

Such, as it appears to me, are the chief passions or faculties of emotion discoverable in the human mind. I submit, however, the present analysis and classification of them with some degree of diffidence; for, as far as I am aware, it is the first attempt of the kind that has ever been ventured upon; and, like other first attempts, it may perhaps be open to the charge of considerable imperfections and errors. Be this, however, as it may, it at least offers us a new key to the mind's complicated construction in one branch of its study, simplifies its machinery, and perhaps unfolds a few springs which have never hitherto been sufficiently brought into public view.

I have said that the use of the passions is to furnish us with happiness, as that of the intellectual faculties is with knowledge, and that of the faculties of volition with freedom. But from the survey thus far taken, it must be obvious to every one, that the passions furnish us with misery as well as with happiness. And it may, perhaps, become a question with many, whether the harvest of the former be not more abundant than that of the latter. We cannot, therefore, close this subject better than by briefly inquiring whether the passions produce happiness at all? Whether, allowing the affirmative, they produce more happiness than misery, and whether the present constitution of things would be improved if those that occasionally produce misery were to be banished from the list?

Supposing, by a decree of the Creator, all the mental passions were to be eradicated from the human frame, and nothing were to remain to it but a sense of corporeal pain and pleasure,—what would be the consequence under the present state of things, with this single alteration? Man would cease to be a social being; the sweet ties of domestic life would be cut asunder; the pleasures of friendship, the luxury of doing good, the fine feeling of sympathy, the sublimity of devotion, would be swept away in a moment. The world would become an Asphaltites, a dead and stagnant sea, with a smooth unruffled calm, more hideous than the roughest tempest. No breeze of hope or fear, of desire or emulation, of love or gayety, would play over it: the harmony of the seasons would be lost upon us, and the magnificence of the creation become a blank. The wants and gratifications of the body might instigate us, perhaps, to till the soil, to engage in commerce and mechanical pursuits, and to provide a generation to succeed us. And, if literature should exist at all, a few cold and calculating philosophers might spin out their dull fancies upon abstract speculations, and a few Lethæan poets write odes upon indifference; but all would be selfish and solitary. The master-tie would be snapped; the spiritus rector would be evaporated, and every man would be a stranger to every man.

To a state of being thus torpid and monotonous, let us now grant the pleasurable passions, and withhold those that accompany or indicate uneasiness. Now, uneasiness, as I have already observed, is, in some degree or other, an essential attendant upon desire, hope, and emulation; and hence these passions must as necessarily be excluded here as under the former scheme. For a similar reason we must allow neither generosity, nor gratitude, nor compassion; for put away all sorrow and aversion, all mental pain and uneasiness, and such affections could have no scope for their exertion: they must necessarily have no existence.

But still the world would be thronged with a gay and lively troop of passions; love and transport, mirth and jollity, would revel with an uninterrupted career:—not a cloud would obstruct the laughing sunshine; and man would drink his full from the sea of pleasure, and intoxicate himself without restraint.

But how long would this scene of ecstasy continue? Under the present constitution of nature, not a twelvemonth. In less than a year, the world, in respect to its inhabitants, would cease to exist: worn out by indulgence, and destroyed for want of those very uneasinesses, those pains and sorrows, those aversions and hatreds, which, when skilfully intermixed and directed, like wholesome but unpalatable medicines, chiefly contribute to its moral health; and form the best barriers against that misery and ruin, which, when superfi-

cially contemplated, they seem expressly intended to produce; but which man must be obnoxious to in a state of imperfection and trial, and would be infinitely more so but for their presence and operation.

