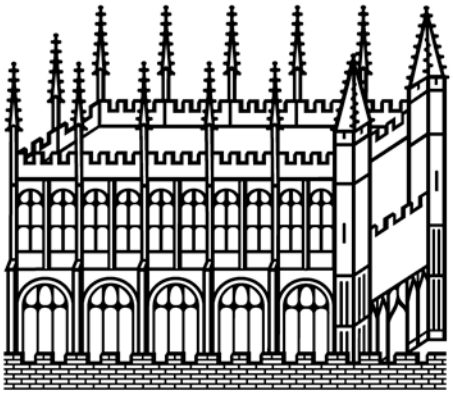

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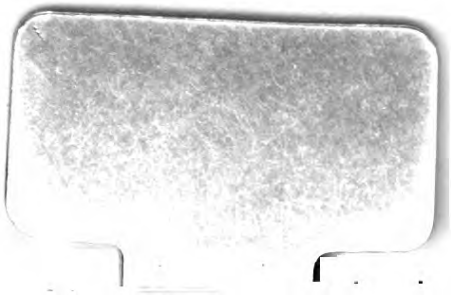

SELECTED ESSAYS OF WALTER HORATIO PATER

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SELECTED ESSAYS
OF
WALTER HORATIO PATER

EDITED, WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
BY
H. G. RAWLINSON, M.A.
INDIAN EDUCATIONAL SERVICE

Ὡς φιλοσοφίας οὔσης μεγίστης μουσικῆς

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INTRODUCTION

WALTER PATER

THERE is really very little for the biographer to record about the career of a scholarly recluse like Walter Pater, practically the whole of whose adult life was spent in the seclusion of his study in Oxford or Kensington, and almost the only events in which were the publication of his works. The Paters were originally of Dutch extraction, and had dwelt near Olney in Buckinghamshire, the home of the poet Cowper. One branch of the family had migrated to America, and here Walter's father, Richard Pater, was born. Richard Pater returned to England and settled down to practise as a doctor at Shadwell, near Stepney, where Walter Horatio was born, August 4th, 1839. There were three other children, two girls and a boy, and Richard Pater died while Walter was hardly more than a baby. After his death the family moved to an old house, with a great, shady garden, at Enfield, sanctified by its memories of Charles Lamb. The Paters had originally been Roman Catholics, but had left the Church, and Pater was brought up as an Anglican. That delicate phantasy, *The Child in the House*, is, like so much of Pater's work, largely auto-

biographical, and contains many delightful descriptions of the impressions left upon his mind by his early life at Enfield. Perhaps we may trace to the Catholic strain in his blood his innate love of ritual, " church lights, holy days, all that belonged to the comely order of the sanctuary, the secrets of its white linen and holy vessels and fonts of pure water," which he mentions as one of the moulding forces of the boy's life, and to his Dutch ancestry his desire for beauty " in precise and definite forms."

In 1853, Pater, aged thirteen, was sent to King's School, Canterbury. Life in an English public school in the early part of the nineteenth century was rough and brutal, and the shy, sensitive lad shrank from it instinctively. He was, however, deeply influenced by the great Cathedral, with its stately services and vaulted aisles. The impressions of his school-life are vividly recorded in *Emerald Uthwart*, where he describes himself and his companions as learning Latin and Greek " under the shadow of medieval church-towers, amid the haunts, the traditions, and with something of the discipline, of monasticism," and " shouting at their games or reciting their lessons, overarched by the work of medieval priors, or passing to church meekly, into the seats occupied by the young monks before them." From King's School Pater went up, in 1858, to Queen's College, Oxford, with an exhibition. Here his life was very much like that which he had led at school. Omnivorous reading and assiduous practice in the art of writing and translation were only broken by quiet walks with chosen friends. Two visits to his sisters at Heidelberg during

his College vacations left vivid impressions of that quaint old German city on his mind, and imbued him with a taste for German philosophy and literature, just then being popularised in England by Carlyle and by Pater's elder contemporary, Matthew Arnold. Pater was never an exact scholar, and his reading was too discursive for examination purposes. He only obtained a second-class in *Litterae Humaniores* in 1862, making up for this, however, by winning a Brazenose Fellowship two years later. Pater had by this time abandoned his earlier intention of taking holy orders. Pater's attitude towards Christianity was never clearly defined. Throughout his life he was a regular and devout attendant at College Chapel, and when in London, at churches like St. Austin's, Walworth, and St. Alban's, Holborn. The ritual of the Catholic church had a powerful attraction for him: "its hieratic purity and simplicity," to quote his own words, "became a type of something he desired always to have about him in actual life." In *Gaston Latour* he describes the singing of the Office at Chartres Cathedral as being "like a stream of water crossing unexpectedly a dusty way. . . . In psalm and antiphon, inexhaustibly fresh, the soul seemed to be taking refuge from the sordid languor and mean business of men's lives, in contemplation of the unfaltering vigour of the divine righteousness." Nor can one easily forget the picture, so delicately and feelingly drawn, of the Mass at which Marius assists in the Catacombs. In his review of *Robert Elsmere*, speaking of "the large class of minds which cannot be sure that the sacred story is true," he points out that there

is an " equally large class of minds of various degrees of intellectual power, up to the highest, who cannot be sure that it is false." Pater's Marius passes through various stages, Paganism, Epicureanism, and Stoicism, to the foot of the Cross. But he is brought there more by the artistic appeal of Christianity than by any actual religious instinct. This probably represents very fairly Pater's own spiritual experience; his latest work, the essay on Pascal, which might be so helpful in determining his final conclusions, takes us no further. The exact form of his religion, like that of his favourite hero, Leonardo, remains a mystery, but, to use his own words, is of little importance in the estimate of his genius.

In 1865 came an epoch-making event in Pater's life. In company with Dr. Shadwell, now Provost of Oriel, he made a tour in Northern Italy, visiting Pisa, Ravenna, Florence and other Italian cities. Here for the first time he made the acquaintance of the Italian artists of the Renaissance, the exposition of whom was destined to form so great a part of his life's work. But the train was actually fired by reading, in Otto Jahn's recent *Biographische Aufsätze*, a life of Johann Winckelmann. Winckelmann was born at Stendal in Prussian Saxony in 1717. He became enamoured of classical art, and sacrificed everything in order to get to Rome and study it for himself. Here he plunged deeply into his subject, until he at length became "consummate, tranquil, withdrawn into the region of ideals, yet retaining colour from the incidents of a passionate intellectual life." The result was his *History of Ancient Art.* Winckelmann's career was tragically

cut short in 1768, when he was murdered by a fellow-traveller for the sake of his medals. Pater's essay on Winckelmann came out in the *Westminster*, January, 1867. Studies from his pen of typical Renaissance figures—Pico della Mirandola, Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci and others—now began to appear regularly in the *Fortnightly*, then edited by John Morley. In 1873 these were collected and published in one volume, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*. This volume is characteristic of Pater. It reveals both his strength and his weakness. As an example of style it is almost unique. No one had ever brought English prose to such a pitch of perfection. He has the subtle artistry of Lamb, the poetic fervour of De Quincey, the scholarly finish of Newman, the long-drawn sweetness of Sir Thomas Browne. But Pater goes further than any of these. He uses the English language as though it were some exquisite musical instrument, capable of infinite subtle modulations. He is the perfect artist in words, choosing them, as the jeweller chooses his gems, until he achieves "the deposit, little cell by little cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions." Stories are told of how he went to work, jotting down his ideas as they arose on separate slips, arranged round a central "formula," writing and rewriting his rough draft on alternate lines, which he used for additions and corrections, even setting it up in type in order to study the effect, "loading every rift with ore," but finally removing every trace of surplusage, until he had achieved "the last finish of the gem-engraver, blowing away the last particle of invisible dust." The result was the

creation of an almost perfect poetic prose. Pater had achieved in his chosen medium what his contemporary and analogue, Swinburne, was achieving in verse. Pater's art "constantly aspires to the condition of music," which is, in his opinion, "the true type of perfected art." Like his own Marius, though his medium was formally prose, he was always of "the poetic temper." Something of the secrets of the alchemy by which these magical effects were attained may be learnt from a study of his essay on Style, which appeared, along with earlier essays on Coleridge, Wordsworth, Rossetti, Lamb, Sir Thomas Browne and other subjects, in a volume of *Appreciations* in 1889. Here he describes "imaginative prose" as being "the special and privileged artistic faculty of the day," and exerting in due measure, "all the varied charms of poetry, down to the rhythm which gives its musical value to every syllable."

On the other hand, both as a stylist and a critic, Pater has, to a very marked degree, the "defects of his qualities." A style so deliberately artificial must necessarily lack spontaneity. It has a languid, hothouse air, a voluptuous sensuousness which is often wearying and even cloying to the reader. We get tired of the conscious mannerisms, the long sentences with their involved parentheses. As a critic, Pater had little technical knowledge of art, in which respect he differs lamentably from Ruskin. His criticism is entirely impressionistic and subjective. To him, the true aesthetic critic is the "Interpreter of the House Beautiful," and his only interest in a work of art is in its poetic suggestiveness. This led him into strange

errors of judgment. His criticism of Botticelli's Madonnas as "shrinking from the pressure of the Divine Child" was characterised by *Blackwood* as "one of the most incongruous and grotesque misrepresentations ever invented by man." He even blunders lamentably over his beloved Leonardo, attributing to him work which is almost certainly by other hands. In reading the justly famous description of the Monna Liza, a passage which for lyric rapture and intensity is surely unparalleled, we are often tempted to wonder what Leonardo himself would have made of this exquisitely imaginative interpretation of his masterpiece! The *Renaissance* brought Pater fame. But, at the same time, it aroused a great deal of adverse criticism. Early Victorian propriety had not yet recovered from the shock it had received in 1866 from the frank Paganism of Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads*. The "fleshly school of poetry," the chief offender being Dante Gabriel Rossetti, had been attacked with a violence worthy of the palmy days of Jeffrey. The appearance of Pater, with his insistence on Flaubert's doctrine of "Art for Art's sake," was not likely to pass unchallenged. And, indeed, there was a good deal in *Studies of the History of the Renaissance*, especially in the conclusion (which the author afterwards withdrew) to arouse misgivings. Pater again and again insists that life consists of a kind of intellectual Epicureanism "grasping at any exquisite passion that seems to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colours and curious odours." "To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this

ecstasy, is success in life." Again, in speaking of Winckelmann's pretended conversion to Catholicism in order that he might have further opportunities for studying Art, Pater holds that, "at the bar of the higher criticism," he may be absolved. "The insincerity of his religious profession was only one incident of a culture in which the moral instinct, like the religious or political, was merged in the artistic." There was, of course, a good deal of wilful paradox in all this, but it is not surprising that Jowett and others considered it dangerous teaching for one to propound who held the position of a college tutor. On the other hand, it is scarcely fair to make Pater responsible for the vagaries and extravagances which became associated with the aesthetic school. The meteoric rise and fall of Oscar Wilde, who came up to Oxford in 1874, discredited the whole movement, and some of the obliquy fell, quite undeservedly, on Pater's shoulders. He is caricatured, brilliantly but unkindly, in Mr. Mallock's *New Republic* (1877) as Mr. Rose, the languid pre-Raphaelite, who "seems to talk of everybody as if they had no clothes on." Mr. Mallock afterwards explained that he was criticising "an attitude of mind rather than a man," and after all, Pater does not come off very much worse than Mr. Luke (Matthew Arnold).[1] Indeed, Pater had little or nothing in common with the Aesthetes who are ridiculed in *Patience* and in Du Maurier's drawings in *Punch*. Pater was essentially a scholar and a recluse. His Hedonism was purely intellectual. He lived in a

[1] Pater has also been identified with "Edward Langham" in Mrs. Humphry Ward's *Robert Elsmere*.

frugal, almost monastic fashion, and even in Oxford his rooms were furnished in a severely simple manner. Pater lived and died a poor man. He had little besides his College Fellowship and the exiguous return from his writings.

As a college tutor Pater was not a success. He was not an accurate scholar, and was of little use as a lecturer or a coach, though a select few found him a source of real inspiration. Still less was he capable of dealing with boisterous outbursts of undergraduate wit. Many good stories, mostly apocryphal, were told of his unpractical character—the anecdote about the man called Sanctuary, and his approval of bonfires in the Quad, "because they lit up so beautifully the spire of St. Mary's Church!" From 1878 he became more and more absorbed in *Marius the Epicurean*, his greatest and most characteristic work, published in 1885, "an Imaginary Portrait of a peculiar type of mind in the time of Marcus Aurelius." The original of Marius is stated to be Pater's friend, Mr. Richard Jackson, but the book is, to a very large extent, like all Pater's creative work, autobiographical. Marius is a young Roman of noble family, and the author traces the story of his intellectual development through the stages of unquestioning belief in the old gods to a kind of intellectual Epicureanism and then to Stoicism, which he learns at the feet of the great Emperor to whose household be becomes attached. Finally, he perishes on the threshold of Christianity, and his last moments are soothed by Christian consolations and rites. In the year when *Marius* appeared Pater went to live in Kensington. During

this period he was working industriously at essays and reviews for various periodicals. One series of these appeared in his lifetime, in the volume of *Appreciations* (1889) already referred to. Others were collected after his death by his friend and executor, Dr. Shadwell, under the titles of *Miscellaneous Studies* (1895), a very important volume, *Greek Studies*, and *Essays to the Guardian.*

One class of work to which Pater devoted much of his time after finishing *Marius* is represented in the four studies which appeared in 1887 under the title of *Imaginary Portraits.* He follows the idea which he had worked out on a larger scale in the case of Marius. He selects some character, historical or fictitious, and weaves round him a tale illustrating his temperamental characteristics. Thus *A Prince of Court Painters* is the story of Watteau, told through the medium of an imaginary journal kept by a girl whose brother is a pupil of the great artist. *Sebastian van Storck* is a young Hollander who is attracted by the cold abstractions of the philosophy of Spinoza ; *Duke Carl of Rosenmold*, on the other hand, is a young German nobleman, carried away by the overwhelming flood of the Renaissance, with all its wealth of new ideas, new experiences, and new forms of beauty. *Denys l'Auxerrois* and a later Imaginary Portrait, *Apollo in Picardy*, both reveal a new side of Pater's character, his love of what he himself calls the *macabre.* Both these are studies of a Pagan spirit which appears, reincarnated, in a medieval village. Pater seems to wish to study the effects of the clash of the Pagan and Christian ideals, and in both the story ends on a note

of horror; Denys is torn to pieces by a brutal mob of superstitious villagers, while the young serf, after slaying his boy friend with an antique *discus*, vanishes, none knows whither. To the same *genre* belong two other studies, *The Child in the House* and *Emerald Uthwart*, republished in the volume of *Miscellanies*, and the lovely *Hippolytus Veiled*, originally written in 1889, and afterwards included in *Greek Studies*. *Emerald Uthwart*, the story of a young soldier, condemned, along with his companion, to be shot for a romantic escapade, is to a great extent autobiographical. It contains pictures of Pater's own school-life, and is meant to analyse the result of the ἄσκησις, or discipline, of school-life on the character. The latter part is spoilt by that rather morbid love of the horrible and painful which we have already noted. *The Child in the House*, also autobiographical, is, on the other hand, the tenderest and most exquisite of Pater's shorter pieces, and shows the author at his best.

In 1893 appeared *Plato and Platonism*, earlier chapters of which Pater had, *more suo*, contributed to *Macmillan's* and the *Contemporary Review*. Pater looked upon this as his greatest contribution to literature, but it is doubtful whether posterity will accept this verdict. It is really a study, not of Plato's philosophy, but of his relation to contemporary thought and life, his setting, so to speak, in his environment. The chapter on *Lacedaemon*, originally a separate essay, enshrines, however, much of Pater's most characteristic teaching in a singularly beautiful guise. In 1893 Pater returned to Oxford from

London, and settled down in St. Giles' with his sisters. From 1888 he had been intermittently engaged upon a romance, *Gaston la Tour*. This, like *Marius*, which it resembles in so many ways, is an expanded "Imaginary Portrait." Gaston is a quiet, meditative lad, living at an old manor-house not far from the mighty Cathedral of Chartres, in the middle of the sixteenth century. Gaston, who is in many ways another example of Pater's self-portraiture, comes into contact with three typical Renaissance characters, each of them after the author's own heart—Ronsard, Montaigne, and Giordano Bruno. After completing five chapters Pater put the work aside, never to take it up again. Death, which overtook him suddenly and painlessly on July 30th, 1894, found him at work on an essay on Pascal. A series of *Greek Studies*, ranging from 1876 to 1894, was afterwards collected and published by Messrs. Macmillan. He never married: women had formed no part of the life of this gentle, solitary dreamer, "always so desirous of beauty, but desiring it always in such precise and definite forms as hands or flowers or hair."

STYLE

SINCE all progress of mind consists for the most part in differentiation, in the resolution of an obscure and complex object into its component aspects, it is surely the stupidest of losses to confuse things which right reason has put asunder, to lose the sense of achieved distinctions, the distinction between poetry and prose, for instance, or, to speak more exactly, between the laws and characteristic excellences of verse and prose composition. On the other hand, those who have dwelt most emphatically on the distinction between prose and verse, prose and poetry, may sometimes have been tempted to limit the proper functions of prose too narrowly; and this again is at least false economy, as being, in effect, the renunciation of a certain means or faculty, in a world where after all we must needs make the most of things. Critical efforts to limit art *a priori*, by anticipations regarding the natural incapacity of the material with which this or that artist works, as the sculptor with solid form, or the prose-writer with the ordinary language of men, are always liable to be discredited by the facts of artistic production; and while prose is actually found to be a coloured thing with Bacon, picturesque with Livy and Carlyle, musical with Cicero and Newman,

mystical and intimate with Plato and Michelet and Sir Thomas Browne, exalted or florid, it may be, with Milton and Taylor, it will be useless to protest that it can be nothing at all, except something very tamely and narrowly confined to mainly practical ends—a kind of "good round-hand"; as useless as the protest that poetry might not touch prosaic subjects as with Wordsworth, or an abstruse matter as with Browning, or treat contemporary life nobly as with Tennyson. In subordination to one essential beauty in all good literary style, in all literature as a fine art, as there are many beauties of poetry so the beauties of prose are many, and it is the business of criticism to estimate them as such; as it is good in the criticism of verse to look for those hard, logical, and quasi-prosaic excellences which that too has, or needs. To find in the poem, amid the flowers, the allusions, the mixed perspectives, of *Lycidas* for instance, the thought, the logical structure:—how wholesome! how delightful! as to identify in prose what we call the poetry, the imaginative power, not treating it as out of place and a kind of vagrant intruder, but by way of an estimate of its rights, that is, of its achieved powers, there.

Dryden, with the characteristic instinct of his age, loved to emphasise the distinction between poetry and prose, the protest against their confusion with each other, coming with somewhat diminished effect from one whose poetry was so prosaic. In truth, his sense of prosaic excellence affected his verse rather than his prose, which is not only fervid, richly figured, poetic, as we say, but vitiated, all unconsciously, by

many a scanning line. Setting up correctness, that humble merit of prose, as the central literary excellence, he is really a less correct writer than he may seem, still with an imperfect mastery of the relative pronoun. It might have been foreseen that, in the rotations of mind, the province of poetry in prose would find its assertor; and, a century after Dryden, amid very different intellectual needs, and with the need therefore of great modifications in literary form, the range of the poetic force in literature was effectively enlarged by Wordsworth. The true distinction between prose and poetry he regarded as the almost technical or accidental one of the absence or presence of metrical beauty, or, say! metrical restraint; and for him the opposition came to be between verse and prose of course; but, as the essential dichotomy in this matter, between imaginative and unimaginative writing, parallel to De Quincey's distinction between "the literature of power and the literature of knowledge," in the former of which the composer gives us not fact, but his peculiar sense of fact, whether past or present.

Dismissing then, under sanction of Wordsworth, that harsher opposition of poetry to prose, as savouring in fact of the arbitrary psychology of the last century, and with it the prejudice that there can be but one only beauty of prose style, I propose here to point out certain qualities of all literature as a fine art, which, if they apply to the literature of fact, apply still more to the literature of the imaginative sense of fact, while they apply indifferently to verse and prose, so far as either is really imaginative—certain

conditions of true art in both alike, which conditions may also contain in them the secret of the proper discrimination and guardianship of the peculiar excellences of either.

The line between fact and something quite different from external fact is, indeed, hard to draw. In Pascal, for instance, in the persuasive writers generally, how difficult to define the point where, from time to time, argument which, if it is to be worth anything at all, must consist of facts or groups of facts, becomes a pleading—a theorem no longer, but essentially an appeal to the reader to catch the writer's spirit, to think with him, if one can or will—an expression no longer of fact but of his sense of it, his peculiar intuition of a world, prospective, or discerned below the faulty conditions of the present, in either case changed somewhat from the actual world. In science, on the other hand, in history so far as it conforms to scientific rule, we have a literary domain where the imagination may be thought to be always an intruder. And as, in all science, the functions of literature reduce themselves eventually to the transcribing of fact, so all the excellences of literary form in regard to science are reducible to various kinds of painstaking; this good quality being involved in all "skilled work" whatever, in the drafting of an act of parliament, as in sewing. Yet here again, the writer's sense of fact, in history especially, and in all those complex subjects which do but lie on the borders of science, will still take the place of fact, in various degrees. Your historian, for instance, with absolutely truthful intention, amid the multitude of facts

presented to him must needs select, and in selecting assert something of his own humour, something that comes not of the world without but of a vision within. So Gibbon moulds his unwieldy material to a preconceived view. Livy, Tacitus, Michelet, moving full of poignant sensibility amid the records of the past, each, after his own sense, modifies—who can tell where and to what degree?—and becomes something else than a transcriber; each, as he thus modifies, passing into the domain of art proper. For just in proportion as the writer's aim, consciously or unconsciously, comes to be the transcribing, not of the world, not of mere fact, but of his sense of it, he becomes an artist, his work *fine* art; and good art (as I hope ultimately to show) in proportion to the truth of his presentment of that sense; as in those humbler or plainer functions of literature also, truth—truth to bare fact, there—is the essence of such artistic quality as they may have. Truth! there can be no merit, no craft at all, without that. And further, all beauty is in the long run only *fineness* of truth, or what we call expression, the finer accommodation of speech to that vision within.

—The transcript of his sense of fact rather than the fact, as being preferable, pleasanter, more beautiful to the writer himself. In literature, as in every other product of human skill, in the moulding of a bell or a platter for instance, wherever this sense asserts itself, wherever the producer so modifies his work as, over and above its primary use or intention, to make it pleasing (to himself, of course, in the first instance) there, "fine" as opposed to merely serviceable art, exists. Literary art, that is, like all art which is in

any way imitative or reproductive of fact—form, or colour, or incident—is the representation of such fact as connected with soul, of a specific personality, in its preferences, its volition and power.

Such is the matter of imaginative or artistic literature—this transcript, not of mere fact, but of fact in its infinite variety, as modified by human preference in all its infinitely varied forms. It will be good literary art not because it is brilliant or sober, or rich, or impulsive, or severe, but just in proportion as its representation of that sense, that soul-fact, is true, verse being only one department of such literature, and imaginative prose, it may be thought, being the special art of the modern world. That imaginative prose should be the special and opportune art of the modern world results from two important facts about the latter: first, the chaotic variety and complexity of its interests, making the intellectual issue, the really master currents of the present time incalculable—a condition of mind little susceptible of the restraint proper to verse form, so that the most characteristic verse of the nineteenth century has been lawless verse; and secondly, an all-pervading naturalism, a curiosity about everything whatever as it really is, involving a certain humility of attitude, cognate to what must, after all, be the less ambitious form of literature. And prose thus asserting itself as the special and privileged artistic faculty of the present day, will be, however critics may try to narrow its scope, as varied in its excellence as humanity itself reflecting on the facts of its latest experience—an instrument of many stops, meditative,

observant, descriptive, eloquent, analytic, plaintive, fervid. Its beauties will be not exclusively "pedestrian"; it will exert, in due measure, all the varied charms of poetry, down to the rhythm which, as in Cicero, or Michelet, or Newman, at their best, gives its musical value to every syllable.[1]

The literary artist is of necessity a scholar, and in what he proposes to do will have in mind, first of all, the scholar and the scholarly conscience—the male conscience in this matter, as we must think it, under a system of education which still to so large an extent limits real scholarship to men. In his self-criticism, he supposes always that sort of reader who will go (full of eyes) warily, considerately, though without consideration for him, over the ground which the female conscience traverses so lightly, so amiably. For the material in which he works is no more a creation of his own than the sculptor's marble. Product of a myriad various minds and contending tongues, compact of obscure and minute association, a language has its own abundant and often recondite laws, in the habitual and summary recognition of which scholarship consists. A writer, full of a matter he is before all things anxious to express, may think

[1] Mr. Saintsbury, in his *Specimens of English Prose, from Malory to Macaulay*, has succeeded in tracing, through successive English prose-writers, the tradition of that severer beauty in them, of which this admirable scholar of our literature is known to be a lover. *English Prose, from Mandeville to Thackeray*, more recently "chosen and edited" by a younger scholar, Mr. Arthur Galton, of New College, Oxford, a lover of our literature at once enthusiastic and discreet, aims at a more various illustration of the eloquent powers of English prose, and is a delightful companion.

of those laws, the limitations of vocabulary, structure, and the like, as a restriction, but if a real artist will find in them an opportunity. His punctilious observance of the proprieties of his medium will diffuse through all he writes a general air of sensibility, of refined usage. *Exclusiones debitæ naturæ*—the exclusions, or rejections, which nature demands—we know how large a part these play, according to Bacon, in the science of nature. In a somewhat changed sense, we might say that the art of the scholar is summed up in the observance of those rejections demanded by the nature of his medium, the material he must use. Alive to the value of an atmosphere in which every term finds its utmost degree of expression, and with all the jealousy of a lover of words, he will resist a constant tendency on the part of the majority of those who use them to efface the distinctions of language, the facility of writers often reinforcing in this respect the work of the vulgar. He will feel the obligation not of the laws only, but of those affinities, avoidances, those mere preferences, of his language, which through the associations of literary history have become a part of its nature, prescribing the rejection of many a neology, many a license, many a gypsy phrase which might present itself as actually expressive. His appeal, again, is to the scholar, who has great experience in literature, and will show no favour to short-cuts, or hackneyed illustration, or an affectation of learning designed for the unlearned. Hence a contention, a sense of self-restraint and renunciation, having for the susceptible reader the effect of a challenge for

minute consideration ; the attention of the writer, in every minutest detail, being a pledge that it is worth the reader's while to be attentive too, that the writer is dealing scrupulously with his instrument, and therefore, indirectly, with the reader himself also, that he has the science of the instrument he plays on, perhaps, after all, with a freedom which in such case will be the freedom of a master.

For meanwhile, braced only by those restraints, he is really vindicating his liberty in the making of a vocabulary, an entire system of composition, for himself, his own true manner ; and when we speak of the manner of a true master we mean what is essential in his art. Pedantry being only the scholarship of *le cuistre* (we have no English equivalent) he is no pedant, and does but show his intelligence of the rules of language in his freedoms with it, addition or expansion, which like the spontaneities of manner in a well-bred person will still further illustrate good taste.—The right vocabulary ! Translators have not invariably seen how all-important that is in the work of translation, driving for the most part at idiom or construction ; whereas, if the original be first-rate, one's first care should be with its elementary particles, Plato, for instance, being often reproducible by an exact following, with no variation in structure, of word after word, as the pencil follows a drawing under tracing-paper, so only each word or syllable be not of false colour, to change my illustration a little.

Well ! that is because any writer worth translating at all has winnowed and searched through his vocabulary, is conscious of the words he would select in

systematic reading of a dictionary, and still more of the words he would reject were the dictionary other than Johnson's; and doing this with his peculiar sense of the world ever in view, in search of an instrument for the adequate expression of that, he begets a vocabulary faithful to the colouring of his own spirit, and in the strictest sense original. That living authority which language needs lies, in truth, in its scholars, who recognising always that every language possesses a genius, a very fastidious genius, of its own, expand at once and purify its very elements, which must needs change along with the changing thoughts of living people. Ninety years ago, for instance, great mental force, certainly, was needed by Wordsworth, to break through the consecrated poetic associations of a century, and speak the language that was his, that was to become in a measure the language of the next generation. But he did it with the tact of a scholar also. English, for a quarter of a century past, has been assimilating the phraseology of pictorial art; for half a century, the phraseology of the great German metaphysical movement of eighty years ago; in part also the language of mystical theology: and none but pedants will regret a great consequent increase of its resources. For many years to come its enterprise may well lie in the naturalisation of the vocabulary of science, so only it be under the eye of a sensitive scholarship—in a liberal naturalisation of the ideas of science too, for after all the chief stimulus of good style is to possess a full, rich, complex matter to grapple with. The literary artist, therefore, will be well aware of physical science; science also attain-

ing, in its turn, its true literary ideal. And then, as the scholar is nothing without the historic sense, he will be apt to restore not really obsolete or really worn-out words, but the finer edge of words still in use: *ascertain*, *communicate*, *discover*—words like these it has been part of our "business" to misuse. And still, as language was made for man, he will be no authority for correctnesses which, limiting freedom of utterance, were yet but accidents in their origin; as if one vowed not to say "*its*," which ought to have been in Shakespeare; "*his*" and "*hers*," for inanimate objects, being but a barbarous and really inexpressive survival. Yet we have known many things like this. Racy Saxon monosyllables, close to us as touch and sight, he will intermix readily with those long, savoursome Latin words, rich in "second intention." In this late day certainly, no critical process can be conducted reasonably without eclecticism. Of such eclecticism we have a justifying example in one of the first poets of our time. How illustrative of monosyllabic effect, of sonorous Latin, of the phraseology of science, of metaphysic, of colloquialism even, are the writings of Tennyson; yet with what a fine, fastidious scholarship throughout!

A scholar writing for the scholarly, he will of course leave something to the willing intelligence of his reader. "To go preach to the first passer-by," says Montaigne, "to become tutor to the ignorance of the first I meet, is a thing I abhor"; a thing, in fact, naturally distressing to the scholar, who will therefore ever be shy of offering uncomplimentary assistance to the reader's wit. To really strenuous

minds there is a pleasurable stimulus in the challenge for a continuous effort on their part, to be rewarded by securer and more intimate grasp of the author's sense. Self-restraint, a skilful economy of means, *ascêsis*, that too has a beauty of its own; and for the reader supposed there will be an æsthetic satisfaction in that frugal closeness of style which makes the most of a word, in the exaction from every sentence of a precise relief, in the just spacing out of word to thought, in the logically filled space connected always with the delightful sense of difficulty overcome.

