

yielded. When the washing was done and spread to dry, then into the basin they sprung and laughed and splashed and shouted, or swam as lazily and sluggishly about as the little black bugs below.

After that there was more danger, and there was the Apache country. I well remember the

shudder at Apache Pass, and the visit which Cochise, the famous chief, paid to our lonely wagon. But the hard balance of suffering was over, and finally, when the rolling hills were green with spring, our tired eyes greeted Los Angeles, that fairest city of the south.

KATE HEATH.

## THE DECAY OF EARNESTNESS.

Every animal, when not frightened, shows in its own way a certain quiet self-complacency, a confidence in the supreme worth of its individual existence, an exalted egotism, which is often not a little amusing if we reflect on the shortness, the insignificance, and the misery of most creatures' lives. This animal self-complacency characterizes, also, as we know, all naturally-minded men. We know, too, that most men are nearly as much in error as the beasts, in the degree of importance that they attach to their lives. But what I have just now most in mind is that the same kind of blunder is frequently found in the judgment that any one age passes upon itself and its own work. Every active period of history thinks its activity of prodigious importance, and its advance beyond its predecessors very admirable. So the eighteenth century thought that the English poetry of past times had been far surpassed in form and in matter by the poetry of the age of Dryden and of Pope. Long since the blindness of the eighteenth century upon this point has been fully exposed. The Neoplatonic philosophy, the Crusades, the First French Empire, are familiar instances from the multitude of cases where men utterly failed to perform the permanent work which they were very earnestly trying to do, and where they were, at most, doing for the world that which they least of all wished or expected to do. Like individuals, then, whole eras of history go by, sublimely confident in their own significance, yet often unable to make their claims even interesting in the sight of posterity.

The same lesson may be drawn both here and in the case of individuals. The man is vain; so is the age. The man ought to correct his vanity first by negative criticism; so ought the time. But the disillusioning process is a cruel one in both cases. It is hard for the man to bear the thought that, perhaps, after all, he is a useless enthusiast. So it is hard for an age to bear the thought that its dearest worship may be only idolatry, and its best work only a fight-

ing of shadows. But for both the lesson is the same. Let them find some higher aim than this merely natural one of self-satisfaction. Let their work be done, not that it may seem grand to them alone, but so that it must have an element of grandeur in it, whatever be the success of its particular purposes. Grandeur does not depend upon success alone, nor need illusions always be devoid of a higher truth. The problem is to find out what is the right spirit, and to work in that. If the matter of the work is bad, that must perish, but the spirit need not.

Now, in our age we are especially engaged upon certain problems of thought. We discuss the origin of the present forms of things in the physical and in the moral universe. Evolution is our watchword; "everything grew," is the interpretation. Our method of inquiry is the historical. We want to see how, out of certain simple elements, the most complex structures about us were built up. Now, in the enormous thought-activity thus involved, two things especially strike one who pauses to watch. The first is, that in studying Evolution men have come to neglect other important matters that used to be a good deal talked about. The true end of life, the nature and grounds of human certitude, the problems of Goethe's *Faust* and of Kant's *Critique*—these disappear from the view of many representative men. The age finds room to talk about these things, but not to enter upon them with a whole-souled enthusiasm. Yet these are eternally valuable matters of thought. The age for which they are not in the very front rank of problems is a one-sided age, destined to be severely criticised within a century. The other fact that strikes us in this age is that the result of our one-sidedness is an unhappy division, productive of no little misery, between the demands of modern thought and the demands of the whole indivisible nature of man. The ethical finds not enough room in the philosophy of the time. The world is studied, but not the active human will, without whose interference the

