LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME VI

OPP. PAGE

AGE OF PERICLES . . . . *Frontispiece*
EARL RUSSELL 36
SAMUEL HOUSTON 44
EDWARD EVERETT 51
RUFUS CHOATE 294
MACAULAY 338
CALEB CUSHING 392
JOHN BROWN 405

VICTOR COUSIN

ICTOR COUSIN, French philosopher, statesman, educationist, and author, was born of humble parentage at Paris, Nov. 28, 1792, and died at Cannes, France, Jan. 13, 1867. He was educated at the Lycée Charlemagne and at l'Ecole Normale, and under Royer-Collard began to teach philosophy at the Sorbonne, of which later on he became director and in the Thiers ministry, of 1840, Minister of Public Instruction. In 1817, the hostility of the church to his teaching, acting upon the government of Louis XVIII, drove him for a time from his chair into Germany, where he pursued his philosophical studies and came under the influence of Hegel and Schelling. In 1828, he was restored to his chair and resumed his lectures, which now brought him honors and distinction. He also wrote largely, not only on his own subject of philosophy, but on education, edited a number of classics, and becoming a member of the Council, and subsequently Minister of Public Instruction, a member of the French Institute, and a peer of France. He moreover brought out editions of Pascal's "Pensées," of the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Descartes, and Abélard, and wrote two notable works, by which he is best known to English readers, on "The True, the Beautiful, and the Good," and on the "Philosophy of History." He also did excellent work for education while on the Council of Public Instruction, and as lecturer at l'Ecole Normale, and president of the Sorbonne. The *coup d'etat* of Louis Napoleon, in December, 1851, lost him his post on the Council of Public Instruction and he henceforth lived in retirement. Cousin left a considerable number of disciples among the younger French thinkers and philosophical *littérateurs*, among whom may be named Janet, Jouffroi, and Jules Simon. His collected writings appeared in Paris in 1846-47.

ELOQUENCE AS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE FINE ARTS

IT WILL, perhaps, seem strange that we rank among the arts neither eloquence, nor history, nor philosophy.

The arts are called the fine arts, because their sole object is to produce the disinterested emotion of beauty, without regard to the utility either of the spectator or the artist.* They are also called the liberal arts, because they

are the arts of free men and not of slaves, which affranchise the soul, charm and ennoble existence; hence the sense and origin of those expressions of antiquity, artes liberales, artes ingenuae. There are arts without nobility, whose end is practical and material utility; they are called trades, such as that of the stove-maker and the mason. True art may be joined to them, may even shine in them, but only in the accessories and the details.

Eloquence, history, philosophy, are certainly high employments of intelligence. They have their dignity, their eminence, which nothing surpasses; but rigorously speaking, they are not arts.

Eloquence does not propose to itself to produce in the soul of the auditors the disinterested sentiment of beauty. It may also produce this effect, but without having sought it. Its direct end, which it can subordinate to no other, is to convince, to persuade. Eloquence has a client which, before all, it must save or make triumph. It matters little whether this client be a man, a people, or an idea. Fortunate is the orator if he elicit the expression: That is beautiful! For it is a noble homage rendered to his talent: unfortunate is he if he does not elicit this, for he has missed his end. The two great types of political and religious eloquence, Demosthenes in antiquity, Bossuet among the moderns, think only of the interest of the cause confided to their genius, the sacred cause of country and that of religion, while at bottom Phidias and Raphael work to make beautiful things. Let us hasten to say, what the names of Demosthenes and Bossuet command us to say, that true eloquence, very different from that of rhetoric, disdains certain means of success. It asks no more than to please, but without any sacrifice unworthy

of it; every foreign ornament degrades it. Its proper character is simplicity, earnestness. I do not mean affected earnestness, a designed and artful gravity, the worst of all deceptions; I mean true earnestness, that springs from sincere and profound conviction. This is what Socrates understood by true eloquence.

As much must be said of history and philosophy. The philosopher speaks and writes. Can he, then, like the orator, find accents which make truth enter the soul; colors and forms that make it shine forth evident and manifest to the eyes of intelligence? It would be betraying his cause to neglect the means that can serve it; but the profoundest art is here only a means, the aim of philosophy is elsewhere; whence it follows that philosophy is not an art. Without doubt, Plato is a great artist; he is the peer of Sophocles and Phidias, as Pascal is sometimes the rival of Demosthenes and Bossuet; but both would have blushed if they had discovered at the bottom of their souls another design, another aim than the service of truth and virtue.

