

And Earth's brown, clinging lips impress  
The long cold kiss that waits us all!

My bosom heaves, remembering yet  
The morning of that blissful day  
When Rose, the flower of spring, I met,  
And gave my raptured soul away.

Flung from her eyes of purest blue,  
A lasso, with its leaping chain  
Light as a loop of larkspurs, flew  
O'er sense and spirit, heart and brain.

Thou com'st to cheer my waning age,  
Sweet vision, waited for so long!  
Dove that would seek the poet's cage  
Lured by the magic breath of song!

She blushes! Ah, reluctant maid,  
Love's *drapeau rouge* the truth has told;  
O'er girlhood's yielding barricade  
Floats the great Leveller's crimson fold!

Come to my arms! — love heeds not years.  
No frost the bud of passion knows. —  
Ha! what is this my frenzy hears?  
A voice behind me uttered, — Rose!

Sweet was her smile, — but not for me;  
Alas, when woman looks *too* kind,  
Just turn your foolish head and see, —  
Some youth is walking close behind!

As to *giving up* because the almanac or the Family-Bible says that it is about time to do it, I have no intention of doing any such thing. I grant you that I burn less carbon than some years ago. I see people of my standing really good for nothing, decrepit, effete, *la lèvre inférieure déjà pendante*, with what

little life they have left mainly concentrated in their epigastrium. But as the disease of old age is epidemic, endemic, and sporadic, and everybody who lives long enough is sure to catch it, I am going to say, for the encouragement of such as need it, how I treat the malady in my own case.

First. As I feel, that, when I have anything to do, there is less time for it than when I was younger, I find that I give my attention more thoroughly, and use my time more economically than ever before; so that I can learn anything twice as easily as in my earlier days. I am not, therefore, afraid to attack a new study. I took up a difficult language a very few years ago with good success, and think of mathematics and metaphysics by-and-by.

Secondly. I have opened my eyes to a good many neglected privileges and pleasures within my reach, and requiring only a little courage to enjoy them. You may well suppose it pleased me to find that old Cato was thinking of learning to play the fiddle, when I had deliberately taken it up in my old age, and satisfied myself that I could get much comfort, if not much music, out of it.

Thirdly. I have found that some of those active exercises, which are commonly thought to belong to young folks only, may be enjoyed at a much later period.

A young friend has lately written an admirable article in one of the journals, entitled, "Saints and their Bodies." Approving of his general doctrines, and grateful for his records of personal experience, I cannot refuse to add my own experimental confirmation of his eulogy of one particular form of active exercise and amusement, namely, *boating*. For the past

nine years, I have rowed about, during a good part of the summer, on fresh or salt water. My present fleet on the river Charles consists of three row-boats. 1. A small flat-bottomed skiff of the shape of a flat-iron, kept mainly to lend to boys. 2. A fancy "dory" for two pairs of sculls, in which I sometimes go out with my young folks. 3. My own particular water-sulky, a "skeleton" or "shell" race-boat, twenty-two feet long, with huge outriggers, which boat I pull with ten-foot sculls, — alone, of course, as it holds but one, and tips him out, if he does n't mind what he is about. In this I glide around the Back Bay, down the stream, up the Charles to Cambridge and Watertown, up the Mystic, round the wharves, in the wake of steamboats, which leave a swell after them delightful to rock upon; I linger under the bridges, — those "caterpillar bridges," as my brother professor so happily called them; rub against the black sides of old wood-schooners; cool down under the overhanging stern of some tall Indiaman; stretch across to the Navy Yard, where the sentinel warns me off from the Ohio, — just as if I should hurt her by lying in her shadow; then strike out into the harbor, where the water gets clear and the air smells of the ocean, — till all at once I remember, that, if a west wind blows up of a sudden, I shall drift along past the islands, out of sight of the dear old State-house, — plate, tumbler, knife and fork all waiting at home, but no chair drawn up at the table, — all the dear people waiting, waiting, waiting, while the boat is sliding, sliding, sliding into the great desert, where there is no tree and no fountain. As I don't want my wreck to be washed up on one of the beaches in company with devil's-aprons, bladder-weeds, dead horse-shoes, and bleached crab-shells, I

turn about and flap my long, narrow wings for home. When the tide is running out swiftly, I have a splendid fight to get through the bridges, but always make it a rule to beat, — though I have been jammed up into pretty tight places at times, and was caught once between a vessel swinging round and the pier, until our bones (the boat's, that is) cracked as if we had been in the jaws of Behemoth. Then back to my moorings at the foot of the Common, off with the rowing-dress, dash under the green translucent wave, return to the garb of civilization, walk through my Garden, take a look at my elms on the Common, and, reaching my habitat, in consideration of my advanced period of life, indulge in the Elysian abandonment of a huge recumbent chair.