The sum of the inquiry, then, is, that all the passions have their use,—that they all contribute to the general good of mankind;—and that it is the abuse of them, the allowing them to run wild and unpruned in their career, and not the existence of any of them, that is to be lamented. While there are things that ought to be hated, and deeds that ought to be bewailed, aversion and grief are as necessary to the mind as desire and joy. It is the duty of the judgment to direct and to moderate them; to discipline them into obedience, and attune them to harmony. The great object of moral education is to call forth, instruct, and fortify the judgment upon this important science; to let it feel its own power, and accustom it to wield the sceptre intrusted to it with dexterity and steadiness. Where this is accomplished, the violent passions can never show themselves—they can have no real existence; for we have already produced evidence that they are nothing more than the simpler affections, discordantly associated or raised to an improper pitch. Where this is accomplished, the sea of life will, for the most part, be tranquil and sober,—not from indifference or the want of active powers, but from their nice balance and concord; and if, in the prosecution of the voyage, the breeze should be fresh, it will be still friendly, and quicken our course to the desired haven. Finally, wherever this is accomplished, man appears in his true dignity—he has achieved the great point for which he was created, and visions of unfading glory swell before him, as the forthcoming reward of his present triumph.

LECTURE X.

ON THE LEADING CHARACTERS AND PASSIONS OF SAVAGE AND CIVILIZED LIFE.

In the preceding lecture but one, I stated, as may, perhaps, be remembered by many of the audience before me, that of the numerous and complicated faculties which form the nice mechanism of the human mind, sometimes one, sometimes another, and sometimes several in conjunction, appear peculiarly active and prominent, and acquire a mastery over the rest; and that such effect is, in different instances, the result of different causes, as peculiarity of temperament, peculiarity of climate, or peculiarity of local or national habits and associations. Let us pursue this subject, and make it a groundwork for the present lecture.

All violent passions are evil, or, in other words, produce, or tend to produce unhappiness: for evil and unhappiness are only commutable terms. There is no proposition in morals that admits of clearer proof. Some violent passions are evil intrinsically; others as extremes of those that are good; and all of them as refractory and hostile to the legitimate control of the understanding. For happiness, as we had lately occasion to prove, is a state of discipline; and is only to be found, in any considerable degree of purity and permanency (without which qualities it is unworthy of the name), in a regulated and harmonious mind; where reason is the charioteer, and reins, and guides, and moderates the mental coursers in the great journey of life, with a firm and masterly hand.

It may, hence, be supposed, that the greatest degree of violence and unhappiness to be met with any where, is among savages; since, unquestionably, it is here that the traces of discipline are most feeble and obscure. And such, in fact, is the concurrent opinion of moralists and civilians. But it is an opinion which should be given with some degree of hesitation. It is true so far as the simpler passions, and especially those of the selfish class, are concerned,—passions which are more or less common to all countries and con-

ditions; but civil life has passions peculiar to itself, and passions, too, of peculiar force and obstinacy, that

Grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength,

which no system of internal discipline seems at all times capable of moderating; which, in too many instances, we behold defying, with equal contumacy, all the laws of religion and morality; and, consequently, introducing into the world pains and penalties, mischiefs and miseries, which the tribes of barbarous and uncultivated nature, amid all their evils, know nothing of.

To a certain extent, it is, however, probable, that the common opinion is correct, and that the greatest portion of violence and wretchedness is to be met with in savage life.

Now what are the passions that are chiefly brought into action, in this low and lamentable state of existence? Let us take a brief survey of them,—it may prove an interesting inquiry,—and examine the changes they undergo, and the new affections they give rise to, as man emerges from chaos to order, from the gloom of ignorance to the light of civilization, morality, and science.

One common character runs through savages of every kind. The empire of the heart is divided between two rival deities or rather demons—Selfishness and Terror. The chief ministers of the first are lust, hatred, and revenge; the chief ministers of the second are cruelty, credulity, and superstition. Look through the world, and you will find this description apply to barbarians of every age and country.