Different classes of persons, at different times, make, of course, very various demands upon literature. Still, scholars, I suppose, and not only scholars, but all disinterested lovers of books, will always look to it, as to all other fine art, for a refuge, a sort of cloistral refuge, from a certain vulgarity in the actual world. A perfect poem like *Lycidas*, a perfect fiction like *Esmond*, the perfect handling of a theory like Newman's *Idea of a University*, has for them something of the uses of a religious "retreat." Here, then, with a view to the central need of a select few, those "men of a finer thread" who have formed and maintain the literary ideal, everything, every component element will have undergone exact trial, and, above all, there will be no uncharacteristic or tarnished or vulgar decoration, permissible ornament being for the most part structural, or necessary. As the painter in his picture, so the artist in his book, aims at the production by honourable artifice of a peculiar atmosphere. "The artist," says Schiller, "may be known rather

by what he *omits* " ; and in literature, too, the true artist may be best recognised by his tact of omission. For to the grave reader words too are grave ; and the ornamental word, the figure, the accessory form or colour or reference, is rarely content to die to thought precisely at the right moment, but will inevitably linger awhile, stirring a long " brain-wave " behind it of perhaps quite alien associations.

Just there, it may be, is the detrimental tendency of the sort of scholarly attentiveness of mind I am recommending. But the true artist allows for it. He will remember that, as the very word ornament indicates what is in itself non-essential, so the " one beauty " of all literary style is of its very essence, and independent, in prose and verse alike, of all removable decoration ; that it may exist in its fullest lustre, as in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, for instance, or in Stendhal's *Le Rouge et Le Noir*, in a composition utterly unadorned, with hardly a single suggestion of visibly beautiful things. Parallel, allusion, the allusive way generally, the flowers in the garden :—he knows the narcotic force of these upon the negligent intelligence to which any *diversion*, literally, is welcome, any vagrant intruder, because one can go wandering away with it from the immediate subject. Jealous, if he have a really quickening motive within, of all that does not hold directly to that, of the facile, the otiose, he will never depart from the strictly pedestrian process, unless he gains a ponderable something thereby. Even assured of its congruity, he will still question its serviceableness. Is it worth while, can we afford, to attend to just that, to just that figure

or literary reference, just then?—Surplusage! he will dread that, as the runner on his muscles. For in truth all art does but consist in the removal of surplusage, from the last finish of the gem-engraver blowing away the last particle of invisible dust, back to the earliest divination of the finished work to be, lying somewhere, according to Michelangelo's fancy, in the rough-hewn block of stone.

And what applies to figure or flower must be understood of all other accidental or removable ornaments of writing whatever; and not of specific ornament only, but of all that latent colour and imagery which language as such carries in it. A lover of words for their own sake, to whom nothing about them is unimportant, a minute and constant observer of their physiognomy, he will be on the alert not only for obviously mixed metaphors of course, but for the metaphor that is mixed in all our speech, though a rapid use may involve no cognition of it. Currently recognising the incident, the colour, the physical elements or particles in words like *absorb*, *consider*, *extract*, to take the first that occur, he will avail himself of them, as further adding to the resources of expression. The elementary particles of language will be realised as colour and light and shade through his scholarly living in the full sense of them. Still opposing the constant degradation of language by those who use it carelessly, he will not treat coloured glass as if it were clear; and while half the world is using figure unconsciously, will be fully aware not only of all that latent figurative texture in speech, but of the vague, lazy, half-formed personification—

a rhetoric, depressing, and worse than nothing, because it has no really rhetorical motive—which plays so large a part there, and, as in the case of more ostentatious ornament, scrupulously exact of it, from syllable to syllable, its precise value.

So far I have been speaking of certain conditions of the literary art arising out of the medium or material in or upon which it works, the essential qualities of language and its aptitudes for contingent ornamentation, matters which define scholarship as science and good taste respectively. They are both subservient to a more intimate quality of good style: more intimate, as coming nearer to the artist himself. The otiose, the facile, surplusage: why are these abhorrent to the true literary artist, except because, in literary as in all other art, structure is all-important, felt, or painfully missed, everywhere?—that architectural conception of work, which foresees the end in the beginning and never loses sight of it, and in every part is conscious of all the rest, till the last sentence does but, with undiminished vigour, unfold and justify the first—a condition of literary art, which, in contradistinction to another quality of the artist himself, to be spoken of later, I shall call the necessity of *mind* in style.

An acute philosophical writer, the late Dean Mansel (a writer whose works illustrate the literary beauty there may be in closeness, and with obvious repression or economy of a fine rhetorical gift) wrote a book, of fascinating precision in a very obscure subject, to show that all the technical laws of logic are but means of securing, in each and all of its apprehensions, the

unity, the strict identity with itself, of the apprehending mind. All the laws of good writing aim at a similar unity or identity of the mind in all the processes by which the word is associated to its import. The term is right, and has its essential beauty, when it becomes, in a manner, what it signifies, as with the names of simple sensations. To give the phrase, the sentence, the structural member, the entire composition, song, or essay, a similar unity with its subject and with itself :—style is in the right way when it tends towards that. All depends upon the original unity, the vital wholeness and identity, of the initiatory apprehension or view. So much is true of all art, which therefore requires always its logic, its comprehensive reason—insight, foresight, retrospect, in simultaneous action—true, most of all, of the literary art, as being of all the arts most closely cognate to the abstract intelligence. Such logical coherency may be evidenced not merely in the lines of composition as a whole, but in the choice of a single word, while it by no means interferes with, but may even prescribe, much variety, in the building of the sentence for instance, or in the manner, argumentative, descriptive, discursive, of this or that part or member of the entire design. The blithe, crisp sentence, decisive as a child's expression of its needs, may alternate with the long-contending, victoriously intricate sentence; the sentence, born with the integrity of a single word, relieving the sort of sentence in which, if you look closely, you can see much contrivance, much adjustment, to bring a highly qualified matter into compass at one view. For the literary architecture, if it is to

be rich and expressive, involves not only foresight of the end in the beginning, but also development or growth of design, in the process of execution, with many irregularities, surprises, and afterthoughts; the contingent as well as the necessary being subsumed under the unity of the whole. As truly, to the lack of such architectural design, of a single, almost visual, image, vigorously informing an entire, perhaps very intricate, composition, which shall be austere, ornate, argumentative, fanciful, yet true from first to last to that vision within, may be attributed those weaknesses of conscious or unconscious repetition of word, phrase, motive, or member of the whole matter, indicating, as Flaubert was aware, an original structure in thought not organically complete. With such foresight, the actual conclusion will most often get itself written out of hand, before, in the more obvious sense, the work is finished. With some strong and leading sense of the world, the tight hold of which secures true *composition* and not mere loose accretion, the literary artist, I suppose, goes on considerately, setting joint to joint, sustained by yet restraining the productive ardour, retracing the negligences of his first sketch, repeating his steps only that he may give the reader a sense of secure and restful progress, readjusting mere assonances even, that they may soothe the reader, or at least not interrupt him on his way; and then, somewhere before the end comes, is burdened, inspired, with his conclusion, and betimes delivered of it, leaving off, not in weariness and because he finds *himself* at an end, but in all the freshness of volition. His work now structurally

complete, with all the accumulating effect of secondary shades of meaning, he finishes the whole up to the just proportion of that ante-penultimate conclusion, and all becomes expressive. The house he has built is rather a body he has informed. And so it happens, to its greater credit, that the better interest even of a narrative to be recounted, a story to be told, will often be in its second reading. And though there are instances of great writers who have been no artists, an unconscious tact sometimes directing work in which we may detect, very pleasurably, many of the effects of conscious art, yet one of the greatest pleasures of really good prose literature is in the critical tracing out of that conscious artistic structure, and the pervading sense of it as we read. Yet of poetic literature too; for, in truth, the kind of constructive intelligence here supposed is one of the forms of the imagination.

That is the special function of mind, in style. Mind and soul:—hard to ascertain philosophically, the distinction is real enough practically, for they often interfere, are sometimes in conflict, with each other. Blake, in the last century, is an instance of preponderating soul, embarrassed, at a loss, in an era of preponderating mind. As a quality of style, at all events, soul is a fact, in certain writers—the way they have of absorbing language, of attracting it into the peculiar spirit they are of, with a subtlety which makes the actual result seem like some inexplicable inspiration. By mind, the literary artist reaches us, through static and objective indications of design in his work, legible to all. By soul, he reaches us, somewhat capriciously perhaps, one and

not another, through vagrant sympathy and a kind of immediate contact. Mind we cannot choose but approve where we recognise it; soul may repel us, not because we misunderstand it. The way in which theological interests sometimes avail themselves of language is perhaps the best illustration of the force I mean to indicate generally in literature, by the word *soul*. Ardent religious persuasion may exist, may make its way, without finding any equivalent heat in language: or, again, it may enkindle words to various degrees, and when it really takes hold of them doubles its force. Religious history presents many remarkable instances in which, through no mere phrase-worship, an unconscious literary tact has, for the sensitive, laid open a privileged pathway from one to another. "The altar-fire," people say, "has touched those lips!" The Vulgate, the English Bible, the English Prayer-Book, the writings of Swedenborg, the Tracts for the Times:—there, we have instances of widely different and largely diffused phases of religious feeling in operation as soul in style. But something of the same kind acts with similar power in certain writers of quite other than theological literature, on behalf of some wholly personal and peculiar sense of theirs. Most easily illustrated by theological literature, this quality lends to profane writers a kind of religious influence. At their best, these writers become, as we say sometimes, "prophets"; such character depending on the effect not merely of their matter, but of their matter as allied to, in "electric affinity" with, peculiar form, and working in all cases by an immediate sympathetic

contact, on which account it is that it may be called soul, as opposed to mind, in style. And this too is a faculty of choosing and rejecting what is congruous or otherwise, with a drift towards unity—unity of atmosphere here, as there of design—soul securing colour (or prefume, might we say?) as mind secures form, the latter being essentially finite, the former vague or infinite, as the influence of a living person is practically infinite. There are some to whom nothing has any real interest, or real meaning, except as operative in a given person; and it is they who best appreciate the quality of soul in literary art. They seem to know a *person*, in a book, and make way by intuition: yet, although they thus enjoy the completeness of a personal information, it is still a characteristic of soul, in this sense of the word, that it does but suggest what can never be uttered, not as being different from, or more obscure than, what actually gets said, but as containing that plenary substance of which there is only one phase or facet in what is there expressed.

If all high things have their martyrs, Gustave Flaubert might perhaps rank as the martyr of literary style. In his printed correspondence, a curious series of letters, written in his twenty-fifth year, records what seems to have been his one other passion—a series of letters which, with its fine casuistries, its firmly repressed anguish, its tone of harmonious grey, and the sense of disillusion in which the whole matter ends, might have been, a few slight changes supposed, one of his own fictions. Writing to Madame X. certainly he does display, by "taking thought" mainly,

by constant and delicate pondering, as in his love for literature, a heart really moved, but still more, and as the pledge of that emotion, a loyalty to his work. Madame X., too, is a literary artist, and the best gifts he can send her are precepts of perfection in art, counsels for the effectual pursuit of that better love. In his love-letters it is the pains and pleasures of art he insists on, its solaces: he communicates secrets, reproves, encourages, with a view to that. Whether the lady was dissatisfied with such divided or indirect service, the reader is not enabled to see; but sees that, on Flaubert's part at least, a living person could be no rival of what was, from first to last, his leading passion, a somewhat solitary and exclusive one.

"I must scold you," he writes, "for one thing, which shocks, scandalises me, the small concern, namely, you show for art just now. As regards glory be it so: there, I approve. But for art!—the one thing in life that is good and real—can you compare it with an earthly love? —prefer the adoration of a relative beauty to the *cultus* of the true beauty? Well! I tell you the truth. That is the one thing good in me: the one thing I have, to me estimable. For yourself, you blend with the beautiful a heap of alien things, the useful, the agreeable, what not?—

"The only way not to be unhappy is to shut yourself up in art, and count everything else as nothing. Pride takes the place of all beside when it is established on a large basis. Work! God wills it. That, it seems to me, is clear.—

"I am reading over again the *Æneid*, certain verses of which I repeat to myself to satiety. There are phrases there which stay in one's head, by which I find myself beset, as with those musical airs which are for ever returning. and cause you pain, you love them so much. I

observe that I no longer laugh much, and am no longer depressed. I am ripe. You talk of my serenity, and envy me. It may well surprise you. Sick, irritated, the prey a thousand times a day of cruel pain, I continue my labour like a true working man, who, with sleeves turned up, in the sweat of his brow, beats away at his anvil, never troubling himself whether it rains or blows, for hail or thunder. I was not like that formerly. The change has taken place naturally, though my will has counted for something in the matter.—

" Those who write in good style are sometimes accused of a neglect of ideas, and of the moral end, as if the end of the physician were something else than healing, of the painter than painting—as if the end of art were not, before all else, the beautiful."

What, then, did Flaubert understand by beauty, in the art he pursued with so much fervour, with so much self-command? Let us hear a sympathetic commentator :—

" Possessed of an absolute belief that there exists but one way of expressing one thing, one word to call it by, one adjective to qualify, one verb to animate it, he gave himself to superhuman labour for the discovery, in every phrase, of that word, that verb, that epithet. In this way, he believed in some mysterious harmony of expression, and when a true word seemed to him to lack euphony still went on seeking another, with invincible patience, certain that he had not yet got hold of the *unique* word. . . . A thousand preoccupations would beset him at the same moment, always with this desperate certitude fixed in his spirit: Among all the expressions in the world, all forms and turns of expression, there is but *one*—one form, one mode—to express what I want to say."

The one word for the one thing, the one thought, amid the multitude of words, terms, that might just do: the problem of style was there!—the unique word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, essay, or song, absolutely proper to the single mental presentation or vision within. In that perfect justice, over and above the many contingent and removable beauties with which beautiful style may charm us, but which it can exist without, independent of them yet dexterously availing itself of them, omnipresent in good work, in function at every point, from single epithets to the rhythm of a whole book, lay the specific, indispensable, very intellectual, beauty of literature, the possibility of which constitutes it a fine art.

One seems to detect the influence of a philosophic idea there, the ideal of a natural economy, of some pre-existent adaptation, between a relative, somewhere in the world of thought, and its correlative, somewhere in the world of language—both alike, rather, somewhere in the mind of the artist, desiderative, expectant, inventive—meeting each other with the readiness of "soul and body reunited," in Blake's rapturous design; and, in fact, Flaubert was fond of giving his theory philosophical expression.—

"There are no beautiful thoughts," he would say, "without beautiful forms, and conversely. As it is impossible to extract from a physical body the qualities which really constitute it—colour, extension, and the like—without reducing it to a hollow abstraction, in a word, without destroying it; just so it is impossible to detach the form from the idea, for the idea only exists by virtue of the form."

All the recognised flowers, the removable ornaments of literature (including harmony and ease in reading aloud, very carefully considered by him) counted certainly; for these too are part of the actual value of what one says. But still, after all, with Flaubert, the search, the unwearied research, was not for the smooth, or winsome, or forcible word, as such, as with false Ciceronians, but quite simply and honestly, for the word's adjustment to its meaning. The first condition of this must be, of course, to know yourself, to have ascertained your own sense exactly. Then, if we suppose an artist, he says to the reader,—I want you to see precisely what I see. Into the mind sensitive to "form," a flood of random sounds, colours, incidents, is ever penetrating from the world without, to become, by sympathetic selection, a part of its very structure, and, in turn, the visible vesture and expression of that other world it sees so steadily within, nay, already with a partial conformity thereto, to be refined, enlarged, corrected, at a hundred points; and it is just there, just at those doubtful points that the function of style, as tact or taste, intervenes. The unique term will come more quickly to one than another, at one time than another, according also to the kind of matter in question. Quickness and slowness, ease and closeness alike, have nothing to do with the artistic character of the true word found at last. As there is a charm of ease, so there is also a special charm in the signs of discovery, of effort and contention towards a due end, as so often with Flaubert himself—in the style which has been pliant, as only obstinate, durable metal can be, to the inherent

perplexities and recusancy of a certain difficult thought.

If Flaubert had not told us, perhaps we should never have guessed how tardy and painful his own procedure really was, and after reading his confession may think that his almost endless hesitation had much to do with diseased nerves. Often, perhaps, the felicity supposed will be the product of a happier, a more exuberant nature than Flaubert's. Aggravated, certainly, by a morbid physical condition, that anxiety in "seeking the phrase," which gathered all the other small *ennuis* of a really quiet existence into a kind of battle, was connected with his lifelong contention against facile poetry, facile art—art, facile and flimsy; and what constitutes the true artist is not the slowness or quickness of the process, but the absolute success of the result. As with those labourers in the parable, the prize is independent of the mere length of the actual day's work. "You talk," he writes, odd, trying lover, to Madame X.—

"You talk of the exclusiveness of my literary tastes. That might have enabled you to divine what kind of a person I am in the matter of love. I grow so hard to please as a literary artist, that I am driven to despair. I shall end by not writing another line."

"Happy," he cries, in a moment of discouragement at that patient labour, which for him, certainly, was the condition of a great success—

"Happy those who have no doubts of themselves! who lengthen out, as the pen runs on, all that flows forth from their brains. As for me, I hesitate, I disappoint myself,

turn round upon myself in despite : my taste is augmented in proportion as my natural vigour decreases, and I afflict my soul over some dubious word out of all proportion to the pleasure I get from a whole page of good writing. One would have to live two centuries to attain a true idea of any matter whatever. What Buffon said is a big blasphemy : genius is not long-continued patience. Still, there is some truth in the statement, and more than people think, especially as regards our own day. Art ! art ! art ! bitter deception ! phantom that glows with light, only to lead one on to destruction."

Again—

" I am growing so peevish about my writing. I am like a man whose ear is true but who plays falsely on the violin : his fingers refuse to reproduce precisely those sounds of which he has the inward sense. Then the tears come rolling down from the poor scraper's eyes and the bow falls from his hand."

Coming slowly or quickly, when it comes, as it came with so much labour of mind, but also with so much lustre, to Gustave Flaubert, this discovery of the word will be, like all artistic success and felicity, incapable of strict analysis : effect of an intuitive condition of mind, it must be recognised by like intuition on the part of the reader, and a sort of immediate sense. In every one of those masterly sentences of Flaubert there was, below all mere contrivance, shaping and afterthought, by some happy instantaneous concourse of the various faculties of the mind with each other, the exact apprehension of what was *needed* to carry the meaning. And that it fits with absolute justice will be a judgment of immediate

sense in the appreciative reader. We all feel this in what may be called inspired translation. Well! all language involves translation from inward to outward. In literature, as in all forms of art, there are the absolute and the merely relative or accessory beauties; and precisely in that exact proportion of the term to its purpose is the absolute beauty of style, prose or verse. All the good qualities, the beauties, of verse also, are such, only as precise expression.

In the highest as in the lowliest literature, then, the one indispensable beauty is, after all, truth:—truth to bare fact in the latter, as to some personal sense of fact, diverted somewhat from men's ordinary sense of it, in the former; truth there as accuracy, truth here as expression, that finest and most intimate form of truth, the *vraie vérité*. And what an eclectic principle this really is! employing for its one sole purpose—that absolute accordance of expression to idea—all other literary beauties and excellences whatever: how many kinds of style it covers, explains, justifies, and at the same time safeguards! Scott's facility, Flaubert's deeply pondered evocation of "the phrase," are equally good art. Say what you have to say, what you have a will to say, in the simplest, the most direct and exact manner possible, with no surplusage:—there, is the justification of the sentence so fortunately born, "entire, smooth, and round," that it needs no punctuation, and also (that is the point!) of the most elaborate period, if it be right in its elaboration. Here is the office of ornament: here also the purpose of restraint in ornament. As the exponent of truth,

that austerity (the beauty, the function, of which in literature Flaubert understood so well) becomes not the correctness of purism of the mere scholar, but a security against the otiose, a jealous exclusion of what does not really tell towards the pursuit of relief of life and vigour in the portraiture of one's sense. License again, the making free with rule, if it be indeed, as people fancy, a habit of genius, flinging aside or transforming all that opposes the liberty of beautiful production, will be but faith to one's own meaning. The seeming baldness of *Le Rouge et Le Noir* is nothing in itself; the wild ornament of *Les Misérables* is nothing in itself; and the restraint of Flaubert, amid a real natural opulence, only redoubled beauty—the phrase so large and so precise at the same time, hard as bronze, in service to the more perfect adaptation of words to their matter. After-thoughts, retouchings, finish, will be of profit only so far as they too really serve to bring out the original, initiative, generative, sense in them.

In this way, according to the well-known saying, "The style is the man," complex or simple, in his individuality, his plenary sense of what he really has to say, his sense of the world; all cautions regarding style arising out of so many natural scruples as to the medium through which alone he can expose that inward sense of things, the purity of this medium, its laws or tricks of refraction: nothing is to be left there which might give conveyance to any matter save that. Style in all its varieties, reserved or opulent, terse, abundant, musical, stimulant, academic, so long as each is really characteristic or expressive, finds thus

its justification, the sumptuous good taste of Cicero being as truly the man himself, and not another, justified, yet insured inalienably to him, thereby, as would have been his portrait by Raffaelle, in full consular splendour, on his ivory chair.

A relegation, you may say perhaps—a relegation of style to the subjectivity, the mere caprice, of the individual, which must soon transform it into mannerism. Not so! since there is, under the conditions supposed, for those elements of the man, for every lineament of the vision within, the one word, the one acceptable word, recognisable by the sensitive, by others "who have intelligence" in the matter, as absolutely as ever anything can be in the evanescent and delicate region of human language. The style, the manner, would be the man, not in his unreasoned and really uncharacteristic caprices, involuntary or affected, but in absolutely sincere apprehension of what is most real to him. But let us hear our French guide again.—

"Styles," says Flaubert's commentator, "*Styles*, as so many peculiar moulds, each of which bears the mark of a particular writer, who is to pour into it the whole content of his ideas, were no part of his theory. What he believed in was *Style*: that is to say, a certain absolute and unique manner of expressing a thing, in all its intensity and colour. For him the *form* was the work itself. As in living creatures, the blood, nourishing the body, determines its very contour and external aspect, just so, to his mind, the *matter*, the basis, in a work of art, imposed, necessarily, the unique, the just expression, the measure, the rhythm—the *form* in all its characteristics."

If the style be the man, in all the colour and intensity of a veritable apprehension, it will be in a real sense "impersonal."

I said, thinking of books like Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, that prose literature was the characteristic art of the nineteenth century, as others, thinking of its triumphs since the youth of Bach, have assigned that place to music. Music and prose literature are, in one sense, the opposite terms of art; the art of literature presenting to the imagination, through the intelligence, a range of interests, as free and various as those which music presents to it through sense. And certainly the tendency of what has been here said is to bring literature too under those conditions, by conformity to which music takes rank as the typically perfect art. If music be the ideal of all art whatever, precisely because in music it is impossible to distinguish the form from the substance or matter, the subject from the expression, then, literature, by finding its specific excellence in the absolute correspondence of the term to its import, will be but fulfilling the condition of all artistic quality in things everywhere, of all good art.

Good art, but not necessarily great art; the distinction between great art and good art depending immediately, as regards literature at all events, not on its form, but on the matter. Thackeray's *Esmond*, surely, is greater art than *Vanity Fair*, by the greater dignity of its interests. It is on the quality of the matter it informs or controls, its compass, its variety, its alliance to great ends, or the depth of the note of revolt, or the largeness of hope in it, that the great-

ness of literary art depends, as *The Divine Comedy*, *Paradise Lost*, *Les Misérables*, *The English Bible*, are great art. Given the conditions I have tried to explain as constituting good art ;—then, if it be devoted further to the increase of men's happiness, to the redemption of the oppressed, or the enlargement of our sympathies with each other, or to such presentment of new or old truth about ourselves and our relation to the world as may ennoble and fortify us in our sojourn here, or immediately, as with Dante, to the glory of God, it will be also great art ; if, over and above those qualities I summed up as mind and soul—that colour and mystic perfume, and that reasonable structure, it has something of the soul of humanity in it, and finds its logical, its architectural place, in the great structure of human life.

1888.

WORDSWORTH

Some English critics at the beginning of the present century had a great deal to say concerning a distinction, of much importance, as they thought, in the true estimate of poetry, between the *Fancy*, and another more powerful faculty—the *Imagination.* This metaphysical distinction, borrowed originally from the writings of German philosophers, and perhaps not always clearly apprehended by those who talked of it, involved a far deeper and more vital distinction, with which indeed all true criticism more or less directly has to do, the distinction, namely, between higher and lower degrees of intensity in the poet's perception of his subject, and in his concentration of himself upon his work. Of those who dwelt upon the metaphysical distinction between the Fancy and the Imagination, it was Wordsworth who made the most of it, assuming it as the basis for the final classification of his poetical writings; and it is in these writings that the deeper and more vital distinction, which, as I have said, underlies the metaphysical distinction, is most needed, and may best be illustrated.

For nowhere is there so perplexed a mixture as in Wordsworth's own poetry, of work touched with

intense and individual power, with work of almost no character at all. He has much conventional sentiment, and some of that insincere poetic diction, against which his most serious critical efforts were directed: the reaction in his political ideas, consequent on the excesses of 1795, makes him, at times, a mere declaimer on moral and social topics; and he seems, sometimes, to force an unwilling pen, and write by rule. By making the most of these blemishes it is possible to obscure the true æsthetic value of his work, just as his life also, a life of much quiet delicacy and independence, might easily be placed in a false focus, and made to appear a somewhat tame theme in illustration of the more obvious parochial virtues. And those who wish to understand his influence, and experience his peculiar savour, must bear with patience the presence of an alien element in Wordsworth's work, which never coalesced with what is really delightful in it, nor underwent his special power. Who that values his writings most has not felt the intrusion there, from time to time, of something tedious and prosaic? Of all poets equally great, he would gain most by a skilfully made anthology. Such a selection would show, in truth, not so much what he was, or to himself or others seemed to be, as what, by the more energetic and fertile quality in his writings, he was ever tending to become. And the mixture in his work, as it actually stands, is so perplexed, that one fears to miss the least promising composition even, lest some precious morsel should be lying hidden within—the few perfect lines, the phrase, the single

word perhaps, to which he often works up mechanically through a poem, almost the whole of which may be tame enough. He who thought that in all creative work the larger part was *given* passively, to the recipient mind, who waited so dutifully upon the gift, to whom so large a measure was sometimes given, had his times also of desertion and relapse; and he has permitted the impress of these too to remain in his work. And this duality there—the fitfulness with which the higher qualities manifest themselves in it, gives the effect in his poetry of a power not altogether his own, or under his control, which comes and goes when it will, lifting or lowering a matter, poor in itself; so that that old fancy which made the poet's art an enthusiasm, a form of divine possession, seems almost literally true of him.

This constant suggestion of an absolute duality between higher and lower moods, and the work done in them, stimulating one always to look below the surface, makes the reading of Wordsworth an excellent sort of training towards the things of art and poetry. It begets in those, who, coming across him in youth, can bear him at all, a habit of reading between the lines, a faith in the effect of concentration and collectedness of mind in the right appreciation of poetry, an expectation of things, in this order, coming to one by means of a right discipline of the temper as well as of the intellect. He meets us with the promise that he has much, and something very peculiar, to give us, if we will follow a certain difficult way, and seems to have the secret of a special and privileged state of mind. And those who have under-

gone his influence, and followed this difficult way, are like people who have passed through some initiation, a *disciplina arcani*, by submitting to which they become able constantly to distinguish in art, speech, feeling, manners, that which is organic, animated, expressive, from that which is only conventional, derivative, inexpressive.

But although the necessity of selecting these precious morsels for oneself is an opportunity for the exercise of Wordsworth's peculiar influence, and induces a kind of just criticism and true estimate of it, yet the purely literary product would have been more excellent, had the writer himself purged away that alien element. How perfect would have been the little treasury, shut between the covers of how thin a book! Let us suppose the desired separation made, the electric thread untwined, the golden pieces, great and small, lying apart together. What are the peculiarities of this residue? What special sense does Wordsworth exercise, and what instincts does he satisfy? What are the subjects and the motives which in him excite the imaginative faculty? What are the qualities in things and persons which he values, the impression and sense of which he can convey to others, in an extraordinary way?

An intimate consciousness of the expression of natural things, which weighs, listens, penetrates, where the earlier mind passed roughly by, is a large element in the complexion of modern poetry. It has been remarked as a fact in mental history again and again. It reveals itself in many forms; but is strongest and

most attractive in what is strongest and most attractive in modern literature. It is exemplified, almost equally, by writers as unlike each other as Senancour and Théophile Gautier: as a singular chapter in the history of the human mind, its growth might be traced from Rousseau to Chateaubriand, from Chateaubriand to Victor Hugo: it has doubtless some latent connexion with those pantheistic theories which locate an intelligent soul in material things, and have largely exercised men's minds in some modern systems of philosophy: it is traceable even in the graver writings of historians: it makes as much difference between ancient and modern landscape art, as there is between the rough masks of an early mosaic and a portrait by Reynolds or Gainsborough. Of this new sense, the writings of Wordsworth are the central and elementary expression: he is more simply and entirely occupied with it than any other poet, though there are fine expressions of precisely the same thing in so different a poet as Shelley. There was in his own character a certain contentment, a sort of inborn religious placidity, seldom found united with a sensibility so mobile as his, which was favourable to the quiet, habitual observation of inanimate, or imperfectly animate, existence. His life of eighty years is divided by no very profoundly felt incidents: its changes are almost wholly inward, and it falls into broad, untroubled, perhaps somewhat monotonous spaces. What it most resembles is the life of one of those early Italian or Flemish painters, who, just because their minds were full of heavenly visions, passed, some of them, the better part of sixty years

in quiet, systematic industry. This placid life matured a quite unusual sensibility, really innate in him, to the sights and sounds of the natural world—the flower and its shadow on the stone, the cuckoo and its echo. The poem of *Resolution and Independence* is a storehouse of such records: for its fulness of imagery it may be compared to Keats's *Saint Agnes' Eve*. To read one of his longer pastoral poems for the first time, is like a day spent in a new country: the memory is crowded for a while with its precise and vivid incidents—

" The pliant harebell swinging in the breeze
On some grey rock " ;—

" The single sheep and the one blasted tree
And the bleak music from that old stone wall " ;—

" In the meadows and the lower ground
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn " ;—

" And that green corn all day is rustling in thine ears."

Clear and delicate at once, as he is in the outlining of visible imagery, he is more clear and delicate still, and finely scrupulous, in the noting of sounds; so that he conceives of noble sound as even moulding the human countenance to nobler types, and as something actually " profaned " by colour, by visible form, or image. He has a power likewise of realising, and conveying to the consciousness of the reader, abstract and elementary impressions—silence, darkness, absolute motionlessness: or, again, the whole complex sentiment of a particular place, the abstract expression of desolation in the long white road, of peacefulness in

a particular folding of the hills. In the airy building of the brain, a special day or hour even, comes to have for him a sort of personal identity, a spirit or angel given to it, by which, for its exceptional insight, or the happy light upon it, it has a presence in one's history, and acts there, as a separate power or accomplishment; and he has celebrated in many of his poems the "efficacious spirit," which, as he says, resides in these "particular spots" of time.

