

men's Field, where Roger Conant and Miles Standish met, and the fourteen watchers waited; past Norman's Woe, where Longfellow wrecked the *Hesperus*—the wind rising, the little waves growing wilder with delight, or something which seems like it, and Gattin seated in the bottom of the boat. Higher the waves rise, higher the wind rises. "The rude and broken coast-line white with breakers" there to leeward gave no comfort to Vater at the oars, who headed the boat almost bayward, to keep out of the trough of the sea. Once or twice there came a little cry from Gattin, as a threatening wave higher than her head seemed about to break into the *Idler*. They took little thought of Whittier's lines:

"Of the marvellous valley hidden in the depths of  
Gloucester woods,  
Full of plants that love the summer—blooms of  
warmer latitudes;  
Where the Arctic birch is braided by the Tropic's  
flowery vines,  
And the white magnolia-blossoms star the twilight  
of the pines."

However, they landed safely at Magnolia, and from the windows of the *Hesperus* house looked out upon the waves, which, now that the rowers were out of their reach, seemed to soften down.

There were boats and coast-scenery in Vater's dreams that night, and in them, after a perilous row in a dory, he found himself snug and safe climbing a stair-way in the harbor of Marblehead.

Marblehead!—it is no dream-land. Name it, and what stories of heroism, trial, and trouble throng to mind! Its old look is wearing away. Last summer a visitor found in the harbor but one old schooner; a coal-vessel was running in, and a few yachts were sunning themselves idly in its waters. The fish-houses and flakes are falling down; new houses look out from old places; but you look for the name of the street you are in, and it is that of a hero, or is historic in itself. Marblehead streets are crooked, but their names will wear.

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GEORGE ELIOT.

It is no easy task to write for the public eye an account of a deeply venerated friend, whom death has newly taken. It is a task on which one might well shrink from entering, save at the wish of those whose desire in such a matter carries the force of a command. He who makes the attempt can scarcely avoid two opposite perils. Strangers will be apt to think his admiration excessive. Friends more intimate than himself, on the other hand, will find a disappointing incompleteness in any estimate formed by one less close than they,—one who, seeing only what his own nature allowed him to see, must needs leave so much unseen, untold. Between these conflicting dangers the only tenable course is one of absolute candor. To fail in candor, indeed, would be to fail in respect. "Obedience is the courtesy due to kings," and to the sovereigns of the world of mind the courtesy due is truth.

The world has already been made acquainted with most of the external facts of George Eliot's life. Mary Ann Evans, youngest child of Robert Evans, land agent, was born at Arbury, near Nuneaton, in Warwickshire, on November 22, 1820. Her birthplace was thus only some twenty miles from Shakspere's, and the "rookery elms" of her childish memories, survivors of the Forest of Arden, may have cast their shadow also on the poet of *Jaques* and *Rosalind*. Arbury

Hall, the seat of Sir Roger Newdigate, her father's principal employer, is reproduced as the Cheverel Manor of "Mr. Gilfil's Love-story." So, also, does Chilvers Coton Church appear as Shepperton, Astley Church—"The Lanthorn of Arden"—as Knebley, and Nuneaton as Milby, while many of the inhabitants of that quiet region are painted in "Scenes of Clerical Life," as they were, or as they might have been.

Her education was mainly self-acquired. For a short time—before she was ten years old—she was at school in Nuneaton, afterward at the Miss Franklins' in Coventry. "I began at sixteen," she says, in a letter which lies before me, "to be acquainted with the unspeakable grief of a last parting, in the death of my mother." After this loss, and the marriage of her brothers and sisters, she lived alone with her father, and in 1841 they removed from Griff House to Foleshill, near Coventry.