world is wholly void of human significance. The matter of thinking overwhelms us; we forget to study the form, and so we accept, with a blank wonder, the results of our thinking as if they were self-existent entities that had walked into our souls of themselves. For example, we make molecules by reasoning about facts of sensation, and by grouping these facts in the simplest and easiest fashion possible; then we fall into a fear lest the molecules have, after all, made us, and we write countless volumes on a stupid theme called materialism. This unreflective fashion of regarding the products of our thought as the conditions and source of our thought, is largely responsible for the strife between the ethical and the scientific tendencies of the time. The scientific tendency stops in one direction at a certain point, content with having made a theory of evolution, and fearing, or, at any rate, neglecting, any further analysis of fundamental ideas. The ethical tendency, on the other hand, rests on a rooted feeling that, after all, conscious life is of more worth than anything else in the universe. But this is, nowadays, commonly a mere feeling, which, finding nothing to justify it in current scientific opinion, becomes morose, and results in books against science. The books are wrong, but the feeling, when not morose, is right. The world is of importance only because of the conscious life in it, and the Evolution theory is one-sided because of the subordinate place it gives to consciousness. But the cure is not in writing books against science, but solely in such a broad philosophy as shall correct the narrowness of the day, and bring back to the first rank of interest once more the problems of Goethe's *Faust* and of Kant's *Critique*. We want not less talk about evolution, but more study of human life and destiny, of the nature of men's thought, and the true goal of men's actions. Send us the thinker that can show us just what in life is most worthy of our toil, just what makes men's destiny more than poor and comic, just what is the ideal that we ought to serve; let such a thinker point out to us plainly that ideal, and then say, in a voice that we must hear, "Work, work for that; it is the highest"—then such a thinker will have saved our age from one-sidedness, and have given it eternal significance. Now, to talk about those problems of thought which concern the destiny, the significance, and the conduct of human life, is to talk about what I have termed "the ethical aspect of thought." Some study we must give to these things if we are not to remain, once for all, hopelessly one-sided.

In looking for the view of the world which shall restore unity to our divided age, we must first not forget the fact that very lately all these

now neglected matters have been much talked about. It is the theory of Evolution that, with its magnificent triumphs, its wonderful ingenuity and insight, has put them out of sight. Only within twenty years has there been a general inattention to the study of the purposes and the hopes of human life—a study that, embodied in German Idealism, or in American Transcendentalism, in Goethe, in Schiller, in Fichte, in Wordsworth, in Shelley, in Carlyle, in Emerson, had been filling men's thoughts since the outset of the great Revolution. But since the end of the period referred to our knowledge of the origin of the forms of life has driven from popular thought the matters of the worth and of the conduct of life, so that one might grow up nowadays well taught in the learning of the age, and when asked, "Hast thou as yet received into thy heart any Ideal?" might respond very truthfully, "I have not heard so much as whether there be any Ideal."

Yet, I repeat, the fault in our time is negative rather than positive. We have to enlarge, not to condemn. Evolution is a great truth, but it is not all truth. We need more, not less, of science. We need a more thorough-going, a more searching—yes, a more critical and skeptical—thought than any now current. For current thought is, in fact, *naïf* and dogmatic, accepting without criticism a whole army of ideas because they happen to be useful as bases for scientific work. We need, then, in the interests of higher thought, an addition to our present philosophy—an addition that makes use of the neglected thought of the last three generations. But, as preliminary to all this, it becomes us to inquire: Why was modern thought so suddenly turned from the contemplation of the ethical aspect of reality to this present absorbing study of the material side of the world? How came we to break with Transcendentalism, and to begin this search after the laws of the redistribution of matter and of force? To this question I want to devote the rest of the present study; for just here is the whole problem in a nut-shell. Transcendentalism, the distinctly ethical thought-movement of the century, failed to keep a strong hold on the life of the century. Why? In the answer to this question lies at once the relative justification, and at the same time the understanding, of the incompleteness of our present mode of thinking.

By Transcendentalism, I mean a movement that began in Germany in the last thirty years of the eighteenth century, and that afterward spread, in one form or another, all over Europe, and even into our own country—a movement that answered in the moral and mental world to the French Revolution in the political world.