It is to such a world, and to a world of congruous meditation thereon, that we see him retiring in his but lately published poem of *The Recluse*—taking leave, without much count of costs, of the world of business, of action and ambition, as also of all that for the majority of mankind counts as sensuous enjoyment.

And so it came about that this sense of a life in natural objects, which in most poetry is but a rhetorical artifice, is with Wordsworth the assertion of what for him is almost literal fact. To him every natural object seemed to possess more or less of a moral or spiritual life, to be capable of a companionship with man, full of expression, of inexplicable affinities and delicacies of intercourse. An emanation, a particular spirit, belonged, not to the moving leaves or water only, but to the distant peak of the hills arising suddenly, by some change of perspective, above the nearer horizon, to the passing space of light across the plain, to the lichened Druidic stone even, for a certain weird fellowship in it with the moods of men. It was like a "survival," in the peculiar intellectual temperament of a man of letters at the end of the

eighteenth century, of that primitive condition, which some philosophers have traced in the general history of human culture, wherein all outward objects alike, including even the works of men's hands, were believed to be endowed with animation, and the world was "full of souls"—that mood in which the old Greek gods were first begotten, and which had many strange aftergrowths.

In the early ages, this belief, delightful as its effects on poetry often are, was but the result of a crude intelligence. But, in Wordsworth, such power of seeing life, such perception of a soul, in inanimate things, came of an exceptional susceptibility to the impressions of eye and ear, and was, in its essence, a kind of sensuousness. At least, it is only in a temperament exceptionally susceptible on the sensuous side, that this sense of the expressiveness of outward things comes to be so large a part of life. That he awakened "a sort of thought in sense," is Shelley's just estimate of this element in Wordsworth's poetry.

And it was through nature, thus ennobled by a semblance of passion and thought, that he approached the spectacle of human life. Human life, indeed, is for him, at first, only an additional, accidental grace on an expressive landscape. When he thought of man, it was of man as in the presence and under the influence of these effective natural objects, and linked to them by many associations. The close connexion of man with natural objects, the habitual association of his thoughts and feelings with a particular spot on earth, has sometimes seemed to degrade those who are subject to its influence, as if it did but

reinforce that physical connexion of our nature with the actual lime and clay of the soil, which is always drawing us nearer to our end. But for Wordsworth, these influences tended to the dignity of human nature, because they tended to tranquillise it. By raising nature to the level of human thought he gives it power and expression: he subdues man to the level of nature, and gives him thereby a certain breadth and coolness and solemnity. The leech-gatherer on the moor, the woman "stepping westward," are for him natural objects, almost in the same sense as the aged thorn, or the lichened rock on the heath. In this sense the leader of the "Lake School," in spite of an earnest preoccupation with man, his thoughts, his destiny, is the poet of nature. And of nature, after all, in its modesty. The English lake country has, of course, its grandeurs. But the peculiar function of Wordsworth's genius, as carrying in it a power to open out the soul of apparently little or familiar things, would have found its true test had he become the poet of Surrey, say! and the prophet of its life. The glories of Italy and Switzerland, though he did write a little about them, had too potent a material life of their own to serve greatly his poetic purpose.

Religious sentiment, consecrating the affections and natural regrets of the human heart, above all, that pitiful awe and care for the perishing human clay, of which relic-worship is but the corruption, has always had much to do with localities, with the thoughts which attach themselves to actual scenes and places. Now what is true of it everywhere, is truest of it in

those secluded valleys where one generation after another maintains the same abiding-place ; and it was on this side, that Wordsworth apprehended religion most strongly. Consisting, as it did so much, in the recognition of local sanctities, in the habit of connecting the stones and trees of a particular spot of earth with the great events of life, till the low walls, the green mounds, the half-obliterated epitaphs seemed full of voices, and a sort of natural oracles, the very religion of these people of the dales appeared but as another link between them and the earth, and was literally a religion of nature. It tranquillised them by bringing them under the placid rule of traditional and narrowly localised observances. " Grave livers," they seemed to him, under this aspect, with stately speech, and something of that natural dignity of manners, which underlies the highest courtesy.

And, seeing man thus as a part of nature, elevated and solemnised in proportion as his daily life and occupations brought him into companionship with permanent natural objects, his very religion forming new links for him with the narrow limits of the valley, the low vaults of his church, the rough stones of his home, made intense for him now with profound sentiment, Wordsworth was able to appreciate passion in the lowly. He chooses to depict people from humble life, because, being nearer to nature than others, they are on the whole more impassioned, certainly more direct in their expression of passion, than other men : it is for this direct expression of passion, that he values their humble words. In much that he said in exaltation of rural life, he was but pleading indirectly for

that sincerity, that perfect fidelity to one's own inward presentations, to the precise features of the picture within, without which any profound poetry is impossible. It was not for their tameness, but for this passionate sincerity, that he chose incidents and situations from common life, "related in a selection of language really used by men." He constantly endeavours to bring his language near to the real language of men: to the real language of men, however, not on the dead level of their ordinary intercourse, but in select moments of vivid sensation, when this language is winnowed and ennobled by excitement. There are poets who have chosen rural life as their subject, for the sake of its passionless repose, and times when Wordsworth himself extols the mere calm and dispassionate survey of things as the highest aim of poetical culture. But it was not for such passionless calm that he preferred the scenes of pastoral life; and the meditative poet, sheltering himself, as it might seem, from the agitations of the outward world, is in reality only clearing the scene for the great exhibitions of emotion, and what he values most is the almost elementary expression of elementary feelings.

And so he has much for those who value highly the concentrated presentment of passion, who appraise men and women by their susceptibility to it, and art and poetry as they afford the spectacle of it. Breaking from time to time into the pensive spectacle of their daily toil, their occupations near to nature, come those great elementary feelings, lifting and solemnising their language and giving it a natural

music. The great, distinguishing passion came to Michael by the sheepfold, to Ruth by the wayside, adding these humble children of the furrow to the true aristocracy of passionate souls. In this respect, Wordsworth's work resembles most that of Georges Sand, in those of her novels which depict country life. With a penetrative pathos, which puts him in the same rank with the masters of the sentiment of pity in literature, with Meinhold and Victor Hugo, he collects all the traces of vivid excitement which were to be found in that pastoral world—the girl who rung her father's knell; the unborn infant feeling about its mother's heart; the instinctive touches of children; the sorrows of the wild creatures, even—their home-sickness, their strange yearnings; the tales of passionate regret that hang by a ruined farm-building, a heap of stones, a deserted sheepfold; that gay, false, adventurous, outer world, which breaks in from time to time to bewilder and deflower these quiet homes; not "passionate sorrow" only, for the overthrow of the soul's beauty, but the loss of, or carelessness for personal beauty even in those whom men have wronged—their pathetic wanness; the sailor "who in his heart, was half a shepherd on the stormy seas"; the wild woman teaching her child to pray for her betrayer; incidents like the making of the shepherd's staff, or that of the young boy laying the first stone of the sheepfold;—all the pathetic episodes of their humble existence, their longing, their wonder at fortune, their poor pathetic pleasures, like the pleasures of children, won so hardly in the struggle for bare existence; their yearning towards each other,

in their darkened houses, or at their early toil. A sort of biblical depth and solemnity hangs over this strange, new, passionate, pastoral world, of which he first raised the image, and the reflection of which some of our best modern fiction has caught from him.

He pondered much over the philosophy of his poetry, and reading deeply in the history of his own mind, seems at times to have passed the borders of a world of strange speculations, inconsistent enough, had he cared to note such inconsistencies, with those traditional beliefs, which were otherwise the object of his devout acceptance. Thinking of the high value he set upon customariness, upon all that is habitual, local, rooted in the ground, in matters of religious sentiment, you might sometimes regard him as one tethered down to a world, refined and peaceful indeed, but with no broad outlook, a world protected, but somewhat narrowed, by the influence of received ideas. But he is at times also something very different from this, and something much bolder. A chance expression is overheard and placed in a new connexion, the sudden memory of a thing long past occurs to him, a distant object is relieved for a while by a random gleam of light—accidents turning up for a moment what lies below the surface of our immediate experience—and he passes from the humble graves and lowly arches of " the little rock-like pile " of a Westmoreland church, on bold trains of speculative thought, and comes, from point to point, into strange contact with thoughts which have visited, from time to time, far more venturesome, perhaps errant, spirits.

He had pondered deeply, for instance, on those strange reminiscences and forebodings, which seem to make our lives stretch before and behind us, beyond where we can see or touch anything, or trace the lines of connexion. Following the soul, backwards and forwards, on these endless ways, his sense of man's dim, potential powers become a pledge to him, indeed, of a future life, but carried him back also to that mysterious notion of an earlier state of existence—the fancy of the Platonists—the old heresy of Origen. It was in this mood that he conceived those oft-reiterated regrets for a half-ideal childhood, when the relics of Paradise still clung about the soul—a childhood, as it seemed, full of the fruits of old age, lost for all, in a degree, in the passing away of the youth of the world, lost for each one, over again, in the passing away of actual youth. It is this ideal childhood which he celebrates in his famous *Ode on the Recollections of Childhood*, and some other poems which may be grouped around it, such as the lines on *Tintern Abbey*, and something like what he describes was actually truer of himself than he seems to have understood; for his own most delightful poems were really the instinctive productions of earlier life, and most surely for him, "the first diviner influence of this world" passed away, more and more completely, in his contact with experience.

Sometimes as he dwelt upon those moments of profound, imaginative power, in which the outward object appears to take colour and expression, a new nature almost, from the prompting of the observant mind, the actual world would, as it were, dissolve and

detach itself, flake by flake, and he himself seemed to be the creator, and when he would the destroyer of the world in which he lived—that old isolating thought of many a brain-sick mystic of ancient and modern times.

At other times, again, in those periods of intense susceptibility, in which he appeared to himself as but the passive recipient of external influences, he was attracted by the thought of a spirit of life in outward things, a single, all-pervading mind in them, of which man, and even the poet's imaginative energy, are but moments—that old dream of the *anima mundi*, the mother of all things and their grave, in which some had desired to lose themselves, and others had become indifferent to the distinctions of good and evil. It would come, sometimes, like the sign of the *macrocosm* to Faust in his cell: the network of man and nature was seen to be pervaded by a common, universal life: a new, bold thought lifted him above the furrow, above the green turf of the Westmoreland churchyard, to a world altogether different in its vagueness and vastness, and the narrow glen was full of the brooding power of one universal spirit.

And so he has something, also, for those who feel the fascination of bold speculative ideas, who are really capable of rising upon them to conditions of poetical thought. He uses them, indeed, always with a very fine apprehension of the limits within which alone philosophical imaginings have any place in true poetry; and using them only for poetical purposes, is not too careful even to make them consistent with

each other. To him, theories which for other men bring a world of technical diction, brought perfect form and expression, as in those two lofty books of the *Prelude*, which describe the decay and the restoration of Imagination and Taste. Skirting the borders of this world of bewildering heights and depths, he got but the first exciting influence of it, that joyful enthusiasm which great imaginative theories prompt, when the mind first comes to have an understanding of them; and it is not under the influence of these thoughts that his poetry becomes tedious or loses its blitheness. He keeps them, too, always within certain ethical bounds, so that no word of his could offend the simplest of those simple souls which are always the largest portion of mankind. But it is, nevertheless, the contact of these thoughts, the speculative boldness in them, which constitutes, at least for some minds, the secret attraction of much of his best poetry—the sudden passage from lowly thoughts and places to the majestic forms of philosophical imagination, the play of these forms over a world so different, enlarging so strangely the bounds of its humble churchyards, and breaking such a wild light on the graves of christened children.

And these moods always brought with them faultless expression. In regard to expression, as with feeling and thought, the duality of the higher and lower moods was absolute. It belonged to the higher, the imaginative mood, and was the pledge of its reality, to bring the appropriate language with it. In him, when the really poetical motive worked at all, it united, with absolute justice, the word and the

idea; each, in the imaginative flame, becoming inseparably one with the other, by that fusion of matter and form, which is the characteristic of the highest poetical expression. His words are themselves thought and feeling; not eloquent or musical words merely, but that sort of creative language which carries the reality of what it depicts, directly, to the consciousness.

The music of mere metre performs but a limited yet a very peculiar and subtly ascertained function, in Wordsworth's poetry. With him, metre is but an additional grace, accessory to that deeper music of words and sounds, that moving power, which they exercise in the nobler prose no less than in formal poetry. It is a sedative to that excitement, an excitement sometimes almost painful, under which the language, alike of poetry and prose, attains a rhythmical power, independent of metrical combination, and dependent rather on some subtle adjustment of the elementary sounds of words themselves to the image or feeling they convey. Yet some of his pieces, pieces prompted by a sort of half-playful mysticism, like the *Daffodils* and *The Two April Mornings*, are distinguished by a certain quaint gaiety of metre, and rival by their perfect execution, in this respect, similar pieces among our own Elizabethan, or contemporary French poetry. And those who take up these poems after an interval of months, or years, perhaps, may be surprised at finding how well old favourites wear, how their strange, inventive turns of diction or thought still send through them the old feeling of surprise. Those who lived about Wordsworth were all great lovers of the older English literature, and oftentimes

there came out in him a noticeable likeness to our earlier poets. He quotes unconsciously, but with new power of meaning, a clause from one of Shakespeare's sonnets ; and, as with some other men's most famous work, the *Ode on the Recollections of Childhood* had its anticipator. He drew something too from the unconscious mysticism of the old English language itself, drawing out the inward significance of its racy idiom, and the not wholly unconscious poetry of the language used by the simplest people under strong excitement—language, therefore, at its origin.

The office of the poet is not that of the moralist, and the first aim of Wordsworth's poetry is to give the reader a peculiar kind of pleasure. But through his poetry, and through this pleasure in it, he does actually convey to the reader an extraordinary wisdom in the things of practice. One lesson, if men must have lessons, he conveys more clearly than all, the supreme importance of contemplation in the conduct of life.

Contemplation—impassioned contemplation—that, is with Wordsworth the end-in-itself, the perfect end. We see the majority of mankind going most often to definite ends, lower or higher ends, as their own instincts may determine ; but the end may never be attained, and the means not be quite the right means, great ends and little ones alike being, for the most part, distant, and the ways to them, in this dim world, somewhat vague. Meantime, to higher or lower ends, they move too often with something of a sad countenance, with hurried and ignoble gait, becoming, unconsciously, something like thorns, in their anxiety

to bear grapes; it being possible for people, in the pursuit of even great ends, to become themselves thin and impoverished in spirit and temper, thus diminishing the sum of perfection in the world, at its very sources. We understand this when it is a question of mean, or of intensely selfish ends—of Grandet, or Javert. We think it bad morality to say that the end justifies the means, and we know how false to all higher conceptions of the religious life is the type of one who is ready to do evil that good may come. We contrast with such dark, mistaken eagerness, a type like that of Saint Catherine of Siena, who made the means to her ends so attractive, that she has won for herself an undying place in the *House Beautiful*, not by her rectitude of soul only, but by its "fairness"—by those quite different qualities which commend themselves to the poet and the artist.

Yet, for most of us, the conception of means and ends covers the whole of life, and is the exclusive type or figure under which we represent our lives to ourselves. Such a figure, reducing all things to machinery, though it has on its side the authority of that old Greek moralist who has fixed for succeeding generations the outline of the theory of right living, is too like a mere picture or description of men's lives as we actually find them, to be the basis of the higher ethics. It covers the meanness of men's daily lives, and much of the dexterity and the vigour with which they pursue what may seem to them the good of themselves or of others; but not the intangible perfection of those whose ideal is rather in *being* than in *doing*—not those *manners* which are, in the deepest

as in the simplest sense, *morals*, and without which one cannot so much as offer a cup of water to a poor man without offence—not the part of "antique Rachel," sitting in the company of Beatrice; and even the moralist might well endeavour rather to withdraw men from the too exclusive consideration of means and ends, in life.

Against this predominance of machinery in our existence, Wordsworth's poetry, like all great art and poetry, is a continual protest. Justify rather the end by the means, it seems to say: whatever may become of the fruit, make sure of the flowers and the leaves. It was justly said, therefore, by one who had meditated very profoundly on the true relation of means to ends in life, and on the distinction between what is desirable in itself and what is desirable only as machinery, that when the battle which he and his friends were waging had been won, the world would need more than ever those qualities which Wordsworth was keeping alive and nourishing.

That the end of life is not action but contemplation—*being* as distinct from *doing*—a certain disposition of the mind: is, in some shape or other, the principle of all the higher morality. In poetry, in art, if you enter into their true spirit at all, you touch this principle, in a measure: these, by their very sterility, are a type of beholding for the mere joy of beholding. To treat life in the spirit of art, is to make life a thing in which means and ends are identified: to encourage such treatment, the true moral significance of art and poetry. Wordsworth, and other poets who have been like him in ancient or

more recent times, are the masters, the experts, in this art of impassioned contemplation. Their work is, not to teach lessons, or enforce rules, or even to stimulate us to noble ends; but to withdraw the thoughts for a little while from the mere machinery of life, to fix them, with appropriate emotions, on the spectacle of those great facts in man's existence which no machinery affects, "on the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature,"—on "the operations of the elements and the appearances of the visible universe, on storm and sunshine, on the revolutions of the seasons, on cold and heat, on loss of friends and kindred, on injuries and resentments, on gratitude and hope, on fear and sorrow." To witness this spectacle with appropriate emotions is the aim of all culture; and of these emotions poetry like Wordsworth's is a great nourisher and stimulant. He sees nature full of sentiment and excitement; he sees men and women as parts of nature, passionate, excited, in strange grouping and connexion with the grandeur and beauty of the natural world:—images, in his own words, "of man suffering, amid awful forms and powers."

Such is the figure of the more powerful and original poet, hidden away, in part, under those weaker elements in Wordsworth's poetry, which for some minds determine their entire character; a poet somewhat bolder and more passionate than might at first sight be supposed, but not too bold for true poetical taste; an unimpassioned writer, you might sometimes fancy, yet thinking the chief aim, in life and

art alike, to be a certain deep emotion; seeking most often the great elementary passions in lowly places; having at least this condition of all impassioned work, that he aims always at an absolute sincerity of feeling and diction, so that he is the true forerunner of the deepest and most passionate poetry of our own day; yet going back also, with something of a protest against the conventional fervour of much of the poetry popular in his own time, to those older English poets, whose unconscious likeness often comes out in him.

1874.

CHARLES LAMB

THOSE English critics who at the beginning of the present century introduced from Germany, together with some other subtleties of thought transplanted hither not without advantage, the distinction between the *Fancy* and the *Imagination*, made much also of the cognate distinction between *Wit* and *Humour*, between that unreal and transitory mirth, which is as the crackling of thorns under the pot, and the laughter which blends with tears and even with the sublimities of the imagination, and which, in its most exquisite motives, is one with pity—the laughter of the comedies of Shakespeare, hardly less expressive than his moods of seriousness or solemnity, of that deeply stirred soul of sympathy in him, as flowing from which both tears and laughter are alike genuine and contagious.

This distinction between wit and humour, Coleridge and other kindred critics applied, with much effect, in their studies of some of our older English writers. And as the distinction between imagination and fancy, made popular by Wordsworth, found its best justification in certain essential differences of stuff in Wordsworth's own writings, so this other critical distinction, between wit and humour, finds a

sort of visible interpretation and instance in the character and writings of Charles Lamb ;—one who lived more consistently than most writers among subtle literary theories, and whose remains are still full of curious interest for the student of literature as a fine art.

The author of the *English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century*, coming to the humourists of the nineteenth, would have found, as is true pre-eminently of Thackeray himself, the springs of pity in them deepened by the deeper subjectivity, the intenser and closer living with itself, which is characteristic of the temper of the later generation ; and therewith, the mirth also, from the amalgam of which with pity humour proceeds, has become, in Charles Dickens, for example, freer and more boisterous.

To this more high-pitched feeling, since predominant in our literature, the writings of Charles Lamb, whose life occupies the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth, are a transition ; and such union of grave, of terrible even, with gay, we may note in the circumstances of his life, as reflected thence into his work. We catch the aroma of a singular, homely, sweetness about his first years, spent on Thames' side, amid the red bricks and terraced gardens, with their rich historical memories of old-fashioned legal London. Just above the poorer class, deprived, as he says, of the "sweet food of academic institution," he is fortunate enough to be reared in the classical languages at an ancient school, where he becomes the companion of Coleridge, as at a later period he was his enthusiastic

disciple. So far, the years go by with less than the usual share of boyish difficulties; protected, one fancies, seeing what he was afterwards, by some attraction of temper in the quaint child, small and delicate, with a certain Jewish expression in his clear, brown complexion, eyes not precisely of the same colour, and a slow walk adding to the staidness of his figure; and whose infirmity of speech, increased by agitation, is partly engaging.

And the cheerfulness of all this, of the mere aspect of Lamb's quiet subsequent life also, might make the more superficial reader think of him as in himself something slight, and of his mirth as cheaply bought. Yet we know that beneath this blithe surface there was something of the fateful domestic horror, of the beautiful heroism and devotedness too, of old Greek tragedy. His sister Mary, ten years his senior, in a sudden paroxysm of madness, caused the death of her mother, and was brought to trial for what an over-strained justice might have construed as the greatest of crimes. She was released on the brother's pledging himself to watch over her; and to this sister, from the age of twenty-one, Charles Lamb sacrificed himself, "seeking thenceforth," says his earliest biographer, "no connexion which could interfere with her supremacy in his affections, or impair his ability to sustain and comfort her." The "feverish, romantic tie of love," he cast away in exchange for the "charities of home." Only, from time to time, the madness returned, affecting him too, once; and we see the brother and sister voluntarily yielding to restraint. In estimating the humour of *Elia*, we must

no more forget the strong undercurrent of this great misfortune and pity, than one could forget it in his actual story. So he becomes the best critic, almost the discoverer, of Webster, a dramatist of genius so sombre, so heavily coloured, so *macabre*. *Rosamund Grey*, written in his twenty-third year, a story with something bitter and exaggerated, an almost insane fixedness of gloom perceptible in it, strikes clearly this note in his work.

For himself, and from his own point of view, the exercise of his gift, of his literary art, came to gild or sweeten a life of monotonous labour, and seemed, as far as regarded others, no very important thing; availing to give them a little pleasure, and inform them a little, chiefly in a retrospective manner, but in no way concerned with the turning of the tides of the great world. And yet this very modesty, this unambitious way of conceiving his work, has impressed upon it a certain exceptional enduringness. For of the remarkable English writers contemporary with Lamb, many were greatly preoccupied with ideas of practice—religious, moral, political—ideas which have since, in some sense or other, entered permanently into the general consciousness; and, these having no longer any stimulus for a generation provided with a different stock of ideas, the writings of those who spent so much of themselves in their propagation have lost, with posterity, something of what they gained by them in immediate influence. Coleridge, Wordsworth, Shelley even—sharing so largely in the unrest of their own age, and made personally more interesting thereby, yet, of their

actual work, surrender more to the mere course of time than some of those who may have seemed to exercise themselves hardly at all in great matters, to have been little serious, or a little indifferent, regarding them.

Of this number of the disinterested servants of literature, smaller in England than in France, Charles Lamb is one. In the making of prose he realises the principle of art for its own sake, as completely as Keats in the making of verse. And, working ever close to the concrete, to the details, great or small, of actual things, books, persons, and with no part of them blurred to his vision by the intervention of mere abstract theories, he has reached an enduring moral effect also, in a sort of boundless sympathy. Unoccupied, as he might seem, with great matters, he is in immediate contact with what is real, especially in its caressing littleness, that littleness in which there is much of the whole woeful heart of things, and meets it more than half-way with a perfect understanding of it. What sudden, unexpected touches of pathos in him !—bearing witness how the sorrow of humanity, the *Welt-schmerz*, the constant aching of its wounds, is ever present with him : but what a gift also for the enjoyment of life in its subtleties, of enjoyment actually refined by the need of some thoughtful economies and making the most of things ! Little arts of happiness he is ready to teach to others. The quaint remarks of children which another would scarcely have heard, he preserves—little flies in the priceless amber of his Attic wit—and has his " Praise of chimney-sweepers " (as William Blake has written, with so

much natural pathos, the Chimney-sweeper's Song) valuing carefully their white teeth, and fine enjoyment of white sheets in stolen sleep at Arundel Castle, as he tells the story, anticipating something of the mood of our deep humourists of the last generation. His simple mother-pity for those who suffer by accident, or unkindness of nature, blindness for instance, or fateful disease of mind like his sister's, has something primitive in its largeness; and on behalf of ill-used animals he is early in composing a *Pity's Gift.*

And if, in deeper or more superficial sense, the dead *do* care at all for their name and fame, then how must the souls of Shakespeare and Webster have been stirred, after so long converse with things that stopped their ears, whether above or below the soil, at his exquisite appreciations of them; the souls of Titian and of Hogarth too; for, what has not been observed so generally as the excellence of his literary criticism, Charles Lamb is a fine critic of painting also. It was as loyal, self-forgetful work for others, for Shakespeare's self first, for instance, and then for Shakespeare's readers, that that too was done: he has the true scholar's way of forgetting himself in his subject. For though "defrauded," as we saw, in his young years, "of the sweet food of academic institution," he is yet essentially a scholar, and all his work mainly retrospective, as I said; his own sorrows, affections, perceptions, being alone real to him of the present. "I cannot make these present times," he says once, "present to *me.*"

Above all, he becomes not merely an expositor, permanently valuable, but for Englishmen almost

the discoverer of the old English drama. "The book is such as I am glad there should be," he modestly says of the *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the time of Shakespeare*; to which, however, he adds in a series of notes the very quintessence of criticism, the choicest savour and perfume of Elizabethan poetry being sorted, and stored here, with a sort of delicate intellectual epicureanism, which has had the effect of winning for these, then almost forgotten, poets, one generation after another of enthusiastic students. Could he but have known how fresh a source of culture he was evoking there for other generations, through all those years in which, a little wistfully, he would harp on the limitation of his time by business, and sigh for a better fortune in regard to literary opportunities!

To feel strongly the charm of an old poet or moralist, the literary charm of Burton, for instance, or Quarles, or The Duchess of Newcastle; and then to interpret that charm, to convey it to others—he seeming to himself but to hand on to others, in mere humble ministration, that of which for them he is really the creator—that is the way of his criticism; cast off in a stray letter often, or passing note, or lightest essay or conversation. It is in such a letter, for instance, that we come upon a singularly penetrative estimate of the genius and writings of Defoe.

Tracking, with an attention always alert, the whole process of their production to its starting-point in the deep places of the mind, he seems to realise the but half-conscious intuitions of Hogarth or Shakespeare, and develops the great ruling unities which have

swayed their actual work; or "puts up," and takes, the one morsel of good stuff in an old, forgotten writer. Even in what he says casually there comes an aroma of old English; noticeable echoes, in chance turn and phrase, of the great masters of style, the old masters. Godwin, seeing in quotation a passage from *John Woodvil*, takes it for a choice fragment of an old dramatist, and goes to Lamb to assist him in finding the author. His power of delicate imitation in prose and verse reaches the length of a fine mimicry even, as in those last essays of Elia on Popular Fallacies, with their gentle reproduction or caricature of Sir Thomas Browne, showing, the more completely, his mastery, by disinterested study, of those elements of the man which were the real source of style in that great, solemn master of old English, who, ready to say what he has to say with fearless homeliness, yet continually overawes one with touches of a strange utterance from worlds afar. For it is with the delicacies of fine literature especially, its gradations of expression, its fine judgment, its pure sense of words, of vocabulary—things, alas! dying out in the English literature of the present, together with the appreciation of them in our literature of the past—that his literary mission is chiefly concerned. And yet, delicate, refining, daintily epicurean, as he may seem, when he writes of giants such as Hogarth or Shakespeare, though often but in a stray note, you catch the sense of veneration with which those great names in past literature and art brooded over his intelligence, his undiminished impressibility by the great effects in them. Reading, commenting on Shakespeare, he

is like a man who walks alone under a grand stormy sky, and among unwonted tricks of light, when powerful spirits might seem to be abroad upon the air; and the grim humour of Hogarth, as he analyses it, rises into a kind of spectral grotesque; while he too knows the secret of fine, significant touches like theirs.

There are traits, customs, characteristics of houses and dress, surviving morsels of old life, such as Hogarth has transferred so vividly into *The Rake's Progress*, or *Marriage à la Mode*, concerning which we well understand how, common, uninteresting, or even worthless in themselves, they have come to please us at last as things picturesque, being set in relief against the modes of our different age. Customs, stiff to us, stiff dresses, stiff furniture—types of cast-off fashions, left by accident, and which no one ever meant to preserve—we contemplate with more than good-nature, as having in them the veritable accent of a time, not altogether to be replaced by its more solemn and self-conscious deposits; like those tricks of individuality which we find quite tolerable in persons, because they convey to us the secret of life-like expression, and with regard to which we are all to some extent humourists. But it is part of the privilege of the genuine humourist to anticipate this pensive mood with regard to the ways and things of his own day; to look upon the tricks in manner of the life about him with that same refined, purged sort of vision, which will come naturally to those of a later generation, in observing whatever may have survived by chance of its mere external habit. Seeing things always by the light of an understanding more entire

than is possible for ordinary minds, of the whole mechanism of humanity, and seeing also the manner, the outward mode or fashion, always in strict connexion with the spiritual condition which determined it, a humourist such as Charles Lamb anticipates the enchantment of distance; and the characteristics of places, ranks, habits of life, are transfigured for him, even now and in advance of time, by poetic light; justifying what some might condemn as mere sentimentality, in the effort to hand on unbroken the tradition of such fashion or accent. "The praise of beggars," "the cries of London," the traits of actors just grown "old," the spots in "town" where the country, its fresh green and fresh water, still lingered on, one after another, amidst the bustle; the quaint, dimmed, just played-out farces, he had relished so much, coming partly through them to understand the earlier English theatre as a thing once really alive; those fountains and sun-dials of old gardens, of which he entertains such dainty discourse:—he feels the poetry of these things, as the poetry of things old indeed, but surviving as an actual part of the life of the present, and as something quite different from the poetry of things flatly gone from us and antique, which come back to us, if at all, as entire strangers, like Scott's old Scotch-border personages, their oaths and armour. Such gift of appreciation depends, as I said, on the habitual apprehension of men's life as a whole—its organic wholeness, as extending even to the least things in it—of its outward manner in connexion with its inward temper; and it involves a fine perception of the congruities, the musical accordance

between humanity and its environment of custom, society, personal intercourse; as if all this, with its meetings, partings, ceremonies, gesture, tones of speech, were some delicate instrument on which an expert performer is playing.

