered fancy, going wrong within the sacred precincts of domestic life. He is quick at fancying affronts, and greatly exaggerates the slightest and most trifling acts of supposed inattention. The least irregularity on the part of the domestics excites, angers, and vexes him. He is suspicious of and quarrels with his nearest relations, and mistrusts his best, kindest, and most faithful friends. While in this premonitory stage of mental derangement, bordering closely on an attack of acute

insanity, he twists, distorts, misconceives, misconstrues, and perverts in a most singular manner every look, gesture, action, and word of those closely associated, and nearly related to him.

Considering that Dr. Winslow does really in that paragraph sketch the moral characteristics of at least a score of people known to every one of us, all this is alarming enough. And considering, too, how common a thing sleeplessness is among men who go through hard mental work, or who are pressed by many cares and anxieties, it is even more alarming to read, that—

Wakefulness is one of the most constant concomitants of some types of incipient brain disease, and in many cases a certain forerunner of insanity. It is an admitted axiom in medicine, that the brain cannot be in a healthy condition while a state of sleeplessness exists.

But I pass away from this part of my subject. I do not believe that it is good for either my readers or myself to look from a medical point of view at those defects or morbid manifestations in our mental organization which stamp us screws. We accept the fact, generally; without going into details. It is a bad thing for a man to be always feeling his pulse after every little exertion, and fancying that its acceleration or irregularity indicates that something is wrong. Such a man is in the fair way to settled hypochondria. And I think it is even worse to be always watching closely the play of the mental machine, and thinking that this process or that emotion is not as it ought to be. Let a man work his mind fairly and moderately, and not worry himself as to its state. The mind can get no more morbid habit than that of continually watching itself for a stumble. Except in the case of metaphysicians, whose business it is to watch and analyse the doings of the mind, the mind ought to be like the stomach. You know that your stomach is right, because you never feel that you have one; but the work intended for that organ is somehow done. And common folk should know that they have minds, only by finding the ends fairly attained, which are intended to be attained by that most sensitive and ticklish piece of machinery.

I think that it is a piece of practical wisdom in driving the mental screw, to be careful how you allow it to dwell too constantly upon any one topic. If you allow yourself to think too much of any subject, you will get a partial craze upon that; you will come to vastly overrate its importance. You will make yourself uncomfortable about it. There once was a man who mused long upon the notorious fact that almost all human beings stoop consider ably. Few hold themselves as upright as they ought. And this notion took such hold upon the poor man's mind, that, waking or sleeping, he could not get rid of it; and he published volume after volume to prove the vast extent of the evils which come of this bad habit of stooping, and to show that to get fairly rid of this bad habit would be the regeneration of the human race, physically and morally. We know how authors exaggerate the claims of their subject; and I can quite imagine a very earnest man feeling afraid to think too much and long about any existing evil, for fear it should greaten on his view into a thing so large and pernicious, that he should be constrained to give all his life to wrestling with that one thing, and attach to it an importance which would make his neighbours think him a monomaniac. If you think long and deeply upon any subject, it grows in apparent magnitude and weight; if you think of it too long, it may grow big enough to exclude the thought of all things besides. If it be an existing and prevalent evil you are thinking of, you may come to fancy that if that one thing were done away, it would be well with the human race: all evil would go with it. I can conceive the process by which, without mania, without anything worse than the workable unsoundness of the practically sound mind, one might come to think as the man who wrote against stooping thought. For myself, I feel the force of this law so deeply, that there are certain evils of which I am afraid to think much, for fear I should come to be able to think of nothing else and nothing more. I remember, when I was a boy, there was a man in London who constantly advertised himself in the newspapers as the Inventor of the only Rational System of Writing in the Universe. His system was, I believe, to move in writing, not the fingers merely, but the entire arm from the shoulder. This may be an improvement perhaps: and that man had brooded over the mischiefs of moving the fingers in writing till these mischiefs shut out the view of the rest of creation, or at least till he saw nothing but irrationality in writing otherwise. All the millions who wrote by the fingers were cracked. The writing−master, in short, though possibly a reasonable man on other subjects, was certainly unsound upon this. You may allow yourself to speculate on the chance of being bitten by a mad dog, or of being maimed by a railway accident, till you grow morbid on these points. If you live in the country, you may give in to the idea that your house will be broken into at night by burglars, till, every time you wake in the dark hours, you may fancy you hear the centre−bit at work boring through the window−shutters down stairs. A very clever woman once told me, that for a year she yielded so much to the fear that she had left, a spark behind her in any room into which she had gone with a lighted candle, which

spark would set the house on fire, that she could not be easy till she had groped her way back in the dark to see that things were right. Now, ye readers whose minds must be carefully driven (I mean all the readers who will ever see this page), don't give in to these fancies. As you would carefully train your horse to pass the corner he always shies at, so break your mind of this bad habit. And in breaking your mind of the smallest bad habit, I would counsel you to resort to the same kindly Helper whose aid you would ask in breaking your mind of the greatest and worst. It is not a small matter, the existence in the mind of any tendency or characteristic which is unsound. We know what lies in that direction. You are like the railway−train which, with breaks unapplied, is stealing the first yard down the incline at the rale of a mile in two hours; but if that train be not pulled up, in ten minutes it may be tearing down to destruction at sixty miles an hour.

I have said that almost every human being is mentally a screw; that all have some intellectual peculiarity, some moral twist, away from the normal standard of Tightness. Let it, be added, that it is little wonder that the fact should be as it is. I do not think merely of a certain unhappy warping, of an old original wrench, which human nature long ago received, and from which it never has recovered. I am not writing as a theologian; and so I do not suggest the grave consideration that human nature, being fallen, need not be expected to be the right−working machinery that it may have been before it fell. But I may at least say, look how most people are educated; consider the kind of training they get, and the incompetent hands that train them: what chance have they of being anything but screws? Ah, my reader, if horses were broken by people as unfit for their work as most of the people who form human minds, there would not be a horse in the world that would not be dead lame. You do not trust your thorough−bred colt, hitherto unhandled, to any one who is not understood to have a thorough knowledge of the characteristics and education of horses. But in numberless instances, even in the better classes of society, a thing which needs to be guarded against a thousand wrong tendencies, and trained up to a thousand right things from which it is ready to shrink, the most sensitive and complicated thing in nature, the human soul, is left to have its character formed by hands as hopelessly unfit for the task as the Lord Chancellor is to prepare the winner of the next St. Leger. You find parents and guardians of children systematically following a course of treatment calculated to bring out the very worst tendencies of mind and heart that are latent in the little things given to their care. If a young horse has a tendency to shy, how carefully the trainer seeks to win him away from the habit. But if a poor little boy has a hasty temper, you may find his mother taking the greatest pains to irritate that temper. If the little fellow have some physical or mental defect, you have seen parents who never miss an opportunity of throwing it in the boy's face; parents who seem to exult in the thought that they know the place where a touch will always cause to wince,—the sensitive, unprotected point where the dart of malignity will never fail to get home. If a child has said or done some wrong or foolish thing, you will find parents who are constantly raking up the remembrance of it, for the pure pleasure of giving pain. Even so would a kindly man, who knows that his horse has just come down and cut himself, take pains whenever he came to a bit of road freshly macadamized to bring down the poor horse on the sharp stones, again with his bleeding knees. And even where you do not find positive malignity in those entrusted with the training of human minds, you find hopeless incornpetcncy exhibited in many other ways; outrageous silliness and vanity, want of honesty, and utter want of sense. I say it deliberately, instead of wondering that most minds are such screws, I wonder with indescribable surprise that they are not a thousand times worse. For they are like trees pruned and trained into ugliness and barrenness. They are like horses carefully tutored to shy, kick, rear, and bite. It says something hopeful as to what may yet be made of human beings, that most of them are no worse than they are. Some parents, fancying too that they are educating their children on Christian principles, educate them in such fashion that Ihe only wonder is that the children do not end at the gallows.

Let us recognise the fact in all our treatment of others, that we have to deal with screws. Let us not think, as some do, that by ignoring a fact you make it cease to be a fact. I have seen a man pulling his lame horse up tight, and flicking it with his whip, and trying to drive it as if it were not lame. Now, that won't do. The poor horse makes a desperate effort, and runs a step or two as if sound. But in a little the heavy head falls upon the bit at each step, and perhaps the creature comes down bodily with a tremendous smash. If it were only his idiotic master that was smashed, I should not mind. So have I seen parents refusing to see or allow for the peculiarities of their children, insisting on driving the poor screw as though it were perfect in wind and limb. So have I seen people refusing to see or allow for the peculiarities of those around them; ignoring the depressed spirits, the unhappy twist, the luckless perversity of temper, in a servant, an acquaintance, a friend, which, rightly managed, would

still leave them most serviceable screws; but which, determinedly ignored, will land in uselessness and misery. I believe there are people who (in a moral sense), if they have a crooked stick, fancy that by using it as if it were straight, it will become straight. If you have got a rifle that sends its ball somewhat to the left side, you (if you are not a fool) allow for that in shooting. If you have a friend of sterling value, but of crotchety temper, you (if you are not a fool) allow for that. If you have a child who is weak, desponding, and early old, you (if you are not a hopeless idiot) remember that, and allow for it, and try to make the best of it. But if you be an idiot, you will think it deep diplomacy, and adamantine firmness, and wisdom beyond Solomon's, to shut your eyes to the state of facts; to tug sharply the poor screw's mouth, to lash him violently, to drive him as though he were sound. Probably you will come to a smash: alas! that the smash will probably include more than you.

Not, reader, that all human beings thus idiotically ignore the fact that it is with screws they have to deal. It is very touching to see, as we sometimes see, people trying to make the best of awful screws. You are quite pleased if your lame horse trots four or five miles without showing very gross unsoundness, though of course this is but a poor achievement. And even so, I have been touched to see the child quite happy at having coaxed a graceless father to come for once to church; and the wife quite happy when the blackguard bully, her husband, for once evinces a little kindness. It was not much they did, you see: but remember what wretched screws did it, and be thankful if they do even that little. I have heard a mother repeat, with a pathetic pride, a connected sentence said by her idiot boy. You remember how delighted Miss Trotwood was, in Mr. Dickens's beautiful story, with Mr. Dick's good sense, when he said something which in anybody else would have been rather silly. But Mr. Dick, you see, was just out of the Asylum, and no more. How pleased you are to find a relation, who is a terrific fool, merely behaving like anybody else!

Yes: there is a good deal of practical resignation in this world. We get reconciled to having and to being screws. We grow reconciled to the fact that our possessions, our relations, our friends, are very far indeed from being what we could wish. We grow reconciled to the fact, and we try to make the best of it, that we ourselves are screws: that in temper, in judgment, in talent, in tact, we are a thousand miles short of being what we ought; and that we can hope for little more than decently, quietlv, sometimes wearily and sadly, to plod along the path in life which God in his kindness and wisdom has set us. We come to look with interest, but without a vestige of envy, at those who are cleverer and better off than ourselves. A great many good people are so accustomed to things going against them, that they are rather startled when things go as they could have desired: they can stand disappointment, but success puts them out, it is so unwonted a thing. The lame horse, the battered old gig,—they feel at home with these; but they would be confused if presented with my friend Smith's drag, with its beautiful steeds, all but thoroughbred, and perfectly sound. To struggle on with a small income, manifold worries, and lowly estimation,—to these things they have quietly reconciled themselves. But give them wealth, and peace, and fame (if these things can be combined), and they would hardly know what to do. Yesterday I walked up a very long flight of steps in a very poor part of the most beautiful city in Britain. Just before me, a feeble old woman, bent down apparently by eighty years, was slowly ascending. She had a very large bundle on her back, and she supported herself by a short stick in her withered, trembling hand. If it had been in the country, I should most assuredly have carried up the poor creature's bundle for her; but I am sorry to say I had not moral courage to offer to do so in town: for a parson with a great sackcloth bundle on his back, would be greeted in that district with depreciatory observations. But I kept close by her, to help her if she fell; and when I got to the top of the steps I passed her and went on. I looked sharply at the poor old face in passing; I see it yet. I see the look of cowed, patient, quiet, hopeless submission: I saw she had quite reconciled her mind to bearing her heavy burden, and to the far heavier load of years, and infirmities, and poverty, she was bearing too. She had accepted those for her portion in this life. She looked for nothing better. She was like the man whose horse has been broken−winded and lame so long, that he has come almost to think that every horse is a screw. I see yet the quiet, wearied, surprised look she cast up at me as I passed: a look merely of surprise to see an entire coat in a place where my fellow−creatures (every one deserving as much as me) for the most part wear rags. I do not think she even wished to possess an equally entire garment: she looked at it with interest merely as the possession of some one else. She did not even herself (as we Scotch say) to anything better than the rags she had worn so long. Long experience had subdued her to what she is.

But short experience does so too. We early learn to be content with screws, and to make the best of imperfect means. As I have been writing that last paragraph, I have been listening to a colloquy outside my study door,

which is partly open. The parties engaged in the discussion were a certain little girl of five years old, and her nurse. The little girl is going out to spend the day at the house of a little companion; and she is going to take her doll with her. I heard various sentences not quite distinctly, which conveyed to me a general impression of perplexity; and at length, in a cheerful, decided voice, the little girl said, 'The people will never know it has got no legs!' The doll, you see, was unsound. Accidents had brought it to an imperfect state. But that wise little girl had done what you and I, my reader, must try to do very frequently: she had made up her mind to make the best of a screw.

I learn a lesson, as I close my essay, from the old woman of eighty, and the little girl of five. Let us seek to reconcile our minds both to possessing screws, and (harder still) to being screws. Let us make the best of our imperfect possessions, and of our imperfect selves. Let us remember that a great deal of good can be done by means which fall very far short of perfection; that our moderate abilities, honestly and wisely husbanded and directed, may serve valuable ends in this world before we quit it,—ends which may remain after we are gone. I do not suppose that judicious critics, in pointing out an author's faults, mean that he ought to stop writing altogether. There are hopeless cases in which he certainly ought: cases in which the steed passes being a screw, and is fit only for the hounds. But in most instances the critic would be quite wrong, if he argued what because his author has many flaws and defects, he should write no more. With all its errors, what he writes may be much better than nothing; as the serviceable screw is better than no horse at all. And if the critic's purpose is merely to show the author that the author is a screw,—why, if the author have any sense at all, he knows that already. He does not claim to be wiser than other men; and still less to be better: yet he may try to do his best. With many defects and errors, still fair work may be turned off. I will not forget the lame horses that took the coach so well to Inverary. And I remember certain words in which one who is all but the greatest English poet declared that under the heavy visitation of God he would do his utmost still. Here is the resolution of a noble screw:—

I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward!

CHAPTER VII. CONCERNING SOLITARY DAYS.

Let me look back, this New Year's time, over nine years. Let me try to revive again the pervading atmosphere of the days when I used to live entirely alone. All days crush up into very little in the perspective. The months and years which were long as they passed over, are but a hand−breadth in remembrance. Five or ten years may be packed away into a very little corner in your mind; and in the case of a man brought up from childhood in a large family, who spends no more than three or four years alone before he again sees a household beginning to surround him, I think those lonely years seem especially short in the retrospect. Yet possibly in these he may have done some of the best work of his life; and possibly none, of all the years he has seen, have produced so great an impression on his character and on his temperament. And the impression left may be most diverse in nature. I have known a man remarkably gentle, kind, and sympathetic; always anxious to say a pleasant and encouraging word; discerning by a wonderful intuition whenever he had presented a view or made a remark that had caused pain to the most sensitive, and eager to efface the painful feeling; and I have thought that in all this I could trace the result of his having lived entirely alone for many years. I have known a man insufferably arrogant, conceited, and self−opinionated; another morbidly suspicious and ever nervously anxious; another conspicuously devoid of common Eense; and in each of these I have thought I could trace the result of a lonely life. But indeed it depends so entirely on the nature of the material subjected to the mill what the result turned off shall be, that it is hard to say of any human being what shall be the effect produced upon his character by almost any discipline you can think of. And a solitary life may make a man either thoughtful or vacant, either humble or conceited, either sympathetic or selfish, either frank or shrinkingly shy.

Great numbers of educated people in this country live solitary lives. And by a solitary life I do not mean a life in a remote district of country with hardly a neighbour near, but with your house well filled and noisy with, children's voices. By a solitary life I mean a life in which, day after day and week after week, you rise in the morning in a silent dwelling, in which, save servants, there are none but yourself; in which you sit down to breakfast by yourself, perhaps set yourself to your day's work all alone, then dine by yourself, and spend the evening by yourself. Barristers living in chambers in some cases do this; young lads living in lodgings, young clergymen in country parsonages, old bachelors in handsome town houses and beautiful country mansions, old maids in quiet streets of country towns, old ladies once the centre of cheerful families, but whose husband and children are gone—even dukes in palaces and castles, amid a lonely splendour which must, one would think, seem dreary and ghastly. But you know, my reader, we sympathize the most completely with that which we have ourselves experienced. And when I hear people talk of a solitary life, the picture called up before me is that of a young man who has always lived as one of a household considerable in numbers, who gets a living in the Church, and who, having no sister to keep house for him, goes to it to live quite alone. How many of my friends have done precisely that! Was it not a curious mode of life? A thing is not made commonplace to your own feeling by the fact that hundreds or thousands of human beings have experienced the very same. And although fifty Smiths have done it (all very clever fellows), and fifty Robinsons have done it (all very commonplace and ordinary fellows), one does not feel a bit the less interest in recurring to that experience which, hackneyed as it may be, is to you of greater interest than all other experience, in that it is your own. Draw up a thousand men in a row, all dressed in the same dark−green uniform of the riflemen; and I do not think that their number, or their likeness to one another, will cause any but the most unthinking to forget that each is an individual man as much as if he stood alone in the desert; that each has his own ties, cares, and character, and that possibly each, like to all the rest as he may appear to others, is to several hearts, or perhaps to one only, the one man of all mankind.

Most clergymen whom I have known divide their day very much in the same fashion. After breakfast they go into their study and write their sermon for two or three hours; then they go out and visit their sick or make other calls of duty for several hours. If they have a large parish, they probably came to it with the resolution that before dinner they should always have an hour's smart walk at least; but they soon find that duty encroaches on that hour, and finally eats it entirely up, and their duty calls are continued till it is time to return home to dinner. Don't you remember, my friend, how short a time that lonely meal lasted, and how very far from jovial the feast was? As for

me, that I might rest my eyes from reading between dinner and tea (a thing much to be desired in the case of every scholar), I hardly ever, failed, save for a few weeks of midwinter, to go out in the twilight and have a walk—a solitary and very slow walk. My hours, you see, were highly unfashionable. I walked from half−past five to half−past six: that was my after−dinner walk. It was always the same. It looks somewhat dismal to recall. Do you ever find, in looking back at some great trial or mortification you have passed through, that you are pitying yourself as if you were another person? I do not mean to say that those walks were a trial. On the contrary, they were always an enjoyment—a subdued quiet enjoyment, as are the enjoyments of solitary folk. Still, now looking back, it seems to me as if I were watching some one else going out in the cold February twilight, and walking from half−past five to half−past six. I think I see a human being, wearing a very thick and rough great−coat, got for these walks, and never worn on any other occasion, walking very slowly, bearing an extremely thick oak walking−stick (I have it yet) by the shore of the bleak gray sea. Only on the beach did I ever bear that stick; and by many touches of the sand it gradually wore down till it became too short for use. I see the human being issuing from the door of a little parsonage (not the one where there are magnificent beeches and rich evergreens and climbing roses), and always waiting at the door for him there was a friendly dog, a terrier, with very short legs and a very long back, and shaggy to that degree that at a cursory glance it was difficult to decide which was his head and which his tail. Ah, poor old dog, you are grown very stiff and lazy now, and time has not mellowed your temper. Even then it was somewhat doubtful. Not that you ever offered to bite me; but it was most unlucky, and it looked most invidious, that occasion when you rushed out of the gate and severely tore the garments of the dissenting minister! But he was a worthy man: and I trust that he never supposed that upon that day you acted by my instigation. You were very active then; and so few faces did you see (though a considerable town was within a few hundred yards), that the appearance of one made you rush about and bark tremendously. Cross a field, pass through a hedgerow of very scrubby and stunted trees, cross a railway by a path on the level, go on by a dirty track on its further side; and you come upon the sea−shore. It is a level, sandy beach; and for a mile or two inland the ground is level, and the soil ungenial. There are sandy downs, thinly covered with coarse grass. Trees will hardly grow; the few trees there are, are cut down by the salt winds from the Atlantic. The land view, in a raw twilight of early spring, is dreary beyond description; but looking across the sea, there is a magnificent view of mountain peaks. And if you turn in another direction, and look along the shore, you will see a fine hill rising from the sea and running inland, at whose base there flows a beautiful river, which pilgrims come hundreds of miles to visit. How often, O sandy beach, have these feet walked slowly along you! And in these years of such walks, I did not meet or see in all six human beings. A good many years have passed since I saw that dismal beach last; I dare say it would look very strange now. The only excitement of those walks consisted in sending the dog into the sea, and in making him run after stones. How tremendously he ran; what tiger−like bounds he made, as he overtook the missile! Just such walks, my friends, many of you have taken. Homines estis. And then you have walked into your dwelling again, walked into your study, had tea in solitude, spent the evening alone in reading and writing. You have got on in life, let it be hoped; but you remember well the aspect and arrangement of the room; you remember where stood tables, chairs, candles; you remember the pattern of the grate, often vacantly studied. I think every one must look back with great interest upon such days. Life was in great measure before you, what you might do with it. For anything you knew then, you might be a great genius; whereas if the world, even ten years later, has not yet recognized you as a great genius, it is all but certain that it never will recognize you as such at all. And through those long winter evenings, often prolonged far into the night, not only did you muse on many problems, social, philosophical, and religious, but you pictured out, I dare say, your future life, and thought of many things which you hoped to do and to be.

A very subdued mood of thought and feeling, I think, creeps gradually over a man living such a solitary life. I mean a man who has been accustomed to a house with many inmates. There is something odd in the look of an apartment in which hardly a word is ever spoken. If you speak while by yourself, it is in a very low tone; and though you may smile, I don't think any sane man could often laugh heartily while by himself. Think of a life in which, while at home, there is no talking and no laughing. Why, one distinctive characteristic of rational man is cut off when laughing ceases. Man is the only living creature that laughs with the sense of enjoyment. I have heard, indeed, of the laughing hyena; but my information respecting it is mainly drawn from Shakspeare, who was rather a great philosopher and poet than a great naturalist. 'I will laugh like a hyen,' says that great man; and as these words are spoken as a threat, I apprehend the laughter in question is of an unpleasant and umnirthful

character. But to return from such deep thoughts, let it be repeated, that the entire mood of the solitary man is likely to be a sobered and subdued one. Even if hopeful and content, he will never be in high spirits. The highest degree in the scale he will ever reach, may be that of quiet lightheartedness; and that will come seldom. Jollity, or exhilaration, is entirely a social thing. I do not believe that even Sydney Smith could have got into one of his rollicking veins when alone. He enjoyed his own jokes, and laughed at them with extraordinary zest; but he enjoyed them because he thought others were enjoying them too. Why, you would be terrified that your friend's mind was going, if before entering his room you heard such a peal of merriment from within, as would seem a most natural thing were two or three cheerful companions together. And gradually that chastened, subdued stage comes, in which a man can sit for half an hour before the fire as motionless as marble; even a man who in the society of others is in ceaseless movement. It is an odd feeling, when you find that you yourself, once the most restless of living creatures, have come to this. I dare say Robinson Crusoe often sat for two or three hours together in his cave, without stirring hand or foot. The vital principle grows weak when isolated. You must have a number of embers together to make a warm fire; separate them, and they will soon go out and grow cold. And even so, to have brisk, conscious, vigorous life, you must have a number of lives together. They keep each other warm. They encourage and support each other. I dare say the solitary man, sitting at the close of a long evening by his lonely fireside, has sometimes felt as though the flame of life had sunk so low that a very little thing would be enough to put it out altogether. From the motionless limbs, from the unstrung hands, it seemed as though vitality had ebbed away, and barely kept its home in the feeble heart. At such a time some sudden blow, some not very violent shock, would suffice to quench the spark for ever. Reading the accounts in the newspapers of the cold, hunger, and misery which our poor soldiers suffered in the Crimea, have you not thought at such a time that a hundredth part of that would have been enough to extinguish you? Have you not wondered at the tenacity of material life, and at the desperate grasp with which even the most wretched cling to it? Is it worth the beggar's while, in the snow−storm, to struggle on through the drifting heaps towards the town eight miles off, where he may find a morsel of food to half−appease his hunger, and a stone stair to sleep in during the night? Have not you thought, in hours when you were conscious of that shrinking of life into its smallest compass—that retirement of it from the confines of its territory, of which we have been thinking—that in that beggar's place you would keep up the fight no longer, but creep into some quiet corner, and there lay yourself down and sleep away into forgetfulness? I do not say that the feeling is to be approved, or that it can in any degree bear being reasoned upon; but I ask such readers as have led solitary lives, whether they have not somelimes felt it? It is but the subdued feeling which comes of loneliness carried out to its last development. It is the highest degree of that influence which manifests itself in slow steps, in subdued tones of voice, in motionless musings beside the fire.

Another consequence of a lonely life in the case of many men, is an extreme sensitiveness to impressions from external nature. In the absence of other companions of a more energetic character, the scenes amid which you live produce an effect on you which they would fail to produce if you were surrounded by human friends. It is the rule in nature, that the stronger impression makes you unconscious of the weaker. If you had charged with the Six Hundred, you would not have remarked during the charge that one of your sleeves was too tight. Perhaps in your boyhood, a companion of a turn at once thoughtful and jocular, offered to pull a hair out of your head without your feeling it. And this he accomplished, by taking hold of the doomed hair, and then giving you a knock on the head that brought tears to your eyes. For, in the more vivid sensation of that knock you never felt the little twitch of the hair as it quitted its hold. Yes, the stronger impression makes you unaware of the weaker. And the impression produced either upon thought or feeling by outward scenes, is so much weaker than that produced by the companionship of our kind, that in the presence of the latter influence, the former remains unfelt, even by men upon whom it would tell powerfully in the absence of another. And so it is upon the lonely man that skies and mountains, woods and fields and rivers, tell with their full effect; it is to him that they become a part of life; it is in him that they make the inner shade or sunshine, and originate and direct the processes of the intellect. You go out to take a walk with a friend: you get into a conversation that interests and engrosses you. And thus engrossed, you hardly remark the hedges between which you walk, or the soft outline of distant summer hills. After the first half−mile, you are proof against the influence of the dull December sky, or the still October woods. But when you go out for your solitary walk, unless your mind be very much preoccupied indeed, your feeling and mood are at the will of external nature. And after a few hundred yards, unless the matter which was in your mind at starting be of a very worrying and painful character, you begin gradually to take your tone from the sky above you, and the

ground on which you tread. You hear the birds, which, walking with a sympathetic companion, you would never have noticed. You feel the whole spirit of the scene, whether cheerful or gloomy, gently pervading you, and sinking into your heart. I do not know how far all this, continued through months or years of comparative loneliness, may permanently affect character; we can stand a great deal of kneading without being lastingly affected, either for better or worse; but there can be no question at all, that in a solitary life nature rises into a real companion, producing upon our present mood a real effect. As more articulate and louder voices die away upon our ear, we begin to hear the whisper of trees, the murmur of brooks, the song of birds, with a distinctness and a meaning not known before.

The influence of nature on most minds is likely to be a healthful one; still, it is not desirable to allow that influence to become too strong. And there is a further influence which is felt in a solitary life, which ought never to be permitted to gain the upper hand. I mean the influence of our own mental moods. It is not expedient to lead too subjective a life. We look at all things, doubtless, through our own atmosphere; our eyes, to a great extent, make the world they see. And no doubt, too, it is the sunshine within the breast that has most power to brighten; and the thing that can do most to darken is the shadow there. Still, it is not fit that these mental moods should be permitted to arise mainly through the mind's own working. It is not fit that a man should watch his mental moods as he marks the weather; and be always chronicling that on such a day and such another he was in high or low spirits, he was kindly−disposed or snappish, as the case may be. The more stirring influence of intercourse with others, renders men comparatively heedless of the ups and downs of their own feelings; change of scenes and faces, conversation, business engagements, may make the day a lively or a depressed one, though they rose at morning with a tendency to just the opposite thing. But the solitary man is apt to look too much inward; and to attach undue importance to the fancies and emotions which arise spontaneously within his own breast; many of them in great measure the result of material causes. And as it is not a healthy thing for a man to be always feeling his pulse, and fearing that it shows something amiss; it is not a healthy thing to follow the analogous course as regards our immaterial health and development. And I cannot but regard those religious biographies which we sometimes read, in which worthy people of little strength of character record particularly from day to day all the shifting moods and fancies of their minds as regards their religious concerns, as calculated to do a great deal of mischief. It is founded upon a quite mistaken notion of the spirit of true Christianity, that a human being should be ever watching the play of his mind, as one might watch the rise and fall of the barometer; and recording phases of thought and feeling which it is easy to see are in some cases, and in some degree, at least, the result of change of temperature, of dyspepsia, of deranged circulation of the blood, as though these were the unquestionable effects of spiritual influence, either supernal or infernal. Let us try, in the matter of these most solemn of all interests, to look more to great truths and facts which exist quite independently of the impression they may for the time produce upon us; and less to our own fanciful or morbid frames and feelings.

It cannot be denied that, in some respects, most men are better men alone than in the society of their fellows. They are kinder−hearted; more thoughtful; more pious. I have heard a man say that he always acted and felt a great deal more under the influence of religious principle while living in a house all by himself for weeks and months, than he did when the house was filled by a family. Of course this is not saying much for the steadfastness of a man's Christian principle. It is as much as to say that he feels less likely to go wrong when he is not tempted to go wrong. It is as though you said in praise of a horse, that he never shies when there is nothing to shy at. No doubt, when there are no little vexatious realities to worry you, you will not be worried by them. And little vexatious realities are doubtless a trial of temper and of principle. Living alone, your nerves are not jarred by discordant voices; you are to a great degree free from annoying interruptions; and if you be of an orderly turn of mind, you are not put about by seeing things around you in untidy confusion. You do not find leaves torn out of books; nor carpets strewn with fragments of biscuits; nor mantelpieces getting heaped with accumulated rubbish. Sawdust, escaped from maimed dolls, is never sprinkled upon your table−covers; nor ink poured over your sermons; nor leaves from these compositions cut up for patterns for dolls' dresses. There is an audible quiet which pervades the house, which is favourable to thought. The first evenings, indeed, which you spent alone in it, were almost awful for their stillness; but that sort of nervous feeling soon wears off. And then you have no more than the quiet in which the mind's best work must be done, in the case of average men.

And there can be little doubt, that when you gird up the mind, and put it to its utmost stretch, it is best that you should be alone. Even when the studious man comes to have a wife and children, he finds it needful that he should

have his chamber to which he may retire when he is to grapple with his task of head−work; and he finds it needful, as a general rule, to suffer no one to enter that chamber while he is at work. It is not without meaning that this solitary chamber is called a study: the word reminds us that hard mental labour must generally be gone through when we are alone. Any interruption by others breaks the train of thought; and the broken end may never be caught again. You remember how Maturin, the dramatist, when he felt himself getting into the full tide of composition, used to stick a wafer on his forehead, to signify to any member of his family who might enter his room, that he must not on any account be spoken to. You remember the significant arrangement of Sir Walter's library, or rather study, at Abbotsford; it contained one chair, and no more. Yes, the mind's best work, at the rate of writing, must be done alone. At the speed of talking, the case is otherwise. The presence of others will then stimulate the mind to do its best; I mean to do the best it can do at that rate of speed. Talking with a clever man, on a subject which interests you, your mind sometimes produces material which is (for you) so good, that you are truly surprised at it. And a barrister, addressing a judge or a jury, has to do hard mental work, to keep all his wits awake, to strain his intellect to the top of its bent, in the presence of many; but, at the rate of speed at which he does this, he does it all the better for their presence. So with an extempore preacher. The eager attention of some hundreds of his fellow−creatures spurs him on (if he be mentally and physically in good trim) to do perhaps the very best he ever does. I have heard more than two or three clergymen who preach extempore (that is, who trust to the moment for the words entirely, for the illustration mainly, and for the thought in some degree), declare that they have sometimes felt quite astonished at the fluency with which they were able to express their thoughts, and at the freshness and fulness with which thoughts crowded upon them, while actually addressing a great assemblage of people. Of course, such extemporaneous speaking is an uncertain thing. It is a hit or a miss. A little physical or mental derangement, and the extempore speaker gets on lamely enough; he flounders, stammers, perhaps breaks down entirely. But still, I hold that though the extempore speaker may think and say that his mind often produces extempore the best material it ever produces, it is in truth only the best material which it can produce at the rate of speaking: and though the freshly manufactured article, warm from the mind that makes it, may interest and impress at the moment, we all know how loose, wordy, and unsymmetrical such a composition always is: and it is unquestionable that the very best product of the human soul must be turned off, not at the rate of speaking, but at the much slower rate of writing: yes, and oftentimes of writing with many pauses between the sentences, and long musing over individual phrases and words. Could Mr. Tennyson have spoken off in half−an−hour any one of the Idylls of the Kingt Could he have said in three minutes any one of the sections of In Memoriam? And I am not thinking of the mechanical difficulty of composition in verse: I am thinking of the simple product in thought. Could Bacon have extemporized at the pace of talking, one of his Essays? Or does not Ben Jonson sum up just those characteristics which extempore composition (even the best) entirely wants, when he tells us of Bacon that 'no man ever wrote more neatly, more pressly; nor suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in that he uttered?' I take it for granted, that the highest human composition is that which embodies most thought, experience, and feeling; and that must be produced slowly and alone.

And if a man's whole heart be in his work, whether it be to write a book, or to paint a picture, or to produce a poem, he will be content to make his life such as may tend to make him do his work best, even though that mode of life should not be the pleasantest in itself. He may gay to himself, I would rather be a great poet than a very cheerful and happy man; and if to lend a very retired and lonely life be the likeliest discipline to make me a great poet, I shall submit to that discipline. You must pay a price in labour and self−denial to accomplish any great end. When Milton resolved to write something 'which men should not willingly let die,' he knew what it would cost him. It was to be 'by labour and intent study, which I take to be my portion in this life.' When Mr. Dickens wrote one of his Christmas Books, he shut himself up for six weeks to do it; he 'put his whole heart into it, and came out again looking as haggard as a murderer.' There is a substratum of philosophic truth in Professor Aytoun's brilliant burlesque of Firmilian. That gentleman wanted to be a poet. And being persuaded that the only way to successfully describe tragic and awful feelings was to have actually felt them, he got into all kinds of scrapes of set purpose, that he might know what were the actual sensations of people in like circumstances. Wishing to know what are the emotions of a murderer, he goes and kills somebody. He finds, indeed, that feelings sought experimentally prove not to be the genuine article: still, you see the spirit of the true artist, content to make any sacrifice to attain perfection in his art. The highest excellence, indeed, in some one department of human exertion is not consistent with decent goodness in all: you dwarf the remaining faculties when you develop one to

abnormal size and strength. Thus have men been great preachers, but uncommonly neglectful parents. Thus have men been great statesmen, but omitted to pay their tradesmen's bills. Thus men have been great moral and social reformers, whose own lives stood much in need of moral and social reformation. I should judge from a portrait I have seen of Mr. Thomas Sayers, the champion of England, that this eminent individual has attended to his physical to the neglect of his intellectual development. His face appeared deficient in intelligence, though his body seemed abundant in muscle. And possibly it is better to seek to develop the entire nature—intellectual, moral, and physical−than to push one part of it into a prominence that stunts and kills the rest. It is better to be a complete man than to be essentially a poet, a statesman, a prize−fighter. It is better that a tree should be fairly grown all round, than that it should send out one tremendous branch to the south, and have only rotten twigs in every other direction; better, even though that tremendous branch should be the very biggest that ever was seen. Such an inordinate growth in a single direction is truly morbid. It reminds one of the geese whose livers go to form that regal dainty, the pate de foie gras. By subjecting a goose to a certain manner of life, you dwarf its legs, wings, and general muscular development; but you make its liver grow as large as itself. I have known human beings who practised on their mental powers a precisely analogous discipline. The power of calculating in figures, of writing poetry, of chess−playing, of preaching sermons, was tremendous; but all their other faculties were like the legs and wings of the fattening goose.

Let us try to be entire human beings, round and complete; and if we wish to be so, it is best not to live too much alone. The best that is in man's nature taken as a whole is brought out by the society of his kind. In one or two respects he may be better in solitude, but not as the complete man. And more especially a good deal of the society of little children is much to be desired. You will be the better for having them about you, for listening to their stories, and watching their ways. They will sometimes interrupt you at your work, indeed, but their effect upon your moral development will be more valuable by a great deal than the pages you might have written in the time you spent with them. Read over the following verses, which are among the latest written by Longfellow. I do not expect that men who have no children of their own will appreciate them duly; but they seem to me among the most pleasing and touching which that pleasing poet ever wrote. Miserable solitary beings, see what improving and softening influences you miss!

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations
That is known as the Children's Hour.
I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.
From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall−stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.
A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.
A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!
They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair:
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.
They almost devour me with kisses,

Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse−Tower on the Rhine!
Do you think, O blue−eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old moustache as I am
Is not a match for you all?
I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeons,
In the round−tower of my heart.
And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And moulder in dust away!

What shall be said as to the effect which a solitary life will produce upon a man's estimate of himself? Shall it lead him to fancy himself a man of very great importance? Or shall it tend to make him underrate himself, and allow inferior men of superior impudence to take the wall of him? Possibly we have all seen each effect follow from a too lonely mode of life. Each may follow naturally enough. Perhaps it is natural to imagine your mental stature to be higher than it is, when you have no one near with whom you may compare yourself. It no doubt tends to take down a human being from his self−conceit, to find himself no more than one of a large circle, no member of which is disposed to pay any special regard to his judgment, or in any way to yield him precedence. And the young man who has come in his solitary dwelling to think that he is no ordinary mortal, has that nonsense taken out of him when he goes back to spend some days in his father's house among a lot of brothers of nearly his own age, who are generally the very last of the race to believe in any man. But sometimes the opposite effect comes of the lonely life. You grow anxious, nervous, and timid; you lose confidence in yourself, in the absence of any who may back up your failing sense of your own importance. You would like to shrink into a corner, and to slip quietly through life unnoticed. And all this without affectation, without the least latent feeling that perhaps you are not so very insignificant after all. Yet, even where men have come well to understand how infinitely little they are as regards the estimation of mankind, you will find them, if they live alone, cherishing some vain fancy that some few people, some distant friends, are sometimes thinking of them. You will find them arranging their papers, as though fancying that surely somebody would like some day to see them; and marshalling their sermons, as though in the vague notion that at some future time mortals would be found weak enough to read them. It is one of the things slowly learnt by repeated lessons and lengthening experience, that nobody minds very much about you, my reader. You remember the sensitive test which Dr. Johnson suggested as to the depth of one mortal's feeling for another. How does it affect his appetite? Multitudes in London, he said, professed themselves extremely distressed at the hanging of Dr. Dodd; but how many on the morning he was hung took a materially worse breakfast than usual? Solitary dreamer, fancying that your distant friends feel deep interest in your goings−on, how many of them are there who would abridge their dinner if the black−edged note arrived by post which will some day chronicle the last fact in your worldly history?