It is equally the history of Europeans and Africans; of the Pelasgi, who were the progenitors of the Greeks, and of the Celts and Scythians, the successive progenitors of the English. All the discoveries of modern circumnavigators confirm the assertion; and though the captivating names of Friendly and Society Islands have been given to two distinct groups in the vast bosom of the Pacific Ocean, and the inhabitants in several of them have made some progress in the first rudiments of civilization and government, there is not a people or a tribe to be met with, who are yet in a savage state, that are not still slaves to these debasing and tyrannical passions. The gentleness of courtship, or rather the first proof of affection, among the savages of New South Wales, consists in watching the beloved fair one of another tribe to her retirement, and then knocking her down with repeated blows of a club or wooden sword. After which impressive and elegant embrace, the matrimonial victim is dragged, streaming in her blood, to the lover's party, and obliged to acknowledge herself his wife. Cannibalism, in times of war, is still common to several of the islands; human immolation to most of them. It was at the bloody shrine of revenge that Captain Cook fell a sacrifice in Owhyee, one of the best informed and most disciplined of all the islands; nor has any one, perhaps, who ever read the interesting history of Prince Lee Boo, forgotten the delight he manifested at St. Helen's, on discovering a bed of groundsel, which he immediately converted to an article of food. All of them believe in magic—are the dupes of priestcraft and witchcraft—and in carving images of their deities, seem to think they can never represent them under figures sufficiently terrific and disgusting.

The simple but violent passions, then, common to mankind in savage life, are selfishness, lust, hatred, revenge, terror, cruelty, credulity, and superstition. These are differently modified, as well as combined with other passions according to the force of collateral circumstances, as the dulness or vivacity of the intellectual faculties, the warmth or frigidity of the climate, the tameness or picturesque grandeur of the scenery, and the political constitution and habits of the people. Let us see how far this remark is supported by history.

From the cap or cauc of the Caucasus descended those streams of adventurers that, under the names of Getes, Goths, Scythians, and Scandinavians, overran all the north of Europe, and progressively spread themselves from the Caspian Sea to the Thames. Born in the midst of snows, brought up in

the midst of perils, and stretching their barren track from lake to lake, and from mountain to mountain, through the wildest, the boldest, the sublimest, and most fearful line of country that indents the face of the old world, they caught the gloomy grandeur that surrounded them; exchanged the love of women for the love of war; and carried fierceness and terror into the whole of their political institutions, their sullen ritual, and their mythology. They neither gave nor would consent to receive quarter; their highest honour being to fall in battle, and their deepest disgrace to sink into the grave by a natural death. They had their heaven, but it was only for heroes; and they denominated it Valhalla, or the hall of slaughter. They had also their hell, but it was only for those who died at home, and who, as they taught, were immediately conveyed to it, and tormented for ever, for their cowardice, with hunger, thirst, and misery of every kind. This audacious contempt of death, and burning desire to enter the hall of their ferocious gods, is correctly described by Lucan, who calls it a happy error—*felicis errore suo*.

We here meet with all the passions I have enumerated as characteristic of savage life, but modified and peculiarly directed by local circumstances, which at the same time gave birth to other passions equally fierce and violent.

Nerved by nature with a firm, robust constitution, and nursed in the midst of cliffs and cataracts, and torrents and tempests, they drank in courage and independence with every breath of air; their only delight was the gloomy one of hunting out difficulties and dangers; their only lust that of battle and conquest; and their only fear that of being thought cowards on earth, and being shut out from the hall of slaughter in heaven. To adopt once more the language of Lucan, and follow up his correct description, which, nevertheless, before a mixed audience I must endeavour to give in our own tongue,—

In error bless'd, beneath the polar star,
That worst of fears, the fear of death they dare;
Gasping for dangers, prodigal of pain,
Spendthrifts of life, that must return again.*

The natural passions of cruelty, hatred, and revenge seem to have remained untouched, and the whole character of the heart concurred in giving a terrible enthusiasm to their superstition. Patriotism they had none, for they had no country; and they only so far sacrificed their personal liberty, and concentrated themselves into tribes and clans, with leaders of limited authority at their head, as they found best calculated to give success to their lawless enterprises. And hence the origin of the feudal system, and the first rude efforts towards a basis of government and civilization in northern Europe.

Let us contrast this picture with one of a different kind.