These are some of the characteristics of Elia, one essentially an essayist, and of the true family of Montaigne, "never judging," as he says, "system-wise of things, but fastening on particulars;" saying all things as it were on chance occasion only, and by way of pastime, yet succeeding thus, "glimpse-wise," in catching and recording more frequently than others "the gayest, happiest attitude of things;" a casual writer for dreamy readers, yet always giving the reader so much more than he seemed to propose. There is something of the follower of George Fox about him, and the Quaker's belief in the inward light coming to one passive, to the mere wayfarer, who will be sure at all events to lose no light which falls by the way—glimpses, suggestions, delightful half-apprehensions, profound thoughts of old philosophers, hints of the innermost reason in things, the full knowledge of which is held in reserve; all the varied stuff, that is, of which genuine essays are made.

And with him, as with Montaigne, the desire of self-portraiture is, below all more superficial tendencies, the real motive in writing at all—a desire closely connected with that intimacy, that modern subjectivity, which may be called the *Montaignesque* element in literature. What he designs is to give you himself, to acquaint you with his likeness; but must do this, if at all, indirectly, being indeed always

more or less reserved, for himself and his friends; friendship counting for so much in his life, that he is jealous of anything that might jar or disturb it, even to the length of a sort of insincerity, to which he assigns its quaint "praise"; this lover of stage plays significantly welcoming a little touch of the artificiality of play to sweeten the intercourse of actual life.

And, in effect, a very delicate and expressive portrait of him does put itself together for the duly meditative reader. In indirect touches of his own work, scraps of faded old letters, what others remembered of his talk, the man's likeness emerges; what he laughed and wept at, his sudden elevations, and longings after absent friends, his fine casuistries of affection and devices to jog sometimes, as he says, the lazy happiness of perfect love, his solemn moments of higher discourse with the young, as they came across him on occasion, and went along a little way with him, the sudden, surprised apprehension of beauties in old literature, revealing anew the deep soul of poetry in things, and withal the pure spirit of fun, having its way again; laughter, that most short-lived of all things (some of Shakespeare's even being grown hollow) wearing well with him. Much of all this comes out through his letters, which may be regarded as a department of his essays. He is an old-fashioned letter-writer, the essence of the old fashion of letter-writing lying, as with true essay-writing, in the dexterous availing oneself of accident and circumstance, in the prosecution of deeper lines of observation; although, just as with the record of his conversation, one loses something, in losing the

actual tones of the stammerer, still graceful in his halting, as he halted also in composition, composing slowly and by fits, "like a Flemish painter," as he tells us, so "it is to be regretted," says the editor of his letters, "that in the printed letters the reader will lose the curious varieties of writing with which the originals abound, and which are scrupulously adapted to the subject."

Also, he was a true "collector," delighting in the personal finding of a thing, in the colour an old book or print gets for him by the little accidents which attest previous ownership. Wither's *Emblems*, "that old book and quaint," long-desired, when he finds it at last, he values none the less because a child had coloured the plates with his paints. A lover of household warmth everywhere, of that tempered atmosphere which our various habitations get by men's living within them, he "sticks to his favourite books as he did to his friends," and loved the "town," with a jealous eye for all its characteristics, "old houses" coming to have souls for him. The yearning for mere warmth against him in another, makes him content, all through life, with pure brotherliness, "the most kindly and natural species of love," as he says, in place of the *passion* of love. Brother and sister, sitting thus side by side, have, of course, their anticipations how one of them must sit at last in the faint sun alone, and set us speculating, as we read, as to precisely what amount of melancholy really accompanied for him the approach of old age, so steadily foreseen; make us note also, with pleasure, his successive wakings up to cheerful realities, out of a too

curious musing over what is gone and what remains, of life. In his subtle capacity for enjoying the more refined points of earth, of human relationship, he could throw the gleam of poetry or humour on what seemed common or threadbare; has a care for the sighs, and the weary, humdrum preoccupations of very weak people, down to their little pathetic "gentilities," even; while, in the purely human temper, he can write of death, almost like Shakespeare.

And that care, through all his enthusiasm of discovery, for what is accustomed, in literature, connected thus with his close clinging to home and the earth, was congruous also with that love for the accustomed in religion, which we may notice in him. He is one of the last votaries of that old-world sentiment, based on the feelings of hope and awe, which may be described as the religion of men of letters (as Sir Thomas Browne has his *Religion of the Physician*), religion as understood by the soberer men of letters in the last century, Addison, Gray, and Johnson; by Jane Austen and Thackeray, later. A high way of feeling developed largely by constant intercourse with the great things of literature, and extended in its turn to those matters greater still, this religion lives, in the main retrospectively, in a system of received sentiments and beliefs; received, like those great things of literature and art, in the first instance, on the authority of a long tradition, in the course of which they have linked themselves in a thousand complex ways to the conditions of human life, and no more questioned now than the feeling one keeps by one of the greatness—say! of Shakespeare.

For Charles Lamb, such form of religion becomes the solemn background on which the nearer and more exciting objects of his immediate experience relieve themselves, borrowing from it an expression of calm; its necessary atmosphere being indeed a profound quiet, that quiet which has in it a kind of sacramental efficacy, working, we might say, on the principle of the *opus operatum*, almost without any co-operation of one's own, towards the assertion of the higher self. And, in truth, to men of Lamb's delicately attuned temperament mere physical stillness has its full value; such natures seeming to long for it sometimes, as for no merely negative thing, with a sort of mystical sensuality.

The writings of Charles Lamb are an excellent illustration of the value of reserve in literature. Below his quiet, his quaintness, his humour, and what may seem the slightness, the occasional or accidental character of his work, there lies, as I said at starting, as in his life, a genuinely tragic element. The gloom, reflected at its darkest in those hard shadows of *Rosamund Grey*, is always there, though not always realised either for himself or his readers, and restrained always in utterance. It gives to those lighter matters on the surface of life and literature among which he for the most part moved, a wonderful force of expression, as if at any moment these slight words and fancies might pierce very far into the deeper soul of things. In his writing, as in his life, that quiet is not the low-flying of one from the first drowsy by choice, and needing the prick of some strong passion or worldly

ambition, to stimulate him into all the energy of which he is capable ; but rather the reaction of nature, after an escape from fate, dark and insane as in old Greek tragedy, following upon which the sense of mere relief becomes a kind of passion, as with one who, having narrowly escaped earthquake or shipwreck, finds a thing for grateful tears in just sitting quiet at home, under the wall, till the end of days.

He felt the genius of places ; and I sometimes think he resembles the places he knew and liked best, and where his lot fell—London, sixty-five years ago, with Covent Garden and the old theatres, and the Temple gardens still unspoiled, Thames gliding down, and beyond to north and south the fields at Enfield or Hampton, to which, " with their living trees," the thoughts wander " from the hard wood of the desk "—fields fresher, and coming nearer to town then, but in one of which the present writer remembers, on a brooding early summer's day, to have heard the cuckoo for the first time. Here, the surface of things is certainly humdrum, the streets dingy, the green places, where the child goes a-maying, tame enough. But nowhere are things more apt to respond to the brighter weather, nowhere is there so much difference between rain and sunshine, nowhere do the clouds roll together more grandly ; those quaint suburban pastorals gathering a certain quality of grandeur from the background of the great city, with its weighty atmosphere, and portent of storm in the rapid light on dome and bleached stone steeples.

1878.

SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLISH KINGS

" A brittle glory shineth in this face :
As brittle as the glory is the face."

THE English plays of Shakespeare needed but the completion of one unimportant interval to possess the unity of a popular chronicle from Richard the Second to Henry the Eighth, and possess, as they actually stand, the unity of a common motive in the handling of the various events and persons which they bring before us. Certain of his historic dramas, not English, display Shakespeare's mastery in the development of the heroic nature amid heroic circumstances ; and had he chosen, from English history, to deal with Cœur-de-Lion or Edward the First, the innate quality of his subject would doubtless have called into play something of that profound and sombre power which in *Julius Cæsar* and *Macbeth* has sounded the depths of mighty character. True, on the whole, to fact, it is another side of kingship which he has made prominent in his English histories. The irony of kingship—average human nature, flung with a wonderfully pathetic effect into the vortex of great events ; tragedy of everyday quality heightened in degree only by the conspicuous scene which does but make those who play their parts there con-

spicuously unfortunate; the utterance of common humanity straight from the heart, but refined like other common things for kingly uses by Shakespeare's unfailing eloquence: such, unconsciously for the most part, though palpably enough to the careful reader, is the conception under which Shakespeare has arranged the lights and shadows of the story of the English kings, emphasising merely the light and shadow inherent in it, and keeping very close to the original authorities, not simply in the general outline of these dramatic histories but sometimes in their very expression. Certainly the history itself, as he found it in Hall, Holinshed, and Stowe, those somewhat picturesque old chroniclers who had themselves an eye for the dramatic "effects" of human life, has much of this sentiment already about it. What he did not find there was the natural prerogative—such justification, in kingly, that is to say, in exceptional, qualities, of the exceptional position, as makes it practicable in the result. It is no *Henriade* he writes, and no history of the English people, but the sad fortunes of some English kings as conspicuous examples of the ordinary human condition. As in a children's story, all princes are in extremes. Delightful in the sunshine above the wall into which chance lifts the flower for a season, they can but plead somewhat more touchingly than others their everyday weakness in the storm. Such is the motive that gives unity to these unequal and intermittent contributions towards a slowly evolved dramatic chronicle, which it would have taken many days to rehearse; a not distant story from real life still well remembered in

its general course, to which people might listen now and again, as long as they cared, finding human nature at least wherever their attention struck ground in it.

He begins with John, and allows indeed to the first of these English kings a kind of greatness, making the development of the play centre in the counteraction of his natural gifts—that something of heroic force about him—by a madness which takes the shape of reckless impiety, forced especially on men's attention by the terrible circumstances of his end, in the delineation of which Shakespeare triumphs, setting, with true poetic tact, this incident of the king's death, in all the horror of a violent one, amid a scene delicately suggestive of what is perennially peaceful and genial in the outward world. Like the sensual humours of Falstaff in another play, the presence of the bastard Faulconbridge, with his physical energy and his unmistakable family likeness—" those limbs which Sir Robert never holp to make " [1]—contributes to an almost coarse assertion of the force of nature, of the somewhat ironic preponderance of nature and circumstance over men's artificial arrangements, to the recognition of a certain potent natural aristocracy, which is far from being always identical with that more formal, heraldic one. And what is a coarse fact in the case of Faulconbridge becomes a motive of pathetic appeal in the wan and babyish Arthur. The magic with which nature models tiny and deli-

[1] *Elinor.* Do you not read some tokens of my son (Cœur-de-Lion)
In the large composition of this man ?

cate children to the likeness of their rough fathers is nowhere more justly expressed than in the words of King Philip—

> " Look here upon thy brother Geoffrey's face !
> These eyes, these brows were moulded out of his :
> This little abstract doth contain that large
> Which died in Geoffrey ; and the hand of time
> Shall draw this brief into as huge a volume."

It was perhaps something of a boyish memory of the shocking end of his father that had distorted the piety of Henry the Third into superstitious terror. A frightened soul, himself touched with the contrary sort of religious madness, doting on all that was alien from his father's huge ferocity, on the genialities, the soft gilding, of life, on the genuine interests of art and poetry, to be credited more than any other person with the deep religious expression of Westminster Abbey, Henry the Third, picturesque, though useless, but certainly touching, might have furnished Shakespeare, had he filled up this interval in his series, with precisely the kind of effect he tends towards in his English plays. But he found it completer still in the person and story of Richard the Second, a figure —" that sweet lovely rose "—which haunts Shakespeare's mind, as it seems long to have haunted the minds of the English people, as the most touching of all examples of the irony of kingship.

Henry the Fourth—to look for a moment beyond our immediate subject, in pursuit of Shakespeare's thought—is presented, of course, in general outline, as an impersonation of " surviving force : " he has a

certain amount of kingcraft also, a real fitness for great opportunity. But still true to his leading motive, Shakespeare, in *King Henry the Fourth*, has left the high-water mark of his poetry in the soliloquy which represents royalty longing vainly for the toiler's sleep; while the popularity, the showy heroism, of Henry the Fifth, is used to give emphatic point to the old earthly commonplace about "wild oats." The wealth of homely humour in these plays, the fun coming straight home to all the world, of Fluelen especially in his unconscious interview with the king, the boisterous earthiness of Falstaff and his companions, contribute to the same effect. The keynote of Shakespeare's treatment is indeed expressed by Henry the Fifth himself, the *greatest* of Shakespeare's kings.—"Though I speak it to you," he says *incognito*, under cover of night, to a common soldier on the field, "I think the king is but a man, as I am: the violet smells to him as it doth to me: all his senses have but human conditions; and though his affections be higher mounted than ours yet when they stoop they stoop with like wing." And, in truth, the really kingly speeches which Shakespeare assigns to him, as to other kings weak enough in all but speech, are but a kind of flowers, worn for, and effective only as personal embellishment. They combine to one result with the merely outward and ceremonial ornaments of royalty, its pageantries, flaunting so naively, so credulously, in Shakespeare, as in that old medieval time. And then, the force of Hotspur is but transient youth, the common heat of youth, in him. The character of Henry the Sixth again, *roi fainéant*, with

La Pucelle [1] for his counterfoil, lay in the direct course of Shakespeare's design: he has done much to fix the sentiment of the "holy Henry." Richard the Third, touched, like John, with an effect of real heroism, is spoiled like him by something of criminal madness, and reaches his highest level of tragic expression when circumstances reduce him to terms of mere human nature.—

"A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!"

The Princes in the Tower recall to mind the lot of young Arthur—

"I'll go with thee,
And find the inheritance of this poor child,
His little kingdom of a forced grave."

And when Shakespeare comes to Henry the Eighth, it is not the superficial though very English splendour of the king himself, but the really potent and ascendant nature of the butcher's son on the one hand, and Katharine's subdued reproduction of the sad fortunes of Richard the Second on the other, that define his central interest.[2]

With a prescience of the Wars of the Roses, of

[1] Perhaps the one person of *genius* in these English plays.

The spirit of deep prophecy she hath,
Exceeding the nine Sibyls of old Rome:
What's past and what's to come she can descry.

[2] Proposing in this paper to trace the leading sentiment in Shakespeare's English Plays as a sort of *popular dramatic chronicle*, I have left untouched the question how much (or, in the case of *Henry the Sixth* and *Henry the Eighth*, how little) of them may be really his: how far inferior hands have contributed to a result, true on the whole to the greater, that is to say, the Shakespearian, elements in them.

which his errors were the original cause, it is Richard who best exposes Shakespeare's own constant sentiment concerning war, and especially that sort of civil war which was then recent in English memories. The soul of Shakespeare, certainly, was not wanting in a sense of the magnanimity of warriors. The grandiose aspects of war, its magnificent apparelling, he records monumentally enough—the "dressing of the lists," the lion's heart, its unfaltering haste thither in all the freshness of youth and morning—

> "Not sick although I have to do with death—
> The sun doth gild our armour: Up, my Lords!—
> I saw young Harry with his beaver on,
> His cuisses on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,
> Rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury."

Only, with Shakespeare, the afterthought is immediate—

> "They come like sacrifices in their trim.
>
> —Will it never be to-day? I will trot to-morrow a mile, and my way shall be paved with English faces."

This sentiment Richard reiterates very plaintively, in association with the delicate sweetness of the English fields, still sweet and fresh, like London and her other fair towns in that England of Chaucer, for whose soil the exiled Bolingbroke is made to long so dangerously, while Richard on his return from Ireland salutes it—

> "That pale, that white-fac'd shore,—
> As a long-parted mother with her child.—

So, weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my earth !
And do thee favour with my royal hands."—

Then (of Bolingbroke)

" Ere the crown he looks for live in peace,
Ten thousand bloody crowns of mothers' sons
Shall ill become the flower of England's face ;
Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace
To scarlet indignation, and bedew
My pastures' grass with faithful English blood."—

" Why have they dared to march ? "—

asks York,

" So many miles upon her peaceful bosom,
Frighting her pale-fac'd visages with war ? "—

waking, according to Richard,

" Our peace, which in our country's cradle,
Draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep : "—

bedrenching " with crimson tempest "

" The fresh green lap of fair king Richard's land : "—

frighting " fair peace " from " our quiet confines," laying

" The summer's dust with showers of blood,
Rained from the wounds of slaughter'd Englishmen : "

bruising

" Her flowerets with the armed hoofs
Of hostile paces."

Perhaps it is not too fanciful to note in this play a

peculiar recoil from the mere instruments of warfare, the contact of the " rude ribs," the " flint bosom," of Barkloughly Castle or Pomfret or

" Julius Cæsar's ill-erected tower : "

the

" Boisterous untun'd drums
With harsh-resounding trumpets' dreadful bray
And grating shock of wrathful iron arms."

It is as if the lax, soft beauty of the king took effect, at least by contrast, on everything beside.

One gracious prerogative, certainly, Shakespeare's English kings possess : they are a very eloquent company, and Richard is the most sweet-tongued of them all. In no other play perhaps is there such a flush of those gay, fresh, variegated flowers of speech —colour and figure, not lightly attached to, but fused into, the very phrase itself—which Shakespeare cannot help dispensing to his characters, as in this " play of the Deposing of King Richard the Second," an exquisite poet if he is nothing else, from first to last, in light and gloom alike, able to see all things poetically, to give a poetic turn to his conduct of them, and refreshing with his golden language the tritest aspects of that ironic contrast between the pretensions of a king and the actual necessities of his destiny. What a garden of words ! With him, blank verse, infinitely graceful, deliberate, musical in inflexion, becomes indeed a true " verse royal," that rhyming lapse, which to the Shakespearian ear, at least in youth, came as the last touch of refinement on it, being here doubly appropriate. His eloquence

blends with that fatal beauty, of which he was so frankly aware, so amiable to his friends, to his wife, of the effects of which on the people his enemies were so much afraid, on which Shakespeare himself dwells so attentively as the " royal blood " comes and goes in the face with his rapid changes of temper. As happens with sensitive natures, it attunes him to a congruous suavity of manners, by which anger itself became flattering : it blends with his merely youthful hopefulness and high spirits, his sympathetic love for gay people, things, apparel—" his cote of gold and stone, valued at thirty thousand marks," the novel Italian fashions he preferred, as also with those real amiabilities that made people forget the darker touches of his character, but never tire of the pathetic rehearsal of his fall, the meekness of which would have seemed merely abject in a less graceful performer.

Yet it is only fair to say that in the painstaking " revival " of *King Richard the Second*, by the late Charles Kean, those who were very young thirty years ago were afforded much more than Shakespeare's play could ever have been before—the very person of the king based on the stately old portrait in Westminster Abbey, " the earliest extant contemporary likeness of any English sovereign," the grace, the winning pathos, the sympathetic voice of the player, the tasteful archæology confronting vulgar modern London with a scenic reproduction, for once really agreeable, of the London of Chaucer. In the hands of Kean the play became like an exquisite performance on the violin.

The long agony of one so gaily painted by nature's

self, from his " tragic abdication " till the hour in which he

" Sluiced out his innocent soul thro' streams of blood,"

was for playwrights a subject ready to hand, and became early the theme of a popular drama, of which some have fancied surviving favourite fragments in the rhymed parts of Shakespeare's work.

" The king Richard of Yngland
Was in his flowris then regnand :
But his flowris efter sone
Fadyt, and ware all undone : "—

says the old chronicle. Strangely enough, Shakespeare supposes him an over-confident believer in that divine right of kings, of which people in Shakespeare's time were coming to hear so much ; a general right, sealed to him (so Richard is made to think) as an ineradicable personal gift by the touch—stream rather, over head and breast and shoulders—of the " holy oil " of his consecration at Westminster ; not however, through some oversight, the genuine balm used at the coronation of his successor, given, according to legend, by the Blessed Virgin to Saint Thomas of Canterbury. Richard himself found that, it was said, among other forgotten treasures, at the crisis of his changing fortunes, and vainly sought reconsecration therewith—understood, wistfully, that it was reserved for his happier rival. And yet his coronation, by the pageantry, the amplitude, the learned care, of its order, so lengthy that the king, then only eleven years of age, and fasting, as a communicant at the ceremony, was carried away in a faint, fixed the

type under which it has ever since continued. And nowhere is there so emphatic a reiteration as in *Richard the Second* of the sentiment which those singular rites were calculated to produce.

> " Not all the water in the rough rude sea
> Can wash the balm from an anointed king,"—

as supplementing another, almost supernatural, right. —" Edward's seven sons," of whom Richard's father was one,

> " Were as seven phials of his sacred blood."

But this, too, in the hands of Shakespeare, becomes for him, like any other of those fantastic, ineffectual, easily discredited, personal graces, as capricious in its operation on men's wills as merely physical beauty, kindling himself to eloquence indeed, but only giving double pathos to insults which " barbarism itself " might have pitied—the dust in his face, as he returns, through the streets of London, a prisoner in the train of his victorious enemy.

> " How soon my sorrow hath destroyed my face ! "

he cries, in that most poetic invention of the mirror scene, which does but reinforce again that physical charm which all confessed. The sense of " divine right " in kings is found to act not so much as a secret of power over others, as of infatuation to themselves. And of all those personal gifts the one which alone never altogether fails him is just that royal utterance, his appreciation of the poetry of his own hapless lot, an eloquent self-pity, infecting others

in spite of themselves, till they too become irresistibly eloquent about him.

In the Roman Pontifical, of which the order of Coronation is really a part, there is no form for the inverse process, no rite of "degradation," such as that by which an offending priest or bishop may be deprived, if not of the essential quality of "orders," yet, one by one, of its outward dignities. It is as if Shakespeare had had in mind some such inverted rite, like those old ecclesiastical or military ones, by which human hardness, or human justice, adds the last touch of unkindness, to the execution of its sentences, in the scene where Richard "deposes" himself, as in some long, agonising ceremony, reflectively drawn out, with an extraordinary refinement of intelligence and variety of piteous appeal, but also with a felicity of poetic invention, which puts these pages into a very select class, with the finest "vermeil and ivory" work of Chatterton or Keats.

> "Fetch hither Richard that in common view
> He may surrender!"—

And Richard more than concurs: he throws himself into the part, realises a type, falls gracefully as on the world's stage.—Why is he sent for?

> "To do that office of thine own good will
> Which tired majesty did make thee offer."—
>
> "Now mark me! how I will undo myself."

"Hath Bolingbroke deposed thine intellect?" the Queen asks him, on his way to the Tower:—

> "Hath Bolingbroke
> Deposed thine intellect? hath he been in thy heart?"

And in truth, but for that adventitious poetic gold, it would be only "plume-plucked Richard."—

> "I find myself a traitor with the rest,
> For I have given here my soul's consent
> To undeck the pompous body of a king."

He is duly reminded, indeed, how

> "That which in mean men we entitle patience
> Is pale cold cowardice in noble breasts."

Yet at least within the poetic bounds of Shakespeare's play, through Shakespeare's bountiful gifts, his desire seems fulfilled.—

> "O! that I were as great
> As is my grief."

And his grief becomes nothing less than a central expression of all that in the revolutions of Fortune's wheel goes *down* in the world.

No! Shakespeare's kings are not, nor are meant to be, great men: rather, little or quite ordinary humanity, thrust upon greatness, with those pathetic results, the natural self-pity of the weak heightened in them into irresistible appeal to others as the net result of their royal prerogative. One after another, they seem to lie composed in Shakespeare's embalming pages, with just that touch of nature about them, making the whole world akin, which has infused into their tombs at Westminster a rare poetic grace. It is that irony of kingship, the sense that it is in its happiness child's play, in its sorrows, after all, but children's grief, which gives its finer accent to all the

changeful feeling of these wonderful speeches :—the great meekness of the graceful, wild creature, tamed at last.—

" Give Richard leave to live till Richard die ! "

his somewhat abject fear of death, turning to acquiescence at moments of extreme weariness :—

" My large kingdom for a little grave !
A little little grave, an obscure grave ! "—

his religious appeal in the last reserve, with its bold reference to the judgment of Pilate, as he thinks once more of his " anointing."

And as happens with children he attains contentment finally in the merely passive recognition of superior strength, in the naturalness of the result of the great battle as a matter of course, and experiences something of the royal prerogative of poetry to obscure, or at least to attune and soften men's griefs. As in some sweet anthem of Handel, the sufferer, who put finger to the organ under the utmost pressure of mental conflict, extracts a kind of peace at last from the mere skill with which he sets his distress to music.—

" Beshrew thee, Cousin, that didst lead me forth
Of that sweet way I was in to despair ! "

" With Cain go wander through the shades of night ! "—cries the new king to the gaoler Exton, dissimulating his share in the murder he is thought to have suggested ; and in truth there is something of the murdered Abel about Shakespeare's Richard. The fact seems to be that he died of " waste and a

broken heart : " it was by way of proof that his end had been a natural one that, stifling a real fear of the face, the face of Richard, on men's minds, with the added pleading now of all dead faces, Henry exposed the corpse to general view ; and Shakespeare, in bringing it on the stage, in the last scene of his play, does but follow out the motive with which he has emphasised Richard's physical beauty all through it—that " most beauteous inn," as the Queen says quaintly, meeting him on the way to death—residence, then soon to be deserted, of that wayward, frenzied, but withal so affectionate soul. Though the body did not go to Westminster immediately, his tomb,

" That small model of the barren earth
Which serves as paste and cover to our bones," [1]

the effigy clasping the hand of his youthful consort, was already prepared there, with " rich gilding and ornaments," monument of poetic regret, for Queen Anne of Bohemia, not of course the " Queen " of Shakespeare, who however seems to have transferred to this second wife something of Richard's wildly proclaimed affection for the first. In this way, through the connecting link of that sacred spot, our thoughts once more associate Richard's two fallacious prerogatives, his personal beauty and his " anointing."

According to Johnson, *Richard the Second* is one of those plays which Shakespeare has " apparently

[1] Perhaps a *double entendre* :—of any ordinary grave, as comprising, in effect, the whole small earth now left to its occupant : or, of such a tomb as Richard's in particular, with its actual model, or effigy, of the clay of him. Both senses are so characteristic that it would be a pity to lose either.

revised;" and how doubly delightful Shakespeare is where he seems to have revised! "Would that he had blotted a thousand"—a thousand hasty phrases, we may venture once more to say with his earlier critic, now that the tiresome German superstition has passed away which challenged us to a dogmatic faith in the plenary verbal inspiration of every one of Shakespeare's clowns. Like some melodiously contending anthem of Handel's, I said, of Richard's meek "undoing" of himself in the mirror-scene; and, in fact, the play of *Richard the Second* does, like a musical composition, possess a certain concentration of all its parts, a simple continuity, an evenness in execution, which are rare in the great dramatist. With *Romeo and Juliet*, that perfect symphony (symphony of three independent poetic forms set in a grander one[1] which it is the merit of German criticism to have detected) it belongs to a small group of plays, where, by happy birth and consistent evolution, dramatic form approaches to something like the unity of a lyrical ballad, a lyric, a song, a single strain of music. Which sort of poetry we are to account the highest, is perhaps a barren question. Yet if, in art generally, unity of impression is a note of what is perfect, then lyric poetry, which in spite of complex structure often preserves the unity of a single passionate ejaculation, would rank higher than dramatic poetry, where, especially to the reader, as distinguished from the spectator assisting at a theatrical performance, there must always be a sense of the effort necessary to keep the

[1] The Sonnet: the Aubade: the Epithalamium.

various parts from flying asunder, a sense of imperfect continuity, such as the older criticism vainly sought to obviate by the rule of the dramatic "unities." It follows that a play attains artistic perfection just in proportion as it approaches that unity of lyrical effect, as if a song or ballad were still lying at the root of it, all the various expression of the conflict of character and circumstance falling at last into the compass of a single melody, or musical theme. As, historically, the earliest classic drama arose out of the chorus, from which this or that person, this or that episode, detached itself, so, into the unity of a choric song the perfect drama ever tends to return, its intellectual scope deepened, complicated, enlarged, but still with an unmistakable singleness, or identity, in its impression on the mind. Just there, in that vivid single impression left on the mind when all is over, not in any mechanical limitation of time and place, is the secret of the "unities"—the true imaginative unity—of the drama.

1889.

LEONARDO DA VINCI

HOMO MINISTER ET INTERPRES NATURÆ

In Vasari's life of Leonardo da Vinci as we now read it there are some variations from the first edition. There, the painter who has fixed the outward type of Christ for succeeding centuries was a bold speculator, holding lightly by other men's beliefs, setting philosophy above Christianity. Words of his, trenchant enough to justify this impression, are not recorded, and would have been out of keeping with a genius of which one characteristic is the tendency to lose itself in a refined and graceful mystery. The suspicion was but the time-honoured mode in which the world stamps its appreciation of one who has thoughts for himself alone, his high indifference, his intolerance of the common forms of things; and in the second edition the image was changed into something fainter and more conventional. But it is still by a certain mystery in his work, and something enigmatical beyond the usual measure of great men, that he fascinates, or perhaps half repels. His life is one of sudden revolts, with intervals in which he works not at all, or apart from the main scope of his work. By a strange fortune the pictures on which his more

popular fame rested disappeared early from the world, like the *Battle of the Standard* ; or are mixed obscurely with the product of meaner hands, like the *Last Supper*. His type of beauty is so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights, and seems more than that of any other artist to reflect ideas and views and some scheme of the world within ; so that he seemed to his contemporaries to be the possessor of some unsanctified and secret wisdom ; as to Michelet and others to have anticipated modern ideas. He trifles with his genius, and crowds all his chief work into a few tormented years of later life ; yet he is so possessed by his genius that he passes unmoved through the most tragic events, overwhelming his country and friends, like one who comes across them by chance on some secret errand.

His *legend*, as the French say, with the anecdotes which every one remembers, is one of the most brilliant chapters of Vasari. Later writers merely copied it, until, in 1804, Carlo Amoretti applied to it a criticism which left hardly a date fixed, and not one of those anecdotes untouched. The various questions thus raised have since that time become, one after another, subjects of special study, and mere antiquarianism has in this direction little more to do. For others remain the editing of the thirteen books of his manuscripts, and the separation by technical criticism of what in his reputed works is really his, from what is only half his, or the work of his pupils. But a lover of strange souls may still analyse for himself the impression made on him by those works, and try to reach through it a definition of the chief

elements of Leonardo's genius. The *legend*, as corrected and enlarged by its critics, may now and then intervene to support the results of this analysis.

His life has three divisions—thirty years at Florence, nearly twenty years at Milan, then nineteen years of wandering, till he sinks to rest under the protection of Francis the First at the *Château de Clou*. The dishonour of illegitimacy hangs over his birth. Piero Antonio, his father, was of a noble Florentine house, of Vinci in the *Val d'Arno*, and Leonardo, brought up delicately among the true children of that house, was the love-child of his youth, with the keen, puissant nature such children often have. We see him in his boyhood fascinating all men by his beauty, improvising music and songs, buying the caged birds and setting them free, as he walked the streets of Florence, fond of odd bright dresses and spirited horses.