When I have established a pair of well-pronounced feathering-calluses on my thumbs, when I am in training so that I can do my fifteen miles at a stretch without coming to grief in any way, when I can perform my mile in eight minutes or a little more, then I feel as if I had old Time's head in chancery, and could give it to him at my leisure.

I do not deny the attraction of walking. I have bored this ancient city through and through in my daily travels, until I know it as an old inhabitant of a Cheshire knows his cheese. Why, it was I who, in the course of these rambles, discovered that remarkable avenue called *Myrtle Street*, stretching in one long line from east of the Reservoir to a precipitous and rudely paved cliff which looks down on the grim abode of Science, and beyond it to the far hills; a promenade so delicious in its repose, so cheerfully varied with glimpses down the northern slope into busy Cambridge Street with its iron river of the horse-railroad,

and wheeled barges gliding back and forward over it, — so delightfully closing at its western extremity in sunny courts and passages where I know peace, and beauty, and virtue, and serene old age must be perpetual tenants, — so alluring to all who desire to take their daily stroll, in the words of Dr. Watts, —

“ Alike unknowing and unknown,” —

that nothing but a sense of duty would have prompted me to reveal the secret of its existence. I concede, therefore, that walking is an immeasurably fine invention, of which old age ought constantly to avail itself.

Saddle-leather is in some respects even preferable to sole-leather. The principal objection to it is of a financial character. But you may be sure that Bacon and Sydenham did not recommend it for nothing. One's *hepar*, or, in vulgar language, liver, — a ponderous organ, weighing some three or four pounds, — goes up and down like the dasher of a churn in the midst of the other vital arrangements, at every step of a trotting horse. The brains also are shaken up like coppers in a money-box. Riding is good, for those that are born with a silver-mounted bridle in their hand, and can ride as much and as often as they like, without thinking all the time they hear that steady grinding sound as the horse's jaws triturate with calm lateral movement the bank-bills and promises to pay upon which it is notorious that the profligate animal in question feeds day and night.

Instead, however, of considering these kinds of exercise in this empirical way, I will devote a brief space to an examination of them in a more scientific form.

The pleasure of exercise is due first to a purely physical impression, and secondly to a sense of power in action. The first source of pleasure varies of course with our condition and the state of the surrounding circumstances; the second with the amount and kind of power, and the extent and kind of action. In all forms of active exercise there are three powers simultaneously in action, — the will, the muscles, and the intellect. Each of these predominates in different kinds of exercise. In walking, the will and muscles are so accustomed to work together and perform their task with so little expenditure of force, that the intellect is left comparatively free. The mental pleasure in walking, as such, is in the sense of power over all our moving machinery. But in riding, I have the additional pleasure of governing another will, and my muscles extend to the tips of the animal's ears and to his four hoofs, instead of stopping at my hands and feet. Now in this extension of my volition and my physical frame into another animal, my tyrannical instincts and my desire for heroic strength are at once gratified. When the horse ceases to have a will of his own and his muscles require no special attention on your part, then you may live on horseback as Wesley did, and write sermons or take naps, as you like. But you will observe, that, in riding on horseback you always have a feeling, that, after all, it is not you that do the work, but the animal, and this prevents the satisfaction from being complete.

Now let us look at the conditions of rowing. I won't suppose you to be disgracing yourself in one of those miserable tubs, tugging in which is to rowing the true boat what riding a cow is to bestriding an Arab. You know the Esquimaux *kayak* (if that is the name

of it), don't you? Look at that model of one over my door. Sharp, rather? — On the contrary, it is a lubber to the one you and I must have; a Dutch fish-wife to Psyche, contrasted with what I will tell you about. — Our boat, then, is something of the shape of a pickerel, as you look down upon his back, he lying in the sunshine just where the sharp edge of the water cuts in among the lily-pads. It is a kind of giant *pod*, as one may say, — tight everywhere, except in a little place in the middle, where you sit. Its length is from seven to ten yards, and as it is only from sixteen to thirty inches wide in its widest part, you understand why you want those "outriggers," or projecting iron frames with the rowlocks in which the oars play. My rowlocks are five feet apart; double the greatest width of the boat.

