

phy, and letters, and art. As yet we have nothing but tendency and indication.

This starting, this warping of the best literary works from the adamant of nature, is especially observable in philosophy. Let it take what tone of pretension it will, to this complexion must it come at last. Take for example the French eclecticism, which Cousin esteems so conclusive; there is an optical illusion in it. It avows great pretensions. It looks as if they had all truth in taking all the systems, and had nothing to do but to sift and wash and strain, and the gold and diamonds would remain in the last colander. But truth is such a flyaway, such a slyboot, so untransportable and unbarrelable a commodity, that it is as bad to catch as light. Shut the shutters never so quick, to keep all the light in, it is all in vain; it is gone before you can cry, hold. And so it happens with our philosophy. Translate, collate, distil all the systems, it steads you nothing; for truth will not be compelled in any mechanical manner. But the first observation you make in the sincere act of your nature, though on the veriest trifle, may open a new view of nature and of man, that, like a menstruum, shall dissolve all theories in it; shall take up Greece, Rome, stoicism, eclecticism, and what not, as mere data and food for analysis, and dispose of your world-containing system as a very little unit. A profound thought, anywhere, classifies all things: a profound thought will lift Olympus. The book of philosophy is only a fact, and no more inspiring fact than another, and no less; but a wise man will never esteem it anything final and transcending. Go and talk with a man of genius, and the first word he utters sets all your so-called knowledge afloat and at large. Then Plato, Bacon, Kant, and the eclectic Cousin, condescend instantly to be men and mere facts.

I by no means aim, in these remarks, to disparage the merit of these or of any existing compositions; I only say that any particular portraiture does not in any manner exclude or forestall a new attempt, but when considered by the soul, warps and shrinks away. The inundation of the spirit sweeps away before it all our little architecture of wit and memory as straws and straw-huts before the torrent. Works of the intellect are great only by comparison with each other. Ivanhoe and Waverley compared with Castle Radcliffe and the Porter novels; but nothing is great,—not mighty Homer and Milton,—beside the infinite reason. It carries them away as a flood. They are as a sleep.

Thus is justice done to each generation and individual,—wisdom teaching man that he shall not hate, or fear, or mimic his ancestors; that he shall not bewail himself as if the world was old and thought was spent and he was born into the dotage of things; for, by virtue of the Deity, thought renews itself inexhaustibly every day, and the thing whereon it shines, though it were dust and sand, is a new subject with countless relations.

III. Having thus spoken of the resources and the subject of the scholar, out of the same faith proceeds also the rule of his ambition and life. Let him know that the world is his, but he must possess it by putting himself into harmony with the constitution of things. He must be a solitary, laborious, modest, and charitable soul.

He must embrace solitude as a bride. He must have his glees and his glooms alone. His own estimate must be measure enough, his own praise reward enough for him. And why must the student be solitary and silent? That he may become acquainted with his thoughts. If he pines in a lonely place hankering for the crowd, for display, he is not

in the lonely place; his heart is in the market; he does not see; he does not hear; he does not think. But go cherish your soul; expel companions; set your habits to a life of solitude; then will the faculties rise fair and full within, like forest trees and field flowers; you will have results, which, when you meet your fellow men, you can communicate and they will gladly receive. Do not go into solitude only that you may presently come into public. Such solitude denies itself; is public and stale. The public can get public experience, but they wish the scholar to replace to them those private, sincere, divine experiences of which they have been defrauded by dwelling in the street. It is the noble, manlike, just thought which is the superiority demanded of you, and not crowds, but solitude confers this elevation. Not insulation of place, but independence of spirit is essential, and it is only as the garden, the cottage, the forest, and the rock, are a sort of mechanical aids to this, that they are of value. Think alone, and all places are friendly and sacred. The poets who have lived in cities have been hermits still. Inspiration makes solitude anywhere. Pindar, Raphael, Angelo, Dryden, De Staël, dwell in crowds it may be, but the instant thought comes the crowd grows dim to their eye; their eye fixes on the horizon,—on vacant space; they forget the bystanders; they spurn personal relations; they deal with abstractions, with verities, with ideas. They are alone with the mind.