From his earliest years he designed many objects, and constructed models in relief, of which Vasari mentions some of women smiling. His father, pondering over this promise in the child, took him to the workshop of Andrea del Verrocchio, then the most famous artist in Florence. Beautiful objects lay about there—reliquaries, pyxes, silver images for the pope's chapel at Rome, strange fancy-work of the middle age, keeping odd company with fragments of antiquity, then but lately discovered. Another student Leonardo may have seen there—a lad into whose soul the level light and aërial illusions of Italian sunsets had passed, in after days famous as Perugino. Verrocchio was an artist of the earlier Florentine type,

carver, painter, and worker in metals, in one; designer, not of pictures only, but of all things for sacred or household use, drinking-vessels, ambries, instruments of music, making them all fair to look upon, filling the common ways of life with the reflexion of some far-off brightness; and years of patience had refined his hand till his work was now sought after from distant places.

It happened that Verrocchio was employed by the brethren of Vallombrosa to paint the Baptism of Christ, and Leonardo was allowed to finish an angel in the left-hand corner. It was one of those moments in which the progress of a great thing—here, that of the art of Italy—presses hard on the happiness of an individual, through whose discouragement and decrease, humanity, in more fortunate persons, comes a step nearer to its final success.

For beneath the cheerful exterior of the mere well-paid craftsman, chasing brooches for the copes of *Santa Maria Novella*, or twisting metal screens for the tombs of the Medici, lay the ambitious desire to expand the destiny of Italian art by a larger knowledge and insight into things, a purpose in art not unlike Leonardo's still unconscious purpose; and often, in the modelling of drapery, or of a lifted arm, or of hair cast back from the face, there came to him something of the freer manner and richer humanity of a later age. But in this *Baptism* the pupil had surpassed the master; and Verrocchio turned away as one stunned, and as if his sweet earlier work must thereafter be distasteful to him, from the bright animated angel of Leonardo's hand.

The angel may still be seen in Florence, a space of sunlight in the cold, laboured old picture; but the legend is true only in sentiment, for painting had always been the art by which Verrocchio set least store. And as in a sense he anticipates Leonardo, so to the last Leonardo recalls the studio of Verrocchio, in the love of beautiful toys, such as the vessel of water for a mirror, and lovely needlework about the implicated hands in the *Modesty and Vanity*, and of reliefs, like those cameos which in the *Virgin of the Balances* hang all round the girdle of Saint Michael, and of bright variegated stones, such as the agates in the *Saint Anne*, and in a hieratic preciseness and grace, as of a sanctuary swept and garnished. Amid all the cunning and intricacy of his Lombard manner this never left him. Much of it there must have been in that lost picture of *Paradise*, which he prepared as a cartoon for tapestry, to be woven in the looms of Flanders. It was the perfection of the older Florentine style of miniature-painting, with patient putting of each leaf upon the trees and each flower in the grass, where the first man and woman were standing.

And because it was the perfection of that style, it awoke in Leonardo some seed of discontent which lay in the secret places of his nature. For the way to perfection is through a series of disgusts; and this picture—all that he had done so far in his life at Florence—was after all in the old slight manner. His art, if it was to be something in the world, must be weighted with more of the meaning of nature and purpose of humanity. Nature was "the true mis-

tress of higher intelligences." He plunged, then, into the study of nature. And in doing this he followed the manner of the older students; he brooded over the hidden virtues of plants and crystals, the lines traced by the stars as they moved in the sky, over the correspondences which exist between the different orders of living things, through which, to eyes opened, they interpret each other; and for years he seemed to those about him as one listening to a voice, silent for other men.

He learned here the art of going deep, of tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats, the power of an intimate presence in the things he handled. He did not at once or entirely desert his art; only he was no longer the cheerful, objective painter, through whose soul, as through clear glass, the bright figures of Florentine life, only made a little mellower and more pensive by the transit, passed on to the white wall. He wasted many days in curious tricks of design, seeming to lose himself in the spinning of intricate devices of line and colour. He was smitten with a love of the impossible—the perforation of mountains, changing the course of rivers, raising great buildings, such as the church of *San Giovanni*, in the air; all those feats for the performance of which natural magic professed to have the key. Later writers, indeed, see in these efforts an anticipation of modern mechanics; in him they were rather dreams, thrown off by the overwrought and labouring brain. Two ideas were especially confirmed in him, as reflexes of things that had touched his brain in childhood beyond the depth of other impressions

—the smiling of women and the motion of great waters.

And in such studies some interfusion of the extremes of beauty and terror shaped itself, as an image that might be seen and touched, in the mind of this gracious youth, so fixed that for the rest of his life it never left him. As if catching glimpses of it in the strange eyes or hair of chance people, he would follow such about the streets of Florence till the sun went down, of whom many sketches of his remain. Some of these are full of a curious beauty, that remote beauty which may be apprehended only by those who have sought it carefully; who, starting with acknowledged types of beauty, have refined as far upon these, as these refine upon the world of common forms. But mingled inextricably with this there is an element of mockery also; so that, whether in sorrow or scorn, he caricatures Dante even. Legions of grotesques sweep under his hand; for has not nature too her grotesques—the rent rock, the distorting lights of evening on lonely roads, the unveiled structure of man in the embryo, or the skeleton?

All these swarming fancies unite in the *Medusa of the Uffizii*. Vasari's story of an earlier Medusa, painted on a wooden shield, is perhaps an invention; and yet, properly told, has more of the air of truth about it than anything else in the whole legend. For its real subject is not the serious work of a man, but the experiment of a child. The lizards and glow-worms and other strange small creatures which haunt an Italian vineyard bring before one the whole picture of a child's life in a Tuscan dwelling—half

castle, half farm—and are as true to nature as the pretended astonishment of the father for whom the boy has prepared a surprise. It was not in play that he painted that other Medusa, the one great picture which he left behind him in Florence. The subject has been treated in various ways; Leonardo alone cuts to its centre; he alone realises it as the head of a corpse, exercising its powers through all the circumstances of death. What may be called the fascination of corruption penetrates in every touch its exquisitely finished beauty. About the dainty lines of the cheek the bat flits unheeded. The delicate snakes seem literally strangling each other in terrified struggle to escape from the Medusa brain. The hue which violent death always brings with it is in the features; features singularly massive and grand, as we catch them inverted, in a dexterous foreshortening, crown foremost, like a great calm stone against which the wave of serpents breaks.

The science of that age was all divination, clairvoyance, unsubjected to our exact modern formulas, seeking in an instant of vision to concentrate a thousand experiences. Later writers, thinking only of the well-ordered treatise on painting which a Frenchman, Raffaelle du Fresne, a hundred years afterwards, compiled from Leonardo's bewildered manuscripts, written strangely, as his manner was, from right to left, have imagined a rigid order in his inquiries. But this rigid order would have been little in accordance with the restlessness of his character; and if we think of him as the mere reasoner who subjects design to anatomy and composition to

mathematical rules, we shall hardly have that impression which those around Leonardo received from him. Poring over his crucibles, making experiments with colour, trying, by a strange variation of the alchemist's dream, to discover the secret, not of an elixir to make man's natural life immortal, but of giving immortality to the subtlest and most delicate effects of painting, he seemed to them rather the sorcerer or the magician, possessed of curious secrets and a hidden knowledge, living in a world of which he alone possessed the key. What his philosophy seems to have been most like is that of Paracelsus or Cardan; and much of the spirit of the older alchemy still hangs about it, with its confidence in short cuts and odd byways to knowledge. To him philosophy was to be something giving strange swiftness and double sight, divining the sources of springs beneath the earth or of expression beneath the human countenance, clairvoyant of occult gifts in common or uncommon things, in the reed at the brook-side, or the star which draws near to us but once in a century. How, in this way, the clear purpose was overclouded, the fine chaser's hand perplexed, we but dimly see; the mystery which at no point quite lifts from Leonardo's life is deepest here. But it is certain that at one period of his life he had almost ceased to be an artist.

The year 1483—the year of the birth of Raphael and the thirty-first of Leonardo's life—is fixed as the date of his visit to Milan by the letter in which he recommends himself to Ludovico Sforza, and offers to tell him, for a price, strange secrets in the art of

war. It was that Sforza who murdered his young nephew by slow poison, yet was so susceptible of religious impressions that he blended mere earthly passion with a sort of religious sentimentalism, and who took for his device the mulberry-tree—symbol, in its long delay and sudden yielding of flowers and fruit together, of a wisdom which economises all forces for an opportunity of sudden and sure effect. The fame of Leonardo had gone before him, and he was to model a colossal statue of Francesco, the first Duke of Milan. As for Leonardo himself, he came not as an artist at all, or careful of the fame of one; but as a player on the harp, a strange harp of silver of his own construction, shaped in some curious likeness to a horse's skull. The capricious spirit of Ludovico was susceptible also to the power of music, and Leonardo's nature had a kind of spell in it. Fascination is always the word descriptive of him. No portrait of his youth remains; but all tends to make us believe that up to this time some charm of voice and aspect, strong enough to balance the disadvantage of his birth, had played about him. His physical strength was great; it was said that he could bend a horse-shoe like a coil of lead.

The *Duomo*, work of artists from beyond the Alps, so fantastic to the eye of a Florentine used to the mellow, unbroken surfaces of Giotto and Arnolfo, was then in all its freshness; and below, in the streets of Milan, moved a people as fantastic, changeful, and dreamlike. To Leonardo least of all men could there be anything poisonous in the exotic flowers of sentiment which grew there. It was a life of brilliant sins

and exquisite amusements: Leonardo became a celebrated designer of pageants; and it suited the quality of his genius, composed, in almost equal parts, of curiosity and the desire of beauty, to take things as they came.

Curiosity and the desire of beauty—these are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius; curiosity often in conflict with the desire of beauty, but generating, in union with it, a type of subtle and curious grace.

The movement of the fifteenth century was twofold; partly the Renaissance, partly also the coming of what is called the "modern spirit," with its realism, its appeal to experience. It comprehended a return to antiquity, and a return to nature. Raphael represents the return to antiquity, and Leonardo the return to nature. In this return to nature, he was seeking to satisfy a boundless curiosity by her perpetual surprises, a microscopic sense of finish by her *finesse*, or delicacy of operation, that *subtilitas naturæ* which Bacon notices. So we find him often in intimate relations with men of science,—with Fra Luca Paccioli the mathematician, and the anatomist Marc Antonio della Torre. His observations and experiments fill thirteen volumes of manuscript; and those who can judge describe him as anticipating long before, by rapid intuition, the later ideas of science. He explained the obscure light of the unilluminated part of the moon, knew that the sea had once covered the mountains which contain shells, and of the gathering of the equatorial waters above the polar.

He who thus penetrated into the most secret parts

of nature preferred always the more to the less remote, what, seeming exceptional, was an instance of law more refined, the construction about things of a peculiar atmosphere and mixed lights. He paints flowers with such curious felicity that different writers have attributed to him a fondness for particular flowers, as Clement the cyclamen, and Rio the jasmin ; while, at Venice, there is a stray leaf from his portfolio dotted all over with studies of violets and the wild rose. In him first appears the taste for what is *bizarre* or *recherché* in landscape ; hollow places full of the green shadow of bituminous rocks, ridged reefs of trap-rock which cut the water into quaint sheets of light,—their exact antitype is in our own western seas ; all the solemn effects of moving water. You may follow it springing from its distant source among the rocks on the heath of the *Madonna of the Balances*, passing, as a little fall, into the treacherous calm of the *Madonna of the Lake*, as a goodly river next, below the cliffs of the *Madonna of the Rocks*, washing the white walls of its distant villages, stealing out in a network of divided streams in *La Gioconda* to the seashore of the *Saint Anne*—that delicate place, where the wind passes like the hand of some fine etcher over the surface, and the untorn shells are lying thick upon the sand, and the tops of the rocks, to which the waves never rise, are green with grass, grown fine as hair. It is the landscape, not of dreams or of fancy, but of places far withdrawn, and hours selected from a thousand with a miracle of *finesse*. Through Leonardo's strange veil of sight things reach him so ; in no ordinary night or day, but as in faint

light of eclipse, or in some brief interval of falling rain at daybreak, or through deep water.

And not into nature only; but he plunged also into human personality, and became above all a painter of portraits; faces of a modelling more skilful than has been seen before or since, embodied with a reality which almost amounts to illusion, on the dark air. To take a character as it was, and delicately sound its stops, suited one so curious in observation, curious in invention. He painted thus the portraits of Ludovico's mistresses, Lucretia Crivelli and Cecilia Galerani the poetess, of Ludovico himself, and the Duchess Beatrice. The portrait of Cecilia Galerani is lost, but that of Lucretia Crivelli has been identified with *La Belle Feronière* of the Louvre, and Ludovico's pale, anxious face still remains in the Ambrosian library. Opposite is the portrait of Beatrice d'Este, in whom Leonardo seems to have caught some presentiment of early death, painting her precise and grave, full of the refinement of the dead, in sad earth-coloured raiment, set with pale stones.

Sometimes this curiosity came in conflict with the desire of beauty; it tended to make him go too far below that outside of things in which art really begins and ends. This struggle between the reason and its ideas, and the senses, the desire of beauty, is the key to Leonardo's life at Milan—his restlessness, his endless re-touchings, his odd experiments with colour. How much must he leave unfinished, how much recommence! His problem was the transmutation of ideas into images. What he had attained so far had been the mastery of that earlier Florentine style,

with its naïve and limited sensuousness. Now he was to entertain in this narrow medium those divinations of a humanity too wide for it, that larger vision of the opening world, which is only not too much for the great, irregular art of Shakespeare; and everywhere the effort is visible in the work of his hands. This agitation, this perpetual delay, give him an air of weariness and *ennui*. To others he seems to be aiming at an impossible effect, to do something that art, that painting, can never do. Often the expression of physical beauty at this or that point seems strained and marred in the effort, as in those heavy German foreheads—too heavy and German for perfect beauty.

For there was a touch of Germany in that genius which, as Goethe said, had "thought itself weary"—*müde sich gedacht*. What an anticipation of modern Germany, for instance, in that debate on the question whether sculpture or painting is the nobler art![1] But there is this difference between him and the German, that, with all that curious science, the German would have thought nothing more was needed. The name of Goethe himself reminds one how great for the artist may be the danger of over-much science; how Goethe, who, in the *Elective Affinities* and the first part of *Faust*, does transmute ideas into images, who wrought many such transmutations, did not invariably find the spell-word, and in the second part of *Faust* presents us with a mass of science which has almost no artistic character at all. But Leonardo

[1] How princely, how characteristic of Leonardo, the answer, *Quanto più, un' arte porta seco fatica di corpo, tanto più è vile!*

will never work till the happy moment comes—that moment of *bien-être*, which to imaginative men is a moment of invention. On this he waits with a perfect patience; other moments are but a preparation, or after-taste of it. Few men distinguish between them as jealously as he. Hence so many flaws even in the choicest work. But for Leonardo the distinction is absolute, and, in the moment of *bien-être*, the alchemy complete: the idea is stricken into colour and imagery: a cloudy mysticism is refined to a subdued and graceful mystery, and painting pleases the eye while it satisfies the soul.

This curious beauty is seen above all in his drawings, and in these chiefly in the abstract grace of the bounding lines. Let us take some of these drawings, and pause over them awhile; and, first, one of those at Florence—the heads of a woman and a little child, set side by side, but each in its own separate frame. First of all, there is much pathos in the reappearance, in the fuller curves of the face of the child, of the sharper, more chastened lines of the worn and older face, which leaves no doubt that the heads are those of a little child and its mother. A feeling for maternity is indeed always characteristic of Leonardo; and this feeling is further indicated here by the half-humorous pathos of the diminutive, rounded shoulders of the child. You may note a like pathetic power in drawings of a young man, seated in a stooping posture, his face in his hands, as in sorrow; of a slave sitting in an uneasy inclined attitude, in some brief interval of rest; of a small Madonna and Child, peeping sideways in half-reassured terror, as a mighty griffin with bat-

like wings, one of Leonardo's finest *inventions*, descends suddenly from the air to snatch up a great wild beast wandering near them. But note in these, as that which especially belongs to art, the contour of the young man's hair, the poise of the slave's arm above his head, and the curves of the head of the child, following the little skull within, thin and fine as some sea-shell worn by the wind.

Take again another head, still more full of sentiment, but of a different kind, a little drawing in red chalk which every one will remember who has examined at all carefully the drawings by old masters at the Louvre. It is a face of doubtful sex, set in the shadow of its own hair, the cheek-line in high light against it, with something voluptuous and full in the eyelids and the lips. Another drawing might pass for the same face in childhood, with parched and feverish lips, but much sweetness in the loose, short-waisted childish dress, with necklace and *bulla*, and in the daintily bound hair. We might take the thread of suggestion which these two drawings offer, when thus set side by side, and, following it through the drawings at Florence, Venice, and Milan, construct a sort of series, illustrating better than anything else Leonardo's type of womanly beauty. Daughters of Herodias, with their fantastic head-dresses knotted and folded so strangely to leave the dainty oval of the face disengaged, they are not of the Christian family, or of Raphael's. They are the clairvoyants, through whom, as through delicate instruments, one becomes aware of the subtler forces of nature, and the modes of their action, all that is magnetic in it, all those finer

conditions wherein material things rise to that subtlety of operation which constitutes them spiritual, where only the finer nerve and the keener touch can follow. It is as if in certain significant examples we actually saw those forces at their work on human flesh. Nervous, electric, faint always with some inexplicable faintness, these people seem to be subject to exceptional conditions, to feel powers at work in the common air unfelt by others, to become, as it were, the receptacle of them, and pass them on to us in a chain of secret influences.

But among the more youthful heads there is one at Florence which Love chooses for its own—the head of a young man, which may well be the likeness of Andrea Salaino, beloved of Leonardo for his curled and waving hair—*belli capelli ricci e inanellati*—and afterwards his favourite pupil and servant. Of all the interests in living men and women which may have filled his life at Milan, this attachment alone is recorded. And in return Salaino identified himself so entirely with Leonardo, that the picture of *Saint Anne*, in the Louvre, has been attributed to him. It illustrates Leonardo's usual choice of pupils, men of some natural charm of person or intercourse like Salaino, or men of birth and princely habits of life like Francesco Melzi—men with just enough genius to be capable of initiation into his secret, for the sake of which they were ready to efface their own individuality. Among them, retiring often to the villa of the Melzi at *Canonica al Vaprio*, he worked at his fugitive manuscripts and sketches, working for the present hour, and for a few only, perhaps chiefly for himself.

Other artists have been as careless of present or future applause, in self-forgetfulness, or because they set moral or political ends above the ends of art; but in him this solitary culture of beauty seems to have hung upon a kind of self-love, and a carelessness in the work of art of all but art itself. Out of the secret places of a unique temperament he brought strange blossoms and fruits hitherto unknown; and for him, the novel impression conveyed, the exquisite effect woven, counted as an end in itself—a perfect end.

And these pupils of his acquired his manner so thoroughly, that though the number of Leonardo's authentic works is very small indeed, there is a multitude of other men's pictures through which we undoubtedly see him, and come very near to his genuis. Sometimes, as in the little picture of the *Madonna of the Balances*, in which, from the bosom of His mother, Christ weighs the pebbles of the brook against the sins of men, we have a hand, rough enough by contrast, working upon some fine hint or sketch of his. Sometimes, as in the subjects of the *Daughter of Herodias* and the *Head of John the Baptist*, the lost originals have been re-echoed and varied upon again and again by Luini and others. At other times the original remains, but has been a mere theme or motive, a type of which the accessories might be modified or changed; and these variations have but brought out the more the purpose, or expression of the original. It is so with the so-called *Saint John the Baptist* of the Louvre—one of the few naked figures Leonardo painted—whose delicate brown flesh and woman's hair no one would go out into the wilderness to seek,

and whose treacherous smile would have us understand something far beyond the outward gesture or circumstance. But the long, reedlike cross in the hand, which suggests Saint John the Baptist, becomes faint in a copy at the Ambrosian Library, and disappears altogether in another version, in the *Palazzo Rosso* at Genoa. Returning from the latter to the original, we are no longer surprised by Saint John's strange likeness to the *Bacchus* which hangs near it, and which set Théophile Gautier thinking of Heine's notion of decayed gods, who, to maintain themselves, after the fall of paganism, took employment in the new religion. We recognise one of those symbolical inventions in which the ostensible subject is used, not as matter for definite pictorial realisation, but as the starting-point of a train of sentiment, subtle and vague as a piece of music. No one ever ruled over the mere *subject* in hand more entirely than Leonardo, or bent it more dexterously to purely artistic ends. And so it comes to pass that though he handles sacred subjects continually, he is the most profane of painters; the given person or subject, Saint John in the Desert, or the Virgin on the knees of Saint Anne, is often merely the pretext for a kind of work which carries one altogether beyond the range of its conventional associations.

About the *Last Supper*, its decay and restorations, a whole literature has risen up, Goethe's pensive sketch of its sad fortunes being perhaps the best. The death in child-birth of the Duchess Beatrice was followed in Ludovico by one of those paroxysms of religious feeling which in him were constitutional.

The low, gloomy Dominican church of *Saint Mary of the Graces* had been the favourite oratory of Beatrice. She had spent her last days there, full of sinister presentiments; at last it had been almost necessary to remove her from it by force; and now it was here that mass was said a hundred times a day for her repose. On the damp wall of the refectory, oozing with mineral salts, Leonardo painted the *Last Supper*. Effective anecdotes were told about it, his retouchings and delays. They show him refusing to work except at the moment of invention, scornful of any one who supposed that art could be a work of mere industry and rule, often coming the whole length of Milan to give a single touch. He painted it, not in fresco, where all must be *impromptu*, but in oils, the new method which he had been one of the first to welcome, because it allowed of so many after-thoughts, so refined a working out of perfection. It turned out that on a plastered wall no process could have been less durable. Within fifty years it had fallen into decay. And now we have to turn back to Leonardo's own studies, above all to one drawing of the central head at the *Brera*, which, in a union of tenderness and severity in the face-lines, reminds one of the monumental work of Mino da Fiesole, to trace it as it was.

Here was another effort to lift a given subject out of the range of its traditional associations. Strange, after all the mystic developments of the middle age, was the effort to see the Eucharist, not as the pale Host of the altar, but as one taking leave of his friends. Five years afterwards the young Raphael,

at Florence, painted it with sweet and solemn effect in the refectory of Saint Onofrio; but still with all the mystical unreality of the school of Perugino. Vasari pretends that the central head was never finished. But finished or unfinished, or owing part of its effect to a mellowing decay, the head of Jesus does but consummate the sentiment of the whole company—ghosts through which you see the wall, faint as the shadows of the leaves upon the wall on autumn afternoons. This figure is but the faintest, the most spectral of them all.

The *Last Supper* was finished in 1497; in 1498 the French entered Milan, and whether or not the Gascon bowmen used it as a mark for their arrows, the model of Francesco Sforza certainly did not survive. What, in that age, such work was capable of being—of what nobility, amid what racy truthfulness to fact—we may judge from the bronze statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni on horseback, modelled by Leonardo's master, Verrocchio (he died of grief, it was said, because, the mould accidentally failing, he was unable to complete it), still standing in the *piazza* of Saint John and Saint Paul at Venice. Some traces of the thing may remain in certain of Leonardo's drawings, and perhaps also, by a singular circumstance, in a far-off town of France. For Ludovico became a prisoner, and ended his days at Loches in Touraine. After many years of captivity in the dungeons below, where all seems sick with barbarous feudal memories, he was allowed at last, it is said, to breathe fresher air for awhile in one of the rooms of the great tower still shown, its walls covered with

strange painted arabesques, ascribed by tradition to his hand, amused a little, in this way, through the tedious years. In those vast helmets and human faces and pieces of armour, among which, in great letters, the motto *Infelix Sum* is woven in and out, it is perhaps not too fanciful to see the fruit of a wistful after-dreaming over all Leonardo's sundry experiments on the armed figure of the great duke, which had occupied the two so much during the days of their good fortune at Milan.

The remaining years of Leonardo's life are more or less years of wandering. From his brilliant life at court he had saved nothing, and he returned to Florence a poor man. Perhaps necessity kept his spirit excited: the next four years are one prolonged rapture or ecstasy of invention. He painted now the pictures of the Louvre, his most authentic works, which came there straight from the cabinet of Francis the First, at Fontainebleau. One picture of his, the *Saint Anne*—not the *Saint Anne* of the Louvre, but a simple cartoon, now in London—revived for a moment a sort of appreciation more common in an earlier time, when good pictures had still seemed miraculous. For two days a crowd of people of all qualities passed in naïve excitement through the chamber where it hung, and gave Leonardo a taste of the "triumph" of Cimabue. But his work was less with the saints than with the living women of Florence. For he lived still in the polished society that he loved, and in the houses of Florence, left perhaps a little subject to light thoughts by the death of Savonarola—the latest gossip (1869) is of an un-

draped Monna Lisa, found in some out-of-the-way corner of the late *Orleans* collection—he saw Ginevra di Benci, and Lisa, the young third wife of Francesco del Giocondo. As we have seen him using incidents of sacred story, not for their own sake, or as mere subjects for pictorial realisation, but as a cryptic language for fancies all his own, so now he found a vent for his thought in taking one of these languid women, and raising her, as Leda or Pomona, as Modesty or Vanity, to the seventh heaven of symbolical expression.

La Gioconda is, in the truest sense, Leonardo's masterpiece, the revealing instance of his mode of thought and work. In suggestiveness, only the *Melancholia* of Dürer is comparable to it; and no crude symbolism disturbs the effect of its subdued and graceful mystery. We all know the face and hands of the figure, set in its marble chair, in that circle of fantastic rocks, as in some faint light under sea. Perhaps of all ancient pictures time has chilled it least.[1] As often happens with works in which invention seems to reach its limit, there is an element in it given to, not invented by, the master. In that inestimable folio of drawings, once in the possession of Vasari, were certain designs by Verrocchio, faces of such impressive beauty that Leonardo in his boyhood copied them many times. It is hard not to connect with these designs of the elder, by-past master, as with its germinal principle, the unfathomable smile, always with a touch of something sinister

[1] Yet for Vasari there was some further magic of crimson in the lips and cheeks lost for us.

in it, which plays all over Leonardo's work. Besides, the picture is a portrait. From childhood we see this image defining itself on the fabric of his dreams; and but for express historical testimony, we might fancy that this was but his ideal lady, embodied and beheld at last. What was the relationship of a living Florentine to this creature of his thought? By what strange affinities had the dream and the person grown up thus apart, and yet so closely together? Present from the first incorporeally in Leonardo's brain, dimly traced in the designs of Verrocchio, she is found present at last in *Il Giocondo's* house. That there is much of mere portraiture in the picture is attested by the legend that by artificial means, the presence of mimes and flute-players, that subtle expression was protracted on the face. Again, was it in four years and by renewed labour never really completed, or in four months and as by stroke of magic, that the image was projected?

The presence that rose thus so strangely beside the waters, is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire. Hers is the head upon which all "the ends of the world are come," and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed! All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded

there, in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants: and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary; and all this had been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands. The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern philosophy has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life. Certainly Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea.

During these years at Florence Leonardo's history is the history of his art; for himself, he is lost in the bright cloud of it. The outward history begins again in 1502, with a wild journey through central Italy, which he makes as the chief engineer of Cæsar Borgia. The biographer, putting together the stray jottings of his manuscripts, may follow him through every day of it, up the strange tower of Siena, elastic like a bent bow, down to the seashore at Piombino, each place appearing as fitfully as in a fever dream.

One other great work was left for him to do, a work all trace of which soon vanished, *The Battle of the Standard*, in which he had Michelangelo for his rival. The citizens of Florence, desiring to decorate the walls of the great council-chamber, had offered the work for competition, and any subject might be chosen from the Florentine wars of the fifteenth century. Michelangelo chose for his cartoon an incident of the war with Pisa, in which the Florentine soldiers, bathing in the Arno, are surprised by the sound of trumpets, and run to arms. His design has reached us only in an old engraving, which helps us less perhaps than our remembrance of the background of his *Holy Family* in the *Uffizii* to imagine in what superhuman form, such as might have beguiled the heart of an earlier world, those figures ascended out of the water. Leonardo chose an incident from the battle of Anghiari, in which two parties of soldiers fight for a standard. Like Michelangelo's his cartoon is lost, and has come to us only in sketches, and in a fragment of Rubens. Through the accounts given we may discern some lust of terrible things in it, so that even the horses tore each other with their teeth. And yet one fragment of it, in a drawing of his at Florence, is far different—a waving field of lovely armour, the chased edgings running like lines of sunlight from side to side. Michelangelo was twenty-seven years old; Leonardo more than fifty; and Raphael, then nineteen years of age, visiting Florence for the first time, came and watched them as they worked.

We catch a glimpse of Leonardo again, at Rome in

1514, surrounded by his mirrors and vials and furnaces, making strange toys that seemed alive of wax and quicksilver. The hesitation which had haunted him all through life, and made him like one under a spell, was upon him now with double force. No one had ever carried political indifferentism farther; it had always been his philosophy to "fly before the storm"; he is for the Sforzas, or against them, as the tide of their fortune turns. Yet now, in the political society of Rome, he came to be suspected of secret French sympathies. It paralysed him to find himself among enemies; and he turned wholly to France, which had long courted him.

France was about to become an Italy more Italian than Italy itself. Francis the First, like Lewis the Twelfth before him, was attracted by the *finesse* of Leonardo's work; *La Gioconda* was already in his cabinet, and he offered Leonardo the little *Château de Clou*, with its vineyards and meadows, in the pleasant valley of the Masse, just outside the walls of the town of Amboise, where, especially in the hunting season, the court then frequently resided. *A Monsieur Lyonard, peinteur du Roy pour Amboyse*—so the letter of Francis the First is headed. It opens a prospect, one of the most interesting in the history of art, where, in a peculiarly blent atmosphere, Italian art dies away as a French exotic.

Two questions remain, after much busy antiquarianism, concerning Leonardo's death—the question of the exact form of his religion, and the question whether Francis the First was present at the time. They are of about equally little importance in the

estimate of Leonardo's genius. The directions in his will concerning the thirty masses and the great candles for the church of Saint Florentin are things of course, their real purpose being immediate and practical; and on no theory of religion could these hurried offices be of much consequence. We forget them in speculating how one who had been always so desirous of beauty, but desired it always in such precise and definite forms, as hands or flowers or hair, looked forward now into the vague land, and experienced the last curiosity.

1869.

THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE[1]

As Florian Deleal walked, one hot afternoon, he overtook by the wayside a poor aged man, and, as he seemed weary with the road, helped him on with the burden which he carried, a certain distance. And as the man told his story, it chanced that he named the place, a little place in the neighbourhood of a great city, where Florian had passed his earliest years, but which he had never since seen, and, the story told, went forward on his journey comforted. And that night, like a reward for his pity, a dream of that place came to Florian, a dream which did for him the office of the finer sort of memory, bringing its object to mind with a great clearness, yet, as sometimes happens in dreams, raised a little above itself, and above ordinary retrospect. The true aspect of the place, especially of the house there in which he had lived as a child, the fashion of its doors, its hearths, its windows, the very scent upon the air of it, was with him in sleep for a season; only, with tints more musically blent on wall and floor, and some finer light and shadow running in and out along its curves and angles, and with all its little carvings daintier. He awoke with a sigh at the thought of almost thirty

[1] Published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Aug. 1878.

years which lay between him and that place, yet with a flutter of pleasure still within him at the fair light, as if it were a smile, upon it. And it happened that this accident of his dream was just the thing needed for the beginning of a certain design he then had in view, the noting, namely, of some things in the story of his spirit—in that process of brain-building by which we are, each one of us, what we are. With the image of the place so clear and favourable upon him, he fell to thinking of himself therein, and how his thoughts had grown up to him. In that half-spiritualised house he could watch the better, over again, the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be there—of which indeed, through the law which makes the material objects about them so large an element in children's lives, it had actually become a part; inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture—half, tint and trace and accident of homely colour and form, from the wood and the bricks; half, mere soul-stuff, floated thither from who knows how far. In the house and garden of his dream he saw a child moving, and could divide the main streams at least of the winds that had played on him, and study so the first stage in that mental journey.

The *old house*, as when Florian talked of it afterwards he always called it (as all children do, who can recollect a change of home, soon enough but not too soon to mark a period in their lives), really was an old house; and an element of French descent in its inmates—descent from Watteau, the old court-painter, one of whose gallant pieces still hung in one of the

rooms—might explain, together with some other things, a noticeable trimness and comely whiteness about everything there—the curtains, the couches, the paint on the walls with which the light and shadow played so delicately ; might explain also the tolerance of the great poplar in the garden, a tree most often despised by English people, but which French people love, having observed a certain fresh way its leaves have of dealing with the wind, making it sound, in never so slight a stirring of the air, like running water.

The old-fashioned, low wainscoting went round the rooms, and up the staircase with carved balusters and shadowy angles, landing half-way up at a broad window, with a swallow's nest below the sill, and the blossom of an old pear-tree showing across it in late April, against the blue, below which the perfumed juice of the find of fallen fruit in autumn was so fresh. At the next turning came the closet which held on its deep shelves the best china. Little angel faces and reedy flutings stood out round the fireplace of the children's room. And on the top of the house, above the large attic, where the white mice ran in the twilight—an infinite, unexplored wonderland of childish treasures, glass beads, empty scent-bottles still sweet, thrum of coloured silks, among its lumber—a flat space of roof, railed round, gave a view of the neighbouring steeples ; for the house, as I said, stood near a great city, which sent up heavenwards, over the twisting weather-vanes, not seldom, its beds of rolling cloud and smoke, touched with storm or sunshine. But the child of whom I am writing did not hate the fog because of the crimson lights which fell

from it sometimes upon the chimneys, and the whites which gleamed through its openings, on summer mornings, on turret or pavement. For it is false to suppose that a child's sense of beauty is dependent on any choiceness or special fineness, in the objects which present themselves to it, though this indeed comes to be the rule with most of us in later life; earlier, in some degree, we see inwardly; and the child finds for itself, and with unstinted delight, a difference for the sense, in those whites and reds through the smoke on very homely buildings, and in the gold of the dandelions at the roadside, just beyond the houses, where not a handful of earth is virgin and untouched, in the lack of better ministries to its desire of beauty.

This house then stood not far beyond the gloom and rumours of the town, among high garden-wall, bright all summer-time with Golden-rod, and brown-and-golden Wall-flower—*Flos Parietis*, as the children's Latin-reading father taught them to call it, while he was with them. Tracing back the threads of his complex spiritual habit, as he was used in after years to do, Florian found that he owed to the place many tones of sentiment afterwards customary with him, certain inward lights under which things most naturally presented themselves to him. The coming and going of travellers to the town along the way, the shadow of the streets, the sudden breath of the neighbouring gardens, the singular brightness of bright weather there, its singular darknesses which linked themselves in his mind to certain engraved illustrations in the old big Bible at home, the coolness of the

dark, cavernous shops round the great church, with its giddy winding stair up to the pigeons and the bells —a citadel of peace in the heart of the trouble—all this acted on his childish fancy, so that ever afterwards the like aspects and incidents never failed to throw him into a well-recognised imaginative mood, seeming actually to have become a part of the texture of his mind. Also, Florian could trace home to this point a pervading preference in himself for a kind of comeliness and dignity, an *urbanity* literally, in modes of life, which he connected with the pale people of towns, and which made him susceptible to a kind of exquisite satisfaction in the trimness and well-considered grace of certain things and persons he afterwards met with, here and there, in his way through the world.

So the child of whom I am writing lived on there quietly; things without thus ministering to him, as he sat daily at the window with the bird-cage hanging below it, and his mother taught him to read, wondering at the ease with which he learned, and at the quickness of his memory. The perfume of the little flowers of the lime-tree fell through the air upon them like rain; while time seemed to move ever more slowly to the murmur of the bees in it, till it almost stood still on June afternoons. How insignificant, at the moment, seem the influences of the sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover, they affect us; with what capricious attractions and associations they figure themselves on the white paper, the smooth wax, of our ingenuous souls, as "with lead in the rock

for ever," giving form and feature, and as it were assigned house-room in our memory, to early experiences of feeling and thought, which abide with us ever afterwards, thus, and not otherwise. The realities and passions, the rumours of the greater world without, steal in upon us, each by its own special little passage-way, through the wall of custom about us; and never afterwards quite detach themselves from this or that accident, or trick, in the mode of their first entrance to us. Our susceptibilities, the discovery of our powers, manifold experiences—our various experiences of the coming and going of bodily pain, for instance—belong to this or the other well-remembered place in the material habitation—that little white room with the window across which the heavy blossoms could beat so peevishly in the wind, with just that particular catch or throb, such a sense of teasing in it, on gusty mornings; and the early habitation thus gradually becomes a sort of material shrine or sanctuary of sentiment; a system of visible symbolism interweaves itself through all our thoughts and passions; and irresistibly, little shapes, voices, accidents—the angle at which the sun in the morning fell on the pillow—become parts of the great chain wherewith we are bound.

Thus far, for Florian, what all this had determined was a peculiarly strong sense of home—so forcible a motive with all of us—prompting to us our customary love of the earth, and the larger part of our fear of death, that revulsion we have from it, as from something strange, untried, unfriendly; though life-long imprisonment, they tell you, and final banishment

from home is a thing bitterer still; the looking forward to but a short space, a mere childish *goûter* and dessert of it, before the end, being so great a resource of effort to pilgrims and wayfarers, and the soldier in distant quarters, and lending, in lack of that, some power of solace to the thought of sleep in the home churchyard, at least—dead cheek by dead cheek, and with the rain soaking in upon one from above.

So powerful is this instinct, and yet accidents like those I have been speaking of so mechanically determine it; its essence being indeed the early familiar, as constituting our ideal, or typical conception, of rest and security. Out of so many possible conditions, just this for you and that for me, brings ever the unmistakeable realisation of the delightful *chez soi*; this for the Englishman, for me and you, with the closely-drawn white curtain and the shaded lamp; that, quite other, for the wandering Arab, who folds his tent every morning, and makes his sleeping-place among haunted ruins, or in old tombs.

With Florian then the sense of home became singularly intense, his good fortune being that the special character of his home was in itself so essentially home-like. As after many wanderings I have come to fancy that some parts of Surrey and Kent are, for Englishmen, the true landscape, true home-counties, by right, partly, of a certain earthy warmth in the yellow of the sand below their gorse-bushes, and of a certain grey-blue mist after rain, in the hollows of the hills there, welcome to fatigued eyes, and never seen farther south; so I think that the sort of house I have described, with precisely those pro-

portions of red-brick and green, and with a just perceptible monotony in the subdued order of it, for its distinguishing note, is for Englishmen at least typically home-life. And so for Florian that general human instinct was reinforced by this special home-likeness in the place his wandering soul had happened to light on, as, in the second degree, its body and earthly tabernacle; the sense of harmony between his soul and its physical environment became, for a time at least, like perfectly played music, and the life led there singularly tranquil and filled with a curious sense of self-possession. The love of security, of an habitually undisputed standing-ground or sleeping-place, came to count for much in the generation and correcting of his thoughts, and afterwards as a salutary principle of restraint in all his wanderings of spirit. The wistful yearning towards home, in absence from it, as the shadows of evening deepened, and he followed in thought what was doing there from hour to hour, interpreted to him much of a yearning and regret he experienced afterwards, towards he knew not what, out of strange ways of feeling and thought in which, from time to time, his spirit found itself alone; and in the tears shed in such absences there seemed always to be some soul-subduing foretaste of what his last tears might be.

And the sense of security could hardly have been deeper, the quiet of the child's soul being one with the quiet of its home, a place "inclosed" and "sealed." But upon this assured place, upon the child's assured soul which resembled it, there came floating in from the larger world without, as at windows left ajar

unknowingly, or over the high garden walls, two streams of impressions, the sentiments of beauty and pain—recognitions of the visible, tangible, audible loveliness of things, as a very real and somewhat tyrannous element in them—and of the sorrow of the world, of grown people and children and animals, as a thing not to be put by in them. From this point he could trace two predominant processes of mental change in him—the growth of an almost diseased sensibility to the spectacle of suffering, and, parallel with this, the rapid growth of a certain capacity of fascination by bright colour and choice form—the sweet curvings, for instance, of the lips of those who seemed to him comely persons, modulated in such delicate unison to the things they said or sang,—marking early the activity in him of a more than customary sensuousness, "the lust of the eye," as the Preacher says, which might lead him, one day, how far! Could he have foreseen the weariness of the way! In music sometimes the two sorts of impressions came together, and he would weep, to the surprise of older people. Tears of joy too the child knew, also to older people's surprise; real tears, once, of relief from long-strung, childish expectation, when he found returned at evening, with new roses in her cheeks, the little sister who had been to a place where there was a wood, and brought back for him a treasure of fallen acorns, and black crow's feathers, and his peace at finding her again near him mingled all night with some intimate sense of the distant forest, the rumour of its breezes, with the glossy blackbirds aslant and the branches lifted in them, and of the perfect nicety of the little cups that

fell. So those two elementary apprehensions of the tenderness and of the colour in things grew apace in him, and were seen by him afterwards to send their roots back into the beginnings of life.

Let me note first some of the occasions of his recognition of the element of pain in things—incidents, now and again, which seemed suddenly to awake in him the whole force of that sentiment which Goethe has called the *Weltschmerz*, and in which the concentrated sorrow of the world seemed suddenly to lie heavy upon him. A book lay in an old book-case, of which he cared to remember one picture—a woman sitting, with hands bound behind her, the dress, the cap, the hair, folded with a simplicity which touched him strangely, as if not by her own hands, but with some ambiguous care at the hands of others—Queen Marie Antoinette, on her way to execution—we all remember David's drawing, meant merely to make her ridiculous. The face that had been so high had learned to be mute and resistless; but out of its very resistlessness, seemed now to call on men to have pity, and forbear; and he took note of that, as he closed the book, as a thing to look at again, if he should at any time find himself tempted to be cruel. Again, he would never quite forget the appeal in the small sister's face, in the garden under the lilacs, terrified at a spider lighted on her sleeve. He could trace back to the look then noted a certain mercy he conceived always for people in fear, even of little things, which seemed to make him, though but for a moment, capable of almost any sacrifice of himself. Impressible, susceptible persons, indeed, who had had

their sorrows, lived about him; and this sensibility was due in part to the tacit influence of their presence, enforcing upon him habitually the fact that there are those who pass their days, as a matter of course, in a sort of "going quietly." Most poignantly of all he could recall, in unfading minutest circumstance, the cry on the stair, sounding bitterly through the house, and struck into his soul for ever, of an aged woman, his father's sister, come now to announce his death in distant India; how it seemed to make the aged woman like a child again; and, he knew not why, but this fancy was full of pity to him. There were the little sorrows of the dumb animals too—of the white angora, with a dark tail like an ermine's, and a face like a flower, who fell into a lingering sickness, and became quite delicately human in its valetudinarianism, and came to have a hundred different expressions of voice—how it grew worse and worse, till it began to feel the light too much for it, and at last, after one wild morning of pain, the little soul flickered away from the body, quite worn to death already, and now but feebly retaining it.

So he wanted another pet; and as there were starlings about the place, which could be taught to speak, one of them was caught, and he meant to treat it kindly; but in the night its young ones could be heard crying after it, and the responsive cry of the mother-bird towards them; and at last, with the first light, though not till after some debate with himself, he went down and opened the cage, and saw a sharp bound of the prisoner up to her nestlings; and therewith came the sense of remorse,—that he too was

become an accomplice in moving, to the limit of his small power, the springs and handles of that great machine in things, constructed so ingeniously to play pain-fugues on the delicate nerve-work of living creatures.

I have remarked how, in the process of our brain-building, as the house of thought in which we live gets itself together, like some airy bird's nest of floating thistle-down and chance straws, compact at last, little accidents have their consequence; and thus it happened that, as he walked one evening, a garden gate, usually closed, stood open; and lo! within, a great red hawthorn in full flower, embossing heavily the bleached and twisted trunk and branches, so aged that there were but few green leaves thereon—a plumage of tender, crimson fire out of the heart of the dry wood. The perfume of the tree had now and again reached him, in the currents of the wind, over the wall, and he had wondered what might be behind it, and was now allowed to fill his arms with the flowers—flowers enough for all the old blue-china pots along the chimney-piece, making *fête* in the children's room. Was it some periodic moment in the expansion of soul within him, or mere trick of heat in the heavily-laden summer air? But the beauty of the thing struck home to him feverishly; and in dreams all night he loitered along a magic roadway of crimson flowers, which seemed to open ruddily in thick, fresh masses about his feet, and fill softly all the little hollows in the banks on either side. Always afterwards, summer by summer, as the flowers came on, the blossom of the red hawthorn still seemed to him

absolutely the reddest of all things; and the goodly crimson, still alive in the works of old Venetian masters or old Flemish tapestries, called out always from afar the recollection of the flame in those perishing little petals, as it pulsed gradually out of them, kept long in the drawers of an old cabinet. Also then, for the first time, he seemed to experience a passionateness in his relation to fair outward objects, an inexplicable excitement in their presence, which disturbed him, and from which he half longed to be free. A touch of regret or desire mingled all night with the remembered presence of the red flowers, and their perfume in the darkness about him; and the longing for some undivined, entire possession of them was the beginning of a revelation to him, growing ever clearer, with the coming of the gracious summer guise of fields and trees and persons in each succeeding year, of a certain, at times seemingly exclusive, predominance in his interests, of beautiful physical things, a kind of tyranny of the senses over him.

In later years he came upon philosophies which occupied him much in the estimate of the proportion of the sensuous and the ideal elements in human knowledge, the relative parts they bear in it; and, in his intellectual scheme, was led to assign very little to the abstract thought, and much to its sensible vehicle or occasion. Such metaphysical speculation did but reinforce what was instinctive in his way of receiving the world, and for him, everywhere, that sensible vehicle or occasion became, perhaps only too surely, the necessary concomitant of any perception of things, real enough to be of any weight or reckoning, in his

house of thought. There were times when he could think of the necessity he was under of associating all thoughts to touch and sight, as a sympathetic link between himself and actual, feeling, living objects; a protest in favour of real men and women against mere grey, unreal abstractions; and he remembered gratefully how the Christian religion, hardly less than the religion of the ancient Greeks, translating so much of its spiritual verity into things that may be seen, condescends in part to sanction this infirmity, if so it be, of our human existence, wherein the world of sense is so much with us, and welcomed this thought as a kind of keeper and sentinel over his soul therein. But certainly he came more and more to be unable to care for, or think of soul but as in an actual body, or of any world but that wherein are water and trees, and where men and women look, so or so, and press actual hands. It was the trick even his pity learned, fastening those who suffered in anywise to his affections by a kind of sensible attachments. He would think of Julian, fallen into incurable sickness, as spoiled in the sweet blossom of his skin like pale amber, and his honey-like hair; of Cecil, early dead, as cut off from the lilies, from golden summer days, from women's voices; and then what comforted him a little was the thought of the turning of the child's flesh to violets in the turf above him. And thinking of the very poor, it was not the things which most men care most for that he yearned to give them, but fairer roses, perhaps, and power to taste quite as they will, at their ease and not task-burdened, a certain desirable, clear light in the new morning, through which

sometimes he had noticed them, quite unconscious of it, on their way to their early toil.

So he yielded himself to these things, to be played upon by them like a musical instrument, and began to note with deepening watchfulness, but always with some puzzled, unutterable longing in his enjoyment, the phases of the seasons and of the growing or waning day, down even to the shadowy changes wrought on bare wall or ceiling—the light cast up from the snow, bringing out their darkest angles ; the brown light in the cloud, which meant rain ; that almost too austere clearness, in the protracted light of the lengthening day, before warm weather began, as if it lingered but to make a severer workday, with the school-books opened earlier and later ; that beam of June sunshine, at last, as he lay awake before the time, a way of gold-dust across the darkness ; all the humming, the freshness, the perfume of the garden seemed to lie upon it—and coming in one afternoon in September, along the red gravel walk, to look for a basket of yellow crab-apples left in the cool, old parlour, he remembered it the more, and how the colours struck upon him, because a wasp on one bitten apple stung him, and he felt the passion of sudden, severe pain. For this too brought its curious reflexions ; and, in relief from it, he would wonder over it—how it had then been with him—puzzled at the depth of the charm or spell over him, which lay, for a little while at least, in the mere absence of pain ; once, especially, when an older boy taught him to make flowers of sealing-wax, and he had burnt his hand badly at the lighted taper, and been unable to sleep. He remem-

bered that also afterwards, as a sort of typical thing—a white vision of heat about him, clinging closely, through the languid scent of the ointments put upon the place to make it well.

Also, as he felt this pressure upon him of the sensible world, then, as often afterwards, there would come another sort of curious questioning how the last impressions of eye and ear might happen to him, how they would find him—the scent of the last flower, the soft yellowness of the last morning, the last recognition of some object of affection, hand or voice; it could not be but that the latest look of the eyes, before their final closing, would be strangely vivid; one would go with the hot tears, the cry, the touch of the wistful bystander, impressed how deeply on one! or would it be, perhaps, a mere frail retiring of all things, great or little, away from one, into a level distance?

For with this desire of physical beauty mingled itself early the fear of death—the fear of death intensified by the desire of beauty. Hitherto he had never gazed upon dead faces, as sometimes, afterwards, at the *Morgue* in Paris, or in that fair cemetery at Munich, where all the dead must go and lie in state before burial, behind glass windows, among the flowers and incense and holy candles—the aged clergy with their sacred ornaments, the young men in their dancing-shoes and spotless white linen—after which visits, those waxen, resistless faces would always live with him for many days, making the broadest sunshine sickly. The child had heard indeed of the death of his father, and how, in the Indian station, a fever

had taken him, so that though not in action he had yet died as a soldier; and hearing of the "resurrection of the just," he could think of them as still abroad in the world, somehow, for his protection—a grand, though perhaps rather terrible figure, in beautiful soldier's things, like the figure in the picture of Joshua's Vision in the Bible—and of that, round which the mourners moved so softly, and afterwards with such solemn singing, as but a worn-out garment left at a deserted lodging. So it was, until on a summer day he walked with his mother through a fair churchyard. In a bright dress he rambled among the graves, in the gay weather, and so came, in one corner, upon an open grave for a child—a dark space on the brilliant grass—the black mould lying heaped up around it, weighing down the little jewelled branches of the dwarf rose-bushes in flower. And therewith came, full-grown, never wholly to leave him, with the certainty that even children do sometimes die, the physical horror of death, with its wholly selfish recoil from the association of lower forms of life, and the suffocating weight above. No benign, grave figure in beautiful soldier's things any longer abroad in the world for his protection! only a few poor, piteous bones; and above them, possibly, a certain sort of figure he hoped not to see. For sitting one day in the garden below an open window, he heard people talking, and could not but listen, how, in a sleepless hour, a sick woman had seen one of the dead sitting beside her, come to call her hence; and from the broken talk evolved with much clearness the notion that not all those dead people had really

departed to the churchyard, nor were quite so motionless as they looked, but led a secret, half-fugitive life in their old homes, quite free by night, though sometimes visible in the day, dodging from room to room, with no great goodwill towards those who shared the place with them. All night the figure sat beside him in the reveries of his broken sleep, and was not quite gone in the morning—an odd, irreconcileable new member of the household, making the sweet familiar chambers unfriendly and suspect by its uncertain presence. He could have hated the dead he had pitied so, for being thus. Afterwards he came to think of those poor, home-returning ghosts, which all men have fancied to themselves—the *revenants*—pathetically, as crying, or beating with vain hands at the doors, as the wind came, their cries distinguishable in it as a wilder inner note. But, always making death more unfamiliar still, that old experience would ever, from time to time, return to him ; even in the living he sometimes caught its likeness ; at any time or place, in a moment, the faint atmosphere of the chamber of death would be breathed around him, and the image with the bound chin, the quaint smile, the straight, stiff feet, shed itself across the air upon the bright carpet, amid the gayest company, or happiest communing with himself.

To most children the sombre questionings to which impressions like these attach themselves, if they come at all, are actually suggested by religious books, which therefore they often regard with much secret distaste, and dismiss, as far as possible, from their habitual thoughts as a too depressing element in life. To

Florian such impressions, these misgivings as to the ultimate tendency of the years, of the relationship between life and death, had been suggested spontaneously in the natural course of his mental growth by a strong innate sense for the soberer tones in things, further strengthened by actual circumstances; and religious sentiment, that system of biblical ideas in which he had been brought up, presented itself to him as a thing that might soften and dignify, and light up as with a "lively hope," a melancholy already deeply settled in him. So he yielded himself easily to religious impressions, and with a kind of mystical appetite for sacred things; the more as they came to him through a saintly person who loved him tenderly, and believed that this early pre-occupation with them already marked the child out for a saint. He began to love, for their own sakes, church lights, holy days, all that belonged to the comely order of the sanctuary, the secrets of its white linen, and holy vessels, and fonts of pure water; and its hieratic purity and simplicity became the type of something he desired always to have about him in actual life. He pored over the pictures in religious books, and knew by heart the exact mode in which the wrestling angel grasped Jacob, how Jacob looked in his mysterious sleep, how the bells and pomegranates were attached to the hem of Aaron's vestment, sounding sweetly as he glided over the turf of the holy place. His way of conceiving religion came then to be in effect what it ever afterwards remained—a sacred history indeed, but still more a sacred ideal, a transcendent version or representation, under intenser and

more expressive light and shade, of human life and its familiar or exceptional incidents, birth, death, marriage, youth, age, tears, joy, rest, sleep, waking—a mirror, towards which men might turn away their eyes from vanity and dullness, and see themselves therein as angels, with their daily meat and drink, even, become a kind of sacred transaction—a complementary strain or burden, applied to our every-day existence, whereby the stray snatches of music in it re-set themselves, and fall into the scheme of some higher and more consistent harmony. A place adumbrated itself in his thoughts, wherein those sacred personalities, which are at once the reflex and the pattern of our nobler phases of life, housed themselves; and this region in his intellectual scheme all subsequent experience did but tend still further to realise and define. Some ideal, hieratic persons he would always need to occupy it and keep a warmth there. And he could hardly understand those who felt no such need at all, finding themselves quite happy without such heavenly companionship, and sacred double of their life, beside them.

Thus a constant substitution of the typical for the actual took place in his thoughts. Angels might be met by the way, under English elm or beech-tree; mere messengers seemed like angels, bound on celestial errands; a deep mysticity brooded over real meetings and partings; marriages were made in heaven; and deaths also, with hands of angels thereupon, to bear soul and body quietly asunder, each to its appointed rest. All the acts and accidents of daily life borrowed a sacred colour and significance; the very colours of

things became themselves weighty with meanings like the sacred stuffs of Moses' tabernacle, full of penitence or peace. Sentiment, congruous in the first instance only with those divine transactions, the deep, effusive unction of the House of Bethany, was assumed as the due attitude for the reception of our every-day existence; and for a time he walked through the world in a sustained, not unpleasurable awe, generated by the habitual recognition, beside every circumstance and event of life, of its celestial correspondent.

Sensibility—the desire of physical beauty—a strange biblical awe, which made any reference to the unseen act on him like solemn music—these qualities the child took away with him, when, at about the age of twelve years, he left the old house, and was taken to live in another place. He had never left home before, and, anticipating much from this change, had long dreamed over it, jealously counting the days till the time fixed for departure should come; had been a little careless about others even, in his strong desire for it—when Lewis fell sick, for instance, and they must wait still two days longer. At last the morning came, very fine; and all things—the very pavement with its dust, at the roadside—seemed to have a white, pearl-like lustre in them. They were to travel by a favourite road on which he had often walked a certain distance, and on one of those two prisoner days, when Lewis was sick, had walked farther than ever before, in his great desire to reach the new place. They had started and gone a little way when a pet bird was found to have been left

behind, and must even now—so it presented itself to him—have already all the appealing fierceness and wild self-pity at heart of one left by others to perish of hunger in a closed house ; and he returned to fetch it, himself in hardly less stormy distress. But as he passed in search of it from room to room, lying so pale, with a look of meekness in their denudation, and at last through that little, stripped white room, the aspect of the place touched him like the face of one dead ; and a clinging back towards it came over him, so intense that he knew it would last long, and spoiling all his pleasure in the realisation of a thing so eagerly anticipated. And so, with the bird found, but himself in an agony of home-sickness, thus capriciously sprung up within him, he was driven quickly away, far into the rural distance, so fondly speculated on, of that favourite country-road.

ROMANTICISM

αἰνει δὲ παλαιὸν μὲν οἶνον, ἄνθεα δ' ὕμνων νεωτέρων

THE words, *classical* and *romantic*, although, like many other critical expressions, sometimes abused by those who have understood them too vaguely or too absolutely, yet define two real tendencies in the history of art and literature. Used in an exaggerated sense, to express a greater opposition between those tendencies than really exists, they have at times tended to divide people of taste into opposite camps. But in that *House Beautiful*, which the creative minds of all generations—the artists and those who have treated life in the spirit of art—are always building together, for the refreshment of the human spirit, these oppositions cease; and the *Interpreter* of the *House Beautiful*, the true æsthetic critic, uses these divisions, only so far as they enable him to enter into the peculiarities of the objects with which he has to do. The term *classical*, fixed, as it is, to a well-defined literature, and a well-defined group in art, is clear, indeed; but then it has often been used in a hard, and merely scholastic sense, by the praisers of what is old and accustomed, at the expense of what is new, by critics who would never have discovered for

themselves the charm of any work, whether new or old, who value what is old, in art or literature, for its accessories, and chiefly for the conventional authority that has gathered about it—people who would never really have been made glad by any Venus fresh-risen from the sea, and who praise the Venus of old Greece and Rome, only because they fancy her grown now into something staid and tame.

And as the term, *classical*, has been used in a too absolute, and therefore in a misleading sense, so the term, *romantic*, has been used much too vaguely, in various accidental senses. The sense in which Scott is called a romantic writer is chiefly this; that, in opposition to the literary tradition of the last century, he loved strange adventure, and sought it in the Middle Age. Much later, in a Yorkshire village, the spirit of romanticism bore a more really characteristic fruit in the work of a young girl, Emily Brontë, the romance of *Wuthering Heights*; the figures of Hareton Earnshaw, of Catherine Linton, and of Heathcliffe—tearing open Catherine's grave, removing one side of her coffin, that he may really lie beside her in death—figures so passionate, yet woven on a background of delicately beautiful, moorland scenery, being typical examples of that spirit. In Germany, again, that spirit is shown less in Tieck, its professional representative, than in Meinhold, the author of *Sidonia the Sorceress* and the *Amber-Witch*. In Germany and France, within the last hundred years, the term has been used to describe a particular school of writers; and, consequently, when Heine criticises the *Romantic School* in Germany—that movement which culmin-

ated in Goethe's *Goetz von Berlichingen*; or when Théophile Gautier criticises the romantic movement in France, where, indeed, it bore its most characteristic fruits, and its play is hardly yet over where, by a certain audacity, or *bizarrerie* of motive, united with faultless literary execution, it still shows itself in imaginative literature, they use the word, with an exact sense of special artistic qualities, indeed; but use it, nevertheless, with a limited application to the manifestation of those qualities at a particular period. But the romantic spirit is, in reality, an ever-present, an enduring principle, in the artistic temperament; and the qualities of thought and style which that, and other similar uses of the word *romantic* really indicate, are indeed but symptoms of a very continuous and widely working influence.

Though the words *classical* and *romantic*, then, have acquired an almost technical meaning, in application to certain developments of German and French taste, yet this is but one variation of an old opposition, which may be traced from the very beginning of the formation of European art and literature. From the first formation of anything like a standard of taste in these things, the restless curiosity of their more eager lovers necessarily made itself felt, in the craving for new motives, new subjects of interest, new modifications of style. Hence, the opposition between the classicists and the romanticists—between the adherents, in the culture of beauty, of the principles of liberty, and authority, respectively—of strength, and order or what the Greeks called κοσμιότης.

Sainte-Beuve, in the third volume of the *Causeries*

du Lundi, has discussed the question, *What is meant by a classic?* It was a question he was well fitted to answer, having himself lived through many phases of taste, and having been in earlier life an enthusiastic member of the romantic school: he was also a great master of that sort of "philosophy of literature," which delights in tracing traditions in it, and the way in which various phases of thought and sentiment maintain themselves, through successive modifications, from epoch to epoch. His aim, then, is to give the word *classic* a wider and, as he says, a more generous sense than it commonly bears, to make it expressly *grandiose et flottant*; and, in doing this, he develops, in a masterly manner, those qualities of measure, purity, temperance, of which it is the especial function of classical art and literature, whatever meaning, narrower or wider, we attach to the term, to take care.

The charm, therefore, of what is classical, in art or literature, is that of the well-known tale, to which we can, nevertheless, listen over and over again, because it is told so well. To the absolute beauty of its artistic form, is added the accidental, tranquil, charm of familiarity. There are times, indeed, at which these charms fail to work on our spirits at all, because they fail to excite us. "*Romanticism*," says Stendhal, "is the art of presenting to people the literary works which, in the actual state of their habits and beliefs, are capable of giving them the greatest possible pleasure; *classicism*, on the contrary, of presenting them with that which gave the greatest possible pleasure to their grandfathers." But then, beneath

all changes of habits and beliefs, our love of that mere abstract proportion—of music—which what is classical in literature possesses, still maintains itself in the best of us, and what pleased our grandparents may at least tranquillise us. The " classic " comes to us out of the cool and quiet of other times, as the measure of what a long experience has shown will at least never displease us. And in the classical literature of Greece and Rome, as in the classics of the last century, the essentially classical element is that quality of order in beauty, which they possess, indeed, in a pre-eminent degree, and which impresses some minds to the exclusion of everything else in them.