Here you are, then, afloat with a body a rod and a half long, with arms, or wings, as you may choose to call them, stretching more than twenty feet from tip to tip; every volition of yours extending as perfectly into them as if your spinal cord ran down the centre strip of your boat, and the nerves of your arms tingled as far as the broad blades of your oars, — oars of spruce, balanced, leathery and ringed under your own special direction. This, in sober earnest, is the nearest approach to flying that man has ever made or perhaps ever will make.<sup>a</sup> As the hawk sails without

<sup>a</sup> Since the days when this was written the bicycle has appeared as the rival of the wherry. I have witnessed three appearances of the pedal locomotive. The first was when I was a boy. (The machine was introduced into Great Britain from France about 1820.) Some of the Harvard College students who boarded in my neighborhood had these machines, then called velocipedes, on which they used to waddle along like so many ducks, their feet pushing against the ground, and looking

flapping his pinions, so you drift with the tide when you will, in the most luxurious form of locomotion indulged to an embodied spirit. But if your blood wants rousing, turn round that stake in the river, which you see a mile from here; and when you come in in sixteen minutes (if you do, for we are old boys, and not champion scullers, you remember), then say if you begin to feel a little warmed up or not! You can row easily and gently all day, and you can row yourself blind and black in the face in ten minutes, just as you like. It has been long agreed that there is no way in which a man can accomplish so much labor with his muscles as in rowing. It is in the boat, then, that man finds the largest extension of his volitional and muscular existence; and yet he may tax both of them so slightly, in that most delicious of exercises, that he shall mentally write his sermon, or his poem, or recall the remarks he has made in company and put them in form for the public, as well as in his easy-chair.

as if they were perched on portable treadmills. They soon found that legs were made before velocipedes. Our grown-up young people may remember the second advent of the contrivance, now become a treadle-locomotive. There were "rinks" where this form of roller-skating had a brief run, and then legs again asserted their prior claim and greater convenience. At the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia, in 1876, I first saw the modern bicycles, some of them, at least, from Coventry, England. Since that time the bicycle glides in and out everywhere, noiseless as a serpent,

And [wheels] rush in where [horses] fear to tread.

The boat flies like a sea-bird with its long, narrow, outstretched pinions; the bicycle rider, like feathered Mercury, with his wings on his feet. There seems to be nothing left to perfect in the way of human locomotion but aerial swimming, which some fancy is to be a conquest of the future.

I dare not publicly name the rare joys, the infinite delights, that intoxicate me on some sweet June morning, when the river and bay are smooth as a sheet of beryl-green silk, and I run along ripping it up with my knife-edged shell of a boat, the rent closing after me like those wounds of angels which Milton tells of, but the seam still shining for many a long rood behind me. To lie still over the Flats, where the waters are shallow, and see the crabs crawling and the sculpins gliding busily and silently beneath the boat, — to rustle in through the long harsh grass that leads up some tranquil creek, — to take shelter from the sunbeams under one of the thousand-footed bridges, and look down its interminable colonnades, crusted with green and oozy growths, studded with minute barnacles, and belted with rings of dark mussels, while overhead streams and thunders that other river whose every wave is a human soul flowing to eternity as the river below flows to the ocean, — lying there moored unseen, in loneliness so profound that the columns of Tadmor in the Desert could not seem more remote from life — the cool breeze on one's forehead, the stream whispering against the half-sunken pillars, — why should I tell of these things, that I should live to see my beloved haunts invaded and the waves blackened with boats as with a swarm of water-beetles? What a city of idiots we must be not to have covered this glorious bay with gondolas and wherries, as we have just learned to cover the ice in winter with skaters!

I am satisfied that such a set of black-coated, stiff-jointed, soft-muscled, paste-complexioned youth as we can boast in our Atlantic cities never before sprang from loins of Anglo-Saxon lineage. Of the females

that are the mates of these males I do not here speak. I preached my sermon from the lay-pulpit on this matter a good while ago. Of course, if you heard it, you know my belief is that the total climatic influences here are getting up a number of new patterns of humanity, some of which are not an improvement on the old model. Clipper-built, sharp in the bows, long in the spars, slender to look at, and fast to go, the ship, which is the great organ of our national life of relation, is but a reproduction of the typical form which the elements impress upon its builder. All this we cannot help; but we can make the best of these influences, such as they are. We have a few good boatmen, — no good horsemen that I hear of, — I cannot speak for cricketing, — but as for any great athletic feat performed by a gentleman in these latitudes, society would drop a man who should run round the Common in five minutes. Some of our amateur fencers, single-stick players, and boxers, we have no reason to be ashamed of. Boxing is rough play, but not too rough for a hearty young fellow. Anything is better than this white-blooded degeneration to which we all tend.