During all these early years, as, indeed, during all the years which followed them, religious and moral ponderings made the basis of George Eliot's life. To her, as to most of the more serious spirits of her generation, religion came first after the Evangelical—for a time even after the Calvinistic—pattern. The figure of Dinah Morris is partially taken from her aunt, Elizabeth Evans, whose



simple goodness had much attraction for the earnest, self-questioning girl. And in other well-known characters she has shown her deep realization of those forms of faith and piety which rest, not on outward ceremonies, but on the direct communion of the heart with God. The story of the spiritual growth of Maggie Tulliver—in great part, no doubt, autobiographical—has been felt by many readers to be almost unique in its delineation of passionate search, of an eager, self-renouncing soul. But there are those who seek and cannot find, who knock, and to whom it is not opened. There are those, the very intensity of whose gaze seems to dim the great hope on which it rests; who, while the kingdom of heaven fulfills itself within them, cease to discern it before them and afar.

Such was the case with George Eliot. After a few years spent at Foleshill in close study, aided by the Charles Brays and other intelligent friends at Coventry, we find her coming first before the world, though anonymously, in 1846, with a translation of Strauss's "Life of Jesus." This was followed by a translation of Feuerbach's "Essence of Christianity," and a translation, as yet unpublished, of Spinoza's "Ethics." Her mind had taken its ply, and while her nature, eminently constant and conservative, retained always a deep reverence and affection for whatever names itself by the name of Christ, she never sought again the old means of grace, nor felt the old hope of glory.

Her father died in 1849, and for some time before his death she was mainly absorbed in attendance on him. She told me once that for the last year of his life she had read Scott's novels aloud to him for many hours almost daily; and thus, we may suppose, amid her severer studies, she was imbibing something of the method of one to whom she always looked up as a master. After her father's death she went abroad with the Brays, and remained for some eight months *en pension* near Geneva, and afterward at M. d'Albert's house in the town. This was to her a time of intense delight in the external world. The shock of bereavement had left her spirit open to those consolations with which Nature is ever ready to soothe a generous pain.

She returned to England in 1850, and in 1851 she became sub-editor of the "Westminster Review," a periodical which has often been the first to welcome the contributions of writers who have afterward risen to fame. She lodged with the editor, Dr. Chapman, and his wife, in a large house in the Strand, which was the center of a literary group, penetrated for the most part with strongly scientific tendencies, and especially with the phi-

losophy of the Comtist school. Among the articles in the "Review" which have since been pointed out as hers, that on "Worldliness and Other-Worldliness" (Jan., 1857) is especially characteristic and noteworthy.

This course of placid self-culture was interrupted by personal events which increased the perplexity, deepened the significance, of life. A long tragedy unrolled itself before her; her pity, affection, gratitude were subjected to a strong appeal; a path was chosen over which, amidst much of happiness, a certain shadow hung. It is enough to say here that if ever her intimate history is made more fully known to the world, it will be found to contain nothing at variance with her own unselfish teaching; no postponement of principle to passion; no personal happiness based upon others' pain.

In 1854, Mr. and Mrs. Lewes went to Germany, and spent a year mainly at Weimar and Berlin. They saw much of the most intellectual society of Germany, and it was, perhaps, in this stimulating companionship that the earnest student first became strongly conscious of original power. It was, at any rate, soon afterward that she discovered the means of self-expression by which she was best able to move mankind, in a form of literature whose freedom of plan renders it specially fitted to reflect the complexity of modern life and thought. She precluded with one or two short tales, which indicate that her power was only just ripening. Then "Scenes of Clerical Life" appeared, in 1857, "Adam Bede" in 1859, and "The Mill on the Floss" in 1860.

The author's identity was soon discovered under her *nom de plume* of "George Eliot," and the publication of these first books made a sudden change in her life and surroundings. She awoke and found herself famous. From an obscure sub-editor of an unfashionable review, she rose at a bound to the first place among the imaginative prose writers of her time.