You get, living alone, into little particular ways of your own. You know how, walking along a crowded street, you cannot keep a straight line: at every step you have to yield a little to right or left to avoid the passers by. This is no great trouble: you do it almost unconsciously, and your journey is not appreciably lengthened. Even so, living in a family, walking along the path of life in the same track with many more, you find it needful scores of times each day to give up your own fancies and wishes and ways, in deference to those of others. You cannot divide the day in that precise fashion which you would yourself like best. You must, in deciding what shall be the dinner−hour, regard what will suit others as well as you. You cannot sit always just in the corner or in the chair you would prefer. Sometimes you must tell your children a story when you are weary, or busy; but you cannot find it in your heart to cast a shadow of disappointment on the eager little faces that come and ask you. You have to stop writing many a time, in the middle of a sentence, to open your study door at the request of a little voice outside; and to admit a little visitor who can give no more definite reason for her visit than that she has come to

see you, and tell you she has been a good girl. And all this is well for you It breaks in hour by hour upon your native selfishness. And it cosfs you not the slightest effort to give up your own wish to that of your child. Even if to middle age you retain the innocent taste for sweetmeats, would you not have infinitely greater pleasure in seeing your little boy or girl eating up the contents of your parcel, than in eating them yourself? It is to me a thoroughly disgusting sight to see, as we sometimes do, the wife and children of a family kept in constant terror of the selfish bashaw at the head of the house, and ever on the watch to yield in every petty matter to his whims and fancies. Sometimes, where he is a hard−wrought and anxious man, whose hard work earns his children's bread, and whose life is their sole stay, it is needful that he should be deferred to in many things, lest the overtasked brain and overstrained nervous system should break down or grow unequal to their task. But I am not thinking of such cases. I mean cases in which the head of the family is a great fat, bullying, selfish scoundrel; who devours sullenly the choice dishes at dinner, and walks into all the fruit at dessert, while his wife looks on in silence, and the awe−stricken children dare not hint that they would like a little of what the brutal hound is devouring. I mean cases in which the contemptible dog is extremely well dressed, while his wife and children's attire is thin and bare; in which he liberally tosses about his money in the billiard−room, and goes off in autumn for a tour on the Continent by himself, leaving them to the joyless routine of their unvaried life. It is sad to see the sudden hush that falls upon the little things when he enters the house; how their sports are cut short, and they try to steal away from the room. Would that I were the Emperor of Russia, and such a man my subject! Should not he taste the knout? Should not I make him howl? That would be his suitable punishment: for he will never feel what worthier mortals would regard as the heavier penalty by far, the utter absence of confidence or real affection between him and his children when they grow up. He will not mind that there never was a day when the toddling creatures set up a shout of delight at his entrance, and rushed at him and scaled him and searched in his pockets, and pulled him about; nor that the day will never come when, growing into men and women, they will come to him for sympathy and guidance in their little trials and perplexities. Oh, woful to think that there are parents, held in general estimation too, to whom their children would no more think of going for kindly sympathy, than they would think of going to Nova Zembla for warmth!

But this is an excursus: I would that my hand were wielding a stout horsewhip rather than a pen! Let me return to the point of deviation, and say that a human being, if he be true−hearted, by living in a family, insensibly and constantly is gently turned from his own stiff track; and goes through life sinuously, so to speak. But the lonely man settles into his own little ways. He is like the man who walks through the desert without a soul to elbow him for miles. He fixes his own hours; he sits in his own corner, in his peculiar chair; he arranges the lamp where it best suits himself that it should stand; he reads his newspaper when he pleases, for no one else wants to see it; he orders from the club the books that suit his own taste. And all this quite fitly: like the Duke of Argyle's attacks upon Lord Derby, these things please himself, and do harm to nobody. It is not selfishness not to consult the wishes of other people, if there be no other people whose wishes you can consult. And, though with great suffering to himself, I believe that many a kind−hearted, precise old bachelor, stiffened into his own ways through thirty solitary years would yet make an effort to give them up, if he fancied that to yield a little from them was needful to the comfort of others. He would give up the corner by the fire in which he Las sat through the life of a generation: he would resign to another the peg on which his hat has hung through that long time. Still, all this would cost a painful effort; and one need hardly repeat the common−place, that if people intend ever to get married, it is expedient that they should do so before they have settled too rigidly into their own ways.

It is a very touching thing, I think, to turn over the repositories of a lonely man after he is dead. You come upon so many indications of all his little ways and arrangements. In the case of men who have been the heads of large families, this work is done by those who have been most nearly connected with them, and who knew their ways before; and such men, trained hourly to yield their own wishes in things small and great, have comparatively few of those little peculiar ways in which so much of their individuality seems to make its touching appeal to us after they are gone. But lonely men not merely have very many little arrangements of their own, but have a particular reserve in exhibiting these: there is a strong sensitiveness about them: you know how they would have shrunk in life from allowing any one to turn over their papers, or even to look into the arrangements of their wardrobe and their linen−press. I remember once, after the sudden death of a reserved old gentleman, being one of two or three who went over all his repositories. The other people who did so with me were hard−headed lawyers, and did not seem to mind much; but I remember that it appeared to me a most touching sight we saw. All

the little ways into which he had grown in forty lonely years; all those details about his property (a very large one), which in life he had kept entirely to himself—all these we saw. I remember, lying on the top of the documents contained in an iron chest, a little scrap of paper, the back of an ancient letter, on which was written a note of the amount of all his wealth. There you saw at once a secret which in life he would have confided to no one. I remember the precise arrangement of all the little piles of papers, so neatly tied up in separate parcels. I remember the pocket−handkerchiefs, of several different kinds, each set wrapped up by itself in a piece of paper. It was curious to think that he had counted and sorted those, handkerchiefs; and now he was so far away. What a contrast, the little cares of many little matters like that, and the solemn realities of the unseen world! I would not on any account have looked over these things alone. I should have had an awe−stricken expectation that I should be interrupted. I should have expected a sudden tap on the shoulder, and to be asked what I was doing there. And doubtless, in many such cases, when the repositories of the dead are first looked into by strangers, some one far away would be present, if such things could be.

Solitary men, of the class which I have in my mind, are generally very hard−wrought men, and are kept too busy to allow very much time for reverie. Still, there is some. There are evening hours after the task is done, when you sit by the fire, or walk up and down your study, and think that you are missing a great deal in this lonely life; and that much more might be made of your stay in this world, while its best years are passing over. You think that there are many pleasant people in the world, people whom you would like to know, and who might like you if they knew you. But you and they have never met; and if you go on in this solitary fashion, you and they never will meet. No doubt here is your comfortable room; there is the blazing fire and the mellow lamp and the warmly−curtained windows; and pervading the silent chamber, there is the softened murmur of the not distant sea. The backs of your books look out at you like old friends; and after you are married, you won't be able to afford to buy so many. Still, you recall the cheerful society in which you have often spent such hours, and you think it might be well if you were not so completely cut off from it. You fancy you hear the hum of lively conversation, such as gently exhilarates the mind without tasking it; and again you think what a loss it is to live where you hardly ever hear music, whether good or bad. You think of the awkward shyness and embarrassment of manner which grows upon a man who is hardly ever called to join in general conversation. Yes, He knew our nature best who said that it is not good that man should be alone. We lean to our kind. There is indeed a solitariness which is the condition of an individual soul's being, which no association with others can do away; but there is no reason why we should add to that burden of personality which the Bishop of Oxford, in one of his most striking sermons, has shown to be truly 'an awful gift.' And say, youthful recluse (I don't mean you, middle−aged bachelor, I mean really young men of five or six and twenty), have you not sometimes, sitting by the fireside in the evening, looked at the opposite easy chair in the ruddy glow, and imagined that easy chair occupied by a gentle companion—one who would bring out into double strength all that is good in you—one who would sympathize with you and encourage you in all your work—one who would think you much wiser, cleverer, handsomer, and better than any mortal has ever yet thought you—the Angel in the House, in short, to use the strong expression of Mr. Coventry Patmore? Probably you have imagined all that: possibly you have in some degree realized it all. If not, in all likelihood the fault lies chiefly with yourself.

It must be a dismal thing for a solitary man to be taken ill: I mean so seriously ill as to be confined to bed, yet not so dangerously ill as to make some relation or friend come at all sacrifices to be with you. The writer speaks merely from logical considerations: happily he never experienced the case. But one can see that in that lonely life, there can be none of those pleasant circumstances which make days in bed, when acute pain is over, or the dangerous turning−point of disease is happily past, as quietly enjoyable days as any man is ever likely to know. No one should ever be seriously ill (if he can help it) unless he be one of a considerable household. Even then, indeed, it will be advisable to be ill as seldom as may be. But to a person who when well is very hard−worked, and a good deal worried, what restful days those are of which we are thinking! You have such a feeling of peace and quietness. There you lie, in lazy luxury, when you are suffering merely the weakness of a serious illness, but the pain and danger are past. All your wants are so thoughtfully and kindly anticipated. It is a very delightful sensation to lift your head from the pillow, and instantly to find yourself giddy and blind from loss of blood, and just drop your head down again. It is not a question, even for the most uneasily exacting conscience, whether you are to work or not: it is plain you cannot. There is no difficulty on that score. And then you are weakened to that degree that nothing worries you. Things going wrong or remaining neglected about the garden or the stable, which

would have annoyed you when well, cannot touch you here. All you want is to lie still and rest. Everything is still. You faintly hear the door−bell ring; and though you live in a quiet country house where that phenomenon rarely occurs, you feel not the least curiosity to know who is there. You can look for a long time quite contentedly at the glow of the fire on the curtains and on the ceiling. You feel no anxiety about the coming in of the post; but when your letters and newspapers arrive, you luxuriously read them, a very little at a time, and you soon forget all you have read. You turn over and fall asleep for a while; then you read a little more. Your reviving appetite makes simple food a source of real enjoyment. The children come in, and tell you wonderful stories of all that has happened since you were ill. They are a little subdued at first, but soon grow noisy as usual; and their noise does not in the least disturb you. You hear it as though it were miles off. After days and nights of great pain, you understand the blessing of ease and rest: you are disposed to be pleased with everything, and everybody wants to please you. The day passes away, and the evening darkness comes before you are aware. Everything is strange, and everything is soothing and pleasant. The only disadvantage is, that you grow so fond of lying in bed, that you shrink extremely from the prospect of ever getting up again.

Having arrived at this point, at 10.45 on this Friday evening, I gathered up all the pages which have been written, and carried them to the fireside, and sitting there, I read them over; and I confess, that on the whole, it struck me that the present essay was somewhat heavy. A severe critic might possibly say that it was stupid. I fancied it would have been rather good when it was sketched out; but it has not come up to expectation. However, it is as good as I could make it; and I trust the next essay may be better. It is a chance, you see, what the quality of any composition shall be. Give me a handle to turn, and I should undertake upon every day to turn it equally well. But in the working of the mental machine, the same pressure of steam, the same exertion of will, the same strain of what powers you have, will not always produce the same result. And if you, reader, feel some disappointment at looking at a new work by an old friend, and finding it not up to the mark you expected, think how much greater his disappointment must have been as the texture rolled out from the loom, and he felt it was not what he had wished. Here, to−night, the room and the house are as still as in my remembrance of the Solitary Days which are gone. But they will not be still to−morrow morning; and they are so now because sleep has hushed two little voices, and stayed the ceaseless movements of four little pattering feet. May those Solitary Days never return. They are well enough when the great look−out is onward; but, oh! how dreary such days must be to the old man whose main prospect is of the past! I cannot imagine a lot more completely beyond all earthly consolation, than that of a man from whom wife and children have been taken away, and who lives now alone in the dwelling once gladdened by their presence, but now haunted by their memory. Let us humbly pray, my reader, that such a lot may never be yours or mine.

CHAPTER VIII. CONCERNING GLASGOW DOWN THE WATER.

Upon any day in the months of June, July, August, and September, the stranger who should walk through the handsome streets, crescents, and terraces which form the West End of Glasgow, might be led to fancy that the plague was in the town, or that some fearful commercial crash had brought ruin upon all its respectable families,—so utterly deserted is the place. The windows are all done up with brown paper: the door−plates and handles, ere−while of glittering brass, are black with rust: the flights of steps which lead to the front−doors of the houses have furnished a field for the chalked cartoons of vagabond boys with a turn for drawing. The more fashionable the terrace or crescent, the more completely is it deserted: our feet waken dreary echoes as we pace the pavement. We naturally inquire of the first policeman we meet, What is the matter with Glasgow,—has anything dreadful happened? And we receive for answer the highly intelligible explanation, that the people are all Down the Water.

We are enjoying (shall we suppose) our annual holiday from the turmoil of Westminster Hall and the throng of London streets; and we have taken Glasgow on our way to the Highlands. We have two or three letters of introduction to two or three of the merchant−princes of the city; and having heard a great deal of the splendid hospitalities of the Western metropolis of the North, we have been anticipating with considerable satisfaction stretching our limbs beneath their mahogany, and comparing their cuisine and their cellar with the descriptions of both which we have often heard from Mr. Allan M'Collop, a Glasgow man who is getting on fairly at the bar. But when we go to see our new acquaintances, or when they pay us a hurried visit at our hotel, each of them expresses his deep regret that he cannot ask us to his house, which he tells us is shut up, his wife and family being Down the Water. No explanation is vouchsafed of the meaning of the phrase, which is so familiar to Glasgow folk that they forget how oddly it sounds on the ear of the stranger. Our first hasty impression, perhaps, from the policeman's sad face (no cold meat for him now, honest man), was that some sudden inundation had swept away the entire wealthier portion of the population,—at the same time curiously sparing the toiling masses. But the pleasant and cheerful look of our mercantile friend, as he states what has become of his domestic circle, shows us that nothing very serious is amiss. At length, after much meditation, we conclude that the people are at the sea−side; and as that lies down the Clyde from Glasgow, when a Glasgow man means to tell us that his family and himself are enjoying the fresh breezes and the glorious scenery of the Frith of Clyde, he says they are Down the Water.

Everybody everywhere of course longs for the country, the sea−side, change of air and scene, at some period during the year. Almost every man of the wealthier and more cultivated class in this country has a vacation, longer or shorter. But there never was a city whence the annual migration to the sea−side is so universal or so protracted as it is from Glasgow. By the month of March in each year, every house along the coast within forty miles of Glasgow is let for the season at a rent which we should say must be highly remunerative. Many families go to the coast early in May, and every one is down the water by the first of June. Most people now stay till the end of September. The months of June and July form what is called 'the first season;' August and September are 'the second season.' Until within the last few years, one of these 'seasons' was thought to furnish a Glasgow family with vigour and buoyancy sufficient to face the winter, but now almost all who can afford it stay at the sea−side during both. And from the little we have seen of Glasgow, we do not wonder that such should be the case. No doubt Glasgow is a fine city on the whole. The Trongate is a noble street; the park on the banks of the Kelvin, laid out by Sir Joseph Paxton, furnishes some pleasant walks; the Sauchyhall−road is an agreeable promenade; Claremont, Crescent and Park Gardens consist of houses which would be of the first class even in Belgravia or Tyburnia; and from the West−end streets, there are prospects of valley and mountain which are worth going some distance to see. But the atmosphere, though comparatively free from smoke, wants the exhilarating freshness of breezes just arrived from the Atlantic. The sun does not set in such glory beyond Gilmore−hill, as behind the glowing granite of Goatfell; and the trunks of the trees round Glasgow are (if truth must be spoken) a good deal blacker than might be desired, while their leaves are somewhat shrivelled up by the chemical gales of St. Rollox. No wonder, then, that the purest of pure air, the bluest of blue waves, the most picturesque of noble hills, the most purple of heather, the greenest of ivy, the thickest of oak−leaves, the most fragrant of roses and honeysuckle,

should fairly smash poor old Glasgow during the summer months, and leave her not a leg to stand on.

The ladies and children of the multitudinous families that go down the water, remain there permanently, of course: most of the men go up to business every morning and return to the sea−side every night. This implies a journey of from sixty to eighty miles daily; but the rapidity and the cheapness of the communication, render the journey a comparatively easy one. Still, it occupies three or four hours of the day; and many persons remain in town two or three nights weekly, smuggling themselves away in some little back parlour of their dismantled dwellings. But let us accept our friend's invitation to spend a few days at his place down the water, and gather up some particulars of the mode of life there.

There are two ways of reaching the coast from Glasgow. We may sail all the way down the Clyde, in steamers generally remarkably well−appointed and managed; or we may go by railway to Greenock, twenty−three miles off, and catch the steamer there. By going by railway we save an hour,—a great deal among people with whom emphatically time is money,—and we escape a somewhat tedious sail down the river. The steamer takes two hours to reach Greenock, while some express trains which run all the way without stopping, accomplish the distance in little more than half an hour. The sail down the Clyde to Greenock is in parts very interesting. The banks of the river are in some places richly wooded: on the north side there are picturesque hills; and the huge rock on which stands the ancient castle of Dumbarton, is a striking feature. But we have never met any Glasgow man or woman who did not speak of the sail between Glasgow and Greenock as desperately tedious, and by all means to be avoided. Then in warm summer weather the Clyde is nearly as filthy as the Thames; and sailing over a sewer, even through fine scenery, has its disadvantages. So we resolve to go with our friend by railway to Greenock, and thus come upon the Clyde where it has almost opened into the sea. Quite opened into the sea, we might say: for at Greenock the river is three miles broad, while at Glasgow it is only some three hundred yards.

'Meet me at Bridge−street station at five minutes to four,' says Mr. B—, after we have agreed to spend a few days on the Clyde. There are a couple of hours to spare, which we give to a basin of very middling soup at McLerie's, and to a visit to the cathedral, which is a magnificent specimen of the severest style of Gothic architecture. We are living at the Royal Hotel in George Square, which we can heartily recommend to tourists; and when our hour approaches, Boots brings us a cab. We are not aware whether there is any police regulation requiring the cabs of Glasgow to be extremely dirty, and the horses that draw them to be broken−winded, and lame of not more than four nor less than two legs. Perhaps it is merely the general wish of the inhabitants that has brought about the present state of things. However this may be, the unhappy animal that draws us reaches Bridge−street station at last. As our carriage draws up we catch a glimpse of half−a−dozen men, in that peculiar green dress which railway servants affect, hastening to conceal themselves behind the pillars which decorate the front of the building, while two or three excited ticket−porters seize our baggage, and offer to carry it up−stairs. But our friend with Scotch foresight and economy, has told us to make the servants of the Company do thein work. 'Hands off,' we say to the ticket−porters; and walking up the steps we round a pillar, and smartly tapping on the shoulder one of the green−dressed gentlemen lurking there, we indicate to him the locality of our port−manteau. Sulkily he shoulders it, and precedes us to the booking−office. The fares are moderate; eighteen−pence to Greenock, first class: and we understand that persona who go daily, by taking season tickets, travel for much less. The steamers afford a still cheaper access to the sea−side, conveying passengers from Glasgow to Rothesay, about forty−five miles, for sixpence cabin and three−pence deck. The trains start from a light and spacious shed, which has the very great disadvantage of being at an elevation of thirty or forty feet above the ground level. Railway companies have sometimes spent thousands of pounds to accomplish ends not a tenth part so desirable as is the arranging their stations in such a manner as that people in departing, and still more in arriving, shall be spared the annoyance and peril of a break−neck staircase like that at the Glasgow railway station. It is a vast comfort when cabs can draw up alongside the train, under cover, so that people can get into them at once, as at Euston−square.

The railway carriages that run between Glasgow and Greenock have a rather peculiar appearance. The first−class carriages are of twice the usual length, having six compartments instead of three. Each compartment holds eight passengers; and as this accommodation is gained by increasing the breadth of the carriages, brass bars are placed across the windows, to prevent any one from putting out his head. Should any one do so, his head would run some risk of coming in collision with the other train; and although, from physiological reasons, tome heads might receive no injury in such a case, the carriage with which they came in contact would probably suffer.

The expense of painting is saved by the carriages being built of teak, which when varnished has a cheerful light−oak colour. There is a great crowd of men on the platform, for the four o'clock train is the chief down−train of the day. The bustle of the business−day is over; there is a general air of relief and enjoyment. We meet our friend punctual to the minute; we take our seat on the comfortable blue cushions; the bell rings; the engine pants and tugs; and we are off 'down the water.'

We pass through a level country on leaving Glasgow: there are the rich fields which tell of Scotch agricultural industry. It is a bright August afternoon: the fields are growing yellow; the trees and hedges still wear their summer green. In a quarter of an hour the sky suddenly becomes overcast. It is not a cloud: don't be afraid of an unfavourable change of weather; we have merely plunged into the usual atmosphere of dirty and ugly Paisley. Without a pause, we sweep by, and here turn off to the right. That line of railway from which we have turned aside runs on to Dumfries and Carlisle; a branch of it keeps along the Ayrshire coast to Ardrossan and Ayr. In a little while we are skimming the surface of a bleak, black moor; it is a dead level, and not in the least interesting: but, after a plunge into the mirk darkness of a long tunnel, we emerge into daylight again; and there, sure enough, are the bright waters of the Clyde. We are on its south side; it has spread out to the breadth of perhaps a couple of miles. That rocky height on its north shore is Dumbarton Castle; that great mass beyond is Ben Lomond, at whose base lies Loch Lomond, the queen of Scottish lakes, now almost as familiar to many a cockney tourist as a hundred years since to Rob Roy Macgregor. We keep close by the water's edge, skirting a range of hills on which grow the finest strawberries in Scotland. Soon, to the right, we see many masts, many great rafts of timber, many funnels of steamers; and there, creeping along out in the middle of the river, is the steamer we are to join, which left Glasgow an hour before us. We have not stopped since we left Glasgow; thirty−five minutes have elapsed, and now we sweep into a remarkably tasteless and inconvenient station. This is Greenock at last; but, as at Glasgow, the station is some forty feet above the ground. A railway cart at the foot of a long stair receives the luggage of passengers, and then sets off at a gallop down a dirty little lane. We follow at a run; and, a hundred and fifty yards off, we come on a long range of wharf, beside which lie half−a−dozen steamers, sputtering out their white steam with a roar, as though calling impatiently for their passengers to come faster. Our train has brought passengers for a score of places on the Frith; and in the course of the next hour and a half, these vessels will disperse them to their various destinations. By way of guidance to the inexperienced, a post is erected on the wharf, from which arms project, pointing to the places of the different steamers. The idea is a good one, and if carried out with the boldness with which it was conceived, much advantage might be derived by strangers. But a serious drawback about these indicators is, that they are invariably pointed in the wrong direction, which renders them considerably less useful than they might otherwise be. Fortunately we have a guide, for there is not a moment to lose. We hasten on board, over an awkward little gangway, kept by a policeman of rueful countenance, who punches the heads of several little boys who look on with awe. Bareheaded and bare−footed girls offer baskets of gooseberries and plums of no tempting appearance. Ragged urchins bellow 'Day's Penny Paper! Glasgow Daily News!' In a minute or two, the ropes are cast off, and the steamers diverge as from a centre to their various ports.

We are going to Dunoon. Leaving the ship−yards of Greenock echoing with multitudinous hammerings, and rounding a point covered with houses, we see before us Gourock, the nearest to Greenock of the places 'down the water.' It is a dirty little village on the left side of the Frith. A row of neat houses, quite distinct from the dirty village, stretches for two miles along the water's edge. The hills rise immediately behind these. The Frith is here about three miles in breadth. It is Renfrewshire on the left hand; a few miles on, and it will be Ayrshire. On the right are the hills of Argyleshire. And now, for many miles on either side, the shores of the Frith, and the shores of the long arms of the sea that run up among those Argyleshire mountains, are fringed with villas, castles, and cottages—the retreats of Glasgow men and their families. It is not, perhaps, saying much for Glasgow to state that one of its greatest advantages is the facility with which one can get away from it, and the beauty of the places to which one can get. But true it is, that there is hardly a great city in the world which is so well off in this respect. For six−pence, the artisan of Bridgeton or Calton can travel forty miles in the purest air, over as blue a sea, and amid as noble hills, as can be found in Britain. The Clyde is a great highway: a highway traversed, indeed, by a merchant navy scarcely anywhere surpassed in extent; but a highway, too, whose gracious breezes, through the summer and autumn time, are ever ready to revive the heart of the pale weaver, with his thin wife and child, arid to fan the cheek of the poor consumptive needlewoman into the glow of something like country health and

strength.

After Greenock is passed, and the river has grown into the Frith, the general features of the scene'remain very much the same for upwards of twenty miles. The water varies from three to seven or eight miles in breadth; and then suddenly opens out to a breadth of twenty or thirty miles. Hills, fringed with wood along their base, and gradually passing into moorland as they ascend, form, the shores on either side. The rocky islands of the Great and Little Cumbrae occupy the middle of the Frith, about fourteen or fifteen miles below Greenock: to the right lies the larger island of Bute; and further on the still larger island of Arran. The hills on the Argyleshire side of the Frith are generally bold and precipitous: those on the Ayrshire side are of much less elevation. The character of all the places'down the water' is almost identical: they consist of a row of houses, generally detached villas or cottages, reaching along the shore, at only a few yards' distance from the water, with the hills arising immediately behind. The beach is not very convenient for bathing, being generally rocky; though here and there we find a Btrip of yellow sand. Trees and shrubs grow in the richest way down to the water's edge. The trees are numerous, and luxuriant rather than large; oaks predominate; we should say few of them are a hundred years old. Ivy and honeysuckle grow in profusion; for several miles along the coast, near Largs, there is a perpendicular wall of rock from fifty to one hundred feet in height, which follows the windings of the shore at a distance of one hundred and fifty yards from the water, enclosing between itself and the sea a long ribbon of fine soil, on which shrubs, flowers, and fruit grow luxuriantly; and this natural rampart, which advances and retreats as we pursue the road at its base, like the bastions and curtains of some magnificent feudal castle, is in many places clad with ivy, so fresh and green that we can hardly believe that for months in the year it is wet with the salt spray of the Atlantic. Here and there, along the coast, are places where the land is capable of cultivation for a mile or two inland; but, as the rule, the hill ascends almost from the water's edge, into granite and heather.

Let us try to remember the names of the places which reach along the Frith upon either hand: we believe that a list of them will show that not without reason it is said that Glasgow is unrivalled in the number of her sea−side retreats. On the right hand, as we go down the Frith, there are Helensburgh, Row, Roseneath, Shandon, Gareloch−head, Cove, Kilcreggan, Lochgoil−head, Arrochar, Ardentinny, Strone, Kilmun, Kirn, Dunoon, Inellan, Toward, Port Bonnatyne, Rothesay, Askog, Colintrave, Tynabruach. Sometimes these places form for miles one long range of villas. Indeed, from Strone to Toward, ten or twelve miles, the coast is one continuous street. On the left hand of the Frith are Gourock, Ashton, Inverkip, Wemyss Bay, Skelmorlie, Largs, Fairlie: then comes a bleak range of sandy coast, along which stand Ardrossan, Troon, and Ayr. In the island of Cumbrae is Millport, conspicuously by the tall spire which marks the site of an Episcopal chapel and college of great architectural beauty, built within the last few years. And in Arran are the villages of Lamlash and Brodick. The two Cumbrae islands constitute a parish. A simple−minded clergyman, not long deceased, who held the cure for many years, was wont, Sunday by Sunday, to pray (in the church service) for 'the islands of the Great and Little Cumbrae, and also for the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland.'

But all this while the steam has been fiercely chafing through the funnel as we have been stopping at Gourock quay. We are away at last, and are now crossing the Frith towards the Argyleshire side. A mile or two down, along the Ayrshire side, backed by the rich woods of Ardgowan, tall and spectral−white, stands the Cloch lighthouse. We never have looked at it without thinking how many a heart−broken emigrant must be remembering that severely simple white tower as almost the last thing he saw in Scotland when he was leaving it for ever. The Frith opens before us as we advance: we are running at the rate (quite usual among Clyde steamers) of sixteen or seventeen miles an hour. There, before us, is Cumbrae: over Bute and over Cumbrae look the majestic mountains of Arran; that great granite peak is Goat−fell. And on a clear day, far out, guarding the entrance to the Frith, rising sheer up from the deep sea, at ten miles' distance from the nearest land, looms Ailsa, white with sea−birds, towering to the height of twelve or thirteen hundred feet. It is a rocky islet of about a mile in circumference, and must have been thrown up by volcanic agency; for the water around it is hundreds of feet in depth.

Out in the middle of the Frith we can see the long, low, white line of buildings on either side of it, nestling at the foot of the hills. We are drawing near Dunoon. That opening on the right is the entrance to Loch Long and Loch Goyle; and a little further on we pass the entrance to the Holy Loch, on whose shore is the ancient burying−place of the family of Argyle. How remarkably tasteful many of these villas are! They are generally built in the Elizabethan style: they stand in grounds varying from half an acre up to twenty or thirty acres, very prettily laid out with shrubbery and flowers; a number (we can see, for we are now skirting the Argyleshire coast at the

distance of only a few hundred yards) have conservatories and hot−houses of more or less extent: flagstaffs appear to be much affected (for send a landsman to the coast, and he is sure to become much more marine than a sailor): and those pretty bow−windows, with the crimson fuchsias climbing up them—those fantastic gables and twisted chimneys—those shining evergreens and cheerful gravel walks—with no lack of pretty girls in round hats, and sportive children rolling about the trimly−kept grass plots—all seen in this bright August sunshine—all set off against this blue smiling expanse of sea—make a picture so gay and inviting, that we really do not wonder any more that Glasgow people should like to 'go down the water.'

Here is Dunoon pier. Several of the coast places have, like Dunoon, a long jetty of wood running out a considerable distance into the water, for the accommodation of the steamers, which call every hour or two throughout the day. Other places have deep water close in−shore, and are provided with a wharf of stone. And several of the recently founded villages (and half of those we have enumerated have sprung up within the last ten years) have no landing−place at which steamers can touch; and their passengers have to land and embark by the aid of a ferry−boat. We touch the pier at last: a gangway is hastily thrown from the pier to the steamer, and in company with many others we go ashore. At the landward end of the jetty, detained there by a barrier of twopence each of toll, in round hats and alpaca dresses, are waiting our friend's wife and children, from whom we receive a welcome distinguished by that frankness which is characteristic of Glasgow people. But we do not intend so far to imitate the fashion of some modern tourists and biographers, as to give our readers a description of our friend's house and family, his appearance and manners. We shall only say of him what will never single him out—for it may be said of hundreds more—that he is a wealthy, intelligent, well−informed, kind−hearted Glasgow merchant. And if his daughters did rather bore us by their enthusiastic descriptions of the sermons of 'our minister,' Mr. Macduff, the still grander orations of Mr. Caird, and the altogether unexampled eloquence of Dr. Gumming, why, they were only showing us a thoroughly Glasgow feature; for nowhere in Britain, we should fancy, is there so much talk about preaching and preachers.

In sailing down the Frith, one gets no just idea of the richness and beauty of its shores. We have said that a little strip of fine soil,—in some places only fifty or sixty yards in breadth,—runs like a ribbon, occasionally broadening out to three or four times that extent, along the sea−margin; beyond this ribbon of ground come the wild moor and mountain. In sailing down the Frith, our eye is caught by the large expanse of moorland, and we do not give due importance to the rich strip which bounds it, like an edging of gold lace (to use King James's comparison) round a russet petticoat. When we land we understand things better. We find next the sea, at almost any point along the Frith, the turnpike road, generally nearly level, and beautifully smooth. Here and there, in the places of older date, we find quite a street of contiguous houses; but the general rule is of detached dwellings of all grades, from the humblest cottage to the most luxurious villa. At considerable intervals, there are residences of a much higher class than even this last, whose grounds stretch for long distances along the shore. Such places are Ardgovvan, Kelly, Skelmorlie Castle, and Kelburne, on the Ayrshire side; and on the other shore of the Frith, Roseneath Castle, Toward Castle, and Mountstuart. [Footnote: Ardgowan, residence of Sir Michael Shaw Stewart; Kelly, Mr. Scott; Skelmorlie, the Earl of Eglinton; Kelburne, the Earl of Glasgow; Roseneath, the Duke of Argyle; Toward, Mr. Kirkwall Finlay Mountstuart, the Marquis of Bute.] And of dwellings of a less ambitious standing than these really grand abodes, yet of a mark much above that suggested by the word villa, we may name the very showy house of Mr. Napier, the eminent maker of marine steam−engines, on the Gareloch, a building in the Saracenic style, which cost we are afraid to say how many thousand pounds; the finely−placed castle of Wemyss, built from the design of Billings; and the very striking piece of baronial architecture called Knock Castle, the residence of Mr. Steel, a wealthy shipbuilder of Greenock. The houses along the Frith are, in Scotch fashion, built exclusively of stone, which is obtained with great facility. Along the Ayrshire coast, the warm−looking red sandstone of the district is to be had everywhere, almost on the surface. One sometimes sees a house rising, the stone being taken from a deep quarry close to it: the same crane often serving to lift a block from the quarry, and to place it in its permanent position upon the advancing wall. We have said how rich is vegetation all along the Frith, until we reach the sandy downs from Ardrossan to Ayr. All evergreens grow with great rapidity: ivy covers dead walls very soon. To understand in what luxuriance vegetable life may be maintained close to the sea−margin, one must walk along the road which leads from the West Bay at Dunoon towards Toward. We never saw trees so covered with honeysuckle; and fuchsias a dozen feet in height are quite common. In this sweet spot, in an Elizabethan house of exquisite design, retired within grounds where fine taste has done its

utmost, resides, during the summer vacation (and the summer vacation is six months!), Mr. Buchanan, the Professor of Logic in the University of Glasgow. It must be a very fair thing to teach logic at Glasgow, if the revenue of that chair maintains the groves and flowers, and (we may add) the liberal hospitalities, of Ardflllane.

One pleasing circumstance about the Frith of Clyde, which we remark the more from its being unhappily the exception to the general rule in Scotland, is the general neatness and ecclesiastical character of the churches. The parish church of Dunoon, standing on a wooded height, rising from the water, with its grey tower looking over the trees, is a dignified and commanding object. The churches of Roseneath and Row, which have been built within a year or two, are correct and elegant specimens of ecclesiastical Gothic: indeed they are so thoroughly like churches, that John Knox would assuredly have pulled them down had they been standing in his day. And here and there along the coast the rich Glasgow merchants and the neighbouring proprietors have built pretty little chapels, whose cross−crowned gables, steep−pitched roofs, dark oak wood−work, and stained windows, are pleasant indications that old prejudice lias given way among cultivated Scotchmen; and that it has come to be understood that it is false religion as well as bad taste and sense to make God's house the shabbiest, dirtiest, and most uncomfortable house in the parish. Some of these sea−side places of worship are crowded in summer by a fashionable congregation, and comparatively deserted in winter when the Glasgow folks are gone.

A very considerable number of the families that go 'down the water' occupy houses which are their own property. There must be, one would think, a special interest about a house which is one's own. A man must become attached to a spot where he himself planted the hollies and yews, and his children have marked their growth year by year. Still, many people do not like to be tied to one place, and prefer varying their quarters each season. Very high rents are paid for good houses on the Frith of Clyde. From thirty to fifty pounds a month is a common charge for a neat villa at one of the last founded and most fashionable places. A little less is charged for the months of August and September than for June and July; and if a visitor takes a house for the four months which constitute the season, he may generally have it for May and October without further cost, Decent houses or parts of houses (flats as they are called), may be had for about ten pounds a month; and at those places which approach to the character of a town, as Largs, Eothesay, and Dunoon, lodgings may be obtained where attendance is provided by the people of the house.

A decided drawback about the sea−side places within twenty miles from Greenock, is their total want of that fine sandy beach, so firm and dry and inviting when the tide is out, which forms so great an attraction at Ardrossan, Troon, and Ayr. At a few points, as for instance the West Bay at Dunoon, there is a beautiful expanse of yellow sand: but as a rule, where the shore does not consist of precipitous rocks, sinking at once into deep water, it is made of great rough stones, which form a most unpleasant footing for bathers. In front of most villas a bathing place is formed by clearing the stones away. Bathing machines, we should mention, are quite unknown upon the Frith of Clyde.

So much for the locality which is designated by the phrase, Down the Water: and now we can imagine our readers asking what kind of life Glasgow people lead there. Of course there must be a complete breaking up of all city ways and habits, and a general return to a simpler and more natural mode of living. Our few days at Dunoon, and a few days more at two other places on the Frith, were enough to give us some insight into the usual order of things. By seven or half−past seven o'clock in the morning the steam is heard by us, as we are snug in bed, fretting through the waste−pipe of the early boat for Glasgow; and with great complacency we picture to ourselves the unfortunate business−men, with whom we had a fishing excursion last night, already up, and breakfasted, and hurrying along the shore towards the vessel which is to bear them back to the counting−house and the Exchange. Poor fellows! They sacrifice a good deal to grow rich. At each village along the shore the steamer gets an accession to the number of her passengers; for the most part of trim, close−shaved, well−dressed gentlemen, of sober aspect and not many words; though here and there comes some whiskered and moustached personage, with a shirt displaying a pattern of ballet−dancers, a shooting coat of countless pockets, and trousers of that style which, in our college days, we used to call loud. A shrewd bank−manager told us that he always made a mental memorandum of such individuals, in case they should ever come to him to borrow money. Don't they wish they may get it! The steamer parts with her entire freight at Greenock, whence an express train rapidly conveys our friends into the heat and smoke of Glasgow. Before ten o'clock all of them are at their work. For us, who have the day at our own disposal, we have a refreshing dip in the sea at rising, then a short walk, and come in to breakfast with an appetite foreign to Paper Buildings. It is quite a strong sensation when the post appears about

ten o'clock, bearing tidings from the toiling world we have left behind. Those families who have their choice dine at two o'clock—an excellent dinner hour when the day is not a working one: the families whose male members are in town, sometimes postpone the most important engagement of the day till their return at six or half−past six o'clock. As for the occupations of the day, there are boating and yachting, wandering along the beach, lying on the heather looking at Arran through the sun−mist, lounging into the reading−room, dipping into any portion of The Times except the leading articles, turning over the magazines, and generally enjoying the blessing of rest. Fishing is in high favour, especially among the ladies. Hooks baited with muscles are sunk to the ground by leaden weights (the fishers are in a boat), and abundance of whitings are caught when the weather is favourable. We confess we don't think the employment ladylike. Sticking the muscles upon the hooks is no work for fair fingers; neither is the pulling the captured fish off the hooks. And, even in the pleasantest company, we cannot see anything very desirable in sitting in a boat, all the floor of which is covered by unhappy whitings and codlings flapping about in their last agony. Many young ladies row with great vigour and adroitness. And as we walk along the shore in the fading twilight, we often hear, from boats invisible in the gathering shadows, music mellowed by the distance into something very soft and sweet. The lords of the creation have come back by the late boats; and we meet Pater−familias enjoying his evening walk, surrounded by his children, shouting with delight at having their governor among them once more. No wonder that, after a day amid the hard matter−of−fact of business life, he should like to hasten away to the quiet fireside and the loving hearts by the sea.

Few are the hard−wrought men who cannot snatch an entire day from business sometimes: and then there is a pic−nic. Glasgow folk have even more, we believe, than the average share of stiff dinner parties when in town: we never saw people who seemed so completely to enjoy the freshness and absence of formality which characterize the well−assorted entertainment al fresco. We were at one or two of these; and we cannot describe the universal gaiety and light−heartedness, extending to grave Presbyterian divines and learned Glasgow professors; the blue sea and the smiling sky; the rocky promontory where our feast was spread; its abundance and variety; the champagne which flowed like water; the joviality and cleverness of many of the men; the frankness and pretty faces of all of the women. [Footnote: We do not think, from what we hare seen, that Glasgow is rich in beauties; though pretty faces are very common. Times are improved, however, since the days of the lady who said, on being asked if there were many beauties in Glasgow, 'Oh no; very few; there are only THREE OF US.'] We had a pleasant yachting excursion one day; and the delight of a new sensation was well exemplified in the intense enjoyment of dinner in the cramped little cabin where one could hardly turn, And great was the sight when our host, with irrepressible pride, produced his preserved meats and vegetables, as for an Arctic voyage, although a messenger sent in the boat which was towing behind could have procured them fresh in ten minutes.