Seated in an early period of the world in the vicinity of these ferocious mountaineers, but at the southern foot of the Caucasus, instead of at its summit, we behold another set of barbarians, who progressively spread themselves into the softer regions of the south and west, under the names of Gomerians or Cymarians, and Celts. Their patronymic appellation sufficiently proves them to have been the sons of Gomer, and gives them a near connexion with the tribes we have just noticed. The country which formed their cradle was the finest part of Asia Minor, a country that has been regarded in all ages as the garden of the world. Soft, tepid airs; a rich, productive soil, that scarcely demanded cultivation; plains and sloping hills extending in every direction, and covered with fattening verdure; fountains interspersed, and meandering rivers; banks blossoming with the choicest flowers, and suffused with the sweetest odours; the refreshing foliage of deep umbrageous woods; and over all the blue and cloudless canopy of the skies, diffusing light, and laughter,

* Certe populi, quos despicit Arctus
Felicis errore suo, quos ille timorum
Maximus haud urget lethi metus. Inde ruendi
In ferrum mens prona vivis, animæque capaces
Mortis; et ignavum rediturae parcere vitæ.
Phars. Lib. i. 458.

and benevolence, seemed labouring with happy concert to subjugate the rugged feelings of the savage heart, and attune it to harmony and peace. Nor was the magic force exerted in vain. The agreeable ideas hereby excited, prompted them, in their migrations, to seek, as far as they were able, for regions of a similar character; and the growing impulse of internal pleasure thus derived from external beauty gave a new direction to their mental powers. Selfish lust softened gradually into social love; the activity of a sportive fancy subdued the gloomy dictates of cruelty and revenge; the Gorgon form of fear gave place to the young radiance of hope; and superstition dropped her circlet of snakes, and half listened to the soothing song of reason and of truth.

In proof of this, it is only necessary to mention that they spread themselves from the headspring of the Danube, or Ister, as it was formerly called, to the mouth of the Tagus, and peopled in their progress Phrygia, so celebrated for its dithyrambic music and vigorous dance; the Troad, or country of Troy, ages ago

Married to immortal verse;

Thrace, of scarcely less distinction than Troy; Hungary, the greater part of Germany, Gaul, Italy, Spain, and the British islands; sometimes confining themselves to small independent tribes, and sometimes, as in the warmer regions more especially, sinking conjointly into subjugation, under one ambitious and powerful chieftain. Different local circumstances diversified their general character; but for the most part we find them equally courteous and courageous, faithful to their engagements, hospitable to strangers, full of patriotism, loyalty, and domestic virtue; and let me add, it is to the quarter I am now speaking of that the Greeks were indebted not only for their Phrygian music, which formed their most enthusiastic and maddening movements, as I have just observed, but also for their Lydian, which formed its opposite, and was equally adapted to quell the cares and fury of the breast, and melt it into feelings of tenderness and affection. It is under this description Dryden speaks of it in his Ode to Alexander's Feast—

Softly sweet in Lydian measures
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.

And thus a greater than Dryden, in his well-known poem, entitled L'Allegro—

And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs;
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out:
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.

Such, in most parts of the world, has been the effect of climate and surrounding scenery. But there is another cause, and a still more powerful one, that ought not to be omitted in the consideration of national character: and that is the government and habits of a people.

These may, in the first instance, be produced by accident; they may be the result of the cause already adverted to; but, when once formed and established, they lay a much firmer basis for public feeling and conduct than can be derived from any physical impulse whatever.

Persia had at one time as much reason as Macedonia to boast of her military hardihood and heroism; and, under the guidance of Cyrus, is well known to have overrun all Egypt and Asia Minor, taken Babylon, and destroyed the Assyrian empire. But her government was at that time most excellent; her code of laws full of wisdom; her administration of justice exemplary; and her morals the simplest and most correct in the Pagan world. Her youth, from the age of seven to that of seventeen, were allowed no other food than bread and