Her remaining twenty years of life were such as the spirit conscious of a message to deliver might most desire. Her mind was fed by strenuous and constant study,—scientific, linguistic, literary,—by frequent travel in those historic lands whose air quickens spirit as well as body, and by habitual intercourse with many of the foremost minds of the age. She never had much connection with the political—still less, of course, with the merely fashionable—world, but nearly all who were most eminent in art, science, literature, philanthropy might be met from time to time at her Sunday afternoon receptions. There were many women, too, drawn often from among



very different traditions of thought and belief by the unfeigned goodness which they recognized in Mrs. Lewes's look and speech, and sometimes illumining with some fair young face a *salon* whose grave talk needed the grace which they could bestow. And there was sure to be a considerable admixture of men not as yet famous—probably never to be so—but whom some indication of studies earnestly pursued, of sincere effort for the good of their fellow-men, had recommended to “that hopeful interest which”—I quote the generous words of a letter which lies before me—“the elder mind, dissatisfied with itself, delights to entertain with regard to the younger, whose years and powers hold a larger measure of unspoiled life.”

It was Mr. Lewes who, on these occasions, contributed the cheerful *bonhomie*, the observant readiness, which are necessary for the fusing together of any social group. Mrs. Lewes's manner had a grave simplicity which rose in closer converse into an almost pathetic anxiety to give of her best—to establish a genuine human relation between herself and her interlocutor—to utter words which should remain as an active influence for good in the hearts of those who heard them. To some of her literary admirers, this serious tone was distasteful; they were inclined to resent, as many critics in print have resented, the prominence given to moral ideas in a quarter from which they preferred to look merely for intellectual refreshment.

Mrs. Lewes's humor, though fed from a deep perception of the incongruities of human fates, had not, except in intimate moments, any buoyant or contagious quality, and in all her talk,—full of matter and wisdom and exquisitely worded as it was,—there was the same pervading air of strenuous seriousness which was more welcome to those whose object was distinctly to *learn* from her than to those who merely wished to pass an idle and brilliant hour. To her, these mixed receptions were a great effort. Her mind did not move easily from one individuality to another, and when she afterward thought that she had failed to understand some difficulty which had been laid before her,—had spoken the wrong word to some expectant heart,—she would suffer from almost morbid accesses of self-reproach. Perhaps to no imaginative writer—to no writer, at any rate, of what is commonly called “light literature”—has fame ever presented itself so unmixedly as responsibility. Each step that she gained in popular favor drove her into a more sedulous conscientiousness,—a conscientiousness which probably injured her later books, by the over-elaboration to which it led. Aware

of this danger of a too sedulous and sensitive care, she abstained almost wholly from reading reviews of her works. She had no appetite for indiscriminate eulogy.

“Vague praise,” she writes to a friend, “or praise with false notes in its singing, is something to be endured with difficult resignation.” And censure, or criticism which called on her for what she could not give, would, she felt, only serve to embarrass and depress her. In this matter, as in all, Mr. Lewes stood between her and the world without, with the loyal care with which he repaid the priceless benefit which his character drew from hers.

Thus passed a score of years. Then came his sudden death; her heavy sorrow; her faithful effort to preserve forever the memory which she held so dear. She edited his last book with scrupulous care, and founded the “George Henry Lewes Studentship” in Physiology; providing, with a loving minuteness, that his full name should be forever associated with a wisely planned scheme for the fostering of his chosen study. And then, beyond expectation, it came about that fate reserved for her yet seven months of a new happiness; and she reached unawares the term of earthly life in the midst of unslackening intellectual activities, of ever-deepening loves.

Nothing, indeed, was more remarkable in this last period of her life than her intense mental vitality, which failing health did not seem in the least to impair. She possessed in an eminent degree that power which has led to success in so many directions—which is ascribed both to Newton and to Napoleon—of keeping her mind unceasingly at the stretch without conscious fatigue. She would cease to read or to ponder when other duties called her, but never (as it seemed) because she herself felt tired. Even in so complex an effort as a visit to a picture-gallery implies, she could continue for hours at the same pitch of earnest interest, and outweary strong men. Nor was this a mere habit of passive receptivity. In the intervals between her successive compositions her mind was always fusing and combining its fresh stores, and had her life been prolonged, it is probable that she would have produced work at least equal in merit to anything which she had already achieved. I may perhaps be allowed to illustrate what has here been said by a few words as to the occupations of her last days on earth.