A Sunday at the sea−side, or as Scotch people prefer calling it, a Sabbath, is an enjoyable thing. The steamers that come down on Saturday evening are crammed to the last degree. Houses which are already fuller than they can hold, receive half−a−dozen new inmates,—how stowed away we cannot even imagine. We cannot but reject as apocryphal the explanation of a Glasgow tout, that on such occasions poles are projected from the upper windows, upon which young men of business roost until the morning. Late walks, and the spooniest of flirtations characterize the Saturday evening. Every one, of course, goes to church on Sunday morning; no Glasgow man who values his character durst stop away. We shall not soon forget the beauty of the calm Sunday on that beautiful shore: the shadows of the distant mountains; the smooth sea; the church−bells, faintly heard from across the water; the universal turning−out of the population to the house of prayer, or rather of preaching. It was almost too much for us to find Dr. Gumming here before us, giving all his old brilliancies to enraptured multitudes. We had hoped he was four hundred and odd miles off; but we resigned ourselves, like the Turk, to what appears an inevitable destiny. This gentleman, we felt, is really one of the institutions of the country, and no more to be escaped than the income−tax.

Morning service over, most people take a walk. This would have been regarded in Scotland a few years since as a profanation of the day. But there is a general air of quiet; people speak in lower tones; there are no joking and laughing. And the Frith, so covered with steamers on week−days, is to−day unruffled by a single paddle−wheel. Still it is a mistake to fancy that a Scotch Sunday is necessarily a gloomy thing. There are no excursion trains, no pleasure trips in steamers, no tea−gardens open: but it is a day of quiet domestic enjoyment, not saddened but hallowed by the recognized sacredness of the day. The truth is, the feeling of the sanctity of the Sabbath is so ingrained into the nature of most Scotchmen by their early training, that they could not enjoy Sunday pleasuring.

Their religious sense, their superstition if you choose, would make them miserable on a Sunday excursion.

The Sunday morning service is attended by a crowded congregation: the church is not so full in the afternoon. In some places there is evening service, which is well attended. We shall not forget one pleasant walk, along a quiet road bounded by trees as rich and green as though they grew in Surrey, though the waves were lapping on the rocks twenty yards off, and the sun was going down behind the mountains of Cowal, to a pretty little chapel where we attended evening worship upon our last Sunday on the Clyde.

Every now and then, as we are taking our saunter by the shore after breakfast, we perceive, well out in the Frith, a steamer, decked with as many flags as can possibly be displayed about her rigging. The strains of a band of music come by starts upon the breeze; a big drum is heard beating away when we can hear nothing else; and a sound of howling springs up at intervals. Do not fancy that these yells imply that anything is wrong; t/tat is merely the way in which working folk enjoy themselves in this country. That steamer has been hired for the day by some wealthy manufacturer, who is giving his 'hands' a day's pleasure−sailing. They left Glasgow at seven or eight o'clock: they will be taken probably to Arran, and there feasted to a moderate extent; and at dusk they will be landed at the Broomielaw again. We lament to say that very many Scotch people of the working class seem incapable of enjoying a holiday without getting drunk and uproarious. We do not speak from hearsay, but from what we have ourselves seen. Once or twice we found ourselves on board a steamer crowded with a most disagreeable mob of intoxicated persons, among whom, we grieve to say, we saw many women. The authorities of the vessel appeared entirely to lack both the power and the will to save respectable passengers from the insolence of the 'roughs.' The Highland fling may be a very picturesque and national dance, but when executed on a crowded deck by a maniacal individual, with puffy face and blood−shot eyes, swearing, yelling, dashing up against peaceable people, and mortally drunk, we should think it should be matter less of assthetical than of police consideration. Unless the owners of the Clyde steamers wish to drive all decent persons from their boats, they must take vigorous steps to repress such scandalous goings−on as we have witnessed more than once or twice. And we also take the liberty to suggest that the infusion of a little civility into the manner and conversation of some of the steam−boat officials on the quay at Greenock, would be very agreeable to passengers, and could not seriously injure those individuals themselves.

What sort of men are the Glasgow merchants? Why, courteous reader, there are great diversities among them. Almost all we have met give us an impression of shrewdness and strong sense; some, of extraordinary tact and cleverness—though these last are by no means among the richest men. In some cases we found extremely unaffected and pleasing address, great information upon general topics—in short, all the characteristics of the cultivated gentleman. In others there certainly was a good deal of boorishness; and in one or two instances, a tendency to the use of oaths which in this country have long been unknown in good society. The reputed wealth of some Glasgow men is enormous, though we think it not unlikely that there is a great deal of exaggeration as to that subject. We did, however, hear it said that one firm of iron merchants realized for some time profits to the extent of nearly four hundred thousand a year. We were told of an individual who died worth a million, all the produce of his own industry and skill; and one hears incidentally of such things as five−hundred−pound bracelets, thousand−guinea necklaces, and other appliances of extreme luxury, as not unknown among the fair dames of Glasgow.

And so, in idle occupations, and in gleaning up particulars as to Glasgow matters according to our taste wherever we go, our sojourn upon the Frith of Clyde pleasantly passed away. We left our hospitable friends, not without a promise that when the Christmas holidays come we should visit them once more, and see what kind of thing is the town life of the winter time in that warm−hearted city. And meanwhile, as the days shorten to chill November,—as the clouds of London smoke drift by our windows,—as the Thames runs muddy through this mighty hum and bustle away to the solitudes of its last level,—we recall that cheerful time with a most agreeable recollection of the kindness of Glasgow friends,—and of all that is implied in Glasgow Down the Water.

CHAPTER IX. CONCERNING MAN AND HIS DWELLING−PLACE

When my friend Smith's drag comes round to his door, as he and I are standing on the steps ready to go out for a drive, how cheerful and frisky the horses look! I think I see them, as I saw them yesterday, coming round from the stable−yard, with their glossy coats and the silver of their harness glancing in the May sunshine, the May sunshine mellowed somewhat by the green reflection of two great leafy trees. They were going out for a journey of twenty miles. They were, in fact, about to begin their day's work, and they knew they were; yet how buoyant and willing they looked! There was not the faintest appearance of any disposition to shrink from their task, as if it were a hard and painful one. No; they were eager to be at it: they were manifestly enjoying the anticipation of the brisk exertion in the midst of which they would be in five minutes longer. And by the time we have got into our places, and have wrapped those great fur robes comfortably about our limbs, the chafing animals have their heads given them; and instantly they fling themselves at their collars, and can hardly be restrained from breaking into a furious gallop. Happy creatures, you enjoy your work; you wish nothing better than to get at it!

And when I have occasionally beheld a ploughman, bricklayer, gardener, weaver, or blacksmith, begin his work in the morning, I have envied him the readiness and willingness with which he took to it. The plough−man, after he has got his horses harnessed to the plough, does not delay a minute: into the turf the shining share enters, and away go horses, plough and man. It costs the ploughman no effort to make up his mind to begin. He does not stand irresolute, as you and I in childish days have often done when taken down to the sea for our morning dip, and when trying to get courage to take the first plunge under water. And the bricklayer lifts and places the first brick of his daily task just as easily as the last one. The weaver, too, sits down without mental struggle at his loom, and sets off at once. How different is the case with most men whose work is mental; more particularly how different is the case with most men whose work is to write—to spin out their thoughts into compositions for other people to read or to listen to! How such men, for the most part, shrink from their work—put it off as long as may be; and even when the paper is spread out and the pen all right, and the ink within easy reach, how they keep back from the final plunge! And after they have begun to write, how they dally with their subject; shrink back as long as possible from grappling with its difficulties; twist about and about, talking of many irrelevant matters, before they can summon up resolution to go at the real point they have got to write about! How much unwillingness there is fairly to put the neck to the collar!

Such are my natural reflections, suggested by my personal feelings at this present time. I know perfectly well what I have got to do. I have to write some account, and attempt some appreciation, of a most original, acute, well−expressed, and altogether remarkable book—the book, to wit, which bears the comprehensive title of Man and his Dwelling−Place. It is a metaphysical book; it is a startling book; it is a very clever book; and though it is published anonymously, I have heard several acquaintances say, with looks expressive of unheard−of stores of recondite knowledge, that they have reason to believe that it is written by, this and that author, whose name is already well known to fame. It may be so, but I did not credit it a bit the more because thus assured of it. In most cases the people who go about dropping hints of how much they know on such subjects, know nothing earthly about the matter; but still the premises (as lawyers would say) make it be felt that the book is a serious one to meddle with. Not that in treating such a volume, plainly containing the careful and deliberate views and reflections of an able and well−informed man, I should venture to assume the dignified tone of superiority peculiar to some reviewers in dissecting works which they could not have written for their lives. There are not a score of men in Britain who would be justified in reviewing such a book as this de haut en has. I intend the humbler task of giving my readers some description of the work, stating its great principle, and arguing certain points with its eminently clever author; and under the circumstances in which this article is written, it discards the dignified and undefined We, and adopts the easier and less authoritative first person singular. The work to be done, therefore, is quite apparent: there is no doubt about that. But the writer is most unwilling to begin it. Slowly was the pen taken up; oftentimes was the window looked out of. I am well aware that I shall not settle steadily to my task till I shall have had a preliminary canter, so to speak. Thus have I seen school−hoys, on a warm July day, about to jump from a sea−wall into the azure depths of ocean. But after their garments were laid aside, and all was

ready for the plunge, long time sat they upon the tepid stones, and paddled with idle feet in the water.

How shall I better have that preliminary and moderate exercitation which serves to get up the steam, than by talking for a little about the scene around me? Through diamond−shaped panes the sunshine falls into this little chamber; and going to the window you look down upon the tops of tall trees. And it is pleasant to look down upon the tops of tall trees. The usual way of looking at trees, it may be remarked, is from below. But this chamber is high up in the tower of a parish church far in the country. Its furniture is simple as that of the chamber of a certain prophet, who lived long ago. There are some things here, indeed, which he had not; for yesterday's Times lies upon the floor drying in the morning sunbeams, and Fraser's Magazine for May is on a chair by the window. Why does that incomparable monthly act blisteringly upon the writer's mind? It never did so till May, 1859. Why does he put it for the time out of sight? Why, but because, for once, he has read in that Magazine an article—by a very eminent man, too—written in what he thinks a thoroughly mistaken spirit, and setting out views which he thinks to be utterly false and mischievous. Not such, the writer knows well, are the views of his dear friend the Editor; not such are the doctrines which Fraser teaches to a grateful world. In the latter pages of his review of Mill on Liberty, Mr. Buckle spoke golely for himself; he did not express the opinions which this Magazine upholds, nor commit for one moment the staff of men who write in it; and, as one insignificant individual who has penned a good many pages of Fraser, I beg to express my keen disapprobation of Mr. Buckle's views upon the subject of Christianity. They may be right, but I firmly believe they are wrong; they may be true, but I think them false. I repudiate any share in them: let their author bear their responsibility for himself. Alas, say I, that so able a man should sincerely think (I give him credit for entire sincerity) that man's best refuge and most precious hope is vain delusion! Very jarringly to my mind sound those eloquent periods, so inexpressibly sad and dreary, amid pages penned in many quiet parsonages, by many men who for the truth of Christianity would, God helping them, lay down their lives. So, you May magazine, get meanwhile out of sight: I don't want to think of you. Rather let me stay this impatient throbbing of heart by looking down on the green tops of those great silent trees.

Thick ivy frames this mullioned window, with its three lance−shaped lights. Seventy feet below, the grassy graves of the churchyard swell like green waves. The white headstones gleam in the sun. Ancient oaks line the lichened wall of the churchyard: their leaves not yet to thick as they will be a month hereafter. Beyond the wall, I see a very verdant field, between two oaks; six or seven white lambs are lying there, or frisking about. The silver gleam of a river bounds the field; and beyond are thick hedges, white with hawthorn blossoms. In the distance there is a great rocky hill, which bounds the horizon. There is not a sound, save when a little flaw of air brushes a twig against the wall some feet below me. The smoke of two or three scattered cottages rises here and there. The sky is very bright blue, with many fleecy clouds. Quiet, quiet! And all this while the omnibuses, cabs, carriages, drays, horses, men, are hurrying, sweltering, and fretting along Cheapside!

Man and his Dwetting−Place! Truly a comprehensive subject. For man's dwelling−place is the universe; and remembering this, it is plain that there is not much to be said which might not be said under that title. But, of course, there are sweeping views and opinions which include man and the universe, and which colour all beliefs as to details. And the author of this remarkable book has arrived at such a sweeping view. He holds, that where−as we fancy that we are living creatures, and that inanimate nature is inert, or without life, the truth is just the opposite of this fancy. He holds that man wants life, and that his dwelling−place possesses life. We are dead, and the world is living. No doubt it would be easy to laugh at all this; but I can promise the thoughtful reader that, though after reading the book he may still differ from its author, he will not laugh at him. Very moderately informed folk are quite aware of this—that the fact of any doctrine seeming startling at the first mention of it, is no argument whatever against its truth. Some centuries since you could hardly have startled men more than by saying that the earth moves, and the sun stands still. Nay, it is not yet forty years since practical engineers judged George Stephenson mad, for saying that a steam−engine could draw a train of carriages along a rail−way at the rate of fourteen miles an hour. It is certainly a startling thing to be told that I am dead, and that the distant hill out there is living. The burden of proof rests with the man who propounds the theory; the prima facie case is against him. Trees do not read newspapers; hills do not write articles. We must try to fix the author's precise meaning when he speaks of life; perhaps he may intend by it something quite different from that which we understand. And then we must see what he has to say in support of a doctrine which at the first glance seems nothing short of monstrous and absurd.

No: I cannot get on. I cannot forget that May magazine that is lying in the corner. I must be thoroughly done

with it before I can fix my thoughts upon the work which is to be considered. Mr. Buckle has done a service to my mind, entirely analogous to that which would be done to a locomotive engine by a man who should throw a handful of sand into its polished machinery. I am prepared, from personal experience, to meet with a flat contradiction his statement that a man does you no harm by trying to cast doubt and discredit upon the doctrines you hold most dear. Mr. Buckle, by his article, has done me an injury. It is an injury, irritating but not dangerous. For the large assertions, which if they stated truths, would show that the religion of Christ is a miserable delusion, are unsupported by a tittle of proof: and the general tone in regard to Christianity, though sufficiently hostile, and very eloquently expressed, appears to me uncommonly weak in logic. But as Mr. Buckle's views have been given to the world, with whatever weight may be derived from their publication in this magazine, it is no more than just and necessary that through the same channel there should be conveyed another contributor's strong disavowal of them, and keen protest against them. I do not intend to argue against Mr. Buckle's opinions. This is not the time or place for such an undertaking. And Mr. Buckle, in his article, has not argued but dogmatically asserted, and then called hard names at those who may conscientiously differ from him. Let me suggest to Mr. Buckle that such names can very easily be retorted. Any man who would use them, very easily could. Mr. Buckle says that any man who would punish by legal means the publication of blasphemous sentiments, should be regarded as a noxious animal. It is quite easy for me to say, and possibly to prove, that the man who advocates the free publication of blasphemous sentiments, is a noxious animal. So there we are placed on an equal footing; and what progress has been made in the argument of the question in debate? Then Mr. Buckle very strongly disapproves a certain judgment of, as I believe, one of the best judges who ever sat on the English Bench: I mean Mr. Justice Coleridge. That judge on one occasion sentenced to imprisonment a poor, ignorant man, convicted of having written certain blasphemous words upon a gate. I am prepared to justify every step that was taken in the prosecution and punishment of that individual. That, however, is not the point at issue. Even supposing that the magistrates who committed, and the judge who sentenced, that miserable wretch, had acted wrongly and unjustly, could not Mr. Buckle suppose that they had acled conscientiously? What right had he to speak of Mr. Justice Coleridge as a 'stony−hearted man?' What right had he to say that the judge and the magistrates, in doing what they honestly believed to be right, were 'criminals,' who had 'committed a great crime?' What right had he to say that their motives were 'the pride of their power and the wickedness of their hearts?' What right had he to call one of the most admirable men in Britain 'this unjust and unrighteous judge?' And where did Mr. Buckle ever see anything to match the statement, that Mr. Justice Coleridge grasped at the opportunity of persecuting a poor blasphemer in a remote county, where his own wickedness was likely to be overlooked, while he durst not have done as much in the face of the London press? Who will believe that Mr. Justice Coleridge is distinguished for his 'cold heart and shallow understanding?' But I feel much more comfortable now, when I have written upon this page that I, as one humble contributor to this Magazine, utterly repudiate Mr. Buckle's sentiments with regard to Sir J. T. Coleridge, and heartily condemn the manner in which he has expressed them.

If there be any question which ought to be debated with scrupulous calmness and fairness, it is the question whether it is just that human laws should prevent and punish the publication of views commonly regarded as blasphemous. I deny Mr. Buckle's statement, that all belief is involuntary. I say that in a country like this, every man of education is responsible for his religious belief; but of course responsible only to his Maker. Thus, on totally different grounds from Mr. Buckle, I agree with him in thinking that no human law should interfere with a man's belief. I am not prepared, without much longer thought than I have yet given to the subject, to agree with Mr. Buckle and Mr. Mill, that human law should never interfere with the publication of opinions, no matter how blasphemous they may be esteemed by the great majority of the nation to which they are published. I might probably say that I should not interfere with the publication of any book, however false and mischievous I might regard the religious doctrines it taught, provided the book were written in the interest of truth—provided its author manifestly desired to set out doctrines which he regarded as true and important. But if the book set out blasphemous doctrine in such a tone and temper as made it evident that the writer's main intention was to irritate and distress those who held the belief regarded as orthodox, I should probably suppress or punish the publication of such a book. Sincere infidelity is a sad thing, with little of the propagandist spirit. Even if it should think that those Christian doctrines which afford so much comfort and support to men are fond delusions, I think its humane feeling would be,—Well, I shall not seek to shatter hopes which I cannot replace. I know that such was the feeling of the most amiable of unbelievers—David Hume. I know how he regularly attended church, anxious that he

might not by his example dash in humble minds the belief which tended to make them good and happy, though it was a belief which he could not share. My present nolion is, that laws ought to punish coarse and abusive blasphemy. They may let thoughtful and philosophic scepticism alone. It will hardly reach, it will never distress, the masses. But if a blackguard goes up to a parsonage door, and bellows out blasphemous remarks about the Trinity; or if a man who is a blockhead as well as a malicious wretch writes blasphemous words upon a parsonage gate, I cannot for an instant recognize in these men the champions of freedom of religious thought and speech. Even Mr. Buckle cannot think that their purpose is to teach the clergymen important truth. They don't intend to proselytize. Their object is to insult and annoy and shock. And I think it is right to punish them. They are not punished for setting out their peculiar opinions. They are punished for designedly and maliciously injuring their neighbours. Mr. Justice Coleridge punished the blasphemer in Cornwall, not because he held wrong views, not because he expressed wrong views. He might have expressed them in a decent way as long as he liked, and no one would have interfered with him. He was punished because, with malicious and insulting intention, he wrote blasphemous words where he thought they would cause pain and horror. He was punished for that: and rightly. Mr. Buckle seeks to excite sympathy for the man, by mixing up with the question whether or no his crime deserved punishment, the wholly distinct question, whether or no the man was so far sane as to deserve punishment for any crime whatever. These two questions have no connexion; and it is unfair to mingle them. The question of the man's sanity or insanity was for the jury to decide. The jury decided that he was so sane as to be responsible. Mr. Buckle's real point is, that however sane the man might have been, it was wicked to punish him; and I do not hesitate to say, for myself, that looking to the entire circumstances of the case, the magistrates who committed that nuisanee of his neighbourhood, and the judge who sent him to jail, did no more than their duty.

There are several statements made by Mr. Buckle which must not be regarded as setting forth the teaching of the Magazine in which they were made. Mr. Buckle says that no man can be sure that any doctrine is divinely revealed: that whoever says so must be 'absurdly and immodestly confident in his own powers.' I deny that. Mr. Buckle says that it is part of Christian doctrine that rich men cannot be saved. I deny that. Christ's statement as to the power of worldly possessions to concentrate the affections upon this world, went not an inch further than daily experience goes. What said Samuel Johnson when Garrick showed him his grand house? 'Ah, David, these are the things that make death terrible!' Mr. Buckle says that Christianity gained ground in early ages because its doctrines were combated. They were not combated. Its professors were persecuted, which is quite another thing. Mr. Buckle says that the doctrine of Immortality was known to the world before Christianity was heard of, or any other revealed religion. I deny that. Greek and Roman philosophers of the highest class regarded that doctrine as a delusion of the vulgar. Did Mr. Buckle ever read the letter of condolence which Sulpicius wrote to Cicero after the death of Cicero's daughter? A beautiful letter, beautifully expressed; stating many flimsy and wretched reasons for drying one's tears; but containing not a hint of any hope of meeting in another world. And the same may be said of Cicero's reply. As for Mr. Buckle's argument for Immortality, I think it extremely weak and inconclusive. It certainly goes to prove, if it proves anything, that my cousin Tom, who lately was called to the bar, is quite sure to be Lord Chancellor; and that Sam Lloyd, who went up from our village last week to a merchant's counting−house in Liverpool, is safe to rival his eminent namesake in wealth. Mr. Buckle's argument is just this: that if your heart is very much set upon a thing, you are perfectly sure to get it. Of course everybody has read the soliloquy in Addison's Cato, where Mr. Buckle's argument is set forth. I deem it not worth a rush. Does any man's experience of this life tend to assure him, that because some people (and not all people) would like to see their friends again after they die, therefore they shall? Do things usually turn out just as we particularly wish that they should turn out? Has not many a young girl felt, like Cato, a 'secret dread and inward horror' lest the pic−nic day should be rainy? Did that ensure its being fine? Was not I extremely anxious to catch the express train yesterday, and did not I miss it? Does not every child of ten years old know, that this is a world in which things have a wonderful knack of falling out just in the way least wished for? If I were an infidel, I should believe that some spiteful imp of the perverse had the guidance of the affairs of humanity. I know better than that: but for my knowledge I have to thank Revelation. But is it philosophical, is it common sense, in a man who rejects Revelation, and who must be guided in his opinions of a future life by the analogy of the present, to argue that because here the issue all but constantly defeats our wishes and hopes, therefore an end on which (as he says) human hearts are very much set shallcertainly be attained hereafter? 'If the separation were final,' says Mr. Buckle, in a most eloquent and pathetic passage, 'how could we stand up and live?' Fine feeling, indeed, but

impotent logic. When a man has worked hard and accumulated a little competence, and then in age loses it all in some swindling bank, and sees his daughters, tenderly reared, reduced to starvation, I doubt not he may think 'How can I live?' but will all this give him his fortune back again? Has not many a youthful heart, crushed down by bitter disappointment, taken up the fancy that surely life would now be impossible; but did the fancy, by the weight of a feather, affect the fact? I remember, indeed, seeing Mr. Buckle's question put with a wider reach of meaning. Poor Uncle Tom, torn from his family, is sailing down the Mississippi, and finding comfort as he reads his well−worn Bible. How could that poor negro weigh the arguments on either side, and be sure that the blessed Faith, which was then his only support, was true? With better logic than Mr. Buckle's, he drew his best evidence from his own consciousness. 'It fitted him so well: it was so exactly what he needed. It must be true, or how could he live?'

Having written all this, I feel that I can now think without distraction of Man and his Dwelling−Place, I have mildly vented my indignation; and I now, in a moral sense, extend my hand to Mr. Buckle. Had he come up that corkscrew stair an hour or two ago, I am not entirely certain that I might not have taken him by the collar and shaken him. And had I found him standing on a chair in the green behind the church, and indoctrinating my simple parishioners with his peculiar notions, I have an entire conviction that I should have forgotten my theoretical assent to the doctrine of religious toleration, and by a gentle hint to my sturdy friends, procured him an invigorating bath in that gleaming river. I have got rid of that feeling now. And although Mr. Buckle is the last man who would find fault with any honest opposition, I yet desire to express my regret if I have written any word that passes the limit of goodnatured though sturdy conflict. I respect Mr. Buckle's earnestness and moral courage: I heartily admire his eloquence: I give him credit for entire sincerity in the opinions he holds, though I think them sadly mistaken.

So now for Man and his Dwelling−Place. Twice already has the writer put his mind at that book, but it has each time swerved, like a middling hunter from a very stiff fence, and taken a circle round the field. Now at last the thing matt really be done.

If you, my reader, are desirous of discovering a book which shall entirely knock up your previous views upon all possible subjects, read this Essay Towards the Interpretation of Nature. It does, indeed, interpret Nature, and Man too, in a fashion which, to the best of my knowledge, is thoroughly original. And the book is dis tinguished not more by originality than by piety, earnestness, and eloquence. Its author is an enthusiastic Christian; and indeed his peculiar views in metaphysics and science are founded upon his interpretation of certain passages in the New Testament. It is from the sacred volume that he derives his theory that man is at present dead. The work appears likely to appeal to a limited circle of readers; it will be understood and appreciated by few. Though its style is clear, the abstruseness of the subjects discussed and the transcendental scope of its author, make the train of thought often difficult to follow. Possibly the fault is not in the book, but in the reader: possibly it may result from the book having been read rapidly and while pressed by many other concerns; but there seems to me a certain want of clearness and sharpness of presentment about it. The great principle maintained is indeed set forth with unmistakable force; but, it is hard to say how, there appears in details a certain absence of method, and what in Scotland is called a drumliness of style. There is a good deal of repetition too; but for that one is rather thankful than otherwise; for the great idea of the deadness of man and the life and spirituality of nature grows much better defined, and is grasped more completely and intelligently, as we come upon it over and over again, put in many different ways and with great variety of illustration. It is a humiliating confession for a reviewer to make, but, to say the truth, I do not know what to make of this book. If its author should succeed in indoctrinating the race with his views, he will produce an intellectual revolution. Every man who thinks at all will be constrained for the remainder of his days (I must not say of his life) to think upon all subjects quite differently from what he has ever hitherto thought. As for readers for amusement, and for all readers who do not choose to read what cannot be read without some mental effort, they will certainly find the first half−dozen pages of this work quite sufficient for them. Without pretending to follow the author's views into the vast number of details into which they reach, I shall endeavour in a short compass to draw the great lines of them.

There is an interesting introduction, which gradually prepares us for the announcement of the startling fact, that all men hitherto have been entirely mistaken in their belief both as to themselves and the universe which surrounds them. It is first impressed upon us that things may be in themselves very different indeed from that which they appear to us: that phenomenon may be something far apart from actual being. Yet though our

conceptions, whether given by sense or intellect, do not correspond with the truth of things, still they are the elements from which truth is to be gathered. The following passage, which occurs near the beginning of the introduction, is the sharp end of the wedge:—

All advance in knowledge is a deliverance of man from himself. Slowly and painfully we learn that he is not the measure of truth, that the fact may be very different from the appearance to him. The lesson is hard, but the reward is great. So he escapes from illusion and error, from ignorance and failure. Directing his thoughts and energies no longer according to his own impressions, but according to the truth of things, he finds himself in possession of an unimaginable power alike of understanding and of acting. To a truly marvellous extent he is the lord of nature.

But the conditions of this lordship are inexorable. They are the surrender of prepossessions, the abandonment of assumption, the confession of ignorance: the open eye and the humble heart. Hence in all passing from error to truth we learn something respecting ourselves, as well as something respecting the object of our study. Simultaneously with our better knowledge we recognize the reason of our ignorance, and perceive what defect on our part has caused us to think wrongly.

Either the world is such as it appears to us, or it is not. If it be not, there must be some condition affecting ourselves which modifies the impression we receive ffom it. And this condition must be operative upon all mankind: it must relate to man as a whole rather than to individual men.

Thus does the author lay down the simple, general principle from which he is speedily to draw conclusions so startling. Nothing can be more innocuous than all this. Every one must agree in it. Now come the further steps.

The study of nature leads to the conclusion that there is a defectiveness in man which modifies his perception of all external things; and that thus in so far as the actual fact of the universe differs from our impression of it, the actual fact is better, higher, more complete, than our impression of it. There are qualities, there is a glory about the universe, which our defective condition prevents our seeing or discerning. The universe, or nature, is not in itself such as it is to man's feeling; and man's feeling of it differs from the fact liy defect. All that we discern in the universe is there: and a great deal besides.

Now, we think of nature as existing in a certain way which we call physical. We call the world the physical world. This mode of existence involves inertness. That which is physical does not act, except passively, as it is acted upon. Inertness is inaction. That which is inert, therefore, differs from that which is not inert by defect. The inert wants something of being active.

Next, we have a conception of another mode of being besides the inert. We conceive of being which possesses a spontaneous and primary activity. This kind of being is called spiritual. This kind of being has shaken off the reproach of inertness. It can act, and originate action. The physical thus differs from the spiritual (as regards inertness) by defect. The physical wants something of being spiritual.

So far, my reader, we do not of necessity start back from anything our author teaches us. Quite true, we think of matter, a kind of being which can do nothing of itself. Quite true, we think of spirit, a kind of being which can do. And no doubt that which is able to do is (quoad hoc) a higher and more noble kind of being than that which cannot do, but only be done to. But remember here, I do not admit that in this point lies the differentia between matter and spirit. I do not grant that by taking from matter the reproach of inertness, you would make it spirit. The essential difference seems to me not to lie there. We could conceive of matter as capable of originating action, and yet as material. This is by the bye—but now be on your guard. Here is our author's great discovery—

It is man's defectiveness which makes him feel the world as thus defective. Nature is really not inert, though it appears so to man. We have been wont to think that nature, the universe, is inert or physical; that man is not−inert, or spiritual. Now, there is no doubt at all that there is inertness somewhere. Here are the two things, Man and Nature; with which thing does the inertness lie? Our author maintains that it lies with man, not with nature. Science has proved to us that nature is not−inert. As there is inertness somewhere, and as it is not in nature, of course the conclusion is that it is in man. Inertness is in the phenomenon; that is, in nature as it. appears to us. There cannot be any question that nature seems to us to be inert. But the author of this book declares that this inertness, though in the phenomenon, is not in the fact. Nature LOOKS inert; it is not−inert. How does the notion of inertness come at all, then? Now comes the very essence of the new theory; I give it in its author's words:—

The inertness is introduced by man. He perceives defect without him, only because there is defect within him.

To be inert has the same meaning as to be dead. So we speak of nature, thinking it to be inert, as 'dead matter.'

To say that man introduces inertness into nature implies a deadness in him: it is to say that he wants life. This is the proposition which is affirmed. This condition which we call our life, is not the true life of man.

The Book that has had greater influence upon the world than all others, differs from all others, in affirming that man wants life, and in making that statement the basis of all that it contains respecting the past and present and future of mankind.

Science thus pays homage to the Bible. What that book has declared as if with authority, so long ago, she has at last decyphered on the page of nature. This is not man's true life.

And who is there who can doubt, looking at man as lie is now, and then thinking of what he is to be in another world, that there is about him, now, great defect? There is truly much wanting which it is hoped will one day be supplied. What shall we call this lacking thing—this one thing lacking whose absence is felt in every fibre of our being? Our author chooses to call it life; I am doubtful with how much felicity or naturalness of expression. Of course we all know that in the New Testament life does not mean merely existence continued; eternal life does not mean merely existence continued for ever: it means the highest and purest form of our being continued for ever;—happiness and holiness continued for ever. We know, too, that holy Scripture describes the step taken by any man in becoming an earnest believer in Christ, as 'passing from death to life;' we remember such a text as 'This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and−Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' We know that a general name for the Gospel, which grasps its grand characteristics, is 'The Word of Life;' and that, in religious phrase, Christianity is concerned with the revealing, the implanting, the sustaining, the crowning, of a certain better life. Nor is it difficult to trace out such analogies between natural and spiritual death, between natural and spiritual life, as tend to prove that spiritual life and death are not spoken of in Scripture merely as the strongest words which could be employed, but that there is a further and deeper meaning in their constant use. But I do not see any gain in forcing figurative language into a literal use. Everybody knows what life and death, in ordinary language, imply. Life means sensibility, consciousness, capacity of acting, union with the living. Death means senselessness, helplessness, separation. No doubt we may trace analogies, very close and real, between the natural and the spiritual life and death. But still they are no more than analogies. You do not identify the physical with the spiritual. And it is felt by all that the use of the words in a spiritual sense is a figurative use. To the common understanding, a man is living, when he breathes and feels and moves. He is dead when he ceases to do all that. And it is a mere twisting of words from their understood sense to say that in reality, and without a figure, a breathing, feeling, moving man is dead, because he lacks some spiritual quality, however great its value may be. It may be a very valuable quality; it may be worth more than life; but it is not life, as men understand it; and as words have no meaning at all except that which men agree to give these arbitrary sounds, it matters not at all that this higher quality is what you may call true life, better life, real life. If you enlarge the meaning of the word life to include, in addition to what is generally understood by it, a higher power of spiritual action and discernment, why, all that can be said is, that you understand by life something quite different from men in general. If I choose to enlarge the meaning of the word black to include white, of course I might say with truth (relatively to myself) that white forms the usual clothing of clergymen. If I extend the meaning of the word fast to include slow, I might boldly declare that the Great Northern express is a slow train. And the entire result of such use of language would be, that no mortal would understand what I meant.

Thus it is that I demur to any author's right to tell me that such and such a thing is, or is not, 'the true life of man.' And when he says 'that man wants life, means that the true life of man is of another kind from this,' I reply to him, Tell me what is the blessing man needs; Tell me, above all, where and how he is to get it: but as to its name, I really do not care what you call it, so you call it by some name that people will understand. Call it so that people will know what you mean—Salvation, Glory, Happiness, Holiness, Redemption, or what else you please. Do not mystify us by saying we want life, and then, when we are startled by the perfectly intelligible assertion, edge off by explaining that by life you mean something quite different from what we do. There is no good in that. If I were to declare that this evening, before I sleep, I shall cross the Atlantic and go to America, my readers would think the statement a sufficiently extraordinary one; but if, after thus surprising them, I went on to explain that by the Atlantic I did not mean the ocean, nor by America the western continent, but that the Atlantic meant the village green, and America the squire's house on the other side of it, I should justly gain credit for a very silly mystification. As Nicholas Nickleby very justly remarked, If Dotheboy's Hall is not a hall, why call it one? Mr. Squeers, in his reply, no doubt stated the law of the case: If a man chooses to call his house an island, what is to

hinder him? If the author of Man and his Dwelling−Place means to tell us only that we want some spiritual capacity, which it pleases him to call life, but which not one man in a million understands by that word, is he not amusing himself at our expense by telling us we want life? We know what we mean by being dead: our author means something quite different. Let him speak for himself:

That man wants life means that the true life of man is of another kind from this. It corresponds to that true, absolute Being which he as he now is cannot know.

He cannot know it because he is out of relation with it. THIS IS HIS DEADNESS. To know it is to have life.

Yes, reader—this is his deadness! Something, that is, which no plain mortal would ever understand by the word. When I told you, a long time ago, that this book taught that man is dead and nature living, was this what the words conveyed to you?

Still, though there may be something not natural in the word, the author's meaning is a broad and explicit one. For the want of that which he calls our true life (he maintains) utterly distorts and deforms this world to our view. Here is his statement as to the things which surround us:

There is not a physical world and a spiritual world besides; but the spiritual world which alone is is physical to man, the physical being the mode in which man, by his defectiveness, perceives the spiritual. We feel a physical world to be: that which is is the spiritual world.

The phenomenon, that is, is physical: the fact is spiritual. A tree looks to us material, because we want life: if we had life, we should see that it is spiritual. Really, there is no such thing as matter. Our own defectiveness makes us fancy that to be material which in truth is spirilual. So I was misinterpreting the author, when I said that all that we see in nature is there, and a great deal more. The defect in us, it appears, not only subtracts from nature, it transforms it. Not merely do we fail to discern that which is in nature, we do actually discern that which is not in nature.

And to be delivered from all this deadness and delusion, what we have to do is to betake ourselves to the Saviour. Christianity is a system which starts from the fundamental principle that man is dead, and proposes to make him alive. Under its working man gains true life, otherwise called eternal life; and in gaining that life he finds himself ipso facto conveyed into a spiritual world. This world ceases to be physical to him, and becomes spiritual.

Such are the great lines of the new theory as to Man and his Dwelling−Place. Thus does our author interpret Nature. I trust and believe that I have not in any way misrepresented or caricatured his opinions. His Introduction sets out in outline the purport of the entire book. The remainder of the volume is given to carrying out these opinions into detail, as they are suggested by or as they affect the entire system of things. It is divided into four Hooks. Book I. treats Of Science; Book II. Of Philosophy; Book III. Of Religion; Book IV. Of Ethics; and the volume is closed by four dialogues between the Writer and Reader, in which, in a desultory manner, the principles already set forth are further explained and enforced.

Early in the first chapter of the Book Of Science, the author anticipates the obvious objection to his use of the terms Life and Death. I do not think he succeeds in justifying the fashion in which he employs them. But let him speak for himself:

It may seem unnatural to speak of a conscious existence as a state of death. But what is affirmed is, that a sensational existence such as ours is not the life of MAN; that a consciousness of physical life does itself imply a deadness. The affirmations that we are living men, and that man has not true and absolute life, are not opposed. Life is a relative term. Our possession of a conscious life in relation to the things that we feel around us, is itself the evidence of man's defect of life in a higher and truer sense.

Let a similitude make the thought more clear. Are not we, as individuals, at rest, steadfast in space; evidently so to our own consciousness, demonstrably so in relation to the objects around us? But is man at rest in space? By no means. We are all partakers of a motion. Nay, if we were truly at rest, we could not have this relative steadfastness, we should not beat rest to the things around us: they would fleet and slip away. Our relative rest, and consciousness of steadfastness, depend upon our being not at rest. There are moving things, to which he only can be steadfast who is moving too. Even Buch is the life of which we have consciousness. We have a life in relation to these physical things, because man wants life. True life in man would alter his relation to them. They could not be the realities any more: he could not have a life in them. As rest to moving things is not truly rest, but motion; so life to inert things is not truly life, but deadness.

Very ingeniously thought out: very skilfully put, with probably the only illustration which would go on all fours. But to me all this is extremely unsatisfactory: and unsatisfactory in a much farther sense than merely that it is using terms in a non−natural sense. I know, of course, that to look at Nature through blue spectacles will make Nature blue: but I cannot see that to look at Nature through dead eyes should make Nature dead. I see no proof that Nature, in fact, is living and active, though it admittedly looks inert and dead. And I can discover nothing more than a daring assertion, in the statement that we are dead, and that we project our own deadness upon living nature. I cannot see how to the purest and most elevated of beings, a tree should look less solid than it does to me. I cannot discover how greater purity of heart, and more entire faith in Christ, should turn this material world into a world of spirit. I doubt the doctrine that spirit in itself, as usually understood (apart from its power of originating action) is a higher and holier existence than matter. It seems to me that very much from a wrong idea that it is, come those vague, unreal, intangible notions as to the Christian Heaven, which do so much to make it a chilly, unattractive thing, to human wishes and hopes. It is hard enough for us to feel the reality of the things beyond the grave, without having the additional stumbling−block cast in our way, of being told that truly there is nothing real there for us to feel. As for the following eloquent passage, in which our author subsequently returns to the justification of his great doctrine, no more need be said than that it is rhetoric, not logic:—

That man has not his true life, must have taken him long to learn. All our prepossessions, all our natural convictions, are opposed to that belief. If these activities, these powers, these capacities of enjoyment and suffering, this consciousness of free will, this command of the material world, be not life, what is life? What more do we want to make us truly man? This is the feeling that has held men captive, and biased all their thoughts so that they could not perceive what they themselves were saying.