crosses, and no other drink than water. They were all educated at public schools, provided by the state, and superintended by masters of the highest character for sobriety and science; who were enjoined by the constitution to use every means of inspiring them with a love of virtue for its own sake, and an equal abhorrence of vice. With the exception of the Macedonians, the Persians are the only people who enacted a law against ingratitude, punishing with a brand on the forehead every one who was convicted of so heinous a crime; a regulation which, I shrewdly suspect, if carried into execution in the present day, would wofully disfigure the faces of great multitudes of our contemporaries. The ear of the prince, moreover, was open to the advice of every one, but with this salutary limitation, to prevent the royal presence from being pestered with political busy-bodies: the adviser in proposing his opinion was placed upon an ingot of gold: if his counsel were found useful, the ingot was his reward; if trifling, or of no value, his reward was a public whipping.

So long as this system of simplicity and political jurisprudence continued, the Persians were the most powerful people in the world; but the temptations of a warm luxurious climate, and the influx of enormous wealth, from the conquest of surrounding countries, threw them gradually off their guard; their discipline became relaxed, their laws slighted, their manners changed; and the nation which was able to conquer Phrygia, Lydia, Egypt, and the proud empire of Assyria, not two centuries afterward, fell prostrate before an army of little more than thirty thousand Greeks, under the banners of Alexander the Great.

If we turn our attention to the Greeks who triumphed on this proud occasion, their whole history will furnish us with a repetition of the same lesson. The mildness of their climate, the luxuriance of their soil, the picturesque beauty of their country, attuned all the rougher passions to harmony, and gave birth to an equal mixture of the gentler and the sublimer virtues. Composed of a variety of small separate states, united by a confederate tie, they felt a generous rivalry to surpass each other in whatever could contribute to enlarge or adorn the human understanding. And hence, while the well-balanced liberty they possessed inspired them to defend it against every foreign aggression, in philosophy and ethics, in poetry and oratory, in music and painting, in sculpture and architecture, they became models of excellence for all other countries, and for all future ages. They, too, had their superstitions and their mythology; but the genius that pervaded every thing else pervaded these. A few grossnesses, indeed, which it is wonderful they should ever have allowed, deformed the whole machinery: but every thing besides, though wholly fictitious and ideal, was uniformly elegant, and for the most part instructive. Every grove, and stream, and mountain was, in their opinion, instinct with some present deity, and under his immediate protection; and while the sacred heights of Olympus, the bright residence of their gods, was peopled, not with savage heroes and bloody banquets, as among the Scandinavians, but with the divinities of wit, and wisdom, and beauty—with the Loves, the Graces, and the laughing Hours, and the sister train of Music and Poetry.

Such was Greece: but what is she now? Her climate and bewitching scenery are the same; but her spirit and constitution are no more.—What, then, is she now? or rather, what was she till of late? for the spirit of past ages has again, in some measure, revived in several parts of her. A few of her islands are under British protection; and a few others are struggling to throw off the yoke that has for ages equally subjugated them in body and in mind. But, with the exception of these insular and more fortunate spots—NANTES IN GURGITE VASTO—what is she now? The eye sickens at the sight, and the tongue falters while it tells the change. A land of slaves and of barbarous usurpers; where the scourge of the cold Ottoman flays at his will the descendants of those who fell at Thermopylæ, and triumphed at the Granicus—while the tame victims that still submit to it, prove themselves well worthy of the fate that has befallen them:—

ON THE LEADING PASSIONS

In all, save form alone, how changed!—and who,
That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
Who but would deem their bosom burn'd anew
With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!
And many dream withal the hour is nigh,
That gives them back their fathers' heritage;
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful page.

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not,
Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? No!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.—
Shades of the Helots! triumph o'er your foe!
Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the same;
Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thy years of shame.