Everywhere this movement expressed, through a multitude of forms, a single great idea: the idea that in the free growth and expression of the highest and strongest emotions of the civilized man might be found the true solution of the problem of life. Herein was embodied a reaction against the characteristic notions of the eighteenth century. In the conventional, in submission to the external forms of government, religion, and society, joined with a total indifference to the spiritual, and with a general tendency to free but shallow speculation, the average popular thought of the last century had sought to attain repose rather than perfection. The great thinkers rose far above this level; but, on the whole, we look to the age of the rationalists rather for ingenuity than for profundity, rather for good sense than for grand ideas. The prophetic, the emotional, the sublime, are absent from the typical eighteenth century mind-life. Instead, we find cultivation, criticism, skepticism, and at times, as a sort of relief, a mild sentimentality. The Transcendental movement expressed a rebound from this state of things. With the so-called Storm and Stress Period of German literature the protest against conventionality and in favor of a higher life began. Love, enthusiasm, devotion, the affection for humanity, the search after the ideal, the faith in a spiritual life—these became objects of the first interest. A grand new era of history seemed opening. Men felt themselves on the verge of great discoveries. The highest hopes were formed. A movement was begun that lasted through three generations, and far into a fourth. It was, to be sure, in nature a young men's movement; but as the men of one generation lost their early enthusiasm, others arose to follow in their footsteps—blunderingly, perhaps, but earnestly. When Goethe had outgrown his youthful extravagances, behold there were the young Romantics to undertake the old work once more. When they crystallized with time, and lost hold on the German national life, there came Heine and the Young Germany to pursue with new vigor the old path. In England, Wordsworth grows very sober with age, when there come Byron and Shelley; Coleridge fails, and Carlyle is sent; Shelley and Byron pass away, but Tennyson arises. And with us in America Emerson and his helpers renew the spirit of a half century before their time. This movement now seems a thing of the past. There is no Emerson among the younger men, no Tennyson among the new school of poets, no Heine in Germany—much less, then, a Fichte or a Schiller. Not merely is genius lacking, but the general public interest, the soil from which a genius draws nour-

ishment, is unfavorable. The literary taste of the age is represented by George Eliot's later novels, where everything is made subordinate to analysis, by the poetry of several skillful masters of melody, by the cold critical work of the authors of the series on "English Men of Letters." Men of wonderful power there are among our writers—men like William Morris in poetry, or Mathew Arnold in both criticism and poetry; but their work is chiefly esoteric, appealing to a limited class. Widely popular writers we have upon many subjects; but they are either great men of abstract thought, like Spencer and Huxley; or else, alas! mere superficial scribblers like Mr. Mallock, or rhetoricians like Rev. Joseph Cook. The moral leader, the seer, the man to awaken deep interest in human life as human life, no longer belongs to the active soldiers of the army of to-day; and, what is worse, the public mind no longer inquires after such a leader. There must surely be a cause for this state of public sentiment. Neglect of such vital questions must have sprung from some error in their treatment. Let us look in history for that error.

The Storm and Stress Period in Germany began with the simplest and most unaffected desire possible to get back from conventionality and from shallow thought to the purity and richness of natural emotion. There was at first no set philosophy or creed about the universe common to those engaged in the movement. The young poets worshiped genius, and desired to feel intensely and to express emotion worthily. To this end they discarded the traditions as to form which they found embodied in French poetry and in learned text-books. Lessing had furnished them critical authority. He had shown the need of appealing to Nature for instruction, both in the matter and in the manner of poetry. Popular ballads suggested to some of the young school their models. Their own overflowing hearts, their warm, ideal friendships with one another, their passion for freedom, their full personal experiences, gave them material. Together they broke down conventions, and opened a new era in literary life, as the French Revolution, twenty years later, did in national life. Every one knows that Goethe's famous *Werther* is the result of this time of ferment. Now, if one reads *Werther* attentively, and with an effort (for it needs an effort) to sympathize with the mood that produced and enjoyed it, one will see in it the characteristic idea that the aim of life is to have as remarkable and exalted emotional experiences as possible, and those of a purely personal character; that is, not the emotion that men feel in common when they engage in great