Yet the sad undercurrent has belied the boast. From all ages and all lands the cry of anguish, the prayer for life unconscious of itself, has gone up to heaven. In groans and curses, in despair and cruel rage, man pours out his secret to the universe; writing it in blood, and lust, and savage wrong, upon the fair bosom of the earth; he alone not knowing what he does. If this be the life of man, what is his death?

No doubt this would form a very eloquent and effective paragraph in a popular sermon. But in a philosophic treatise, where an author is tied to the severely precise use of terms, and where it will not do to call a thing death merely because it is very bad, nor to call a thing life merely because it is vry good, the argument appears to have but little weight.

You must see, intelligent reader, that one thing which we are entitled to require our author to satisfactorily prove, is the fact that Nature is not inert, as it appears to man. If you can make it certain that Nature is living and active, then, no doubt, some explanation will be needful as to how it comes to look so different to us; though, even then, I do not see that it necessarily follows that the inertness is to be supposed to exist in ourselves. But unless the author can prove that Nature is not inert, he has no foundation to build on. He states three arguments, from which he derives the grand principle:—

1. Inertness necessarily belongs to all phenomena. That which is only felt to be, and does not truly or absolutely exist, must have the character of inaction. It must be felt as passive A phenomenon must be inert because it is a phenomenon. We cannot argue from inertness in that which appears to us, to inertness in that which is. Of whatsoever kind the essence of nature may be, if it be unknown, the phenomenon must be equally inert. We have no ground, therefore, in the inertness which we feel, for affirming of nature that it is inert. We must feel it so, by virtue of our known relation to it, as not perceiving its essence.

2. The question, therefore, rests entirely upon its own evidence. Since we have no reason, from the inertness of the phenomenal, for inferring the inertness of the essential, can we know whether that essential be inert or not? We can know. Inertness, as being absolute inaction, cannot belong to that which truly is. Being and absolute inaction are contraries. Inertness, therefore, must be a property by which the phenomenal differs from the essential or absolute.

3. Again, nature does act: it acts upon us, or we could not perceive it at all. The true being of nature is active therefore. That we feel it otherwise shows that we do not feel it as it is. We must look for the source of nature's apparent or felt inertness in man's condition. Never should man have thought to judge of nature without remembering his own defectiveness.

Such are the grounds upon which rests the belief, that nature is not inert. It appears to me that there is little force in them. To a great extent they are mere assumptions and assertions; and anything they contain in the nature

of argument is easily answered.

First: Why must every phenomenon be felt as inert? Why must a 'phenomenon be inert because it is a phenomenon?' I cannot see why. We know nothing but phenomena; that is, things as they appear to us. Where did we get the ideas of life and activity, if not from phenomena? Many things appear to us to have life and activity. That is, there are phenomena which are not inert.

Secondly: Wherefore should we conclude that the phenomenon differs essentially from the fact? The phenomenon is the fact−as−discerned−by−us. And granting that our defectiveness forbids our having a full and complete discernment of the fact, why should we doubt that our discernment is right so far as it goes? It is incomparably more likely that things (not individual things, but the entire system, I mean) are what they seem, than that they are not. Why believe that we are gratuitously and needlessly deluded? God made the universe; he placed us in it; he gave us powers whereby to discern it. Is it reasonable to think that he did so in a fashion so blundering or so deceitful that we can only discern it wrong? And if nature seems inert, is not the rational conclusion that it is so?

Thirdly: Why cannot 'inertness, as being absolute inaction, belong to that which truly is?' Why cannot a thing exist without doing anything? Is not that just what millions of things actually do? Or if you intend to twist the meaning of the substantive verb, and to say that merely to be is to do something,—that simply to exist is a certain form of exertion and action,—I shall grant, of course, that nothing whatever that exists is in that sense inert; but I shall affirm that you use the word inert in quite a different sense from the usual one. And in that extreme and non−natural sense of the word, the phenomenon is no more inert than is the essence. Certainly things seem to us to be: and if just to be is to be active, then no phenomenon is inert; no single thing discerned by us appears to be inert.

Fourthly: I grant that 'nature does act upon us, or we could not perceive it at all.' But then I maintain that this kind of action is not action as men understand the word. This kind of action is quite consistent with the general notion of inertness. A thing may be inert, as mankind understand the word; and also active, as the author of this book understands the word. To discern this sort of activity and life in nature we have no need to 'pass from death to life' ourselves. We simply need to have the thing pointed out to us, and it is seen at once. It is playing with words to say that nature acts upon us, or we could not perceive it. No doubt, when you stand before a tree, and look at it, it does act in so far as that it depicts itself upon your retina; but that action is quite consistent with what we understand by inertness. It does not matter whether you say that your eye takes hold of the tree, or that the tree takes hold of your eye. When you hook a trout, you may say either that you catch the fish, or that the fish catches you. Is the alternative worth fighting about? Which is the natural way of speaking: to say that the man sees the tree, or that the tree shows itself to the man? All the activity which our author claims for nature goes no farther than that. Our reply is that that is not activity at all. If that is all he contends for, we grant it at once; and we say that it is not in the faintest degree inconsistent with the fact of nature's being inert, as that word is understood. You come and tell me that Mr. Smith has just passed your window flying. I say no; I saw him; he was not flying, but walking. Ah, you reply, I hold that walking is an indicate flying; it is a rudimentary flying, the lowest form of flying; and therefore I maintain that he flew past the window. My friend, I answer, if it be any satisfaction to you to use words in that way, do so and rejoice; only do not expect any human being to understand what you mean; and beware of the lunatic asylum.

Why, I ask again, are we to cry down man for the sake of crying up nature? Why are we to depreciate the dweller that we may magnify the dwelling−place? Is not, man (to say the least) one of the works of God? Did not God make, both man and nature? And does not Revelation (which our author holds in so deep reverence) teach that man was the last and noblest of the handiworks of the Creator? And thus it is that I do not hesitate to answer such a question as that which follows, and to answer it contrariwise to what the author expects. It is from the human soul that glory and meaning are projected upon inanimate nature. To Newton, and to Newton's dog, the outward creation was physically the same; to the apprehension of Newton and of Newton's dog, how different! Hear the author:—

To this clear issue the case is brought: Man does introduce into nature something from himself: either the inertness, the negative qualily, the defect, or the beauty, the meaning, the glory. Either that whereby the world is noble comes from ourselves, or that whereby it is mean; that which it has, or that which it wants. Can it be doubtful which it is?

Not in the least! Give me the rational and immortal man, made in God's image, rather than the grandest oak which the June sunbeams will be warming when you read this, my friend—rather than the most majestic mountain which by and bye will be purple with the heather. Reason, immortality, love, and faith, are things liker God than ever so many cubic feet of granite, than ever so many loads of timber. 'Behold,' says Archer Butler, 'we stand alone in the universe! Earth, air, and ocean can show us nothing so awful as we!'

You fancy, says our author, that Nature is inert, because it goes on in so constant and unvarying a course. You know, says he, what conscious exertion it costs you to produce physical changes; you can trace no such exertion in Nature. You would believe, says he, that Nature is active, but for the fact that her doings are all conformed to laws that you can trace. But invariableness, he maintains, is no proof of inaction. RIGHT ACTION is invariable; RIGHT ACTION is absolutely conformed to law. Why, therefore, should not the secret of nature's invariableness be, not passiveness, but rightness?' The unchanging uniformity of Nature's course proves her holiness—her willing, unvarying obedience to the Divine law. 'The invariableness of Nature bespeaks Holiness as its cause.'

May we not think upon all this (not dogmatically) in some such fashion as this?

Which is likelier:

1. That Nature has it in her power to vary from the well−known laws of Nature; that she could disobey God if she pleased; but that she is so holy that she could not think of such a thing, and so through all ages has never swerved once. Or,

2. That Nature is bound by laws which she has not the power to disobey; that she is what she looks, an inanimate, passive, inert thing, actuated, as her soul and will, by the will of the Creator?

And to aid in considering which alternative is the likelier, let it be remembered that Revelation teaches that this is a fallen world; that experience proves that this world is not managed upon any system of optimism; that in this creation things are constantly going wrong; and especially, that all history gives no account of any mere creature whose will was free to do either good or ill; and yet who did not do ill frequently. Is it likely that to all this there is one entire exception; one thing, and that so large a thing as all inanimate nature, perfectly obedient, perfectly holy, perfectly right−and all by its own free will? I grant there is something touching in the author's eloquent words:—

Because she is right, Nature is ours: more truly ours than we ourselves. We turn from the inward ruin to the outward glory, and marvel at the contrast. But we need not marvel: it is the difference of life and death: piercing the dimness even of man's darkened sense, jarring upon his fond illusion like waking realities upon a dream. Without is living holiness, within is deathly wrong.

Let the reader, ever remembering that in such cases analogy is not argument but illustration—that it makes a doctrine clearer, but does not in any degree confirm it—read the chapter entitled 'Of the illustration from Astronomy.' It will tend to make the great doctrine of Man and his Dwelling−Place comprehensible; you will see exactly what it is, although you may not think it true. As astronomy has transferred the apparent movements of the planets from them to ourselves, so, says our author, has science transferred the seeming inertness of Nature from it to us. The phenomenon of Nature is physical and inert: the being is spiritual and active and holy. And if we now seem to have an insuperable conviction that Man is not inert and that Nature is inert, it is not stronger than our apparent consciousness that the earth is unmoving. Man lives under illusion as to himself and as to the universe. Reason, indeed, furnishes him with the means of correcting that illusion; but in that illusion is his want of life.

Strong in his conviction of the grand principle which he has established, as he conceives, in his first book, the author, in his second book, goes crashing through all systems of philosophy. His great doctrine makes havock of them all. All are wrong; though each may have some grain of truth in it. The Idealists are right in so far as that there is no such thing as Matter. Matter is the vain imagination of man through his wrong idea of Nature's inertness. But the Idealists are wrong if they fancy that because there is no Matter, there is nothing but Mind, and ideas in Mind. Nature, though spiritual, has a most real and separate existence. Then the sceptics are right in so far as they doubt what our author thinks wrong; but they are wrong in so far as they doubt what our author thinks right. Positivism is right in so far as it teaches that we see all things relatively to ourselves, and so wrongly; but it is wrong in teaching that what things are in themselves is no concern of ours, and that we should live on as though things were what they seem.

If it were not that the reader of Man and his Dwelling−Place is likely, after the shock of the first grand theory, that Man is dead and the Universe living, to receive with comparative coolness any further views set out in the

book, however strange, I should say that probably, the third Book, 'Of Religion,' would startle him more than anything else in the work. Although this Book stands third in the volume, it is first both in importance and in chronology. For the author tells us that his views Of Religion are not deduced from the theoretical conceptions already stated, but have been drawn immediately from the study of Scripture, and that from them the philosophical ideas are mainly derived. And indeed it is perfectly marvellous what doctrines men will find in Scripture, or deduce from Scripture. Is there not something curious in the capacity of the human mind, while glancing along the sacred volume, to find upon its pages both what suits its prevailing mood and its firm conviction at the time? You feel buoyant and cheerful: you open your Bible and read it; what a cheerful, hopeful book it is! You are depressed and anxious: you open your Bible; surely it was written for people in your present frame of mind! It is wonderful to what a degree the Psalms especially suit the mood and temper of all kinds of readers in every conceivable position. I can imagine the poor suicide, stealing towards the peaceful river, and musing on a verse of a psalm. I can imagine the joyful man, on the morning of a marriage day which no malignant relatives have embittered, finding a verse which will seem like the echo of his cheerful temper. And passing from feeling to understanding, it is remarkable how, when a man is possessed with any strong belief, he will find, as he reads the Bible, not only many things which appear to him expressly to confirm his view, but something in the entire tenor of what he reads that appears to harmonize with it. I doubt not the author of Man and his Dwelling−Place can hardly open the Bible at random without chancing upon some passage which he regards as confirmatory of his opinions. I am quite sure that to ordinary men his opinions will appear flally to conflict with the Bible's fundamental teaching. It has already been indicated in this essay in what sense the statements of the New Testament to the following effect are to be understood:—

The writers of the New Testament declare man to be dead. They speak of men as not having life, and tell of a life to be given them. If, therefore, our thoughts were truly conformed to the New Testament, how could it seem a strange thing to us that this state of man should be found a state of death; how should its very words, reaffirmed by science, excite our surprise? Would it not have appeared to us a natural result of the study of nature to prove man dead? Might we not, if we had truly accepted the words of Scripture, have anticipated that it should be so? For, if man be rightly called dead, should not that condition have affected his experience, and ought not a discovery of that fact to be the issue of his labours to ascertain his true relation to the universe? Why does it seem a thing incredible to us that man should be really, actually dead: dead in such a sense as truly to affect his being, and determine his whole state? Why have we been using words which affirm him dead in our religious speech, and feel startled at finding them proved true in another sphere of inquiry?

It is indeed true—it is a thing to be taken as a fundamental truth in reading the Bible—that in a certain sense man is dead, and is to be made alive; and the analogy which obtains between natural death and what in theological language is called spiritual death, is in several respects so close and accurate that we feel that it is something more than a strong figure when the New Testament says such things as 'You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.' But it tends only to confusion to seek to identify things so thoroughly different as natural and spiritual death. It is trifling with a man to say to him 'You are dead!' and having thus startled him, to go on to explain that you mean spiritually dead. 'Oh,' he will reply, 'I grant you that I may be dead in that sense, and possibly that is the more important sense, but it is not the sense in which words are commonly understood.' I can see, of course, various points of analogy between ordinary death and spiritual death. Does ordinary death render a man insensible to the presence of material things? Then spiritual death renders him heedless of spiritual realities, of the presence of God, of the value of salvation, of the closeness of eternity. Does natural death appear in utter helplessness and powerlessness? So does spiritual death render a man incapable of spiritual action and exertion. Has natural death its essence in the entire separation it makes between dead and living? So has spiritual death its essence in the separation of the soul from God. But, after all, these things do but show an analogy between natural death and spiritual: they do not show that the things are one; they do not show that in the strict unfigurative use of terms man's spiritual condition is one of death. They show that man's spiritual condition is very like death; that is all. It is so like as quite to justify the assertion in Scripture: it is not so identical as to justify the introduction of a new philosophical phrase. It is perfectly true that Christianity is described in Scripture as a means for bringing men from death to life; but it is also described, with equal meaning, as a means for bringing men from darkness to light. And it is easy to trace the analogy between man's spiritual condition and the condition of one in darkness—between man's redeemed condition and the condition of one in light; but surely it would be childish to

announce, as a philosophical discovery, that all men are blind, because they cannot see their true interests and the things that most concern them. They are not blind in the ordinary sense, though they may be blind in a higher; neither are they dead in the ordinary sense, though they may be in a higher. And only confusion, and a sense of being misled and trifled with, can follow from the pushing figure into fact and trying to identify the two.

Stripping our author's views of the unusual phraseology in which they are disguised, they do, so far as regards the essential fact of man's loss and redemption, coincide exactly with the orthodox teaching of the Church of England. Man is by nature and sinfulness in a spiritual sense dead; dead now, and doomed to a worse death hereafter. By believing in Christ he at once obtains some share of a better spiritual life, and the hope of a future life which shall be perfectly holy and happy. Surely this is no new discovery. It is the type of Christianity implied in the Liturgy of the Church, and weekly set out from her thousands of pulpits. The startling novelties of Man and his Dwelling−Place are in matters of detail. He holds that fearful thing, Damnation, which orthodox views push off into a future world, to be a present thing. It is now men are damned. It is now men are in hell. Wicked men are now in a state of damnation: they are now in hell. The common error arises from our thinking damnation a state of suffering. It is not. It is a state of something worse than suffering, viz., of sin:—

We find it hard to believe that damnation can he a thing men like. But does not—what every being likes depend on what it is? Is corruption less corruption, in man's view, because worms like it? Is damnation less damnation, in God's view, because men like it? And God's view is simply the truth. Surely one object of a revelation must be to show us things from God's view of them, that is. as they truly are. Sin truly is damnation, though to us it is pleasure. That sin is pleasure to us, surely is the evil part of our condition.

And indeed it is to be admitted that there is a great and much−forgotten truth implied here. It is a very poor, and low, and inadequate idea of Christianity, to think of it merely as something which saves from suffering—as something which saves us from hell, regarded merely as a place of misery. The Christian salvation is mainly a deliverance from sin. The deliverance is primarily from moral evil; and only secondarily from physical or moral pain. 'Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.' No doubt this is very commonly forgotten. No doubt the vulgar idea of salvation and perdition founds on the vulgar belief that pain is the worst of all things, and happiness the best of all things. It is well that the coarse and selfish type of religion which founds on the mere desire to escape from burning and to lay hold of bliss, should be corrected by the diligent instilling of the belief, that sin is worse than sorrow. The Saviour's compassion, though ever ready to well out at the sight of suffering, went forth most warmly at the sight of sin.

Here I close the book, not because there is not much more in it that well deserves notice, but because I hope that what has here been said of it will induce the thoughtful reader to study it for himself, and because I have space to write no more. It is a May afternoon; not that on which the earliest pages of my article were written, but a week after it. I have gone at the ox−fence at last, and got over it with several contusions. Pardon me, unknown author, much admired for your ingenuity, your earnestness, your originality, your eloquence, if I have written with some show of lightness concerning your grave book. Very far, if you could know it, was any reality of lightness from your reviewer's feeling. He is non ignarus mali: he has had his full allotment of anxiety and care; and he hails with you the prospect of a day when human nature shall cast off its load of death, and when sinful and sorrowful man shall be brought into a beautiful conformity to external nature. Would that Man were worthy of his Dwelling−place as it looks upon this summer−like day! Open, you latticed window: let the cool breeze come into this somewhat feverish room. Again, the tree−tops; again the white stones and green graves; again the lambs, somewhat larger; again the distant hill. Again I think of Cheapside, far away. Yet there is trouble here. Not a yard of any of those hedges but has worried its owner in watching that it be kept tight, that sheep or cattle may not break through. Not a gate I see but screwed a few shillings out of the anxious farmer's pocket, and is always going wrong. Not a field but either the landlord squeezed the tenant in the matter of rent, or the tenant cheated the landlord. Not the smoke of a cottage but marks where pass lives weighted down with constant care, and with little end save the sore struggle to keep the wolf from the door. Not one of these graves, save perhaps the poor friendless tramp's in the corner, but was opened and closed to the saddening of certain hearts. Here are lives of error, sleepless nights, over−driven brains; wayward children, unnatural parents, though of these last, God be thanked, very few. Yes, says Adam Bede, 'there's a sort of wrong that can never be made up for.' No doubt we are dead: when shall we be quickened to a better life? Surely, as it is, the world is too good for man. And I agree, most cordially and entirely, with the author of this book, that there is but one agency in the universe that can

repress evil here, and extinguish it hereafter.

CHAPTER X. LIFE AT THE WATER CURE

[Footnote: A Month at Malvern, under the Water Cure. By R. J. Lane, A. E. R. A. Third Edition. Reconsidered—Rewritten, London: John Mitchell. 1855.

Spirits and Water. By R. J. L. London: John Mitchell. 1855.

Confessions of a Water−Patient. By Sir E. B. Lytton, Bart.

Hints to the Side, the Lame, and the Lazy: or, Passages in the Life of a Hydropathist. By a Veteran. London: John Ollivier. 1848.]

All our readers, of course, have heard of the Water Cure; and many of them, we doubt not, have in their own minds ranked it among those eccentric medical systems which now and then spring up. are much talked of for a while, and finally sink into oblivion. The mention of the Water Cure is suggestive of galvanism, homoepathy, mesmerism, the grape cure, the bread cure, the mud−bath cure, and of the views of that gentleman who maintained that almost all the evils, physical and moral, which assail the constitution of man, are the result of the use of salt as an article of food, and may be avoided by ceasing to employ that poisonous and immoral ingredient. Perhaps there is a still more unlucky association with life pills, universal vegetable medicines, and the other appliances of that coarser quackery which yearly brings hundreds of gullible Britons to their graves, and contributes thousands of pounds in the form of stamp−duty to the revenue of this great and enlightened country.

It is a curious phase of life that is presented at a Water Cure establishment. The Water Cure system cannot be carried out satisfactorily except at an establishment prepared for the purpose. An expensive array of baths is necessary; so are well−trained bath servants, and an experienced medical man to watch the process of cure: the mode of life does not suit the arrangements of a family, and the listlessness of mind attendant on the water−system quite unfits a man for any active employment. There must be pure country air to breathe, a plentiful supply of the best water, abundant means of taking exercise—Sir E. B. Lytton goes the length of maintaining that mountains to climb are indispensable;—and to enjoy all these advantages one must go to a hydropathic establishment. It may be supposed that many odd people are to be met at such a place; strong−minded women who have broken through the trammels of the Faculty, and gone to the Water Cure in spite of the warnings of their medical men, and their friends' kind predictions that they would never live to come back; and hypochondriac men, who have tried all quack remedies in vain, and who have come despairingly to try one which, before trying it, they probably looked to as the most violent and perilous of all. And the change of life is total. You may have finished your bottle of port daily for twenty years, but at the Water Cure you must perforce practise total abstinence. For years you may never have tasted fair water, but here you will get nothing else to drink, and you will have to dispose of your seven or eight tumblers a day. You may have been accustomed to loll in bed of a morning till nine or ten o'clock; but here you must imitate those who would thrive, and 'rise at five:' while the exertion is compensated by your having to bundle off to your chamber at 9.30 p. M. You may long at breakfast for your hot tea, and if a Scotchman, for your grouse pie or devilled kidneys; but you will be obliged to make up with the simpler refreshment of bread and milk, with the accompaniment of stewed Normandy pippins. You may have been wont to spend your days in a fever of business, in a breathless hurry and worry of engagements to be met and matters to be seen to; but after a week under the Water Cure, you will find yourself stretched listlessly upon grassy banks in the summer noon, or sauntering all day beneath the horse−chestnuts of Sudbrook, with a mind as free from business cares as if you were numbered among Tennyson's lotos−eaters, or the denizens of Thomson's Castle of Indolence. And with God's blessing upon the pure element He has given us in such abundance, you will shortly (testibus Mr. Lane and Sir E. B. Lytton) experience other changes as complete, and more agreeable. You will find that the appetite which no dainty could tempt, now discovers in the simplest fare a relish unknown since childhood. You will find the broken rest and the troubled dreams which for years have made the midnight watches terrible, exchanged for the long refreshful sleep that makes one mouthful of the night. You will find the gloom and depression and anxiety which were growing your habitual temper, succeeded by a lightness of heart and buoyancy of spirit which you cannot account for, but which you thankfully enjoy. We doubt not that some of our readers, filled with terrible ideas as to the violent and perilous nature of the Water Cure, will

give us credit for some strength of mind when we tell them that we have proved for ourselves the entire mode of life; we can assure them that there is nothing so very dreadful about it; and we trust they may not smile at us as harmlessly monomaniacal when we say that, without going the lengths its out−and−out advocates do, we believe that in certain states of health much benefit may really be derived from the system, Sir E. B. Lytton's eloquent Confessions of a Water−Patient have been before the public for some years. The Hints to the Sick, the Lame, and the Lazy, give us an account of the ailments and recovery of an old military officer, who, after suffering severety from gout, was quite set up by a few weeks at a hydropathic establishment at Marienberg on the Rhine; and who, by occasional recurrence to the same remedy, is kept in such a state of preservation that, though advanced in years, he 'is able to go eight miles within two hours, and can go up hill with most young fellows.' The old gentleman's book, with its odd woodcuts, and a certain freshness and incorrectness of style—we speak grammatically—in keeping with the character of an old soldier, is readable enough. Mr. Lane's books are far from being well written; the Spirits and Water, especially, is extremely poor stuff. The Month at Malvern is disfigured by similar faults of style; but Mr. Lane has really something to tell us in that work: and there is a good deal of interest at once in knowing how a man who had been reduced to the last degree of debility of body and mind, was so effectually restored, that now for years he has, on occasion, proved himself equal to a forty−miles' walk among the Welsh mountains on a warm summer day; and also in remarking the boyish exhilaration of spirits in which Mr. Lane writes, which he tells us is quite a characteristic result of 'initiation into the excitements of the Water Cure.'

Mr. Lane seems to have been in a very bad way. He gives an appalling account of the medical treatment under which he had suffered for nearly thirty years. In spite of it all he found, at the age of forty−five, that his entire system was showing signs of breaking up. He was suffering from neuralgia, which we believe means something like tic−douloureux extending over the whole body; he was threatened with paralysis, which had advanced so far as to have benumbed his right side; his memory was going; his mind was weakened; he was, in his own words, 'no use to anybody:' there were deep cracks round the edge of his tongue; his throat was ulcerated; in short, he was in a shocking state, and never likely to be better. Like many people in such sad circumstances, lie had tried all other remedies before thinking of the Water Cure; he had resorted to galvanism, and so forth, but always got worse. At length, on the 13th of May, 1845, Mr. Lane betook himself to Malvern, where Dr. Wilson presides over one of the largest cold−water establishments in the kingdom. In those days there were some seventy patients in residence, but the new−comer was pleased to find that there was nothing repulsive in the appearance of any of his confreres,—a consideration of material importance, inasmuch as the patients breakfast, dine, and sup together. Nothing could have a more depressing effect upon any invalid, than to be constantly surrounded by a crowd of people manifestly dying, or afflicted with visible and disagreeable disease. The fact is, judging from our own experience, that the people who go to the Water Cure are for the most part not suffering from real and tangible ailments, but from maladies of a comparatively fanciful kind,—such as low spirits, shattered nerves, and lassitude, the result of overwork. And our readers may be disposed to think, with ourselves, that the change of air and scene, the return to a simple and natural mode of life, and the breaking off from the cares and engagements of business, have quite as much to do with their restoration as the water−system, properly so called.

The situation of Malvern is well adapted to the successful use of the water system. Sir E. B. Lytton tells us that 'the air of Malvern is in itself hygeian: the water is immemorially celebrated for its purity: the landscape is a perpetual pleasure to the eye.' The neighbouring hills offer the exercise most suited to the cure: Priessnitz said 'One must have mountains:' and Dr. Wilson told Mr. Lane, in answer to a remark that the Water Cure had failed at Bath and Cheltenham, that 'no good and difficult cures can be made in low or damp situations, by swampy grounds, or near the beds of rivers.'

The morning after his arrival, Mr. Lane fairly entered upon the Water System: and his diary for the following month shows us that his time was fully occupied by baths of one sort or another, and by the needful exercise before and after these. The patient is gradually brought under the full force of hydropathy: some of the severer appliances—such as the plunge−bath after packing, and the douche—not being employed till he has been in some degree seasoned and strung up for them. A very short time sufficed to dissipate the notion that there is anything violent or alarming about the Water Cure; and to convince the patient that every part of it is positively enjoyable. There was no shock to the system: there was nothing painful: no nauseous medicines to swallow; no vile bleeding and blistering. Sitz−baths, foot−baths, plunge−baths, douches, and wet−sheet packings, speedily began to do their

work upon Mr. Lane; and what with bathing, walking, hill−climbing, eating and drinking, and making up fast friendships with some of his brethren of the Water Cure, he appears to have had a very pleasant time of it. He tells us that he found that—

The palliative and soothing effects of the water treatment are established immediately; and the absence of all irritation begets a lull, as instantaneous in its effects upon the frame as that experienced in shelter from the storm.

A sense of present happiness, of joyous spirits, of confidence in my proceedings, possesses me on this, the third day of my stay. I do nut say that it is reasonable to experience this sudden accession, or that everybody is expected to attribute it to the course of treatment so recently commenced. I only say, so it is; and I look for a confirmation of this happy frame of mind, when supported by renewed strength of body.

To the same effect Sir E. B. Lytton:

Cares and griefs are forgotten: the sense of the present absorbs the past and future: there is a certain freshness and youth which pervade the spirits, and live upon the enjoyment of the actual hour.

And the author of the Hints to the Sick,

Should my readers find me prosy, I hope that they will pardon an old fellow, who looks back to his Water Cure course as one of the most delightful portions of a tolerably prosperous life.

When shall we find the subjects of the established system of medical treatment growing eloquent on the sudden accession of spirits consequent on a blister applied to the chest; the buoyancy of heart which attends the operation of six dozen leeches; the youthful gaiety which results from the 'exhibition' of a dose of castor oil? It is no small recommendation of the water system, that it makes people so jolly while under it.

But it was not merely present cheerfulness that Mr. Lane experienced: day by day his ailments were melting away. When he reached Malvern he limped painfully, and found it impossible to straighten his right leg, from a strain in the knee. In a week he 'did not know that he had a knee.' We are not going to follow the detail of his symptoms: suffice it to say that the distressing circumstances already mentioned gradually disappeared; every day he felt stronger and better; the half−paralysed side got all right again; mind and body alike recovered their tone: the 'month at Malvern' was followed up by a course of hydropathic treatment at home, such as the exigencies of home−life will permit; and the upshot of the whole was, lhat from being a wretched invalid, incapable of the least exertion, mental or physical, Mr. Lane was permanently brought to a state of health and strength, activity and cheerfulness. All this improvement he has not the least hesitation in ascribing to the virtue of the Water Cure; and after eight or ten years' experience of the system and its results, his faith in it is stronger than ever.

In quitting Malvern, the following is his review of the sensations of the past month:—

I look back with astonishment at the temper of mind which has prevailed over the great anxieties that, heavier than my illness, had been bearing their weight upon me. Weakness of body had been chiefly oppressive, because by it I was deprived of the power of alleviating those anxieties; and now, with all that accumulation of mental pressure, with my burden in full cry, and even gaining upon me during the space thus occupied, I have to reflect upon time passed in merriment, and attended by never−failing joyous spirits.

To the distress of mind occasioned by gathering ailments, was added the pain of banishment from home; and yet I have been translated to a life of careless ease. Any one whose knowledge of the solid weight that I carried to this place would qualify him to estimate the state of mind in which I left my home, might well be at a loss to appreciate the influences which had suddenly soothed and exhilarated my whole nature, until alacrity of mind and healthful gaiety became expansive, and the buoyant spirit on the surface was stretched to unbecoming mirth and lightness of heart.

So much for Mr. Lane's experience of the Water Cure. As to its power in acute disease we shall speak hereafter; but its great recommendations in all cases where the system has been broken down by overwork, are (if we are to credit its advocates) two: first, it braces up body and mind, and restores their healthy tone, in a way that nothing else can; and next, the entire operation by which all this is accomplished, is a course of physical and mental enjoyment.

But by this time we can imagine our readers asking with some impatience, what is the Water Cure? What is the precise nature of all those oddly−named appliances by which it produces its results? Now this is just what we are going to explain; but we have artfully and deeply sought to set out the benefits ascribed to the system before doing so, in the hope that that large portion of the human race which reads Fraser may feel the greater interest in the details which follow, when each of the individuals who compose it remembers, that these sitzes and douches

are not merely the things which set up Sir E. B. Lytton, Mr. Lane, and our old military friend, but are the things which may some day be called on to revive his own sinking strength and his own drooping spirits. And as the treatment to which all water patients are subjected appears to be much the same, we shall best explain the nature of the various baths by describing them as we ourselves found them.

Our story is a very simple one. Some years since, after many terms of hard College work, we found our strength completely break down. We were languid and dispirited; everything was an effort: we felt that whether study in our case had 'made the mind' or not, it had certainly accomplished the other result which Festus ascribes to it, and 'unmade the body.' We tried sea−bathing, cod−liver oil, and everything else that medical men prescribe to people done up by over study; but nothing did much good. Finally, we determined to throw physic to the dogs, and to try a couple of months at the Water Cure. It does cost an effort to make up one's mind to go there, not only because the inexperienced in the matter fancy the water system a very perilous one, but also because one's steady−going friends, on hearing of our purpose, are apt to shake their heads,—perhaps even to tap their foreheads,—to speak doubtfully of our common sense, and express a kind hope—behind our backs, especially—that we are not growing fanciful and hypochondriac, and that we may not end in writing testimonials in favour of Professor Holloway. We have already said that to have the full benefit of the Water Cure, one must go to a hydropathic establishment. There are numbers of these in Germany, and all along the Rhine; and there are several in England, which are conducted in a way more accordant with our English ideas. At Malvern we believe there are two; there is a large one at Ben Rhydding, in Yorkshire; one at Sudbrook Park, between Richmond and Ham; and another at Moor Park, near Farnham. Its vicinity to London led us to prefer the one at Sudbrook; and on a beautiful evening in the middle of May we found our way down through that garden−like country, so green and rich to our eyes, long accustomed to the colder landscapes of the north. Sudbrook Park is a noble place. The grounds stretch for a mile or more along Richmond Park, from which they are separated only by a wire fence; the trees are magnificent, the growth of centuries, and among them are enormous hickories, acacias, and tulip−trees; while horse−chestnuts without number make a very blaze of floral illumination through the leafy month of June. Richmond−hill, with its unrivalled views, rises from Sudbrook Park; and that eerie−looking Ham House, the very ideal of the old English manor−house, with its noble avenues which make twilight walks all the summer day, is within a quarter of a mile. As for the house itself, it is situated at the foot of the slope on whose summit Lord John Russell's house stands; it is of great extent, and can accommodate a host of patients, though when we were there, the number of inmates was less than twenty. It is very imposing externally; but the only striking feature of its interior is the dining−room, a noble hall of forty feet in length, breadth, and height. It is wainscoted with black oak, which some vile wretch of a water doctor painted white, on the ground that it darkened the room. As for the remainder of the house, it is divided into commonplace bed−rooms and sitting−rooms, and provided with bathing appliances of every conceivable kind. On arriving at a water establishment, the patient is carefully examined, chiefly to discover if anything be wrong about the heart, as certain baths would have a most injurious effect should that be so. The doctor gives his directions to the bath attendant as to the treatment to be followed, which, however, is much the same with almost all patients. The newcomer finds a long table in the dining−hall, covered with bread and milk, between six and seven in the evening; and here he makes his evening meal with some wry faces. At half−past nine p. m. he is conducted to his chamber, a bare little apartment, very plainly furnished. The bed is a narrow little thing, with no curtains of any kind. One sleeps on a mattress, which feels pretty hard at first. The jolly and contented looks of the patients had tended somewhat to reassure us; still, we had a nervous feeling that we were fairly in for it, and could not divest ourselves of some alarm as to the ordeal before us; so we heard the nightingale sing for many hours before we closed our eyes on that first night at Sudbrook Park.

It did not seem a minute since we had fallen asleep, when we were awakened by some one entering our room, and by a voice which said, 'I hef come tu pack yew.' It was the bath−man, William, to whose charge we had been given, and whom we soon came to like exceedingly; a most good−tempered, active, and attentive little German. We were very sleepy, and inquired as to the hour; it was five a.m. There was no help for it, so we scrambled out of bed and sat on a chair, wrapped in the bed−clothes, watching William with sleepy eyes. He spread upon our little bed a very thick and coarse double blanket; he then produced from a tub what looked like a thick twisted cable, which he proceeded to unroll. It was a sheet of coarse linen, wrung out of the coldest water. And so here was the terrible wet sheet of which we had heard so much. We shuddered with terror. William saw our trepidation, and said, benevolently, 'Yew vill soon like him mosh.' He spread out the wet sheet upon the thick

blanket, and told us to strip and lie down upon it. Oh! it was cold as ice! William speedily wrapped it around us. Awfully comfortless was the first sensation. We tried to touch the cold damp thing at as few points as possible. It would not do. William relentlessly drew the blanket tight round us; every inch of our superficies felt the chill of the sheet. Then he placed above us a feather bed, cut out to fit about the head, and stretched no end of blankets over all. 'How long are we to be here?' was our inquiry. 'Fifty minutes,' said William, and disappeared. So there we were, packed in the wet sheet, stretched on our back, our hands pinioned by our sides, as incapable of moving as an Egyptian mummy in its swathes. 'What on earth shall we do,' we remember thinking, 'if a fire breaks out?' Had a robber entered and walked off with our watch and money, we must have lain and looked at him, for we could not move a finger. By the time we had thought all this, the chilly, comfortless feeling was gone; in ten minutes or less, a sensation of delicious languor stole over us: in a little longer we were fast asleep. We have had many a pack since, and we may say that the feeling is most agreeable when one keeps awake; body and mind are soothed into an indescribable tranquillity; the sensation is one of calm, solid enjoyment. In fifty minutes William returned. He removed the blankets and bed which covered us, but left us enveloped in the sheet and coarse blanket. By this time the patient is generally in a profuse perspiration. William turned us round, and made us slip out of bed upon our feet; then slightly loosing the lower part of our cerements so that we could walk with difficulty, he took us by the shoulders and guided our unsteady steps out of our chamber, along a little passage, into an apartment containing a plunge bath. The bath was about twelve feet square; its floor and sides covered with white encaustic tiles; the water, clear as crystal against that light background, was five feet deep. In a trice we were denuded of our remaining apparel, and desired to plunge into the bath, head first. The whole thing was done in less time than it has taken to describe it: no caloric had escaped: we were steaming like a coach horse that has done its ten miles within the hour on a summer−day; and it certainly struck us that the Water Cure had some rather violent measures in its repertory. We went a step or two down the ladder, and then plunged in overhead. 'One plunge more and out,' exclaimed the faithful William; and we obeyed. We were so thoroughly heated beforehand, that we never felt the bath to be cold. On coming out, a coarse linen sheet was thrown over us, large enough to have covered half−a−dozen men, and the bath−man rubbed us, ourselves aiding in the operation, till we were all in a glow of warmth. We then dressed as fast as possible, postponing for the present the operation of shaving, drank two tumblers of cold water, and took a rapid walk round the wilderness (an expanse of shrubbery near the house is so called), in the crisp, fresh morning air. The sunshine was of the brightest; the dew was on the grass; everybody was early there; fresh−looking patients were walking in all directions at the rate of five miles an hour; the gardeners were astir; we heard the cheerful sound of the mower whetting his scythe; the air was filled with the freshness of the newly−cut grass, and with the fragrance of lilac and hawthorn blossom; and all this by half−past six a.m.! How we pitied the dullards that were lagging a−bed on that bright summer morning! One turn round the wilderness occupies ten minutes: we then drank two more tumblers of water, and took a second turn of ten minutes. Two tumblers more, and another turn; and then, in a glow of health and good humour, into our chamber to dress for the day. The main supply of water is drunk before breakfast; we took six tumblers daily at that time, and did not take more than two or three additional in the remainder of the day. By eight o'clock breakfast was on the table in the large hall, where it remained till half−past nine. Bread, milk, water, and stewed pippins (cold), formed the morning meal. And didn't we polish it off! The accession of appetite is immediate.

Such is the process entitled the Pack and Plunge. It was the beginning of the day's proceedings during the two months we spent at Sudbrook. We believe it forms the morning treatment of almost every patient; a shallow bath after packing being substituted for the plunge in the case of the more nervous. With whatever apprehension people may have looked forward to being packed before having experienced the process, they generally take to it kindly after a single trial. The pack is perhaps the most popular part of the entire cold water treatment.