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild;
Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields:
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honeyed wealth Hymettus yields;
There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
The free-born wanderer of thy mountain air:
Apollo still thy long, long summer glids;
Still in his beam Mendel's marbles glare;
Art, Glory, Freedom, fails, but Nature still is fair.*

A thousand other examples of like effect, from like causes, might easily be adduced. Inasmuch, that it has become a general maxim among political writers, that nations, like individuals, have a natural youth, perfection, and dissolution. It is a maxim, however, that must be received with some degree of caution. The experiment, notwithstanding that the world has now continued for nearly six thousand years, has never been tried in its hardier and colder regions; and we have already seen, that in the warmer climates, there is a cause operating towards the production of national decay, peculiar to itself, and distinct, therefore, from the law of general necessity. Yet, even in the warmer regions of the earth, the fact does not hold universally; for the Chinese have historic documents of the continuance of their empire for nearly four thousand years: one of the chief of which is, the famous record of an eclipse of the sun in the reign of Ching-Kang, 2155 years before the commencement of the Christian era; while Persia, though conquered by the Romans, and shorn of more than half its extent in elder times, has still, under some form or another, descended to the present day, through a period of nearly three thousand years. And, wild and wandering as is the life of the Arab tribes, they may at least make a boast of having uniformly retained their customs, their liberty, and their language, for a longer period than any other people, and amid all the changes that have befallen the most splendid empires around them; and are at this day, in habits, government, and national tongue, nearly the same as they were in the time of the patriarch Job; and probably as they were long before the earliest epoch to which the Chinese can make any pretensions.

There can be no doubt, however, that the very perfection of a people, in the arts of civilization and refinement, has a natural tendency to produce the seeds of future decay and dissolution; and, although the Chinese and Arabians have not hitherto given proofs of any such change, it is only, perhaps, because they have for ages continued stationary, and have never reached the absolute perfection we are speaking of. I shall close the present lecture, therefore, with pointing out a few of those passions and other affections which immediately spring from what may be called the manhood or summit of civilization, are chiefly distinctive of it, and pave the way for its downfall.

In order, however, to give strength and bearing to the picture, let us first glance at the passions and emotions of mankind, in a simpler state; in that

* Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, canto ii.

middle condition of moral cultivation usually to be met with in the villages and smaller towns of a highly civilized people, where the moral affections have sweetened the heart, but refinement has not yet sweetened the manners. Let us transport ourselves for a few minutes to Wales, the Highlands of Scotland,* or the banks of the Garonne. In any of these regions, we shall be received upon a proper introduction, and often without any introduction whatever, with an honest though a homely welcome; the chief virtues of the heart we shall find to be chastity, sincerity, frugality, and industry; its chief feelings, cheerfulness, content, and good-will: if they know little of the sublimer, they know nothing of the turbulent passions:—

Far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn to stray;
Along the cool-sequestered vale of life
They keep the noiseless tenor of their way.

At the same time, we shall find an evident distinction of national character; the first of these tribes evincing an enthusiastic fondness for the shadowy traditions, and the antiquated, perhaps the fabulous, heroes of their country, from some of whom every one believes himself to be lineally descended; the second, an ardent attachment to their respective lairds, and the hardy individuals that compose their respective clans; and the third, an elastic and ebullient vivacity, that seems to fit them for happiness in any country, and almost under any circumstances.