I dropped in at a gentlemen's sparring exhibition only last evening. It did my heart good to see that there were a few young and youngish youths left who could take care of their own heads in case of emergency. It is a fine sight, that of a gentleman resolving himself into the primitive constituents of his humanity. Here is a delicate young man now, with an intellectual countenance, a slight figure, a subpallid complexion, a most unassuming deportment, a mild adolescent in fact, that any Hiram or Jonathan from between the ploughtails would of course expect to

handle with perfect ease. Oh, he is taking off his gold-bowed spectacles! Ah, he is divesting himself of his cravat! Why, he is stripping off his coat! Well, here he is, sure enough, in a tight silk shirt, and with two things that look like batter puddings in the place of his fists. Now see that other fellow with another pair of batter puddings, — the big one with the broad shoulders; he will certainly knock the little man's head off, if he strikes him. Feinting, dodging, stopping, hitting, countering, — little man's head not off yet. You might as well try to jump upon your own shadow as to hit the little man's intellectual features. He need n't have taken off the gold-bowed spectacles at all. Quick, cautious, shifty, nimble, cool, he catches all the fierce lunges or gets out of their reach, till his turn comes, and then, whack goes one of the batter puddings against the big one's ribs, and bang goes the other into the big one's face and, staggering, shuffling, slipping, tripping, collapsing, sprawling, down goes the big one in a miscellaneous bundle. — If my young friend, whose excellent article I have referred to, could only introduce the manly art of self-defence among the clergy, I am satisfied that we should have better sermons and an infinitely less quarrelsome church-militant. A bout with the gloves would let off the ill-nature, and cure the indigestion, which, united, have embroiled their subject in a bitter controversy. We should then often hear that a point of difference between an infallible and a heretic, instead of being vehemently discussed in a series of newspaper articles, had been settled by a friendly contest in several rounds, at the close of which the parties shook hands and appeared cordially reconciled.

But boxing you and I are too old for, I am afraid.

I was for a moment tempted, by the contagion of muscular electricity last evening, to try the gloves with the Benicia Boy, who looked in as a friend to the noble art; but remembering that he had twice my weight and half my age, besides the advantage of his training, I sat still and said nothing.

There is one other delicate point I wish to speak of with reference to old age. I refer to the use of dioptric media which correct the diminished refracting power of the humors of the eye, — in other words, spectacles. I don't use them. All I ask is a large, fair type, a strong daylight or gas-light, and one yard of focal distance, and my eyes are as good as ever. But if *your* eyes fail, I can tell you something encouraging. There is now living in New York State an old gentleman who, perceiving his sight to fail, immediately took to exercising it on the finest print, and in this way fairly bullied Nature out of her foolish habit of taking liberties at five-and-forty, or thereabout. And now this old gentleman performs the most extraordinary feats with his pen, showing that his eyes must be a pair of microscopes. I should be afraid to say to you how much he writes in the compass of a half-dime, — whether the Psalms or the Gospels, or the Psalms *and* the Gospels, I won't be positive.

But now let me tell you this. If the time comes when you must lay down the fiddle and the bow, because your fingers are too stiff, and drop the ten-foot sculls, because your arms are too weak, and, after dallying a while with eye-glasses, come at last to the undisguised reality of spectacles, — if the time comes when that fire of life we spoke of has burned so low that where its flames reverberated there is only the sombre stain of regret, and where its coals glowed,

only the white ashes that cover the embers of memory, — don't let your heart grow cold, and you may carry cheerfulness and love with you into the teens of your second century, if you can last so long. As our friend, the Poet, once said, in some of those old-fashioned heroics of his which he keeps for his private reading, —

Call him not old, whose visionary brain  
Holds o'er the past its undivided reign.  
For him in vain the envious seasons roll  
Who bears eternal summer in his soul.  
If yet the minstrel's song, the poet's lay,  
Spring with her birds, or children with their play,  
Or maiden's smile, or heavenly dream of art  
Stir the few life-drops creeping round his heart, —  
Turn to the record where his years are told, —  
Count his gray hairs, — they cannot make him old!