Mr. Lane says of it:—

What occurred during a full hour after this operation (being packed) I am not in a condition to depose, beyond the fact that the sound, sweet, soothing sleep which I enjoyed, was a matter of surprise and delight. I was detected by Mr. Bardon, who came to awake me, smiling, like a great fool, at nothing; if not at the fancies which had played about my slumbers. Of the heat in which I found myself, I must remark, that it is as distinct from perspiration, as from the parched and throbbing glow of fever. The pores are open, and the warmth of the body is soon communicated to the sheet; until—as in this my first experience of the luxury—a breathing, steaming heat is engendered, which fills the whole of the wrappers, and is plentifully shown in the smoking state which they

exhibit as they are removed. I shall never forget the luxurious ease in which I awoke on this morning, and looked forward with pleasure to the daily repetition of what had been quoted to me by the uninitiated with disgust and shuddering.

Sir E. B. Lytton says of the pack:—

Of all the curatives adopted by hydropathists, it is unquestionably the safest—the one that can be applied without danger to the greatest variety of cases; and which, I do not hesitate to aver, can rarely, if ever, be misapplied in any case where the pulse is hard and high, and the skin dry and burning. Its theory is that of warmth and moisture, those friendliest agents to inflammatory disorders.

I have been told, or have read (says Mr. Lane), put a man into the wet sheet who had contemplated suicide, and it would turn him from his purpose. At least I will say, let me get hold of a man who has a pet enmity, who cherishes a vindictive feeling, and let me introduce him to the soothing process. I believe that his bad passion would not linger in its old quarters three days, and that after a week his leading desire would be to hold out the hand to his late enemy.

Of the sensation in the pack, Sir E. B. Lytton tells us:—

The momentary chill is promptly succeeded by a gradual and vivifying warmth, perfectly free from the irritation of dry heat; a delicious sense of ease is usually followed by a sleep more agreeable than anodynes ever produced. It seems a positive cruelty to be relieved from this magic girdle, in which pain is lulled, and fever cooled, and watchfulness lapped in slumber.

The hydropathic breakfast at Sudbrook being over, at nine o'clock we had a foot−bath. This is a very simple matter. The feet are placed in a tub of cold water, and rubbed for four or five minutes by the bath−man. The philosophy of this bath is thus explained:—

The soles of the feet and the palms of the hands are extremely sensitive, having abundance of nerves, as we find if we tickle them. If the feet are put often into hot water, they will become habitually cold, and make one more or less delicate and nervous. On the other hand, by rubbing the feet often in cold water, they will become permanently warm. A cold foot−bath will stop a violent fit of hysterics. Cold feet show defective circulation.

At half−past ten in the forenoon we were subjected to by far the most trying agent in the water system—the often−mentioned douche. No patient is allowed to have the douche till he has been acclimated by at least a fortnight's treatment. Our readers will understand that from this hour onward we are describing not our first Sudbrook day, but a representative day, such as our days were when we had got into the full play of the system. The douche consists of a stream of water, as thick as one's arm, falling from a height of twenty−four feet. A pipe, narrowing to the end, conducts the stream for the first six feet of its fall, and gives it a somewhat slanting direction. The water falls, we need hardly say, with a tremendous rush, and is beaten to foam on the open wooden floor. There were two douches at Sudbrook: one, of a somewhat milder nature, being intended for the lady patients. Every one is a little nervous at first taking this bath. One cannot be too warm before having it: we always took a rapid walk of half an hour, and came up to the ordeal glowing like a furnace. The faithful William was waiting our arrival, and ushered us into a little dressing−room, where we disrobed. William then pulled a cord, which let loose the formidable torrent, and we hastened to place ourselves under it. The course is to back gradually till it falls upon the shoulders, then to sway about till every part of the back and limbs has been played upon: but great care must be taken not to let the stream fall upon the head, where its force would probably be dangerous. The patient takes this bath at first for one−minute; the time is lengthened daily till it reaches four minutes, and there it stops. The sensation is that of a violent continuous force assailing one; we are persuaded that were a man blindfolded, and so deaf as not to hear the splash of the falling stream, he could not for his life tell what was the cause of the terrible shock he was enduring. It is not in the least like the result of water: indeed it is unlike any sensation we ever experienced elsewhere. At the end of our four minutes the current ceases; we enter the dressing−room, and are rubbed as after the plunge−bath. The reaction is instantaneous: the blood is at once called to the surface. 'Red as a rose were we:' we were more than warm; we were absolutely hot.

Mr. Lane records some proofs of the force with which the douche falls:—

In a corner of one dressing−room is a broken chair. What does it mean? A stout lady, being alarmed at the fall from the cistern, to reduce the height, carefully placed what was a chair, and stood upon it. Down came the column of water—smash went the chair to bits—and down fell the poor lady prostrate. She did not douche again for a fortnight.

Last winter a man was being douched, when an icicle that had been formed in the night was dislodged by the first rush of water, and fell on his back. Bardon, seeing the bleeding, stopped the douche, but the douchee had not felt the blow as anything unusual. He had been douched daily, and calculated on such a force as he experienced.

Although most patients come to like the douche, it is always to be taken with caution. That it is dangerous in certain conditions of the body, there is no doubt. Sir E. B. Lytton speaks strongly on this point:—

Never let the eulogies which many will pass upon the douche tempt you to take it on the sly, unknown to your adviser. The douche is dangerous when the body is unprepared—when the heart is affected—when apoplexy may be feared.

After having douched, which process was over by eleven, we had till one o'clock without further treatment. We soon came to feel that indisposition to active employment which is characteristic of the system; and these two hours were given to sauntering, generally alone, in the green avenues and country lanes about Ham and Twickenham; but as we have already said something of the charming and thoroughly English scenes which surround Sudbrook, we shall add nothing further upon that subject now—though the blossoming horse chestnuts and the sombre cedars of Richmond Park, the bright stretches of the Thames, and the quaint gateways and terraces of Ham House, the startled deer and the gorse−covered common, all picture themselves before our mind at the mention of those walks, and tempt us sorely.

At one o'clock we returned to our chamber, and had a head−bath. We lay upon the ground for six minutes, if we remember rightly, with the back of our head in a shallow vessel of water.

Half−past one was the dinner hour. All the patients were punctually present; those who had been longest in the house occupying the seats next those of Dr. and Mrs. Ellis, who presided at either end of the table. The dinners were plain, but abundant; and the guests brought with them noble appetites, so that it was agreed on all hands that there never was such beef or mutton as that of Sudbrook. Soup was seldom permitted: plain joints were the order of the day, and the abundant use of fresh vegetables was encouraged. Plain puddings, such as lice and sago, followed; there was plenty of water to drink. A number of men−servants waited, among whom we recognized our friend William, disguised in a white stock. The entertainment did not last long. In half an hour the ladies withdrew to their drawing−room, and the gentlemen dispersed themselves about the place once more.

Of the Malvern dinners, Mr. Lane writes as follows:—

At the head of the table, where the doctor presides, was the leg of mutton, which, I believe, is even' day's head dish. I forget what Mr. Wilson dispensed, but it was something savoury of fish. I saw veal cutlets with bacon, and a companion dish; maccaroni with gravy, potatoes plain boiled, or mashed and browned, spinach, and other green vegetables. Then followed rich pudding, tapioca, and some other farinaceous ditto, rhubarb tarts, So much for what I have heard of the miserable diet of water patients.

Dinner being dispatched, there came the same listless sauntering about till four o'clock, when the pack and plunge of the morning were repeated. At half−past six we had another head−bath. Immediately after it there was supper, which was a fac simile of breakfast. Then, more sauntering in the fading twilight, and at half−past Bine we paced the long corridor leading to our chamber, and speedily were sound asleep. No midnight tossings, no troubled dreams; one long deep slumber till William appeared next morning at five, to begin the round again.

Such was our life at the Water Cure: a contrast as complete as might be to the life which preceded and followed it. Speaking for ourselves, we should say that there is a great deal of exaggeration in the accounts we have sometimes read of the restorative influence of the system. It wrought no miracle in our case. A couple of months at the sea−side would probably have produced much the same effect. We did not experience that extreme exhilaration of spirits which Mr. Lane speaks of. Perhaps the soft summer climate of Surrey, in a district rather over−wooded, wanted something of the bracing quality which dwells in the keener air of the Malvern hills. Yet the system strung us up wonderfully, and sent us home with much improved strength and heart. And since that time, few mornings have dawned on which we have not tumbled into the cold bath on first rising, and, following the process by a vigorous rubbing with towels of extreme roughness, experienced the bracing influence of cold water alike on the body and the mind.

We must give some account of certain other baths, which have not come within our course latterly, though we have at different times tried them all. We have mentioned the sitz−bath; here is its nature:—

It is not disagreeable, but very odd: and exhibits the patient in by no means an elegant or dignified attitude. For this bath it is not necessary to undress, the coat only being taken off, and the shirt gathered under the

waistcoat, which is buttoned upon it; and when seated in the water, which rises to the waist, a blanket is drawn round and over the shoulders. Having remained ten minutes in this condition, we dried and rubbed ourselves with coarse towels, and after tea minutes' walk, proceeded to supper with a good appetite.

The soothing and tranquillizing effect of the sitz is described as extraordinary:—

In sultry weather, when indolence seems the only resource, a sitz of ten minutes at noon will suffice to protect against the enervating effect of heat, and to rouse from listlessness and inactivity.

If two or three hours have been occupied by anxious conversation, by many visitors, or by any of the perplexities of daily occurrence, a sitz will effectually relieve the throbbing head, anil fit one for a return (if it must be so) to the turmoil and bustle.

If an anxious letter is to be mentally weighed, or an important letter to be answered, the matter and the manner can he under no circumstances so adequately pondered as in the sitz. How this quickening of the faculties is engendered, and by what immediate action it is produced, I cannot explain, and invite others to test it by practice.

I have in my own experience proved the sitz to be cogitatory, consolatory, quiescent, refrigeratory, revivificatory, or all these together.

Thus far Mr. Lane. The Brause−bad is thus described by our old military friend:—

At eleven o'clock I went to the Brause−bad. This is too delightful: it requires a day or two of practice to enable the patient to enjoy it thoroughly. The water at Marienberg is all very cold, and one must never stand still for above a few seconds at a time, and must be ever employed in rubbing the parts of the body which are exposed to the silvery element. The bath is a square room, eight feet by six. The shower above consists of a treble row of holes, drilled in a metal vessel, about one foot long, and at an elevation of eight feet from the floor. There is, besides, a lateral gush of water, in bulk about equal to three ordinary pumps, which bathes the middle man. When I entered the bath, I held my hands over my head, to break the force of the water; and having thus seasoned my knowledge−box, I allowed the water to fall on my back and breast alternately, rubbing most vigorously with both hands: the allotted time for this aquatic sport is four minutes, but I frequently begged the bademeister to allow me a minute or two more. At my sortie, the bademeister threw over me the dry sheet, and he and his assistants rubbed me dry to the bone, and left me in full scarlet uniform. After this bath I took at least three glasses of water, and a most vigorous walk.

One of the least agreeable processes in the water system is being sweated. Mr. Lane describes his sensations as follows:—

At five o'clock in walked the executioner who was to initiate me into the sweating process. There was nothing awful in the commencement. Two dry blankets were spread upon the mattress, and I was enveloped in them as in the wet sheet, being well and closely tucked in round the neck, and the head raised on two pillows. Then came my old friend the down bed, and a counterpane.

At first I felt very comfortable, but in ten minutes the irritation of the blanket was disagreeable, and endurance was nly only resource; thought upon other subjects out of the question. In half−an−hour I wondered when it would begin to act. At six, in came Bardon to give me water to drink. Another hour, and I was getting into a state. I had for ten minutes followed Bardon's directions by slightly moving my hands and legs, and the profuse perspiration was a relief; besides, I knew that I should be soon fit to be bathed, and what a tenfold treat! He gave me more water; and in a quarter of an hour he returned, when. I stepped, in a precious condition, into the cold bath, Bardon using more water on my head and shoulders than usual, more rubbing and spunging, and afterwards more vigorous dry rubbing. I was more than pink, and hastened to get out and compare notes with Sterling.

By the sweating process, the twenty−eight miles of tubing which exist in the pores of the skin are effectually relieved; and—in Dr. Wilson's words—'you lose a little water, and put yourself in a state to make flesh.' The sweating process is known at water establishments as the 'blanket−pack.'

We believe we have mentioned every hydropathic appliance that is in common use, with the exception of what is called the 'rub in a wet sheet.' This consists in having a sheet, dripping wet, thrown round one, and in being vehemently rubbed by the bath−man, the patient assisting. The effect is very bracing and exhilarating on a sultry summer day; and this treatment has the recommendation that it is applied and done with in the course of a few minutes; nor does it need any preliminary process. It is just the thing to get the bath−man to administer to a friend who has come down to visit one, as a slight taste of the quality of the Water Cure.

One pleasing result of the treatment is, that the skin is made beautifully soft and white. Another less pleasing

circumstance is, that when there is any impurity lurking in the constitution, a fortnight's treatment brings on what is called a crisis, in which the evil is driven off in the form of an eruption all over the body. This result never follows unless where the patient has been in a most unhealthy state. People who merely need a little bracing up need not have the least fear of it. Our own two months of water never produced the faintest appearance of such a thing.

Let us sum up the characteristics of the entire system. In the words of Sir E. B. Lytton:—

The first point which impressed me was the extreme and utter innocence of the water−cure in skilful hands—in any hands, indeed, not thoroughly new to the system.

The next thing that struck me was the extraordinary ease with which, under this system, good habits are acquired and bad habits are relinquished.

That which, thirdly, impressed me, was no less contrary to all my preconceived opinions. I had fancied that, whether good or bad, the system must be one of great hardship, extremely repugnant and disagreeable. I wondered at myself to find how soon it became so associated with pleasurable and grateful feelings as to dwell upon the mind as one of the happiest passages of existence.

We have left ourselves no space to say anything of the effect of the Water Cure in acute disease. It is said to work wonders in the case of gout, and all rheumatic complaints: the severe suffering occasioned by the former vexatious malady is immediately subdued, and the necessity of colchicum and other deleterious drugs is obviated. Fever and inflammation, too, are drawn off by constant packing, without being allowed to run their usual course. Our readers may find remarkable cures of heart arid other diseases recorded at pages 24, 72, 114, and 172, of the Month at Malvern. We quote the account of one case:—

I was introduced to a lady, that I might receive her own report of her cure. She had been for nine years paralysed, from the waist downwards; pale and emaciated; and coming to Malvern, she had no idea of recovering the use of her limbs, but merely bodily health. In five months she became ruddy, and then her perseverance in being packed twice every day was rewarded. The returning muscular power was advanced to perfect recovery of the free use of her limits. She grew stout and strong, and now walks ten miles daily.

We confess we should like to have this story confirmed by some competent authority. It appears to verge on the impossible: unless, indeed, the fact was that the lady was some nervous, fanciful person, who took up a hypochondriac idea that she was paralysed, and got rid of the notion by having her constitution braced up.

We have already said a good deal of the enjoyable nature of the water system; we make a final quotation from our military friend:—

I have given some account of my daily baths, and on reading over what I have written, I feel quite ashamed of the coldness of the recital of all my delight, the recollection of which makes my mouth water. The reader will observe that I am a Scotchman (proverbially a matter−of−fact race), an old fellow, my enemy would say a slow coach. I might enlarge on my ecstatic delight in my baths, my healthy glow, my light−heartedness, my feelings of elasticity, which made me fancy I could trip along the sward like a patent Vestris. I might go much farther, I might indulge in poetic rapture—most unbecoming my mature age—and after all, fall far short of the reality. The reader will do well to allow a large percentage of omitted ecstatic delineation in consequence of want of ardour on the part of the writer. This is in fact due to justice.

See how old patients describe the Water Cure! This is, at all events, a different strain from that of people who have been victimized by ordinary quacks and quack medicines, and who bestow their imprecations on the credulity which has at once ruined their constitutions and emptied their pockets.

We trust we have succeeded in persuading those who have glanced over these pages, that the Water Cure is by no means the violent thing which they have in all probability been accustomed to consider it. There is no need for being nervous about going to it. There is nothing about it that is half such a shock to the system as are blue pill and mercury, purgatives and drastics, leeches and the lancet. Almost every appliance within its range is a source of positive enjoyment; the time spent under it is a cheerful holiday to body and mind. We take it to be quackery and absurdity to maintain that all possible diseases can be cured by the cold water system; but, from our own experience, we believe that the system and its concomitants do tend powerfully to brace and re−invigorate, when mental exertion has told upon the system, and even threatened to break it down. But really it is no new discovery that fresh air and water, simple food and abundant exercise, change of scene and intermission of toil and excitement, tend to brace the nerves and give fresh vigour to the limbs. In the only respect in which we have any

confidence in the Water Cure, it is truly no new system at all. We did not need Priessnitz to tell us that the fair element which, in a hundred forms, makes so great a part of Creation's beauty—trembling, crystal−clear, upon the rosebud; gleaming in the sunset river; spreading, as we see it to−day, in the bright blue summer sea; fleecy−white in the silent clouds, and gay in the evening rainbow,—is the true elixir of health and life, the most exhilarating draught, the most soothing anodyne; the secret of physical enjoyment, and mental buoyancy and vigour.

CHAPTER XI. CONCERNING FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

[Footnote: Friends in Council: a Series of Readings and Discourse thereon. A. New Series. Two Volumes. London: John W. Parker and Son, West Strand, 1859.]

There is a peculiar pleasure in paying a visit to a friend whom you never saw in his own house before. Let it not be believed that in this world there is much difficulty in finding a new sensation. The genial, unaffected, hard−wrought man, who does not think it fine to appear to care nothing for anything, will find a new sensation in many quiet places, and in many simple ways. There is something fresh and pleasant in arriving at an entirely new railway station, in getting out upon a platform on which you never before stood; in finding your friend standing there looking quite at home in a place quite strange to you; in taking in at a glance the expression of the porter who takes your luggage and the clerk who receives your ticket, and reading there something of their character and their life; in going outside, and seeing for the first time your friend's carriage, whether the stately drag or the humbler dog−cart, and beholding horses you never saw before, caparisoned in harness heretofore unseen; in taking your seat upon cushions hitherto impressed by you, in seeing your friend take the reins, and then in rolling away over a new road, under new trees, over new bridges, beside new hedges, looking upon new landscapes stretching far away, and breaking in upon that latent idea common to all people who have seen very little, that they have seen almost all the world. Then there is something fresh and pleasant in driving for the first time up the avenue, in catching the first view of the dwelling which is to your friend the centre of all the world, in walking up for the first time to your chamber (you ought always to arrive at a country house for a visit about three quarters of an hour before dinner), and then in coming down and finding yourself in the heart of his belongings; seeing his wife and children, never seen before; finding out his favourite books, and coming to know something of his friends, horses, dogs, pigs, and general way of life; and then after ten days, in going away, feeling that you have occupied a new place and seen a new phase of life, henceforward to be a possession for ever.

But it is pleasanter by a great deal to go and pay a visit to a friend visited several times (not too frequently) before: to arrive at the old railway station, quiet and country−like, with trees growing out of the very platform on which you step; to see your friend's old face not seen for two years; to go out and discern the old drag standing just where you remember it, and to smooth down the horses' noses as an old acquaintance; to discover a look of recognition on the man−servant's impassive face, which at your greeting expands into a pleased smile; to drive away along the old road, recognizing cottages and trees; to come in sight of the house again, your friend's conversation and the entire aspect of things bringing up many little remembrances of the past; to look out of your chamber window before dinner and to recognize a large beech or oak which you had often remembered when you were far away, and the field beyond, and the hills in the distance, and to know again even the pattern of the carpet and the bed curtains; to go down to dinner, and meet the old greeting; to recognize the taste of the claret; to find the children a little bigger, a little shy at first, but gradually acknowledging an old acquaintance; and then, when your friend and you are left by yourselves, to draw round the fire (such visits are generally in September), and enjoy the warm, hearty look of the crimson curtains hanging in the self−same folds as twenty−four months since, and talk over many old things.

We feel, in opening the new volumes of Friends in Council, as we should in going to pay a visit to an old friend living in the same pleasant home, and at the same pleasant autumnal season in which we visited him before. We know what to expect. We know that there may be little variations from what we have already found, little changes wrought by time; but, barring great accident or disappointment, we know what kind of thing the visit will be. And we believe that to many who have read with delight the previous volumes of this work, there can hardly be any pleasanter anticipation than that of more of the same wise, kindly, interesting material which they remember. A good many years have passed since the first volume of Friends in Council was published; a good many years even since the second: for, the essays and discourses now given to the public form the third published portion of the work. Continuations of successful works have proverbially proved failures; the author was his own too successful rival; and intelligent readers, trained to expect much, have generally declared that the new production was, if not inferior to its predecessor, at all events inferior to what its predecessor had taught them to

look for. But there is no falling off here. The writing of essays and conversations, set in a framework of scenery and incident, and delineating character admirably though only incidentally, is the field of literature in which the author stands without a rival. No one in modern days can discuss a grave subject in a style so attractive; no one can convey so much wisdom with so much playfulness and kindliness; no one can evince so much earnestness unalloyed by the least tinge of exaggeration. The order of thought which is contained in Friends in Council, is quarried from its authors best vein. Here, he has come upon what gold−diggers call a pocket: and he appears to work it with little effort. However difficult it might be for others to write an essay and discourse on it in the fashion of this book, we should judge that its author does so quite easily. It is no task for suns to shine. And it will bring back many pleasant remembrances to the minds of many readers, to open these new volumes, and find themselves at once in the same kindly atmosphere as ever; to find that the old spring is flowing yet. The new series of Friends in Council is precisely what the intelligent reader must have expected. A thoroughly good writer can never surprise us. A writer whom we have studied, mused over, sympathized with, can surprise us only by doing something eccentric, affected, unworthy of himself. The more thoroughly we have sympathized with him; the more closely we have marked not only the strong characteristics which are already present in what he writes, but those little matters which may be the germs of possible new characteristics; the less likely is it that we shall be surprised by anything he does or says. It is so with the author of Friends in Council. We know precisely what to expect from him. We should feel aggrieved if he gave us anything else. Of course there will be much wisdom and depth of insight; much strong practical sense: there will be playfulness, pensiveness, pathos; great fairness and justice; much kindness of heart; something of the romantic element; and as for Style, there will be language always free from the least trace of affectation; always clear and comprehensible; never slovenly; sometimes remarkable for a certain simple felicity; sometimes rising into force and eloquence of a very high order: a style, in short, not to be parodied, not to be caricatured, not to be imitated except by writing as well. The author cannot sink below our expectations; cannot rise above them. He has already written so much, and so many thoughtful readers have so carefully studied what he has written, that we know the exact length of his tether, and he can say nothing for which we are not prepared. You know exactly what to expect in this new work. You could not, indeed, produce it; you could not describe it, you could not say beforehand what it will be; but when you come upon it, you will feel that it is just what you were sure it would be. You were sure, as you are sure what will be the flavour of the fruit on your pet apple−tree, which you have tasted a hundred times. The tree is quite certain to produce that fruit which you remember and like so well; it is its nature to do so. And the analogy holds further. For, as little variations in weather or in the treatment of the tree—a dry season, or some special application to the roots—may somewhat alter the fruit, though all within narrow limits; so may change of circumstances a little affect an author's writings, but only within a certain range. The apple−tree may produce a somewhat different apple; but it will never producn an orange, neither will it yield a crab.

So here we are again among our old friends. We should have good reason to complain had Dunsford, Ellesmere, or Milverton been absent; and here they are again just as before. Possibly they are even less changed than they'should have been after thirteen or fourteen years, considering what their age was at our first introduction to them. Dunsford, the elderly country parson, once fellow and tutor of his college, still reports the conversations of the friends; Milverton and Ellesmere are, in their own way, as fond of one another as ever; Dunsford is still judicious, kind, good, somewhat slow, as country parsons not unnaturally become; Ellesmere is still sarcastic, keen, clever, with much real worldly wisdom and much affected cynicism overlying a kind and honest heart. As for Milverton, we should judge that in him the author of the work has unconsciously shown us himself; for assuredly the great characteristics of the author of Friends in Council must be that he is laborious, thoughtful, generous, well−read, much in earnest, eager for the welfare of his fellow−men, deeply interested in politics and in history, impatient of puritanical restraints, convinced of the substantial importance of amusement. Milverton, we gather, still lives at his country−seat in Hampshire, and takes some interest in rustic concerns. Ellesmere continues to rise at the bar; since we last met him has been Solicitor−General, and is now Sir John, a member of the House of Commons, and in the fair way to a Chief Justiceship. The clergyman's quiet life is going on as before. But in addition to our three old friends we find an elderly man, one Mr. Midhurst, whose days have been spent in diplomacy, who is of a melancholy disposition, and takes gloomy views of life, but who is much skilled in cookery, very fat, and very fond of a good dinner. Also Mildred and Blanche, Milverton's cousins, two sisters, have grown up into young women of very different character: and they take some share in the conversations, and,

as we shall hereafter see, a still more important part in the action of the story. We feel that we are in the midst of a real group of actual human beings:—just what third−rate historians fail to make us feel when telling us of men and women who have actually lived. The time and place are very varied; hut through the greater portion of the book the party are travelling over the Continent. A further variation from the plan of the former volumes, besides the introduction of new characters, is, that while all the essays in the preceding series were written by Milverton, we have now one by Ellesmere, one by Dunsford, and one by Mr. Midhurst, each being in theme and manner very characteristic of its author. But, as heretofore, the writer of the book holds to his principle of the impolicy of 'jading anything too far,' and thinks with Bacon that 'it is good, in discourse and speech of conversation, to vary and intermingle speech of the present occasion with arguments, tales with reasons, asking of questions with telling of opinions, and jest with earnest.' The writer likewise holds by that system which his own practice has done so much to recommend—of giving locality and time to all abstract thought, and thus securing in the case of the majority of readers an interest and a reality in no other way to be attained. Admirable as are the essays contained in the work, but for their setting in something of a story, and their vivification by being ascribed to various characters, and described as read and discussed in various scenes, they would interest a very much smaller class of readers than now they do. No doubt much of the skill of tho dramatist is needed to secure this souce of interest. It can be secured only where we feel that the characters are living men and women, and the attempt to secure it has often proved a miserable failure. But it is here that the author of Friends in Council succeeds so well. Not only do we know precisely what Dunsford, Milverton, and Ellesmere are like; we know exactly what they ought and what they ought not to say. The author ran a risk in reproducing those old friends. We had a right to expect in each of them a certain idiosyncrasy; and it is not easy to maintain an individuality which does not dwell in mere caricature and exaggeration, but in the truthful traits of actual life. We feel we have a vested interest in the characters of the three friends: not even their author has the right essentially to alter them; we should feel it an injury if he did. But he has done what he intended. Here we have the selfsame men. Not a word is said by one of them that ought to have been said by another. And here it may be remarked, that any one who is well read in the author's writings, will not fail here and there to come upon what will appear familiar to him. Various thoughts, views, and even expressions, occur which the author has borrowed from himself. It is easy to be seen that in all this there is no conscious repetition, but that veins of thought and feeling long entertained have cropped out to the surface again.

We do not know whether or not the readers of Friends in Council will be startled at finding that these volumes show us the grave Milverton and the sarcastic Ellesmere in the capacity of lovers, and leave them in the near prospect of being married—Ellesmere to the bold and dashing Mildred; Milverton to the quiet Blanche. The gradual tending of things to this conclusion forms the main action of the book. The incidents are of the simplest character: there is a plan but no plot, except as regards these marriages. Wearied and jaded with work at home, the three friends of the former volumes resolve on going abroad for awhile. Midhurst and the girls accompany them: and the story is simply that at various places to which they came, one friend read an essay or uttered a discourse (for sometimes the essays are supposed to have been given extempore), and the others talked about it. But the gradual progress of matters towards the weddings (it may be supposed that the happy couples are this September on their wedding tours) is traced with much skill and much knowledge of the fashion in which such things go; and it supplies a peculiar interest to the work, which will probably tide many young ladies over essays on such grave subjects as Government and Despotism. Still, we confess that we had hardly regarded Ellesmere and Milverton as marrying men. We had set them down as too old, grave, and wise, for at least the preliminary stages. We have not forgotten that Dunsford told us [Footnote: Friends in Council, Introduction to Book II.] that in the summer of 1847 he supposed no one but himself would speak of Milverton and Ellesmere as young men; and now of course they are twelve years older, and yet about to be married to girls whom we should judge to be about two or three and twenty. And although it is not an unnatural thing that Ellesmere should have got over his affection for the German Gretchen, whose story is so exquisitely told in the Companions of my Solitude, we find it harder to reconcile Milverton's marriage with our previous impression of him. Yet perhaps all this is truthful to life. It is not an unnatural thing that a man who for years has settled down into the belief that he has faded, and that for him the romantic interest has gone from life, should upon some fresh stimulus gather himself up from that idea, and think that life is not so far gone after all. Who has not on a beautiful September day sometimes chidden himself for having given in to the impression that the season was so far advanced, and clung to the belief that it is almost

summer still?

In a preliminary Address to the Reader, the author explains that the essay on War, which occupies a considerable portion of the first volume, was written some time ago, and intends no allusion to recent events in Europe. The Address contains an earnest protest against the maintenance of large standing armies; it is eloquent and forcible, and it affords additional proof how much the author has thought upon the subject of war, and how deeply he feels upon it. Then comes the Introduction proper, written, of course, by Dunsford. It sets out with the praise of conversation, and then it sums up what the 'Friends' have learned in their longer experience of life:—

We 'Friends in Council' are of course somewhat older men than when we first began to meet in friendly conclave; and I have observed as men go on in life they are less and less inclined to be didactic. They have found out that nothing is, didactically speaking, true. They long for exceptions, modifications, allowances. A boy is clear, sharp, decisive in his talk. He would have this. He would do that. He hates this; he loves that: and his loves or his hatreds admit of no exception. He is sure that the one thing is quite right, and the other quite wrong. He is not troubled with doubts. He knows.

I see now why, as men go on in life, they delight, in anecdotes. These tell so much, and argue, or pronounce directly, so little.

The three friends were sauntering one day in Milverton's garden, all feeling much overwrought and very stupid. Ellesmere proposed that for a little recreation they should go abroad. Milverton pleads his old horror of picture−galleries, and declares himself content with the unpainted pictures he has in his mind:—

It is curious, but I have been painting two companion pictures ever since we have been walking about in the garden. One consists of some dilapidated garden architecture, with overgrown foliage of all kinds, not forest foliage, but that of rare trees such as the Sumach and Japan−cedar, which should have been neglected for thirty years. Here and there, instead of the exquisite parterre, there should be some miserable patches of potatoes and beans, and some squalid clothes hung out to dry. Two ill−dressed children, but of delicate features, should be playing about an ugly neglected pool that had once been the basin to the fountain. But the foliage should be the chief thing, gaunt, grotesque, rare, beautiful, like an unkempt, uncared−for, lovely mountain girl. Underneath this picture:—'Property in the country, in chancery.'

The companion picture, of course, should be:—'Property in town, in chancery.' It should consist of two orthree hideous, sordid, window−broken, rat−deserted, paintless, blackened houses, that should look as if they had once been too good company for the neighbourhood, and had met with a fall in life, not deplored by any one. At the opposite corner should be a flaunting new gin−palace. I do not know whether I should have the heart to bring any children there, but I would if I could.

The reader will discern that the author of Friends in Council has lost nothing of his power of picturesque description, and nothing of his horror of the abuses and cruelties of the law. And the passage may serve to remind of the touching, graphic account of the country residence of a reduced family in the Companions of my Solitude. [Footnote: Chap. iv.] Ellesmere assures Milverton that he shall not be asked to see a single picture; and that if Milverton will bring Blanche and Mildred with him, he will himself go and see seven of the chief sewers in seven of the chief towns. The appeal to the sanitarian's feelings is successful; the bargain is struck; and we next find the entire party sauntering, after an early German dinner, on the terrace of some small town on the Rhine,—Dunsford forgets which. Milverton, Ellesmere, and Mr. Midhurst arc smoking, and we commend their conversation on the soothing power of tobacco to the attention of the Dean of Carlisle. Dean Close, by a bold figure, calls tobacco a 'gorging fiend.' Milverton holds that smoking is perhaps the greatest blessing that we owe to the discovery of America. He regards its value as abiding in its power to soothe under the vexations and troubles of life. While smoking, you cease to live almost wholly in the future, which miserable men for the most part do. The question arises, whether the sorrows of the old or the young are the most acute? It is admitted that the sorrows of children are very overwhelming for the time, but they are not of that varied, perplexed, and bewildering nature which derives much consolation from smoke. Ellesmere suggests, very truthfully, that the feeling of shame for having done anything wrong, or even ridiculous, causes most acute misery to the young. And, indeed, who does not know, from personal experience, that the sufferings of children of even four or five years old are often quite as dreadful as those which come as the sad heritage of after years? We look back on them now, and smile at them as we think how small were their causes. Well, they were great to us. We were little creatures then, and little things were relatively very great. 'The sports of childhood satisfy the child:' the sorrows of childhood overwhelm the

poor little thing. We think a sympathetic reader would hardly read without a tear as well as a smile, an incident in the early life of Patrick Fraser Tytler, recorded in his recently published biography. When five years old he got hold of the gun of an elder brother, and broke the spring of its lock. What anguish the little boy must have endured, what a crushing sense of having caused an irremediable evil, before he sat down and printed in great letters the following epistle to his brother, the owner of the gun—'Oh, Jamie, think no more of guns, for the main−spring of that is broken, and my heart is broken!' Doubtless the poor little fellow fancied that for all the remainder of his life he would never feel as he had felt before he touched the unlucky weapon. Doubtless the little heart was just as full of anguish as it could hold. Looking back over many years, most of us can remember a child crushed and overwhelmed by some sorrow which it thought could never be got over, and can feel for our early self as though sympathizing with another personality.

The upshot of the talk which began with tobacco was, that Milverton was prevailed upon to write an essay on a subject of universal interest to all civilized beings, an essay on Worry. He felt, indeed, that he. should be writing it at a disadvantage; for an essay on worry can be written with full effect only by a thoroughly worried man. There was no worry at all in that quiet little town on the Rhine; they had come there to rest, and there was no intruding duty that demanded that it should be attended to. And probably there is no respect in which that great law of the association of ideas, that like suggests like, holds more strikingly true than in the power of a present state of mind, or a present state of outward circumstances, to bring up vividly before us all such states in our past history. We are depressed, we are worried: and when we look back, all our departed days of worry and depression appear to start up and press themselves upon our view to the exclusion of anything else, so that we are ready to think that we have never been otherwise than depressed and worried all our life. But when more cheerful times come, they suggest only such times of cheerfulness, and no effort will bring back the worry vividly as when we felt it. It is not selfishness or heartlessness; it is the result of an inevitable law of mind that people in happy circumstances should resolutely believe that it is a happy world after all; for looking back, and looking around, the mind refuses to take distinct note of anything that is not somewhat akin to its present state. Milverton wrote an excellent essay on Worry on the evening of that day; but he might possibly have written a better one at Worth−Ashton on the evening of a day on which he had discovered that his coachman was stealing the corn provided for the carriage horses, or galloping these animals about the country at the dead of night to see his friends. We must have a score of little annoyances stinging us at once to have the undiluted sense of being worried. And probably a not wealthy man, residing in the country, and farming a few acres of ground by means of somewhat unfaithful and neglectful servants, may occasionally find so many things going wrong at once, and so many little things demanding to be attended to at once, that he shall experience worry in as high a degree as it can be felt by mortal. Thus truthfully does Milverton's essay begin:—

The great characteristic of modern life is Worry.

If the Pagan religion still prevailed, the new goddess, in whose honour temples would be raised and to whom statues would be erected in all the capitals of the world, would he the goddess Worry. London would be the chief seat and centre of her sway. A gorgeous statue, painted and enriched after the manner of the ancients (for there is no doubt that they adopted this practice, however barbarous it may seem to us), would he set up to the goddess in the West−end of the town: another at Temple Bar, of less ample dimensions and less elaborate decoration, would receive the devout homage of worshippers who came to attend their lawyers in that quarter of the town: while a statue, on which the cunning sculptor should have impressed the marks of haste, anxiety, and agitation, would be sharply glanced up at, with as much veneration as they could afford to give to it, by the eager men of business in the City.

The goddess Worry, however, would be no local deity, worshipped merely in some great town, like Diana of the Ephesians; but, in the market−places of small rural communities, her statue, made somewhat like a vane, and shitting with every turn of the wind, would be regarded with stolid awe by anxious votaries belonging to what is called the farming interest. Familiar too and household would be her worship: and in many a snug home, where she might be imagined to have little potency, small and ugly images of her would be found as household gods—the Lares and Penates—near to the threshold, and ensconced above the glowing hearth.

The poet, always somewhat inclined to fable, speaks of Love as ruling

The court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and heaven above;

but the dominion of Love, as compared with that of Worry, would be found, in the number of subjects, as the Macedonian to the Persian—in extent of territory, as the county of Rutland to the empire of Russia.

Not verbally accurate is the quotation from the Lay of the Last Minstrel, we may remark; but we may take it for granted that no reader who has exceeded the age of twenty−five will fail to recognize in this half−playful and half−earnest passage the statement of a sorrowful fact. And the essay goes on to set forth many of the causes of modern worry with all the knowledge and earnestness of a man who has seen much of life, and thought much upon what he has seen. The author's sympathies are not so much with the grand trials of historical personages, such as Charles V., Columbus, and Napoleon, as with the lesser trials and cares of ordinary men; and in the following paragraph we discern at once the conviction of a clear head and the feeling of a kind heart:—

And the ordinary citizen, even of a well−settled state, who, with narrow means, increasing taxation, approaching age, failing health, and augmenting cares, goes plodding about his daily work thickly bestrewed with trouble and worry (all the while, perhaps, the thought of a sick child at home being in the background of his mind), may also, like any hero of renown in the midst of his world−wide and world−attracting fortune, be a beautiful object for our sympathy.

There is indeed no more common error, than to estimate the extent of suffering by the greatness of the causes which have produced it; we mean their greatness as regards the amount of notice which they attract. The anguish of an emperor who has lost his empire, is probably not one whit greater than that of a poor lady who loses her little means in a swindling Bank, and is obliged to take away her daughter from school and to move into an inferior dwelling. Nor is it unworthy of remark, in thinking of sympathy with human beings in suffering, that scrubby−looking little men, with weak hair and awkward demeanour, and not in the least degree gentleman−like, may through domestic worry and bereavement undergo distress quite as great as heroic individuals six feet four inches in height, with a large quantity of raven hair, and with eyes of remarkable depth of expression. It is probable, too, that in the lot of ordinary men a ceaseless and countless succession of little worries does a great deal more to fret away the happiness of life than is done by the few great and overwhelming misfortunes which happen at long intervals. You lose your child, and your sorrow is overwhelming; but it is a sorrow on which before many months you look back with a sad yet pleasing interest, and it is a sorrow which you know you are the better for having felt. But petty unfaithfulness, carelessness, and stupidity on the part of your servants; little vexations and cross−accidents in your daily life; the ceaseless cares of managing a household and family, and possibly of making an effort to maintain appearances with very inadequate means;—all those little annoying things which are not misfortune but worry, effectually blister away the enjoyment of life while they last, and serve no good end in respect to mental and moral discipline. 'Much tribulation,' deep and dignified sorrow, may prepare men for 'the kingdom of God;' but ceaseless worry, for the most part, does but sour the temper, jaundice the views, and embitter and harden the heart.