On the Friday night before her death, Mrs. Cross witnessed a representation of the “Agamemnon,” in Greek, by Oxford undergraduates, and came back fired with the old



words, thus heard anew, and planning to read through the Greek dramatists again with her husband. On Saturday, she went as usual to the concert of classical music, and there, as it seems, she caught the fatal chill. That evening she played through on the piano much of the music which had been performed in the afternoon; for she was an admirable executant, and rendered especially her favorite Schubert with rare delicacy of touch and feeling. And thus, as her malady deepened, her mind could still respond to the old trains of thought and emotion, till, all unexpectedly to herself and those who loved her, she passed into the state of unconsciousness from which she woke on earth no more.

The story of George Eliot's life, it will be seen, is a simple and unsuggestive one. It is merely the record of the steady development of a strong and serious mind. There is not much in her which we can trace as inherited; not much which we can ascribe to the influences of any unusual circumstances in her journey through life. Yet, from her father,—the carpenter who rose to be forester, the forester who rose to be land-agent,—whose modified portrait appears both in Caleb Garth and in Adam Bede,—she derived, no doubt, that spirit of thoroughness, that disdain of all pretentious or dishonest work, that respect for conscientious effort, however mistaken and clumsy, which were so distinctive of her in later life. And it must also be considered as a most fortunate thing,—more important, perhaps, for a female novelist in England than for an author of any other type,—that the position of her family, while sufficiently comfortable to allow of her being liberally educated, was humble enough to bring her into close and natural contact with the quaint types of rural life,—as much superior in picturesqueness to the *habitués* of literary drawing-rooms as Mrs. Poyser is to Theophrastus Such. At the time when impressions sink deepest, it was among the Tullivers, the Silas Marners, the Bartle Masseys of this world that George Eliot's lot was cast. And thus in the shy and quaint, but affectionate and observant child, grew up the habit of discerning worth and wisdom beneath rugged envelopes, of feeling that "keen experience with pity blent" of which she speaks in one of her poems:

"The pathos exquisite of lovely minds  
Hid in harsh forms—not penetrating them  
Like fire divine within a common bush  
Which glows transfigured by the heavenly guest  
So that men put their shoes off; but encaged  
Like a sweet child within some thick-walled cell,  
Who leaps and fails to hold the window-bars,  
But having shown a little dimpled hand,  
Is visited thenceforth by tender hearts,  
Whose eyes keep watch about the prison walls."

This sympathy with imperfection, this skill in interpreting the signs by which dumb and baffled creatures seek to show their love and need, was at the root of much both of her humor and her pathos. Her gaze did not invest the world around her with "the light that never was on sea or land," but seeing men and women without idealization, she still could love them as they were. This gave to her sympathy a peculiar quality which made it less flattering to the recipient, though in one sense of greater value. It was full and penetrating, but it seemed rather to be bestowed on principle, and as to a human being in difficulty or distress, than to be prompted by any such momentary glow as could induce her to forget what she calls

"The twists and cracks in our poor earthenware,  
That touch me to more conscious fellowship  
(I am not myself the finest Parian)  
With my coevals."

She contemplated, indeed, her own powers and character with a gaze of the same impartial scrutiny. Her natural candor of self-judgment had perhaps been fostered by the tardiness of her success, which had worked in her the best effect which long obscurity can produce on strong and humble natures. It had accustomed her to conceive of herself as of one who must still strive, who sees his work before him, whose ideal is not yet attained. And it was noticeable that in any casual allusion to her own faulty tendencies she seemed to have felt less need to guard against those which go with success than against those which go with failure.

