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"WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

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KINGSLEY'S HYPATIA.

An author may say the finest things upon any subject, yet this after all is his opinion, not yours. You see only the result of his thought, and believe, or disbelieve. But if a writer can lead you to reason with him, to canvas his arguments, and to think for yourself, he ensures a better result, a more lasting impression. The suggestive style is the best mode of giving our thought to others. I am hence emboldened to give some of the leading traits of Hypatia, together with the impression directly produced by the work. I shall lose sight of the book as a work of art, and try to call attention to its suggestive power, feeling that those who read it in the quiet thoughtful way will be, as I was, richly rewarded.

The student of character will find in Hypatia three men who will set him thinking. These are well-drawn characters, whose lives may not serve as examples, but clearly suggest the true model.

The lowest of these is the mighty Amal, he has the brute mind, as well as brute strength, and implicitly believes in both. He was the intensely "Practical Man" of his time. "What was good enough for his father was good enough for him." How many men have we to-day, who rely upon inherited strength, of tradition or superstition, to justify a useless, sensual, unambitious life. Who lay upon their ancestors the responsibility for their present course, and ask the past for approval instead of looking ahead, and shaping their lives so as to obtain the sanction of the future. So the mighty Amal lived and died. He was induced to express a belief in Christianity, but in his last hour the force of tradition again asserted itself. And when informed of the downward tendency of his ancestors, he was content to give up his life with the practical man's motto, "their lot is good enough for me."

The next higher of these three central figures is Philammon, the monk. He is the Goth's opposite in high aims, as well as in culture. Yet with his realizing sense of the vanities of the world. In his excessive zeal for the conversion of mankind, he meets with such rebuffs as cause him to envy the Goth's contented ignorance. He aimed at perfection, yet found at every turn in the path of life, that he was but a man. Although voluntarily withdrawn from the world, he longs to see, to enjoy, and judge for himself. He prays the Lord to turn his eyes from vanity, yet looks nevertheless. When assailed by temptation, he takes refuge in prayer, and then—yields. The world did for him what it has done for many educated men since, it besieged him with doubts, fears, and contradictions, until he longed for a blissful ignorance, as a refuge from the follies of wisdom. Yet, Philammon, withal was one whose failure should be wept, not hissed. We must not pity the soldier's scars, for they tell of the heat of battle, loyalty, courage, and the grandest of all human sentiments—patriotism. Let us look kindly then upon one who defended virtue against vice, who stepped forward hopefully, fought bravely, and yet, when the day was done, had naught but bruises to show how he kept face to the foe. Do you know such a one, whose cherished hopes are destined never to be fulfilled? If so speak kindly to him. He is but one more added to the number of

heroes unsung. There are many unrecorded lives, many nameless graves, in this wide world, which man should delight to honor, which woman's hand should decorate with flowers.

And so the Goth untaught, and content—ate, drank and slept, and proved that he was a brute; while Philammon with the loftiest ambition, the purest motives, only succeeded in proving that he was but a man.

The most strongly-marked character of the book is Raphael Aben-Ezra. He was given health, wealth, and culture. The world attracted him, he yielded to its blandishments and became a votary of pleasure. Yet he is so much a man, that in this very excess of pleasure, he sees the need of some higher aim, some nobler purpose. And so mind triumphed over the appetite for pleasure, and drove him forth among his fellow men to seek for his better self. Here he gropes about in the twilight, seeking—he knows not what, until uncertainty grows into absolute doubt, 'till twilight deepens into darkness, and he has reached the "Bottom of the Abyss." He has now lost his belief in duty, his trust in man, and begins to doubt himself. But in this extremity, as in his excess of pleasure, contentment is denied him—Mind cannot rest here and attempts the solution of that great problem "Given self, to find God. And so Raphael in this abyss of distrust, upon the floor of the primeval nothing, ~~feels to build~~ a tower which shall reach the light of day. This chapter headed, the "Bottom of the abyss," is a unit. It might be taken out and read separately, pregnant as it is with the sophistries which a man will inflict upon himself, and suggesting the broad ties of humanity which must solve all such difficulties. We are wont to say, that a man becomes a skeptic from choice. The author proves conclusively, that any responsibilities would be gratefully accepted as a refuge from such an atmosphere of doubt.

Raphael seeks in all directions for something upon which to rest his burdens. The bigotry of the church required too much ignorance, its superstitions asked for too much imagination. He is at last led to the Book of Books to interpret for himself, and found consolation and comfort, and heard like a strain of celestial music, the divine promise of "Peace on earth and good will to men." But how was Raphael rescued from himself? By a mere human cry for sympathy and help; he had drifted, with the animals, for many days, when a dove appeared in the person of Victoria, bearing the olive branch of peace. How was he directed to the Bible? The author seems to say, that having brought him in contact with a pure woman, he has insured Raphael's return to his better self. That all good and pure things are related, and even as the flower points to the sunlight, as the source of its beauty, so our association with pure men and women leads us back to the source of their purity.