'The grand source of worry,' says our author, 'compared with which perhaps all others are trivial, lies in the complexity of human affairs, especially in such an era of civilization as our own.' There can be no doubt of it. In these modern days, we are encumbered and weighed down with the appliances, physical and moral, which have come to be regarded as essential to the carry lag forward of our life. We forget how many thousands of separate items and articles were counted up, as having been used, some time within the last few years, by a dinner−party of eighteen persons, at a single entertainment. What incalculable worry in the procuring, the keeping in order, the using, the damage, the storing up, of that enormous complication of china, glass, silver, and steel! We can well imagine how a man of simple tastes arid quiet disposition, worried even to death by his large house, his numerous servants and horses, his quantities of furniture and domestic appliances, all of a perishable nature, and all constantly wearing out and going wrong in various degrees, might sigh a wearied sigh for the simplicity of a hermit's cave and a hermit's fare, and for 'one perennial suit of leather.' Such a man as the Duke of Buccleuch, possessing enormous estates, oppressed by a deep feeling of responsibility, and struggling to maintain a personal supervision of all his intricate and multitudinous belongings, must day by day undergo an amount of worry which the philosopher would probably regard as poorly compensated by a dukedom and three hundred thousand a year. He would be a noble benefactor of the human race who should teach men how to combine the simplicity of the savage life with the refinement and the cleanliness of the civilized. We fear it must be accepted as an unquestionable fact, that the many advantages of civilization are to be obtained only at the price of countless and ceaseless worry. Of course, we must all sometimes sigh for the woods and the wigwam; but the feeling is as vain

as that of the psalmist's wearied aspiration, 'Oh that I had wings like a dove: then would I flee away and be at rest!' Our author says,

The great Von Humboldt went into the cottages of South American Indiana, and, amongst an unwrinkled people, could with difficulty discern who was the father and who was the son, when he saw the family assembled together.

And how plainly the smooth, cheerful face of the savage testified to the healthfulness, in a physical sense; of a life devoid of worry! If you would see the reverse of the medal, look at the anxious faces, the knit brows, and the bald heads, of the twenty or thirty greatest merchants whom you will see on the Exchange of Glasgow or of Manchester. Or you may find more touching proof of the ageing effect of worry, in the careworn face of the man of thirty with a growing family and an uncertain income; or the thin figure and bloodless cheek which testify to the dull weight ever resting on the heart of the poor widow who goes out washing, and leaves her little children in her poor garret under the care of one of eight years old. But still, the cottages of Humboldt's 'unwrinkled people' were, we have little doubt, much infested with vermin, and possessed a pestilential atmosphere; and the people's freedom from care did but testify to their ignorance, and to their lack of moral sensibility. We must take worry, it is to be feared, along with civilization. As you go down in the scale of civilization, you throw off worry by throwing off the things to which it can adhere. And in these days, in which no man would seriously think of preferring the savage life, with its dirt, its stupidity, its listlessness, its cruelty, the good we may derive from that life, or any life approximating to it, is mainly that of a sort of moral alterative and tonic. The thing itself would not suit us, and would do us no good; but we may be the better for musing upon it. It is like a refreshing shower−bath, it is like breathing a cool breeze after the atmosphere of a hot−house, to dwell for a little, with half−closed eyes, upon pictures which show us all the good of the unworried life, and which say nothing of all the evil. We know the thing is vain: we know it is but an idle fancy; but still it is pleasant and refreshful to think of such a life as Byron has sketched as the life of Daniel Boone. Not in misanthropy, but from the strong preference of a forest life, did the Kentucky backwoodsman keep many scores of miles ahead of the current of European population setting onwards to the West. We shall feel much indebted to any reader who will tell us where to find anything more delightful than the following stanzas, to read after an essay on modern worry:—

He was not all alone: around him grew
A sylvan tribe of children of the chase;
Whose young, unwakened world was ever new,
Nor sin, nor sorrow, yet had left a trace
On her unwrinkled brow; nor could you view
A frown on Nature's or on human face:
The free−born forest found and kept them free,
And fresh as is a torrent or a tree.
And tall, and strong, and swift of foot were they,
Beyond the dwarfing city's pale abortions:
Because their thoughts had never been the prey
Of care or gain: the green woods were their portions.
No sinking spirits told them they grew grey,
No fashion made them apes of her distortions;
Simple they were, not savage, and their rifles,
Though very true, were yet not used for trifles.
Motion was in their days, rest in their slumbers,
And cheerfulness the handmaid of their toil:
Nor yet too many, nor too few their numbers,
Corruption could not make their hearts her soil:
The lust which stings, the splendour which encumbers,
With the free foresters divide no spoil:
Serene, not sullen, were the solitudes,
Of this unsighing people of the woods.

The essay on Worry is followed by an interesting conversation on the same subject, at the close of which we

are heartily obliged to Blanche for suggesting one pleasant thought; to wit, that children for the most part escape that sad infliction; it is the special heritage of comparatively mature years. And Milverton replies:—

Yes; I have never been more struck with that than when observing a family in the middle class of life going to the sea−side. There is the anxious mother wondering how they shall manage to stow away all the children when they get down. Visions of damp sheets oppress her. The cares of packing sit upon her soul. Doubts of what will become of the house when it is left, are a constant drawback from her thoughts of enjoyment; and she confides to the partner of her cares how willingly, if it were not for the dear children, she would stay at tome. He, poor man, has not an easy time of it. He is meditating over the expense, and how it is to be provided for. He knows, if he has any knowledge of the world, that the said expense will somehow or other exceed any estimate he and his wife have made of it. He is studying the route of the journey, and is perplexed by the various modes of going. This one would be less expensive, but would take more time; and then time always turns into expense on a journey. In a word, the old birds are as full of care and trouble as a hen with ducklings; but the young birds! Some of them have never seen the sea before, and visions of unspeakable delight fill their souls—visions that will almost be fulfilled. The journey, and the cramped accommodation, and the packing, and the everything out of place, are matters of pure fun and anticipated joy to them.

We have lingered all this while upon the first chapter of the work: the second contains an essay and conversation on War. Of this chapter we shall say no more than that it is earnest and sound in its views, and especially worthy of attentive consideration at the present time. The third chapter is one which will probably be turned to with interest by many readers; it bears the taking title of A Love Story. Dunsford, a keen though quiet observer, has discovered that Ellesmere has grown fond of Mildred, though the lawyer was not likely to disclose his love. Dunsford suspects that Mildred's affections are get on Milverton, as he has little doubt those of Blanche are. Both girls are very loving to Dunsford, whom they call their uncle, though he is no relation, and the old clergyman determines to have an explanation with Mildred. He manages to walk alone with her through the unguarded orchards which lie along the Rhine; and there, somewhat abruptly, he begins to moralize on the grand passion. Mildred remarks what a happy woman she would have been whom Dunsford had loved; when the lucky thought strikes him that he would tell her his own story, never yet told to any one. And then he tells it, very simply and very touchingly. Like most true stories of the kind, it has little incident; but it constituted the romance, not yet outlived, of the old—gentleman's existence. He and a certain Alice were brought up together. Like many of the most successful students, Dunsford hated study, and was devoted to music and poetry, to nature and art. But he knew his only chance of winning Alice was to obtain some success in life, and he devoted himself to study. Who does not feel for the old man recalling the past, and, as he remembered those laborious days, saying to the girl by his side, "Always reverence a scholar, my dear; if not for the scholarship, at least for the suffering and the self−denial which have been endured to gain the scholar's proficiency." His only pleasure was in correspondence with Alice. He succeeded at last. He took his degree, being nearly the first man of his year in both of the great subjects of examination; and he might now come home with some hope of having made a beginning of fortune. A gay young fellow, a cousin of Alice, came to spend a few days; and of course this lively, thoughtless youth, without an effort, carried off the prize of all poor Dunsford's toils. You never win the thing on which your heart is set and your life staked; it falls to some one else who cares very little about it. It is poor compensation that you get something you care little for which would have made the happiness of another man. Dunsford discovers one evening, in a walk with Alice, the frustration of all his hopes:—

Alice and I were alone again, and we walked out together in the evening. We spoke of my future hopes and prospects. I remember that I was emboldened to press her arm. She returned the pressure, and for a moment there never was, perhaps, a happier man. Had I known more of love, I should have known that this evident return of affection was anything but a good sign; "and," continued she, in the unconnected manner that you women sometimes speak, "I am so glad that you love dear Henry. Oh, if we could but come and live near you when you get a curacy, how happy we should all be." This short sentence was sufficient. There was no need of more explanation. I knew all that had happened, and felt as if I no longer trod upon the firm earth, for it seemed a quicksand under me.

The agony of that dull evening, the misery of that long night! I have sometimes thought that unsuccessful love is almost too great a burden to be put upnn such a poor creature as man. But He knows best; and it must have been intended, for it is so common.

The next day I remember I borrowed Henry's horse, and rode madly about, bounding through woods (I who had long forgotten to ride) and galloping over open downs. If the animal had not been wiser and more sane than I was, we should have been dashed to pieces many times. And so by sheer exhaustion of body I deadened the misery of my mind, and looked upon their happy state with a kind of stupefaction. In a few days I found a pretext for quitting my home, and I never saw your mother again, for it was your mother, Mildred, and you are not like her, but like your father, and still I love you. But the great wound has never been healed. It is a foolish thing, perhaps, that any man should so doat upon a woman, that he should never afterwards care for any other, but so it has been with me; and you cannot wonder that a sort of terror should come over me when I see anybody in love, and when I think that his or her love is not likely to be returned.

Who would have thought that Dunsford, with his gaiters, lying on the grass listening cheerfully to the lively talk of his two friends, or sitting among his bees repeating Virgil to himself, or going about among his parishioners, the ideal of prosaic content and usefulness, had still in him this store of old romance? In asking the question, all we mean is to remark an apparent inconsistency: we have no doubt at all of the philosophic truth of the representation. Probably it is only in the finer natures that such early fancies linger with appreciable effect. We do not forget the perpetually repeated declarations of Mr. Thackeray; we did not read Mr. Gilfits Love Story for nothing; we remember the very absurd incident which is told of Dr. Chalmers, who in his last years testified his remembrance of an early sweet−heart by sticking his card with two wafers behind a wretched little silhouette of her. And it is conceivable that the tenderest and most beautiful reminiscences of a love of departed days may linger with a man who has grown grey, fat, and even snuffy. But it is only in the case of remarkably tidy, neat, and clever old gentlemen that such feelings are likely to attract much sympathy from their juniors. Possibly this world has more of such lingering romance than is generally credited. Possibly with all but very stolid and narrow natures, no very strong feeling goes without leaving some trace.

Pain and grief
Are transitory things no less than joy;
And though they leave us not the men we were,
Yet they do leave us.

Possibly it is not without some little stir of heart that most thoughtful aged persons can revisit certain spots, or see certain days return. And the affection which would have worn itself down into dull common−place in success, by being disappointed and frustrated, lives on in memory with diminished vividness but with increasing beauty, which the test of actual fact can never make prosaic. Dunsford tells Mildred what was his great inducement to make this continental tour. Not the Rhine; not the essays nor the conversations of his friends. At the Palace of the Luxemburg there is a fine picture, called Les illusions perdues. It is one of the most affecting pictures Dunsford ever saw. But that is not its peculiar merit. One girl in the picture is the image of what Alice was.

The chief thing I had to look forward to in this journey we are making was, thsit we might return by way of Paris, and that I might see that picture again. You must contrive that we do return that way. Ellesmere will do anything to please you, and Milverton is always perfectly indifferent as to where he goes, so that he is not asked to see works of art, or to accompany a party of sight−seers to a cathedral. We will go and see this picture together once; and once I must see it alone.

And a very touching sight it would be to one who knew the story, the grey−haired old clergyman looking, for a long while, at that young face. It would be indeed a contrast, the aged man, and the youthful figure in the picture. Dunsford never saw Alice again after his early disappointment: he never saw her as she grew matronly and then old; and so, though now in her grave, she remained in his memory the same young thing forever. The years which had made him grow old, had wrought not the slightest change upon her. And Alice, old and dead, was the same on the canvas still.

Dunsford's purpose in telling his love−story, was to caution Mildred against falling in love with Milverton. She told him there was no danger. Once, she frankly said, she had long struggled with her feelings, not only from natural pride, but for the sake of Blanche, who loved Milverton better and would be less able to control her love. But she had quite got over the struggle; and though now intensely sympathizing with her cousin, she felt she never could resolve to marry him. So the conversation ended satisfactorily; and then a short sentence shows us a scene, beautiful, vivid, and complete:—

We walked home silently amidst the mellow orchards glowing ruddily in the rays of the setting sun.

The next chapter contains an Essay and conversation on Criticism: but its commencement shows us Dunsford still employed in the interests of his friends. He tells Milverton that Blanche is growing fond of him. We can hardly give Milverton credit for sincerity or judgment in being "greatly distressed and vexed." For once, he was shamming. All middle−aged men are much flattered and pleased with the admiration of young girls. Milverton declared that the thing must be put a stop to; that "the idea of a young and beautiful girl throwing her affections away upon a faded widower like himself, was absurd." However, as the days went on, Milverton began to be extremely attentive to Blanche; asked her opinion about things quite beyond her comprehension; took long walks with her, and assured Dunsford privately that "Blanche had a great deal more in her than most people supposed, and that she was becoming an excellent companion." Who does not recognize the process by which clever men persuade themselves into the belief that they are doing a judicious thing in marrying stupid women?

The chapter which follows that on Criticism, contains a conversation on Biography, full of interesting suggestions which our space renders it impossible for us to quote; but we cannot forego the pleasure of extracting the following paragraphs. It is Milverton who speaks:—

During Walter's last holidays, one morning after breakfast he took a walk with me. I saw something was on the boy's mind. At last he suddenly asked me, "Do sons often write the lives of fathers?"—"Often," I replied, "but I do not think they are the best kind of biographers, for you see, Walter, sons cannot well tell the faults and weaknesses of their fathers, and so filial biographies are often rather insipid performances."—"I don't know about that," he said, "I think I could write yours. I have made it already into chapters." "Now then, my boy," I said, "begin it: let us have the outline at least." Walter then commenced his biography.

"The first chapter," he said, "should be you and I and Henry walking amongst the trees and settling which should be cut down, and which should be transplanted." "A very pretty chapter," I said, "and a great deal might be made of it." "The second chapter," he continued, "should be your going to the farm, and talking to the pigs." "Also a very good chapter, my dear." "The third chapter," he said, after a little thought, "should be your friends. I would describe them all, and what they could do." There, you see, Ellesmere, you would come in largely, especially as to what you could do. "An excellent chapter," I exclaimed, and then of course I broke out into some paternal admonition about the choice of friends, which I know will have no effect whatever, but still one cannot help uttering these paternal admonitions.

"Now then," I said, "for chapter four." Here Walter paused, and looked about him vaguely for a minute or two. At length he seemed to have got hold of the right idea, for he burst out with the words, "My going back to school;" and that, it seemed, was to be the end of the biography.

Now, was there ever so honest a biographer? His going hack to school was the "be−all and end−all here" with him, and he resolved it should be the same with his hero, and with everybody concerned in the story.

Then see what a pleasant biographer the boy is! He does not drag his hero down through the vale of life, amidst declining fortune, breaking health, dwindling away of friends, and the usual dreariness of the last few stages. Neither does the biography end with the death of his hero; and by the way, it is not very pleasant to have one's children contemplating one's death, even for the sake of writing one's life; but the biographer brings the adventures of his hero to an end by his own going back to school. How delightful it would be if most biographers planned their works after Walter's fashion: just gave a picture of their hero at his farm, or his business; then at his pleasure, as Walter brought me amongst my trees; then, to show what manner of man he was, gave some description of his friends; and concluded by giving an account of their own going back to school—a conclusion that is greatly to be desired for many of them.

When we begin to copy a passage from this work, we find it very difficult to stop. But the thoughtful reader will not need to have it pointed out to him how much sound wisdom is conveyed in that playful form. And here is excellent advice as to the fashion in which men may hope to get through great intellectual labour: says Ellesmere,—

I can tell you in a—very few words how all work is done. Getting up early, eating vigorously, saying "No" to intruders resolutely, doing one thing at a time, thinking over difficulties at odd times, that is, when stupid people are talking in the House of Commons, or speaking at the Bar, not indulging too much in affections of any kind which waste the time and energies, carefully changing the current of your thoughts before you go to bed, planning the work of the day in the quarter of an hour before you get up, playing with children occasionally, and avoiding fools as much as possible: that is the way to do a great deal of work.

Milverton remarks, with justice, that some practical advices as to the way in which a working man might succeed in avoiding fools were very much to be desired, inasmuch as that brief direction contains the whole art of life; and suggests with equal justice that the taking of a daily bath should be added to Ellesmere's catalogue of appliances which aid in working.

We cannot linger upon the remaining pages which treat of Biography, nor upon two interesting chapters concerning Proverbs. It may be noticed, however, that Ellesmere insists that the best proverb in the world is the familiar English, one, 'Nobody knows where the shoe pinches hut the wearer;' while Milverton tells us that the Spanish language is far richer in proverbs than that of any other nation. But we hasten to an essay which will be extremely fresh and interesting to all readers. We have had many essays by Milverton: here is one by Ellesmere. He had announced some time before his purpose of writing an essay on The Arts of Self−Advancement, and Mildred, whom Ellesmere took a pleasure in annoying by making a parade of mean, selfish, and cynical views, discerned at once that in such an essay he would have an opportunity of bringing together a crowd of these, and declared before Ellesmere began to write it that it would be a nauseous essay.' The essay is finished at length. The friends are now at Salzburg; and on a very warm day they assembled in a sequestered spot whence they could see the snowy peaks of the Tyrolese Alps. Ellesmere begins by deprecating criticism of his style, declaring that anything inaccurate or ungrammatical is put in on purpose. Then he begins to read:—

In the first place, it is desirable to be born north of the Tweed (I like to begin at the beginning of things); and if that cannot be managed, you must at least contrive to be born in a moderately−sized town—somewhere. You thus get the advantage of being favoured by a small community without losing any individual force. If I had been born in Affpuddle—Milverton in Tolpuddle—and Dunsford in Tollerporcorum (there are such places, at least I saw them once arranged together in a petition to the House of Commons), the men of Affpuddle, Tolpuddle, and Tollerporcorum would have been proud of us, would have been true to us, and would have helped to push our fortunes. I see, with my mind's eye, a statue of Dunsford raised in Tollerporcorum. You smile, I observe; but it is the smile of ignorance, for let me tell you, it is of the first importance not to be born vaguely, as in London, or in some remote country−house. If you cannot, however, be born properly, contrive at least to be connected with some small sect or community, who may consider your renown as part of their renown, and be always ready to favour and defend you.

After this promising introduction Ellesmere goes on to propound views which in an extraordinary way combine real good sense and sharp worldly wisdom with a parade of all sorts of mean shifts and contemptible tricks where−by to take advantage of the weakness, folly, and wickedness of human nature. Very characteristically he delights in thinking how he is shocking and disgusting poor Mildred: of course Dunsford and Milverton understand him. And the style is as characteristic as the thought. It is unquestionably Ellesmere to whose essay we are listening; Milverton could not and would not have produced such a discourse. We remember to have read in a review, published several years since, of the former series of Friends in Council, that it was judicious in the author of that work, though introducing several friends as talking together, to represent all the essays as written by one individual; because, although he could keep up the individuality of the speakers through a conversation, it was doubtful whether he could have succeeded in doing so through essays purporting to. be written by each of them. We do not know whether the author ever saw the challenge thus thrown down to him: but it is certain that in the present series he has boldly attempted the thing, and thoroughly succeeded. And it may be remarked that not one of Ellesmere's propositions can be regarded as mere vagaries—every one of them contains truth, though truth put carefully in the most disagreeable and degrading way. Who does not know how great an element of success it is to belong to a sect or class which regard your reputation as identified with their own, and cry you up accordingly? It is to be admitted that there is the preliminary difficulty of so far overcoming individual envies and jealousies as to get your class to accept you as their representative; but once that end is accomplished the thing is done. As to being born north of the Tweed, a Scotch Lord Chancellor and a Scotch Bishop of London are instructive instances. And however much Scotchmen may abuse one another at home, it cannot be denied that all Scotchmen feel it a sacred duty to stand up for every Scotchman who has attained to eminence oeyond the boundaries of his native land. Scotland, indeed, in the sense in which Ellesmere uses the phrase, is a small community; and a community of very energetic, self−denying, laborious, and determined men, with very many feelings in common which they have in common only with their countrymen, and with an invincible tendency in all times of trouble to remember the old cry of Highlandmen, shoulder to shoulder! Let the

ambitious reader muse on what follows:—

Let your position be commonplace, whatever you are yourself. If you are a genius, and contrive to conceal the fact, you really deserve to get on in the world, and you will do so, if only you keep on the level road. Remember always that the world is a place where second−rate people mostly succeed: not fools, nor first−rate people.

Cynically put, no doubt, but admirably true. A great blockhead will never be made an archbishop; but in ordinary times a great genius stands next to him in the badness of his chance. After all, good sense and sound judgment are the essentially needful things in all but very exceptional situations in life—and for these commend us to the safe, steady−going, commonplace man. It cannot be denied that the great mass of mankind stand in doubt and fear of people who are wonderfully clever. What an amount of stolid, self−complacent, ignorant, stupid, conceited respectability, is wrapped up in the declaration concerning any person, that he is "too clever by half!" How plainly it teaches that the general belief is that too ingenious machinery will break down in practical working, and that most men will do wrong who have the power to do it!

The following propositions are true in very large communities, but they will not hold good in the country or in little towns:—

Remember always that what is real and substantive ultimately has its way in this world.

You make good bricks for instance: it is in vain that your enemies prove that you are a heretic in morals, politics, and religion; insinuate that you beat your wife; and dwell loudly on the fact that you failed in making picture−frames. In so far as you are a good brick−maker, you have all the power that depends on good brick−making; and the world will mainly look to j−our positive qualities as a brick−maker.

After having gone on with a number of maxims of a very base, selfish, and suspicious nature, to the increasing horror of the girls who are listening, Ellesmere passes from the consideration of modes of action to a much more important matter:—

Those who wish for self−advancement should remember, that the art in life is not so much to do a thing well, as to get a thing that has been moderately well done largely talked about. Some foolish people, who should have belonged to another planet, give all their minds to doing their work well. This is an entire mistake. This is a grievous loss of power. Such a method of proceeding may be very well in Jupiter, Mars, or Saturn, but is totally out of place in this puffing, advertising, bill−sticking part of creation. To rush into the battle of life without an abundance of kettle−drums and trumpets is a weak and ill−advised adventure, however well−armed and well−accoutred you may be. As I hate vague maxims, I will at once lay down the proportions in which force of any kind should be used in this world. Suppose you have a force which may be represented by the number one hundred: seventy−three parts at least of that force should be given to the trumpet; the remaining twenty−seven parts may not disadvantageously be spent in doing the thing which is to be trumpeted. This is a rule unlike some rules in grammar, which are entangled and controlled by a multitude of vexatious exceptions; but it applies equally to the conduct of all matters upon earth, whether social, moral, artistic, literary, political, or religious.

Ellesmere goes on to sum up the personal qualities needful to success; and having sketched out the character of a mean, crafty, sharp, energetic rascal, he concludes by saying that such a one will not fail to succeed in any department of life—provided always he keeps for the most part to one department, and does not attempt to conquer in many directions at once. I only hope that, having protited by this wisdom of mine, he will give me a share of the spoil.

Thus the essay ends; and then the discourse thereon begins—

MILVERTON. Well, of all the intolerable wretches and black−guards—'

MR. MIDHURST. A conceited prig, too!

UUNSFORD. A wicked, designing villain!

ELLESMERE. Any more: any more? Pray go on, gentlemen; and have you, ladies, nothing to say against the wise man of the world that I have depicted?

And yet the upshot of the conversation was, that though given in a highly disagreeable and obtrusively base form, there was much truth in what Ellesmere had said. It is to be remembered that he did not pretend to describe a good man, but only a successful one. And it is to be remembered likewise that prudence verges toward baseness: and that the difference between the suggestions of each lies very much in the fashion in which these suggestions are put and enforced. As to the use of the trumpet, how many advertising tailors and pill−makers could testify to the soundness of Ellesmere's principle? And beyond the Atlantic it finds special favor. When Barnum exhibited

his mermaid, and stuck up outside his show−room a picture of three beautiful mermaids, of human size, with flowing hair, basking upon a summer sea, while inside the show−room he had the hideous little contorted figure made of a monkey with a fish's tail attached to it, probably the proportion of the trumpet to the thing trumpeted was even greater than seventy−three to twenty−seven. Dunsford suggests, for the comfort of those who will not stoop to unworthy means for obtaining success, the beautiful saying, that "Heaven is probably a place for those who have failed on earth." And Ellesmere, adhering to his expressed views, declares—

If you had attended to them earlier in life, Dunsford would now be Mr. Dean; Milverton would be the Right Honorable Leonard Milverton, and the leader of a party; Mr. Midhurst would be chief cook to the Emperor Napoleon; the bull−dog would have been promoted to the parlor; I, but no man is wise for himself, should have been Lord Chancellor; Walter would be at the head of his class without having any more knowledge than he has at present; and as for you two girls, one. would be a Maid of Honor to the Queen, and the other would have married the richest man in the county.

We have not space to tell how Ellesmere planned to get Mr. Midhurst to write an essay on the Miseries of Human Life; nor how at Treves, upon a lowering day, the party, seated in the ancient amphitheatre, heard it read; nor how fully, eloquently, and not unfairly, the gloomy man, not without a certain solemn enjoyment, summed up his sad catalogue of the ills that flesh is heir to; nor how Milverton agreed in the evening to speak an answer to the essay, and show that life was not so miserable after all; nor how Ellesmere, eager to have it answered effectively, determined that Milverton should have the little accessories in his favor, the red curtains drawn, a blazing wood−fire, and plenty of light; nor how before the answer began, he brought Milverton a glass of wine to cheer him; nor how Milverton endeavored to show that in the present system misery was not quite predominant, and that much good in many ways came out of ill. Then we have some talk about Pleasantness; and Dunsford is persuaded to write and read an essay on that subject, which he read one morning, 'while we were sitting in the balcony of an hotel, in one of the small towns that overlook the Moselle, which was flowing beneath in a reddish turbid stream.' In the conversation which follows Milverton says,

It is a fault certainly to which writers are liable, that of exaggerating the claims of their subject.

And how truly is that said! Indeed we can quite imagine a very earnest man feeling afraid to think too much and long about any existing evil, for fear it should greaten on his view into a thing so large and pernicious, that he should be constrained to give all his life to the wrestling with that one thing; and attach to it an importance which would make his neighbors think him a monomaniac. If you think long and deeply upon any subject, it grows in magnitude and weight: if you think of it too long, it may grow big enough to exclude the thought of all things beside. If it be an existing and prevalent evil you are thinking of, you may come to fancy that if that one thing could be done away, it would be well with the human race,—all evil would go with it. We can sympathize deeply with that man who died a short while since, who wrote volume after volume to prove that if men would only leave off stooping, and learn to hold themselves upright, it would be the grandest blessing that ever came to humanity. We can quite conceive the process by which a man might come to think so, without admitting mania as a cause. We confess, for ourselves, that so deeply do we feel the force of the law Milverton mentions, there are certain evils of which we are afraid to think much, for fear we should come to be able to think of nothing else, and of nothing more.

Then a pleasant chapter, entitled Lovers' Quarrels, tells us how matters are progressing with the two pairs. Milverton and Blanche are going on most satisfactorily; but Ellesmere and Mildred are wayward and hard to keep right. Ellesmere sadly disappointed Mildred by the sordid views he advanced in his essay, and kept advancing in his talk; and like a proud and shy man of middle age when in love, he was ever watching for distant slight indications of how his suit might be received, and rendered fractious by the uncertainty of Mildred's conduct and bearing. And probably women have little notion by what slight and hardly thought−of sayings and doings they may have repressed the declaration and the offer which might perhaps have made them happy. Day by day Dunsfbrd was vexed by the growing estrangement between two persons who were really much attached; and this unhappy state of matters might have ended in a final separation but for the happy incident recorded in the chapter called Rowing down the River Moselle. The party had rowed down the river, talking as usual of many things:—

It was just at this point of the conversation that we pulled in nearer to the land, as Walter had made signs that he wished now to get into the boat. It was a weedy rushy part of the river that we entered. Fixer saw a rat or some other creature, which he was wild to get at. Eliesmere excited him to do so, and the dog sprang out of the boat. In

a minute or two Fixer became entangled in the weeds, and seemed to be in danger of sinking. Ellesmere, without thinking what he was about, made a hasty effort to save the dog, seized hold of him, but lost his own balance and fell out of the boat. In another moment Mildred gave me the end of her shawl to hold, which she had wound round herself, and sprang out too. The sensible diplomatist lost no time in throwing his weighty person to the other side of the boat. The two boatmen did the same. But for this move, the boat would, in all probability, have capsized, and we should all have been lost. Mildred was successful in clutching hold of Ellesmere; and Milverton and I managed to haul them close to the boat and to pull them in. Ellesmere had uot relinquished hold of Fixer. All this happened, as such accidents do, in almost less time than it takes to describe them. And now came another dripping creature splashing into the boat; for Master Walter, who can swim like a duck, had plunged in directly he saw the accident, but too late to be of any assistance.

Things are now all right; and Ellesmere next day announces to his friends that Mildred and he are engaged. Two chapters, on Government and Despotism respectively, give us the last thoughts of the Friends abroad; then we have a pleasant picture of them all in Milverton's farmyard, under a great sycamore, discoursing cheerfully of country cares. The closing chapter of the book is on The Need for Tolerance. It contains a host of thoughts which we should be glad to extract; but we must be content with a wise saying of Milverton's:—

For a man who has been rigidly good to be supremely tolerant, would require an amount of insight which seems to belong only to the greatest genius.

For we hardly sympathize with that which we have not in some measure experienced; and the great thing, after all, which makes us tolerant of the errors of other men, is the feeling that under like circumstances we should have ourselves erred in like manner; or, at all events, the being able to see the error in such a light as to feel that there is that within ourselves which enables us at least to understand how men should in such a way have erred. The sins on which we are most severe are those concerning which our feeling is, that we cannot conceive how any man could possibly have done them. And probably such would be the feeling of a rigidly good man concerning every sin.

So we part, for the present, from our Friends, not without the hope of again meeting them. We have been listening to the conversation of living men; and, in parting, we feel the regret that we should feel in quitting a kind friend's house after a pleasant visit, not, perhaps, to be renewed for many a day. And this is a changing world. We have been breathing the old atmosphere, and listening to the old voices talking in the old way. We have had new thought and new truth, but presented in the fashion we have known and enjoyed for years. Happily we can repeat our visit as often as we please, without the fear of worrying or wearying; for we may open the book at will. And we shall hope for new visits likewise. Milverton will be as earnest and more hopeful, Ellesmere will retain all that is good, and that which is provoking will now be softened down. No doubt by this time they are married. Where have they gone? The continent is unsettled, and they have often already been there. Perhaps they have gone to Scotland? No doubt they have. And perhaps before the leaves are sere we may find them out among the sea lochs of the beautiful Frith of Clyde, or under the shadow of Ben Nevis.

CHAPTER XII. CONCERNING THE PULPIT IN SCOTLAND.

Nearly forty years since, Dr. Chalmers, one of the parish ministers of Glasgow, preached several times in London. He was then in the zenith of his popularity as a pulpit orator. Canning and Wilberforce went together to hear him upon one occasion; and after sitting spell−bound under his eloquence, Canning said to Wilberforce when the sermon was done, 'The tarlan beats us; we have no preaching like that in England.'

In October 1855, the Rev. John Caird, incumbent of the parish of Errol, in Perthshire, preached before the Queen and Court at the church of Crathie. Her Majesty was so impressed by the discourse that she commanded its publication; and the Prince Consort, no mean authority, expressed his admiration of the ability of the preacher, saying that 'he had not heard a preacher like him for ssven years, and did not expect to enjoy a like pleasure for as long a period to come.' So, at all events, says a paragraph in The Times of December 12th, 1855.

It is somewhat startling to find men of cultivated taste, who are familiar with the highest class preaching of the English Church, expressing their sense of the superior effect of pulpit oratory of a very different kind. No doubt Caird and Chalmers are the best of their class; and the overwhelming effect which they and a few other Scotch preachers have often produced, is in a great degree owing to the individual genius of the men, and not to the school of preaching they belong to. Yet both are representatives of what may be called the Scotch school of preaching: and with all their genius, they never could have carried away their audience as they have done, had they been trammelled by those canons of taste to which English preachers almost invariably conform. Their manner is just the regular Scotch manner, vivified into tenfold effect by their own peculiar genius. Preaching in Scotland is a totally different thing from what it is in England. In the former country it is generally characterized by an amount of excitement in delivery and matter, which in England is only found among the most fanatical Dissenters, and is practically unknown in the pulpits of the national church. No doubt English and Scotch preaching differ in substance to a certain 'extent.' Scotch sermons are generally longer, averaging from forty minutes to an hour in the delivery. There is a more prominent and constant pressing of what is called evangelical doctrine. The treatment of the subject is more formal. There is an introduction; two or three heads of discourse, formally announced; and a practical conclusion; and generally the entire Calvinistic system is set forth in every sermon. But the main difference lies in the manner in which the discourses of the two schools are delivered. While English sermons are generally read with quiet dignity, in Scotland they are very commonly repeated from memory, and given with great vehemence and oratorical effect, and abundant gesticulation. Nor is it to be supposed that when we say the difference is main ly in manner, we think it a small one. There is only one account given by all who have heard the most striking Scotch preachers, as to the proportion which their manner bears in the effect produced. Lockhart, late of The Quarterly, says of Chalmers, 'Never did the world possess any orator whose minutest peculiarities of gesture and voice have more power in increasing the effect of what he says; whose delivery, in other words, is the first, and the second, and the third excellence in his oratory, more truly than is that of Dr. Chalmers.' The same words might be repeated of Caird, who has succeeded to Chalmers's fame. A hundred little circumstances of voice and manner—even of appearance and dress—combine to give his oratory its overwhelming power. And where manner is everything, difference in manner is a total difference. Nor does manner affect only the less educated and intelligent class of hearers. It cannot be doubted that the unparalleled impression produced, even on such men as Wilberforce, Canning, Lockhart, Lord Jeffrey, and Prince Albert, was mainly the result of manner. In point of substance and style, many English preachers are quite superior to the best of the Scotch. In these respects, there are no preachers in Scotland who come near the mark of Melvill, Manning, Arnold, or Bishop Wilberforce. Lockhart says of Chalmers,

I have heard many men deliver sermons far better arranged in point of argument; and I have heard very many deliver sermons far more uniform in elegance, both of conception and of style; but most unquestionably, I have never heard, either in England or Scotland, or in any other country, a preacher whose eloquence is capable of producing an effect so strong and irresistible as his.

[Footnote: Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk, vol. iii. p. 267.]

The best proof how much Chalmers owed to his manner, is, that in his latter days, when he was no longer able

to give them with his wonted animation and feeling, the very same discourses fell quite flat on his congregation.

It is long since Sydney Smith expressed his views as to the chilliness which is the general characteristic of the Anglican pulpit. In the preface to his published sermons, he says:

The English, generally remarkable for doing very good things in a very bad manner, seem to have reserved the maturity and plenitude of their awkwardness for the pulpit. A clergyman clings to his velvet cushion with either hand, keeps his eye rivetted on his book, speaks of the ecstacies of joy and fear with a voice and a face which indicates neither; and pinions his body and soul into the same attitude of limb and thought, for fear of being thought theatrical and affected. The most intrepid veteran of us all dares no more than wipe his face with his cambric sudarium; if by mischance his hand slip from its orthodox gripe of the velvet, he draws it back as from liquid brimstone, and atones for the indecorum by fresh inflexibility and more rigorous sameness. Is it wonder, then, that every semi−delirious sectary who pours forth his animated nonsense with the genuine look and voice of passion, should gesticulate away the congregation of the most profound and learned divine of the established church, and in two Sundays preach him bare to the very sexton? Why are we natural everywhere but in the pulpit? No man expresses warm and animated feelings anywhere else, with his mouth only, but with his whole body; he articulates with every limb, and talks from head to foot with a thousand voices. Why this holoplexia on sacred occasions only? Why call in the aid of paralysis to piety? Is sin to be taken from men, as Eve was from Adam, by casting them into a deep slumber? Or from what possible perversion of common sense are we all to look like field preachers in Zembla, holy lumps of ice, numbed into quiescence and stagnation and mumbling?

Now in Scotland, for very many years past, the standard style of preaching has been that which the lively yet gentle satirist wished to see more common in England. Whether successfully or not, Scotch preachers aim at what Sydney Smith regarded as the right way of preaching—'to rouse, to appeal, to inflame, to break through every barrier, up to the very haunts and chambers of the soul.' Whether this end be a safe one to propose to each one of some hundreds of men of ordinary ability and taste, may be a question. An unsuccessful attempt at it is very likely to land a man in gross offence against common taste and common sense, from which he whose aim is less ambitious is almost certainly safe. The preacher whose purpose is to preach plain sense in such a style and manner as not to offend people of education and refinement, if he fail in doing what he wishes, may indeed be dull, but will not be absurd and offensive. But however this may be, it is curious that this impassioned and highly oratorical school of preaching should be found among a cautious, cool−headed race like the Scotch. The Scotch are proverbial for long heads, and no great capacity of emotion. Sir Walter Scott, in Rob Roy, in describing the preacher whom the hero heard in the crypt of Glasgow Cathedral, says that his countrymen are much more accessible to logic than rhetoric; and that this fact determines the character of the preaching which is most acceptable to them. If the case was such in those times, matters are assuredly quite altered now. Logic is indeed not overlooked: but it is brilliancy of illustration, and, above all, great feeling and earnestness, which go down. Mr. Caird, the most popular of modern Scotch preachers, though possessing a very powerful and logical mind, yet owes his popularity with the mass of hearers almost entirely to his tremendous power of feeling and producing emotion. By way of contrast to Sydney Smith's picture of the English pulpit manner, let us look at one of Chalmers's great appearances. Look on that picture, and then on this:

The Doctor's manner during the whole delivery of that magnificent discourse was strikingly animated: while the enthusiasm and energy he threw into some of his bursts rendered them quite overpowering. One expression which he used, together with his action, his look, and the tones of his voice, made a most vivid and indelible impression on my memory... While uttering these words, which he did with peculiar emphasis, accompanying them with a flash from his eye and a slump of his foot, he threw his right arm with clenched fist right across the book−board, and brandished it full in the face of the Town Council, sitting in state before him. The words seem to startle, like an electric shock, the whole audience.

Very likely they did: but we should regret to see a bishop, or even a dean, have recourse to such means of producing an impression. We shall give one other extract descriptive of Chalmers's manner:

It was a transcendently grand, a glorious burst. The energy of his action corresponded. Intense emotion beamed from his countenance. I cannot describe the appearance of his face better than by saving it was lighted up almost into a glare. The congregation were intensely excited, leaning forward in the pews like a forest bending under the power of the hurricane,—looking steadfastly at the preacher, and listening in breathless wonderment. So soon as it was concluded, there was (as invariably was the case at the close of the Doctor's bursts) a deep sigh, or

rather gasp for breath, accompanied by a movement throughout the whole audience.

[Footnote: Life of Chalmers, vol. i. pp. 462, 3, and 467, 8. It should be mentioned that Chahners, notwithstanding this tremendous vehemence, always read his sermons.]