causes, not the devotion to sublime impersonal objects, not surrender to unworldly ideals, but simply the overwhelming sense of the magnitude and worth of one's own loves and longings, of one's own precious soul-experiences—this, and not the other, is to be sought. Werther cannot resist the fate that drives him to load his heart down with emotion until it breaks. He feels how far asunder from the rest of mankind all this drives him. But he insists upon despising mankind, and upon reveling in the dangerous wealth of his inspiration. Now, surely such a state of mind as this must injure men if they remain long in it. Men need work in life, and so long as they undertake to dig into their own bowels for the wonderful inner experiences that they may find by digging, so long must their lives be bad dreams. The purpose of these young men was the highest, but only those of them who, following this purpose, passed far beyond the simplicity of their youth, did work of lasting merit. The others stayed in a state of passionate formlessness, or died early. The result of remaining long in this region, where nothing was of worth but a violent emotion or an incredible deed, one sees in such a man as Klinger, who lived long enough to reap what he had sown, but did not progress sufficiently to succeed in sowing anything but the wind. I remember once spending an idle hour on one of his later romances, written years after the time of Storm and Stress had passed by, which well expresses the state of mind, the sort of *katzenjammer*, resulting from a long life of literary dissipation. It is Klinger's *Faustus*—the same subject as Goethe's masterpiece, but how differently treated! Faustus is a man desperately anxious to act. He wants to reform the world, to be sure, but that only by the way. His main object is to satisfy a vague, restless craving for tremendous excitement. The contract with the devil once made, he plunges into a course of reckless adventure. Where he undertakes to do good he only makes bad worse. Admirable about him is merely the magnitude of his projects, the vigor of his actions, the desperate courage wherewith he defies the universe. Brought to hell at last, he ends his career by cursing all things that are with such fearless and shocking plainness of speech that the devils themselves are horrified. Satan has to invent a new place of torment for him. He is banished, if I remember rightly, into horrible darkness, where he is to pass eternity perfectly alone. Thus terribly the poet expresses the despair in which ends for him, as for all, this self-adoration of the man whose highest object is violent emotional experiences, enjoyed merely because they are his own, not because by having them one

serves the Ideal. As a mere beginning, then, the Storm and Stress Period expressed a great awakening of the world to new life. But an abiding place in this state of mind there was none. What then followed?

The two masters of German literature who passed through and rose above this period of beginnings, and created the great works of the classical period, were Goethe and Schiller. As poets, we are not now specially concerned with them. As moral teachers, what have they to tell us about the conduct and the worth of life? The answer is, they bear not altogether the same message. There is a striking contrast, well recognized by themselves and by all subsequent critics, between their views of life. Both aim at the highest, but seek in different paths. Goethe's mature ideal seems to be a man of finely appreciative powers, who follows his life-calling quietly and with such diligence as to gain for himself independence and leisure, who so cultivates his mind that it is open to receive all noble impressions, and who then waits with a sublime resignation, gained through years of self-discipline, for such experiences of what is grand in life and in the universe as the Spirit of Nature sees fit to grant to him. Wilhelm Meister, who works eagerly for success in a direction where success is impossible, and who afterward finds bliss where he least expected to find it, seems to teach this lesson. Faust, at first eagerly demanding indefinite breadth and grandeur of life, and then coming to see what the limitations of human nature are, "that to man nothing perfect is given," and so at last finding the highest good of life in the thought that he and posterity must daily earn anew freedom, never be done with progressing, seems to illustrate the same thought. Do not go beyond or behind Nature, Goethe always teaches. Live submissively the highest that it is given you to live, and neither cease quietly working, nor despair, nor rebel, but be open to every new and worthy experience. For Goethe this was a perfect solution of the problem of life. He needed no fixed system of dogmas to content him. In the divine serenity of one of the most perfect of minds, Goethe put in practice this maxim: Live thy life out to the full, earnestly but submissively, demanding what attainment thy nature makes possible, but not pining for more.