Of course I would not have any superstition about solitude. Let the youth study the uses of solitude and of society. Let him use both, not serve either. The reason why an ingenious soul shuns society is to the end of finding society. It repudiates the false out of love of the true. You can very soon learn all that society can teach you for one while. Its foolish

routine, an indefinite multiplication of balls, concerts, rides, theatres, can teach you no more than a few can. Then accept the hint of shame, of spiritual emptiness and waste, which true nature gives you and retire and hide; lock the door; shut the shutters; then welcome falls the imprisoning rain,—dear hermitage of nature. Re-collect the spirits. Have solitary prayer and praise. Digest and correct the past experience; and blend it with the new and divine life.

You will pardon me, gentlemen, if I say I think that we have need of a more rigorous scholastic rule; such an asceticism, I mean, as only the hardihood and devotion of the scholar himself can enforce. We live in the sun and on the surface,—a thin, plausible, superficial existence, and talk of muse and prophet, of art and creation. But out of our shallow and frivolous way of life, how can greatness ever grow? Come now, let us go and be dumb. Let us sit with our hands on our mouths, a long, austere, Pythagorean lustrum. Let us live in corners and do chores, and suffer, and weep, and drudge, with eyes and hearts that love the Lord. Silence, seclusion, austerity, may pierce deep into the grandeur and secret of our being, and so diving bring up out of secular darkness the sublimities of the moral constitution. How mean to go blazing, a gaudy butterfly, in fashionable or political saloons, the fool of society, the fool of notoriety, a topic for newspapers, a piece of the street, and forfeiting the real prerogative of the russet coat, the privacy, and the true and warm heart of the citizen!

Fatal to the man of letters, fatal to man, is the lust of display, the seeming that unmakes our being. A mistake of the main end to which they labor is incident to literary men, who, dealing with the organ of languages,—the subtlest,

strongest, and longest-lived of man's creations, and only fitly used as the weapon of thought and of justice,—learn to enjoy the pride of playing with this splendid engine, but rob it of its almightiness by failing to work with it. Extricating themselves from the tasks of the world, the world revenges itself by exposing at every turn the folly of these incomplete, pedantic, useless, ghostly creatures. The scholar will feel that the richest romance,—the noblest fiction that was ever woven,—the heart and soul of beauty,—lies enclosed in human life. Itself of surpassing value, it is also the richest material for his creations. How shall he know its secrets of tenderness, of terror, of will, and of fate? How can he catch and keep the strain of upper music that peals from it? Its laws are concealed under the details of daily action. All action is an experiment upon them. He must bear his share of the common load. He must work with men in houses, and not with their names in books. His needs, appetites, talents, affections, accomplishments, are keys that open to him the beautiful museum of human life. Why should he read it as an Arabian tale, and not know, in his own beating bosom, its sweet and smart? Out of love and hatred, out of earnings, and borrowings, and lendings, and losses; out of sickness and pain; out of wooing and worshipping; out of travelling, and voting, and watching, and caring; out of disgrace and contempt, comes our tuition in the serene and beautiful laws. Let him not slur his lesson; let him learn it by heart. Let him endeavor exactly, bravely, and cheerfully, to solve the problem of that life which is set before him. And this, by punctual action and not by promises or dreams. Believing, as in God, in the presence and favor of the grandest influences, let him deserve that favor and learn how to receive and use it by fidelity also to the lower observances.

This lesson is taught with emphasis in the life of the great actor of this age and affords the explanation of his success. Bonaparte represents truly a great recent revolution, which we in this country, please God, shall carry to its farthest consummation. Not the least instructive passage in modern history, seems to me a trait of Napoleon, exhibited to the English when he became their prisoner. On coming on board the "Bellerophon," a file of English soldiers drawn up on deck, gave him a military salute. Napoleon observed, that their manner of handling their arms differed from the French exercise, and, putting aside the guns of those nearest him, walked up to a soldier, took his gun, and himself went through the motion in the French mode. The English officers and men looked on with astonishment, and inquired if such familiarity was usual with the emperor.