There is indeed in the Scotch Church a considerable class of most respectable preachers who read their sermons, and who, both for matter and manner, might be transplanted without remark into the pulpit of any cathedral in England. There is a school, also, of high standing and no small popularity, whose manner and style are calm and beautiful; but who, through deficiency of that vehemence which is at such a premium in Scotland at present, will never draw crowds such as hang upon the lips of more excited orators. Foremost among such stands Mr. Robertson, minister of Strathmartin, in Forfarshire. Dr. McCulloch, of Greenock, and Dr. Veitch, of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, are among the best specimens of the class. But that preaching which interests, leads onward, and instructs, has few admirers compared with that which thrills, overwhelms, and sweeps away. And from the impression made on individuals so competent to judge as those already mentioned, it would certainly seem that, whether suited to the dignity of the pulpit or not, the deepest oratorical effect is made by the latter, even on cultivated minds. Some of the most popular preachers in England have formed themselves on the Scotch model. Melvill and M'Neile are examples: so, in a different walk, is Ryle, so well known by his tracts. We believe that Melvill in his early days delivered his sermons from memory, and of late years only has taken to reading, to the considerable diminution of the effect he produces. We may here remark, that in some country districts the prejudice of the people against clergymen reading their sermons is excessive. It is indeed to be admitted that it is a more natural thing that a speaker should look at the audience he is addressing, and appear to speak from the feeling of the moment, than that he should read to them what he has to say; but it is hard to impose upon a parish minister, burdened with pastoral duty, the irksome school−boy task of committing to memory a long sermon, and perhaps two, every week. The system of reading is spreading rapidly in the Scotch Church, and seems likely in a few years to become all but universal. Caird reads his sermons closely on ordinary Sundays, but delivers entirely from memory in preaching on any particular occasion.

It may easily be imagined that when every one of fourteen or fifteen hundred preachers understands on entering the church that his manner must be animated if he looks for preferment, very many will have a very bad manner. It is wonderful, indeed, when we look to the average run of respectable Scotch preachers, to find how many take kindly to the emotional style. Often, of course, such a style is thoroughly contrary to the man's idiosyncracy. Still, he must seem warm and animated; and the consequence is frequently loud speaking without a vestige of feeling, and much roaring when there is nothing whatever in what is said to demand it. Noise is mistaken for animation. We have been startled on going into a little country kirk, in which any speaking above a whisper would have been audible, to find the minister from the very beginning of the service, roaring as if speaking to people a quarter of a mile off. Yet the rustics were still, and appeared attentive. They regarded their clergyman as 'a powerfu' preacher;' while the most nervous thought, uttered in more civilized tones, would have been esteemed 'unco weak.' We are speaking, of course, of very plain congregations; but among such 'a powerful preacher' means a preacher with a powerful voice and great physical energy.

Let not English readers imagine, when we speak of the vehemence of the Scotch pulpit, that we mean only a gentlemanly degree of warmth and energy. It often amounts to the most violent melo−dramatic acting. Sheil's Irish speeches would have been immensely popular Scotch sermons, so far as their style and delivery are concerned. The physical energy is tremendous. It is said that when Chalmers preached in St. George's, Edinburgh, the massive chandeliers, many feet off, were all vibrating. He had often to stop, exhausted, in the midst of his sermon, and have a psalm sung till he recovered breath. Caird begins quietly, but frequently works himself up to a frantic excitement, in which his gestulation is of the wildest, and his voice an absolute howl. One feels afraid that he may burst a bloodvessel. Were his hearers cool enough to criticise him, the impression would be at an end; but he has wound them up to such a pitch that criticism is impossible. They must sit absolutely passive, with nerves tingling and blood pausing: frequently many of the congregation have started to their feet. It may be imagined how heavily the physical energies of the preacher are drawn upon by this mode of speaking. Dr. Bennie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and one of the most eloquent and effective of Scotch pulpit orators, is said to have died at an age much short of fifty, worn out by the enthusiastic animation of his style. There are some little accessories of the Scotch pulpit, which in England are unknown: such as thrashing the large Bible which lies before the minister—long pauses to recover breath—much wiping of the face—sodorific results to an unpleasant

degree, necessitating an entire change of apparel after preaching.

The secret of the superior power over a mixed congregation of the best Scotch, as compared with most English preachers, is that the former are not deterred by any considerations of the dignity of the pulpit, from any oratorical art which is likely to produce an effect. Some times indeed, where better things might be expected, the most reprehensible clap−trap is resorted to. An English preacher is fettered and trammelled by fear of being thought fanatical and methodistical,—and still worse, ungentlemanlike. He knows, too, that a reputation as a 'popular preacher' is not the thing which will conduce much to his preferment in his profession. The Scotch preacher, on the other hand, throws himself heart and soul into his subject. Chalmers overcame the notion that vehemence in the pulpit was indicative of either fanaticism or weakness of intellect: he made ultra−animation respectable: and earnestness, even in an excessive degree, is all in favour of a young preacher's popularity; while a man's chance of the most valuable preferments (in the way of parochial livings) of the Scotch church, is in exact proportion to his popularity as a preacher. The spell of the greatest preachers is in their capacity of intense feeling. This is reflected on the congregation. A congregation will in most cases feel but a very inferior degree of the emotion which the preacher feels. But intense feeling is contagious. There is much in common between the tragic actor and the popular preacher; but while the actor's power is generally the result of a studied elocution, the preacher's is almost always native. A teacher of elocution would probably say that the manner of Chalmers, Guthrie, or Caird was a very bad one; but it suits the man, and no other would produce a like impression. In reading the most effective discourses of the greatest preachers, we are invariably disappointed. We can see nothing very particular in those quotations from Chalmers which are recorded as having so overwhelmingly impressed those who heard them. It was manner that did it all. In short, an accessory which in England is almost entirely neglected, is the secret of Scotch effect. Nor is it any derogation from an orator's genius to say that his power lies much less in what he says than in how he says it. It is but saying that his weapon can be wielded by no other hand than his own. Manner makes the entire difference between Macready and the poorest stroller that murders Shakspeare. The matter is the Baine in the case of each. Each has the same thing to say; the enormous difference lies in the manner in which each says it. The greatest effects recorded to have been produced by human language, have been produced by things which, in merely reading them, would not have appeared so very remarkable. Hazlitt tells us that nothing so lingered on his ear as a line from Home's Douglas, as spoken by young Betty:—

And happy, in my mind, was he that died.

We have heard it said that Macready never produced a greater effect than by the very simple words 'Who said that?' It is perhaps a burlesque of an acknowledged fact, to record that Whitfield could thrill an audience by saying 'Mesopotamia!' Hugh Miller tells us that he heard Chahners read a piece which he (Miller) had himself written. It produced the effect of the most telling acting; and its author never knew how fine it was till then. We remember well the feeling which ran through us when we heard Caird say, 'As we bend over the grave, where the dying are burying the dead.' All this is the result of that gift of genius; to feel with the whole soul and utter with the whole soul. The case of Gavazzi shows that tremendous energy can carry an audience away, without its understanding a syllable of what is said. Inferior men think by loud roaring and frantic gesticulation to produce that impression which genius alone can produce. But the counterfeit is wretched; and with all intelligent people the result is derision and disgust.

Many of our readers, we daresay, have never witnessed the service of the Scotch Church. Its order is the simplest possible. A psalm is sung, the congregation sitting. A prayer of about a quarter of an hour in length is offered, the congregation standing. A chapter of the Bible is read; another psalm sung; then comes the sermon. A short prayer and a psalm follow; and the service is terminated by the benediction. The entire service lasts about an hour and a half. It is almost invariably conducted by a single clergyman. In towns, the churches now approximate pretty much to the English, as regards architecture. It is only in country places that one finds the true bareness of Presbytery. The main difference is that there is no altar; the communion table being placed in the body of the church. The pulpit occupies the altar end, and forms the most prominent object; symbolizing very accurately the relative estimation of the sermon in the Scotch service. Whenever a new church is built, the recurrence to a true ecclesiastical style is marked; and vaulted roofs, stained glass, and dark oak, have, in large towns, in a great degree, supplanted the flat−roofed meetinghouses which were the Presbyterian ideal. The preacher generally wears the English preaching gown. The old Geneva gown covered with frogs is hardly ever seen; but the surplice

would still stir up a revolution. The service is performed with much propriety of demeanour; the singing is often so well done by a good choir, that the absence of the organ is hardly felt. Educated Scotchmen have come to lament the intolerant zeal which led the first Reformers in their country to such extremes. But in the country we still see the true genius of the Presbytery. The rustics walk into church with their hats on; and replace them and hurry out the instant the service is over. The decorous prayer before and after worship is unknown. The minister, in many churches wears no gown. The stupid bigotry of the people in some of the most covenanting districts is almost incredible. There are parishes in which the people boast that they have never suffered so Romish a thing as a gown to appear in their pulpit; and the country people of Scotland generally regard Episcopacy as not a whit better than Popery. It has sometimes struck us as curious, that the Scotch have always made such endeavours to have a voice in the selection of their clergy. Almost all the dissenters from the Church of Scotland hold precisely the same views both of doctrine and church government as the Church, and have seceded on points connected with the existence of lay patronage. In England much discontent may sometimes be excited by an arbitrary appointment to a living; but it would be vain to endeavour to excite a movement throughout the whole country to prevent the recurrence of such appointments. Yet upon precisely this point did some three or four hundred ministers secede from the Scotch Church in 1843; and to maintain the abstract right of congregations to a share in the appointment of their minister, has the 'Free Church' drawn from the humbler classes of a poor country many hundred thousand pounds. No doubt all this results in some measure from the self−sufficiency of the Scotch character; but besides this, it should be remembered that to a Scotchman it is a matter of much graver importance who shall be his clergyman than it is to an Englishman. In England, if the clergyman can but read decently, the congregation may find edification in listening to and joining in the beautiful prayers provided by the Church, even though the sermon should be poor enough. But in Scotland everything depends on the minister. If he be a fool, he can make the entire service as foolish as himself. For prayers, sermon, choice of passages of Scripture which are read, everything, the congregation is dependent on the preacher. The question, whether the worship to which the people of a parish are invited weekly shall be interesting and improving, or shall be absurd and revolting, is decided by the piety, good sense, and ability of the parish priest. Coleridge said he never knew the value of the Liturgy till he had heard the prayers which were offered in some remote country churches in Scotland.

We have not space to inquire into the circumstances which have given Scotch preaching its peculiar character. We may remark, however, that the sermon is the great feature of the Scotch service; it is the only attraction; and pains must be taken with it. The prayers are held in very secondary estimation. The preacher who aims at interesting his congregation, racks his brain to find what will startle and strike; and then the warmth of his delivery adds to his chance of keeping up attention. Then the Scotch are not a theatre−going people; they have not, thus, those stage−associations with a dramatic manner which would suggest themselves to many minds. Many likewise expect that excitement in the church, which is more suited to the atmosphere of the play−house. Patrons of late years not unfrequently allow a congregation to choose its own minister; the Crown almost invariably consults the people; the decided taste of almost all songregations is for great warmth of manner; and the supply is made to suit the demand.

As for the solemn question, how far Scotch preaching answers the great end of all right preaching, it is hard to speak. No doubt it is a great thing to arouse the somewhat comatose attention of any audience to a discourse upon religion, and any means short of clap−trap and indecorum are justified if they succeed in doing so. No man will be informed or improved by a sermon which sets him asleep. Yet it is to be feared that, in the prevailing rage for what is striking and new, some eminent preachers sacrifice usefulness to glitter. We have heard discourses concerning which, had we been asked when they were over, What is the tendency and result of all this?—what is the conclusion it all leads to?—we should have been obliged to reply, Only that Mr. Such−a−one is an uncommonly clever man. The intellectual treat, likewise, of listening to first−class pulpit oratory, tends to draw many to church merely to enjojr it. Many go, not to be the better for the truth set forth, but to be delighted by the preacher's eloquence. And it is certain that many persons whose daily life exhibits no trace of religion, have been most regular and attentive hearers of the most striking preachers. We may mention an instance in point. When Mr. Caird was one of the ministers of Edinburgh, he preached in a church, one gallery of which is allotted to students of the University. A friend of ours was one Sunday afternoon in that gallery, when he observed in the pew before him two very rough−looking fellows, with huge walking−sticks projecting from their great−coat pockets, and all the unmistakable marks of medical students. It was evident they were little accustomed to attend any place of

worship. The church, as usual, was crammed to suffocation, and Mr. Caird preached a most stirring sermon. As he wound up one paragraph to an overwhelming climax, the whole congregation bent forward in eager and breathless silence. The medical students were under the general spell. Half rising from their seats they gazed at the preacher with open mouths. At length the burst was over, and a long sigh relieved the wrought−up multitude. The two students sank upon their seat, and looked at one another fixedly: and the first expressed his appreciation of the eloquence of what he had heard by exclaiming half aloud to his companion, 'Damn it, that's it.'

The doctrine preached in Scotch pulpits is now almost invariably what is termed evangelical. For a long time, now long gone by, many of the clergy preached morality, with very inadequate views of Christian doctrine. We cannot but notice a misrepresentation of Dr. Hanna, in his Life of Chalmers. Without saying so, he leaves an impression that all the clergy of the Moderate or Conservative party in the Church held those semi−infidel views which Chalmers entertained in his early days. The case is by no means so. Very many ministers, not belonging to the movement party, held truly orthodox opinions, and did their pastoral work as faithfully as ever Chalmers did after his great change of sentiment. It is curious to know that while party feeling ran high in the Scotch Church, it was a shibboleth of the Moderate party to use the Lord's Prayer in the Church service. The other party rejected that beautiful compendium of all supplication, on the ground that, it was not a Christian prayer, no mention being made in it of the doctrine of the atonement. It is recorded that on one occasion a minister of what was termed the 'High−fiying' party was to preach for Dr. Gilchrist, of the Canongate Church in Edinburgh. That venerable clergyman told his friend before service that it was usual in the Canongate Church to make use of the Lord's Prayer at every celebration of worship. The friend looked somewhat disconcerted, and said, 'Is it absolutely necessary that I should give the Lord's Prayer?' 'Not at all,' was Dr. Gilchrist's reply, 'not at all, if you can give us anything better!'

Mr. Caird's sermon preached at Crathie has been published by royal command. It is no secret that the Queen arid Prince, after hearing it, read it in manuscript, and expressed themselves no less impressed in reading it by the soundness of its views, than they had been in listening to it by its extraordinary eloquence. Our perusal of it has strongly confirmed us in the views we have expressed as to the share which Mr. Caird's manner has in producing the effect with which his discourses tell upon any audience. The sermon is indeed an admirable one; accurate, and sometimes original in thought: illustrated with rare profusion of imagery, all in exquisite taste, and expressed in words scarcely one of which could be allered or displaced but for the worse. But Mr. Caird could not publish his voice and manner, and in warning these, the sermon wants the first, second, and third things which conduced to its effect when delivered. In May, 1854, Mr. Caird preached this discourse in the High Church, Edinburgh, before the Commissioner who represents her Majesty at the meetings of the General Assembly of the Scotch Church, and an exceedingly crowded and brilliant audience. Given there, with all the fkill of the most accomplished actor, yet with a simple earnestness which prevented the least suspicion of anything like acting, the impression it produced is described as something marvellous. Hard−headed Scotch lawyers, the last men in the world to be carried into superlatives, declared that never till then did they understand what effect could be produced by human speech. But we confess that now we have these magic words to read quietly at home, we find it something of a task to get through them. A volume just published by Dr. Guthrie of Edinburgh, the greatest pulpit orator of the 'Free Church,' contains many sermons much more likely to interest a reader.

The sermon is from the text, 'Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' [Footnote: Romans xii. 11.] It sets out thus:—

To combine business with religion, to keep up a spirit of serious piety amid the stir and distraction of a busy and active life,—this is one of the most difficult parts of a Christian's trial in this world. It is comparatively easy to be religious in the church—to collect our thoughts and compose our feelings, and enter, with an appearance of propriety and decorum, into the offices of religious worship, amidst the quietude of the Sabbath, and within the still and sacred precincts of the house of prayer. But to be religious in the world—to be pious and holy and earnest−minded in the counting−room, the manufactory, the market−place, the field, the farm—to cany our good and solemn thoughts and feelings into the throng and thoroughfare of daily life,—this is the great difficulty of our Christian calling. No man not lost to all moral influence can help feeling his worldly passions calmed, and some measure of seriousness stealing over his mind, when engaged in the performance of the more awful and serious rites of religion; but the atmosphere of the domestic circle, the exchange, the street, the city's throng, amidst coarse work and cankering cares and toils, is a very different atmosphere from that of a communion−table.

Passing from one to the other has often seemed as the sudden transition from a tropical to a polar climate—from balmy warmth and sunshine to murky mist and freezing cold. And it appears sometimes as difficult to maintain the strength and steadfastness of religious principle and feeling when we go forth from the church to the world, as it would be to preserve an exotic alive in the open air in winter, or to keep the lamp that burns steadily within doors from being blown out if you take it abroad unsheltered from the wind.

The preacher then speaks of the shifts by which men have evaded the task of being holy, at once in the church and in the world; in ancient times by flying from the world altogether, in modern times by making religion altogether a Sunday thing. In opposition to either notion the text suggests,—

That piety is not for Sundays only, but for all days; that spirituality of mind is not appropriate to one set of actions, and an impertinence and intrusion with reference to others; but like the act of breathing, like the circulation of the blood, like the silent growth of the stature, a process that may be going on simultaneously with all our actions—when we are busiest as when we are idlest; in the church, in the world; in solitude, in society; in our grief and in our gladness; in our toil and in our rest; sleeping, waking; by day, by night; amidst all the engagements and exigencies of life.

The burden of the discourse is to prove that this is so; that religion is compatible with the business of Common Life. This appears, first, because religion, as a science, sets out doctrines easy to be understood by the humblest intellects; and as an art, sets out duties which may be practised simultaneously with all other work. It is the art of being and of doing good: and for this art every profession and calling affords scope and discipline.

When a child is learning to write, it matters not of what words the copy set to him is composed, the thing desired being that, whatever he writes, he learns to write well. When a man is learning to be a Christian, it matters not what his particular work in life may be, the work he does is but the copy−line set to him; the main thing to be considered is that he learn to live well.

The second consideration by which Mr. Caird supports his thesis is, that religion consists, not so much in doing spiritual or sacred acts, as in doing secular acts from a sacred or spiritual motive. 'A man may be a Christian thinker and writer as much when giving to science, or history, or biography, or poetry a Christian tone and spirit, as when composing sermons or writing hymns.'

The third and most eloquent division of the discourse illustrates the thesis from the Mind's Power of acting on Lattat Principles. Though we cannot, in our worldly work, be always consciously thinking of religion, yet unconsciously, insensibly, we may be acting under its ever present control. For example, the preacher, amidst all his mental exertions, has underneath the outward workings of his mind, the latent thought of the presence of his auditory.

Like a secret atmosphere it surrounds and bathes his spirit as he goes on with the external work. And have not yon, too, my friends, an Auditor—it may he, a 'great cloud of witnesses'—but at least one all glorious Witness and Listener ever present, ever watchful, as the discourse of life proceeds? Why, then, in this case too, while the outward business is diligently prosecuted, may there not be on your spirit a latent and constant impression of that awful inspection? What worldly work so absorbing as to leave no room in a believer's spirit for the hallowing thought of that glorious Presence ever near?

We shall give but one extract more, the final illustration of this third head of discourse. It is a very good specimen of one of those exciting and irresistible bursts by which Caird sweeps away his audience. Imagine the following sentences given, at first quietly, but with great feeling, gradually waxing in energy and rapidity; and at length, amid dead stillness and hushed breaths, concluded as with a torrent's rush:—

Or, have we not all felt that the thought of anticipated happiness may blend itself with the work of our busiest hours? The labourer's coming, released from toil—the schoolboy's coming holiday, or the hard−wrought business man's approaching season of relaxation—the expected return of a long absent and much loved friend; is not the thought of these, or similar joyous events, one which often intermingles with, without interrupting, our common work? When a father goes forth to his 'labour till the evening,' perhaps often, very often, in the thick of his toils the thought of home may start up to cheer him. The smile that is to welcome him, as he crosses his lowly threshold when the work of the day is over, the glad faces, and merry voices, arid sweet caresses of little ones, as they shall gather round him in the quiet evening hours, the thought of all this may dwell, a latent joy, a hidden motive, deep down in his heart of hearts, may come rushing in a sweet solace at every pause of exertion, and act like a secret oil to smooth the wheels of labour. The heart has a secret treasury, where our hopes and joys are

often garnered, too precious to be parted with, even for a moment.

And why may not the highest of all hopes and joys possess the same all−pervading influence? Have we, if our religion is real, no anticipation of happiness in the glorious future? Is there no 'rest that remaineth for the people of God,' no home and loving heart awaiting us when the toils of our hurried day of life are ended? What is earthly rest or relaxation, what the release from toil after which we so often sigh, but the faint shadow of the saint's everlasting rest, the rest of the soul in God? What visions of earthly bliss can ever, if our Christian faith be not a form, compare with 'the glory soon to be revealed?' What glory of earthly reunion with the rapture of that hour when the heavens shall yield an absent Lord to our embrace, to be parted from us no more for ever! And if all this be most sober truth, what is there to except this joyful hope from that law to which, in all other deep joys, our minds are subject? Why may we not, in this case too, think often, amidst our worldly work, of the House to which we are going, of the true and loving heart that heats for us, and of the sweet and joyous welcome that awaits us there? And even when we make them not, of set purpose, the subject of our thoughts, is there not enough of grandeur in the objects of a believer's hope to pervade his spirit at all times with a calm and reverential joy? Do not think all this strange, fanatical, impossible. If it do seem so, it can only be because your heart is in the earthly, but not in the higher and holier hopes. No, my friends! the strange thing is, not that amidst the world's work we should be able to think of our House, but that we should ever be able to forget it; and the stranger, sadder still, that while the little day of life is passing—morning, noontide, evening—each stage more rapid than the last; while to many the shadows are already fast lengthening, and the declining sun warns them that 'the night is at hand, wherein no man can work,' there should be those amongst us whose whole thoughts are absorbed in the business of the world, and to whom the reflection never occurs, that soon they must go out into eternity, without a friend, without a home!

The discourse thus ends in orthodox Scotch fashion, with a practical conclusion.

We think it not unlikely that the sermon has been toned down a good deal before publication, in anticipation of severe criticism. Some passages which were very effective when delivered, hate probably been modified so as to bring them more thoroughly within the limits of severe good taste. We think Mr. Caird has deserved the honours done him by royalty; and we willingly accord him his meed, as a man of no small force of intellect, of great power of illustration by happy analogies, of sincere piety, and of much earnestness to do good. He is still young—we believe considerably under forty—and much may be expected of him.

But we have rambled on into an unduly long gossip about Scotch preaching, and must abruptly conclude. We confess that it would please us to see, especially in the pulpits of our country churches, a little infusion of its warmth, rejecting anything of its extravagance.

CHAPTER XIII. CONCERNING FUTURE YEARS.

Does it ever come across you, my friend, with something of a start, that things cannot always go on in your lot as they are going now? Does not a sudden thought sometimes flash upon you, a hasty, vivid glimpse, of what you will be long hereafter, if you are spared in this world? Our common way is too much to think that things will always go on as they are going. Not that we clearly think so: not that we ever put that opinion in a definite shape, and avow to ourselves that we hold it: but we live very much under that vague, general impression. We can hardly help it. When a man of middle age inherits a pretty country seat, and makes up his mind that he cannot yet afford to give up business and go to live at it, but concludes that in six or eight years he will be able with justice to his children to do so, do you think he brings plainly before him the changes which must be wrought on himself and those around him by these years? I do not speak of the greatest change of all, which may come to any of us so very soon: I do not think of what may be done by unlooked−for accident: I think merely of what must be done by the passing on of time. I think of possible changes in taste and feeling, of possible loss of liking for that mode of life. I think of lungs that will play less freely, and of limbs that will suggest shortened walks, and dissuade from climbing hills. I think how the children will have outgrown daisy−chains, or even got beyond the season of climbing trees. The middle−aged man enjoys the prospect of the time when he shall go to his country house; and the vague, undefined belief surrounds him, like an atmosphere, that he and his children, his views and likings, will be then just such as they are now. He cannot bring it home to him at how many points change will be cutting into him, and hedging him in, and paring him down. And we all live very much under that vague impression. Yet it is in many ways good for us to feel that we are going on—passing from the things which surround us—advancing into the undefined future, into the unknown land. And I think that sometimes we all have vivid flashes of such a conviction. I dare say, my friend, you have seen an old man, frail, soured, and shabby, and you have thought, with a start, Perhaps there is Myself of Future Years.

We human beings can stand a great deal. There is great margin allowed by our constitution, physical and moral. I suppose there is no doubt that a man may daily for years eat what is unwholesome, breathe air which is bad, or go through a round of life which is not the best or the right one for either body or mind, and yet be little the worse. And so men pass through great trials and through long years, and yet are not altered so very much. The other day, walking along the street, I saw a man whom I had not seen for ten years. I knew that since I saw him last he had gone through very heavy troubles, and that these had sat very heavily upon him. I remembered how he had lost that friend who was the dearest to him of all human beings, and I knew how broken down he had been for many months after that great sorrow carne. Yet there he was, walking along, an unnoticed unit, just like any one else; and he was looking wonderfully well. No doubt he seemed pale, worn, and anxious: but he was very well and carefully dressed; he was walking with a brisk, active step; and I dare say in feeling pretty well reconciled to being what he is, and to the circumstances amid which he is living. Still, one felt that somehow a tremendous change had passed over him. I felt sorry for him, and all the more that he did not seem to feel sorry for himself. It made me sad to think that some day I should be like him; that perhaps in the eyes of my juniors I look like him already, careworn and ageing. I dare say in his feeling there was no such sense of falling off. Perhaps he was tolerably content. He was walking so fast, and looking so sharp, that I am sure ho had no desponding feeling at the time. Despondency goes with slow movements and with vague looks. The sense of having materially fallen off is destructive to the eagle−eye. Yes, he was tolerably content. We can go down−hill cheerfully, save at the points where it is sharply brought home to us that we are going down−hill. Lately I sat at dinner opposite an old lady who had the remains of striking beauty. I remember how much she interested me. Her hair was false, her teeth were false, her complexion was shrivelled, her form had lost the round symmetry of earlier years, and was angular and stiff; yet how cheerful and lively she was! She had gone far down−hill physically; but either she did not feel her decadence, or she had grown quite reconciled to it. Her daughter, a blooming matron, was there, happy, wealthy, good; yet not apparently a whit more reconciled to life than the aged grandame. It was pleasing, and yet it was sad, to see how well we can make up our mind to what is inevitable. And such a sight brings up to one a glimpse of Future Years. The cloud seems to part before one, and through the rift you discern your earthly

track far away, and a jaded pilgrim plodding along it with weary step; and though the pilgrim does not look like you, yet you know the pilgrim is yourself.

This cannot always go on. To what is it all tending? I am not thinking now of an out−look so grave, that this is not the place to discuss it. But I am thinking how everything is going on. In this world there is no standing still. And everything that belongs entirely to this world, its interests and occupations, is going on towards a conclusion. It will all come to an end. It cannot go on forever. I cannot always be writing sermons as I do now, and going on in this regular course of life. I cannot always be writing essays. The day will come when I shall have no more to say, or when the readers of the Magazine will no longer have patience to listen to me in that kind fashion in which they have listened so long. I foresee it plainly, this evening.—even while writing my first essay for the Atlantic Monthly, the time when the reader shall open the familiar cover, and glance at the table of contents, and exclaim indignantly, 'Here is that tiresome person again with the four initials: why will he not cease to weary us?' I write in sober sadness, my friend: I do not intend any jest. If you do not know that what I have written is certainly true, you have not lived very long. You have not learned the sorrowful lesson, that all worldly occupations and interests are wearing to their close. You cannot keep up the old thing, however much you may wish to do so. You know how vain anniversaries for the most part are. You meet with certain old friends, to try to revive the old days; but the spirit of the old time will not come over you. It is not a spirit that can be raised at will. It cannot go on forever, that walking down to church on Sundays, and ascending those pulpit steps; it will change to feeling, though I humbly trust it may be long before it shall change in fact. Don't you all sometimes feel something like that? Don't you sometimes look about you and say to yourself, That furniture will wear out: those window−curtains are getting sadly faded; they will not last a lifetime? Those carpets must be replaced some day; and the old patterns which looked at you with a kindly, familiar expression, through these long years, must be among the old familiar faces that are gone. These are little things, indeed, but they are among the vague recollections that bewilder our memory; they are among the things which come up in the strange, confused remembrance of the dying man in the last days of life. There is an old fir−tree, a twisted, strange−looking fir−tree, which will be among my last recollections, I know, as it was among my first. It was always before my eyes when I was three, four, five years old: I see the pyramidal top, rising over a mass of shrubbery; I see it always against a sunset−sky; always in the subdued twilight in which we seem to see things in distant years. These old friends will die, you think; who will take their place? You will be an old gentleman, a frail old gentleman, wondered at by younger men, and telling them long stories about the days when Lincoln was President, like those which weary you now about the Declaration of Independence. It will not be the same world then. Your children will not be always children. Enjoy their fresh, youth while it lasts, for it will not last long. Do not skim over the present too fast, through a constant habit of onward−looking. Many men of an anxious turn are so eagerly concerned in providing for the future, that they hardly remark the blessings of the present. Yet it is only because the future will some day be present, that it deserves any thought at all. And many men, instead of heartily enjoying present blessings while they are present, train themselves to a habit of regarding these things as merely the foundation on which they are to build some vague fabric of they know not what. I have known a clergyman, who was very fond of music, and in whose church the music was very fine, who seemed incapable of enjoying its solemn beauty as a tiling to be enjoyed while passing, but who persisted in regarding each beautiful strain merely as a promising indication of what his choir would come at some future time to be. It is a very bad habit, and one which grows unless repressed. You, my reader, when you see your children racing on the green, train yourself to regard all that as a happy end in itself. Do not grow to think merely that those sturdy young limbs promise to be stout and serviceable when they are those of a grown−up man; and rejoice in the smooth little forehead with its curly hair, without any forethought of how it is to look some day when over−shadowed (as it is sure to be) by the great wig of the Lord Chancellor. Good advice: let us all try to take it. Let all happy things be enjoyed as ends, as well as regarded as means. Yet it is in the make of our nature to be ever onward−looking; and we cannot help it. When you get the first number for the year of the. Magazine which you take in, you instinctively think of it as the first portion of a new volume; and you are conscious of a certain though slight restlessness in the thought of a thing incomplete, and of a wish that you had the volume completed. And sometimes, thus locking onward into the future, you worry yourself with litile thoughts and cares. There is that old dog: you Lave had him for many years; he is growing stiff and frail; what arc you to do when he dies? When he is gone, the new dog you get will never be like him; he may be, indeed, a far handsomer and more amiable animal, but he will not be your old companion;

he will not be surrounded with all those old associations, not merely with your own by−past life, but with the lives, the faces, and the voices of those who have left you, which invest with a certain saeredness even that humble but faithful friend. He will not have been the companion of your youthful walks, when you went, at a pace which now you cannot attain. He will just be a common dog; and who that has reached your years cares for that? The other indeed was a dog too, but that was merely the substratum on which was accumulated a host of recollections: it is Auld Lang syne that walks into your study when your shaggy friend of ten summers comes stiffly in, and after many querulous turnings lays himself down on the rug before the fire. Do you not feel the like when you look at many little matters, and then look into the Future Years? That harness—how will you replace it? It will be a pang to throw it by, and it will be a considerable expense too to get a new suit. Then you think how long harness may continue to be serviceable. I once saw, on a pair of horses drawing a stage−coach among the hills, a set of harness which was thirty−five years old. It had been very costly and grand when new; it had belonged for some of its earliest years to a certain wealthy nobleman. The nobleman had been for many years in his grave, but there was his harness still. It was tremendously patched, and the blinkers were of extraordinary aspect; but it was quite serviceable. There is comfort for you, poor country parsons! How thoroughly I understand your feeling about such little things. I know how you sometimes look at your phaeton or your dog−cart; and even while the morocco is fresh, and the wheels still are running with their first tires, how you think you see it after it has grown shabby and old−fashioned. Yes, you remember, not without a dull kind of pang, that it is wearing out. You have a neighbour, perhaps, a few miles off, whose conveyance, through the wear of many years, has become remarkably seedy; and every time you meet it you think that there you see your own, as it will some day be. Every dog has his day: but the day of the rational dog is over−clouded in a fashion unknown to his inferior fellow−creature; it is overclouded by the anticipation of the coming day which will not be his. You remember how that great though morbid man, John Foster, could not heartily enjoy the summer weather, for thinking how every sunny day that shone upon him was a downward step towards the winter gloom. Each indication that the season was progressing, even though progressing as yet only to greater beauty, filled him with great grief. 'I have seen a fearful sight to−day,' he would say, 'I have seen a buttercup.' And we know, of course, that in his case there was nothing like affectation; it was only that, unhappily for himself, the bent of his mind was so onward−looking, that he saw only a premonition of the snows of December in the roses of June. It would be a blessing if we could quite discard the tendency. And while your trap runs smoothly and noiselessly, while the leather is fresh and the paint unscratched, do not worry yourself with visions of the day when it will rattle and crack, and when you will make it wait for you at the corner of back−streets when you drive into town. Do not vex yourself by fancying that you will never have heart to send off the old carriage, nor by wondering where you shall find the money to buy a new one.

Have you ever read the Life of Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith, by that pleasing poet and most amiable man, the late David Macbeth Moir? I have been looking into it lately; and I have regretted much that the Lowland Scotch dialect is so imperfectly understood in England, and that even where so far understood its raciness is so little felt; for great as is the popularity of that work, it is much less known than it deserves to be. Only a Scotchman can thoroughly appreciate it. It is curious, and yet it is not curious, to find the pathos and the polish of one of the most touching and elegant of poets in the man who has with such irresistible humour, sometimes approaching to the farcical, delineated humble Scotch life. One passage in the book always struck me very much. We have in it the poet as well as the humorist; and it is a perfect example of what I have been trying to describe in the pages which you have rend. I mean the passage in which Mansie tells us of a sudden glimpse which, in circumstances of mortal terror, he once had of the future. On a certain 'awful night' the tailor was awakened by cries of alarm, and, looking out, he saw the next house to his own was on fire from cellar to garret. The earnings of poor Mansie's whole life were laid out on his stock in trade and his furniture, and it appeared likely that these would be at once destroyed.

"Then," says he, "the darkness of the latter days came over my spirit like a vision before the prophet Isaiah; and I could see nothing in the years to come but beggary and starvation,—myself a fallen−back old man. with an out−at−the−elbows coat, a greasy hat, and a bald brow, hirpling over a staff, requeeshting an awmous: Nanse a broken−hearted beggar−wife, torn down to tatters, and weeping like Eachel when she thought on better days; and poor wee Benjie going from door to door with a meal−pock on his back."

Ah, there is exquisite pathos there, as well as humour; but the thing for which I have quoted that sentence is its

startling truthfulness. You have all done what Mansie Wauch did, I know. Every one has his own way of doing it, and it is his own especial picture which each sees; but there has appeared to us, as to Mansie, (I must recur to my old figure,) as it were a sudden rift in the clouds that conceal the future, and we have seen the way, far ahead—the dusty way—and an aged pilgrim pacing slowly along it; and in that aged figure we have each recognized our own young self. How often have I sat down on the mossy wall that surrounded my churchyard, when I had more time for reverie than I have now—sat upon the mossy wall, under a great oak, whose brandies came low down and projected far out—and looked at the rough gnarled bark, and at the passing river, and at the belfry of the little church, and there and then thought of Mansie Wauch and of his vision of Future Years! How often in these hours, or in long solitary walks and rides among the hills, have I had visions clear as that of Mansie Wauch, of how I should grow old in my country parish! Do not think that I wish or intend to be egotistical, my friendly reader. I describe these feelings and fancies because I think this is the likeliest way in which to reach and describe your own. There was a rapid little stream that flowed, in a very lonely place, between the highway and a cottage to which I often went to see a poor old woman; and when I came out of the cottage, having made sure that no one saw me, I always took a great leap over the little stream, which saved going round a little way. And never once, for several years, did I thus cross it without seeing a picture as clear to the mind's eye as Mansie Wauch's—a picture which made me walk very thoughtfully along for the next mile or two. It was curious to think how one was to get through the accustomed duty after having grown old and frail. The day would come when the brook could be crossed in that brisk fashion no more. It must be an odd thing for the parson to walk as an old man into the pulpit, still his own, which was his own when he was a young man of six−and−twenty. What a crowd of old remembrances must be present each Sunday to the clergyman's mind, who has served the same parish and preached in the same church for fifty years! Personal identity, continued through the successive stages of life, is a common−place thing to think of; but when it is brought home to your own case and feeling, it is a very touching and a very bewildering thing. There are the same trees and hills as when you were a boy; and when each of us comes to his last days in this world, how short a space it will seem since we were little children! Let us humbly hope, that, in that brief space parting the cradle from the grave, we may (by help from above) have accomplished a certain work which will cast its blessed influence over all the years and all the ages before us. Yet it remains a strange thing to look forward and to see yourself with grey hair, and not much even of that; to see your wife an old woman, and your little boy or girl grown up into manhood or womanhood. It is more strange still to fancy you see them all going on as usual in the round of life, and you no longer among them. You see your empty chair. There is your writing−table and your inkstand; there are your books, not so carefully arranged as they used to be; perhaps,—on the whole, less indication than you might have hoped that they miss you. All this is strange when you bring it home to your own case; and that hundreds of millions have felt the like makes it none the less strange to you. The commonplaces of life and death are not commonplace when they befall ourselves. It was in desperate hurry and agitation that Mansie Waueh saw his vision; and in like circumstances you may have yours too. But for the most part such moods come in leisure—in saunterings through the autumn woods—in reveries by the winter fire.

I do not think, thus musing upon our occasional glimpses of the Future, of such fancies as those of early youth—fancies and anticipations of greatness, of felicity, of fame; I think of the onward views of men approaching middle−age, who have found their place and their work in life, and who may reasonably believe that, save for great unexpected accidents, there will be no very material change in their lot till that "change come" to which Job looked forward four thousand years since. There are great numbers of educated folk who are likely always to live in the same kind of house, to have the same establishment, to associate with the same class of people, to walk along the same streets, to look upon the same hills, as Iong as they live. The only change will be the gradual one which will be wrought by advancing years.

And the onward view of such people in such circumstances is generally a very vague one. It is only now and then that there comes the startling clearness of prospect so well set forth by Mansie Wauch. Yet sometimes, when such a vivid view comes, it remains for days and is a painful companion of your solilude. Don't you remember, clerical reader of thirty−two, having seen a good deal of an old parson, rather sour in aspect, rather shabby−looking, sadly pinched for means, and with powers dwarfed by the sore struggle with the world to maintain his family and to keep up a respectable appearance upon his limited resources; perhaps with his mind made petty and his temper spoiled by the little worries, the petty malignant tattle and gossip and occasional

insolence of a little backbiting village? and don't you remember how for days you felt haunted by a sort of nightmare that there was what you would be, if you lived so long? Yes; you know how there have been times when for ten days together that jarring thought would intrude, whenever your mind was disengaged from work; and sometimes, when you went to bed, that thought kept you awake for hours. You knew the impression was morbid, and you were angry with yourself for your silliness; but you could not drive it away.