Mr. Lewes and she were one day good-humoredly recounting the mistaken effusiveness of a too-sympathizing friend, who insisted on assuming that Mr. Casaubon was a portrait of Mr. Lewes, and on condoling with the sad experience which had taught the gifted authoress of "Middlemarch" to depict that gloomy man. And there was indeed something ludicrous in the contrast between the dreary pedant of the novel and the gay self-content of the living *savant* who stood acting his vivid anecdotes before our eyes. "But from whom, then," said a friend, turning to Mrs. Lewes, "did you draw Casaubon?" With a humorous solemnity, which was quite in earnest, nevertheless, she pointed to her own heart. She went on to say—and this one could well believe—that there was one other character—that of Rosamond Vincy—which she had found it hard to sustain; such complacency of egoism being alien to her own habits of mind. But she laid no claim to any such natural magnanimity as could avert Casaubon's temptations of jealous vanity, of



bitter resentment. No trace of these faults was ever manifest in her conversation. But much of her moral weight was derived from the impression which her friends received that she had not been by any means without her full share of faulty tendencies to begin with; but that she had upbuilt with strenuous pains a resolute virtue,—what Plato calls *an iron sense of truth and right*,—to which others, also, however faulty, by effort might attain.

A few months since, there were still living in England three prophets: for by what other name, as distinguished from our poets and statesmen, can we so fitly call them? Two have passed away; the third still lives to complete his mission. Carlyle's was the most awakening personality. To Ruskin is given the most of revelation. But for the lessons most imperatively needed by the mass of men, the lessons of deliberate kindness, of careful truth, of unwavering endeavor,—for these plain themes one could not ask a more convincing teacher than she whom we are commemorating now. Everything in her aspect and presence was in keeping with the bent of her soul. The deeply lined face, the too marked and massive features, were united with an air of delicate refinement, which in one way was the more impressive because it seemed to proceed so entirely from within. Nay, the inward beauty would sometimes quite transform the external harshness; there would be moments when the thin hands that entwined themselves in their eagerness, the earnest figure that bowed forward to speak and hear, the deep gaze moving from one face to another with a grave appeal,—all these seemed the transparent symbols that showed the presence of a wise, benignant soul. But it was the voice which best revealed her, a voice whose subdued intensity and tremulous richness seemed to environ her uttered words with the mystery of a world of feeling that must remain untold. "Speech," says her Don Silva to Fedalma, in "The Spanish Gypsy,"

"Speech is but broken light upon the depth  
Of the unspoken: even your loved words  
Float in the larger meaning of your voice  
As something dimmer."

And then again, when in moments of more intimate converse some current of emotion would set strongly through her soul, when she would raise her head in unconscious absorption and look out into the unseen, her expression was not one to be soon forgotten. It had not, indeed, the serene felicity of souls to whose child-like confidence all heaven and earth are fair. Rather it was the look (if I may use a Platonic phrase) of a strenuous Demiurge, of a soul on which high tasks are

laid, and which finds in their accomplishment its only imagination of joy.

"It was her thought she saw: the presence fair  
Of unachieved achievement, the high task,  
The mighty unborn spirit that doth ask  
With irresistible cry for blood and breath  
Till feeding its great life we sink in death."

I do not wish to exaggerate. The subject of these pages would not tolerate any words which seemed to present her as an ideal type. For, as her aspect had greatness, but not beauty, so too her spirit had moral dignity but not saintly holiness. A loftier potency may sometimes have been given to some highly favored woman in whom the graces of heaven and earth have met; moving through all life's seasons with a majesty which can feel no decay; affording by her very presence and benediction an earnest of the supernal world. And so, too, on that thought-worn brow there was visible the authority of sorrow, but scarcely its consecration. A deeper pathos may sometimes have breathed from the unconscious heroism of some child-like soul.