In this instance, as always, that man, with whatever defects or vices, represented performance in lieu of pretension. Feudalism and Orientalism had long enough thought it majestic to do nothing; the modern majesty consists in work. He belonged to a class, fast growing in the world, who think that what a man can do is his greatest ornament, and that he always consults his dignity by doing it. He was not a believer in luck; he had a faith, like sight, in the application of means to ends. Means to ends is the motto of all his behavior. He believed that the great captains of antiquity performed their exploits only by correct combinations and by justly comparing the relation between means and consequences; efforts and obstacles. The vulgar call good fortune that which really is produced by the calculations of genius. But Napoleon, thus faithful to facts, had also this crowning merit; that whilst he believed in number and weight and omitted no part of prudence, he believed also in the freedom

and quite incalculable force of the soul. A man of infinite caution, he neglected never the least particular of preparation of patient adaptation; yet nevertheless he had a sublime confidence, as in his all, in the sallies of the courage, and the faith in his destiny, which at the right moment repaired all losses and demolished cavalry, infantry, king, and kaiser as with irresistible thunderbolts. As they say the bough of the tree has the character of the leaf, and the whole tree of the bough, so, it is curious to remark, Bonaparte's army partook of this double strength of the captain; for, whilst strictly supplied in all its appointments and everything expected from the valor and discipline of every platoon in flank and centre, yet always remained his total trust in the prodigious revolutions of fortune, which his reserved Imperial Guard were capable of working, if, in all else, the day was lost. Here he was sublime. He no longer calculated the chance of the cannon ball. He was faithful to tactics to the uttermost,—and when all tactics had come to an end then he dilated and availed himself of the mighty saltations of the most formidable soldiers in nature.

Let the scholar appreciate this combination of gifts which applied to better purpose make true wisdom. He is a revealer of things. Let him first learn the things. Let him not, too eager to grasp some badge of reward, omit the work to be done. Let him know that though the success of the market is in the reward, true success is the doing; that, in the private obedience to his mind; in the sedulous inquiry, day after day, year after year, to know how the thing stands; in the use of all means and most in the reverence of the humble commerce and humble needs of life,—to hearken what they say, and so, by mutual reaction of thought and life to make thought solid, and life wise; and in a contempt for the gabble

of to-day's opinions the secret of the world is to be learned, and the skill truly to unfold it is acquired. Or rather it is not that by this discipline the usurpation of the senses is overcome and the lower faculties of man are subdued to docility; through which, as an unobstructed channel, the soul now easily and gladly flows?

The good scholar will not refuse to bear the yoke in his youth; to know, if he can, the uttermost secret of toil and endurance; to make his own hands acquainted with the soil by which he is fed and the sweat that goes before comfort and luxury. Let him pay his tithe and serve the world as a true and noble man; never forgetting to worship the immortal divinities, who whisper to the poet and make him the utterer of melodies that pierce the ear of eternal time. If he have this twofold goodness—the drill and the inspiration—then he has health; then he is a whole and not a fragment; and the perfection of his endowment will appear in his compositions. Indeed, this twofold merit characterizes ever the productions of great masters. The man of genius should occupy the whole space between God, or pure mind, and the multitude of uneducated men. He must draw from the infinite reason on one side and he must penetrate into the heart and sense of the crowd on the other. From one he must draw his strength; to the other he must owe his aim. The one yokes him to the real, the other to the apparent. At one pole is reason, at the other common sense. If he be defective at either extreme of the scale his philosophy will seem low and utilitarian; or it will appear too vague and indefinite for the uses of life.