It is the addition of strangeness to beauty, that constitutes the romantic character in art; and the desire of beauty being a fixed element in every artistic organisation, it is the addition of curiosity to this desire of beauty, that constitutes the romantic temper. Curiosity and the desire of beauty, have each their place in art, as in all true criticism. When one's curiosity is deficient, when one is not eager enough for new impressions, and new pleasures, one is liable to value mere academical proprieties too highly, to be satisfied with worn-out or conventional types, with the insipid ornament of Racine, or the prettiness of that later Greek sculpture, which passed so long for true Hellenic work; to miss those places where the handiwork of nature, or of the artist, has been most cunning; to find the most stimulating products of art a mere irritation. And when one's curiosity is in excess, when it overbalances the desire of beauty, then one is liable to value in works of art what is

inartistic in them; to be satisfied with what is exaggerated in art, with productions like some of those of the romantic school in Germany; not to distinguish, jealously enough, between what is admirably done, and what is done not quite so well, in the writings, for instance, of Jean Paul. And if I had to give instances of these defects, then I should say, that Pope, in common with the age of literature to which he belonged, had too little curiosity, so that there is always a certain insipidity in the effect of his work, exquisite as it is; and, coming down to our own time, that Balzac had an excess of curiosity—curiosity not duly tempered with the desire of beauty.

But, however falsely those two tendencies may be opposed by critics, or exaggerated by artists themselves, they are tendencies really at work at all times in art, moulding it, with the balance sometimes a little on one side, sometimes a little on the other, generating, respectively, as the balance inclines on this side or that, two principles, two traditions, in art, and in literature so far as it partakes of the spirit of art. If there is a great overbalance of curiosity, then, we have the grotesque in art: if the union of strangeness and beauty, under very difficult and complex conditions, be a successful one, if the union be entire, then the resultant beauty is very exquisite, very attractive. With a passionate care for beauty, the romantic spirit refuses to have it, unless the condition of strangeness be first fulfilled. Its desire is for a beauty born of unlikely elements, by a profound alchemy, by a difficult initiation, by the charm which wrings it even out of terrible things; and a trace of distortion, of the

grotesque, may perhaps linger, as an additional element of expression, about its ultimate grace. Its eager, excited spirit will have strength, the grotesque, first of all—the trees shrieking as you tear off the leaves; for Jean Valjean, the long years of convict life; for Redgauntlet, the quicksands of Solway Moss; then, incorporate with this strangeness, and intensified by restraint, as much sweetness, as much beauty, as is compatible with that. *Énergique, frais et dispos*—these, according to Sainte-Beuve, are the characteristics of a genuine classic—*les ouvrages anciens ne sont pas classiques parce qu'ils sont vieux, mais parce qu'ils sont énergiques, frais, et dispos.* Energy, freshness, intelligent and masterly disposition:—these are characteristics of Victor Hugo when his alchemy is complete, in certain figures, like Marius and Cosette, in certain scenes, like that in the opening of *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*, where Déruchette writes the name of *Gilliatt* in the snow, on Christmas morning; but always there is a certain note of strangeness discernible there, as well.

The essential elements, then, of the romantic spirit are curiosity and the love of beauty; and it is only as an illustration of these qualities, that it seeks the Middle Age, because, in the overcharged atmosphere of the Middle Age, there are unworked sources of romantic effect, of a strange beauty, to be won, by strong imagination, out of things unlikely or remote.

Few, probably, now read Madame de Staël's *De l'Allemagne*, though it has its interest, the interest which never quite fades out of work really touched with the enthusiasm of the spiritual adventurer, the

pioneer in culture. It was published in 1810, to introduce to French readers a new school of writers—the romantic school, from beyond the Rhine; and it was followed, twenty-three years later, by Heine's *Romantische Schule*, as at once a supplement and a correction. Both these books, then, connect romanticism with Germany, with the names especially of Goethe and Tieck; and, to many English readers, the idea of romanticism is still inseparably connected with Germany—that Germany which, in its quaint old towns, under the spire of Strasburg or the towers of Heidelberg, was always listening in rapt inaction to the melodious, fascinating voices of the Middle Age, and which, now that it has got Strasburg back again, has, I suppose, almost ceased to exist. But neither Germany, with its Goethe and Tieck, nor England, with its Byron and Scott, is nearly so representative of the romantic temper as France, with Murger, and Gautier, and Victor Hugo. It is in French literature that its most characteristic expression is to be found; and that, as most closely derivative, historically, from such peculiar conditions, as ever reinforce it to the utmost.

For, although temperament has much to do with the generation of the romantic spirit, and although this spirit, with its curiosity, its thirst for a curious beauty, may be always traceable in excellent art (traceable even in Sophocles) yet still, in a limited sense, it may be said to be a product of special epochs. Outbreaks of this spirit, that is, come naturally with particular periods—times, when, in men's approaches towards art and poetry, curiosity may be noticed to

take the lead, when men come to art and poetry, with a deep thirst for intellectual excitement, after a long *ennui*, or in reaction against the strain of outward, practical things : in the later Middle Age, for instance, so that medieval poetry, centering in Dante, is often opposed to Greek and Roman poetry, as romantic poetry to the classical. What the romanticism of Dante is, may be estimated, if we compare the lines in which Virgil describes the hazel-wood, from whose broken twigs flows the blood of Polydorus, not without the expression of a real shudder at the ghastly incident, with the whole canto of the *Inferno*, into which Dante has expanded them, beautifying and softening it, meanwhile, by a sentiment of profound pity. And it is especially in that period of intellectual disturbance, immediately preceding Dante, amid which the romance languages define themselves at last, that this temper is manifested. Here, in the literature of Provence, the very name of *romanticism* is stamped with its true signification : here we have indeed a romantic world, grotesque even, in the strength of its passions, almost insane in its curious expression of them, drawing all things into its sphere, making the birds, nay ! lifeless things, its voices and messengers, yet so penetrated with the desire for beauty and sweetness, that it begets a wholly new species of poetry, in which the *Renaissance* may be said to begin. The last century was pre-eminently a classical age, an age in which, for art and literature, the element of a comely order was in the ascendant ; which, passing away, left a hard battle to be fought between the classical and the romantic schools. Yet,

it is in the heart of this century, of Goldsmith and Stothard, of Watteau and the *Siècle de Louis XIV.*— in one of its central, if not most characteristic figures, in Rousseau—that the modern or French romanticism really originates. But, what in the eighteenth century is but an exceptional phenomenon, breaking through its fair reserve and discretion only at rare intervals, is the habitual guise of the nineteenth, breaking through it perpetually, with a feverishness, an incomprehensible straining and excitement, which all experience to some degree, but yearning also, in the genuine children of the romantic school, to be *énergique, frais, et dispos*—for those qualities of energy, freshness, comely order ; and often, in Murger, in Gautier, in Victor Hugo, for instance, with singular felicity for attaining them.

It is in the terrible tragedy of Rousseau, in fact, that French romanticism, with much else, begins : reading his *Confessions* we seem actually to assist at the birth of this new, strong spirit in the French mind. The wildness which has shocked so many, and the fascination which has influenced almost every one, in the squalid, yet eloquent figure, we see and hear so clearly in that book, wandering under the apple-blossoms and among the vines of Neuchâtel or Vevey actually give it the quality of a very successful romantic invention. His strangeness or distortion, his profound subjectivity, his passionateness—the *cor laceratum*—Rousseau makes all men in love with these. *Je ne suis fait comme aucun de ceux que j'ai sus. Mais si je ne vaux pas mieux, au moins je suis autre.*— " I am not made like any one else I have ever known :

yet, if I am not better, at least I am different." These words, from the first page of the *Confessions*, anticipate all the Werthers, Renés, Obermanns, of the last hundred years. For Rousseau did but anticipate a trouble in the spirit of the whole world; and thirty years afterwards, what in him was a peculiarity, became part of the general consciousness. A storm was coming: Rousseau, with others, felt it in the air, and they helped to bring it down: they introduced a disturbing element into French literature, then so trim and formal, like our own literature of the age of Queen Anne.

In 1815 the storm had come and gone, but had left, in the spirit of "young France," the *ennui* of an immense disillusion. In the last chapter of Edgar Quinet's *Révolution Française*, a work itself full of irony, of disillusion, he distinguishes two books, Senancour's *Obermann* and Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*, as characteristic of the first decade of the present century. In those two books we detect already the disease and the cure—in *Obermann* the irony, refined into a plaintive philosophy of "indifference"—in Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*, the refuge from a tarnished actual present, a present of disillusion, into a world of strength and beauty in the Middle Age, as at an earlier period—in *René* and *Atala*—into the free play of them in savage life. It is to minds in this spiritual situation, weary of the present, but yearning for the spectacle of beauty and strength, that the works of French romanticism appeal. They set a positive value on the intense, the exceptional; and a certain distortion is sometimes

noticeable in them, as in conceptions like Victor Hugo's *Quasimodo*, or *Gwynplaine*, something of a terrible grotesque, of the *macabre*, as the French themselves call it; though always combined with perfect literary execution, as in Gautier's *La Morte Amoureuse*, or the scene of the "maimed" burial-rites of the player, dead of the frost, in his *Capitaine Fracasse*—true "flowers of the yew." It becomes grim humour in Victor Hugo's combat of Gilliatt with the devil-fish, or the incident, with all its ghastly comedy drawn out at length, of the great gun detached from its fastenings on shipboard, in *Quatre-Vingt-Treize* (perhaps the most terrible of all the accidents that can happen by sea) and in the entire episode, in that book, of the *Convention*. Not less surely does it reach a genuine pathos; for the habit of noting and distinguishing one's own most intimate passages of sentiment makes one sympathetic, begetting, as it must, the power of entering, by all sorts of finer ways, into the intimate recesses of other minds; so that pity is another quality of romanticism, both Victor Hugo and Gautier being great lovers of animals, and charming writers about them, and Murger being unrivalled in the pathos of his *Scènes de la Vie de Jeunesse*. Penetrating so finely into all situations which appeal to pity, above all, into the special or exceptional phases of such feeling, the romantic humour is not afraid of the quaintness or singularity of its circumstances or expression, pity, indeed, being of the essence of humour; so that Victor Hugo does but turn his romanticism into practice, in his hunger and thirst after practical *Justice!*—a justice which shall no

longer wrong children, or animals, for instance, by ignoring in a stupid, mere breadth of view, minute facts about them. Yet the romanticists are antinomian, too, sometimes, because the love of energy and beauty, of distinction in passion, tended naturally to become a little *bizarre*, plunging into the Middle Age, into the secrets of old Italian story. *Are we in the Inferno ?*—we are tempted to ask, wondering at something malign in so much beauty. For over all a care for the refreshment of the human spirit by fine art manifests itself, a predominant sense of literary charm, so that, in their search for the secret of exquisite expression, the romantic school went back to the forgotten world of early French poetry, and literature itself became the most delicate of the arts—like " goldsmith's work," says Sainte-Beuve, of Bertrand's *Gaspard de la Nuit*—and that peculiarly French gift, the gift of exquisite speech, *argute loqui*, attained in them a perfection which it had never seen before.

Stendhal, a writer whom I have already quoted, and of whom English readers might well know much more than they do, stands between the earlier and later growths of the romantic spirit. His novels are rich in romantic quality ; and his other writings—partly criticism, partly personal reminiscences—are a very curious and interesting illustration of the needs out of which romanticism arose. In his book on *Racine and Shakespeare*, Stendhal argues that all good art was romantic in its day ; and this is perhaps true in Stendhal's sense. That little treatise, full of " dry light " and fertile ideas, was published in the year 1823, and its object is to defend an entire independ-

ence and liberty in the choice and treatment of subject, both in art and literature, against those who upheld the exclusive authority of precedent. In pleading the cause of romanticism, therefore, it is the novelty, both of form and of motive, in writings like the *Hernani* of Victor Hugo (which soon followed it, raising a storm of criticism) that he is chiefly concerned to justify. To be interesting and really stimulating, to keep us from yawning even, art and literature must follow the subtle movements of that nimbly-shifting *Time-Spirit*, or *Zeit-Geist*, understood by French not less than by German criticism, which is always modifying men's taste, as it modifies their manners and their pleasures. This, he contends, is what all great workmen had always understood. Dante, Shakespeare, Molière, had exercised an absolute independence in their choice of subject and treatment. To turn always with that ever-changing spirit, yet to retain the flavour of what was admirably done in past generations, in the classics, as we say—is the problem of true romanticism. "Dante," he observes, "was pre-eminently the romantic poet. He adored Virgil, yet he wrote the *Divine Comedy*, with the episode of Ugolino, which is as unlike the *Æneid* as can possibly be. And those who thus obey the fundamental principle of romanticism, one by one become classical, and are joined to that ever-increasing common league, formed by men of all countries, to approach nearer and nearer to perfection."

Romanticism, then, although it has its epochs, is in its essential characteristics rather a spirit which shows itself at all times, in various degrees, in individual

workmen and their work, and the amount of which criticism has to estimate in them taken one by one, than the peculiarity of a time or a school. Depending on the varying proportion of curiosity and the desire of beauty, natural tendencies of the artistic spirit at all times, it must always be partly a matter of individual temperament. The eighteenth century in England has been regarded as almost exclusively a classical period; yet William Blake, a type of so much which breaks through what are conventionally thought the influences of that century, is still a noticeable phenomenon in it, and the reaction in favour of naturalism in poetry begins in that century, early. There are, thus, the born romanticists and the born classicists. There are the born classicists who start with *form*, to whose minds the comeliness of the old, immemorial, well-recognised types in art and literature, have revealed themselves impressively; who will entertain no matter which will not go easily and flexibly into them; whose work aspires only to be a variation upon, or study from, the older masters. "'Tis art's decline, my son!" they are always saying, to the progressive element in their own generation; to those who care for that which in fifty years' time every one will be caring for. On the other hand, there are the born romanticists, who start with an original, untried *matter*, still in fusion; who conceive this vividly, and hold by it as the essence of their work; who, by the very vividness and heat of their conception, purge away, sooner or later, all that is not organically appropriate to it, till the whole effect adjusts itself in clear, orderly, proportionate form;

which form, after a very little time, becomes classical in its turn.

The romantic or classical character of a picture, a poem, a literary work, depends, then, on the balance of certain qualities in it; and in this sense, a very real distinction may be drawn between good classical and good romantic work. But all critical terms are relative; and there is at least a valuable suggestion in that theory of Stendhal's, that all good art was romantic in its day. In the beauties of Homer and Pheidias, quiet as they now seem, there must have been, for those who confronted them for the first time, excitement and surprise, the sudden, unforeseen satisfaction of the desire of beauty. Yet the *Odyssey*, with its marvellous adventure, is more romantic than the *Iliad*, which nevertheless contains, among many other romantic episodes, that of the immortal horses of Achilles, who weep at the death of Patroclus. Æschylus is more romantic than Sophocles, whose *Philoctetes*, were it written now, might figure, for the strangeness of its motive and the perfectness of its execution, as typically romantic; while, of Euripides, it may be said, that his method in writing his plays is to sacrifice readily almost everything else, so that he may attain the fulness of a single romantic effect. These two tendencies, indeed, might be applied as a measure or standard, all through Greek and Roman art and poetry, with very illuminating results; and for an analyst of the romantic principle in art, no exercise would be more profitable, than to walk through the collection of classical antiquities at the Louvre, or the British Museum, or to examine some

representative collection of Greek coins, and note how the element of curiosity, of the love of strangeness, insinuates itself into classical design, and record the effects of the romantic spirit there, the traces of struggle, of the grotesque even, though overbalanced here by sweetness; as in the sculpture of Chartres and Rheims, the real sweetness of mind in the sculptor is often overbalanced by the grotesque, by the rudeness of his strength.

Classicism, then, means for Stendhal, for that younger enthusiastic band of French writers whose unconscious method he formulated into principles, the reign of what is pedantic, conventional, and narrowly academical in art; for him, all good art is romantic. To Sainte-Beuve, who understands the term in a more liberal sense, it is the characteristic of certain epochs, of certain spirits in every epoch, not given to the exercise of original imagination, but rather to the working out of refinements of manner on some authorised matter; and who bring to their perfection, in this way, the elements of sanity, of order and beauty in manner. In general criticism, again, it means the spirit of Greece and Rome, of some phases in literature and art that may seem of equal authority with Greece and Rome, the age of Louis the Fourteenth, the age of Johnson; though this is at best an uncritical use of the term, because in Greek and Roman work there are typical examples of the romantic spirit. But explain the terms as we may, in application to particular epochs, there are these two elements always recognisable; united in perfect art—in Sophocles, in Dante, in the highest

work of Goethe, though not always absolutely balanced there; and these two elements may be not inappropriately termed the classical and romantic tendencies.

Material for the artist, motives of inspiration, are not yet exhausted: our curious, complex, aspiring age still abounds in subjects for æsthetic manipulation by the literary as well as by other forms of art. For the literary art, at all events, the problem just now is, to induce order upon the contorted, proportionless accumulation of our knowledge and experience, our science and history, our hopes and disillusion, and, in effecting this, to do consciously what has been done hitherto for the most part too unconsciously, to write our English language as the Latins wrote theirs, as the French write, as scholars should write. Appealing, as he may, to precedent in this matter, the scholar will still remember that if "the style is the man" it is also the age: that the nineteenth century too will be found to have had its style, justified by necessity—a style very different, alike from the baldness of an impossible "Queen Anne" revival, and an incorrect, incondite exuberance, after the mode of Elizabeth: that we can only return to either at the price of an impoverishment of form or matter, or both, although, an intellectually rich age such as ours being necessarily an eclectic one, we may well cultivate some of the excellences of literary types so different as those: that in literature as in other matters it is well to unite as many diverse elements as may be: that the individual writer or artist, certainly, is to be

estimated by the number of graces he combines, and his power of interpenetrating them in a given work. To discriminate schools, of art, of literature, is, of course, part of the obvious business of literary criticism : but, in the work of literary production, it is easy to be overmuch occupied concerning them. For, in truth, the legitimate contention is, not of one age or school of literary art against another, but of all successive schools alike, against the stupidity which is dead to the substance, and the vulgarity which is dead to form.

CONCLUSION

Λέγει που Ἡράκλειτος ὅτι πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδὲν μένει

To regard all things and principles of things as inconstant modes or fashions has more and more become the tendency of modern thought. Let us begin with that which is without—our physical life. Fix upon it in one of its more exquisite intervals, the moment, for instance, of delicious recoil from the flood of water in summer heat. What is the whole physical life in that moment but a combination of natural elements to which science gives their names? But these elements, phosphorus and lime and delicate fibres, are present not in the human body alone: we detect them in places most remote from it. Our physical life is a perpetual motion of them—the passage of the blood, the wasting and repairing of the lenses of the eye, the modification of the tissues of the brain under every ray of light and sound—processes which science reduces to simpler and more elementary forces. Like the elements of which we are composed, the action of these forces extends beyond us: it rusts iron and ripens corn. Far out on every side of us those elements are broadcast, driven in many currents; and birth and gesture and death and the springing of

violets from the grave are but a few out of ten thousand resultant combinations. That clear, perpetual outline of face and limb is but an image of ours, under which we group them—a design in a web, the actual threads of which pass out beyond it. This at least of flamelike our life has, that it is but the concurrence, renewed from moment to moment, of forces parting sooner or later on their ways.

Or if we begin with the inward world of thought and feeling, the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring. There it is no longer the gradual darkening of the eye, the gradual fading of colour from the wall—movements of the shore-side, where the water flows down indeed, though in apparent rest—but the race of the mid-stream, a drift of momentary acts of sight and passion and thought. At first sight experience seems to bury us under a flood of external objects, pressing upon us with a sharp and importunate reality, calling us out of ourselves in a thousand forms of action. But when reflexion begins to play upon those objects they are dissipated under its influence; the cohesive force seems suspended like some trick of magic; each object is loosed into a group of impressions—colour, odour, texture—in the mind of the observer. And if we continue to dwell in thought on this world, not of objects in the solidity with which language invests them, but of impressions, unstable, flickering, inconsistent, which burn and are extinguished with our consciousness of them, it contracts still further: the whole scope of observation is dwarfed into the narrow chamber of the individual mind. Experience, already

reduced to a group of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world. Analysis goes a step farther still, and assures us that those impressions of the individual mind to which, for each one of us, experience dwindles down, are in perpetual flight; that each of them is limited by time, and that as time is infinitely divisible, each of them is infinitely divisible also; all that is actual in it being a single moment, gone while we try to apprehend it, of which it may ever be more truly said that it has ceased to be than that it is. To such a tremulous wisp constantly re-forming itself on the stream, to a single sharp impression, with a sense in it, a relic more or less fleeting, of such moments gone by, what is real in our life fines itself down. It is with this movement, with the passage and dissolution of impressions, images, sensations, that analysis leaves off—that continual vanishing away, that strange, perpetual weaving and unweaving of ourselves.

Philosophiren, says Novalis, *ist dephlegmatisiren vivificiren*. The service of philosophy, of speculative culture, towards the human spirit, is to rouse, to startle it to a life of constant and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive

to us,—for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?

To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. In a sense it might even be said that our failure is to form habits: for, after all, habit is relative to a stereotyped world, and meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike. While all melts under our feet, we may well grasp at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colours, and curious odours, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend. Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening. With this sense of the splendour of our experience and of its awful brevity, gathering all we are into one desperate effort to see and touch, we shall hardly have time to make theories about the things we see and touch. What we have to do is to be for ever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions, never acquiescing in a facile orthodoxy of Comte, or of Hegel, or of our own.

Philosophical theories or ideas, as points of view, instruments of criticism, may help us to gather up what might otherwise pass unregarded by us. "Philosophy is the microscope of thought." The theory or idea or system which requires of us the sacrifice of any part of this experience, in consideration of some interest into which we cannot enter, or some abstract theory we have not identified with ourselves, or of what is only conventional, has no real claim upon us.

One of the most beautiful passages of Rousseau is that in the sixth book of the *Confessions*, where he describes the awakening in him of the literary sense. An undefinable taint of death had clung always about him, and now in early manhood he believed himself smitten by a mortal disease. He asked himself how he might make as much as possible of the interval that remained; and he was not biassed by anything in his previous life when he decided that it must be by intellectual excitement, which he found just then in the clear, fresh writings of Voltaire. Well! we are all *condamnés*, as Victor Hugo says: we are all under sentence of death but with a sort of indefinite reprieve—*les hommes sont tous condamnés à mort avec des sursis indéfinis*: we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest, at least among "the children of this world," in art and song. For our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. Great passions may give us this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, the various forms of enthusiastic activity, disinterested

or otherwise, which come naturally to many of us. Only be sure it is passion—that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of such wisdom, the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for its own sake, has most. For art comes to you, proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake.

1868.

NOTES

STYLE

This essay originally appeared in the *Fortnightly*, December 1888. It is of peculiar interest to the student, because it is, to a great extent, a personal confession. Pater, himself the prince of stylists, subjects the whole problem of literary style to a searching analysis. The first essential of style he finds to be personality. The true literary artist is he who succeeds most perfectly in transcribing, not mere objective fact, but his sense of fact. It is to this power of selection that a work like Gibbon's, for instance, owes its greatness. " The artist," says Schiller, " is known by what he omits." All surplusage must be remorselessly pruned away. So too, in language he must fastidiously and scrupulously insist upon the selection of the *not propre*, " the one word for the one thing." Pater quotes with approval the dictum of the great French stylist Flaubert, to whom, more than to any other writer, he is indebted for his ideas, that " there is only one way of saying one thing." " Say what you have to say in the simplest, the most direct and most exact manner possible." Lastly, Pater insists upon the necessity of Soul in style. The great literary masterpieces are, as it were, a cloister where the soul takes refuge from the world. And above all, without Beauty, which in the long run is only " fineness of truth," there can be no excellence at all.

p. 1, l. 17. **A priori.** Arguing from cause to effect.

p. 1, l. 23 ff. **Bacon.** Francis Bacon (1561-1626), " the wisest, wittiest, meanest of mankind," and the founder of the Inductive Philosophy which paved the way for modern

science, wrote singularly sententious and nervous prose, of which *The Advancement of Learning* and the *Essays* are characteristic examples. **Milton's** greatest prose work is the *Areopagitica*. **Jeremy Taylor** (1613-67), an English divine, whose best-known work is *Holy Living and Holy Dying*. **Sir Thomas Browne,** the Norwich antiquarian (1605-1682), was the author of *Religio Medici, Hydrotaphia,* and other works, and is the subject of a charming essay of Pater's. All these seventeenth century prose-writers were celebrated for their florid and picturesque prose-style, which delighted Pater, as it had done Charles Lamb, who may be said to have rediscovered them. For Livy and the other authors mentioned here, *vide infra.*

p. 2, l. 8. **Wordsworth.** The reference is to the famous theory, first propounded in *Lyrical Ballads,* and repeated in successive prefaces, that there is no essential difference between the language of prose and poetry. This completely reversed the standards of " poetic diction " of the eighteenth century, formulated by Dryden, Pope and Johnson, and brought about the Romantic Movement, of which Wordsworth and Coleridge were the pioneers.

p. 2, l. 25. **Dryden.** Modern English prose begins with Dryden (1631-1700), whose vigorous unaffected style contrasts sharply with the cumbrous, semi-poetical writing of his predecessors.

p. 4, l. 7. **Pascal** (1623-1662), the French theologian and philosopher. His *Provincial Letters* (1656), in which he threw his whole weight on to the side of the Jansenists of Port Royal in their famous controversy with the Jesuits, are a masterpiece of dialectic subtilty.

p. 5, ll. 4, 5. **Gibbon** (1737-1794), author of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* **Livy** (59-17 B.C.) wrote, under the patronage of the Emperor Augustus, a history of Rome from its foundation to the death of Augustus, in 142 books, of which thirty-five are extant. **Tacitus** (*c.* 55-130 A.D.), the historian of the Roman Empire, wrote the *Annals* and *Histories,* a life of Agricola and an account of Germany. **Michelet** (1798-1874), the French historian, spent thirty-eight years over his *History of France,* and was the author of a famous *History of the French Revolution.*

p. 7, l. 5. **Cicero** (106-43 B.C.), the famous Roman politician, lawyer, orator, philosopher and man of letters, who was proscribed and murdered, along with other republican leaders, by Mark Anthony, for his share in the murder of Julius Caesar. **Newman** (1801-1890), the real founder of the Tractarian Movement, which shook Oxford in the early part of the reign of Queen Victoria. In 1833, a body of Oxford scholars began to publish *Tracts for the Times*, the chief object of which was to assert the Catholicity of the English Church. After the publication of Tract 90 in 1841, Newman left Oxford and retired to Littlemore. His inward struggles during that period are described in his *Apologia pro Vita Mea*. In 1845 he was received into the Roman Catholic Church, and in 1879 he became a Cardinal. His *Apologia* (1864), *The Idea of a University* (1854) and his Sermons shew him to be a master of English prose.

p. 8, l. 6. **Exclusiones.** "Exclusions due to Nature," one of the processes of elimination in Bacon's *Novum Organum*, forming part of the inductive method of analysis, by means of which he hopes to arrive at the Forms, or underlying causes of natural phenomena.

p. 8, l. 24. **Neology**, a new or "coined" word.

p. 9, l. 15. **le cuistre,** a pedant, hack-writer, "Dryasdust," in Carlyle's picturesque phraseology.

p. 9, l. 25. **Plato** (429-347 B.C.), disciple of Socrates and predecessor of Aristotle, the founder of the Idealistic Philosophy. His *Dialogues* and his *Republic* expound his teaching. Plato is regarded as the writer of the most perfect Attic prose style.

p. 10, l. 22. **German metaphysical movement.** This movement, first announced to the world in Mme. de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* in 1810, was made familiar to English readers by Carlyle and Emerson. Carlyle, in particular, made it his creed: it also profoundly influenced Matthew Arnold and Pater. Apart from the purely philosophical speculations of Kant and the German metaphysicians, on the literary side its chief exponents were Tieck, Jean Paul Richter and Novalis. It culminated in Goethe, who was the greatest intellectual force in Europe since Shakespeare.

p. 11, l. 28. **Montaigne** (1533-1592), the genial Frenchman who is justly regarded as the father of the Essay. His chief characteristic is his frank egotism. He takes the reader completely into his confidence about himself. He was translated into English by Florio (1603) and Cotton (1685). Shakespeare had imbibed Montaigne's shrewd wisdom and quotes him in the *Tempest*. A copy of Florio's Montaigne in the British Museum contains what is purported to be Shakespeare's signature.

p. 12, l. 5. **ascêsis.** Ἄσκησις, self-discipline, "the austere and serious girding of the loins in youth." The word occurs also in *Emerald Uthwart*.

p. 12, l. 32. **Schiller** (1757-1805), the friend of Goethe and author of historical dramas, *Wallenstein*, *Wilhelm Tell* and others.

p. 13, l. 17. **Flaubert** (1821-1880), the French novelist and stylist. His most famous masterpieces were *Madame Bovary* (1856), *Salammbô*, a tale of ancient Carthage, and *La Tentation de Saint Antoine* (1874). Pater became acquainted with Flaubert's correspondence, from which he here quotes so liberally, when he was asked to review it for the *Athenæum*, August 1889. It is evident that Flaubert exercised a profound influence upon Pater. **Stendhal.** Marie Henri Beyle (1783-1842), one of the founders of the modern French novel, wrote *Le Rouge et le Noir*, *Chronique du XIX^me^ siècle* (1830), and *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839).

p. 14, l. 7. **Michelangelo** (1474-1563). Michelangelo Buonarroti, the famous painter, sculptor and architect. He was employed by Pope Leo X. to decorate the Vatican, and his most famous works are the paintings, particularly the Last Judgement, in the Sistine Chapel.

p. 15, l. 26. **Mansel.** Dean Mansel (1820-1871), a Victorian divine, author of works on Logic and History. He was dean of St. Paul's and Regius Professor of History at Oxford.

p. 19, l. 17 ff. **The Vulgate,** the Latin version of the Bible, made by St. Jerome in the fourth century A.D., and sanctioned for the Roman Catholic Church by the Council of Trent in 1546.

The Authorized Version of the English Bible was made by a committee of divines in 1611, under the orders of James I.

The Prayer Book of the Church of England is substantially the second Prayer Book of the reign of Edward VI. (1552), compiled by Cranmer, but revised by Elizabeth.