Now, this of course is a selfish maxim. If the highest life is to be unselfish, Goethe cannot have given us the final solution to the problem. His selfishness was not of a low order. It was like the selfishness in the face of the Apollo Belvedere, the simple consciousness of vast personal worth. But it was selfishness for all that. We see how it grew for him out of his

early enthusiasm. The Storm and Stress Period had been full of the thought that there is something grand in the emotional nature of man, and that this something must be cultivated. Now, Goethe, absorbed in the faith of the time—himself, in fact, its high priest—learned after a while that all these much sought treasures of emotion were there already, in his own being, and that they needed no long search, no storming at all. He had but to be still and watch them. He needed no anxious brooding to find ideals; he went about quietly, meeting the ideal everywhere. The object of search thus attained, in so far as any mortal could attain it, Goethe the poet was in perfect harmony with the Goethe of practical life; and so was formed the creed of the greatest man of the century. But it was a creed of little more than personal significance. For the grand example remains, but the attainment of like perfection is impossible, and we must look for another rule of living. For those sensitive and earnest people who learn, as many learn while yet mere school-boys or school-girls, that there is a great wealth of splendid emotional life, of affection and aspiration and devotion, shut up in their own hearts; for those who, feeling this, want to develop this inner nature, to enjoy these high gifts, to order their lives accordingly, to avoid shams and shows, and to possess the real light of life—for such natural Transcendentalists, what shall Goethe's precept avail? Alas! their little lives are not Olympian, like his. They cannot meet the Ideal everywhere. Poetry does not come to express their every feeling. No Grand Duke calls them to his court. No hosts of followers worship them. Of all this they are not worthy. Yet they ought to find some path, be it never so steep a one, to a truly higher life. Resignation may be the best mood, but Goethe's reason for resignation such souls have not.

Perhaps Schiller's creed may have more meaning for men in general. In fact, Schiller, though no common man, had much more in him than common men may, without trouble, appreciate. His origin was humble, and the way up steep and rough. In his earlier writings the Storm and Stress tendency takes a simpler and cruder form than that of Werther. What Schiller accomplished was for a long time the result of very hard work, done in the midst of great doubt and perplexity. Schiller's ideal is, therefore, to use his own figure, the laborious, oppressed, and finally victorious Hercules—*i. e.*, the man who fears no toil in the service of the highest, who knows that there is something of the divine in him, who restlessly strives to fulfill his destiny, and who at last ascends to the sight and knowledge of the truly perfect.

Schiller's maxim therefore is: Toil ceaselessly to give thy natural powers their full development, knowing that nothing is worth having but a full consciousness of all that thou hast of good, now latent and unknown within thee. Resignation, therefore, though it is the title of one of Schiller's poems, is never his normal active mood. He retains to the end a good deal of the old Storm and Stress. He is always a sentimental poet, to use the epithet in his own sense; that is, he is always toiling for the ideal, never quite sure that he is possessed of it. He dreams sometimes that he soon will know the perfect state of mind; but he never does attain, nor does he seem, like Goethe, content with, the eternal progress. There is an undercurrent of complaint and despair in Schiller, which only the splendid enthusiasm of the man keeps, for the most part, out of sight. Some of his poems are largely under its influence.

Now, this creed, in so far as it is earnest and full of faith in the ideal, appeals very much more immediately than does Goethe's creed to the average sensitive mind. Given a soul that is awake to the higher emotions, and if you tell such a one to work earnestly and without rest to develop this better self, you will help him more than if you bid him contemplate the grand attainment of a Goethe, and be resigned to his own experiences as Goethe was to his. For most of us the higher life is to be gained only through weary labor, if at all. But what seems to be lacking in Schiller's creed is a sufficiently concrete definition of the ideal that he seeks. Any attentive reader of *Faust* feels strongly, if vaguely, what it is that Faust is looking for. But one may read Schiller's "Das Ideal und das Leben" a good many times without really seeing what it is that the poor Hercules, or his earthy representative, is seeking. Schiller is no doubt, on the whole, the simpler poet, yet I must say that if I wanted to give any one his first idea of what perfection of mind and character is most worthy of search, I should send such a one to Goethe rather than to Schiller. Schiller talks nobly about the way to perfection, but he defines perfection quite abstractly. Goethe is not very practical in his directions about the road, but surely no higher or clearer ideals of what is good in emotion and action can be put into our minds than those he suggests in almost any passage you please, if he is in a serious mood, and is talking about good and evil at all.

But neither of the classical poets satisfied his readers merely as a moral teacher. As poets, they remain what they always seemed—classics, indeed; but as thinkers they did little more than state a problem. Here is a higher life, and they tell us about it. But wherein consists

its significance, how it is to be preached to the race, how sought by each one of us—these questions remain still open.