The student, as we all along insist, is great only by being passive to the superincumbent spirit. Let this faith, then, dictate all his action. Snares and bribes abound to mislead

him; let him be true nevertheless. His success has its perils too. There is somewhat inconvenient and injurious in his position. They whom his thoughts have entertained or inflamed seek him before yet they have learned the hard conditions of thought. They seek him that he may turn his lamp on the dark riddles whose solution they think is inscribed on the walls of their being. They find that he is a poor, ignorant man, in a white-seamed, rusty coat, like themselves, no wise emitting a continuous stream of light, but now and then a jet of luminous thought, followed by total darkness; moreover, that he cannot make of his infrequent illumination a portable taper to carry whither he would and explain now this dark riddle, now that. Sorrow ensues. The scholar regrets to damp the hope of ingenuous boys; and the youth has lost a star out of his new flaming firmament. Hence the temptation to the scholar to mystify; to hear the question; to sit upon it; to make an answer of words in lack of the oracle of things. Not the less let him be cold and true, and wait in patience, knowing that truth can make even silence eloquent and memorable. Truth shall be policy enough for him. Let him open his breast to all honest inquiry and be an artist superior to tricks of art. Show frankly, as a saint would do, your experience, methods, tools, and means. Welcome all comers to the freest use of the same. And out of this superior frankness and charity you shall learn higher secrets of your nature, which gods will bend and aid you to communicate.

If, with a high trust, he can thus submit himself, he will find that ample returns are poured into his bosom out of what seemed hours of obstruction and loss. Let him not grieve too much on account of unfit associates. When he sees how much thought he owes to the disagreeable antagonism of vari-

ous persons who pass and cross him he can easily think that in a society of perfect sympathy no word, no act, no record, would be. He will learn that it is not much matter what he reads, what he does. Be a scholar, and he shall have the scholar's part of everything. As in the counting-room the merchant cares little whether the cargo be hides or barilla; the transaction a letter of credit or a transfer of stocks; be it what it may, his commission comes gently out of it; so you shall get your lesson out of the hour and the object, whether it be a concentrated or a wasteful employment, even in reading a dull book or working off a stint of mechanical day labor, which your necessities or the necessities of others impose.

Gentlemen, I have ventured to offer you these considerations upon the scholar's place, and hope, because I thought that, standing as many of you now do, on the threshold of this college, girt and ready to go and assume tasks, public and private, in your country, you would not be sorry to be admonished of those primary duties of the intellect whereof you will seldom hear from the lips of your new companions. You will hear every day the maxims of a low prudence. You will hear that the first duty is to get land and money, place and name. "What is this truth you seek? what is this beauty?" men will ask with derision. If, nevertheless, God have called any of you to explore truth and beauty, be bold, be firm, be true. When you shall say, "As others do, so will I; I renounce, I am sorry for it, my early visions; I must eat the good of the land and let learning and romantic expectations go until a more convenient season;" then dies the man in you; then once more perish the buds of art, and poetry, and science, as they have died already in a thousand thousand men. The hour of that choice is the crisis of your history; and see that you hold yourself fast by the intellect. It is

this domineering temper of the sensual world that creates the extreme need of the priests of science; and it is the office and right of the intellect to make and not take its estimate. Bend to the persuasion which is flowing to you from every object in nature, to be its tongue to the heart of man, and to show the besotted world how passing fair is wisdom. Forewarned that the vice of the times and the country is an excessive pretension, let us seek the shade and find wisdom in neglect. Be content with a little light, so it be your own. Explore and explore. Be neither chided nor flattered out of your position of perpetual inquiry. Neither dogmatize nor accept another's dogmatism. Why should you renounce your right to traverse the star-lit deserts of truth for the premature comforts of an acre, house, and barn? Truth also has its roof, and bed, and board. Make yourself necessary to the world and mankind will give you bread, and if not store of it, yet such as shall not take away your property in all men's possessions, in all men's affections, in art, in nature, and in hope.

You will not fear that I am enjoining too stern an asceticism. Ask not, Of what use is a scholarship that systematically retreats? or, Who is the better for the philosopher who conceals his accomplishments and hides his thoughts from the waiting world? Hides his thoughts! Hide the sun and moon. Thought is all light and publishes itself to the universe. It will speak, though you were dumb, by its own miraculous organ. It will flow out of your actions, your manners, and your face. It will bring you friendships. It will impledge you to truth by the love and expectation of generous minds. By virtue of the laws of that nature which is one and perfect it shall yield every sincere good that is in the soul to the scholar beloved of earth and heaven.