Swedenborg (1688-1772), a Swedish mystic, founder of the sect bearing his name. He was the author of *Arcana Cœlestia* and other apocalyptic works. For **Tracts for the Times,** *vide supra*, p. 7, l. 5, *note*.

p. 26, l. 6. **Buffon.** " La génie n'est autre chose qu'une grande aptitude à la patience," which Carlyle renders, " Genius—which means transcendent capacity for taking trouble." Buffon (1707-1788) was a French naturalist and philosopher.

p. 27, l. 28. **entire.** Horace's " totus teres atque rotundus."

p. 28, l. 13. **Les Misérables.** Victor Hugo's masterpiece. See note on p. 36, l. 3.

p. 29, l. 4. **Rafaelle** (1483-1520), the friend of Michelangelo, and like him, one of the crowning figures of the Italian Renaissance. His so-called Sistine Madonna is his masterpiece. He was the author of many of the frescoes in the Vatican and Saint Peter's at Rome, which he executed for Pope Leo X.

p. 30, l. 7. **Bach** (1685-1750), a great German musician, the author of many preludes and fugues and of a well-known Passion.

p. 31, l. 1. **The Divine Comedy.** Dante's famous epic, written in exile, in which, guided by the poet Virgil, he visits Hell, Purgatory and Heaven, where at last he is vouchsafed a vision of Beatrice, the lady whom he had " loved long since and lost awhile."

WORDSWORTH

William Wordsworth was born in 1770, and educated at Saint John's College, Cambridge. After leaving Cambridge in 1791, he visited France, where, like so many of

the rising generation, he was, for the time being, carried away by the French Revolution. As he tells us in his *Prelude*, he imagined that the fall of the Bastille heralded the coming of a Golden Age.

> Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive
> But to be young was very heaven.

In 1798, in conjunction with Coleridge, he produced the epoch-making *Lyrical Ballads*. This was the beginning of a new era in English Literature, the birth of the Romantic Movement. In spite of derision from the orthodox critics, Wordsworth discarded, once and for all, the insipid and conventional " poetic diction " of Pope and his school, which had reigned undisputed and unchallenged since the death of Milton. He asserted that poetry should be expressed in a selection of " the ordinary language of everyday life." He found his inspiration, not in the conventional subjects of classical antiquity, beloved of the eighteenth century, but in the homely lives of the Westmorland peasants, with their simple joys and sorrows, the flowers of the field, and the mountains, valleys and lakes amid which he dwelt. To Wordsworth, as a pantheist, Nature had more than an ordinary significance. Throughout it he felt

> a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns.

Wordsworth was Pater's favourite English poet, and his criticism of him is at once delicate and subtle. He sets himself to analyze the problem, what special sense does Wordsworth exercise, and what instincts does he satisfy ? In answering this question, he points out that one of Wordsworth's chief characteristics is " an intimate consciousness of the expression of natural things," the flower and its shadow on the stone, the cuckoo and its echo. His is pre-eminently " the power to open out the soul of apparently little or familiar things." To him " every natural object seemed to possess more or less of a spiritual or moral life, to be capable of a companionship with man, full of expression, of inexplicable affinities and delicacies of intercourse." It is a common mistake to think that Wordsworth is a

" tame " poet. " It was not for their tameness, but their passionate sincerity, that he chose incidents and situations from common life." And finally, what Wordsworth aims at is absolute sincerity of feeling and diction, which makes him the forerunner of the deepest and most passionate poetry of our day.

p. 35, l. 3. **Disciplina arcani.** Secret training, initiation.

p. 36, ll. 3 to 7. **Senancour** (1779-1846), the author of *Obermann*, a series of letters, supposed to be written by a recluse from a lonely valley of the Jura. It was a great favourite with Matthew Arnold.

Théophile Gautier (1811-1872), an eccentric member of the earlier Romantic French School, the forerunner of Baudelaire. His best known works are his brilliant but erotic novel, *Mlle de Maupin* (1835), and his *Émaux et Camées*.

Rousseau (1712-1778), see p. 147, l. 17, *note*.

Chateaubriand (1768-1848) was the principal representative of the reaction against the French Revolution. His most celebrated works are *The Genius of Christianity*, and his prose epics, *Atala* and *Réné*. The latter has been called " The connecting link between *Werther* and *Childe Harold*."

Victor Hugo (1802-1885). The greatest figure in nineteenth century French literature. His chief works are his novels, *Notre Dame, Les Misérables, Les Travailleurs de la Mer, L'homme qui rit*; but he was equally celebrated for his poems (*La Légende des Siècles*, 1859) and his dramas (*Hernani*, 1830).

p. 36, l. 16. **Reynolds, Gainsborough.** Two great English portrait-painters of the eighteenth century.

p. 43, l. 5. **Georges Sand** (1804-1876), the *nom de plume* of Armadine Dupin, the French woman-novelist. The friend of De Musset, Chopin and Jules Sandeau, she produced in collaboration with the latter her first novel, *Rose et Blanche*. It would be impossible to give a list of her numerous romances. She has all Wordsworth's feeling for Nature and love of the peasant, and she was obviously George Eliot's model.

p. 43, l. 8. **Meinhold.** A German romantic writer of the eighteenth century, author of *Sidonia the Sorceress* and the *Amber-Witch*.

p. 45, l. 10. **Origen.** One of the Fathers of the Church (*c.* 185-254 A.D.). He lived at Alexandria and was renowned as a teacher; but his doctrines (that of metempsychosis amongst others) were afterwards condemned as heretical.

p. 46, l. 12. **Animi mundi,** the World Soul.

p. 46, l. 17. **sign of the macrocosm.** See Goethe's *Faust*, Part I., at the beginning, where Faust calls up Mephistopheles by making the "sign of the Macrocosm."

p. 49, l. 6. **Anticipator.** Henry Vaughan, "the Silurist," a seventeenth century Welsh mystic poet of the school of Crashaw and Herrick. The poem which anticipates Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality* is the familiar one (in *Silex Scintillans*) beginning

They are all gone into the realms of light.

p. 50, l. 6. **Grandet, Javert.** Characters in *Les Misérables*. Javert represents the inflexibility of the Law.

p. 50, l. 11. **St. Catherine of Siena** (1347-1380), a medieval girl saint, to whom were vouchsafed in her cell visions of the Saviour, from whom she received the *Stigmata*, or signs of the Passion, like St. Francis of Assisi. Her greatest achievement was to persuade the Pope, in 1376, to return to Rome from Avignon.

p. 50, l. 13. **House Beautiful.** See p. 138, l. 9, *note*.

p. 50, l. 22. **Greek moralist.** Aristotle.

p. 51, ll. 1-4. **Manners ... morals.** A pun on the double sense of the Latin *mores*.

Cup of water. St. Matthew x. 42.

Rachel ... Beatrice. Rachel, the Old Testament heroine (Genesis xxix.), is, in *The Divine Comedy*, the type of Divine Contemplation. In *Inferno*, ii. 101, Beatrice speaks of

the place,
where I was sitting with the ancient Rachel.

See also *Inferno*, iv. 60, *Purg.* xxvii. 104, *Paradiso*, xxxii. 8. So to Pater she becomes the type of the βιὸς

θεωρητικός as distinguished from the βιὸς πρακτικός, " not action but contemplation,—being as distinct from doing."

CHARLES LAMB

Charles Lamb was born in Crown Office Row, Inner Temple, in 1775, his father being a clerk to one of the Benchers. From 1782 to 1789 he was educated at Christ's Hospital, where he had, as a friend and school-fellow, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. He was too poor to go to the University, and in 1792 he took a clerkship in the India Office, at which drudgery he worked for thirty-three years. In 1796 occurred the tragedy which overshadowed his whole life. His sister Mary stabbed her mother in a fit of frenzy, and Charles resolved to give up everything and to devote his life to her care. In 1798 he produced a short prose tale, entitled *Rosamund Gray*. In 1801 came an unsuccessful drama in the Elizabethan manner, entitled *John Woodvil*. Three years later, brother and sister collaborated in *Tales from Shakespeare*, which was closely followed by his *Specimens from the English Dramatic Poets*, with its felicitous critical notes. In 1810 he began to contribute essays to Leigh Hunt's *Reflector*, but he found his true *métier* in a second series, which appeared, under the pseudonym of Elia, in the *London Magazine* (1820-1823). After his retirement from the India Office he wrote less, and he died in 1834. Lamb's fame rests on his essays; their frank self-revelation proves him to be indeed sealed of the tribe of Montaigne, and their quaint, old-world charm is redolent of those older authors,—Burton, Sir Thomas Browne, and the minor Elizabethan dramatists—from whose works he had " wiped the dust of ages."

Pater was attracted to Lamb, first of all, through his friend Mr. R. C. Jackson, the connoisseur and bibliophile, who was a grandson of Lamb's " Captain Jackson." Pater wrote the essay in Mr. Jackson's library, surrounded by Lamb's books, furniture and other relics. Pater finds five characteristics in Lamb,—his humour, " the laughter which blends with tears," akin to the laughter of Shakespeare's Comedies; his ready sympathy; his devotion to " Art for

its own sake " ; his love for Elizabethan literature, which he helped the world to rediscover ; his love, too, for other quaint old things—old buildings, old books, old customs, even old street-cries. There was, indeed, much in common between Pater and his subject,—their residence in Enfield, their desire of self-portraiture, and their conscious artistry in words. The essay is a model of delicate and thoughtful appreciation ; but Pater views Lamb through the spectacles of his own temperament, and is prone to dwell too exclusively upon one aspect only of his character and genius, his " delicate intellectual epicureanism," rather than his humour, his heroism and his literary accomplishments.

p. 57, l. 4. **Webster** (*c.* 1600) was one of the Elizabethan dramatists " discovered " by Lamb. He is, perhaps, the greatest of Shakespeare's successors in tragic drama. His finest plays are *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. **Macabre,** what Pater calls " the terrible grotesque " (p. 149), a term usually applied to the medieval *danse macabre* or Dance of Death.

p. 58, l. 23. **Welt-schmerz,** Goethe's expression for " the concentrated sorrows of the whole world." (p. 125, l. 4).

p. 59, l. 17. **Titian** (1477-1576), the celebrated Venetian painter. **Hogarth** (1697-1764), the engraver who satirized the vices and follies of contemporary England in his terrible series " The Rake's Progress," " Marriage à la Mode " and many others. The reference is to Lamb's essay on the *Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art.*

p. 60, l. 19. **Burton** (1576-1640), author of the *Anatomy of Melancholy* ; **Quarles** (1592-1644), who wrote a book of " emblems," religious poems illustrated by grotesque engravings ; **The Duchess of Newcastle** (1625-1673), a learned lady who wrote a life of he husband, a Cavalier who fought for Charles I. at Marston Moor ; all quaint seventeenth century writers " discovered " by Lamb. **Defoe** (1671-1731), the author of *The Journal of the Plague Year, Robinson Crusoe* and many other narratives distinguished by lucidity of style and an unequalled realism in presentation.

p. 61, l. 6. **Godwin,** one of Lamb's acquaintances, was an advanced political thinker, author of *Political Justice* and

Caleb Williams, but chiefly celebrated as the husband of the gifted and beautiful Mary Wollstonecraft. Their daughter was Shelley's second wife.

p. 64, l. 16. **Fox.** George Fox (1640-1691) was the founder of the Society of Friends, popularly known as Quakers, a sect which refuses to recognize the validity of orders or sacraments of any kind. Their refusal to take an oath frequently led to their punishment in courts of law previous to 1833.

p. 68, l. 8. **Opus operatum,** a theological term, denoting the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ to redeem the soul of the individual, apart from any efforts of his own.

SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLISH KINGS

This essay, which appeared in 1889, is written upon the general theme that " Shakespeare's kings are not, nor are meant to be, great men : rather, little or quite ordinary humanity, thrust upon greatness, with those pathetic results, the natural self-pity of the weak heightened in them into irresistible appeal to others as the net result of their royal prerogative." The leading sentiment in these plays is " a popular dramatic chronicle." Pater devotes much of his time to the analysis of the character of Richard II., the poet-king in whom he would naturally find much to attract his sympathy.

p. 71, l. 12. **Hall** (*c.* 1530), **Holinshed** (*c.* 1575), **Stowe** (1525-1605) were all chroniclers and important sources for the study of medieval English history. Holinshed was Shakespeare's authority for his English historical plays.

p. 71, l. 19. **Henriade.** Voltaire's epic on the subject of Henry IV. of Navarre.

p. 74, l. 32. **roi fainéant,** puppet-king.

p. 75, l. 1. **La Pucelle.** Joan of Arc, " the Maid."

p. 79, l. 20. **Charles Kean** (1811-1868). Son of the actor Edmund Kean. In the early part of the nineteenth century he achieved some great Shakesperean triumphs with his wife, Ellen Tree.

p. 82, l. 19. **Chatterton,** " the matchless boy who perished

in his pride." The son of a poor sexton at Bristol and unable to obtain recognition for his genius, he produced some pseudo-antique poems, which he claimed to have found in the muniment room at St. Mary's, Redcliffe. But the fraud was detected, and Chatterton, on the verge of starvation, took poison in a London garret (1770).

p. 86, l. 3. **Would he had blotted.** " I remember that the players often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing, whatsoever he penned, he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, Would he had blotted a thousand, which they thought a malevolent speech." Ben Jonson, *Discoveries*.

p. 86, l. 9. **Handel** (1685-1759), a great German musician, who is best known for his oratorios.

LEONARDO DA VINCI

Leonardo da Vinci was born near Florence in 1452. That world-shaking movement in Art and Letters, known as the Renaissance, was now gathering strength. It was not that civilization was dead during the Middle Ages, at any rate in Italy ; but the Catholic Church and Feudalism between them held men's souls and bodies in an iron grip. The coming of the new era is heralded by Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1300), by Petrarch (1304-74) and his contemporary, Boccaccio. Italy, too, provided an essentially freer political atmosphere : the Papacy, with all its faults, was cosmopolitan, and instead of the centralized rule of France, England or Spain, there arose a number of city-states, Florence, Genoa, Naples, Milan, Venice, Rome, and others, independent and to some extent democratic. These, like the city-states of old Greece, afforded an ideal environment for art, and were munificent patrons of artists. In Florence, especially, the family of the Medici, of whom the greatest was Lorenzo the Magnificent, were notable patrons of the arts. Leonardo received his artistic education from Andrea Verrochio, a celebrated craftsman who took a number of pupils or apprentices. The pupil soon beat the master, and attracted Lorenzo's attention. Between 1480

and 1484 he apparently travelled in Mahommedan countries, and in 1487 he took service under Duke Ludovico il Moro of Milan. For him Leonardo designed fortresses and military engines, pageants and other shows, and executed two great works, the equestrian statue of the Duke's father, Francesco Sforza, and the wonderful painting of the Last Supper on the walls of the convent of Santa Maria della Grazie. This ranks, with the Sistine Madonna and the Last Judgement, among the greatest paintings in the world. About 1505 followed the Mona Lisa, an almost equally famous masterpiece, whose enigmatic smile has fascinated generations of men. In 1515 he returned with Francis I. to France and died there. He has well been named the Faust of the Italian Renaissance. His fertile brain was for ever busy with all manner of strange problems, ranging from new *media* for painting, to optics, and devices for flying. He loved to manufacture curious mechanical toys, to study dissection, to devise tools and machines of all kinds. In art, he had a passion for rare plants and curious animals, strangely shaped hills, the far-fetched, enigmatic or grotesque. His many-sided genius is as baffling as it is fascinating and picturesque.

In Leonardo, as in Winckelmann, Pater found an ideal subject, one strangely like himself in temperament, whose intellectual life was dominated by two *motifs*, Curiosity and Beauty. But Pater was deficient in his technical knowledge of Art, and he makes many curious blunders. He is mistaken, for instance, in regarding Leonardo as a realist; and the Medusa described on p. 94 is really not by Leonardo at all, but much later. The fanciful interpretation of the Mona Lisa is one of Pater's most celebrated passages.

Homo. Man the minister and interpreter of nature, an aphorism from the *Novum Organum*.

p. 89, l. 2. **Battle of the Standard.** Cf. p. 113, l. 3. This was the battle of Anghiari on the lower Tiber, 1440, where the Florentines under Francesco Sforza defeated Niccolò Picciuino, the general of the Visconti.

p. 89, l. 3. **meaner hands.** The original painting has almost disappeared owing to time and damp, and has been retouched many times by restorers.

p. 89, l. 19. **Vasari** (1513-74), the pupil of Michelangelo and Andrea del Sarto, patronized by the Medicis, is only known to fame by his gossiping but invaluable *Delle Vite de' più Excellenti Pittori, Scultori ed Architettori* (1550-68).

p. 89, l. 20. **Amoretti.** *Memorie Storiche sulla vita etc. di Lionardo da Vinci*, Milan, 1804.

p. 90, l. 23. **Andrea del Verrocchio,** 1453-88, a famous craftsman and teacher. His greatest work is the equestrian statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni at Venice, which ranks beside that of Marcus Aurelius at Rome.

p. 90, l. 32. **Perugino** (1446-1524). An artist of the Umbrian school.

p. 93, l. 25. **San Giovanni,** the *bel San Giovanni* of Dante, the baptistery of St. John, designed by Arnolfo di Cambio (see below). Leonardo wanted to lift it from its foundations and replace it on a marble base.

p. 95, l. 24. **treatise on painting.** This celebrated work consisted of a number of brief notes, critical or didactic, on the art and practice of painting. It was published in Paris in 1551, and an English translation has appeared.

p. 96, l. 12. **Paracelsus** (1490-1541), alchemist, philosopher and physician, was one of the most notorious figures of his day. He created an immense stir by his empiric methods, disregarding all the *a priori* rules of the doctors. **Cardan** of Pavia (1501-76) was an astrologer, mathematician, and physician of a similar type.

p. 96, l. 27. **Raphael.** Rafaello Santi of Urbino (1483-1520) was the third of the three famous contemporaries, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael. See p. 29, l. 4, *note*.

p. 97, l. 25. **Duomo** (Santa Maria del Fiore), was built on the plans of Arnolfo di Cambio (1289), who also designed the baptistery. The reference is probably to the modern façade, which is the work of de Fabrio.

p. 97, l. 27. **Giotto** (1276-1336), the pupil of Cimabue, the father of Italian painting, designed the Campanile at Florence. He was a friend of Dante, and painted the portrait described so well by Carlyle. He was the painter of the frescoes in the Franciscan church at Assisi.

p. 99, l. 8. **Clement,** *Raphael, Leonardo de Vinci et Michel-ange*, Paris, 1879.

p. 100, l. 17. **Feronière,** a jewel worn on the forehead, suspended by a gold chain or band, as in the well-known picture of Beatrice d'Este.

p. 101 (footnote). " The more a work of art bears upon it the impress of manual effort, the more valueless it is." *Ars est celare artem.*

p. 102, l. 17. **French.** The French invasions of Italy began with Charles VIII., 1483. In 1498 Louis XII. attacked Milan: his cousin, Francis I., repeating the exploit in 1515, won a great battle at Marignano; but ten years later he was routed and captured at Pavia.

p. 103, l. 4. **Savonarola** (1452-1498), a Dominican monk who preached against the frivolity and corruption of Italian society in Florence. He had at one time a great following, but he made powerful enemies in Church and State, and was cruelly executed as a heretic and traitor, though he was in reality a reformer only, attacking not the doctrines but the morals of the Church. (See George Eliot's *Romola.*)

p. 103, l. 16. **La Gioconda** is, if not the greatest, the most characteristic of Leonardo's works. The model was Lisa di Antonio Maria di Noldo Gheradina, wife of Zanobi del Gioconda, commonly called Mona (Madonna) Lisa. It was bought for 4,000 livres by Francis I., and hangs in the Louvre. In Mona Lisa, with her haunting, enigmatic smile, Leonardo at last found his ideal subject, and he spent four years over the work, causing music to be played that the sitter might not lose her rapt expression. The colouring of the painting has, alas, much faded.

THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE

This beautiful phantasy, written in 1878 for *Macmillan's Magazine*, is an " Imaginary Portrait," but, like so much of Pater's work, it is really, to a very large extent, autobiographical. Speaking of Marius, Pater says: " Though the

manner of his work was changed formally from poetry to prose, he remained, and must always be, of the poetic temper; by which I mean, among other things, that he lived much, and as it were by system, in reminiscence." This applies equally to *The Child in the House*. Its gentle, retrospective mood is essentially poetic, and by general consent it is the most perfect of Pater's short pieces. He records, firstly, the boy's first impressions of the old house with its " carved balusters and shadowy angles," the attic with its " unexplored wonderland of childish treasures "; the garden, with the murmur of the bees and the scent of the limes; the old religious books with their quaint engravings; and then, the entry into all this peace and beauty of " the great and inevitable sorrows of life," the death of the child's pets and the sickness of his little brother.

p. 117, l. 26. **house.** This is no doubt the house at Enfield where Walter Pater spent his boyhood.

p. 117, l. 31. **Watteau** (1684-1721), a celebrated French pastoral painter of the court of Louis XIV.

p. 119, l. 19. **Flos Parietis.** Botanical name for the wall-flower.

p. 120, l. 10. **urbanity.** Pater puns on the twofold meaning of the Latin word.

p. 120, l. 32. **with lead.** Job. xix. 24.

Gouter, foretaste.

p. 124, l. 16. **Preacher.** The author of the book Ecclesiastes, said to be King Solomon.

p. 125, l. 9. **Welt-schmerz.** *Vide supra*, p. 58, l. 23, *note*.

p. 125, l. 17. **David** (1748-1825), a French artist, who painted many historical pictures of scenes in the French Revolution in which he had participated,—the Death of Marat, the Oath of the Tennis Court, and Marie Antoinette on her way to the Scaffold being the most famous. Many of these adorn the walls of the Palace at Versailles and the Louvre.

p. 131, l. 22. **Morgue.** The public mortuary at Paris.

p. 132, l. 7. **Joshua's vision.** Joshua v. 13-15.

p. 134, l. 24. **wrestling angel . . . Jacob.** Genesis xxix. 10 ff. ; xxxii. 24 ff.

p. 134, l. 27. **Aaron's vestment.** Exodus xxxix. 25-43.

ROMANTICISM

In this essay, which appeared as a postscript to the volume of *Appreciations* in 1889, Pater discusses the much-abused terms *classic* and *romantic*, as they appear in literature. The opposition between them, he contends, is very largely unreal. In the " House Beautiful," where the creative minds of all generations come together, such distinctions vanish. *Classical* is a term applied to what has been sanctioned by the approval of ages, that which is constructed according to regular and approved canons of art and taste ; *Romantic* implies the addition of strangeness, of the element of curiosity, to beauty. The charm of the classical is the charm of the well-known tale, to which we can listen over and over again, because it is so well told. To the absolute beauty of form is added the accidental charm of familiarity. Hence the typical Classical literature is that of ancient Greece and Rome. Romantic literature, on the other hand, seeks its inspiration in the wilder atmosphere of the Middle Ages, with its unworked sources of strange beauty. Yet, as Stendhal acutely observes, all good art was romantic in its day, In fact, true art is a blending of both. With an excess of classicism, it grows dry, pedantic and formal ; with an excess of the romantic element it tends to become grotesque. The two tendencies are complementary ; they are united in perfect art, in Sophocles and Dante and Goethe. What we have to learn to-day is to write our English language as the Latins wrote theirs, as the French write, as scholars should write. The true contention is not of one school of literary art against another, but of all schools alike against " stupidity, which is dead to the substance, and vulgarity, which is dead to form."

'Αινεῖ. " He praises old wine, but the flowers of newer songs."

p. 138, l. 9. **House Beautiful.** " He lift up his eyes, and behold, there was a very stately palace before him, the name of which was *Beautiful*" (*Pilgrim's Progress*). Bunyan had in mind the splendid mansion at Houghton Park in Bedfordshire, now in ruins.

p. 139, l. 26. **Tieck** (1773-1853), familiar to students of Carlyle, was one of the precursors of German romanticism. He wrote *Phantasus*, a collection of medieval tales, and completed Schlegel's classical translation of Shakespeare.

Meinhold was another contemporary writer of romances. See p. 43, l. 8.

p. 139, l. 31. **Heine** (1779-1856), a German Jew, exiled to Paris, who wrote there, in circumstances of great poverty and physical suffering, his *Buch der Lieder*, lyrics unmatched for pathos and satire.

p. 140, l. 1. **Goetz von Berlichingen,** the historical drama which first brought Goethe into fame in 1771.

p. 140, l. 2. **Gautier.** See note on p. 36, l. 3.

p. 140, l. 4. **bizarrerie,** whimsicality, extravagance.

p. 140, l. 31. κοσμιότης, orderliness.

p. 140, l. 32. **Sainte Beuve** (1804-1869), the greatest French critic of his day. His *Causeries de Lundi* and his *Portraits* appeared in the *Constitutionnel*. He was a favourite of Matthew Arnold, who constantly quotes him.

p. 141, l. 13. **grandiose et flottant,** comprehensive and inclusive.

p. 141, l. 26. **Stendhal.** See note on p. 13, l. 7.

p. 142, l. 25. **Racine** (1639-1699) was, with Corneille, the greatest of the Classical French tragedians of the seventeenth century.

p. 143, l. 6. **Jean Paul Richter** (1768-1825), a German humorist, greatly admired by Carlyle, who published two essays upon him in his *Miscellanies*. *Titan* and *Flegeljahre* are usually regarded as his masterpieces.

p. 143, l. 12. **Balzac** (1799-1850), the author of *La Comédie Humaine*, in which he depicts, with unsparing

humour, every phase of contemporary middle-class life in France.

p. 144, ll. 5, 16, 17. **Jean Valjean, Marius and Cosette, Deruchette, Gilliat.** Characters in Victor Hugo's novels.

p. 144, l. 10. **Énergique.** "Ancient works are classical, not because they are old, but because they are energetic, fresh and lively." For Sainte Beuve, see note on p. 142, l. 32, *supra*.

p. 144, l. 29. **De l'Allemagne.** See note on p. 10, l. 22. Madame de Staël (1766-1817), was a learned lady, daughter of Necker the financier and friend of Gibbon, whose *salon* was crowded with the literary celebrities of her day. Napoleon banished her for her political views.

p. 145, l. 12. **Heidelberg.** Pater had spent his long vacations at Heidelberg with his aunt and sisters. For the German romantic writers mentioned on this page the student is referred to the notes on pp. 139, 143, etc., *supra*.

p. 145, l. 19. **Murger** (1822-1861) is best known for his descriptions of student-life in Paris in *La Vie de Bohème* and other sketches. See p. 149 *infra*, l. 24.

Sophocles (495-406 B.C.), the greatest of the tragic dramatists of ancient Athens,

> Who saw life steadily and saw it whole,
> The mellow glory of the Attic stage.

On p. 152, l. 20 *infra*, Pater refers to his drama *Philoctetes*.

p. 146, l. 10. **Polydorus.** See Vergil, *Aeneid*, iii. 70, and Dante, *Inferno*, xxx. 18, and *Purgatorio*, xx. 115. Polydorus was one of the sons of Priam, who was murdered by his host the king of Thrace, who buried his body. Aeneas plucks a branch from a tree growing on a mound. The branch bleeds, and a voice from the mound narrates the story of the murder.

p. 146, l. 21. **Provence.** This is the Languedoc, where the Troubadours sang their songs of love and war in the courts of the nobility in the Middle Ages. The vernacular poetry of France and Italy originated with the Troubadours.

p. 147, l. 2. **Stothard** (1755-1834) was a famous engraver and book illustrator.

p. 147, l. 17. **Rousseau** (1712-1778) was the most remarkable of the forerunners of the French Revolution. His romances, *La Nouvelle Héloise* and *Émile*, contain remarkable fresh ideas upon education. Rousseau was opposed to any constraint, either of law or morality, being placed upon the individual. His *Contrat Social* advocates the theory that kingship is based upon a contract between the king and the people, which the latter are at liberty to dissolve at will. His wild irregular life is fully exposed in his *Confessions*, a morbid but extraordinarily frank piece of autobiographical self-revelation. See p. 161, l. 9.

p. 148, l. 3. **Werther.** Goethe's famous romance (1785), which "opened the pent-up gates of sentimentalism" all over Germany. **Réné** (1409-1480), the poet-king of Naples, who resigned his throne in order to devote himself to literature. **Obermann** (1804) was the masterpiece of Etienne de Senancour, and takes the form of a series of letters written by a solitary recluse in a lonely valley of the Jura (p. 36, l. 3, *note*).

p. 148, l. 15. **Quinet** (1803-1875), a French historian and critic.

p. 148, l. 18. **Chateaubriand** (1768-1848), a French historical and romantic writer, author of *Atala*, the *Martyrs*, *Réné* and other works (p. 36, l. 7, *note*).

p. 149, l. 5. **Gautier** (1811-1872). (See p. 36, l. 3, *note*.)

p. 150, l. 21. **Stendhal.** See note on p. 13, l. 17.

p. 151, l. 25. **Ugolino.** See the *Inferno*, xxxiii. Ugolino was accused by the Pisans of selling their city to Florence. He and his two sons and little grandsons were locked up in a tower and left to starve. The shade of Ugolino tells the story to Dante with terrible brevity and pathos.

p. 153, l. 19. **immortal horses.** See the *Iliad*, xvii. l. 443 ff.

p. 154, l. 7. **Chartres ... Rheims.** The cathedrals in these two cities are the most perfect extant examples of Gothic architecture.

CONCLUSION

The famous Conclusion to Pater's *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* was omitted in the second edition, chiefly on account of the misunderstandings to which it had given rise. The theme is one which is amplified in *Marius the Epicurean*, namely, that the object of life is a kind of "delicate intellectual Epicureanism," the pursuit of exquisite sensation. Long ago, Heracleitus had propounded the doctrine that all is in a state of perpetual flux. Life is a tremulous wisp, constantly reforming itself on the stream, a never-ending series of unstable, flickering impressions. A counted number of pulses only is given us of this variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? "When all melts under our feet, we may well grasp any exquisite passion . . . to burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is Success in Life."

Λέγει. "Heracleitus says somewhere, that all things vanish and nothing is permanent." Heracleitus of Ephesus (*c.* 500 B.C.) was the author of the famous aphorism Πάντα ῥεῖ, "all things are in a state of flux."

p. 159, l. 25. **Philosophiren.** "To philosophise is to arouse, awaken." Novalis (1772-1801) was a prominent member of the German romantic movement and is often quoted by Carlyle. His real name was Ludwig von Hardenberg, and he is often spoken of as "the prophet of the Romantic School."

p. 160, l. 32. **Comte** (1798-1857) was the author of a form of rationalism known as Positivism, which at one time claimed several adherents in England, including George Eliot, Frederic Harrison and Lord Morley. **Hegel** (1770-1831), the great German metaphysician.

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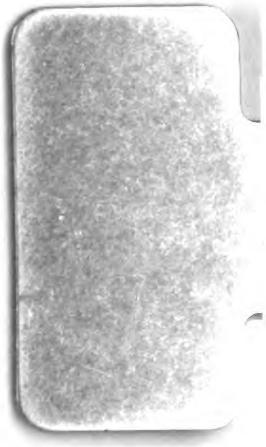
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