It is perhaps by thus dwelling on the last touches which this high nature was dimly felt to lack—some aroma of hope, some felicity of virtue—that we can best recognize the greatness of her actual achievement, of her practical working-out of the fundamental dogma of the so-called Religion of Humanity—the expansion, namely, of the sense of human fellowship into an impulse strong enough to compel us to live for others, even though it be beneath the on-coming shadow of an endless night. For she held that there was so little chance of man's immortality that it was a grievous error to flatter him with such a belief; a grievous error at least to distract him by promises of future recompense from the urgent and obvious motives of well-doing,—our love and pity for our fellow-men. She repelled "that impiety toward the present and the visible, which flies for its motives, its sanctities, and its religion to the remote, the vague, and the unknown," as contrasted with "that genuine love which cherishes things in proportion to their nearness, and feels its reverence grow in proportion to the intimacy of its knowledge." These words are from the essay on "Worldliness and Other-Worldliness," which has been alluded to, and which contains a forcible condemnation of the view—advanced by the poet Young in its utmost crudity—according to which the reason for virtue is simply the prospect of being rewarded for it hereafter. So far as moral action is dependent on that belief, so far, she urges, "the emotion which prompts it is not



truly moral—is still in the stage of egoism, and has not yet attained the higher development of sympathy." And she adds to this a moving argument, which in after life was often on her lips and in her heart. "It is conceivable," she says, "that in some minds the deep pathos lying in the thought of human mortality—that we are here for a little while and then vanish away, that this earthly life is all that is given to our loved ones and to our many suffering fellow-men—lies nearer the fountains of moral emotion than the conception of extended existence."

It was, indeed, above all things, this sadness with which she contemplated the lot of dying men which gave to her convictions an air of reality far more impressive than the rhetorical satisfaction which is sometimes expressed at the prospect of individual annihilation. George Eliot recognized the terrible probability that, for creatures with no future to look to, advance in spirituality may oftenest be but advance in pain; she saw the somber reason of that grim plan which suggests that the world's life-long struggle might best be ended—not, indeed, by individual desertions, but by the moving off of the whole great army from the field of its unequal war—by the simultaneous suicide of all the race of man. But since this could not be; since that race was a united army only in metaphor—was, in truth, a never-ending host

"Whose rear lay wrapt in night, while breaking dawn  
Roused the broad front, and called the battle on,"

she held that it befits us neither to praise the sum of things nor to rebel in vain, but to take care only that our brothers' lot may be less grievous to them in that we have lived. Even so, to borrow a simile from M. Renan, the emperor who summed up his view of life in the words *Nil expedit*, gave none the less to his legions as his last night's watch-word, *Laboremus*.

This stoic lesson she would enforce in tones which covered a wide range of feeling, from the grave exhortation which disdained to appeal to aught save an answering sense of right, to the tender words which offered the blessedness of self-forgetting fellowship as the guerdon won by the mourner's pain.

I remember how, at Cambridge, I walked with her once in the Fellows' Garden of Trinity, on an evening of rainy May; and she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet-calls of men,—the words *God, Immortality, Duty*,—pronounced, with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the *first*,

how unbelievable the *second*, and yet how peremptory and absolute the *third*. Never, perhaps, have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing Law. I listened, and night fell; her grave, majestic countenance turned toward me like a sibyl's in the gloom; it was as though she withdrew from my grasp, one by one, the two scrolls of promise, and left me the third scroll only, awful with inevitable fates. And when we stood at length and parted, amid that columnar circuit of the forest-trees, beneath the last twilight of starless skies, I seemed to be gazing, like Titus at Jerusalem, on vacant seats and empty halls,—on a sanctuary with no Presence to hallow it, and heaven left lonely of a God.