If, from these scenes of simple life and ingenuous manners, we pass to the crowded capitals of refinement and luxury, we shall see more perhaps to admire, but certainly more to disrelish and weep over; a strange intermixture of the noblest virtues and the foulest vices; the mind in some instances drawn forth to its utmost stretch of elevation and genius, and in others sunk into infamy and ruin; a courtesy of attention that enters into all our feelings, and anticipates all our wants; delicacy of taste; punctilious honour; sprightly gallantry; splendour and magnificence; wit, mirth, gayety, and pleasure of every kind. Of national character, however, we find little or nothing: like the pebbles in a river, all roughnesses are smoothed away by mutual friction into one common polish. It is easy, indeed, to perceive that every thing tends to an extreme; the jaded taste becomes fastidious, and is perpetually hunting for something new; gallantry degenerates into seduction; fine, trembling honour, into an irritable thirst to avenge trifles; the heart is full of restlessness and fever. In the general pursuit of happiness, contentment is altogether unknown; no one is satisfied with his actual rank and condition, and is perpetually striving to surpass or supplant his neighbour; and striving, too, by all the machinery he can bring into play. Hence, in the more refined ranks, all is flattery, servility, and corruption; in the busy walks of traffic and commerce, all is wild venture, speculation, and hazard; the bosom is distracted with the civil warfare of avarice, ambition, pride, envy, and sullen rancour; the whole surface is at length hollow and showy, and the face becomes no index to the feelings. There is no necessity for dwelling on those open and atrocious villains, that, like vermin on a putrid carcass, such a state of things must indispensably generate and fatten;—the haggard tribe of anxiety, vexation, and disappointment—the downfall of splendour—the mortification of pride—the failure of friendship—the sting of ingratitude—the violation of sacred trusts—blasted expectations, and disconcerted projects—the cup of joy dashed from the lips that are sipping it—hope shipwrecked on the verge of possession—the agony of the mighty adventurer, who for months beforehand sees the tempest of his ruin rolling towards him; sees it, but dares not meet it; sees it, but perhaps cannot avert it—harrowed through every nerve by the gaunt spectres of approaching shame, by the lamentations of his own family, reduced to beggary; and the cutting rebukes of other families, whom a misplaced confidence has involved in one common

* See, for a correct description of the amusements, superstitions, and manners of the Scottish peasantry, Burns's *Hallowe'en* and his *Cottar's Saturday Night*.

destruction—the demon train of distraction, madness, suicide:—these, and a thousand miseries such as these, that naturally flow from, and are naturally dependent upon, a state of superabundant and diseased refinement, without taking into the account the flagrant and atrocious villainies which fall within the cognizance of the criminal judge, are sufficient to prove, that the nation which has reached the utmost pitch of civil perfection is in danger of degeneracy and decay; and justify the doubt I ventured to suggest, at the opening of the present lecture, as to which of the two extremes of society is pregnant with the greatest share of moral evils—that of gross barbarism, or that of an exuberant and vitiated polish.

LECTURE XI.

ON TEMPERAMENTS, OR CONSTITUTIONAL PROPENSITIES.

THE social principle—that horror of solitude, and inextinguishable desire of consorting with our own kind, which every man feels in his bosom, and which impels him to prefer misery with fellowship, to ease and indulgence without it—laid the first foundation for cities and states; and the nature of the social compact, peculiarity of climate, and community of habits and manners, unite in producing that general tissue of feelings and propensities, which constitutes, and is denominated, national character; which gives vivacity to the French, a refined taste to the Italians, phlegmatic industry to the Dutch, a free and enterprising spirit to the English, and a military genius to the Germans.

But, independently of these national tendencies that run through the general mass of a people, it is impossible for us to open our eyes without perceiving some peculiar propensity, or prominent moral feature, in every individual of every nation whatever; and which, if strictly analyzed, will be found as much to distinguish him from all other individuals as the features of his face. This is sometimes the effect of habit, or of education, which is early and systematic habit, and which every one knows is capable of changing the original bent of the mind, and of introducing a new direction; but it is far more generally an indigenous growth, implanted by the hand of nature herself; or, in other words, dependent on the original organization, admitting of infinite varieties, and produced by the ever-shifting proportions which the mental faculties and the corporeal organs bear to themselves, or to each other, and which it is impossible in every instance to catch hold of and classify.

The Greek physiologists, however, attempted the outlines of a classification; for they began by studying the individual varieties, which they ascribed to the cause just adverted to, and hence denominated them idiosyncrasies, or peculiarities of constitution.

They beheld, as every one must behold in the present day, for nature is ever the same, one man so irascible, that you cannot accidentally tread on his toe, or even touch his elbow, without putting him into a rage; another so full of wit and humour, that he would rather lose his friend than repress his joke; a third, on the contrary, so dull and heavy, that you might as well attempt to move a mile-stone; and possessing, withal, so little imagination, that the delirium of a fever would never raise him to the regions of a brilliant fancy. They beheld one man for ever courting enterprise and danger; another distinguished for comprehensive judgment and sagacity of intellect; one peculiarly addicted to wine, a second to gallantry, and a third to both: one generous to profligacy; another frugal to meanness; and a few, amid the diversified crowd, with a mind so happily attempered and balanced by nature, that education has little to correct, and is almost limited to the act of expanding and strengthening the budding faculties as they show themselves.