And open they are, the constant theme for eager discussion and for song all through the early part of the nineteenth century. Close upon the classical period followed the German Romantic school. Young men again, full of earnestness and of glorious experience! On they come, confident that they at least are called to be apostles, determined to reform life and poetry—the one through the other. Surely they will solve the problem, and tell us how to cultivate this all important higher nature. Fichte, the great idealist, whose words set men's hearts afire, or else, alas! make men laugh at him; young Friedrich Schlegel, versatile, liberal in conduct even beyond the bounds that may not safely be passed, bold in spirit even to insolence; the wonderful Novalis, so profound, and yet so unaffected and child-like, so tender in emotion and yet so daring in speculation; Schelling, full of vast philosophic projects; Tieck, skillful weaver of romantic fancies; Schleiermacher, gifted theologian and yet disciple of Spinoza; surely, these are the men to complete the work that will be left unfinished when Schiller dies and Goethe grows older. So at least they thought and their friends. Never were young men more confident; and yet never did learned and really talented men, to the most of whom was granted long life with vigor, more completely fail to accomplish anything of permanent value in the direction of their early efforts. As mature men, some of them were very influential and useful, but not in the way in which they first sought to be useful. There is to my mind a great and sad fascination in studying the lives and thoughts of this school, in whose fate seems to be exemplified the tragedy of our century. Such aspirations, such talents, and such a failure! Fragments of inspired verse and prose, splendid plans, earnest private letters to friends, prophetic visions, and nothing more of enduring worth. Further and further goes the movement, in its worship of the emotional, away from the actual needs of human life. Dramatic art, the test of the poet that has a deep insight into the problems of our nature, is tried, with almost complete failure. The greatest dramatic poet of the new era, one that, if he had lived, might have rivaled Schiller, was Heinrich von Kleist, author of the *Prinz von Homburg*. Driven to despair by unsolved problems and by loneliness, this poet shot himself before his life-work was more than fairly begun. There remain a few dramas, hardly finished, a few powerful tales, and a bundle of fragments to tell us what he was. His fate is typical of the work of the

younger school between the years 1805 and 1815. There was a keen sense of the worth of emotional experience, and an inability to come into unity with one's aspirations. Life and poetry, as the critics have it, were at variance.

Now, in all this, these men were not merely fighting shadows. What they sought to do is eternally valuable. They felt, and felt nobly, as all generous-minded, warm-hearted youths and maidens at some time do feel. They were not looking for fame alone; they wanted to be and to produce the highest that mortals may. It is a pity that we have not just now more like them. Yet their efforts failed. What problems Goethe and Schiller, men of genius and of good fortune, had solved for themselves alone, men of lesser genius or of less happy lives could only puzzle over. The poetry of the next following age is largely the poetry of melancholy. The emotional movement spread all over Europe; men everywhere strove to make life richer and worthier; and most men grew sad at their little success. Alfred de Musset, in a well known book, has told in the gloomiest strain the story of the unrest, the despair, the impotency of the youth of the Restoration.

Wordsworth and Shelley represent in very much contrasted ways the efforts of English poets to carry on the work of Transcendentalism, and these men succeeded, in this respect, better than their fellows. Wordsworth is full of a sense of the deep meaning of little things and of the most common life. Healthy men, that work like heroes, that have lungs full of mountain air, and that yet retain the simplicity of shepherd life, or children, whose eyes and words teach purity and depth of feeling, are to him the most direct suggestions of the ideal. Life is, for Wordsworth, everywhere an effort to be at once simple and full of meaning; in harmony with nature, and yet not barbarous. But Wordsworth, if he has very much to teach us, seems to lack the persuasive enthusiasm of the poetic leader of men. At all events, his appeal has reached, so far, only a class. He can be all in all to them, his followers, but he did not reform the world. Shelley, is, perhaps, the one of all English poets in this century to whom was given the purest ideal delight in the higher affections. If you want to be eager to act out the best that is in you, read Shelley. If you want to cultivate a sense for the best in the feelings of all human hearts, read Shelley. He has taught very many to long for a worthy life and for purity of spirit. But alas! Shelley, again, knows not how to teach the way to the acquirement of the end that he so enthusiastically describes. If you can feel with him, he does you good. If you fail to understand him, he is