This was the severer aspect of her teaching. How gentle, how inspiring a tone it could assume when it was called upon to convey not impulse only but consolation, I must quote a few words to show. Writing to a friend who was feeling the first anguish of bereavement, she approaches with tender delicacy the themes with which she would sustain his spirit. "For the first sharp pangs," she says, "there is no comfort;—whatever goodness may surround us, darkness and silence still hang about our pain. But slowly the clinging companionship with the dead is linked with our living affections and duties, and we begin to feel our sorrow as a solemn initiation preparing us for that sense of loving, pitying fellowship with the fullest human lot which, I must think, no one who has tasted it will deny to be the chief blessedness of our life. And especially to know what the last parting is seems needful to give the utmost sanctity of tenderness to our relations with each other. It is that above all which gives us new sensibilities to 'the web of human things. Birth and the grave, that are not as they were.' And by that path we come to find for ourselves the truth of the old declaration, that there is a difference between the ease of pleasure, and blessedness, or the fullest good possible to us wondrously mixed mortals. \* \* \* All the experience that makes my communion with your grief is summed up in a 'God bless you,' which represents the swelling of my heart now as I write, thinking of you and your sense of what was and is not."

It is on reading words like these that one's thoughts recall the apothegm of old Cæcilius:

"If each for each be all he can,  
A very God is man to man."

Every one of George Eliot's works might be read as a commentary on that text. In each there is a moral crisis, which depends on



some strong efflux of the feeling of human fellowship—sometimes pouring forth unchecked, but with unwonted energy, and sometimes overcoming the counter impulses of egoistic pleasure or pain; some selfish craving, some angered pride, some wounded and bleeding love. I need not recall each individual instance. Throughout the earlier novels, where there is less of visible purpose and more of mere humorous portraiture than in the later ones, this lesson nevertheless is always recurring. “Romola,” the most laboriously executed of all her works,—the book which, as she said, “she began a young woman, and ended an old one,”—is almost from first to last one strain of grave insistence on the human bond. Or consider, especially, her poems; for these, though often failing in that instinctive melody which is the indispensable birth-gift of poets, are yet the most concentrated expression of herself which she has left behind her. The poems move through more ideal scenes, but they enforce the self-same lesson; they teach that as the mounting spirit becomes more conscious of its own being, it becomes more conscious also of the bonds which unite it to its kin; that thus the higher a man is, the closer he is drawn to the lowest, and greatness is not an exemption, but a debt the more.

“The Legend of Jubal” is, as it were, the sublimation of all she had to say. It is in that mythic tale that the benefit conferred is most far-reaching, the self-effacement most absolute, the absorption into the universal good most satisfying and sacred.

“Wouldst thou have asked aught else from any god—  
Whether with gleaming feet on earth he trod  
Or thundered through the skies—ought else for share  
Of mortal good, than in thy soul to bear  
The growth of song, and feel the sweet unrest  
Of the world’s spring-tide in thy conscious breast?  
No, thou hadst grasped thy lot with all its pain,  
Nor loosed it any painless lot to gain  
Where music’s voice was silent; for thy fate  
Was human music’s self incorporate:  
Thy senses’ keenness and thy passionate strife  
Were flesh of *her* flesh and her womb of life.”

Few passages could so completely lift us into the region where Art melts into Virtue; where they are discerned as twin aspects of the spirit’s unselfish earnestness, which would fain lose itself in a larger joy. The visible Jubal perishes forsaken and alone, but he lives on in the life of Music, his deathless gift to mankind.

In the well-known lines which begin, “O may I join the choir invisible,” the ardent writer has given voice to her own aspirations. This poem received its fittest commentary when it was read above her grave:

“May I reach  
That purest heaven, be to other souls  
The cup of strength in some great agony,  
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,  
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty.”

To those who knew her, these words are her very self. Language has never expressed with more directness the innermost of a noble soul.