The physiologists of Greece, and especially the medical physiologists, did not rest here. They attempted to cluster the different species of idiosyncrasies, or particular constitutions, that had any resemblance to each other, and to arrange them into genera, which were denominated crases (*κράσεις*) or temperaments. We have the express testimony of Galen,* that Hippocrates was the founder of this system. He conceived the state or condition of the animal frame to be chiefly influenced by the nature and proportion of its radical fluids, at least, far more so than by those of its solids. The radical fluids he supposed to be four, the elementary materials of which were furnished by the stomach, as the common receptacle of the food; but each of which is dependent upon a peculiar organ for its specific production or secretion. Thus, the blood he asserted to be furnished by the heart; the phlegm, lymph, or finer watery fluid, by the head; the yellow bile by the gall-duct; and the black bile by the spleen. The perfection of health, or *hygēia*, as the Greeks denominated it, he conceived to result from a due proportion of these fluids to each other; and the different temperaments, or predispositions of the body, to peculiar constitutions or idiosyncrasies, from a disturbance of the balance, and a preponderating secretion or influence of any one of them over the rest.

Hence Hippocrates established four genera of temperaments, which he denominated from the respective fluids whose superabundance he apprehended to be the cause of them, the BILIOUS or CHOLERIC, produced by a surplus of yellow bile, and dependent on the action of the gall-duct or liver; the ATRABILIARY or MELANCHOLIC, produced by a surplus of black bile, and dependent upon the action of the spleen; the SANGUINEOUS, produced by a surplus of blood, and dependent upon the action of the heart; and the PHEGMATIC, produced by a surplus of phlegm, lymph, or fine watery fluid, dependent upon the action of the brain.

This arrangement of Hippocrates continued in great favour with physiologists, and with very little variation, till the beginning of the last century, at which time it was warmly supported, in all its bearings, by the quaint but solid learning of Sir John Floyer.† And even to the present hour, notwithstanding all the changes that have taken place in the sciences of physiology, anatomy, and medicine, and the detection of some erroneous reasonings and opinions in the writings of Hippocrates upon this subject, intermixed with much that is admirable and excellent,—it has laid a foundation for all the systems of temperaments, constitutions, or natural characters, that have more lately been offered to the world. Most of these, however, have been distinguished by an introduction of five other genera, denominated a WARM, a COLD, a DRY, a MOIST, and a NERVOUS or irritable temperament: the first four of these five having been added to the list by Boerhaave, but unnecessarily, as they may readily be comprehended, as I shall presently show you, under the four simple temperaments of Hippocrates; while the fifth, in the general opinion of modern physiologists, is requisite to supply what must be admitted to be a chasm in the Greek hypothesis.

I have dwelt the longer upon this subject, because it has an immediate and very extensive bearing upon the popular phraseology of the present day, in all nations; and will give us a clear insight into the meaning of various colloquial terms and idioms, which we are in the constant habit of employing, in many instances, without any definite signification.

The two usual words to express the moral disposition or propensity of a man, and especially as connected with the passions, are TEMPER and HUMOUR. Both are Latin terms: the first, in its original sense, imports mingling, compounding, modifying, or qualifying, and has an obvious reference to the combination of the four radical fluids just mentioned; on the peculiar *temper* or *proportion* of which to each other we have just seen that the Greek physiologists supposed the idiosyncrasy or peculiar constitution to depend: and hence TEMPER is, in a certain sense, synonymous with CONSTITUTION itself, though

* De Temperament. ii. p. 60. § b.

† See his Physician's Pulse-watch; or an Essay to explain the Old Art of Feeling the Pulse, and to improve it by the Help of the Pulse-watch. 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1707.