no systematic teacher. At best, he will arouse a longing. He can never wholly satisfy it. Shelley wanted to be no mere writer. He had in him a desire to reform the world. But when he speaks of reform one sees how vague an idea he had of the means. Prometheus, the Titan, who represents in Shelley's poem oppressed humanity, is bound on the mountain. The poem is to tell us of his deliverance. But how is this accomplished? Why, simply when a certain fated hour comes, foreordained, but by nobody in particular, up comes Demogorgon, the spirit of eternity, stalks before the throne of Jupiter, the tyrant, and orders him out into the abyss; and thereupon Prometheus is unchained, and the earth is happy. Why did not all this happen before? Apparently because Demogorgon did not sooner leave the under-world. What a motive is this for an allegoric account of the deliverance of humanity! Mere accident rules everything; and yet apparently there is a coming triumph to work for. The poet of lofty emotions is but an eager child when he is to advise us to act.

The melancholy side of the literary era that extends from 1815 to 1840 is represented especially by two poets, Byron and Heine. Both treat the same great problem, What is this life, and what in it is of most worth? Both recognize the need there is for something more than mere existence. Both know the value of emotion, and both would wish to lead men to an understanding of this value, if only they thought that men could be led. Despairing themselves of ever attaining an ideal peace of mind, they give themselves over to melancholy. Despairing of raising men even to their own level, they become scornful, and spend far too much time in merely negative criticism. The contrast between them is not a little instructive. Byron is too often viewed by superficial readers merely in the light of his early sentimental poems. Those, for our present purpose, may be disregarded. It is the Byron of *Manfred* and *Cain* that I now have in mind. As for Heine, Matthew Arnold long since said the highest in praise of his ethical significance that we may dare to say. Surely both men have great defects. They are one-sided, and often insincere. But they are children of the ideal. Byron has, I think, the greater force of character, but the gift of seeing well what is beautiful and pathetic in life fell to the lot of Heine. The one is great in spirit, the other in experience. Byron is, by nature, combative, a hater of wrong, one often searching for the highest truth; but his experience is petty and heart-sickening, his real world is miserably unworthy of his ideal world, and he seems driven on into the darkness like his

own Cain and Manfred. Heine has more the faculty of vision. The perfect delight in a moment of emotion is given to him as it has seldom been given to any man since the unknown makers of the popular ballads. Hence, his frequent use of ballad forms and incidents. Surely, Byron could never have given us that picture of Edith of the Swan's Neck searching for the dead King Harold on the field of Hastings, which Heine has painted in one of the ballads of the *Romancero*. But, on the other hand, Heine lacks the force to put into active life the meaning and beauty that he can so well appreciate. He sees in dreams, but he cannot create in the world the ideal of perfection. So he is bitter and despairing. He takes a cruel delight in pointing out the shams of the actual world. Naturally romantic, he attacks romantic tendencies ever afresh with hate and scorn. In brief, to live the higher life, and to teach others to live it also, one would have to be heroic in action, like Byron, and gifted with the power to see, as Heine saw, what is precious, and, in all its simplicity, noble, about human experience. The union of Byron and Heine would have been a new, and, I think, a higher, sort of Goethe.

Since these have passed away we have had our Emerson, our Carlyle, our Tennyson. Upon these men we cannot dwell now. I pass to the result of the whole long struggle. Humanity was seeking, in these its chosen representative men, to attain to a fuller emotional life. A conflict resulted with the petty and ignoble in human nature, and with the dead resistance of material forces. Men grew old and died in this conflict, did wonderful things, and—did not conquer. And now, at last, Europe gave up the whole effort, and fell to thinking about physical science and about great national movements. The men of the last age are gone, or are fast going, and we are left face to face with a dangerous practical materialism. The time is one of unrest, but not of great moral leaders. Action is called for, and, vigorous as we are, spiritual activity is not one of the specialties of the modern world.