Yet, in this realm of high speculation, to admire is not necessarily to feel complete agreement. There were some to whom these consolations seemed all too shadowy, this resignation premature; some whose impulsion to a personal life beyond the grave was so preoccupying and dominant that they could not readily acquiesce in her negations, nor range themselves unreservedly as the fellow-workers of her brave despair. Those, especially, to whom life’s most impressive experience had been the spectacle of some tragedy without an issue, of some unmerited anguish driven in storms upon an innocent soul,—such men might well have scarcely heart enough to work for the future, with thoughts forever turning to an irredeemable injustice in the past. Rather they would still recur to the ancient hopes of men; they would urge that great discoveries follow on great needs; that problems which have resisted a hundred keys may yield to yet one key more: that in some field of knowledge there may yet be that to know which shall not, indeed, diminish life’s effort, but shall establish its felicity,—shall not relax duty but add hope. To one who thus, amid great sorrow, could not abandon this anchor of the soul, she used words some of which I quote, since they may serve to bring her nearer to some minds, which may have shrunk at times from the despondency discernible beneath her bravest speech. She wrote:

“I have no controversy with the faith that cries out and clings from the depths of man’s need. I only long, if it were possible to me, to help in satisfying the need of those who want a reason for living in the absence of what has been called consolatory belief. But all the while I gather a sort of strength from the certainty that there must be limits or negations in my own moral powers and life-experience which may screen from me many possibilities of blessedness for our suffering human nature. The most melancholy thought surely would be that we in our own persons had measured and exhausted the sources of spiritual good. But we know how the poor help the poor.”

Those whose own faith is most assured can, I think, “have no controversy” with such a temper as this. The faithful servant,—we may reverently suppose,—will not be met with condemnation because, like her own Fedalma, *she would not count on aught but being faithful*. Nor can it be ours to



blame her because, in the presence of solemn issues, she was resolved to keep within the limits of what she did certainly feel and know, and—a sterner Prometheus—at least to omit "vain hopes" from the gifts which she brought to men. She gave us of her best; she gave us all her best; she had no wish, no pleasure, but to give.

"This was thy lot, to feel, create, bestow,  
And that immeasurable life to know  
From which the fleshly self falls shrivelled, dead;  
A seed primeval that has forests bred.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Thy gifts to give was thine of men alone:  
'Twas but in giving that thou couldst atone  
For too much wealth amid their poverty."

For what she gave to the world, the world has not been slow to thank her. But what she gave of private amity;—of companionship which never knew that it was conde-

scending, of sympathy the more salutary for its sternness, of encouragement which pointed to duty only as the goal:—the thought of these things can come to few without some self-condemning tinge in their regret. Who is there that has drawn from an ennobling friendship all the blessing which he might have won? Wisdom is everlasting; early or late we apprehend her still the same. But "Wisdom herself," as Plato says, "we cannot see, or terrible had been the loves she had inspired." And the living forms in which she is in some wise embodied, the eyes through which there looks some parcel of her eternal fire,—these pass suddenly from our sight, and we have hardly recognized them, hardly known. For those who thus lament, there is a stern consolation. Let them draw near by faith; what they missed in presence, let them recover by contemplation; what is wanting to memory let them reserve for hope.

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"WHEN THE TRUE POET COMES."

I.

WHEN the true poet comes, how shall we know him—  
By what clear token,—manners, language, dress?  
Or shall a voice from Heaven speak and show him:  
Him the swift healer of the Earth's distress!  
Tell us that when the long-expected comes  
At last, with mirth and melody and singing,  
We him may greet with banners, beat of drums,  
Welcome of men and maids, and joy-bells ringing;  
And, for this poet of ours,  
Laurels and flowers.

II.

Thus shall ye know him—this shall be his token:  
Manners like other men, an unstrange gear;  
His speech not musical, but harsh and broken  
Shall sound at first, each line a driven spear;  
For he shall sing as in the centuries olden,  
Before mankind its earliest fire forgot;  
Yet whoso listens long hears music golden.  
How shall ye know him? Ye shall know him not  
Till, ended hate and scorn,  
To the grave he's borne.

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