*End of the Professor's paper.*

[The above essay was not read at one time, but in several instalments, and accompanied by various comments from different persons at the table. The company were in the main attentive, with the exception of a little somnolence on the part of the old gentleman opposite at times, and a few sly, malicious questions about the "old boys" on the part of that forward young fellow who has figured occasionally, not always to his advantage, in these reports.

On Sunday mornings, in obedience to a feeling I am not ashamed of, I have always tried to give a more appropriate character to our conversation. I have never read them my sermon yet, and I don't know that I shall, as some of them might take my convictions as a personal indignity to themselves. But having read our company so much of the Professor's talk

about age and other subjects connected with physical life, I took the next Sunday morning to repeat to them the following poem of his, which I have had by me some time. He calls it — I suppose for his professional friends — THE ANATOMIST'S HYMN; but I shall name it —]

#### THE LIVING TEMPLE.

Not in the world of light alone,  
Where God has built his blazing throne,  
Nor yet alone in earth below,  
With belted seas that come and go,  
And endless isles of sunlit green,  
Is all thy Maker's glory seen:  
Look in upon thy wondrous frame, —  
Eternal wisdom still the same!

The smooth, soft air with pulse-like waves  
Flows murmuring through its hidden caves  
Whose streams of brightening purple rush  
Fired with a new and livelier blush,  
While all their burden of decay  
The ebbing current steals away,  
And red with Nature's flame they start  
From the warm fountains of the heart.

No rest that throbbing slave may ask,  
Forever quivering o'er his task,  
While far and wide a crimson jet  
Leaps forth to fill the woven net  
Which in unnumbered crossing tides  
The flood of burning life divides,  
Then kindling each decaying part  
Creeps back to find the throbbing heart.

But warmed with that unchanging flame  
Behold the outward moving frame,  
Its living marbles jointed strong  
With glistening band and silvery thong,

And linked to reason's guiding reins  
By myriad rings in trembling chains,  
Each graven with the threaded zone  
Which claims it as the master's own.

See how yon beam of seeming white  
Is braided out of seven-hued light,  
Yet in those lucid globes no ray  
By any chance shall break astray.  
Hark how the rolling surge of sound,  
Arches and spirals circling round,  
Wakes the hushed spirit through thine ear  
With music it is heaven to hear.

Then mark the cloven sphere that holds  
All thought in its mysterious folds,  
That feels sensation's faintest thrill  
And flashes forth the sovereign will;  
Think on the stormy world that dwells  
Locked in its dim and clustering cells!  
The lightning gleams of power it sheds  
Along its slender glassy threads!

O Father! grant thy love divine  
To make these mystic temples thine!  
When wasting age and wearying strife  
Have sapped the leaning walls of life,  
When darkness gathers over all,  
And the last tottering pillars fall,  
Take the poor dust thy mercy warms  
And mould it into heavenly forms.

## VIII.

[SPRING has come. You will find some verses to that effect at the end of these notes. If you are an impatient reader, skip to them at once. In reading aloud, omit, if you please, the sixth and seventh

verses. These are parenthetical and digressive, and, unless your audience is of superior intelligence, will confuse them. Many people can ride on horseback who find it hard to get on and to get off without assistance. One has to dismount from an idea, and get into the saddle again, at every parenthesis.]

— The old gentleman who sits opposite, finding that spring had fairly come, mounted a white hat one day, and walked into the street. It seems to have been a premature or otherwise exceptionable exhibition, not unlike that commemorated by the late Mr. Bayly. When the old gentleman came home, he looked very red in the face, and complained that he had been "made sport of." By sympathizing questions, I learned from him that a boy had called him "old daddy," and asked him when he had his hat white-washed.

This incident led me to make some observations at table the next morning, which I here repeat for the benefit of the readers of this record.

— The hat is the vulnerable point of the artificial integument. I learned this in early boyhood. I was once equipped in a hat of Leghorn straw, having a brim of much wider dimensions than were usual at that time, and sent to school in that portion of my native town which lies nearest to this metropolis. On my way I was met by a "Port-chuck," as we used to call the young gentlemen of that locality, and the following dialogue ensued.

*The Port-chuck.* Hullo, You-sir, joo know th' wuz gōn-to be a race to-morra?

*Myself.* No. Who 's gōn-to run, 'n' wher 's't gōn-to be?