So much, then, for the reasons why what I have for brevity's sake called Transcendentalism lost its hold on the life of the century. These reasons were briefly these: First, the ideal sought by the men of the age of which we have spoken was too selfish, not broad and human enough. Goethe might save himself, but he could not teach us the road. Secondly, men did not strive long and earnestly enough. Surely, if the problems of human conduct are to be solved, if life is to be made full of emotion, strong, heroic, and yet not cold, we must all unite, men, women, and children, in the com-

mon cause of living ourselves as best we can, and of helping others, by spoken and by written word, to do the same. We lack perseverance and leaders. Thirdly, the splendid successes of certain modern investigations have led away men's minds from the study of the conduct of life to a study of the evolution of life. I respect the latter study, but I do not believe it fills the place of the former. I wish there were time in our hurried modern life for both. I know there must be found time, and that right quickly, for the study of the old problems of the Faust of Goethe.

With this conclusion, the present study arrives at the goal set at the beginning. How we are to renew these old discussions, what solution of them we are to hope for, whether we shall ever finally solve them, what the true ideal of life is—of all such matters I would not presume to write further at this present. But let us not forget that if our Evolution text-books contain much of solid—yes, of inspiring—truth, they do not contain all the knowledge that is essential to a perfect life or to the needs of hu-

manity. A philosophy made possible by the deliberate neglect of that thought-movement, whose literary expression was the poetry of our century, cannot itself be broad enough and deep enough finally to do away with the needs embodied in that thought-movement. Let one, knowing this fact, be therefore earnest in the search for whatever may make human life more truly worth living. Let him read again, if he has read before, or begin to read, if he has never read, our Emerson, our Carlyle, our Tennyson, or the men of years ago, who so aroused the ardent souls of the best among our fathers. Let him study Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Wordsworth, anything and everything that can arouse in him a sense of our true spiritual needs. And having read, let him work in the search after the ideal—work not for praise, but for the good of his time.

And then, perhaps, some day a new and a mightier Transcendental Movement may begin—a great river, that shall not run to waste and be lost in the deserts of sentimental melancholy.

JOSIAH ROYCE.

## A STRANGE CONFESSION.

### CHAPTER X.

The plan adopted by Mrs. Howard with reference to the newspapers had due weight. It is impossible to refrain from remarking in this connection that, ordinarily, the power of a reporter is greatly underrated. He is looked upon as a machine, for which his salary—generally very small—is the fuel for raising steam, and the policy of his newspaper the length of his stroke. As the quantity of fuel is generally quite small, there is never a dangerous head of steam, thus dispensing with the necessity for a safety-valve. The machine runs steadily on for years and years, and it is not long that a vestige of the original varnish, and polish, and finishing blue remains. It runs on and on, until the parts are worn, and the joints are loose, and the flues are choked with cinders and ashes. When it is worn out at last, it becomes a politician.

But the reporter, although his policy is controlled—or who, rather, has no policy of his own—is nevertheless a quiet and dangerous power. Sometimes he is human—more the pity. In fact, if the fraud must be exposed, he is generally human. Perhaps his peculiar train-

ing renders him comparatively free from prejudices, for his judgment must always be open, while his heart must always be closed. He is paid for his brain, and not for his sentiment. As he is human—a disgraceful admission—he is capable of feeling, which enters unconsciously and conscientiously into all his work. His policy having been outlined for him, dependence is, to a certain extent, placed in him. His judgment is supposed by his employer to be his guide, and confidence is reposed in his judgment; and it is never knowingly betrayed. Though he may have sentiments of his own that clash with the work in hand, he tears them to shreds with perfect cheerfulness. He takes a grim delight in trampling on them, and showing to others how unnecessary and how wrong they are. A man insults him, and yet he lauds that man a hero. But the insult goes down into his heart, and rankles there, to crop out when least expected. He is a nomadic insect—if such an expression be allowable—and what he has no opportunity of writing for this paper, he may for the next that employs him. The reporter is a whole encyclopædia of kindnesses to be remembered and wrongs to be redressed. There is no other man in society who is so