Much in the same way as we have shown these three characters, the reader will find Hypatia, Pelagia, and Victoria confronting each other in different stages of culture and each suggesting the ideal woman. Hypatia's zeal and genius could create sophisms so plausible as to deceive their author; yet this very enthusiasm is used, to show her lack of feminine traits which should

be the pride of every true woman. Her life warns us of Philosophers who claim that their theory fits the world, when as the author expresses it they have clipped the world to fit their theories. It shows us that zeal is not worth, and that plans for salvation are easily invented and easily forgotten. Is there anything in the life of this enthusiast which might benefit the revivalist of to-day? We only ask the question.

Pelagia, on the other hand, lacked the high aims and aspirations of her rival. Her beauty was her pride, innocence her defender. Yet she gave evidence of a hidden beauty, in hating the "Alruna Maiden," who esteemed herself above pleasure, and "too pure to love a man."

The author gives much space to the delineation of these two characters. But when he comes to Victoria, he seems to say, here is the true woman, let those who possess her purity fully appreciate her. Her deeds are few but marked by charity. Her sayings are not many, but of that gentle, womanly kind, which you and I seldom hear. We know, from the moment of Victoria's introduction that we have at last found true womanhood. One whose pride will be in her sons, and whose rights are secured to her through their love. Whose mission on earth is to refine and encourage. We do not ~~consider whether she would be better with the right~~ of Suffrage, but we know, that as in Raphael we saw the germ of manhood which must civilize the world. So we see in Victoria, the woman who must aid in the work and share his throne. As regards the book in general, to the attentive reader it will be a favor conferred by the author. It is emphatically a work which sets one thinking and hence is beneficial. Charles Kingsley will be gratefully remembered, if posterity will but study the matter and manner of his thought.

Great men reproduce themselves in their works. In the case of the novelist, this may be done by assuming a character, or by making one of these "creatures of fancy" adopt his ideas and defend them. This last privilege Bulwer misuses to state his literary prejudices, Thackeray avails himself of to express his so-called cynical ideas. And 'tis this which Charles Kingsley uses to show us "Old foes with new faces." He states both sides of the question fully and fairly, and as a consequence establishes his own theory more firmly. He has not given us here, his private life, but that which is of more importance, his manner of thinking and its results. The author does not forsake the legitimate function of the novelist, the portrayal of character, but under his hands it seems to take on a new form. There is such an excellent contrasting of truth with theory, of wisdom with brute force, of Goth with Greek, that one sees the intent in each case, yet wonders how one man at the same time could occupy such diverse plans of thought. His characters seem to stand face to face, pointing to a happy medium, which is the true model. Each theory is confronted by its opposite, and these seem to unite in suggesting better thoughts, more temperate beliefs. The extremes merge into what is better than either—the truth.

THE AIM OF CRITICISM.

S. 21 Several of our Exchanges have had, lately, a good deal to say about criticism and its abuses. Some of them have referred especially to the mutual criticism indulged in by the various College Journals. On this particular matter we have already said what we had to say. But some of the articles that we have seen, relate more generally to the whole subject of the uses and requirements of criticism of every kind. This is a matter of great interest, and we will take the liberty of adding a few words here to what others have said about it.

Most of the remarks referred to are upon the necessity of *justice* in criticism. *Scribner's Monthly*, a magazine itself not particularly noted editorially, we think, for fair and discriminating critical judgments, some time since published a decidedly severe article on the unfairness of the majority of American journalistic criticisms. It seemed to view fairness as the first requisite for a good reviewer. No other aim, apparently, was placed before him than success in judging the comparative merits of two books. Let him do this without being influenced by prejudice, and his work is accomplished. And this seems to be a very common view of the question. And in consequence the critic has come to be commonly considered as the man who pulls to pieces without being able to construct, as the being who can, like Prospero, declare all things that we have supposed real in any object to be but like the baseless fabric of a vision, while he has not Prospero's power to call up a single pleasing image himself.

Now all this is a mistake, resting we think, on a very incomplete understanding of the business of the critic. He has an office quite as constructive as that of any other branch of literature. The difference is that his department is a somewhat elementary one. He builds, but it is chiefly underground. The "gorgous pinnacles and cloud-capped towers," he cannot call up, but he can cause a firm road to appear in a place that was before his coming but a wilderness of quagmires. For, as we understand his office, he seeks chiefly to establish from an analysis of facts laid before him, elementary generalizations in all branches of literary pursuit, whatever they may be. And therefore, if he be an historical critic, he studies and lays together the accounts given of events, and thereby establishes the true construction and relation of the events themselves in a far clearer manner than was possible for those who wrote the original accounts. He aims to find something of the hidden causes and of the *rationale* of the events. But of course the highest generalizations do not belong to his department, but rather to that of the Philosophy of History. Still in his province he is invaluable, both as enabling us to be more certain of the facts themselves, and as making us better prepared to enter into the consideration of the most general questions that lie beyond his field. If again he be a philosophic or scientific critic his aim is a similar one. He now seeks to empower us to see the cause of error, to gain possession of new rules for investigation, to discover the laws of the progress of thought,

to find how to make allowance for the personal equation in individual investigators. And if, finally, he be an artistic or a literary critic, his task is to separate true from false art, to give means of distinguishing the one from the other in cases in which they seem indissolubly joined, and, greatest of all, to enter into the soul of the artist and to interpret to himself and to others the divine thought which the inspiration of the beautiful gave in full form, but which the duller eye of common life sometimes fails to catch sight of.