History does not relate for the sake of relating; it does not paint for the sake of painting; it relates and paints the past that it may be the living lesson of the future. It proposes to instruct new generations by the experience of those who have gone before them, by exhibiting to them a faithful picture of great and important events, with their causes and their effects, with general designs and particular passions, with the faults, virtues, and crimes that are found mingled together in human things. It teaches the excellence of prudence, courage, and great thoughts profoundly meditated, constantly pursued, and executed with moderation and force. It shows the vanity

of immoderate pretensions, the power of wisdom and virtue, the impotence of folly and crime. Thucydides, Polybius, and Tacitus undertake anything rather than procuring new emotions for an idle curiosity or a wornout imagination. They doubtless desire to interest and attract, but more to instruct; they are the avowed masters of statesmen and the preceptors of mankind.

The sole object of art is the beautiful. Art abandons itself as soon as it shuns this. It is often constrained to make concessions to circumstances, to external conditions that are imposed upon it; but it must always retain a just liberty. Architecture and the art of gardening are the least free of arts; they are subjected to unavoidable obstacles; it belongs to the genius of the artist to govern these obstacles, and even to draw from them happy effects, as the poet turns the slavery of metre and rhyme into a source of unexpected beauties. Extreme liberty may carry art to a caprice which degrades it, as chains too heavy crush it. It is the death of architecture to subject it to convenience, to comfort. Is the architect obliged to subordinate general effect and the proportions of the edifice to such or such a particular end that is prescribed to him? He takes refuge in details, in pediments, in friezes, in all the parts that have not utility for a special object, and in them he becomes a true artist. Sculpture and painting, especially music and poetry, are freer than architecture and the art of gardening. One can also shackle them, but they disengage themselves more easily.

Similar by their common end, all the arts differ by the particular effects which they produce, and by the processes which they employ. They gain nothing by exchanging their means and confounding the limits that separate

them. I bow before the authority of antiquity; but, perhaps, through habit and a remnant of prejudice, I have some difficulty in representing to myself with pleasure statues composed of several metals, especially painted statues. Without pretending that sculpture has not to a certain point its color, that of perfectly pure matter, that especially which the hand of time impresses upon it, in spite of all the seductions of a contemporaneous artist of great talent, I have little taste, I confess, for that artifice that is forced to give to marble the morbidezza of painting. Sculpture is an austere muse; it has its graces, but they are those of no other art. Flesh-color must remain a stranger to it. Nothing more would remain to communicate to it but the movement of poetry and the indefiniteness of music! And what will music gain by aiming at the picturesque, when its proper domain is the pathetic? Give to the most learned symphonist a storm to render. Nothing is easier to imitate than the whistling of the winds and the noise of thunder. But by what combinations of harmony will he exhibit to the eyes the glare of the lightning rending all of a sudden the veil of the night, and, what is most fearful in the tempest, the movement of the waves that now ascend like a mountain, now descend and seem to precipitate themselves into bottomless abysses? If the auditor is not informed of the subject, he will never suspect it, and I defy him to distinguish a tempest from a battle. In spite of science and genius, sounds cannot paint forms. Music, when well guided, will guard itself from contending against the impossible; it will not undertake to express the tumult and strife of the waves and other similar phenomena; it will do more: with sounds it will fill the soul with the sentiments that succeed each other

in us during the different scenes of the tempest. Haydn will thus become the rival, even the vanquisher of the painter, because it has been given to music to move and agitate the soul more profoundly than painting.

Since the "Laocoon" of Lessing, it is no longer permitted to repeat, without great reserve, the famous axiom —Ut pictura poesis; or, at least, it is very certain that painting cannot do everything that poetry can do. Everybody admires the picture of Rumor, drawn by Virgil; but let a painter try to realize this symbolic figure; let him represent to us a huge monster with a hundred eyes, a hundred mouths, and a hundred ears, whose feet touch the earth, whose head is lost in the clouds, and such a figure will become very ridiculous.

So the arts have a common end, and entirely different means. Hence the general rules common to all, and particular rules for each. I have neither time nor space to enter into details on this point. I limit myself to repeating that the great law which governs all others is expression. Every work of art that does not express an idea signifies nothing; in addressing itself to such or such a sense, it must penetrate to the mind, to the soul, and bear thither a thought, a sentiment capable of touching or elevating it. From this fundamental rule all the others are derived; for example, that which is continually and justly recommended—composition. To this is particularly applied the precept of unity and variety. But, in saying this, we have said nothing so long as we have not determined the nature of the unity of which we would speak. True unity is unity of expression, and variety is made only to spread over the entire work the idea or the single sentiment that it should express. It is useless to remark,

that between composition thus defined, and what is often called composition, as the symmetry and arrangement of parts according to artificial rules, there is an abyss. True composition is nothing else than the most powerful means of expression.