It makes a great difference in the prospect of Future Years, if you are one of those people who, even after middle age, may still make a great rise in life. This will prolong the restlessness which in others is sobered down at forty: it will extend the period during which you will every now and then have brief seasons of feverish anxiety, hope, and fear, followed by longer stretches of blank disappointment. And it will afford the opportunity of experiencing a vividly new sensation, and of turning over a quite new leaf, after most people have settled to the jog−trot at which the remainder of the pilgrimage is to be covered. A clergyman of the Church of England may be made a bishop, and exchange a quiet rectory for a palace. No doubt the increase of responsibility is to a conscientious man almost appalling; but surely the rise in life is great. There you are, one of four−and−twenty,—selected out of near twenty thousand. It is possible, indeed, that you may feel more reason for shame than for elation at the thought. A barrister unknown to fame, but of respectable stantling, may be made a judge. Such a man may even, if he gets into the groove, be gradually pushed on till he reaches an eminence which probably surprises himself as much as any one else. A good speaker in Parliament may at sixty or seventy be made a Cabinet Minister. And we can all imagine what indescribable pride and elation must in such cases possess the wife and daughters of the man who has attained this decided step in advance. I can say sincerely that I never saw human beings walk with so airy tread, and evince so fussily their sense of a greatness more than mortal, as the wife and the daughter of an amiable but not able bishop I knew in my youth, when they came to church on the Sunday morning on which the good man preached for the first time in his lawn sleeves. Their heads were turned for the time; but they gradually came right again, as the ladies became accustomed to the summits of human affairs. Let it be said for the bishop himself, that there was not a vestige of that sense of elevation about him. He looked perfectly modest and unaffected. His dress was remarkably ill put on, and his sleeves stuck out in the most awkward fashion ever assumed by drapery. I suppose that sometimes these rises in life come very unexpectedly. I have heard of a man who, when he received a letter from the Prime Minister of the day offering him a place of great dignity, thought the letter was a hoax, and did not notice it for several days. You could not certainly infer from his modesty what has proved to be the fact, that he has filled his place admirably well. The possibility of such material changes must no doubt tend to prolong the interest in life, which is ready to flag as years go on. But perhaps with the majority of men the level is found before middle age, and no very great worldly change awaits them. The path stretches on, with its ups and downs; and they only hope for strength for the day. But in such men's lot of humble duty and quiet content there remains room for many fears. All human beings who are as well off as they can ever be, and so who have little room for hope, seem to be liable to the invasion of great fear as they look into the future. It seems to be so with kings, and with great nobles. Many such have lived in a nervous dread of change, and have ever been watching the signs of the times with apprehensive eyes. Nothing that can happen can well make such better; and so they suffer from the vague foreboding of something which will make them worse. And the same law readies to those in whom hope is narrowed down, not by the limit of grand possibility, but of little,—not by the fact that they have got all that mortal can get, but by the fact that they have got the little which is all that Providence seems to intend to give to them. And, indeed, there is something that is almost awful, when your affairs are all going happily, when your mind is clear and equal to its work, when your bodily health is unbroken, when your home is pleasant, when your income is ample, when your children are healthy and merry and hopeful,—in looking on to Future Years. The more happy you are, the more there is of awe in the thought how frail are the foundations of your earthly happiness,—what havoc may be made of them by the chances of even a single day. It is no wonder that the solemnity and awfuluess of the Future have been felt so much, that the languages of Northern Europe have, as I dare say you know, no word which expresses the essential notion of Futurity. You think, perhaps, of shall and will. Well, these words have come now to convey the notion of Futurity; but they do so only in a secondary fashion. Look to their etymology, and you will see that they imply Futurity, but do not express it. I shall do such a thing means I am bound to do it, I am under an obligation to do it. I will do such a thing means I intend to do it, It is my present purpose to do it. Of course, if you are under an obligation to do anything, or if it be your intention to do anything, the probability is that the thing will be done;

but the Northern family of languages ventures no nearer than that towards the expression of the bare, awful idea of Future Time. It was no wonder that Mr. Croaker was able to cast a gloom upon the gayest circle, and the happiest conjuncture of circumstances, by wishing that all might be as well that day six months. Six months! What might that time not do? Perhaps you have not read a little poem of Barry Cornwall's, the idea of which must come home to the heart of most of us:—

Touch us gently, Time!
Let us glide adown thy stream
Gently,—as we sometimes glide
Through a quiet dream.
Humble voyagers are we,
Husband, wife, and children three—
One is lost,—an angel, fled
To the azure overhead.
Touch us gently, Time!
We've not proud nor soaring wings:
Our ambition, our content,
Lies in simple things.
Humble voyagers are we,
O'er life's dim, unsounded sea,
Seeking only some calm clime:—
Touch us gently, gentle Time!

I know that sometimes, my friend, you will not have much sleep, if, when you lay your head on your pillow, you begin to think how much depends upon your health and life. You have reached now that time at which you value life and health not so much for their service to yourself, as for their needfulness to others. There is a petition familiar to me in this Scotch country, where people make their prayers for themselves, which seems to me to possess great solemnity and force, when we think of all that is implied in it. It is, Spare useful lives! One life, the slender line of blood passing into and passing out of one human heart, may decide the question, whether wife and children shall grow up affluent, refined, happy, yes, and good, or be reduced to hard straits, with all the manifold evils which grow of poverty in the case of those who have been reduced to it after knowing other things. You often think, I doubt not, in quiet hours, what would become of your children, if you were gone. You have done, I trust, what you can to care for them, even from your grave: you think sometimes of a poetical figure of speech amid the dry technical phrases of English law: you know what is meant by the law of Mortmain; and you like to think that even your dead hand may be felt to be kindly intermeddling yet in the affairs of those who were your dearest: that some little sum, slender, perhaps, but as liberal as you could make it, may come in periodically when it is wanted, and seem like the gift of a thoughtful, heart and a kindly hand which are far away. Yes, cut down your present income to any extent, that you may make some provision for your children after you are dead. You do not wish that they should have the saddest of all reasons for taking care of you, and trying to lengthen out your life. But even after you have done everything which your small means permit, you will still think, with an anxious heart, of the possibilities of Future Years. A man or woman who has children has very strong reason for wishing to live as long as may be, and has no right to trifle with, health or life. And sometimes, looking out into days to come, you think of the little things, hitherto so free from man's heritage of care, as they may some day be. You see them shabby, and early anxious: can that be the little boy's rosy face, now so pale and thin? You see them in a poor room, in which you recognize your study chairs, with the hair coming out of the cushions, and a carpet which you remember now threadbare and in holes.

It is no wonder at all that people are so anxious about money. Money means every desirable material thing on earth, and the manifold immaterial things which come of material possessions. Poverty is the most comprehensive earthly evil; all conceivable evils, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, may come of that. Of course, great temptations attend its opposite; and the wise man's prayer will be what it was long ago—'Give me neither poverty nor riches.' But let us have no nonsense talked about money being of no consequence. The want of it has made many a father and mother tremble at the prospect of being taken from their children; the want of it has embittered many a parent's dying hours. You hear selfish persons talking vaguely about faith. You find such heartless persons

jauntily spending all they get on themselves, and then leaving their poor children to beggary, with the miserable pretext that they are doing all this through their abundant trust in God. Now this is not faith; it is insolent presumption. It is exactly as if a man should jump from the top of St. Paul's, and say that he had faith that the Almighty would keep him from being dashed to pieces on the pavement. There is a high authority as to such cases—'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' If God had promised that people should never fall into the miseries of penury under any circumstances, it would be faith to trust that promise, however unlikely of fulfilment it might seem in any particular case. But God has made no such promise; and if you leave your children without provision, you have no right to expect that they shall not suffer the natural consequences of your heartlessness and thoughtlessness. True faith lies in your doing everything you possibly can, and then humbly trusting in God, And if, after you have done your very best, you must still go, with but a blank outlook for those you leave, why, then, you may trust them to the Husband of the widow and Father of the fatherless. Faith, as regards such matters, means firm belief that God will do all he has promised to do, however difficult or unlikely. But some people seem to think that faith means firm belief that God will do whatever they think would suit them, however unreasonable, and however flatly in the face of all the established laws of His government.

We all have it in our power to make ourselves miserable, if we look far into future years and calculate their probabilities of evil, and steadily anticipate the worst. It is not expedient to calculate too far a−head. Of course, the right way in this, as in other things, is the middle way: we are not to run either into the extreme of over−carefulness and anxiety on the one hand, or of recklessness and imprudence on the other. But as mention has been made of faith, it may safely be said that we are forgetful of that rational trust in God which is at once our duty and our inestimable privilege, if we are always looking out into the future, and vexing ourselves with endless fears as to how things are to go then. There is no divine promise, that, if a reckless blockhead leaves his children to starve, they shall not starve. And a certain inspired volume speaks with extreme severity of the man who fails to provide for them of his own house. But there is a divine promise which says to the humble Christian,—'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.' If your affairs are going on fairly now, be thankful, and try to do your duty, and to do your best, as a Christian man and a prudent man, and then leave the rest to God. Your children are about you; no doubt they may die, and it is fit enough that you should not forget the fragility of your most prized possessions; it is fit enough that you should sometimes sit by the fire and look at the merry faces and listen to the little voices, and think what it would be to lose them. But it is not needful, or rational, or Christian−like, to be always brooding on that thought. And when they grow up, it may be hard to provide for them. The little thing that is sitting on your knee may before many years be alone in life, thousands of miles from you and from his early home, an insignificant item in the bitter price which Britain pays for her Indian Empire. It is even possible, though you hardly for a moment admit that thought, that the child may turn out a heartless and wicked man, and prove your shame and heart−break; all wicked and heartless men have been the children of somebody; and many of them, doubtless, the children of those who surmised the future as little as Eve did when she smiled upon the infant Cain. And the fireside by which you sit, now merry and noisy enough, may grow lonely,—lonely with the second loneliness, not the hopeful solitude of youth looking forward, but the desponding loneliness of age looking back. And it is so with everything else. Your health may break down. Some fearful accident may befall you. The readers of the magazine may cease to care for your articles. People may get tired of your sermons. People may stop buying your books, your wine, your groceries, your milk and cream. Younger men may take away your legal business. Yet how often these fears prove utterly groundless! It was good and wise advice given by one who had managed, with a cheerful and hopeful spirit, to pass through many trying and anxious years, to 'take short views:'—not to vex and worry yourself by planning too far a−head. And a wiser than the wise and cheerful Sydney Smith had anticipated his philosophy. You remember Who said, 'Take no thought,'—that is, no over−anxious and over−careful thought—'for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.' Did you ever sail over a blue summer sea towards a mountainous coast, frowning, sullen, gloomy: and have you not seen the gloom retire before you as you advanced; the hills, grim in the distance, stretch into sunny slopes when you neared them; and the waters smile in cheerful light that looked so black when they were far away? And who is there that has not seen the parallel in actual life? We have all known the anticipated ills of life—the danger that looked so big, the duty that looked so arduous, the entanglement that we could not see our way through—prove to have been nothing more than spectres on the far horizon; and when at length we reached them, all their difficulty had vanished into air, leaving us to think what fools we had been for having so needlessly

conjured up phantoms to disturb our quiet. Yes, there is no doubt of it, a Very great part of all we suffer in this world is from the apprehension of things that never come. I remember well how a dear friend, whom I (and many more) lately lost, told me many times of his fears as to what he would do in a certain contingency which both he and I thought was quite sure to come sooner or later. I know that the anticipation of it caused him some of the most anxious hours of a very anxious, though useful and honoured life. How vain his fears proved! He was taken from this world before what he had dreaded had cast its most distant shadow. Well, let me try to discard the notion which has been sometimes worrying me of late, that perhaps I have written nearly as many essays as any one will care to read. Don't let any of us give way to fears which may prove to have been entirely groundless.

And then, if we are really spared to see those trials we Bometimes think of, and which it is right that we should sometimes think of, the strength for them will come at the time. They will not look nearly so black, and we shall be enabled to bear them bravely. There is in human nature a marvellous power of accommodation to circumstances. We can gradually make up our mind to almost anything. If this were a sermon instead of an essay, I should explain my theory of how this comes to be. I see in all this something beyond the mere natural instinct of acquiescence in what is inevitable; something beyond the benevolent law in the human mind, that it shall adapt itself to whatever circumstances it may be placed in; something beyond the doing of the gentle comforter Time. Yes, it is wonderful what people can go through, wonderful what people can get reconciled to. I dare say my friend Smith, when his hair began to fall off, made frantic efforts to keep it on. I have no doubt he anxiously tried all the vile concoctions which quackery advertises in the newspapers, for the advantage of those who wish for luxuriant locks. I dare say for a while it really weighed upon his mind, and disturbed his quiet, that he was getting bald. But now he has quite reconciled himself to his lot; and with a head smooth and sheeny as the egg of the ostrich, Smith goes on through life, and feels no pang at the remembrance of the ambrosial curls of his youth. Most young people, I dare say, think it will be a dreadful thing to grow old: a girl of eighteen thinks it must be an awful sensation to be thirty. Believe me, not at all. You are brought to it bit by bit; and when you reach the spot, you rather like the view. And it is so with graver things. We grow able to do and to bear that which it is needful that we should do and bear. As is the day, so the strength proves to be. And you have heard people tell you truly, that they have been enabled to bear what they never thought they could have come through with their reason or their life. I have no fear for the Christian man, so he keeps to the path of duty. Straining up the steep hill, his heart will grow stout in just proportion to its steepness. Yes, and if the call to martyrdom came, I should not despair of finding men who would show themselves equal to it, even in this commonplace age, and among people who wear Highland cloaks and knickerbockers. The martyr's strength would come with the martyr's day. It is because there is no call for it now, that people look so little like it.

It is very difficult, in this world, to strongly enforce a truth, without seeming to push it into an extreme. You are very apt, in avoiding one error, to run into the opposite error; forgetting that truth and right lie generally between two extremes. And in agreeing with Sydney Smith, as to the wisdom and the duty of 'taking short views,' let us take care of appearing to approve the doings of those foolish and unprincipled people who will keep no out−look into the future time at all. A bee, you know, cannot see more than a single inch before it; and there are many men, and perhaps more women, who appear, as regards their domestic concerns, to be very much of bees. Not bees in the respect of being busy; but bees in the respect of being blind. You see this in all ranks of life. You see it in the artisan, earning good wages, yet with every prospect of being weeks out of work next summer or winter, who yet will not be persuaded to lay by a little in preparation for a rainy day. You see it in the country gentleman, who, having five thousand a year, spends ten thousand a year; resolutely shutting his eyes to the certain and not very remote consequences. You see it in the man who walks into a shop and buys a lot of things which he has not the money to pay for, in the vague hope that something will turn up. It is a comparatively thoughtful and anxious class of men who systematically overcloud the present by anticipations of the future. The more usual thing is to sacrifice the future to the present; to grasp at what in the way of present gratification or gain can be got, with very little thought of the consequences. You see silly women, the wives of men whose families are mainly dependent on their lives, constantly urging on their husbands to extravagances which eat up the little provision which might have been made for themselves and their children when he is gone who earned their bread. There is no sadder sight, I think, than that which is not a very uncommon sight, the care−worn, anxious husband, labouring beyond his strength, often sorrowfully calculating how he may make the ends to meet, denying himself in every way; and the extravagant idiot of a wife, bedizened with jewellery and arrayed in velvet and lace, who

tosses away his hard earnings in reckless extravagance; in entertainments which he cannot afford, given to people who do not care a rush for him; in preposterous dress; in absurd furniture; in needless men−servants; in green−grocers above measure; in resolute aping of the way of living of people with twice or three times the means. It is sad to see all the forethought, prudence, and moderation of the wedded pair confined to one of them. You would say that it will not be any solid consolation to the widow, when the husband is fairly worried into his grave at last,—when his daughters have to go out as governesses, and she has to let lodgings,—to reflect that while he lived they never failed to have champagne at their dinner parties; and that they had three men to wait at table on such occasions, while Mr. Smith, next door, had never more than one and a maidservant. If such idiotic women would but look forward, and consider how all this must end! If the professional man spends all he earns, what remains when the supply is cut off; when the toiling head and hand can toil no more? Ah, a little of the economy and management which must perforce be practised after that might have tended powerfully to pirt off the evil day. Sometimes the husband is merely the care−worn drudge who provides what the wife squanders. Have you not known such a thing as that a man should be labouring under an Indian sun, and cutting down every personal expense to the last shilling, that he might send a liberal allowance to his wife in England; while she meanwhile was recklessly spending twice what was thus sent her; running up overwhelming accounts, dashing about to public balls, paying for a bouquet what cost the poor fellow far away much thought to save, giving costly entertainments at home, filling her house with idle and empty−headed scapegraces, carrying on scandalous flirtations; till it becomes a happy thing, if the certain ruin she is bringing on her husband's head is cut short by the needful interference of Sir Cresswell Cresswell? There are cases in which tarring and feathering would soothe the moral sense of the right−minded onlooker. And even where things are not so bad as in the case of which we have been thinking, it remains the social curse of this age, that people with a few hundreds a year determinedly act in various respects as if they had as many thousands. The dinner given by a man with eight hundred a year, in certain regions of the earth which I could easily point out, is, as regards food, wine, and attendance, precisely the same as the dinner given by another man who has five thousand a year. When will this end? When will people see its silliness? In truth, you do not really, as things are in this country, make many people better off by adding a little or a good deal to their yearly income. For in all probability they were living up to the very extremity of their means before they got the addition; and in all probability the first thing they do, on getting the addition, is so far to increase their establishment and their expense that it is just as hard a struggle as ever to make the ends meet. It would not be a pleasant arrangement, that a man who was to be carried across the straits from England to France, should be fixed on a board so weighted that his mouth and nostrils should be at the level of the water, and thus that he should be struggling for life, and barely escaping drowning all the way. Yet hosts of people, whom no one proposes to put under restraint, do as regards their income and expenditure a precisely analogous thing. They deliberately weight themselves to that degree that their heads are barely above water, and that any unforeseen emergency dips their heads under. They rent a house a good deal dearer than they can justly afford; and they have servants more and more expensive than they ought; and by many such things they make sure that their progress through life shall be a drowning struggle; while, if they would rationally resolve and manfully confess that they cannot afford to have things as richer folk have them, and arrange their way of living in accordance with what they can afford, they would enjoy the feeling of ease and comfort; they would not be ever on the wretched stretch on which they are now, nor keeping up the jollow appearance of what is not the fact. But there are folk who make it a point of honour never to admit that in doing or not doing anything, they are actuated for an instant by so despicable a consideration as the question whether or not they can afford it. And who shall reckon up the brains which this social calamity has driven into disease, or the early paralytic shocks which it has brought on?

When you were very young, and looked forward to Future Years, did you ever feel a painful fear that you might outgrow your early home affections, and your associations with your native scenes? Did you ever think to yourself,—Will the day come when I have been years away from that river's side, and yet not care? I think we have all known the feeling. O plain church to which I used to go when I was a child, and where I used to think the singing so very splendid! O little room where I used to sleep! and you, tall tree,—on whose topmost branch I cut the initials which perhaps the reader knows, did I not even then wonder to myself if the time would ever come when I should be far away from−you,—far away, as now, for many years, and not likely to go back,—and yet feel entirely indifferent to the matter? and did not I even then feel a strange pain in the fear that very likely it might? These things come across the mind of a little boy with a curious grief and bewilderment. Ah, there is something

strange in the inner life of a thoughtful child of eight years old! I would rather see a faithful record of his thoughts, feelings, fancies, and sorrows, for a single week, than know all the political events that have happened during that space in Spain, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Russia, and Turkey. Even amid the great grief at leaving home for school in your early days, did you not feel a greater grief to think that the day might come when you would not care at all; when your home ties and affections would be outgrown; when you would be quite content to live on, month after month, far from parents, sisters, brothers, and feel hardly a perceptible blank when you remembered that they were far away? But it is of the essence of such fears, that, when the thing comes that you were afraid of, it has ceased to be fearful; still it is with a little pang that you sometimes call to remembrance how much you feared it once. It is a daily regret, though not a very acute one, (more's the pity,) to be thrown much, in middle life, into the society of an old friend whom as a boy you had regarded as very wise, and to be compelled to observe that he is a tremendous fool. You struggle with the conviction; you think it wrong to give in to it; but you cannot help it. But it would have been a sharper pang to the child's heart, to have impressed upon the child the fact, that 'Good Mr. Goose is a fool, and some day you will understand that he is.' In those days one admits no imperfection in the people and the things one likes. Tou like a person; and he is good. That seems the whole case. You do not go into exceptions and reservations. I remember how indignant I felt, as a boy, at reading some depreciatory criticism of the Waverley Novels. The criticism was to the effect that the plots generally dragged at first, and were huddled up at the end. But to me the novels were enchaining, enthralling; and to hint a defect in them stunned one. In the boy's feeling, if a thing be good, why, there cannot be anything bad about it. But in the man's mature judgment, even in the people he likes best, and in the things he appreciates most highly, there are many flaws and imperfections. It does not vex us much now to find that this is so; but it would have greatly vexed us many years since to have been told that it would be so. I can well imagine, that, if you told a thoughtful and affectionate child, how well he would some day get on, far from his parents and his home, his wish would be that any evil might befall him rather than that! We shrink with terror from the prospect of things which we can take easily enough when they come. I dare say Lord Chancellor Thurlow was moderately sincere when he exclaimed in the House of Peers, 'When I forget, my king, may my God forget me!' And you will understand what Leigh Hunt meant, when, in his pleasant poem of The Palfrey, he tells us of a daughter who had lost a very bad and heartless father by death, that,

> The daughter wept, and wept the more,
> To think her tears would soon be o'er.

Even in middle age, one sad thought which comes in the prospect of Future Years is of the change which they are sure to work upon many of our present views and feelings. And the change, in many cases, will be to the worse. One thing is certain,—that your temper will grow worse, if it do not grow better. Years will sour it, if they do not mellow it. Another certain thing is, that, if you do not grow wiser, you will be growing more foolish. It is very true that there is no fool so foolish as an old fool. Let us hope, my friend, that, whatever be our honest worldly work, it may never lose its interest. We must always speak humbly about the changes which coming time will work upon us, upon even our firmest resolutions and most rooted principles; or I should say for myself that I cannot even imagine myself the same being, with bent less resolute and heart less warm to that best of all employments which is the occupation of my life. But there are few things which, as we grow older, impress us more deeply than the transitoriness of thoughts and feelings in human hearts. Nor am I thinking of contemptible people only, when I say so. I am not thinking of the fellow who is pulled up in court in an action for breach of promise of marriage, and who in one letter makes vows of unalterable affection, and in another letter, written a few weeks or months later, tries to wriggle out of his engagement. Nor am I thinking of the weak, though well−meaning lady, who devotes herself in succession to a great variety of uneducated and unqualified religious instructors; who tells you one week how she has joined the flock of Mr. A., the converted prize−fighter, and how she regards him as by far the most improving preacher she ever heard; and who tells you the next week that she has seen through the prize−fighter, that he has gone and married a wealthy Roman Catholic, and that now she has resolved to wait on the ministry of Mr. B., an enthusiastic individual who makes shoes during the week and gives sermons on Sundays, and in whose addresses she finds exactly what suits her. I speak of the better feelings and purposes of wiser, if not better folk. Let me think here of pious emotions and holy resolutions, of the best and purest frames of heart and mind. Oh, if we could all always remain at our best! And after all, permanence is the great test. In the matter of Christian faith and feeling, in the matter of all our worthier principles and purposes,

that which lasts longest is best. This, indeed, is true of most things. The worth of anything depends much upon its durability,—upon the wear that is in it. A thing that is merely a fine flash and over only disappoints. The highest authority has recognized this. You remember Who said to his friends, before leaving them, that He would have them bring forth fruit, and much fruit. But not even that was enough. The fairest profession for a time, the most earnest labour for a time, the most ardent affection for a time, would not suffice. And so the Redeemer's words were,—'I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.' Well, let us trust, that, in the most solemn of all respects, only progress shall be brought to us by all the changes of Future Years.'

But it is quite vain to think that feelings, as distinguished from principles, shall not lose much of their vividness, freshness, and depth, as time goes on. You cannot now by any effort revive the exultation you felt at some unexpected great success, nor the heart−sinking of some terrible loss or trial. You know how women, after the death of a child, determine that every day, as long as they live, they will visit the little grave. And they do so for a time, sometimes for a long time; but they gradually leave off. You know how burying−places are very trimly and carefully kept at first, and how flowers are hung upon the stone; but these things gradually cease. You know how many husbands and wives, after their partner's death, determine to give the remainder of life to the memory of the departed, and would regard with sincere horror the suggestion that it was possible they should ever marry again; but after a while they do. And you will even find men, beyond middle age, who made a tremendous work at their first wife's death, and wore very conspicuous mourning, who in a very few months may be seen dangling after some new fancy, and who in the prospect of their second marriage evince an exhilaration that approaches to crackiness. It is usual to speak of such things in a ludicrous manner, but I confess the matter seems to me anything but one to laugh at. I think that the rapid dying out of warm feelings, the rapid change of fixed resolutions, is one of the most sorrowful subjects of reflection which it is possible to suggest, Ah, my friends, after we die, it would not be expedient, even if it were possible, to come back. Many of us would not like to find how very little they miss us. But still, it is the manifest intention of the Creator that strong feelings should be transitory. The sorrowful thing is when they pass and leave absolutely no truce behind them. There should always be some corner kept in the heart for a feeling which once possessed it all. Let us look at the case temperately. Let us face and admit the facts. The healthy body and mind can get over a great deal; but there are some things which it is not to the credit of our nature should ever be entirely got over. Here are sober truth, and sound philosophy, and sincere feeling together, in the words of Philip van Artevelde:—

> Well, well, she's gone,
> And I have tamed my sorrow. Pain and grief
> Are transitory things, no less than joy;
> And though they leave us not the men we were,
> Yet they do leave us. You behold me here,
> A man bereaved, with something of a blight
> Upon the early blossoms of his life,
> And its first verdure,—having not the less
> A living root, and drawing from the earth
> Its vital juices, from the air its powers:
> And surely as man's heart and strength are whole,
> His appetites regerminate, his heart
> Re−opens, and his objects and desires
> Spring up renewed.

But though Artevelde speaks truly and well, you remember how Mr. Taylor, in that noble play, works out to our view the sad sight of the deterioration of character, the growing coarseness and harshness, the lessening tenderness and kindliness, which are apt to come with advancing years. Great trials, we know, passing over us, may influence us either for the worse or the better; and unless our nature is a very obdurate and poor one, though they may leave us, they will not leave us the men we were. Once, at a public meeting, I heard a man in eminent station make a speech. I had never seen him before; but I remembered an inscription which I had read, in a certain churchyard far away, upon the stone that marked the resting−place of his young wife, who had died many years before. I thought of its simple words of manly and hearty sorrow. I knew that the eminence he had reached had

not come till she who would have been proudest of it was beyond knowing it or caring for it. And I cannot say with what interest and satisfaction I thought I could trace, in the features which were sad without the infusion of a grain of sentirnentalism, in the subdued and quiet tone of the man's whole aspect and manner and address, the manifest proof that he had not shut down the leaf upon that old page of his history, that lie had never quite got over that great grief of earlier years. One felt better and more hopeful for the sight. I suppose many people, after meeting some overwhelming loss or trial, have fancied that they would soon die; but that is almost invariably a delusion. Various dogs have died of a broken heart, but very few human beings. The inferior creature has pined away at his master's loss: as for us, it is not that one would doubt the depth and sincerity of sorrow, but that there is more endurance in our constitution, and that God has appointed that grief shall rather mould and influence than kill. It is a much sadder sight than an early death, to see human beings live on after heavy trial, and sink into something very unlike their early selves and very inferior to their early selves. I can well believe that many a human being, if he eould have a glimpse in innocent youth of what he will be twenty or thirty years after, would pray in anguish to be taken before coming to that! Mansie Wauch's glimpse of destitution was bad enough; but a million times worse is a glimpse of hardened and unabashed sin and shame. And it would be no comfort—it would be an aggravation in that view—to think that by the time you have reached that miserable point, you will have grown pretty well reconciled to it. That is the worst of all. To be wicked and depraved, and to feel it, and to be wretched under it, is bad enough; but it is a great deal worse to have fallen into that depth of moral degradation, and to feel that really you don't care. The instinct of accommodation is not always a blessing. It is happy for us, that, though in youth we hoped to live in a castle or a palace, we can make up our mind to live in a little parsonage or a quiet street in a country town. It is happy for us, that, though in youth we hoped to be very great and famous, we are so entirely reconciled to being little and unknown. But it is not happy for the poor girl who walks the Haymarket at night that she feels her degradation so little. It is not happy that she has come to feel towards her miserable life so differently now from what she would have felt towards it, had it been set before her while she was the blooming, thoughtless creature in the little cottage in the country. It is only by fits and starts that the poor drunken wretch, living in a garret upon a little pittance allowed him by his relations, who was once a man of character and hope, feels what a sad pitch he has come to. If you could get him to feel it constantly, there would be some hope of his reclamation even yet.

It seems to me a very comforting thought, in looking on to Future Years, if you are able to think that you are in a profession or a calling from which you will never retire. For the prospect of a total change in your mode of life, and the entire cessation of the occupation which, for many years employed the greater part of your waking thoughts, and all this amid the failing powers and nagging hopes of declining, years, is both a sad and a perplexing prospect to a thoughtful person. For such a person cannot regard this great change simply in the light of a rest from toil and worry; he will know quite well what a blankness, and listlessness, and loss of interest in life, will come of feeling all at once that you have nothing at all to do. And so it is a great blessing, if your vocation be one which is a dignified and befitting one for an old man to be engaged in, one that beseems his gravity and his long experience, one that beseems even his slow movements and his white hairs. It is a pleasant thing to see an old man a judge; his years become the judgment−seat. But then the old man can hold such an office only while he retains strength of body and mind efficiently to perform its duties; and he must do all his work for himself: and accordingly a day must come when the venerable Chancellor resigns the Great Seal; when the aged Justice or Baron must give up his place; and when these honoured Judges, though still retaining considerable vigour, but vigour less than enough for their hard work, are compelled to feel that their occupation is gone. And accordingly I hold that what is the best of all professions, for many reasons, is especially so for this, that you need never retire from it. In the Church you need not do all your duty yourself. You may get assistance to supplement your own lessening strength. The energetic young curate or curates may do that part of the parish work which exceeds the power of the ageing incumbent, while the entire parochial machinery has still the advantage of being directed by his wisdom and experience, and while the old man is still permitted to do what he can with such strength as is spared to him, and to feel that he is useful in the noblest cause yet. And even to extremest age and frailty,—to age and frailty which would long since have incapacitated the judge for the Bench—the parish clergyman may take some share in the much−loved duty in which he has laboured so long. He may still, though briefly, and only now and then, address his flock from the pulpit, in words which his very feebleness will make far more touchingly effective than the most vigorous eloquence and the richest and fullest

tones of his young coadjutors. There never will be, within the sacred walls, a silence and reverence more profound than when the withered kindly face looks as of old upon the congregation, to whose fathers its owner first ministered, and which has grown up mainly under his instruction,—and when the voice that falls familiarly on so many ears tells again, quietly and earnestly, the old story which we all need so much to hear. And he may still look in at the parish school, and watch the growth of a generation that is to do the work of life when he is in his grave; and kindly smooth the children's heads; and tell them how One, once a little child, and never more than a young man, brought salvation alike to young and old. He may still sit by the bedside of the sick and dying, and speak to such with the sympathy and the solemnity of one who does not forget that the last great realities are drawing near to both. But there are vocations which are all very well for young or middle−aged people, but which do not quite suit the old. Such is that of the barrister. Wrangling and hair−splitting, browbeating and bewildering witnesses, making coarse jokes to excite the laughter of common jurymen, and addressing such with clap−trap bellowings, are not the work for grey−headed men. If such remain at the bar, rather let them have the more refined work of the Equity Courts, where you address judges, and not juries; and where you spare clap−trap and misrepresentation, if for no better reason, because, you know that these will not stand you in the slightest stead. The work which best befits the aged, the work for which no mortal can ever become too venerable and dignified or too weak and frail, is the work of Christian usefulness and philanthropy. And it is a beautiful sight to see, as I trust we all have seen, that work persevered in with the closing energies of life. It is a noble test of the soundness of the principle that prompted to its first undertaking. It is a hopeful and cheering sight to younger men, looking out with something of fear to the temptations and trials of the years before them. Oh! if the grey−haired clergyman, with less now, indeed, of physical strength and mere physical warmth, yet preaches, with the added weight and solemnity of his long experience, the same blessed doctrines now, after forty years, that he preached in his early prime; if the philanthropist of half a century since is the philanthropist still,—still kind, hopeful, and unwearied, though with the snows of age upon his head, and the hand that never told its fellow of what it did now trembling as it does the deed of mercy; then I think that even the most doubtful will believe that the principle and the religion of such men were a glorious reality! The sternest of all touchstones of the genuineness of our better feelings is the fashion in which they stand the wear of years.

But my shortening space warns me to stop; and I must cease, for the present, from these thoughts of Future Years,—cease, I mean, from writing about that mysterious tract before us: who can cease from thinking of it? You remember how the writer of that little poem which has been quoted asks Time to touch gently him and his. Of course he spoke as a poet, stating the case fancifully,—but not forgetting, that, when we come to sober sense, we must prefer our requests to an Ear more ready to hear us and a Hand more ready to help. It is not to Time that I shall apply to lead me through life into immortality! And I cannot think of years to come without going back to a greater poet, whom we need not esteem the less because his inspiration was loftier than that of the Muses, who has summed up so grandly in one comprehensive sentence all the possibilities which could befall him in the days and ages before him. "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory!" Let us humbly trust that in that sketch, round and complete, of all that can ever come to us, my readers and I may be able to read the history of our Future Years!

CONCLUSION.

And now, friendly reader, who have borne me company so far, your task is ended. You will have no more of the RECREATIONS OF A COUNTRY PARSON. Yet do not be alarmed. I trust you have not seen the writer's last appearance. It is only that the essays which he hopes yet to write, will not be composed in the comparative leisure of a country clergyman's quiet life. And not merely is it still a pleasant change of occupation, to write such chapters as those you have read: but the author cannot forget that to them he is indebted for the acquaintance of some of the most valued friends he has in this world. It was especially delightful to find a little sympathetic public, whose taste these papers suited; and to which they have not been devoid of profit and comfort. Nor was it without a certain subdued exultation that a quiet Scotch minister learned that away across the ocean he had found an audience as large and sympathetic as in his own country; and a kind appreciation by the organs of criticism there, which he could not read without much emotion. Of course, if I had fancied myself a great genius, it would

have seemed nothing strange that the thoughts I had written down in my little study in the country manse, should be read by many fellow−creatures four thousand miles off. But then I knew I was not a great genius: and so I felt it at once a great pleasure and a great surprise. My heart smote me when I thought of some flippant words of depreciation which these essays have contained concerning our American brothers. They are the last this hand shall ever write: and I never will forget how simple thoughts, only sincere and not unconsidered, found their way to hearts, kindly Scotch and English yet, though beating on the farther side of the Great Atlantic.

After all, a clergyman's great enjoyment is in his duty: and I think that, unless he be crushed down by a parish of utter misery and destitution, in which all he can do is like a drop in the ocean (as that great and good man Dr. Guthrie tells us he was), the town is to the clergyman better than the country. The crowded city, when all is said, contains the best of the race. Your mind is stirred up there, to do what you could not have done elsewhere. The best of your energy and ability is brought out by the never−ceasing spur.

Yet you will be sensible of various evils in the city clergyman's life. One is the great evil of over−work. You are always on the stretch. You never feel that your work is overtaken. The time never comes, in which you feel that you may sit down and rest: never comes, at least, save in the autumnal holiday. It is expedient that a city clergyman should have his mind well stored before going to his charge: for there he will find a perpetual drain upon his mind, and very little time for refilling it by general reading. To prepare two sermons a week, or even one sermon a week, for an educated congregation (or indeed for any congregation), implies no small sustained effort. It is not so very hard to write one sermon in one week; but is very hard to write thirty sermons in thirty successive weeks. You know how five miles in five hours are nothing: but a thousand miles in a thousand hours are killing. But every one knows that the preparation for the pulpit is the least part of a town clergyman's work. You have many sick to visit regularly: many frail and old people who cannot come to church. You have schools, classes, missions. And there is the constant effort to maintain some acquaintance with the families that attend your church, so that you and they shall not be strangers. I am persuaded that there ought to be at least two clergymen to every extensive parish. For it is not expedient that the clergy should have their minds and bodies ever on the strain, just to get througr the needful work of the day. There is no opportunity, then, for the accumulation of some stock and store of thought and learning. And one important service which the clergy of a country ought to render it, is the maintenance of learning, and general culture. Indeed, a man not fairly versed in literature and science is not capable of preaching as is needful at the present day. And when always overdriven, a man is tempted to lower his standard: and instead of trying to do his work to the very best of his ability, to wish just to get decently through it. Then, as for other men, they have the great happiness of knowing when their work is done. When a lawyer has attended to his cases, he has no more to do that day. So when the doctor has visited his patients. But to clerical work there is no limit. Your work is to do all the good you can. There is the parish: there is the population: and the uneasy conscience is always suggesting thia and that new scheme of benevolent exertion. The only limit to the clergyman's duty is his strength: and very often that limit is outrun. Oh that one could wisely fix what one may safely and rightly do; and then resolutely determine not to attempt any more! But who can do that? If your heart be in your work, you are every now and then knocking yourself up. And you cannot help it. You advise your friends prudently against overwork; and then you go and work till you drop.

And a further evil of the town parish is, that a great part of your work is done by the utmost stretch of body and mind. Much of it is work of that nature, that when you are not actually doing it, you wonder how you can do it at all. When you think of it, it is a very great trial and effort to preach each Sunday to a thousand or fifteen hundred human beings. And by longer experience, and that humbler self−estimate which longer experience brings, the trial is ever becoming greater. It is the utmost strain of human energy, to do that duty fittingly. You know how easily some men go through their work. It is constant and protracted; but not a very great strain at any one time: there is no overwhelming nervous tension. I suppose even the Chief Justice, or the Lord Chancellor, when in the morning he walks into Court and takes his seat on the bench, does so without a trace of nervous tremour. He is thoroughly cool. He has a perfect conviction that he is equal to his work; that he is master of it. But preaching is to many men an unceasing nervous excitement. There is great wear in it. And this is so, I am persuaded, even with the most eminent men. Preaching is a thing by itself. When you properly reflect upon it, it is very solemn, responsible, and awful work. Not long since, I heard the Bishop of Oxford preach to a very great congregation. I was sitting very near him, and watched him with the professional interest. I am much mistaken if that great man was not as nervous as a young parson, preaching for the first time. Pie had a number of little things

in the pulpit to look after: his cap, gloves, handkerchief, sermon−case: I remember the nervous way in which he was twitching them about, and arranging them. No doubt that tremour wore off when he began to speak; and he gave a most admirable sermon. Still, the strain had been there, and had been felt. And I do not think that the like can recur week by week, without considerable wear of the principle of life within. Now, in preaching to a little country congregation, there is much less of that wear: to say nothing of the increased physical effort of addressing many hundreds of people, as compared with that of addressing eighty or ninety. It is quite possible that out of the many hundreds, there may not be very many individuals of whom, intellectually, you stand in very overwhelming awe: and the height of a crowd of a thousand people is no more than the height of the tallest man in it. Still, there is always something very imposing and awe−striking in the presence of a multitude of human beings.

And yet, if you have physical strength equal to your work, I do not think that for all the nervous anxiety which attends your charge, or for all its constant pressure, you would ever wish to leave it. There is a happiness in such sacred duty which only those who have experienced it know. And without (so far as you are aware) a shade of self−conceit, but in entire humility and deep thankfulness, you will rejoice that God makes you the means of comfort and advantage to many of your fellow−men. It is a delightful thing to think that you are of use: and, whether in town or country, the diligent clergyman may always hope that he is so, less or more.

THE END.