If this be true, the historical critic's first business is not the assailing of every new work on history that appears, nor is it the philosophical critic's duty above all things to pick flaws in every existing system of philosophy, nor the artistic critic's sole object in life to attack all new productions in art. But each of them is fulfilling his allotted task when he collates, compares, and generalizes the facts in his own field. If in doing this it is the duty of all of them very commonly to attack or to defend, to condemn or to praise, in every case they attend to this incidentally, and subordinate everything to their main object. This is what all great critics have become great in doing. This is what Aristotle, the father of criticism, acted out as a model for all who should follow. This is what makes the true critical spirit the foundation of modern progress.

It may perhaps be objected that what we have suggested is in reality the object of a certain class of critics, but that there is another branch of the critical science which deals only in comparisons with a view to ascertaining relative excellence. This we cannot admit. The finding of fault without the corresponding and accompanying search for the truly excellent, cannot be dignified by any scientific title. The search for beauties even, without a desire for the attainment of a knowledge of the Beautiful and for the capacity to avoid the distasteful, can but be called literary flirtation, and is quite as aimless as the other kinds of flirtation, even if it be less injurious than some of them.

With all who have written on the subject then, we would say, let the critic be fair. But, above all things, we would add, let him not be content with fairness. He must construct in his own field. He must rise above petty comparisons of particular examples, to a general view of universal laws. He must remember that in most of what he does he is dealing with manifestations of the human mind; and that his duty is not done when he has passed judgment on the manifestations, but that he must also go behind them to find out something about the underlying mind. If he does not do his duty here, he may be properly called the drone of the literary hive. If he does do his duty, he will have the credit of furnishing materials and truths for the philosopher, suggestion and counsel to the artist, instruction and benefit to every inquiring mind.

THE "SWIFT AND COMMODIOUS."

Travelers of today meet with many comforts which were not to be had ten years ago. There is more system in our railroads, our river steamers are model hotels, our ocean steamers are

made more comfortable, from year to year. The City of Peking has about reached the limit in this respect, and the result is a floating palace. It would seem to a casual observer that nothing could be desired which the City of Peking could not give. This is not the case. We have another step to record, a boon which the traveling public has long craved, and it is characteristic of the energetic management of the Berkeley Ferry Co., that they are the first to meet the intellectual needs of the public. We allude to the fact that the Mare Island has an art gallery. We wish right here to correct certain rumors which have gained ground among the public. It has been said that this steamer was selected in the interests of real estate owners, because people coming over in it would rather settle in Berkeley than go back. The report that the Freshmen stand on deck with their canes and keep the steamer from landing, is untrue because the Freshmen are not allowed to wear canes. The seats were not made uncomfortable to keep passengers out of the wind, nor is their any fear of the boat tipping over, but they were so constructed to drive people down into the art gallery. Let us therefore descend to the museum and stand up, slightly bent, and look at the pictures. The one which claims our closest attention, is an ideal representation of a portion of the bay of San Francisco. There we have the traditional white caps—"The fretful waves lashing each other into an angry foam," and all that sort of thing. The warring elements are depicted with all becoming ferocity, while the scene is divested of life and significance, probably for the purpose of heightening the pugilistic effect, produced by the attitude of the waves. The watery portion of the painting might easily be taken for the ocean in miniature, or the Gulf of Finland, were it not for one thing which fixes the location beyond doubt. For there right in the midst of things, the central figure, with her name in front, to prevent mistakes, stands the Mare Island. She has a saucy, venturesome air which sets danger at defiance and reminds one of the lines

Then out spake Pilot Dollinger
A brave heart, firm and true,
"Just put your trust in Dollinger,
And he will fetch you through."

The sensations which one experiences while in presence of this masterpiece, are not identical with those which Beethoven, or Milton call for, but, they are equally inexplicable. The artist seems to have had a preconceived poetical idea, and to have shaped all his efforts towards exciting wonder in spectators. He has spared no paint in the attainment of this object, and we think he has succeeded. This is seen in the fact that he has made the slip too small for the boat to land, and in the eager expectant look, which all nature seems to put on at the arrival of the Mare Island. We attempted to analyze the impressions produced by this paint, but failed. We brooded over it from the time when the deck-hand untied and shoved us out into the stream, until having reached the other side, the captain went forth with a scuttle, to buy coal for the return trip, and then gave up in despair. Every work of art is excellent in some particular direction. This allegorical representation, has never been equalled in broader comprehensiveness. And as regards raw material, paint and space, it will hold its own for at least a decade.