Expression not only furnishes the general rules of art, it also gives the principle that allows of their classification.

In fact, every classification supposes a principle that serves as a common measure.

Such a principle has been sought in pleasure, and the first of arts has seemed that which gives the most vivid joys. But we have proved that the object of art is not pleasure—the more or less of pleasure that an art procures cannot, then, be the true measure of its value.

This measure is nothing else than expression. Expression being the supreme end, the art that most nearly approaches it is the first of all.

All true arts are expressive, but they are diversely so. Take music; it is without contradiction the most penetrating, the profoundest, the most intimate art. There is physically and morally between a sound and the soul a marvellous relation. It seems as though the soul were an echo in which the sound takes a new power. Extraordinary things are recounted of the ancient music. And it must not be believed that the greatness of effect supposes here very complicated means. No, the less noise music makes, the more it touches. Give some notes to Pergolese, give him especially some pure and sweet voices, and he returns a celestial charm, bears you away into infinite spaces, plunges you into ineffable reveries. The peculiar power of music is to open to the imagination a limitless career, to lend itself with astonishing facility to all the

moods of each one, to arouse or calm, with the sounds of the simplest melody, our accustomed sentiments, our favorite affections. In this respect music is an art without a rival; however, it is not the first of arts. . . .

Between sculpture and music, those two opposite extremes, is painting, nearly as precise as the one, nearly as touching as the other. Like sculpture, it marks the visible forms of objects, but adds to them life; like music, it expresses the profoundest sentiments of the soul, and expresses them all. Tell me what sentiment does not come within the province of the painter? He has entire nature at his disposal, the physical world, and the moral world, a churchyard, a landscape, a sunset, the ocean, the great scenes of civil and religious life, all the beings of creation —above all, the figure of man, and its expression, that living mirror of what passes in the soul. More pathetic than sculpture, clearer than music, painting is elevated, in my opinion, above both, because it expresses beauty more under all its forms, and the human soul in all the richness and variety of its sentiments.

But the art par excellence, that which surpasses all others, because it is incomparably the most expressive, is poetry.

Speech is the instrument of poetry; poetry fashions it to its use, and idealizes it, in order to make it express ideal beauty. Poetry gives to it the charm and power of measure; it makes of it something intermediary between the ordinary voice and music—something at once material and immaterial, finite, clear, and precise—like contours and forms the most definite, living and animated; like color pathetic, and infinite like sound. A word in itself, especially a word chosen and transfigured by poetry, is the

most energetic and universal symbol. Armed with this talisman, poetry reflects all the images of the sensible world, like sculpture and painting; it reflects sentiment like painting and music, with all its varieties, which music does not attain, and in their rapid succession that painting cannot follow, as precise and immobile as sculpture; and it not only expresses all that; it expresses what is inaccessible to every other art—I mean thought, entirely distinct from the senses and even from sentiment—thought that has no forms—thought that has no color, that lets no sound escape, that does not manifest itself in any way—thought in its highest flight, in its most refined abstraction.

Think of it. What a world of images, of sentiments, of thoughts at once distinct and confused, are excited within us by this one word—country! and by this other word, brief and immense—God! What is more clear and altogether more profound and vast!

Tell the architect, the sculptor, the painter, even the musician, to call forth also by a single stroke all the powers of nature and the soul! They cannot, and by that they acknowledge the superiority of speech and poetry.

They proclaim it themselves, for they take poetry for their own measure; they esteem their own works, and demand that they should be esteemed, in proportion as they approach the poetical ideal. And the human race does as artists do: a beautiful picture, a noble melody, a living and expressive statue, gives rise to the exclamation, How poetical! This is not an arbitrary comparison; it is a natural judgment which makes poetry the type of the perfection of all the arts—the art par excellence, which comprises all others, to which they aspire, which none can reach.

When the other arts would imitate the works of poetry,

they usually err, losing their own genius, without robbing poetry of its genius. But poetry constructs, according to its own taste, palaces and temples, like architecture; it makes them simple or magnificent; all orders, as well as all systems, obey it; the different ages of art are the same to it; it reproduces, if it please, the Classic or the Gothic, the beautiful or the sublime, the measured or the infinite. Lessing has been able, with the exactest justice, to compare Homer to the most perfect sculptor; with such precision are the forms which that marvellous chisel gives to all beings determined! And what a painter, too, is Homer! And, of a different kind, Dante! Music alone has something more penetrating than poetry, but it is vague, limited, and fugitive. Besides its clearness, its variety, its durability, poetry has also the most pathetic accents. Call to mind the words that Priam utters at the feet of Achilles while asking him for the dead body of his son, more than one verse of Virgil, entire scenes of the "Cid" and the "Polyeucte," the prayer of Esther kneeling before the Lord, or the choruses of "Esther" and "Athalie." In the celebrated song of Pergolese, "Stabat Mater Dolorosa," we may ask which moves most, the music or the words. The "Dies Irae, Dies Illa," recited only, produces the most terrible effect. In those fearful words, every blow tells, so to speak; each word contains a distinct sentiment, an idea at once profound and determinate. The intellect advances at each step, and the heart rushes on in its turn. Human speech, idealized by poetry, has the depth and brilliancy of musical notes; it is luminous as well as pathetic; it speaks to the mind as well as to the heart; it is in that inimitable, unique, and embraces all extremes and all contraries in a harmony that redoubles their reciprocal

effect—in which, by turns, appear and are developed all images, all sentiments, all ideas, all the human faculties, all the inmost recesses of the soul, all the forms of things, all real and all intelligible worlds!

LIBERTY

PASSIONS abandoning themselves to their caprices are anarchy. Passions concentrated upon a dominant passion are tyranny. Liberty consists in the struggle of will against this tyranny and this anarchy. But this combat must have an aim, and this aim is the duty of obeying reason, which is our true sovereign, and justice, which reason reveals to us and prescribes for us. The duty of obeying reason is the law of will, and will is never more itself than when it submits to its law. We do not possess ourselves as long as to the domination of desire, of passion, of interest, reason does not oppose the counterpoise of justice. Reason and justice free us from the yoke of passions, without imposing upon us another yoke. For, once more, to obey them is not to abdicate liberty, but to save it, to apply it to its legitimate use.

It is in liberty and in the agreement of liberty with reason and justice that man belongs to himself, to speak properly. He is a person only because he is a free being enlightened by reason.

What distinguishes a person from a simple thing is especially the difference between liberty and its opposite. A thing is that which is not free, consequently that which does not belong to itself, that which has no self, which has only a numerical individuality, a perfect effigy of true individuality, which is that of person.

A thing not belonging to itself belongs to the first person that takes possession of it and puts his mark on it.

A thing is not responsible for the movements which it has not willed, of which it is even ignorant. Person alone is responsible, for it is intelligent and free; and it is responsible for the use of its intelligence and freedom.

A thing has no dignity; dignity is only attached to person.

A thing has no value by itself; it has only that which person confers on it. It is purely an instrument whose whole value consists in the use that the person using it derives from it.

Obligation implies liberty; where liberty is not duty is wanting, and with duty right is wanting also.

It is because there is in me a being worthy of respect, that I have the duty of respecting it, and the right to make it respected by you. My duty is the exact measure of my right. The one is in direct ratio with the other. If I had no sacred duty to respect what makes my person, that is to say, my intelligence and my liberty, I should not have the right to defend it against your injuries. But as my person is inviolable and sacred in itself, it follows that, considered in relation to me, it imposes on me a duty, and considered in relation to you, it confers on me a right.

I am not myself permitted to degrade the person that I am by abandoning myself to passion, to vice, and to crime, and I am not permitted to let it be degraded by you.

The person is inviolable; and it alone is inviolable.

It is inviolable not only in the intimate sanctuary of

consciousness, but in all its legitimate manifestations, in its acts, in the product of its acts, even in the instruments that it makes its own by using them.

Therein is the foundation of the sanctity of property. The first property is the person. All other properties are derived from that. Think of it well. It is not property in itself that has rights, it is the proprietor, it is the person that stamps upon it, with its own character, its right and its title.

The person cannot cease to belong to itself, without degrading itself—it is to itself inalienable. The person has no right over itself; it cannot treat itself as a thing, cannot sell itself, cannot destroy itself, cannot in any way abolish its free will and its liberty, which are its constituent elements.

Why has the child already some rights? Because it will be a free being. Why have the old man, returned to infancy, and the insane man still some rights? Because they have been free beings. We even respect liberty in its first glimmerings or its last vestiges. Why, on the other hand, have the insane man and the imbecile old man no longer all their rights? Because they have lost liberty. Why do we enchain the furious madman? Because he has lost knowledge and liberty. Why is slavery an abominable institution? Because it is an outrage upon what constitutes humanity. This is the reason why, in fine, certain extreme devotions are sometimes sublime faults, and no one is permitted to offer them, much less to demand them. There is no legitimate devotion against the very essence of right, against liberty, against justice, against the dignity of the human person.